



INTIMACY
SERIES

THE BRIDE #1

PASTOR LAWRENCE

INTIMACY series
THE bride #1

BY
Pastor Lawrence

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pure and perfect. Amen.

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FOREWORD

Dear reader and friend,

I am so glad you took the time to read this book. I am honored to share with you what the Lord has done in my life over the years. I pray that this book will guide you into a more intimate relationship with the Lord – something you were designed for from the beginning.

I have decided to teach the truths about intimacy in a story format. All the stories in this book are real, and are used so that the book will flow. Please try to see the hidden truths about an intimate relationship with the Lord.

I now ask you to take off your “religious glasses” because some of the things in this book might be totally new to you.

But give it some time. Let the Lord reveal to you what He wants you to take from this book. If you do that, your walk with the Lord will be transformed just by knowing the Lord – walking with Him daily. I hope that, in the end, you will be able to pray the following simple prayer with me, “Lord, I have nothing to give but my love. Lord, come and enjoy my love and my beauty in Jesus name. Amen.”

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Chapter 1: The first time I experienced God's intimacy

Years of hunger for God and seeking Him ended in nothing. I was still empty and hungry, looking for the One I loved. I loved Him so much because He showed me His love, time and time again. His love came packaged in so many different forms: a loving family, friends who were always there for me, and the beauty of nature. The experience of His presence came over me in many church meetings, causing tears to stream

down my cheeks.

To me, God was real. I knew He was there, and there was a desire in my heart to give back to Him. I wanted to return His love, but I realized we, as humans, have nothing to give. Money was the first thing that crossed my mind, but how do you give riches to the One who owns it all? Then I thought about time, but time is in His hands. I really had nothing to give, until one day I found it.

I was on a farm on a prayer walk, enjoying His creation while praying in my heavenly language. After thirty minutes of praying, I realized my spirit was very excited. My spirit was talking to God in a special way, despite me not knowing the words. My hands were moving as if I were explaining something to someone.

Suddenly, I walked into *beauty*. It was more something I felt than something I could see with my natural eyes. This beauty was a thousand times greater than the most beautiful woman I have ever seen.

Amazed and captured by this experience, I said, "Wow, God! You're so beautiful!" At first I thought this experience was the beauty of the Holy Spirit, but I was wrong. I heard God's voice, "This is not My beauty. It is *your* beauty. It is the beauty of *your* spirit." His words were so simple yet so real. What a revelation! It was not His beauty. It was my beauty, my *spiritual* beauty! I always thought of myself as a sinner and ugly in God's eyes. That is what tradition taught me over the years. But it was a lie. God did not look through the eyes of tradition but through His eyes of love - through the blood of Jesus that washed away all my sins.

I walked in this beauty for about thirty minutes. It was pure, beautiful, and perfect. It was me - *my* spirit. The way God saw me. And I realized how true it was. The Bible is full of God's love for His bride. Everything He does is to prepare us for the wedding of the Lamb.

I thought about this experience for days to come. I realized that God desires me like a husband desires his wife. As a man, I understood that very well, and I realized that the intimacy we as humans experience is just a small taste of the things to come. God has planned an eternity to be intimate with us. I also realized that intimacy is not reserved for heaven alone. We can experience it right here on earth.

A few weeks later, I went for another prayer walk on another farm. Again, I felt the same urge to give God something. And again, I realized there was nothing I could give. But then I remembered my beauty. The beauty of my spirit I experienced a few weeks ago. And suddenly I realized that *that* is what He wanted – my spirit. That was what He longed for. And I have it! I have something to give!

I was lying down next to a dam, praying, talking with God, when suddenly new words came from my mouth, “God, I have nothing to give but my beauty. Lord, I give You my beauty. Come and enjoy the beauty of my spirit.” As I prayed that simple prayer, something happened. Suddenly, I could feel His presence covering me like a cloud. My body began to vibrate with a small vibration at first. I thought I was shivering from the cold, but it was not cold. It was a hot summer day. I just kept on praying, “God, come enjoy my beauty. I love you, Lord. I have nothing to give but my beauty and my love. Come and enjoy my beauty.” The more I prayed these words, the stronger the vibrations became.

God's power surrounded me. Never before had I experienced something quite this powerful. Until that point, all I knew were quiet moments of prayer and tears. I had always longed for something to happen, as I had seen so many people drunk in the Holy Spirit, laughing and falling over. But never had I been so fortunate to experience what they experienced myself. But this new experience was something I cannot explain in words. It was the answer for all the longings and desires I ever had. In that moment, I became aware of a hunger for His intimacy. It was built into me.

As a young boy, I attended several revival services at a big church near our house, longing for something special. But nothing happened to me – just tears. But this experience was much more powerful than that. The vibration turned into a shaking, and I no longer possessed the power to control it. At times, it lifted my body from the ground for a few seconds but without any pain.

The shaking continued for a few minutes and then suddenly stopped. And then I felt peaceful satisfaction as a fulfillment filled my whole being. I just had my first intimate experience with the Lord. I knew that *this* is intimacy. I saw Him enjoying the only thing I could give – my beauty. He came to enjoy my spirit as I asked Him to.

Waves of peace washed over me next to that dam. I just kept my eyes closed, enjoying every moment of it. It felt like I had just found everything I had been looking for my entire life. This experience with the Lord left me with joy and peace so great that no one can describe it. I was made for this – to be one with Him.

The sound of birds and sunshine on my face reminded me that I was still on earth. I slowly opened my eyes, expecting to see Him. The experience I had with Him was so real I thought I would see Him when I opened my eyes. He had to have been there Himself.

I was shocked and amazed by what just happened. I lay there next to that dam for a few more minutes, soaking it in. I knew that this was what I had been longing for all my life. It had been more than a good sermon. It had been more than the hours of prayer and fasting I tried. This had been *it* - intimacy with the King of kings, and the Lords of lords.

Sunset brought the day to an end. As I stood up, my body felt stiff. The power that went through me was so strong that my human body almost couldn't handle all of it. But the peace was still all over me.

I do not know if my family sensed what just happened to me, for I was no longer with them. I was on a different planet with the One I loved, amazed by what just happened. Then understanding came over me like a flood.

Chapter 2: The bride

The more I thought about my experience, the more I realized that I was the bride of Christ in the spirit. Although I am a male in the flesh, I am His bride. We are all His bride in the spirit – the bride He longs for.

Then God showed me something. A beautiful bride in her finest moment, wearing her wedding dress. She has made herself extremely beautiful, coloring her face with make-up,

designing her hair, decorating herself with beautiful accessories to underscore her beauty for the wedding. And her beauty was enjoyed by everyone around her. The more attracted people were to her, the more she did to enhance her appearance, and the more beautiful she looked.

Suddenly, the wedding was over. It was time for the wedding night. But now, all the things she did to look beautiful had to be removed so that her husband could enjoy her real beauty. The beautiful wedding dress that transformed her into a princess for at least one day was all forgotten. Everything she added had to be removed for one of the best nights in a couple's life: the wedding night.

And then God showed me the meaning. We are all brides at heart. The problem is we do not realize it. We were created this way. Instinctively, we try to please Him. We pray for hours, and our prayers become like make-up. We add jewelry by fasting for days. We live lives full of religion and tradition - the wedding dress. All these things are done to please Him. People around us notice *our* "beauty" - something I call holiness. And the more holy we appear, the more compliments we get, and the more holy we try to be.

God showed me that all the things we do to impress Him were like being a bride, covering her true beauty. For Him to enjoy our real beauty, we need to stop doing all these things we do to please Him.

The truth is this: A new bride does not need all the accessories to be beautiful for her husband. She just needs herself. And so it is with the Lord. All the things we do do not necessarily impress Him. Does this mean that we should stop praying and fasting? For the moment, at least, *yes*. Stop all the things you

are doing and take a moment to realize that He is impressed with you just the way you are.

All the bride needs to impress her husband is herself. And that is all he wants. At some point, even talking needs to stop for a true intimate experience. I see this as prayer. Sometimes we talk so much in prayer that God cannot enjoy our real beauty. The Bible says, "Be still and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10)

If you can grasp this secret - being still and giving yourself to Him - just that knowledge will propel you into a life of intimacy with Him.

Intimacy is a giving game - the more you give, the more you receive. The same can be said with the Lord. We always pray, "God, I want more of You." But we need to take the next step and pray, "God, here is more of me. Here is *all* of me. All my love and my beauty! Come and enjoy my beauty."

After realizing that you are all He wants, you will start praying and fasting with new passion and purpose. Your prayer life will change. Suddenly, you're not praying to impress Him but rather just talking to the One you love. You are no longer trying to deserve His love. You just know, like a bride, that you are all He wants - all He longs for. The desire in His heart towards you was there from the beginning, and it will be there until the end to be continued for eternity in heaven.

Back at the farm, the day came to an end. The experience faded, and suddenly I felt hungry for Him again. I wondered if it could happen once more. Was this just a one-off experience?

Chapter 3: Intimacy is not a once-off experience

My family and I had dinner that night. I did not tell them what happened to me that sunset. I was not sure if they would ever understand it. It was all so new to me. I wasn't even sure what to make of it myself. All I knew was that it was as real as the air I breathed, and nothing could ever take it away.

My mom spoiled us with the finest of foods, and for a moment my focus went back to my family, away from the Lord. I wasn't focusing on Him specifically, but something was different. I felt a peace in me that I never had before. And that peace did not fade like it did before. I became aware of a closeness with the Lord that I never knew before.

After the meal, my family said their goodnights, and I made my way outside. The starry night welcomed me back into His presence, and the moonlight created the perfect mood and scene for the honeymoon experience I had with the Lord. But I was not sure if it could happen again.

Suddenly, I felt a deep longing for Him again. As before, I wanted to give Him something. This time, I knew what to do. This time, I had something to give! I had my spiritual beauty, and that was all He wanted. I prayed, "Lord, I give you my beauty. Come and enjoy my beauty!" And suddenly, I experienced His closeness again. This time, I knew that it was not the cool of the night. It was Him! The Lord took my prayer seriously.

Again, the vibration increased to a shaking, and it almost lifted my body from the ground. It ended suddenly, and an

indescribable peace flooded my being. I felt a fulfillment that I cannot describe in human words. This fulfillment was not only for my flesh. It was for my spirit as well.

Sin offers many ways to meet our needs for intimacy. It leads us to drugs, affairs, and much more. All these things provide us with satisfaction for a moment but then leave us with a feeling of death. But intimacy with the Lord is different. He does not misuse us as sin does. His love for us is real, and He desires to fulfill not only our human need for intimacy but also our spiritual need for intimacy.

Does this mean that we do not need marriage for intimacy? No, we still need it. Marriage is God's idea. It is His way of giving us a small taste of what eternity will be like with Him. Although we have a longing for intimacy with God in our spirits, we are still human beings in human bodies. And our bodies crave intimacy. Why? Because we were created in God's image and God is an intimate being. Human intimacy was not only created to keep us from extinction but also to be enjoyed in marriage - the perfect picture of eternity.

I see it in this way. God has provided your spouse for your body's intimate desires. But that is all your spouse can fulfill. There is a part of you that only God can fulfill - your spirit.

I believe that perfect intimacy in a marriage comes when both parties realize that God wants to be a part of it. God created your husband or your wife to take care of your human needs for intimacy, but He kept your spirit for Himself. Do not leave God outside! Make Him part of your marriage. God is the very origin of intimacy - remember that.

A new truth was revealed to me that night. I realized that

intimacy with the Lord is not a one-off experience. It is something we need daily. If we do not spend time with the Lord, our bodies will find other sinful ways to make up for it. This is why Jesus said, “Go into your room, close the door, and pray.” (Matthew 6:6)

There is a time and place that was designed for you and the Lord to enjoy each other. The problem is that we praise God together with the rest of the congregation, going to church and praying in groups. There is a time and place for that as well, but we need some time alone with the Lord every day. Neglecting this time with the Lord opens the door for sin to enter - sin that tries to meet our needs for intimacy and ultimately kills us.

Before I knew intimacy, I always thought that the circumstances needed to be perfect before the Lord would show up – for instance, being in a church with soft music (again there is a time and place for this). But I realized that this experience of intimacy can happen anytime, anywhere.

Many times, I felt as if the Lord would reject my intimacy, but the moment I invited Him to enjoy my beauty, He showed up. I knew my sins were enough to keep Him away, but He always came. He never rejected my love. Not even once!

I realized that sin is the only thing that stands in the way of our intimacy with the Lord. Sin prevents intimacy by covering up our true beauty. Yet the good news is that He made a way - the blood of Jesus!

The blood of Jesus does not only cover our sins. It removes our sins, making us perfect and holy in His sight again. It cleanses us, transforming us into the bride He longs for. His

grace is so big. All you need to do is ask, "Please Lord, let the blood of Jesus remove all my sins so that You can enjoy my true beauty."(1 John 1:7)

Does this mean that you can just continue sinning, asking Him to cleanse us every time? You *could*! But when you are in an intimate relationship with Him, you become sensitive to His feelings. You can feel when He is happy or sad. You will start to sense His sadness towards our sins, and this will prevent you from sinning.

When you start to experience this intimacy with God, you will firstly start to live a life that is fulfilled by Him. Your desire for sin will lessen. Secondly, you will become so sensitive to His feelings that you will not want to hurt Him anymore, exactly the same way you would feel about your spouse.

I always thought that God is doing us a favor by visiting us with His presence in church. But intimacy taught me something else: His longing for us is much more than our longing for Him. I realized that He needs us more than we need Him. It might sound a bit strange, but it is true!

You are His life. You mean the world to Him. You cost Him His life (He gave His life for you!) Why? Because He could not imagine a life without you. He hungers for you. This might seem strange to you. When you think from a mind-set saying that we are the ones hungering after God, it might seem wrong. But His hunger for us is greater than we could ever think or dream.

Why does God hunger for us? What is it about Him that hungers for us? He showed me the answer in the Bible: Adam and Eve. God created Adam and provided him with everything

he needed to survive. God then entrusted him with the job of naming all the animals. I can just imagine how Adam realized that every living thing had a mate except him. He felt lonely. God knew that because Adam was created in His image. A deep sleep came over Adam. Here is the secret: God took a part of Adam that was very near to his heart, and He created Eve. (Genesis 2:18-25)

God showed me that the same scene happened in heaven. Heaven was perfect! All the angels worshipped Him, and His glory filled the heavens entirely! But something was missing. A mighty God felt lonely. He was looking for someone to whom He could give all His love to, but none in heaven could understand the depth of it because that is all they ever knew. The heavenly beings had been bathed in God's love from the beginning. Almost like rich children who do not know what it is like to be poor, who do not know the "need for money." Then God took a part of Himself that was very near to His heart - love - and with it He created us. He created us with one sole purpose - to show us love.

Things that happen in the spiritual world always have a manifestation in the natural world. Before sin entered the world, Adam and Eve were not aware of the fact that they were naked. There was nothing that prevented their intimacy. Likewise, there was nothing preventing their intimacy with the Lord. But the very moment they sinned - right then - their intimate relationship with the Lord was broken.

This event manifested itself in the flesh because suddenly they were aware of their nakedness, and they were ashamed of it. In their own human way, they covered up their nakedness with clothes that God made for them. And God covered Himself by removing them from the garden. (Genesis 3)

An intimate relationship between God and humans was broken right there. They were separated, and it seemed like a lost case. But God did not give up on us. He used the very thing that broke our intimate relationship with Him - sin - to show us more of Himself, grace. We all know grace. God's amazing grace. As the Bible says, "His love and grace is unmerited." (Romans 3:24 Amplified bible) He does not keep record of our sinful deeds. He just loves us for who we are.

Throughout the Old Testament, we see God's hunger for love. We see a God hungry for reunification with the very object of His love, humans. Throughout Israel's travels, He performed many mighty deeds! He "showed-off" His power like a man trying to impress the woman He loves. He snatched Israel from Egypt's slavery, showing-off His power with the ten plagues, following with the opening of the Red Sea. And then the grand finale: He drowned Pharaoh and the whole Egyptian army in front of Israel's very eyes! I feel sorry for Pharaoh. The Bible says that God hardened the Pharaoh's heart. (Exodus 9:12) Now we may wonder why God did that. I believe He did it to create a scene - a battle scene where He could show-off His love for His bride.

Israel did not leave Egypt empty handed. God favored them among the people of the land. (Exodus 3:21) He told them to ask the Egyptians for gold and silver. In addition, God changed the hearts of the Egyptians, and suddenly they felt, "We want to give. We want to give you everything!"

Next, God took care of His bride in the desert by providing food and water in the most amazing of ways. He healed all Israel's diseases. He kept her clothes and shoes brand new so that they would never wear off. He opened the Jordan River so

that His people could walk through into the Promised Land, flowing with milk and honey. Then Jericho - a mighty display of God's power! God Himself destroyed those walls as they entered the Promised Land.

God fought all of Israel's battles. One of my favorite stories is the one of Joshua. He destroyed innumerable armies with a few hundred men. He had only one enemy - time. But even time was in God's hands! God showed-off His power when Joshua commanded the sun and the moon to stop. He needed time, and time he got. (Joshua 10:13)

Do you realize what it must have taken for God to perform that miracle? I am not sure how God pulled it off, but all the planets and stars had to stand still in their orbits for a few hours - just because a small little human had paused time with his prayer.

Just think about it! We are travelling around the sun at a very high speed. And suddenly, it all had to stop dead - a miracle! Try driving your bike into a wall at high speed. The bike will stop, but you will keep on moving. In Joshua's case, the earth had to stop dead in its orbit to make that possible, but no one went flying! The sun had to stand still for a few hours - a miracle from humans' perspective. From God's perspective, it took more than a million things to make it possible.

God did all of this, and much more, to show-off His power. He so desperately wanted to be reconciled with the human race, but nothing seemed to work. God even showed up in person on Mount Sinai in the desert, but it was too much for the Israelites. (Exodus 19) They sent Moses to communicate with God because they themselves could not handle it. Even Moses - God's friend - could not stand up in God's presence! He asked to see God, but God's power was so great that He had to

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