



---

# THE LIFE-GIVING WOMAN

---



OCTOBER 2019 NEWSLETTER

As we continue to think about what it means to be a life-giving woman, I want to go a layer deeper and talk about allowing ourselves to be known by God. Yes, He already knows us because He created us! But there is a heart posture we can have before the Lord, so as to invite Him into deeper places of our hearts.

I think of David when he said, “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!” (Psalm 139:23).

I recently wrote about what [the best kind of friend](#) looks like, and boiled down, I think it’s one who knows God. But knowing God isn’t one-sided. When I speak of knowing God, what I mean is that there is an active, growing, reciprocal relationship with Him.

**The degree to which we seek to know God and allow ourselves to be known by God will directly affect our ability to relate to others.** And, if we truly want to be life-givers, we need to give time, thought, and attention to what it means to have a dynamic, reciprocal relationship with the Lord.

We can know God and keep it pretty surfacey. But it’s similar to a surface-level relationship with another person. If the deepest we can go with another person is the weather, it’s a pretty shallow relationship and probably doesn’t mean very much to us. It demonstrates a lack of knowing one another.

And so, there’s a lesser degree of enjoyment, shared experiences, and understanding of one another. And I don’t know about you, but the shallow relationships aren’t the ones that I gravitate toward or spend much time with. Don’t get me wrong, we don’t need to plummet to the depths of our souls with every person we meet. Shallow relationships have their place—the bagging guy at the grocery store doesn’t need (or want!) you and I to pour out our hearts to him.

The knowing of someone is layered. And, while we'll have varying degrees of relationships with people, the Lord intended us to know Him on *all* the levels of depth that He can be known. He wants to know what we think about the weather, but He also wants us to share with Him the deepest parts about us.

*"The friendship of the LORD is for those who fear him..."*

(Psalm 25:14a)

If we want to move beyond a shallow relationship with the Lord, **we must first make the choice to move beyond**. Depth of relationship doesn't just happen; it requires intentionality and work. The Lord is always at work to move toward us, and just as in any healthy relationship, a reciprocal movement toward Him is required of us.

Maybe you don't feel like you can move forward, or maybe you don't know how to move forward. In the link above, I explained that affection isn't a feeling, but an **intentional bending toward** another. So even in times of not feeling like it, times of fear, or of apathy, we can still bend toward the Lord by asking Him to give us desire for Him.

Goodness, *this is an act of effort* toward depth of relationship with the Lord, and He doesn't overlook it or take it lightly! No, He is indeed working through it.

### **One Way to Go Deeper: Adoration**

About a decade ago, several life events collided to create the perfect environment for the Lord to begin doing a deep work in my heart. All the right ingredients were present—multiple transitions, a few losses, hardship, hormonal fluctuations. I was a hot mess, struggling on so many levels.

Well, around this time, the Lord gave me a new friend who gently disciplined me, and she led me straight to the Lord. She taught me how to begin a lifestyle of practicing adoration because she knew that if I become like what I behold, I'd better get my eyes up and onto the most Beautiful One there is to behold.

I don't know about you, but my mind and my heart can get so distracted from the reality of Who Jesus **is**. Rather than intentionally taking my thoughts captive, my mind can easily turn into a vortex of self-flagellation or despondent feelings, and I can quickly spiral down. It looks different for all of us. Some of us are worst-case scenario people, some of us try to control or manipulate, and some of us just escape.

*Can you hear how self-centered this is, rather than Christ-centered?*

But consider what happens when we take time to adore God—when we intentionally lift our eyes to the One we were made to behold, the One who was intended to occupy our thoughts.

When we turn our mind from ourselves and our circumstances to *Him*, we behold beauty. We behold *glory*—and friends, we were meant to behold His glory and to *bask* in it. When we do this, we get to **know** Him.

He is *worthy* of our adoration--of our thoughts, of our words, of our gaze, of our song and even our dance--and what's actually happening when we adore is a beautiful transaction with the Lord.

As we gaze on Him, breathing in His Word, and exhaling praise and adoration, He begins to rewire our insides. He renews our mind, re-wallpapers the walls of our hearts. He gives us a new framework from which to operate, where *He* is preeminent. He transforms us. That's a relational process! One in which the two parties involved have the opportunity to know one another quite deeply.

When we adore, we tell Him who He is **with His Word**, while at the same time we remind our own hearts of who He is. *Adoration is war*. It's a fight, is it not, to think on things that are lovely and pure? To believe that God is who He says He is, even when it doesn't feel like it?

It's a fight to keep a tender heart before the Lord when life gets hard, or maybe when life is just ho-hum. And yet, we're commanded to. And I'm convinced this is a tool *and* a weapon we must use *often*. And, as we do, not only do we know Him more, but we open ourselves up to Him in a similar manner to David. It's not so different from when we open our hearts to another treasured to us and tell them what we see in them. It's a bit vulnerable, is it not? But it yields further depth of intimacy.

It might feel laborious at times, if I'm honest. There are times when I go to the Lord, verse in hand, and not at all feeling like I believe what I am saying to Him about who He is. But, I do it because I really believe He's worthy of it, and it's doing something in my heart. That every single time I go to Him, it's not in vain.

"To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies exult over me. Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame; they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous" (Psalm 25:1-3).

And I'm honest with Him. *"I don't really believe this, Father...please help me to believe this about you."*

I cling to verses like Psalm 34:5, "Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be put to shame."

And, it may feel awkward, but I want to encourage you to lean into the awkwardness with expectation. There is not a right way to adore. Your words don't need to be eloquent or long. You can say a sentence or even sing a song if that's what the Lord puts in your heart. Write it out. He delights in all of it.

And don't be afraid of silence, because it's *there* that we can hear from the Lord (I can't wait to talk about silence in the coming months!).

Adoration, for me, has been transformational. Secret moments stacked on secret moments, stacked on weeks, and months, which have now become nearly a decade of the habit of adoration. If you keep a habit that long, you're bound to know the One you're adoring more and more. (And bound to be changed in the process)

### **A Practical Tip or two...**

I have five children, which means I live life tired. I carve out just enough margin in my days to keep time with the Lord guarded, and one or two other things. I don't want to miss meeting Him, and my time with Him always begins with adoration. Can I encourage you to pick a meeting time with the Lord that you treat with utmost importance? Maybe set an alarm on your phone, or get to bed early enough to start your day with Him.

But also, head over to Sara's blog to print out her guided [monthly adoration sheets](#). This is what I use every day! Print it, cut it out, and glue it in your journal, or put it in a page protector.

Taking a few minutes to set yourself up for success will go a long way in developing a new discipline that I don't think you'll regret. We'll be spending eternity adoring the Lord, why not begin practicing now?

### **I'd love to hear from you.**

Does this seem awkward or uncomfortable, or do you already have this habit? I'm praying for you as you read this email!

And as usual,

### **A few favorites from October...**

- **Podcast:** [By Faith hosted by Christine Hoover](#)- Garrett Kell on Hiding Sin and God's Goodness to Bring it to Life – This is a powerful episode with a painful, yet hopeful testimony of a pastor who had a dramatic conversion, but went on to hide a secret sin from people in his life.
- **Book:** I'm currently reading Robert & Nancy Wolgemuth's new book, [You Can Trust God to Write Your Story](#). If you love stories of God's faithfulness, you'll appreciate this book! I've cried my way through a good part of it (this is an Amazon affiliate link!).
- **Video:** [The Running Pastor](#) – I loved this! And nodded my head at some points, as a runner. 😊 (Let me know if you're inspired to take up running after watching this 😊 "In the middle of the cold North Atlantic, craggy mountaintops rise straight up out of the sea. And it's here, in the rugged Faroe Islands, that

local pastor Sverri Steinholm tends to his flocks. Plural. Born the son of a shepherd, Sverri's now a pastor. The job can get heavy, so to clear his mind and feed his soul, he runs over these weatherworn cliffs. For Sverri, trail running is spiritual."

Warmly,

Kelly



**kellytarr.com**

You received this email because you signed up on our website or made a purchase from us.

[Unsubscribe](#)