



# FAITH FOUNDATIONS

## Theme 1: Building my friendship with God

### Week 3: Intimacy



## Teaching Outline

### Defining intimacy

Introduce idea of being intimate with God (ie: Gerard & Chrissie Kelly's book titled *Intimate with the Ultimate*) How does the idea sound to you?

### Brainstorm: (board)

- 1) How would you define 'intimacy'?
- 2) How does our culture define intimacy? (Write addition characteristics in a different colour; circle those already written down)

In our culture we've confused 'intimacy' with the sexual...

- We tend to experience physical intimacy before we've experienced intimacy which is non-sexual.
- This threatens the development of true intimacy ... and of deep relationships, ones which can last once passion has subsided

### A biblical view of sexuality: (see resource list for more on this)

We were created as sexual beings - our sexuality is intended by God to be fully integrated into our spirituality.

"Sexuality is fundamentally the divine invitation to find our destinies in deep connection ... It invites us out of our loneliness into intimate connection and communion with God and the world." (Sexuality and Holy Longing, p.6)

"We are Grand Canyons without a bottom, longing for completion, for perfect communion with another that we will not experience this side of heaven." (Ronald Rolheiser)

We're made for relationship, made for deep connection with others.

But ultimately we're made for deep connection with God. That highest, ultimate longing is reflected in our longing for human relationships.

What we long for, what we're made for, won't be fully fulfilled until we reach heaven.

### Intimacy in O.T. = 'private counsel'

[Heb] = being pressed closely together for the purpose of confidential communication.

[Heb] = to be tight, firm, pressed together (Pillows pressed together on couch)

Usages in the OT:

- lovers whose heads lie pressed next to each other on pillows, where they reveal intimacies with each other
- friends who share their thought while sitting close together on a couch
- generals who convene under a tent, putting their heads together to discuss battle strategy
- Prov 3:32 The Lord "is intimate with the upright" (NASB)

### Intimacy in NT:

John 17:3 - Eternal life to 'know' you, the only true God ... [ginosko] = intimate knowledge / union

Personal relationships are sustained by mutual revelation - a willingness to reveal who you really are & what is hidden in your heart.

The more intimate the relationship, the greater the revelation/communication of what's important to you / about you.

Jesus - John 15:15 - a servant does not know what his master is doing; I have called you friends

Abraham - friend of God.

There's a difference between a personal relationship with Christ and an intimate one. It's the depth of relationship that determines the depth of our conversations.

[At this point you could refer back to the brainstorm board and notice how our definitions of intimacy fit with the biblical view.]

### Introduction to the Bible study:

Tonight, story about Mary of Bethany.

She's mentioned 3 times in scripture, always at Jesus' feet (Lk 10:39, Jn 11:32, 12:3).

Her physical posture reflects her spiritual posture - being at his feet is an act of humility, of worship, acknowledging Jesus' place as her Lord.

[Told by John - "the one whom Jesus loved", an intimate friendship]

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### Resources:

Sermon - *Holy Longing* by Elizabeth de Smaele [www.deeper-devotion.net/holy-longing.html](http://www.deeper-devotion.net/holy-longing.html)

Books: Lisa Graham McMinn. *Sexuality and Holy Longing: Embracing intimacy in a broken world.*

Jossey-Bass. 2004.

Albert Haase. *Coming Home to your True Self: Leaving the emptiness of false attractions.* IVP Books. 2008.