

**Fellowship With God**  
**Making It Work**  
**John 14:23-24**

"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. 24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me. NKJV

Have you ever notice that when your with some people the conversation flows easily and you could talk with them for hours. But with other people you just can't find anything to talk about. Why is that? Is it that you do not have a lot in common? Is it that you are not a conversationalist?

But about when you come to God in prayer? I have seen many people who could not pray at all. Even when their life was in danger and they are driven to prayer, all they know is the Lord's Prayer or some other form prayers they learned as children. When that happens, it betrays their unfamiliarity with God. They can't pray because you never do something well when you do it for the first time.

I was listening to, I think it was Steve Brown, talk about going to visit an elderly lady. She asked if they might pray together. So Steve told her he would be happy and that he would lead off and she could finish. So he said that he began one of his most excellent prayers and when he finished he kept his head bowed and waited for this elderly saint to pray. But she didn't say anything. Finally he said that he ventured to open one eye. He supposed that the old woman had dosed off. But he decided that she was very much awake so he would wait a little longer. After some time he said that the woman began to pray. And when she did, he could tell that she had made contact with the Almighty. Steve the professional found out that this elderly saint had connected with God not out of a great seminary education, not from eloquent speech but by a continual life spent in regular times of prayer.

You can listen to a conversation of two people and very soon pick up if that conversation is one of deep friendship or of a casual acquaintance. So it is with our time with God, this fellowship that we have been talking about. It all goes back to loving God. If we love Him and know that He loves us, conversation is not a struggle but it flows like water.

Charles Spurgeon writes, "Many men believe in the existence of a God, but they do not love that belief. But to the Christian the thought that there is a God is the sunshine of his existence. His intellect bows before the Most High; like the angel prostrates himself because to adore his Maker. His intellect is as fond of God as his imagination." Daily Help, April 12

Eugene Peterson in his book A Long Obedience says, "Religion in our time has been captured by the tourist mind set. Religion is understood as a visit to an attractive site to be made when we have adequate leisure. For some it is a weekly jaunt to church; for other, occasional visits to special services." But that is not the mind set of love. I have often told the story of the grandfather who asked his grandson if he wanted to go with him. To which the grand son asked where he was going. But the grandfather never answered but just left without the child. When

grandfather came back the boy asked why he had not answered so the boy could decide if he wanted to go with him or not. To which the grandfather replied, "If you had wanted to go with me, it would not have matter where I was going." If we want spend time with God, He will welcome us. But if we think is going to boring then God won't bother us.

- I. Make time every day
  - A. Jesus referred to "Our daily bread"
  - B. A time of prayer, start with 5 minutes.
    - 1. It is better to be regular than long and seldom.
    - 2. You can always add more time later.
  - C. Remember Jesus spent time of extended prayer with the heavenly Father.
- II. God speaks to us through the Bible.
  - A. Be selective in your readings.
    - 1. New Testament or Psalms and Proverbs as opposed to 1 & 2 Chronicles
    - 2. Pray that God will speak to you in the passage.
    - 3. Don't get tangled up with things you do not understand but pray that the Holy Spirit will teach you.
  - B. You can keep a journal of what God is speaking to you in the passage.
    - 1. I just finished reading Quiet Strength by Tony Dungy and he related how amazed he had been that God often spoke to him through his daily devotional.
    - 2. As a matter of fact his journal eventually led to the book that he wrote, now # 69 on Amazon.com best sellers list.
    - 3. The reason I point that out is that sometimes people think that Bible reading is for some kind of spiritual nerd. But when you're the head coach of the world champion football team, that can hardly apply.
  - C. There are a number of devotional booklets to help.
    - 1. We give out the our daily bread booklets.
    - 2. But there are plenty of others.
    - 3. For women, men, teens, sports people etc.
    - 4. The point is you can find one for you.
    - 5. You can get one emailed to you each day if you are a computer geek.
    - 6. The point is to start.

- D. But remember that the Word of God is what is primary.
  - 1. We often read the devotional part of the booklet without looking up the Scripture that it refers to.
  - 2. God has promised to bless His word, but not necessarily the devotional.
- E. If you do not use a devotional then at least be systematic in your reading.
  - 1. Read through an entire book, day by day.
    - a. Otherwise you are like the farmer who goes and picks a few ears from the middle of the field and goes to the other side to pick a few.
    - b. You never get a full sense of what the chapter and book is saying.
  - 2. After you have read the passage ask yourself some questions.
    - a. What is the primary teaching of this passage?
    - b. What is God saying to me in this passage?
    - c. What is God telling me to do in this passage?
    - d. What is God telling me I need to change?

The Psalmist wrote in the very first Psalm. Ps 1:1-3

Blessed is the man

Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,

Nor stands in the path of sinners,

Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;

2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD,

And in His law he meditates day and night.

3 He shall be like a tree

Planted by the rivers of water,

That brings forth its fruit in its season,

Whose leaf also shall not wither;

And whatever he does shall prosper.

NKJV