



Harvest Warriors NEWSLETTER



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Warring to Harvest

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How is Your Relationship?

Why did God create us? Have you ever asked this question? Most people say, "Because He wanted to" or "How should I know, He's God and He can do what ever He wants" or "He just did and it's not necessary for us to know on this side of eternity." I think we can know and God wants us to know. The Bible reveals who God is, what He thinks of us and why He created us.

"And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable for him.'" Genesis 2:18

Did you catch that? God didn't want Adam to be alone. God created the earth and everything on it and then gave it to Adam to rule over. Adam had it all, what else would he need! But here is where God reveals Himself to us. God knew that eventually Adam would desire companionship. How would God know this? Same way we all know how somebody feels, by experiencing the same feelings, emotions or event. That's how we sympathize with others in their time of suffering and pain. I believe God created us for companionship. He desires above all else to have a relationship with each and every one of us. So much so that He would sacrifice His one and only Son to make it so.



The definition of sacrifice is: forfeiture of something highly valued for the sake of one thought to have a greater value or claim.

***"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, how we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved through His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation."* Romans**

5:8-11

The definition of reconcile is: to make friendly again; to settle a quarrel. Some translations use relationship or friendship in place of reconciliation.

Because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve, sin entered the human race and we lost our relationship with God. God had a quarrel with us and the only way to settle that quarrel and regain our

friendship with Him was through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

“For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight” Col. 1:19-22.

There are some key words in the above scriptures that express God’s desire to regain the relationship that we lost. First word is in Rom 5:8, where God says He demonstrates His own love. Parents, think about the love that is required to give up your only son or daughter. That has to be a love greater than we could ever fathom. Not only was God’s love for us so great but He was pleased (Col 1:19) to do it! He looked forward to the day that we could

be reconciled and renew a relationship with Him. You see God wants a relationship with you! He wants you to know Him and hear from Him. He wants to be a part of your life on a daily basis. He wants you to talk (prayer) to Him! How do you develop a relationship (friendship) with God? You develop it just like you would any other relationship (friendship). You begin by talking (prayer) and taking the time to get to know the person (reading your Bible). The more time you spend developing a relationship with someone the closer you get because you share your feelings, worries, frustrations, and pain. You look to that person for advice and trust their opinion. You reveal things you wouldn’t normally tell others because there is a certain level of trust that is built. A relationship with the Lord is the same way. If you want Him to speak to you, you must first begin to develop a relationship. That’s not going to happen unless you have a heartfelt desire for it and ask for it. *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of*

faith...(Heb 10:22). God will not force Himself on anyone. I know that one of my most desired prayers as a new Christian was to have a relationship with the Lord and my continued prayer is that my desire for that relationship is never extinguished. There are many scriptures that talk about seeking God and drawing near to Him and God promises that if you draw near to Him, He will draw near to you.

“Draw near to God and he will draw near to you.” James 4:8

“But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul.” Deut. 4:29

“Now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God.” 1 Chron. 22:19

“...If you seek Him, He will be found by you . . .” 1 Chron. 28:9.

Let me ask you something, have you ever experienced a true friendship?

I’m talking about unconditional friendship! A friend that will be your friend through thick and thin! Someone that will never forsake you! When every one has abandoned you, that friend is still standing with you. They love you on your best days just as much as on your worst days. We all desire a relationship like that. I have to say, these types of friendships are hard to come by, but this is exactly the type of relationship that God wants to have with you.

Building our relationship with God is one of our primary purposes on earth. It is a subject that is not widely taught in our churches. We are filling our churches with new converts but we don’t teach them where to go from there. Typically what happens after conversion is we encourage them to get involved in some type of ministry within the church because our churches are growing and we need people to work in the nursery, take up the offering, usher, serve communion, etc. They are

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so on fire for the Lord that they spend more of their free time helping in ministry instead of developing their relationship with the Lord and our Pastors are more concerned with the size of their church than the quality of the Christian. Now I do believe that everyone should get involved in some type of ministry, but I think that a new Christian should get into a good Bible study group and spend at least the first year solely on developing their relationship with God. The next step after accepting Christ is building your relationship with the Lord and we should be teaching them how to do that!

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are therefore ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God” 2 Cor. 5:17-20.

Did you catch that? God gave us the ministry of reconciliation! What is the ministry of reconciliation? *‘that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them.’ (2Cor5:19)* God wants us to deliver this message that through Christ we can have a relationship with God and we are His *‘ambassadors, as though God were pleading through us.’ (2Cor5:20)* Through this message God is pleading with you to enter into a relationship with him; In fact the Apostle Paul implores you on Christ’s behalf to enter a relationship with God!

It is my belief that it will be our relationship that is examined when we go before God not the

amount of works we’ve done.

21“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ 23 And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’ 24 Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock; 25 And the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand; 27 And the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, and it fell. And great was its fall.” Matthew 7:21-27

I certainly believe that we should perform good works but your relationship with the Lord comes first. When you have a good relationship with the Lord you will be happy to perform good works because you love Him ...

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Let’s break these verses down. You can clearly see that in verse 21 the people who are saying ‘Lord, Lord’ think they have a relationship with God. These are Christians who go to church every Sunday, attend a Bible study, and are actively involved in some type of ministry but have never put any energy in developing a relationship with the Lord and sadly enough they may never have been taught otherwise. They think that as long as they are doing their part, tithing and attending church, they’re covered. This is more a religion of works. You need to get honest and ask yourself why you go to church. Do you have the right motives? I certainly believe that we should perform good works but your relationship

with the Lord comes first. When you have a good relationship with the Lord you will be happy to perform good works because you love Him ...”with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”(Matt 22:37) You won’t be performing them because you feel obligated and according to God’s word, He would rather you not perform them out of obligation.

“For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.” Hosea 6:6

Now who does Jesus say will enter the kingdom of heaven? Only those that do the will of God! How do you know what God’s will for your life is, if you haven’t taken the time to find out? You couldn’t possibly know without a relationship with the Lord. This means all those good works you have done amount to **nothing**, because you did them of your own free will and God **never** asked you to do them.

In verse 22 we see that these people felt that they did what was necessary to enter heaven. Can you imagine the look on these peoples faces when they find out that they have spent their whole lives thinking they were serving God and to find out they were deceived in their thinking. Now look at Christ’s response to these people who believe they should get into heaven because they did a lot of good works.

In verse 25 He says ‘*I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!*’ (Matt7:23) He says I never knew you because they never had a relationship with Him; and what does He say about them? They practice **lawlessness!** Why does He say that? Because, they weren’t interested in having a relationship with God, they did good works out of unclean motives. They never asked God what HE wanted them to do.

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He says I never knew you because they never had a relationship with Him; and what does He say about them? They practice lawlessness!

“Therefore the Lord said: ‘Inasmuch as these people draw near to with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed hearts far from Me. And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men.’” Isaiah 29:13

Maybe they just wanted to make themselves look good in front of their peers or maybe they thought they could earn their way into Heaven. Let me give you an analogy that might help you grasp this, let’s say you are a very popular celebrity and one day there are thousands of people outside your door some you know, others you don’t. They all claim they are your biggest supporters which ones are you going to let in; those that took the time to get to know you and were with you in the good times and bad, or those that you met once and claim to be your best friend?

Where do you think these people will end up? The scriptures give us some idea in the story of the centurion and his servant.

“Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.” And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.” The centurion answered and said,

“Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, **“Assuredly, I**

say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! And I say to you that many

will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Matthew 8:5-13

In this story, Jesus was showing you what kind of servants he wants, those that do the will of the Father. If you aren't this kind of servant, according to the above scripture, you will likely end up in the outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. It is important that you notice He called these people sons of the kingdom, which infers that at one time they were entitled to an inheritance in the Kingdom of God. I believe these are people who accepted Christ but stopped there and never developed their relationship with the Lord.

It's just like the story I told you about the celebrity and the thousands of people outside wanting in. You're only going to let those you know in and the others you keep outside.

Now in verse 24 through 27 we see what will happen when our relationship with the Lord is tested. *And the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. (Matt 7:25)* Who is the rock? This is symbolic for Christ.

“But Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as if it were by works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. As it is written: ‘Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and a rock of offense, whoever trusts in Him will not be put to shame.’” Romans 9:31-33

The house symbolizes your relationship with Christ. The rock symbolizes Christ and you have built such a strong relationship with Him that when it is tested nothing can tear it down.

Now in verse 26 and 27 we see what will happen if we haven't built a strong relationship with the Lord, *“But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish*

Jesus Christ has this problem. There are many in His Bride, the church who don't know Him at all.



man who built his house on sand: And the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” (Matt 7:26-27) If you waste your life running yourself into the ground with the everyday cares of this world and you don't

spend time developing your relationship with the Lord, you will hear the weeping and gnashing of teeth on the other side.

How would you feel if you were suddenly told that you had to marry someone that you did not know at all? You wouldn't like it! Jesus Christ has this problem. There are many in His Bride, the church who don't know Him at all.

“ Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” Revelation 19:7

In order for the Bride to be prepared for the Bridegroom, the Body of Christ as a whole has to be in a right relationship with the Lord. I don't know about you but I wouldn't like the idea of marrying somebody I don't know. When you die and go to heaven it will be just you and the Lord. If you don't have a relationship with Him, it's going to be uncomfortable and if you do, it will be like a homecoming. Like seeing a friend that you've

spent years talking on the phone with and now you are seeing them for the first time in awhile.

How do you enter into a relationship with God? First, you must accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. *Rom 10:9, that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.* If you haven't done this and would like to you can pray this prayer:

Father God, I confess that I'm a sinner and that there is nothing I can do to earn your forgiveness. I believe that Jesus is the Christ, son of the living God, my Lord, and my Savior. I believe that by His shed blood on the cross, that Jesus died for my sins, was resurrected and ascended to the right hand of God's throne. Jesus, I ask that You come into my heart, forgive me of my sins and cleanse me of all unrighteousness. I ask for this and thank you for it in Jesus name. Amen

Now the next step is to talk to the Lord, your heartfelt desire for a personal relationship. If you haven't done this you can pray this prayer:

Father God, I thank you for the sacrifice that Jesus made for me so that I may have eternal life. Father, I ask you with all my heart, my entire mind, and all my soul to draw me close to You. I ask you to teach me Your ways by Your Holy Spirit. I ask that You give me an unquenchable desire to draw near to You. I ask for this and thank You for it in Jesus name. Amen

The following is a list of things you can do to develop your relationship with the Lord:

- 1) Read your Bible
- 2) Scripture memorization
- 3) Pray without ceasing
- 4) Cleanse your life of all sins & unclean spirits

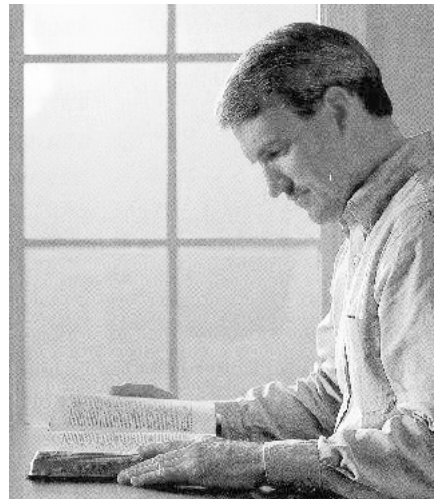
Satan will do everything he can to prevent you from reading the word of God. He will try to keep you too busy to read or he might try to make you sleepy while you're reading.

Now you need to spend at least one hour a day in quiet time reading your Bible and talking (praying) to Lord. If you don't have a Bible, I suggest that you get a good study Bible. We recommend the *Spirit Filled Life Bible* in the New King James Version. A *One Year Bible* is also good. You can pick these up in any bookstore. They are nice because they break up the Bible in

days so you can start at any point in the year and read the entire bible in a year. It's also nice because each day you read a section of the Old Testament, New Testament, Psalms, and Proverbs. I think it's great for beginners. Why is it so important to read the Bible? Because that is the number one way that God reveals Himself to you. When you start reading the Bible, pray on a daily basis that the Holy Spirit will teach you through the word of God. **A word of warning,** Satan will do everything he can to prevent you from reading the word

of God. He will try to keep you too busy to read or he might try to make you sleepy while you're reading. It's a good idea not to read your Bible late at night before you go to bed, because this is when you are tired. I suggest reading your Bible in the morning before you get started on your day. I

find that I have an easier time withstanding Satan's attacks if I start my day in the word of God. If you have never read the Bible, I suggest that you read



through the entire bible once before you tackle scripture memorization. You should spend the first year just enjoying the Bible and it would be a good idea to read other books that help you grow spiritually. We have a list of good books on the back of the newsletter and our web site has many excellent Christian authors. After, the first year, you need to get serious about scripture memorization. It is important that you have the word of God implanted in your head; this is so that the Holy Spirit can quicken scripture to you in a time of need. Also this is the easiest way to get in tune with hearing the Holy Spirit.

A good quick way to memorize scripture and to learn to discern when the Lord is speaking to you can be found in *Standing On The Rock*, by Rebecca Brown, pp. 120-125.

Prayer is your means of communicating with God. Praying doesn't have to be anything grammatically spectacular. It's just you talking to the Lord. You can tell him anything you want, share your desires, fears, worries, frustrations, and etc. Basically the type of stuff you might share with a really close friend. You can prayer about specific needs, pray about other people. You can pray at anytime. I like to pray a lot in my car when I'm driving. I pray throughout the day and my mind is always set on God.

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” 1 Thess. 5:16-18.

At some point it will be important that you cleanse

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your life, if you don't, your relationship with God will not be able to progress any further. Sin separates us from God and because of your sins prior to accepting Christ, you allowed unclean spirits to take up residence in you and they need to be kicked out. We have a handout that can walk you through this. If you drop us a line we would be happy to send one of these to you.

Your relationship with the Lord is going to have peaks and valleys just like any other relationship but you need to keep pressing forward in the knowledge of God and pray always that God will continue to draw you ever closer. If you ever get totally satisfied with your relationship, something is wrong. You must always have a desire, if you find your desire decreasing, pray and ask God to renew it.

So, I ask you, how is your relationship with God? Do you have one? If so, are you satisfied with your relationship to this point in your life? If your not, confess to the Lord that you have a heart felt desire to draw near to Him and He promises to draw near to you. If you don't have a relationship, the Lord is waiting for you to call on Him to draw near. I tell you from the bottom of my heart, it will be the best decision you ever made to seek after the one true God!

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