

Growing in Spiritual Maturity at Front Range

Spiritual Intimacy

Spiritual intimacy relates to our closeness with the heart of God. God is not distant from us, but desires intimacy. Whether you're starting from scratch, or trying to get a refresh on your spiritual intimacy, here are some ways you can grow in this:

- **Keep showing up** – Set an expectation for yourself that you'll attend a church service every week, and schedule it on your calendar. The Bible tells us to gather together as believers because God knows how much we need each other. When you show up, you worship, you learn, and you form relationships. You'll need a strong foundation as you face life's trials and temptations. What happens at church on Sunday is an important part of building that foundation.
- **Spend time in prayer** – If you need a roadmap to help you spend time with God in prayer, try this:
 - o **Adoration:** Spend time "adoring" God for who He is and what He's done. Get specific. What brings you awe and amazement about God? Tell Him.
 - o **Confession:** Is there any sin in your life that you need to confess and repent of? Take some time and listen for God to bring up anything you may have missed, and then know that Jesus' sacrifice covers you.
 - o **Thanksgiving:** What are you thankful for? What good has happened that you can thank God for?
 - o **Supplication:** Pray for your needs and the needs of others.
- **Worship** – Worship is not just singing at church, it's giving worth and honor to God because He alone is worthy. Worship can take many different forms, and it's easy to get stuck in a set way of "worshiping God." Try something different that you've never done before to engage with God, like going on a hike and praying during that time.
- **Fasting** – Fasting is removing something from the natural to focus on the supernatural for a set period of time. Whenever you're tempted by food or social media (or whatever you fast), take that time to pray and engage with God.

Here are some books that you can check out to grow in this area:

- *"Rooted,"* by Banning Liebscher
- *"Crazy Love,"* by Francis Chan
- *"The Circle Maker"* and *"Whisper"* by Mark Batterson

Questions for reflection:

- When is the last time you felt like you heard from God or felt His presence? What led to that experience?
- Is there any unconfessed sin in your life that could be a roadblock to your fellowship with God? Spend time working through that and know that God paid the price for your sins and casts them as far as the East is from the West (Psalm 103)! He wants to be close to you and took care of everything to make that possible.

Biblical Knowledge

God's Word is His primary method of speaking to us. We learn the character, principles and commandments of God through His Word. Through the Bible, we learn more about who God is, what He says to us and about us, and what we're called to do in this journey of following Jesus. Here are some resources to help you grow in your Biblical Knowledge:

- **Get a Bible you understand and want to read** – It may seem elementary but being able to grow in your knowledge of the Bible requires that you actually understand what you're reading. If you don't already have one, find a Bible that is written in a language that you actually speak. We give away Bibles at our Sunday services, so grab one from the auditorium if you need it. Those are there for you! [You can also grab a study Bible](#) that includes commentaries written by Biblical scholars to help you process what you're reading.
- **Download YouVersion** – One of the best apps you can download to your phone is the YouVersion Bible App. This free app gives you access to a ton of resources to help you get into the Bible. There are multiple translations available, as well as Reading Plans to help give you a guide to reading Scripture. This app can remind you to read each day at a certain time that you choose. There are ways to highlight and save Scriptures that stand out, as well as take notes on things you want to come back to.
- [BlueLetterBible.org](#) – This website (and app) can help you take a deeper step into understanding the meaning behind Scripture. There are resources to learn more about the original languages and meanings of the Scriptures that we read. It's a huge resource to be able to dig into as deep as you want to go.
- [Right Now Media](#): This website gives you access to hundreds of video studies to help you grow and increase your Biblical knowledge. There are video studies from many great pastors and teachers, all available for free with a login to Right Now Media. If you would like access, simply email jonnysharp@frontrange.org

Which sounds most like you?

"I love to read and want to get as much as I can as fast as I can get it."

You're a great candidate to start at the beginning with the Book of Genesis and read all the way through Revelation.

"I'm overwhelmed, but want to get started."

You don't have to read the entire Bible cover to cover right away. If you want to begin with a handful of books, these will give you a decent overview: Genesis, Exodus, Luke, Acts, James, 1 Peter.

"I can only handle one book right now."

Start with either the Book of Luke or John. Your choice! You'll learn a lot about Jesus and his ministry, and you'll also learn what it means to be a Christian.

No matter where you start, God's Word is alive and active (Hebrews 4:12). He wants to speak to you and help you grow in your Biblical Knowledge. Engage with His Word and He will show up!

Holy Obedience

Spiritual Intimacy Comes First

Some people believe Christians blindly follow the rules of an invisible, untouchable God – so it makes sense they wouldn't want to obey His commands. That's why spiritual intimacy always comes first. It sets the foundation for holy obedience. If you don't have that important, loving relationship on which to build, go back and start with Spiritual Intimacy.

Biblical Knowledge Is Key

The same goes for Biblical knowledge. Without reading and understanding God's word, you won't know exactly what Christians believe and why we seek to please God. Once you've deepened your Spiritual Intimacy, make sure you've broadened your Biblical Knowledge.

Now you're ready!

Spiritual Intimacy and Biblical Knowledge have equipped you for Holy Obedience, but what does that mean? It means every time you're presented with a decision, you look through the lens of God's truth and choose your next step wisely. You follow God's instructions for living – even when it's hard.

Ask yourself these questions when you're faced with a decision:

1. *Is this true – what does the Bible say about this issue?*
2. *Am I feeding my own desires or living the life God desires for me?*
3. *Is this a decision or behavior that God can bless?*

Listen for God's prompts and act.

1. *Do you sense God asking you to help someone? Do it and pray with them.*
2. *Does it feel like God has stirred an idea within you to serve His kingdom? Make it happen.*
3. *Has God shown you a next step you should take in your faith – being baptized, volunteering, stepping up spiritually at home, going on a mission trip? Take the step!*

Holy obedience is anything but boring.

Obedience can be a wild ride! Sometimes through obedience, we step out into bold, new territories where the stakes are high. Remember: When you listen to God and follow His commands, you've opened the gates of Heaven for God to pour out His favor. It's a beautiful and rich cycle – the more you obey, the closer your relationship becomes, and the more you seek Him.

What if I fail?

Romans 3:23-24 says, *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."* God doesn't require your perfection. He longs for your persistence, but His love is unconditional. When you sin, confess it quickly and recommit to holy obedience.