

The Importance of a Biblical Fellowship (Part 1)

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Introduction: We need to be reminded daily what it means to be in the presence of God.

- A. When we consider the holiness and power of God we marvel that man could ever have a relationship with God. **(Isa 6:1-5)**
 - 1. We need to know that our God is pure, He is light and has no darkness.
 - 2. Our God also sees and knows everything including our actions and they very thoughts of our hearts.
 - 3. If this was all we knew about God then we would be in despair.
- B. Our God has also sought man out and has a plan to bring us to Him.
 - 1. What Isaiah needed was forgiveness. **(Isa 6:6-7)**
 - 2. Our God has acted on our behalf to provide forgiveness. **(Rom 6:23)**
 - 3. Once forgiven God has a plan to mold us to become more like Him. Here is where we need to learn of God's ways and the ways in which we should walk.

I. God's ways are not the ways of man

- A. A walk with God will lead in paths that are distinctly different from the world and worldly religion. **(Isa 55:6-9)**
 - 1. When man is left to himself he does what he wants to do!
 - 2. The essence of worldliness is that there are no standards, no right or wrong and no one should tell anyone else what to do.
- B. Our God tells us that this is not freedom but in fact a terrible slavery to the God of this world. **(Rom 6:16-21)**
 - 1. Men do not like to hear that they are not in charge.
 - 2. You are blessed when you are able to see the real nature of this world and how each of us need to help and guidance that our God can give. **(Jn 14:30; 1 Pt 5:6-9)**
 - 3. If we want to walk with God and have His blessings we must learn how to have a relationship with God! Where are the paths to walk with God?

II. The world will fight your walk with God

- A. Consider the great battle this kind of thinking has with our current culture.
 - 1. "The "don't judge" mentality is winning out in such a way that we are afraid to say anything for fear of being branded bigots and fear-mongers. The only real "sin" of our times is that of speaking out against actual sins. We have learned that we cannot really call sin out for what it is because that would mean we are hateful, judgmental hypocrites."
– On the Silencing of Sin by Doy Moyer

2. To the experienced Christian this is nothing new. **(1 Pt 4:3-4, 12)**
- B. Consider the battles that Nehemiah had to fight. Satan will use opponents in these ways to stop you.
 1. Ridicule and peer pressure. **(Neh 2:19, 4:1-3)**
 2. Direct attack. **(Neh 4:7-9)**
 3. Negotiations to compromise principle **(Neh 6:1-3)**
 4. Slander and Gossip **(Neh 6:5-9)**
 5. Notice that in every case God's people stayed focused on Him and were not distracted in fear. **(1 Pt 3:12-15)**
- C. Fellowship with God requires winning the battle for the mind and heart.
 1. While we are not to withdraw from the world, we do not need to let our hearts be enticed and beguiled by the world and worldly religion.
 2. Who is in your "great cloud of witnesses?" **(Heb 12:1)**
 3. When we become concerned about what the world will tolerate and accept, then we have taken a significant step away from God.
 4. We need to carefully evaluate what we are letting into our hearts and what kind of relationships we sustain.

III. Our God want to have a relationship with us that is likened to a marriage

- A. This is incredibly humbling and exciting.
 1. Why would God want to be that close to me?
 2. The love of God is the basis for the love in marriage. **(Eph 5:25-26, 32)**
- B. A marriage means that we walk together and keep ourselves from things that destroy that relationship.
 1. What a blessing marriage is when you marry one who loves God.
 2. Marriage will change every person who enters into it, for good or bad.
 3. Israel was likened to an unfaithful mate. **(Jer 3:6-10)**
- C. We are engaged now but the actual marriage will take place in the future. **(Rev 21:2-4)**
 1. I still remember my bride coming down "the isle" for me.
 2. Can you imagine what our God has for us!
 3. It is so humbling to consider the plan our God has revealed.

Conclusion: "The Spirit and bride say: "Come!"" **(Rev 22:17)**