

SERMON: INTIMACY, DEPENDENCY AND OBEDIENCE

Based on I John 4:8-10

Instead of one word for you today, I have three. These three words are the three things that define the relationship Jesus had with his Heavenly Father. These three words are the blueprint for the kind of relationship we need to build with God. The three words are **intimacy, dependency, obedience.**

First, **intimacy**. Jesus said, “For the Father loves the Son and shows him all He does.” (John 5:20) You only

reveal yourself, including your innermost thoughts and secrets, to someone with whom you are intimate. And when you become intimate with God, God will share with you things that others are not privy to.

King David's greatest passion was to know God intimately. In Psalm 24, David wrote, "Show me your way, O Lord, teach me your paths." And then he follows that up by writing, "The Lord confides in those who fear and honor the Lord."

Having an intimate relationship with God

involves the 3 D's: *desire*, *discipline* and *delight*. Live life in 3D, with desire, discipline and delight!

To have an intimate relationship with God, there must be a desire for that kind of relationship. The truth is that we are as close to God right now as we desire to be. Otherwise, we would rearrange our priorities to make it happen. Desire to be intimate with God.

To have an intimate relationship with God, we must have discipline. This calls for spending time alone with God in daily

prayer and Bible reading. When you pray, you're talking to God. When you read the Bible, God is talking to you. It takes discipline to be intimate with God.

And to have an intimate relationship with God, there must be delight. The Psalmist writes, "Delight yourself in the Lord and the Lord shall give you the desires of your heart." (Psalm 37:4) Something wonderful happens when you delight in the Lord. God's desire becomes your desire. Do you want a more intimate relationship with

God? If you are willing to pursue it, you can have it.

Remember the three words that should define our quest to have a Christ-like relationship with God? Intimacy. Dependency. Obedience.

The second thing that defines Jesus' relationship with His Father is **dependency**. Corrie ten Boom used to say, "I am just the glove. Jesus is the hand that fills it and works through it." That's a nice picture of Jesus' relationship with God and a blueprint for the kind of relationship we can have with God.

In the Bible, we notice an all-important trait of Jesus. He never seemed to suffer from the fear of failing like we so often do. Why? Because he prayed regularly. He received direction from God. Knowing he was acting on his Father's will, Jesus never doubted. Jesus knew he could not accomplish anything of significance without God's direction and power.

We, on the other hand, we say we trust God, but we act like everything depends on us. The result? We fall flat

on our faces and keep
wondering why we fail.

Please know that every
action of God in your life is
intended to increase, not
decrease, your dependence
on God. You'll never know
that Christ is all you need
until Christ is all you've got.

Of our three words,
intimacy, dependency and
obedience, that is
dependency. The third word
that defines Jesus'
relationship with His Father
is this: **obedience**. Jesus
once said, "I judge only as I
hear...for I seek not to
please myself but God who
sent me." (John 5:30)

Note Jesus' words, "I judge only as I hear." When you know you have heard from God, you will have confidence to handle whatever life throws at you; to take on any assignment God gives you. But you must be willing to listen and obey God, even when what God reveals to you does not seem rational, popular or convenient, when it requires you to walk an unfamiliar pathway

And here is something we need to know. Intimacy, dependency and obedience are not cultivated by you trying to love God more, but

on you having an understanding of God's amazing, undeserved, unfailing love for you.

The Bible reminds us: "God showed how much God loves us by sending God's one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through Him. This is real love, not that we loved, but that God loves us and sent God's Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins." (I John 4:8-10)

Pray for a genuine realization of God's great love for you. Then seek intimacy, dependency and obedience in your

relationship with God.
Amen.