

Deeper Walk 6. 5/2/23

Friendship with God. – Elizabeth Jordaan

What is your first thought when you wake up in the morning? For some people it might be... I still want to sleep. Or... oh no! I can't face today. But then there are people who look forward to the new day. Maybe there is a brand new romance! I can't wait to see her or him today! Let me quickly check if there is a message on my phone... Or, today is the first day of a new job! Finally my dream is coming true...

What was our Creator God's first thought at the dawn of each new day in the Garden of Eden? Maybe, I can't wait to see Adam today! God created people because He wanted to adopt people as His own children (Eph.1:5). God wants the company of people every day. He wants to do even more than that. He pours out all His spiritual blessing on people (Eph.1:3). He wants to love people. He wants to be good to people. He wants to see that people are full of joy and happy to know Him. He wants to dwell with people! (Rev. 21:3).

Adam's sin did not thwart this purpose of God. In fact, God's dream is more possible now than it was in the Garden of Eden. It is possible for any person to experience the indwelling of God in the human heart. But it all starts with a simple walk with God.

A friendship begins with a meeting or an introduction. First, I have to meet someone, find out what their name is, see what they look like, hear how they speak and listen to what they say. I have to pay attention to his body language, and look into his eyes to see if he is friendly or not, if he is happy to see me or not. I have to see if he is smiling or if he is grumpy. And then something happens in one's heart. A friendship is born. The friendship grows when I discover that the person has the same interests as me, wants to talk about the same things, stimulates my thoughts and causes my best qualities to emerge. It grows even closer when I see that the person makes sacrifices to meet me and is happy to spend time with me. Over time, a close bond of friendship develops. Even if the friendship is tested by all kinds of difficulties, especially when tested, it grows deeper. The deepest growth is when we go through tremendous challenges together, facing life and death situations together, and can trust each other. In a deep, secure friendship I can share the deepest secrets of my heart with the person, and know that I will not be rejected, but will be loved unconditionally. God wants to be such a friend to you.

God wanted to be such a friend to Adam. After the fall, God did not stop longing for people as friends. Abel's sacrifice pleased God. God himself testified how it blessed Him (Heb.11:4). In the time of Enos (Adam's grandson), people began to worship God the Creator, but it was only in the 7th generation that God found a human friend after His heart: Enoch.

ENOCH WALKED WITH GOD. We read this twice in succession in Genesis 5:22 and 5:24. The word "walk" can also be translated as "accompanied" or "follow in the footsteps". Enoch accompanied God on His walks! He followed in God's footsteps. What a wonderful thought. Enoch's walk with God was so intimate and intense that God revealed to him one of His deepest secrets - the second coming of Christ!

- "It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."" (Jude 1:14-15)

Enoch's friendship so pleased God, that God fetched him and took him to heaven! Enoch did not die, God just took him.

NOAH WALKED WITH GOD. Noah was also God's friend. Noah lived in a scary dangerous time. It was in Noah's time that people's hearts became wicked and that God even said that every intention of the thoughts of their hearts were only evil, continually. God was deeply saddened and filled with grief, and He regretted that He had ever made people. He decided to simply wipe off all humans and animals off the face of the earth because He was sorry that He made them. It was to be the greatest extinction ever of all life on earth. But... there was one man who held God's heart captive... Noah. NOAH WALKED WITH GOD. He was the only person left who lived close to God. He was the only friend with whom God could share His deep sorrow regarding the condition of humans. Noah was God's friend.

- "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God." (Gen.6:8-9)

Many years later, long after the flood, God found a friend again - Abraham. What did God see in Enoch, Noah and Abraham that led Him to call these men His friends? Just one thing: FAITH. Faith that God exists, and faith that God loves and wants to befriend people.

- "and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God." (Jam.2:23)

Friendship with God is not cheap. It is also not built with skimpy times of 1 minute with God or 5 minutes with God daily devotionals. Friendship with God is built during long uninterrupted intimate fellowship with the living God. Long times just being with Him, getting to know Him, discovering His character, discerning His voice, obeying His word, experiencing His love, carrying out His orders, loving His ways, knowing His Son, honouring your body as the temple of His Spirit, believing His promises, experiencing His provision, learning to trust Him. Friendship with God does not go together with friendship with the world, and the enjoyment and pleasures the world offers. Friendship with God is exclusive - no other gods are welcome. Friendship with God is time-consuming because if you have Him as a friend, then you want to spend time with Him. Friendship with God makes you a friendly person because God's kindness rubs off on you. God's goodness rubs off on you. His patience, His love, His peace, His joy, His mercy, His generosity, His merciful mercy on widows, orphans, fatherless, poor, lonely, outcasts, sinners, all of it rubs off on you. You receive His character in your inner being. Your behaviour changes. You are transformed into a child of God that looks just like His Son.

Are you a friend of God?

PRAYER: Father, Creator God, I want to be Your friend. I want to know You as a friend. I want to know Your Son. I want to know Your Spirit. I want to know Your voice. I want to know You. I want to know everything about You. I give you my time. I give my life to You. Here I am. Meet me now. Teach me to walk with You. I love You.