

Volume 6, Day 1: Faithless Prayer for Healing

The miracle that God did at the Detroit Rescue Mission back in 1984 gave me absolute confirmation of my belief, as my faith became sight. After preaching sincerely to those men who had come in off of the streets to get a free meal, two men came up to me and asked me to do something I had never done.

Normally, I would not even have done what I did. The man with a broken shoulder, who could not even move his arm, asked me to pray for him. I had had a fractured shoulder bone when I was a teenager, so I recognized that his was an actual broken bone. I said something like – “pray for you?? Man you need a doctor!!”

The man who had come up with him said something like – “hey man, we’re on the streets, we can’t afford a doctor, would you pray for him preacher?” Normally, I would have told him that I would take him to a doctor, and pray for God to guide the physician in treating him; but instead of thinking that thought, I put my hand on his good shoulder and prayed, “Father, I would like you to heal this man, in Jesus name.”

As I opened my eyes from praying, I was amazed. The man stood there swinging his arm freely, and with his eyes wide open, he was saying, “I am healed!” The man next to him had his eyes wide open and was saying, “He’s healed!” I had my eyes wide open now saying, “Wow, he’s healed.”

I cannot say that God did this miracle because of my faith that He would do it. I believe He did it to give me that absolute confidence in the 66 documents that are included in the Holy Bible.

My confirming Scriptures: My aligning experiences

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

Volume 6, Day 2: The Most Penetrating Question

Jesus asked Peter a question that hurt his feelings. Like Peter we might be initially silent. Our human nature and individuality declares what or who we love. But the actual love we have toward another person is only discovered by the hurt of the question, "Do you love me?" This is true of love for another person or love for God. Peter loved Jesus in the way in which any natural man loves a good man. It is based on how pleasant the other's personality and expressions of themselves are to me. I may think that I have a deep love for the individual, but the love does not penetrate the surface impressions of the person. Love at this level has not been tested by deeper more intimate truth about the other person. True love does far more than profess verbally any affection for the other being. Jesus said, "Whoever will confess Me before men ..." What this means is to express your love not merely by your words, but also by everything you do regardless of what the other does or says.

Unless we are deeply hurt by the question, "Do you love me?" to the point that every doubt we might have about that love is gone, we must seek evidence in our actions that the love is true. We may say that we love God enormously, but our actions which indicate that God is not having His desires satisfied in us betray our confession as false. The word of God hurts as no sin can ever hurt because sin actually numbs feeling.

This question coming from the Lord intensifies feeling, until being hurt by Jesus is the most exquisite hurt conceivable. It hurts in a profoundly personal spiritual way. The word of the Lord pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit so that there is no deception left in us. Such hurt will continue until the love for God is genuine and complete. The point of each hurt feeling is to bring revelation that at some level our love is more for us than for God.

My Confirming Scriptures:

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Volume 6, Day 3: Is Jesus Your First Love?

Have you felt the hurt of the Lord to the place where the real sensitivity of your life is lodged? The devil never hurts there, neither sin nor human affection hurts there, nothing goes through to that place but the word of God. Peter was awakening to the fact that in the real true center of his personal life he was devoted to Jesus, and he began to see what the patient questioning meant. There was not the slightest strand of delusion left in Peter's mind. He never could be deluded again.

There was no room for passionate utterance, no room for exhilaration or sentiment. It was a revelation to him to realize how much he did love the Lord, and with amazement he exclaimed, "Lord, You know all things!" Notice that Peter did not say, "Look at this!" to confirm it. Peter was beginning to discover that there was no one in heaven or earth beside Jesus Christ; but he did not know it until the probing, hurting questions of the Lord came. The Lord's questions always reveal me to myself.

The patient directness of Jesus Christ with Peter! Our Lord never asks questions until the right time. Jesus will get us into a corner where He will hurt us with His undeviating questions, and we will realize that we do love Him far more deeply than any profession can ever show. Otherwise we will face the fact that Jesus is not our first love. And, to be sure, we cannot effectively communicate to others something we do not possess! Reflect on your daily consistent actions and attitudes. In them lies the irrefutable evidence of the objects of our genuine love!

The heart is the only organ with which we can know and experience love. Exercise it frequently. The more you receive of God's love the more you can offer to others. And it is only God's love in the Holy Spirit within you that will draw others to God!

My Confirming Scriptures:

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Vol 6, Day 4: God's Love, Not Yours, Will Satisfy Them

This is love in the making. The love of God is intimate. It is God's nature. It is His very essence. 1 John 4:8 states, "... God IS love!" When we receive the Holy Spirit He unites us with God so that His love is expressed in us. When the soul is united to God by the indwelling Holy Spirit that is not the end. The end is that we may be one with the Father as Jesus was. What kind of oneness did Jesus Christ have with the Father? Such a oneness that the Father sent Him down here to be spent for us, and He says – "As the Father hath sent Me, I send you in the same manner." And that manner is love so all consuming that it even extends to those who hate us.

Peter realizes now, with the revelation of the Lord's hurting question, that he does love Him; then comes the point – "Spend it out." Don't testify how much you love Me. Express that love fluently and unreservedly. Don't waste time talking about the marvelous revelation you have had. Just - "Feed My sheep." And the food that they all need and want most is the Love of God!

Jesus has some extraordinarily funny sheep, some bedraggled, dirty sheep, some awkward, butting sheep, and all of the sheep have gone astray! It is impossible to exhaust God's love. It is impossible to diminish that love in me if it springs from the one center, the Holy Spirit. The love of God pays no attention to personality, that is, the distinctions made by natural individuality. If I love my Lord, I have no business being guided by natural temperament and affinities. I just have to feed His sheep. There will never be any release from this commission. Beware of counterfeiting the love of God by working along the line of natural human sympathy, because that will end in blaspheming the love of God.

Your own love is insufficient to deliver a God-like, unconditional affection to others. Your new nature is the presence of the Holy Spirit not a cleaned up, made-over human nature. Learning to be fully surrendered to the Spirit of God (Holy Spirit) in you is the only way to dispense the love of God!

My Confirming Scripture: My Aligning Experiences:

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Vol 6 Day 5: Who or What Motivates Me to Service?

It is easier to serve God without a vision from Him. It is easier to work for God without a call to His specific ways and means. This is because you will not be concerned about what God might require. Common sense will be your guide in ministry just like in personal and vocational pursuits. Yet you will veneer over your common sense with 'Christian' prayers and Biblical sayings.

You will be more prosperous, successful, and light hearted, if you never realize the call of God. But if once you receive a specific directive from Jesus Christ, the memory of what God wants you to do, and how He wants you to do it, will always come like a blinding reminder. You will no longer be able to work for Him on a common-sense basis.

What do I really hold dear and valuable? If I have not been completely gripped and overwhelmed by Jesus Christ, I will count service for Him to be dear. I will consider my time given to God as dear. But that is to hold my life dear unto myself and Him in second place at best. Paul said that he counted his life dear only in order that he might fulfill the ministry he had been dispatched by God to do. He refused to expend his energy on any other thing. Acts 20:24 notes Paul's absolute annoyance at being asked to consider his own agenda.

A true disciple of Jesus is absolutely indifferent to any consideration other than that of fulfilling the ministry he has received. Practical work is most often a fierce competitor of abandonment to God. Practical work is based on this, "Think of how useful you are here." - or - "Consider how much value your talents would be in that particular type of work."

That attitude does not put the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ as the Guide for where you go, but rather puts yourself based on your own assessment as to where you could be of most use. Never consider whether you are of use; but ever consider that you are not your own but His.

My Confirming Scriptures:

My Aligning Experiences:

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

Volume 6, Day 6: Where Is My Loyalty?

Joy comes with the perfect fulfillment of that for which I was created and redeemed, not the successful completion of a particular task or project. The joy of Jesus Christ came by doing what the Father sent Him to do. It was this "... joy that was set in His mind..." in His redemption of mankind from the consequences of sin that caused Him to overcome His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane and deliver Himself to crucifixion.

Jesus said, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so am I sending you." Have I received God's inspiration for ministry from the Lord? If so, I must be loyal to it. Because of my loyalty in love for God, I will count my life precious only for the purpose of fulfilling that ministry. Think of the satisfaction it will be to hear Jesus say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." to know that you have done what He sent you to do.

We have all hope to find our niche in life. Spiritually, we find it when we receive our ministry from the Lord, not our own creativity. In order to do this, we must have become very intimate with Jesus! We must know Him as more than just a personal Savior. I must get beyond my desire to serve Him painlessly. I must be willing "... to endure the great things I must suffer for His sake."

I do not get to choose my place and means of service. I only choose absolute loyalty to Jesus' commission or to my own pursuits. I must be loyal to what I discern when I am in closest contact with God. If I have received a ministry from the Lord Jesus, I will know that the need is never the call. The need is the opportunity. The call is loyalty to the ministry I received when I was intimately in touch with Him.

This does not imply that there is a campaign of service marked out for you, but it does mean that you will have to ignore the natural inclination for service along any other lines.

My Confirming Scriptures

Aligning Experiences:

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Volume 6, Day 7: Enthusiasm in the Mundane

Nothing short of Almighty grace enables me to take the next step when there is no miraculous vision or audience to applaud me. The next step in spiritual or secular pursuits when there is no personal affirmation or accolades available, takes the very grace of God to motivate me. The next step takes the "... lamp unto my feet" of the Holy Spirit's guidance and the "light unto the path" of God's choosing for me.

The next steps in any direction or avenue of life, the direction of understanding, devotion and intimacy are energized by the unconditional love of God alone. And it is His unconditional love for me that invokes God's favor upon me in moments when I have failed Him miserably. It takes more grace to operate invisibly and anonymously than to be the most eloquent, successful evangelist for the Gospel.

Every Christian in a very personal way must partake of the essence of the incarnation of Jesus. We must live real flesh and blood practical lives as though we were God in the flesh to others. We falter when there is no miraculous vision from God. We slack off when there is no one to cheer us on or applaud our efforts. We languish in doing the mundane, common, and trivial tasks. We stop when there is no personal benefit to motivate us.

The thing that tells the story of our motives in the long run for God and for men is the steady persevering work in the unseen places. The only way to keep from being crushed is to live every moment looking to God's and only God's approval. Ask God to keep the eyes of your spirit open to the reality of the Holy Spirit of the Risen Christ within you. When He does, it will be impossible for drudgery to dampen your enthusiasm for the work at hand. Remain connected to the vine as in the fifteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel and the fruit will appear.

My Confirming Scriptures:

My Aligning Experiences:

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Volume 6, Day 8: Comfortable Victory

When Paul talks about separation from the love of God, he is referring to the 'non-spiritual' things that are likely to separate us from the love of God. Nearly everything we do which is not within the confines of our quiet, alone place with God tends to distract us from the love of God and His purposes for our lives. From God's perspective, nothing can wedge between us and His love. It flows incessantly and in torrents. However, our love for Him is often blocked by our own distractions or human loves which exceed our love for God.

The foundation of our Christian faith is the unconditional, unmerited, fathomless, incomprehensible love of God. This was indelibly etched in human history by the exhibition of Jesus' brutalized, abused, shamefully displayed body on a criminal's cross outside of Jerusalem. This is a love we never can or will merit. It is only ours by the grace (unmerited favor) which is a by-product of God's extraordinary love for us.

The manner in which we are 'more than conquerors' is that we not only achieve victory over sin and death, but also the super-victory of joy in the very circumstances which would otherwise overwhelm us with distress, anxiety and fear. The waves which the surfer seeks distress the casual swimmers.

In the same sense, the super-joy of surfing through our tribulations, distresses, persecutions without any of those negative sensations is the very victory that Jesus says, "overcomes the world," that is the natural human response. Thus, we are more than conquerors through Him in all these things, not in spite of them, but in the middle of the messiness and stress. The joy of the LORD is only, ever experienced by the saint in tribulation! The experiences of life, terrible or monotonous, are impotent to touch the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ!

My Confirming Scriptures:

My Aligning Experiences:

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Vol 6, Day 9: I'm A Christian, but I Have My Rights

No one is ever intimate with Jesus Christ until he is willing to let go of not sin only, but his whole way of seeing and doing things. Being born from above of the Spirit of God means that we must let go of self before we lay hold of God. In the first stages it is the relinquishing of all pretense. What God wants us to present to Him is not goodness, nor honesty, nor endeavor, but real solid sin; that is all He can take from us. And what does He give in exchange for our sin? Real solid righteousness. But we must stop pretending that we possess good character, all claim of being worthy of God's consideration.

Once we submit everything we are and have to God, or at least what we think is all, the Spirit of God will show us what more there is to relinquish. I must renounce all claims to my right to myself in every particular. Am I willing to release my grip on all I possess, my obsessions of my affections, my propensities regarding everything personal, and to be, as it were, crucified to death as Jesus was with His death on the cross?

There is always a sharp painful disillusionment to go through before we do relinquish. When a man really sees himself as the Lord sees him, it is not the abominable sins of the flesh that shock him, but the awful nature of the pride of his own good works and accomplishments for God that strike at the heart of Jesus Christ. When he sees himself in the light of the enormous love of God, the shame and the horror and the desperate conviction come over him.

When you are faced with the question of relinquishing all of your own agenda, goals and pursuits, rise to the challenge of this crisis. Let go of everything that is not God in you and God will make you fit for all that He asks or expects of you.

My Confirming Scriptures: "I am crucified with Christ."
Galatians 2:20

Aligning Experiences:

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Vol 6, Day 10: Deliver the Love of God, Not Just Stuff

We have not been saved in order to provide food, clothing, shelter and other earthly necessities and comforts. We have been saved to be Christ incarnate right here, right now! We are not simply spiritual guides to other believers. We were saved to become spiritual messengers to others who are not yet believers. In a sense, every Christian is called to be an evangelist, not by vocation, but by occupation!

When we say that love is action, we actually reduce love to pity for the less fortunate socially. When in other countries we find poverty far greater than in our homeland, simultaneously we see men and women who are so deeply enamored in their love for God that it makes us look like spiritual dwarfs! The gospel of Jesus Christ heals the soul even if it never affects the body.

When we substitute charitable activities for the love of Jesus, we reduce Jesus to a social equalizer. Our testimony cannot be 'social kindness.' Even atheists and those of other religions do the same 'socially loving' acts of human kindness!

When Jesus said, "when you have done these things to the least of these, you have done them to me," He was talking about genuine affection. In Matthew chapter 7 Jesus declares that many who have given to the poor will be banished to eternal punishment! What is that about?! It's about giving the genuine love of God to those in spiritual need of redemption. The social gospel is a contrivance of humans as their access to God!

The natural human heart is inclined to goodwill. It takes the heart broken by conviction of sin, and born the second time in the Spirit to be reshaped into the purpose of God. Redemption, in Jesus, takes us out of our own plans and purposes and we are "hammered into shape and use," for God's purposes. The indwelling Holy Spirit made the disciples the incarnation of what they preached. "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me." And what is this witness of Jesus as He told His disciples in John 13:34-35? "Love Like Jesus Loves!" The salvation of God comes only through the love of God received and dispensed through the human lives it transforms.

Volume 6, Day 11: Relationship or Business Deal

When we declare that we have left everything and everyone to follow Jesus, He reminds us that abandonment is not about what we are leaving behind, but Whom we are abandoned to. This can be seen in essence in our relationships with our most significant others. It is not about our sacrifice. It is about our devotion to another's interests above our own.

True relationships are forged, not by extracting what we want from the other. True relationship is 'other caring' and doing what we do to please the other person. Be careful not to make a business transaction out of friendship or any other personal relationship. This is especially important when we engage in relationship with God (Father, Son or Holy Spirit). If we think that "we are going to give ourselves to God" because we want to be delivered from sin, we are on the wrong track.

"Being made holy or righteous" is the result of being right with God. But that spirit is not of the essential nature of Christianity. Abandonment is not for anything at all. We have become so self indulgent that we only go to God for something from Him, and not for Himself. It is like saying, "No, Lord, I don't want You. I want myself. But I want myself to be full, comfortable, happy, respected and influential. I want to be filled with the Holy Spirit. I want to be on display in Your showroom so that I can say, 'Look at me!' This is what God has done for me!"

If we only give up something to God in order to get more back, it is only miserable self-interest. That we gain heaven, are delivered from sin, are made useful to God - these things never enter as considerations into absolute abandon to God. Abandon is a personal preferential choice for Jesus Christ to be sovereign over us and abandoning our own sovereignty.

When we come up against the barriers of natural relationship, where is Jesus Christ? Most of us desert Him in order to please our human significant others. Most of us know abandonment in theory or vision only.

Volume 6, Day 12: Both Abandoned in “Marriage!”

Salvation is not merely deliverance from sin, nor the experience of personal holiness. The salvation of God is deliverance out of self entirely into union with Himself. My experiential knowledge of salvation will be essentially deliverance from sin and personal holiness. However, salvation is that the Spirit of God has brought me into touch with God's personality, and I am thrilled with a relationship with someone infinitely greater than myself. I am overwhelmed and obsessed with the love God.

If we believe that we are called to proclaim holiness or sanctification, we have been misguided. We are called to introduce others to a personal and intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. The fact that He saves from sin and makes us holy is part of the effect of the wonderful experience of falling in love with God.

Abandonment never produces the consciousness of its own effort, because the whole life is taken up with the One to Whom we abandon ourselves. Don't go around telling others you are abandoned to God when you know nothing about it. And you will never know anything about it unless and until you have realized that John 3:16 means that God gave Himself wholly and absolutely to us.

In our abandon we give ourselves over to God just as God gave Himself for us, without any reservation or hesitation. We are 'all in' to this 'up-close-and-personal' love affair with Him. The consequence of abandonment never enters into our minds because our life is taken up with Him.

Salvation is the initiation of a marriage of sorts, wherein each partner commits to put the interests and needs of the other ahead of one's own. Anything less than the highest of all human relationship commitments will produce neither salvation nor relationship. Jesus gave His all. We must give our all in return. Then and only then is the relationship established. And once it is established, no one can break it up.

Volume 6, Day 13: Everyone Is A Slave to Someone

In order to know whose slave I am, I must determine by examination of my attitudes and feelings who dominates me. It can be my most significant other, myself, my sports star, God or any other. Then I must admit the unwelcome fact that I am the responsible party who made the choice. If I am a slave to myself, I am to blame because at some time in my past I decided to follow the rules of my own making, for my self appointed sovereignty, me. Similarly, if I primarily obey God, I do so because I made a cognitive choice at some point to do so. All of us will yield ourselves to sovereignty every moment in life. And it is obvious at those moments whom we chose to obey!

Yield in childhood to selfishness, or in childishness in adulthood and you will find it the most miserable binding tyranny on earth. There is no power in the human soul of itself to break the bondage of a disposition formed by yielding. Yield for one second to anything in the nature of lust whether it be the lust of the flesh or the lust of the mind - once yield and though you may hate yourself for having yielded, you are a slave to that thing. (Remember what lust is: "I must have it at once." Or to put it another way, "The essence of Lust is getting and lust can't wait to get! The essence of love is giving and love can wait for the right time to give!")

There is no release in human power at all. Release from lust (self-indulgence) is only possible through the Redemption of Jesus Christ. You must yield yourself in utter humiliation to the only One Who can break the dominating power of lust.

You discover that to be true in ridiculously foolish thoughts and expressions, "Oh, I can give that habit up when I like." No, you cannot! You will find that the habit absolutely dominates you because you yielded to it willingly and persistently. It is easy to sing, "He will break every fetter," and at the same time be living a life of obvious slavery to yourself. Yielding to Jesus' Holy Spirit within you will break every form of slavery in any human life!

Vol 6, Day 14: The Morphing Relationship with Jesus

At the beginning of our new life in Christ we were sure we knew all about Jesus. It was quite natural, a delight actually, to sell all we held dear and to cast ourselves wholeheartedly to Him out of passionately overwhelming love. But what on earth happened? Now we are not quite so sure we really knew what we were doing. At this point, after myriad disappointments, Jesus looks strange to us.

There is an aspect of Jesus that chills the heart of a disciple to the bone and makes the whole spiritual life gasp for breath. This strange Jesus with His face set like a flint in striding determination, strikes fear into me. He is no longer Counselor and Comrade. He now seems to hold a point of view I know nothing about. It scares me! And I am puzzled by Him.

At first I was confident that I understood Him. He was all about loving me! But now I am not so sure. I realize that there is a distance between Jesus Christ and me. I can not feel that wonderful familiarity with Him. He is ahead of me and He never turns round. I have no idea where He is going. And the goal has become very strange and distant.

Jesus Christ had to feel the effects of every sin and every sorrow man could experience. That is what makes Him seem strange. When we see Him in this light, He is very different to us. We don't recognize one feature of His life now, and we do not know how to follow Him. Our comradeship with Him has dissipated.

Take heart! The discipline of dismay is essential in the life of a disciple. Through the discouragement of unexpected adversity and calamity, we will see more of Who He is and how deeply He loves us. Once we experience His sustaining power over our dismal and discouraging circumstances, it will kindle a new fire of enthusiasm that will increase our trust and desire to be more like Him. When the darkness of dismay comes, endure until it is over, because out of it will come that following of Jesus which is overflowing with unspeakable joy.

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

Vol 6, Day 15: Accountability: Love, Not Condemn

Paul says that we must all, preacher and people alike, “appear before the judgment seat of Christ.” If you learn to live in the love of Christ here and now, judgment becomes discernment. This will cause you to delight in the work of God in you. Remain constantly aware of the presence of Christ. Walk in every moment in the light of the Christ’s revelation to you available instantly to move at His bidding. Rather than casting judgments on any other soul, accept them with the fullness of God’s love. Otherwise you will operate in the spirit of the devil, no matter how saintly you are. It takes only one carnal judgment of any other to create hell on earth for them and you.

Bring your condemnation of others and say, “My God, I am guilty here.” If you don’t, hardness will set in. It is not only God who punishes for sin. Sin confirms itself in the sinner and gives back full pay. No amount of striving or praying will enable you to stop doing some things. And the act of sin, if you gradually get used to it, you will cease to consider it sin. No power except the union of the Holy Spirit with your spirit can alter the tendency to sin.

“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light.” For many of us, walking in the light means holding others and ourselves to our standard of perfection. The deadliest Pharisaism today is not hypocrisy, but unconscious fantasy and unrealistic expectations of self and others. It is a huge mistake to assume that “Walking in the Light (in the Spirit)” occurs by achieving a relatively sinless state. Even avoiding sin, studying the Bible more and praying more will never cause one to “Walk in the Spirit.” This is putting the cart in front of the horse which will never accomplish forward progress. The only way to “Walk in the Spirit” is to develop such an absolutely passionate abandoned love for God that the affection itself connects one inextricably and intimately with the Holy Spirit. The abundance of this magnificent passionate love overflows in the expressions of the Spirit of God as opposed to the expressions of the human spirit in the union.

My Confirming Scripture: My Aligning Experiences:

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

Vol 6, Day 16: Spiritual and Emotional Separation

Personal relationship with God shows itself in separation. This is seen in the life of Abraham by his separation from his country, kith and kin. Today the separation is more about spiritual and emotional preferences. As devotees of Christ we feel separation from those who are not into how we perceive life. Our kith, kin and significant others who do not have a personal relationship with God, step away from us. This is because we have new desires which are no longer the same as theirs. Consequently, we gravitate to others whose desires are more toward God and his purposes than our natural human desires.

Faith never knows where it is being led, but it loves and knows and trusts explicitly the One Who is leading. Ours is now a life of faith, not of intellect and reason. It is a life of knowing God, Who gives us new purpose. The root of our faith is an intimate knowledge of a Personal God. One of the erroneous traps for Christians is the idea that God is sure to lead us to success. God is never interested in success. That is the human way of life. God desires a deeply passionate love affair with us.

The final stage in the life of faith is humility not character. When one becomes truly humble, all of the best character traits are expressed as naturally and effortlessly as breathing. We cannot possess good character as Jesus said, "There is none good but God." However, since redemption is the result of the union of the Holy Spirit and the natural spirit, the perfect character of God, in the Holy Spirit will manifest itself in us when we abandon ourselves to Him.

The life of faith is not a life of mounting up with wings, but a life of walking and not fainting. It is not a question of sanctification; but of something infinitely further on than sanctification. It is a life of faith that has been focused on the perfection of God in every relationship dimension. Abraham's mustard seed faith was on this and only this: "God is the perfect Father, Mother, Sister, Brother, Friend and Mate. No Christian needs more faith. We simply need to place all of our faith in God as perfect in every relationship way.

Volume 6, Day 17: Friendship with God

There is genuine delight in real friendship, especially friendship with God. It is far more than just occasional feelings of His presence all day, every day. We feel Him not just while in prayer, but at all times as we bring His presence into our current conscious moment. True friendship with God occurs when we are so much in contact with God that we never need to ask Him to show us His will. A deeply affectionate relationship enables us to finish the other's sentences and know what they desire before they even speak. When you are rightly related to another (even God), it brings freedom of expression of the most intimate thoughts and desires of your life. Vulnerability becomes very natural in genuine relationship. When you experience intimacy with God, you are God's will, and all your common-sense decisions are His will for you unless He checks. You decide things in perfect delightful friendship with God, knowing that if your decisions are wrong He will always cause you to pause. When He checks, stop at once.

Genuine relationships bring with them difficulties which we would not encounter in any other way. These difficulties can actually, if not properly addressed, cause a silence or even a break in relationship. However, they occur in order to bring us to fully appreciate friendship or better yet, develop intimacy with another person. When we stop communicating we weaken the bond. Why do we stop praying when we don't get the results we sought? It is because we are not intimate enough yet to go boldly on until God grants our desire or enables us to know His purposes and desire for us in that particular matter.

Whenever we stop short in prayer and say – “Well, I don't know; perhaps it is not God's will,” we are not as intimately acquainted with God as Jesus was, and as He wants us to be – “That they may be one even as we are one.” Think of the last thing you prayed about. Were you devoted to your desire or to God's desire? Were you determined to get some gift from God or to bring pleasure to God? The point of asking is that you may get to know God better. “Delight yourself also in the Lord; and He shall give you the desires of your heart.” Keep praying in order to get a perfect understanding of God Himself.

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Volume 6, Day 18: Interest or identification?

The imperative need spiritually is to sign the death warrant of the disposition of sin. It is essential to turn all emotional impressions and intellectual beliefs into a moral verdict against the disposition of sin. This disposition is: my claim to my right to myself. Paul says, "I have been crucified with Christ." He does not say, "I have determined to imitate Jesus Christ," or, "I will try hard to follow Him." When I come to such a purposeful decision and act upon it, then all that Christ accomplished for me on the Cross is accomplished in me. That which God requires surrendered in me is all, not just some, of my rights! The free will commitment of myself to God gives the Holy Spirit the opportunity to express through me the holiness of Jesus Christ.

"... nevertheless I live ..." The individuality and uniqueness of personality remains, but the mainspring, the ruling disposition, is radically altered. The same human body remains, but the old satanic right to myself is destroyed. When we do not surrender all of our rights, we commit sin as our natural spirit operates against the Holy Spirit. He has been posited there by God in faith. But we can grieve Him when we thwart His expression of God's love even if we are doing what appears to be loving and kind things for others.

"And the life which I now live in the flesh ..." not the life which I long to live, but the life I now do live in my mortal flesh, the life which men can see, "I live by the faith of the Son of God." This faith is not our faith in Jesus Christ, but the faith that the Son of God has imparted to us, "the faith of the Son of God." It is faith which has overleapt all conscious bounds, the identical faith of the Son of God. And what was the evidence of Jesus' faith in God? It was that Jesus surrendered in absolute trust of His Father all of His own rights to the will of His Father.

Do you hold back some things which you think you can handle without His assistance or do you let go of your control over your life and the lives of others. God can always be trusted to do the best thing in any and every circumstance. And as with the agony of the Garden, God's purposes may require something painful for you.

Volume 6, Day 19: Is Your Love for God Passionate?

How gloriously the world would be changed if only we could learn the secret of the burning heart. When we come to the point of salvation, Jesus suddenly appears to us, the fires are kindled, and we have wonderful visions. But then we need to learn the secret of how to maintain that burning heart such that we can go through anything without hesitation. It is the dull, mundane, dreary and commonplace day, with commonplace duties and people that put out the burning fires of the heart toward God. The secret is abiding in Jesus.

Much of our distress and misery comes not because of sin, but because we are ignorant of the tendencies of our own nature. For example, the only test as to whether we ought to allow an emotion to have its way is to see what the outcome of the emotion will be. Push it to its logical conclusion, and if the outcome is something God would condemn, allow it no more way. But if it be an emotion kindled by the Spirit of God and you do not let that emotion have its right issue in your life, it will cause disruption and misery deeper in the soul.

The higher the emotion is, the deeper the degradation will be, if it is not worked out on its proper level. If the Spirit of God has stirred you, consider as many things as possible to be inevitable. Let the consequences be what they will. Any consideration of consequences which I might prevent, but God wants to occur, will always lead me to my purposes and not God's. We cannot stay on the mount of transfiguration, those very highly emotional moments with God. However, we can and must share the light we received there. We must let the Holy Spirit express it through us in word or action. When God gives a vision, go about your business with that vision in mind. Do not hesitate to operate according to the vision, no matter what it costs.

“We cannot kindle the fire which in the heart resides,
The spirit blows and is still, in mystery our soul abides;
But tasks in hours of insight willed
Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.”

My Confirming Scripture: My Aligning Experiences:

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

Volume 6, Day 20: Am I Carnally Minded?

The natural man knows nothing about carnality. The flesh lusting against the Spirit that came in at regeneration, and the Spirit lusting against the flesh, produces carnality. Carnality occurs when, and only when, the flesh is allowed to reign in the moment. "Walk in the Spirit," says Paul, "and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." Be ruled by the Spirit and carnality will disappear.

Are you contentious or easily troubled about trifles? "Oh, but no one who is a Christian ever is!" you might say. But Paul says they are. He connects these things with carnality. Is there a truth in the Bible that instantly awakens petulance in you? That is a proof that you are carnal. If sanctification is being worked out, there is no trace of that spirit left.

If the Spirit of God detects anything in you that is wrong, He does not ask you to correct it. He asks you to accept the light of His truth about it. He will put it right. A child of the light confesses instantly and stands bare before God. A child walking in darkness says, "Oh, I can explain that away." When the light breaks and the conviction of wrong comes, be a child of the light, and confess, and God will deal with what is wrong. If you vindicate yourself, you prove yourself to be carnal indeed!

What is the proof that carnality has gone? Don't kid yourself! When carnality is overcome it is the most real thing imaginable. God will give you many opportunities to prove to yourself the marvel of His grace. The practical test is the only proof. "Why," you say, "if this had happened before, I would have been resentful!" You will never cease to be the most amazed person on earth at what God has done for you on the inside.

My Confirming Scriptures:

Aligning Experiences:

petulance

noun

PEEVISHNESS, bad temper, ill temper, pettishness, pique, impatience, irritability, moodiness, sulkiness, snappishness, touchiness, waspishness, irascibility, tetchiness, testiness, querulousness, fractiousness, cantankerousness, grumpiness, grouchiness, crabbiness, ill humor, spleen;

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

Volume 6, Day 21: Decreasing into God's Purpose

If you develop another soul's dependence on you, you are out of the Will of God. God's will is that all should come to repentance unto salvation and a full surrender in dependence upon God Himself. As a worker for God, your great responsibility is to be a friend of the Bridegroom. When once you see a soul in sight of the claims of Jesus Christ, you know that your influence has led them in the right direction. It is never your job to prevent the trials in their lives or your own life either. Rather pray that they grow ten times stronger until there is no power on earth or in hell that can keep that soul away from Jesus Christ.

Time and again, we become amateur providences. We come in and prevent God from doing His work. We say, "This and that must not be tolerated in life." Instead of proving friends of the Bridegroom, we put our own personal sympathy in the way. The soul we have thus hindered will one day say about us, "That one was a thief. He stole my affections from Jesus and I lost my vision of Him."

Beware of praying for our own personal sympathies for others rather than praying for God's will to be done in the midst of the misery or calamity. Stop rejoicing with a soul in the wrong thing (deliverance from difficulty). See that you do rejoice in the right thing (personal growth in learning from the adversity). "The friend of the Bridegroom ... rejoices greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice: 'this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.'" This is spoken with joy and not with sadness. Finally they get to see the Bridegroom! John says this is his greatest joy. It is the absolute dissolution of the ministry of the worker. He is never thought of again.

Watch intently until you see the Bridegroom and hear His voice in the life of another. Regardless of the havoc it brings, what upsets, what deterioration of health, rejoice with divine hilarity when once His voice is heard. You may often see Jesus Christ wreck a life before He saves it. (Cf. Matt. 10:34.)

My Confirming Scriptures: My Aligning Experiences:

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

Volume 6, Day 22: My Insignificance to Promote His Significance

Goodness and purity of love never do attract attention to themselves. They are magnets to draw people to Jesus Christ. If my holiness is not drawing others toward Him, it is not holiness of the right kind. Rather it is an influence that will awaken inordinate affection and lead souls away from God or into meaningless pursuits. A beautiful saint will actually be a hindrance if he does not present Jesus Christ in the fullness of His love but only what Christ has done for him. He will leave the impression, "What fine character that man has!" That is not being a true friend of the Bridegroom. I am increasing all the time, He is not. The focus is on me, the 'best' man, rather than on the 'perfect' man, the Bridegroom!

In order to maintain this friendship and loyalty to the Bridegroom, we have to be more careful with our relationship to Him than of any other thing, even of obedience. Sometimes there is nothing to obey. The only thing to do is to maintain a vital connection with Jesus Christ. Do not let anything interfere with that. Actually obedience is a by-product of genuine passionate love for God. We can actually begin doing, what would have been obedient, before it is even expressed.

Only occasionally do we have to obey. When a crisis arises we find out what God's will is. The more intimate our relationship with God the more we know what His will is in every situation. The greatest experience of the life is not conscious obedience but maintenance of intimacy in relationships. Christian work might actually end up being a means of evading the soul's concentration on Jesus Christ. Instead of being lovers of God, we may become amateur providences (acting like God in the lives of others). When we operate in this capacity, we work against Him while we use His resources.

You can most certainly count on this. When your life, that is, how you treat others, attracts people to the love of God which exudes from your expressions, you are definitely in the 'will of God.'

Volume 6, Day 23: The Pure in Heart
See God in Everything!

Purity is not innocence, it is much more. Purity is the outcome of sustained spiritual intimacy with God. We have to grow in purity. The life with God may be right and the inner purity remain unsullied. Yet every now and again the natural spirit which reaches the outside will be sullied. God does not shield us from this possibility because in this way we realize the necessity of maintaining the vision by personal intimacy which alone produces purity. If the spiritual bloom of our life with God is getting impaired in the tiniest degree, we must stop doing everything and reacquire the intimacy. Remember that vision depends on character – "... the pure in heart see God."

We may have thought that the 'pure in heart' are those whose moral quotient approaches perfect behavior and attitudes. However, Jesus was referring specifically to the way we see other people. Do we tend to find fault and criticize their inappropriate expressions. Or do we give them the benefit of the unknown and see them as having noble motives which we simply may not understand at the moment. When we cast purity on the motives of others until their motives have been clearly revealed as evil, we can see God in them. God is good. Thus if we see good in them, we also see God who creates the good in them. There is none righteous without God's Holy Spirit in them. But we have the best chance of helping them see God when we first see them as God sees them. They, too, are his children (only once born).

God makes us pure by His sovereign grace, but we have something to look after, this bodily life by which we come in contact with other people and with other points of view, it is these that are apt to sully us. It is only by the Holy Spirit within us that we are brought into perfect accord with the purity God gives us by His grace. The spiritual understanding is blurred the instant that our expressions are unloving toward others. Make every reasonable effort to increase your awareness of how your expressions reflect the spirit (or Holy Spirit) within you. One of these spirits will always be more evident than the other.

Volume 6, Day 24: The Source of Personal Character

Your personal character is largely determined by how others perceive you, not by how purely you live. However, the character which is observed in you comes from one of two spirits. If you only have one spirit (the flesh and blood natural spirit) you are stuck with only one character source. Our character flows from the abundance of the feelings in our soul. And those feelings come from choices which we make. So, in order to have elevated character, it will come from feelings elevated by choice. The best news in this regard is for 'born again' believers in Jesus, the choices can be made by the most elevated of all spirits in the Universe, God's Holy Spirit.

Development of true character does not come from the activities in which we engage or the expressions coming from within. These are the evidences of character. The golden rule is often thought of as limiting our expressions to what we desire to be expressed to us by others. However, the best application of the golden rule rests in the understanding of what we really want from others. It is not their resources or toleration which we desire. It is rather to be accepted by them without needing to change a thing. Being accepted "as-is" as a person of value in spite of our idiosyncrasies and lunacies.

We can twist our idea of holiness beyond what flesh and blood could ever achieve. It then becomes a spiritual acrobatic performance. You are poised and dare not move. But when God's Holy Spirit elevates your character by your surrender to His present power, instead of finding a pinnacle to cling to, you find a high plateau of character where it is easy to encourage others.

Growth in grace is measured not by the fact that you have not abandoned God, but that you have abandoned yourself more, even if only a little bit. You are constantly conscious of where you are spiritually and how much more the character of God will be formed in you by greater surrender to His Holy Spirit. This is the attainment of the highest possible character.

My Confirming Scriptures: Aligning Experiences:

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

Volume 6, Day 25: Mistaken or Misunderstood

I may not understand what Jesus Christ says. But it is wrong to say that therefore He was mistaken in what He said. It is never right to think that my obedience to a word of God will bring dishonor to Jesus. The only thing that will bring dishonor is not obeying Him. To put my concern for His honor ahead of what He is plainly telling me to do is never right. Although it may arise from a real desire to prevent Him from being put to open shame.

I know when the proposition comes from God because of its quiet persistence: When I insist on weighing the pros and cons, and doubt and debate come in, I am bringing in an element that is not of God, and I come to the conclusion that what I thought I heard Him propose was not what He really wanted. Any time we seek the confirmation of what God has spoken only to our ear by other trusted believers, we will become immobilized to the request of God.

Many of us are loyal to our notions of Jesus Christ, but how many of us are loyal to Him out of pure love for Him? Loyalty to Jesus means I have to step out where I do not see where I am going or what results to expect. Loyalty to my opinions means that I clear the ground first by my intelligence, and then follow up with my common-sense. Faith, on the other hand, is not intelligent understanding, faith is deliberate commitment to a Person where I do not need to know the way.

Are you debating whether to take a step in faith in Jesus or to wait until you can see how to do the thing yourself? Obey Him with glad reckless joy. When He says something and you begin to debate, it is because you have a conception of His honor which is not His honor but yours. Are you loyal to what He says, or are you trying to compromise with your own ideas which never came from Him? "Whatever He says to you, do it."

My Confirming Scriptures:

Aligning Experiences:

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

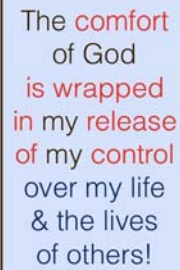
Volume 6, Day 26 Too Busy to See

The most important thing for a Christian is to be ready to face Jesus Christ at any and every turn. This applies to the home place, the work place, the play place, the worship place, the private place and the public place.. It is every experiential place. This is not a common practice of most Christians today. The struggle is not against sin or difficulties or circumstances, but against being so absorbed in work that we are not even

aware of His presence in us all the time. He is there, waiting to be noticed, even consulted. But we are distracted by our circumstances so much that we fail to get God's guidance while it is the most readily available resource we have. Force yourself to develop the habit of the awareness of His Holy Spirit's presence and wise counsel.

It is always in the most illogical and unplanned connections that He reminds us of His presence. The only way we can remain true to God is by being aware of the Holy Spirit who prepares us for the Lord's Divine surprises. It is not actual service that matters, but intense spiritual reality, considering Jesus Christ in every decision we make. This will give our life the attitude of child-like wonder which He wants it to have. If we are constantly aware of the presence of Jesus Christ, we have to stop being religious and be spiritually genuine.

If you are "preoccupied with Jesus," avoiding the call of the religious activities in which you engage, and setting your heart on what He wants; thinking His thoughts - you will be called impractical and dreamy. But when He appears in the stress of the job and the heat of the moment, you will be the only one who is able to remain calm and ready. Trust no one, not even the finest saint who ever walked this earth. Ignore him, if he recommends anything other than your constant awareness of Jesus Christ.



The comfort
of God
is wrapped
in my release
of my control
over my life
& the lives
of others!

Volume 6, Day 27: Intercession for NOT Criticism of

If we are not yielding to the way the Spirit of God works in us, we have become spiritual hypocrites. We see where other people are failing, and we turn our discernment into condemnation of them by way of our criticism instead of into intercession on their behalf to the restoration of their fellowship. The revelation is made to us not through the sharpness of our minds, but by the direct penetration of the Spirit of God. If we are not submitted to the source of the revelation, we will become criticizing centers and ignore God's words, "... He shall ask, and He shall give him life for them that sin not unto death." Be careful not to play the hypocrite by spending all your time trying to manipulate others' behaviors into obedience to God.

One of the subtlest burdens God ever puts on us as saints is this burden of discernment concerning other souls. He reveals things in order that we may take the burden of these souls before Him and form the mind of Christ about them, and as we intercede on His line, God says He will give us "life for them that sin not unto death." It is not that we bring God into touch with our minds, but that we open our minds and hearts to God until God is able to convey His mind to us about the one for whom we intercede.

Is Jesus Christ seeing evidence of the travail of His soul in us? He cannot unless we are so identified with Himself that we are fully motivated to hold His point of view about the people for whom we pray. We must learn to intercede so wholeheartedly that Jesus Christ will be abundantly satisfied with us as intercessors.

My Confirming Scriptures: My Aligning Experiences

The peace of God is **fully acquired** when we become **fully aware** of His presence in every decision. —J H Alan

Volume 6, Day 28: Blindness Is Self Imposed

We think that it was God who had blinded the eyes of the Disciples. But the truth is that all of us are blinded by our own choice not to believe what we are hearing. This is most often due to the fact that this is new information and revelation and no one else seems to believe it either. We choose to remain ignorant of the truth for fear we would wander away from God's own people in the process of believing God's personal revelation to us. And we accept the lie that, "... if you are the only one who believes it, you must be wrong!"

Jesus had entered into Jerusalem in triumph. The city was stirred to its foundations. But a strange god was there, the pride of Pharisaism. It was religious and upright, but a gathering of "white-washed tombs." And for many Christians today, our personal 'self-righteous whiteness' is more important than obedience to the personal revelation of God. We have a strange god - not a disgusting monster, but a disposition that rules us! I am blind (by my own choice) to the things which belong to my peace. It is an appalling thing that we can be in the place where the Spirit of God should be have his way with us, and yet increase our self-condemnation in direct contradiction to the Gospel itself.

"If you had known ..." - God goes direct to the heart. These words imply culpability. God holds us responsible for what we do not see. "Now they are hidden from your eyes" - because the selfish natural disposition has never been yielded fully to the Holy Spirit of God. How sad to have missed what "might have been!" God never forces open doors that we have closed. He opens other doors. He does remind us that there are doors which we have shut, doors which need never have been shut, imaginations which need never have been sullied. Never be afraid when God brings back the past. Let memory have its way. It is a minister of God with its rebuke and chastisement and sorrow. God will turn the "might have been" into a wonderful culture for the future.

My Confirming Scripture: My Aligning Experiences:

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

Vol 6, Day 29: Seeing God's Blessing in Everything

Jesus disciples' faith was real, but it was not complete. It was not at work in actual experience. The disciples were distracted by their own interests. Their interests never were those of Jesus Christ. After we have become perfectly related to God in sanctification, our faith has to be applied to our daily activities. We will be distracted not as much by our work, but by inner anxieties and fears. In time we will discover what internal death to God's blessings means. That is, we will stop looking for God's blessing (which makes us feel good) and see His blessing encompasses everything we experience. It is all "... for our good." Seldom do we consider this idea. Even more rarely do we prepare ourselves to seek His blessings in the tragedies and calamities of life.

It is not necessarily that we choose unfortunate circumstances, but that we have utmost confidence that God engineers every one of our circumstances so that we are convinced of His constant blessing. Until we have come to that understanding, our faith is bolstered up primarily by feelings and by good happenings. When once we see that God has a purpose in every trial as well as every blessing, no matter where God places us or what our inner distractions are, we can praise God that all is well. That is faith being worked out in real life.

"... and shall leave Me alone." Have we made our relationship with Jesus far less than it could be by seeing His providence as random occurrences? Because we do not see God in our circumstances, begin to distrust the sovereignty of God. Are we prepared to let God do as He likes with us - prepared to be separated from conscious blessings? Until Jesus Christ is Lord, we all have ends of our own to serve. Our faith is real, but it is not complete yet. God is never in a hurry. If we wait, we will see that God is pointing out that we have not been interested in Himself but only in His blessings. The sense of God's blessing in every situation is foundational to intimacy with Him.

"Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." What this means is that in Christ we overcome the negative reactions to things which constantly plague us in the natural.

Vol 6, Day 30: Lives Colliding at the Cross of Christ

Oswald Chambers – My Utmost for His Highest – April 6

The Cross of Jesus is the revelation of God's judgment on sin. Never tolerate the idea of martyrdom about the Cross of Jesus Christ. The Cross was a superb triumph over all evil and spiritual death. There is nothing more certain in time or eternity than what Jesus Christ did on the Cross. He switched the whole of the human race back into a right relationship with God. He made Redemption the basis of human life, that is, He made a way for every son of man to get into communion with God.

The Cross did not happen to Jesus. He came on purpose for it. He is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The whole meaning of the Incarnation is the Cross. Beware of separating God manifest in the flesh from the Son becoming sin. The Incarnation was for the purpose of Redemption. God became incarnate for the purpose of putting away sin; not for the purpose of Self-realization. The Cross is the center of time and of eternity. It is the answer to the enigmas of both.

The Cross is not the cross of a man but the Cross of God. The Cross of God can never be realized in human experience. The Cross is the exhibition of the nature of God, the gateway whereby any individual of the human race can enter into union with God. When we get to the Cross, we do not go through it. We abide in the life to which the Cross is the gateway.

The center of salvation is the Cross of Jesus, and the reason it is so easy to obtain salvation is because it cost God so much. The Cross is the point where God and sinful man merge with a collision and the way to life is opened - but the agony of the collision is on the heart of God - the ecstasy is on ours!

My Confirming Scriptures: "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." 1 Peter 2:24

Aligning Experiences:

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

Vol 6, Day 31: Closed Minds Can't Receive Answers

Jesus told His own disciples and many He healed that they should tell no one what things they had seen. Jesus set the ultimate example of humility. He did the most extraordinary things, but sought no personal notoriety or accolades. Once He was finished with His work of death and resurrection to new life, it became imperative that His works were revealed in the context of the real purposes for which He had done them. In a similar way, until the life of the risen Christ so dominates you that you understand what the love of Christ is, you might as well be silent. If there is no visible evidence, which would only be a love far greater than human love for others, you have no testimony at all. But when we are transformed into Christ-like lovers, it is this very love that is the manifest purpose of God in Jesus Christ.

Many Christians do not understand the miseries of life which issue from the new birth. We miss the point of adversity and often try to pray it away. But when you get to the right state on the inside, that is, in your emotional surrender to the love of God, the word which Jesus has spoken is so plain that you are amazed that you did not see it before. You could not understand it before because you were not mature enough to bear the full weight of it. It is essential that God reveal His truth to us at exactly the right time when we are most receptive of it.

Our Lord does not hide these things. They are hidden by the blindness of our own selfishness. It is revealed when you are humble enough to accept it. This acceptance comes when and only when we can see that the purposes of God are rarely akin to our own. Jesus said, "I have yet many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now." There must be full identification with His risen life before a particular word can be heard and properly interpreted into spiritual reality.

The evidence that we know anything about the impartation of Christ's life in us is that His word is becoming interpretable to us. God cannot reveal anything to us if we do not have His Spirit and fully surrender to it. If we have made up our minds about a Biblical issue, the light of God will no longer come to us on that issue. We cannot get it.

Vol 6, Day 32: Boot Camp or Special Forces Training

Most of the men's conferences or retreats have a flavor of military basic training or some other approach to the Christian life which focuses on disciplines of the body and mind which are supposed to lead men to spiritual maturity. This is raised as the Christian standard of behavior, motivated by sheer determination and personal effort. This mentality leads to false expectations of results which are touted as certain to occur if the disciplines are religiously practiced on a daily basis.

All of this heroic intensity sounds like it should actually produce 'godly' men whose wives and children respond positively to the man's rigorous and consistent practices. These practices have been hailed over the millennia by clerics, rabbis, pastors and priests as the primary means to achieve the ends of being obedient to God which is God's primary purpose.

Unfortunately, this intentional and intense focus on self-discipline largely leaves men stranded on an island that is remote from reality and devoid of meaningful relationships. Even in the presence of a host of other men engaging in the same pursuits, the end of this game largely produces isolation and desperation. Behavior management cannot and will not ever satisfy the basic need of every soul to belong to someone else who truly cares about them. And to this end, Jesus never promoted behavior management. He actually declared emphatically that a new birth (of the spirit) was the only means of pleasing God. And it is only the Holy Spirit of God that is fused with the man's spirit that can produce the Jesus' variety of love and relationship.

God IS love and only desires that we also love both God and all of God's children! Special Forces Training as God offers it is to make a person into a God-level lover, not a fighter!