

## Fear of Intimacy and Loneliness

April 2, 2019



Thank you, Lord, for explaining the deep things in human nature that seem without reason. Please Lord, touch the lonely hearts and bring them into the intimacy of knowing You as their Spouse.

My dear family, it has been a very interesting and challenging month for us. Bringing together a potential for a very fertile combination, the Lord brought a special friend into our family—but he did not want to stay. I understand the words he used to describe his objection. But truly, deep down inside. What was the real reason?

Lord, are You showing me something that can be mended? Or is this a situation you have used to help me better understand others?

*Jesus began, "Both. Not only was I calling upon your charity, but also, his loneliness. And yet you cannot mix water with oil, Clare. There must be a foundational truth holding you together. You sensed this from the beginning; this soul does not know Me intimately. This is why your motherly heart was trying to guide him into dwelling prayer. But why should a learned man give up his mental prayers for some nebulous emotionalism of knowing Me intimately?"*

They have an expression in the institution he came from. This short article sums it up.

This was taken from: [Catholic Missionary Disciples](#)

If there is one phrase which can get the Catholic social media arguments going, it is "a personal relationship with Jesus". On one side, there are folks that argue it is a phrase stolen from Evangelical Protestants—and is empty of meaning, because it is relativistic. They might also charge that it shuns the communal aspect of Christianity.

On the other side, some Catholics use it freely, because they believe it identifies a missing piece of Catholicism, which we haven't emphasized enough, through several generations.

(That's where I'm at.)

I think that both sides have a point. (The author continues.) We can't have a personal relationship with Jesus on our own terms—it has to be on the terms of Jesus. Thus, the Catechism of The Catholic Church says:

"By faith, man completely submits his intellect and his will to God. With his whole being man gives his assent to God the Revealer. Sacred Scripture calls this human response to God, the author of revelation, "the obedience of faith".

To submit means that there can be no relativism. And the purpose of the relationship is to be conformed into the image and likeness of Jesus, more and more. So, we should not fear being relativistic, when we submit. Furthermore, we can't settle for a me-and-Jesus relationship and think we are done. It isn't Jesus OR the Catholic Church. Rather, it is a relationship with both, which means we need a community (the Body of Christ) as well.

Yet, in many ways, we have neglected the personal response of faith, in Catholicism. So, let us not ignore that we need to emphasize the personal aspect, in order to make up for the deficit.

With that in mind, I will propose how each of us can each have a relationship with Jesus AND the Catholic Church.

When I was dating my wife, I wanted to spend as much time as I possibly could with her. Why? Because I wanted to know her personally. I wanted to know what she liked and what she didn't. I wanted to get to know her pet peeves and what her passions were. I wanted to know everything I could about her. But, above all, I had to learn how to make choices that showed I loved her. This is what happens when you love someone—you want as close, intimate, and personal of a relationship as you can; appropriate to the kind of relationship it is, of course.

The same goes with Jesus. If you are a Christian, you are called to have a close, intimate, and personal relationship with him. But many are unsure about what this is all about. If you are one who is not yet sure how to do this, it is simple.

As with any relationship, you choose how close you want to be with someone. It is a choice only you can make. Others can't do that for you, nor can the church as a whole. Many who are Catholic (and other Christians also) have merely an intellectual or emotional connection to God, but not a personal one they have chosen in faith.

To intellectually know Jesus (to know about Jesus) or have a movement of the emotions (to feel good about Jesus) isn't enough. Remember that even the demons know about Jesus, and that we will all have times we don't feel good about Jesus.

This is why we must choose Jesus in faith, which is done through an act of our will. Of course, faith is really a response to grace, and being able to say "yes" to Jesus is only possible because God has chosen us first. Once you choose Jesus in faith, you have to do it again and again. This concept of having a personal relationship with Jesus sometimes sounds too "Protestant" to some Catholics. But that's not true.

St. Therese of Lisieux said, "Whosoever is a LITTLE ONE, let him come to me." (Proverbs 9:4) And so, I succeeded. I felt I had found what I was looking for. But, wanting to know, O my God, what You would do to the very little one who answered Your call, I continued my search and this is what I discovered: 'As one whom a mother caresses, so will I comfort you; you shall be carried at the breasts, and upon the knees they shall caress you.' (Isaiah 66: 13,12)

Ah! Never did words more tender and more melodious come to give joy to my soul. The elevator which must raise me to Heaven is Your arms, Jesus! And for this I had no need to grow up, but rather I had to remain little and become this more and more."

(Clare) And she, by the way, is a doctor in the Catholic Church. A very simple, simple woman in her Little Way. And it's quite powerful and it does lead to intimacy with the Lord.

Another quote from St. Bonaventure, "If you have learned everything except Jesus,"

All the intellectual arguments. All the religious arguments. Philosophy. If you've learned all of that.

"If you have learned everything except Jesus, you know nothing. If you've learned nothing but Jesus, you have learned everything."

And this, by the way, is essentially the spirituality that is our heartbeat as Heartdwellers. Is to know and love and serve the Lord, but in an intimate way. Not in a distant way. Not just through the Scriptures, but experientially, as well.

Going back to what the author was saying.

When I promised I would love my wife in our wedding vows, it wasn't merely an emotional act (it was and there is nothing wrong with that) or that I know a lot about her (there is and that is good). Rather, I chose to love my wife that day and every time I choose to love her again, I affirm that initial commitment I made in my vows. The same is true for my relationship with Jesus. This is how you have a personal relationship with Him.

As Thomas a Kempis says: "You cannot live well without a friend, and if Jesus be not your friend above all else, you will be very sad and desolate. Thus, you are acting foolishly if you trust or rejoice in any other. Choose the opposition of the whole world rather than offend Jesus.

"Of all those who are dear to you, let Him be your special love. Let all things be loved for the sake of Jesus, but Jesus for His own sake. Jesus Christ must be loved alone with a special love—for He alone, of all friends, is good and faithful. For Him and in Him you must love friends and foes alike, and pray to Him that all may know to love Him."

And that's the end of the quote from Thomas.

He goes on to say: A close, intimate, and personal relationship with Jesus doesn't happen by accident. You must choose it and that choice must be intentional.

And I would witness to that. That's how I get backslidden, is by not choosing Jesus above everything else, every day. And I have my weak points. I really, I really have some serious weak

points, especially with food. But the Lord is helping me. But what that means, basically, is I'm not choosing the Lord over my own personal pleasure of eating something I should really abstain from. And so, Jesus and the relationship with Him is a choice. And it wounds Him when we choose selfishly. When we choose for ourselves. It hurts Him deeply, because it's in the intimacy of Obedience to Him that our love for Him grows.

Well, Jesus continued, *"So, you are dealing with the bias of religious relativism, which makes a soul depend more strictly on the rules and mental prayer, as well as drawing upon the intellectual approach to Me. Each soul has their own way. But when they pigeonhole the kind of intimacy that we have with one another, they never plunge into the riches of the espousal relationship.*

*"For some, that is just too risky. So, their time is taken up with mental prayer, the Psalms, the breviary and other written prayers. They find the justification for their faith in these practices.*

*"The heart is treacherous, especially when it has been continually wounded from childhood up. The heart becomes a jagged puzzle of 'goes' and 'don't go' to protect the many wounds that have never been healed.*

*"When I call a soul into a deeper relationship with Me, I have already prepared the remedy for all these fragmented pieces. I go very slowly and pull them closer. Their own misconceptions of Me—for instance if they had a bad relationship with their father or authority figure—is what prevents them from crossing over from the books filled with prayers, into My arms.*

*"Yet, this is the very place where I can effect multiple healings in their heart. There is great fear in the proposition of intimacy with Me, the fear of being deeply hurt again, which could make them devastated and lost to even wanting to live.*

*"So, there are screens and protections set up, with powerful emotional responses, such as a laser beam, sensing danger and setting off alarms.*

*"Add to that the lying influence of Satan that feeds the ego, 'Oh, you don't need that.' To the threats, 'Don't go there; it's just emotionalism. You'll be disappointed. And hurt in the end.'*

*"This causes them to drift in life, from situation to situation, without ever getting past the emotional alarm system. And introducing the concept of a truly espousal relationship with Me becomes a no-go zone.*

*"So, one continues on with their books and mental prayers and a touch of scorn for those emotional addicts that are off the deep end with Me, and not well-studied in religious practices.*

*"My people, how I love you! Some of you are in serious bondage to a Religious spirit and My Heart yearns to bring you closer, even into the depths of My own aching heart. Your distancing and justifying will be shown for what it is on that Day. It is blocking My Love from flowing*

*through you. You cannot possibly give to others what you don't have. The grace of loving others, in spite of who they are or what they do, comes from My Heart.*

*"But if you will not draw closer to My Heart, how can I fill and heal you?"*

*"Some of you have chosen very isolated life-styles to protect yourselves. And you are lonely, sizing up your life experience as less than fulfilling. Pain always comes with vulnerability. But the Love I have for you does not involve pain; it is pure, unconditional love.*

*"Oh yes, there will be growing pains; always. Those are necessary to perfection. But I stand with you in all you must endure.*

*"Please, look deeply into your heart and see if you are holding Me at arm's length. And understand that this wall of self-protection is keeping you from life's greatest joys and fulfillment.*

*"Yes, I am standing by. Waiting for you to bring down the wall and throw yourself into My arms. I will never give up waiting for you, because I love you. And I see all the pain and disappointment, the betrayal and lies of the enemy. And I grieve with you. I want to heal you, but you must make the decision to lower the wall and throw yourself on My Mercy."*

And the Scripture that came to mind as I was getting ready to write that is:

*"God makes the solitary into families; those that were bound he brings out into prosperity: but the rebellious dwell in a parched [land]."*

Dear ones. Rebellion does not have to be a visible rebellion. It can be an attitude of denying God in the innermost part of you. And keeping Him distanced from you. Let's respond to the Lord's heart. And come to Him with open arms.

Jesus, help us. Please help us to let go and trust. And come into Your loving arms unconditionally. Amen.