

When Christians speak of having a relationship with Jesus, many non-believers are confused. It is difficult for them to understand just what this relationship might look like, given that Jesus died 2,000 years ago, and even if he did rise from the dead, he isn't around to have a relationship with. It becomes easier to understand having a relationship with Jesus if we understand that most of the time when we have a relationship, we relate to the position more than the person. When you have a relationship with a parent, for example, you are relating to them being a parent more than them being their individual identity, which is why finding a box of old pictures or mementos of your parent is so weird, because all of a sudden their individual identity intrudes upon their position as parent. Jesus has many positions, and the first is creator. So how do we relate to Jesus as creator? Let's find out.

Day 1

Know Your Story

Jesus created all things in heaven and on earth, and in the book of Genesis Jesus creates with a word. What words has Jesus spoken about you? What has his word declared about your identity? Who are you according to his creative word? When we look at the identity Jesus has created for us, it is more than just a label. When we think about great figures from the past like Abraham Lincoln or George Washington, we think about many formative events like the winter at valley forge, where the army Washington was leading seemed like it would fall apart, or we think of the many failures that Lincoln faced and overcame in his life, and how that shaped his response to the many failures of the Union throughout much of the Civil War. All the great individuals from history we know are more than just labels like president, king, or warrior, they all have great stories or narratives that inform us of who they were over time, and what obstacles they overcame. In the same way, it is important to know your story, because just like them, you are more than a label. If you don't know your story, you are likely to become someone else, and you will relate to your creator in a dysfunctional and sinful way. There is a whole Bible that contains stories of great people from the past, and who they were in Christ, and your identity is partially revealed in their stories, so you should know it in detail.

Verses: Jeremiah 1:5, Genesis 1:27, 2 Corinthians 5:17

Prayer Topics: Wisdom, Identity, Confidence

Day 2

Recognize Lies

The only way to recognize a lie is to know the truth. When you learn who you were created to be, and when you learn the benefit and glory of your identity in Christ, you will understand how to relate to him as creator. Letting Jesus be creator means letting the word of Jesus create you. You must participate with this creation, because unlike other things that Jesus created with His word, He allowed you to decide whether or not to accept His word in your life. There is another who wants to create you, and that is the devil or Satan. Satan is a liar and a murderer. First, Satan lies to you about who you are, and he tries to get you to reject the word of Christ that creates you. Second, Satan is a murderer because when he gets you to believe those lies, you move from life to death. Life is found in the word of creation from Jesus, because in the end, the only things that will exist are the things that Jesus created. When the end of time comes, and all things are made new, only the perfect creation of Jesus will stand. When you believe the lies that Satan tells you, you are moving into non-reality, that is, into death. You are rejecting the life, the being, that Jesus has given you and are moving into something that will soon come to not be. It is important to us to recognize the lies that Satan tells us, lies about the deficiency of our creation, lies about the benefit of trying to create ourselves, and lies about the intentions of the one who

has given us life. Do not fall for the lies, because to fail to relate properly to your creator is to fail as a creature, and that means the end of true existence.

Verses: Colossians 3:9-10, Psalm 101:7, Proverbs 12:19

Prayer Topics: Truthfulness, Accuracy, Certainty

Day 3

Name the Liar

When we have begun to uncover the lies in our life, we often just take note of the event as unusual or interesting and then move on. In fact, many times we continue to repeat the lie we have been told by others to ourselves in our self-talk even after we have discovered that it was, in fact, a lie. To give just one example, we will often tell ourselves that we deserve something when we haven't really earned it. We will tell ourselves, if we are dieting, that we deserve the piece of cake because we have been good at sticking to our diet that day. Before we eat the cake, we will sometimes realize the foolishness and untruth of the thought, then go on to tell it to ourselves again as we eat the cake. We do this so much; we stop remarking to ourselves how dysfunctional it actually is. When we uncover a lie that has been told to us, rather than just moving on, we need to name the liar. What is it that has told us the lie? Our culture? Our neighbor? Ourselves? We need to name the liar because, chances are, this will be the source of more lies. There are many "isms" in our culture, and most of them contain truth mixed with lies. For many, there are "isms" that they believe in uncritically, when in reality they would be much better off naming these things as the liar, so that they could better distinguish the true parts from the false. Ultimately, every lie begins with Satan, the father of lies, and we should start to become wise by seeing the patterns in his work, for he is trying to be your creator, to make you in his image.

Verses: Colossians 3:9-10, John 8:44, Proverbs 12:19

Prayer Topics: Truth, Insight, Understanding

Day 4

Speak the Truth

After we have named the liar so that we can begin to become wise, we must learn to speak the truth. It is a courageous thing to speak the truth in a culture that is filled with lies. It is much more comfortable to go along with the popular lies, because once you start to speak the truth, your life becomes much more uncomfortable and dangerous. Once you start to speak the truth, even to yourself, you will start to be remade, as you can no longer endorse, celebrate, and participate in things that used to bring you comfort and community with the world. The church in the west has largely forgotten that friendship with the world is enmity with God. The world is created and run by the liar Satan, and speaking the truth will make you his enemy, even as it makes you God's friend. We must first learn to speak the truth to ourselves rather than to indulge ourselves with every excuse for the way we live. It is so easy to give yourself the benefit of the doubt, and to become your own worst enemy. Think of every person who truly seeks your good, and think of every time in your life where you have truly grown. Your doctor, your lawyer, your personal trainer, and even your boss probably speak the truth to you more than you do to yourself. Why should this be? Why should we care less about our good than others? Speak the truth to yourself, and you will grow into the kind of person who has been made by the word of truth, then you will be able to speak the truth to the world, and see it remade by the word of God.

Verses: John 8:32, John 16:13, John 4:24

Prayer Topics: Honesty, Bravery, Principle

Day 5

Thank the Truth Giver

We must learn to always thank the truth giver, because the truth is good. The truth is painful sometimes, but it is always good. When I was young, I used to love science fiction stories and think about how great it would be if the world was other than it is. Now, as I have gotten older, I think about how great the world really is just as it has been created. When I was young, I would think about how great it would be if people had super-powers. If everyone had them, it would be basically the same as it is now, just a little more so. If you alone had super-powers, or were one of a very few, how could you ever get over the responsibility that would be imposed on you by such a great and terrible ability. How does Superman ever go to the movies with a friend knowing that there are people dying all over the city? God has made a world that is so good, it reflects His glory. At every turn, I am faced with boundaries and limitations that are good for me, I am fearfully and wonderfully made, just as the rest of creation. Even so, I am given dominion over this incredible world, and I have meaning and purpose because of the truth of how and why and by whom I was created. The truth is good, so thank the truth giver.

Verses: 1 Thessalonians 5:18, James 1:17, Psalm 136:1, Psalm 118:24

Prayer Topics: Gratitude, Joy, Love