

Series: Like Eagles
2. The Power of a Relationship with God
1 John 4.10

1 John 4.10 **This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.** Before we loved God or sought Him, God already God loved us and created a plan for us to have access to Him. Christ didn't come just to forgive us our sins, but also to enable us to have a relationship with God. And, if it is possible to have a relationship with God, that must become the most important thing in our lives and should impact everything we are and do.

But a healthy relationship has to be based on loyalty and ongoing communication, as well as giving and receiving. This becomes a problem because most people rarely talk to God and they only seek him when in despair or when they need something. As for fidelity, although we say we love God, the truth is that we love other things more than Him and allow them to have priority over our relationship with the Lord.

If we want to have a healthy relationship with God, there comes a time in life that we must respond to the challenge that Joshua gave the people of Israel: **So fear the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord alone. But if you refuse to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve...But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.**" Joshua 24.14-15 The people were unfaithful, and their hearts were divided, thus he challenges them, once and for all, to decide whom they would follow and serve. We have to make the same decision and act accordingly.

What do we learn with the eagles about relationships? When the male is looking for a mate and he finds a candidate, he begins to follow her as she flies. If she is interested, she will fly in many directions expecting him to follow her and copy her movements. If he fails to do so then she rejects him.

Application - God is like that eagle. He follows us seeking to have a relationship with you and me. To achieve that, He tries to get our attention. Quite often what happens in life, things that we believe to be just coincidences, is God attempting to get our attention.

Maybe you think that you don't deserve the love of God because of your sins and mistakes, but God is not tired of you, on the contrary, He wants to have a relationship with you. His desire is that for no one to be lost but that we all may have fellowship with Him.

Unfortunately, we do many things that makes it difficult to have a relationship with God. They tend to be the same things that make it difficult to have healthy relationships with others, including our spouses. For example:

1. We take things in our own hands (We don't trust God) - If God's answer doesn't come when or how we expect, usually we follow our own plans and the results are often disastrous. "God, I've been waiting for an answer and 3 whole days have gone by..." We are very impatient and don't trust God as we should.

2. We ask for the advice of others before seeking the counsel of God - Problems arise in our lives and we talk to everyone except God. As a result we end up living in anxiety and frustration. God cares about you and hears your prayer, so we must seek His advice first.

3. We don't Listen - We run so much that it becomes difficult to stop and listen to God. Many times we do not hear His voice because we have not trained our spirit. Sometimes God answers, but because it isn't the answer we want, we continue to ask. We need to create the ideal conditions to hear the Lord, and that includes to be in His house.

4. We complain more than we give thanks – It's easier to blame God than to rely on Him. We are always ready to question and blame God for this or that and rarely willing to count our blessings. Giving thanks is for our benefit because if we focus on the negative, the negative fills our hearts.

5. We don't forsake our sins – We allow certain sins in our lives and we aren't willing to forsake them. We might even ask for forgiveness, but we do not intend to change. The consequence of sin is always death, including in our relationships. Infidelity kills any relationship. We can't forget that, "To say YES to God is to say NO to anything that offends His holiness." In the same way that to say YES to your wife is to say NO to all other women. We must let go everything that harms the relationship.

Transition - These 5 Things, and others that could be added, make it difficult to have healthy relationships, including a relationship with God.

Isaiah 40.29 says that: **He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless.** God gives power but we have to go and get it. In the same way that you have to plug a cable into the wall socket to receive and benefit from electricity, we have to come to God and connect with Him, to receive the power that He has for us. And when we do so we ought to have the expectation that God desires that, and that He blesses those who seek Him.

God wants us to seek Him not only when we have needs but so that we might have a healthy, ongoing relationship with Him. How can you help make this happen? **How can you deepen your relationship with the Lord?**

1. Keep your eyes fixed on Christ - Your body follows your eyes, in the same way that your car or your bicycle follow your eyes. You must look in the direction you want to go. When you start focusing where you don't want to go quite often you'll end up there. To go in the direction of God you must look at Him not at people.

2. Remove the distraction, the sin, and the extra weights in your life. Don't keep or allow in your life those things that don't build up a healthy relationship.

3. Push Yourself Try a little harder and be more determined. Do not say "God willing it will happen!" but do your part to make it happen.

Illustration - Many say "if I had a job like that one, or a home like yours, my life would be better." But the reality is that often if one tries a little more, you'll get there. We need to try a little harder and be willing to cooperate with God.

4. Don't live just for today but keep the future in mind – Keep in mind long term goals and not only immediate results. It takes time to become a doctor, a nurse, a pastor, etc. It is a process. It takes time to become what God wants us to be and achieve what God has for us, so do not give up, but persevere.

Illustration - Many times when we have to go through a surgery we suffer even more than before, but we submit because we believe that the future will be better. Similarly, we might experience some pain now but, if we submit to God, there will be a reward.

5. The tribulations are temporary Even Job's trials came to an end. God will help you reach the other side.

6. Know that there is power in this relationship. - If you have God, you have everything you need. Seek Him and He will reveal more to you. He has power.

To receive "power" is not enough to connect the cable to the socket, you must stay connected. Similarly we have to stay connected to receive the continuing power of God.

1. GOD WANTS TO HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU - He is looking for your attention
2. MAKES EVERY EFFORT TO MAINTAIN AND GROW IN THIS RELATIONSHIP

Today let's respond to the challenge of Joshua 24.14-15: So fear the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols. (put away all that takes the place of God in your life) ... Are you going to only serve the Lord?