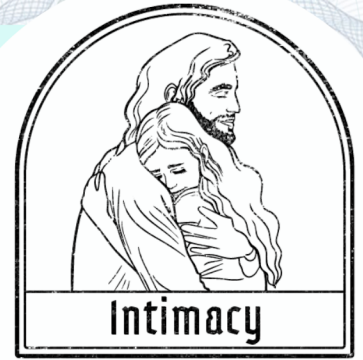


LIFE IN THE KINGDOM



16. INTIMACY

Intimacy is a fundamental human need. Through intimacy we become ONE in our heart with everything in which we relate to closely; in what we spend our time on the most. Intimacy develops naturally, first between the baby and the mother and then, with the father and other family members. When we learn how to connect intimately in a healthy way in our childhood, it will be easier for us to connect intimately with others and especially with our Eternal Father when we grow up. Being intimate with God means that we will not be seeking intimacy in the wrong places and in the wrong ways.

The human being was created by God himself. He put His Spirit in each of us, so living in intimacy with Him is part of our design. This is what every human being needs and because of this need for intimacy with God, we constantly seek to be satisfied with something: relationships, possessions, titles etc. This is the same as when we seek to be satisfied when we are thirsty. However the reality is that our needs can only be satisfied by Him; by investing time in a relationship with Him, getting to know Him, listening to Him, knowing how He thinks, what He likes and what He dislikes.

The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions.

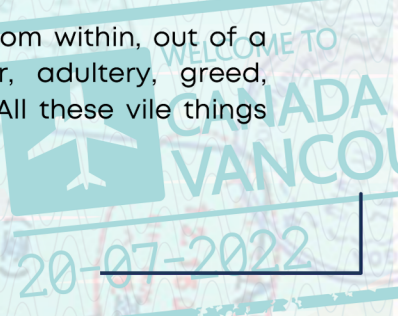
Galatians 5:17 NLT

In this intimate relationship, God's desires become ours and we will no longer be dominated by those of our human nature. Previously we learnt that the old nature is immersed in sin and its desires lead us to satisfy our need for intimacy with God in wrong, dangerous sources and that lead us to separate ourselves further from Him.

Intimacy with God begins in the mind. It is there where thoughts are conceived which then move down to the heart becoming feelings, emotions and desires that manifest themselves in actions. For this reason all the actions of humanity occur in the heart, good or bad, depending on who we spend time with in the intimacy of our mind and our heart. All this occurs alone, where no one but our Father knows what is happening.

And then he added, "It is what comes from inside that defiles you. For from within, out of a person's heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these vile things come from within; they are what defile you."

Mark 7:20-23 NTV



Intimacy occurs alone in secret and deep in the heart. It is there where we are exposed to ourselves; without distractions, without preaching, without interventions from third parties, or interference. In this intimacy when we are exposed to ourselves, we are able to give freedom to the Holy Spirit to bring to light all those thoughts that glorify Him and those that do not. As this becomes part of our lives, we become ONE with Him.

But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

Matthew 6:6 NTV

Alone with the door closed and by being ONE with Him, it is easy to be in agreement with others because ultimately what unites us is not our thoughts, plans or purposes; but His.

The culture of the Kingdom is a culture of Intimacy where each and every one of the subjects of this Kingdom spends time in intimacy with Him and as we gather with the family of faith, we reflect this intimacy and his Holy Spirit leads us to be **ONE** in it together.

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. Can you identify the number one excuse for not setting aside time daily in intimacy with God?
2. Why do you think it is important before trying to be one with the other members of the church, to be ONE with our Heavenly Father?
3. If we identify behaviours that do not reflect the culture of the Kingdom of God in our lives; what must be transformed first? Why?
4. What do you think is the danger in doing what your heart tells you?