

TEN STEPS TO A RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS

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Mt 15:1-9 – Is 29:13

Col 2:8

Knowing the difference between relationship and religion ... and HAVING a relationship are two distinctly different things. Knowing I'm married to Cookie, and having a relationship with her are two different things. So .. how do know we have a relationship with Jesus? What must we do? Here are some steps we must take to begin that "walk in the light" that we might have that sweet fellowship with Jesus. Note: learning to have a relationship with Jesus will make our relationships with our spouse, friends, church family etc., real, and sweet, for the principles are the same.

- be saved
- make the decision to have a relationship
 - "I have decided to follow Jesus", **Philippians 3:12-14** Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
 - just like making the decision to enter into a relationship with a future bride Paul made the decision to follow Jesus
 - We are either in, or not. Joshua said "choose you this day". A decision had to be made.
 - Moses said "who is on the Lord's side?"

- Jesus was very clear about how he feels about the church that can't make up its mind whether it be hot or cold. Indecision is the same as being luke warm. You must make the decision. Inaction is a decision. **1 Kings 18:21 And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.** Their silence was their decision.
- make the commitment to the decision
 - once the decision is made the commitment to the relationship must be made. Just like in a God centered marriage, the commitment to the marriage must be made. There can be no turning back, no matter what.
 - Once the hand is put to the plough, we must not look back. It is why this verse says that the man who looks back is not fit for the kingdom of heaven. The COMMITMENT to the relationship must be there.
 - A man who marries a woman without this kind of commitment will soon be divorced. It is the same principle.
- kick out the competition
 - God is a jealous God and will not allow any competition. **Exodus 34:14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: 2 Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.** Paul here is talking about the relationship between the bride (the church) and the bridegroom (Jesus). There is no room for secondary relationships.
 - I guarantee you, Cookie will not allow me to have another relationship.

- Any person or activity that takes you away from your relationship with Jesus is competition
 - Hobbies
 - Activities
 - Work
 - Worldly relationships ...including family
 - Religion
 - Anything that would have us contrary to our relationship
- clean out the closet
 - We've talked many times about harbouring feelings, keeping old habits, living in the past. There is no way we can have a meaningful relationship with Jesus if we don't remove the obstacles to that relationship. This includes:
 - Guilt from past sins
 - Besetting sins that we continue to live in
 - Habits and activities that do not honor and glorify the one we seek a relationship with.
 - Grudges against other people, whether in the family of God or not
- make time
 - There can be no relationship if we do not make time for that relationship
 - Time is relative. We can do with it what we want. Sure, there are commitments, but if we really want to, we can find time to be in a meaningful relationship with our Lord.
 - I make it a priority to find the time to call Cookie. If it is important to us, we will make the time.
 - Ep 5:1-16. We must make good use of the time God has given to us
- be sincere
 - Phil 1:9-11

- Relationships cannot be built on hypocrisy, ulterior motives and sarcasm.
- walk the talk
 - 2 Cor. 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
 - Galatians 5:25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.
 - Colossians 1:10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;
 - 1 John 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:
 - We must walk the talk, not just talk the talk.
- recognize (and admit) your weaknesses
 - Jesus does not expect perfection. Thankfully, my wife accepts me just as I am and I know I make plenty of mistakes. Admittedly so. Honesty in a relationship is paramount to it's success.
 - 2 Corinthians 12:9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.
 - 2 Corinthians 13:4 For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.
 - To believe that we stand strong in the relationship on our own is pretentious at best.
- make the call

- Pray. Without ceasing. Every day. All the time. If we have a true relationship with our Lord, we will want to be talking to him constantly.
- read the love letters
 - Deuteronomy 13:1-4 If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.
 - If we have a true relationship with Jesus, we will read the letters.

DO IT NOW!