

Torrey Conference 1997 How to Have Intimacy with God

By Bob Anderson

Speaker 1:

I think we are all set. God has something in store for you, and this is the last session, is it the last session? Is that true? It is, yes. We're going skiing this afternoon. Yes. God has something still in store for you in this last session. And Bob's been great this week. And and so just before he comes, I'm going to ask Tony just to come and pray and ask God to make our hearts soft, that we wouldn't just kind of let this fly over our heads. Thanks for coming. Have a great rest of the week and the weekend.

Speaker 2:

Let's again, as we did, those of you that were here yesterday, just quiet our hearts for a moment as we prepare to receive God's word and and come to a conclusion of the three day Torrey conference, my prayer for each of you that it's really been a blessing and a life changing experience, not only for these three days, but for the future and for the days ahead.

So just by your heads for a moment and and we'll have a word of prayer. There again, you've drawn us together, and this is the last of the three days of the Torrey conference, and my prayer truly is that lives started to be change for your internal purposes and that many hearts have truly been touched by the outpouring of your spirit over these last few days. And we look forward to the work that you're going to do in each of these lives in the days ahead. Father, we just continue to pray that you draw us closer to you by your spirit, to your goals of having a passion for the

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world and for having a compassion for the world that is around us. Lord, you've certainly prepared Bob well to be here this morning and to share again with us, and we just thank you for his faithfulness. And Lord, we continue to pray for his health as he still is experiencing some difficulty in his health. And father, we thank you for the theme that he has prepared for his closing message, how that we can become more intimate with you and father. I know that title certainly brings a great delight to your heart and father.

Now, I just pray that you prepare us to receive your word, to change lives where necessary, and for us to become more diligent in the pursuit of knowing and understanding you as our most. Holy God. Lord, this morning we come before you equip us and strengthen us, according to your word, words in Christ name that I pray amen and not a big welcome, but we've had a welcome for the last three days. You know, Bob, Bob's here and Bob is going to preach the word of God.

And let's give him a nice, warm welcome this morning. Thanks.

Anderson:

Thank you very much. Many years ago, after paying a debt, a poor man had some money left over. He had just enough money left over for one single gift deciding on buying a mirror. He hurried home and he gave this mirror to his family. His wife smiled as she looked into a mirror. His little girl giggle. It's the first time she'd ever seen herself in a mirror, but his boy cried. His face was kicked by a mule and it was badly scarred, Mom, he asked, looking up at his mother.

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Did you know I looked like this? Yes, son. And you still love me? He asked. I do, said his mother. Your face makes no difference. In the very same way, the Lord loves you and you and you and all of you, even though he knows all of your faults and your failures, hear him as he says, I have loved you with an everlasting love. And when he says that, are you eternally glad?

For the love with which he loves you, if I had a voice, I would sing to you now. That would be probably the major treat the entire week, but I can't. So I read these words. Oh, Lord, you're beautiful. Your face is all I seek. And when your eyes are on this child, Your Grace abounds to me, I want you to think about as we talk today about how to have intimacy with God, the fact that God looks upon you every moment of your life. He sees the good and the bad and everything in between. And yet he loves you and you have to choose. To get him to turn his back on you and he doesn't ever want to do that to anybody. We have to force that. Father, I pray that you would guide us this day, that we would understand intimacy with you better in Jesus name. Amen. Intimacy is an interesting thing. Most of the time when we hear the word intimacy, we're thinking sexually to a great degree.

I really believe that intimacy with another person is the key to maximum joy with that person. There are three types of intimacy. First, there's the intimacy of friendship. This is a mutual care and affection. This kind of intimacy is missing from so many men today. Men don't understand intimacy as well as women do. When little girls grow up, they're just taught to go out and talk and they talk with their friends and they talk about everything. And they they're just weird because they're girls and that's how it is.

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But guys, they go out and they play ball and they have to be tough and strong and they're not allowed to cry. And so they don't need to talk. And that's just because they're stupid, because they're guys. Hence, I have read, I'm writing, I'm writing another book right now. And I didn't know I could have brought all my books up here. I would have brought them up and given you a chance to donate money to our ministry.

If you don't have any money, you just take them anyway. Next time I've read about 30 books on marriage and how to have a wonderful marriage. Most of them have been written by Christian authors. But I've written I've read several books by secular authors. And in my opinion, it's grievous for me to tell you that the best book, the book that seems to get through to how couples understand each other and get along is written by a man who there is no indication in my life he knows Jesus. His name is John Gray and he's written Men are from Mars, women are from Venus. The thing about this man is he understands people are different ways to capture their differences. I've been telling people in one of my seminars for years that the key word to getting along with you're a member of the opposite sex is to realize you're different. Hence I'm writing a book. It's about two thirds done now and the publisher is having a little bit of struggle with my title, but with my title there, there are no negatives intended. That's just how the publisher takes it. But I told him, I said, listen, women in America buy 90 percent of all the books and 95 percent of the women will buy the book because of this title. And the title is Women are Weird. Men are stupid. Because when we look at when we men look at a woman, I look at my wife. We're married twenty eight years plus and I can't understand why she does something. She does it just totally weird to me. It makes no sense. There's no logic involved. It's just how she does it.

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I was hoping maybe this morning I would be able to announce to you that I was a grandpa because my daughter is dilating and my wife called and said she's going to call me even if it was 3:00 in the morning to tell me if the baby was born. I've always told him it's going to be born on Sunday because that's Mother in Law Day. And it's the first good thing I will have ever done for my mother in law. And not really. But my wife doesn't understand some of the ways that I think and therefore she thinks I'm stupid. And we work together on these things and we realize that we are totally different. God really blesses. We have an intimacy, a friendship. Probably one of the greatest things my wife told me.

We went on a cruise almost four years ago and we're pulling back into San Diego Harbor. And it was just a one day cruise. We pull back and it's about 10:00 at night. We're standing on the side of a ship, nobody around us. And she looked at me and she said after being with me for four thirteen solid hours except to go to the bathroom, we were never out of each other's sight. And she looked at me and she says, I think being empty nesters will be fun, which means that once we don't have children in the house, she was looking forward to being with me. That's because we've developed an intimacy, a friendship. There's the intimacy of touch. There's non-sexual touching, there's sexual touch, and there's the intimacy of family, both immediate and extended. So there are many kinds of intimacy.

But let's let's look at you today. If you're like everyone else, you've been hurt. You know what it is to have loved and to have lost the first time I ever had a true love in my heart and lost it was I was nine years old. This female was so special to me. We lived three miles from the nearest house and this this female and I would would go out and we would play, we would hide from

everybody else. We made our own little little effort and I made it. I had to do all the work because because I was stupid and and we would run and we would play and we would talk and, you know, and I'd throw a ball and I'd say, go chase. She'd run after it because, you see, my female was my dog, honey, and this little female would sleep at the foot of my bed which my wife still does that, but she would sleep at the foot of my bed. But that's because I'm in the family room and she'd sleep with me. And then all of a sudden one day my mother, we were getting ready to go on a vacation to Iowa. I don't even know where Iowa is. I've been there three times and I still don't know where it is. And if you're from Iowa, please forgive me. But she said, Bob, I'm going to give your dog away. You're going to let me give you a dog. I told this lady I'm going to give her honey. I said, well, how about my friend Kenny takes care of my dog until we're back now. I promise to. I give her your dog. But if you don't cry, I'll give you a dollar bill. No, I had never seen a dollar bill in my whole life, so I didn't cry. And I remember seeing my dog go in the back of a station wagon wagging her tail as I was waving goodbye to my dog. And and then a few minutes later, my mother gave me a dollar bill.

I never liked my mom. I always loved her, but I didn't like her and I didn't know why. And back in 1930, nine years later, when I was forty eight years old, I was angry and I was struggling and I didn't know why. So I went to a counselor friend of mine. I said, I just need to talk to you. I said, something's not right and I'm not able to put my finger on it. So right at the beginning he says, Well, tell me about your dad now. They all say and he said, tell me about your dad. And I told him, my dad is the greatest man that's ever walked the planet. And he was my best friend. And we know and he says, Tell me about your mom. Oh, no, I prefer not to thank you and right it

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right at that moment, we knew that there was a problem and it came out the dog story came out within a half an hour.

Did I go and address my mother about that? No, she was 88 at the time. Wouldn't have done any good. Wouldn't have made her it would have made her a happier person. I just held out but she read about it. It's in the introduction to the first book I wrote, which is called Give Me This Mountain, which is on how to overcome trials in Life. And I talked about the anger that I had held in my heart toward my mother for all those years until I finally let God have it. And she read that and she came out and asked me to forgive her. And the last three years of her life, she just died this this last year, I guess, the last five years of her life, she was almost 93 when she died, we had a very special relationship. And I liked my mother as well as I loved her. We had to get that cleared up.

You see, intimacy is a very interesting thing. And I, I lost my dog, and that was an incredible thing to me. You see, oftentimes we feel we know what it's like to have offered our hand and given ourselves away in love. And it's stripped away. And in spite of pain, God does not want any of you to live inside of self protective walls because walls, when we build up walls in our lives, they keep out bad things. But walls also keep out good things. He wants you to give your heart to the ones in your life who are trustworthy and hopefully on this earth, your mate, whoever God places you with, is going to be the most trustworthy person of all.

One of my favorite writers, C.S. Lewis, said this To love it all is to be vulnerable. Love anything in your heart will be certainly wrong and possibly be broken. If you want to be sure of keeping it

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intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully around with Hobbes and little luxuries. Avoid all entanglements, lock it up safely in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, your heart will change. It will become unbreakable, impenetrable, unredeemable. The only place outside heaven where you can be perfectly safe from all danger and perpetrations of love is hell. Vance Packer said. We are a nation of strangers. Could you say that in your life, in your family, with your friendships? We are a family of strangers. We are a dorm room of strangers. Or are you allowing God through his great power and mercy to bring intimacy into your lives? You need to develop a deeper intimacy with your family, mom and dad. If your if your parents are living with your brothers and sisters, even if they are the most obnoxious creatures on the planet, with your roommates, with people in your class and the people in your church and all around. But most important, you need to develop an intimacy with God.

What is intimacy with God? First of all, intimacy with God is experienced when you desire it with all your heart. What do you desire most in this life today? You must desire intimacy with God, with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13 says, and you will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart, our prayer should. Lord, when there's not harmony between us, remind me that you are always on the right note when you are not harmony with God. He didn't change his tune. I'm not a bumper sticker fan and never probably will have one on my car. But I did read one that I was intrigued by and it said, if you feel distant from God, guess who moved. Your God is never going to move. He's never going to change. He's always going to be there for you. The same yesterday and today forever. And you see the one constant we have in our lives,

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the one constant we have in our world is God himself. He is always the same and his motives are motives of love and peace.

We can always find him. And Aria says this. If with all the heart you truly seek me, you shall ever truly find me. This is a promise that we can claim. It is a rock on which we can let our emotions play because God never changes. Jeremiah thirty one three. I have loved you with an everlasting love. I have drawn you with loving kindness. The well-known preacher of the past, White Alamoudi, once commented, I know of no truth in the whole Bible that ought to come home to us with such power and tenderness as that of the love of God. Satan constantly tries to persuade men and women that the Lord does not love them. He succeeded in making our first parents believe that lie, and too often he succeeds with us. We make a mistake when we tell our children that the Heavenly Father does not love them when they do wrong, but only when they do right. That is not taught in scripture because your child is fretful or has committed some act of disobedience. You do not cast him out as though he did not belong to you. So to when we go astray, it does not follow that God despises us. It is the sin that he hates.

Someone has said that God's love is like a stream that never runs dry. It is like a fountain that never stops flowing and it is like a sun that never sets. You see, the love of God is so pure and it is so powerful. Failure to appreciate the love of God was probably what cost one twenty nine year old Southern California man to take his own life. He left a note saying, I can't live without love. Man's love, your love, my love has limits, but God's love has no limits. Think with me for a moment that the one whom we cannot begin to comprehend loves us. Consider for a moment who it is that really loves you. Consider the vastness of this earth, the solar system and the

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galaxy with over one hundred billion stars. And if that's not enough, consider the billions of other galaxies.

What is that to him? All of the galaxies of the entire universe and other universes are nothing more than fine. Dust in the corner of one room of God's house and the one who inhabits and made that house loves you with an everlasting love. Does that begin to grip your mind? Consider his dimensions on time. Go back in your mind as far as you can through all the centuries to the creation of the universe. Go back into the dim distance of eternity and our mind boggles at the effort.

We are very hard pressed to go back very far in time. We can't conceive it, and yet we look in the future and our minds can't begin to see what hasn't yet begun to be. None of us know the future. And yet this one who is from everlasting to everlasting, whose very being fills the universe and far beyond this very one loves you when you kick in anthill and you probably always already all done that at one time or another, thousands of little ants start to scurry around, but one little ant and that whole ant hill continues to go around and do his work.

You would never notice that one ant that was continuing to work furiously. And the distance between you and that ant is nothing compared to the distance between God and each one of us. When you look at your mental capacity and you look at the mental capacity of one little ant and the distance between the distance to. You and your creator is far greater. Sometimes I think that we almost compare ourselves with God in many ways, how tragic is that? We have to realize the

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greatness of God in the entire world itself is but a speck of dust in the balance of God because he created it all.

And yet for you to have intimacy with God, you must seek him with all your heart because he will change you. And then secondly, intimacy with God is realizing an amazing fact that we talk about easily. But I don't know if we really live it out all the time. And that is that Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, resides in you. If you are a Christian, why should God love us? Psalm 8:4 says what is man that now we take thought of him.

That in itself is rather stupendous that God even thinks of any of us, but that God should love us is beyond our comprehension in order to describe what God did for us. When it says God loves us, he had to invent a brand new word. There was no word in the human language to describe his love because they were all defiled through association. So at that point in time, he invented a new word that is found only in the heart of Christianity. And the noun is an agape. The verb is an agapao, God loved us, God is agape. A whole new word, a whole new concept of love and holy and unmovable love, a love that is moved by nothing is the object. We men look upon these fair and beautiful women, and some of you men have probably picked out one or maybe two or three. But you pick out one eventually and you look upon these beautiful women and we are moved by their grace and their virtues.

And yet for all of us men and women, God looks upon us according to the word as extension his nostrils. There is no help for us from our head to our feet. We have all become unprofitable to him because there is sin in every heart. It is hard to go through life with a pure heart all the time,

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I really strive to do that. I'm very strongly opinionated person and I'm critical in nature. But I really tried to not be critical, even though I will I will always probably be very opinionated. Sometimes I come across as being so strongly opinionated that I won't listen to anything that's not true. But that's part of my nature. And I continue to work at it. And when I die and I meet Jesus, I'll be perfect. So I'm looking forward to the day God says that in our hearts we are desperately wicked, and yet he loves us.

Why does he love us? It's certainly not because we are lovely. We're about as lovely as a worm that crawls in the dirt when compared to God. It is not because of who we are, what we are. It's because of what he did. And as I shared with you briefly yesterday, it was not until July 11th, 1977, while the dean of the high school camp at Hume like that, I grasped the truth and I started to understand a few certain things that God said. And I put them all in a package. I heard him before, but all of a sudden they impacted me for all, have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

And the wages of sin is death. But the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus, our Lord for God sent his only begotten son into the world. That if we believe in him, we will not perish, but we will have eternal life, and if we confess our sins, he's faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and cleanses from all unrighteousness. And what does he do with our sins as far as East is from the West so far? Has he removed our sins from us? Micah 7:19. He has buried our sins in the depths of the sea. Isaiah 38: 17. He has cast our sins behind his back. 1 Peter 2: 24, They have been nailed to the cross you see. And then in Ephesians 2: 8 and 9, it is by grace that we have been saved is our faith. We've been saved, not of works, so we can't boast about it.

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And if you are a new creation in Christ, all things are passed away, all becomes new, and all of a sudden God's word started to come through to me. These no longer became individual scripture verses, but they became something that I could lean on and I gave my life to Christ, sitting on a big rock just to the eastern side of the new chapel. They can't move it because that rock is so big. You see in 1 John 4:10, it says he loved us and he said his own son to be the propitiation for our sins. This is indeed astonishing. Galatians 2:20, I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live with Christ, who lives in me and the life which I now live in the flesh. I live by faith in son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. This is the exchange life. We exchange the life we have here. We give ourselves totally to him and we walk with him. I gave all myself to Christ and he gave all of himself to me. But what was sad is he had given himself all to me long before I gave myself to him.

There was an African princess who was captured with her husband and sent to Rome. Later, when she was released and came back home, her friends back. Tell us about the sights of Rome. I never saw them, she said. Why? They wondered. We were condemned to death. My husband said to the Caesar, Give me to the lions, tear me limb from limb, but let this woman go home free in all of Rome, she continued, I saw nothing but the face of my husband, who sacrificed himself to save me. God grant that beyond its golden glitter sin with its Sadun that we too may only see Jesus who gave himself to save us this afternoon.

Maybe some of you are going to Disneyland. Maybe some of you are going skiing. Maybe whatever it is you're going to do, you're going to have fun. Go have fun. God made all this stuff and he put all these ideas in people's minds so that we can enjoy it. There are very few activities

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out there that are truly sinful. People make them sinful and some things are sinful. But go and enjoy the planet. God give us gave you to live on, but always remember, keep your face in front of his face and please him all the way and he will give you more joy than you ever have had before because he gives emotional security that enables us to open up our hearts to others.

There was a man selling balloons in a big city. He filled a white one green. Let it go. He filled a yellow one. Let it go. As they as these balloons soared into the sky, a little black boy came up and asked him, Mister, if you feel a black balloon, will it go up to yes, he yes. He said, it's not the color of the balloon. It's what's inside that makes it go up. And what is true of balloons is true believers. It is Christ within you that makes you go up and love. Not down in lust, up in grace, not down to disgrace. Up in peace. Not down in pieces. Up to overcome, not down to be overcome. Why is it that so many of God's people complain that something is missing from the Christian lives? Unbelievable numbers of people complain about that. Why is it that some of them feel they really don't know God intimately?

I believe it's because they fail to focus their attention directly on him. They let distractions such as riches or poverty, happiness or sorrow or ambition or defeat divert their attention from God. Even in some people's most religious acts, listening to sermons, studying the Bible and fellowship with believers, they concentrate on something other than the Lord. And then people get an array of problems. They are overcome with fear and anxiety and stress. They overcome with depression. They have anger that just wells up within them.

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I've written a series. I'm in the midst of writing a series of booklets. There'll be a total of thirty by the time it's all done. First four done how to overcome fear, how to overcome anger, abortion, and how to overcome post abortion syndrome and how to overcome depression. The written material in this book is written for men. It's twenty to twenty four pages because I know that there aren't a guy on this planet will read more than twenty to twenty four pages at once now.

And then at the end of these books, our homework assignments and their Bible studies on how to overcome these things, and they really work, I want to tell you a little story here, that when people come to see me, I have a lot of people that come to see me that are very depressed. And I had a lady come to see me about three months ago who had been diagnosed as clinically depressed seven years ago. She had been seeing secular and Christian psychologists and she had been seeing a psychiatrist for all this time so she could get her meds. And she came in to see me and she'd been on Prozac for seven years at varying doses throughout the course of her depression. And her doctor had recently upped her dosage 20 milligrams. And she was she was taking this and she was she was just sort of still feeling the same as she always was. And somebody says you ought to go see Bob. And so she made an appointment. She came to see me and she shared her life with me. And she told me about things. And we sat and talked for about an hour and a half.

One day I said, I got an open I got one opening next week. Can you come? Then she came and she she came and we talked again. Two days later, she was going to go see her psychiatrist. Now, at the end of that first session, I said, you know, I want to do what I do for all the people that come to me. I want to prescribe Prozac for you. She said, well, I'm already on Prozac.

I said, I know, but I want you to take my prescription, too, because it will really help you if you take them both. And I said, I want you to take Prozac. So I want to I want to prescribe Prozac for everybody out here today, OK? And she looked at me like I was a little weird and I said, it's OK. And so I prescribed Prozac for her. She took it diligently. And ten days later, she went to see her psychiatrist.

Now, two days before she came back, she came. When she came back to see me, she was cheerful. You could see she had happiness and joy in her life. She says, I haven't felt this good years. And I said, well, now when you go see your psychiatrist in a couple days, you go tell them how good you feel. So she went in and and she was just bubbly and happy. And today I saw her just this last week. She's just cheerful. She's walking with God. She's serving. Her family is astounded. There's no fakery in it. She's just she's just trusting God, walking God. And it's a joy. She has a personality a lot like Lori Salerno. She was just on it all the time and she's just happy and serving God. So she goes into her psychiatrist and he's noticed a change. She says, wow, this new prescription is really he's really helping you. I can see there's a big difference. And she said, well, she says, you know, I don't really know. But I went to see another counselor a couple of weeks ago, and he also prescribed Prozac for me. And I've been taking that prescription, too. He said he must be nuts. You're never supposed to take double's on that just. Well, I've been doing it. I feel a lot better, she said he said, but you're taking twenty milligrams a day and that we don't like to give much more than that. How much did he prescribe? She said, well, he prescribed five hundred milligrams, six times a day. And psychiatrist said you should be dead. I guess she could be dead in one minute if she took that kind of stuff and just blow your head off. And so he says

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this guy is a quack. Oh, she says, no, no, no, he's not a quack. Let me tell you about it. So she pulls it out and she shows him my prescription for Prozac.

And here it is. She said, Doctor, and everything I do now before I do anything, I pray about it. That's P and Prozac prayer, she said. I have realized that I've been a Christian a long time and I don't pray about anything. I worry about everything. I try to solve problems all by myself. I have never been leaning on God. If I can't solve it myself, I ask my family and if they can't help me, I ask my preacher and if they can help me. I asked my friends if I, like, come down here and you gave me Prozac. She says, you know, I claim to be a Christian, but I don't pray it's a joke. And so then I had I then said, she said so the second step in understanding taking Prozac is I have to have a repentant heart. I had to repent of my sin, of not trusting God. I had to repent of my sins, of worry. I had to repent of my sins, of anger and repent of my sins, of of just not trusting anybody, which then made me sad and depressed. And I asked God to forgive me because I was repentant. So as I prayed, I became repentant. And then thirdly, I realized that as I was doing this and I was repenting and I was praying I had to trust God and have an optimistic attitude that God would truly change my life. Because, you see, I've learned I go to church every Sunday and I really believe all these things the preachers say, but I've never taken them to heart. And so I've had this optimistic attitude that no matter what comes, whether I see it as good or bad, it's going to be wonderful for me. And she said, and then I have attacked it with zeal like I have never had before. She said, I am doing everything God tells me to do.

Are you doing what that other doctor tells you? You know, he told me to do a God tells me to do so. Yeah, I guess I am, but I'm just trusting God. I'm praying. I have a repentant heart. I'm

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thankful. I'm optimistic and I'm zealous about it. And then she said, But then comes the very most important thing. And my other counselor told me that he thinks this is the one thing that most Christians like me forget about. And that is this.

I have to have an attitude of appreciation for the fact that Jesus died on the cross to save me men and women. I tell you the truth. Every one of you in here that is a Christian knows that Jesus died on the cross to to give you redemption from sin. He paid the final sacrifice. And yet, how many of you think every day about that incredible fact that he gave up his life and he hung there in absolute physical agony, but that the emotional agony of bearing the sins of the world that saw his pain was the physical agony, no doubt hurt incredibly.

But taking your sins in mind and I really believe that for us to have an intimate relationship with God, we have to realize and be appreciative of the fact that he died for us. How many of you seen a dead body raise your hand? You've seen a dead body. Oh, good. Now, if you have not seen a dead body, then I suggest you go to a rest funeral home somewhere. Sorry. Well, it's pretty close and I'm sorry.

My mom was there for a few months because we couldn't care for anymore. You go to a funeral home and you go look at a dead person that you don't know. It won't be too traumatic for you and you don't have to touch them. I've done over seven hundred funerals in my life and I have heard people say on many occasions, oh, doesn't he look good? No, he looked in real dead. And if you want reach down and touch him, you want to know what a dead person feels like.

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Do this to a friend next to you, whoever you're sitting next to now, just do this right now. Put your hands put your hands together like this with another friend. Just do this. Do this with the friend, OK? And then take your fingers and go up and down the outside with the other hand and rub on the outside of those two fingers. OK, go ahead, do it. That's what a dead person feels like. I'm telling you. Just rub up and down. That's what a dead guy feels like. They just feel waxy, you know. Now there's your thrill of the day. You go home. What do you learn a story this week? Oh, I learned what a dead guy feels like your parents are going to say, and I pay money to send you there. Boy, is this a treasure.

Now, people, when they die, their dad and I and I have this little little thing here that I have. I if I if my wife died today, OK, if I if I got a phone call, my wife was dead, I would not look at her body. I would never go look at her. I would believe me. I would believe them. And they told me she was dead. I don't need to I don't have this thing. Well, you're not willing to face death. That's bull. Of course I'm willing to face death. I face it all the time. But I didn't look at my dad and I didn't look at my mom. And I never look at any of my friends. And the reason is I like to remember the eyes and the smile of the person that I'm remembering. I'm the last person I ever looked at dead in a coffin that I knew was my best friend who died when we were 19 years old. And it was appalling to me. He was a nice looking guy and he had died of blood poisoning and he just looked wretched. And my memory of his face is that wretched look in that casket. Now, if I see somebody, I don't care who they are. If I didn't know them, I can look at them. And that doesn't bother me at all because it's just a frame. But from a loved one. I like to remember the eyes and the smile. It's a very important thing to me now we have to have an attitude of

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appreciation that Jesus died for us and then finally see and Prozac, you have to be committed to be obedient to God every moment of every day you live.

Now, we'll give you a guarantee that if you follow that prescription for Prozac and you pray thoroughly about everything and you repent of anything in your life that may be holding you back from a walk with God, if you are optimistic that your walk with God will take you where you need to be and you are zealous in getting it done, you appreciate the fact he died for you and you are committed to walking with him. It is very difficult to be depressed.

You've got to really work at it. God overwhelms. And this woman walked out and her psychiatrist got her medication that day and she says, you know, my other counselor who would be me, said, you might do that. And he said, you know, that could be dangerous in his suggestion was that you cut me back to ten milligrams and I stay on ten milligrams for a month and then go to five and then get off, because we don't want it to be bad for my body.

And I know that from doing all my research into psychotropic drugs. And so she's now completely off and she's excited and her family is excited. She gives her testimony and we watch God use her life to help other people understand something. If we walk in the light of God in sweet communion, we press on every day with an attitude of holiness. We leave the world behind because our focus is on Jesus Christ. The person that walks close to God leaves no room for anything else to come between pardon me, intimacy with God must be desired with all your heart. It is realizing that Jesus Christ resides in you. And thirdly, intimacy with God is living in dependence on him. Psalm 62: 5 and 6, my soul wait in silence for God only for my hope is in

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him. He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold. I shall not be shaken. You need to understand the security you get when you depend on him.

In 1990, my family and I moved to Texas. I went there to pastor a church. The church grew. It doubled in about a year and a half. The money was overflowing in our church. They gave me a big raise. They gave me a brand new Buick Park Avenue. But I felt uneasy about a lot of things. In April of 1992, my wife and I flew to San Diego. We stayed a hotel and we prayed. We visited with fifteen pastor friends. We went back and resigned the church. On May 1st, 1992, I began studying for my doctorate and I studied between 8 and 12 hours a day, six days a week, and that's all I did. I didn't work. I just studied. And I did this from May of 92 until March of 93 and in the middle of March. And I had to have my doctoral dissertation fully completed by the 15th of June or I would have to wait another entire year. They don't mess around with you when you're working on a doctorate. You either have it done or you don't. There's a middle march. And I looked at myself and I said, you know, Bob, you're not going to get it done.

And I got depressed because I wasn't thinking about God. I wasn't repentant for my laziness. I wasn't I wasn't optimistic. I had no zeal. I wasn't thinking about Jesus and I really wasn't very committed. And so I laid down on my sofa and I put a remote in my hand. And for three weeks, for 20 hours a day, I laid on the sofa watching television. I would get up and sometimes it would crawl to the bathroom to go to the bathroom and I'd crawl or walk back. I'd lay down and every day at four o'clock I watched Oprah because it was just sort of the highlight of my day to watch Oprah talk to all these people on TV. And one day I'd been laying there about three weeks. She was talking about depressed people and depression, and she had some depressed people on there.

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And I looked at them and I said, man, I'm sorry, group of people, they're all depressed. And then all of a sudden the camera came on her and she pointed to another guy and she said, you need to get up off your sofa. You need to get back to work. You need to get a life and you need to go get over your depression to go take care of your family. The camera went off of her. I sat up on myself and my son was sitting right over next to me in a chair. And I looked over at him and I said, am I depressed? He said, You're the one studying for the doctorate. You don't know? And I got up and I went in. I took a shower, I shaved, I got cleaned up. I put on cologne. I went back out into the dining room where nothing had moved from, where I did all my studying and I started studying. My wife came home a couple hours later about had a heart attack. And it is because of God and Oprah Winfrey, I stand before you today. God used that woman to change my life by a very simple sentence, I don't know that Oprah is my sister in Christ in little shaky thought there. She's a fine woman. I feel like telling her that story and say care to ties to my ministry. Whoa. That said it over the top. But, you know, God used her.

God uses strange things sometimes to change our lives. And instead of performing and trying to be Mr. Genius, I had to fall into the arms of God. Let him help me. I completed my doctoral dissertation in 17 days and I mailed it in. I put it on a computer. I gave it to my I had an English professor that I had go through to check the syntax and all the stuff that I wasn't all that good at. She brought it back to me, I, I reprogramed it. Then I put it in there and I mailed it in and it was accepted on first draft. And they said that is a very, very rare occurrence in doctoral dissertations when you get accepted. And I actually got it in three weeks early because all of a sudden I put my eyes on God and I said, God, you got to help me. A joyous freedom marks those who have

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learned that the Christian life flows from a personal relationship with Jesus, not some slavish routine of obeying laws or doing what somebody else tells you to do.

You see, having intimacy with God must be desired with all your heart. It's realizing that Jesus Christ dwells within you. It is living in dependence on him. And then lastly, intimacy with God will bring you wisdom and joy. Psalm 16:11 says you will make known to me the path of life in thy presence is fullness of joy, and in my right hand are treasures forevermore. What role does intimacy play in your human relationships? Intimacy with God is the key to maximum joy in your relationships with other people. How do you find this intimacy with God? Well, very critically. You must spend time alone with him. You must spend time in prayer to open your heart. You must study scripture and in an orderly fashion.