

Communicate With God Together

Listen through Bible study together.

**Deut 6:6-7; 2 Kings 23:2-3; Ps 100:2-3;
Acts 17:11; Acts 20:32; 2 Tim 3:16-17**

Talk to God in prayer together.

**1 Chron 5:20; 2 Chron 7:14; Matt 6:9-13; Matt 18:19;
Mark 11:24; John 14:13-14; John 15:7-8; Acts 12:5-7;
Heb 4:15-16; James 4:2-3; 1 Peter 3:12**

Show love together through obedience.

Luke 6:46; John 14:21; 1 John 3:24; 1 John 5:3

Let's now work on expanding your communication with God, especially together with other Christians. One way to look at communication with God is that it has three parts. There is listening to God through knowing what He has written to us in the Bible. Second, there is the two-way communication of prayer. And, third, there is our communication to God through obedience that shows we love Him.

Better communication deepens relationships. We all know how conversation is much easier with a long-time friend who will understand what we mean by what we say. In heaven, when we commune with God in one way or another, communication will be more adequate, functional, and enjoyable if we have earlier developed communication with God through Bible study, prayer and obedience now. Developing our communication with God now will prepare us for a closer relationship with God in heaven.

Communicating with God is difficult in this life before heaven, but that difficulty can give us stronger spirits for deeper communication with God in heaven. Presently we have to deal with the struggles of ordinary life and try to find time to read and meditate on Scripture. With regard to prayer, so many concerns in our minds and so much disarray surrounding us make it difficult to concentrate on talking to God and listening to Him, a still, small voice possible to discern in our minds if we can block out the static of everyday life. And, although we want to show God how much we love Him through obedience, we often can only find time for simple moral obedience rather than the sacrificial love that is the divine love represented by the Greek word "agape".

The difficulty now with sin opposing our communication with God will develop the ability of our spirits to concentrate on communicating with God. This will give us greater communication strength in heaven where there will be no distraction from sin.

That is why we need the power of close, intimate, Christian friendships, families and marriages committed strongly to Jesus Christ. Because God said to the first man Adam, recorded in Genesis 2:18, that Adam needed a helper, we know that anything difficult that God asks us to do, any hard spiritual opportunity, needs help from other believers. Adam and Eve needed each other's help to live God's way for total happiness and contentment – and they forgot to help each other. As a result, they left us with sin inside of us and evil outside in our environments and cultures. Too often we make the same mistake, in

this case studying the Bible, praying and offering our obedience alone, without the significant involvement of other Christians that can maximize results.

Heaven is all about God, so increasing our ability to communicate with Him is very important. We want to go there with more natural, spontaneous and automatic ability to learn from what God will tell us there in heaven, which will be far more than the Bible contains.

The last verse in the Gospel of John reads, *“Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.”*

We also want to go to heaven with increased skill in prayer, in talking with God. Making prayer requests within His will and listening to what He wants to say to our spirits for daily life will make life in heaven more natural. There in heaven, the sense of harmony with God and its accompanying joy will be enhanced.

Last, we should want to go to heaven more prepared to show our love for God by doing things His way. Of course, we will all do things His way, but the quality that will be different for each of us is the depth of our desire to please Him and bring Him joy through our obedience.

Before going on, let me clarify that Bible study, prayer and obedience when we are alone is very necessary. But so are the three ways of communication with God with other Christians, especially for larger things. For thousands of years, people have considered together content in the Bible to squeeze out more and more of what God is saying. Most believers would want more than their individual prayers for someone they love who is seriously ill. And, tough obedience is almost always too much for one individual Christian alone.

Nevertheless, most of your Bible study, prayer, and obedience will be done by you alone.

To that, let’s add on significant communication with God with other Christians with whom you are close and can be open and honest.

We have to realize that when we individually study a Bible passage, we can distort it for a variety of reasons. Perhaps we do not want to hear God challenging our way of living, so we adopt an inaccurate meaning to what God is saying in Scripture. But it is just as likely that we do not have specific life experiences that would help us see what God is saying.

We need to be able to drop our guard and study the Bible with Christians we are close to and trust so that we can safely acknowledge that we don’t know the Bible thoroughly. Then, we can express doubts and questions that stimulate seeking God’s answers in Scripture. Many different views of the meaning of God’s words puts us to searching for the meaning that is consistent with the rest of the Bible. Since these relationships last over time, those in a believer’s Christian Inner Circle can help them remember what has been learned in the past that God is saying in the pages of Scripture that have been studied together.

There is great value in praying with those in your Christian Inner Circle. First, let’s consider the value in making our requests to God together. Jesus said as recorded in Matthew 18, verses 19 and 20, *“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”*

It is very wise to bring our desires to our Christian friendships, marriages and families for examination. A Christian alone can present his or her request to God and the Lord will certainly hear. However, Christians together with Jesus can take a closer look at the need and refine it so that it more closely represents what the Lord wants the request to be. God cannot grant something He does not want or

something He knows is not in a person's best interest.

A husband and wife can discuss the content of an important prayer before presenting it to God as a request. They can first ask Jesus what He likes or would change about the prayer being drafted. Then, two hearts with Jesus can present a united front, paving the way for God's fulfillment.

A whole family discussing important things to request through prayer should bring Jesus into the discussion. The family as a whole needs many things for which God can provide. They also want things. But, before asking the Lord for them, they should allow any family member to bring up why God might or might not want them to request such a thing. Individual family members would also be wise to run their prayer requests by the family for confirmation, correction or alteration.

Then there is the other aspect of prayer, letting God speak to us.

Listening for God's quiet voice is best accomplished together, with more ears focused on the task. Christians in their friendships, families and marriages would do very well to set aside times of silence with the purpose of hearing God speak.

Training in how to listen can never be valued too much. But, listening deeper than the words spoken, what some call "listening with the inner ear", must be practiced and developed. Here in a sinful environment with the old self still active inside of us there is a tendency to listen to ourselves more than to others. How often, when someone is speaking about something, are we preoccupied with what we think or how we want to respond? We are not carefully listening to what they are trying to communicate.

Listening more accurately to God with the help of our closest, trusted Christian friends, family members and spouses gains us more listening power. We can understand more accurately what God is saying to us when prayer is listening for God together.

We need one another's help to listen to God when sin surrounds us. The ability to carefully listen for God above earthly distractions will go with us to heaven. We will find that we have a greater ability to recognize God's voice, not over sinful distractions but over the many wonderful diversions of a perfect heaven. His voice will be all around us to hear at the deeper level allowed by our previously-trained ears.

If we are standing on the edge of a pond, can we hear all of what is going on, or are our senses limited to hearing only a few of the intriguing sounds. Do we hear the frogs, crickets, wind, lapping of the water against the bank and birdsong all together? Can we take in the complete experience?

Everything in heaven will speak of God. Sounds will praise Him and silence will praise Him. Do you want to hear it all?

You will grow in heaven to be able to hear more and more, but not as well as those who learned to hear God before death in the middle of unholy distractions and interruptions.

Last, let's talk about obedience as the way to communicate our love for God. Jesus, as recorded in John 14:21, said: *"Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."*

Christians need help from those in their Christian Inner Circles to communicate love for God by obedience. God is the High King of Heaven and for all that He has done for us through Jesus, we should love Him with more than sentimental words. Obedience is what Jesus identified as true love for God.

We need to help one another obey God and live the way He wants us to. And, we need to help one another until we obey out of love rather than duty. We must help one another find the joy in obedience.

We need to help one another get a glimpse of God's joy when he sees His people together in love with Him.

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There is more about communicating with God at our website ChristiansTogether.org. Just go down the list of the Togethers and click on "Communicate with God Together".

Prayer to Embrace this Together

Dear Lord, I and those in my Christian Inner Circle will need Your help to grow our spirits to be in communication with You more regularly and build a more personal relationship with You. Help us to yield to the work of the Holy Spirit for all of us to give You more glory in the way we communicate with You in Bible study, prayer and obedience.

Please help us all to become more like Jesus in knowing the Scriptures, being constant in prayer with You, and doing what You want us to do. Help me and those in my Christian Inner Circle to be in the Bible together, talk to You in prayer together, and obey You together.

May our lives worship You more because we value learning about You and what You want us to know, value talking with You often, and value every chance to obey You when it does not come natural and automatic.

Make us strong in Your power to defeat the devil by ignoring him and, instead, communicating with You about evil. Help us to know Your ways very well that we might not adopt the evil one's ways. Help our Christian Inner Circles to pray against Satan and those spirits under his power. And, give us opportunities to obey You and defeat the devil's attempts to draw us away from You and decrease our love for You.

Help us all to prepare for heaven by growing more completely to be in communication with You so that when we arrive in Your home, we will have an advanced relationship with You. May all of us in our Christian conversations and activities be quite aware of Your presence and learn from You, talk with You about what is going on, and express our love through obedience to Your ways of living.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.