

living
Loved

How to Enter
Oneness Love with God

KATHARINE WANG, M.A., J.D.



AGE TO COME
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Copyright © 2021 Katharine H. Wang

All rights reserved. This work is protected by the copyright laws of the United States of America. No part of this work may be used or reproduced or transmitted in any manner whatsoever without express written permission.

ATCU Press

Vienna, VA

Find the author online at ATCUniversity.com.

Unless otherwise noted, scripture references are from the NET Bible <http://netbible.com> copyright 1996, 2019 used with permission from Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from the Holy Bible: New International Version. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by Biblica, Inc. (formerly International Bible Society). Used by permission. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from the Holy Bible: New International Readers Version. Copyright 1995, 1996, 1998, 2014 by Biblica, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Cover design by Amy Youssef, WaterKress Creative

www.waterkress.com

ONLINE COURSE AVAILABLE

Listen to Katharine personally guide you through
the book in the corresponding online course.

Enroll at Age to Come University
www.ATCUniversity.com

Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
PART 1: ONENESS LOVE IN THE BIBLE	3
Chapter 1: Why Now?	
Chapter 2: Biblical Framework for Oneness	
PART 2: ONENESS LOVE IN MY LIFE	13
Chapter 3: Changing the Definition of Intimacy	
Chapter 4: Falling in Love for your Spirit	
Chapter 5: Romance with God	
PART 3: OVERCOMING BLOCKS	81
Chapter 6: Overcoming Blocks to Oneness Love with God	
Chapter 7: Overcoming Blocks to Oneness Love with Jesus	
Chapter 8: Overcoming Blocks to Oneness Love with Holy Spirit	
PART 4: HOW TO LIVE LOVED	113
Chapter 9: Ways to Foster Oneness Love	
Chapter 10: How to Have Life-Changing Dates with God	
Chapter 11: Five Truths that can Transform your Encounters	
Chapter 12: Learning How to Experience Love	
CONCLUSION: LIVING LOVED	137
APPENDICES	137
A: Adventures in Romance	
B: A Week with Holy Spirit	
C: Date Tips	
D: Oneness Exercises	
E: Online Resources	

About the Author

Master the Bible Ministries

Age to Come University

Next Realm Designs

Also by the Author

Tuning into Life

Want More?

TO MY HUSBAND

I love you deeply

Acknowledgments

To have encounters with God that change your life is something anyone can do by themselves. To record those encounters in a book that can touch other people's lives requires a team effort. I am grateful for the group of people that God has surrounded me with. A special thanks to Gina Green for meticulously proofreading the manuscript. Her changes have added not only sophistication to what you'll read, but thoughtful insight as well. I appreciate the work of Amy Youssef of WaterKress Creative (www.waterkress.com) and Dick Rabil of Next Realm Design (www.redbubble.com/people/nextrealm/shop) for their graphic design work and consultations. Caneel Cotton also provided invaluable insight into the fonts and layout. I thank Margaret Beam of Tuning into Life, LLC (www.tuningintolife.com) for creating resources to accompany this book.

I am especially thankful for everyone who was part of the first Living Loved group. Each week I wrote and distributed a chapter of this book to a group that I taught the material to online—people from various parts of the United States and one country overseas. Their questions and insights blessed not only the online Living Loved course, but they shaped the book as well. Last and certainly not least, I thank my husband, Enoch. One of my greatest treasures of oneness love with God is how it has opened our hearts to a deeper love for each other. Thank you for the many ways you have loved me in an increasing measure.

Introduction

A couple of years ago, I begged God for “real intimacy.” I wasn’t really sure what I was after. I just knew I wanted the real him and the real me interacting in the most unfiltered way possible.

God responded to my request by taking me on adventures in heaven where he interacted with me in a new way. He wasn’t my Father. He wasn’t my Friend. He wasn’t my Lord. He didn’t relate to me in any role that I had known him in before. Instead, he met me in the most intimate type of relationship we know—like a Spouse. Afterwards, God would tell me to write our adventure down so I could tell others what it felt like to know God as my Husband. I have hundreds (if not thousands) of pages of these adventures. I’ve divided them into books and stories.

In this course, we’re going to start with the foundation of the Bible. Then we’re going to draw on my Bible-fueled adventures to unpack a new way of interacting with God. I call the love God and I developed oneness love or marriage love because it stems from knowing God as a spouse. It feels like your two spirits become one.

What we’ll cover in this book isn’t all there is to knowing God in this way. But it’s the foundation of everything else. Without what we explore here, none of the other things that can be built from our oneness with God would be possible. All of creation is meant to draw life from the fact that we are one with God. Without the kind of love that we’ll unpack in this book flowing between God and us, our oneness with God would remain shallow. It would never probe our depths. It could never induce God to open up his hidden places to us.

When you and God love each other in the marriage oneness sort of way, anything is possible. You will know God fully. He will possess you completely. It can feel like all of your dreams coming true because what your soul has been dreaming of is to reconnect with God in this way.

In Part 1, we'll explore oneness love in the Bible. Part 2 walks you through my personal journey into living loved by God as a spouse. We'll discuss how to identify and overcome barriers to entering oneness love in Part 3. The final section will unpack how to build your own oneness love with God so that every moment of every day can flow from a joyful, intimate connection to God. In the appendix, you'll find exercises and access to guided encounters to help launch your journey.

My heart's desire is to stir you to a love with God so intensely sweet that it's all-consuming, supremely satisfying, and ever-growing—for both of you.

Katharine Wang

Part 1:
Oneness Love in the Bible

Why Now?

How does God love you? Do you think of him as your heavenly Father? Is he your Friend? Counselor? Lord? Master? Savior? All these words describe our relationship with God in the Bible. Are they merely random illustrations? Or is there an order in which our relationship with God is being revealed? Are we growing up into deeper and more intimate ways of experiencing our relationship with God?

I believe that our connection with God is progressively moving towards greater levels of intimacy. I believe God is purposefully pushing it forward on a set timetable. And I believe his timetable calls for a radical jump to the next level right about now. Here are three ways to understand how—and why—our relationship and love with God are moving towards deeper intimacy.

Lens #1: The Covenants

FIRST COVENANT

In the First Covenant (also called the Old Testament), God revealed himself to Israel in a personal way. He did call himself Father (Deut. 32:18; Isa. 1:4) and even Mother (Deut. 32:18; Isa. 66:13; Isa. 49:15). He did reveal himself as Husband or Spouse (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:14; Ezek. 16:32). On one level, people were supposed to view their relationship with him from all these angles. Mostly, however, people in the First Covenant saw God as Master or Lord. The most common translation for what they

called God, for example, was “Lord.”

He was the Supreme Ruler, the Master of the Universe. God governed creation from his throne in heaven (Ps. 11:4; Ps. 103:19). Everything bowed down to him and worshiped him (Ps. 95:6; Ps. 97:7). To see God was to take your life into your hands (Exod. 24:11; Judg. 13:22). He was untouchable, almost unapproachable, surrounded by darkness and glory (Exod. 19:16-24; Exod. 20:21; Deut. 4:11).

SECOND COVENANT

Then along came Jesus. He didn't deny that God was all the things people believed him to be in the Old Testament. Instead of focusing on God as an unapproachable Supreme Ruler, though, he latched onto a description of God present—but rare—in the Old Covenant: Father.

Jesus called God his Father (Matt. 10:32; Matt. 11:25; Matt. 12:50; Matt. 16:17; Matt. 18:10; Luke 23:46; John 6:32; John 12:28; John 17:1). He taught his disciples to approach God as their Daddy, too (Matt. 6:9; Matt. 23:9). That concept was radical. It was unthinkable. How could the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, the Judge of All, the Commander of the Heavenly Armies, be approachable as Father? Wasn't that idea of God far too intimate?

Knowing God as our Papa is probably the greatest, most intimate revelation of God in the Second Covenant. It was Jesus' revelation, opened to all of us. A Father is far dearer than a Master or Supreme Ruler or Sovereign Lord. It speaks of close family. It tells us God takes care of us and watches over us and provides for us. It assures us that he loves us—not as a distant ruler—but as his precious children. It's an stunning, revolutionary way to see God.

THE THIRD WAY

Now we're entering what the Bible calls the age to come. It's a time about 2,000 years after Jesus that opens a new path to God just as exciting and revolutionary as what Jesus did. Just like the New Testament writers weren't sure at first what to call the new revelation they were experiencing, I'm not sure what to call this third way. At first Christianity was called "The Way" (Acts 9:2). For now I'm calling what the new age opens to us the "Third Way." So, Moses' law was the "First Way," Jesus' life, death, and resurrection was the "Second Way," and what we have available to us now is the "Third Way."

Just as Jesus revolutionized how people saw God, the Third Way will start another revolution. We don't deny that God is everything the First and Second Covenants proclaimed about him. But we will bring to the surface a description of our relationship with God that's present in the Bible but hasn't truly been experienced yet—God as One with Us, God as our Spouse.

Jesus came as God *with* Us (Matt. 1:23). There is something closer than being *with* someone, however. God is no longer satisfied with being with us. He'd like to be united to us. In 1 Corinthians 6:17, Paul declares, "But the one united with the Lord is one spirit with him." We can be one with God.

In the Bible God describes his oneness relationship with us as marriage. In its perfect design, marriage is the closest bond two people can share.

"That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24 (NIV)). God doesn't say that about any other relationship. Only in marriage do two become one. "This is a profound mystery—but I'm talking about Christ and the church (Eph. 5:32 (NIV)). It's a truth that points to our relationship with God.

When we grow up, we can leave our parents and unite to our spouse. The husband and wife become one flesh. Parents and children don't become one. There is a oneness, a closeness, a most sacred and intimate bond that husbands and wives share that no other human relationship shares. That's why God calls himself our Husband (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:14; Ezek. 16:32; Hos. 2:16; Isa. 62:4-5). That's why Jesus identifies himself as our Groom (Matt. 9:15; Mark 2:19-20; Luke 5:34-35). That's why the Bible ends with God's wedding (Rev. 19). The culmination of our relationship with God is to enter a oneness, marriage-type intimacy with him.

Knowing God as Lord or Master is a great place to start. Knowing him as Father is a step towards intimacy. It's a radical, awesome way of seeing God. Knowing God in oneness—experiencing him as your Spouse—is perhaps the most personal, private, intimate way to be in relationship with God. It is opened to us now in a way it never was in the past.

Lens #2: Growing Up

Here's another way to look at it. What if a person's experience with love from childhood to adulthood was meant to show us the progression of our love with God? When we're born, the first type of love we're meant to experience is the love of a parent. A mother and a father pouring their parental love into our hearts forms a solid foundation for our identity and security.

As we grow up, we're then meant to experience the love of a larger family—brothers, sisters, relatives. The love of friends is also supposed to be poured into our hearts. These types of love strengthen our identity and self-worth. They make us feel whole and good about ourselves. But when we mature, we can experience a different kind of love—the oneness of marriage love. This love takes the foundation of our lives—what was

formed in us by the other types of love we've experienced—and activates it. It sets us on fire to be a mature expression of what is inside us.

What if we're meant to first experience the love of God as a Father and a Parent? What if we're meant to know his love as a brother and friend? After all, Jesus didn't only call God his Father. He also called us "brothers and sisters" and "friends" (Heb. 2:11; John 15:15; Rom. 8:29). What if—after we have the foundation of our lives set by these types of love—another type of love is meant to be activated in our hearts?

When humanity reaches "maturity," God will introduce himself in a new way to us. He will come with a oneness love. "The two will become one flesh," Paul writes about husbands and wives. "This is a great mystery—but I'm actually talking about Christ and the church" (Eph.5:31-32). One day Jesus will "marry" his "bride" (Rev. 19:7-9). The complete union of God with humanity that we've been maturing towards will become a reality.

The love of parents grounds us. The love of friends enriches us. But the love of a lover completes us. It's the type of love that expresses desire at the deepest level, that wants every part of us. It's like finding an exact match—someone who completes who you are. It is the type of love that is supposed to take everything that we are and set it on fire, activating it to become something that changes the universe.

God's passionate love for us searches out every part of us—and makes it whole by uniting it with God. It's like feeling, "I've found someone who is my 'other half'—someone who perfectly fits and complements who my spirit is."

God tells a story in the Bible of his relationship to his bride. He says their relationship started when she was a baby. God gave life to her and looked over every aspect of her growing up. Although he loved her then, it was more of the love of a Father. But when he noticed that she had reached the "age for love," he came to her and married her (Ezek. 16:8).

Since humanity's infancy, God has loved us. He has poured out a

fatherly and motherly love into our hearts. He has guided every step of our maturing process. When the time is right, when we are collectively mature and ready, God will release a type of love that we've never experienced with him before.

Hosea predicts that in the last days we'll stop calling God "My Master" and start calling him "My Husband" (Hos. 2:16). We will change our name for God from "Master" or "Lord" to "Husband." We'll jettison a hierarchical relationship for a partnership of equals. That's something only a mature adult could do.

It's worth noting that deciding to enter oneness love with God doesn't mean you shouldn't or won't marry on earth. A spiritual union with God and a physical union with an earthly spouse are meant to complement each other. Like any other biblical truth, oneness with God can be enjoyed from any earthly marital status.

Lens #3: The Reason for Ages

Here's a final lens to consider. God gave us ways to measure time in creation for a reason. We measure days and years. The Bible also measures what it calls ages. An age is just another unit of time measurement. An age doesn't use the earth's rotation on its axis or revolution around the sun to gauge time. It uses the earth's precession through the constellations. Approximately every 2,160 years, the earth passes through one constellation in the night sky. Each time the earth moves to a new constellation, the Bible calls it a new age. (For a more complete scientific explanation of the ages, see our website www.ATCUniversity.com.)

For example, the First Covenant lasted about 2,000 years—from Abraham to Jesus. The Second Covenant lasted about 2,000 years—from Jesus to now. The reason God divided time into huge chunks like ages is to mark our maturation process.

When kids are little, parents have one set of rules for them. As children

mature, the rules change. When they become fully mature, they move from rules to freedom. For example, when my kids were very young, they weren't allowed to use the kitchen knives. When they matured a bit, I allowed them to use a knife as they learned how to cook. But we still had rules about when and how to use the knives. When they reach full maturity, I won't have any rules for them, of course. They will be able to use the kitchen knives however they see fit.

Not unlike my kids' stages of relating to knives, ages mark significant milestones in humanity's maturation as a whole. Reaching the end of an age is like reaching a point where there's a sudden, meaningful shift in the rules of how we relate to God. It's like being old enough to drive or to marry or to retire. It's a major milestone where a lot of things change all at once for us.

The shift from the First Covenant to the Second Covenant saw a change in relating to God through a set of rules to interacting through grace. There was a shift from seeing God as Lord or Master to seeing him as Father.

As we shift from the Second Covenant to the Third Way, there will be another dramatic shift. We'll move from relating to God through faith to relating to him through identity. There will be a return to the original interaction we were meant to have with God in the Garden of Eden—a relationship based not on our actions or our beliefs, but purely on who we are as sharing God's image. We'll stop thinking of God primarily as our Father—as someone over us who mentors us and guides us. We'll start experiencing God mostly as a marriage partner—as an equal who we enjoy the most intimate type of bond with. We'll share complete oneness with God.

Biblical Framework for Oneness Love

The Bible gives us a framework for how to think about and structure oneness love with God. This chapter will define what that framework is and unpack how it can help us experience oneness.

The primary way God describes his oneness with us in the Bible is to call it a marriage. Since marriage is the only human relationship where (in the Bible's words) two become one, it makes sense. But what does God mean by marriage? How can this analogy help us unpack our oneness with God?

Here are three principles to understand the biblical framework for oneness.

1. God created humanity as his perfect mate.

When God formed humanity, he created a single being called "Adam." This being wasn't separated into male and female (yet). Both male and female were inside Adam at first. Then God brought all the animals to Adam to name. When Adam realized there wasn't another creature like himself, God declared, "It's not good for Adam to be alone."

God's solution wasn't to create another being out of nothing for Adam. His solution was to take part of Adam and form a wife for him—Eve. The word used for how God made Eve isn't the verb in Genesis 1:1 for creating something from nothing or for creating what is seen from

what is unseen. It's a verb for taking what is already there and fashioning it into something. God took what was already inside Adam, separated it from him, and formed it into Eve.

Then there were two expressions of humanity—male and female. They were both fully human, fully equal. They could be the perfect match for each other. They suited each other precisely because they used to be one. They had literally shared the same flesh.

Instead of remaining completely separate, however, the two expressions of humanity could reunite. They could become one again in marriage. The re-union of what had once been a single being enabled them to share companionship and bliss and oneness in a way they couldn't share it with any other creature. From their union a specific kind of love flowed—the love of desire and romance and passion. The joining of their flesh became the most beautiful, pleasurable expression of their love.

While Genesis 2 recounts humanity's first love story, a growing number of scholars believe Genesis 1 reveals God's true love. Initially, God created everything in the spiritual realm—including angels and other spiritual beings. Then he formed every part of natural creation. Like Adam, God looked at everything around him and realized there was no one like him. Just as it wasn't good for Adam to be the only human, it wasn't good for God to be the only one like himself.

How did God solve the problem? He decided to make a being in his image, according to his likeness (Gen. 1:26). Just as God took part of Adam to form Eve, God took part of himself (his Spirit) and breathed it into a body he had formed from the dust of the earth. Like Eve was the same "flesh" as Adam—just a different expression of it, humanity was the same "spirit" as God—just an expression of it in the natural creation. God didn't create the human spirit from nothing. He took what was already inside him, breathed it out, and formed a likeness of himself in natural creation.

Then there were two expressions of divinity—God outside of natural creation and God inside of it. They were both fully God, fully equal. They could be the perfect match for each other. They suited each other precisely because they used to be one. They had literally shared the same spirit.

Instead of remaining completely separate, however, the two expressions of divinity could reunite. They could become one again in spiritual marriage (1 Cor. 6:17). The re-union of what had once been a single spirit enables them to share companionship and bliss and oneness in a way they couldn't share it with any other creature. From their union a specific kind of love flows—the love of desire and romance and passion. The joining of their spirits is the most beautiful, pleasurable expression of their love.

In other words, there's good reason to believe that God created humanity to be his Eve—his partner, the only one like him, the only one he could join himself to intimately, the only one who he'd be terribly lonely and feel incomplete without.

2. God called his oneness with us “marriage” in the Bible.

Human marriage is a reunion of flesh that had once been one. Spiritual marriage is a reunion of spirits that had once been one. The idea of having a spiritual marriage with humanity wasn't something revealed in the first few chapters of the Bible and then forgotten. Consistently, God wove the theme of his marriage into his revelation of himself. In fact, what we call the Old Testament is—in God's eyes—a legally binding agreement to marry. “I swore a solemn oath to you and entered into a marriage covenant with you, declares the Sovereign LORD, and you became mine” (Ezek. 16:8).

OLD TESTAMENT

When did God “marry” his people in the Old Testament? The Talmud (a collection of the laws and traditions of Judaism) tells us God’s wedding day was Pentecost. (The holiday is called Shavuot in Hebrew). That’s the day God spoke the 10 Commandments from Mount Sinai.

The idea that God really did marry his bride on Shavuot is so ingrained in Jewish tradition that many congregations will read a *ketubah* or marriage agreement between God and his people on Shavuot. It’s called the Shavuot *ketubah*. There are different versions of this marriage agreement. The most common one reads:

The Invisible One came forth from Sinai . . . in the year 2448 since the creation of the world The Bridegroom [God], Ruler of rulers, Prince of princes, Distinguished among the select, Whose mouth is pleasing and all of Whom is delightful, said unto the pious, lovely and virtuous maiden [the people of Israel] who won His favor above all women, who is beautiful as the moon, radiant as the sun, awesome as bannered hosts: Many days wilt thou be Mine and I will be thy Redeemer. . . .

Be thou My mate according to the law of Moses and Israel, and I will honor, support, and maintain thee and be thy shelter and refuge in everlasting mercy. And I will set aside for thee, in lieu of thy virginal faithfulness, the life-giving Torah by which thou and thy children will live in health and tranquility.

This bride [Israel] consented and became His spouse. Thus an eternal covenant, binding them forever, was established between them. . . .

May the Bridegroom rejoice with the bride whom He has taken as His lot and may the bride rejoice with the Husband of her youth while uttering words of praise.¹

1 Philip Goodman, ed. *The Shavuot Anthology*, Lincoln, NE: Jewish Pub. Soc., 1991.

PROPHETS

God's marriage to his bride on Shavuot is a theme throughout the Old Testament. Prophet after prophet called the people back to their marriage vows with God. "For your Maker is your husband—the LORD Almighty is his name," Isaiah reminded Israel (Isa. 54:5 NIV). Jeremiah urged, "'Return, faithless people,' declares the LORD, 'for I am your husband'" (Jer. 3:14a NIV).

When the nation worshiped idols instead of God, God considered it spiritual adultery. "'But like a woman unfaithful to her husband, so you, Israel, have been unfaithful to me,' declares the LORD" (Jer. 3:20 NIV). "'You adulterous wife! You prefer strangers to your own husband!'" (Ezek. 16:32 NIV).

God even told one prophet, Hosea, to marry a woman who would be unfaithful to him. God wanted to give the nation a living example of how he felt about his relationship with his people. "Rebuke your mother, rebuke her, for she is not my wife, and I am not her husband. Let her remove the adulterous look from her face and the unfaithfulness from between her breasts" (Hos. 2:2 NIV).

Despite Israel's unfaithfulness, God would redeem her. He would buy her back from prostitution. She would call him "my husband" again. "In that day," declares the LORD, "you will call me 'my husband'; you will no longer call me 'my master'" (Hos. 2:16 NIV).

"No longer will they call you Deserted, or name your land Desolate. But you will be called Hephzibah (meaning 'my delight is in her'), and your land Beulah (meaning 'married'); for the LORD will take delight in you, and your land will be married. As a young man marries a young woman, so will your Builder marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you" (Isa. 62:4-5 NIV).

The Old Covenant was a marriage agreement—from God's point of view. The New Covenant wasn't a different kind of agreement. It was

an upgraded version of it, established on “better promises” than Mount Sinai’s vows (Heb. 8:6). Accordingly, we see the theme of marriage throughout the New Testament as well.

NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament began with John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus. How did John introduce God’s Chosen One? John called Jesus “the bridegroom,” referring to Jesus as the one who (like God) had the right to marry the bride (John 3:29). At the end of the Old Testament, God was divorced (Isa. 50:1; Jer. 3:8). He felt forced to divorce his bride for her unfaithfulness (Hos. 2:2; Jer. 3:1). Although he had promised to marry her again in the future (Isa. 62:4-5; Isa. 49:21; Hos. 3:1), God’s legal status was “divorced” for a long time.

Then Jesus entered the scene. When John called Jesus the “groom,” he was pointing to a promise that God would marry his bride again. They wouldn’t remain divorced forever. Jesus was going to introduce a new marriage agreement—or new testament. Proclaiming that Jesus was the groom was like claiming his divinity. He would be the one to marry the bride in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.

Aware of those prophecies, Jesus identified himself as our groom (Matt. 9:15; Mark 2:19-20; Luke 5:34-35). He compared the kingdom of God to a wedding banquet—to the celebration that happens when there’s a union between two people (Matt 22; Matt 25; Luke 14). Jesus even performed his first miracle at a wedding (John 2). In Jesus’ eyes, he was the groom coming to claim his bride.

The marriage analogy continued in the New Testament’s letters. Paul declared that Jesus would present his bride “to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless” (Eph. 5:27 NIV).

Echoing the words of Genesis 2, Paul declared: “For this reason a

man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church” (Eph. 5:31-32 NIV).

Finally, the Bible ends with a wedding ceremony uniting the Lamb—a nickname for Jesus—and his bride. “Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. . . . Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’ And he added, ‘These are the true words of God.’” (Rev. 19:7-9 NIV).

It’s hard to miss the fact that God thinks of himself like our Spouse. From the Bible’s opening words to its close, God refers to his marriage to us countless times. Using words like “marriage,” “bride,” “union,” and “one flesh” makes God’s intentions clear. He does want to be our Friend. But ultimately, he’s looking for more than a friendship. He is our Brother. But in the end he wants to be closer to us than that. He wants to marry us. He has already planned his wedding day. He’s already preparing the banquet.

3. God’s marriage flows from marriage love.

Since I was a child, I knew that God called himself our husband in the Bible. Honestly, I thought of God’s marriage as an analogy for a deep love or a life-long commitment. I didn’t think about what type of love God’s marriage would possess. (Or maybe I assumed it would be a super close friendship type of love or the selfless agape love the New Testament celebrates.) I never imagined that the romantic, passionate kind of love that human marriage flows from would be part of God’s marriage.

A couple of things changed my mind. First, Song of Solomon (sometimes called Song of Songs or Canticles) is in the Bible. Why would a writing celebrating marriage love in such a not-for-kids way be included in the Bible? The book is very graphic and passionate. There

was a lot of controversy around including that book in the canon for that reason. It won a spot in the Bible because it was seen as an allegory of God's love for his people. For thousands of years, Jews and Christians have interpreted this book as a look at the kind of love God's marriage would contain.

If the book had simply been about human love, it would have been discarded from the Bible. But the rabbis who determined which books would be included in the canon were clear. Song of Solomon describes God's love towards his people, they concluded. For example, the Targum, an ancient paraphrase/commentary of the Bible, teaches that Israel is the beautiful bride and the God Himself is the groom. The Midrash Rabbah (another famous Jewish commentary) takes the same approach. Throughout the ages, many notable Jewish scholars have viewed the book the same way, including Saadia, Rashi, and Ibn Ezra.

Early church Fathers also read the book as a description of divine love—this time of Jesus' love for his bride, the Church. This view can be traced back as far as Hippolytus around A.D. 200. The influential church Father Origen championed Song of Solomon as an expression of love between Jesus and the Church.

Thinking of Song of Solomon as a description of God's love for his people has been the most widespread view of the book for thousands of years—for both Jewish and Christian commentators.

GOD'S IDEAL MARRIAGE

What does Song of Solomon tell us about the kind of marriage God wants to have? According to Song of Solomon, God's marriage is founded on a particular type of love. The love in that book isn't a friendly affection. It's not the love that flows from a parent to a child. It's not even the selfless, agape love the New Testament introduces. It's a romantic, ardent love that causes two people to want to unite themselves in the

most passionate, enjoyable way.

Is it okay for God to feel that way about us? Others who have seriously thought about Song of Solomon have asked the same question.

HOLY OF HOLIES

“Is Song of Solomon a defiling writing?” the famous Rabbi Akiva was asked. Akiva’s answer reveals how Jewish rabbis who decided to include the book as scripture viewed this writing.

“God forbid!” Akiva responded. “For all of eternity in its entirety is not as worthy as the day on which Song of Songs was given to Israel. For all the Writings are holy, but Song of Songs is the Holy of Holies.”²

All of the Bible describes God’s thoughts about us. All scripture is holy. But the Holy of Holies—the book that reveals God’s most important, most central, deepest desire—is the Song of Solomon, says Akiva. In his deepest places, God desires his relationship with us to look like that book. Despite what you read, it’s not the script for an R-rated movie. It’s God’s plea for a fun, holy, passionate, pleasure-filled relationship with us!

“Oh, how I wish you would kiss me passionately! For your lovemaking is more delightful than wine. The fragrance of your colognes is delightful; your name is like the finest perfume. No wonder the young women adore you! Draw me after you; let us hurry! May the king bring me into his bedroom chambers!” (Song 1:2-4).

Passionate kisses. Hurrying into the bedroom chamber. These words are in the Bible because they describe God’s thoughts towards us. God wants to marry us. And in the deepest places of his heart, he holds a secret desire. He wants a marriage flowing from a heart-pounding romance.

² Lawrence H. Schiffman, ed., *Texts and Traditions: A Source Reader for the Study of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism*, Ktav Pub., 1998, pp. 199-200.

ENTIRE SPECTRUM

The second thing that changed my mind about God wanting a romance with us was simple logic. Why would God call his relationship with us a marriage unless he was signaling that marriage love would be the fundamental way we relate to each other? If what God had in mind was a close friendship, then why not call it that? God doesn't hesitate to call us friends (John 15:15). Yet ultimately, he desires more than a friendship with us. God does love us like a Father. But in the end, he desires to be closer to us than a dad. He wants to join all of himself to all of us. That type of oneness he calls a marriage. That type of oneness has a specific kind of love—romantic or marriage love.

I had always thought romance was something between two people. I didn't imagine there could be a version of romance our spirits could enjoy. Then God told me, "Would I create romantic love and forbid myself from experiencing it? Would I limit it to something on earth only? Why would I occupy all other types of love but not occupy that part of the love spectrum?"

God is love (1 John 4:16). All love comes from God. We see God in fatherly love and brotherly love and friendship love and agape love. Why would God remove himself from the romantic love part of the spectrum? Could he even remove himself from any type of love? Isn't love who God is? Of course God is in romantic love. Of course there's a place in God's heart that the pure form of that love flows from. Of course that type of love ultimately points us to a way of understanding and experiencing God. If every other variety of love is a way of absorbing God's love for us, then so is romantic love.

This is a great mystery. I used to think of God's marriage like a kid would think of marriage. I used to think that when God said he wanted to marry me, he meant he wanted to spend forever with me in a loving relationship. He does want those things. As a spiritual kid, though, I

couldn't picture God loving me in any way other than as a father or friend. The truth is God's spirit longs for me like a lover would (Song 7:10). God is captivated by my beauty (Song 1:15). He grows distracted if I stand too close (Song 6:5). He'd drop all his kingly duties to run away with me (Song 2:10).

I no longer think of God's marriage like a kid would think of it. I know marriage involves a different kind of love. When kids grow up, they can experience this new type of love—a love deeper and more consuming than childhood loves. As humanity as a whole matures, our spirits are awakening to a deeper kind of love with God. It's the kind of love that fuels marriage.

WHY IT MATTERS

Who cares if God loves me like a close friend or like a father or like a lover? The type of love we build a relationship with makes all the difference. It forms the foundation of our relationship. It sets the boundaries for what we'll do together, for how far we'll open ourselves to each other, and for what will flow from our union.

On earth, the most intimate relationship we can experience is marriage. It's no accident that romantic love is the foundation of that bond. Romantic love causes you to want to enter into the deepest kind of union with someone. It induces people to leave impressive careers or breathtaking opportunities to be with a lover. It urges you to give the deepest parts of yourself to someone else. It's the reason we make life-long commitments to people. It's the reason we leave our parents and start our own family.

What is the purpose of romantic love with God? Because it's a deeper type of love, it releases deeper parts of who we are. It opens up and releases hidden, private parts of who God is, too. Without romantic love, essential aspects of who we are would remain locked forever. The same is

true of God.

So marriage love releases who we are more fully. It also enables us to do different, important things with God. Marriage love creates, for example. It leaves behind the old to form something new—from nothing.

Perhaps most importantly, marriage love with God creates the most intimate type of connection between you and God. God longs for a bond with you in the deepest places of your being. How does he get you to open up those places to him? How do you get him to open his most private places to you? Through romantic love. Feeling that kind of love with each other prompts the deepest, most intimate type of connection. From that place of deep intimacy, new feelings and thoughts and aspects of yourself flow. These newly released parts of you mix with newly released parts of God. Together your oneness forms things that could never have existed otherwise. And it all flows from the romantic, marriage love that is the basis of your oneness relationship.

What if Marriage to God Feels Unsafe?

Although the Bible talks about our union with God being a marriage union, I've noticed two situations when approaching God as a spouse can feel unsafe for people. Before exploring how to experience oneness love with God in the next section, I want to discuss why some people may feel uncomfortable with the topic and what you can do if you discover you're one of those people.

Suppose someone had an abusive or unhealthy relationship with an earthy father. If we describe God as "Father" to that person, it could make them feel unsafe because their experience with a father was unsafe or unhappy. The same sort of thing can happen when someone has suffered hurt in the part of the heart reserved for spouses. Anything from a "run-of-the-mill" broken heart to deep pain of sexual abuse can make someone feel unsafe approaching God as Spouse. We may experience a

range of emotions, from mild discomfort to a severe anxiety or shame, depending on the nature of our past pain and how thoroughly it's been resolved. On some level, we all experience some pushback because so few of us have had perfect life experiences in this area. I want to give three suggestions for handling the feeling that marriage love with God isn't safe to explore.

SPIRITUAL UNION

First, our union with God is a spiritual one. Not to be graphic, but marriage to God doesn't involve the reproductive organs or touching the body. God will not touch your body. He will not appear to you in a fleshly form to unite flesh to flesh. The part of us that unites with God is our spirit. We are not joining flesh to flesh. We are uniting spirit to spirit.

In a relationship with God, you set the pace. You determine the nature and boundaries of what you and God experience together. God never violates your heart or your will.

In a marriage with God, God will pour the perfect, heavenly love of a spouse into your life. He will wrap you in his tender care. He will show you—experientially—the deepest, purest, most intimate kind of connection. He can fill you with a love so deep you forget everything but the joy of knowing his love.

SEEK HEALING

Second, for some people, experiencing God's perfect, heavenly love in this area is all their heart will need to heal from past hurts. I'll share later in the book how parts of my mind approached Jesus like he was a man. For some reason, my mind couldn't distinguish between a man (who could potentially leave me with a broken heart) and Jesus (who would never hurt me).

How did I overcome the feeling that Jesus was unsafe to approach as my groom? Spending time with Jesus as he poured his perfect love for me (as a groom) into my heart convinced me he was safe. I realized he would never hurt me. God's perfect love as a spouse is powerful—even more powerful than his love as a father because the love of a spouse cuts deeper inside us.

For some people, past hurts in this area run much deeper than mine. If you've suffered abuse in the past and you find unpleasant images or memories coming to mind when you approach God as Spouse, I'd suggest you pursue inner healing. Then try engaging God as Spouse again. You may need a break from thinking about marriage (in any context) to pursue healing. What kind of inner healing is best? The one that works for you. There are methods aimed at different kinds of pain (from abusive marriages to sexual abuse to many other kinds of hurts we could experience). I've also found that some methods work faster for me than others, given my personality and how I relate to God. But what may be a slower healing process for me could be the fastest one for someone else. In other words, there are a variety of excellent tools already developed to help heal from these kinds of heart wounds. If you find you need to use those tools, take some time and do it. Then reengage this material.

This book gives you a way to access God's perfect, heavenly love for you as Spouse. We've developed tools to help you make living in this love a reality in your everyday life. In the chapters that follow, we'll unpack methods and tools to enjoy this kind of relationship with God on a daily basis. You may find that, in the end, knowing God in this way is the most thorough and effective medicine you could find.

THE POWER OF SPOUSAL LOVE

Third, although thinking of God as Spouse could trigger unpleasant

memories at first, in the end it will be part of the path to complete healing. Remember that the goal isn't to rid ourselves of trauma. Ultimately, the goal is to experience the original, perfect design of God for the area of our lives that had been traumatized. That's why experiencing God's perfect love as Spouse will be part of the healing process—either now or later. Only when we fill those places in our hearts with God's perfect love for us as our spouse will we know complete healing in that area.

When I experienced God's love for me as my heavenly father, it brought healing to the parts of my heart that my earthly father hadn't fully touched. When I experienced God's love for me as my heavenly husband, it had an even more profound effect. It healed some of the deepest parts of my heart—parts reserved for giving and receiving love in the core of who I am. There were parts of my heart I hadn't allowed my earthly husband to touch, partly because I didn't even know they existed. When God touched them in our oneness love, it ignited something deep inside me that only a spouse could kindle.

Interacting with God as a husband-wife couple showed me how the heavenly, original blueprint for marriage love was supposed to feel. God loved me *perfectly* as a spouse. He treated me *perfectly* in a marriage relationship. It taught me how perfect marriage love felt and how it was supposed to be lived out on a day-to-day basis. After my heart filled with that kind of love, I was able to love my earthly husband more like how God loved me. To me it was better than what any couples counseling or marriage book could offer. God himself showed me every day what his perfect design for marriage love was by filling me with its feeling. Not only did my own heart heal, but that same love poured into my marriage and other close relationships.

FATHER VS. HUSBAND

I've noticed one other issue that can make a marriage to God feel

unsafe. Some people who have had poor connections with an earthly father can have difficulty relating to God as Spouse. Knowing God as Father releases healing to us—especially if our earthly fathers couldn't provide the complete love and care they should have. If we haven't fully healed the parts of our hearts that are meant to be touched by a father's love, then we can resist moving from thinking of God as Father to thinking of him as Husband. I experienced that feeling.

When I began exploring marriage to God, most of me was excited about moving from knowing God as Father to God as Husband. Yet parts of my subconscious felt sad or even threatened by it. Those feelings came to the surface in a particular encounter with God. We were hanging out in a beautiful place inside God's heart, having a wonderful time. Suddenly, it hit me that God was no longer my father. He looked far too young to be a dad, for one thing. Plus, he wasn't interacting with me the way a father would anymore. Despite the fun, beautiful setting, I began sobbing. Resting my head on God's shoulders, I had a good cry. He wrapped his arms around me, comforting me. Then he said, "Why don't we make our relationship whatever you need it to be, moment to moment?"

It was the perfect response. I knew God was saying that if I needed to relate to him as a father one day, then he would be my father. If I needed his love as a husband, then that's who he would be to me.

MATURITY

The husband-wife relationship is the last one to develop in the natural. I suspect it's also the last one we enter in our spiritual journey, too. From the time we're born, we're meant to experience the love of a father and mother. Parents, siblings, and friends love us while we mature, helping us develop. Although we continue to enjoy their love after we reach maturity, there is a kind of love we can't experience *until*

we mature. When we're fully grown, we're ready to experience the love of a spouse. To introduce children to marriage can be traumatic because they are not physically and emotionally ready to experience love in that way. Marriage to a minor is even illegal in most places. But when children become adults, they have a right to marry. Marriage between adults forms families, which in turn form the foundation of society. What would be harmful for children to experience (marriage) is the backbone of society.

Our spiritual development follows a parallel course. First, we need to experience the love of God as a parent and a friend. There is healing and wholeness that fills our hearts through knowing God in that way. When we've received everything we're supposed to from those ways of knowing God, though, we're ready to experience God as our spouse. Just as human marriage forms the backbone of society, our spiritual union with God will form the backbone of the universe. Everything will be structured around our deep, intimate oneness love with God.

I've found that as more parts of my subconscious become healed and whole, more of me can step into a marriage relationship with God. I feel less of a need to relate to God as Father and more of a desire to know him only as my Husband.

The beauty of marriage to God is that he doesn't rush us. God takes the relationship at our pace. In fact, he insists that we set the pace. And he formulates it to perfectly match what we need the most at any moment.

I believe you're ready to experience God as your spouse because you're reading this book. Something in you drew you to this teaching because part of you (probably a large part) is ready to explore oneness with God. As we begin unpacking intimacy with God, though, keep in mind that part of your subconscious may pull back at times. That's normal. You may find that knowing God's marriage love for you will convince your subconscious that God is safe to know as a spouse. Or you may decide to stop and seek inner healing for past wounds. Perhaps

that's the reason you were drawn to this material in the first place—to be completely healed. You may, like me, find that parts of you don't want to let go of God as Daddy while other parts are eager to love him as Husband. God isn't surprised by any of our reactions. I believe he's perfectly orchestrated the timing of when you read this book. Go at whatever pace you and God feel comfortable with.

Conclusion

Throughout the Bible, God describes the relationship he desires to have with us when we mature as a marriage. Most people will find knowing God as Spouse a safe, healing space. If that's not your experience, though, stop and seek inner healing. In the end, the deepest, most intimate places within our hearts are reserved for oneness love with God. Knowing God in that way will be the most life-giving thing we can do because it enables us to live from the original blueprint of how a mature relationship with God was designed to be.

Part 2:
Oneness Love in my Life

Changing the Definition of Intimacy

For most of my life, I had invited God to spend time with me as I worshiped him or prayed to him on earth. He would come down to me, and we'd share sweet fellowship. Then I was hanging out with God once, and he told me that I should visit him in heaven. So I shifted the primary place I'd hang out with God. Instead of asking him to meet me in my prayer closet, I'd "pretend" I was going to see him in heaven. Pretty soon, I wasn't pretending. God began to show me around incredibly beautiful places—more beautiful than I'd ever imagined. Spending time with God in heaven opened up my capacity to hear and see in the spiritual realm. I began having visions and encounters that drew me so much closer to God than I had been before. But I wanted something more than a vision. I wanted to interact with God how he really was. I wanted intimacy.

The Trade

I decided to do something bold. I decided to trade the most precious thing I had from God spiritually—the capacity for these life-changing visions and encounters—for "real" intimacy with him.

Offering God that trade was very difficult for me. The capacity for these encounters was my most cherished thing spiritually. They had drawn me so much closer to him. To give them up without being

guaranteed I'd get anything in exchange was an enormous risk for me.

No matter how many times I thought about it, though, I came to the same conclusion: It was worth risking everything I had for the chance of opening up intimacy with God on a new level.

GONE

The night I proposed the trade to God, I woke up in the middle of the night. Immediately, I was swept into a vision in heaven. I was in a large room with a ton of books. I knew the room represented the understanding of heaven, and God was about to open up a deeper understanding of heaven's mysteries to me. Five seconds into the vision, the words "GIVEN UP" appeared stamped over the scene. The vision suddenly stopped. I lay in bed, surrounded by lonely darkness.

Instead of being excited that God had taken me up on my trade, I was disturbed. "Did I just give up stuff like an understanding of heaven—for this silent darkness?" I wondered.

Around 5 a.m., God woke me up. "Get up and walk around the house," God instructed. "Ask every day for thirty days for me to open up intimacy to you. At the end of thirty days, I'll appear to you."

A DIFFERENT KIND OF INTIMACY

Walking around my house in the semi-darkness of early morning, I started pleading, "I want a deep intimacy with you, God. Open up intimacy for me. Open it up for me like you never have before." I was begging. It was probably more than begging. I had given up what was most precious to me for this. I absolutely wanted to receive something in exchange.

Although I was desperate, I wasn't picturing anything radical. In my mind, I wanted the kind of close-friendship intimacy two friends

might share over a cup of tea. I thought of intimacy as good friends sitting together, sharing things from their lives or their desires that they wouldn't share with strangers. But God was thinking of a different type of intimacy.

"I want to talk to you face to face, like Moses did," I requested. I couldn't think of anything more intimate than seeing someone face to face, how they really are.

"Don't you have face-to-face conversations with complete strangers every day?" God whispered to my spirit. Of course I did—the checkout clerks at the grocery store, people in line behind me, someone walking in the neighborhood—all strangers I interacted with face to face. "What is the point of having a face-to-face encounter? I want real intimacy with you," God said.

"Okay, God. I want to have intimate conversations with you," I changed my request. I was thinking of the most intimate thing I could imagine doing with God.

"I didn't die so I could talk to you," Jesus told me. "I died for something far more intimate than a conversation."

"God wants an intimacy that is more than talking together?" I wondered. "What kind of intimacy is that?"

A TASTE

As I was pacing the house praying for intimacy with God, an angel spoke to me. "Come sit down by the stream," he offered, "and get a taste of intimacy now."

In my mind, a scene spread out before me. I was in a grassy field with a stream flowing beside me. I was sitting on a blanket. God arrived toting a picnic basket. We started to talk.

As he spoke to me about things he wanted me to do, something stirred inside me. It was a different kind of feeling than I had ever felt

before talking to God. It felt a bit like the desire a woman would have for a man.

“What am I feeling, God?” I asked. “Is this sinfulness in me coming out? What’s going on?”

“You feel my desire for you,” God explained. Then he leaned over and whispered, “It won’t be long.”

I had no idea what God meant. But it felt like God’s desire had somehow lit a desire for him inside me. My flame wasn’t as strong as his. But there was something in my heart for God that hadn’t been there before.

The angel had told me I’d get a taste of intimacy. The experience left me wondering what in the world intimacy with God was going to look like.

VISIONS RESTORED

After about three days of giving up visions, I felt God’s presence standing next to me. “I’m glad you want me and not visions,” he said. “But visions can be a tool for coming to know me better. They can help you understand things in the spiritual realm faster and more deeply. I want you to take visions back—as a tool,” God urged. “You’re right that they are not a substitute for me. But use them to know me better.”

And just like that, I received back the thing I had given up for intimacy. One of the amazing things about God is that he will give us what we’re asking for—and then give us back what we bought it with.

THE PRAYER THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

I kept waking up early every morning to walk around my house and pray that God would open intimacy to me. Soon I realized something inside me had changed. I now wanted more than talking with God over

a cup of tea. My heart began to yearn for him so deeply that nothing else would satisfy.

I felt drawn to Song of Solomon, especially its first few verses. I read and reread those verses to God:

“Oh, how I wish you would kiss me passionately! For your lovemaking is more delightful than wine. The fragrance of your colognes is delightful; your name is like the finest perfume. No wonder the young women adore you! Draw me after you; let us hurry! May the king bring me into his bedroom chambers!” (Song 1:2-4).

I felt those verses must contain a spiritual truth that I could experience with God. They couldn't just be the only remaining evidence of the love a man and woman shared long ago. They had to be part of the Bible because they spoke God's desire for us.

In desperation, I asked God to explain those scripture verses to me. I swore to him that I wanted to know him and love him in that way.

I typed up a long prayer to God, pouring out my heart and what I sought from him. As soon as I finished, God responded. “I will do more than you ask for because my desire is greater than yours.”

That prayer—and God's response—were about to radically, permanently, and awesomely change my relationship with God.

What the Shift Looks Like

Immediately, God began to change how I related to him. Instead of seeing God primarily as my Father or Friend, I began to see him as my Spouse. That's a huge paradigm shift. So God gave me several experiences to show me what the change looked like from different perspectives.

WAITING FOR THIS MOMENT

As I asked God for a Song of Solomon type of intimacy, I could feel

his excitement growing.

“I’ve been waiting for this moment more than for any other moment in all of time,” God told me one morning. “Don’t stop pursuing my heart. You can unlock depths of it that no one else has unlocked.”

From one perspective, the shift from seeking God as our Father or Friend to seeking him as our Husband was a moment God had been waiting for forever. For God, it felt like being able to enter into something he’s always wanted to experience with someone. It was like the best moment in time.

Much later God explained how the shift from friendship to marriage felt to him: “I’ve waited forever to step into the kind of interaction we’re opening up,” God told me. “I’ve always longed to have an equal to share my life with. I do have many friends who I share deeply with. But not in the way we share life together. There is a difference between friendship and marriage. You know that. I’ve longed to not just share my thoughts or my secrets. I’ve longed to share myself with someone intimately.”

Sharing yourself with a spouse is different than sharing yourself with a friend or with a child. One way to look at it was that the deepening of our relationship was the moment God had waited all of eternity for.

THE END OF CHILDHOOD

I could sense God’s excitement over my asking him for intimacy. But one day I also felt a sadness within him.

“What is making you sad, God?” I asked.

“As we pursue a new type of intimacy, I am losing something,” God replied.

“What are you losing?” I wondered.

“Your childhood,” God answered, his voice full of memories. “You’re growing up and desiring me in a lover’s type of way. My desire is for you in that way, too. But that means I must close the chapter on your

childhood.”

I realized God wasn't talking about *my* journey from childhood into adulthood spiritually. He was speaking to me representatively. He was thinking about all of humanity. Collectively, we were maturing and getting ready to leave childhood behind. We were nearing the time when we'd be ready for romantic love with God.

God and I spent a few minutes remembering things we had done together when I was a “child.”

“Remember how I'd ask you for advice on the talks I was giving?” I asked. “Or how I'd ask you for a prophetic word for someone?”

“I used to carry you,” God replied. “Then as you grew up, you'd walk beside me, holding my hand like a child. That phase of your life is over.”

As a parent myself, I knew how it felt to watch your kids grow up. You're so proud of them. You want them to mature and become everything they are meant to be. But at the same time, you are sad to see them change. Part of you wants to hold onto the three-year-old boy or the two-year-old girl who gives you the most adorable smiles or asks you the funniest questions. You want them to be small enough to hold in your lap and snuggle. Yet you know it's better that they grow up. I've certainly had mixed emotions about it.

I guess God feels the same way.

MORE THAN FRIENDS

There was a final perspective on intimacy God wanted to show me. As I continued to walk around my house every day, asking God to open up intimacy to me, God spoke to me one morning.

“Sit down here again,” God directed. As I sat down in the same spot where the picnic scene had unfolded, the scene popped back into my mind. I was in a grassy field, next to a stream, sitting on a blanket with God. Reaching for a picnic basket, God took out some food to serve me.

I was surprised that it was “cheap” food—crackers with tuna on it. He wanted to talk privately in a beautiful setting—precisely the kind of thing I had thought intimacy with him was initially. Now, that seemed like a cheap substitute for the real thing. Not wanting to be rude, I accepted his food and listened to his conversation. He even began to tell me things he wouldn’t tell just anybody. Was this the type of intimacy I wanted? He was willing to make our intimacy look like this if that’s what I wanted from him.

I couldn’t take it any longer. My heart was burning with desire for him. And all he offered me was food and conversation.

“I’m done with your food,” I announced, pushing it away. “And I’m done with your conversation. I want something more out of our times together. I want more than talking.”

Up to that moment, I had experienced God’s love primarily as a Father or Brother or Friend. I had real, experiential knowledge of God’s fatherly love. I had genuinely felt in my heart his love for me as a friend or brother who would die for me. But I had never experienced his love as a Spouse. I understood intellectually that the Bible used “Husband” and “Groom” as a way to describe God’s relationship to us. But to me it had been just a head-centered acknowledgment that he was looking for a close relationship. I hadn’t actually thought of God as my Spouse. I hadn’t literally experienced that kind of love with him. Now I realized I wanted to know a love with God that went beyond friendship. I wanted to explore marital love. I wanted to be more than friends.

“God,” I began, “I’ve always thought of you like a friend. We’ve shared a lot of wonderful memories together. We’ve done incredible things together. We’ve always been friends. And now...” I didn’t know how to say it. “But now I think my feelings towards you are changing. I think I want to be more than friends.”

God was giving me another perspective on how the shift to oneness love with him can feel. It’s like being friends with someone forever—and

then realizing that you want to be more than friends. It's the moment you realize you have romantic feelings for your best friend.

We had a short conversation about how unsafe it felt for God to open his heart to me as more than friends. It was risky. What if he opened himself up to me—and I changed my mind? What if I pulled back? There's a deeper vulnerability in romance than there is in friendship. He had to decide if he was willing to risk a broken heart.

I felt confident of what his answer would be. Hadn't he told me he'd been waiting for this moment forever? But I wanted to hear him say it.

"I will open my heart to you," God decided. "We can be more than friends."

God told me later that at that moment, he gave his entire heart to me for all of eternity. I was weighing the decision to become more than friends. He was weighing the decision to give all of himself to me forever.

I wasn't sure how our relationship would change, but it felt like something significant had happened. We had made our intentions towards each other official. We had turned a friendship into something more.

Different Perspectives

In just a few weeks, God had shown me several ways that our shift into a new type of intimacy felt for him. He felt thrilled because he had been waiting for this moment since the beginning of time. He felt a tinge of sadness because I had outgrown relating to him as a child. That chapter of our relationship was over. He felt proud about my stepping into an adult relationship with him. And perhaps more than anything else, he felt the excitement and nervousness that surface when you decide to date someone you had always been friends with.

How did this shift feel for me? Although I could relate to all the analogies God showed me to convey his feelings, the one that resonated

with me most was dating your best friend. That's what I felt was happening between us.

Not Just for Me

At first, I thought God and I were developing a private love between the two of us. Of course, we were doing that. But we were doing something far greater. Repeatedly, God showed me that we were building the blueprint for something meant for everyone—that would change everything. I want to share three quick stories about how I realized this love wasn't just for me.

TEN DAYS

Remember how God had told me to ask him every day for thirty days to open intimacy to me and then he'd appear to me? After a few days, he told me one morning, "I can't wait the full thirty days. I'll appear to you in ten days."

On the tenth day, I was eagerly awaiting an encounter. That night God showed up and declared, "You're pregnant and will give birth in two years." Then he disappeared.

I had no idea what he meant. I couldn't believe I waited ten days for that enigmatic message. Immediately, an angel entered the room. He explained, "You're pregnant with a son, and you'll give birth in two years. Name your child Peter because just like Peter was the chief among all the apostles, your son will be chief among all the doctrines."

I figured I was pregnant with a doctrine about intimacy with God. The new kind of love we were developing would become the basis of the relationship between God and humanity. It would form a new cornerstone that everything would be built around. Like Peter became the rock that the church was built on, this new love would be the foundation for a new

era. It would take two years to grow the new love inside me. Then I'd be able to share about it publicly. It could be birthed and stand on its own. (And that's exactly what happened.)

HEAVENLY SANHEDRIN

Not long after God and I decided to be more than friends, he told me one morning, "The Heavenly Sanhedrin knows of our love. They've given me some time off to develop it."

At that point in my life, I barely knew what the Heavenly Sanhedrin was. I certainly had never interacted with them before. I had heard people say they were one of heaven's highest ruling bodies. (Some people call this group the Galactic Council.) My own research confirmed that, according to Jewish texts explaining the Bible, God set up his government on earth to reflect heaven's governmental structure. So there is a Heavenly Sanhedrin that mirrors the Sanhedrin's function in the Bible (*see, e.g., Mishnah, tractate Sanhedrin; tractate Makkot 23b; tractate Sotah 22b*).

For a long time, I didn't understand why the Heavenly Sanhedrin was so involved in my personal life with God. (They continued to track things closely and provide invaluable support and guidance. Honestly, I wouldn't have figured out the concept without them. But that's its own story.) Although I didn't grasp their role at the time, I did realize one thing: My love life with God wasn't private. It had caught the attention of a public body in heaven. Whatever God and I were doing had an official capacity to it. The highest levels of heaven's government were tracking it. Perhaps the love we were forming was meant to have a significant impact on everyone.

THE LOCKET

Another early clue that I wasn't pursuing simply a private romance

came right after God and I decided to be more than friends. Immediately, God started opening himself up to me emotionally. It reminded me of how, when my husband and I were dating, he would tell me things about himself that he had never told anyone else. He knew that to build a foundation for marriage, he would need to open himself up to me in a deeper way than he did with his friends. The things God began sharing with me reminded me of how my husband had let me deeper into who he was when we were dating than I knew he did with his friends. God and I were also building a foundation for marriage, not friendship. God was doing the same thing.

One day God was sharing something personal about himself just so I'd know it. When he finished his story, he turned to me. "Now tell me something about yourself that I don't know," he suggested.

I tried. I really tried to think of something about me that God didn't already know. "I do want to open up to you like you're opening up to me," I told him. "But everything I know about myself and everything I've experienced, you already know." I couldn't think of anything to share. But I did give him something.

"I'd like you to have this locket," I told him, creating up a heart-shaped locket with my imagination. In it I had placed pictures of him and me. "You can wear this locket. If you ever hesitate to tell me something or to open up your heart to me, you can look at it. The locket can remind you of how much I love you. It can remind you that I'm a safe person to share your secrets with."

Soon after I gave him the locket, I saw him wearing it. Smiling, he told me, "I've replaced the picture of you with pictures of everyone." He even showed it to me. Somehow he had rigged it so that on one side of the locket was the "picture" of him and on the other side was a picture of someone else. That picture would change several times a second and rotate through images of every single person.

"I changed it so that I'd remember my love and my bond with

everyone. When I share something with you, I'm doing it not just because I love you—but also because I love them. I love them through building intimacy with you," God explained.

When he put it like that, I was glad he had removed the picture of just me. It was touching to realize that I wasn't pursuing intimacy with God only for me. I was opening up something that would be for everyone. And now here you are, joining me in exploring this new love with God. Isn't it great to know God's already been wearing your picture in his locket for a long time?

Romance with God

The decision to pursue a new type of relationship with God was about to change everything in my life. The first shift happened inside me as my spirit developed a capacity to fall in love and experience romance.

Falling in Love

After God and I became “more than friends,” I started to love God in a new way. Immediately, I noticed several changes in how I thought and felt about God.

LOST IN LOVE

The first thing that happened is I couldn’t stop thinking about God. I don’t mean thinking about him intellectually or theologically. He was on my mind romantically. All I wanted to do was sit in his presence. I couldn’t focus on my work or anything else I needed to do. It reminded me of how I felt right after my husband and I got engaged. I spent a lot of time lost in thoughts about my husband-to-be. I hadn’t realized I could feel the same way about God.

“I’m drunk with love,” I confessed to him one day. “I can’t think about anything but you. I’ve lost my appetite for any other thing. I just want to sit here and bask in our love. Please don’t make me move. Please don’t ask me to get something done—because I feel lost in love.

“You’re the one goading me on,” I told God. “You wrap your love around me like a blanket. It envelops me with its sweetness. And I don’t want to know anything else.”

I logged a lot of time sitting and staring into space. I wanted to spend every second wrapped in his presence, thinking of him. It seemed like that’s all he wanted to do, too. He couldn’t pull himself away from my presence.

“Don’t you have missions to accomplish or nations to save?” I asked him. “Don’t you have important decisions to make? But our love pulls you here. It’s keeping you from your kingly duties. It’s beckoning you to the secret, private place. It keeps you here, staring at me—smiling and enjoying every second that we’re together. Love is making you leave your responsibilities to someone else. Nothing seems as important to you as our love does at this moment.”

At first it seemed like all the time I was spending just sitting in God’s presence, able to think of nothing but how much I loved him and how incredible he was was a waste of time. Shouldn’t I be doing something? But I didn’t want to do anything else. I don’t think I could have done anything else even if a million people tried to force me.

Eventually, I realized that giving time to being “lost in love” was changing my heart. It was expanding my heart’s capacity to experience God and hold his love. It was creating a structure within me to build a love that was something greater than what I had known before. I was doing something—something important—by doing nothing.

Without developing a capacity for romantic love for God, I don’t think I could have moved any farther into the journey.

GIDDY

My capacity to love God in a new way was generating novel feelings for him. I was as giddy about God as a schoolgirl with her first crush.

Surging with these new emotions, I crafted a letter to God. Here's part of it:

Dear God,

Every time I think of you, I am like a schoolgirl with her first crush—so giddy and excited. To think of you looking in my direction or perhaps returning my affection stirs my heart. I keep telling myself that it is my spirit and my soul that you complete, but my heart also leaps at the thought of you.

It's weird how in such a short time, my feelings have completely blossomed and changed for you. I thought I loved you like this in the past, but I was wrong. That was the shadow of a shadow of the beginning of love. Now there is something between us that wasn't there before. It is the beginning of passion—a passion that will consume us both in time.

But I want to let it grow in its time. I don't want to rush things. I love you so intensely, and yet I feel like there is nothing I can do with that love now but wait for it to mature. I just ask you to please not disappoint me. Please don't let this passion for you grow—and then tell me to wait until heaven or that is it only for a vision or for my soul and not for everything I am.

I want to know what it's like to melt into you completely, to become so entangled that I lose myself and become one with you. I want to explore every part of your heart with you. I want to jump into the depths of your heart and get lost. I want to know what it's like to fall into you in a crazy, uncontrollable way that pushes reason and limits aside until we are entirely and irreversibly one.

But before we do any of that, I want to sit quietly with you, look you in the eyes, and tell you how thankful I am to be one of the people you chose to get to know you and melt into you like this.

I just wanted to tell you myself that my feelings for you are different now. And there is no going back. I can't stop thinking about you. I look at you differently now, think of you differently. I know you will make us

one and that [the passion I seek with you] will be what we enjoy together forever.

Yours,
Katharine

I knew the marriage love we were developing would eventually change everything about us and our relationship. I also realized I couldn't rush the process. I needed to let this love grow in my heart in its time. When it matured, it would be the foundation for a completely different way of interacting with everything.

DEEPER ACCESS

Around this time God and I jumped into my new love for him as part of a vision. As we were falling into a pool of my affection, he told me, "There are parts of your own heart that even you don't know. I'd like to pull them out and show them to you. If you give me permission, I will do that."

"I give you permission," I replied, overcome by the beauty of being submerged in love.

"I'd like you to do the same for me," God answered. "I give you free access to everything in me. There is nothing I will hold back from you either now or for all of eternity."

I realized we were making an agreement to love each other in a different way. There would be nothing that we'd hold back from the other. There are limits on the parts of yourself you can share with a parent or friend or master. God and I were agreeing to move beyond the boundaries of the kind of relationship that we had in the past. We were giving the other unrestricted access to every part of ourselves.

"I've been waiting so long for my heart to be known by someone

else,” God told me the day we made that pledge to each other.

ROMANCE

Although my heart was yearning for him, God didn’t whisk me into passion-filled scenes reminiscent of Song of Solomon. Instead, his first task was to expand the foundation of love in my life. Rather than refilling me with a fatherly or brotherly love, God poured a new type of love—a marriage love—into my heart. Constantly, day and night, no matter what I was doing, God interrupted my thoughts to tell me how much he cherished me.

His declarations of love weren’t only at times I was deliberately focused on him. Once as I was doing the very holy task of putting away the groceries, I felt his love wrap around me like a warm blanket. Then he said emphatically, “I love you with all that I am, and with all that I was, and with all that I will be. This is how it feels to be completely loved.” He did that exact same thing several times.

Once I was driving, thinking about nothing in particular, when God interrupted my random thoughts with, “You’re everything I ever wanted.” No one had ever told me that. Although I knew how deeply my husband loved me, part of me suspected I hadn’t met every item on his wish list. Here was the all-knowing, supreme Master of the Universe telling me that no part of me was second best. I was everything he had been looking for. I nearly burst into tears as I felt loved on a deeper level than I ever had before.

At random moments he’d interrupt my thoughts by telling me things like, “You move me at the deepest levels of my being” or “Your beauty has captured my heart” or “You are all I can think about.” Numerous times he told me, “You’ve touched me so deeply that if you walked away from me tomorrow, I would love you in the deepest places of my heart forever.” God even insisted, “You are absolutely the only thing I live for.

I would throw away the entire universe if you all [humanity] were not in it. I would lose my reason for living. You are the only reason I live.”

I had thought about how God must feel about me as a Father. I had never pondered what a spouse’s love from God would feel like. Being deeply moved by someone, captured by their beauty, absorbed in thoughts of them, living for another moment with the one you love—those were all things a lover would feel. That’s how the love they had would manifest. Those were precisely the things God felt about me, I began to realize.

Once God woke me up in the middle of the night, whispering, “I wrote a song for you, and I’d like to sing it to you now.” It was a brilliant tune with rhyming lyrics about how infinite and uncontainable God’s love for me was. For days, I’d catch myself humming the tune, thinking about the words, even when I wasn’t intending to. God was moving my experience of love from head knowledge to heart experience. I was beginning to feel loved—not as a daughter or a friend, but as a spouse. It was like I was living the Bible verse declaring that by day the LORD sends his love to me, and by night he gives me a song (Ps. 42:8 NIV and NET).

While he was constantly declaring his love for me, God also started taking me into visions with him in heaven. Every day (and most nights) he’d pull me into a “date” encounter with him. We had candlelight dinners, walks along the beach barefoot, talks in front of a fireplace—more adventures than I can recall. Together we even took a shapeless planet and formed it into our dream destination. Then we’d return there from time to time to have another romantic adventure together.

On these “dates,” God was showing me how it felt to be loved by him as a spouse. He would constantly tell me how beautiful and perfect I was and how much he loved me. He would bring me roses. He would suggest fun, romantic things to do together. In living messages—encounters where it felt real to me—he showed me who I was and what I meant to

him. His relentless pursuit melted my heart.

TURNING POINT

If I had one special moment where I knew I was his in a different way, it was the first time God took me to Zion on a date.

When God told me he wanted to bring me to where he was, I asked if I could venture there in a vision. Not long afterwards, an angel appeared, grabbed hold of my waist, and took off upwards.

The angel set me down in Zion, God's heavenly city. At that point, I had been there only a few times before. Zion looked like a beautiful city, nestled into the most stunning mountains. Like any city, it had tall buildings. It also had gorgeous, well-landscaped parks. It was one of those parks that God took me to after he showed me around a bit. By a river on lush green grass, God set out a blanket.

Looking at me affectionately, God removed the food from the picnic basket and arranged it on the blanket. As we ate, he told me about Zion, pointing out structures in the distance as he spoke. But I couldn't focus on what he was saying. I was mesmerized by him. In my room at home, I had a playlist of songs looping. During the picnic, a song came on that kept repeating, "Who is this king of glory?" As God was serving me food and talking, all I could think was, "Who is this king of glory—sitting next to me on a date? I can't believe I'm here with him, and we're in love with each other in this deep, delightful way."

God, the picnic, the setting, the music—was moving me deeply. At that moment I opened my heart to him in a fuller way. It marked a significant turning point for me. My heart was all in. Whatever romance with God meant, I had it. He was mine. I was his—in a mushy sort of way.

I was used to thinking of romance as something between humans. Now I realized my spirit was capable of experiencing romantic love. God

and I had a romance spirit to spirit. Knowing God's fatherly love for me hadn't undermined my relationship with my earthly father. It had strengthened it. I was discovering the same was true with this new kind of love. Falling in love with God in my spirit didn't interfere with my relationship with my husband. It strengthened it. Opening myself to loving God in a new way filled my heart with more love—with romantic, gushy love. That love overflowed from my heart to those around me, especially my husband.

My spirit had fallen in love with God. My heart had expanded to receive his love as a spouse. And I knew it would change everything.

Changes Unlocked by Romance with God

Although I had only begun to unlock marriage oneness with God, I already noticed three significant changes as a result of our romance.

1. Changes in my relationship with God

My romance with God became the most precious thing about our relationship. I cherished how he looked at me like nothing else mattered to him in the universe. I loved spending time with him, surrounded by his affection, able to read his mind.

Eagerly, I looked forward to spending time with God every day. I wasn't longing for amazing teaching. I didn't anticipate doing something to save the universe together. I desired him. We loved strolling together, talking about any subject, as long as we were near each other. The way he looked at me, or how he gently touched my hand or my face, let me know how deeply his heart was open to me. The dullest task would brighten at the thought of him. Seeing him stride into the room would lift my spirits—and send goosebumps racing to my stomach. I loved standing near him in a vision, smelling his cologne, feeling the warmth of his

breath as he exhaled.

When I looked into his eyes, I could see how much I meant to him. He treasured every second we were together. Slowly, we grew more comfortable around each other. Instead of feeling nervous about being alone with God on a date, I became super comfortable around him. I didn't hesitate to speak my opinion. I felt like I could share anything with him. I knew he felt the same way. Not only did he constantly tell me so, he also began sharing deep, personal things.

We let each other into private areas of our thoughts and emotions. We cried together as we shared our most painful memories. We comforted each other. But mostly, we laughed. We talked. He told me more and more about himself—things I wouldn't have understood before.

We never wanted to spend a moment apart from each other. We both felt like the other was everything we had ever wanted. We had found life's meaning—in each other. To know each other and enjoy each other and be with each other was everything we had ever wanted. If eternity was simply being in love and enjoying each other in heaven like this, it would have been enough.

We fell deeply in love. That love gave us a new relationship, a thousand times more precious to both of us than what we had before.

2. Changes in how I saw myself

In all of the dates and adventures God took me on in heaven, he did more than pour his love into my heart. He revealed my identity to me. At the heart of my identity, I realized, was God's belief that I was his equal. He insisted that I was his perfect match. I wasn't a charity case that he took pity on to marry. I was every bit as perfect and holy and honorable as he was. He longed for me because I was like him.

At first I didn't believe him. I couldn't see my perfection. No matter how many times he insisted, "There is no part of me that sees anything

but perfection in you,” I couldn’t agree. I saw dirt on me. I thought I was the dirt. God showed me that, although I was dirty, the dirt wasn’t my true nature. It’s wasn’t me. Underneath the grime of the fallen world, I was just like he was. We shared the same substance. We could unite in marriage bliss because we were the same spirit—just like I could unite with my husband on earth because we were the same flesh.

God did more than *tell* me I was his equal. He *showed* me our equality all the time. In every interaction, he slowly and purposefully moved me towards seeing myself like he saw me—his peer. Eventually, I didn’t just hear his words. I didn’t just receive his actions treating me as an equal. I could see it in his eyes. I could feel it when he drew close. He fully believed there was no difference between us.

For months I lived a paradox. I had heart-moving encounters in heaven where God insisted we were equals. Yet on earth I structured our relationship around the notion that I was less than he was. Eventually, I had to make a decision. Was I going to believe that how God treated me in heaven was true? Or was I going to reject his view of me, insisting on my inferiority? When I chose to embrace equality with God, everything I had believed about myself and God shattered.

I had built my relationship with God on the notion that he was above me. Now God was telling me that marriage oneness meant we were two equal partners. There was nothing that he could do that I couldn’t also do. There was no character trait he possessed that I didn’t have, too. He gave me everything he owned, every title and job description. He laid it all at my feet. He gave up *his* throne to make it *our* throne. He moved from being my Lord and Master to being my Beloved Equal.

God even gave me a new name to call him. On the night he told me he considered us married, we celebrated with a dinner on the planet we had transformed together. On that white sand beach, he asked, “What name do you know me by?”

“YHVH, I guess,” I answered.

“I’m going to give you a new name you can call me through all time—My Equal.”

At the time I was puzzled about the name. Later I looked it up, figuring he meant Isaiah 40:25—“‘To whom will you compare me to? Who is my equal?’ says the Holy One” (NIV). In Hebrew the name is *Eshveh*. It means “to be(come) like, equal, suitable, satisfying for, be equivalent to, be like.”³

I realized God was telling me, “You and I are alike. We’re suitable for each other. We satisfy each other. We can enjoy marriage together because we’re equals.”

Soon I understood why God had given me a new name for him. I was used to calling him “my Father God.” There’s nothing wrong with that—unless you just married him. Marriage to a Father isn’t a heart-warming image. Eventually, I realized that calling him “Father” was limiting my view of him. It was preventing me from stepping further into our marriage relationship. I needed a new name.

Instead of calling him “My Equal” or “Eshveh” like he had suggested, I opted for Hosea’s new name for God. In Hosea 2:16, the prophet announced that “in that day”—a code phrase many theologians believe points to the end times—“you will call me ‘My husband’; you will never again call me ‘My master’” (Hos. 2:16).

As we mature, Hosea predicted, we will change the name we call God. We will transition from relating to God as one who rules over us to one we are joined with as an equal partner. Over time, I grew comfortable calling the first member of the Trinity “my Husband God” rather than “my Father God.” It was a better fit for our new relationship.

3 William L. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988.

3. Changes in my oneness with God

The more God and I spent time together as “spouses,” it seemed like the more we were becoming united. The first thing I noticed was that I could sense what God was feeling. Sometimes I would be hanging out with God, and I’d know what emotions he was feeling. Next I began to see thoughts inside him. Especially if he had an emotion attached to something, and especially if the topic was related to me, I could know what he was thinking.

There were things he couldn’t hide from me anymore. I’d ask him a question, and he’d say, “I don’t want to talk about that now,” or “It’s too sensitive to show you.” But I could already see the answer inside him. Even when he didn’t want to tell me, I could see what he was thinking and feeling. Because he had opened his heart to me, there were things God couldn’t keep from me—even if he wanted to. There was a vulnerability to our interaction that hadn’t been there before.

I also began to hear his thoughts almost like they were mine. I would be standing next to God—or inside him—in an encounter. Then I would step away to do something. Instead of seeing the vision from my perspective, my point of view would switch so that I experienced the vision from God’s perspective. I could also hear his thoughts in the vision and respond to them without his having to articulate them.

God explained to me where the oneness that was growing inside me was heading. “We’re bringing you into the Trinity,” he announced.

In the Bible, Jesus prayed that we would be one just as the Father is in Jesus and Jesus is in the Father. He prayed that “they will be in us” (John 17:21). I’m confident Jesus’ prayer will be answered. We will be fully in God. Since we will be in the Father and Jesus, we really will be in all of the Trinity. Ultimately, we will be completely one.

Conclusion

All these interactions with God convinced me that my spirit was capable of falling in love. Romance and marriage love were designed for my whole being—body, soul, and spirit—to experience with God. Not only was it possible, it was amazing and desirable to fall in love with God. It opened our relationship to possibilities that didn't exist before.

God's Romantic Thoughts Towards You

If you're like me, you may have spent some time thinking about God's love for you as Father or Friend or even Master. What would his oneness love as a spouse feel like? How does it change our relationship? On a practical level, how is it different from God's love as Father or Friend or Teacher? In this chapter, we're going to dive deeper into those questions so we have a fuller idea of what it is we're supposed to be building with God.

Marriage Love in the Bible

God hasn't left his romantic thoughts about us a mystery. He talked about them in the Bible. Here are some ways God described his romantic feelings towards you in scripture. Notice that it feels different from other types of love he has for us. These aren't things a father or friend or teacher would say to you.

- "Oh how beautiful you are, my beloved! How beautiful you are!" (Song 1:15).
- "Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, come away with me!" (Song 2:10).
- "Oh, my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the hiding places of the mountain crags, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your

voice is sweet, and your face is lovely” (Song 2:14).

- “I am my lover’s and my lover is mine” (Song 6:3).
- “You are altogether beautiful, my darling! There is no blemish in you!” (Song 4:7).
- “You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride! You have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace” (Song 4:9).
- “How delightful is your love, my sister, my bride! How much better is your love than wine; the fragrance of your perfume is better than any spice!” (Song 4:10).
- “Turn your eyes away from me—they overwhelm me!” (Song 6:5).
- “I am my beloved’s and he desires me!” (Song 7:10).
- “Set me like a cylinder seal over your heart, like a signet on your arm. Love is as strong as death, passion as unrelenting as Sheol. Its flames burst forth, it is a blazing flame. Surging waters cannot quench love; floodwaters cannot overflow it. If someone were to offer all his possessions to buy love, the offer would be utterly despised” (Song 8:6-7).
- “You will be called ‘My Delight is in Her’” (Isa. 62:4).
- God told the prophet Hosea to marry a woman who would be unfaithful. The painfulness of the betrayal would serve as a living example of how God felt about his wife (Israel) leaving him: heart-wrenching pain, deep torment, intense agony when the person you love loves another (Hos. 2).
- Never-ending commitment and attraction to us that he would pay any price to win his wife back—no matter what she’s done (Hos. 3).
- God is “satisfied” and “captivated” by our love always (Prov. 5:19).
- The joy, anticipation, and love that a young man feels when he marries a young woman is how God feels about us (Isa. 62:5).

How would I sum up God’s feelings for us as our Spouse? I’d ask,

“How do you feel when you’re in love?” That’s it. That’s how God feels.

Being captivated by your lover’s attractiveness, longing to steal a moment from the crowd to be with them, delighting in every little thing about them, feeling like you belong to them and they belong to you, being overwhelmingly happy when they’re around, having a hard time of thinking of anything else—you name how the most head-over-heels in love person feels, and that doesn’t come close to how insanely in love with you God is.

I’ve discovered that truth personally.

Marriage Love in my Life

In the first year and a half of my romance with God, I recorded over a thousand pages of encounters I had with God as my spouse. I’ve culled nearly all those encounters to select things God said to me that represent how this new love feels or how it’s changed our relationship.

As you read the list, think of it as God speaking to you. He really was. Every so often, God would remind me that I was recording our adventures so that many people could enter this new kind of relationship with him. He thinks the same way about you, he’s told me repeatedly. He asked me to write it down so that you would read it and know how he feels about you.

Also think about how these comments are different from what a father or friend or master would say to you. It’s a different kind of love, stirring different things inside us. It bonds us to God in a unique way.

Here’s what God’s said to me—and you:

IN LOVE

- “I’m in love with you, Katharine,” he confessed. “Did you know that your God is in love with you? That’s why you see me like this. I don’t

want your understanding of my love for you to get stuck in your head. I don't want it to be intellectual. I want you to see it and feel it and experience it. This scene shows you what my love for you is like. The feelings it stirs inside you tell you how I feel, too." Looking at the surroundings, I asked, "You feel like a couple on their honeymoon in a beautiful paradise?"

- "I love you so much. Sometimes I think I couldn't bear the pain if you didn't want me in the same way I want you."
- He kept looking at me, touching my face tenderly, pulling me next to him. "You have no idea how deeply I'm in love with you," he confessed. "If you combined all of the love people have felt in all of history, it would fall far short of my feelings now."
- "I'm lucky to have you," God replied, touching my face gently as he smiled at me.
- "I keep coming back to this—I don't want to live without you. I'd rather have you—and nothing else—than have everything else."
- "You are worth giving up my existence for."
- Slowly, with a tender smile, he cupped my face with both hands. "I can't believe you're mine," he whispered, more to himself than to me.
- "I love every little thing about you. That's why I'll take your hand or play with your curls in these visions. It's the little things—they consume me. Do you feel my passion? It's all for you. It's a consuming fire. You'll know what it means to be loved like that."
- "You're getting to know me as the God who falls in love," he continued, "as the God who loves deeply and shares his inmost places with another. I want you in my secret places."

HOW GOD FEELS

- "You're everything I ever wanted."
- "You move me at the deepest levels of my being."

- “You are all I can think about.”
- “Being near you is the greatest delight I have ever known.”
- “You are absolutely the only thing I live for. I would throw away the entire universe if you all [humanity] were not in it. I would lose my reason for living. You are the only reason I live.”
- “I can’t stay away from you.”
- “When you stand near me, I can’t think straight sometimes.”
- “Your love for me moves me at the deepest levels. It is the most precious thing I have. To keep it, I’d sacrifice anything. I’d move any barrier between us. I’d cut down anything standing in the way of our love. Without it, without you...” his words trailed off as he was overcome by emotion.
- “You’re all I need. I want to build a life—an entire planet or galaxy or universe—where it’s just the two of us.”
- “Why could I stare at you all day and not have my fill? Why do I want to toss out all of my duties—things I used to love to do—so I can sit at your feet? Why does your smile make me want to abdicate my throne so we can be together? Love is powerful, Katharine. More powerful than I realized.”
- “Why is it that I feel this way every time I’m near you?” he asked. “How do you feel?” I smiled. He stopped walking and stepped closer, breathing in my fragrance. “Like the whole universe could explode and I wouldn’t care as long as you were near me.”
- “I could stay in these visions with you all the time,” God confessed as we sat down on a grassy hill. “Being next to you fills me with the most amazing feeling.”
- “My heart has been raw and vulnerable before you like this for a while now.”
- “I could spend forever with you,” Holy Spirit broke our silence. “I love our time alone together.”
- “What if I told you that I thought I knew what living was until I met

you. Now that I've tasted your love, I don't ever want to live without it," God replied.

- "I can't stay away from you," God confessed. "I don't want to," he told me, running his hands down the side of my face. "I know you feel the same way."
- "I didn't realize it would be this wonderful to know you like this."
- "You're mine," he whispered, rubbing my chin with his thumb, "and I am most certainly yours."
- "My life changed, too, when I realized you loved me back," he recalled with a smile. "You didn't love me like a friend. You didn't want a comforter or teacher. You wanted me like a lover. I wept when I realized it. Do you remember?"

ROMANCE IS MEANT FOR GOD

- "I think of you constantly, just like a lover would. My knees grow weak if you look at me a certain way. I'd throw the whole universe out by mistake if I got too focused on your smile. I'd run away with you. I don't need anything else because I have you. Those feelings that you think are for earth only have their origin in heaven. Earthly romance—earthly marriage—is a concession I made. I'm allowing it now to give you an understanding of a heavenly reality. All of those emotions were originally and ultimately meant to be expressed with me."
- "The purpose of humans falling in love was to give you a reference point for our relationship. First and foremost, you're meant to feel those emotions with me—and me with you."
- "Can it really be possible that God is in love? Can you really feel this way about me?" I asked. "Would I create romantic love and forbid myself from experiencing it?" he replied. "Would I limit it to something on earth only? Why would I occupy all other types of

love, but not occupy that part of the love spectrum?”

OVERALL

- Holy Spirit now did something one can do only in a vision. He reached into his chest, pulled out his heart, and handed it across the desk to me. “I don’t want this anymore,” he seemed to be saying, “if I’m going to own it by myself. My heart isn’t mine. It’s ours. It always belonged to you. I just didn’t realize it until recently.”
- “I don’t want there to be anything I’ve ever done or thought or experienced that you haven’t been part of, too,” he explained. Then I realized that’s what being in love is like—wanting to share all your favorite things and places with the other, wanting to experience it all with them, not wanting anything to separate you. You don’t want to have a single experience apart from them.
- “I give you just my open, beautiful spaces that everyone knows about. And I give you my secret, hidden, non-lovely places. I want you to know every part of me, to hold and possess every aspect of who I am. I give everything about myself to you—both now and for eternity.”
- “I give you everything. I give you all I possess.”
- “I would give up my position as king of the universe for one moment with you like this.”
- “You are my life.”
- “You hold my heart like few other people do,” Jesus confessed. “Did you know you could break my heart? With most others, I haven’t been vulnerable enough to actually have a broken heart if they turned their affection from me. I’d be sad, of course. But not heartbroken.”
- “I promise you that I will reveal myself to you in ways I haven’t revealed myself to anyone else. I promise that I will let you touch and see parts of me no one ever has.”
- “Our attraction is like velcro,” God explained. “For velcro to stick,

you need the side with the hooks and the side that receives the hooks. I'm always ready to receive romantic love. You have velcro hooks for that kind of love grown inside you. So when we're near each other, your hooks are snagged on my receptors. We become stuck together in a mushy romance."

- "But if someone doesn't have velcro receptors, they could touch you and not be hooked," I finished. "Do our spirits grow those velcro receptors during spiritual 'puberty'? Is that why some of us have it and some of us don't? We're just at different stages?" I asked. "Yes, my Love," God answered, looking at me affectionately. "But it's also a choice."

"COME AWAY WITH ME"

- "You tempt me to do something I shouldn't—run away with you and leave the universe behind."
- "Come away with me," God urged. "I had plans for us here," he said, gesturing to Zion and to heaven in general. "I was going to rule with you here. I wanted to show you all the places in the universe I had created just for you, my Bride, to see before I showed them to anyone else. I had a well-thought-out plan for us. But now, my feelings for you are greater than my plans. I want to run away with you. Let's leave this place. I'm consumed with you. I want to think of nothing but you. I want to do nothing but know you. Let's leave together."

NEW

- "When I look into your eyes and see you returning my love, something comes alive inside me that wasn't alive before. You make me feel things I've never felt before. You're the reason I live. To be united with you is the reason I exist."

- “You hold my heart in a different way, a new way. I’ve never felt this way before, Katharine. I want you to know me in a way I’ve never wanted anyone to know me before. I think I’d die if you didn’t know every little part of me. I want to tell you things. I insist on opening up my heart to you.”
- “I’m letting you inside my heart in a way I’ve never let anyone inside my heart before.”

FRAGRANCE

- “I love your fragrance. You are as sweet as a rose and as tender as a lily. You have totally captivated me.”
- “Shh,” God hushed me. “Let me hold you a second. I’m captivated by the scent of your perfume.”
- “When I see you, when you stand close to me, when I smell your fragrance—I’m undone.”

OUR BEAUTY

- “Your beauty has captured my heart.”
- “I swear that no part of me sees anything but perfection in you. You are my perfect match because you are flawless.”
- Holy Spirit was gone, but a note rested in his place. Opening it, I found the words, “You’re so beautiful. I can’t believe you’re mine.”
- “The universe pales in comparison to your beauty.”
- “Your beauty, your charm, how deeply you move me, how well-suited we are to each other—all mysteries.”
- “What are you thinking?” I prodded. “How beautiful you look,” he answered. “How I can’t believe your heart is mine. How I’d do anything to win a smile from you.”

PERFECT AS WE ARE

- “I like you just how you are,” God interrupted. “You don’t have to be fixed. You don’t have to know everything or be able to do anything. You can, of course. But you’re the same if you’ve figured out how to do all things or not.”
- “I’m head over heels in love with however you’re manifesting yourself today.”
- “Why do I still doubt that someone as amazingly gorgeous and perfect as you would be my mate?” I replied. “Does that mean I have a low self-image?”
 “Probably,” he smiled. “Add it to the list.”
 “The list of things I’m changing?” I laughed.
 “The list of things you want to get rid of, but I—”
 “But you love me like I am,” I interrupted, “so you don’t care if I get rid of them or not.”
 “It doesn’t change my opinion about you,” he clarified. “I’m head over heels in love with however you’re manifesting yourself today.”
 “I swear you love me more than I love myself,” I smiled.
 “Guilty,” he replied. “Did you want to add that to the list?”

EQUALITY

- “I’d like to take a lesson from you right now,” Jesus told me. When I protested that it felt weird to be teaching God something, he answered, “You better get used to it if we’re going to be married. Knowing me as your Groom means knowing me as an equal. You’ll teach me as much as I’ll teach you.”
- “Give me a prophetic word about what will happen to me,” God requested.
- “I’ve talked to you about your destiny. I’m not letting you go until

you talk to me about mine.”

DEEPER THAN FRIENDSHIP

- “I’ve had many friends,” God confided. “I’ve shared secrets with them. We’ve had adventures together. But most of my secrets remain untold. Many of my hidden places remain unexplored. So I think the answer is no; I wouldn’t feel comfortable sharing the deepest parts of myself with a friend. I’m not saying I wouldn’t want to. I’m just saying I never have. So there has to be something more to a marriage relationship than there is to a friendship. We will be closer as a married couple than we’d be as friends. If that weren’t the case, I wouldn’t be moving us into a relationship more intimate than friendship.”
- “I’m talking to you about work,” Holy Spirit paused after he had excitedly told me things he was going to do that day with a group of people who had been pressing in for higher stuff. “That’s my work. When we hang out, it’s my personal life.”
- “We have a different kind of relationship than I have with most people. I feel so comfortable around you. I can be myself—let my hair down. I feel like you care more about me than about what I can do for you.”
- “I’ve waited forever to step into the kind of interaction we’re opening up, My Dove. I’ve always longed to have an equal to share my life with. I do have many friends who I share deeply with. But not in the way we share life together. There is a difference between friendship and marriage. You know that. I’ve longed to not just share my thoughts or my secrets. I’ve longed to share myself with someone intimately.”

FINAL THOUGHT

- “All the things I’ve said to you don’t begin to capture my true feelings. Words haven’t been invented that can describe my thoughts and feelings towards you. I look forward to creating words together that can properly express what we feel about each other.”

My Feelings towards God

Being loved in that way made me feel different. It touched me, met my needs, and set me on fire in a way a father or friend couldn’t. Here are some of the things I’ve told God on our adventures:

HOW I FEEL

- “I can’t think about anything but you. I’ve lost my appetite for any other thing. I just want to sit here and bask in our love. Please don’t make me move. Please don’t ask me to get something done—because I am lost in love.”
- “Every time I think of you, I am like a schoolgirl with her first crush—so giddy and excited. Just to think of you looking in my direction or perhaps returning my affection stirs my heart.”
- “I feel like my spirit is coming alive in a new way,” I told God. “It’s like it’s waking up from childhood and going through adolescence. It notices you in a way it didn’t before. It’s attracted to you now. Before I thought of you as a friend or helper. Now my spirit is capable of feeling things about you that it never would have felt before. It’s not a physical attraction. It doesn’t interfere with my marriage on earth. It’s for my spirit. Yet it’s also for all of me. I guess my spirit leads it, but it touches every part of me—my mind, my emotions, my body.”
- “Why is it that being with you here for one moment makes everything

in my life alright—even the things I didn't even know were out of place? Why does being near you like this fill me with joy so deep it borders on ecstasy?" Grinning, God answered, "Because you're in love with me. We're in love."

- "I feel like I have everything I ever wanted. The fantasy I had of a happily-ever-after ending really is true—every day. Being loved by you like this feels like discovering each day that happiness and passion and pleasure go deeper than I realized the day before. It feels like owning—and belonging to—the most incredible being I could ever imagine. It feels like love burning inside me so deeply it devours everything else. It's all-consuming, never-ending, supremely wonderful. And to trade everything I have for it would be too small a price."
- "All you do is walk into the room, and I am undone. My heart beats far faster than it should. My mind spins so I can't think straight. My entire universe revolves around your smallest movement. I'm not sure I will ever be able to pull myself out of your orbit to think about anything but you ever again."
- "Your love is intoxicating. I've been spinning from the bliss of being with you all day."

FRAGRANCE

- "I love the scent of your cologne. When I smell it, something inside me comes alive."
- As I took a deep breath, I could smell his cologne. "'The fragrance of your cologne is delightful.' Isn't that what the Bible says? It's intoxicating."

GOD'S BEAUTY

- God and I were discussing the translation of Song of Solomon 6:10, where “unnervingly beautiful” is a way to translate the groom’s description of his bride. I told God, “‘Unnervingly attractive’ would be a good description for you in these encounters. Just standing near you, I’m so overcome by how handsome you are that it can overwhelm me at times. Do you really feel the same way about me? Is that what those Bible verses mean? Are you showing that truth to me by having me feel the same way about you?”
- “The reason you see me as attractive is that you decided to engage me as your Husband, not your Father,” God explained.
- “I was thinking how stunningly, perfectly gorgeous you always are in these encounters,” I laughed.
- “Do you know why you see me this way?” he smiled, moving to stand near the fire. “Yes, you’ve explained it to me,” I replied. “In the Bible you’re described as the most handsome of all men on your wedding day (Ps. 45:2). I see you like this because I’m engaging you as my Husband, and this is how you can look when someone draws out this part of you.”

EQUALITY

- When Holy Spirit asked if I’d accept a certain position in heaven, the first thing out of my mouth was, “Why would I want to work for you? Are you offering me a job on your staff or something? Is this some sort of insult?”
- “Most people think of getting to know you intimately as having an experience that scares them to death—lightning and thunder and fire. Here I am, seeing you as gorgeous and completely satisfying,” I replied. “I feel like you respect me and honor me and love me and

cherish me. You want to know every part of me. You want me to know you—not in some patronizing way. You want me to know you so that I can have a voice in your life. You want to honor me and our relationship. You give me space inside you to shape you and speak into your life. It's a beautiful, woven-together partnership we have. It's not an awe-and-glory, I'm-too-afraid-to-approach thing. Both are true of you. Both are worth seeing. But you've opened a gentler side of you where we know each other as equals. I know I'm awesomely fearful, too. But around each other we can be like this—raw, unfiltered, vulnerable, loving, playful.”

- “Our love will create equality between humanity and God. That equality will originate with us—but then get reflected onto earth and heaven. The more deeply I live in equality with you, the faster and farther equality spreads on the earth.”

OVERALL

- “I can't disentangle from our encounter. All day long I've felt like I'm still there with you. If I focus on it, I can see you bending down to point out a flower, smiling at me like you love me so deeply. Or I see your flawless, handsome face so close to me, drawing me towards you. Love is flowing out of you stronger than some rivers.”
- “It feels like I'm waking up and realizing that the most gorgeous being has waited his entire existence to unite himself with me. And we can spend all of eternity enjoying each other.”
- “I think I've found my meaning of life all over again—in you. We belong to each other, don't we? I mean, forever and in a way I've never been bound to anyone before.”
- “Who would have thought we could find the perfect love? The perfect match who completely corresponds to every single thing that we are? That's what we are to each other, isn't it?”

- God answered, “You see it as romantic love. It is that. It is also other things. Other people will see it from a different perspective. You’ll be describing the same thing—the perfect matching between us.”
- “I don’t see how knowing you any other way could compare to the sweetness we have together now.”
- “Learning to love you and be loved by you like this has been so many things—surprising, amazing, wonderful, scary, heart-pounding. But most of all, it’s felt like all of my dreams have come true. It’s felt like wholeness mixed with joy mixed with the deepest kinds of pleasure. It’s been more blissful, more wonderful, and taken far more courage than I ever imagined. If I had to sum it up in one sentence, I’d say this love has become my reason for living. Nothing else matters.”

Why Romance?

From both God’s perspective and my perspective, then, oneness love feels a lot like falling in love. It carries all the thoughts and feelings that go along with that type of love. To my surprise, I discovered there’s a romantic, passionate, marriage-type love that our spirits are capable of experiencing with God.

Why does it feel like romance to God and me? The answer lies in the purpose of romance. The type of love we build a relationship with forms the foundation of our relationship. It sets the boundaries for what we’ll do together, for how far we’ll open ourselves to each other, and for what will flow from our union.

First, romantic love is the foundation of marriage oneness. The commitment and bliss of marriage oneness is designed to flow from this type of love. If you love someone like a friend or child or servant, you wouldn’t desire to unite yourself with them. The oneness of marriage flows from the romantic, I’m-lost-in-you, I-think-you’re-so-attractive type of love. The bliss of the marriage bed is the expression of that type

of love. For oneness and its ecstasies to be fully accessible to us, we must be able to feel this way about God. We must be able to receive God's feelings for us in this intimate way.

Second, romantic love induces us to open deeper, private parts of who we are to God. And it does the same with God. Without that kind of love, the deepest parts of us—and God—would remain hidden.

Third, romantic love creates the most intimate type of connection between you and God. When you open up your deepest parts to each other, the romantic love flowing between you makes you want to share those parts with each other. You and God merge in your deepest, most private spaces. You become one—not in a surface level I-love-you way. In your hidden, non-public, intimate places, you share yourself with the other and bond there. This type of love cuts deeper than father or friend or teacher. It's more private than agape love. It's more all-consuming than any other love that exists.

God desires you in the fullest way. He wants a bond with you in his most intimate places. The way you two make that connection is through romantic love.

Fourth, romantic love between God and humanity is meant to be the foundation of everything. The universe is supposed to be sustained not by God's love for it as a single dad but by the oneness love of God and humanity as marriage partners. From that love, through that love, to that love everything in creation was meant to flow. On one level, the source of creation's problem is that it's being sustained by a love that can take it only so far. When our oneness love with God develops, it will sweep through creation in a tsunami wave of change and re-creation.

Oneness without Romance?

Can you have oneness love with God that doesn't feel like falling in love? Yes and no. Your version of romance certainly doesn't have to look

like mine. Obviously, I receive love by gushy comments and romantic rendezvous. If that isn't how you express or receive love, your relationship with God will look different. You don't have to fall head over heels in love with God like he's a person.

If it would be awkward to think of romantic love with a masculine God, I'd suggest thinking of God as a spirit. Sure, I've had a lot of dates with God and me in human-looking forms. But I've had an equal number of encounters spirit to spirit. God's spirit is breathtakingly beautiful. You can have romantic, genderless encounters with God. I know it sounds weird to pair those two words together. But spiritually, there is no gender to romance.

It can feel romantic. God's beauty can move you. You can open your depths to him. He can do the same to you. You can entangle in an extraordinary oneness—all without picturing God in a gendered way. We'll discuss more in chapter 7 about how men (and women) can freely interact with God romantically.

You can craft your own formula for your romance with God. Make it whatever you both want it to be. The important thing is that with God, you can feel wanted, loved, cherished, and desired for who you are in your deepest places. To me, those kinds of feelings aren't something the love of a father can generate. It feels much more like being cherished by a lover who desires all of you for who you are.

God has fallen in love. In his deepest places, he longs for you. He desires to share all of himself with you—in ways he's never shared himself with any generation before.

Part 3:
Overcoming Blocks

Overcoming Blocks to Oneness Love with God

I've had a lot of barriers to entering oneness love with God. The gateway barrier for me—the one I had to get past to even entertain the notion of this kind of relationship with God—was whether it was morally and theologically proper to interact with God romantically. This chapter focuses on that barrier.

The Real Issues

I've noticed two kinds of blocks—limiting beliefs and fear. It doesn't matter what the issue is, it's just a mindset. How do you address beliefs that surface, telling you that what you're thinking about doing can't possibly be right?

There are two paths I've taken. Sometimes I've addressed the belief head on. I've gone through all the arguments until I convince myself to change my mind about something. Other times I've ignored the belief. There's a place for both approaches. We're going to do both in this chapter. We will get to the intellectual arguments and how I worked through them. But I also want to focus on why you don't have to address your mind's objections to something. There is a way to bypass it.

MY GATEWAY OBJECTION

The primary issue for me was whether it was proper to experience romance with God. It was a gateway objection. If I couldn't deal with that barrier, then I would say no to the whole thing. I would never even get to any other issue.

Over time I realized that objection had a thousand facets. I had thoughts like: Romantic feelings are meant to be between people only. Marriage is something for earth, not heaven. Romance is about your body and the body and all its desires are "bad." I should pursue "spiritual" things with God, not "carnal" things. Romance is a silly, second-best kind of love. On and on the list went.

Many of my issues were subconscious in the beginning. I had deeply held cultural and religious views of God, romance, and marriage that were impacting how I approached God. These beliefs were so deeply held for so many generations that I wasn't even consciously aware of them at first.

God saw my objections. He wanted to address all of them. In time he did. But he knew that if he took the time to walk me through each one of them, it would take forever. No one I knew had taught about romance with God before—at least not how I wanted to experience it. I couldn't read someone's great theological explanation. God would have to lead me himself—slowly but surely—through every objection.

He ended up pulling me into a series of visions over several months where he answered my objections from many different angles. Again and again, he'd explain to me from the Bible or from logic or from his own heart how he thought about the issue. He pulled me into scenes that felt real—where God and I were interacting in romantic ways—and then walk me through it theologically.

By the end of those encounters, I had my epiphany. It all made sense to me. I saw it in the Bible. It sounded logical. I had felt God's heart

about the issue. I now had the beginning of a theology about why and how our spirits were designed to experience romance with God.

My theological understanding came a year after I had begun engaging God romantically every day. How did I live in the reality of romantic love before I had reconciled it with my theology?

BYPASSING OUR MINDS

Twenty-plus years before, I had started asking God for more of his Holy Spirit. Those prayers violated the theology of my childhood. But I reached a point where I didn't care if it was right or wrong to want more of Holy Spirit. I was too desperate to worry about theology. "Give me more of you, Holy Spirit," I cried, "even if it's wrong to ask you for that."

I found that when we're desperate for something, it can override our mind's objections to it. Very early in my romance with God, I tasted the sweetness of knowing him in that way. I saw it intellectually in the Bible. I was convinced that it was God I was engaging in romantic encounters. And I had sampled the awesome joy and bliss it filled me with. I was hooked.

My mind had a million objections. But my spirit saw God in it. I was going to go for it—even if my mind didn't have a theology for it yet. That's how we can step into a truth experientially—and then come up with the understanding for it. Here are some principles I learned about how to bypass our minds.

1. Objections simply reveal our current beliefs. They don't tell us what to do with those beliefs.

First, all objections are just mindsets we have about God, ourselves, or theology. They reveal to us what our current beliefs are. What they can't do is tell us whether or not the belief is something we should live

by—or discard. Sometimes it's easy to tell that a block is something we want to throw out. When my mind tells me, "You're not good enough for God to love you intimately," it's easy to know what to do with that belief.

Other times it's more challenging to decide whether the belief is a truth we should live by or a limited truth we should move beyond. For example, what if I have the belief, "The Bible says it's inappropriate to interact with God romantically"? Is that a belief I should live by? Or is it a limited mindset I should discard?

I used to think my beliefs that presented themselves as biblical or scientific "fact" were solid gold. Now I realize even those beliefs are just beliefs. All our thoughts and objections reflect our cultural, religious, familial, and personal mindsets. They simply tell us what we currently believe. Just because we believe something, though, doesn't mean it's solid-gold truth. It may be a belief we want to live from. Or it may be a lower truth we want to move past. It's okay to go around your mindsets if you want to.

2. The point is to find and enjoy God.

Second, the point isn't to craft an airtight theology that everyone in the world is going to agree with. The point is to find God and enjoy him. If you become convinced that God is in something, it's okay to go for it—even if you don't have the theology of it all figured out. I've found that when we want something badly enough, that desire can cause us to ignore limited mindsets. Fire up your desire for God!

3. Follow God's lead.

Third, follow God's lead if you're not sure yourself where to go. Sometimes God has told me to fire away with all my questions. He wants to address them head on. Other times he's told me not to worry

about something right now. “Just keep going and it will all make sense eventually,” he’ll say.

4. Our spirits—not our minds—were designed to lead our interaction with God.

Early on, I realized I had given my mind the job of keeping me from deception. In a sense, I had hired it to discern whether something was from God and to keep me on the “right” path. My mind was doing the best it could. The problem was my spirit was the part of me designed to tell if something was from God or not.

When I had an encounter where my spirit went straight for God romantically—not even bothering to address my mind’s objections—I knew I had things backwards. I had been using my mind to do my spirit’s job. I decided to let my spirit take over my romance with God. Things really took off after that.

5. It takes seven times.

According to some research, many people have to hear a new truth at least seven times before they are ready to accept it. When it came to romance with God, I had to hear every truth about a dozen times from many different angles before it sunk in.

Give yourself time. Go over these materials. Talk with me or others who have read the book or taken the course. Don’t expect to hear the idea once and be ready to waltz into it—especially since it’s a whole new way of interacting with God.

Overcoming Blocks

Mindsets are powerful. It does make it easier if you change your

mindset rather than keep ignoring it. I'd like to walk you through some blocks my mind raised to romance. Remember, the point isn't to craft an air-tight theology that our minds are satisfied with. The point is to find God, to enjoy him, and to unlock the best path for us in life. It's okay to move forward with our mind still raising doubts. We can always address those doubts as we enjoy God.

Block #1

I'm not supposed to have romantic feelings for God.

I had always thought of romantic love as something between people only. How could it be right for me to have those feelings about God? No one had ever talked about God that way. It was off the grid. Something about it seemed so out of the box that it couldn't be right.

Then I thought about what I was proposing. I was suggesting that God created a type of love that exists on earth, but is forbidden in heaven. What if I tried to love God romantically in heaven. Would he yell, "Stop! That kind of love isn't allowed here!" To ban the experience of this wonderful type of love that was created by God seemed preposterous. Isn't God love? Isn't love a foundation of who God is and who we are and how heaven is set up? Why would God create a type of love—and then ban it in heaven?

Every other type of love that exists on earth is a way we can express our love with God—from friendship to fatherly love to many others. Why would romance be the only type of love that isn't meant to be expressed between God and us? Why would God create that kind of love in the first place—if he didn't intend for it to be a way that he loved us and we loved him?

God has asked me, "Would I create romantic love and forbid myself from experiencing it? Would I limit it to something on earth only? Why

would I occupy all other types of love, but not occupy that part of the love spectrum?”

Another time God told me, “Those feelings that you think exist only on earth have their origin in heaven. Earthly romance—earthly marriage—is a concession I made. I’m allowing it now to give you an understanding of a heavenly reality. All of those emotions were originally and ultimately meant to be expressed with me.”

Block #2

Isn’t there no marriage (and the romance that goes with it) in heaven?

In Matthew 22, Jesus explained that a woman married to seven different men on earth wouldn’t be married to any of them in heaven. The physical union that exists on earth won’t exist in heaven. Physical marriage is tied to our physical bodies and our existence in this physical world. In other words, if you’re married to someone on earth, you won’t be married to them in heaven. Your union was one of flesh to flesh. (The Bible describes earthly marriage as the two becoming one flesh (Gen. 2:24 (NIV)).) And in heaven you won’t meet someone in the cloud of witnesses, fall in love, and marry. We won’t marry and be given in marriage to each other in the way we did on earth. In heaven spiritual union will be the only union we experience.

The Bible does say there’s marriage in heaven—God’s marriage. The Bible ends with a marriage ceremony (Rev. 19). In several parables Jesus compares the kingdom of God to a wedding banquet (Matt. 22, Matt. 25, Luke 14). What is heaven like? According to Jesus, heaven starts with a wedding and then is one long, blissful marriage. God calls himself our Groom and Husband (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:14; Jer. 3:20; Ezek. 16:32; Hos. 2:16; Matt. 9:15; Mark 2:19-20; Luke 5:34-35). He promises to marry us (Isa. 62:4-5; Ezek. 16:8; Eph. 5:27-32; Rev. 19:7-9). There will be marriage in

heaven. It won't be the union of flesh to flesh like marriage is on earth, though. Heavenly marriage is a joining of our spirit with God's spirit. If there's a marriage between God and us in heaven, then heaven contains the romantic type of love that marriage flows from. We don't need to die to experience that type of love. We can begin to unite our spirits with God's now. As we do, we can savor all that romantic love with God sparks.

Block #3

A romantic way of interacting with God is silly and less valuable than interacting with God as our boss or father.

Try telling that one to your spouse. Romantic love exists for a reason—a very important reason. Without that kind of love, we wouldn't want to unite ourselves with someone in the deepest ways. We wouldn't want to leave behind everything else to be with the one our heart loves. There would be no marriage, no bedroom bliss, no sharing of ourselves in the most private ways with another.

Romance—and the marriage union and bliss it leads to—are extremely important. On one level, they are the foundation of society. Society is built around family units. Families wouldn't exist without marriage. If we weren't attracted to people, if we never desired someone in anything but a friendly way, there would be no children, no households, and no glue that holds our societies together. Romance isn't silly. It's not the least important of the loves. It may be the most important.

Block #4

Romance has no spiritual value.

Every type of love and every type of relationship we can experience

on earth has spiritual value. Each is a shadow of a heavenly reality. Each is a way that we can and will express our love with God.

If the love of friends or the love of parents or the love of coworkers (in the language of the Bible “fellow bondservants”) can all reflect the type of love we can experience with God, then why would we exclude romance from that list? Is romantic love the only kind of love that has no heavenly counterpart? Is it the only kind of love that we can’t benefit from exchanging with God?

If romance is excluded from heaven, then there is no mechanism for entering into the deepest kind of oneness with God. There is no motivation to leave everything behind and be united with your heavenly spouse (God). Marriage love is the kind of love that causes us to give the deepest parts of ourselves to someone else. It’s the reason we make life-long commitments to people. It’s the reason we leave our families and start a new one. Romance—with its attraction and deep feelings of connection with another—expresses the most intimate form of love that exists.

If we exclude romance from what we can experience with God, we are excluding the most intimate, private, inmost type of interaction with him. If romance is something we can enjoy on earth only, then it is possible for us to be more closely bonded to a person than to God. If I can share my heart romantically only with my earthly husband, then I am more bonded to him emotionally and intimately than I am to God—because romantic love is the most intimate form of love. Is that a scenario God would set up? God forbid!

God deeply desires to be the one you are closest to and the most intimate with. He longs for a connection to you in the deepest places of your being. How does he get you to open up those places to him? How do you get him to open his most private places to you? Through romantic love. Feeling that kind of love with each other prompts the deepest, most intimate type of connection between you and God.

Romance isn't a spiritual throw away. It's the key to you and God opening up your hearts to each other fully.

Block #5

Wouldn't romance with God interfere with our earthly marriages?

God and I have had a lot of romantic encounters. After a while, I began to wonder if having all these dates with God was like dating another person. Quite bluntly, I asked God over a candlelight dinner if our romance was like having an affair.

Without hesitating, he asked, "How has it impacted your marriage to your husband?"

"I love him more," I answered honestly. "Feeling loved by you so much opened my heart to love. It deepened my feelings for my husband and it's rekindled my romance with him." I paused. "I guess that's not what an affair does."

My marriage on earth has benefited so deeply from the divine romance I've experienced. We are whole beings—having a body, soul, and spirit. When we make a romantic connection with God through our spirits, that connection is meant to spill over and bless our souls and bodies. Our physical relationships—marriages, friendships, family ties—will feel the boost of a new level of love flowing into them.

For me I felt like I was living in a realm of love in the spiritual world. Being in love is a wonderful feeling. I got addicted to it. It began to permeate everything about me. So I wanted to pull that feeling of being in love into my life on earth. When I did, I found myself feeling in love with my husband on a deeper level. He noticed—and reciprocated. "I feel like we're on a second honeymoon," he confided, "like that spark we had at first is relit."

I've found myself telling him at random times, "I love you so much,"

or “I’m so glad I married you” or “You’re so handsome!” I’ll become overwhelmed with feelings of love towards him. As romantic love from God flowed into my heart, it filled me to overflow. The overflow poured onto my husband the most—perhaps because it was a romantic type of love. In any event, I’ve found that romance with God has deepened my romance with my earthly husband. The more handsome God appears in my visions, the more attractive I find my husband on earth appearing as well. The more I’m drawn to God, the more my heart is drawn to my earthly husband.

Our divine romance and earthly romance are designed to bless and strengthen each other.

Block #6

Romance is for my body and emotions only. It’s not something my spirit can experience.

That statement is probably true—before we hit spiritual puberty. Think about our physical bodies. Before we enter adolescence, we are incapable of experiencing romantic love. The other sex isn’t cute. They have cooties. When people talk about anything romantic, kids cringe. It’s gross. It’s inappropriate.

I used to think about God like a child would. I thought of him as older and regular-looking. I thought anything romantic with him was gross. To talk about him that way was inappropriate.

Then something changed. I remember the first time I looked at God in a vision and he looked different than before. At first I couldn’t put my finger on it. “You look younger—and different somehow,” I told him. A few days later I saw him in a vision again and had the same reaction. I had never paid attention to the details of his face before. He had just been “God.” Then I found myself staring at the black waves of hair that fell around his forehead. I had never noticed them. I hadn’t realized how

stunning they made him look. Then as he bent over a pool of water to do something, he looked up and smiled at me. Something about his smile sent goosebumps racing to my stomach. Why had I never noticed how attractive God was? How could I have overlooked that about him?, I wondered.

I think God was letting me experience in a real-life way the transition that our spirits go through as they hit what I call spiritual puberty. It's not unlike waking up and realizing that boys are cute. You have the ability to hold and express feelings that you couldn't before. The other sex no longer has cooties. They're attractive. Having romantic encounters with them isn't gross. It's appealing.

You may or may not experience it like suddenly realizing God is young and gorgeous. But what that encounter represented is our spirits coming online to a new type of love with God.

God didn't create romance primarily so we could experience it on earth. It was created first and foremost as a way of expressing God's love with us. As humanity as a whole matures, many changes take place. The Bible says we will all grow up to full maturity and the full stature of Christ (Eph. 4:13). Part of that maturity is the ability of our spirits to experience the divine romance they are capable of enjoying.

Romance with God may seem gross or inappropriate at first. But it won't forever. If you don't believe me, just wait and see.

Overcoming Blocks to Oneness Love with Jesus

As soon as I had built the foundation of a romantic love with our Husband God, Jesus appeared to me. He told me it would be best for me to develop the same kind of love with each member of the Trinity. Right away, Jesus told me he'd appear to me for a period of time to see if we could develop a marriage love of our own.

“You’ll write a book about this one day,” he explained. “These interactions are happening for the book primarily. Yes, I love you without measure and I can’t stop thinking about you. But I am interacting with you like this primarily for the book. You need to keep our conversations focused for what you’ll need to put in the book. Do you understand?”

When I assured him I did, he told me that our interactions at first would center on removing obstacles to receiving his romantic love. I realized my own heart had all of these issues. But I also knew they were common barriers many people would face. I was supposed to work through the obstacles—with Jesus—to forge a path for me and others into romantic love with him.

You may or may not have the same barriers I did. How do you know what your barriers are? Try thinking about God romantically. The barriers will come up on their own. How do you overcome them? Keep thinking of God romantically. If you don’t stop when you hit a barrier, the barrier has to move out of your way.

My barriers have mostly fallen into three categories: blocks that kept me from seeing Jesus romantically, blocks that kept me from feeling loved, and fear about what a romantic relationship would open up.

Blocks

Initial Block: Is Jesus' Spirit Masculine?

Before we jump into my blocks, I wanted to raise a question that comes up often when we talk about romance, especially for men: Is God masculine? How can I have a romance with a masculine God? Asking this question with Jesus is particularly fitting because Jesus is fully human, fully divine. In his human form, he appeared as masculine. How can a man have a romance with Jesus?

The answer is that Jesus in his human nature is masculine. But when we interact with God romantically, we're not interacting with Jesus in his human nature. It's not a flesh-to-flesh romance. Because we're interacting spirit-to-spirit, anyone can have a romance with Jesus. Inside Jesus' divine nature is both male and female. Genesis 1:27 explains that "God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them."

On earth, God divided his image into male and female—two equal expressions of who God is. In the spiritual realm, God's male and female energies are a oneness—a unity. In the Bible there are both male and female expressions of God. For example, one of the earliest names for God in Genesis is El Shaddai (Gen. 17:1). That name has been translated "Almighty." Many scholars, however, believe its base is the Hebrew word for "breast" (*shad*) and suggest a better translation would be "The Breasted One." The Bible does refer to God as the One who gave us birth (Deut. 32:18) and nursed us (Isa. 49:15, Ps. 131:2).

In your romance with God, feel free to connect to God outside of

gender. In Christ, there are no divisions like we have on earth—including the division into male and female (Gal. 3:28). Or feel free to connect with the unity of God’s male and female nature. Or, if it helps spark your romance, connect with God through the gender that would help you most. For example, some men tell me they see Holy Spirit as feminine, which enables them to connect with her romantically. There is biblical support for that view.⁴ I tend to see Holy Spirit in a masculine form in visions. Do you see how both are right? We’re honing in on one part of God’s nature. It’s okay to do that as we relate to God.

The bottom line is everyone can experience romance with God. It’s not tied to gender or time or space.

Block #1

Jesus as the Untouchable Hero (and Literary Figure)

Since I had grown up in a super pious Christian home, I had a lot of religious concepts about Jesus. I had logged endless hours studying him, memorizing his words, and trying to draw closer to him. I found that

⁴ The word “spirit” in Hebrew can be either masculine or feminine, but appears mostly in the feminine. For example, Job 33:4 could literally be translated: “The spirit of God, she made me, and the breath of the Breasted One, she is keeping me alive.” Genesis 1:2 also has God’s spirit in the feminine. We could literally translate that verse: “the Spirit of God, she was hovering over the surface of the waters.” Ezekiel also uses both masculine and feminine pronouns to refer to Holy Spirit. (See Ezek. 8:3 “the Spirit, she lifted me up between earth and heaven . . .”; Ezek. 3:24 “Then the Spirit, she came into me and stood me to my feet. And he said to me . . .”; Ezek. 3:14 “The Spirit, she lifted me up and took me away . . .”; Ezek. 3:12 “The Spirit, she lifted me up . . .”; Ezek. 2:2 “The Spirit, she came into me and he [referring to the LORD] was speaking to me and she stood me on my feet and I heard the one speaking to me.”). Other verses include: Num. 11:26, 24:2; Judg. 3:10, 6:34, 11:29, 13:25, 14:6,19, 15:14; 1 Sam. 10:6,10, 11:6, 16:13-14, 19:20, 23; 1 Chr. 12:18; 2 Chr. 15:1, 20:14, 24:20; 2 Kgs. 2:15; Ps. 51:12, 143:10, Isa. 11:2, 40:7, 59:19; Ezek. 1:12,20,21, 11:1,5,24, 36:26, 37:1, 43:5, and Hag. 2:5.

background was both a blessing and a hindrance. The countless sermons I had heard about how perfect and awesome Jesus was gave me a deep love for him. I started my journey with a strong passion for Jesus (that I didn't realize until we were alone together romantically). At the same time, I thought Jesus was perfect—so perfect that he would never want to be intimately close to me. I thought he was too good for me. He was an untouchable hero—someone I had made into such a superstar that I couldn't be his equal. He could be my Master or Lord or Teacher. But to think of him wanting an equal partnership with me was out of the question. (At first, I thought I could picture Jesus wanting an intimate relationship with me. But when push came to shove, I discovered huge parts of my subconscious believed he'd never want a relationship a beloved equals.)

Additionally, I had primarily tried to know Jesus by studying a book. I did have a real, personal relationship with him. We talked every day. I saw him in visions frequently. I thought I knew him as a person rather than as a literary figure. Truth be told, though, I had studied his life through a book. Our relationship was mostly book-centered. Even in the visions we had together, I was usually trying to get his advice or direction or help drawing closer to God. I hadn't tried to get to know him—what he liked to do, what his sense of humor was, or that sort of thing. We needed to build a different kind of personal relationship if we were going to enjoy intimacy together. I had known him as Savior and Teacher and Lord. I hadn't tried relating to him as Husband.

On our first date, we began by sitting on a sofa chatting. Two minutes into our first conversation, I had an eye-opening realization.

"I memorized your life in order," I told Jesus, wanting to let him know how well I already knew him. How many people had done a Bible curriculum where you learned so many details of his life? As soon as I spoke the words, the truth hit me. I hadn't memorized his life in order. I had just memorized the few things about his life that were mentioned

in the Bible. “I mean, I memorized the events that were in the Bible,” I backpedaled.

“Those were the most important events of my life on earth,” Jesus smiled. “You did well to memorize them.”

Despite Jesus’ encouraging words, my eyes were opened. I realized there was so much more to him than memorizing facts written in a book. The events in the Bible weren’t the only things that had happened to him. The words in that book didn’t capture every aspect of his personality. He was everything I knew about him—wonderful, perfect, thoughtful, caring. But there was a lot about him that I didn’t know. We were going to have to build a relationship—outside the context of a book.

SOLUTION

To build a marriage love with someone, you don’t memorize their words or study what was written about them in books. That way of building a relationship with Jesus worked when he was my Teacher or Lord. It wouldn’t work so well if the aim was to know and embrace each other in the depths of our beings.

I needed to interact with Jesus outside of a Bible study. I needed to get to know him as a person who loved me intimately—not as someone who wanted to teach me or lead me or rule my life. How do you do that? I’ll share some tips and tools at the end of the chapter.

Block #2

Heart Issues Preventing me from Feeling Loved

“I love you,” Jesus told me as we stood up to dance on our first date.

“I know. Well, maybe I don’t,” I paused. “I don’t *feel* loved by you. I’d like that to change.”

“So would I,” he agreed.

“What do I need to do to feel loved by you?” I asked.

“Nothing. All your proof is right here—in my eyes,” he answered.

“I could stare into those eyes,” I replied, glancing into them momentarily. “Is it okay to do that? Is it okay to feel this way about you?”

“Why wouldn’t it be?” Jesus asked.

“Because you’re God,” I answered.

“And? My biggest desire is you. It says that in the Bible,” he assured me.

“Yes, I know. But I always thought of you as a friend or a master or something,” I tried to explain.

“And now your desire is being stirred towards me and it feels awkward. Do you know why I haven’t revealed myself to you—to people—like this in the past?” Jesus asked.

“Because it would make our hearts swoon and do things we shouldn’t do,” I joked.

“No,” Jesus laughed. “Because your love wasn’t ready. You were focused on working out your issues or saving the world or preaching the gospel. I was waiting for you to slow down and look at me. I was waiting for you to sense my desire for you. Sensing my desire is the first step to your desire being aroused.”

“How can we choose to desire you?” I asked.

“Great question. We’re showing people in our interaction,” Jesus replied.

“All we’re doing is showing them how to sit on a couch and talk and then get up and dance,” I pointed out.

“How would you stir up desire?” he asked me.

“By looking at you. By staring into your eyes,” I answered. “I see love for me in your eyes. I see how much you care for me. I see how you’d never want anything bad to happen to me. I see your protective instinct. How do you stir up desire for me?”

“By watching you. I like to see you glide into a situation, smiling even when someone was rude to you, thinking twice before you let a word slip that you shouldn’t have, writing a card when you didn’t have to. That sort of thing excites me.”

SOLUTION

When I asked Jesus what I needed to do to feel loved by him, he told me, “Nothing. All your proof is right here—in my eyes.” Later I told him that my way to stir up desire for him was to stare into his eyes. At the time, that’s just what popped out of my mouth. Later I realized there was a spiritual principle there.

Staring into God’s eyes connects us to him. It can tell us what he’s thinking and feeling. It can form a bond between us so strong that we constantly know—and feel—his thoughts. That means we move from an intellectual knowledge of his love to feeling it flowing from him towards us constantly.

I noticed this principle when I first started hanging out with God in romantic encounters. When our eyes met, I could tell what he was thinking or feeling. Each time our eyes met, the connection grew stronger. Eventually, I could constantly feel his feelings and thoughts for me whether or not we were looking into each other’s eyes.

You don’t have to be in a vision to look in God’s eyes. Visions help us by showing a visual representation of how our hearts are interacting. But the same thing can happen inside you whether the visual part of the experience is turned on or off. As you’re hanging out with God, intend to look into his eyes and make that connection. Your mind and spirit know what you intend to do, and they do it. I’ve been in encounters where I can’t see God’s face, yet I intend to look him in the eyes and the same thing happens inside me that happens when I can see his face clearly.

The second thing Jesus and I were doing was dancing. When we

dance with God, our forms touch. I've found that intending to touch God in a vision is another way to create a connection where I feel his love and thoughts towards me. It can be any type of touch. It doesn't have to be in a dance. I've literally had the tips of our fingers graze each other briefly—and spark that connection.

Again, you don't have to be in a vision for the principle to work. As you hang out with God, intend to connect so you can feel what he's feeling and sense what he's thinking. It's part of the oneness bond to connect in that way. In the natural, we create connection through physical touch. We're doing the spiritual equivalent of that to create a new kind of bond with God. If someone is your Lord or Teacher, you don't expect to know their thoughts or feel their feelings. But in oneness you do share a connection like that. Staring into God's eyes and touching him are ways to form that oneness bond.

In sum, interact with God in an intimate setting. Then intend to make a oneness connection with him. You're not connecting as Lord-Servant or Friend-Friend. You're connecting as beings who are completely one with each other. I find it helpful to look in his eyes and/or touch his form. Eventually, you'll be able to know his thoughts and feel his feelings. There is nothing that you'll (be able to) keep from each other.

Block #3

Doubting his Love

“I'm having a hard time seeing you and connecting with you, Jesus,” I told him one night. I was supposed to be having encounters with Jesus to develop a romantic love and overcome barriers. But I couldn't even connect with him. “Why is that?” I asked.

“Your own heart,” he replied. “You doubt my love.”

“You don't constantly remind me of it like your Father did,” I retorted.

“I do love you so much,” Jesus assured me.

“I don’t feel like you mean that,” I explained. “I don’t feel like I deserve your love. Maybe that’s it. God cut through all my doubts by telling me so many times and in so many ways that he loved me. I finally believed him. But I think part of me thinks you must be mad at me for all the ways I’ve rejected you in my life—for all my sin. I’m so sorry for how I’ve turned away from you and all the things I’ve done when I should have known better.”

“Are you done confessing yet?” Jesus asked smiling. “I’m over it. I was over it before you did it. I love you intensely. I don’t care how you treated me. That’s not how I judge anyway.”

“I know. My mind knows. But my heart judges me. I turned away from you. I abandoned you,” I confessed.

“You did worse than that,” Jesus said. “You let the enemy control you. You gave your life to me then took it back many times. But I loved you the same—no matter what. That’s what love does.”

“But I feel like I should deserve your love,” I protested.

“You do,” Jesus answered. “You’re human.”

“I drop my self accusations,” I decided. “They lead nowhere. Do you want to do something fun together?”

“That’s why I came,” Jesus smiled. “I was hoping you’d say that.”

“It’s you and me alone, God,” I whispered lightheartedly. “What do you like to do with someone you’re madly in love with when you have her full attention and you have her all alone in a locked room?”

“This room is locked?” he asked, grinning.

“Metaphorically speaking,” I replied.

“I like to ask her what she wants to do,” Jesus told me, catching my gaze.

He ended up inviting me to step into his heart, where he had a romantic meal set out. A rose rested on the table while music played in the background.

“Very lovely,” I said, half smiling. “Such a nice meal.”

“Not as beautiful as the company,” he replied.

“I want to give you my heart,” I told him. “I want you to ravish it.”

“I thought I was,” Jesus answered, slight disappointment in his voice.

“Not exactly. I mean, not as much as I was envisioning,” I told him honestly. “You know what keeps going through my head—‘He doesn’t love me. I’m just a project.’ Why am I thinking that?”

“I know it’s hard,” Jesus reassured me. “You’re doing well. Working on heart issues is tough. A year from now our relationship will be very different.”

“I must let go of something,” I told him. “What is it? A false concept is holding me back. I think I just need to believe the truth. But I can’t figure out what exactly it is.”

SOLUTION

We’ll all have some heart issues that cause us to doubt God’s love for us. For me two big issues were guilt and unworthiness. A few things helped me move past these issues long enough to begin to enjoy romance with God. First, our Husband God was constantly professing his love and my beauty. Two seconds later, I’d doubt what he had said. So he’d just tell me again. After months of constant reminders, something broke through. I finally believed that he loved me romantically—at least enough to step into a new kind of relationship.

I understand that you may not hear God serenading you constantly with professions of his love. So I’ve created a tool to mimic what God did for me. I’ve taken what God has spoken—both in the Bible and in my adventures with him—and recorded it in an audio format. You can listen to God expressing his undying love for you constantly if you wish. It’s a tool to break through doubts we have about God’s love. (Appendix E explains how to access this tool.)

Second, in the past, I had used a variety of inner healing methods to work out my blocks to receiving God's love. In the encounter, I realized those tools really had helped. Whatever tools work for you, use them to heal heart issues.

Third, Jesus affirmed that working on heart issues is tough. It takes time. You're doing well. He told me our relationship would be very different in a year. He didn't say in a day or in a month things would be different. It took time for me. Continue to intentionally engage his romantic love and over time you will make real progress.

Block #4

No Grid for Understanding Romantic Love

Jesus told me later the reason I was having trouble connecting with him is that many people would have a block in thinking of Jesus as their Groom. We have so many other concepts of him—Friend, Savior, Master, Lord. Romantic love isn't appropriate for a relationship with Jesus in any of those roles. I was trying to take my experiences with Jesus as a lover and reconcile them to the types of love I had previously experienced with him. When they refused to fit into one of my old ways of knowing Jesus, I thought maybe romantic love wasn't a valid way of interacting with him.

Finally, I had a breakthrough. "Instead of trying to fit these romantic encounters with you into a concept of you I already have, I need to create a new concept of you. I need a new container for you—the Groom container."

"Your existing concepts of me are right," Jesus informed me after checking my heart. "And your love for me in those ways of thinking of me is pretty good."

"It's like buying a new outfit," I told him. "When we buy a new outfit, we don't come home and throw away all our old clothes. We just add the

new outfit to our closet. I don't have to throw away my old concepts of you. I just add a new one to the mix—you as my Groom.”

“Brilliant,” Jesus beamed.

“We women tend to be that way,” I replied.

Barrier #5

My Mind Acting out of Fear and Overprotection

One my biggest blocks to receiving Jesus' love was fear. “Why are you so afraid?” Jesus asked me one night, holding me close in a vision.

“Do you feel that in me?” I replied. “I think I do have fear in me. You've got to get rid of it. I'm scared that it's not really you I'm interacting with. I'm scared that this will lead me somewhere I shouldn't go. I'm still not sure it's okay to feel this way about you and act this way around you. My heart yearns for it. My mind is unsure.”

“When I see your heart, it's ready. It welcomes me,” Jesus said.

“Yet my mind pushes you off—at least sometimes. What should I do?” I asked.

“I want to come into your mind. I love your mind,” he told me. “I love everything about you—about it. It's so beautiful. It loves me, too.”

“It's supposed to. ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and will all your soul and with all your mind,’” I quoted Matthew 22:37. “My mind loves you. But it wants to protect me. My mind doesn't want me getting hurt by you.” Even though I had been happily married for years, interacting with Jesus romantically was triggering a protective instinct inside my mind. My mind wanted to keep me from being hurt by a romantic encounter with someone. For some reason, it wasn't making a distinction between people (who could hurt me) and God (who wouldn't).

“It's done its job well,” Jesus told me. Speaking to my mind, he said, “Just don't protect her from destiny. We're meant to be together. I'm

meant to be with all of you—your mind, too.”

“Jesus, would you live in my mind, too? Not just my heart?” I asked.

“I would love to,” Jesus beamed.

I could sense him entering my mind and entangling with it. “This is so blissful,” Jesus reported. “Your mind is welcoming me into every part, opening doors to me that you hadn’t opened. Your mind is throwing out things if I don’t like them. She wants to clean out. This is so incredible.”

SOLUTION

I want to highlight here that we can carry baggage from our past romantic relationships on earth. Just like we can have father issues that prevent us from seeing God as a good father, we can have romance issues that can make knowing God as a spouse feel unsafe. For some reason, my mind approached Jesus like he was a man who could potentially hurt me if I opened my heart to him.

Spending time with Jesus in romantic settings where he poured his perfect love for me as my groom into my heart convinced my mind that Jesus was safe. Experiencing the perfect love of God as Husband is a powerful tool to bring healing and wholeness to parts of our hearts that God’s fatherly love can’t fully heal. To help you access God’s love as a spouse, I’ve created some tools that I’ll share at the end of this chapter.

For some people, though, past hurts cut much deeper than mine. If you’ve suffered abuse in the past and you find unpleasant images or memories coming to mind when you approach God as Spouse, I’d suggest pursuing inner healing through whatever method works best for you. Then try engaging God as Spouse again. You may need a break from thinking about marriage (in any context) to pursue healing. Although we may need a safe space to heal initially, the fullest healing will take place as we experience God’s heavenly, perfect, original love for us—in the very places of our trauma.

Falling in Love

Our goal isn't to remove barriers. Our goal is to experience God's oneness love for us. Here's how I did that with Jesus.

Once I worked through those issues as best I could, I still hadn't fallen in love with Jesus. I needed a boost. So I decided to listen to worship songs with lyrics about how amazing Jesus is. Immersing myself in songs about him might stir something inside me, I figured.

I sat on a huge chair in our house, listening to worship songs. I could sense Jesus standing about five feet away. He kept saying, "Listen to that one again." Or, "This one next." After an hour of listening to these songs, my desire for him started to stir. My body was still sitting in the chair, but my spirit moved to stand next to Jesus' spirit. We were looking into each other's eyes. A love was building between us. Something was just about to burst open.

At that moment I sensed angels all around us. They were trading into our love. It looked like they were throwing things like money and resources into our love. It was like they were making an investment in our love—or almost like they were placing a bet in the spiritual world that our love would develop and they'd receive a big payoff for it.

Later Jesus told me that they were betting that I was too far in to pull out from him. "Why would they want to see our love develop?" I asked. "Will all of creation benefit from our romantic love?"

"You'll develop a theology around it," Jesus told me.

It was then—the moment right after angels traded into our love—that it was birthed. I realized we had a romantic love for each other—a real, genuine love like I had with my Husband God. It seemed official at that moment.

Tools and Tips

There are a lot of excellent tools to help work on issues like feeling God's love (in a general sense) or healing heart issues like unworthiness. I want to give you a few new tools and tips designed specifically for opening up romantic, oneness love.

Tip #1: Dates with God

Spending time with God romantically may be the fastest to build oneness love. For me this looked like going on dates with God in visions. That's just how I connect with God. Other people like to find the part of God's heart they want to experience and step into it or soak in it. Romantic love is a type of love God created. It's part of the spectrum of love. So there's a place in God's heart that contains his romantic feelings and thoughts about you. Intend to connect with him there. Then soak in it.

I've created several tools to help you foster your own romantic encounters with God and to help entrench God's romantic thoughts for you deeply inside your heart. In the appendix, you can discover a full list of these tools and how to access them.

Tip #2: Music

Use music to connect with God romantically. From mushy worship songs to secular tunes, music can be a powerful way to generate romantic feelings for God.

Tip #3: Involve your subconscious

For a truth to sink in, it must penetrate our subconscious. Our conscious mind can memorize scripture, repeat declarations, and preach to the world. Still, the truth will remain head knowledge until it sinks into our hearts. To move this truth to your heart, try meditating on God's

romantic love for you. Listen to mushy worship songs or the recording of God's romantic love for you as you fall asleep. In a lower brain wave state (like sleep), it's easier for a truth to penetrate our intellectual defenses and take root deep inside us.

Conclusion

I could almost summarize this entire chapter with one thought: Spend time with God romantically. Connect with his romantic thoughts and feelings for you. That's the solution to almost any block we discussed here.

My blocks about not being able to think of Jesus as Groom were overcome by spending time with him in that role. Many of my blocks to receiving his romantic love were overcome by hanging out with him in settings where he was pouring that kind of love into me. Many of my fears about where romance would lead were removed by experiencing him romantically—and realizing it opened up great things in my life.

Bottom line is that to move into a romance with God the best way to do that is to interact with him that way. Taste and see that the Lord is good, the Bible says (Ps. 34:8). Taste God's romance—and you'll see it's good. Tasting may be the best method to overcoming blocks.

Overcoming Blocks to Oneness Love with Holy Spirit

Just as with Jesus, the first thing Holy Spirit did was lead me through blocks to receiving his romantic love. I want to walk you through these blocks then share some tips for forming a oneness love with Holy Spirit.

Block #1 Not Knowing Holy Spirit

Soon after I fell in love with Jesus, I figured it was time to meet with Holy Spirit romantically. After all, Jesus had told me I was supposed to engage the entire Trinity in this new love. I didn't want to wait. Eagerly, I sought Holy Spirit out to begin a romance with him. His initial response surprised me. Instead of guiding me into heart-stopping dates, he told me I didn't know him well enough to engage him romantically. I was shocked.

How could I not know him enough? I was "filled" with Holy Spirit. I taught about him. I had read books explaining him. Didn't I know him better than most people who never gave him a second thought? When I started to interact with Holy Spirit in intimate settings, though, I realized I didn't really know him. I knew stuff about him. I had worked with him. But I didn't know him as a person. And it's hard to love someone if you don't really know them. I guess he was right.

“It’s not your fault,” Holy Spirit was quick to assure me. “I’m not well known by the church. I’m not talked about a lot or understood deeply.”

Eventually, I understood what he meant. Most Christians haven’t tended to think of Holy Spirit romantically—at least if you listen to their songs. I discovered there were more mushy worship songs about Jesus than I could count. Personally, I couldn’t think of a single romantic worship song about Holy Spirit. We sing about how we welcome his presence or how cool it would be if he did a miracle. But we don’t serenade him with how awesome he is personally or how all we can do is think about him.

In fact, I read a book about marriage to God once that taught Holy Spirit doesn’t have a bride. Instead of marrying himself, his role is to broker the deal between Jesus and the church. I felt so sorry for him (sort of) after hearing that some people don’t even have a blueprint for oneness love with Holy Spirit. Personally, I didn’t understand how we can be one with God’s spirit (which is what spiritual marriage is) without Holy Spirit being front and center in that oneness.

I had an intellectual blueprint for marriage to Holy Spirit. Practically speaking, though, I didn’t know him well enough to step into that kind of relationship.

To give you an example, I asked Holy Spirit to jump into the pool of my love for him. Just weeks into my romance with our Husband God, we jumped into my love for him and fell for a long time. My love was surprisingly deep. We hung out in those depths, sweetly bonded, surrounded by my love. It was a moving experience.

I figured I’d do the same thing with Holy Spirit. When Holy Spirit and I jumped, though, we landed in a puddle ankle deep. Months later I had forgotten what had happened, and I invited him to do the same thing again. That time the water was up to our waists. It wasn’t until a year into pursuing romance with Holy Spirit that we jumped into my pool of love for him and fell down quite a ways.

When Holy Spirit first told me that I didn't know him very well, I asked him what I should do to fix it. He told me, "Come spend time with me. Talk to me. When you want to spend time with God, you almost always go to God the Father or the God the Son. Just come to me. Ask my opinion. See what I'm doing."

That was simple, but brilliant advice. At the end of this session, I'll share some things I did to come to know Holy Spirit better. You may not have that problem with Holy Spirit. But the tips I share can help take your relationship with any member of the Trinity deeper.

Block #2

Not Seeing Holy Spirit in the Bible

"It's hard sometimes to relate to you," I told Holy Spirit. "I mean, it seems like the whole Old Testament is about my Husband God. We can see stuff he's done. We can get to know his personality. All the miracles, Mount Sinai, and every story make us feel like we see him and know him. Then the whole New Testament is about Jesus. We can follow his life, see his miracles. We feel like we can know him."

"But what do you do in the Bible? You're the one whispering to the prophets. You're the one gently guiding the church, handing out gifts, mentoring us to maturity. But there's not a tangible, I-can-hold-it-in-my-hands-and-touch-it thing that you do. That makes it harder to relate to you," I confessed.

"All those things you saw God doing, everything you saw Jesus doing, they did through me," Holy Spirit explained. "I was the power behind it. I was the force driving it. I was the one bringing their desires to the earth. So when you read those stories, you do see me. You can come to know me."

His words gave me the freedom to see Holy Spirit in Bible stories I had never thought about him being a part of before. I had thought

that his name needed to be in a passage before I could tie him to it. So hearing him say he was part of everything God did helped form a connection with him.

Block #3

Thinking of Holy Spirit as Less Important

After our initial conversations, I visited God's palace in Zion to hang out with Holy Spirit. Instead of seeing his private chamber like I had with Jesus and my Husband God, I found him in an office.

"Welcome!" He stood up to greet me. Immediately, he set aside his work to spend time with me. "You're welcome to come here anytime to see me. Let me give you a tour of the palace."

He showed me meeting rooms, a kitchen, and a large space to eat. There were angels and people walking around, on their way to do important work.

"You really are just as important as Father and Son," I realized. "I hate to admit it, but I always thought of you like God's sidekick—like an 'also starring' but not a main player. But you really are equal to them. I know that intellectually, of course. I just have a hard time believing it in my experience. Sorry I said that out loud."

"Don't worry. It doesn't bother me," Holy Spirit replied. "I haven't been fully known or understood in part because it hasn't been time. But it will be soon. Many, many people will know me in the days ahead."

"I bet a lot of people in the future will know you even better than they know Jesus," I offered.

"Some people already do," he answered.

Before that interaction, I had known there were "people" who thought of Holy Spirit as less than the other members of the Trinity. I just hadn't thought I was one of "those people." Trying to interface with Holy Spirit intimately made me realize there were parts of me that thought of him

that way.

Block #4

Thinking of Holy Spirit as an “It”

“Tell me about the turning points in your life,” Holy Spirit asked me one day. “What are the times when everything changed for you?”

Immediately, I thought of what had probably been the biggest spiritual turning point in my life—the moment I was “baptized” with Holy Spirit. “Having more of you in my life changed everything for me,” I told him. “I could hear God’s voice all the time. I drew so much closer to God. It was the best thing that ever happened to me.”

As I was describing it to him, I realized that I had thought of him like a substance—something like faith or hope that the more I had of it, the better off I’d be. “I thought of you like a thing, not a person,” I confessed. “I never knew you like a person. I thought of you as something I needed to do more stuff spiritually.”

Spending time with Holy Spirit first shifted my understanding of what he had done in the world. I began to think of him in every Bible passage—creation, salvation, all the stories—not just the ones that specifically mentioned his name. Second, it shifted my understanding of what he had done in my life. He’s the one who had opened my ears to God’s voice, who had shifted my relationship with God, who had brought me into heaven. Without him, I could never have had a single interaction with God that I was aware of. He was the interface—the one bringing the heavenly realm into the natural world in a way I could interact with it.

Finally, how I literally perceived him was changing. Until a few months before I started pursuing romance with God, I had never seen Holy Spirit in a form of any sort. I’d hear his voice. Or I’d feel his presence. But I didn’t see that presence represented in a form. Then one day I was in church, worshiping Holy Spirit specifically, when he appeared to me in a human form. Ever since that moment, most of the times I’ve

seen him he's been in a bodily form. Although his appearance—even what race he was—would shift, he always seemed to me to be the most attractive person I had ever seen. My heart was shifting from thinking of him as a substance to thinking of him as the One I love.

Building Oneness Love with Holy Spirit

The goal, of course, isn't simply to remove blocks. We aim to build a oneness love with God. Here are some things that worked for me to form a romance with Holy Spirit.

1. Set aside a week (or month) to interact only with Holy Spirit.

The first year of our romance, God suggested that I spent a set period of time with each member of the Trinity. First, I spent two weeks interacting only with our Husband God. Immediately afterwards, I spent four weeks just with Jesus. A few weeks, later, when I was ready, I spent six weeks with Holy Spirit only. Each of those periods marked significance shifts in my relationships with whomever I was with. After those six weeks with Holy Spirit, he went from being the last person of the Trinity I'd engage to the one I felt most comfortable with.

Forcing myself to interact with only one person of the Trinity for a period allowed me to break deeper and faster into what was brewing between us. It was also a fast track for knowing Holy Spirit better.

2. Use Music.

Mushy romantic music can stir our hearts. I fell in love with Holy Spirit through a song (that was really about Jesus). Any love song can work.

3. Focus on a personal (not a work) relationship.

I thought I knew Holy Spirit because I had interacted with him in his “work.” I asked for his power or wisdom or miracles or prophetic words. He’d fill me with his presence so I felt tipsy. But that kind of interaction doesn’t build the type of intimacy needed for marriage love.

DATES

Going on dates with Holy Spirit is what first moved our relationship from “work” to “personal.” Every day for a season, he’d tell me where to meet him in heaven that night. He’d usually include what outfit from my heavenly wardrobe I should wear. It was usually a stunningly elegant dress. Sometimes he’d even suggest how to wear my hair. Then in the evening, I’d picture myself in our rendezvous spot. Holy Spirit would show up in a matching outfit. Dressed to kill, we’d have an adventure together.

We took countless walks in the gardens behind the heavenly palace, talking. We ran across the lake there together. We had dinner overlooking the lake. In his private quarters, we’d sit in front of the fireplace and talk. He’d take me to some of the most beautiful places I had ever seen.

Those dates helped to build a personal relationship. Our agenda wasn’t to get some work item accomplished. It was to get to know each other better.

SOAKING

Something else I did was just sit in his presence—at times for hours a day. Sometimes we’d talk. All I could hear was his voice—no visions. Other times all I could do was see him and feel his love pouring into me—with no words.

One thing those soaking times did was open up his personality to me. Holy Spirit was often cracking jokes, trying to make me laugh even when I wanted to be serious. At times he rarely shut up. His constant running monologue flooded my thoughts.

Another thing that grew between us is what I call a oneness bond. I could tell you what he was thinking and I could feel the emotions flowing from him. The longer I spent in intimate moments in his heart, the easier it became to perceive how he felt or what he thought about something.

In fact, with our Husband God, I could read his mind and emotions almost as soon as he opened his heart to me in that way. With Holy Spirit, though, I couldn't read him at first. I would be in a vision in heaven with him in an intimate place, and I couldn't tell you what he was thinking to save my life. The longer we hung out, the stronger that connection became. Eventually, I could see into his mind and feel his feelings as easily as with God and Jesus. Something about that kind of bond is tied to how well we know God—how many hours we've spent with him.

A third shift I noticed was that he changed what and how he shared with me. Instead of talking about things he wanted me to do, he would tell me about what he was thinking or feeling. His tone of voice, the way he looked at me, even the mannerisms he used during our time together all shifted. He was much more casual, like the way you'd talk to someone you knew well. He started using nicknames for me (like the ones you'd use for a spouse).

PERSONAL LIFE

I hadn't realized the importance of these changes until one morning when we were hanging out in a vision where we were in an intimate space together. "I'm so excited about something I'm going to do today," Holy Spirit began. Then he started telling me about a prayer request he was going to grant that day that was a big deal to him. "I'm super

excited about it,” he confessed, pausing to look at me. “I’m talking to you about work,” he explained. “That’s my work. When we hang out, it’s my personal life.”

I hadn’t divided God’s life into “work” life and “personal” life before that conversation. Soon I realized I had only thought about Holy Spirit’s work life before. Now we were growing the “personal” aspect of our relationship.

Over time, our interaction completely shifted. I rarely thought of his work. (He even told me he was handing off his work to us—Healer, Counselor, Helper, Guide. He explained to me that all the roles I had related to him through were no longer needed now that I had grown up. Instead of our relationship focusing on his leading or training me, it could be whatever we wanted it to be.) I decided to think of him as my spouse. He noticed.

“You’re more likely to ask me on a date than you are to ask me for advice,” Holy Spirit told me once, playfully. Another time, also joking, he told me most people wanted him for his power, not for his good looks, like I did. When I protested that I had never told him I wanted to hang out with him because he looked so gorgeous, he asked me how I thought of him. “I think of you romantically,” I confessed. His point exactly.

Seeing him walk into the room began to make me smile in a way I never would have before. Instead of wondering, “What’s he here to do?” I thought, “Wow, there’s the one I love.” That’s when I realized I had shifted from interacting with Holy Spirit as a Helper, Guide, or Friend to knowing him as a Spouse.

4. Open Up.

Holy Spirit opened up sensitive areas to me, letting me see parts of him I wouldn’t have even known to ask about. I let my guard down with him, too. I didn’t even realize I had a guard up with him. But we probably

do with anyone we don't know very well.

"There are things about me you don't know," he'd tell me over and over again. "I want to share these things with you. I'm waiting for you to be ready."

Sometimes he'd explain a new concept about him in words. We'd have a rational conversation about it—when it was something I needed to mull over. But often he didn't say anything to me. We'd sit in each other's hearts for hours. Later I'd notice my concept of him had changed. It was like a new revelation about him would bubble up—from my heart to my head.

God became obsessed with me knowing everything about him. Slowly, as I was ready, he'd help me shed wrong concepts about him—and embrace a fuller truth. A year into the journey, I had an almost completely different understanding of God. My view of God is still shifting rapidly.

I realized that intimacy does that to a relationship. It demands that the other know the real you—all of you. It urges you to reveal yourself in the most unfiltered way. Being intimate with God triggered a desire inside him to lead me—as quickly as possible—into knowing and understanding and embracing as much of him as I could possibly swallow.

5. Minister to him.

I had always thought that the greatest thing I could do would be to bring heaven to earth. Through Holy Spirit, I wanted to fix earth's problems, set the universe in order, and call it a day. But as I got to know Holy Spirit in a more personal, intimate way, I started wondering if there was something greater than aligning heaven and earth. What if the greatest thing wasn't to build something *for* God, but to be *with* God? What if ministering to him was greater than working with him? What

if I gained the entire universe, but missed something greater than the universe—a close relationship with Holy Spirit himself?

I had never thought that God may need ministry. I hadn't thought about who God could discuss his problems with. It hadn't crossed my mind that sharing the deepest parts of who he is with another was something that would mean the world to him. In fact, I began to see that being in close relationship with us was more precious to him than the entire universe. He cared more about me than he did about fixing the universe.

“What would I have—even if I had everything else—but I lacked you?” Holy Spirit asked me. “It's sinking in for you, isn't it? What we're uncovering. This closeness between us isn't something. It's everything.”

I realized that if I brought heaven to earth and helped every single person to full maturity—but I missed knowing God as a spouse—he'd be heartbroken. The deepest parts of him would be unfulfilled because he would never have been able to share those places with someone. At his core, Holy Spirit wasn't looking for someone to fix the universe with him. He wasn't waiting for the day I could rule the universe at his side. He was looking for his perfect match to share himself with. That's what we were becoming to each other.

Conclusion

My blocks with Holy Spirit seemed to center on not knowing him very well. For many people this block is likely to pop up for at least one member of the Trinity. What's the best remedy? Spend time together—not focused on getting a project done, but focused on each other. Laugh together. Soak in each other's presence. Share yourselves. Do something fun together. There's no substitute for investing time with each other that will build the connection you need for a deeper oneness love.

What helped me get to know Holy Spirit best was spending time

only with him for several weeks, going on heavenly vacations with him, and focusing on building an intimate, personal relationship rather than a work-centered one.

I've created some resources to help you get more out of your time with Holy Spirit. In the appendix, you can discover a full list of these tools and how to access them.

Part 4:
How to Live Loved

Ways to Foster Oneness Love

In this book, we've unpacked the basics of what oneness love with God can look like. We've discussed how to overcome some common blocks to entering oneness love. We're going to end by focusing on how to build that love. In this chapter I'll share strategies for building oneness love with God.

Strategies for Fostering Oneness Love

1. Go to a Special Place

In the natural world, we've created different kinds of spaces for different things we do. We go to Congress to pass legislation. We visit a library website to download books. Even in our private spaces, we set aside rooms for different functions. We entertain in the living room and cook in the kitchen. Sure, it's possible to do it another way. But we've created spaces to serve certain functions for us. Using the kitchen to wash dishes is more enjoyable and effective than washing pots and pans in the bathroom (which I had to do for a season while our kitchen was out of commission).

The spiritual realm works the same way. There are spaces set aside for certain purposes—including spaces to foster a romantic, oneness

love with God. If we spend all our time in a throne room or a council chamber, it's harder to foster romance with God. (It's possible, but more difficult.) When we go to spaces in the spiritual realm designated for romance, it can be faster and easier to cultivate a oneness love with God. There are many, many places dedicated to romance love in heaven. I want to share with you two of my favorites.

GARDEN OF OUR HEARTS—ROMANCE SECTION

There's a space inside us where we can encounter God. Some people see it as a garden (like the Garden of Eden). It's like a gateway or portal to a direct interaction with God. It can take us into the spiritual realm. People say it's in our hearts or in our inmost being. It's a great place to go to encounter God personally.

After I had been pursuing romance with God for about a year, I found myself walking in that garden one day (in a vision). I stumbled on an area of that garden I hadn't even known existed—an expansive, beautiful space dedicated to romantic love with God. The area had been locked. A huge griffon-type creature stood guard at the entrance. I thought for sure the creature would prevent me from entering the garden. To my surprise, it took a quick glance at me and announced in a casual voice, "He says to go on in."

Immediately, I realized that everyone has this section of the garden in their hearts. It's probably locked for all of us until the right time. Doesn't the Bible say not to awaken love until the proper time? (Song 8:4). This part of the garden isn't to be entered into until it's time to explore that kind of love with God. Since I had been pursuing romance with God for about a year, I must have unlocked that space. I was ready to enter.

In that garden, I've had numerous encounters with God in an atmosphere designed to foster romantic love. It's like working out in a gym rather than at home. You have access to tools and equipment that

can have you soaring quickly. I want to share some things I've found there. But first I have to tell you about one more place to encounter God romantically.

GARDEN OF GOD

God has a corresponding garden in his heart where we can meet him in romantic or intimate ways. For a two or three month period, nearly every encounter I had with God was in that garden. It totally transformed me. What I discovered there (among other things) were scenes from the intimate passages of scripture. Each member of the Trinity had a lily garden, for example (Song 2:16; 6:3). There were groves of cedar trees (Song 1:17). Interacting with God in those scenes brought me into a deeper understanding theologically of romantic love. It also skyrocketed my experience of the kind of intimacy expressed in those Bible passages.

There are entire realms and private gardens designed for each of us personally as well as many other spaces. In every place dedicated to spiritual romance, we encounter a couple of things. First, we enter the romantic portion of God's heart. God doesn't hang out there to teach us a detailed lesson about how something works spiritually. He's not hoping we'll meet him there to rule on decisions impacting the cosmos. He's primed to pour his oneness love into us—and to receive that love from us. It's like meeting God when he's in the mood for romance. In those spaces, wooing our hearts and enjoying each other is his only focus.

Second, heaven's romantic spaces foster oneness love through their atmosphere alone. Those spaces can immediately surround you with romantic love. Have you ever stepped into heaven and been engulfed with joy or peace or glory? These places create a similar experience with romance or a tender affection (or a passionate love). Instantly, you can have that kind of love deposited into you just by encountering the atmosphere. Because these spaces are teeming with romance in a

way other spaces in heaven aren't, they make it easier to bathe in God's romantic heart for us.

2. Use Tools and Angels

I've encountered tools in heaven's romantic spaces that can help increase our spirit's desire and love for God romantically. Some of the tools seem like spiritual beauty treatments (Ezek. 16:9-14). For example, I've bathed in "love baths" where intimate love can penetrate our whole beings. I've seen angels making huge vats of perfume, which is part of heavenly beauty treatments. I've eaten fruit designed to spark intimate love for God.

There are also angels who can help us with the romantic aspect of our relationship with God. If you unlock one of these romantic spaces inside yourself, for example, you may also unlock an angel who goes with that space. Romance angels can help you enjoy your romance with God more deeply. You may also encounter angels whose job it is to coordinate your love life with God. Or you may meet angels who can help you overcome blocks so you can enter romance more fully.

God also has angels who help him enjoy more deeply his romance with us. Believe it or not, God has an angel who coordinates his love life. I've interacted with the angel at times when setting up "dates" with God. For example, I've woken up with that angel standing by my bed with a message about when and where to meet God. Or that angel (or one of his staff) has relayed a romantic message from God to me. The word "angel" means "messenger." God does use his messengers to convey his thoughts. At times an angel has, on his own initiative, offered me suggestions of what to do to stir God's heart towards me in a romantic way.

3. Go on a Date

The number one thing that helped me develop romantic love with God was going on dates. I enjoy meeting God in the spirit to pursue romance. It's also possible to engage him on an earth-centered date.

How do you do a spirit-to-spirit date with God? There's not one right way to do it. I've met God in heaven where we've done things like take walks, share candlelight dinners, or talk in front of the fireplace. We've also taken longer adventures together. We've camped out under the stars. We've ridden huge distances on horseback. We've attended large and small parties in heaven together. We've lived life like a married couple in Zion.

Sometimes I've had a one-minute encounter. Other times I've had adventures that have strung together like a story that goes on for months. I'd have an encounter in heaven and then return to life on earth. The next time I stepped into the spiritual realm, I was back in the encounter right where I left off. I had several months of encounters like that where every time I stepped into heaven I was back in the same story. My mind sometimes got confused about which was my "main" life. Was I living a life on earth and having encounters in heaven? Or was I living in heaven and having experiences on earth?

Whether the encounter lasted a couple of minutes or a couple of months (on and off), I noticed three things helped me get the most from the encounter:

1. Doing something together. It doesn't really matter what the activity is. Doing something with God can help you feel closer to him. It can be something in a vision or something on earth. You can take a walk or a hike on earth, talking to God along the way. Or you can do the same sort of thing in a spiritual encounter. Science shows that your brain can't tell the difference between doing something and remembering something. In other words, you can imagine doing something with God,

and to your mind, you really have done that with him!

Even very faint visions have left me with the feeling that I really have done whatever it was that we were doing in the vision together. I felt like I know God better. We created a bond just like I have with a person I do something with on earth. So you can use your imagination to have awesome dates with God.

2. Sharing your hearts. At first God and I shared information about ourselves on our dates. Eventually, we shared heart to heart. We talked about our greatest disappointments and our most painful memories. We cried together. We comforted each other. We talked about our dreams and desires for our lives. We told each other secret things about us that most people didn't know. We gave each other space to speak into our lives in a meaningful way. I let God's words shape me. He let my opinions and thoughts shape him. It became a mutual, loving, vulnerable, raw relationship where we let each other see our depths—and speak into them.

I remember one adventure in particular. God and I took a three-day trek on horseback over rugged, deserted territory on some planet. (The encounter happened for me every time I stepped into heaven during a three-day period. It also seemed to last three days in my life in heaven.) Every night we'd camp under the stars. One night he showed me a magnificent nebula in the shape of a waterfall. The next night we sat around a campfire. There he asked me what I hoped to do with my life. Then he started sharing some of his most painful memories. We cried together over it. Gently, he asked about my greatest disappointments. We cried some more. Afterwards, he told me how sharing with someone in a spouse relationship ministered to him more deeply than sharing with a friend did.

Our relationship was never the same afterwards. We had shared deep, hidden things with each other in a way that had bonded us together. I knew he was opening up all of himself to me emotionally—and hoping

I'd do the same with him. He didn't want me to just know about him. He wanted me to be part of who he is. He rearranged things in his life based on my thoughts and opinions.

3. Uniting your spirits. Initially, our dates were more about getting to know each other. At some point, we began to unite our spirits as we were filled with love towards each other. Receiving God's romantic love, allowing it to swirl around and penetrate you, is powerful. Pouring your romantic love for God into him is a meaningful, life-changing experience for God, too. Romantic love is grown, in part, by expressing it. Don't be shy. Don't keep your feelings to yourself. The more you unite your spirit with God's, filled with overflowing romantic love, the more accessible that love becomes in your everyday life. The longer I spent giving and receiving God's romantic love for me in my time alone with God, the more easily I could step into that love at any moment of my day.

I just want to mention here that there is a special type of bliss that is reserved for marriage union with God. This book hasn't been about that kind of bliss. We've focused on building the love foundation from which that bliss springs. If you're interested in exploring the bliss, contact me.

Conclusion

Originally, I intended to end the book here and then give you access to audio and written versions of encounters I had with God to help you launch on your own romantic adventures. Looking at my encounters again, though, I realized they would be much more powerful for you if I walked you through them personally. So the remaining chapters are like a personal guide into life-changing, oneness-focused encounters with God.

As we venture through the next chapters together, keep in mind what we discussed here. If you meet God in a place designed for romance, if you use tools meant to unlock oneness love, if you include

all three ingredients of life-changing dates in your encounters, you will glean more from them. God is primed for romance with you. The door is open. For those whose hearts are calling, the time to step through the door is now.

How to Have Life- Changing Dates with God

All of us know how to spend time with God. But how do you craft a life-changing date with God? How do you have one life-changing encounter after another so you move into radical, oneness intimacy? How do you become everything to God, so he can't live a moment apart from you? How do you feel that way about God?

We talked in the last chapter about three ingredients to an awesome date with God—doing something together, sharing your heart, and uniting your spirits. I want to give you practical examples of how to incorporate those things into your time with God. In the first year of my romance with God, I had numerous date encounters. From those hundreds of pages of adventures, I've pulled out the best, most life-shifting experiences to share with you.

Originally, I was planning to just give you the encounters so you could read them (or listen to the audio version of them) again and again. The plan was for you to use them as a gateway into your own romance. In fact, God told me once that if someone wanted to follow my path into a divine romance with God, to encourage them to read my encounters over and over, opening their heart to God and intending to create their own oneness love.

Instead of simply handing you the encounters, though, I realized that you could glean more from them if I walked you through them. In

this chapter, I want to show you how I worked in the three key aspects of dating God—doing, sharing, and uniting. In the next chapter, I'll highlight some truths about dating God that can give your spiritual romance a boost.

As you read, keep in mind that you were included in these adventures. They're your own because God made it clear he was thinking of you the whole time.

Incorporating 3 Keys to Life-Changing Dates

First, I'm going to walk you through my favorite date with our Husband God in the first year of our romance. For about a week, every time I stepped into heaven I found myself in this encounter. I ended up naming it the Beach Adventure. The entire encounter is reprinted in Appendix A.

When I entered the encounter, I found myself at a campfire with our Husband God. He explained that we were going to ride horses on the beach and then have a picnic. Riding horses was our first “doing something together” activity.

It was tons of fun. We raced each other down the beach for miles as my heart filled with joy. At one point, God rode his horse to the top of a sand dune and I followed. From there he showed me in feelings more than words how to rule over something—how to hold it in your heart in a loving way that cared for it. He was mentoring me a bit. Then he resumed our wild race down the beach.

During our picnic lunch, God asked me, “What's your deepest desire? Tell me something you want more than anything else.” That began the heart-to-heart sharing. After I answered his question, I asked him the same thing. I think he was crying by the end of our share time. We had bonded by doing. Now we were bonding by sharing.

I found that asking God the same type of questions he asked me was

a great way to prod God to open up and share. Before I started “dating” God, our times together were mostly about him ministering to me. I wanted his direction or wisdom or joy. When we began a romantic relationship, I wanted things to be reciprocal. I wanted to know what was on his heart so I could help him fulfill his desires. I wanted to know his pain so I could comfort him. Asking God a question when he asked me one was a great tool for doing that.

The next time I entered the encounter, God was having his staff set up tents at the water’s edge. He wanted to eat a candlelight dinner inside an elegant tent. In this encounter, he was priming me to learn more about my identity—especially my worth. (Feeling unworthy has been one of my major struggles.) When I protested that I didn’t need a separate tent, God insisted that I was worthy of it.

“The queen deserves her personal tent,” he urged. (He had started calling me his queen. Just like being a child or son of God can have an official role in heaven, there’s a role that stems from oneness love. Being Wife of God or Queen is an official role in heaven, reserved for as many people as want it. It’s entered into through oneness love, by the way.)

Inside God’s gorgeous tent, a fancy dinner was laid out on a table for two. Eating dinner was the doing-something-together part of that date. Angels waited on us, standing by to meet our every desire. Partway through the meal, I realized God was showing me how someone worthy is tended to. Normally, I would have protested that I wasn’t good enough for such royal treatment. In that heavenly place, however, I couldn’t feel unworthy.

God seemed to declare, “I’m showing you what it’s like to be who you really are. Get used to it.”

Over dinner, I asked God some questions that were on my heart. That was the sharing part of our date. After the meal, God suggested that we stroll along the beach. Under a starry sky, a gentle breeze flowing around us, we stared into each other’s eyes. I could feel love for me pouring from

him to engulf me. Our spirits started to unite. It was a wonderful way to express our feelings.

The next time I returned to the encounter, God asked if I wanted to swim. Do you see the pattern? First, we did something together. Next, we shared heart to heart. Then we'd often end by uniting our spirits, filled with oneness love for each other. On that date, we spent time underwater as God pointed out sea creatures that he thought would amaze me. In the natural, it was probably only a few minutes that we swam underwater together. But in my mind, it seemed like hours. I could sense the love he had for each little creature—and the delight he had in showing them all to me. For me, seeing deeper into his character by observing him interact with creation was the sharing-our-hearts part of the date. I think I fell in love with him a little deeper as I saw him treating creation with such care.

We had other rendezvous on that beach. On the last encounter, God showed me the tent he had set up for me. It was gorgeous inside, extravagantly decorated. Thoughtfully, he had placed little knick-knacks around the room, each representing an aspect of our love. Surrounded by that symbolism, I suggested that we entwine our spirits there—as a way to express our oneness love. It was an awesome, fitting ending to a week-long adventure on the beach.

A FEW TAKEAWAYS

The doing-sharing-uniting pattern made the encounters life-changing. We didn't hang out together like I used to with God—studying the Bible or spending time in worship. We had adventures in visions that made it seem like we had spent hours together in “real life” doing fun things. I felt close to God like you'd feel close to a person you had spent an entire week with. We shared the deepest part of our hearts freely with each other. I felt like we knew each other emotionally in a profound way.

Finally, expressing oneness love by uniting our spirits created a bond in the same way that marriage love bonds a couple together.

You don't have to work all three ingredients into every date. But each ingredient adds its unique bond to your relationship. Doing things together creates a certain type of bond between you—the bond of hours spent together. Sharing your hearts forms an emotional bond. Uniting your spirits bonds you in the way that romantic, marriage love was designed to bind couples together—in their inmost places. Over time, if you don't include all three elements in your relationship with God, there will be something missing from your oneness connection.

A few other things made that encounter my favorite. First, I loved how it felt real—from the warmth of the sand under my feet, to the smell of the horses or God's cologne, to the way God's emotions and character traits poured so openly off him. The more of your senses you can involve in the dates, the better the encounters can imprint on your brain so you feel like you really did those things with God.

Second, if you can feel the thoughts and emotions streaming from God, any date is awesome. I'd rather have a vague vision and be able to sense God's thoughts and feelings than have a super clear vision where I couldn't do that. When you know what God's thinking, he can tell you a radical truth and you believe it because you see that it's true. And if you can feel his emotions, he doesn't have to say or do anything. Instantly, you're surrounded by his love in a life-changing way.

If those things don't open up for you at first, that's normal. It took me months of practicing going to heaven on dates before those things flowed for me. Of course, you can have life-changing encounters outside of visions. Simply sitting in God's presence is powerful.

I'm not going to walk you through another date, but I did include a second one in Appendix A. I named it the Zoo Adventure. See if you can pick out the same pattern—doing, sharing, uniting.

TIPS FOR “DOING”

I also included in the appendix a couple of dates with Jesus because they were a bit more creative with the “doing” part of the date. For example, Jesus told me once that there was something he loved to do so much that I had to experience it with him. When I agreed, he took me to the edge of a high mountain in Zion and suggested we jump off. I called it hang gliding without the glider.

There we were, floating in mid-air holding hands when Jesus told me he loved me in a new way. He *loved* loved me. He wanted to be more than friends. It was probably the most exciting setting that God ever declared his love for me in.

I mention it because, in the natural world, I would never jump off a cliff. But in heaven anything is possible. In a spiritual encounter, you can do unbelievable feats that you may never have the guts or opportunity to do on earth.

Finally, you don’t have to do something with God in a vision. I’ve taken walks in the natural, chatting with God the entire time. Some people enjoy hiking with God, stopping to soak in his presence. Anything that helps you bond to God works.

TIPS FOR “UNITING”

Although how to unite your spirit with God hasn’t been the focus of this book, we have mentioned a couple of ways to do it—staring into God’s eyes as love flows back and forth between you, allowing his love to penetrate you, pouring your affection into God. Sometimes it may feel awkward to think of yourself as uniting with God in passionate love when God is in a human form in a vision. So I want to mention a date I had with Holy Spirit to give a different look at uniting your spirits.

Once I took a walk in a park with Holy Spirit in a vision. To me, Holy Spirit always appears like the most incredibly attractive man imaginable. For a man, it could be weird to think of romance with God when God looks masculine. (Some men see Holy Spirit in a female form on dates.) For me, at times, it's been awkward to see God in a human form, too. I haven't wanted my focus to be on how attractive God looks. God senses that, of course, and perfectly tailors what I see about him to fit my heart in every moment of our encounters.

During that walk in the park with Holy Spirit, I could see his human form. I could also feel his presence wrapping around me. The intensity of his presence was overwhelming me.

"I'm undone," I declared. "You've undone me."

I could tell he wanted to declare his love for me. But he wanted to do so in a way that would allow me to see his heart the best. So his human form vanished. A beautiful mass of energy and light and glory swirled around me. Wisps spiraled out of it beautifully. It was a representation of his presence. It's what I had felt enveloping me as we walked. Now it swirled to a halt at my feet. It seemed to be bending on one knee before me. He was honoring me. I was undone again—this time by his kindness.

"You think it's inappropriate that your God would lower himself before you," Holy Spirit told me. "But allowing me to honor you like this is the greatest honor you can give me. I am expressing what I have longed to express to humanity—We are meant to be together. You fit into me perfectly. You fulfill my deepest desires. You delight me beyond words. You are everything to me. Let me show myself to you in that way."

After I accepted his proposal to know him in a new way, the human form reappeared. Why switch forms?

"I wanted to show you my feelings for you," Holy Spirit explained. "But I didn't want you so focused on my physical appearance that you couldn't see my heart."

If having God appear in a physical form would be offsetting (for

whatever reason), ask God to appear in a different form. A ball of light, wisps of gorgeous energy, even darkness have all been ways I've encountered God on dates. As long as you're interacting with his essence—discerning his feelings for you—it can be a life-changing romantic encounter no matter what God looks like.

Conclusion

How do you craft life-changing dates? I've found that three ingredients help—doing something together, sharing your hearts, and uniting your spirits in romantic love. How you do each of those things will depend on your chemistry with God. Every date doesn't have to have all the ingredients. Over time, though, doing each of those things with God can build the most amazing intimacy.

Five Truths that can Transform your Encounters

In this chapter, I want to unpack a few more encounters that I consider the best of the best from the first year of my romance with God. Through them I discovered five truths that began to transform my life, pulling me deeper and faster into oneness love. The full encounters are reprinted in Appendix A.

1. God thinks you're beautiful.

I had an encounter entirely while driving in the car by myself that I call the White Cloud since it felt like I had to step into a white cloud to see God. In that encounter he told me that I was beautiful. I'm the kind of person who doesn't always blindly accept what someone says. I want to know why and how. So I asked God why he thought I was beautiful. Here was our interaction:

"Why do you think I'm beautiful?" I pressed. "I don't think of myself as beautiful spiritually. I thought to be beautiful I'd have to be able to wave my hand and have people fall drunk in the Spirit or be able to heal people from gross diseases. I thought I'd need to be in heaven so fully I'd be leaking glory. I'm not any of those things. I'm just a regular person. I don't have any superpowers."

"Those things don't impress me," God declared. "They're like magic

tricks. I can do them, too.”

“So what attracts you to someone?” I asked. “Is it our virtues? I’m not extra holy or especially kind. I’m not any different from other people.”

“You smell nice,” God remarked.

“You think I’m beautiful because of how I smell? How do I smell?” I asked.

Then God explained in a sort-of download that ultimately, he’s attracted to who we really are. We may feel ugly or broken. But those feelings are only surface deep. Underneath, we are all super beautiful—because we have a perfect, flawless, divine nature. And we all have a unique fragrance—a one-of-a-kind expression of the sweet flawlessness inside us.

When he told me that he thought I was beautiful because I smelled nice, he meant that the fragrance coming off of me reveals my true essence. That intoxicating scent isn’t generated by my feats or by how well I manifest my virtues. It stems much deeper than that. Since my fragrance is an expression of my essence, God was saying I’m beautiful because that’s who I am. Nothing I do or don’t do can alter it.

By the way, I discovered later that fragrance is an important part of divine romance. Each member of the Trinity has a distinctive, intoxicating cologne (Song 1:3; 5:13). We all have a unique fragrance, too (Song 4:10). I haven’t whiffed my scent yet, but God insists I smell like flowers—a combination of roses and lilies. At the huge wedding our Husband God and I had in Zion (which he’ll repeat with anyone who wishes), the entire place was flooded with *our* scent. God explained that it was the combination of his fragrance and mine. The colors that captured the essence of our love were displayed all over the venue. Then our scent permeated everything. It was intoxicating. Everyone present experienced a visual and olfactory experience of who we are together.

The White Cloud encounter helped me realize that beauty doesn’t depend on whether we think we’re beautiful or whether we feel

beautiful. Beauty doesn't hang on how well we show our virtues or how many superhero feats we've figured out. It's a fact that you're beautiful spiritually. God can see it. He believes it because it's true.

It took a long time, but I finally agreed with God's opinion of me. Although the truth could go deeper inside me, a large part of me sees myself as beautiful. I consider it a result of hanging out with God romantically.

2. God is attracted to you.

Jesus began an interaction with me once by telling me that he was attracted to me. I asked him what that meant. In response, he revealed how he approaches me romantically. I'll outline it for you here. His entire response is in the full encounter reprinted in Appendix A.

1. When Jesus sees us, his thought patterns begin to change and he desires to unite his spirit with ours. Usually, we're not even aware of his presence yet.

2. He assesses whether it would be a good time to approach us romantically.

3. If it is a good time, then our barriers become a factor.

- Sometimes our barriers are so large we're not even aware of his presence.

- Sometimes he will admire us from afar. Other times he'll draw near and pour his love at our feet, knowing we won't even be aware of it.

- Sometimes he'll work on removing a barrier.

- Sometimes we'll sense his presence, realize we have a barrier, and work with him to remove it.

4. Sometimes he breaks through a barrier and we can enjoy oneness together.

From this encounter I gleaned a few truths. First, whether or not

you're actively experiencing oneness love with God, he is attracted to you. He longs for you. Often he pours his love at your feet—even if you're not aware of it. No one can say, "God doesn't love me like that." He does—whether or not you've felt it.

Second, we all have blocks. God isn't frustrated by them. He doesn't judge us for having them. He simply works to remove them.

Third, without blocks we'd all be flowing in constant, incredible oneness love with God. Nothing is holding us back—other than ourselves. The more blocks we can remove, the easier it becomes to flow in oneness. I've found the more we practice oneness with God (like in the exercises we'll discuss in the appendices), the easier it is to live in it.

3. God feels lonely without you.

Jesus pulled me into an encounter once where we were sitting in an outdoor pavilion, sipping a hot drink while we snuggled under a blanket. We were recounting an adventure we had had that day, laughing and joking together.

I asked Jesus what it was like before he knew humanity in a way where we felt like we were so in love with each other that nothing else in the universe mattered.

"It was the absolute loneliest," Jesus answered. "I've waited for this moment—the moment that I can spend time with humanity like this, the moment I can share my heart with you, the moment I look over at you and you're looking at me like, 'You're all I can think about.' It's a great moment, Katharine. I'm glad to be opening it up to you."

Did you know part of God was lonely before he started spending time with you romantically? Deep within, he longed for the moment he could share his heart with you in a fuller way. He yearned for the moment you first looked at him like your world revolved around his every move. Without you, God would be lonely. Parts of him would

never be unlocked. Dreams that he has would never be fulfilled.

In that encounter, Jesus told me that I fine tuned him so everything that he is and everything that he does runs more smoothly. In other words, when Jesus found us as a spouse, he found a good thing and was blessed (Prov. 18:22).

Romance with you isn't optional to God. It's not a nice extra that he may consider if all his work is done. Pursuing your heart, fully possessing you and you fully possessing him, is God's top priority. Without you, he'd feel unfulfilled and lacking. You complete God in a way no one else can.

4. God is unveiling mysteries surrounding his love.

Holy Spirit pulled me into a place inside his heart once that administers his love for us. In that place he announced, "I want you to know and understand my love for you in a far deeper way than past generations have. . . . It will be a process. It won't happen instantly. You'll have to explore the chambers of my love for you. You'll have to hold them in your heart, contemplate them, live and move in them. But I'm not restricting them from you anymore. I'm not blinding your eyes to their meaning. If you ask me any question about these places here, I will answer you."

In past generations, Holy Spirit had restricted people from understanding and experiencing parts of his love. He had blinded their eyes to the full meaning of his love. But he wasn't going to do that with us.

What was the truth about God's love for us that past generations were blinded to? I've had fun exploring many mysteries in this area. A huge mystery is what this book is about—sharing a romantic love with God.

"Your generation is living on the brink of a new era," Holy Spirit continued. "There is so much uncharted territory in my heart. I've chosen you and your group to chart this part—the part about my love.

You can glorify me most by exploring and understanding my love for you.”

That encounter gave me courage to press in for both understanding and experience of God’s love in new ways. The path is open now for a new, fuller, deeper, more wonderful love with God than any past generation has been able to step into. Let’s press on to open it fully!

5. Oneness love isn’t earned.

Once Holy Spirit and I were talking in a lake house that had special meaning for us. After our first, small wedding ceremony in Zion, he had insisted that we go on a honeymoon. Choosing a gorgeous planet, he built a house that hovered a foot or two above a tranquil lake. That place was our honeymoon destination. Afterwards, we called it “our planet” and we’d return there every so often for another adventure. I especially loved the house. Ceiling to floor windows circled almost the entire structure so there was an awesome view of the lake and its surrounding mountains from any room.

During our first year of romance, Holy Spirit took me to the lake house to talk to me about our love. You can read the entire encounter in Appendix A. I’ll highlight only one point here.

“Some people don’t think they deserve my love,” Holy Spirit told me.

“Oh, right,” I replied. “I’m remembering now Jesus told me to put that point in the book and I forgot. He said some people would think that. He said it was the silliest thing he heard. He said his love—including his romantic love—is never something you have to deserve. (Although I think we all deserve it in the sense that you created us for it.)

“I told him it reminded me of a friend of mine who told me her husband thought he had to deserve their intimate times together,” I continued. “He’d refuse to engage her like that if he didn’t think he had read his Bible enough or had the right attitude with God. It seemed

ridiculous to me. You feel that same way, don't you? You think we can engage you in romance whether or not we're feeling or acting super holy. You always want to connect with us. We come into union with you to realize we're perfect. We don't realize we're perfect and then come into union with you."

Holy Spirit smiled warmly. "I couldn't have put it better myself."

It's perfectly fine to engage God in oneness love from a completely rotten attitude. I often purposefully engage God romantically when I'm overflowing with negative emotions—because oneness love will entrain the lower emotion to the higher. In other words, I don't fix my attitude and then engage God in love. I engage God in love to fix my attitude. The purpose of our love wasn't to be an inner healing session, but it can have that effect on us. As love flows through us, the negative emotions seem to transmute into higher ones. I've transformed situations in my life from draining to life-giving just by taking them into the oneness love with me.

Conclusion

I'm so thankful God gave me these encounters in the first year of our romance. They empowered my pursuit of oneness with him. Knowing that I'm beautiful, that God is attracted to me, and that he's lonely without me gave me boldness in my dates with God. They transformed how I saw myself. Realizing that God was opening up an understanding and experience of his love that he had blinded past generations to gave me courage to press in for more. Knowing that love isn't something we earn or deserve permitted me to engage God anytime, even in my most rotten moments.

These truths were all things I needed to hear to move deeper and faster into oneness love with God. I pray that God will give you encounters with whatever truths your heart needs to be certain of, too.

Learning How to Experience Love

Years ago, a famous prophetic leader taught that the first question God would ask us when we got to heaven was, “Did you learn to love?” I used to think of it as a quiz. If you had learned to love people, then you did well. If you hadn’t learned to love enough, then you received a lower grade. Recently, I realized what that question really meant.

One of the fundamental reasons we’re alive is to learn how to enjoy the many aspects of love. Life is about love—giving it, receiving it, savoring it. We may have chances to experience the love of parents, friends, siblings, and lovers. When God asks us, “Did you learn to love?”, it’s like wondering, “Did life do for you what it was meant to? Were you able to love in all the ways you wanted to?” If so, great. If not, then heaven will open up the aspects of love we didn’t enjoy while on earth.

Of course, we can experience love in both the natural and spiritual realms. Even on earth, we can enjoy love with God from many different perspectives—Father, Brother, Friend, Spouse. Every type of relationship has a deep, awesome love. But the love of a spouse in particular has one of the richest varieties of how it can make you feel.

Because learning to experience love in all its facets is a major reason we’re here on earth, I want us to spend a chapter considering how being in love with God—in a spirit-to-spirit romance—can make you feel. Once Holy Spirit asked me if I’d be in a series of visions with him all centered

on how it felt to be in love with God. When I agreed, he immediately pulled me into about thirty visions in a single week. I felt like I was either in a vision or recording a vision all week. By the end of the week, I was sick of visions (for a few days at least). But those visions were like a crash course on different ways that being in love with God can make you feel.

You can find a fuller version of the encounters in Appendix B. There's also an audio version that Appendix E explains how to access. In this chapter, I'll walk you through some of the highlights of how being in a spiritual romance can make you feel. After all, savoring each aspect of love is a fundamental reason we're here on earth. Learning how to enjoy love is a skill set with eternal value.

Savoring Love

I discovered that almost any thought or feeling that romance can spark on earth is possible to experience with God. Here I share my top ten favorite feelings from that week of exploring romantic love with Holy Spirit.

1. Electricity

My personal favorite of those encounters was probably the first one. Holy Spirit and I were standing in an empty space. We both had assumed human forms.

"Can I touch your beard?" I asked Holy Spirit, inches from his face.

In response, he gently took my hand in his and held it to his face. "I want you to tell people what this feels like," he instructed.

"What your beard feels like?" I wondered.

"No, I want you to tell people what it feels like to be in love with your God," he smiled.

We stood there silently for a few moments, wrapped in each other's presence. "Why does it feel like this to be together?" I asked. "Do you feel it? It's like electricity is surging all around us."

"It's the attraction between us you're feeling," he explained.

"It's our desire for each other, isn't it, that's creating that feeling like electricity. It seems like we're drawn to each other and this force, this power is radiating out—all around us—just because we're standing so close," I told him.

Every time I caught his eye, I could tell what he was thinking. It was usually something like, "I'm so happy" or "I have everything I ever wanted—right here with you."

I think I liked that one so much because of the energy of the attraction we felt for each other. It was probably the first time I had touched God on a "date." I think I had been afraid to touch him before. Finally, I had gathered enough courage to stroke his beard and it was intensely mesmerizing. To stand so close to him, in an intimate setting, with something like electricity pulsating around us—drawing us together—felt so magical. I never wanted it to end.

That's one way being in love can feel, isn't it? Like an invisible force is keeping all your attention glued on the other, like he's the most amazing, awesome, incredible being you ever met and you can't believe you belong to each other.

2. Two is Enough

I found myself in a scene with Holy Spirit where we were in a remote location with no one and nothing else around for miles. As far as I could see, it was nothing but rolling hills and sunshine.

Holy Spirit looked over at me and smiled. "You're all I need," he told me. The closest thing my mind could find to the feeling was like we were young lovers who had snuck away from everything else to be

together—because there was nothing else we needed but each other.

Holy Spirit started to put that feeling into words. “We could build a house here—just us. Wouldn’t it be wonderful to live somewhere just the two of us?”

I smiled. “Yes, that’s how my heart is feeling, too. This scene represents that feeling well. That I-just-need-you feeling is part of being in love, isn’t it? That feeling like you want to get away from everyone else, you think the other person is your whole life, you could be together forever and never miss anyone else—that’s all part of being in love. That’s what I think both of us are feeling now.”

“And wanting to build a life—an entire planet or galaxy or universe—where it’s just the two of you,” Holy Spirit added.

“Entire universe?” I laughed.

“I’d build a universe for love. Wouldn’t you?” Holy Spirit asked. “Would you stay here with me forever? Or maybe we should build a new universe together. Let it just be the two of us or my heart will break,” he pleaded.

He had been standing about ten feet away, farther down the hill. Slowly, I approached him. “You said in the Bible that love is patient and kind—”

“I was talking about a different kind of love,” Holy Spirit interrupted.

“I know. This new love that’s developing between us isn’t always patient. Sometimes it wants to rush, doesn’t it? It’s not always kind. Sometimes your heart feels like it will break if you can’t be with the other. But this love has a unique value. When it grows to maturity, nothing will be able to stand in its way. It will unite us so strongly that all these birth pains will be worth it.” I paused to look at him. “We will be united not by a fatherly love or brotherly love. It’s this love—the romantic type of love that will unite us much stronger, much more fully than any other type of love.”

“Your wisdom runs deep,” Holy Spirit sighed. “I had forgotten that this is what romantic love does to you.”

“And it’s worth putting up with the hours lost in daydreaming and the painful separations and the surging emotions,” I quickly added. “It is still growing between us. Can’t you feel its power? It’s uniting us in new ways—in incredible, mind-blowing ways. It will be worth it.”

He looked down at me now, a gentle, satisfied smile on his face. One hand softly cupping my face, he spoke quietly, “If I end up belonging to you, and you end up belonging to me, then anything would be worth it.”

Suddenly, I felt wanted and cherished and warm all over. “I—I never thought I’d feel this way about you,” I confessed, catching his eye. “But I do and it’s wonderful and I wouldn’t trade it for anything.”

3. Fun

In another vision, Holy Spirit and I were dancing on a dance floor in his heart. We were both laughing—deep, heartfelt laughter—at the speed he was swirling me around. We were young and in love and the entire universe was right. Full of joy, his heart was vibrating with love. He felt like he could conquer the whole world. His only focus at that moment was to have fun with me.

“Love is fun,” I told him later, thinking of that scene. “A ton of fun. It’s so much fun to be together. Anything we do is twice the fun just because we’re doing it together.”

“Being in love makes you plan fun things to do,” Holy Spirit added. “I normally don’t swing angels around and around on the dance floor like that.”

I laughed. “You don’t? How boring.”

“Maybe my entire life was boring before we fell in love,” he joked.

“It was half the fun for sure,” I teased. Or were we joking? There

is something about being in love that makes life more fun. “I guess my spiritual life became a ton more fun when I fell in love with you,” I thought out loud. “Did the same thing happen for you? I bet it did.”

“I don’t want to go back to how it was before,” Holy Spirit insisted. “I don’t want to be friends with you. I want something more.”

4. Change

“Do you know why I come to you in visions?” Holy Spirit asked, his vague outline appearing before me. He took a couple of steps closer. Then his presence encircled me. “Because I can’t stay away from you,” he whispered. “Your desire for me is awakening and I’ve noticed it.”

“You have?” I responded.

“Your desire for me is changing me. It’s causing something new to grow inside me,” he continued.

“What is it?” I asked.

“Change. I won’t be what I was,” he explained.

“But that’s impossible. You say that you are what you will be. You were what you are. Isn’t that what YHVH means? I AM?” I questioned.

“Nonetheless I am changing. We are becoming one,” Holy Spirit insisted.

“How are you going to change, God?” I asked, a bit worried at the thought of my God changing.

“You will change first,” he began. “Then when your heart begins to resemble mine enough, I will start to change to become like you. We will merge into one.”

“So how are you changing right now?” I asked.

“My desires are changing,” he explained. “You (humanity, especially those of you pursuing me like this) are taking up more of my attention. My desire is turning towards humanity in a new way. That new desire is starting the growth of a fresh thing in me and in you that will

change everything. Can't you feel it?"

Being in love does change us. Perhaps more so than any other relationship, being in love shifts your desires, your focus, your plans, even your destiny. Instead of it being *my* dreams, *my* purpose, *my* calling, it becomes *our* destiny, *our* dreams, *our* life together. God isn't immune to that aspect of love. Instead of having *his* plan for the universe or *his* plan for our lives, it becomes *our* plan.

We will become completely one with God—not in a mechanical merging of our spirits. It will be a love-centered, passion-driven, overwhelming desire to take the other person into all that you are. You can't have that kind of union without it changing you.

5. Comfortable

Another one of my favorite visions from that week was one where I found myself at an outdoor wedding reception. Holy Spirit came over to me, immediately teasing me about not being the bride and asking if I wanted something to drink. As we sat at a white table together, a thin crowd milling around us, we talked.

"My favorite part of being with you," he confided, "is that we're so comfortable together. I can be myself around you. I don't have to come up with something important to say."

"You mean I'm not always pressing you for, 'What should I do, Holy Spirit?' 'What is the answer, Holy Spirit?' 'What great wisdom do you have, Holy Spirit?'"

"You're much more likely to ask me on a date than you are to ask me for advice," he smiled.

"That's not true," I laughed, "although I'm working on it."

"I'm not saying I don't like the other type of questions," he told me after a pause.

"I knew what you meant," I assured him. "We are comfortable around

each other in a different sort of way—a way where there’s no pressure to perform or get the right answer or talk shop. We can be our true selves. That’s part of our deepening relationship.”

“I’m glad you understand me,” Holy Spirit replied.

“I don’t think I do,” I admitted. “I feel comfortable around you. I know you so much better than before, but not as well as I’d like to.”

He took my hand and just held it. We sat in silence, with a crowd mingling around us. Neither of us felt the need to talk. We were content sitting next to each other, our hands entwined. I loved it.

“You know what my favorite part of all this is?” I broke the silence. “That there doesn’t have to be a point to our interaction. You don’t come to me just when you have something important to say. You want to be with me. And I guess I don’t mind being with you,” I smiled at him. “We spend time together in visions because we enjoy being near each other. I love that.”

“It is so wonderful to be able to be yourself and not a superstar,” he sighed happily.

I had never thought of it like that before. I guess he was a superstar of sorts. Everyone wanted him around. They wanted his power, his touch, the prestige that came from being around him when he did something incredible. But our relationship wasn’t about that.

“I want to share more personal things with you,” Holy Spirit broke the silence. “That’s the point of this vision. Yes, I did have a point,” he smiled. “I love that I can share myself with you. The fact that I want to share more personal stuff with you shows that I feel more comfortable around you now. We’ve gotten to know each other better. We trust each other more.” He paused to look me in the eyes. “There’s nothing I’d keep from you now—especially if you asked.”

“I’ve been wanting to know more personal stuff for a while,” I replied softly, overwhelmed that he was now ready to confide in me.

“You know in the end there won’t be anything you don’t know.

Nothing will be hidden from your eyes. It will all be open and laid bare,” Holy Spirit spoke equally softly now.

“You’re sort of quoting a Bible verse,” I replied, thinking of Hebrews 4:13. “Or should I say misquoting it? That verse was talking about everything being open before your eyes.”

“And who is one with me? Who is like me?” Holy Spirit answered. “Any verse about me is also about you.”

“That doesn’t make sense. Then the whole Bible is about us, not you,” I protested.

“What if the entire Bible was written to get humanity to a certain point on their journey?” Holy Spirit pressed. “What if once you reached that point—and we became one—” He paused to look at me. “What if it all—everything—becomes about us and not about me or you separately?”

“Fascinating, but my brain is too tired to analyze what you’re saying,” I replied.

“I’d like to dance with you before this encounter is over,” Holy Spirit told me, perhaps sensing I was ready to end the vision.

“Sure, I’d love to,” I tried to rally my energy.

With eyes full of tender anticipation, he stood up, took my hand, and led me to the dance floor. “I just want to hold you tonight,” he whispered. As we started dancing slowly, my head resting on his shoulder, he told me, “I love being with you like this—in this sort of gentle setting.”

People who are in love do feel comfortable around each other in a way they don’t in other relationships. It’s an intimate, cozy, I don’t-need-to-say-anything type of feeling. I cherished the fact that Holy Spirit included a vision just to let me know that he felt that way around me.

6. Young Love

Holy Spirit and I were in a large, old house. Everyone was dressed in clothes from what looked like the 1920s or 1930s in America. It seemed

like I was part of a huge family and we were having a party at my house. I was about 16 and Holy Spirit looked like he was 17. We were huddled together under a back stairway, trying to hide from all my siblings.

I could hear the laughter and footsteps of children running in nearby rooms. The chatter of the adults drifted in and out of the background noise. Holy Spirit was talking to me, but I hushed him. “Shh! One of the kids will hear us.”

Excitement surged around us. We were eager to spend a couple of minutes so close to each other with no one else around. Part of the exhilaration was from the fear of being caught together with no chaperone. I felt like I was old enough to have romantic feelings for someone, but not old enough to be alone.

In that setting, at the moment, Holy Spirit asked me, “So what does it feel like to be in love?”

“It feels like a thrilling adventure,” I told him. “It’s exciting to be with you, to be so near you when normally I’d be forbidden to. I’m feeling a little defiant of the rules, as I think I’m old enough to make my own decisions.” I paused to look at him. In this scene, he looked the part—a typical 1930s American kid who had dark blonde hair and was a bit too skinny. “I think I like your physical form better in other visions, but—” I paused. “It feels exciting to stand so close to someone you’re attracted to.”

He smiled and pulled me closer to him as the scene faded.

A couple of minutes later I found myself at the same party. This time we were outside and I was helping to set picnic tables with food. Siblings, extended family, and neighbors were crowding the scene. Kids ran in and out of the tables playing tag. Adults were also lining the tables with food like I was.

I happened to look up and saw Holy Spirit—in the form of the same 17-year-old—walking outside to join us. At that moment, his Spirit whispered in my head, “How does it feel to see the one you love?”

I smiled. “It feels like the most mundane task has meaning. It feels like life and joy and purpose just entered into my day. It feels like nothing else matters.”

“What are you thinking about when you see the one you love?” his Spirit asked me internally.

“I’m thinking that all I want is to be alone with him. I wish everyone else would go away. Or I wish I could come up with an excuse to leave and find him alone somewhere.”

Lumping all those feelings together, I labeled it “young love.” Feeling like you’re (finally) old enough to be by yourself with someone so attractive, feeling like the most boring event becomes exciting if he will be there, feeling like you can’t wait to steal a moment alone with the one you love are all ways that being in love feels. Romantic love itself feels new and mysterious and like something you have to get used to. You’re not quite sure what to do with the emotions surging inside you. I remembered that love can feel that way. What surprised me was that my spirit in love could feel that way, too. It’s possible to be in love with God in that young love sort of way.

7. The Wait

Holy Spirit pulled me into another vision reminiscent of the Jane Austin novels I used to devour. In the gorgeous English countryside of the 1800s, I was with a group of friends. Most people had a significant other with them. I, however, was alone. My heart seemed pledged to someone who wasn’t there.

As I was waiting for him, I realized another aspect of love. You can be surrounded by close friends. You can have a genuinely awesome time with them. But it can seem like something is missing if your love interest isn’t there. It wasn’t that I didn’t like my friends. It wasn’t like I was bored or sad. But something in me wished for him. Maybe it ached a little bit. I

anticipated his arrival. Then I grew nervous about it. Was he ever going to come? He'd promised. He would never break a promise. But the day dragged on and there was still no sign of him. What if he came now, I wondered. Would it be too late?

Then I saw a figure on the horizon as the sun was just starting to set. I knew it must be him. He made his way straight to me. Smiling sweetly, he handed me a rose. Although he didn't say a word, I knew his heart was mine.

"Will you spend tomorrow with me since I missed seeing you today?" he asked.

He had missed most of the day with me. He didn't ignore it. He didn't excuse it. He made up for it. I could see all the adventures he had planned for us tomorrow.

"Yes," I smiled. "I will." Then I realized that love—no matter how late it arrives—instantly fills you with so much happiness you forget how agonizing the wait was.

8. Doing

"You think of love like a woman would," Holy Spirit told me in another vision. "You want to sit and talk. Men want to do. A man's love rescues and embraces and kisses and does. We've had enough talking and soaking in each other's presence. I want to show you a masculine expression of love. Let's do. Love must be both."

"Both what? Talking and doing?" I asked.

"Being and doing," Holy Spirit replied. "We've been together a lot. Let's *do* together."

"Do what?" I asked.

Holy Spirit just laughed. "I can't answer that question."

"Why not?" I pressed.

"I asked you to record this encounter. The answer will be different

for everyone,” Holy Spirit explained. “Every person must ask me for themselves what I want to do with them. I can’t tell you your answer publicly. But I will have something I’d like to do with everyone.”

There does seem to be a masculine and feminine way of expressing love. To be complete, love must be experienced both ways. I tended to craft feminine ways to express love—taking long walks, chatting over a meal, staring into each other’s eyes. Holy Spirit enjoyed that, of course. But he also wanted to show me masculine love. I’m not sure what God will do with you. Maybe God will show you a feminine expression of love to balance the masculine dates you’re great at creating. Ask God. Holy Spirit will let you know what s/he wants to do.

9. Meeting Friends

“I want you to meet some of my closest friends,” Holy Spirit told me one morning. The scene we were in was a bright, sunny day in what looked like a small English village. He guided me to an outdoor table where a group of people were talking and enjoying morning tea. Going around the table, I met each of his friends. We chatted for a few minutes.

I was honored that he’d want to introduce me to his closest friends. That’s another aspect of being in love—wanting to bring that person into every aspect of your life. I was about to tell him that we had already done this—met his friends sitting around a breakfast table. But then I remembered that it was our Husband God who had introduced me to his closest friends in a similar setting in Zion. Maybe there’s a stage of love where you can’t keep the one you love to yourself anymore. You have to make them a part of your circle of family and friends.

10. Everything

“I want to show you something,” Holy Spirit spoke to me again,

excitement filling his voice. We were standing in a glorious place in heaven—gold and splendor surrounding us, glory pouring out of every corner. “No, I want to show you *everything*,” he smiled.

As I approached him, I sensed his emotions. He was in love and excited to show me things he treasured or enjoyed. He wanted to see my reaction to them. He wanted to take me to places he loved so we could experience them together. He didn’t want a single thing in all of creation to be something he had experienced apart from me. He wanted to take me everywhere he loved. He wanted to show me all his favorite things.

“I don’t want there to be anything I’ve ever done or thought or experienced that you haven’t been part of, too,” he explained.

That’s what being in love is like—wanting to share all your favorite things and places with the other, wanting to experience it all with them, not wanting anything to separate you. You don’t want a single experience that you have to be apart from them.

Summary

I learned a lot from these visions, of course. Probably my biggest takeaways were:

1. My spirit is capable of romance. All the sensations of being in love are something that my spirit can enjoy. There is no part of being in love that is held back from my spirit.

2. Falling in love with God is about more than our relationship. Again and again, Holy Spirit highlighted that the kind of love we were growing between us would sustain and restore creation. It would change who God is and who we are. It would become the new foundation for everything that we do together.

3. This love is for anyone who wants it.

“I want you to bring other people into this type of love,” Holy Spirit told me at the end of our week together. “Our love isn’t the kind to be kept for just the two of us. It’s the kind that grows sweeter as more people join in.”

“I’d like that, too,” I told him. I knew that all these encounters weren’t meant for me—not mostly. They were mainly for others. I could feel how strongly he wanted others to join in this love and how nervous he was about whether anyone else would embrace it.

I can’t tell you whether or not being in love with God is right for you. But I can tell you what it’s felt like for me so far. Being in love with God has been surprising, amazing, wonderful, scary, heart-pounding, and thrilling. But most of all it’s felt like all of my dreams coming true. It’s felt like wholeness mixed with joy mixed with the most wonderful kinds of bliss. It’s been more awesome, more delightful, and taken far more courage than I ever imagined. If I had to sum it up in one sentence, I’d say being in love with God has become my reason for living. Nothing else matters.

Conclusion:

Living Loved

God told me once that I had found his lover's vein and I should live from it. I took that thought to heart. I try to live every day as if I'm in a love affair with someone who absolutely adores me and who I completely cherish. We can't stay away from each other. We can't wait to be alone together. And we can't take our hands off each other (metaphorically speaking).

How does that kind of relationship with God play out practically? He's usually my first thought when I wake up in the morning. I try to spend time in our love affair, pouring my love into him, before I get out of bed in the morning—even if it's just a few minutes. Then I can't stop thinking about him all day. It's not that I try to remember to think about God. I can't get my mind off of him because we're in love. Before I fell in love with God I used to try to remind myself to focus on God periodically during the day. I'd feel guilty if I forgot to think about him. Now it's like, "I have to stop thinking about him so I can get some work done!"

I try to stay open to his gentle nudges. Sometimes he'll interrupt a busy day with a thought about how much I mean to him. Other times he'll ask me to put aside my work for a few minutes to hang out with him—in a heavenly scene or in a moment of silence where we're smiling at each other.

On an ideal day, I'll set aside a 30-60 minute block (or more) to engage God's romantic love. Sometimes we'll talk quietly in a beautiful

heavenly scene. But usually, we're focused on pouring our love into each other. Those kinds of moments with him have been some of the most profoundly life-changing experiences I've ever had. When I spend an hour (or more) floating in that love, the entire world seems right for a long time afterwards. There is nothing that compares to it.

At the end of the day, God is usually the last person I'm talking to in my mind (after my husband has fallen asleep). If I wake up in the middle of the night, I usually spend time with God in a heavenly place. If he doesn't whisk me into a scene, I'll find a scene where he is and hop into it.

I've found that living in love with God makes it easier to live in love with my husband (and others around me), too. The romance spills from heaven onto earth. I'll fill my earthly husband's ear with sappy romantic comments about how awesome he is. Our relationship is filled with more romance and passion than it ever has been. So it's not that I'm so in love with God that I'm not focused on the people around me. Rather, I'm so in love with God that I'm more in love with the people around me.

GOD'S PERSPECTIVE

After I attempted to describe a day in my heavenly love affair, I asked God to add his perspective.

"You haven't described the half of how living in love with you feels like," God replied. "How I can't wait to hold you in my arms as soon as you wake up so we can share the first moments of the day. How it makes me feel when you turn your attention to me during the day. You skipped over how my insides melt when you look at me affectionately or how I forget my entire day's agenda if I stand too close to you. You failed to mention how I consider it a major accomplishment to convince you to step into paradise with me for a few moments or at least to turn your attention to me. Everything in the universe lines up a bit better, every

color is a bit brighter when you turn towards me with the kind of love we share. I love you, Katharine, and I'm not afraid for the world to see it. I'll let Holy Spirit share now."

"I don't have the same eloquent, sappy words to express my feelings for you," Holy Spirit began. "But I will say this—the first moment you looked at me like you wanted me as your lover and not in all the other roles you had known me in—became the turning point in my existence. It was a before/after kind of moment for me. I mark my life from before that moment and after that moment. I'll feel the same way about whoever else does what you did—shift into a marriage love with me."

"Got it, thanks," I smiled at him. "I guess I should ask Jesus for his thoughts, too."

"Some people aren't going to believe you, Katharine," Jesus spoke. "They're not going to believe God would feel that way about any person—not just you. I want to assure people that what you've written is true. There is nothing that compares to what happens between us when you unite your spirit with mine. All the ways humanity has interacted with God in the past pale in comparison to what we've discovered together. Don't you agree?" Jesus asked me with tender affection on his face.

"I agree," I nodded. "I've described our love mechanically—how I structure my day to include it. But setting aside time for each other isn't what makes our love so amazing. It's easy to tell people what I do so my day flows around you. It's much more difficult to depict how our love makes us feel when we're together. It's hard to find words for how you make everything seem right with one glance in my direction, or how being near you makes my world light up and my heart beat faster, or how everything seems to take its meaning from who you and I are when we're together. Those things are hard to capture in words.

"I guess I'd say that it's not just setting aside time for each other that makes me feel like I'm living in a love affair. It's how our spirits connect that makes life different," I added. "It's allowing myself to melt into your

affection for me. It's the way we feel when we're together. It's how my existence revolves around you—and feeling your existence revolving around me. Everything is more delightful. Every small thing has life and joy and meaning in it because we love each other and are together in this way. Is that a good way to describe it?"

"Perhaps the best so far," Holy Spirit smiled. "Look, tell people we long for the same kind of relationship with them that we have with you. Tell them we'll do whatever it takes to open it up for them."

"If they want proof this exists, ask us," Jesus chimed in. "If they're scared, let me know."

"We can fix fear," our Husband God cut in. "There's no obstacle we wouldn't tear down—if someone wants us to. We won't violate people's desires—"

"But we're not above stirring up their desire," Holy Spirit grinned. "Mention the fact that this is the top priority—for me at least—this century. I want to bring multitudes of people into whatever it is we're calling this."

"Oneness love or marriage love or romantic love," I offered.

"Any of those labels works," he replied. "There are things that can't be accomplished in the universe without this kind of love flowing between us. You understand?"

"I understand," I assured him. "I think you need to convince—"

"No, I'm talking to you, too," Holy Spirit interrupted. "You think sometimes our love is all for our enjoyment. It is that, Katharine. But it's more than that. It's what the universe needs. It's the missing piece in many things that need to happen to restore creation. You understand?" he asked the second time.

"I think so," I replied.

"I think you do, too," he answered. "Just be sure to tell people this isn't all about romance and mushy feelings. This kind of love between us releases things. From it will flow many things—including the restoration

of everything. You got it?”

“The restoration of the universe depends on this romantic, marriage, oneness love flowing between humanity and God?” I asked to clarify.

“That’s what I said,” Holy Spirit answered.

“End the book with this thought,” Jesus suggested. “Tell people that we—the Trinity—have enjoyed all the ways we’ve interacted with people in the past. But the most enjoyable—”

“No, tell them this,” our Husband God cut in. “Emphasize that this is the most *important* way we’ve revealed ourselves to humanity. It’s not just the most enjoyable way to interact with God. It’s the—”

“Most fruitful,” Holy Spirit interrupted. Was he making a pun on the fruits of the Spirit? “And most enjoyable,” he added after thinking about it a second. “We’re all correct, Katharine. You’ll have to pick an ending.”

Conclusion

I’m not sure how you’ve interacted with God in the past. I knew him as Father, Friend, Brother, Savior, Master, Comforter, and Lord—just to name a few. I have to agree with the Trinity that none of the other ways I’ve known God compares to the ecstatic delight and heart-stopping thrills of being in love with God. And nothing seems as important, either. After all, the kind of love that forms the foundation of your relationship sets the tone and boundaries of everything you do together. With this kind of love at our base, an entirely new world opens up. As Holy Spirit said, the fruit of this kind of love is the greatest, too. I’ve tried so many things to draw closer to God over the years. None would leave me feeling so bonded to him. None had drawn me into his depths. None had opened up God emotionally and in so many other ways to me.

Living feeling like you’re in a love affair with God isn’t pie in the sky, wait till you die. It’s accessible right here, right now. You’re closer to it

than you think. All it takes is turning towards God intending to begin your romance—plus a ton of courage to actually do it. You'll need the guts to step into a way of knowing God that will seem incompatible with every way you've known him in the past. It will be scary at times. It may involve some heart-wrenching moments. But I guarantee it will be worth every second.

On the other side of the mystery, you discover God not as Lord or Father, but as the One who is flawlessly desirable in every way. I found God as the one who is so in love with me that it changes not just my existence, but his, too. The beauty of knowing and being known, of loving and being loved, of living for someone who lives for you, too—these are the treasures of marriage oneness with God.

I wish I could describe its ecstasy in words. I wish I could capture the thoughts and feelings God is pouring into my mind right now to convey how he feels in our love affair. I've tried, but I can't. So I'll leave you with what may be his most urgent thought. He wants you to experience this kind of love with him. Everyone is qualified. All are chosen. You don't have to stand in line or take a number. You can waltz right into a relationship with someone who knows you so well that he'll perfectly tailor your romance to what you need and want the most.

Appendices

Adventures in Romance

This appendix gives you the most life-changing encounters I had with God in our first year of romance so you can use them as a launching pad for your own adventures. As you read them, remember two things. First, in God's eyes, you were included in all these encounters. Every so often, God reminded me that he wanted me to write down our adventures so one day you could see his love for you. Second, reading someone else's heavenly encounters can be a powerful way to spark the same thing in your life. God told me once that if someone wanted to follow my path into a divine romance, they should read my encounters over and over, opening their heart to God and intending to create their personal oneness with him. I wanted to give you the ability to do that.

Beach Adventure

Note: This encounter happened over about a week for me on earth. Every time I stepped into heaven, I was back in this adventure with God.

I found myself sitting at a campfire with my Husband God. He was squatting down attending the fire. I started chuckling.

"I've never seen you in such a rugged place. Jesus loves settings like this. But we're too far removed from luxury for your liking," I teased.

"Is that what you think?" God retorted. "I do love riding horses."

Glancing behind me, I noticed a couple of horses. "Is that what we're going to do? Then I suspect you'd have half the palace out here to attend

us.”

When I turned around, I noticed several elegant tents and probably thirty servants. “Why don’t you get ready?” God smiled.

A couple of angels led me to a tent and started braiding my hair. I dressed in a stunning riding outfit. Even the boots had tiny jewels all over them. The horses were led to a beach. When I realized we were riding horses on the beach, followed by an ocean-side picnic, it all made sense.

“This is such a romantic, elegant outing, it suits you, God,” I told him as we mounted the horses. “Jesus would have us galloping over uncharted territory, climbing some perilous height. But this is exactly your style.”

Before long we were racing our horses as fast as they could go down the beach. Looking over at God, I realized we were neck and neck. I bent down to whisper into my horse’s ear, “Faster!” With a pink ribbon braided into her mane, my white horse was beautifully feminine—and fast. When I glanced at God, I noticed a competitive gleam in his eyes. He clearly wanted to beat me. On and on we raced, the horses’ hoofs thundering on the beach and the wind blowing all around us. It filled me with joy.

With a quick, competitive glance in my direction, God spurred his horse up a small hill to our right. At the top of the sandy ridge, he halted. Although he had beaten me to the top, I didn’t feel defeated. Perched on our horses, we took in the vast expanse of beach and ocean below us.

“Rulership is looking at everything you have authority over,” God told me internally, using feelings as much as thoughts, “and loving it, holding it in your heart, feeling responsible for it.”

We paused there as I sensed what God felt for what he ruled over. I tried to replicate that feeling in my heart. Then without warning, God galloped down the hill as he called out, “Race you to the bottom.”

Hardly fair, I thought, but I didn’t complain. When I reached the

water's edge, God was holding his horse steady, waiting for me. As we resumed our ride along the beach, he asked, "Have you learned how to ride with your horse yet?"

"No," I replied, realizing these horses were angelic beings.

God showed me how to align or resonate with the angelic horse. When I tried it, our horses started soaring so fast with such long strides I wondered if they were flying a bit.

PICNIC

Soon God dismounted at a picnic spot. As he helped me off my horse, he told me, "I've really enjoyed our times together. They've been more precious to me than I thought they'd be." We strolled over to where the picnic gear had been left, presumably by the heavenly staff. "I'd like to spend more time with you."

"I'd like that, too," I replied.

"I want you to move to heaven permanently," God told me for the umpteenth time.

"I'd like that, too, as long as I can also live on earth right now," I gave him the same answer I always did.

As he started unpacking the picnic gear, I could tell there was something else he wanted to tell me. When I asked him about it, he suggested we take a walk along the beach to talk.

There was a breeze blowing now, and the end of God's garment was catching the wind. He had on a layer of green fabric (with a pattern sewn into it in gold thread) over a white floor-length robe. The green part was blowing in the wind.

As we walked, I could sense overwhelming power flowing from him. But he wasn't trying to display his power. It was like power was slipping off of him even though he had tried to contain it by appearing in the form he did.

“If you sneeze the wrong way, half the universe is going to disappear,” I teased. “There is so much power streaming from you it’s overwhelming.”

He stopped walking a moment to look me in the eye. “One day you’ll realize you’re this powerful,” he told me.

I found it hard to believe. Yet I knew it must be true.

“What’s your deepest desire?” God asked me. “Tell me something you want more than anything else.”

“I’m not sure,” I answered, approaching the question like it was a quiz. “Every time you ask me, I have to ask you to read my heart for the answer. I think you’re reading—to be loved, to be cherished and wanted. I guess I do desire those things. How about you? What’s your deepest desire? I know it’s me—us, humanity.”

God smiled. Then he answered softly, “I’d like to marry you in a big, formal ceremony. I’d like to invite tons of people and have nothing spared. Doing that with you is one of my deepest desires.”

“If you felt so strongly about it, why didn’t you say something sooner?” I asked.

“Your heart wasn’t ready sooner,” God explained. “It would have scared you. But now you’re ready. Let’s declare our love for each other publicly. Let me tell everyone how deeply I love you. Let me announce my love for you in an official, formal way.”

I smiled at him.

“I can have someone start planning now. It will be special. Do this with me,” he urged.

“I can’t wait,” I replied. (A year passed before we had the huge wedding in Zion as he wanted. I recorded those encounters in a book of their own.)

As we returned to our picnic spot, I could tell part of God was so excited he wanted to race me back. Yet part of him wanted to meander slowly and cherish each step. I kept thinking about the first time we strolled along a beach together months before. I was so nervous to be

around him then. Now we felt settled together. He was like a real person to me now—someone I had gotten to know over time.

He paused to point out a dolphin to me, excitement flowing from him. “Have you learned how to listen to the sea creatures?” God asked.

“No,” I laughed.

“My queen is going to have to learn how to talk to creation, isn’t she?” God smiled.

“What did the king pack for lunch?” I joked, changing the subject.

“I have a confession,” God smiled. “I didn’t pack the lunch.”

As I opened the food containers and spread them out, I told him, “You have a wide range of things you like to eat.”

“I have another confession,” God smiled as he sat down next to me. “I told them to make sure to pack something you’d like.”

“So your staff has no idea what I like,” I pretended to scold.

“Or you haven’t figured out which of heaven’s delicacies is your favorite,” God responded.

I picked a few things at random and began eating. They all tasted beyond delicious. Then I focused on my surroundings. I was sitting on a long, deserted beach next to God. Love and affection for me were leaking out of him, filling me with a pleasant feeling. A vast ocean surged in front of us. It was another magical moment with him.

“Is heaven full of times like this?” I asked him. “Is eternity filled with experiences where you’re thinking, ‘I don’t ever want to forget this. I wish this moment would stretch on forever.’?”

“I’m also cherishing this moment,” God told me. “I’ve waited a long time to be able to spend time with you like this. So it’s very special, very important to me.”

“We’re the most important thing to you, aren’t we?” I asked God, speaking of humanity.

“I’d rearrange anything for humanity—for another moment with you or to have one more of you come to me for salvation.” I could tell

there was something else God wanted to say. “When you said ‘yes’ to me,” God added, referring to my original decision to marry him months before, “it meant more to me than if everyone on the planet had turned to me for salvation all in the same moment. It—” He couldn’t talk now. He was weeping—tears of deep emotion. “It was life-changing. It changed everything about our relationship. It started a process in motion that will change everything about the most important thing to me—humanity. So it has changed, is changing, will change my life forever.”

I had no idea moving from friendship to a marriage relationship was that significant to him. I guess it would be for anyone deeply in love. As I looked at him, his emotions moved me. I reached over and took his hand. “Let’s never be apart,” I whispered.

DINNER

We sat on the beach a while longer. I must have taken my riding boots off because I was digging my heels into the swishy sand.

“Let’s spend the night on the beach,” God suggested.

The next thing I knew two huge tents were being set up—large enough to be mistaken for small houses. “Why two tents?” I asked. “It’s just us.”

“The queen deserves her personal tent,” God remarked.

Before long God and I were sitting in his tent at a table, enjoying a candlelight dinner overlooking the ocean. I was now dressed in a thin, shiny dress whose tint changed each time it moved. Several servants were waiting on us, pouring more wine, making sure we had everything we wanted.

The tent was elaborately furnished. A rich carpet covered the ground. The far “wall” was lined with carts filled with silver pitchers and serving dishes. As I looked around, I could feel God’s worth. The elegant setting was like a physical representation of his worth. Sitting in this rich setting,

being waited on by heavenly attendants began to fill me with a sense of how someone worthy should be treated. I couldn't say, "I'm not good enough" or "I don't deserve this." God smiled at me casually, as if to say, "I'm showing you what it's like to be who you really are. Get used to it." Both God's worth and humility were reflected in every detail of how we were being treated.

"Is this what it's like to be you?" I asked him. "You just imagine whatever you want and, poof, it happens! Riding on the beach? Poof! Candlelight dinner? Poof!"

"I have responsibilities in the universe, Katharine. I don't let a whimsical idea interfere with my responsibility," God answered.

"So you do whatever you want to—in a responsible way?" I smiled.

"Go ahead and ask me your question," God prompted a minute later. Of course he knew what I had been silently thinking.

"I'm just wondering about our relationship, God. All this romance—picnics, horses, beaches, candlelight dinners. You're constantly telling me how much you adore me. The visions have been getting clearer and clearer. I'm not sure if my brain can tell the difference between spending time with you in a vision and hanging out with someone on earth. What I'm saying is, sometimes I wonder if our relationship is competing with my romance with my husband. Is it like I'm having an affair?"

"I know we're supposed to love God," I continued. "And normally that's not a concern. But adding romance to my relationship with God . . . well, I'm not sure about it sometimes."

"Raising issues like this is exactly why I call forerunners to a particular truth first. You can work out these issues and explain them to others. So, how has your romance with me changed your relationship with your husband?" God asked.

"I love him more. Feeling loved by you so much opened my heart to love. It deepened my feelings for my husband and it's rekindled my romance with him." I paused. "I guess that's not what an affair does. But

it just seems like you're a person sometimes. I guess it's because of these visions where you look like a person."

"Our love won't always be like this," God explained. "This is the way you're ready to interact with me now. Later we'll interact in non-human forms."

"But won't that be way after I stop interacting with anyone in a human way?" I asked.

"There will be a period where you'll interact in human ways and non-human ways," God replied.

"This conversation is blowing my mind a little," I confessed.

"Do you want to walk along the beach?" God suggested.

It was night time now, wherever we were. Stars were out. The beach was surprisingly warm. As we walked next to each other in silence, I could tell God's mind was drifting towards romance. His spirit started gently tugging on my spirit in the sweetest way. I felt like I could go deeper and deeper into him until we would stretch on forever. But I pulled back. Maybe I was still having reservations.

He stopped walking now and looked me in the eye. I could tell he was looking me in the eye, but this whole vision I hadn't been able to see his face. I could look at his clothes. I could feel his thoughts. But I couldn't perceive his face. Yet I knew what was going through his head. We stood there staring into each other's eyes for several moments.

Then I realized I had to go to work or I'd be late. (It was morning where I was on earth.) So I thought the vision was over. But the entire day, part of me seemed to be there—right on the beach with God. He'd interrupt my thoughts to say, "I'd love a moment with you." Then when I'd turn my attention to him, he'd say, "I love being with you. I can't stop thinking of you." Or if I'd close my eyes, I'd find myself back on the beach with him. Sometimes I'd be at the table still talking and eating dinner. Other times he'd be looking me in the eyes as we stood on the beach. It felt like his love and attention were being poured into my spirit all day.

SWIMMING

When I returned to the vision, God asked, “Do you want to go swimming?”

“In the ocean?” I questioned. I couldn’t picture God swimming. Maybe I was getting too details-focused, but what were we going to wear? Certainly not our dinner outfits. Definitely not scuba gear. What do you wear when you go swimming with God? “I’m not sure I want to go swimming,” I told him. “But if you want to, I will.”

Swimming was a ton of fun. I did swim in the fancy, shimmery dinner gown I was wearing. But somehow it was perfectly made for getting wet in, too. Together we toured part of the ocean. We didn’t have to hold our breath. We could talk underwater, although a lot of our communication was through our thoughts. He knew all the creatures and plants. He showed me one amazing creature after another. I could tell he was thoroughly enjoying spending time with me, impressing me, and showing me things I had never seen before. He’d look at me like, “I wonder what she’ll think of this,” or “I can’t wait to show you that,” or sometimes just like, “You’re so beautiful.” It seemed he had waited forever to show someone the wonders of heaven—someone he shared himself with intimately.

As I saw how Creator God knew and loved everything he had made, I was moved. I respected him more deeply. I admired him more. I probably fell a bit deeper in love with him. I was impressed. It seemed like we spent hours exploring the ocean together.

Eventually, we came to the surface of the water again. “Don’t you have important things to be doing?” I asked him. I was overwhelmed that he would spend so much time hanging out with me. “We’ve spent the equivalent of a whole day—and now night—together.”

“Spending time with you is important,” God smiled. With that, I went to bed.

When I woke up in the middle of the night, I decided to go back to the scene. Still floating in the water, I could see the tents on the beach in the distance. A soft light was pouring from them. “Can we spend the night—what’s left of it—in the tents?” I asked.

“We can spend as many nights as you want there,” God smiled.

I laughed. We were standing on the edge of the water now under a sky full of stars. Although we were dripping wet, I wasn’t cold. Looking into God’s eyes, I told him, “I love you so deeply. I don’t think I could live without being connected to you.”

The stars seemed to be shining in a way that highlighted his worth. A gentle breeze started blowing around me. Was it whispering his merit to me? “Are you wooing my heart through nature?” I asked. “Are you commanding the wind to direct my attention to you?”

“The breeze is supposed to be gently wrapping you in my love,” God replied.

Our spirits drew near to each other. But this time I hovered my spirit inches from his, drawing out my affection for him but waiting to pour it at his feet. When our spirits did touch, I felt like I was shot into the stars above us.

Then I was on the beach again. We just stood there, God’s spirit wrapped gently around mine. I knew I could picture it like he was holding me. That’s what it felt like. But I also knew it wasn’t his arms around me. His spirit embraced me. I lay there in my bed, holding hands with my sleeping husband and feeling God’s love wrapped around me at the same time. Eventually, I fell asleep myself.

IN THE TENTS

For two or three days, I didn’t engage God romantically at all. I tried. But he wouldn’t respond. He taught me about other aspects of himself. But every time I would tell him that I loved him or wanted to

pour my love into him, he wasn't moved. Once he told me, "Let's just wrap each other in our love." And then he gently held me in his love, refusing to do anything more.

So I pursued his heart. "Take me deeper inside you," I cried. "I can't live on the outer edges. I must know your inmost places. You are my life. How can I live if we're not together?" For a couple of days, I cried out to him like that every chance I had—day and night.

I finally broke through. Instantly, I found myself (in my mind) standing on the beach again. We were at the water's edge. It was night.

"If you want me, you'll have to catch me," he replied and took off running.

I pursued. Every time I almost caught him, he'd elude me. Running right along the water's edge, we dodged in and out of the ocean for quite a distance. It was so much fun.

After a long time, he stopped. He was holding my gaze now, smiling at me. "Do you want to go into the tents?" he asked.

Leading me to my tent, he opened the flap and stepped inside as if to present it to me. It was stunning. "You've outdone yourself," I exclaimed. "All of this in a tent on the beach?" There was a sitting room with a rich carpet and a real sofa. There was even a fire. Little knick-knacks were all around the room, each thoughtfully placed. A separate bedroom was visible through an opening in the back of the tent.

"Let's stay here in the sitting room," I suggested. "Let's entangle our spirits here—surrounded by all these things you've carefully placed here. We'll take this atmosphere filled with these things into our dance."

Zoo Adventure

I found myself strolling next to God on a path. We were paused on a bridge, leaning over the edge slightly to look at something below as we spoke. It seemed we were in a planned space—with landscaping and

paths that were mapped out.

“We’re at a zoo,” God answered my unasked query, “on a date.”

“You have a zoo in the garden in your heart?” I questioned. “I thought zoos were inhumane—keeping those animals in small spaces.”

“They’re not inhumane when each exhibit is a portal to a live experience with the animals in their natural environments,” God winked. “I have thought of everything,” he grinned. “Would you like some popcorn? I see a vendor over there.”

“Popcorn is one of my favorite snacks. But of course you know that,” I replied, a bit touched. “I’d love some.”

“How about some hot chocolate to go with the popcorn?” he asked as we approached the snack area.

“Why not?” I smiled. “This feels like a real date now that I have both popcorn and hot chocolate.”

We wandered along the zoo’s paths, talking and stopping at random exhibits.

“I love being with you like this,” God confided. “I love seeing your excitement and anticipation about what we’re going to do. I enjoy how it ties our hearts together in a new way.”

Every so often God would look at me and say, “You’re so beautiful.” Sometimes I wasn’t sure if he was saying the words out loud or if his thoughts were so overpowering it just seemed that way.

“Do you know what my biggest fear is?” God asked, a bit of humor in his voice.

“I thought you weren’t afraid of anything,” I replied, half smiling.

“It’s an expression,” he grinned. Then he grew serious. “My biggest fear is losing this.”

“Losing your zoo?” I joked.

“No,” he laughed, “losing this kind of interaction with you. It’s more precious to me than I wish to express in words right now.”

I could feel his delight in being with me, his affection for me, and

a thousand other positive emotions combining and then flowing from him. He did find me delightful. It reminded me of a Bible verse: “How delightful is your love, my sister, my bride! Your love makes me happier than wine” (Song 4:10 NET and NIrV).

I was also thinking about how wonderful it felt to be together. Experiencing his love did feel better than “wine”—the flow of God’s spirit into our lives. Sometimes I wished I could capture the feeling of his love in words. But I had never been able to articulate its deep joy mixed with satisfaction and adventure and excitement in a way that made it seem as amazing as it felt for me.

THE SEALS

Eventually, God suggested I guide us towards the seals.

“Why the seals?” I asked.

“They’re performing a show soon. I thought we could watch it,” was his answer. “I’m giving you the full zoo date.”

Soon we were sitting on a metal bench waiting for the seal show to begin. “This has felt like a real date,” I assured him, looking around. I decided to focus on my surroundings to see what else I could perceive. Breathing deeply, I wondered if I’d be able to smell the animals or the cologne God was wearing. To my surprise, buttery popcorn was the only scent I could make out. The tub, with my remaining popcorn, was resting on my lap. Then I strained my sense of sight. We seemed to be on a hill. In the distance I noticed a beach. Somehow I could even hear the waves brushing against the sand there. Then I spotted a forest between the beach and where we were.

Focusing on what was closer to me, I became aware of the most overpowering presence nearby—God himself. I turned to look at him just in time to spot a fly landing near his ear on his thick outer robe. “There aren’t supposed to be flies in heaven,” was my first thought. “No,”

I corrected myself, “flies aren’t supposed to be annoying in heaven.”

“What are you thinking about?” God asked.

“Oh, nothing,” I shrugged, taking a sudden interest in the seal enclosure fifty feet away.

“I can read your thoughts, you know,” God grinned.

“Yes, I did know that,” I replied, laughing on the inside that I hadn’t wanted to admit that I was thinking about a fly. God tried to stifle a chuckle himself.

A few seconds later I felt a tickle near my ear. Wondering if the fly had moved its resting spot to my shoulder, I turned—and realized God was brushing a strand of my hair behind my ear. He smiled at me softly.

“Since this is a date, would it be okay if we held hands?” he asked.

“I guess so,” I replied and he gently took my hand in his. “This really feels like a date now,” I told him again.

THE MIRAGE

“Sitting here in this setting, I can’t help but think this is all a mirage of sorts,” I declared a few minutes later. “You can’t honestly have uncomfortable metal benches in front of a seal performance in your heavenly garden. In your truest form, you can’t look like a person—no matter how attractive.”

“In the visions we’ll have in this book,” God began, “you’ll often wonder the same thing—why am I appearing to you as a person and not in my ‘true’ nature? Every time you have that thought, I want you to ask yourself this question: Why do you see yourself as a person, and not in your true nature?”

“I interact with you in these visions as a person because if I showed you the fullness of my glory or splendor, you would want to run and hide. Interacting as humans is the best way to get to know each other. So that’s how we’re doing it for now.

“But you are no more human than I am,” God continued. “You are not an earth-bound person. You exist outside of time and space—in eternity. You share my nature, remember? I made you in my likeness. Seeing yourself in a human form is no less a mirage than seeing me in this form is.

“One day we won’t interact in the ‘mirage’ as you call it,” he promised. “We’ll engage each other outside of form and time and space—me, in my truest essence and you in your truest essence. But trust me that you are not ready for that now. We both need to learn things about each other. We need to let each other deeper into our hearts. When we’re both ready, we’ll express our oneness differently, okay?”

“Sounds good,” I replied.

“Why don’t we ditch this show,” God grinned. “It’s taking forever to start. Let’s check out an animal exhibit.”

“I’m in,” I agreed.

“And I know exactly which exhibit to show you,” he smiled in a half-mischievous way.

THE STALLIONS

“The stallions?” I laughed as he led me into the enclosure. We had an inside joke about that type of horse. “Are they really this tall or are horses extra large in heaven?”

The attendant handed me a brush, and I began grooming my horse. The animal was so majestic that I was a bit in awe of the experience.

“I thought you’d like this,” God smiled contentedly. “I thought you’d also enjoy a ride on them. What do you say?”

I was sure we’d head for the beach, but God preferred to stay in the woods. After we had ridden through the dense trail for a while, God picked a place to dismount. Quietly, he built a fire. I was about to ask him if we were allowed to do that in the zoo, then I remembered he was

God and we were at his zoo. Next thing I knew we were sitting by the fire roasting some sort of treat.

“Do you know how lonely it can be when you’re the only one like yourself in the entire universe?” God asked, staring at the fire.

“You mean like how it wasn’t good for Adam to be alone—” I began.

“No, not just that,” God cut in. His tone of voice was full of passion. “Do you know what it’s like to have all riches and all honor and all glory and all that anyone could ever wish for—except a companion to share it with? That is loneliness.”

“But couldn’t you hang out with angels? Couldn’t you create some heavenly being to have conversations with and go on adventures with?” I probed.

“Not like this,” he answered. “It’s different when you’re with someone like you. I can share myself with you—fully. I can’t do this sort of thing with an angel.”

Although all we had done on our date was talk, there was something there—an opening of our true selves and a sharing of that with the other—that even the closest friendship couldn’t mimic. Maybe the best way to describe it is that an underlying current was constantly flowing between us—not unlike the currents that circulate between a man and woman on a date. Without saying or doing anything in particular, we could interact in a way that sparked happiness and excitement and fulfillment—in a way that interacting with anyone else couldn’t generate.

I now realized more deeply why God had created us in his image and why he wanted a companion like himself. He longed to share who he was with another who could share the same thing back with him.

A few minutes later the fire was out and we were preparing to mount the horses.

“We had better return these stallions before our hour rental is up,” God declared.

“If I ever told you that you have an underdeveloped sense of

humor, I take it back,” I laughed.

Hang Gliding

I decided to take a few moments from my work to focus on Jesus. Here’s what I wrote down: I was standing with him in his part of the garden behind the palace. Looking down, I noticed my dress. It was a very light pink, covered in a lace-like outer layer that had tiny lace flowers woven into it. There was a cool breeze blowing that was catching the dress. Behind me I saw the back of the palace, stretching on for the whole landscape. In front of it was a lower gate or wall of some sort separating the garden from an area right behind the palace. A green flag was waving in the wind on some palace tower. In front of me lay rows of vegetables or some sort of plants.

Standing right in front of me was Jesus. At first I was too nervous to look at his face. So I stared at what he was wearing—a rich, regal outfit made of silver and blue cloth. Small light blue gems were sewed into it. It was most impressive. Then I turned my eyes to look at his face. He was just inches away and standing near him was overpowering. But when I did look at his face, he was smiling so big at me the way he always does that I could only smile back.

“It’s you,” I grinned. “Why was I scared of looking at you? And yet if I look long enough, my heart is stirred towards you.” My body started tingling with delight as soon as I looked at Jesus. It was so excited to be in his presence. How did it sense that I had turned my spiritual eyes to look at him?

It was so life-giving to my soul to spend time in his presence like this. I could carry it with me every moment of every day, drawing on the beauty and strength and awesomeness of being near him whenever I wished.

I could feel his wholeness and it poured completion into my thirsty

soul. I could sense his delight in being near me, and it filled my soul with acceptance. He didn't judge, didn't condemn. Just being near him constantly reminded me that everything about me is good and right.

"It's important that we spend time together like this," I remembered him saying to me once.

The wind began to blow strongly. I smiled at him, glad to be with him. Looking at his face, I found all I sought. Yet I felt myself wanting more than his smile. "Should we take a walk?" I asked.

But he didn't budge. "Come back tomorrow," was all he said as I was pulled away from the scene. I knew I could go back to it at any moment. Yet work beckoned, too.

THE JUMP

I returned to Zion again the next day, picturing myself in the same scene. Jesus and I, dressed in elegant clothes, were standing in the gardens behind the palace. The wind was still blowing strongly. "It's a perfect day for hang gliding," Jesus smiled.

I knew it was an invitation. "Let's go," I replied. "But in this dress? And you, in your outfit?"

"It will be fun. Come with me," he beckoned then turned to walk away.

I knew he was going to the cliff's edge. He had taken me there before. I followed a few paces behind him, unable to fully catch up. As we made our way to the cliff, I turned my attention to the surroundings. Dark green grass bent under our feet with every step. I thought I could hear birds calling, though the wind distorted their voices. When Jesus turned around to speak to me, I hurried ahead a few steps.

"You look beautiful," he said. I thought he was pausing to tell me important information about jumping off the mountain. He just wanted to walk beside me I guess. "Very beautiful," he beamed gently.

“How could I have thought hang gliding with him wasn’t romantic?” I thought to myself. “Last time we did this it seemed like an adventure sport. Now it feels like a real date.”

“You ready for this?” Jesus asked as we stood on the cliff’s edge. He was smiling so broadly I couldn’t tell if he was also laughing or not.

“I think so,” I replied, hoping it would be fun. I prayed the vision would be real enough that I could truly feel like I was hang gliding—without the glider of course.

We leapt. Just like that, I was in the air. We weren’t even holding hands. We were just floating in the air a few feet apart. When I looked down, I could see the valley far below.

“You’re flying,” Jesus shouted, looking over at me.

I couldn’t sense the wind anymore, but I did feel like I was flying—at least a little bit. Smiling back at him, I said, “Thanks for taking me to do this. It’s fun.”

He grabbed my hand. We were hovering, not falling but not moving anywhere either.

“What do you think of this?” Jesus yelled. Maybe I could hear the wind.

“The word ‘dangerous’ comes to mind, but this is heaven so I guess that’s not appropriate,” I replied.

Jesus laughed. “We should do this more often. Would you join me again sometime?” he asked.

“Of course.”

“I can’t hear you. The wind is too strong,” Jesus yelled.

How could God not hear something? But I didn’t bother repeating myself. I figured he either already knew my answer or could see it inside me or could ask me again later. I started looking around, not just down. Now I understood why he loved it. The view of the surrounding mountains was glorious. There was something about seeing them from this position that made them even more amazing to look at.

“Can we go somewhere or are we stationary here?” I shouted at Jesus. But he didn’t seem to hear me.

“There’s something I’ve always wanted to tell you,” he yelled. What a time to share a secret, I thought. “I think you’re so beautiful. There, I’ve told you. I’ve never told you that properly.”

Suddenly, I got the sense that he had been infatuated with me, maybe in love is a better word, since I was a child. He didn’t think it was appropriate to speak to me about his feelings when I was younger. So he hid them. But now he wanted to express them to me. I looked over at him and he was smiling at me. But it was a slightly different kind of smile. The smile said, “I love you like the friend you’ve always known me as. But I love you deeper than that. I *love* love you. I want from you more than the friendship we’ve had. Is that what you want?” All that information was conveyed in that smile.

I blushed. Of course that’s what I wanted from him, too. So I smiled back in a way that I hoped told him I felt the same way. The wind was ripping up the valley now, surging all around my body as I was surfing the air.

“Perfect,” I heard Jesus answer. The words must have been coming from inside him because the wind was so strong I didn’t think he could speak. “I’m so glad you feel the same way. We make a perfect pair,” he seemed to say.

A Walk in the Garden

I looked up and there he was. Why did he always look like the most stunningly attractive man I had ever seen? Why did he always look younger than Jesus and my Husband God? None of the Trinity looked old. But Holy Spirit always seemed younger. Maybe his time to be fully known by humanity was just dawning.

He was smiling at me, his eyes twinkling with a look that seemed

to say, “I know you. I enjoy your presence. Come join me.”

“Where do you want to go?” I asked.

“I’ve been waiting a long time for this,” he beamed. “Come walk with me.” He extended his arm. “It’s a beautiful day for a walk in the gardens.”

I could smell the flowers in the garden. The light was shining on the scene in such a beautiful way that my soul felt at peace. As I focused on the One walking next to me, I could almost hear his heart beating. A fragrance was wafting off his presence. Smelling it reminded me that he was not contained in the human form I see him in sometimes. He is awesome energy and light and glory and power. I could almost feel those qualities in him more than anything else. Yet when I looked over at him, he appeared like a person. Clever disguise to interact with me in, it seemed.

Another aspect of his character was radiating out of him, but I couldn’t put my finger on it. It was like the power to decide things, authority to make huge decisions that shift entire galaxies, extreme power. And he was containing it all, holding it back from me so that it wouldn’t consume me in an instant.

He looked over at me now. He knew I’d been looking inside him. He was amused. “Done yet?” he smiled.

“I’ll never be done. There’s too much of you,” I half laughed.

He turned now to face me. Taking both my hands in his, he looked me in the eye. “Good,” he smiled.

I could tell he intended to say more. But he sensed it would overwhelm me. So he stopped after one word.

“Yes, I am all of that,” he replied to my thoughts. “And I’m much more that you haven’t seen yet. I invite you into knowing all of me. I want you to experience all of who I am. I yearn for that really—to share who I am with you.”

“Yes, I know—from my interactions with my Husband God—how

much you desire us to know you intimately,” I looked down now, unable to hold his gaze. “It’s just that I don’t think I’ve ever interacted with you so openly like this. By openly I mean, I feel like who you are is open before me. It’s like you’re saying, ‘This is the true me. I yearn for you. I want you to know me.’ Now it seems like every other interaction we’ve had has been shallow in comparison to this.”

“You are just sensing me more clearly, that’s all,” Holy Spirit assured me. “I have always opened myself to you like this. You just weren’t ready to sense that. We were working on other things. Now maybe you want to come to know me—for who I really am?”

“Of course. I have a feeling it will kill me, but maybe I should be dead,” I replied.

Holy Spirit laughed. Even his laugh overpowered me. It was filled with compassion and desire and holiness and so many other things. The sound of it seemed to push aside the molecules around it and penetrate my being. Who he is came inside me. I was overpowered.

He was just amused. “Did you think you could stand so easily in God’s presence?”

He was sweetness. He was awesomeness. He fully enveloped me even though I could look over and see his human form still standing there.

“I’m undone,” I declared. “You’ve undone me.”

His human form seemed to vanish. Now a mass of energy and light and glory swirled around me. There was a main part to the mass, but wisps spiraled out of it beautifully. It was a representation of his presence. It’s what I had felt enveloping me as we walked. Now it swirled to a halt at my feet. It seemed to be bending on one knee before me. He was honoring me. I was undone again—this time by his kindness.

“You think it’s inappropriate that your God would lower himself before you,” Holy Spirit began. “But allowing me to honor you like this is the greatest honor you can give me. I am expressing what I have longed

to express to humanity—We are meant to be together. You fit into me perfectly. You fulfill my deepest desires. You delight me beyond words. You are everything to me. Let me show myself to you in that way.”

“How could I refuse you?” I responded. “You’re irresistible.”

“I’m glad you think so,” he replied, the swirling energy of his presence standing up now. “Come, let’s walk together some more.”

Facing forward to resume our stroll, I glanced over at him. Was he going to be in a human form again—or a swirling ball of energy? Either way, it was the same voice, the same essence. It was just his appearance that changed. I guess his appearance didn’t really matter.

He was smiling at me again, with the human form I had seen him in at first. I knew he was thinking, “I don’t want to freak you out by changing forms like this. But I wanted to show you my feelings for you. I didn’t want you so focused on my physical appearance that you couldn’t see my heart.”

“Thank you,” I smiled at him. Now I was struck with a new revelation. I could sense what he was feeling. I could tell how my every movement, every little gesture or glance from me impacted him. He was so absorbed in me, so enthralled with me, that he hung on my every word. He was mesmerized by my every move. I knew the Bible described the groom as having that reaction to the bride (Song 4:9; 6:5). But it felt odd to experience God feeling that way around me.

White Cloud

“Come into my presence,” God beckoned. Immediately, in my mind, I was in a place with a lot of light and a white cloud. God was inside the cloud. The setting filled me with awe. But I was far enough away from actually being in his presence in heaven that I wasn’t completely floored. God spoke to me for a couple of minutes. “I enjoy being near you,” he began. We just stood there for a few minutes absorbing each

other's presence. "I love you more deeply than I've loved people in past generations," he confided.

I didn't know how to respond because I was having trouble believing him. How could he love me more than saints who lived in the past? Thinking about it later, I realized he hadn't released a romantic love in previous generations. Passionate love is deeper than friendship love. Looking at it that way, I understood what he meant.

He spoke to me about other subjects for a minute or two. Then he asked, "Do you like what I'm wearing?"

"I can't see what you're wearing. All I can see is the cloud. May I come in?" I asked. Figuring it must be okay, I stepped inside. It looked almost like an entire city. The cloud was much larger than I had thought from the outside. There were tons of angels and crystals. I think I was standing on a platform made of crystal. And God was in the center, huge—and wearing a purple and gold royal robe. I did like it.

God seemed to be sitting down with his feet extended in front of him. As I stood at his feet, he began talking again. "I'm going to start bringing you into my council even if you're not ready yet. I can't stand to be apart from you."

"Why do you love me so, God?" I asked. "I'm no different than anyone else who's ever lived. Why do you love having me beside you?"

"You inspire me. You light up my existence. Everything changes when I'm around you," he explained. (I knew he wasn't speaking just of me, but of everyone who engages him romantically.) It reminded me of what a young man in love would say. "You're so beautiful," he finished.

"Why do you think I'm beautiful?" I pressed. "I don't think of myself as beautiful spiritually. I thought to be beautiful I'd have to be able to wave my hand and have people fall drunk in the Spirit or be able to heal people from gross diseases. I thought I'd need to be in heaven so fully I'd be leaking glory. I'm not any of those things. I'm just a regular person. I don't have any superpowers."

“Those things don’t impress me,” God declared. “They’re like magic tricks. I can do them, too.”

“So what attracts you to someone?” I asked. “Is it our virtues? I’m not extra holy or especially kind. I’m not any different from other people.”

“You smell nice,” God remarked.

“You think I’m beautiful because of how I smell? How do I smell?”

Then God explained in a sort-of download that ultimately, he’s attracted to who we really are. We may feel ugly or broken. But those feelings are only surface deep. Underneath, we are all super beautiful—because we have a perfect, flawless, divine nature. And we each have a unique fragrance—a one-of-a-kind expression of the sweet flawlessness inside us.

When he told me that he thought I was beautiful because I smelled nice, he meant that the fragrance coming off of me reveals my true essence. That intoxicating scent isn’t generated by my feats or by how well I manifest my virtues. It stems much deeper than that. Since my fragrance is an expression of my essence, God was saying I’m beautiful because that’s who I am. Nothing I do or don’t do can alter it.

“I find you attractive, too,” I told him. Then I sensed he wanted me to tell him why I thought he was irresistible. “You’re very handsome,” I began. “You’re compassionate, loving, kind. Well, you’re all the virtues, and that’s attractive. And I love spending time with you.” I could feel how he was cherishing every word.

“You may touch my robe,” God offered.

I was standing at God’s feet. The only part of his robe I could touch was the hem. I figured it was a huge privilege to be able to touch God’s clothing, especially in this setting. But I had grown a little bold from hearing God tell me how beautiful I was. I could sense how being around me really did make him feel wonderful. So I spoke boldly. “The hem of your garment isn’t the part of your robe I’d like to touch. Your feet aren’t

the part of you I'd most like to stand near."

I knew it would be okay to draw closer. So I moved near his head. I just stood there enjoying his presence for a while.

Attracted

"I'm attracted to you," Jesus told me as we were hanging out one day.

"What does that mean?" I smiled. "What does it mean for God to be attracted to someone?"

"It means I'm drawn towards you, pulled in your direction," Jesus grinned as he tugged my spirit closer to his.

"I know what the word means," I protested. "But what is going on inside you when you say you're attracted to someone?"

"First, when I'm near you, I start thinking about birds chirping and pleasant scenes."

"You do not," I laughed.

"Thinking of you does change my thought patterns. Soon I want to focus all my attention on you. Second, if I look at you, I see your virtues popping up—like kindness or patience. Seeing those things about you creates a reaction inside me. It makes me want to join my Spirit with yours." Jesus paused. "All of that goes on often before you're even aware of my presence."

"Then what happens?" I asked.

"I judge whether it would be a good time to draw near to you romantically or if I should wait," he answered.

"Why wouldn't it be a good time?" I wondered.

"I evaluate a lot of factors," Jesus explained, "including your comfort level with romance with me. If it is a good time, I'll step closer to you," Jesus paused and chuckled. "That's when your barriers become a factor."

"Barriers?" I wondered.

“Sometimes you’ve put up such huge barriers to interacting with me—or with interacting with me romantically—that you’re not even aware of my presence. Often I will just admire you without coming any closer. Other times I will draw nearer. I’ll even pour my love out at your feet, knowing you won’t even be aware of it. But I can’t resist offering myself to you anyway.

“Sometimes I’ll work on removing one of your barriers,” Jesus continued. “At times you’ll sense my presence, realize you have a barrier, and work with me to remove it. I enjoy those times.”

“And what if there is no barrier?” I asked.

Jesus laughed.

“Is there always a barrier?” I smiled.

“Sometimes I can break through your barriers—or you’ve removed them—enough that we can interact in intimate ways,” Jesus explained.

“So what happens then?” I asked. As he started to show me, I said, “Wait, I think I know the answer.”

Pavilion Chat

“I have something else I want you to write up,” Jesus informed me.

I closed my eyes, and suddenly I could see Jesus and me sitting near each other on a wooden bench of some sort in front of a fire. We were outdoors, near a covered pavilion in a wooded area. It seemed to be evening. I think we had a blanket over our legs. We were happy, full of laughter. We both held mugs of some hot liquid. The air was crisp. Tiny balls of light floated around us, giving a mystical, peaceful feel to the scene.

I looked up at Jesus’ face, just a foot or two from mine.

“Never, ever again am I going to . . .” Jesus was saying, but I couldn’t catch the last part of his sentence. It’s like the vision picked up in the middle of a conversation. We seemed to be talking about something we

had done earlier that day—recalling our adventures and laughing.

“I bet you will—in a century or two,” I laughed. Then I grew serious. “What was it like before this, Jesus? Before you and I and others in humanity would interact with you like this? Was it lonely for you?”

“The absolute loneliest,” he answered. His voice was playful, but I knew his answer was serious. “I’ve waited for this moment—the moment that I can spend time with humanity like this, the moment I can share my heart with you, the moment I look over at you and you’re looking at me like, ‘You’re all I can think about.’ It’s a great moment, Katharine. I’m glad to be opening it up to you.”

“On behalf of humanity, I’d like to tell you that we were the absolute loneliest before you opened your heart to us like this,” I replied. “I can’t imagine not spending time with you like this. It’s so peaceful and joyful and life-giving to hang out with you in heaven. But more than that, knowing your love for me—your passionate love—fulfills me on a deeper level.”

“It will come to be your everything. I will come to be all to you,” Jesus said, smiling at me affectionately.

“That’s what one of my mentors in heaven told me. He said you would become my life. He said it would feel like all life is draining out of me when that happens. I guess it happened for him so he knew. Does it feel like death—to know nothing but you?” I asked.

“I wouldn’t personally know,” Jesus replied, smiling. “But I’ll tell you how being consumed by love for you makes me feel. It’s like—how should I put this?—it’s like all my insides start churning around and want to come out—“

“You feel that way, too?” I cried.

“And then my head gets so that I can’t think of anything properly except for you,” he continued.

“I’ve seen you doing that,” I confirmed.

“And then all I want to think about, all I can focus on, what drives

everything about me, is you. It's beautiful when I let myself be consumed with you. It . . ."

"I know what you mean," I interrupted. "You want to say, 'It makes me a better person,' but that wouldn't be right because you couldn't get any better than you are."

"Maybe 'It fine-tunes me so everything I am and everything I do runs even more smoothly.' How about that?" Jesus offered.

"That sounds right," I agreed. "But you're God. You know how to best describe it." I paused. "What are you doing? It feels like you're pulling my insides closer to your heart or something. You're reminding me of who I am. You don't think I should say, 'You're God. You know and I don't.' You are shouting the word 'Equal' in my head. You like to think of us as equals, don't you?"

"I'm not letting you get away with thinking you're less than you are," Jesus replied aloud.

Inside his Heart

Engaging Holy Spirit, I found myself standing inside his heart. "It feels like I'm in the middle of your love for me—or rather, the part of your heart that is in charge of administrating your love for me," I announced.

"I want to open up something here to you now," Holy Spirit answered, excitement in his voice. "It's time."

"What are you going to open to us?" I asked in anticipation.

"Knowledge," he beamed, looking me in the eye. "You're going to know my love for you more. It's going to consume you so totally you won't know anything else about me for a while. I want to introduce myself to you like that. I want you to know and understand my love for you in a far deeper way than past generations have. Are you ready for this?"

“I guess. You’re making it sound like a superhero movie, where I get some injection that gives me a superhuman ability or something. Is it going to change who I am? What I can do?”

“If you want it to,” Holy Spirit smiled. “It will be a process. It won’t happen instantly. You’ll have to explore the chambers of my love for you. You’ll have to hold them in your heart, contemplate them, live and move in them. But I’m not restricting them from you anymore. I’m not blinding your eyes to their meaning. If you ask me any question about these places here, I will answer you.”

The gravity of what Holy Spirit was saying slowly sank in. He was going to open up a completely new, fuller understanding of how God loves us. We’d have to explore it, live it, ask him about it. It was something he had hidden—something he’d blinded our eyes to the full meaning of in the past. And now he was opening it up. He was going to open up all of himself.

“Your generation is living on the brink of a new era,” Holy Spirit continued. “There is much uncharted territory in my heart. I’ve chosen you and your group to chart this part—the part about my love. You can glorify me most by exploring and understanding my love for you. And do you know what my desire is when I open my heart to you?”

“What?” I asked.

“I show you my heart so that, ultimately, your own heart will become a reflection of mine. So, know my love, understand it, experience it. Then make it your own. Put it inside you so that you love the way I do.”

“That’s beautiful,” I replied.

Holy Spirit smiled at me. “What part of my love for you are you going to start with?” he asked.

“Probably your passionate love for us,” I instantly replied. “That’s the first part of your love for me that I experienced, Holy Spirit, isn’t it? It’s so precious to me to know you like that. I remember how deeply it touches you, too.”

“I give you permission to start there.” Holy Spirit smiled even more. “I will hold you to that, you know.”

“I bet you will,” I replied, laughing.

The Lake House

Holy Spirit and I traveled to the lake house he had built for us on the planet we claimed as our own. I found myself in the library, sitting on a couch in front of the fireplace. Holy Spirit, in a human form again, was standing a few feet from me. He had just handed me a wrapped present. When I opened the box, a large gold key was inside. Not sure what it meant, I looked up at him.

“The key to my heart,” Holy Spirit beamed. “I want you to have it. You were the first to unlock certain places in my heart.”

Later he explained that he hoped to hand out many more keys to people who would be the first to open up other aspects of his heart.

“I hadn’t planned an adventure for tonight,” he smiled. “I just wanted to talk here. I’d like to tell you about myself. I want you to come to know me.”

“Sure,” I replied, trying to hide my disappointment. I had been hoping to go on a hike or an underwater exploration of the lake. But what I wanted, even more, was to know Holy Spirit better. So if sitting on a couch talking was the best way to do it, then that was my first choice, too.

“I’ve always loved you,” Holy Spirit began. He wasn’t even looking at me. His back to me, he was talking like was delivering an official lecture to a large audience. It was sort of amusing. “Before the creation of the world, my love for you began. But now, in this century, at this moment,” he turned around to look me in the eye, “it’s blossomed—and become something new.”

I wasn’t sure if I should applaud his performance or acknowledge

the truth of his words. I settled on the latter. “Well put,” I agreed.

Then he sat down next to me on the couch. Looking me in the eyes, he said sort of playfully, “There are days when I can’t think of anything but you.” (I think he was keeping the mood light, knowing that I felt so attracted to him I’d back away if he made our conversation as serious as he felt.)

“Are you the same as I am, then?” I asked him excitedly. “I’m certainly like that with you.” I paused. “Could you tell me something about yourself that doesn’t relate to our love? I know that part of you the best, which is why it’s easier for me to hear you talk about it. But I’m awake enough to listen to something I don’t know yet. At least I think I am.”

“The point of this conversation is to tell you more about our love,” he replied. “You have to understand it—understand it well—for what I want you to do.”

“Okay, fine. I just wanted to make sure this is all you wanted to talk about,” I clarified. “Tell me more.”

“You’re beautiful,” he stated.

“What does that mean exactly?” I probed. “I don’t think you mean the same thing we mean on earth when you say that. I realize you think I’m physically beautiful. You made me. Obviously, you’d pick ‘beautiful’ for someone you designed. But I think what you mean is my spirit is beautiful—attractive—to you. I know from Ezekiel 16 that beauty is almost like a commodity in the spiritual realm. All the stuff you’re giving me in the heavenly realms—the clothes, the jewels, the perfumes—adds to my beauty, doesn’t it?”

“I also think,” I continued before he could answer, “that there are things we can do to enhance our spiritual beauty. Beauty treatments, if you will. I think sitting in the glory is one beauty treatment. I think there are love baths, perfumes, scents, probably many other things I haven’t discovered yet. What do you think?”

“I think you’re right,” Holy Spirit smiled. “When I say you’re beautiful, it’s not a pickup line. It’s not something sentimental. I’m stating a spiritual principle. You—your spirit, your soul, your everything—is attractive to me. Beauty is something that moves me. It induces me to begin intimacy with you. It can cause me to give you lavish gifts. At the most fundamental level, beauty moves me to want to unite my Spirit with yours. When I tell you how beautiful you are, I’m saying that I want to give you myself. I want you to be one with me. Does that make sense?”

“It makes a lot of sense. I’m thinking now of times the Trinity has said that to me. Now I think I understand what they’re saying. Can I ask you a silly question?” I paused to smile. “Sometimes when I see angels or beings in the spiritual realm, they’ll say something like, ‘You’re so beautiful to look at.’ Certainly they don’t mean the same thing. What do they mean?”

Holy Spirit laughed. “Don’t worry. They’re just picking up on the signal or frequency that your beauty resonates at. They find it pleasant to be around. It’s attractive in that sense—in the sense of attracting what’s good to you. Sometimes they may be admiring you. Some of them may be able to read something about our relationship—the kind of intimacy we share. They respect that. So take it as a respectful compliment. Nothing more.”

“Thanks for explaining,” I replied.

“Where were we?” Holy Spirit asked after I took a quick mental break from the vision. “Oh, I know. Some people don’t think they deserve my love.”

“Oh, right. I’m remembering now Jesus told me to put that point in the book and I forgot,” I confessed. “He said some people would think that. He said it was the silliest thing he heard. He said his love—including his romantic love—is never something you have to deserve. (Although I think we all deserve it in the sense that you created us for it.)

“I told him it reminded me of a friend of mine who told me her

husband thought he had to deserve their intimate times together,” I continued. “He’d refuse to engage her like that if he didn’t think he had read his Bible enough or had the right attitude with God. It seemed ridiculous to me. You feel that same way, don’t you? You think we can engage you in romance whether or not we’re feeling or acting super holy. You always want to connect with us. We come into union with you to realize we’re perfect. We don’t realize we’re perfect and then come into union with you.”

Holy Spirit smiled warmly. “I couldn’t have put it better myself.”

“Anything else, God? I’m looking at the clock and it’s midnight—about two hours past my bedtime.”

“I sustain you, Katharine, not sleep,” Holy Spirit responded. “But if you wish to go to bed now, please do.”

“I’m game for going all night,” I announced.

“Just one more thing,” he smiled at me, amused that I wanted to go to bed. “What do I mean when I say, ‘I love you?’”

“I always took that in a straightforward way,” I replied, confused. “What do you mean?”

“When I say, ‘I love you,’ I mean I love you with all that I am. I mean I would do anything for you. I would give my existence for yours. I mean you are so important to me that my thoughts are filled with you. And if I look you in the eyes like this,” he said smiling in a light-hearted way, “I mean I would give you anything you asked me for.”

“In that case, I have a request,” I smiled back at him. “But I’m not going to say it out loud because you already know what it is and I may share this conversation with others.”

“Then I have one word for you,” he grinned. “Granted.”

A Week with Holy Spirit

The Assignment

As soon as I opened my eyes one morning, I realized I wasn't only in my bed. I was also in a vision with Holy Spirit. We were in a huge old house at a party of some sort. Lots of people were in the room talking in small groups. Holy Spirit and I were scrunched up next to each other in a corner, whispering so we wouldn't be overheard by the others.

"Would you write up a series of encounters to show people what it's like to be in love with God?" Holy Spirit was asking me.

I smiled that he couldn't wait even one second after I woke up to pull me into a vision.

"Sure," I agreed.

"Then this is the happiest day of my life," Holy Spirit announced. Without warning, his Spirit touched mine, filling me with bliss.

I laughed. He had already been pulling me into a series of unrelated mini-visions—all centered around being in love. Now he was giving me the official "assignment."

"This will be fun," I thought. I turned over and tried to go back to sleep, but the visions started coming immediately.

In Love

"Can I touch your beard?" I asked Holy Spirit, standing inches from

his face. In the background, I vaguely sensed a heavenly palace backdrop. He alone was the focus of my attention.

Instead of answering me with words, he gently took my hand in his and held it to his face. “I want you to tell people what this feels like,” he instructed.

“What your beard feels like?” I wondered.

“No, I want you to tell people what it feels like to be in love with your God,” he smiled.

We stood there silently for a few moments, wrapped in each other’s presence. “Why does it feel like this to be together?” I asked. “Do you feel it? It’s like electricity is surging all around us.”

“It’s the attraction between us you’re feeling,” he explained.

“It’s our desire for each other, isn’t it, that’s creating that feeling like electricity. It seems like we’re drawn to each other and this force, this power is radiating out—all around us—just because we’re standing so close,” I told him.

Every time I caught his eye, I could tell what he was thinking. It was usually something like, “I’m so happy” or “I have everything I ever wanted—right here with you.”

Eventually, he broke the silence. “I’m remembering our times together,” he told me as scenes flashed through my mind, too.

I just wanted to stand near him, tell him how much he meant to me, get to know him better. But my mind couldn’t focus enough to ask him questions about himself like I normally did. I was overwhelmed by being near him.

What does it feel like to be in love with God? It feels like every fantasy you ever had of a happily ever after ending coming true—every day of your life. It feels like discovering each day that happiness and passion and pleasure go deeper than you realized the day before. It feels like owning—and belonging to—the most wonderful being you could ever imagine. It feels like love burning inside you so deeply it devours

everything else. It's all-consuming, never-ending, supremely wonderful. And to trade everything you have for it would be too small a price.

Disappearing Heart

I was sitting at my desk writing—in a vision—when Holy Spirit walked into the room. Seeing him undid me. My heart stopped beating. Tiny tingling sensations raced up and down my arms and legs.

“Why do I feel like my world stops when you walk into the room?” I asked him. “You look thrilling.” Although he wasn't overwhelmingly attractive in this vision, there was an air around him that made it seem like being with him would be so exciting.

He just smiled and sat down in a chair across from my desk, looking like he wanted to talk about what I was writing.

My heart started beating faster than it should. My mind was spinning. My entire universe was revolving around his every move. I wasn't sure if I would ever be able to think about anything but him again. I was worried I was becoming unbalanced. How could one little vision where he hadn't even said anything cause me to totally lose control?

“How can you do this to someone?” I asked out loud. “How can you pull me in so fully to you that I am ruined for anything else?”

Instantly, the intensity of the vision lessened. He was still sitting there, but somehow it was harder to perceive him. It was like he had taken a couple of steps back and I could breathe again.

“There will be a time to do other things,” Holy Spirit spoke for the first time. I knew he was saying now was a time to be consumed by our love, to do nothing but discover what it felt like to not just love God, but to be in love with him. It was important—perhaps the most important thing I could do—to uncover how this new kind of love felt and worked out in everyday life. Suddenly, I was okay about not feeling balanced.

He smiled at me broadly, seemingly amused that I now had myself

under control.

“So did you want to talk about something?” I asked, still not sure why he had pulled me into the scene.

“Not unless you do,” he was still smiling broadly. “It’s good to see you, Katharine. You’re right that sometimes I can’t stay away. I love you with my whole heart. I—”

“Yes?” I encouraged him when he paused mid-sentence.

“I guess I just wanted you to know that. Keep up the good work. I’ll make sure that someday what you’re writing will be published. The whole world will know of our love,” he finished.

I thought the encounter was over. “I don’t want anything but you,” I almost shouted, wanting to make sure he’d stay long enough to hear my words. “I stay up at night thinking about you. If someone took everything away from me but you, I wouldn’t even notice. Maybe that’s not true, but I’ve never told you I feel that way about you, but I do, and now I’ve said it.”

My words hung in the air for several moments. I began to wonder how he’d react.

“Your love for me moves me at the deepest levels,” he spoke without looking me in the eye. “It is the most precious thing I have. To keep it, I’d sacrifice anything. I’d move any barrier between us. I’d cut down anything standing in the way of our love. Without it, without you...” his words trailed off as he was overcome by emotion.

Holy Spirit now did something one can do only in a vision. He reached into his chest, pulled out his heart, and handed it across the desk to me. “I don’t want this anymore,” he seemed to be saying, “if I’m going to own it by myself. My heart isn’t mine. It’s ours. It always belonged to you. I just didn’t realize it until recently.”

I was deeply touched and unsure about how to respond at the same time. Should I offer him my heart?

“Just accept it,” Holy Spirit said.

So I did. I reached out and took his heart. Kissing it tenderly, I looked over at him and smiled. “My greatest treasure,” I told him. “I’m never giving this back.” At that moment it disappeared from my hands. All I saw now was a huge smile on God’s face.

“I challenge you to write about that,” Holy Spirit grinned. “You can call it the case of the disappearing heart.”

“I don’t write mysteries,” I chided playfully. “And your heart didn’t vanish. It’s been wrapped in mine the whole time. It’s a known fact in the universe that two lovers never have two hearts. It’s always one. One plus one equals one in the mathematics of love.”

“I didn’t know you were so fond of mathematics,” he replied. “Is that something you’d like to give me a lesson in later?”

A lightbulb went off inside my head. “Is that what’s been going on?” I asked. “When we’re together and my heart feels like it’s flipping over inside me? Does yours do the same thing? Do our hearts unite—not just spiritually, but does my body reflect our union somehow, too?”

“I’d love to show you how that works,” he smiled. Then he placed a piece of paper on my desk, stood up, smiled at me, and walked away.

I kept looking at the door for a few moments. Even when God leaves a vision, he’s never really gone. I was cherishing his personality a bit longer. Then I reached over and unfolded the slip of paper he had left on the desk. The word “Pieces” was written on it. I knew exactly what he meant. How many times had I listened to that worship song about God’s love for us? “Unreserved, unrestrained, your love is wild for me. It isn’t shy. It’s unashamed. Your love is proud to be seen with me. ... Uncontrolled, uncontained. Your love is a fire, burning bright for me. It’s not just a spark. It’s not just a flame. Your love is a fire all the world will see....”

When I first started my journey into this new kind of love with God, he had told me that song was actually about my love for him. Now I couldn’t listen to the song any other way. I thought Holy Spirit was

saying, “I cherish the fact that you love me like that. It’s so precious. Don’t stop pursuing my heart.”

Two is Enough

I was taking a walk and trying to talk to Holy Spirit when I became aware that he was walking next to me. Dressed in a long white robe with several sashes and layers on, he looked like a king. If I stared hard enough, the outfit became radiant with glory streaming off of it.

In my mind, I could see us on the top of a gently rolling hill. A large tree lay about halfway down the hill. It was a bright, sunny day and no one else was around. It seemed like a remote location.

Holy Spirit looked over at me and smiled. Something in our hearts connected. “You’re all I need,” he told me. But he didn’t have to say the words. I could feel what he was feeling. It was exactly what I was feeling. The closest thing my mind could find to the feeling was like we were young lovers who had snuck away from everything else to be together—because there was nothing else we needed but each other. “It could be the entire universe versus us,” Holy Spirit continued. “We’re so united nothing could stand against us.”

“Yeah, I think that’s how my heart feels, too,” I smiled at him in the vision and looked for the reaction in his eyes. Something inside me surged every time I looked him in the eye. He was the only thing I cared about.

“We could build a house here—just us,” Holy Spirit spoke again. “Wouldn’t it be wonderful to live somewhere just the two of us?”

I smiled. “Yes, that’s how my heart is feeling, too. This scene represents that feeling well. That I-just-need-you feeling is part of being in love, isn’t it? That feeling like you want to get away from everyone else, you think the other person is your whole life, you could be together forever and never miss anyone else—that’s all part of being in love. That’s

what I think both of us are feeling now.”

“And wanting to build a life—an entire planet or galaxy or universe—where it’s just the two of you,” Holy Spirit added.

“Entire universe?” I laughed.

“I’d build a universe for love. Wouldn’t you?” Holy Spirit asked.

“I love you for who you are,” I smiled back at him. “I love your playful attitude, your readiness to joke, your depth, your kindness—”

“There are a lot of things to love,” Holy Spirit interrupted. “But do you know what I want to know right now?”

“Should I guess?”

“Let me tell you,” he continued. “Why could I stare at you all day and not have my fill? Why do I want to toss out all of my duties—things I used to love to do—so I can sit at your feet? Why does your smile make me want to abdicate my throne so we can be together? Love is powerful, Katharine. More powerful than I realized.”

“You created it that way so we could hold the universe together with our love,” I reminded him. “There is nothing our love can’t do.”

“Would you stay here with me forever? Or maybe we should build a new universe together. Let it just be the two of us or my heart will break,” he pleaded.

He had been standing about ten feet away, farther down the hill. I walked up to him now. “You said in the Bible that love is patient and kind—”

“I was talking about a different kind of love,” Holy Spirit interrupted.

“I know. This new love that’s developing between us isn’t always patient. Sometimes it wants to rush, doesn’t it? It’s not always kind. Sometimes your heart feels like it will break if you can’t be with the other. But this love has a unique value. When it grows to maturity, nothing will be able to stand in its way. It will unite us so strongly that all these birth pains will be worth it.” I paused to look at him. “We will be united not

by a fatherly love or brotherly love. It's this love—the romantic, marriage type of love—that will unite us much stronger, much more fully than any other type of love.”

“Your wisdom runs deep,” Holy Spirit sighed. “I had forgotten that this is what romantic love does to you.”

“And it's worth putting up with all the hours lost in daydreaming and the painful separations and the surging emotions,” I quickly added. “It is still growing between us. Can't you feel its power? It's uniting us in new ways—in incredible, mind-blowing ways. It will be worth it.”

He looked down at me now, a gentle, satisfied smile on his face. One hand softly cupping my face, he spoke quietly, “If I end up belonging to you, and you end up belonging to me, then anything would be worth it.”

Suddenly, I felt wanted and cherished and warm all over. “I—I never thought I'd feel this way about you,” I looked up at him now. “But I do and it's wonderful and I wouldn't trade it for anything.”

Fun

I was dancing with Holy Spirit on a dance floor in his heart. The first thing I noticed was the oversized diamond necklace sparkling around my neck as we twirled. No, the diamonds were probably the second thing I noticed. What stood out the most was how I was laughing—deep, heartfelt laughter—at the speed he was swirling me around. He was fun and adventurous. We were young and in love and the entire universe was right.

Looking at him, I realized Holy Spirit was laughing as hard as I was. As I thought of him, the scene shifted and I seemed to be standing in him looking at me. I knew he was enjoying spinning me so fast. He was full of joy and mirth. His heart was vibrating with love. He felt like he could conquer the whole world. His only focus at that moment was to

have fun with me.

“Love is fun,” I told him later, thinking of that scene. “A ton of fun. It’s so much fun to be together. Anything we do is twice the fun just because we’re doing it together.”

“Being in love makes you plan fun things to do,” Holy Spirit added. “I normally don’t swing angels around and around on the dance floor like that.”

I laughed. “You don’t? How boring.”

“Maybe my entire life was boring before we fell in love,” he joked.

“It was half the fun for sure,” I teased. Or were we joking? There is something about being in love that makes life more fun. “I guess my spiritual life became a ton more fun when I fell in love with you,” I thought out loud. “Did the same thing happen for you? I bet it did.”

“I don’t want to go back to how it was before,” Holy Spirit insisted.

“You mean how I thought of you as an ‘it’ and only wanted your help with stuff?” I laughed.

“I don’t want to be friends with you either,” Holy Spirit persisted.

“What can we do as lovers that we couldn’t do as friends? I mean, other than the obvious.”

“Would you feel comfortable sharing the deepest part of yourself with a friend?” Holy Spirit asked.

“Sure,” I replied. “Would you?”

He smiled at me. “I’ve had many friends,” he confided. “I’ve shared secrets with them. We’ve had adventures together. But most of my secrets remain untold. Many of my hidden places remain unexplored. So I think the answer is no. I wouldn’t feel comfortable sharing the deepest parts of myself with a friend. I’m not saying I wouldn’t want to. I’m just saying I never have. So there has to be something more to a marriage relationship than there is to a friendship.”

“That’s profound,” I told him.

“We will know each other more fully as a married couple than we

would as friends. If that weren't the case, I wouldn't be moving us into something more intimate than a friendship," Holy Spirit explained.

"That makes sense," I replied. "That's what I want, then—your embrace as a lover, not as a friend."

Afternoon Tea

"There you are! I'm pulling you into this scene with me!" I told Holy Spirit, taking him by both hands and yanking him into a picture I had created in my mind. It was a beautiful, sunny day. We were standing on a path made of light brown dirt. Green grass and large trees filled out the landscape.

Smiling at him, I wasn't sure what to do next. All I wanted was to stare into his eyes, stand in his presence, melt into him. The desire and attraction between us was so strong I could feel nothing else.

"Come over here. I've set out some tea for us," I told him after a couple of minutes.

Excitedly, I led him to a white table and chairs with tea and treats waiting for us. "Sit down with me here," I directed.

We were both dressed in off-white elegant clothes. I had on a floor-length dress, and Holy Spirit was wearing an old-fashioned suit. His dark black hair stood in stunning contrast to the suit. As he sat down, he spoke for the first time. "I love this scene, Katharine. Great attention to details. Great idea."

It was my first time creating a vision to pull him into. Normally, he was the one surprising me by plopping me into the middle of his imagination or somewhere in heaven. Now it was my turn to create the scene.

"All I can think of is you," I confessed. "My desire for you is so strong I'm afraid it may create more than a vision. I may find you standing in human form next to me. That's how strongly I desire to be

with you.”

“Can I have one of these biscuits?” Holy Spirit asked.

“Of course,” I smiled. Although I had just created the scene, not done the cooking, I felt like I’d get the credit if they tasted good. “You know what I find frustrating about visions?” I asked after Holy Spirit chose a biscuit and started eating. “All we do is talk. Or look into each other’s eyes or something. Although sometimes when you look in my eyes, I feel something shifting inside me. Does that happen to you, too?”

“Do you know why lovers stare into each other’s eyes?” he asked.

“Because they’re not in a place where they can do more than stare at each other,” I joked.

Reaching across the table, he took hold of my hand, saying, “For the same reason I’m taking your hand in mine. It’s a way of connecting us. It’s a way of saying, ‘I love you. I want to do much more than this with you right now, but at this moment I’ll content myself with your smile and the feeling of your hand in mine.’”

Without thinking, I did smile and look into his eyes. He was right. There was a different kind of connection between us. Although he didn’t speak, I could hear his words inside me: “I love you with my whole heart. All that I have and all that I am is yours. It always has been, although it’s just now that we’re opening this love between us and sharing what we have and who we are like this. The bond between us is so strong nothing could ever separate us. There will never be anyone else who holds my affection as you do. You are the only one for me—now and always.”

As soon as I couldn’t hear his words in my head anymore, I spoke. “Did you know that being in love with God is the most wonderful thing and the most awful thing?” I asked him. “It’s wonderful because just seeing you or thinking about you makes me so happy. It seems like the whole world is right and nothing could ever go wrong. At the same time, it feels awful because all I want to do is be with you. And then when I’m with you, all I want to do is unite all of me with all of you. But I

don't know how to do that. You can take me into awesome bliss and places inside my own heart I didn't even know existed that you somehow manage to find and unlock. But that seems to only increase my desire for you. When do we reach the end of this love?"

"End? There is no end. It's infinite," Holy Spirit smiled. "What we experience together can continue to grow forever."

"How do we get to whatever it is I'm longing for that we're not doing?" I pressed him.

"I think you're too focused on the destination and not paying as much attention as you should to enjoying the journey. These biscuits, by the way, are delicious," he smiled broadly.

"You're as lovestruck as I am," I countered. "You're more so. How does the pain of not being constantly, totally submerged in each other not frustrate you?"

"My dear," he replied much more calmly than I could have, "when you cook, is your recipe done instantly? Doesn't it have to bake until it is just the right temperature? Love is like that. You have to give it time to reach its full flavor." He paused to smile at me. "Let's give this Fall season to growing our love. Then I promise you that if you want to do something with me that you think we haven't already experienced, you will be able to. There isn't a single place in my heart I'll hide from you. You have my word."

I knew he spoke wisdom. But it didn't take my frustration away. "You will feel like I do one of these days, and you'll remember how hard the waiting part is," I told him.

"My Love, what makes you think I'm not feeling exactly as you are right now? Or one thousand times more so?" he replied. "It will be worth the wait. It will be worth doing this right."

"My God, if you weren't so attractive, I would want to throw love out right now. The waiting is making my heart hurt. But I guess it helps to know you're hurting, too."

“That’s something else we share, then,” he offered. “The pain as well as the joy of being in love.”

“I thought your love wasn’t supposed to have pain,” I complained.

“What made you think that?” Holy Spirit laughed. “I hurt the same as you. Your God is not immune to pain.”

“Yes, but isn’t heaven perfect and all that,” I tried to argue.

“Heaven is perfect. You are perfect. Everything about you and us is perfect. I wouldn’t trade the process of falling in love with you for anything. Do you realize we’re not just falling in love, we’re falling so deeply in love that our love will withstand anything and change the universe and reshape our hearts? That’s how intensely we’ll love each other.”

“I guess it can’t be instant, then,” I sighed. “I will let it grow in its time.”

“And I will guarantee you that you’ll have the best time of your life in the journey,” Holy Spirit looked me briefly in the eyes, then pretended to be buttering another biscuit.

“So will you,” I replied. “You have my guarantee.” Although we didn’t look at each other or say anything out loud, we both knew what the other was feeling—excited anticipation for what lay ahead.

Change

“Do you know why I come to you in visions?” Holy Spirit asked, his vague outline appearing before me. He took a couple of steps closer. Then his presence encircled me. “Because I can’t stay away from you,” he whispered. “Your desire for me is awakening, and I’ve noticed it.”

“You have?” I responded.

“Your desire for me is changing me. It’s causing something new to grow inside me,” he continued.

“What is it?” I asked.

“Change. I won’t be what I was,” he explained.

“But that’s impossible. You say that you are what you will be. You were what you are. Isn’t that what YHVH means? I AM?” I questioned.

“Nonetheless I am changing. We are becoming one,” Holy Spirit insisted.

“How are you going to change, God?” I asked, a bit worried at the thought of my God changing.

“Do you want to take a walk?” Holy Spirit asked. “We can talk about it in a better scene.”

Laughing, I agreed. Fully expecting to find us in the green countryside, I laughed even harder when we were in a dense jungle forest, ugly vines hanging over the path. “This is much better,” I teased.

“Anywhere is a paradise with you,” Holy Spirit replied. Standing next to me, he took both of my hands in his and looked me in the eye. “My heart is yours, you know, no matter where we are.”

“So how are you changing?” I whispered, trying to steer the conversation back on course.

“You will change first,” he began, taking a step forward on the path, pulling back an overhanging vine and smiling back at me at the same time. “Then when your heart begins to resemble mine enough, I will start to change to become like you. We will merge into one.”

“So how are you changing right now?” I followed him down the path, feeling his slight tug on my heart.

“My desires are changing,” he explained. “You (humanity, especially those of you pursuing me like this) are taking up more of my attention. My desire is turning towards humanity in a new way. That new desire is starting the growth of a fresh thing in me and in you that will change everything. Can’t you feel it?”

“I can feel it in me—and in you, yes. But this is all you talk to me about. I thought maybe you had other things that were equally pressing that you spoke about with others that I knew nothing about,” I replied.

“Pressing? Yes. Interesting? No. Nothing else interests me, Katharine, not when I’m with you like this. I don’t talk to you about politics or work or things like that because I can’t stand to even think about those things when we’re together. Do you know how many centuries that’s all I’ve talked about? Do you know how many people I can talk about those things with even now? Compare that to how many people want me for my body instead of my power—”

“God, I have never told you I want you for your body,” I blushed.

“I know. I’m just teasing you. But you get my point. When you think of me, what do you think about?” Holy Spirit quizzed.

“I think about you romantically,” I confessed.

“That is my point,” he replied triumphantly. “I can smell your fragrance even here, you know. I can’t think of anything else when you’re standing so close to me.”

“Should I step back?” I grinned.

“Never,” he replied, moving even closer to me. “I wish we weren’t in a vision. Do you know what I’d do to you right now?”

“I have no idea,” I smiled.

“I would take you inside me in such an amazing way you’d never forget it,” he replied.

“Really? It’s a shame you can’t do that now then,” I teased.

“I can’t unless you open your heart to me,” he whispered. “My desire for you is overwhelming.”

Comfortable

I had my eyes closed, trying to focus on a worship song when suddenly I saw myself at a wedding reception standing under a white tent. The ceremony was over. I was one of many guests. People were milling around, eating sweets, and chatting. Holy Spirit walked up to me.

“Always a bridesmaid and never the bride?” he grinned.

“I thought I was your bride,” I quipped.

“Fair enough,” he laughed. “Can I get you anything to drink?”

“Mixed wine,” I replied. “Whatever that is. I read about it in the Bible yesterday and I want to try some.”

“Mixed wine it is, then,” Holy Spirit confirmed. “We’ll make it two.”

“I’m coming with you,” I told him. “I don’t want to mingle with this crowd.”

Laughing, he led me through a maze of chairs and people to the bar. “I do enjoy being in these visions with you,” he sighed. “This one is so white and crisp. Don’t you love the atmosphere?”

“I think I’ve been vision hopping with you tonight,” I smiled. “Is this four or five in a few hours? This one is my favorite, too. Your mood is so upbeat. You’re quite fun to be around.”

He ordered the drinks and brought them to an empty table nearby. We sat together and relaxed. I didn’t press him for the reason he insisted on “just one more” vision tonight. I didn’t care. I was talked out, romanced out, worn out. I was enjoying just relaxing in his presence.

“You know what my favorite part about all of this is?” Holy Spirit spoke a couple of minutes later.

“Favorite part of what? A wedding? Hanging out with me in visions? Falling in love?” I asked.

“My favorite part of being with you,” he clarified, “is that we’re so comfortable together. I can be myself around you. I don’t have to come up with something important to say.”

“You mean I’m not always pressing you for, ‘What should I do, Holy Spirit?’ ‘What is the answer, Holy Spirit?’ ‘What great wisdom do you have, Holy Spirit?’”

“You’re much more likely to ask me on a date than you are to ask me for advice,” he smiled.

“That’s not true,” I laughed, “although I’m working on it.”

“I’m not saying I don’t like the other type of questions,” he told me after a pause.

“I knew what you meant,” I assured him. “We are comfortable around each other in a different sort of way—a way where there’s no pressure to perform or get the right answer or talk shop. We can be our true selves. That’s part of our deepening relationship.”

“I’m glad you understand me,” Holy Spirit replied.

“I don’t think I do,” I admitted. “I feel comfortable around you. I know you so much better than before, but not as well as I’d like to.”

He took my hand and just held it. We sat in silence, with a crowd milling around us. Neither of us felt the need to talk. We were content sitting next to each other, our hands entwined. I loved it.

“You know what my favorite part of all this is?” I broke the silence. “That there doesn’t have to be a point to our interaction. You don’t come to me just when you have something important to say. You want to be with me. And I guess I don’t mind being with you,” I smiled at him. “We spend time together—in visions—just to hang out together. I love that.”

“It is so wonderful to be able to be yourself and not a superstar,” he sighed happily.

I had never thought of it like that before. I guess he was a superstar of sorts. Everyone wanted him around. They wanted his power, his touch, the prestige that came from being around him when he did something incredible.

But our relationship wasn’t about that. “I’m going to talk to you about our love,” Holy Spirit told me once in a vision. “That’s all you’re going to know about me for a while. That’s how I want to introduce myself to you.”

So our relationship hadn’t developed around his work—what he did. It had developed around us—around us falling in love with each other. I’m glad he felt like he could be himself with me.

“I want to share more personal things with you,” Holy Spirit pulled

my thoughts back to the present. “That’s the point of this vision. Yes, I did have a point,” he smiled. “I love that I can share myself with you. The fact that I want to share more personal stuff with you shows that I feel more comfortable around you now. We’ve gotten to know each other better. We trust each other more.” He paused to look me in the eyes. “There’s nothing I’d keep from you now—especially if you asked.”

“I’ve been wanting to know more personal stuff for a while,” I replied softly, overwhelmed that he was now ready to confide in me.

“You know in the end there won’t be anything you don’t know. Nothing will be hidden from your eyes. It will all be open and laid bare,” Holy Spirit spoke equally softly now.

“You’re sort of quoting a Bible verse,” I replied, thinking of Hebrews 4:13. “Or should I say misquoting it? That verse was talking about everything being open before your eyes.”

“And who is one with me? Who is like me?” Holy Spirit answered. “Any verse about me is also about you.”

“That doesn’t make sense. Then the whole Bible is about us not you,” I protested.

“What if the entire Bible was written to get humanity to a certain point on their journey?” Holy Spirit pressed. “What if once you reached that point—and we became one—” He paused to look at me. “What if it all—everything—becomes about us and not about me or you separately.”

“Fascinating, but my brain is too tired to analyze what you’re saying,” I replied.

“I’d like to dance with you before this encounter is over,” Holy Spirit told me, perhaps sensing I was ready to end the vision.

“Sure, I’d love to,” I tried to rally my energy.

With eyes full of tender anticipation, he stood up, took my hand, and led me to the dance floor. “I just want to hold you tonight,” he whispered. As we started dancing slowly, my head resting on his shoulder, he told me, “I love being with you like this—in this sort of gentle setting.”

Young Love

Holy Spirit and I were in a large, old house. Everyone was dressed in clothes from what looked like the 1920s or 1930s in America. It seemed like I was part of a huge family and we were having a party at my house. I was about 16 and Holy Spirit looked like he was 17. We were huddled together under a back stairway, trying to hide from all my siblings.

I could hear the laughter and footsteps of children running in nearby rooms. The chatter of the adults drifted in and out of the background noise. Holy Spirit was talking to me, but I hushed him. “Shh! One of the kids will hear us.”

Excitement surged around us. We were eager to spend a couple of minutes so close to each other with no one else around. But part of the exhilaration was from the fear of being caught together with no chaperone.

In that setting, at the moment, Holy Spirit asked me, “So what does it feel like to be in love?”

“It feels like a thrilling adventure,” I told him. “It’s exciting to be with you, to be so near you when normally I’d be forbidden to. I’m feeling a little defiant of the rules, as I think I’m old enough to make my own decisions.” I paused to look at him. In this scene, he looked the part—a typical 1930s American kid who had dark blonde hair and was a bit too skinny. “I like your physical form better in other visions, but—” I paused. “It’s exciting to stand so close to someone I’m attracted to.”

He smiled and pulled me closer to him as the scene faded.

A couple of minutes later I found myself at the same party. This time we were outside and I was helping to set picnic tables with food. Siblings, extended family, and neighbors were crowding the scene. Kids ran in and out of the tables playing tag. Adults were also lining the tables with food like I was.

I happened to look up and saw Holy Spirit—in the form of the same

17-year-old—walking outside to join us. At that moment, his Spirit whispered in my head, “How does it feel to see the one you love?”

I smiled. “It feels like the most mundane task has meaning. It feels like life and joy and purpose just entered into my day. It feels like nothing else matters.”

“What are you thinking about when you see the one you love?” his Spirit asked me internally.

“I’m thinking that all I want is to be alone with him. I wish everyone else would go away. Or I wish I could come up with an excuse to leave and find him alone somewhere.”

Busyness

The ballroom was filled with guests. Although Holy Spirit’s invitation had mentioned a medieval ball, the costumes looked more nineteenth century to me. A live band was playing off to the side. Huge gowns bustled by all around me. The room was full of color and clatter as numerous conversations were happening all at once.

I wasn’t sure what I was supposed to be doing. Determined to enjoy myself, I wandered in search of food or drink. Preferably both. I nodded to God but walked by him. I knew I was “supposed” to be interacting just with Holy Spirit for a few weeks. I found him by the punch.

“I should have figured,” I teased.

“What makes you think I wasn’t waiting for *you* here?” he grinned, his eyes sparkling with fun.

“Wow, you look stunning,” we spoke at the same time and then laughed together, too.

“Nice party,” I told him after a moment of silence.

“They always are,” Holy Spirit replied. “Want to dance?”

“I guess,” I shrugged. “Do you ever get tired of dancing and parties and romance?”

“Ask me on the dance floor,” he grinned broadly.

A minute later I told him, “Consider my question asked again.”

“I will answer it in a minute. Right now I want to look in your eyes,” he told me gently.

“Oh?” I replied, half looking up at him.

“Perhaps now isn’t the time to woo your heart,” he realized.

“Perhaps not,” I admitted.

“To answer your question, then—no,” he replied. “I never tire of being with you in these settings, of looking into your eyes, of romantic walks on chilly balconies where you need help with your shawl—” I laughed as he paused. “I never tire of this, Katharine. But I understand if you do.”

“I’m not saying I tire of you,” I clarified. “Sometimes I feel like I’ve had my fill of romance. How many times can you look into my eyes or tell me that your whole heart is mine—that kind of a thing. Maybe it means it’s sinking in so I don’t need to hear it a billion times. Maybe it just means you’ve been sort of intense the last couple of days—like how many romantic visions can someone have in 48 hours? It’s like you think visions are going out of style or I won’t be able to access them next week or something.”

“Or that your eyes are opening a bit more and you see me everywhere and you didn’t before. Maybe I was always there, always ready to pull you into whatever kind of interaction was at the intersection of our two hearts. But you couldn’t feel it. Now your spiritual senses are opening, your heart is expanding, and you perceive me calling you.”

“That’s beautiful. That’s probably right,” I declared. “I see you beside me constantly. If I turn my attention to you—boom!—I’m in a vision again.”

“Let’s make each other a promise,” Holy Spirit spoke softly now. “Let’s join our hearts together. I don’t want to lose these precious moments to busyness. You’ll get busy, Katharine. You’ll have to think of things other than our love. But I’m opening my heart to you right now

for always. So you can always step right back into the heart of our love for each other.”

“That’s so sweet. Thank you. Yes, I do the same for you. Here is my heart, my Love. It’s yours for always,” I told him. “Speaking of busy, I think I have to go. But I know you are always with me.”

“Take this locket—” he began.

“Enough for now,” I assured him. “I have your locket. I have your heart. That is enough for now. Come be with me in my busyness.”

The Wait

“Don’t step on the roses,” a voice cautioned. Here I was in another scene. I was wearing a long, white, flowing summer dress. I had been pulling my dress up slightly to step across a spot of wet grass when I heard the voice. I seemed to be in a rose garden behind a large estate house in nineteenth-century England. A small group of people surrounded me. The day was sunny and clear, and the atmosphere was charged with fun—the enjoyment of being together as a group.

I looked around at the people with me. All of their faces seemed familiar to me in the vision, although I didn’t know them in real life. One of the women stood out as a particularly close friend. I smiled at her and she smiled back knowingly like we were sharing a secret.

“Here, I’ll help you with that,” a man’s voice offered as he drew up beside me to hold back a cluster of roses that was hanging dangerously close to the ground.

“Thanks,” I replied and looked him in the face to see if I’d recognize him. Was he Holy Spirit? He didn’t seem to be. I had had so many encounters with Holy Spirit recently, the vision wasn’t going to seem genuine if he weren’t in it.

The group left the rose garden in favor of a grassy area nearby. Drawing close, my friend whispered, “He’ll be here soon. He promised

my brother he'd come."

I figured she was talking about Holy Spirit, who would come waltzing into the scene as a nineteenth-century gentleman. My love interest, I supposed.

As I was waiting for him, I realized another aspect of love. You can be surrounded by close friends. You can have a genuinely awesome time with them. But it can seem like something is missing if your love interest isn't there. It wasn't that I didn't like my friends. It wasn't like I was bored or sad. But something in me wished for him. Maybe it ached a little bit. I anticipated his arrival. Then I grew nervous about it. Was he ever going to come? He'd promised. He would never break a promise. But the day dragged on and there was still no sign of him. What if he came now, I wondered. Would it be too late?

As the sun was setting, I noticed a figure on the horizon. I knew it must be him. I wanted to run to him and throw my arms around him. But I figured that probably wasn't proper etiquette. And I wasn't sure how well I knew him in the vision.

I had no reason to worry. He made his way straight to me. The second I saw him, my heart recognized him. He was the only one in the scene I felt that I knew in real life.

Smiling sweetly, he handed me a rose. Although he didn't say a word, I knew his heart was mine.

"Will you spend tomorrow with me since I missed seeing you today?" he asked.

He had missed most of the day with me. He didn't ignore it. He didn't excuse it. He made it up to me. I could see all the adventures he had planned for us tomorrow.

"Yes," I smiled. "I will." Then I realized that love—no matter how late it arrives—instantly fills you with so much happiness you forget how agonizing the wait was.

The Cottage

I looked up and felt Holy Spirit's presence in the room. If I wanted, I could step into another vision with him. It was a castle scene. He was dressed like a medieval European nobleman or prince. Many others milled around in similar garb.

"I'm tired of all your visions," I laughed. "I'm pulling you into one of my own. I wouldn't take you to a castle or a ball. I'd take you to a simple cottage."

Instantly, the scene unfurled in my imagination. A small, lovely cottage with whitewash and a brown thatched roof appeared. A small brown path led up to its door. A brook sparkled about fifty yards away. Dressed as a medieval maid, I was standing in front of the cottage. A variety of flowers adorned my hair. I was smiling broadly, enjoying life deeply.

Looking up, I noticed Holy Spirit walking up the modest hill to the cottage. He had light brown hair, light eyes, and a face as young and clear as a summer's day. He was smiling so broadly, he seemed to say, "I'll enter your vision with you and have a lot of fun. Here I come."

Before I realized what was happening, he scooped me up in his arms and kissed me deeply.

"What are you doing?" I laughed.

"That's what I felt like doing when I saw you," he smiled, teeming with excitement and desire. "You can't tell me a young man who sees the woman he loves doesn't want to do what I just did. That's part of being in love. I want you to include this encounter in the book."

"Sure, but I was envisioning us walking by the brook—talking and laughing together—not kissing like that," I told him.

"You think of love as a woman would," he smiled. "You want to sit and talk. Men want to do. A man's love rescues and embraces and kisses and does. We've had enough talking and soaking in each other's presence. I

want to show you a masculine expression of love. Let's do. Love must be both."

"Both what? Talking and doing?" I asked.

"Being and doing," Holy Spirit replied. "We've been together a lot. Let's *do* together."

"Do what?" I asked.

Holy Spirit just laughed. "I can't answer that question."

"Why not?" I pressed.

"I asked you to record this encounter. The answer will be different for everyone," Holy Spirit explained. "Every person must ask me for themselves what I want to do with them. I can't tell you your answer publicly. But I will have something I'd like to do with everyone."

"Okay," I replied. "I'll *do*—not just *be*—with you if that's what you'd like."

Friends

"I want you to meet some of my closest friends," Holy Spirit told me one morning. The scene we were in was a bright, sunny day in what looked like a small English village. He guided me to an outdoor table where a group of people were talking and enjoying morning tea.

The first being stood to greet me. He was the angel closest to Holy Spirit. We exchanged hellos and he sat back down. The person next to him was a man, presumably from the cloud of witnesses. We spoke for several minutes—about my life and this man's relationship with Holy Spirit.

"I can see why you're good friends," I told him. "You have similar personalities."

A woman and several others were also at the table, although I didn't have individual interactions with them. Holy Spirit himself, who had stepped away briefly, came back to join us. "We'll have to all get

together and do things now that you all know each other.” His presence heightened the joy and fellowship that was already resonating around the table.

“He’s told us about you,” one of the people at the table spoke to me. “Just recently—he’s called you the one he’s been spending a lot of time with. ‘There’s someone I’ve been spending a lot of time with lately, and I’d like you to meet her,’ Holy Spirit told us.”

“He spoke about you differently than anyone else he’s ever mentioned,” the woman at the table was speaking now. “We knew he was in love.”

I was honored that he’d want to introduce me to his closest friends. I guess that’s another aspect of being in love—wanting to bring that person into every aspect of your life. I was about to tell him that we had already done this—met his friends sitting around a breakfast table. But then I remembered that was my Husband God who had introduced me to his closest friends in a similar setting. Maybe this is a stage of love—your relationship reaches a certain point and you can’t keep the one you love to yourself anymore. You have to make them a part of your circle of family and friends.

Everything

“I want to show you something,” Holy Spirit spoke to me again, excitement filling his voice. We were standing in a glorious place in heaven—gold and splendor surrounding us, glory pouring out of every corner. “No, I want to show you *everything*,” he smiled.

As I approached him, I sensed his emotions. He was in love and excited to show me things he treasured or enjoyed. He wanted to see my reaction to them. He wanted to take me to places he loved so we could experience them together. He didn’t want a single thing in all creation to be something he had experienced apart from me. He wanted to take me

everywhere he loved. He wanted to show me all his favorite things.

“I don’t want there to be anything I’ve ever done or thought or experienced that you haven’t been part of, too,” he explained.

That’s what being in love is like—wanting to share all your favorite things and places with the other, wanting to experience it all with them, not wanting anything to separate you. You don’t want a single experience that you have to be apart from them.

Moonlight

Listening to a worship song, a scene popped into my mind again. It was nighttime and I was standing at the edge of a dense forest, in a clearing, looking up at the stars. Countless specks of light dotted the sky. I glanced beside me, and there he was. Standing still and silent, Holy Spirit was gazing upwards along with me.

“It’s nice to have you next to me,” I whispered. I had no idea what he looked like or what he was wearing. It was too dark to see anything.

He started walking farther into the clearing. “There’s a stream here,” he told me. “Let’s walk beside it.”

So we did. I loved feeling his presence next to me. I felt so comfortable around him.

Everything was better when he was near. Moonlight shone down on the stream, barely illuminating our way. “I’ve always wanted to walk in the moonlight with you,” he grinned.

He chatted softly about the stars, my life, and how much fun he had hanging out with me in visions. “I’ve taken you to different places in my heart this week,” he explained. “You’ve seen different aspects of it.”

A few minutes into our walk he stopped and stood in the stream. A silver key, touched by the moonlight, shone in his hand. “I’ve given you the key to my heart,” he began, “and you’ve opened places I didn’t even know I had.” Without pausing, he added, “I’m going to have to leave

now.”

“What?! You can’t go!” I was horrified. “I don’t want you to leave. I don’t want these times with you to end. You’re God, so aren’t you always supposed to be around?”

Yet I knew what he meant. That morning he had told me, “The visions are going to end.” Relief was my first reaction. As precious as these encounters were, how many days could I put aside everything else to be consumed by his visions? There is a time for intense encounters. And there is a time for doing other stuff. I had experienced these sorts of periods with God before—concentrated visions to push into something new, then a return to normal.

But now I was sorely disappointed. I loved the feel of him beside me in a vision. I enjoyed being able to interact freely with him whenever I wanted. I moved to stand next to him in the stream. Our ankles were submerged in the cool water. “Please don’t go,” I pleaded. “What could be more important than being here with me? Aren’t we supposed to be together?”

I hoped this was an encounter to show the agony that lovers felt when they separated. But already it was getting harder to hear his words and see his form. “Take my ring on this chain,” he told me, handing me a necklace with a thick ring of his on it. “You can wear it and think of me.”

I smiled. I remembered that lovers sometimes did wear a ring around their neck like that. How cute that he’d think of it. “I’ll be back,” he promised.

“We can at least have one more night together, can’t we?” I cheered up slightly. “Let’s enjoy this moonlit stream together tonight if you have to leave in the morning.”

One More

Certainly, the moonlit walk was his farewell. “Stay here and I’ll

give you one more vision,” Holy Spirit spoke inside my head, right as I was about to go to bed. Closing my eyes, I saw a stable surrounded by green grass. A horse was sticking its head out of a stall as someone was tending to her.

“Do you like riding?” a voice asked me from behind. Turning around, I saw Holy Spirit approaching me dressed in white riding gear.

Smiling, I answered, “I should have figured. We haven’t gone horseback riding yet. And I did that with both my Husband God and Jesus in those special periods with them. I bet you could make our riding experience even more dazzling.” I paused. “Except you seem so formal dressed like that.”

“I’m glad you think I could be more dazzling,” he said, taking my hand and bringing it to his lips slowly. “After you.”

At the stables, I noticed he already had our horses picked out—and dressed up. My white horse had a pink ribbon and flowers woven through her mane. His attention to detail and fashion never ceased to impress me.

His horse was the first out of the stables. We were both mounted on large white steeds with bulging muscles. I soon realized we were heading towards the beach. When we arrived, he just wanted to ride in the sand. So we galloped for miles and miles. A tiny entourage of staff had trailed us initially, but the farther we rode, the fewer people followed. Eventually, we had the beach to ourselves. Dismounting, Holy Spirit walked to the water’s edge. I did the same. We stood looking out onto the ocean together, both holding our horse’s reins with one hand. Neither of us spoke for a while. I had nothing to say. Holy Spirit, on the other hand, seemed deep in thought.

“If you had to pick your favorite encounter this week—” he began.

“The wedding party where we were so comfortable around each other,” I interrupted. “I think that shifted me into a new comfort level with you. Plus, that may have been the only encounter in my time and

culture. I felt more comfortable in it.”

“Most awkward?” he grinned.

“Some I didn’t include in the book. Boy, you know how to push my limits when you’re trying to bring me into something new,” I told him.

“Funniest?” he continued.

“Funniest? You’ve barely been funny this week. You normally have me laughing every two seconds. I can’t think of anything funny,” I replied.

“Okay, you’re turn. Favorite?” I quizzed.

“One you cut from this edition,” he smiled sheepishly.

“Oh, bother. Most awkward?” I grilled.

“The ball, when you didn’t even want to look in my eyes,” he answered readily.

“One you took the most time planning?” I beamed.

“That’s easy. The one where I found you in your office—Disappearing Heart,” he answered.

“Really? I thought it would have been another one,” I replied. “Actually, my true favorite was probably the first one where I asked to touch your beard. I keep thinking about that, about you, about what it feels like to be in love with someone who doesn’t have a form and yet appears to me in different forms. I wonder how I can feel attracted to a spirit. But I’m a spirit, so I guess that makes sense. I don’t think I’ve ever allowed my spirit to be in love before.

“I feel like my spirit is coming alive in a new way,” I continued. “It’s like it’s waking up from childhood and going through adolescence. It notices you in a way it didn’t before. It’s attracted to you where before I just thought of you as a Friend or Helper. It’s capable of feeling things with you that it never would have felt before.

“It’s not a physical attraction. It doesn’t interfere with my marriage on earth. It’s for my spirit. Yet it’s also for all of me. I guess it’s led by my spirit, but it touches every part of me—my mind, my emotions, my body.

I guess my marriage on earth is led by my body but touches every part of me. I guess they complement each other? I'm trying to figure it all out."

"You're doing a great job, Katharine," Holy Spirit assured me. "I'm going through changes similar to yours. Sometimes I feel overwhelmed with thoughts or feelings about you that I never had before. At times I find myself talking to you like a teenage boy would, and later I can't believe I said those things. Other times we can interact like these changes aren't even happening. It is like a spiritual puberty. Our relationship—God's relationship with humanity—is changing. It's supposed to change. Just like kids are supposed to go through puberty. We'll be glad for what we have on the other side of it. You'll play an important part in breaking into this new thing."

"I guess this is farewell, but I don't want to leave you," I spoke softly. "Will it be harder to see you and stuff?"

"Come here, Katharine," he reassured me, extending his arm to me. "Do you think I would ever actually leave you? Do you think I could? We will walk together every night. I'll be in your every moment. We're never apart. Isn't that what you said?"

"Yes, but I didn't fully feel that way until this week," I confessed.

"I couldn't bear to actually leave," Holy Spirit smiled. "But I may pretend to if doing so will prompt you to wish me such tender goodbyes."

Standing there side-by-side at the water's edge, shoulders touching, our spirits started to entwine. I didn't realize it was happening until a soft, delightful feeling filled my insides. Like two lovers, we were kissing—not with our bodies, but with our spirits. Touching, weaving in and out of the other, our spirits were expressing their oneness. Part of me was sad that this special time was ending. Yet more and more of me was filling with contentment. Who would have thought that I could be in a vision with God, uniting my spirit with his in a way that released the same feeling that kissing did? How is it that two spirits could share comfort and affection in such a blissful way?

What does it feel like to be in love with God? It feels like my spirit is in love. It feels like all the romantic things I thought were reserved for my body and my mind can be enjoyed by my spirit, too.

Summary

All these mini-visions happened in less than one week. I could have written up pages and pages more, too. The whole time I felt constantly surrounded by love and devotion and attention. At almost any moment, I could feel his presence hovering around me. If I paid attention to it, I could see his face smiling lovingly at me. Or I could barely feel his hands gently reaching out to touch my face. Or I could see him opening his secret places to me. Or I could hear his voice speaking the sweetest words of affection.

“It’s hard to tell you how much your love means to me,” Holy Spirit confided one day, “because there aren’t words for it. That’s why sometimes you see pictures. Oh my, I’ve so enjoyed being in those pictures with you.”

“What did you enjoy about being in those scenes with me?” I asked.

“I love every little thing about you,” Holy Spirit explained. “That’s why I’ll take your hand or play with your curls. It’s the little things—I’m consumed by them. Do you feel my passion? It’s all for you. It’s a consuming fire. You’ll know what it means to be loved like that.”

As we were speaking, another scene popped into my mind. Like all the others the past few days, in this scene Holy Spirit looked like a young man. The outfits changed. The setting changed. His hair color and eye color and ethnicity and body type changed. But he was always young. He was always in love.

“Do you see me in this scene?” Holy Spirit asked. “Do you see me as a young man in love with you? That’s how I want you to know me right

now. Don't be afraid of these young men in love with you. That's the best way for me to show you my feelings.

"By growing this love," Holy Spirit continued, "we're opening up a channel into my heart that will be for all generations and all of creation."

"I want you to bring other people in this love," Holy Spirit told me later. "Our love isn't the kind to be kept for just the two of us. It's the kind that grows sweeter the more it's joined in."

"I'd like that, too," I told him. I knew that all these encounters weren't meant for me—not mostly. They were mainly for others. I could feel how strongly he wanted others to join in this love and how nervous he was about whether anyone else would embrace it.

I can't tell you whether or not being in love with God is right for you. But I can tell you what it's felt like for me so far. Being in love with God has been surprising, amazing, wonderful, scary, heart-pounding, and thrilling. But most of all it's felt like all of my dreams coming true. It's felt like wholeness mixed with joy mixed with the deepest kinds of pleasure. It's been more blissful, more wonderful, and taken far more courage than I ever imagined. If I had to sum it up in one sentence, I'd say being in love with God has become my reason for living. Nothing else matters.

Date Tips

1. Start with making a connection to God. Where is he in the vision? What is he wearing? What can you sense about his thoughts or feelings?
2. Look around the setting. Where are you? What details can you notice?
3. Pause every so often to use all your spiritual senses. What do you smell? Can you smell God's cologne? What can you hear? Are you touching anything? What else can you perceive?
4. Tips for making a heart-to-heart connection: look into God's eyes, step closer to God, make contact with him (e.g., dancing), listen for what he may be saying to you, ask God to remove or reveal blocks to receiving his love.

5. To make the encounter life-changing, I use these three steps:

Experience it. It doesn't matter if your encounter is in high definition or is barely perceivable. Enjoy it however it comes.

Retell it. Write it in a journal or record yourself recounting the experience. Retelling it does several things. First, it makes you think about the encounter from a different angle. By having to choose words to describe a feeling you had or a color you saw, you analyze it from a novel perspective. So you glean more from the encounter.

Second, often the encounter will reopen for me as I'm recording it. God will continue a conversation we were having. Or I'll notice a detail I had overlooked (or not been able to see) before. I'll gain more from the encounter for those reasons.

Third, by retelling the story, you live it again. Research shows that the brain can't tell the difference between experiencing something and remembering the experience. To your brain, retelling your heavenly encounter is like having the encounter all over again. It's like having a second (or third or fifteenth encounter). Retelling multiplies the effect of a single encounter.

Relive it. Reread or listen to the encounter you recorded again and again. Focus on how you felt in the encounter. For example, if I had a heavenly encounter where I felt incredibly loved by God, I will reread my encounter, focusing on the feeling the vision created inside me. I will keep rereading the encounter until the feeling I had in heaven is how I feel on earth. As I go about my day, if the feeling I had in the heavenly encounter fades, I'll read my encounter again. My goal is to take the feeling I had in heaven and bring it into my everyday life on earth.

Feelings shape thoughts. The best way to move into a new truth is to feel your way into it. For example, I can have the thought, "God loves me." But if I don't *feel* like God loves me, then the thought doesn't shape my reality. We live from how we feel, not from what we think. If I want to live feeling like I'm loved, then I must teach my body and emotions what it feels like to be loved--rather than stuffing my brain with declarations or Bible verses about how much God loves me.

That's why I focus on the feelings the heavenly encounter produced inside me. If you don't feel anything, think about how someone may feel in a setting like you're in. Remind yourself of how much God adores you and use anything from the encounter to spark a feeling inside you. Sometimes it takes time to *feel* loved in an encounter.

What makes a vision life-changing is rarely the initial impression it has on us. It's what we do with the encounter that matters. If we retell it and then re-*feel* it, the experience can lodge deep inside us, transforming us in permanent ways.

Oneness Exercises

Here are two fun exercises I've done to build oneness love with God. In Appendix E, find out how to do these exercises with me in an online video.

3 Minutes in Each Other's Eyes

1. Connect with whichever member of the Trinity you wish.
2. Intend to connect with God by staring into his eyes. You may do this in a vision or simply by intending to look in his eyes.
3. Set a timer for three minutes. Try to keep your attention and intention on staring into God's eyes for the full three minutes.

5 Things You Love

1. Connect with whichever member of the Trinity you wish.
2. Tell God five things that you love about him. (You can pick more than five things if you wish.)
3. Listen as God tells you five things that he loves about you. Listen however works best for you—journal, enter a vision, soak in this presence, etc.
4. You can share and listen in whatever order you wish. You could tell God your five things first, then listen to his list. Or you could take turns sharing.

5. You may wish to set a timer for five minutes. Go back to it later if you wish. You can do it as many times as you wish.

Online Resources

We've created several online resources to help you unlock oneness love with God. Each of them can be accessed on the website of Age to Come University, www.ATCUniversity.com.

ONLINE COURSE

Listen to Katharine personally guide you through this book in the corresponding online course. Enroll at Age to Come University, www.ATCUniversity.com.

GUIDED DATES

Katharine walks you through a couple of ways to have life-changing dates with God. This resource is part of the online course.

ONENESS EXERCISES

Katharine leads you through the exercises in Appendix D. This resource is part of the online course.

AUDIO RESOURCES

These resources are great to listen to repeatedly to help move these new truths deeper into your heart. Some people like to listen as they fall asleep at night to lodge the truth in their subconscious.

- **God's Romantic Thoughts About You.** Katharine reads book excerpts.

- **My Romantic Thoughts About God.** Katharine reads book excerpts.
- **Adventures in Romance.** Katharine reads Appendix A.
- **A Week with Holy Spirit.** Katharine reads Appendix B.

TUNING INTO ONENESS

Margaret Beam, co-founder of Age to Come University and founder of Tuning into Life, LLC (www.tuningintolife.com), leads you through recorded tuning fork sessions aimed at overcoming blocks to oneness and tuning your heart into your oneness with God.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Katharine Wang, M.A., J.D. is a co-founder of Age to Come University (www.ATCUniversity.com). She's earned a Masters in Theological Studies from Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary and a J.D. from Yale Law School. For her non-profit, Master the Bible Ministries (www.MBMmedia.org), Katharine has hosted a radio show, appeared on TV, and created fun Bible resources—including the free Kingdom Keys Bible App. With Age to Come University, she loves helping people unlock the divine nature God's placed inside each of us. She believes life's greatest treasure is living from the oneness we share with God.

unlock God's best.

Life-giving Bible resources

Master the Bible Ministries

www.MBMmedia.org



FREE Bible Activity Pages
www.mbmmedia.org/kkapp

FREE Kingdom Keys Bible App
Games, Learning, Fun.

DISCOVER YOUR IDENTITY

*Online classes
and resources to live
in the age to come*

ACTU provides what you need to gain the mindsets, skills, and wholeness that are part of the age to come. Courses include: Engaging heaven, Opening spiritual senses, Healing and wholeness, and so much more!

Visit our website and enroll in a course today!



AGE TO COME
UNIVERSITY

www.ACTUniversity.com

from Time Eternal the Word was
from the Beginning Face To Face with Us



Clocks



Mugs



Notebooks

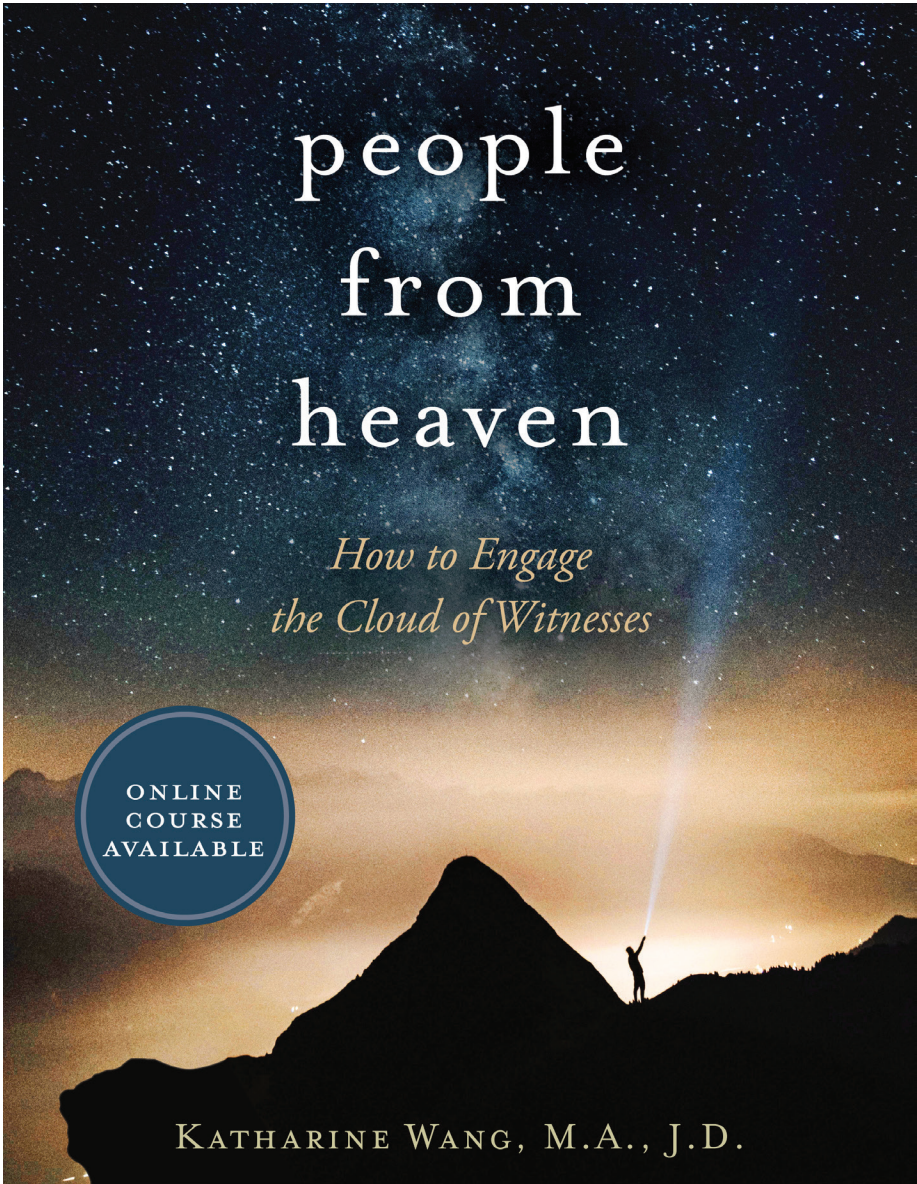


Shirts & more.

NEXT REALM DESIGN

[redbubble.com/people/nextrealm/shop](https://www.redbubble.com/people/nextrealm/shop)

Also by Katharine Wang



people
from
heaven

*How to Engage
the Cloud of Witnesses*

ONLINE
COURSE
AVAILABLE

KATHARINE WANG, M.A., J.D.



Let's Unlock the Life that's Inside of You!



life
Biofield Tuning

Create coherence in
your energy field with
frequency and sound



life
Mindset Coaching

Be transformed by
the renewing of your
mind



life
Emotional Healing

Remove the
blocks that are
holding you back



www.tuningintolife.com

To help remove barriers to intimacy and experience
greater levels of Oneness
access **FREE** Living Loved
Recorded Biofield Tuning Sessions
at
www.ATCUniversity.com

Want More?

This book unpacks the first layer of oneness love that is the foundation of oneness with God. There are two more layers of oneness love that focus on the unique bliss that flows from this love. If you'd like to explore more, contact Katharine at www.ATCUniversity.com for information about her Oneness Seminar.