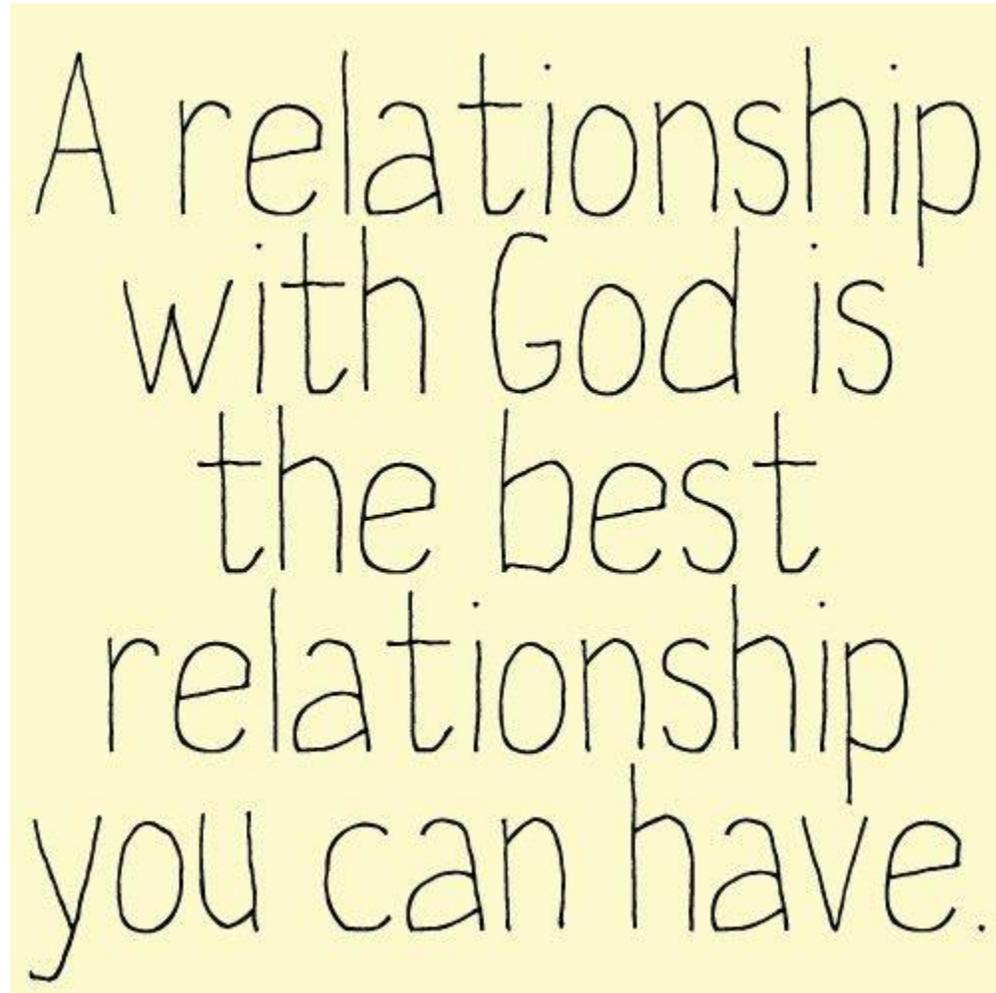


Daily Life with Christ. Love-26: Understanding the objective, universal, unchanging, eternal nature of love: 2nd Person Personal Relationship with Jesus Christ—the need for communication with Him.



A relationship
with God is
the best
relationship
you can have.

(Pdf copy at <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/040318.pdf>; for background and complete series, see <http://www.fbcweb.org/doctrines.html>).

Stephen: So, you think I am a legalist? How do you define legalism?

George: Legalism is religionism . . . being more interested in ecclesiastic rules and regulations than a personal relationship with God . . . like the Pharisees.

Stephen: How do you define personal relationship with God?

George: Not living by rules and regulations.

Stephen: So, simply not living by religious rules and regulations means one has a personal relationship with God? Personal relationship is defined by what we do not do . . . by absence?

George: No! A personal relationship is more a positive . . . like loving Him. It is all about loving Christ, the Christ-centered life.

Stephen: I agree, but I would still like to know what makes a relationship PERSONAL! Just because one loves someone does not mean he has a personal relationship with him. I bet there are people who love others, but that does not automatically translate into a personal relationship.

George: Well, the person you love must love you too.

Stephen: Agreed, but that still does not establish a PERSONAL relationship. Two people can love each other and still not have a personal relationship.

George: How so?

Stephen: Well, a husband can love a wife and be committed to his wife, and she can love him in return, but they can be so busy that they do not have a personal relationship. The same is true with the LORD, we can love the LORD and understand that He loves us but be so busy—like with work and electronic media—that we do not have a personal relationship with Him.

George: How do you define personal?

Stephen: 2nd person relationship—the direct “I-you” relationship. There is little to no personal relationship in 1st person or 3rd person orientation. For example, just thinking about how I (1st person) love the Lord, or He (3rd person) loves me does not qualify as personal. Personal relationships are only developed in 2nd person orientation. 2nd person is the direct and unmediated sharing of attitudes and thoughts from person to person. Only in 2nd person do we truly live in the presence of the living Jesus Christ. This requires communication. There is no true development of any personal relationship apart from communication, the direct person to person sharing of souls in living presence of each other. This is how we live in the presence of Jesus Christ. To live in the presence of Jesus Christ is to communicate with Him throughout each day, thanking Him for His love, salvation, and asking for strength to handle the difficulties of life. Only in 2nd person do we really live in His living presence in a personal way.

George: But we are not supposed to pray to Jesus? We pray to the Father, through the Son, in the name of the Holy Spirit.

Stephen: Where did you get that idea? If that were true, then it would be impossible to enjoy a 2nd person living relationship with Jesus Christ. Even if one attempted to live in the presence of Christ or live to please Him, thinking of Him only in terms of “He” still falls short of a direct and unmediated relationship. Let me ask you, how in the world can any believer really develop a personal living relationship with Jesus Christ apart from 2nd person orientation—being able to come directly into His presence and communicate love for Him and need for His strength? It would not be much different than only thinking in terms of 1st person or 3rd person with my wife and never communicating with her in 2nd person. How could I have a personal relationship with my wife, if anytime I was in her presence I only thought of her as a she? Would that not be odd? For example, when she comes home from work, and I greet her with “I wonder how Patti’s day went?” “I wonder what Patti would like for dinner?” Say we sit down for dinner. I look at her, fully aware that I love her and she loves me, fully aware that she is in my presence, and say “I wonder how she, Patti, likes dinner?” See the disconnect? She is there but the connection is not direct and unmediated—it is not the second person “how do YOU like dinner, honey”? This

principle applies to all personal relationships, including Jesus Christ. I maintain that one cannot have a direct and unmediated personal relationship with Jesus Christ apart from communication—from prayer directly to Jesus Christ, where we share our souls and express our gratitude. Furthermore, I believe that one of the most important things for any believer is to have private devotion time each day with the LORD to develop that personal relationship. It really is all about a personal relationship. In a personal relationship we come to realize that while we often fail to be all we should be, He has never failed to be all that He has promised to be.

George: But the Bible teaches that we should only pray to the Father.

Stephen: No, it doesn't. I think you are guilty of reductionism.