

RESTORED TO FRIENDSHIP “Drawing Near To God” James 4:8 and Revelation 3:20

“Draw close to God, and God will draw close to you. ...” James 4:8 (NLT)

“Look! Here I stand at the door and knock. If you hear me calling and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal as friends.” Revelation 3:20 (NLT)

“... we were restored to friendship with God by the death of His Son while we were still His enemies, we will certainly be delivered from eternal punishment by His life.” Romans 5:10 (NLT)

- We were made to live in God’s continual **presence**.
- After the “Fall,” that ideal relationship was **lost**.
- Jesus has changed the situation. When He paid for our sins on the cross, He opened the way for us to be **restored** to our intimacy with God.

“All of this is done by God, who through Christ changed us from enemies into His friends.” 2 Corinthians 5:18 (TEV)

God is **passionate** about His relationship with you.

“You must worship no other gods, but only the Lord, for He is a God who is passionate about His relationship with you.” Exodus 34:14 (NLT)

BECOMING A FRIEND OF GOD

1. REMEMBER HIS **PRESENCE** AND **TALK** TO HIM.

Friendship with God is built by sharing all of our **life experiences** with Him.

Practice the presence of God with **conversational prayers**.

“Satan does not fill us with hatred of God, but with forgetfulness of God.”—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The goal is not a feeling or a new experience, but a continual **awareness** of the reality that God is always present.

2. **BE HONEST** WITH HIM.

God does not expect you to be **perfect**. None of His friends in the Bible were perfect, so it is not a requirement for intimacy with Him.

God is not bothered by our **frankness**.

Genuine friendship is built on **disclosure**. What may appear as audacity, God views as authenticity. God listens to the passionate words of His friends; He is bored with predictable, pious clichés.

To instruct us in candid honesty, God gives us the book of Psalms—a worship manual, full of ranting, raving, doubts, fears, resentment, and deep passions combined with thanksgiving, praise, and statements of faith. Every possible emotion is catalogued in the Psalms.

“I pour out my complaints before Him and tell Him all my troubles. For I am overwhelmed ...” Psalm 142:2-3 (NLT)

3. LET GOD BE **HONEST** WITH YOU.

It is impossible to have intimacy with God apart from knowing what He says—listening keeps things **relational**.

“... I speak what the Father taught me.” John 8:28 (NLT)

Insight from God (John 8:31-33):

A. “... hold to my teaching ...” (v. 31)

Benefit: Growing **Relationship**.

Two options:

- 1) **Retreat** to darkness.
- 2) **Abide** in the light.

“God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all. ... if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, ...”
1 John 1:5-7 (NIV)

B. “Then you will know the truth ...” (v. 32)

Benefit: You will have “**Aha**” moments that enhance your relationship with God.

“Aha” moments enhance my **accountability**. It tells me that God cares enough to speak to me about my life issues.

C. “... the truth will set you free.” (v. 32)

Benefit: Freedom to live in a **vibrant** relationship with God.

D. “... We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been slaves ...” (v. 33)

Result: **Playing Church**.