

INTRODUCTION: LEVITICUS 9

- Man was made for intimacy, oneness with God
- When God said let us make man in our image, in our likeness... in the same way that God exists in eternal oneness... Father, Son and Holy Spirit... God made man to exist in the eternal oneness of relationship
- You could say that man was God's first love

As Paul wrote to the Corinthian church

1 Corinthians 1:9 (NKJV)

⁹ God *is* faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

- This is where we are in the Book of Leviticus
- God calling Moses from the tabernacle of meeting said...

Leviticus 1:2 (NKJV)

² "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When any one of you brings an offering to the LORD

- The word "offering" is "korban" and it means to "draw near"
- We've looked at how the 5 offerings represent man's desire, man's decision to willingly drawn near to God

But in Leviticus 9 we see God's desire to be close to man

Leviticus 9:22–24 (NKJV)

²² Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people, blessed them, and came down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and peace offerings. ²³ And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of meeting, and came out and blessed the people. Then the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people, ²⁴ and fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw *it*, they shouted and fell on their faces.

- Here we see God recognizing and accepting the people's desire to draw near to the LORD... He put His YES on their YES
- God responds by showing them His Glory... His Presence
- NOTICE: The glory of the LORD appeared to all the people and when the people saw it they shouted with joy and worshipped the LORD

- Why? Because God desires intimacy with man for man was created for intimacy with God
- There are 5 kinds of intimacy that we can experience with God
- Each one builds on the other

The first I call the INTIMACY OF SALVATION (SIN OFFERING)

- When you experienced God's saving power for the first time
- After God delivered the nation of Israel from Egyptian bondage and defeated the Egyptian army... God spoke to them at Sinai

Exodus 19:4–6 (NKJV)

⁴ 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. ⁵ Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth *is* Mine. ⁶ And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

- God reveals Himself by delivering them out of Egypt, carrying them on eagles' wings and bringing them to Himself
- God says to Israel... obey My voice and keep My covenant and Israel answered together and said... all that the LORD has spoken we will do!
- I remember when God revealed Himself to me
- I heard God call me to Himself and I felt the overwhelming love of God
- I remember vowing in my heart... I will follow you all the days of my life
- I would spend hours worshipping the LORD and reading His Word
- This is what the Bible refers to as "young love"
- It's a thankful love, an expressive love, an excited love
- It's so exciting to see people come to Jesus, to hear their testimonies and there are churches that are built on the intimacy of salvation
- Every week people are getting saved and it's wonderful
- But there's another kind of intimacy

I call it the INTIMACY OF PRESENCE (BURNT OFFERING)

- After God delivers Israel from Egyptian bondage, He leads them into the wilderness where they experience God's Presence
- God descends upon Mount Sinai and establishes His Kingdom in the midst of Israel

- At the end of Exodus, God descends on the Tabernacle of Meeting

Exodus 40:34–35 (NKJV)

³⁴ Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ³⁵ And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

God led the nation with His Presence

Exodus 40:36–38 (NKJV)

³⁶ Whenever the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle, the children of Israel would go onward in all their journeys. ³⁷ But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not journey till the day that it was taken up. ³⁸ For the cloud of the LORD was above the tabernacle by day, and fire was over it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

- Every house of Israel saw the Presence of God
- Every house of Israel experienced the Presence of God
- They felt the rush of exhilaration as the fire of God wooshed from the Tabernacle and the heat of the fire on their skin as it consumed the offerings in Leviticus 9
- They saw the Presence of God in the cloud by day and the fire by night
- When Lonnie Frisbee prayed for me I felt the Presence of God like 1000 volts of electricity... it was real
- There is an intimacy with God that we can only experience through an encounter with His Presence
- There are many churches built on being “addicted” to God’s Presence
- They love the emotional high, to feel the power of God
- But there is still another kind of intimacy

I call it the INTIMACY OF FRIENDSHIP (PEACE OFFERING)

- Only 2 people in the entire Bible that were called friends of God

Abraham was called a friend of God

James 2:23 (NKJV)

²³ And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*” And he was called the friend of God.

Moses was called a friend of God

Exodus 33:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.

Friendship is based on trust that is built through life experience

- Abraham believed in the LORD and that was the basis of His friendship and as a result God shared His plans with Abraham
- Genesis 18:17 God said... shall I hide anything from Abraham what I am about to do?
- When the LORD spoke to Moses... it says He spoke face to face... there was nothing between the LORD and Moses
- The word “speaks” suggests that God conversed with Moses... not just commanded... but had a conversation... back and forth
- The word can also include laughter and singing
- There was a reciprocal relationship... and that is what friendship is

But what blows me away... is Jesus calls you and I His friend

John 15:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

- Friendship has special privileges...
- Jesus reveals everything He has heard from the Father to His friends
- Friendship with God is wonderful... He is the best friend ever
- But there is still another kind of intimacy

I call it the INTIMACY OF FAMILY (PEACE OFFERING)

- In Leviticus 1:2 the LORD calls Moses to speak to the children of Israel
- To God, they were more than a nation they were family
- As close as you can be to your friends, your family will always be closer
- They see you at your best and they see you at your worst
- No matter how bad you are, they are still your family
- Your friends might forsake you... but my family will always be my family

Here's an amazing revelation... God calls you and I family

1 John 3:1 (NKJV)

3 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!

John 1:12 (NKJV)

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

- The only people who can interrupt my busy schedule is my family
- They don't need an appointment, they aren't afraid of getting fired
- They move into my house, eat my food, use my things... they're family

There are privileges to being in God's family

- Hebrews 4:16 says we can come boldly into the throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace in time of need
- Romans 8:16-17 says I am heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ
- Everything that the Father gives to the Son is given to us
- Now... if you and could grasp the power of that statement
- The power, the authority, the promises, the permission to represent the King of all Kings... it's all ours because we are God's Family
- I wish I had the full revelation of this kind of INTIMACY
- But we are not beggars in the house of God, pleading and begging God for help... we are His children and if we being human know how to bless our kids... how much more does God bless His kids!
- But as great as it is to be a son and daughter of God, there is still one more kind of intimacy

I call it the INTIMACY OF ONENESS (BURNT OFFERING)

John 10:30 (NKJV)

30 I and My Father are one."

- There was no separation between Jesus and the Father, they were ONE
- Jesus had the Father's heart, thought the Father's thoughts, did whatever He saw the Father doing... He perfectly represented the Father
- I wish I had this... I only have fleeting moments of this
- But I know God desires this for all of us

John 17:21 (NKJV)

21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

- Jesus prayed that we would be ONE in US (Father, Son and Holy Spirit)

This kind of ONENESS is given by revelation

John 17:22 (NKJV)

22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:

- The only way we can get it is to receive it from Jesus Himself by faith
- We receive this Oneness when we receive a new heart of flesh, when we receive the mind of Christ, when we become a new creation
- The life I live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loves me and gave Himself for me
- It's when I think His thoughts, have His heart and demonstrate His love by allowing myself to be a vessel of His power to save
- This level of intimacy can't be faked... people will know if you reflect Jesus or not
- There are very few that actually experience this level of intimacy with God and the ones that do will enter into His glory, but also His sufferings
- There's a cost to being intimate with God... It's part of the package... the world hated Jesus, the world will hate those who are one with Jesus
- Paul said I count all things loss in view of the surpassing greatness of knowing Jesus

Now all 5 kinds of intimacy build on each other

- But one isn't better than the other
- They are all unique, but they are the same in one aspect...
- You can only experience them if you want to, if you desire to
- The Intimacy of Salvation, Presence, Friendship, Family or Oneness... they are all entered into voluntarily...
- God doesn't force you to be intimate with Him... He invites you, but it's up to you to accept the invitation to intimacy with God
- It will cost you everything you have, but I can guarantee you this... you will be so overwhelmed by God's love you will wish you had more to give