

Volume 1 – Day 15: Carefulness Hurts Like Infidelity

Jesus words in Matthew 6:25, “Take no thought for your life, what you will eat, or what you will drink; nor yet for your body what you will wear,” make it clear that faith is absolute trust in God. Jesus’ implication is that a disciple living by common-sense and human intelligence and wisdom hurts the heart of God like infidelity hurts us. {Imagine the pain another’s infidelity creates for you.}

If we have received the Spirit of God, it is essential that we listen for His guidance alone. A heart tuned to the Spirit of God will hear Him asking, “Now where does God come to bear in this relationship, in this vacation, in these new books or movies, in the choice you are about to make?” He continues to reminds us of His Presence, until we learn to make Him our first consideration. Whenever we put other things first, there is confusion of priorities and emotions.

"Take no thought ... “about the possible consequences of obedience to the Spirit of God. Leave them to Him. Don't create your own stress by focusing on your future. **It is not only wrong to worry, it is equivalent to infidelity**, because worrying means that we do not think that God can handle the practical details of our lives, and it is never anything else that worries us. Have you ever noticed what Jesus said would choke out what He teaches us? It is not the devil! It is ever, only and always our own concerns about the issues of everyday life.

When I fail to trust God where I cannot see the end result, that is where infidelity begins. The only cure for infidelity is obedience to the Spirit in absolute trust. The most significant word of Jesus to His disciples is abandon. If we do not abandon ourselves to God, it is because we do not trust Him fully.

My Confirming Scriptures:

My Aligning Experiences:

Volume 1 – Day 16: Value-Add Teaching

There are two different philosophies of teaching, informational and transformational. When the focus is on accumulation of information, it can be learned by rote and measured by testing. The more information you possess the greater your power and influence. This is the predominant philosophy of public education. It is popular because it helps to build personal wealth and power.

The transformational philosophy focuses on the development of character and emotional harmony. Unfortunately, you can't just purpose to have character. It is developed in and through relationship. It is curious that what we want most (happy relationships) is seldom attained, due to a selfish pursuit of applause, wealth and influence. These things are more readily achieved by amassing personal knowledge.

Jesus' teachings are purely *relational* and thereby *transformational*. His message ran contrary to all religious teaching in His day. He and His message were rejected summarily by any and all who were more interested in themselves (their own prosperity, popularity and power) than in wholesome, mutually other-caring relationships. All religions, including the Christian religion, place more value on the selfish pursuits of the *worshippers*, attempting to appease their gods, than in developing genuine, affectionate relationships with others.

Christianity, when properly practiced, is relationship and not religion. Most relationships, then and now, were (and are) mutual accommodation of self-need. That explains the phenomena of falling **in** love and then falling **out** of love.

My Confirming Scriptures:

My Aligning Experiences:

Volume 1 – Day 17: Taught or Caught

“Some things are taught and some things are caught!” The significance of this particular parallel is that Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is largely determined by the ability of one to store knowledge and then retrieve it at will in high measure of accuracy. Until recent times the measure of Emotional Intelligence or Emotion Quotient (EQ) was largely unknown or little understood. And it is essentially both IQ and EQ which distinguish the human race from all other species.

While boasting of high IQs and impressive accomplishments, most have failed to reach their emotional potential (EQ). The underlying force, that is, the success engine of personal achievement is one which runs well only on a race track of speed and fanfare. The success engine of human happiness is one which is fueled by affection and runs on any track where it can share its fuel with others in need.

We are careful to teach each other to be more rational than emotional and for seemingly good reasons. Crimes of passion often produce the most gruesome of crime scenes. Yet, the truth be told, we are primarily emotional beings and driven mostly by emotion.

Regardless of how much we pack information into our heads about good character and good behaviors, it is our emotions which cause us to fall short with respect to both. Hopefully this one thought may help you. “The deeper my affection for another person, the greater my kindness will be toward them.” — J H Alan. When I fall in love, I catch a passion which transforms me. Information may help me see what needs to be changed in me, but only a change of feeling will change how I can make others feel.

“It is not what I do or say for which I will be remembered. I will be remembered for how I made them feel.”

My Confirming Scriptures: My Aligning Experiences:

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

Volume 1 – Day 18: Morality or Motive

Jesus did not teach morality. Jesus did not teach justice and equity. Jesus did not teach responsible living. Jesus did not teach behavior management. Jesus did not teach social activism. All expressions of any of these are at best futile attempts to be *self-righteous*, or *a good person*. Even the Old Testament was grossly misunderstood as a behavioral approach to *rightness*. A more accurate understanding is that all of the rules and regulations of the Commandments of God were simply the revelation of the symptoms of the disease of selfishness (the antithesis of love). Anyone can see the natural consequences, that is relational carnage, that violation of the rules would produce. Your true morality quotient is determined by your motives.

Check out the story of the woman brought to Jesus who had been caught in the very act of adultery. Notice what Jesus said to her. “Neither do I condemn you, go and stop pursuing this lifestyle.” At the same time ponder the desire of the most religious men of Jesus’ day with respect to the woman. “Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned to death!” Consider then what these religious leaders did to Jesus shortly after this encounter (crucifixion). Why would Jesus ignore the Law and show mercy to the woman?

Who would you act like, Jesus or the religious leaders? Sometimes we get so caught up in compliance with the rules that we refuse to consider exercising mercy, forgiveness and grace. Yet, we always cry out for these when we are the offender!

My Confirming Scriptures:

My Aligning Experiences:

Volume 1 – Day 19: Feeling *IS* Relationship

We must first feel God's love for us in order to respond to it. If we have misperceptions as to the measure of God's love for us or misgivings about it, we cannot respond to it. You cannot respond to a love you do not feel. It is usually the case, that when we do not believe that God actually does love us, just the way we are, we have been misinformed by well-meaning but misguided informants. These informants are parents, pastors, peers, politicians, professors, and professionals of all kinds. However, the good news of the Gospel is this. The Holy Spirit of God Himself will come to us and convince us that God desires to be in close relationship with us.

But, if we do not say "yes" to His overtures of love, we remain apart from Him. The good news is that God will express His affectionate intentions toward every man and woman many times in his or her life. He wants every one to be up close and personal with Him. But that could not be possible if ever God forced anyone in that regard. This is the very essence of faith in God. **Faith is essentially my affectionate response to God's love for me.** It is in the moment when my heart is pierced by His love, that I have the opportunity to establish a personal relationship with Him. It cannot and will not happen at any other time. So when the Spirit of God whispers His invitation into relationship with Him, I strongly suggest that you just say *yes!*

My Confirming Scriptures: John 3:16-17.

My Aligning Experiences:

Volume 1 – Day 20: Joy and Happiness Are Yours

Jesus said, “No one can take away your joy.” You can give it up. But don’t give it up! You need to take hold of it and have the joy of your salvation restored to you. You need to take it up. You need to live in it. You have a right to be happy because Jesus purchased that right. You have a right to live with a smile on your face. You have a right to know that you are incredibly loved and to be amazingly happy about it. You need to abide in the happiness of God. You need to live there; camp there. It’s important to the Father that you’re happy. It’s so important that we are the happiest people on earth.

Even on our worst days we have God with us. He is with us. He is for us. Even when He’s praying to the Father, Jesus prayed this in John 17, “But now I come to you and these things I speak out in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves.” So when you are in Christ you are a partaker of *His* righteousness. You’re a partaker of *His* obedience. You’re a partaker of how *He* is wonderfully loved. And you are a partaker of *His* happiness and *His* joy.

Everything that He is belongs to you. That’s why the Father put you into Him, so that everything in Christ belongs to you. Every word that God speaks to you is designed to lead you into an experience where joy is one of the outcomes. What Jesus speaks in prayer to the Father He also speaks to us. John 15:11 “These things I have spoken to you, so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be made full.” It’s time to get filled with the joy of the Lord.

If you are feeling badly right now, is it because of your vision of God or the vision of your circumstances?

Do you know how to acquire joy in the experience of difficulty?
My Confirming Scriptures:

My Aligning Experiences:

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

Volume 1 – Day 21: Defined by Love

Once having been overwhelmed by God's love and responding to His invitation of a deeply personal relationship with Him, my expressions about Him will reflect my affection for Him. My identity is not defined by my abilities, talents, intelligence, vocation or my personal successes. My identity is a matter of relationship. I am defined by my heritage, my relationship and my personality. Identity is a matter of *being* not *doing*. Unfortunately the predominant answer to the question, "Who are you?" is a recitation of accomplishments and abilities. Relationship, which is the ultimate in human experience is based rather on pure emotional and spiritual connection with another being. My identity then, is in my identification with another in relationship. Birth and marriage are two primary examples of this.

In Christ, that is in having responded to God's invitation to be joined to Him in a deeply personal way, my identity takes on a much higher value than with any other relationship. As a Christ-In, I am identified with God as a member of His family, by marriage, with all of its inherent benefits and pleasures. Thus the term "Christian" in its purest meaning is in this marital union with God in all three of His manifestations, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Living in relational unity and harmony with God, enables me to demonstrate the selfless, other-caring Spirit of God to all those around me. And in that Spirit, I will have genuine affection for all others around me. From this place of identity **everything I do will be motivated by who I am.**

My Confirming Scriptures:

My Aligning Experiences: