



Key Scripture:

James 4:7–8 (ESV)

⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. [...]

Romans 8:9–14 (ESV)

⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

¹² So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Matthew 6:33 (ESV)

³³ **But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.**

Isaiah 61:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;
 my soul shall exult in my God,
 for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation;
 he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,

Discussion Questions:

In the last century, how do you feel that the value of “personal independence” has changed? Can you give examples?

Do you think that this change within our culture has had any ripple effects into Christianity? Have we lost anything important?

Can you enjoy both intimacy and independence in relationships? Are they mutually exclusive values?

Read James 4:8. **Why does the writer put first that we are to draw near to God before He draws near to us?**

In James 4:7, what does it mean to submit yourself to God? What in a believer’s life does that effect?

Is it possible to not submit to God and draw near to Him? What do we have the hardest time submitting to God with?

Read Romans 8:9-14. **Does being lead by the Spirit mean the same thing as submitting to God?**

Similarly to James 4:8, Romans 8:13 puts the responsibility on us to live how God has commanded. But Romans 8:13 adds that it is *us by the Spirit*. **What could that mean and how does it work?**

Rus gave us 4 keys to intimacy. **What do you think about these?**

- 1) Pursue; the worship & exaltation of Jesus.
- 2) Communicate; with Jesus & have Him speak back.
- 3) Perseverance; James 1:3 speaks to this testing.
- 4) Be teachable; hearing, responding and changing.

We can often think we are following the Spirit but at the same time have areas of our life we are keeping independent. **How can prayer unlock these areas to God’s will?**

Have you put your intimacy with Christ on-hold? Or, have you become comfortable with your level of intimacy with Jesus?