

## Knowing the Heart of God

The Lord is searching for a true and earnest friend, one that will keep Him company in the night and identify with the very heart and feelings of the sweet Master. Give me a few minutes to explain as this article could change your devotional life forever! I promise you that!

**“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)

**“Rejoice... inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings...”** (I Peter 4:13)

What does it mean when Scripture uses the term: **the fellowship of His sufferings**? Is it just going through persecution as we suffer with the Lord? That’s part of it, but it is also saying, “Lord, what’s on your heart right now?”

When was the last time you took the time to ask, “Father, what breaks your heart? What burdens you? How do you see the church? How do you see my family?” Don’t doubt for a moment that He will come and reveal Himself to you when you get close enough to ask.

One evening, many years ago, I was alone in my bedroom when I suddenly realized how self-centered my prayers had become. I had spent many hours casting my cares upon Jesus, and there is nothing wrong with that, for He bids us to come and has always faithfully dried our tears and calmed our worries. No matter what time of day or night, He stands there with His arms open wide waiting to hear the deepest longings of our hearts. His loving touch brings us peace and joy.

It brings great comfort and gladness to know we have somebody to turn to when the world turns its back on us. However, on that summer evening in the early '90s, I knew I had missed a great opportunity. I thought to myself, *When was the last time I asked Jesus what was on **His** heart?* Fellowship is the union of friends sharing similar interests or problems. To suffer is to feel the pain or distress of another. Could I ask my Lord what breaks His heart? Why not try?

I whispered, “What’s on your heart tonight, Jesus? What burdens you most? Let me feel what you feel...” All at once, I was overcome with a tremendous burden. I began to weep uncontrollably as the Lord said, “Child abuse hurts my heart. Child porn hurts me, and abortion hurts me deeply . . .” Suddenly my heart was overwhelmed by His burden, and the spirit of intercession took control of me. I was standing in the place of another so that I wrestled in prayer and I travailed for more than two hours. Sobbing, I lay on the floor until the sudden burden lifted and I felt unspeakable joy and full of glory.

I instantly knew I had **prayed clear through** a burden that was heavy on His heart. Paul yearned to share the pain and anguish Christ experienced. As we make ourselves available to fellowship with the Lord in His sufferings, our hearts will be consumed with what is on His heart. Our own self-centeredness in prayer has left us with little or no time to contemplate Christ’s sufferings, let alone share in them. Sadly, the Lord has few trusted friends with whom He can share His burdens.

Many forget the Holy Trinity can be grieved, quenched, and hurt. Will we stop talking long enough to hear the heart of our Father? I’m sure no man can fully understand all His sufferings, and certainly our feeble attempts are very limited, but God takes great delight in those who care enough to ask Him, “How are you doing? What is on your heart right now?” What close intimacy this type of love exchange can offer.

My prayer life has changed enormously since I started asking the Lord what was on His heart. I still take time to bring my needs and worries to God, but I also stop and ask Him what’s on His heart. Many people never ask Him that question, but those who do bring Him great delight and comfort.

Sometimes, the Lord actually weeps about the church. And, as you begin your fellowship with the Lord in that suffering, you become a true companion to your God and you begin to carry the passion and the desire of the Lord. And, when you speak, you’re not speaking mere head knowledge; you’re speaking something that’s coming from deep down inside your soul. When your heart is burning for something or you’re burning for the church, you’re carrying a real, genuine fiery love that has been placed there by the Father.

The person with this anointing has stepped into the Father's heart and has fellowship with the Lord in His suffering. When He suffers, we suffer with Him. **Our Father has so few that will communion with Him there...**

This occasionally happens to me when I visit some meetings where I'll literally want to weep because I'm sensitive that way, but why? I'm thinking, *Why am I sensing this?* It's like sensing the grieving heart of God at times—as though he's been pushed out, He's been replaced with this or that. I'm not being critical nor am I searching for things about which to complain. Yet, my heart is burning and sometimes I have to get up and walk away because I'm weeping, and it's not going to stop because it's like a burning deep inside me that I know reflects what Our Father feels. I know His presence has been replaced with mere intellectualism and dead letters with no anointing or presence. He has been restricted and He stands outside the door knocking, asking to come in, but it's obvious that He isn't welcome there. So, I allow my burden to motivate me to silently intercede, remaining ever hopeful, and not throwing up my hands in defeat.

I've often said to the Lord, "Lord, I want to be that close friend of Yours who weeps when You weep. When You're full of joy, I want to be full of joy." Right now, He is weeping over His church, hoping against hope that His people catch His vision. He often weeps over His people for one reason or another. Now perhaps you'd like to ask me whether I go around feeling brokenhearted all the time. No way! Sometimes I carry a deep sense of joy and celebration. Sometimes I dance with joy, and sometimes the new wine comes or the power of His presence falls on me, but no matter what I'm sensing, I can't get over the fact that I get to be His friend. Believe me, I am no one special; I am just available. There are many in the church with this desire. They remain hidden and quietly intercede when they know things need to change. **They bring reformation through intercession instead of the flesh.**

I want Him to be able to trust me with His most troubling secrets. When you have a friend you can trust, or share things with, you feel free to be real with them. You know they are not going to judge you and you know they are going to hear you. Can you be that kind of friend to Jesus? Can you handle it when He's not upbeat and happy? Can you handle it when He's brokenhearted and grieved and wants to share those feelings with you?

As part of His core group, we have to be willing to sit with the Lord and listen to Him share. When I fellowshiped with the Lord in His sufferings, I entered under a special anointing. When He knows He can trust us with His treasures, He will give us breakthroughs like we've never seen before. And,

when that happens, there's power—more than enough to accomplish great things! Sometimes He allows us to be part of the solution when we are unaware that it's happening. At times, I wake in the night with a burden to pray for someone in Africa I've never met or I intercede for those on Facebook that sent in their prayer request, and I pray and weep knowing that He is moving on behalf of a total stranger on the other side of the world.

Under the prophetic anointing I say, I decree that their life will be saved, and I decree that their family will be blessed, and I decree and I sense it, and I keep praying until I feel the release in my spirit. When that burden lifts, I know I have a breakthrough. So, if you want to be a true loyal friend of the Sweet Master, you must be willing to fellowship with the Lord in His sufferings. Be available for Him to trust you with His deepest secrets... Make yourself available even today! *Come precious Father share with me your longings... Here I am, Lord... Speak!*

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Steve Porter is the founder of Refuge Ministries. He has written many books and has a special anointing to bring forth the deep truths of the Spirit with a clarity and simplicity that draw one up into a closer walk and deeper relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. Steve's books, articles, and videos have touched countless lives around the world.