

## THE FREEDOM OF DISCOVERING DEPENDENCE ON GOD

### INTRODUCTION

Proverbs 3.5: *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.*

### Remember those old trust fall exercises?

One of the most painful struggles we seem to have as The people of God is the struggle to depend on God or trust in God.

- I think the reason it is a struggle is because we feel it is our responsibility to depend on God. And the good news is that this struggle is not our responsibility.

### To trust God is to actually abandon our need to control

- The way we try to control things this by insisting on understanding everything.
- When we let go of control
  - Our need to understand
  - To fall into the arms of God is to actually abandon our need to control

Isaiah 26.3: *You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.*

- “Trust” – lean to the point of imbalance
  - Now, we can’t let go of control most of the time; we’re just too addicted to it!

**DROP OF DOOM:** *Just get on the ride.* God will ‘drop you’ until you live ‘dropped.’ I got excited about the feeling of being out of control!

- We think of dependence on God as relying on God. It is; But it’s far more about abandoning ourselves to God.

**Dependence is more than relying on God; it is abandoning our mind and emotions in favor of God.**

### SO, WHAT IS DEPENDENCE

Dependence is surrender far more than it is reliance.

- Dependence is... abandoning ourselves [our understanding] rather than trying to trust.  
[EXPLAIN]

Are you trying to trust God? Then stop! It’s you trying to trust God: **I GIVE UP!**

**Dependence is... surrendering our inability to trust rather than trying to trust.**

**Dependence on God is more of a reflex than a choice**

- The little rubber mallet

**Dependence is... not having to resolve our emotions.**

- Dependence is not insisting on outcomes, including emotional resolution.
- Many times while we're trying to depend on God, our emotions don't cooperate very well. We still fight anxiety or maybe anger or disappointment and we feel like we are not depending on God until these emotions are resolved. But ironically, that is not dependence. That is self-reliance.

**HOW DO WE GET TO THE PLACE WHERE DEPENDENCE IS A REFLEX?**

**RELAXING INTO THE UNRESOLVED**

**(1) Come to terms with the principle that God must take us through many circumstances that we don't understand to free us from the root of pride.**

**Pride is more subtle than arrogance or self-centeredness. Pride's most subtle form is self-reliance.**

**One of the great ways that God restores us is by calling us to follow him when we don't understand things.**

- God never explained to Adam and Eve why they should not eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. He told him what the consequence would be, but did not give them a rationale or a reason why they shouldn't.
- The way Satan deceived Eve was by awakening her to distrust by giving her *reasons* why God commanded them not to eat of the tree of knowledge. *"You will become like God knowing good and evil, and the reason God commanded you not to eat is because he doesn't want you to know that."*
  - That was an illegitimate reason, not because it didn't contain truth. Of course they were going to become like gods knowing good and evil. But Satan's implication here is clear: "God didn't want you to know that, and therefore he cannot be trusted."

**And thus the need to understand was planted deeply into our humanity.** And the endgame of this is the idolatry of reason.

**Now, to set us free, God must do a lot of this in our lives: Tell us to trust him when we don't understand.** It is fundamental to living the Christian life.

- When western culture enshrined reason as the main way we determine truth, it's separated us from this essential process of re-discovering what trust was.
- Needing to know why is one of the deep causes for relationship breakdown. <sup>1</sup>

## ANTICIPATION VS EXPECTATION

### (2) Stop expecting from God and start anticipating God

1 Peter 1:13: Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind and [being] fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.

Now this is mind-blowing here. We might hear this and say, “How does some future grace that is going to be brought to me when Jesus returns... How does that help me now?”

- That GRACE is a future power that brings certainty to your present. The hope is the anticipation that the future manifestation of the risen Christ to the world, is at work in you NOW.
  - That future grace is so CERTAIN that it works retroactively in our present. So that hope is anticipating how the power of that Grace works in our immediate circumstances now.

### Hope is anticipating grace.

- What we get to do is anticipate. **Anticipation is a lot different than expectation.** And anticipation is what first Peter 1:13 is about when it says, "Set your hope... Anticipate."
  - I remember anticipating Paul McCartney's stadium concert in Berkeley Stadium back when he had just released the flowers in the dirt album. 60,000+ in the stands.
- I didn't expect anything because I didn't know what to expect. If I would've expected a certain kind of experience, chances are, I would've been disappointed. I just anticipated what was to come without defining it.

I think we have set ourselves up for a lot of unnecessary disappointment because we have confused expectation and anticipation. I fully anticipate the power of the grace of God to meet me at every future trial! I'm just not gonna place my expectations on God to meet me in the ways I think He should.

**“Anticipation is the joyful, open-minded excitement for a future event, whereas expectation is a rigid belief or demand that a specific outcome must occur. Anticipation thrives on possibility, while expectation often leads to disappointment when reality fails to match a pre-set, imagined storyline. “Anticipation draws us out of ourselves because it is based on Hope, and Hope is external to us.”**  
(From *AndSonsMagazine*)

Here is a breakdown of the differences according to a life coach<sup>2</sup>

- Anticipation (Open & Exciting):
- Focus: The feeling of excitement for what is to come.
- Mindset: Grounded in hope without entitlement; embraces the journey.
- Control: Does not try to control the outcome.
- Emotion: Joyful, positive, and wonder.
- Expectation (Rigid & Demanding):

- Focus: The firm belief that something will or should happen.
- Mindset: Projects a specific, imagined reality onto the future.
- Control: Tries to predict or control the future.
- Emotion: Can lead to frustration or disappointment if unmet.

**Key Takeaway: You can anticipate the best without expecting a specific outcome, which allows for joy without the risk of disappointment.**

**James Clear** writes about habits, decision making, and continuous improvement. He is the author of the #1 New York Times bestseller, **Atomic Habits**. The book has sold over 25 million copies worldwide

**Anticipation: You're excited for what the future holds, but you don't try to control it.**

**Expectation: You try to predict the future and restrict your happiness to one outcome.**

**Always be excited about the possibilities. Never be entitled to them" (James Clear, *Atomic Habits*)**

**"Anticipation is looking forward with excitement to what is coming, resting in the assurance that it will be good regardless of what form it takes. Expectation is projecting an imagined reality onto the future"<sup>3</sup>**

## SEGUE

**There are two unresolved chords in life: A diminished chord and a suspended chord. Gdim and Gsus.**

- Both call for resolution.
- Most of us live lives in which we handle unresolved emotions as diminished chords. We **MUST** resolve the chord! We are unsettled

**When I hit a suspended chord, the feeling is anticipated resolution!** And if I hit 8 suspended chords, anticipation simply builds. We don't have to fret that the chord is not resolved in the score.

- Like listening to Chicago's great existential hit *Questions 67 And 68*. The climax was several suspended chords in a magnificent retard... then it resolved! The feeling of those sustained chords was magnificent!
  - I didn't feel **"Oh no!! It's got to resolve!! What'll I do?? My emotions are being damaged in this moment of irresolution!"**
- I learned with suspended chords that there chords there are exquisite emotions to be experienced that cannot be experienced with resolved chords. I LIKE suspended chords in a song/score. There is a feeling of anticipation: HOPE!

## SUSPENDED CHORDS ARE LIKE ASKING AND KEEP ON ASKING

**Matthew 7.7: "Ask [and keep on asking] and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. <sup>8</sup> For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.**

## APPLY IT TO HEALING

**Don't press the healing, just enjoy the repeated asking!**

**Hope is not experienced in the resolved places. Only in the unresolved places.**

- 1 Corinthians 13.13: *Now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*
- "Now abides these 3 things... faith, hope, love."
  - Love is eternal. Faith is not (When we see Him we'll forever SEE Him).
  - And hope is not. But yet both are eternal! How? God has always lived in the NOW of the unresolved within the resolved. He is Eternally The God of **BURIAL AND RESURRECTION.**

We want to go from **"It is finished"** to **"He is risen!"**

- But He is The Lord who preaches in hell too. That has been eternally present to Him. And the emotional bliss that comes from knowing NOTHING can shake you is immense. God has lived in the eternal confidence (My own right arm will achieve salvation) of His power *because all suffering has already been present to Him and He KNOWS that He has already overcome!*

**Romans 5.3: *We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts***

- It is suffering that awakens hope. Like your first sexual experience. It had to be awakened in you. If you want to enjoy intimacy with Redeemer-God, then embrace the process of cultivating hope through what He's redeeming: a broken world!

**God has chosen to do His work in a deeply flawed world of 'unresolvables'. If you want intimacy with Him you must go there with Him. To do that you will suffer with people as He does, you will experience intimacy with God, and you will cultivate hope.**

**Embrace the unresolved places; for there you experience the freedom to surrender and the freedom from control**

- One of the things that happens with unresolved chords of life is that we enter into God's longsuffering [like with people... God will get people to their destinations! I must love God enough to enter His patience with people.

**We must have a theology that works. Jack Hayford died in his sleep overnight. My dad wasted away for 2 years slowly losing his soundness. Albie Pearson died in 3 days. His wife Helen slowly eroded with Alzheimer's. *We must have the spiritual understanding to see God in both!***

**Dependence is “releasing”. It is not “contending.”**

**Dependence is “releasing” something to God rather than “contending” for something with God.**

## **FLOWING IN THE SPIRIT**

### **(3) Discover the joy of flowing in The Spirit**

**John 7.38: “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”<sup>39</sup> Now this he said about the Spirit...**

- The Holy Spirit is a river of life, out of our innermost being will flow rivers of living water.
- They will not need exterior stimulus to keep them strong in the Lord. Their motivation comes from within because they have learned to live in the Spirit.

The key is knowing how to live in the Spirit now!

**Ephesians 5.18-20: *Be filled [Be continually being filled] with the Spirit,<sup>19</sup> speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord,<sup>20</sup> always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

- We think of being filled like filling your car with gas. We fill it and we drive a few hundred miles before having to fill it again.
  - One of the things we have enjoyed as grandparents is having the grandkids splash around in the little wading pool we have. When we know they’re coming over we fill the kiddie pool with air and then plug it. Then fill it with water in play in it.
  - **This is honestly the way we live our spiritual lives. We get thin or anxious or upset or frustrated and we go to worship gathering or even a prophetic service and get filled up.**
- That is not what Paul is talking about here... He is talking about what Jesus talked about when he said that the Holy Spirit would be inside of us flowing in is like a river.

***A much better way to understand how this works is to think about it like a Tube Man rather than a kiddie pool!***

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**The Holy Spirit is means to be our *source* not our *resource*.**

- We are meant to live in the awareness of the river flowing in us.
  - Don’t make this overly mystical or try so hard to be spiritual that you end up living strained.

***Paul says here that the way we live like two people is speak to yourselves into each other in psalms hymns and spiritual songs making melody in your heart.***

“It can’t be this simple.” No but it IS this basic!

- I've talked about this passage before: God's act of creation was accompanied by the song of the angels

**Job 38.7: "Where were you... when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"**

*Be Tube people not Kiddie Pools*

This truth of constantly receiving the supply of the spirit that sometimes feels like peace, sometimes feel like joy, sometimes feels like I hope, sometimes feels like a simple willingness to take one more step... But this understanding of spiritual life is exactly the way Paul taught it.

## SOWING TO THE SPIRIT

**(4) Be at peace in sowing, and be released from reaping**

**Galatians 6.8: "He who is sowing to the flesh, of the flesh shall reap corruption; and he who is sowing to the Spirit, of the Spirit shall reap life [that endures through the ages] (Young's Literal Translation) [age-during]**

The farmer simply shows the seed. He does not sweat bullets over bringing forth life.

In the same way we simply so to the spirit and it is the spirit that will bring forth life... We will reap life, peace and joy, in due course.

**We sow to The Spirit through praise. We sow to The Spirit by sowing Scripture into our emotions.**

- *And we don't have to reap emotional resolve to think we've sown effectively.*
- *Repentance is not just turning from sin; it is turning from our emotions*

Example: when I feel burnt out

## SOWING FUTURE AWE IN MY EMOTIONS

**Habakkuk 3.2: O Lord, I have heard the report of you, and your work, O Lord, do I fear. In the midst of the years revive it; in the midst of the years make it known.**

- When Habakkuk the prophet fears the work of God, but wants God to revive it, it is because there is a sense of trembling and preciousness. I sowed future awe into my emotions, and then did not worry about how numb I was emotionally

Example: When I feel disoriented

## **SOWING EMOTIONAL REASSURANCE INTO MY PERPLEXITY**

I found myself sewing **Psalm 139:7-12** Into my emotions!

**Psalm 139:7-12: *Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? <sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! <sup>9</sup> If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, <sup>10</sup> even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me. <sup>11</sup> If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night," <sup>12</sup> even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.***

## **CONCLUSION**

To live in reflexive dependence remember these truths:

**(4) Be at peace in sowing, and be released from reaping**

**(3) Discover the joy of flowing in The Spirit**

**(2) Stop expecting from God and start anticipating God**

**(1) Embrace the unresolved places; for there you experience the freedom to surrender and the freedom from control**

<sup>1</sup> It is fundamental for us to walk a walk of trust without understanding. This principle is far more central than you might think. As we will see in this part of our study, it was precisely because Paul could not understand his thorn, that he struggled with God. It is why the Holy Spirit summarized Paul and Barnabas' follow up program with the line "It is necessary that we go through much suffering to enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14.21-22).

Trust is the most basic ingredient of what it means to be a person. Trust is the joyous embrace of our incompleteness. The way God keeps us feeling incomplete is by calling us to trust his word and we don't understand. Distrust leads to independence, and this is the essence of pride. The evidence of trust is rest. When we are not at rest, somewhere we are not trusting God. And yet the solution is not trying really hard to trust God! The solution begins by abandoning ourselves to our fundamental inability to trust God. To truly trust God, we must trust Him to trust Him. Trust in God's power to enable us to continually trust Him. If we cannot exist without the very breath of God, if it is true that "in him we live and move and have our being" (which is a pagan insight and very accurate! See Acts 17), then keeping us continually in the posture of trust God will continually call us to believe things without understanding why all the time. God is not at all adverse to us asking the question, why, nor is he adverse to giving us lots of understanding. But when the need to understand trumps our ability to remain in rest by simply trusting God, then God calls us to believe him without understanding. And it is this that keeps reinforcing to us our fundamental incompleteness and therefore keeps us always prepared to continuously experience the joy of intimacy... With him and with others.

What is at stake here is nothing less than becoming a genuine human!

<sup>2</sup> Susie Raymond, Catalyst Life Coach, Reiki Master/Teacher, Esthetician  
<https://whitesagespa.com/blogs/anticipation-vs-expectation-vs-intention/>

<sup>3</sup> (*AndSonsMagazine*)