



GROWING AND WALKING WITH GOD - PART 2

How do you grow in your walk with God and increase your intimacy with Him?

How do you increase your trust of God? How do you increase your ability to believe God?

As you get to know God better through the time you spend with Him and as you learn to hear His voice, your trust will grow. He will speak to your heart, and you will begin to own what He says to you. It is not enough to go on an Expedition and identify your lie, wound, vow, pose, or false self. Understanding does not equal healing. You must go to those broken places, invite Christ in to heal them, and allow Him to mend your broken heart (Isaiah 61:1-3).

This is where the 7-4-1 is so helpful. You may want to add some more Scripture reading into your time and lengthen the 7 minutes to 10 minutes. As you do this try and be as honest with God as you can. In doing this, you actually learn to hear Jesus speak to you and tell you who you are, how strong you are, and how much He loves you. He wants you to know that He loves you more than you could ever imagine.

The only bad method is the same one over and over, so you will want to vary how you journal and hear from God. Some mornings it may be listening to some Christian songs that speak to your heart, other mornings it may be taking a walk with Jesus, and other mornings it may be all listening prayer. You will want to avoid the rut. This whole love affair with Jesus is about your heart and about falling more and more in love with Him, who He is, and what He has done and is doing for you and in you. It's called intimacy with Jesus.

Remember the "**Letter from Father to His Courageous Son**" we sent you a few weeks ago? This letter lists specific passages of Scripture — this is how Jesus speaks to you. Often when He speaks to you, it may embarrass you because you are so used to seeing your shortcomings and believing lies about who you really are. When God speaks to your glory, you will be stunned, embarrassed, and may not even want to believe that it is true. This is a learned skill, and it takes time. Do not force it. Simply be yourself, be honest and open, and allow God to come after your heart. It is so vital that you begin to own who God says you are and reject what has come against you and what has been spoken to you or over you by others.

Remember the goal: Intimacy with God and learning to walk with Him so that you will genuinely experience an ongoing conversational walk with Him throughout your day. You are invited to be an intimate ally, a partner with Jesus in His unfolding story, and you have a huge role to play. So it's vital to learn to live from your good heart and be able to discern His voice as He speaks to you throughout your day—as you are driving; when you are in a meeting, when you are with your children, or in a discussion with your wife, etc. It is an "AND" not an "OR". It is BOTH taking time to learn to hear Jesus speak to you AND inviting Him into everything you are doing. As you learn to hear His voice and His leadings you will then have the courage to follow Him.

How do you fight against the lies, accusations, and condemnations that come from the enemy?

You may begin to drift back into the lies and messages you have heard your whole life. "I'm stupid. I'm not enough. I'm a disappointment. I am not pleasing. I am a *\$** idiot." We speak very harshly to our hearts. These are lies from the enemy. Remember the enemy is the father of all lies (John 8:44). The way you fight these lies and begin to live from your true, good heart is to stand up and fight (James 4:7).

James 4:4-8 (MSG): *You're cheating on God. If all you want is your own way, flirting with the world every chance you get, you end up enemies of God and his way. And do you suppose God doesn't care? The proverb has it that "he's a fiercely jealous lover." And what he gives in love is far better than anything else you'll find. It's common knowledge that "God goes against the willful proud; God gives grace to the willing humble." So let God work his will in you. Yell a loud no to the Devil and watch him scamper. Say a quiet yes to God and he'll be there in no time. Quit dabbling in sin. Purify your inner life. Quit playing the field.*

Or as the NIV puts it: *Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

The reason most Christians do not experience much freedom in their lives — from the lies they have believed, freedom to be their true selves, and freedom to truly believe that God's heart towards them is good— is because either they don't know they are supposed to, or they simply do not fight—they roll over and go passive like Adam did in the garden, when he stood there and let the enemy take out Eve and then himself (*Genesis 3*).

There is an astonishing and predominate passivity that has crept into the Christian church. If you don't want to be a part of that and instead want the freedom and life Jesus offers (*John 10:10, Galatians 5:1*), you will have to step up and fight for your own heart. This is what resistance looks like.

Here are a couple of key passages you will want to memorize to help you:

Romans 8:1: *"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."* (**The point:** You are under no condemnation; therefore, God will not speak to you in a voice that brings condemnation, reproach, or shame.)

Colossians 2:13-15: *"When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross."* (**The point:** You are fully alive with Christ. ALL your sins are forgiven, even future ones. The enemy has no claim on you; therefore you do not need to respond to his lies. You can renounce them and learn to live freely.)

How do you fight the battle without making this another "to-do" or performance?

Focus not on the battle primarily, but on Jesus and learning to enjoy Him and walk with Him. He is inviting you to be His intimate partner, an ally in His story, and when you begin to believe that then it will totally change the way you see yourself, your life, and life itself. Each day God is saying, "Live out who you truly are. Live from your good heart. Enjoy me and know I am for you." Eventually as you begin to really believe this and own it, you will be able to say, "Yes, God is quite fond of me." You'll say that and live that out as you hear Father speak to your heart about who you are and how much He loves you and cares for you. It is such an amazing adventure to wake up each day and be invited by God Himself to walk with Him and be His beloved son, warrior, and chosen king here on this planet.