



Small Groups

DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Shallows – Part 2
A Pathway to Your Destination
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Main Idea – In order to ascend to your ultimate purpose, you must first learn the deeper things of God. That requires patience, discipline, and the right process. Filter out the noise of the world: be still, trust God, and flow with the Holy Spirit's momentum.

Don't stay in shallow water

- The shallows are on the pathway to deep water. Shallow water can be fun and superficially interesting, but you should not spend all your time there.
- Deep water can be defined as “the distance from the surface to the bottom.” The deeper you go, the more volume that is available for God to fill with His knowledge and wisdom.
- **1 Corinthians 2: 6-12** – However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. (NKJV)
- Surface oriented things are still available in the deep water, but there is also so much more.
- In the deep water, God has more potential knowledge and wisdom available to you than you could ever contain. **Luke 6: 38** – Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, *and running over will be put into your bosom*. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

You must descend to God's deeper things before ascending to the heights of His plans for

you.

- Ephesians 4: 7-10 – But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore He says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.” (Now this, “He ascended” – what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)
- God has called you to ascend to great things in His name.
- Like Jesus, you are called to go higher. However, also like Jesus, you must first submit to the slow, deliberate, process of going deeper.
- You can’t go deep quickly. There are no shortcuts to going deeper. It takes time, patience, and discipline to learn how to go deep.

Sign #1 that you are in deep waters: Silence - stillness

- The shallow water – and the secular world – is filled with noise that prevents hearing deeper things.
- In the shallow water it is easy to manufacture “noise” for yourself. You won’t hear and learn the deeper things of God if you are continually involving yourself with superficial, worldly information.

Psalm 46:10 –

Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

Proverbs 3:5-6 – Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.

- In the deep water it is quiet so you can hear God’s still, small voice. 1 Kings 19: 12-13 – and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. So it was, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. Suddenly a voice came to him, and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”
- It is vital that Christians do the work required to go deeper. Our common faith is dependent on knowledge of God’s deeper things. Hosea 4:6 – My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

Sign #2 that you are in deep waters: Rest - trust

- The Gospel writers refer to at least two different instances where Jesus is reported to have calmed rough water on the Sea of Galilee. The first instance in Matthew 8: 23-27 and Mark 4:35-40 is the story of Jesus calming the sea after being asleep in the

front of the disciple's fishing boat. The disciples exhibited a degree of faith in knowing Jesus could calm the storm. *But, Jesus exhibited the greater faith by being calm – even at rest - in the midst of the storm.*

- You and I must ask for even greater faith than we currently have, and then work to enable that faith so we can remain at rest in storms.
- **Proverbs 20:5 – Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.**
- The Hebrew word for *understanding* in the above verse is “tabuwn” – which means ‘cleverness, skill, the faculty of understanding, intelligence, and insight.’
- That type of understanding takes time, and the correct process, to develop.

Sign #3 that you are in deep waters: Momentum

- The second instance of Jesus calming rough water is told by the Gospel writer John. **John 6: 16-21 – Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them. Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing. So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid. But He said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.” Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.**
- There are powerful currents that run beneath the surface in deep water. Anything that functions in the deep water has learned to depend on, and work with, those currents.
- Like the disciples in the boat, you must willingly invite Jesus into the activities of your life. Jesus and the Holy Spirit provide the momentum to get you where God intends.
- God can make up lost time in your life. It is no great effort for Him to calm the rough waters and enable you to miraculously fulfill your purpose. The Holy Spirit operates in the spiritual realm, with spiritual currents, that will powerfully move you to the place you need to be.

Go deep, then go high

- God wants you to ascend. But, first, you must experience the process of going deep. **Ephesians 4:10 - He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.**
- Begin the process of going deep through prayer and a humble mindset. Clear away the noise and static of the world; be still, trust God, rely on Him. The momentum

and energy to succeed will come from Him.

- The height you attain in Him will be dependent on how deep you have gone in seeking understanding of God's deeper things.

Reflective Questions for The Shallows – Part 2

1. It is almost certain our world today is filled with more noise than ever before. What are some good things that have come from our “busyness” and technology? What has been the cost – what have we lost – from all the “noise”?
2. What is easier for you: to eliminate distractions and noise so that you can hear God's still, small voice, or to trust Him in the middle of a storm? (Each is needed to go deeper in Him.)
3. Pastor Stephen said the process of going deeper requires an intentional commitment on your part. Name three steps to which you can commit, so you can prepare yourself to hear God's deeper things.