

Developing Intimacy With Jesus

Our King cannot return until the Bride is ready.

Our King, The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, is coming back to marry his Bride. His bride is his people, but the Bride has to be ready.

For the Bride to be ready, there has to be a significant number of believers who are operating in oneness with him. Oneness is the level he's looking for because marriage at its pinnacle is about oneness. So, he's looking for a collection of people who will be in oneness with him. I don't know what the number is, but the number will fit a mathematical formula that will produce a tipping point. From that number he'll make a decision on his return – all other things being fulfilled.

The basis of oneness is intimacy. We need to have intimacy with our Bridegroom King if that is to develop into oneness. Oneness is related to, and based on, intimacy. Intimacy is what Father is interested in, what Holy Spirit is interested in, and what our Bridegroom King is interested in.

We've been talking about intimacy for a long time. We know it's about our communication with him, and our time spent with him. But there's more to intimacy than those 2 things. Terry Bennett spells this out quite strongly in his teaching at the end of 2016. He shows from his experience that the intimacy the Lord is looking for is based on communication, time spent, love, PLUS being transformed into his image. This is because a bridegroom is looking for a bride who has a certain set of characteristics.

Here is what Terry had to say about character and maturity as part of intimacy:

“God doesn't train you, even in intimacy, through prayer alone. Intimacy is more widespread than just our prayer life, though our prayer life is extraordinarily important. It is a part of our intimacy, but only a component of it – I will give it a 10%. You say “What?” Yes, because God is not making us isolated and insulated from this world. The mundane is incredibly important to God. What's going on at work is not just important to you, it's important to the Lord. What's going on in your marriage should be important to us, because it's important to the Lord. What's going on in his house¹, in the relationships, is extraordinarily important to the Lord. Whether they are under the hand of the Lord or they are under our hand, or any other. All of that is extraordinarily important. I can't spend a whole lot of time on it, but I just want to mention it to you.

We think intimacy is only a matter of prayer, but you can pray and pray and pray and transformation never occurs. And God is after transformation, not just time spent. Transfiguration² comes from all that we're facing: his life applied in every situation; his life ruling in me in every dynamic; every event. It's proven there in conflict, not in isolation. God has not called us to be monks, separated and isolated from this world. He has called us to be in the world, just not of it. And, the world to have nothing in us, but to be completely subjugated to the Spirit of Christ is for the world to have no grip on us. We use it without it having anything on us.

Money has no meaning to us. Don't misunderstand me, you need money. Well yes, in the system you do. But money must never become our source, our focus – you know that. I'm just being simplistic. Those kinds of things are tests. And too much of the Church wants to isolate itself, “Well, I just need to get along with the Lord and there you'll experience the transformation of God”. I tell you a better way to experience the transformation of God, get married. Get in a real meaningful relationship with another person, under the hand of God – don't misunderstand me – under the hand of God. Get in a meaningful relationship with another person and persons, and watch God work on you. You don't need a prophet. All you need is a wife or a husband. You don't need God to tell you what's wrong, your wife will do that – the same thing with husbands. I'm jokingly saying this but I mean it.

I had a good friend of mine who wanted to go off to Utah, up in the mountains, and just be alone with the Lord. He would write me these long, long letters. “Terry, I just don't understand, I'm really not

1 – i.e. The religious term for a church organisation in a church building

2 – i.e. Being changed into the likeness of Christ

*seeing any advancement in the Lord. What about persecution, should I start beating myself?" I said "No. The reason you're not being persecuted is that you're not around the Church. Come back and join a church, you'll get enough persecution". That's what I told him. I said "Who's going to persecute you out there? The mountain lions might want to eat you but they don't want to persecute you". He was up in the mountains of Utah with nobody up there. "What, is God going to send the angels down just to beat you for a while? Come join the church"."*³

Our Bridegroom King is looking for a bride who has his character, who bears his image. It's his image that he'll be drawn to, not any other image. Not a religious image, not a secular image, not a personal image, nor any theologically contrived image. He's looking for oneness with those who bear his image.

Character development produces the image of Christ-likeness and it occurs in community where there is openness, transparency and vulnerability. Here, each person's foibles triggers the darkness that's in others. This is how the Spirit shows us our hearts – the place where transformation needs to take place. This is one reason why meeting as a Kingdom Community and hanging out together is critical for our growth and development.

It's all up to us, individually. If we want to be part of the Bride, intimacy and oneness with him is not optional.

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3 – Extracted from: "Unto His Full Measure 1A" - Terry Bennett [1:14:10-1:19:00]
(soundcloud.com/terrybennettministries/1-unto-his-full-measure-terry-11-18-16-part-1mp3)