

Voices: Getting to know God is worth the effort

October 18, 2023

I lived at home in the country my first two years of college. I had no car. So, I road my bike to school every morning. Being downhill most of the way, it was fast. But coming home, I had a lot of hills to climb.

The first hill was in the city, then a big hill just before the one my house was on. I would focus on a single spot to accomplish another yard. The cars would go by at 60 miles per hour. I could feel the wind they caused pushing at me.

I always wondered if someone I knew saw how hard I was struggling, but I kept going because I had to get home. There was no other choice.

I looked at the top of the hill, then I would look down at my feet, keeping focused on each pedal up. I wouldn't let myself stop pedaling until I had gone at least a foot more up the hill than the previous day. Then, I would get off my bike and walk the rest of the way up.

By the end of the summer, I was pedaling up the whole hill and speeding down the other side so fast I almost climbed the next hill.

Everything that comes easy usually is not valued as much as a goal achieved that took some effort.

Proverbs 1:2 says, "Their purpose is to teach people wisdom and discipline, to help them understand the insights of the wise" (NLT).

It is an honorable endeavor to increase your knowledge and understanding of anything noble. Our God is all of that and more.

Staying focused on the prize

When we are on the road to fellowship and intimacy with our God, there will be resistance. Satan is clever and will keep trying to sidetrack us.

It's like when we are trying to get physically fit. The person who puts priority on working toward the goal will achieve much. The person who lets other things interfere with the discipline of working out will achieve little.

Paul tells us: "All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize" (1 Corinthians 9:25 NLT).

What possibly could be more noble and wise than the teachings from our Creator? Our prize of salvation is eternity with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in paradise. Our prize for growing close to God is to walk with him closer now and later in paradise like Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

God wants us back to that intimacy with him. But we don't have to wait for eternity to know our God better.

John wrote: "And we know that the Son of God has come, and he has given us understanding so that we can know the true God. And now we live in fellowship with the true God because we live in fellowship with his son, Jesus Christ. He is the only true God, and he is eternal life" (1 John 5:20 NLT).

Making the effort

Getting to know God is worth the effort. There will be times when life gets in the way, when Satan wants us to lose our focus, when the hill is too steep, when we have friends trying to distract us from our purpose.

We must keep our head down and stay focused on the prize—intimacy with God. The goal is to get home spiritually to God. We have to make the effort.

Just keep our head down and keep giving the effort. Don't let the high, lofty hilltop loom over our will. Small steps forward pay off.

The Na'vi in the movie "Avatar" would say, "I see you," but that didn't happen right away. Jake Sully had to get to know the people. After he put some effort into it, he honestly could say, "I see you" in return.

God sees us. We just have to get to know him better. Then we will see him better each and every day we make the effort.

D. Scozzari is the author of The Ninth Region Series and an editorial writer. She is active in Bear Creek Baptist Church in Houston as a prayer and care leader and a teacher at the elementary school level. The views expressed are those of the author.