The Sensitive Heart
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For a long time now I have had the constant, nagging sense that the Lord is used to being neglected, that He’s used to being alone with very few friends. Granted, He has many servants who live to serve Him but He has very few with whom He can share Himself completely.

But this is changing. At this very moment He is working to bring His people into harmony with Himself. Slowly but surely He is making our feet like hinds feet so that we can scale the heights by His side (Ps. 18:33).

The Lord is searching, to and fro, throughout the earth, looking to see if there are any who understand and seek Him (Ps. 14:2; 33:13); His eyes are on those who fear Him (Ps. 33:18). He is looking for those who are willing to set themselves apart unto Him, to minister to Him with His pleasure in mind, not their own. When dwelling in the heart of God and gazing at His beauty is the “one thing” we adamantly seek after, we will dwell with Him all the days of our lives (Ps. 27:4; Phil. 3:13).

The Ministry of Hospitality...To The Lord

We are experts at serving people. We know how to please them, how to meet their needs; we know how to make them feel “at home,” how to make them feel important. But we are desperately lacking in effectiveness when it comes to ministering to the Lord, to pleasing Him, to meeting His needs and making Him feel “at home” in our midst so that He can know, with sincerity, from our hearts, how important He is to us.

Many, whether they know it or not, view the Lord as a distant, inaccessible, ghost-like Being. But this is far from the truth. He is a real Person, just like us, which is why we are who we are; we were created in His image and likeness. We have a heart because He has a heart. We have feelings because He has feelings. We have desires because He has desires. And as a Person, like us, He can be hurt; He can be grieved (Eph. 4:30; 1 Thess. 5:19). He can feel sorrow and pain. And yet, when it comes to “ministry,” “service,” “hospitality,” and things like this, the Lord’s personal needs and wants are often left unattended.

To this, many may say, “Hey, I already know this.” But my question is: Who is really attending to the Lord over and above everyone and everything else?

Ask yourself, honestly: What does He desire? What does He need? What is in His heart?

Sure, there are many who have very good intentions. They mean well. But the Lord worthy of far more than this. He deserves nothing less than being the primary recipient of our attention and care.

Obviously, our priorities are out of order if we live in such a way that the second commandment (“love thy neighbor”) comes before the first (“love the Lord”). And if we think that “ministry to men” is the same as “ministry to the Lord,” we are sadly mistaken.
Like the marriage between a husband and wife, the relationship between them is not the same as their relationship to their children. The “first” relationship (between the husband and wife) must always hold priority over and above the “second” (between the parents and their children) if familial order and joy is to be maintained.

The same is true in our relationship to the Lord. Our relationship to Him – our attention and affection toward Him – must always hold priority above and not be confused with our relationship to His kids. But this requires a serious paradigm shift on our part, from the inside-out.

I know this may seem revolutionary to many, but it’s not as radical as we may think. Our primary purpose in life is to minister to the Lord, to His heart; to keep the first commandment in first place.

Serving men requires a certain level of sensitivity to what people need and want, to their feelings and desires.

The same is true of the Lord. But the kind and quality of ministry that He desires – that He is in fact worthy of – requires far more than even what the most prestigious deserve.

It is time for us find out what He values most, in His heart. It is time for us to cultivate a powerful inward sense of what pleases Him. As Ephesians 5:10 states, “Find out what pleases the Lord.” Learn Him (Eph. 4:20). If you find out what attracts Him and then provide it for Him, He will come.

**But What’s In It For Me?**

This is the all-time, bottom-line question.

This is why it is so difficult to disregard and surrender our soul – our thoughts, our feelings and our desires – to the heart and soul of Him Whom we call Lord. We are not wholly inclined to that which pleases Him over ourselves because our first love, our first concern and primary focus, is zeroed in on the unholy trinity of “me, myself and I.”

When the opportunity arises to participate in that which benefits Christ and Him ONLY, at the ever-painful expense of “self,” our minds, consciously, unconsciously or subconsciously, ask the ever-pivotal, inward question: What’s in it for me? What do I get out of this?

Sure we may not say this out-loud, for everyone to hear, but it is, whether we admit it or not, the underlying fulcrum by which we make every decision in our life.

This is why the prayer life of many is, for the most part, nonexistent. Think about the ministry of prayer in your average church setting. When was the last time you saw masses of “believers” rushing to a prayer meeting? It’s not the most popular thing to do.

Again, the core question is: What’s in it for me? What do I get out of it?

Truthfully speaking, when the heart of the Holy Spirit, and sensitivity to His heart, are made the focus, the center and circumference in anything, in any way, shape or form, at the cost of “self,” expect ONLY those who are true seekers to come and remain. Honestly,
this is where the “curious” are separated from the “committed,” where “the boys” are separated from “the men.”

Those who are truly committed to the heart of Christ – to His pleasures and His desires – without any thought of “what’s in it for me,” will be granted the highest honor and position of Heaven; higher than “apostle”, “prophet”, “bishop” or any other title. He will personally call them friend.

Because they have sacrificed the pull of their own pleasures, with a pure, whole-hearted desire to give their Lord their full, undivided attention, even their own affections, to their own demise, He will reward them openly with the wonder of His Manifest Presence (Matt. 6:6).

Because they have not allowed their lives to be governed by anything other than a passionate resolve to meet the intimate “needs” of their Well-Beloved, He will settle down and make His home with them forever.

**Being Sensitive To The Lord**

Being sensitive to the Lord – to the feelings of His heart and the thoughts of His mind – is not an easy matter. But it is simple.

Those who have courage, who are brave enough to really ignore the voice and pull of “self” and surrender to the Lord’s heart, against the popular flow of the “how it’s always been” or “how it feels,” will be able to respond, moment by moment, with simplicity and purity of heart, to His deepest desires.

If we speak or don’t speak, act or don’t act, we should be sure that our words or actions or the lack of them are appropriate to the “mood” or “tone” of the Spirit at that very moment; if there is any doubt, in any way, it is never wrong to remain silent and still as our words and actions will rarely, if ever, improve upon the wisdom of His silence.

As the old saying goes, “Silence is golden.” Thus, the only words that will have any chance of eclipsing the value of silence are those that are diamond-like and these are very rare and costly.

It is in the stillness of silence, and the silence of stillness, that we will come to “know Him Whom we have believed” (2 Tim. 1:12). It is in this place of tenderness toward the Lord, of quiet reverence and awe, that we will see Him Whom we have only heard of by the hearing of the ear (Job 42:5).

“**The secret of the sweet, satisfying companionship of the Lord have they who fear...Him...**” (Ps. 25:14, Amp). This “fear” speaks of a deep reverence and awe.

I fear we do not “fear” the Lord as we should. This really must change if we wish to cultivate the kind of heart that likes what He likes and hates what He hates. If we really “fear” the Lord, we will shrink in horror at just the thought of saying or doing anything that would cause us to be separated from the bright presence of our Father (Heb. 5:7, Amp).
If we honored the Lord, if we respected and valued Him, half as much as we do “self,” we would be much closer to that which Enoch had with the Lord, in the fellowship of their intimacy. And yet the Lord wants us to know Him far more than Enoch and all the prophets ever did. In fact, He wants us to be as close to Him as He is to us so that we can know Him like He knows us. The only question is: Are we willing to honor and value Him more than anything or anyone in this life, including ourselves?

When we are more considerate of the Holy Spirit than we are of “self” or our dearest human relation, He will “descend,” as a dove. Whether or not He “stays,” is entirely up to us for He wants to stay, with all His heart; actually, He wants to remain with us more than we do. But our hearts and minds must maintain the same “poise” of consideration and thoughtfulness to keep Him near that it took to attract Him in the first place.

The seeking heart is a sensitive, considerate, kindly heart for it seeks to win the eternal favor and fellowship of Him Whom we are seeking to know on the deepest level. This kind and quality of spirit has one delight, one teeming aspiration: to only do what it sees the Father doing; to only say what it hears the Father saying.

If we do not have “dove’s eyes” – a “straight and narrow” focus upon the Lord – the Dove will “fly away” (Song 1:15). Therefore, His face, His need, His desires, deep within His being, must be the unchanging motivation and stimulation in all that we are and ever will be.

But we must ask ourselves: Are we willing to sit still before the Lord and yield our wills, sick as they are, to Him? Are we willing to allow Him to bend us until we are like Him? When we seek to make personal contact with God, are we willing, at that very moment, to run all our thoughts and feelings through the grid of what He desires, deep down within His heart? Do we have the courage and humility to yield to this kind of care?

The Lord loves an open and peaceful heart. Those who dare to cultivate this kind and quality of spiritual excellence will find the Lord being drawn nearer and nearer, like a moth to the flame.

He is not in the noise and confusion of our clamor but in the still small voice. Therefore, we must become still and small – reposed, calm, hushed and broken – if we wish to really hear Him. Like a weaned children with its mother, we must wean our souls from all that used to feed them (Ps. 131:2).

Listen to the voice of God in silence. Be quick to listen and very slow to speak. Be willing to accept what He shows you, even when it crosses what you “believe.” Listen to God and be deaf to “self.” When you are in a place of calm and quiet rest, follow all that you sense within your spirit; otherwise, wait. True fruitfulness comes by no other means.

If your mind is too busy to maintain a quiet awareness of God than separate yourself from all that feeds your reasoning mind and lean in dependence upon the Lord.

“Thinking too much will distract you. If you become trapped in your thoughts, they will blow out your inward spiritual sense like a wind blowing out a candle” (Francis Fenelon).
Cultivate silence and brokenness; the Lord is close to those who are broken and contrite (Ps. 34:18; 51:16-17; Isa. 57:15; 66:2). Be as lowly and simple before the Lord as you are among the prestigious. Lean on Him. Trusting in God is a simple resting in His love, as a babe lies in its mother’s arms. Do not trust yourself too much. Do not think too highly of yourself. Man, in his best state, is only a breath (Ps. 39:5). Commit your spirit to Him (Ps. 31:5). View your soul with a serious tone of self-distrust and caution but always trust the Lord. And do not be afraid to make the distinction between yourself and the Lord. His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts; so do not confuse them.

If we take this stance, we will be better able to sense what is His pleasure and what is not so that we can accommodate His needs above and beyond our own. Our only desire should be to long for Him as the dear pants for the water (Ps. 42:1-3). Everything that is meaningful will come from this. And when your heart bursts with passion so that your own flesh begins to cry out for Him, do not fight it (Ps. 63:8; 84:1-2). Only yield. He will carry you the rest of the way.