

3. GOD-SEEKING FLUENCY

Ministry *for* God without intimacy *with* God is a dead work. Mission to the world without a connection with the God who loves the world is a filthy rag. Anything of eternal consequence flows out of our relationship with Father. Far too much of the ministry being attempted today is deprived of the soul-morphing effect of an intimate encounter with God.

David said, “The intimate friendship of the Lord is reserved for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant.” (Psalm 25:14) His response? “My eyes are ever towards the Lord.” (25:15) This fluency speaks to the need for intimacy with God.

This lack of intimacy is a fundamental problem for so many Christians in general and leaders in particular. It's like a travel agent selling time shares for a property she's never seen. Or a vegan waiter pushing meat loaf he's never tasted. The pictures look good and the food smells great, but the experience is second-hand. Far too many believers are bored with their relationship with God. Like spiritual pornographers, they attend (and lead!) religious gatherings to watch other people encounter God, while they themselves are lifeless and dull, wearied by the “duties” associated with “serving” God.

Spiritual leaders *must* have first-hand experiences with God in order to lead people to have first-hand experiences with God. We intend to mobilize movements of people who will make the first commandment their first priority. We love God. And how does this manifest in the real world? We begin by seeking God.

Our eternal *position* changes the moment we reorient our trust from our righteousness to Jesus'. We change. We are born from above. But we still have an ongoing need for this same kind of reorientation at the *practical* level. This involves our activity, attention, and energy. The human soul is a fickle thing. Nothing short of direct abiding in Jesus and allowing His words to abide in us will do the trick.

“And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.” (Mark 1:35)

If we want to reflect our King, and represent our King, we must *imitate* our King. And before the sun had even risen, He would find a solitary place – a place to shut the door on distraction. To shut the door on temptation. To shut the door on all competitors for his attention. Because behind the shut door Father gets the monopoly. In fact, this is precisely how Jesus taught us to seek His face: *go, shut the door, and pray to your Father who is in secret.* (Matthew 6:6)

We challenge people to be extravagant in their devotion. We equip people to move from duty to delight. We expect every leader to spend the first fruit of their day in the Secret Place. We expect every pastor to commit two hours per day in the Secret Place. We call people to the place of encounter with God.

Suggested books: Why Revival Tarries, Secrets of the Secret Place, The Hour that Changes the World, The Praying Life