

# Adventuring with God

By Jeanne Hedrick

September 2008

## God is Easy to Live With

A.W. Tozer once wrote that God is not easy to please, but He is easy to live with. The longer I serve Him and grope towards understanding Him better, the more I can see the wisdom in that statement.

I know that He has high standards for me. For my own good and for the good of His kingdom, He wants me to obey His commands. No excuses, no compromises, no settling for a less than valiant effort to seek His glory and purposes for me. My own striving won't bring me to this place of excellence – this is God's work through the power of the Holy Spirit. But I do have a role to play in its completion. I must not hinder or thwart what He wants to do in me. I must cooperate in His work of sanctification.

I'm glad God is not affected by my whining and pity parties. He doesn't relent and say, like some overly indulgent parent, "That's okay. Maybe my demands were too high and I was a little unrealistic about what your capabilities are. You can have your way, after all." No, He holds me to the standards for which His Son purchased me. I have every spiritual resource necessary to become like Jesus in the way I live out my life:

*"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires" (2 Peter 1:3-4).*

Like any good parent, His expectations for us are high. He doesn't want us to settle for less than our very best. But He isn't harsh or scolding towards us as we pursue our quest to become holy, as many think. Actually, He's easier to live with than anyone else you'll ever know. The reason is simple: He loves us without condition and without limit.

When we look at the early days of covenant between God and Israel, He makes how He feels about their relationship abundantly clear. *"The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. The Lord did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the Lord loved you..."* (Deuteronomy 7:6-8).

He knew they weren't numerous, powerful, or exceptionally holy people. It was in their weakness that He chose them, so that He could show to the whole world how powerful He was – capable of transforming a rag-tag group of nobodies into something glorious in the earth.

He doesn't expect us to be great, either. At least not when we enter into covenant with Him. He asks only that we be honest about our condition and we look to Him to supply what we need to please Him. It's when we begin to trust in our own goodness and become independent in our hearts that we come under His censure and discipline. As long as we are childlike in our dependence upon Him and grateful for His mercy and grace, we can enjoy a rich, ongoing fellowship with Him – friend to friend.

That the holy (God) can carry on a relationship with the unholy (that would be me) is one of the great mysteries of spiritual life. But God assures us that this is possible because the blood of Christ makes us acceptable in His sight. Oh, how wondrous is the gift of salvation! We should be continually thanking Jesus and praising Him for His amazing sacrifice and what it purchased for us!

Because we are accepted in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:6), we can relax as we walk out our individual lives of faith. We can put away our ideas of a cosmic judge eager to lower his gavel every time we

fail to measure up to his standard. "Three strikes and you're out!" will not be thundered at us out of heaven. Like any obedient child seeks to gain the approval of the parent he loves and depends on, we will want to please our heavenly Father and do our best to live up to His standards for us. But He isn't looking for something we are incapable of giving: perfection in word and deed.

In all the ordinary pursuits of life we can be ourselves. We don't need to twist ourselves into self-conscious shadows of reality for fear of offending Him. Think about Gideon, Samson, David, and Peter, to name just a few less-than-perfect disciples. Yet they earned their place in history because they were willing to be used, in whatever way, to glorify God. Let's face it. If He had to wait to accomplish something on the earth until He had a perfectly mature and godly instrument, nothing would ever get done.

I like what Jonathan said to his young armor bearer when they set out to take on the Philistines in 1 Samuel 14. He knew that victory would come from the Lord's hand and that the adequacy or inadequacy of the human vessel was not as important as just being available for the Lord to use. *"Come, and let us go over. It may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few"* (v. 6).

Aren't you glad that our heavenly Father is easy to live with? He may have high expectations for us, but that is because He loves us. He has made sure that we have everything we need to become our best in Him. So what's holding us back? Let's shake off our sense of defeat and self-consciousness and go for it. God can take care of everything else – all He asks of us is to trust Him and obey Him. Pretty simple, huh?

---

"There is a great difference between having 'company' and having a friend in the house. The friend we can treat as a member of the family, but company must be entertained. God is not satisfied until there exists between Him and His people a relaxed informality that requires no artificial stimulation. Complete trust needs no words of assurance. Such words have long ago been spoken and the adoring heart can safely be still before God."

A.W. Tozer, *That Incredible Christian* (Harrisburg, Penn: Christian Publications, 1964), 121.