

**Let's Fall in Love with God**  
**Testimonial: Developing Intimate Relationship**  
(as told and edited by Bob Clarkson)  
{ You can too! }

**Bob Clarkson's personal journey with God**

*Realizing that my sources of truth were 'self-trusted'* further exposed my "self-trust." I was raised in a God fearing home. I attended a church pastored by a Bible College professor in Michigan. And I was intent to please my family by committing my life to the church. I lived what looked like a very righteous life.

**A Personal Encounter**

However as an early teenager, I began to notice that I did not like to go to church. I did not want my parents or pastors to know this. I was, after all, the one who quoted large passages of scripture from memory and led in worship on Sundays. I knew something was missing from my relationship with God. Why did I not like church? I discovered that I did not like church, because I was in love with my reputation there, but not with the God who met me there each week. Well, God was about to blow me away.

**I Lied**

In the fall that year, our church held a revival meeting that lasted four days. I don't know why I

attended, but I did enjoy the messages and music. Being rather gregarious, I approached the Evangelist and Musician after the last meeting to thank them for coming. My pastor, of our very large church, put his arm around me and asked me, in front of the entire church and these two men of God, “And you are going to be a pastor too, aren’t you?” Being uncomfortable with this question, I squirmed my way out of this jam, with these words, “If that is what God wants, Pastor, yes, that’s what I will do.”

### **God Came In**

Later that night, home alone in my bedroom, I had a unique visitation. I did not hear an audible voice, but in my thoughts God spoke very clearly to me. He asked, “Did you tell your pastor that you would be a pastor also?” I blurted out, “Yes, I did.” Then God’s Spirit challenged me, “Did you mean that?” It quickly slipped through my lips, “Absolutely not!” “Oops,” I thought to myself, “I hope God does not strike me for that.”

### **True Repentance — I Changed My Mind**

Much to my surprise, God went silent as I pondered the impact of this dialog. Within a few moments I realized that if the God of the universe cared enough about me, to have this conversation with me, He must have a plan. Next I surprised myself with these words to God, “I did not mean it when I told the pastor

that I would be a pastor if You called me to it. But, I am telling You now, that I will do anything You ask, even if it is to become a pastor.”

### **New Direction**

Up to that point, I had expectations of becoming an engineer or scientist. But once I uttered those words of commitment to God, my heart flipped as it has only otherwise flipped when I fell in love with an earthly lover. From that day on, my love for God, compelled me into His service week after week for the rest of my days.

### **New Passion**

Being *born again* is like falling in love. Being in love changes everything. Being passionately in love causes one to do things more for the love of their significant other than for self. Since having been *born again* at fourteen, I committed my life to God. At the age of seventeen, I was called by God to the ministry. I followed God to Bible College and subsequent ordination to a pulpit ministry. From that point on, my life was in the orbit of intense service for God. However, I did not realize how *self-trusting* I would become. I also did not realize at that time that *intensity* for God and *intimacy* with God are radically different.

### **Stumbling Blocks**

Unfortunately, my extensive training in theology and commitment to be obedient to God and His Scriptures, produced in me an *intensity* for God that, once I left the ministry vocationally, compelled me to be one of the most intentional and committed layman in every church I attended. I taught, preached, participated in choirs, orchestras, men's singing groups, traveling musical groups, led in a Boy Scout Troop, drove buses, led hand bell choirs and nearly anything else that was presented to me. For all of this history of 40 years, I believed that the great commission was about *converting people to Christianity*. I thought I was a really successful business man, blessed by God with prosperity, popularity and power. All of this proved to be a stumbling block to what God truly wanted to do with and in me.

### **Transformation Not Information**

One morning in church, while sitting in my pew, the fourth one from the front, I was staring at the front wall. All of a sudden I was overwhelmed by a sense of failure as a Christian. I had been born again for 40 years, intentional about evangelism, but could not remember the name of a single person that I had personally brought to saving faith in Jesus! I told God "This *fortress* mentality is not working. I am leaving this *fortress* where the *choir* is preaching to the *choir*. Very few are finding Jesus here. I

am leaving the church, but I am taking Jesus with me as I am not going to give up my salvation.” He told me to stay in church and He would help me find what I wanted. I did not know what that meant at the time, but I intended to find out.

### **New Places, New Sources**

God sent me to several new places and sources. These would inform my soul with new understandings of what I needed to know and to do in order to find true satisfaction in my faith. Several months after this cry for help, God introduced me to an individual whose very presence revealed to me what I was truly seeking. After a women’s conference all of the women went through a reception line to meet their speaker. My wife invited me to come along and meet the speaker. So when I stepped up to meet the speaker I thanked her for her teaching and how much it had meant to my wife over the past few years. Then I hugged her. As we embraced these words came out of my mouth, “I feel like I am hugging Jesus here!” I did not say those words to her. But in that moment, I knew where I was going and what I wanted from God.

### **I Want It! I Want It! I Want it!**

As I drove home from that conference, I said to God, “I want what that woman has. I wanted to someday be so tender and intimate with Jesus, that someone might

be in my arms and feel like they were the arms of Jesus!” This began a quest of 2 years to find out how to become intimate with God. Within 2 months God sent me a mentor. He was a man from Jordan, whose Middle Eastern mindset presented a completely different understanding of God. God told me to submit completely to his authority. I did so. And about 18 months later I was well into a journey of absolute abandon to intimacy with God.

### **Metamorphosis of Intimacy**

John Henry Alan wrote a book which I helped him publish which pretty much sums up what I learned and how God transformed my experience of Him. My intensity for God and ecstasies in Him turned into a deeply passionate intimacy with Him. I exchanged extensive amounts of relative truth for absolute truth. And my intensities are now laced with the love of God rather than the love of myself or my service for God. My journey introduced me to several new sources of spiritual revelation and inspiration. I began to seek out men and women who were ahead of me in this journey. And my love for God has been on the rise for over twenty years now. The poem of Madame Guyon, “My Lord, How Full of Sweet Content,” now resonates with my heart.

### **Not A Prophet, but A True Mystic**

Brother Lawrence discovered this in the 17th century. He lived moment by moment believing that Christ was in him and ever present in his heart and mind. He was praying all the time. And his prayers were unlike all others. He never prayed for prosperity or healing or any other selfish things. He simply conversed with God about whatever he was doing. He trusted God completely to help him with whatever tasks he was assigned, even washing pots and pans in the kitchen which was his primary job.

In the spirit of Brother Lawrence, I have exchanged my pursuit of God from “carpe diem,” wherein I tried to “seize the day,” to “carpe momentum,” wherein I “seize the moments,” every one of them in my day, and bring God into each of them. I yield control to God in every decision and action. It was this avid pursuit of God and an equally avid determination to lose all interest in my natural selfish pursuits (prosperity, popularity and power) that affected transformation in my soul. I now experience a constant peace and contentment even in my most trying circumstances and difficult experiences of life.

### **My Wilderness of Wandering**

I was personally, like many Christians, very intentional about pursuing God and trying in every way possible to serve and please Him. Yet, it seemed that I

never quite met His expectations of me. After 40 years of this, I said to God. “This fortress mentality, where we come to church week after week, actually several times a week, is not working. I’m leaving this church but I’m taking Jesus with me.” In other words, I had seen way too little fruit in my life.

### **Making Points — Making No Difference**

It was not about moral failure, as I was pretty respectable in that area. But if my Christianity was only making a point but no difference, it was useless. Yet, I still wanted to be close to God and grow to be useful to Him. So instead of preaching to the choir, that is hunkering down with a bunch of Christians in a *fortress* called a church, reinforcing what we believed in common and little more, I was asking God to show me why my faith felt so disappointing, almost futile, so much of the time. Fortunately, God replied to my proclamation that I was leaving the community of faith, “I want you to stay in this church, with these people. I will show you what is missing in your life which has brought you to this point of dissatisfaction.”

### **Exposure to Deep Affection**

Over the next few years, God introduced me to several new people, in communities that were different from my own. And to top it off, He brought a sorely



needed mentor into my life to help me experience a radical transformation within. God also brought me into the orbit of a Bible teacher whose passion for God was so great, that he wept when he read the Word of God while leading Bible Studies. His affection was so deep that you could almost see his heart beating in his chest. His love for God was so intense that his shirt was drenched with the perspiration of his passionate desire for God.

### **Pride Precludes Intimacy**

Once exposed to the deeply passionate love of another man for his God, I knew what was missing in my life and what I wanted to find at any cost. And the cost was immense. I went, in less than a year, from riches to rags as God brought me down to bankruptcy. Then, God performed miracle after miracle to restore more than had been lost. Meanwhile, and only by way of humility, which was to submit completely to the authority of my mentor, I began to see how proud I had been and still was in so many ways. I immediately realized that I had never submitted to any authority except God. I also realized that it was my pride, and only my pride, which had kept me from the intimacy with God and the passionate desire that I wanted to have for Him. God revealed that until I could love Him more than my most significant other on earth, I would never become intimate with Him.

### **No Longer Possessed**

Once I reached the point where I was no longer obsessed with my own possessions, successes, achievements, relationships with people, concern for my own reputation and was happy to sit in the back row, anonymously, instead of standing behind the lectern, I felt a peace so deep, that it eludes words to express it. As the seat of control of my life was finally and completely given to God, I was able to relax completely in every circumstance.

I began to be aware of God's presence in me constantly. I began to actively turn every decision, many every day, over to His management. And I have not experienced anxiety for more than a few moments in any decision before I relax in His control. Since it has lasted for over 20 years now, I believe it will last until my last breath.

My prayer for you is that you have read "Let's Fall in Love with God" by my friend John Henry and have discovered new understandings about your life with God which will transform you into the most passionately intimate love of God ever. God IS Love. And He made that abundantly clear by the sacrifice of His Only Begotten Son to make it possible for you and me to become united to the Holy Spirit of God now and forever! And to quote John Henry, "Love Like Jesus Loves!" When you do, love like He loves, you will do what He did, always!