

2 Keys to Going Deeper in Your Walk With God

Experiencing the depths of Jesus Christ requires more than prayer and Scripture study; it calls for total abandonment to Him.

There are several steps involved in coming to know the depths of Jesus Christ. The first two are quite simple: praying the Scriptures and just beholding the Lord in quietness and trust. After you have pursued this level of experience with the Lord for a considerable length of time, you then should be ready to go on to a deeper level of knowing Him.

But in this deeper encounter with the Lord, you must move outside the realm of prayer alone; or, to state it more clearly, you must move away from just the one or two times a day you set apart for prayer with the Lord.

At this point, there must enter into your heart whole new attitudes toward your entire life. If you are to branch out beyond just a time of prayer each day, other parts of your life—and even your whole viewpoint of life—will have to be altered. This new attitude must come for a very special reason: so that you may go on deeper, still deeper, into another level with your Lord.

To do this, you must have a fresh attitude toward yourself as well as toward the Lord; it is an attitude that must go much deeper than any you have known previously.

To help you develop this attitude, I introduce a new word to you. The word is *abandonment*.

To penetrate deeper in the experience of Jesus Christ, it is required that you begin to abandon your whole existence, giving it up to God.

Let us take the daily occurrences of life as an illustration.

You must utterly believe that the circumstances of your life—that is, every minute of your life, as well as the whole course of your life; anything, yes, everything that happens—have all come to you by His will and by His permission. You must utterly believe that everything that has happened to you is from God and is exactly what you need.

One way you can be introduced to such a disposition is to learn to accept every time of prayer, whether it be a glorious time with Him or a time when your mind wanders, as being exactly what He desired for you. Then learn to broaden this perspective until it encompasses every second of your life!

Such an outlook toward your circumstances and such a look of faith toward your Lord will make you content with everything. Once you believe this, you will then begin to take everything that comes into your life as being from the hand of God, not from the hand of man.

Do you truly, sincerely desire to give yourself up to God?

Then I must next remind you that once you have made the donation, you cannot take the gift back again. Once the gift has been presented, it no longer belongs to the giver.

You see, knowing the depths of Jesus Christ is not just a method. It is a lifelong attitude. It is a matter of being enveloped by God and possessed by Him.

We have spoken of abandonment. Abandonment is a matter of the greatest importance if you are to make progress in knowing your Lord. Abandonment is, in fact, the key to the inner court—the key to the fathomless depths. Abandonment is the key to the inward spiritual life.

The believer who knows how to abandon herself to the Lord will soon come into perfect concert with His will in all

circumstances.

Let us say you reach this state of abandonment. Once you have reached it, you must continue, steadfast and immovable. Otherwise, to arrive there and remain only briefly is of little value. It is one thing to reach this state; it is another thing to remain there.

Be careful; do not listen to the voice of your natural reasoning. You can expect just such reasoning to well up within you. Nonetheless, you must believe that you can abandon yourself utterly to the Lord for all your lifetime and that He will give you the grace to remain there. You must trust in God, hoping against hope (see Rom. 4:18).

Great faith produces great abandonment.

Abandonment Defined

Exactly what is abandonment? If we can understand what it is, perhaps we can better lay hold of it.

Abandonment is casting off all your cares. Abandonment is dropping all your needs. This includes spiritual needs. Let me repeat that, for it is not easily grasped. Abandonment is laying aside, forever, all your spiritual needs.

All Christians have spiritual needs; but the believer who has abandoned himself to the Lord no longer indulges in the luxury of being aware of spiritual needs. Rather, he gives himself over completely to the disposal of God.

Do you realize that all Christians have been exhorted to abandonment?

The Lord Himself has said, "Take no thought for tomorrow, for your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things" (see Matt. 6:34). Again the Scripture says, "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths"

(Prov. 3:6). Again, "Commit your works to the Lord, and your thoughts will be established" (Prov. 16:3). In the book of Psalms, it says, "Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass" (Ps. 37:5).

True abandonment must cover two complete worlds, two complete realms.

There must be an abandonment in your life concerning all outward, practical things. Secondly, there must also be an abandonment of all inward, spiritual things. You must come to the Lord and there engage in giving up all your concerns.

All your concerns go into the hand of God. You forget yourself, and from that moment on, you think only of Him.

By continuing to do this over a long period of time, your heart will remain unattached; your heart will be free and at peace!

How do you practice abandonment? You practice it daily, hourly and by the moment. Abandonment is practiced by continually losing your own will in the will of God—by plunging your will into the depths of His will, there to be lost forever!

And how do you begin? You must begin by refusing every personal desire that comes to you just as soon as it arises—no matter how good that personal desire is and no matter how helpful it might appear!

Abandonment must reach a point at which you stand in complete indifference to yourself. You can be sure that out of such a disposition, a wonderful result will come.

The result of this attitude will, in fact, bring you to the most wonderful point imaginable. It is the point at which your will breaks free of you completely and becomes free to be joined to the will of God. You will desire only what He desires—that is, what He has desired for all eternity.

Become abandoned by simply resigning yourself to what the Lord wants in all things, no matter what they are, where they come from or how they affect your life.

What is abandonment? It is forgetting your past; it is leaving the future in His hands; it is devoting the present fully and completely to Him.

Abandonment is being satisfied with the present moment, no matter what that moment contains. You are satisfied because you know that whatever that moment has, it contains—in that instant—God's eternal plan for you.

You will always know that that moment is the absolute and total declaration of His will for your life.

Remember, you must never blame man for anything. No matter what happens, it was neither man nor circumstances that brought it. You must accept everything (except, of course, your own sinfulness) as having come from your Lord.

Surrender not only what the Lord does to you, but also your reaction to what He does.

Do you wish to go into the depths of Jesus Christ? If you wish to enter into this deeper state of knowing the Lord, you must seek to know not only a deeper prayer but also abandonment in all realms of your life. This means branching out until your new relationship includes living 24 hours a day utterly abandoned to Him.

Begin to surrender yourself to be led by God and to be dealt with by Him. Do so right now. Surrender yourself to allow Him to do with you exactly as He pleases—both in your inward life of experiencing Him and also in your outward life of accepting all circumstances as from Him.

Read a companion devotional.

Jeanne Guyon (1648-1717) was a French Quietist who had a tremendous impact on church history. She was a mystic who was imprisoned for her writings, which were considered heretical in her day.