

more to be GET REAL WITH GOD

and He will get real with you

You know how to read. You know how to think. You know how to speak. You know how to hear. So why don't you understand the Scriptures? Why can't you hear from God? Why are you speechless when it comes time to pray? Because it takes time and dedication to learn how to hear God's voice, to understand and apply the Scriptures, and to be real with God in your conversations with Him.

Getting real with God requires a commitment and sacrifice on your part. In order to grow in your faith, you will need to devote time each day to Scripture reading, memorization, and study, along with a time of prayer spent both speaking and listening to God. It may sound like too much to you, but trust me, the rewards of this investment are well worth the costs.

Make a the decision right now to give God your whole-hearted effort, and I am certain you will see tremendous growth in your spiritual walk. Follow these simple ideas to launch into a step-by-baby-step Get Real journey!

Step 1. Receive His Love Letter

Instead of thinking of the Bible as a history book or a bound set of laws, look at it as your Heavenly Father's love letter to you. A true love letter doesn't simply pay superficial compliments. No, a sincere love letter includes words of wisdom and instructions for your benefit as well as warnings of things to be careful of as you live your life. God is not about the business of holding us bound to some set of rules. No, God's truth sets us free to live a life within the safe boundaries of His instructions and love.

*Then you
will know the
truth, and the
truth will set
you free.*
John 8:32

The Bible is to be read with with an inquisitive mind and eager heart. Instead of searching Scripture for answers, read it in such a way that the Holy Spirit can draw upon it to change your thinking and behavior. Keep these questions in the forefront of your mind:

- What is the point and lesson of this passage?
- Who is it written about?
- Who is it written to?
- What does this reveal about God's character?
- What does this reveal about my character?

- What solution does this Scripture offer?

The key to living a real life with God comes from trusting that His Word is authentic and meant to be applied.

Step 2. Set a Course and Stick with It!

As you read the Scriptures on a daily basis, with an inquisitive mind and eager heart, the Word will become a source of encouragement, wisdom, and hope. However, if you simply jump around the Bible without a plan, you'll find that you'll likely become overwhelmed and bored. Therefore, pick a Bible reading plan and stick with it for at least 30 days. Change it up when you've reached your goal. Try to get involved in a Bible study with others, or even online, to grow in the Word. Consider these ideas for focused Bible reading:

1. Pick a plan that takes you through the Bible in a year.
2. Choose a book in the Bible and read a chapter a day, and enhance your learning using a study guide.
3. Create your own key-word study plan using BibleGateway.com or a concordance.
4. Study the people of the Bible, looking at their character, circumstances, and lessons learned.

Bible study will transform your ordinary faith into a vibrant relationship with God. God wants to use the Word to to teach you about who He really is and who you really are in His sight!

Step 3. Give Him Your Heart and Time

Becoming real with God also requires taking time to speak with Him. You won't grow close to God if you just holler at Him in times of trouble. God desires for you to speak to Him about every detail of your life. Plus, sharing your concerns with Him will relieve your stress! Set aside time every day to pray:

- ✓ use a journal to record your thoughts
- ✓ take a walk and speak aloud
- ✓ close your eyes, bow your head, get on your knees and pray

Don't close your prayer time without pausing to listen to God. Yes, He will speak to your heart. It may sound like your voice in your head, but if what you hear is true to Scripture and consistent with His character, it is God speaking! The more you study Scripture, the more you'll discern the voice of God. Plus, you can always turn to a mature Believer to verify if what you think you hear is actually God speaking. As you learn to hear, and heed, the Lord's instructions, your faith will grow by leaps and bounds.

Don't miss this opportunity to spend time with God every day. Devote 20 minutes -- any time of the day -- to the study of Scripture and prayer, and you will be blessed!