



DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Shallows – Part 3
A Pathway to Your Destination
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Main Idea – God is your source, your victory, and your King. Knowing and believing those things will enable you to learn God’s deeper things, and then to serve others with the humility and self-awareness that Jesus demonstrated.

Knowledge comes from going deeper

- God will reveal to you many things about His hidden knowledge if you know how to pursue those deeper things.
- **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)
- Even secular psychology knows that the highest level of human attainment has to do with transcendent spiritual needs (see Maslow’s Hierarchy). Christians take it one step further: we know that such knowledge is only available from God.
- **1 Corinthians 3: 18-20** – Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, “He catches the wise in their own craftiness”; and again, “The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.”
- **1 John 2:15-17** – Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of

the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

You must descend to God's deeper things before ascending to the heights of 'transcendent spiritual understanding'.

- 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.)
- "A man on his face cannot fall from that position" (referring to prayer, and the humbleness necessary to receive higher ideas.)

Learning about self-awareness from Jesus' example

- The first recorded miracle of Jesus' ministry was when he turned water into wine at a wedding. **John 2: 1-10** tells that story.
- Jesus was self-aware. His mother requested his help even as Jesus stated it was not yet time to reveal himself in that way. Nevertheless, Jesus performed the miracle to the amazement of many in attendance. He respected his mother's place in his life, and accommodated the desires of the people at the wedding celebration.
- You will experience the same kind of self-awareness, with wisdom to appropriately respond to the environment around you, when you are conscious of God's deeper things.
- When you have gone deep:
 - People will follow you, and look to you for spiritual guidance. **John 2:11- This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.**
 - Just like Mary did to Jesus, others will acknowledge your gifts and call them out of you. **John 2:3 – And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."** There will be a demand put on you to help others. If you have gone to the deeper things of God, it will be natural for you to nourish others (just as the surface waters of the ocean receive nourishment from deep water eddies.)
 - Your motivations will be pure. Jesus performed miracles to help others, not to show off or draw attention to himself. **John 2:4 – Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."**

Jesus went deeper to counter Satan's temptations

- **Matthew 4:1-11** records how Satan tempted Jesus near the end of Jesus' forty day fast.
- What Jesus replied to each of those temptations gives you hints on how you will respond after having learned of God's deeper things.

Step #1 to going deeper: Recognize God as your source

- Even though John the Baptist had the privilege of baptizing Jesus, and proclaiming him as the Messiah, John knew that Jesus was the fundamental source of everything.
- **John 1:15** – John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.’”
- There are many things in life that serve as resources to you: your job, your family members, your friends, your money, etc. However, resources are not sources. Resources temporarily hold something of value, but they are of limited capacity. God is your real source; His ability to provide is limitless.
- Likewise, Jesus knew the Father was his source. **Matthew 4:3-4** – Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”

Sign #2 to going deeper: Know that God is your victory.

- In life, you are not fighting *for* victory, you are fighting *from* victory.
- There is no reason to be tempted by what the world may dangle in front of you. Know that temptations are lies, and that God is not distracted by them. **Matthew 4:7** – Jesus said to him, “It is written again, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’”

Sign #3 to going deeper: Know that God is your king.

- **Matthew 4:8-11** – Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’” Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.
- Some in the world will try to tempt, or intimidate, you into giving them power they don't have.
- Jesus demonstrated He is all-powerful through his humility and ultimate sacrifice. He

paid the price for your sins by dying on your behalf, and then rising to life again having made the full payment.

- Knowing and believing these things will enable you to learn God's deeper things, and then to serve others with the humility and self-awareness that Jesus demonstrated.

Reflective Questions for The Shallows – Part 3

1. Pastor Stephen explained the difference between a resource and a source. From your own experience, identify a time you were able to focus on God as your source, rather than on worldly things that were just resources.
2. What does the phrase “we are not fighting *for* victory, but *from* victory” mean? Give an example of how with worldly perspectives Satan can confuse that distinction.
3. As a Christian you know there is a lot of “common knowledge” in the world that is foolishness to God. What can we learn from the story of Jesus at the wedding about the appropriate way for you to interact with the world today?