

Session 3 Intimacy with You is the Desire of God's Heart

I. Review from Last Session

- A. The 4 Keys
- B. Quieting your Mind
How do you remove: Outer noise? Inner noise?
- C. Testing What You Hear

II. Is Your Journal Entry from the Lord? Or, Influenced by Your Feelings?

- A. We have discussed the different sources we can hear from (our flesh, the devil, and the Lord) and ways to test them. The kind of input we get from God can also be filtered through our heart—that is, through our emotions, feelings, and beliefs. What we feel or believe can become what Mark Virkler calls an **“idol in your heart.”** Our worries and concerns can color our journal entries, so we have to become aware of this.
- B. Quote from Timothy Keller's book *Counterfeit Gods*, p. xvi, xix
“When most people think of “idols” they have in mind literal statues—or the next pop star anointed by Simon Cowell. Yet while traditional idol worship still occurs in many places, internal idol worship, within the heart, is universal. In Ezekiel 14:3 God says about the elders of Israel, “These men have set up their idols in their hearts.” Like us, the elders must have responded to this charge, “Idols? What idols? I don't see any idols!” God was saying that the human heart takes good things like a successful career, love, material possessions, even family, and turns them into ultimate things Our hearts deify them as the center of our lives, because, we think, they can give us significance and security, safety and fulfillment, if we attain them...An idol is whatever you look at and say, in your heart of hearts, “If I have that, then I'll feel significant and secure.”
- C. A biblical example: Balaam (Numbers 22)
Therefore, the easiest way to get a messed-up journal entry and an inaccurate answer from the Lord in your journaling is to pray when your heart is consumed by emotion or desire.
- D. Examples
 - When finances, health worries, relationship problems, job concerns, anger, or fear fill our thoughts, it is hard to get a clear journal entry from the Lord.
 - If I am upset because someone has hurt or offended me, it is hard to trust what I hear because of the emotion involved. I have to work through forgiveness first and then I am able to hear clearly.
- E. Because our emotions can sometimes affect what we are hearing, you should have spiritual counselors who can evaluate your journaling. You might want to get others to pray with you about situations that are weighing heavily on you.

F. If the problem seems bigger than Jesus, you likely are praying with an idol in your heart.

III. Intimacy – The Desire of God's Heart

A. Is the loving relationship that Father God has for you a reality in your life or just a concept?
2-way journaling will definitely enable you to draw closer to God and receive His affirming, loving words.

B. Biblical Examples

1. David – “a man after God's own heart.” In many of the Psalms, he pours out his heart to the Lord, then you'll see there's a shift and he connects with God. Then out come God's reassurance, promises of deliverance, thanksgiving, and confidence. Jesus wants us to be honest with Him, like David was. You can think of David's psalms as 2-way journaling, set to music.

2. Mary and Martha – Jesus commended Mary for “choosing the good part” by being with Him, listening to Him, sharing friendship and mutual love. The goal of your times alone with Jesus should be to share love together, enjoy Him, relax, and don't work at it.

3. Paul – in his epistles he wrote of the love of God that is far greater than we can even think or imagine!

- *Romans 5:5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*
- *Romans 8:39 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
- *Ephesians 3:19...To know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

4. Jesus – the perfect example of a loving, intimate relationship with the Father.

John 17:23, 26 – Jesus' high priestly prayer: “I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me... And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

C. As you spend time with Jesus, He will make His love known to you. And when you hear it often enough, you will start to believe it.

IV. Activation