

Basic Faith Conversations:

2 – Maintaining Your Relationship with God

Before you began your relationship with God, did you think of God as someone you could know personally?

What quality of relationship would you like to have with God?

The Dynamic Aspect of your Relationship with God

As you develop your relationship with God it is helpful to understand that there is a permanent aspect of your relationship with Him, but also a dynamic quality of the relationship through your on-going fellowship with Him.



The relationship between a mother and child illustrates these two aspects of a relationship.

If a woman has a child, the mother-child blood relationship will always exist. However, certain things may cause the fellowship between the mother and child to be broken, affecting the quality of their relationship.



John 1:12 says that you become God's child when you place your faith in Jesus Christ. Your relationship with God is **secure** and **enduring**. You will always be His child and that will never change regardless of what you do or what may happen.

But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

John 1:12

[\(Explore More\)](#)

But God also wants your relationship to become **close** and **fulfilling**. God wants you to enjoy the type of fellowship with Him described in Revelation 3:20: "I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me."

Read **1 John 1:3-4**.

And indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

1 John 1:3-4

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How would you describe your fellowship with God right now?

Hindrances to your Fellowship with God

Unlike our eternal relationship, our fellowship with God is affected by choices we make.

What types of things put strain on your relationships with other people?

What do you think would strain your fellowship with God?

Sin can be a wrong action or attitude, or even the failure to please God. Before you accepted Jesus into your life, your sin – your rejection of God and His will for you – kept you from being able to have a relationship with God. Sin in a person's life makes them unacceptable to God because God is holy and cannot condone sin.

According to **Hebrews 10:10,17-18**, what happened to the barrier of sin and to you when you accepted God's gift of new life through Christ?

... we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. . . he adds, "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more." And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary.

Hebrews 10:10,17-18

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Since Christ died to forgive all your sins and make you acceptable to Him, is there anything you need to do in addition to this to make up for your sins?

As a Christian, even though your sins are forgiven and you have new life, you still have the ability to sin. Your desires and old habits may tempt you and you may make wrong choices, deciding to ignore or disobey God and pursue your own will.

How would you expect God to react to this?

How does **Psalms 103:10-13** describe God's response to when His children sin?

He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.

Psalm 103:10-13

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There are consequences to sin, however. When you sin as a Christian, the sin causes your fellowship with God to be broken and you begin to become estranged from Him even though He remains your heavenly Father.

Based on **Isaiah 59:2**, if you sin, can you still enjoy fellowship with God?

but your iniquities [sins] have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

Isaiah 59:2

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Restoring your Fellowship with God

As a compassionate Father, God has made it possible to restore your fellowship even after you have disobeyed, ignored, or betrayed Him. He is willing to do this because you are now in Christ and every sin – past, present, and future – was paid for when Christ gave His life for you.

You restore fellowship by turning back to God and expressing to Him your sorrow for the sin, your thankfulness for His forgiveness, and your desire to change. This is called confession or repentance.

1 John 1:8-9 points to three aspects

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:8-9

([Explore More](#))

1. **Acknowledge to God that your sin was wrong** and has become a barrier to your fellowship with God.
2. **Thank God that He already forgave you** for that sin by accepting Christ's death as payment for it.
3. **Ask God to change your heart** so that next time you choose God's way rather than your own.



Whenever you realize you have disobeyed God or there is some sin in your life, immediately confess it to Him. You may use words similar to these:

“Father, I am sorry for my sin. Thank you that through Christ you have forgiven and cleansed me. Please change my desires so I no longer pursue this sin, but seek to please you instead.”

Once we have honestly confessed our sins, we can experience joy and freedom from guilt.

Based on **Romans 8:1**, why should you not feel shame or guilt after confessing sin?

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:1

([Explore More](#))

Is there any sin for which you still feel guilt or one you feel God could not forgive?

- ✝ If so, stop now and write your sin on a piece of paper.
- ✝ After confessing it to God, write **1 John 1: 9** and **Romans 8: 1** over it.
- ✝ Thank God that through Christ this sin was fully forgiven and your guilt removed.
- ✝ Now tear up the paper as a reminder that it is gone.

In the book of Psalms, David shares his experience of how his sin affected his fellowship with God. Read **Psalms 32:1-5**.

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;

my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.

I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity;

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Psalms 32:1-5

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What was David's experience before he confessed his sin?

What indicates that his fellowship with God has been restored?

Thankfulness for what God has graciously done and continues to do for you is vital to developing a closer relationship. Your relationship with God will be built on love and appreciation, rather than guilt and obligation.

Summing up your thoughts on this topic:

What have you learned about God's heart towards you?

Which truths could you share with someone to help or encourage them in their faith?

This week read one passage each day. Consider what it says about God's heart. Thank God for His incredible love and forgiveness that allows you to have fellowship.

Luke 15:11-32

And he said, "There was a man who had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.”’ And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate.

For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.

“Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant.

And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound.' But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, 'Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!' And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

[\(Explore More\)](#)

Colossians 2:13-14

And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

[\(Explore More\)](#)

Isaiah 53:4-6

Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought
us peace,

and with his wounds we are healed.

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.

[\(Explore More\)](#)

1 John 1:5-2:2

This is the message we have heard from him
and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in
him is no darkness at all. If we say we have
fellowship with him while we walk in
darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.
But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light,
we have fellowship with one another, and the
blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.
If we say we have no sin, we deceive
ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

[\(Explore More\)](#)

Romans 8:31-39

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[\(Explore More\)](#)

Luke 7:36-50

One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.”

Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher."

"A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly."

Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

[\(Explore More\)](#)