

GOING  
DEEPER



AN EXERCISE IN BENEVOLENT DETACHMENT



# GOING DEEPER

## AN EXERCISE IN BENEVOLENT DETACHMENT

(Excerpts from *Resilient* by John Eldredge)

*"For this reason, I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being."*

**Ephesians 3:14-16**

When you pray, where is God?

In heaven?

Beside you?

Within you?

### YOUR "INMOST BEING"

Repeatedly, the Word of God speaks of a part of us known as our "innermost being" (aka inmost), which makes us different from all of God's creatures- it is where the deepest part of our soul connects with the Holy Spirit. Jesus spoke of this in John 7:37-38, *"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. For the Scriptures declare that rivers of living water shall flow from the inmost being of anyone who believes in me."* (LB)

Just as a tree's roots travel deep into a subterranean world to find its deepest needs supplied, we must learn to tap into the presence of God in our innermost being to have our deepest soul needs supplied.

## HOW DO WE DESCEND?

Many have tried to explain this deep-seated place where we can commune with God. Russian Bishop Theophan the Recluse (1815-1894) penned it this way, *"One must descend with the mind into the heart, and there stand before the face of the Lord, ever-present, all-seeing, within you."* The reference to the "mind and heart." Possibly, Theophan refers to our conscious attention by the word "mind" and our innermost being by the word "heart." This is echoed in Jesus' words, *"God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."* John 4:24

This idea of "descending" into a place where God dwells may seem unfamiliar to some, and that may be because we have never considered the deeper level of our being. We live in a world where we are constantly bombarded with distractions that keep our souls on a superficial level. We have a connection with God, but deep intimacy eludes us. There is a relationship with the Lord, but the distractions keep us at a shallow level.

## LEVELS OF OUR BEING

- **SHALLOWS** - characterized and ruled by the distractions of life. Flitting from thought to thought, such as daily tasks from sending birthday cards, picking up your dry cleaning to what to eat for lunch.
- **MIDLANDS** - ruled by the "cares of life" such as worries, heartaches, longings, and aspirations. This could be thoughts of concerns for family members, career issues, hopes, and fears for the future.
- **DEPTHS** - this is the essence of your existence and is the deepest dwelling place of God (now that you have invited him to live in you). Eternal things like faith, hope, love, and joy rule this level.

*...and I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”*  
Ephesians 3:17-19

**“...WAIT FOR THE LORD...”**

*“Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord;  
Lord, hear my voice.*

*Let your ears be attentive  
to my cry for mercy...*

*I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits...*

*I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the  
morning,*

*more than watchmen wait for the morning.”*

Psalm 130:5-7

This scripture speaks of undistracted focus. It can be applied to our innermost being waiting for God- giving our undivided attention to the God-who-lives-within-us.

## **BENEVOLENT DETACHMENT**

In his book, *Resilient*, author John Eldredge explains a simple practice called “benevolent detachment.” Because the Midlands and Shallows levels mainly rule our attention, we must get untangled from all the distractions to “descend.”

*“We are aiming for release, turning over into the hands of God whatever is burdening us and leaving it there. It's so easy to get caught up in the drama in unhealthy ways and then we are unable to see clearly, set boundaries, respond freely.”* Theophan the Recluse

We need to find time in our day to let it all go—all the tragedies in the world and heartbreaks. Our souls were never meant to inhabit this world; therefore, it is vital to find a way to let them go for a period to allow God to restore what the world tries to deplete from our souls.

This is where benevolent detachment comes in - learning to give everyone and everything over to God. We are simply pausing and releasing those cares that weigh us down. We are not letting go forever but momentarily letting go for a few moments of focused prayer.

*“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”*  
1 Peter 5:7

Once we feel we have let go of those cares and burdens, allowing our mind to descend into our heart, this frees us to give full attention to the Lord and tell him how much we love him.

*“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”* Matthew 22:37



## THE PRACTICE

Find a quiet place, get your body in a comfortable position, and pray the following:

**Jesus, I give everyone and everything to you. I give everyone and everything to you, God.**

Repeat this several times. If something keeps trying to distract you, give the issue to God. Don't get caught up in a laundry list of cares. Just keep tuning in to the Jesus-within-you.

Ask the Holy Spirit for his help.

**Holy Spirit, help me to descend.**

**Help me locate Christ in me.**

**Help me follow Christ down into the depths of my being.**

**I pray to commune with you there.**

Share with the Lord your love for him.

**I love you, Lord. I love you. I truly love you, Lord.**

Tell him in your own words how much you love him.

Be open to what he wants to do. It might be comfort, it might be a word from God, or he might want to show you something. Let him take the lead.

Finish your time with the following:

**Lord, fill the depths of my being with your glory. Fill me with the river of life in my innermost being. Give me the strength that prevails, Lord. I pray for supernatural resilience. Amen.**

Consider the prayer of benevolent detachment as a daily rhythm in your life. It will restore your soul!



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