

Let's Fall in Love with God
Chapter 14: Pathway to Intimacy
(John Henry Alan, edited by Bob Clarkson)
{ Not too fast! } { 208 }

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” Psalm 133:1 Tozer speaks about the journey:

The worth of any journey can always be measured by the difficulties encountered along the way. The more difficult the journey, the more satisfying the destination. Think of being *abandoned to intimacy with God* as a journey. It has a beginning of course, but the end is never this side of glory. As everybody who has traveled this journey knows if your journey is not cluttered with difficulties and hardships and burdens, you just might be on the wrong path or going in the wrong direction.

Welcome Adversity and Struggle.

Throughout recorded history, adversity and struggle appear on nearly every page. There are both good times and bad times. Many are tempted to blame the devil for the bad things and give God credit for the good. People who get angry with God over bad things happening to good people and vice versa, fail to understand that God cannot just crush all evil doers and coddle all the

do-gooders. He cannot just intervene in this way. But God can be with us in both good or bad times. Unfortunately, we often ignore God in good times and only call on Him when things go south. Fortunately, we can be assured that “All things work together for good to those who love God.” And when we look for the good in every adversity or calamity, we will find it and it will be of benefit to us.

Do Not Blame Others. { 209 }

Blaming others for our problems is almost as natural as breathing. Who knows why any of us would think blaming solves anything. Blaming others is like asking a surgeon to save me from a failing organ by doing surgery on my friend. We will only arrive at solutions to problems we own. God cannot fix in someone else what is wrong with me. Nor will he fix me unless I admit that I need and want His intervention.

See Adversity As Positive.

Everything has a positive side. There is a positive side to severe problems and adversity. The positive side may only be a lesson learned or evidence of growth or lack thereof. But much can be learned by facing them. There is an enemy facing us, but it would be far better to turn to God for assistance than to even think about engaging the enemy by ourselves. Our greatest weakness is a lack of intimacy with God.

Do Not Ask for More Faith. { 210 }

I was at my breakfast table one morning with several men. We engaged weekly in a few hours of conversation about relationship with God and God's grace. As the conversation was flowing, the Holy Spirit took me briefly on a rabbit chase. I don't know what had been said to trigger the thought, but it was profoundly useful to me. God asked me why I kept asking Him for more faith. Then the scripture came to mind where Jesus said, "If you have faith the size of a grain of mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'be cast into the sea' and it will happen." So, what you are saying is that I don't need to have more faith. I simply need to have faith in the right mustard seed. "Yes, that is what I am saying," He replied. Then He pointed me to the icon of faith, Abraham. "Abraham believed God and it was imputed to him for righteousness."

Do It Without Hesitation. { 211 }

I reflected on Abrahams faith when God told him to pack all his belongings and family and head out without any specific destination. I thought that would be like loading up my family in cars, my belongings in moving vans, and my horses in trailers and driving to who knows where! But for some reason Abraham did it without questions. Another time God was about to destroy

Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone.

God had such a close relationship with Abraham that He thought it was the appropriate thing for Him to share with Abraham what He was about to do because Abraham's nephew, Lot, lived there. The friendship was so great that God did not become exasperated with Abraham's several requests to save the cities on behalf of his nephew. And even when there were obviously no other righteous men in the cities other than Lot, Abraham's friend, God Himself, fetched Lot out of the city before the destruction occurred.

Faith in the Right Mustard Seed { 212 }

So I began to ponder Abraham's relationship with God as it pertained to faith. As I looked around the room I estimated that billions of mustard seeds would fit in that space. I said to God, "I think that I get it. I have enough faith already. I simply need to figure out which one of this host of seeds is the right seed in which to put my faith." "Yep," He replied. And here is what I concluded. I had to believe about God exactly what Abraham believed. As I pondered this thought, I realized that Abraham never doubted God's perfect intentions toward him and God's perfect love for him. So what I finally surmised is that Abraham believed that God was the perfect relational being. As such God Himself could be trusted.

The Perfect Relational Being.

The logical extension of Abraham's belief is this. God is the *perfect Father*. And as such I can trust Him to protect me and look out for my best interest. I can trust Him to help me become the happiest adult and reach my highest potential. God is the *perfect Mother*. As such I can trust Him to comfort me when I am troubled, nurture me, and care for me in every motherly way.

God is the *perfect Sister and Brother*. I can be assured that even though siblings may fight with each other, that they will lock arms with me to defend the family if anyone comes against us. God will do the same for me. God is the *perfect Friend*, as it were. He is a BFF (best friend forever). And the perfect friend is one in whom I can confide, with whom I can be vulnerable, and who will guard my reputation and dignity.

God is the *perfect Mate*. In Jesus, the embodiment of God, I have a mate that will always cherish and adore me and be faithful to me in relationship and provide the ecstasies and intimacies of deeply passionate love for me. It is only when God can be trusted to always do right by me, that I can surrender the control over my life to Him. When I fully *trust* God, I *will* let God handle my reputation and provide everything I need to grow and thrive.

Bigger Than Just Me { 213 }

In addition to being my provider, promoter and protector, God will sometimes bring adversity into my life, but only when it can help me reach my potential or accomplish something in His grander scheme of things. His blessing may contain circumstances that are in themselves not pleasant and maybe even painful. But these can be a blessing to me only if I continue to trust Him as making the *perfect choices* in the circumstances and that they will provide the greatest glory for Him, in me or in the mass of humanity. As we saw with Joseph, much of his entire life was spent in miserable situations, but in the end God raised him up to be the second most powerful man in Egypt. And with this promotion, Joseph was able to save all of Egypt and his entire family.

Premium Message of Faith { 214 }

Along this same line, hear what Oswald Chambers spoke about Abraham's faith in his teachings in the Bible Training College in London, England which was later recorded in *My Utmost for His Highest*, a compilation of his teachings, by his widow, B.D., 18 years after his untimely death to appendicitis:

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THE SUPREME CLIMB

"Take now thy son . . and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Genesis 22:2

Character determines how a man interprets God's will (cf. Psalm 18:25-26). Abraham interpreted God's command to mean that he had to kill his son, and he could only leave his tradition behind by the pain of a tremendous ordeal. God could purify his faith in no other way. If we obey what God says according to our sincere belief, God will break us from those traditions that misrepresent Him. There are many such beliefs to be got rid of, e.g., that God removes a child because the mother loves him too much - a devil's lie! and a travesty of the true nature of God. If the devil can hinder us from taking the supreme climb and getting rid of wrong traditions about God, he will do so; but if we keep true to God, God will take us through an ordeal which will bring us out into a better knowledge of Himself.

The great point of Abraham's faith in God was that he was prepared to do anything for God. He was there to obey God, no matter to what belief he went contrary. Abraham was not a devotee of his convictions, or he would have slain Isaac and said that the voice of the angel was the voice of the devil. That is the attitude of a fanatic.

If you will remain true to God, God will lead you straight through every barrier into the inner chamber of the knowledge of Himself; but there is always this point of giving up convictions and traditional beliefs. Don't ask God to test you. Never declare as Peter did - "I will do anything, I will go to death with Thee." Abraham did not make any such declaration, he remained true to God, and God purified his faith.

Just develop a faith like Abraham's !