

Volume 1 – Day 8: Divine Quest

The quest to know God and to be in a wholesome relationship with Him has been around since the beginning of the human race. Some abandon this quest and become atheists. Others search with many doubts that He exists and call themselves agnostics. Still others decide to follow another supernatural being, Lucifer, and actually sacrifice their own children to this “god” whom they serve in exchange for riches and power. Then there are others who manufacture their own god or idols and are very religious, hoping to reach God by moral integrity or worship of these idols. And there are some who respond to the Gospel of Jesus, commit their lives to Him and become Christians.

The question posed to everyone, especially Christians, is this, “How can we develop a deeply passionate and intimate relationship, like husband and wife, with God?” Or to put it in other terms, *Can we live in commitment to God and His desires in the same manner as true lovers treat their most significant others on earth?* I think that many Christians, possibly even the majority of them, *want* to relate to God more as lovers than slaves to a master or subjects to their sovereign king. So, what is the problem? I suggest that there is something wrong with our system of beliefs. There must be misperceptions about who God is, what He expects of us, and what He wants from us. These misperceptions stand between us and intimacy with God. And He desperately wants these obstacles to be removed.

My Confirming Scripture:

My Aligning Experiences:

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan

Volume 1 – Day 9: Examination, Courage & Confirmation

Don't put this book down if it happens to make you feel uncomfortable. No one ever broadens their horizons in life if they do not leave their personal comfort zone. Don't be afraid that these insights will lead you astray. You know scripture too well for that to happen. Better yet, if the Holy Spirit Who inspired the writers of scripture lives in you, He will not let you be misled.

Be like the Bereans, mentioned in Acts 17:11, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that *they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*" What Paul was teaching was radically different from everyone's former understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures. The Bereans tried to confirm these *new* truths Paul was expressing to them, not to disprove them.

Make an extensive list of your current beliefs and compare them to the words and heart of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels. Let His treatment of people be the context of your every understanding.

"Let us examine our current beliefs. Let us discover which of them may be keeping us from this intimate love for God which we strongly desire. And let's have the courage to change what we believe. To do this we must reject some beliefs which we adopted from very trusted sources in our lives. This is not a rejection of those people, it is simply a course correction of faith which God desires for us to pursue. God wants us to be in a passionate love affair with Him.— A. W. Tozer

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Volume 1 – Day 10: Every Belief Is a Matter of Choice

Most of us fail to realize that the majority of what we believe has been fed to us by others. However, we also fail to consider why we have accepted what was spoon fed to us from our infancy and continuing until this very day. We have believed some things in order not to disappoint some person whom we love or respect. Other things have been adopted into our belief system out of a sense that there is safety in numbers. Still other beliefs have arisen from the lack of due diligence regarding particular issues. And our beliefs have become concrete in our souls by way of repetition or natural curing over time. The good news is that since we get to choose what we believe, we can change it at will for any reason. Here's how we derive every belief we hold.



Instead of letting your culture (that which was given to you by your family, friends and other people) and desire (that which satisfies the way you want to live) determine your truth, let God's truth (truth about yourself, others and God) change your desires such that your culture will be transformed by your expressions of love and acceptance of others!

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Volume 1 – Day 11: Destination: Intimate Relationships

A message from the writings of A. W. Tozer:

An old Chinese proverb says "The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step." If that first step is not taken, nothing else really matters. If you are not on the journey, talking about it does not matter. Many Christians talk about living in intimate relationship with God, but nothing in their lives indicates they have even begun the journey. There's much joy that they have been saved, but no anticipation of continuing on the journey towards spiritual perfection. They are so happy that they are not what they used to be, that they cannot see what God wants them to be. Christianity has a glorious and victorious side, that few Christians experience.

My recommendation to the church of Christ and all others in the world is "*Live abandoned to intimacy with God.*" Our tragic loss is that very few are going on to know Christ in enriched intimacy and familiarity. Worse yet, we're not even talking about it. We rarely hear about it. And it does not find its way into our literature or media ministries. And it is not found in our churches. What I'm talking about is this yearning, this longing to know God in increasing measure.

A loving Personality dominates the Bible, walking among the trees of the garden and breathing fragrance over every scene. Always a living Person is present, speaking, pleading, loving, working, and manifesting Himself whenever and wherever His people have the receptivity necessary to receive the manifestation.

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Volume 1 – Day 12: Information OR Transformation

The vast majority of teaching is based on the *informational philosophy*. Jesus' teaching was based on the *transformational philosophy*. Even the methods of delivery of the messages of Jesus were intended to promote *life change*, not information accumulation. Jesus' entire focus was on relationship. And for very good reason. Humans were created for relationships. Relationship can only be established between humans. Relationships are at the core of our engineering *in the image of God*. Everything external to relationship, the human expression of personality, simply provides an environment in which relationship can be expressed.

It is no mystery that the informational philosophy is so predominant. We have all heard the saying, *knowledge is power*. Since one of the three basic desires of humans is to obtain *power*, we are driven to become powerful. Yet, most of the carnage in human history is evidence of this axiom, *power corrupts*. The *power* pursuit of man binds people in relationship to one another. At the same time, this same pursuit can be the greatest hindrance or destroyer of relationship. In other words, relationship's greatest strength is also its greatest weakness. Another expression of *power* is *worship*. *Power* seeking people are in effect garnering the *worship* of others.

I have spent incredible amounts of time and energy trying to convince, coerce or manipulate others to *worship* me. I did this mostly unconsciously. And so have you. This actually drives many away from us. But, when I truly fall in love with another, my *worship* of them is evidence that I love them. I *worship* that which I value.

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Volume 1 – Day 13: Wannabe: Self-Inflicted Loneliness

I Wannabe Rich

External things, such as the accumulation of resources (*prosperity*) may provide ways and means to express our feelings toward one another. For example, giving a lover flowers expresses affection for them. At the same time, an obsession with the increase of *prosperity* can be the very thing that destroys relationship. This obsession can distract us from meeting the emotional needs of the ones we love.

I Wannabe Famous

Another pursuit of all people is *popularity*. This can be a hurdle over which two people must leap in order to be in relationship with each other. Since we all want to be applauded or recognized for the good things we do, our pursuit of such shifts our attention from the one we love to ourselves. The extreme of this is narcissism.

I Wannabe Boss

Another significant pursuit of all people is power. We all want to be in control of things and people. We want to be large-and-in-charge. We want to have the last word or the final answer. At the same time we do not want others to control us.

Self Inflicted Loneliness

So, the very things that are the greatest impetus for our every expression (word or deed), can also be the demise of any particular relationship. Those who are the loneliest are those whose focus is most introverted and selfish (wannabe). Obsession with self and a desperate need to be prosperous, popular or powerful leads to depression, despair and possibly even personal termination (suicide) when they are not attained. Therefore, healthy relationships which satisfy our desire to be loved and secure are the solution to addictive behaviors of all kinds. The world would be a much better place if all of us were more other-caring and less self-indulgent.

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Volume 1 – Day 14: What Is Worship?

Believe it or not, worship is not a religious activity. Worship is the natural activity of the human soul. It is the basis for all relationships. It is the impetus for individuality, partnership and relational bonding. Every person on earth today is a great worshipper. We all worship many things or people. Unfortunately, worship of objects which cannot return worship in kind, are all too common in every generation. It is equally unfortunate that most objects of worship which have the capacity to return our worship, do not do so. I have worshipped many people who never even knew my name. However, the highest object of worship, and the only one who is guaranteed to return my worship, is the Creator who gave me life and breath in the first place.

The bottom line for all of us is not to become better worshippers. We are all exceptionally good at it. The best option is to improve the objects of our worship. In this case, I suggest that God would be the ultimate object of worship. And who better to be in marital union with than God Himself. Like it or not, we are all in the same boat. And we must all face the fact that the only assured love of our life is the one who created us in the first place. You might liken it to Father and Mother love. Good parents have children in order to have loving relationships with them. And God is the ultimate, good parent!

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