



[a personal journal]

Welcome. The Thirsty Journal is a 31 Day Journey with God. Once you finish with the Introduction, you will see that the Journal is broken into 4 week-long sections, each beginning with a challenge and followed by seven daily devotional thoughts. Each new week begins with a new challenge! If you're ready, click forward to the Introduction to start your journey to knowing God more intimately.

This is what the Lord says:

Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom
or the strong man boast of his strength
or the rich man boast of his riches,
but let him who boasts boast about this:
that he knows and understands me,
that I am the Lord who exercises kindness,
justice and righteousness on the earth,
for in these I delight declares the Lord.
Jeremiah 9:23, 24

Before we begin, it's important that we have one thought clear in our minds: knowing God is a journey.

That's why the writer of Hebrews says, "God is a rewarder of those who earnestly seek Him." To know God well takes time, energy, patience, and commitment.

In other words, intimacy with God is a process --a life-long pursuit. There is no simple formula. No one, two, three. Rather, our relationship with God is a living thing, a dynamic adventure... one that changes like the seasons of life. Sustained intimacy with the Creator is a challenge in this broken and sinful world. Such a pursuit requires all of who we are. Yet to "go for it" brings a reward that is beyond our comprehension.

Take another look at Hebrews 11:6. "Without faith it is impossible to please God, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who earnestly seek Him." Here we discover four things that are essential for the journey: faith, revelation, sacrifice, and hope.

The journey to intimacy with God is a journey of faith.

As the writer of Hebrews states, to know God we must believe that "He is." In other words, we begin with faith. Before we can pursue God, we must believe that He exists, and that He is waiting to be found by each of us. Those who persevere in the pursuit of intimacy greet each day with the conviction that there is a God they can know and a God worth knowing well.

Without revelation, the journey to intimacy is uncertain and unclear.

Simply put, we cannot know God unless He chooses to show us who He is ?unless He reveals to us His awesome nature and character. Fortunately, He has, allowing our pursuit of Him to be fueled constantly by His unfolding self-portrait in scripture and His ultimate revelation in the face of Jesus Christ.

Through His Word we know God is:
who He says He is ?not who we define Him to be;
all of who He says He is ?not just the parts we like best;
always who He says He is ?never effected by circumstance or change.

The journey to intimacy with God follows the road called "sacrifice."

Notice the words "diligently and earnestly" in verse 6. We all know it takes endurance and sacrifice to scale the awe-inspiring peaks of earth. Pursuing our Creator is no different. In other words, there is a price to be paid for intimacy with God. In his book, "Intimacy with the Almighty," Chuck Swindoll highlights four essential disciplines necessary to know God well:
Simplicity ?reordering our private world;
Silence ?allowing us to be still before God;
Solitude ? cultivating serenity in our souls;
Surrender ?resulting from complete trust in God.

Without these, we will only see from a distance, never truly knowing the face of God.

Hope fuels the journey.

We begin the journey with faith. Faith is born out of God?s revelation of Himself. The heights of His majesty are scaled by rugged determination. And, finally, hope sustains us along the way. Hope in what, you ask? Hope in God?s promise to reward those who keep on seeking Him.

How long it takes, I cannot say. Your reward may come in a day, an hour, a week, or a season. But it will come. And the reward? The prize of prizes ?God Himself. Seekers every facet of their lives.

How To "Max Out" This Journal

First, know that you can get to intimacy with God from without knowing that such a relationship is attainable for each of us. The key is to begin ?and to keep moving.

Completing this journal is not "the goal" in and of itself. These pages are only designed to kick-start your journey and encourage you in your pursuit of God. There are thirty-one stops along the way. Thirty-one days if you wish... thirty-one hours if you're really famished!

Remember at each stop to:

✠ Recognize the presence of God.
✠ Talk to Him (preferably aloud) and include Him in everything you do. Don't miss God. He is there. State the goal at the outset of every stop by saying to Him, "God I want to know you more."

✠ Read, think about, and meditate on each scripture given.

✠ Listen to the music online (via the RealPlayer) and/or use the companion CD where indicated. Listen. Reflect on the words.
Make the songs a prayer. Keep the CD in the pocket in the back cover while you are taking the journey.

✠ Journal your thoughts and prayers to God.
✠ To journal is simply to pour out the response of your heart and mind to the revealed person and character of God. Write a prayer, an honest confession, a song of praise, or a poem. Make notes, draw pictures, sketch diagrams... whatever helps you best process and ponder what God is showing you about Himself. Journal a conversation with God. Don't write for others, as we have the tendency to do. Write for God alone.

✠ Enjoy.
✠ God's invitation is to "taste and see that [He] is good." (Psalm 34:8). The pursuit of God is not a sad or boring journey; it's an incredible opportunity to enjoy God with all that you are. During your "Alone Time" with God it's OK to laugh out loud. Cry. Shout. Dance. Be silent. Fall down. Take a walk. Listen. Stand up. Smile. Kneel. Whisper. Rock out. But, whatever you do, enjoy it.

Let's go for it!

thirsty

introduction



"Your name and Your renown are the desire of our souls."

Rooted in the confession of Isaiah 26:8, these words capture the heartbeat of a generation desiring to live for the glory of God.

Having exchanged a me-centered lifestyle for a God-glorifying passion, the 268 Generation is motivated by the hope of magnifying the greatness of God with all that they have and are.

Flowing out of Isaiah 26:8 are the five statements of the 268 Declaration. The first reads:

Because I was created by God and for His glory, I will magnify Him as I respond to His great love. My desire is to make knowing and enjoying God the passionate pursuit of my life.

This first declaration fuels the others, calling us to an unrelenting pursuit of the heart of God. It calls us to our created purpose.

Knowing God is a journey for life. Obviously, such a pursuit is far greater than this small guide, but our prayer is that these words and songs will spur you on to greater glimpses of His majesty.

For only those who know God intimately will live passionately for Him in this world.

Louie Giglio

Renown: indelible memory; fame that never fades

-1- My Soul Thirsts For You



Read Psalm 63



List three or four things that you are earnestly seeking today.

What does it mean to have a soul that clings to God?

Write a description of God based on the words you find in this Psalm.

How was David's passion and thirst for God displayed in action?

Start where you are: if David's expression is not exactly where you are with God, pray this Psalm back to God with the words, "I want" added to each phrase. example: "I want to seek you earnestly."

Your love is better than life, so I will praise You.
psalm 63:3

2 God I Want To Know You

 Read Philippians 3:7-10

J

What will pursuing intimacy with God cost you?

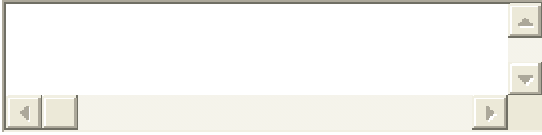
Is an intimate friendship with God worth the price? Why/why not?

Identify the three or four major enemies of intimacy with God in your life.

Who can you share these with, asking for their accountability in this journey?

How does the gift of Christ's righteousness Paul talks about in verse 9 impact your pursuit of knowing God?

Why are we often more willing to pay a high price for earthly stuff than for intimacy with God?



Passion is the degree of difficulty we are willing to endure to reach the goal. Riter



The "cost of discipleship," though it may take all we have, is small when compared to the lot of those who don't accept Christ's invitation to be a part of His company in The Way of life.
Dallas Willard

3 Give us clean hands



Read Psalm 24



we bow our hearts
we bend our knees
oh Spirit come make us humble
we turn our eyes
from evil things
oh Lord we cast down our idols



give us clean hands
give us pure hearts
let us not lift our souls to another
oh God let us be
the generation that seeks
who seeks Your face
of God of Jacob.

"give us clean hands"
charlie hall ? Generation Music

This is the generation of those who seek God?
Psalm 24:6

4 The character of God



Read Psalm 33



The best way to discover God more fully is to meditate on the many facets of His character.

As you read Psalm 33, allow one of God's characteristics to capture your attention. Meditate on that characteristic.

Talk to God about that dimension of Him.

Write this attribute at the top of the page.

Journal a song, prayer, or praise to God about this facet of His character.

Carry that song or praise with you all day long.

Character of God

Faithful

Mighty

Father

Merciful

Eternal

Wise

Compassionate

Forgiving

Jesus

Constant

Just

Provider

True

Reigning

Healer

Loving

Patient

Creator

Friend

Spirit

Kind

Glorious

Beautiful

Life

Understanding

Personal

Right

Pure

Trustworthy

Refuge

Savior

5 Oh, God, You are enough!



Read Hebrews 11:5,6



We constantly search for signs of God's presence through the miraculous. Yet, we must never forget that every time mortal eyes are allowed to see spiritual truth, the blind have once more been made to see. Recently, I was preparing to teach Hebrews 11:6, a verse I had long since memorized and appreciated. As I researched each word in the original language, God unveiled my eyes and caused me to discover that the phrase "must believe that He is" contains the third person singular of the words both God and Christ used of themselves, "I AM." In other words, we might more clearly understand the verse by reading it as, "for He who comes to God must believe that He is the I AM, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." As I sat alone at my worktable, the Spirit of God fell upon me.

Suddenly, a remarkable injustice, except there be mercy, appeared to me in that verse. Is it not enough that the great Elohim Adonai has purposed Himself to be found? Do we need reward, too? The next morning these words came to me in a prayer.

Beth Moore is an author and teacher from Houston, Texas, where she gives leadership to Living Proof Ministries. Beth powerfully communicates the Word of God, impacting the lives of countless people around the globe.

Is it not enough,
Unhidden One,
When seeking
To have found you?
Has my hand yet room
For more than yours
When bound in knots
Around you?

O Blessed Condescension!
Willing, Reaching God!

What kind of souls,
O, wretched man,
Have unbridled we?
To require promise
Of reward
For having sought, Lord, Thee?

Mingled here
My shameful lusts
With Heaven's shameless love
My head cast on

Your bleeding hand
O, God, Thou art enough!

Give, O Giver,
For You must
Give all You have to me
But give Your best
Starve these lusts
Give Thy Son to me.

Beth Moore

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6 Intimacy



Read Psalm 27
Meditate on verses 4 & 10



As you listen, make this song your prayer?

David's one passion, his sole desire, was to behold God's beauty and meditate in His presence.

How would you describe your passion for God?

To a fatherless generation, David writes words of encouragement in verse 10. How do these words impact your relationship with God and others?

Being made in God's image we have the capacity to know Him. The moment the Spirit has quickened us to life in regeneration our whole being senses a kinship to God and leaps in glorious recognition. This is the Heavenly birth without which we cannot see the Kingdom of God. It is, however, not an end but an inception, for now begins the glorious pursuit, the heart's happy exploration of the infinite riches of the Godhead. That is where we begin, I say, but where we stop no man has yet discovered, for there is in the awful and mysterious depths of the Triune God neither limit nor end.

A.W.Tozer
The Pursuit of God



7 Intimacy takes time



Read Psalm 46:10-11



Intimacy with God. That's a familiar phrase, but one that leaves us with the question, "How?" How do we go about building an intimate relationship with our Creator? The answer is one we may not want to hear ?TIME. Not just time in the sense that it takes the years of a lifetime to know the character of our Heavenly Father, but the minutes required each day to build that relationship.

Intimacy comes with the investment of time, not just the desire of the heart. If I tell my husband, "I love you," and ignore him for the next few months, it doesn't matter how strongly I feel those words, he thinks I'm lying. So it is with God. Without the investment of our lives, our words become meaningless.

Invest in knowing Him by communicating with Him throughout the day, learning His character through His Word, and praising Him with your life and words.

Shelley Giglio

God I want to know You
Show me who You are
I want to see Your glory
Show me who you are.
? 1992 David Bell and Rod Padgett

Shelley Giglio lives in Alpharetta, Georgia, where she manages sixstepsrecords and brings leadership to Passion Conferences and Choice Resources. Shelley is a seeker of God and a woman of faith who desires that this generation live for Christ.

thirsty

the invitation

by Louie Giglio



"for I stand at the door and knock. if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and dine [share intimately] with him and he with Me." (revelation 3:20).

these words, spoken by Christ Himself, drive a stake of clarity through the heart of man's lingering dilemma...

"why am I here?"

our thirsting, searching souls and God's thundering passion collide in one awesome purpose: God wants us to know Him intimately. for this we have been created.

i'm staggered to think that God wants to be known by us at all, yet at the cross He made His intentions painfully clear. if God ever wanted an "out" in His relationship with man, He got it with the sin of adam and eve, and their subsequent banishment from eden. God could have wiped man from the face of the earth and walked away without tarnishing His eternal image in the slightest. but He didn't.

do you know why? because two things were lost in the garden that day. man lost innocence and fellowship with his Maker. but God lost man as well, and the relationship with him He so desired. isn't it astonishing to think that both God and man wept as a barricade of sin separated the created from their Creator, both forfeiting love and laughter in the cool of the day. by choices not His own, God was estranged from those He created by and for Himself.

and how did God respond?

relentlessly He pursued man, like He is pursuing you even now. through the centuries of time, merciful God steered history to the manger. yet even that was not enough. having miraculously shown earth His face in the countenance of His Son, God orchestrated Christ's brutal death on a hill they called "the skull." motivated by an intense passion for His name and Holy reputation, God abandoned Christ to suffer the sin of countless edens, opening wide amazing gates of grace, inviting the outcast sinner to return to

His loving embrace.

the cross of Christ has made a way for God to reconnect with you and me.

through Jesus Christ, Infinite and Holy God has made a way for you to know Him, both now and forever. with wounded hands the door's held open wide. nothing you have or hold is more precious than this invitation. God is knocking in the searching of your soul. will you open the door, return His advance and engage His passionate gaze?

like adam, God has formed you by His own hand, creating you uniquely and specifically for Himself. without ceasing, He has pursued you through every moment of time with an invitation more valuable than life itself. forgiven and lean through faith in Jesus Christ, you can know God... intimately, personally, daily, eternally.

God's offer is on the table. He waits for your response.

This is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.

John 17:3

"Father, to your inconceivable invitation I say, 'I will come.' I am stunned by Your unending love for me, yet I receive it. Though weak, wounded, unreliable, and spent, I respond to Your great love and the invitation to know You intimately. By Your grace, I want to make knowing and enjoying You the passionate pursuit of my life."

8 I will open up my heart



Read 1 John 4:9,10
& Psalm 107:1-16



Our love for God must be a response to His love for us.

God has made the first move.

God's love is not based on our:
performance
success
self-worth
faithfulness
religious acts
appearance
ability
achievement
effort
deeds
intentions.

God's love is based on His perfect love alone.

You are loved by God.

It says so on the cross of Jesus Christ.

You have loved us first, O God! We speak of it in terms of history as if You have only loved us first but a single time, rather than without ceasing You have loved us first many times and every day and our whole life through.

Soren Kierkegaard

9 Your Love Is Extravagant



Read Ephesians 3:16-19



List five ways that God's love towards you is extravagant.

God's love is
deep enough to satisfy every wanting thirst
high enough to eclipse mountains of shame
wide enough to embrace all who stray
long enough for the road unseen
strong enough, forever.

Giglio

For we are so preciously loved of God that we cannot even comprehend it. No created being can ever know how much God sweetly and tenderly loves them. It is only with the help of His grace that we are able to persevere in spiritual contemplation with endless wonder at this high, surpassing, immeasurable love which our Lord in His goodness has for us.

Julian of Norwich

10 To know God



Read Jeremiah 9:23,24



"A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy. I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of." John 10:10. (Eugene Peterson, The Message).

Real, Eternal, More, Better.

Real, is life lived wholly devoted to knowing Him. Eternal, the evidence of the greatest transaction the world has ever known. More, not consumed by the "can'ts" of life, but spurred on by the joy of being a child. Better, a life filled with purpose, contentment, and hope.

That's what intimacy with God brings... joy and hope. Deep down. Not the kind determined by circumstances.

I want to know God, and be found pursuing Him when His Kingdom comes on this earth. I want to be found seeking His face, not His hand or plan. I find Him when I seek Him with all my heart. How true to His Word He is! He's not playing keep away. I am moved by how much He wants to be found. Hosea 10:12 tells us that it is time to seek the Lord. Let's seek. Let's find. Let's press on to know Him.

That's the one thing in life to boast about: knowing the Lord. Jeremiah 9:23,24 have been life verses for me since I was in college. Pursuing and knowing Him, I believe, are the keys to intimacy with God. I want the more and better. It's in intimate moments with Him that He quiets me with His love. It's there that He rejoices over me with singing.

Sam Perry

Sam Perry is a songwriter, lead worshipper and lover of God from Sugar Land, Texas.

11 God understands



Read Hebrews 4:14-16 & Isaiah 53



I know You understand
What it's like to be a man
Sometimes I forget You're near
Sometimes I forget You hear
The way the raindrops fall
The sound of the wind as it calls
And every breath I breathe
And song I don't sing.

Lori Chaffer
from "Sink or Swim"
©1996

For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you, nor will I ever forsake you." So that we may confidently say, "The Lord is my Helper, I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"
Hebrews 13:6

12 The character of God



Read Psalm 145



The best way to discover God more fully is to meditate on the many facets of His character. As you read Psalm 145, allow one of God's characteristics to capture your attention.

Meditate on that characteristic.

Talk to God about that dimension of Him.

Write this attribute at the top of the page.

Journal a song, prayer, or praise to God about this facet of His character.

Carry that song or praise with you all day long.

Faithful
Mighty
Father
Merciful
Eternal
Wise
Compassionate
Forgiving
Jesus
Constant
Just
Provider
True
Reigning
Healer
Loving
Patient
Creator
Friend
Spirit
Kind
Glorious
Beautiful
Life
Understanding
Personal
Right
Pure
Trustworthy
Refuge
Savior



13 An Intimate Portrait



Read Psalm 139:13-18 & Isaiah 64:8



You are painting an intimate portrait,
An intimate portrait of me;
Brushing my heart with the pow?r of Your love,
Stirring all the colors?
I?m learning to trust You now,
To trust in Your unfailing hand
As You hold me gently in place.
You have observed when I rise, when I fall;
You know my heart and its limited space.
Everyday you are patient,
With soft, tender strokes you pursue me again and again;
I?m hanging now with every dawn,
All a part of Your artistic plan?
Closer and loser I?m learning Your voice,
Your whisper keeps promising that I am alive!
And now I want to know You with Your kind of passion,
To see through Your artist?s eye ?
It stretches my heart to begin to contain You...
That you would fashion me by choice.
Now this is the place that I long to be,
Everywhere else is becoming a shadow;
Here I breathe the breath of my Creator... I cannot fathom this love.
And in Your gaze I sense that I am complete,
Quieted and honored to sit at Your feet.
Created to know You, to love You ?
My prayer becomes a cry, that when You are finished with me,
That I would be...
An intimate portrait of You.
Christy L. Nockels

"In His goodness He chose to make us His own children by giving us His true word.
And we, out of all creation became His choice possession."
James 1:18

Christy Nockels is a songwriter who paints with words, a musician, singer and mentor. She and her husband Nathan invest their lives for the spreading of God?s fame.

14 I Love You



Read Psalm 86:1-13



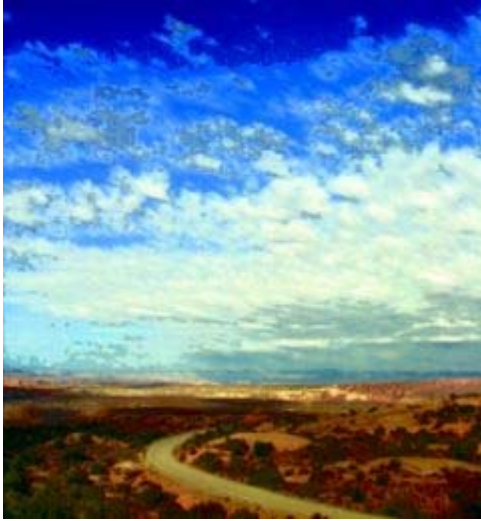
The clouds roll/and rivers flow at my feet/the winds blow in my face/and I know you created all/and I love you/and I know you love me too/and I want to/be surrounded by you/the blood flows/and tears roll down my face/Your Spirit groans in my chest/and I long Lord to worship you

Nickel and Dime ?1997 Lollipop Gang Publishing

thirsty

anyone thirsty?

by Louie Giglio



the obvious answer is yes! however, what's not so obvious is the reason why? that is, why are we so thirsty all the time?

more than ever we live in a consumer world. we devour stuff as fast as we can. yet, we can never get enough... of anything. we devour relationships, pleasure, food, work, ministry, entertainment, accomplishments,

things, and stuff as fast as we can. however, when it's all said and done our thirst remains!

look around. we live in an unquenched world. people everywhere are driven along by a thirsting, a wanting, a needing, a longing. but, for what? why are we so hungry?

it's as simple as this: we were created with an appetite for God. we were created for Him! God says that we are "people that I formed for myself." (isaiah 43:21). to make it personal, you were made (formed) for Him. the result ?you have a panting soul. with every breath our soul longs for fellowship with God.

though we have been given the gift of many earthly things, and though they do bring a measure of satisfaction to our lives, we were made for God alone. our soul's thirst for God is enormous... and far greater than even we comprehend.

since God is huge (and we know He is bigger than we can imagine), then it follows that we have been made with an appetite as big as He is. because God is eternal, our hunger is such that it cannot be satisfied with temporary things. that's why we're so hungry all the time. we have an ocean-sized cavern of need, in souls stamped with the image of God.

unfortunately for most, it's a cavern scarcely filled by the inconsistent trickle of a thousand earthly streams. as a result, many of us exist in dry land, detached from the river of life flowing from the heart of God.

what's amazing is that in the midst of our desert, God's invitation stands: "every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come and buy and eat. why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? listen carefully to Me and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance. listen and come to Me, respond so your soul will live." (isaiah 55:1-3).

what does it mean to come to the waters? we find the answer in verse 4: "seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near." the problem comes when we turn a deaf ear to the invitation of God and try to siphon dry wells to satisfy our souls. big mistake! to do so is to forget that we were made for God.

He describes it this way, "My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and dug for themselves broken wells that can hold no water." (jeremiah 2:13). talk about a dead end!

there is nothing more depressing than digging for soul-sized satisfaction in a job, a boyfriend or a girlfriend. how sad to dig deeper, harder, and faster in a sorority, friends, accomplishments, pleasures, stuff, fame, lust, looks, or self, only to come up empty again. but, God is right; we do it all the time.

we have forsaken God to dig wells.

so what's the solution? maybe we just turn that equation around! it looks like this: forsake wells ? dig God.

what well are you digging in today? what are you asking to satisfy the God-sized hunger in your soul? will you turn and put your shovel deep into the heart of God? if so, rivers will again flow in the desert ?springs in a dry and weary land. that's God's promise, not mine. He is the God who says, "draw near to Me and I will draw near to you." (james 4:8a).

but to dig a broken well is not only stupid, it is a sin. that's why God goes on to say, "cleanse your hand you sinners and purify your hearts you who are double-minded." v.8b

we must repent. we must turn around. forsake empty wells, good or bad. we must stop asking people and things to satisfy souls made for God alone.

turn to God. reach out a weak, feeble hand. cry out for more of Him. "seek the Lord while He may be found!" for He says, "I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the Lord; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for they will return to Me with their whole heart." (jeremiah 24:7).

what awaits is truly extraordinary. one who found Him said, "how precious is Your love, O God! and the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. they drink their fill of the abundance of Your presence; and You let them drink from the river of Your delights. for with You is the fountain of

life; in Your light we see light." (psalm 36:7-9)

the commercial says it so well: obey your thirst.
let it drive you to God.
hungry?
let's eat!

15 I need You



Read Psalm 84



I have a deep need to express myself to God, my Father. Yet, the real joy and relief abounds when He expresses Himself to me, for me. This exchange is satisfying, beautiful, and even intoxicating at times? and most humbling. It reminds me that no other love will ever compare and that no other purpose is nobler than worshipping my Savior with my entire life.

Jami Smith

Sweet, mysterious man
Holy, righteous God
My soul thirsts for you
My eyes long to see your face
Oh God, I?m so needy
I?m so in need of You.
Jami Smith ("Needy," 1998)

16 Near to me



Read Psalm 73:25-28



List three or four ways that God has recently strengthened your heart.

Write a song or prayer to God expressing the deep needs of your heart.

How do you sense God's nearness in your life?

The nearness of God is my good.
Psalm 73:28a

We regard falling from God's friendship as the only thing dreadful and we consider becoming God's friend the only thing worthy of honor and desire.
Gregory of Nyssa

17 Honest to God



Read Colossians 1:15-23



To me, one of the most important aspects of true intimacy with the Father is complete honesty. Having the ability to be painfully honest with God (the One who tells us to cast all our anxieties on Him because He cares about every detail of our lives) is essential. However, in my humanity, I have a hard time being totally honest with God without feeling disrespectful toward Him.

One of my biggest spiritual struggles is finding the fine line between reverence for God and familiarity with God... the place where I fear Him with a Holy fear, but also tenderly call Him Abba. He longs to take us to a deeper understanding of why He is "All in All," and what His sovereignty really means.

I want to know Him so loosely that I can call out, "Lord, I praise You, I love You," and, "Lord I don't understand, I'm mad, but even so hallowed be Thy Name."

Just the other day I was writing in my journal, asking a lot of life's questions like, "Why this, why not that?" I stopped and started pouring it all out to Him. "Lord, I'm having a hard time trusting You with all the details of my life. I know You and I love You, but I am weak and tired and my trust is waning. "It's so weird, because at that moment of complete honesty, I felt so close to Him. I knew that He understood all of my fears. In my weakness I felt His strength. (2 Corinthians 12:9).

The most important relationship I have is with my God, and in order for any relationship to grow, we have to be completely honest. We can tell Him anything. I think He can handle it. After all, He is Almighty God.

Heather Floyd

Heather sings with the group "Point of Grace" and is a songwriter and earnest seeker of the heart of God.

18 God thinks about me



Read Zephaniah 3:17



I am continually staggered, in my walk with Christ, when I pause to reflect on how passionate God is toward me and how often His thoughts turn towards me. This truth is expressed through David when he sings, "How precious also are your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand." (Psalm 139:17-18a). It is beyond my capacity to imagine that the holy, righteous, transcendent God of all nations, Creator of all the cosmoses, turns His thoughts personally and intimately toward me. As though I was the only one alive. And that He is able to be that personal with each one in His creation. I am astounded and humbled to think that God's thoughts turn toward me more than my thoughts will ever turn toward Him.

Not only do His thoughts turn toward me, but He rejoices and celebrates over me." For as a young man marries a virgin, so your sons will marry you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so your God will rejoice over you." (Isaiah 62:5). I still remember the flood of joy that I experienced more than 24 years ago when my bride came out from behind a fence row and walked a cross a field overlooking the Cherokee Mountain range. (I was a product of the 60's). God rejoices over us like that.

He also celebrates over us with shouts of joy." The Lord your God is in your midst, a victorious warrior. He will exalt over you with joy. He will be quiet in His love. He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy." (Zephaniah 3:17) I have this image of God in a thunderous voice shouting my name in the heavens before the Heavenly Host.

God's passion for me fuels my passion for Him. It motivates me! It drives me! It draws me to Him. It might be surprising to learn that my response is not, "Lord produce in me a passion for You that matches Your passion for me". No! I will never match His love and passion for me. It is also true that His love for me will never match His passion for His name, His renown, and His glory. It is God's passion for Himself that ignites my passion for Him. Because of this truth, my prayer is, "Lord, produce in me a passion and love for You that matches Your passion for Yourself."

Jeff Lewis

Jeff Lewis travels the world spreading a passion for the glory of God among all peoples. He's the Director of the Global Center at California Baptist University.

19 The character of God



Read Psalm 33



- The best way to discover God more fully is to meditate on the many facets of His character.
- As you read Psalm 33, allow one of God's characteristics to capture your attention.
- Meditate on that characteristic.
- Talk to God about that dimension of Him.
- Write this attribute at the top of the page.
- Journal a song, prayer, or praise to God about this facet of His character.
- Carry that song or praise with you all day long.

Character of God
Faithful
Mighty
Father
Merciful
Eternal
Wise
Compassionate
Forgiving
Jesus
Constant
Just
Provider
True
Reigning
Healer
Loving
Patient
Creator
Friend
Spirit
Kind
Glorious
Beautiful
Life
Understanding
Personal
Right
Pure
Trustworthy
Refuge
Savior

20 walk with God



Read Psalm 23



Intimacy with Christ is not a ticket to the high road; it's a ticket to His road. His road may be bumpy, winding, and full of unfamiliar road signs. As we grow closer to Jesus, we discover His road is the only true road. And, more important than the road is Who walks by our side. Our Savior walks closely by our side. Leading us down the path, He is intimately in love with us, focused on us, and aware of the bumps in our day. Without question, He is more concerned with the depth of our relationship than the condition of our road. As we grow in our love for Him, and listen for His heartbeat, our focus becomes the same as His. Though the bumps and potholes come, He is there. Not as a rabbit's foot to bring us sunny days, but an intimate friend for eternity.

Gregg Matte



21 My Heart Hungers to Know More of You



Read Psalm 42



Like a deer is thirsty for water
Oh my Lord I'm so thirsty for You
There's a cry Lord, here deep inside me
My soul's thirst is to know more of You

I long for Your song
I long for Your passion
I long for Your tears
Your laugh, and Your life
I long for Your touch
I long for Your face, oh God
I long for Your arms to hold me while I sing
To hold me while I sing

Like an orphan who aches for a father
Oh my Father I'm aching for You
There's a hunger, here deep inside me
My heart hungers to know more of You

"I Long For Your Song"
Charlie Hall

thirsty

come to the river

by Louie Giglio



"the stream of God is full of water."
psalm 65:9

pretty simple, isn't it? with God, there is always a flowing river. God is a river of life. that's good news for a thirsty generation, yet sad for those who

refuse to stop and wade.

my last journal entry was dated many months ago. honestly, the cause of my delay has been "dls." oh, you know of it, i think: dry land syndrome. you know, the long days. the empty days. the riverless days. dry land.

several times i sat down to write but each word was like hard labor under a july sun. soon it became clear that whatever came forth would be true... but possibly not true in me. avoiding hypocrisy, the keys fell silent.

i didn't want to admit it, but ultimately there was no way around it. i am the fool who would not wade into the River of Life. oh, i'll go far and wide to talk about it, speak of it, preach on it, and proclaim it. but, we all know there is no life in ministry. the river of life is in God. somehow i became an expert on The River, yet wasn't standing in the flow.

a month ago, a college minister was sharing with me how my journal on the passion web site has impacted the students he leads. as he inquired about the possibility of a new edition, my heart sank.

finally i confessed ?no new journal had come because my up was a little dry.

"write that," he said. "what a huge encouragement to know you struggle, too... that would be great!"

however, i wanted more than just the chance to be vulnerable. i wanted the fountain of life to spring forth in me. i longed to say with the psalmist, "all of my fountains of joy are in you." psalm 87:7.

"dls" remained.

what happened? a lot of things. it would be easy to play the martyr, talk about the sacrifice of the schedule... the demands of the mission. but, it's not really what did happen that is important, but what did not. i did not come to Jesus.

come! talk about a potent word. this one's like plutonium. check out these words from the mouth of the River Himself, Jesus Christ.

"if anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink."

"I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst."

"come to Me all who are weary and weighted down, and I will give you rest."

the actual tense of the first verse says it all: if anyone is thirsty let him keep on coming to Me and let him keep on drinking of Me!

figuring out how to experience abundance in Christ is not rocket science. it is as simple as manna. by design, God sent manna to his people in the desert. not beef jerky, a power bar, pop tarts, or some other food source that could easily be tucked away in the pocket of a robe, holding the bearer for days in the wilderness. manna is a daily thing.

Jesus is the manna of God... and yesterday's drink from the ever-flowing stream is never enough for today, certainly not for tomorrow.

many of us proclaim Christ, yet live on fumes. how sad. we must ask ourselves, are we filled with the present life of the living Christ or sadly baptized with memories of what it was like to touch the hem of His clothes in days gone by? Jesus is alive! the river is flowing. the invitation is now. come! will you? will i?

a few weeks ago, all of atlanta watched as a radio promotion gone wrong finally came to an end. on march 11,24 lucky souls were chosen to board the "great american scream machine, "the baddest wooden roller coaster around, in an event sponsored by a local rock station, six flags, and the atlanta area jeep/eagle dealers. the deal? whoever stays on the longest wins a jeep wrangler!

think you're ready? here's the catch. you ride from 8 am to 1 am with a five-minute break every hour and a 45-minute break for lunch and dinner. (can you say throw up?) you sleep on the ride's platform and do it all over again the next day. your friends and family can visit, but only on the weekends, and then they have to pay to get into the park!

when i became aware of the contest, three riders remained...in their 41st day. spring break? easter? family? jobs? life? for most of march and all of april, they rode. cold days. dark nights. sunshine.

rain. through it all they rode. for what? a \$16,000 jeep wrangler.

on may 11, with the u.s. and world records long since shattered, the contest mercifully came to an end after 61 days. sixty-one days!!

losing money daily and faced with razed contestants, the sponsors relented, offering all three remaining riders a jeep if they would just get off! fortunately for us all, they did.

my first thought was, "idiots." 12,456 rides,61 days. insane. no way I would pay that kind of price just for a jeep.

then the question turned. would i pay that kind of price to know God? would i seek Him for just one day from 8 a.m. - 1 a.m.? would i forsake family, work, ministry, life, comfort, pleasures, or agenda to pursue the Living God? would i contest for the prize of Him?

upon closer examination, i was an idiot, too... willing to pay such a high price for the things of earth. not the wrangler, mind you. but i ride daily for prizes i?m too embarrassed to name. i have a thirsty soul and a huge appetite.

but "dls" has a cure. it?s called come. Christ paid severely that i might stand in the river of God today. the least i can do is whatever it takes to get there.

today i have renounced the river of ministry as a quencher for my soul and waded into the river of Jesus. it is impossible to go back to yesterday. i have no thoughts of tomorrow. but i?ve found manna outside my tent today and a river of life within. "as for me, the nearness of God is my good." psalm 73:28a.

[Father, i cry out for the waters that flow from Your throne... for the fresh flood of life across a parched and weary soul. things are not enough. not for this soul made for You. Jesus, You are the manna of God. have mercy on me and give me a heart eager to come to You.]



I'm so thirsty, I can feel it
Burnin' through the furthest corners of my soul
Deep desire, can't describe this nameless urge that drives me somewhere
Though I don't know where I go.

Seems I've heard about a river from someone who's been
And they tell me once you reach it, oh you'll never thirst again
So I have to find the river, somehow my life depends on the river
Holy River, I'm so thirsty.

Chris Rice, from "I'm So Thirsty"
©1995 Clumsey Fly Music.

The river is here.

His name is Jesus.

23 the imitation of Christ



Read John 10:27-30 & Ephesians 5:1-2



My central claim is that we can become like Christ by doing one thing ? by following Him in the overall style of life that He chose for Himself. If we have faith in Christ, we must believe that He knew how to live. We can, through faith and grace, become like Christ by practicing the types of activities He engaged in, by arranging our whole lives around the activities He Himself practiced to remain constantly at home in the fellowship of His Father.

Dallas Willard

Disciplines of Abstinence:

- Solitude
- Fasting
- Silence
- Frugality
- Chastity
- Secrecy
- Sacrifice

Disciplines of Engagement:

- Study
- Worship
- Celebration
- Service
- Prayer
- Fellowship
- Confession
- Submission

Taken from "The Spirit of the Disciplines,"
Dallas Willard



24 I'm created for You alone



Read Isaiah 43:7,21 & Psalm 16:8-11



Every now and then the Spirit burns something special into a person's heart. With it comes a sense of completeness and wholeness. It's a feeling of satisfaction and happiness that only God can give. These moments are rare. You know beyond knowing in such times that nothing in this world, no amount of stuff, will ever measure up to what Jesus Christ offers us. You wish to be wrapped in that kind of closeness forever. And you will!

Just think on Paul's words to the Corinthians, "Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror dimly, but then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part, then I will know fully, even as I am fully known." (1 Corinthians 13:12). Sometimes, for me, these moments issue forth in songs of worship. My prayer is that the Holy Spirit might draw you into a living encounter with our heavenly Father through the lyrics of this song.

Faithful Lord, fill my cup
With Your grace and love
Your grace and love
The pleasures that this world's sure of
Will never be enough
Can never be enough

Cause I'm created for You alone
Bought with a price I'm not my own
Seated in the heavenlies
And there's no place I'd rather be
Than with You, forever Lord
You are my treasure.

Chris Tomlin

Chris Tomlin is a lead worshipper, songwriter and lover of life, living in Austin, Texas. He is affectionately known by his closest friends as "Killer."

25 my treasure thou art



Read Isaiah 42:5-13 & Revelation 21:1-6



To have found God and still pursue Him is the soul's paradox of love, scorned indeed by the too-easily satisfied religionist, but justified in happy experience by the children of the burning heart.

A.W. Tozer

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise
Thou mine inheritance, now and always
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my treasure Thou art.

"Be Thou My Vision"
Ancient Irish Hymn

26 my king



Read Psalm 97



There are times when we cannot seem to find a reason to rejoice. Times when questions and doubts are easier to find than answers. Nevertheless, the Psalmist's admonition remains appropriate. No matter what the circumstance, the Lord reigns; that, in itself, is reason enough to rejoice. As believers, we must remind ourselves of the sovereignty of our God. If we know that God is concerned about His own glory, and that He created us to bring Him glory, then we can rejoice in the fact that whatever comes our way, whether triumph or trial, God will cause Himself to be glorified, and we get to play a part. This is only good news if we seek the glory of God above all else. Otherwise, the reign of the Lord is not something to rejoice in, or be glad about, but rather something to be feared. If I am the King, then the reign of another threatens me, but if I am a loyal subject in the kingdom of another, **the reign of my King brings me great joy.**

Voddie Baucham

The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice; let the people be glad.
Psalm 97:1

27 The character of God



Read Psalm 145



The best way to discover God more fully is to meditate on the many facets of His character.

As you read Psalm 145, allow one of God's characteristics to capture your attention.

Meditate on that characteristic.

Talk to God about that dimension of Him.

Write this attribute at the top of the page.

Journal a song, prayer, or praise to God about this facet of His character.

Carry that song or praise with you all day long.

Faithful
Mighty
Father
Merciful
Eternal
Wise
Compassionate
Forgiving
Jesus
Constant
Just
Provider
True
Reigning
Healer
Loving
Patient
Creator
Friend
Spirit
Kind
Glorious
Beautiful
Life
Understanding
Personal
Right
Pure
Trustworthy
Refuge
Savior

28 The True Fast



Read Isaiah 58:6-12



Give your life away. Give it away over and over again. When you feel you have nothing left to offer, give some more. There is something powerful about taking our eyes off ourselves, fixing our gaze on Jesus and going to meet people's needs in the power of the Holy Spirit. In fact, doing so produces intimacy and passion for Jesus and the things of God.

God explains in this passage in Isaiah that He has chosen a fast where we are to loose chains, break heavy yokes, and set the oppressed free. These verses give us a few practical steps by encouraging us to spend ourselves feeding the hungry, finding places for the wanderers to sleep, and clothing the naked. The Kingdom of God comes down from heaven, and Jesus is exalted when we corporately and individually give ourselves to this kind of crazy activity.

Intimacy with Jesus comes in the midst of spending our lives for His sake. After Isaiah tells us to give our lives setting people free, he shares the fruit of that lifestyle; "then your light will break forth like the dawn and your healing will quickly appear... then you will call, and the Lord will answer... the Lord guides you... satisfies your needs... strengthens your frame... you will be like a well watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. You will rebuild ancient ruins, and will raise up age old foundations. You will be called a repairer of the breach and restorer of the streets with dwellings."

I occasionally pray this scripture back to God, saying, "God let me become a repairer of the breach." It is awesome and powerful to think we can give our lives to people in the name of Jesus and the in power of God. As we do we become more intimate with Him.

Charlie Hall

Charlie Hall is an original. Living in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, he's a songwriter, lead worshipper and mentor with a passion to see the lost rejoice in the hope of Christ.

29 draw near



Read James 4:4-10



The possibility of knowing God is such a privilege... and a war. The enemy contends for affection that is rightfully God's. Can you identify two or three areas where battles are waged for your affection?

Spiritual adultery happens when we cheat God out of the love of our hearts. Are there ways that you are spiritually "in bed" with something or someone other than Him?

A part of drawing near to God is cleansing your hands of sin. Ask God to search your heart. What specific actions can you take today to turn away from idols in your life?

God promises to respond to those who draw near to Him. (v.8) What steps will take you closer to God today?

How does the phrase in verse five, "He jealously desires the spirit He has made to dwell in us," impact your life today?

Intimacy comes to those who want God more than pleasure, stuff, fame, accomplishments, sex, sports, money, comfort, and life itself. As well, intimate lovers of God know the joy of watching a thousand earthly treasures pale in the light of the shimmering glory of His face. Soon, all that will remain is Jesus.

God, give me a desire for You like the desire You have for me.

Whatever we love more than God is sin.
Whatever we treasure more than God is an idol.
Whatever controls us more than God is a false god.

30 You are there



Read Psalm 139:1-12,17-18



How are you encouraged today knowing that God is "intimately acquainted" with all your ways?

In what ways does this thought make you uncomfortable?

As you read this passage, what thoughts do you have about God?

In a short sentence, write in your own words the core truth of these verses.

Let it suffice to say then that God perceives the imperfections with us, and because of His love for us, urges us to grow up. His love is not content to leave us in our weakness, and for this reason He takes us into a dark night. He weans us from all of [earth?s] pleasures by giving us dry times and inward darkness. No soul will ever grow deep in the spiritual life unless God works passively in that soul by means of the dark night.

John of the Cross

3) our soul's desire



Read Isaiah 26:1-12
Meditate on verse 8



Yes, Lord, walking in the way of Your truth we wait eagerly for You, for Your name and Your renown are the desire of our souls.

Isaiah 26:8

What would it mean for you today to say "yes" to Jesus?

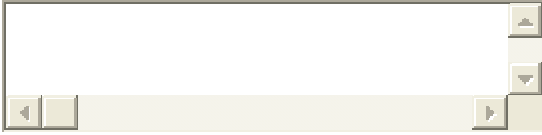
Listen to the voice of the Spirit and write down a few ways that You can walk in His truth today.

Write your own definition of renown.

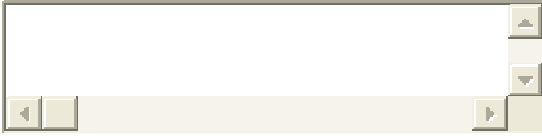
What is one specific way you can make His name more visible to those around you today?

Describe a "268 person" based on this verse.

Write a few specific ways this "journey" has deepened your relationship with God.

An empty rectangular text box with a light beige background and a thin black border. On the right side, there are three vertically stacked buttons: a small square with a right-pointing arrow, a square with a downward-pointing arrow, and a square with an upward-pointing arrow. On the bottom left, there are two small square buttons: one with a left-pointing arrow and one with a right-pointing arrow.

List two specific things that will keep you on the path tomorrow.

An empty rectangular text box with a light beige background and a thin black border. On the right side, there are three vertically stacked buttons: a small square with a right-pointing arrow, a square with a downward-pointing arrow, and a square with an upward-pointing arrow. On the bottom left, there are two small square buttons: one with a left-pointing arrow and one with a right-pointing arrow.

Yes, Lord, walking in the way of Your truth we wait eagerly for You, for Your name and Your renown are the desire of our souls.
Isaiah 26:8

the genesis of the
268 student
declaration



**"Yes, Lord, walking in the way of Your truth we wait eagerly for You, for Your name and Your renown are the desire of our souls."
Isaiah 26:8**

Flowing out of the confession found in Isaiah 26:8, and birthed through Passion Student Conferences, is the 268 Declaration. Consisting of five statements and prayers, this declaration captures the spirit, vision, and commitment of a new generation of students and leaders across the nation and around the world. Neither a simple statement nor a clever conference theme, the 268 Declaration is a challenge for life. Containing the phrase "I desire to magnify," each statement is rooted in the core value of living for the glory of God. Each statement is followed by a prayer, emphasizing that the pursuit of these commitments is a process. These prayers call us to total dependence on the inside work of Christ to transform our desires into realities, recognizing that we could never successfully accomplish such promises in our own strength. Grounded in the unchanging Word of God, each statement is followed by several passages that will prompt further study and application.

To join others around the world in voicing your commitment to the 268 generation, [visit 268generation.com](http://268generation.com) on the Passion Network.