

# THE JOURNEY IS THE DESTINATION

## - GROUP GUIDE -

### Chapter 7: Pursue God

In chapter 7, we are introduced to AAA approach. Grasping these three A's is a huge step in enjoying the life we were created to live.

#### AUTHORITY

Authority - n. - the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience.

Words like "give orders" and "enforce obedience" can be difficult to swallow sometimes. While we can typically understand why authority is necessary, accepting authority in our lives can be tough. We have all had many people in authority in our lives (parents, teachers, coaches, employers, etc). As you think through some of those situations...

1. What authority in your life has been the most difficult for you to accept or follow? Why?

*"It's impossible for us to consider a relationship with God without understanding he comes before all things and is the glue that holds everything together. For us, that means God's intentions, values, and judgments are more valuable and truer than our own. If we are going to live the "with God" life, we need to surrender authority to him." (p. 112)*

2. What is it that makes it so difficult for people to surrender to God's authority?
3. Is there one specific area in your life that is most difficult to turn completely over to God? Share.

#### AFFINITY

For many people their introduction to Christianity is solely based on submitting to God's authority (keeping the rules, thou shalt and thou shalt not). While these things are important, this one-dimensional approach usually leads to failure. It is really difficult to accept authority from someone you don't like.

4. Read the statement. Now, look at some possible ways to complete it. Which one(s) seem most real for you. Why? Add your own if you want. Obedience without Relationship = Resentment - other possible answers: = short-term compliance and long-term frustration / exhaustion / discouragement / distance / avoidance / anger / emptiness / numbness / religion / legalism / joylessness / burnout / living "for" God, not "with" God.

#### ABIDING

A phrase resounds with me right now as I consider this idea: "I can't do this without you." For just a moment, consider the deeper meaning of that phrase. On the surface, it means I've got most of what it takes to overcome this circumstance, but without God's final umph to get me over the finish line, I won't make it. But there's much more to it. Maybe I should rephrase it: "I can't do this apart from you!" (p. 117)

5. In your experience, when has life been especially difficult and felt like God's sustaining power was the most obvious?
6. In what part of your life do you find yourself relying on your own resources too much?

*"Deep, slow, rhythmic breaths allow your lungs to fill with oxygen. This intentional act of filling your lungs with oxygen gives your body time to process the fuel before you expel it and start over. Abiding in Christ is just like that. Dallas Willard taught that abiding in Christ is breathing in deeply the words of Christ and allowing them to respire our hearts. We can't expect our hearts to be filled with short, shallow breaths of Jesus." (p. 116)*

7. What could you do this week that would, "breathe in deeply the words of Christ and allow them to respire our hearts?" Here are some ideas:

- ~ Search for the 4-day reading plan from YouVersion Bible App called: Knowing God's Heart.
- ~ Spend 5 minutes each day focused on Psalm 119. 3 min. to read and 2 min. to pick one verse that stood out. Think - then, say a prayer to ask God to let it sink deeper into your heart. Easy!!
- ~ Make a list of 10-15 qualities about God that are great (i.e. he never gives up on you, forgiving, loves before he asks for love, etc). Pray and thank God for them.