

# YOUR LIFE IN THE **RED ZONE**

## INTIMACY WITH GOD

### **REPLAY**

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You really like Coach. All the players do, but some of them spend more time with Coach than others. They laugh together with Coach, they have dinner with Coach, and they have even taken Coach out to the movies.

You used to laugh this off, but then you noticed how those who spend the most time with Coach are improving their game. Interesting. They aren't all the best players, but they've shown more improvement in the last season than the rest of you. Maybe you should think about this one.

### **GAME BOOK**

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Knowing God and spending time with Him allows you to play better for Him. Having such a relationship is called intimacy with God. It has three parts: knowledge, love, and obedience.

The greatest prayer of St. Paul was that his spiritual children would know grow in the knowledge of Christ (Ephesians 1:17,18; 3:19). He did not want just a knowledge of what God is and isn't. He spoke of a personal knowledge that would overcome doctrine alone. He spoke of being within the One who lives and moves and gives us being.

Most people don't want to know God. They want to know *about* God. Even though sound doctrine is good to know, it pales before the comparison of truly knowing God in His beauty.

The second part of intimacy is loving God. God is love, and He desires us to love Him. His love was such that He made a way for fallen man to return to Him. No human could do it. It required Jesus, both God and man, to restore the relationship and make the way for others to follow.

If we love Jesus, we will keep the commandments (John 15:10). Obedience is the third aspect of intimacy. You cannot truly love God unless you obey Him. Because when you disobey, you are saying that you know more than He does. But we can't because God knows everything.

Whenever God tells us to avoid something, He isn't trying to steal our fun. No, He knows that what we want is contrary to our spiritual health. It would only give us short-term gain. In car terms, He wants to give us a shiny, new Corvette in the showroom when we are trying to grab the Pinto as it chugs by.

Even though this relationship has a wonderful reward, few people today seek it. It requires time. It requires people to choose to set aside their own schedules and priorities to wrap themselves in Him. We must take the time to pray, study His word, and worship Him at the very minimum. Throughout the ages, Christians have found other ways to build their relationship along with these three, but these three have always been, and will always be, at the core.

### **TAKE-AWAY**

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Every Christian should seek intimacy with God. Intimacy is when we come to know God more, love Him better, and follow Him closely. True intimacy requires all three pieces. You can have any one without the others or even any two, but that will not bring about intimacy. When we find intimacy with God, we fulfill the commandment of Christ given in Mark 12:30, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." Building intimacy with God requires first of all our time.