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As God's beloved children, the most important relationship we will ever develop and enjoy in our lives is the one we have with our heavenly Father. Because of His unconditional love and unfathomable giving toward us, He deserves to be number one in our hearts, spurring total devotion, praise, and love.

This quality love relationship is with our heavenly Father, not with His works. We want a relationship with the Giver, not with what we've been given; with the Forgiver, not with the forgiveness; with the Healer, not with the healing. We want to know the Creator, not just the creation. When I'm sitting on my little beach chair on a white, soft, warm sandy beach, enjoying the rhythmical waves coming ashore, the blue sky, and the sparkling water, I certainly enjoy the peace and beauty. But my thoughts do not stop there. I think of the magnificence of Him Who made the oceans and the tides and the blue and the sparkle. We love our heavenly Father! What an awesome God He is!

How do we develop this relationship with our heavenly Father? Let's look at Jesus Christ. He certainly enjoyed a quality relationship with his heavenly Father. By following Jesus Christ's example of how he developed this relationship, we too can develop and enjoy a loving, tender, intimate relationship with our heavenly Father. Because we can do the works of Jesus Christ, we can apply the principles he applied.

John 14:12:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

One principle Jesus Christ applied was that he faithfully studied the written Word. This helped him to know God and to learn about God's love for him. Taking the time to get to know someone is the first step to building a relationship with them. Jesus was diligent and faithful to study the Scriptures before he was even twelve years old!

Luke 2:46,47:

And it came to pass, that after three days they [Joseph and Mary] found him [Jesus] in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

By the time Jesus Christ began his ministry, he had faithfully read and studied the Scriptures to the point that he was knowledgeable of “all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man.”

Luke 18:31:

Then he [Jesus] took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

Jesus Christ took the time to study the Scriptures so that he understood God’s will. He took the time to get to know his heavenly Father by way of the written Word. We can invest priority time studying the Word too! We make time for what is important to us.

Another principle Jesus Christ applied was that he kept his heart meek and tender to obey God and His Word.

John 6:38:

For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

John 8:29:

And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

In response to God’s love for him, Jesus Christ made the freewill decision to please God and to live according to God’s will. What tenderness this would have brought to the relationship. As we encounter situations throughout the day, we can choose to keep our hearts meek and to act according to God’s Word. As beloved children, we want to please Him in all we do.

Psalms 19:14:

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.

To apply this as situations come up, we can ask ourselves, “What does the Word say about this?” and then we act accordingly. If we don’t know the answer yet, we can search the Scriptures. We can build a habit of staying meek to God and His Word.

A third principle Jesus Christ applied was to spend time with his Father in prayer.

Mark 1:35:

And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

Jesus Christ started his day prayerfully and continued in prayer throughout the day. He had an abundant prayer life, seeking God, opening his heart to the Father, and keeping Him involved in his daily life. Like Jesus Christ, we can start each day prayerfully and continue throughout the day. We run to God first in all situations. We never want to run away from Him, give Him the silent treatment, or turn to Him as a last resort. God always wants us near Him. He is first, and we fully share our thoughts and lives with him. As we go to God in prayer, we keep Him intimately involved in our lives.

Psalms 62:5,8:

*My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.
Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him:
God is a refuge for us. Selah.*

What an inspiring example Jesus Christ is to us. We can do the works of Jesus Christ: study God’s Word, keep our hearts meek to obey God and His Word, and go to God in prayer. Like Jesus Christ, we can put these keys and principles into practice, helping us to further develop a loving and tender relationship with God.

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