

Read Ebook {PDF EPUB} He Loves Me! The Relationship God Has Always Wanted with You by Wayne Jacobsen



c. God wants to have a personal relationship with you!

Throughout God's Word, God is depicted as a God who wants a relationship with His people. He is the one pursuing that relationship. Just like a young man desperately in love with the girl of his dreams will do anything he can to spend time with that lovely girl, God pursues us, hoping He can spend time with us. Read the following texts, and discover God's hunger to get to know His bride:

Deut 7:7-8 ♦ The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. ♦ NKJV.

If God was not pursuing a relationship with Israel, I have no idea why He would have freed them from the house of bondage in Egypt. God loves His people, and this is the major reason why He freed the Israelites from that terrible yoke in Egypt. Today as well, God loves us and wants to free us from any bondages in our life. All we need to do is agree to enter into a relationship with our Heavenly Father. I can guarantee you that it works. I have experienced this first hand in my life. God is faithful!

Prov 8:17 ♦ I love those who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me. ♦ NKJV.

What a powerful promise from a God who wants to have a relationship with you and me.

Zeph 3:17 ♦ The LORD your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing. ♦ NKJV.

We are never alone! God wants to have intimacy with us.

John 3:16 ♦ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ♦ NIV.

Rom 5:8 ♦ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ♦ NKJV.

John 15:13-17 ♦ Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another. ♦ NKJV.

The greatest proof that God wants to have intimacy with us is found in these texts! God came Himself down from heaven to re-establish that relationship with us. Sin had brought a horrible separation between us and God (Isaiah 59:2 ♦ But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear").

We chose a path of self-destruction, but God cares so much for us that He made it possible for us to get to know Him again as our Father and Redeemer.

Please note that Jesus' command to all of His followers is to demonstrate that kind of love, God's love, to the world, by loving one another. Again relationship is stressed here.

Rom 8:35-39 ♦ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." 37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. ♦ NKJV.

Can anything separate us from God's love? God's Word is clear with that: NOTHING can separate us from God's love. The devil will try to deceive you. You may even tend to deceive yourself and think God does not care for you. These are lies! God is a God of relationship and Heb 13:8 ♦ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. ♦ NIV God will never change! He loved you yesterday! He loves you today and He will still love you tomorrow!

1 John 4:8-11 ♦ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ♦ NKJV.

1 John 4:19 ♦ We love Him because He first loved us. ♦ NKJV.

Those who do not love do not know God. Those who cannot appreciate relationships do not know God, as He is a God of relationships! Please note that these Bible texts clearly tell us that we are not the ones who first loved God, but it is clearly God who first loved us and pursues intimacy with us. Knowing this, how can we do anything but love one another as Jesus commanded us?

John 1:12-13 ♦ Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God - children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. ♦ NIV.

Because of Him reaching out to us, we have the right to become children of God! How? By accepting in faith His offer of having an intimate relationship with our Redeemer!

These are just a few Bible texts stressing the fact that God wants a relationship with you and me. He wants it so much that He was willing to die for it. Are you willing to die to have an intimate relationship with Him?

The sad fact is that today, we who identify ourselves as Seventh-day Adventists, apply the church of Laodicea from the book of Revelation as being the end time church. In other words we identify ourselves with a church who is lukewarm and does not know the Lord! What are our Lord's words for people who do not even care to have a relationship with God?

Rev 3:15-16 ♦ I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. ♦ NKJV.

My friend, you have a choice to make. You can accept God's invitation to have a close relationship with Him and enjoy that relationship beyond the world's imagination, or you can just continue to wander about and stay the way you are, in a lukewarm comfortable environment and just proclaim you have the truth. But that kind of truth will not set you free! That kind of truth will not obtain you salvation! Acts 4:12 ♦ Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved. " NIV.

The choice is yours my friend. Will you accept His invitation? Matt 11:28-29 ♦ Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ♦ Will you come to Him and experience the Sabbath in the person of Jesus Christ? He will give you rest my friend. He did it for me. He will do it for you as well.

Let us go back to the question we asked in chapter 1: Is there something that can assure you to recognize God when you meet Him in the streets?

Is it guaranteed we can recognize God by keeping the Sabbath?

Well, the priest, Pharisees and doctors of the law were faithfully keeping the Sabbath, but they were unable to recognize God's visitation when Jesus appeared on our planet. In fact, they claimed that God was the devil himself! Matt 9:34 ♦ But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons." ♦

Sabbath keeping does not guarantee to recognize God at work in our world.

Well, can we recognize God by attending church?

Luke 13:26-27 ♦ "Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.' "But he will reply, 'I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!' NIV.

These people mentioned in this verse were attending church. They were eating and drinking with our Lord, but Jesus will not recognize them, as they never really recognized Him. Going to church is no guarantee to recognize our Lord at work.

He Loves Me.

He loves me! He loves me not! Do you find yourself picking through circumstances like children plucking daisy petals attempting to figure out whether or not God loves you? If you find yourself less certain of his love in those critical moments when you most need to trust him, there is hope for you. Discover the kind of relationship that God has always wanted, NOT the fearful subservience of slaves, but rather the loving affections of sons and daughters.

If your spiritual life feels more like performance than freedom, like an empty ritual rather than a joyful journey, then it's time you were introduced to a Father who loves you more than anyone on this planet ever has, or ever will. Learn to walk with a growing confidence in His affection for you through whatever circumstances you face, free from shame, as He transforms us to "live loved."

Book Review: He Loves Me (Wayne Jacobson)

In He Loves Me, Wayne Jacobsen uses vivid examples and stories to help explain the truths of God's immense love for us. The author writes in a very straight forward fashion that I really couldn't argue with as I read the book. To say that I enjoyed this book would be a huge understatement. I believe that He Loves Me has been pivotal in my growth and journey towards fully trusting God.

This book has challenged my thinking about who God is, how He views me, and has gotten me to look at how I relate to God. Over the last few years I've realized that one of the reasons I have tended towards a performance based relationship with the Father is because I don't fully believe that He loves me for who I am. Somewhere in the mix of this I've also realized that I don't always view God as trustworthy. He Loves Me really helped me recognize these two incorrect lines of thinking and begin to adjust how I approach situations in my life. Instead of immediately viewing a hard issue in life as evidence that God doesn't love me because I'm not doing enough, I've begun recognizing the lies and combating them with the truth of the Father's love for me. This isn't always easy but it is a much healthier place for me to be in life and my relationship with the Father.

I so desire to be confident in the Lord's immense love for me and to trust Him completely. I feel like this book has pushed me in the right direction. There are so many fantastic nuggets of truth that I felt like I was underlining and starring the entire book! A few of the statements that especially

stuck out to me while reading this book (three times so far!) are:

God knows how difficult it is for you to trust Him. He is not threatened by that nor angry with you as you struggle in learning to do so. He simply wants you to keep your eye on Him and learn. He (God) also knows that you'll trust Him only to the degree that you are certain of His love for you. He (God) wants you to know His love so completely that being afraid of Him will have no place. When you are absolutely convinced of how much God loves you, it will drive out every fear you have.

I think everyone should read this book! Even if you are fully confident in God's love for you this book offers a fresh perspective of what it looks like to live in the freedom that God gives us through Jesus.

The Yo-Yo Relationship: He Loves Me; He Loves Me Not.

A readers asks about how to see it clearly, break away, and find closure.

Many of us have experienced the rollercoaster ride of being involved with a seemingly compatible, charming lover who remains elusive. Everything is going so well. You may even start to fall in love. But inexplicably, your lover keeps pulling away. And then coming back. And then pulling away. This cycle can be repeated many times, and is characteristic of a "yo-yo relationship."

I received this query from a reader, who found solace in my posts about surviving a break-up, but she's having trouble moving on from a yo-yo relationship. She wants to understand what's going on, and find closure. Here's her story:

I hope you have some insight into my relationship, which I am finding it hard to recover from. He is 50 and I am 30. I don't usually date men of this age but we share similar tastes in music and humor and we get along quite easily. It began as a sexual thing and shortly after, he began to exhibit signs that he wanted to be more serious. This was a surprise to me, as I didn't assume anything would come of it. We dated for five months. I met his friends, stayed at his house; it was normal and nice. I don't want to get married or have children so it seemed to work. Out of the blue he started to detach and when I asked him why he said that I'm young but look way younger and that he didn't know how he would "explain me to his kids" who are only slightly younger than I. He also said he didn't want me to be "a responsibility." I was deeply hurt by this. That was four months ago.

Since then, we have been casually in contact. He went on some dates with another person as did I, but we found no chemistry elsewhere. We sleep together on occasion, he calls me, worries about me, even asked "why didn't you call me for support" when a family member was hospitalized. I thought he didn't want the responsibility.

When I ask him to give me space so that I can get over him, he returns. There seem to be emotions there. But when I ask him what exactly he feels for me he responds "Affection. Affliction." But he doesn't seem to want me out of his life.

Recently I moved three hours away. Before I left we spent two weeks talking and hanging out and being like boyfriend/girlfriend — he even introduced me to some more of his friends but when I asked him what it meant, he used the "you're too young" excuse once again. He knows I love him. I told him I'm in it for the long haul, whatever that brings. Nothing I say changes the situation. So before I moved, I begged him to stop communicating with me. Although my heart felt differently, I knew I needed space to get past this.

Last night (a week later) he messaged me and asked if I am okay. He said, "This hasn't been easy," and that he missed me and his thoughts are with me. I am now sad again, sulking, and I just want to be past this all. However, I still have hope in my heart for us because of the fact that he says one thing, but his actions make me feel like there is more to it. Could you help me better understand this all? I need to understand to feel some closure. Thank you.

Dearest Seeking Closure,

The picture you paint is easy to understand in three words: Ambivalence. Control. Yo-Yo.

On Ambivalence:

Something is holding him back from really being in a relationship with you.

It doesn't matter what it is. It doesn't matter why. What matters is that this is how he is wired, most likely permanently and forever. Indeed, as you've noticed, "Nothing I say changes the situation."

Unfortunately, what this wiring means for his romantic partners—including you—is that he will string you along with occasional rewards (like phone calls, sex, brief expressions of concern, empty offers of support) along with consistently and repeatedly rejecting you.

On Control:

Have you noticed how he remains in control? He decides when you two connect, how much, when, and where. When you want something more, he doesn't want the responsibility. When you seek less, he intrudes with worries, jealousy, and hurt. And when you want to disconnect, he ramps up the contact. Everything happens on his terms, never yours. And why do you have to "beg him" to stop contacting you? Because he remains in charge.

Also note, his jealousy and pettiness are particularly toxic methods of control. Jealousy does not indicate love or caring for your well-being. It only proves that he is controlling. And there is nothing "cute" about that.

On Yo-Yo Relationships:

Why do you stay? Because intermittent reinforcement is a powerful hook. Remember those experiments with rats? When rewards are sporadic and unpredictable, a rat will relentlessly push the lever because persistence gets the reward.

The yo-yo relationship has the same effect, rewarding your persistence and your ability to hang in there. It keeps you just hopeful enough to get sucked into the next round of courtship that follows a period of withdrawal. Whenever you're rejected, you remember the good times, and before you lose hope, here comes another reconciliation. And even when you think you've had enough, it's hard to get away from the allure of another "up" after enduring another "down."

So, how can you get the closure you seek? How can you get rid of "the hope in my heart for us?" How can you escape the yo-yo? Here are five keys.

1. Remember, actions always speak louder than words. Talk is cheap. It's not what he says ("I miss you"), but what he does (pushes you away) that indicates his true status and agenda. Don't believe a single word that is contrary to his actions. Don't try to read between the lines. There is nothing more to it. He is what he does. And essentially, a yo-yo relationship indicates that he's "just not that into you." He is into controlling you and the relationship.
2. Understand that you've been knocked off-center. In addition to his words not matching his actions, his words aren't even consistent. He says something one day and contradicts himself another day. He pairs "affection" with "affliction." It's on-again, off-again. Caring, then rejecting. Nothing lines up or makes sense. And the yo-yo effect is crazy-making, yes?
3. Ask yourself "Is this how I want to live?" It's awful, being jerked around and strung along. Reaffirm your desire to restore your balance. Honor your impulse to run like the wind.
4. Recognize that you can take charge of this situation. You can say "no more." No more falling under his spell when he says he's thinking of you. No more reconciliation. No more yo-yo. You can permanently break up with him. You can block his calls and texts. You can stop begging, and start standing tall and acting on your own behalf. Shift your hopes from "I want this relationship to work" to "I want a real relationship that really works."
5. Remember your worth. Just because you're not looking for marriage, you don't have to settle for ambivalent guys, controlling guys, zero commitment, or a rollercoaster ride of "he loves me; he loves me not." You deserve better. Truly.

As you begin to see this relationship more clearly, you may look back and wonder why the heck you stayed in it for so long. But you stayed as long as you needed, in order to learn the lessons it offered you. Wiser, you'll never look at yo-yo relationships the same, and you won't get sucked in again.

Note: For more on Ambivalence, check out this blog post. It tells you how to get in touch with your body, which never lies about what's good and what's bad for you.

"He Loves Me" by Wayne Jacobsen.

I don't doubt that this approach is effective in getting people to make a decision. I have used it myself. But this method of evangelism rarely leads to lasting transformation. Instead, it creates nervous churchgoers who are forever asking questions like, "Do I have to do such and such, to be saved?" They are more conscious of the rules for who's in and who's out than they are of the love of their heavenly Father.

Fear is a very effective means for motivating fallen people who care for nothing more than their own self-interest and avoiding hurtful consequences. But it is a poor basis for sharing what is supposed to be good news. A far better way for revealing gospel is to demonstrate the love of God, just like Jesus did. His was a show-and-tell gospel. He preached good news to the poor, proclaimed freedom to the captives and the recovery of sight to the blind. He announced the year of the Lord's favor.

There is no fear in love yet many Christians are trying to balance the two. They say you have to love God yet be afraid of Him at the same time. This leads to what Wayne Jacobsen, in his book *He Loves Me: Learning to Live in the Father's Affection*, calls, Daisy Petal Christianity – Christians interpreting God's love for them through their circumstances. "I got a raise. He loves me. I lost my job. He loves me not." When things go well, they figure they're walking in God's favor. When things go not-so-well, they figure they're walking in His displeasure. Since life is full of ups and downs they are permanently insecure and confused. It certainly doesn't help that the Bible seems to paint two contradictory portraits of the living God: a terrible Judge and a loving Father. Wayne Jacobsen asks, "Which is it? Can he be both?... So what happened to God? Did he get 'saved' somewhere between Malachi and Matthew?" (19-20). As I have explained elsewhere, God doesn't change, but we do.

The root problem is that most Christians are uncertain of their Father's love for them. They look right past the cross into the old covenant and conclude that God will not love them unless they first please Him. Never mind that Jesus gave us greatest demonstration of unconditional love the world has ever seen. Never mind that He told story after story about lost things being restored even though they had done nothing to save themselves. Never mind that He went around healing and forgiving the sick and undeserving.

A classic sign that a believer has missed the Father's heart is that he talks more about obedience than love. Doing the right thing – and being seen to be doing the right thing – is paramount. Live like this and you'll make "serving God" your god and miss knowing the real God. Obedience is not the bottom line. God is far more interested in whether we will love and trust Him. You can obey without trusting, but you can't trust without obeying. Cast your mind back to the Garden of Eden and that tree. As Jacobsen reads it, this was not primarily an obedience test, but a trust test:

If obedience had been God's only issue, don't you think he would have made the whole scenario far clearer? He told them not to eat from that tree or they would die. He didn't describe that death in detail... If he had they might have been obedient, but not because they trusted him. They would have obeyed only because it served their self-interest. God would merely have become a tool for their own fulfillment. Self would still have been at the center of their choice, and self would prevent them from discovering the full vitality of life in him. No, God didn't tell them because he wanted something far better. (p.92)

Adam and Eve chose independence over trust and we repeat their mistake whenever we rely on our own strength or understanding. Doing good is just as sinful as doing bad when our motive is to prove ourselves worthy and therefore in no need of grace.

He Loves Me is a book about learning to trust in the love of your heavenly Father. If you are uncertain about the Father's love for you, read this book. In it, Wayne Jacobsen gives one of the best descriptions I have read of what really happened on the cross. He contrasts the appeasement-view of the cross (God's demands for justice needed to be appeased by a human sacrifice) with the Biblical view (God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ). We've heard that Jesus was a lonely victim of divine vengeance taking God's whippings on behalf of humanity. But as Jacobsen explains, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were jointly executing a plan to redeem the world. This was no good cop/bad cop routine. It was a team effort.

I'll leave you with an extended quote from the book that expresses the heart of Jacobsen's message better than I ever could:

There are two ways to hide from God's love – rebellion and religion. Rebellion, illustrated in the prodigal son, defies God's love and seeks to cover up guilt and shame through the indulgence of sensual desires. Religion, on the other hand, is far more subtle. It seeks its cover-up through good works and obligation. However, like the prodigal's older brother, it still denies the Father's place in our lives and leads us no closer to knowing him for who he really is.

Simply, religion is keeping score – striving for acceptance through our own performance whether it be in our good works or in ritualistic activities. Those things put the focus squarely on us and what we can do to be accepted by God, thereby dooming us to failure.

Most of Paul's letters were written because even the earliest believers found themselves trading relationship for religion. Instead of learning to live in the security of his love, they would go back to traditions, creeds, disciplines, and laws as an attempt to earn it themselves. He reminded them again and again that God's love would take them further than their own efforts and achievements ever would...

What would you do today if you knew God absolutely loved you? God knows the answer to that question will lead you further into his life than the strivings of religion ever can. The key to a productive Christian life is not waking up every day trying to be loved by God, but waking up in the awareness that you are already His beloved. (137-8)