

Loving Your Time with God

John Newton was a rough, violent slave ship captain that eventually left that evil profession and decided to seek Jesus. We know him today because he penned the words of the magnificent song, *Amazing Grace*.

Newton well remembered his days running from God and chasing his dream of more and more British pound sterling – he had made cash his god. But after his decision and repentance, Newton sought solace in serving others and spending time in God’s word and in prayer. It was during this period of his life that Newton’s memories of his former life and his realization of the unspeakable grace of God, that he wrote that now world famous song.

A personal realization of his and other’s relationship with God brought Newton to his knees, but also to his pen. One of my favorite quotes from this incredible soul points to differing responses we often seen in those who wish to follow God:

The religion of some people is constrained, like the cold bath when used, not for pleasure, but from necessity for health, into which one goes with reluctance and is glad when able to get out. But religion to the true believer is like water to a fish; it is his element; he lives in it and could not live out of it. - John Newton

We do well to ask ourselves if our worship, our reading or our time with God is more like the cold bath or more like the element in which we live, body, mind and spirit. Personally, I often go home spent after teaching and preaching – but there is a certain peace and joy in that tiredness. There is a personal happiness and deep satisfaction that comes from spending time with the Father who loved us enough to let His only begotten Son die on the cross for our sins. What precious solace it is to live and love in Christ with our brothers and sisters who share that treasure.

I am reminded of 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

What does time with God mean to you, a cold, uncomfortable bath just to get clean, or a warm, quiet repose of the soul with your creator?

-Ray Wallace