
THE GLORY, PLEASURE & TRANSFORMING POWER OF ENCOUNTERING GOD – COREY STARK

I. CULTIVATING INTIMACY WITH GOD THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES

A. There are *two ways* we receive from Scripture – *milk* and *meat* (Heb. 5:12-14; 1 Pet. 2:2). *Milk* is obtaining truth from someone else’s digested meat. *Meat* is learning to eat the Word of God for yourself, gaining truth through the *experiential knowledge* of encounter as you put the Word into practice (Ez. 2:8-3:4; Rev. 10:8-11).

Heb. 5:12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles... of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age... who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil.

B. Growing in the *experiential knowledge* of God is synonymous with growing in *intimacy* with God. I am most *intimate* with those I *know* the most. Therefore, the *more I know* about a person the *more intimate* I am with them. However, this is not purely *cognitive information* gained by memorizing facts about God, but growing in *experiential knowledge* of how He *thinks, feels* and *acts* by encountering Him through the Word.

C. There are *three stages* to growing in intimacy with God:

1. *Invitation* (menu): Intimacy begins with understanding His *desire* for relationship with us at a deep heart level, right now in our weakness not only once we’ve matured (Song 1:5). God doesn’t need us as anointed laborers, He *desires* us to draw near Him, because He *really* likes us (Mk. 3:13-15; Jn. 15:9; 17:24-26)!

Jn. 17:24 Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me...

2. *Substance* (meat): The *relational knowledge* of God gained by personally experiencing Him – the “one thing” needed (Ps. 27:4; Lk. 10:42). God doesn’t hide things *from* us, but *for* us to discover (Pr. 25:2). The Holy Spirit was sent to escort us into the deep things of God’s heart and mind (Jn. 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14).

1 Cor. 2:9 “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor entered the heart of man the things God has prepared for those who love Him.” 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God... 12 that we might know the things... freely given to us by God.

3. *Overflow*: As we encounter God through the Word we are awakened unto *eternal life* (Jn. 5:39-40; 17:3), we receive spiritual *impartation* (Jn. 6:63), end time *understanding* (Dan. 11:32), *strength* to overcome (Dan. 11:32), experience deep *interior pleasure* and *rest* (Ps. 36:8), holy *fascination* (Ps. 27:4), the *delight* of discovery (Pr. 25:2), effortless *worship, prayer* and *proclamation* (Rev. 5:8-10), personal *transformation*, as we delight to do God’s will (2 Cor. 3:18), greater *freedom* (Jn. 8:32), lasting *character development* (Eph. 3:16-19), are established in our *authentic identity* (Mt. 16:18), empowered to *instruct* many, release *great exploits* (Dan. 11:32), and walk out radical acts of *selfless love* (2 Cor. 5:14).

Jn. 14:23 “If anyone [experientially] loves Me, he will [be empowered to] keep My word”

D. Most often the *invitation* and the *overflowing benefits* are taught as a motivation to pursue intimacy with God. However, without engaging in the *substance* of intimacy we can never attain to the overflow! Sadly, after receiving the invitation and failing to experience the overflowing benefits as quickly as desired, many sincere, well-meaning Christians wrongly conclude: 1) The message is *false* and doesn’t work or 2) They are the *problem* and it just doesn’t work for them. The truth is they need to persevere in substance (Heb. 6:11-12).

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II. THE SUBSTANCE OF INTIMACY: ENCOUNTERING JESUS’ MAJESTIC BEAUTY (REV. 1)

A. The *highest revelation* of God is Jesus Christ (Jn. 14:9; 2 Cor. 4:6; Col. 1:19; 2:3, 9). The *greatest revelation* of Jesus is given in the book of Revelation (Rev. 1:1). The Father’s *primary purpose* of the book of Revelation is to unveil the unsearchable riches of Christ to *transform the Church* into a fully mature Bride made *comparable* to Jesus as His eternal companion (Jn. 17:20-26; Eph. 4:13-16; 5:27; Rev. 19:7; 22:17)!

Rev. 1:1 *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God [Father] gave Him [Jesus] to show His servants...*

B. As we behold the glory of Jesus, seen throughout the book of Revelation we are progressively transformed into the *same image* (thoughts, emotions, desires) and *prepared* for mature partnership (Ps. 17:15; 1 Jn. 3:2).

2 Cor. 3:18 *But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

C. In Rev. 1 Jesus reveals Himself, as the “*Son of Man*” (Dan. 7:13-14), highlighting *52 distinct aspects* of His eternal majesty, strategically given in *14 titles*, *10 attributes* and *28 descriptions* of who Jesus is today! Even as it takes time for your eyes to adjust when emerging from a dark room into the blinding light of the summer sun be patient with yourself as your eyes slowly adjust to the glorious light of God’s Son (Rev. 1:16).

Rev. 1:12 *I saw... ¹³One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. ¹⁷And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.*

III. TOOL FOR THE PRAYER ROOM A.R.K.

A. *Agreement*: Make declarations of agreement to Jesus about *who He is* (titles), *what He’s like* (attributes, emotions) and *how He acts* (words, actions). Identify the core truths in each of the *52 aspects* (some overlap) and simply declare them back to Him with affection, gratitude and wonder (Jn. 5:39-40).

Jn. 5:39 *You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.*

1. “You are... the Faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the Dead, Ruler over the Kings,” etc.
2. “You have... eyes like a flame of fire, a sharp two-edged sword, the keys of Hell and Death,” etc.
3. “You do... hold the seven stars in Your right hand, dwell in the midst of the churches,” etc.

R. *Revelation*: Ask Holy Spirit for increased revelation of these specific aspects of Jesus’ majesty. Each facet is like the tip of a massive iceberg of truth just waiting below the surface for the Holy Spirit to reveal to us.

Jn. 16:13 *When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth... ¹⁴ He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine [thoughts, emotions, etc.] and declare [i.e. reveal] it to you.*

K. *Keep the Prophecy*: Make simple declarations of resolve to guard these truths, while asking God to empower us to faithfully express these aspects of Jesus’ majesty in our lives and ministries (Rev. 1:3; 22:7).