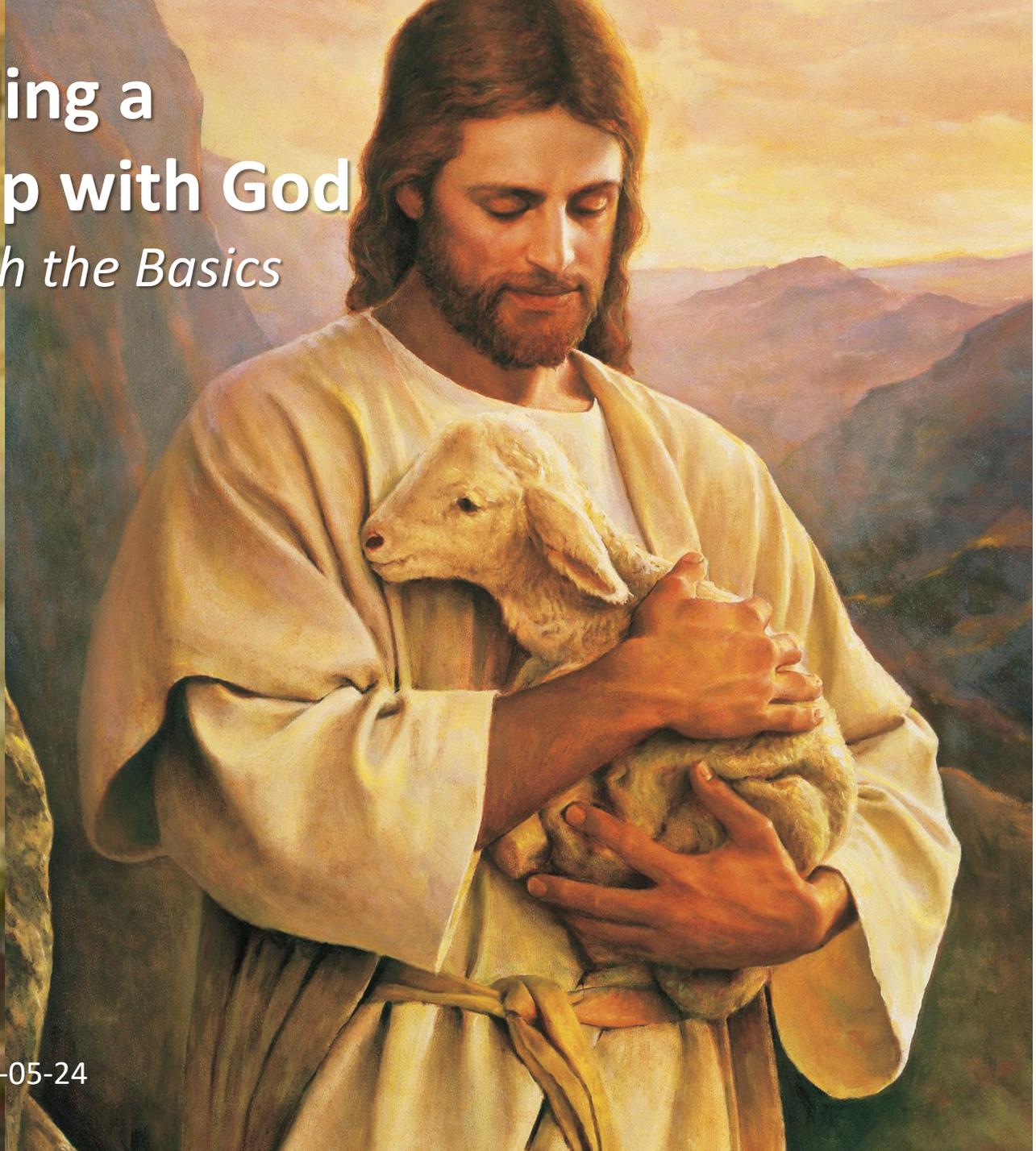


Building a Relationship with God

Starting with the Basics



2019-05-24

Reference



“Why Jesus”

by **Nicky Gumbel**

ISBN 978-933114-99-6

Published by Alpha North America

Relationships are Important and Exciting



Parents

Brothers & Sisters

Extended Family

Husband or Wife

Friends

Christian Brethren

Neighbours

Children

Grandchildren



Relationships are a very important aspect of our lives.

Most importantly ... we need a relationship with God!

A painting of Jesus with long brown hair and a beard, wearing a white robe with a grey sash. He is standing in front of a wooden door, knocking with his right hand. The scene is set in a rustic, outdoor environment with a stone wall and some foliage.

Jesus is knocking ... *He wants to build a relationship with you*

Why are you knocking, Lord?

In Saint Gregory's Liturgy, we say to the Lord:

"You are not in need of my servitude;

Rather, it is I who am in need of Your Lordship"

We are in need; yet He is knocking.

I ought to willingly let Him in.

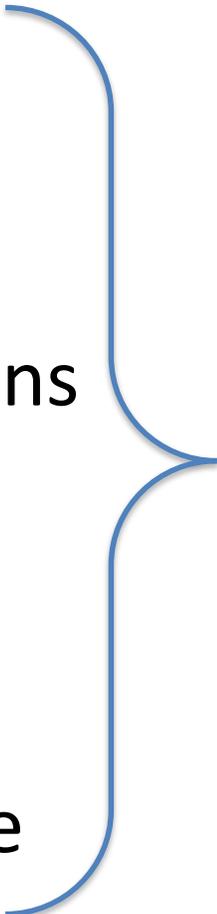
He will not force His way into my heart.

I have to open to Him willingly to enter my heart,

to build & strengthen our relationship.

Recipe for **Successful Relationship**

- Love
- Trust
- Honesty
- Communications
- Sacrifice
- Patience
- Forgiveness
- God's Presence



All of these are important in our:

- Relationships with one another
- Relationships with God

Jesus loves you ... He has all the recipes for a successful relationship



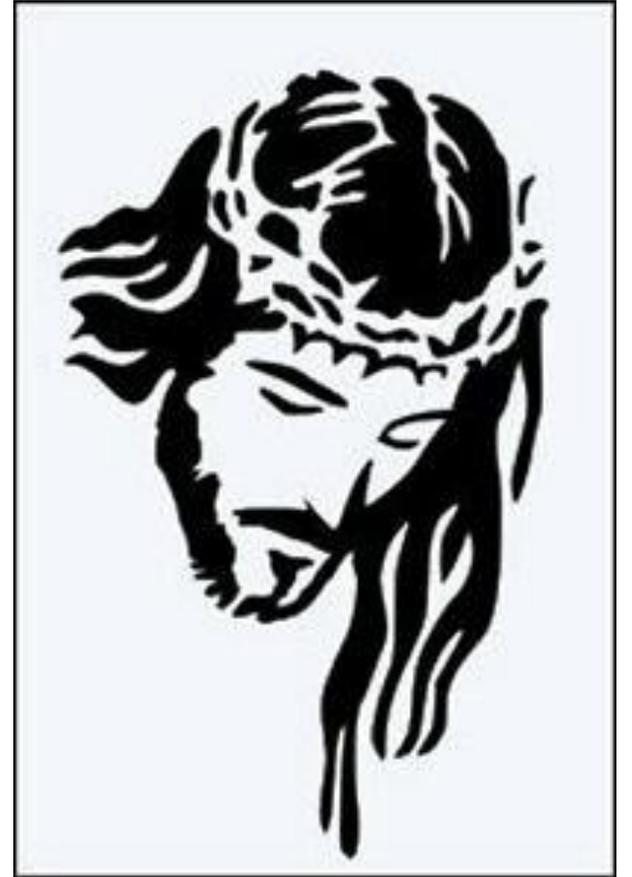
- Jesus **loves** you
- You can **trust** Him
- He is **honest** and the source of truth
- He **communicates** His Word to you;
He loves to hear from you
- He **sacrificed** Himself for you
- He is **patient & longsuffering**
- He is the source of **forgiveness**

JESUS is genuinely **LOVING & CARING.**

JESUS is **POWERFUL & ABLE** to **SAVE.**

Christianity is about Relationships

- **Christianity is about Relationships**
 - *Not so much about rules.*
- **Christianity is about a Person (Our Lord Jesus)**
 - *More than a philosophy.*
- **Christianity is about our Relationships**
 - *Relationships with God (1st) & each other*
 - *The greatest commandment is to **love God***
 - *The second greatest is to **love our neighbour***



*How does **God** fit in?*

We were created to live in a relationship with God.

**Until we find that relationship,
there will always be something MISSING in our lives.**

We are often aware of a **GAP**, a **VOID**, an **EMPTINESS**

– **People try to fill this emptiness in different ways**

- Money, Drugs, Alcohol, Improper relationships
- Over-working, Music, Sports, Success (not “bad” per se)

– **None of these satisfy the hunger deep inside of us.**

– Even the closest human relationships, wonderful as they are, do not satisfy this emptiness deep inside

– **Nothing will fill the gap except relationship with God**

*Why (when) do we feel **empty**?*

As a human race, we feel empty *because* we turned our back on God.

Jesus said, **“I am the bread of life”** (John 6:35)

Jesus is the only One who can satisfy our deepest hunger.

He is the One who makes it possible for our **relationship with God** to be restored.

Individually, we feel empty *when* we still turn our back on God.

How does *Jesus* fill our emptiness?

Jesus is the Bread of Life:

- *Jesus satisfies our hunger for Meaning & Purpose in Life*
- *Jesus satisfies our hunger for Forgiveness*
- *Jesus satisfies our hunger for Life beyond Death*

DO I MATTER?
DOES MY LIFE
HAVE PURPOSE?
DOES GOD KNOW WHO I AM?
WHY AM I HERE?



Jesus gives Meaning & Purpose in Life

DO I MATTER?
DOES MY LIFE
HAVE PURPOSE?
DOES GOD KNOW WHO I AM?
WHY AM I HERE?

“What am I doing on earth?”

“What is the point of life?”

“Is there any purpose to life?”

- We cannot answer such deep questions until we live in a **relationship with God**
- We can only find the true (*and ever-lasting*) meaning and purpose of life, through a **relationship with God**
- We may find passing (*temporary*) satisfaction elsewhere, but it will not last

Jesus gives Forgiveness

- We have all done things we know are wrong
- We all have a great need to be forgiven
- Whether we recognize it or not, we all need forgiveness
- Jesus made it possible for us to be forgiven, bringing us back into a **relationship with God**

Jesus gives Life beyond Death

- Without Christ, death is scary, an unknown
- We long to survive beyond death
- Through Christ, death from this world is only a departure to eternal life
- Our **relationship with God** starts here & now, and continues beyond death, unto eternity!

Jesus also gives Freedom

- *Freedom from what?*

- Fear
- Guilt
- Addiction (Slavery)

- *Freedom for what?*

- To know Him, love Him
- To **build a relationship with Him**
- To change for the better through God's Holy Spirit



God's **gifts** to us ...

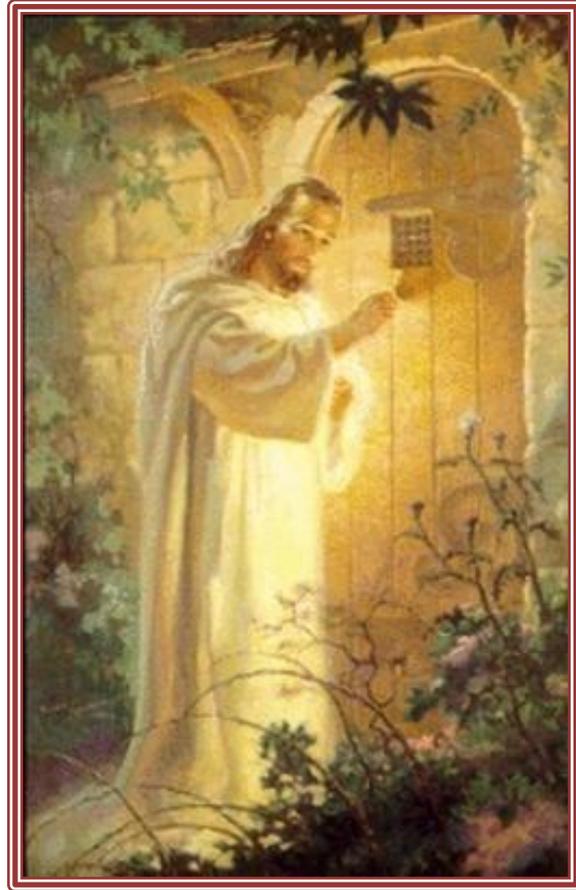
Through Jesus Christ, God offer us these gifts:

- **His Holy Spirit** to live within us & transform us
- **Meaning & Purpose**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Eternal Life**
- **Freedom**

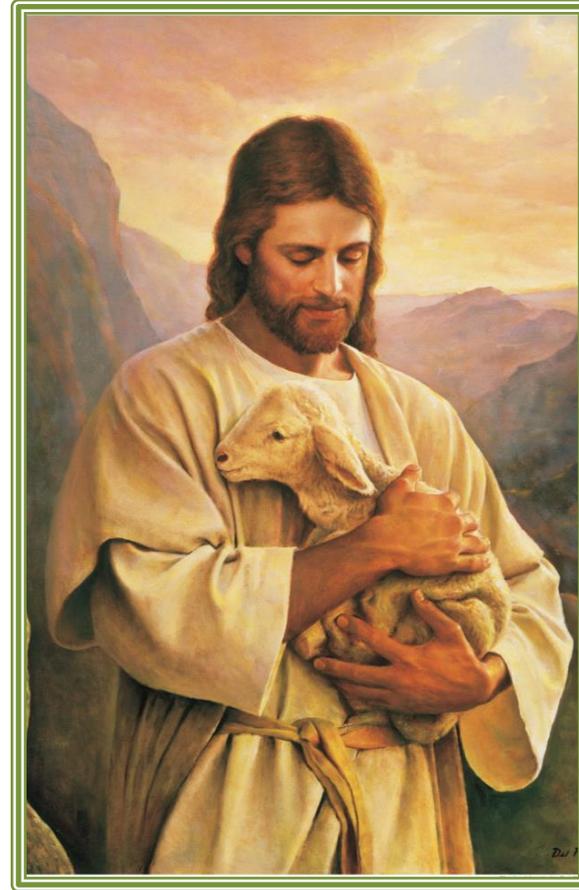
Our choice:

*Do I **reject** or **accept** God's gifts?*

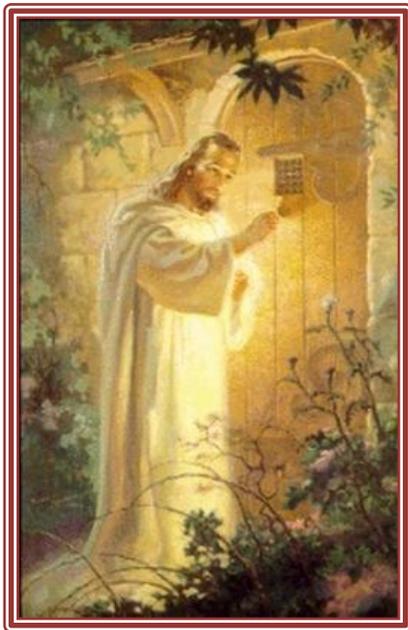
*Do I **reject** or **accept** God's gifts?*



I love you.
I am still knocking.
Please let me in!



I love you.
Do you love me?
Come closer to me!



Sometimes we **reject** God's gifts

Common Excuses

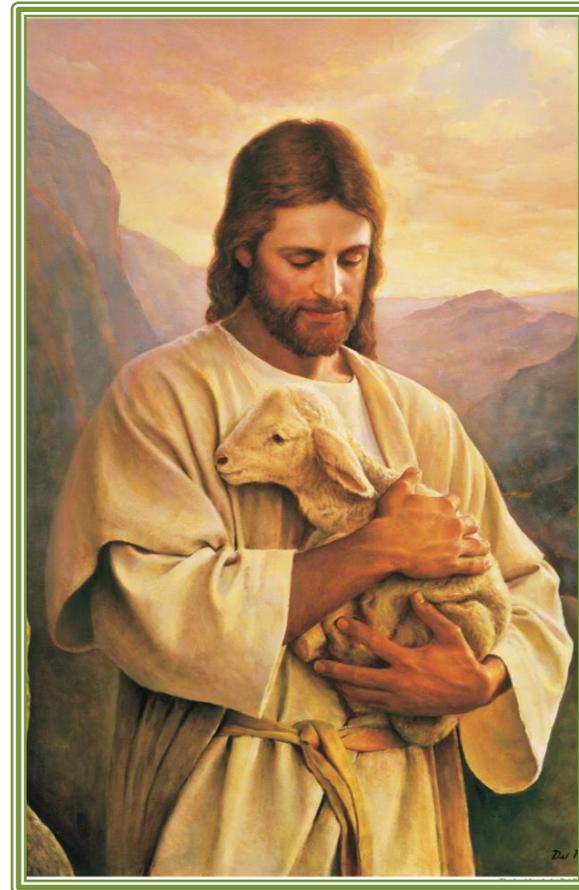
- I have no need of God ...
Really?!
- There is too much to give up ...
There is actually more to gain!
- There must be a trap ...
There is no trap, His gifts are free!
- I'm not good enough ...
Nobody is good enough, but His love is great enough!
- I could never keep it up ...
Come to Him, and He will help!
- I'll come to Him later ...
Delaying is very dangerous!

We are called to **accept** God's gifts

Accept to **build a relationship** with God.

Start with the Basics

- ① *Saying "Sorry"*
- ② *Saying "Thank You"*
- ③ *Saying "Please"*



SORRY ...

- Have Mercy (3x)
Have Mercy Upon Us
O God, the Father, the Pantocrator!
- Have Mercy (3x)
Have Mercy Upon Us
O God, Our Saviour!
- Have Mercy (3x)
Have Mercy Upon Us
And Have Mercy!

We are called to **accept** God's gift

① *Sorry, Lord*

*I go running **back to Him** asking for **forgiveness**.*

② *Thank You, Lord*

*I believe that Jesus died on the cross for me, and **thank Him** for His free gifts of Forgiveness, Freedom, and the Holy Spirit.*

③ *Please, Lord*

*God will never force His way into my life. I need to willingly **accept His gifts**, and **invite Him** to come and live within me by His Holy Spirit.*

THANK YOU ...

- **Thank You, God the Father for giving me:**
 - Your **Son**
 - Your **Kingdom**
 - **Everything you have**
- **Thank You, Our Lord Jesus Christ for giving me:**
 - Your **Life**
 - Your **Blood**
 - **Everything you have**
- **Thank You, O Holy Spirit for giving me:**
 - Your **Self**
 - Your **Help & Comfort ... the Holy Sacraments**
 - **Everything I need**

Building a Relationship with God

① *Sorry*

Lord, forgive me and have mercy on me (Psalm 50)

② *Thank You*

*We thank You in everything, for everything,
concerning everything!*

③ *Please*

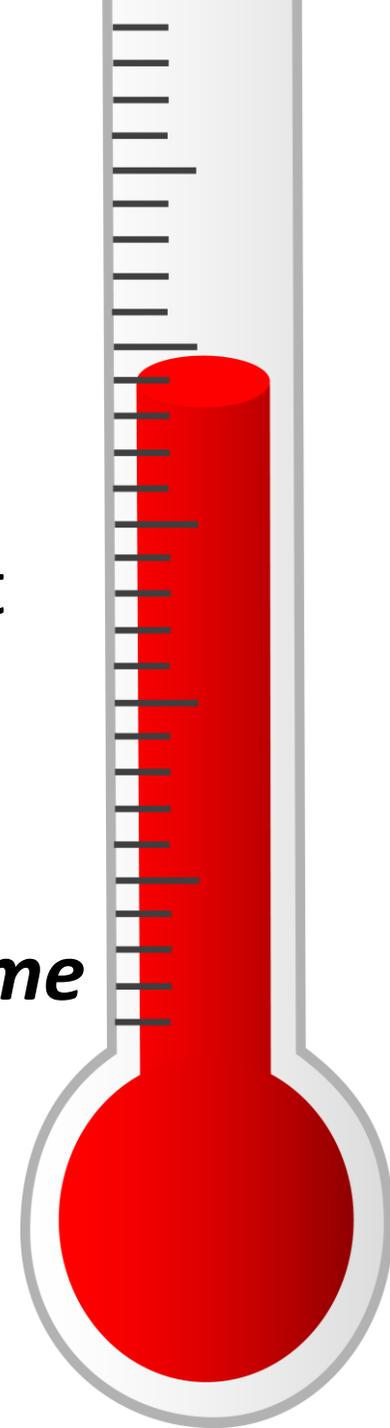
*Stay with me, bless me, save me, fill me,
Enlighten me, lead me, guide me, carry me!*

The Lord asks, “Do you love Me?”

- *Yes, Lord, you know I love you*
- *Do you really love me?*
 - You **ignore** Me
 - You **block** Me out
 - You **don't read about** Me
 - You **don't seek to understand** Me
 - You **don't talk** to Me; yet you talk to others
 - You **don't run to see** Me; yet you run to others
 - You **don't listen** to Me; yet you listen to the world
 - You **don't talk about** Me; yet you talk about others
- *Sorry, Lord*
 - *Please teach me how to love You more ...*

Good News!

- Question:
How close are you to God today?
- Good news:
The answer to the above question is not as important as the answer to the next question ...
- Next Question:
Are you willing to make an effort to come closer to God?
- *Come closer to Him and say*
Sorry, Thank You, Please ...



Building a Relationship with God



① Sorry

Psalm 50 – have mercy on me!
REPENTANCE & CONFESSION

② Thank You

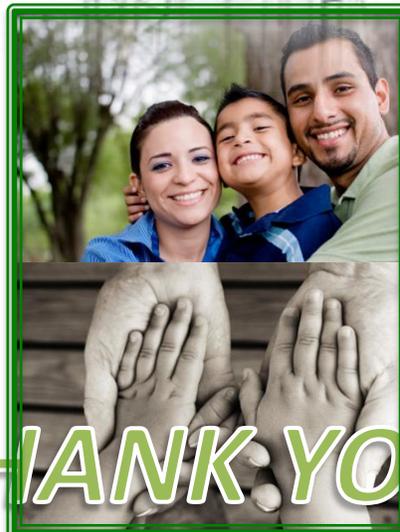
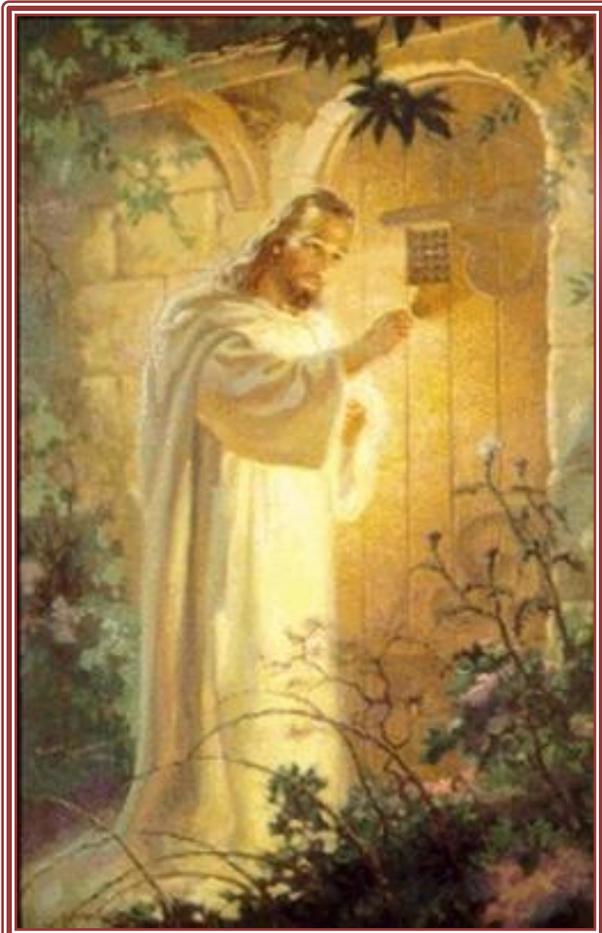
Thanksgiving Prayer, and ...
GLORIFICATION & PRAISE

③ Please

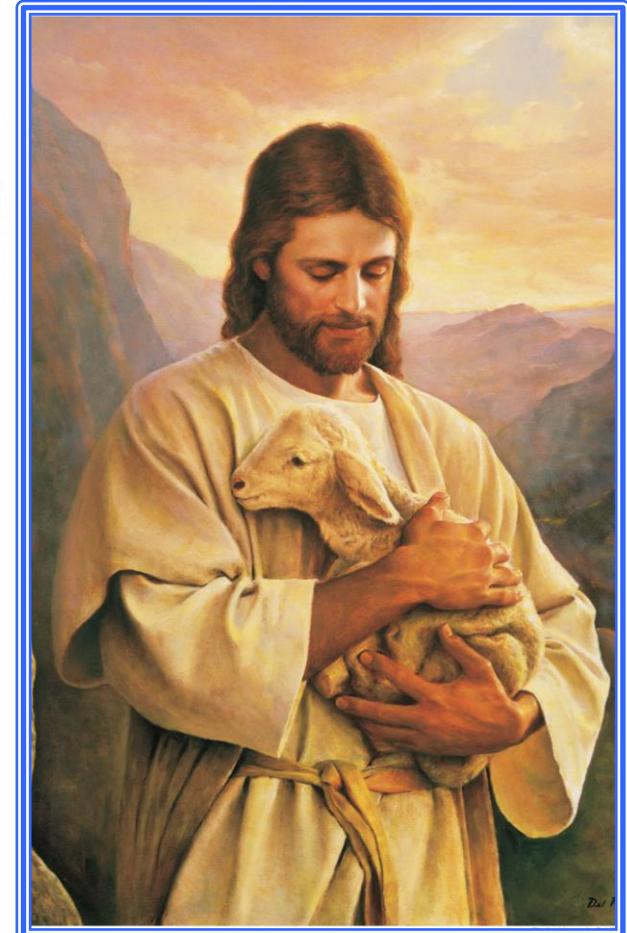
*Accept me, Bless me, Stay with me, Save me,
Fill me, Abide in me (**COMMUNION**)
Enlighten me, lead me, guide me, carry me,
Talk to me (**BIBLE**), talk with me (**PRAYER**)*

More Good News

- If I have a good relationship with God,
- I will also have good relationships with others ...
*the same “**Sorry**, **Thank you**, **Please**” basics apply*



THANK YOU!





I would like to say **SORRY** to You LORD for: _____

I would like to **THANK** the LORD for: _____

I would like to **PLEASE ASK** the LORD for: _____

Slides: www.stmary-ottawa.org/sermons/2015/SMO_2015_09_04_Relationship_with_God_101.pdf

Reference: **"Why Jesus?"** by **Nicky Gumbel**

- Successful Relationships need Love, Trust, Honesty, Communications, Sacrifice, Patience, Forgiveness
- Most Importantly, they need **God's Presence**
- Christianity is about Relationships: with God (1st) and with one another
- The greatest commandment is to **LOVE GOD**; the second greatest is to **LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR**
- We were created to live in a RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
- Until we find that relationship with God, there will always be something MISSING in our lives
- We are often aware of an EMPTINESS, and try to fill it in different ways (some good, some not)
- No money, drugs, alcohol, or improper relationship can fill that EMPTINESS
- Neither can over-working, music, sports or success fill that EMPTINESS
- Neither can the closest human relationships, wonderful as they are, fill that EMPTINESS
- Only a RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD can fill that EMPTINESS
- As a human race, we feel empty BECAUSE we turned our back on God.
- Individually, I feel empty WHEN I still turn my back on God.
- Jesus is the only ONE who can satisfy our deepest hunger: **"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE"** (John 6:35)
- Jesus makes it possible for our **RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** to be restored.
- Jesus satisfies our hunger by giving us **MEANING & PURPOSE IN LIFE**
- Jesus satisfies our hunger for **FORGIVENESS**
- Jesus satisfies our hunger for **LIFE BEYOND DEATH**
- Jesus also gives us **FREEDOM from Fear, Guilt, Addiction (Slavery)**
- Jesus gives us **FREEDOM to Know Him, Love Him, Build a relationship with Him**
- Through Jesus, we also have the Gift of the **Holy Spirit** to dwell within us, and change us for the better
- I have a choice: do I choose to REJECT or ACCEPT God's gifts?
- Sometimes we reject for a variety of excuses, but God still loves us, knocks, waits for us to open to Him
- We are called to accept His wonderful gifts, and Build a relationship with Him ...
- We can start with the Basics, by saying **"Sorry"**, **"Thank You"**, and **"Please, Lord"**
- It doesn't matter so much if I am far from God, or near to Him today ...
- What matters is, "Am I willing to make an effort to come closer to God?"
- Come closer, so He can hug you tight! He loves you, died for you, so you can live. Come closer to Him!