

## My Greatest Desire

“One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple”  
(Psalms 27:4, *NIV*).

**N**arrowed down to one thing, what do you value most? What is your single greatest desire?

David set the pace for all to follow. His passion was not merely to get something from God but to be with God. He wanted to know God and have a deep personal relationship with Him. There is a sharp difference between seeking the face of God and seeking His hand. David's never-ceasing desire was to know God and be in His presence. This is an inseparable, intimate ingredient of being a Christian. Our relationship with God is the most central connection we will ever encounter in life. It is one of the vital indicators on our spiritual compass. Being in right relationship with the Way-Maker clarifies direction in every aspect of life. “Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track” (Proverbs 3:5-6, *MSG*).

Vance Havner tells of a little boy who had been begging his father for favors all day. The youngster ran once more into his Dad's office. The weary father asked, “What do you want this time?” The surprising reply, “I don't want anything. I just want to be with you.” How many times do we come to our heavenly Father with no specific needs but only to seek His presence and fellowship?

David went on to say: “You have said, Seek My face [inquire for and require My presence as your vital need]. My heart says to You, Your face (Your presence), Lord, will I seek, inquire for, and require [of necessity and on the authority of Your Word]” (Psalms 27:8, *AMP*).

No wonder David is called a man after God's heart (1 Samuel 13:14, Acts 13:22). His thinking and desire mirrored God's ultimate aspiration for us. “And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God” (John 17:3, *NKJV*).

In the New Testament, Paul is an excellent example of someone that longed for interaction with God, and desired to make that divine connection. “For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2). “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death” (Philippians 3:10).

Paul wanted to be completely acquainted with God: His attributes, His work, and the salvation He provided. The highest desire in the mind of the Christian is to know Christ. Therefore, he made a resolution. He had a deliberate purpose in mind. He gave his time and attention to

knowing God. It was his chief pursuit. David, Paul and others echoed the ancients: “If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you” (Exodus 33:13, *NIV*).

The first and second commandment shows how much God values relationships. He expects us to love Him, and then to love others. “Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, “Which is the first commandment of all?” Jesus answered him, “The first of all the commandments is: ‘Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” So the scribe said to Him, “Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices” (Mark 12:28-33, *NKJV*).

Jesus was questioned about the greatest commandment. He referred to the *Shema* (Deuteronomy 6:4) knowing that it encapsulated the Jewish confession of faith. Jesus emphasized one’s relationship with God. He taught that one should love God with his *whole* heart, his *whole* soul, his *whole* mind, and his *whole* strength. We should put everything into our relationship with God. But, He didn’t stop there. He went on to reveal the twin duties of loving God and loving our neighbors. This was more important than all the laws, sacrifices, and offerings.

A quick overview of the Ten Commandments reveals they are all about relationships. The first four commandments deal with our relationship with God. The remaining six teach us about our relationships with others. Relationships are important to God. They identify who we are, what we value, what we do, and how we live.



Wade Martin aptly demonstrates the strongest point on the cross is where vertical and horizontal beams connect. The same can be said of our relationships.

The point where our relationships are strongest is where our horizontal relationship with each other connects with our vertical relationship with God. When our relationship with God is weak or bad then relationships with others suffer. When our relationships with others are weak or bad, our relationship with God suffers.

With any relationship we have the choice to build and develop or to allow the relationship to deteriorate. It is up to us. God remains constant; always the same.

In the famous Holman Hunt picture of Jesus standing at the door knocking, there is no handle on the outside (Revelation 3:20). The door can only be opened from inside. God has desired to have a relationship with man from the beginning. Adam and Eve closed the door. Jesus Christ became the door so that our fallen relationship and fellowship could be restored. Yet, the

choice is still ours to let God into our lives. He will not force His way. His Word promises: “Come close to God, and God will come close to you” (James 4:8, *NLT*).

“A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother” (Proverbs 18:24). We must be open to this divine friendship. God is there, willing to stick closer than a brother.

We see a pattern repeated throughout biblical history. People fall into sin, God judges and punishes their sin; and then beckons His people back to a relationship with Him. (See Genesis 3:8 – 19). We were created in the likeness of God (Genesis 1:27). As we live in correct relationship with God we are conformed to His likeness (Romans 8:29).

How does one build a relationship with God? Take a minute or two and brainstorm. He has created us as relational beings, so we already know the answer. It is premised on what it takes to build any relationship.

1. It begins with desire.
2. Communicate often. Be consistent. Spend time with Him in prayer and fasting. Talk to God. Be in friendship with Him. Be transparent and honest.
3. Learn to listen to His voice.
4. Read His Word. This reveals God in written form. It tells us all about God.
5. Study His attributes and ways.

A teacher was instructing a group of elementary children. He asked, “Does anyone here understand electricity?” One fretful little boy, thrust his hand in the air and exclaimed, “I understand electricity?” The teacher said, “Jimmy, would you explain electricity for the class?” The boy suddenly covered his face, “Last night I knew, but this morning I’ve forgotten.” The teacher responded, “This is tragic. The only person in history who ever understood electricity and this morning he forgot it.” At times we feel like that about our relationship and understanding of God. We envision Him off in the distance and impossible to understand. Yet, He is closer than the mention of His name and longs to be our dearest friend and companion.

A class of four-year-olds was drawing pictures of people from the Bible. A darling little girl worked intently on her portrait. The teacher asked, “What are you drawing?” “I’m drawing a picture of God,” she replied. “That’s a nice idea, but no one really knows what God looks like.” To that she responded, “Oh, they will, when I get done!”

We get a clear picture of what God is like through Jesus Christ. He was Emmanuel, God with us (Matthew 1:23). As children, we often played a game called “Who am I?” One would give hints and others guessed who we were referring to. With Jesus Christ, there are no guessing games. He quickly and willingly reveals who He is and His Word unveils who we are in Him.

**Jesus Christ:**

### Who am I?

I am the Bread of Life	John 6:35
I am the Light of the World	John 8:12
I am the Gate and the Door	John 10:7
I am the Good Shepherd	John 10:14
I am the Resurrection and the Life	John 11:25
I am the Way and the Truth and the Life	John 14:6
I am the Vine	John 15:1

Once one has a deeper understanding of God and recognizes who He is, we will have a better comprehension of who we are in Christ. Look at who and what we become because of our relationship with Him.

### Who am I in Christ?

I am His child	John 1:12
I am His friend	John 15:15
I am part of His body	1 Corinthians 12:27
I am redeemed	Colossians 1:13-14; Revelation 5:9
I am a branch of Jesus Christ	John 15:5
I am His temple	1 Corinthians 3:16
I am a minister of reconciliation	2 Corinthians 5:17-21
I am His workmanship	Ephesians 2:10
I am a new creation	2 Corinthians 5:17
I am in Christ	Galatians 3:26, 28
I am joint heir with Christ	Romans 8:17
I am a saint	Ephesians 1:1
I am a citizen of heaven	Ephesians 2:19
I am chosen	John 15:16
I am hidden with Christ	Colossians 3:3
I am the salt of the earth	Matthew 5:13
I am the light of the world	Matthew 5:14
I am more than conqueror	Romans 8:37
I am a chosen generation	1 Peter 2:9
I am a royal priesthood	1 Peter 2:9
I am a holy nation	1 Peter 2:9
I am one of God's living stones	1 Peter 2:5
I am an alien and stranger to this world	1 Peter 2:11
I am saved by grace	Ephesians 2:8-9
I am part of the Bride of Christ	Revelation 19:7
I am a true worshipper	John 4:24

What a breathtaking privilege to know God in a personal way and to be identified as His friend. It's a relationship of highest value and seeing it grow is my greatest desire. It is joy to walk in step with Him. My path is blazed by God. He has me in the grip of His hand (Psalms 37:23-24). He directs me with His compass.

**Study Questions**

1. What was the pace David set for all to follow in their greatest desire? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What is the difference in seeking the face of God and seeking His hand? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Why and where (in the Bible) was David called "a man after God's heart?" \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Who, in the New Testament, is an excellent example of someone who longed for interaction with God, and desired to make that divine connection? Support your answer with Scripture reference. \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Write out (with reference) the two commandments that show how much God values relationships.

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2) \_\_\_\_\_

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6. What was Jesus' response to the question about the greatest commandment? Support your answer with Scripture reference. \_\_\_\_\_

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7. What relationship pattern is seen throughout biblical history? Give Scripture to support.

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