

How can I have a deeper relationship with Jesus? Is Jesus alive and near in your life?

How can I have a deeper relationship with Jesus? John 14:21-23

The relationship that Christians have with Jesus can vary greatly from person to person. Just because you have been converted, i.e., become a Christian, doesn't necessarily mean that you have a deep and intimate relationship with Jesus.

A living and intimate relationship with Jesus

For some Christians, a relationship with Jesus consists of praying to Him and going to church on Sunday. They allow Jesus to be a sacrifice for their sins, but the relationship with Him stops there. For others, Jesus is an example to follow, and they try their best to live as He did. But since Jesus is in heaven and they are here, they don't really expect to have much of a relationship with Him, and therefore, in fact, do not. Such relationships with Jesus can, at best, be described as "distant."

The Bible, however, speaks about an intimate and dynamic relationship with Jesus. He is, after all, a person, not a "theological concept;" not someone who once lived on the earth and now is far away, but a person who is alive and can be very near. He, Himself, was tempted in all points just as you are, but overcame sin and death. (Hebrews 4:15; Romans 6:8) Because of His faithfulness, He has all the power and grace to help you to overcome sin in your life. This also means that your relationship with Him can be full of life – not something lifeless and stagnant – because He Himself is alive! (Revelation 1:18)

- Challenges and difficulties
- Self-image
- Prayer
- Christianity in practice
- Choosing Him

The fact is that you, yourself, decide what relationship you want to have with Jesus. You must first choose to believe that an intimate relationship with Jesus is possible before you can enter into such a relationship, for everything – spiritually speaking – is a product of one's faith.

A relationship with Jesus is not one-sided. Jesus makes this clear when He says, "If anyone loves me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." John 14:23. Just think that Jesus

and the Father want to come and make Their home with you! Is that the relationship that you have with Him?

And again He says that “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.” John 14:21. Have you ever thought that Jesus wants to manifest (reveal) Himself to you? That promise is given to those who love Him and keep His commandments, so it is clear that such a revelation of Jesus is to occur throughout your life as a Christian, and not only at the beginning of your Christian life.

Fellowship on a daily basis

If you choose to fulfill these conditions (obey Jesus’ Word in your life), Jesus will become a beloved friend, whom you can have fellowship with on a daily basis. He will not be far away for you, but rather lives and speaks in your heart and mind through the Holy Spirit. (Did He not say: “The kingdom of heaven is within you?”) There will be an ongoing dialogue with Him whom you love and follow after. He is not only your friend, but one who understands what it's like to be tempted, and can therefore help you in the time of need.

He is a source of wisdom and encouragement and therefore a source of strength in the time of temptation. He is your Savior, not only from the penalty of sin but also from its power in your life on a daily basis. As it is written: “...a very present help in trouble.” Psalm 46:1. That is how you will experience Jesus! He is able to have compassion on the weak, because He has experienced human weakness Himself. (Hebrews 4:15)

Your relationship with Jesus exists in your heart, mind, and spirit. When He is the center of your affection, then He also sits on the throne of your heart. Thoughts that come into your mind begin to be brought before Him, with the attitude of heart: “Dear Lord Jesus, is this thought pleasing in your sight?” With such an attitude, your heart begins to understand what the mind of Jesus is, which is the mind of the Spirit: life and peace!

You learn that some thoughts bring you life and peace, while others bring only unrest and emptiness. In this way you learn to discern between good and evil in the daily situations of life, between what is and what is not well-pleasing in His sight. Jesus becomes your instructor and guide to a deeper life in the Spirit.

The relationship that you have with Jesus is also in your human spirit, where you learn to turn to Him in times of stress, struggle, and temptation, away from your own thoughts and feelings. There you meet the Spirit of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy. (Revelation 19:10) The prophetic spirit of Jesus speaks edification, exhortation, and comfort right to your human spirit, and you will sense that you are powerfully strengthened.

As you draw closer to Jesus, the Bible words you have read and heard and spoken so many times before will suddenly become alive for you. Dry verses that had little meaning before will become full of power to live the life that Jesus lived. You will sense that a spirit of revelation speaks in your inner man, and you will understand the Word of God and your own life very differently as a result. Faith will be born in your heart at a deeper level with each revelation over the Word. And as your faith grows, so does the power of the Spirit in your life, so that you can follow in Jesus' footsteps even more.

An increasingly deep relationship with Christ

Relationships with people are dynamic, in that they often change with time and can grow deeper. So it is also with your relationship with Jesus. Just as God's mercies are new every morning, your relationship with Jesus can also be new and alive every morning! The relationship becomes deeper as your love for Him increases, and as your love for your own life (i.e., your own will) decreases.

Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me." Revelation 3:20.

He says "anyone." Doesn't that include you?

Maybe you became a Christian long ago, but have never really experienced an intimate relationship with Jesus. Do you sense Him knocking at the door of your heart today? Invite Him in to your heart, not just as a sacrifice for your sins, but as a dear and beloved Friend, as Lord and Master, as One whom you desire to rule and reign in your heart and life.

Blessed are you if you believe Jesus' words; open the door of your heart and invite Him in as Lord and Master! If you do this, if you obey His Word in your life, you will experience what it is to have Jesus alive and dwelling in your heart. You will experience an intimate relationship with the King of kings, and Lord of lords!

What does it mean to have a personal relationship with God?

Having a personal relationship with God begins the moment we realize our need for Him, admit we are sinners, and in faith receive Jesus Christ as Savior. God, our heavenly Father, has always desired to be close to us, to have a relationship with us. Before Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden (Genesis chapter 3), both he and Eve knew God on an intimate, personal level. They walked with Him in the garden and talked directly to Him. Due to the sin of man, we became separated and disconnected from God.

What many people do not know, realize, or care about, is that Jesus gave us the most amazing gift—the opportunity to spend eternity with God if we trust in Him. “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23). God became a human being in the Person of Jesus Christ to take on our sin, be killed, and then be raised to life again, proving His victory over sin and death. “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1). If we accept this gift, we have become acceptable to God and can have a relationship with Him.

Those who have a personal relationship with God include God in their daily lives. They pray to Him, read His word, and meditate on verses in an effort to get to know Him even better. Those who have a personal relationship with God pray for wisdom (James 1:5), which is the most valuable asset we could ever have. They take their requests to Him, asking in Jesus’ name (John 15:16). Jesus is the one who loves us enough to give His life for us (Romans 5:8), and He is the one who bridged the gap between God and us.

The Holy Spirit has been given to us as our Counselor. “If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you” (John 14:15-17). Jesus said this before He died, and after He died, the Holy Spirit became available to all who earnestly seek to receive Him.

He is the one who lives in the hearts of believers and never leaves. He counsels us, teaches us truths, and changes our hearts. Without this divine Holy Spirit, we would not have the ability to fight against evil and temptations. But since we do have Him, we begin to produce the fruit that comes from allowing the Spirit to control us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

This personal relationship with God is not as hard to find as we might think, and there is no mysterious formula for getting it. As soon as we become children of God, we receive the Holy Spirit, who will begin to work on our hearts. We should pray without ceasing, read the Bible, and join a Bible-believing church; all these things will help us to grow spiritually. Trusting in God to get us through each day and believing that He is our sustainer is the way to have a relationship with Him. Although we may not see changes immediately, we will begin to see them over time, and all the truths will become clear.

In order to come unto the Heavenly Father we have to come unto Jesus first and accept him as our Lord and Saviour. Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John 14:6)

That personal relationship you will have with Jesus and the Heavenly Father will be the greatest gift and feeling you will ever have for you will grow in your faith.