

## Four Hindrances to Enjoying God

### A. Looking for ultimate satisfaction other places

1. Explanation: Because of the fall our sinful nature directs us to seek heart satisfaction in any place but God himself. Whatever we look to for soul satisfaction become idols.

- Work provides us with a treasure chest of intoxicating rewards:
  - Recognition from coworkers
  - Positions and titles that build our self esteem
  - Authority over others that makes us feel significant
  - Financial rewards that let us wear things, travel places, and buy things that make us feel good
- Immoral sexual gratification provides fleeting pleasures along with false intimacy

### 2. Scripture

- *“You were made for God, and He is the answer to your deepest longings”* I Corinth 6:13
- *“Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods.”* Ps. 63:4-5
- *“You will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasure at your right hand”* Psalm 16:11
- *“You shall have no other gods before me.”* Exodus 20:3
- *“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes, and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the father, but from the world.”* I John 2:15ff
- *“You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world is hatred towards God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.”* James 4:4

*We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered to us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.* CS Lewis "The Weight of Glory"

### B. Guilt

1. Explanation: Guilt blocks all relationships. Only the offering of forgiveness and the receiving of forgiveness along with genuine repentance can fully restore the relationship.

- God, in his mercy forgives the sins of those who are in Christ

- If we do not really understand grace, our shame will cause us to hesitate to come to God
- We will experience distance in our relationship with God if we are harboring pockets of sinful behavior patterns that we refuse to give up.

2. Scripture:

- "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men." Rom. 1:18
- "When I kept silent about my sin my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer." Ps 32:3-4
- "Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice." Psalm 51:7-8

**C. Inability to grasp the truth of our adoption as sons**

1. Explanation: Many men have grown up with fathers who have been absent or emotionally distant, leaving them with no pattern for relating emotionally to their heavenly father. Initially, they will have trouble building a personal relationship with God, but if they persevere, the doctrine of their adoption into God's family as sons will become very precious, as will the privilege of calling God, "Abba."

2. Scripture:

- *"For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him, we cry **Abba, Father.**"* Rom. 8:15-16
- *"Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. **Abba, Father, he said, everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me...**"* Mark 14:35-36
- *"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God! And that it is what we are!"* I John 3:1

***"Adoption is a FAMILY idea, conceived in terms of LOVE, and viewing God as FATHER. In adoption, God takes us into his family and fellowship, and establishes us as his children and the heirs. Closeness, affection, and generosity are at the heart of the relationship. To be right with God the JUDGE is a great thing, but to be loved and cared for by God the FATHER is a greater."***

J. I. Packer, Knowing God

**D. Busyness**

1. Explanation: No relationship can grow without frequent time together.

- In a culture dominated by secularism, our focus is constantly riveted to the outer, physical world, not the inner, spiritual, world.
- You always make time for what is important to you
- We feel like our heavy responsibilities are an obstacle. The irony is that Jesus prioritized our responsibilities and the very highest is to love the Lord our God with all our heart.
- All of life is about relationships. We know that, first, because God is the ultimate relational being, existing as a perfect love relationship (God is love) among the 3 persons of the trinity—God the Father, God, the Son, and God, the Holy Spirit. His relational fingerprints are all over the universe. Second, God summarizes our covenantal responsibilities in relational terms: (vertically) love the Lord your God, and (horizontally), love your neighbor as yourself.
- All relationships die when they are neglected.

## 2. Scripture:

- *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.”* Matthew 22:37-38
- *“If you call the Sabbath a delight and the LORD’s holy day honorable, and if you honor it by not going your own way and not doing as you please or speaking idle words, THEN YOU WILL FIND YOUR JOY IN THE LORD.”* Is. 58:13-14

From the “Forging Bonds of Brotherhood” website: [forgingbonds.org](http://forgingbonds.org)