

It Takes This to Enter Into New Realms of Intimacy With God

How many times has God asked you to go in a certain direction, but you hesitated? I believe we are in a season where God desires to take His people to a whole new level of intimacy with Him.

However, to enter into new realms of intimacy, it will require for us to address certain matters of the heart: complete surrender. Surrender is taking up our cross and following after Christ Jesus—trusting and walking in obedience to God's ways, without knowing the outcome; above all, surrender is revering the Living God.

When we relinquish our life to Him, we trust God and what He has for us. “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future’” (Jer. 29:11). So why do we struggle internally with letting go? Why do we battle abandoning our own agenda and will? Is it because of fear or insecurity?

Until we truly revere God as the Omniscient One, we will not (or cannot) walk down the path of complete surrender to Him.

Revere means to honor and worship God. One of our highest forms of worship toward Him is obedience to His directions and ways, with every part of our being saying, “Not my will, Lord, but Yours.” I’m reminded of the life of Abraham. God promised a child to him and his wife, Sarah. Abraham was 100 years of age when God finally delivered on His promise. Abraham loved his son, Isaac, dearly. Yet a time came when God tested him. Genesis 22:2 is the account of how God tested his heart: “Then He said, ‘Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love,

and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you.'"

Is Abraham's obsession for his possessions? Does Abraham worship his son? Is this test a revelation of Abraham's allegiance? Will Abraham trust and walk in obedience to God, even though he does not know the final outcome?

How many times do we allow life's possessions to become our obsession? What item (person or position) do we worship other than God? Or what item (person or position) do we place before God?

We do this more than we realize. We fall into the trap of worshiping our home, kids, spouse, possessions or even our job. The question becomes, 'Do we love the Lord our God more than those things?' If He asks us to walk away from our job or go in a different direction, will we be obedient to Him as Abraham was? Or if God asks us to give up our home, will we?

Further on (verse 12), the Lord commands, "Then He said, 'Do not lay your hands on the boy or do anything to him, because now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your only son from Me.'" The heart of the matter—God looks for the complete surrender of our heart. Do we fear (revere) Him, as Abraham did? Will we respond to His direction? Was Abraham's situation difficult? Yes. Do I think he struggled internally—emotionally and spiritually? Yes. Abraham is human, not Superman. Yet his heart was completely surrendered to the living God!

Abraham revered God. His obedient action displayed his honor and worship of Him. Abraham's relationship with God was his true possession (and obsession). He withheld nothing from Him, not even his precious son. He desired God's will to be done, not his own. How about you? Is God your true possession (and obsession)? Will you withhold nothing from the Lord of your life? Do you also say, "Not my will, Lord, but Yours."

Surrender is revering the living God; it is trusting in the one and only. Just as Abraham trusted God during his trial, we have to trust—lean on, believe and know—that God will not fail us! By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son. Of him God said, “Through Isaac shall your seed be named” (Heb. 11:18). He reasoned that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he indeed received him in a figurative sense.

Abraham by faith (belief and trust) believed God and obeyed. God desires us to walk by faith with Him—trust in the one and only. Walking by faith is relinquishing control over our life, knowing God in all things works for the good of those who love Him, according to Romans 8:28. Abraham, by faith, trusted God to work out all the details. What is God asking you to trust Him with? Will you? Beloved, walk in faith and believe God to work out the details. Trust me; He’s big enough to handle any situation you face!

Finally, surrender is revering the living God, trusting in Him and learning to take up your cross and follow after Christ Jesus (Mark 8:34).

This means we cease to make self the center of life. We realize, “It’s really not about me!” It’s bringing glory and honor to the One who paid the ultimate price for our freedom. Jesus displays complete surrender to God the Father. He literally took up His cross in obedience to the Father’s will. As the cross led to death for our sins, we symbolically carry our crosses—complete surrender to Christ Jesus, no matter the cost!

What areas of your life are not fully committed to Christ Jesus? Is it your need to be in control? Is it your brokenness? Is it an addiction to alcohol, drugs or even pornography? Beloved, just as Christ Jesus took up His cross for our ultimate freedom, He requires us to bear our cross to

walk in the freedom He designed for us. We must trust God completely!

Perhaps God will use this teaching to encourage you to reflect on your commitment level toward Him. Do you have a “yes!” attitude? Is God asking you to trust Him in a particular situation, even though you do not know details or understand the outcome? Does your heart reflect, “Not my will, Lord, but Yours”? Perhaps He is asking you to follow His example so you may walk in freedom. {eo}

Melissa Pearce is the founder and president of Enduring Hope Ministries.