



Desiring God Isaiah 43:11

The most important new habit disciples need to develop in their walk with God is spending time alone with God reading His Word and praying. This habit has been called having daily devotions. It has been called having a quiet time. I was introduced to this new habit not long after I became a disciple of Jesus. I was challenged to set aside five minutes a day for a daily devotion.

After I came to Western Hills in 1984, the Lord spoke to me and told me that my time alone with Him was more important to Him than anything else I did. He said our prayer meeting together was more important to Him than when I preached for Him.

It has been my habit for the last 34 years to spend at least an hour a day alone with God reading His Word and praying. It is my habit at least two days a week to spend 3-4 hours alone with God in His Word and praying about a message for our church.

One of the most common prayer requests I have received from men I disciple is that they would be more consistent and disciplined in their time alone with God and reading their bible.

I want to share with you my spiritual secret to spending time alone with God reading His Word and in prayer. I long to know God and to be with God.

Have you ever had an incredible longing to be with someone? To have a relationship with them? To know everything about them? Have you had such a great longing to be with someone that you would make great sacrifices to spend time with them and they would do the same for you?

[Song of Solomon 2:8-14](#)

[8 The voice of my beloved! Behold, he comes leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.](#)

[9 My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Behold, he stands behind our wall; He is looking through the windows, gazing through the lattice.](#)

[10 My beloved spoke, and said to me: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.](#)

[11 For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.](#)

[12 The flowers appear on the earth; The time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove Is heard in our land.](#)

13 The fig tree puts forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away!

14 "O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely."

NKJV

The first person I ever longed for like that was my late wife Debbie. After we met in the summer of 1976, we were separated by 405 miles. I did not have a car. When she told me, she was going to be in Fort Worth, Texas, one weekend, I determined that I was going to find a way to go see her. I found a guy on my campus that was heading to Fort Worth for that weekend and asked him if he would give me a ride. I did not even know the guy. Without any money, without a place to stay, and without any guarantee from Debbie that she would be available, I took off with him to Fort Worth to see Debbie. Why? I had this longing to know her that was unlike any longing for someone I had ever experienced.

Even to this day, that longing is so great, if it were possible for me to only spend five minutes with her, I would make any sacrifice to go see her.

Have you ever considered that we should have that kind of longing to know God and to be with Him?

There are people in the bible that expressed this kind of longing for God.

King David had it.

Psalms 42:1-2

42 As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God.

2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?

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In Psalm 73:25

Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You.

Psalms 84:10

10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

NKJV

Paul had it. Paul said....

Philippians 3:7-8

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ

NKJV

I don't just set aside time to be alone with God because it is the right thing to do. I set aside time to be alone with God because I long to know Him and be with Him.

When you long to be with God and to know Him, you do not have to discipline yourself to spend time alone with Him reading His Word and praying. It is not a sacrifice to attend worship service or a prayer meeting. It is not a sacrifice to attend small group.

What if I said to Sandra...

"I know I need to spend time alone with you for the sake of our marriage, so I am going to discipline myself to have lunch with you every Monday?"

Would she be honored if I felt that way?

Wouldn't she be honored if I said...

"I long to be with you and know you, so one of the things I want to do is schedule lunch with you every Monday."

You don't need to discipline yourself to spend time alone with someone you long to know and long to be with. If you have a great longing to be with someone and know them, you must discipline yourself to keep from neglecting other responsibilities because you long to be with them.

What needs to change in us for us to long for God the way David longed for God? The way Paul longed for God?

The day I first met Debbie, we only spent a few minutes talking. But in those few minutes I discovered certain things about her that captured my heart.

- She had a beautiful countenance
- She was grateful
- She was teachable
- She was a leader

My knowledge of her created this longing to be with her and know her.

This is true in our relationship with God. Our longing to be with Him and know Him is created by our knowledge of Him.

To many people theology is an intimidating word. It simply means the study of God. There are things that you can study that would probably never create a longing in you for what you are studying. (Mortuary Science).

Theology based on the truth of the bible should always create in us a longing for God!

But you must study the whole book to have the right theology. You should never pull out a few verses or a few stories from the bible and conclude, "If that is what God is like, I would never want to know Him or be with Him."

During this Christmas season, we are going to learn some things about God that will cause us to long for Him and to long to with Him. I will call these longings, Desiring God.

Where should we begin in our study of God?

Isaiah 43:11

11 I, even I, am the Lord, and besides Me there is no savior.

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He is savior.

In Hebrew, the word Moshia is the word savior or deliverer.

Isaiah lived in Israel in the 8th century BC. In Israel, prior to Isaiah, God's salvation was viewed from a nationalistic perspective. God saved Israel as a nation from other nations.

- Their salvation from the nation of Egypt (Exodus)
- Their salvation from other nations that lived in the promised land (Joshua)
- Their salvation from the nations that enslaved Israel (Judges)
- Their salvation from the nations of the world. (Psalms and the major prophets- Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel)

God is currently still saving Israel as a nation and He will save Israel.

God's salvation on a personal level was limited to supernatural provision to specific individuals through a prophet. (The birth of Isaac; the provision for the widow of Zarephath; the resurrection of her son after he died; Naaman cured of leprosy; the floating of an axe head)

In Isaiah, God's salvation becomes more personal to everyone and not just nationalistic.

What makes salvation more personal is how Isaiah identifies everyone's personal enemies.

- Everyone's personal enemy is the devil.

Isaiah 14:12-15

12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!

13 For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north;

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'

15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit.

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- Everyone's personal enemy is sin.

Isaiah 59:1-2

59 Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear.

2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.

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- Everyone's personal enemy is God's judgment for sin.

Isaiah 2:12-19

12 For the day of the Lord of hosts Shall come upon everything proud and lofty, Upon everything lifted up — And it shall be brought low —

13 Upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan;

14 Upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up;

15 Upon every high tower, and upon every fortified wall;

16 Upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all the beautiful sloops.

17 The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; the Lord alone will be exalted in that day,

18 But the idols He shall utterly abolish.

19 They shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, from the terror of the Lord and the glory of His majesty, when He arises to shake the earth mightily.

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Isaiah 13:6-13

6 Wail, for the day of the Lord is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty.

7 Therefore all hands will be limp, every man's heart will melt,

8 and they will be afraid. Pangs and sorrows will take hold of them; they will be in pain as a woman in childbirth; they will be amazed at one another; their faces will be like flames.

9 Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy its sinners from it.

10 For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be darkened in its going forth, and the moon will not cause its light to shine.

11 "I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

12 I will make a mortal more rare than fine gold, a man more than the golden wedge of Ophir.

13 Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth will move out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts and in the day of His fierce anger.

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Isaiah 34:1-9

34 Come near, you nations, to hear; and heed, you people! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world and all things that come forth from it.

2 For the indignation of the Lord is against all nations, and His fury against all their armies; He has utterly destroyed them, He has given them over to the slaughter.

3 Also their slain shall be thrown out; their stench shall rise from their corpses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.

4 All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll; all their host shall fall down as the leaf falls from the vine, and as fruit falling from a fig tree.

5 "For My sword shall be bathed in heaven; indeed it shall come down on Edom, and on the people of My curse, for judgment.

6 The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made overflowing with fatness, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the Lord has a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom.

7 The wild oxen shall come down with them, and the young bulls with the mighty bulls; their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust saturated with fatness."

8 For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, the year of recompense for the cause of Zion.

9 Its streams shall be turned into pitch, and its dust into brimstone; Its land shall become burning pitch.

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Isaiah promises God would make a way for mankind to be saved from the devil, from sin, and from His judgment.

Isaiah 59:16-21

16 He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; and His own righteousness, it sustained Him.

17 For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.

18 According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, fury to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies; the coastlands He will fully repay.

19 So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun; when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.

20 "The Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," Says the Lord.

21 "As for Me," says the Lord, "this is My covenant with them: My Spirit who is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants, nor from the mouth of your descendants' descendants," says the Lord, "from this time and forevermore."

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Isaiah also promises that the messenger of God's salvation would be someone no one would expect.

Isaiah 7:14

14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

NKJV

Isaiah 9:6-7

6 For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

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Isaiah 53:1-3

53 Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

2 For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.

3 He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

NKJV

God frequently sent angels to provide salvation to the Jews. Isaiah said that God would send His Son born of a virgin to save them from the devil and from sin.

Not only was the messenger someone no one would expect, but the means of God's salvation would be a way no one would expect.

Isaiah 53:4-10

4 Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.

8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.

9 And they made His grave with the wicked — But with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth.

10 Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.

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His Son would die for the sins of the world. His death would provide the way for all mankind to be saved from the devil and from sin.

He is Savior!

Isaiah said that not only would God save us from sin and the devil, but He would save us for eternal life with Him on a new earth with a new heaven.

Isaiah 65:17

17 "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.

NKJV

Isaiah promised God would fulfill on earth every nationalistic prophecy of salvation for Israel, but first He would provide personal salvation for everyone from the devil, from sin, and from God's judgment. He would provide a way for everyone to be saved from this planet polluted by sin and provide a new planet for His followers to live on forever.

Compared to other Old Testament prophets, the prophecies of Isaiah were quoted more by Jesus than any other prophecies. Jesus fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy and He will fulfill every prophecy that is yet to be fulfilled.

He is Savior!

Why would He save us from sin and the devil and save us from for eternal life with Him on a new earth?

God loves us!

[Romans 5:8-9](#)

[8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.](#)

[9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.](#)

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[John 3:16-18](#)

[16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.](#)

[17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.](#)

[18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.](#)

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He loves us, so He saves us!

What a Savior!

If you believe the words of Isaiah and the words of Jesus and you receive Jesus as your savior, you will long to with Him and long to know Him. That longing will change your life and your destiny.

When I first met Sandra, I did not instantly long to with her and to know her. That moment came a few days later in phone call when she showed compassion for my children.

Perhaps you have been introduced to God, but you have not known enough about Him to long to know Him and be with Him. But today, you realize that because of His compassion for you, He sacrificed His Son to save you! He loves you!

He is Savior!

Will you believe in Him and receive Jesus as your savior? Would you declare He is savior!

Perhaps, you have known God as your Savior from the devil, from sin, and from God's judgment, but something has happened to you that has caused your desire for Him to diminish. You are going through the motions of Christianity, but you have lost that passion to know God and to be with God.

We can lose our passion for God if we love the world and the things of the world.

We can lose our passion for God if we allow our suffering to rob us of the joy of our salvation.

We can lose our passion if we neglect our salvation.

What has caused you to lose the passion you had at one time for God.

Will you confess what it is to God? Will you surrender yourself to God? Will you declare today, He is Savior!