

Discussion Notes

How to Reach, Touch, and Receive

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Leanne McAlister

Victor and not Victim

- We continually face walls in our life.
- Our responses to those walls vary, from trying to climb it, solve it, rage against it, and finally, lean against it in defeat.
- Don't take the posture of a victim, align yourself with the truth that you are a victor.
- You are a child of God (1 John 4:16), all is possible through Christ (Phil. 4:13), and the power that raised Christ is in us (Rom. 8:11).

Where is your focus?

- Jesus calls us, in John 14-15, to focus on Him and abide in Him.
- Often, we are confused about the Gospel—Jesus calls us to relationship with Him not just right belief.
- The transformed life is Jesus forming Himself in us.
- James 4:8 calls us to *draw near* to God and he will draw near to us.
- God rewards those who make a move towards him.

How do we draw near?

- The spiritual disciplines found in our tradition are a great help.
- Beware the two extremes of legalism—thinking that we need to do stuff to get God to accept us—and passivity—that God will do what he will regardless of our initiative.
- Sweet spot is co-operating with and responding to God.
- Discipline is about posture—consider the metaphor of getting water from a stream.
- Consider the metaphor of a stream: If you lay in the stream you are most likely to get wet, even though sometimes the stream bed will run dry and sometimes the stream will spill over to those who haven't placed themselves in it—being in the stream still guarantees the most water.

An example of spiritual discipline

- Pick a time of the day and set it apart.
- Read scripture, pray, and worship.
- Listen to God.
- Share! Let other people in on your spiritual journey and how God is working in your life.
- Then move forward in obedience.
- Explore different app stores, there are a million resources for devotionals, prayer guides, and scripture reading plans.
- Spiritual formation is not easy! Don't give up!
- Consider Joshua and the battle of Jericho (Josh. 6:1-27). They were told the wall would fall by walking around the wall and worshipping for seven days, if they gave up on day five or six because it felt useless or silly they wouldn't have seen the victory.

- God wants to tear down the walls in your life, you just need to show up!

Discussion Questions

- What are the biggest challenges or obstacles—the walls—in your life?
- Describe a time of breakthrough in the midst of a spiritual discipline.
- What disciplines do you feel drawn to? Share these with others.
- What do you believe is the value of consistent spiritual practices? Why are they important?