

What Those Who Go Deeper With God Value Most

A lot of believers talk about going deeper in their spiritual walk, yet they often fail to realize what that statement involves. Meanwhile, a large amount of Christianity is content to remain in the shallow waters of life, where it seems safe, predictable and comfortable.

The problem is that a true walk with God involves a great deal of risk, testing and challenging. You can't experience this in the shallow end. Following Christ stretches us in many ways, confronting our comforts and challenging our heart's motives.

God's number one desire is not our comfort, but our transformation. This process often takes place in the deeper waters, where we step out and take greater risks in our faith walk. God's plan is not to take away the resistance, challenges and storms that come our way in the deeper waters. His ways involve teaching us how to battle in the storms so that we become stronger and better equipped to walk with power in life. There is no getting around it: dynamic growth is only going to come when we sail into the deeper waters with God and allow Him to stretch us like never before.

Psalm 42:7 tells us that "Deep calls to deep at the noise of Your waterfalls..." This Scripture speaks of the deep part of God interacting with the deep part of who we are. There is a cry in everyone to go deeper with God and experience everything He has for us, but few set sail off the safety of the shore and into the deep.

Here are some of the values I have observed in a believer's life when they decide once and for all they want to get out of the shallow end and plunge deeper with God.

1. They make daily intimacy with God a high priority. In the

shallow waters, we can seem to get away with putting our daily intimacy with God on the shelf, replacing it with quick prayers, thoughtless Bible reading and relying on church services to fill our tank. We can then try and *do stuff* for God, hoping that our performance pleases Him. Those who go deeper realize very quickly that true intimacy with God cannot be done through shallow living and microwave processing.

Deep sailors develop their own daily walk with God, where they don't need someone to tell them time with God is important. They have a value for it that is reflected in their daily routine. They don't rush it, but spend careful time allowing the Spirit of God and the Word to breathe life into their heart. Time reading the Word and marinating in the Father's heart is non-negotiable in these waters.

2. They have experienced regular surrender. The deeper waters reveal the pride and self-reliance in our lives. The deeper waters also swallow up those who are filled with human effort and self-exaltation. In this arena, one truly learns the power of Peter's and James' exhortations to *submit to God and resist the devil* (1 Peter 5:6, James 4:7). We cannot resist the devil's schemes while we lack true surrender to God and His ways. Many need to be broken into submission to overcome certain arrows of the enemy, which only comes through truly bowing the knee. In these moments, the problem is not the enemy, but a lack of our submission to God.

The deeper waters confront rebellion and our authority issues, where we don't know how to humble ourselves under God. It also confronts where we do not know how to humble ourselves under the people God has put in our lives. This is where the deeper waters can get rough.

When true humility is developed, one does not appear weak or self-rejecting. Under the hand of God, He will exalt you, but in His time and His way. Those who walk this process develop a deep authority that makes the enemy tremble.

3. They carry the heart of an overcomer. Those who sail into the deeper waters develop something very key to maintain, an overcomer's heart. The Scriptures speak that in the last days, those who remain and gain great blessing will be those who carry an overcomer's heart. Overcomers walk with a plan A and no plan B attitude. They have fully given themselves to God and His ways. They have a mindset that says, "Everything in me that is not of God needs to go," so a spiritual tenacity is developed regarding the issues of their life that create a hindrance to greater freedom. While many make peace or justify their strongholds, an overcomer is never content in making peace with the enemy.

4. They are single minded. Deeper water people learn to become single minded. When storms come, they cannot entertain the "what ifs" or the "would've could've should've" kind of thoughts. One will be easily taken out in this kind of thinking, which is why the Bible says a "double minded man is unstable in all his ways." (James 1:8)

They don't make decisions foolishly, but they do not wallow in debate and second guessing. Some people need everything perfect before they step out. That does not require faith. Those in the deep waters realize that the power comes when we first step out.

Jesus said in Luke 9:62: "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back at things is fit for the kingdom of God." Those in the deeper arenas have made single minded decisions to plow forward and not guess anymore. They walk in covenant with God and even develop covenant relationships with people around them. This area of living loses the people who struggle with commitment issues, because when the storms arise, they become easily taken out.

5. They grow in relationships and how to communicate with others. This may surprise most, because going deeper with God is often depicted as someone who spends hours alone with God.

Yet deeper relationship with God must be reflected in our relationship with others. Those who claim to go into deeper waters, but are not growing in relationship with the people around them have developed a fraudulent Christianity.

Jesus said all of the commands are summed up in one simple Scripture:

Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” (Matt. 22:37, MEV).

Our Lord laid it out pretty clearly. Love God. Love yourself. Love people. Period.

Many people who want to go deeper think it's only about themselves and God. Yet it's really about themselves, God and how they process that with others around them.

Going deeper with God will actually confront all our broken ways of relating to people and how we interact with the world. God will not work in our lives while we avoid the people around us, which usually makes this area the most uncomfortable. Those who go deeper welcome the relational conflicts and strains as opportunities to grow in what love really means. Because in those deeper waters, true relationships are built and God's heart is made manifest.
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