Some Disciplines of the Christian Life 2 / 4

The Disciplines of Discipleship

This is a well-covered area and many good books have been written about this. Just as an introduction, note that the Lord Jesus trained the Twelve in discipleship largely in a group. We often have individualised training in our western culture. There were five areas in the discipleship training school run by the Lord Jesus.

- It was **phased** – i.e. not all was taught at once. Foundations were first laid and then built upon.
- It was **on-the-job** training rather than training in an isolated environment.
- It was given to **a group / team**. As Westerners, we often think of the spiritual disciplines as being personal and private. But in the training of the Lord Jesus they were plural and often public. They learned as a team.
- It was **rapid**. We don't produce leaders fast enough. Perhaps we should learn from the Lord Jesus. A leader in our company says it takes 12-15 years to make an effective leader and the dropout rate is high.
- It was based on **modelling**. The Lord Jesus gave them teaching **and** He gave them His example! This is usually a great weakness with us.

There are the great classic spiritual disciplines of:

- ✧ Worship/adoration
- ✧ Intercessory prayer
- ✧ Fasting
- ✧ Feeding one's mind and spirit from the Word of God

I would like to focus on just four of these spiritual disciplines:

- ➢ **The discipline of meditation**
- ➢ **The discipline of affirmation**
- ➢ **The discipline of maintaining joy**
- ➢ **The discipline of maintaining rest**

There are many enemies we have to battle with: condemnation, wounding and pollution. Guilt and shame often plague us and blight our spontaneity and joy. The condemnation of the enemy is intense. (Job 1:6; Zech. 3:1 and Rev. 3:10) As guilt and shame are removed, ground is removed from under the enemy's fleet and tenure is secured for the Holy Spirit in our lives. We will still be “buzzed” in our minds by the enemy. The secret is: as soon as you are consciously aware of the enemy's attacks; enter into the discipline of meditation. This will focus your mind away from the attack. Resist the desire ‘to pray about it’ as that will simply focus your attention on the attack.

The discipline of meditation as a key to spiritual freedom

Joshua 1:7-8

It appears that God was very unfair to Joshua. He was the leader of about two million people, leading them into hostile territory. He was the commander-in-chief of the military. He was president/prime minister. He was also minister of finance, foreign office and chief justice. He was about 80 years old and now he is about to go into battle against various kings and kingdoms. He faced huge logistical problems. He was one extremely busy man! Yet God's command to Joshua was, “Meditate on my law **day and night**”. This might be a reasonable command if going to a week's retreat or on a sabbatical, but not while leading people in battle!

But in fact all of us meditate day and night. We are always thinking or dreaming about something! The key issue is what we are meditating about!

- ✓ *"Oh dear, it's going to be difficult."*
- ✓ *"Oh dear, I'm going to get sick."*
- ✓ *"Oh dear, I'm never going to be able to pay this bill."*
- ✓ *"Oh dear, so-and-so has come to see me and I can't stand the fellow!"*

So often we are hindered and frequently defeated by negative thoughts, pessimism, gloom and despair. We are held in bondage by worry and care. The discipline of meditation is to set you free from this sort of bondage.

God says to Joshua, *"You are my man to lead this people into victory and into all the possessions that I will give them. Go for it! But you must meditate on all the principles I have taught you".*

So: *"Oh dear, it's going to be difficult, but hallelujah, You are with me, Lord Jesus, and nothing is too hard for You! I am going to enjoy watching God at work!"*

Bills? *"Hallelujah, for all Your great promises to care for me and provide for me. It's going to be really exciting to see My Father pay these bills!"*

Freedom comes to us when we turn our thoughts to God's great promises. ***"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from God."***

You might feel lonely, but then you remember the promise, ***"I will never leave you or forsake you."*** So you say, *"Thank you Lord Jesus for Your promise. I don't feel it now, but I know You are with me".* Feelings eventually catch up with faith.

"Noise" is an enemy of the Spirit in our lives. Even when we are in a quiet place, meditation is difficult for our "interior noise" is difficult to switch off and as a generation weaned on electronic noise, we are unfamiliar with silence and feel insecure. We are addicted to activity and hence our difficulty in achieving quietness of spirit. We find it much easier to be Marthas than Marys. We find it hard to stop serving and simply sit at the feet of Jesus.

Learning to quiet our spirits and rediscover inner solitude is an indispensable ingredient to spiritual advance – especially in high-pressure situations. One disciple used the phrase 'my house being stilled' to describe this quiet meditation in God's presence. We must learn the art of "stillness" if we are to go further into the heart of God.

There are five simple steps to do this:

- **Tithe your time** (Dan. 6:10)

  Silence takes time to achieve. Often it takes more time to prepare than to pray. Start with a quiet half hour each day.

- **Shut the door** (Mt. 6:6) – equivalent to a "do not disturb" sign. Six-year-old Sarah answered the door to a milkman in England. He asked to see her mummy for the payment of the bill. *"You can't"* said Sarah. *"She is talking to Jesus."* The milkman was bewildered, but Sarah wouldn't do anything. She had learned that when mummy was with Jesus, she was not to be disturbed.

- **Open your heart** (window) to God.

  Two simple exercises to help open your window:

  - ✓ Take a shower! Imagine a very hot day – hot and dusty. Then stand before the Lord under the shower of God's cleansing love. Visualise the washing away of the dust of the day – irritations, frustrations and small impatiences.
  - ✓ The palms up – palms down. As we symbolically hold our hands palms down, we release to the Lord our fears, tensions, disappointments, frustrations etc. We don't pray about them. We surrender them in His presence. After some moments we turn our palms up as a sign of our desire to now receive from the Lord and we ask for His peace and love to help meet the demands of the day.

- **Silent space** (Ps. 46:10)

  Place yourself in the presence of God and just be there for a while – no words or arguments. Concentrate on worshipping God and loving Him for who He is. You will find yourself calmed and quietened, "***like a child quietened at its mother's breast"***. (Ps. 131:2)

- **Having a tent**

  The great thing about having a tent is that you can carry it around with you and pitch it wherever you want. If we are to learn to meditate and quieten our spirits, we must find places to pitch our tent during the day. You might have only four or five minutes, so take a cup of tea with God or walk round the block. During the day our spirits need quiet places to retain our consciousness of abiding in the Lord Jesus.

So refuse to allow yourself to be preoccupied and dominated by externals and so weaken your inner life with God. The Lord Jesus lived His life in the context of opposition and hostility. For many years He ran a small business with a mother and brothers to support. Yet **He was more conscious of the presence of His Father** than the pressure of people and circumstances.

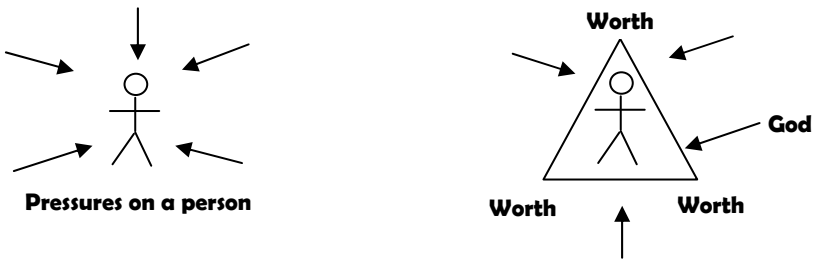
The discipline of affirmation

So often we have wounded spirits – as with our physical body so with the spirit:

- ✧ When wounded we feel pain. We know something is wrong inwardly.
- ✧ We feel weak and inwardly vulnerable when we should be robust.
- ✧ Sometimes there is ultra-sensitivity – perhaps caused by some rejection in the past.
- ✧ We are agitated and restless – no inner harmony.
- ✧ Hardness or 'frozenness' – the symptom is often a strong reaction of aggression.

There is a danger of being simplistic in this area. There are many possible roots to the problem – organic, psychosomatic, demonic, environmental etc. The discipline of affirmation will help make our spirits strong and robust.

This is a process of being ***"changed from one degree of glory to another"***. (2 Cor. 3:18) Our outward environment is unusually rugged, so it is really important ***"that according to the riches of His glory, He may grant you to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner being".*** (Eph. 3:16) ***"For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future - all are yours and you are Christ's and Christ is God's."*** (1 Cor. 3:21-23)



The person is in the "keep" of God. The problems are still there, but the person is being guarded by God's peace and knows the affirmation of God on him/her. The discipline of affirmation is learning to encourage yourself in God. Recall David in 1 Sam. 30:6. David and his battle group had gone off to war, but they were rejected. So they returned home to find their families kidnapped, their houses burned and all their property gone. ***"They lifted up their voices and wept until there was no strength in them to weep."*** Then the men turned on David and thought of stoning him. Did David panic? No! David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

God wants to affirm us. We must the daily affirm **who we are** in the Lord Jesus, where we are going and what God is doing with us. This is very practical as we seek to work the Father's disciplines into our daily lives. **So notice what belongs to you**! I love the understatement of the Bible! Because of the grace of God, ***"The world is yours"***. Our Father owns everything and it is yours by inheritance. We have already become inheritors because the Lord Jesus has died – Heb. 9:15-17. The world is full of people trying to get on the property ladder. But for us, ***"The world is ours"***.

Famous people are yours! Have you noticed the practice of name-dropping? Usually the more insecure people are, the greater the names they drop! But we have no need of that.

We are a body. So there is no need to say, *"I know Dr. David Yonggi Cho"*. It is as strange as saying, *"I had lunch with my foot"* ! All are part of the Body and belong to all of us.

Life is ours. For many people, life seems to pass them by. They always seem to miss it. It is like a ski lift. They are waiting for the chair – always waiting but never getting on the chair, never moving up. They never get hold of life. ***"Life is yours"*** ! Get hold of it. Don't find yourself saying, *"I wish things were different ....."*. That is negativity.

Death is yours! Has something died in your life? A vision? A relationship? A hope? – even the physical death of a relative or friend? Don't be intimidated. Death is not final. Death has no **hold** on you. You have got to get a hold of it. We are people of the resurrection!

Have you ever wished the present wasn't present? *"I just wish I wasn't here"* or *".....if only...."* The **present** is yours. Get hold of it! It doesn't belong to anyone else! Get hold of time and say, *"Its mine!"* Don't let Satan steal it. Don't let discouragement or lethargy have it. Get hold of it for God. Time is God's great gift to you. Time is irretrievably lost if wasted. This is where discipline comes in. Get up in the morning and say, *"Life is mine. Today is mine."* Don't let it pass you by. Leap on it!

The **future** is yours! The future doesn't belong to fear or to failure. The future isn't in the hands of political leaders or in the hands of extremely rich people. The future is ours! You must believe in God's future. Let **vision** characterise you. The future is the Kingdom of God. God has a great future for you. If you don't believe this, you won't amount to much.

So freedom and a strengthened inner man come when we affirm every day:

- ✓ Who we are in God
- ✓ Where we are going
- ✓ What God is doing in our lives

If things seem to be ebbing away, say to yourself: *"I have lost my grip on things. I will get a grip on myself, on the world, on life, on death, on the present and on the future. For God has given them to me."* But note the reversal, ***"And you are Christ's"***. You have the body, the world, life, the present and the future, but what does Christ get? **You!** Affirm these great principles every day. Encourage yourself in God.

If it helps, say this affirmation to yourself every morning:

I believe in the Son of God.
Therefore I am in Him,
Having redemption through His blood and
life by His Spirit.
He is in me and all fullness is in Him.
To Him I belong by creation, purchase, conquest and self-surrender.
There is no cloud between my Lord and me.
There is no difficulty inward or outward that
He is not ready to meet in me today.
I believe I have received, not the spirit of fearfulness, but of
power and of love and of a sound mind.
The Lord is my keeper.

Dare to say that:

- **It is possible** for those who are really willing to reckon on the power of the Lord for keeping and victory, to lead a life in which His promises are taken as they stand and are found to be true.
- **It is possible** to have the thoughts and imaginations of our hearts purified – in the deepest meaning of the word – through faith.
- **It is possible** to see the will of God in everything and to receive it – not with sighing, but with singing.
- **It is possible** in the inner life of desire and feeling, to lay aside all bitterness and wrath and evil doing every day and every hour.

- **It is possible**, by taking complete refuge in divine power, to become strong through and through and find that where our greatest weakness lay, things that formerly upset all our resolves to be patient or pure or humble today provide an opportunity **to make sin powerless** through Him who loved us and works in us. This comes with our agreement with His will and a blessed sense of His presence and His power.

These are divine **possibilities**. Because they are **His work** the true experience of them will always cause us to bow lower at His feet and learn to thirst and long for more. We can't be satisfied with anything less than – each day – in the Lord Jesus – through the power of the Holy Spirit – to walk with God.

The discipline of maintaining joy

As flies are attracted to an open wound, so 'spiritual forces of wickedness' are attracted to areas of our lives where wounding has taken place. There are levels of demonisation:

- ✓ influence for mild cases
- ✓ oppression for more serious cases
- ✓ attack for really acute cases
- ✓ perhaps possession where the person has been taken over by an alien personality

Demonic **influence** has various symptoms:

- ✧ lack of spiritual receptiveness and doubt
- ✧ inability to concentrate on Bible study and prayer
- ✧ a sense of detachment in worship services
- ✧ inability to confess sin
- ✧ states of anxiety and fear
- ✧ outbursts of temper
- ✧ a persistent lack of peace and inner rest
- ✧ depression and constant fatigue

How can we be "influenced" in the spiritual warfare? Having an 'open home' can have its problems. When in contact with infectious diseases, medical staff take great precautions to avoid getting infected themselves. When a stream of troubled people passes through our homes, they sometimes leave something of their demonic problems behind and you become aware of an atmosphere of oppression. On such occasions pray, cleansing the house from any residual contamination.

There are many other ways we can be contaminated, but the emphasis I want to draw out is that **we need not be afraid, but we must be vigilant**.

Often our chief battle is **fear**. Sometimes this is rational. We can analyse why we are afraid, but often it is irrational. We are afraid but we don't know why. The **discipline of maintaining joy** is extremely important in this context.

We read in Neh. 8:10, ***"The joy of the Lord is your strength"***.

You will find that the first thing Satan wants to rob you of is your joy! Why is this usually the **first** task he attempts? Because when your joy is gone, you are defenceless! You have lost your strength. So **now** he can load on you all sorts of temptations – temptations to be negative, to have a critical spirit, to indulge in self-pity, anger etc. In our weakened state we can't resist, we collapse and Satan begins to influence us. So a key discipline to work on is the discipline of maintaining joy.

There is a sentence in the Psalms (87:7) ***"Singers and dancers alike say, 'All of my springs/wells of joy are in You' "***. There are various patterns in Scripture:

Abraham built four altars

Isaac dug four wells

Jacob erected four pillars

Joseph was involved in four dreams

Patterns like this indicate symbolism. So what does the life of Isaac represent? His name means 'laughter' and he symbolises joy. He had to re-dig two wells. The Philistines blocked up with dirt the wells that Abraham's servants had dug because Isaac was rich with flocks and herds and this was resented. He was told to go away. He moved away and re-dug another well (Gen. 26:18-25). This was again blocked up by the enemy. Isaac called the well 'Esek' meaning '**contention**'. Disunity will quickly block up your well of joy! Isaac moved again and dug another well. Again this produced a quarrel. Isaac called it 'Sitnah' meaning '**enmity**'. The names of the wells indicate the factors that rob us of our joy. Isaac moved again and dug another well and called it 'Rehoboth' meaning 'a broad place'. He then dug a fourth well at Beersheba.

So there are wells of joy and of life. (Jn. 4:13-14) Wells are sources of blessing. The Philistines didn't want or need the water, but they didn't want anyone else to have it. Lots of wells implies fruitfulness.

Your source of joy is not in companionship, not in job fulfilment and not in the task. Your source/well of joy is only in Jesus (Jn. 4:14). Sitting by the well that Isaac's son dug, Jesus said, ***"The water I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."***

How do you recover joy when the enemy has blocked up your well? How do you dig or re-dig your wells of joy?

1. **Singing and shouting**

   Shouting is an activity of "the Sons of God" (Job. 38:7). It brings down walls (Josh. 6:20). It defeats our enemy (2 Chron. 13:15). It magnifies the name of the Lord (Ezra 3:11) and it expresses our exultation in God (Ps. 5:11). And then there is the greatest shout of all! ***"The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout."*** (1 Thess. 4:16)

   The Devil is a roaring lion, and we need to roar back at him! So go out from time to time to a lonely place and raise a shout without any inhibitions. It will do wonders to re-dig the wells of joy and help you to recover your joy.

   Over a century ago, a great evangelist from Cornwall in England, Billy Bray, was too busy to go to the Cornish moors. So when he knew he was under attack, he would put his head in a barrel and bellow some hearty 'hallelujahs'.

   A more socially acceptable way is **singing**! Music is the language of the spirit and we need to soak ourselves in it. So often when we are tired and under a lot of pressure, deep within us we are aware of a song. Our spirits want to sing our way through the day, even if our mind doesn't want to cooperate. In the life of the Old Testament People of God – both in priestly service and in warfare – singing was indispensable (2 Chron. 20:21). This is also true of the New Testament People of God. So both individually and corporately be a singing company!

2. **The power of positive affirmation**

   The Psalms are a record of David's private struggles and successes. There are recurring themes of worship and singing. But there is another theme – lots of positive affirmation of God's love and commitment to Him.

   So when you have lost your joy, find a quiet place and confidently assert:

   The Lord is **my** rock in whom I take refuge.

   The Lord is **my** fortress, **my** stronghold.

   The Lord is **my** deliverer.

   The Lord is **my** God.

   The Lord is **my** shield.

   The Lord is **my** salvation.

3. **Giving**

   If you were to give me a gift, it would make me happy. But according to Jesus, if I were to give you a gift, it would make me even happier! He proved it by the way He lived. No one gave himself away like Jesus – the Man for Others! And no one was anointed with the oil of gladness like Jesus. (Ps. 45:7)

Francis of Assisi was certainly a man who was known in church history for his joyful spirit. But often – to the embarrassment of his followers – he was reduced to his underwear after giving everything away.

But it isn't just giving money and possessions that restores joy:

Give away a few smiles to people.

Give away a minute or two to greet old people.

Give away a cheerful 'Thank you' to the bus driver.

Give away something when it isn't necessary or expected. You will find it helps to maintain joy. This is especially true when a covetous spirit robs you of your joy. So reflect and learn from your experiences what helps you to recover your joy. Learn what you need to do to strengthen yourself in God for the discipline of maintaining joy is going to be crucial.

The discipline of maintaining rest – Heb. 4:9-11

"So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God …. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience."

This is not what you think it is. It is not lots of leisure and recreation. God said you should live **in** Sabbath – live in rest! Twelve times in Hebrews 4 'Sabbath' is used as the equivalent of rest. This principle has been largely lost in this age of activism! This is a discipline we need to recover – the discipline of maintaining rest. You have to **strive** to enter into rest and stay there! This is not easy for the enemy wants to keep you out of it.

A person of another way of life who became that the believer in the Lord Jesus, was once asked why. He said, *"There is one verse alone in the Gospel that would make me want to be a follower of Jesus – **'Come unto me all you that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me and you will find rest for your souls'**. I know the books of my religion and there is no promise of rest there. I want that rest".*

We live in a world of increasing turmoil and violence. People are haunted by fear and harassed with care. There is frustration and disillusionment. There are anxious hearts and restless feet. There is a deep inner yearning for rest and **serenity** – freedom from distress in a distracted world. Jesus came to **deliver us from all this** so we could enjoy a life of restful service. Remember Peter in prison and about to be executed – at rest!

I don't want to say anything negative about recreation and hobbies. They are good and honourable in their place. But the Lord Jesus has promised us an **inner resting**. So that's our choice. We can live in self-effort and be anxious and worried and soon exhausted or we can live in the rest of God.

The Pattern of rest in Hebrews 4

There are three rests: Creation Rest, Canaan Rest and Christ's Rest.

- **Creation Rest** – Heb. 4:3-4

  "And God did rest on the seventh day from all His work."

  This is the rest of **completed** work. God had brought order out of chaos. It wasn't that God was exhausted. ***"The Creator of the ends of the earth does not faint neither grows weary."*** (Is. 40:28) It is the rest of satisfaction and not of inactivity. So through grace – as God's new creation – this is to be our model. We can live in satisfaction and fulfilment. Man was created on the sixth day. So his first full day was a day of rest! Built into the Old Covenant was a Sabbath day, a Sabbath year and a year of Jubilee. All of this was a reminder that we were created for rest! In the Old Covenant, if you didn't keep the Sabbath, you were stoned to death. God is not vindictive. The principle is: **if you don't learn to live in rest, you are going to die**. We know it happens. Stress, burnout etc. are common causes of death.

  So the rest of God has been available from the beginning. We were designed to enter into it. We can live in rest in the heart of God. We can live in a continual holiday! How? By developing a holiday heart!

- **Canaan Rest** – Heb. 4:8

  In **Egypt** the people of God found rest from **the fear of the destroying angel of death** by the blood of the lamb. But they were not delivered from the tyrannical power and bondage of Pharaoh.

  In the **desert** they had rest from **slavery** but it was a life that was the antithesis of a life of rest. It was a life of endless moving with lots of discontent, grumbling and rebellion.

  In Canaan it was better, but still there were attacks from outsiders. They failed to enter fully into rest. Joshua was unable to lead them into rest (Heb. 4:6-8).

  But God gave them **a promise** – the promise of the **rest of salvation** in all its breadth, depth and height. Moses couldn't take them into that rest. He took them to the borders. The law (with its rules and regulations) can never take you into rest. Do – Do – Do will never get you in. Only Jesus can take you in. ***"Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider Jesus – the Apostle and High Priest of our confession."*** Done – Done – Done will take you in! It is not only what God has done for us on the Cross, but what God is continuously **doing**. I can rest today because God is working on my behalf today. This is salvation and it is wonderful!

  So God promised: there will be **a day** when you can enter into rest. When is that day? That day is called **today** (used 5 times in chapter 4). The special day is **today**. So when can we enter into rest? Today! Not yesterday! Thank God for that, for then we would have missed it! Not tomorrow! Thank God we don't have to wait for it. **Today** is the day to enter into freedom and rest!

- **Christ's Rest**

  What Joshua failed to do **Christ did!** (Heb. 4:10) We can now enter into a position of rest.

The Peril of failing to enter into rest – Heb. 4:2

Hebrews contains solemn and searching warnings. Don't gloss over them or just apply them to others. The People of God in the Old Covenant failed to enter into God's rest for 3 reasons:

- **They <u>doubted</u> the power of God**

  They said, ***"We are not able to go up against the people for they are stronger than us"***. (Num. 13:3) Enemies and potential enemies are magnified by unbelief. You have seen tiny fleas magnified by TV cameras until they look really terrifying. The People of God completely lost sight of the 'almightiness' of God.

- **They <u>distrusted</u> the love of God**

  They said, ***"Would to God we had died in Egypt or in the desert. Our little ones shall be a prey ..."***. (Num. 14:2-3)

  Unbelief causes a very short memory of the promises and goodness of God. So in spite of repeated and unforgettable daily evidences of God's love and care and protection, they treated Him as though He was utterly unreliable!

- **They <u>disbelieved</u> the Word of God**

  The Word of God that the Old Testament People of God heard did them no good because it wasn't received by faith and made part of the inward life of those who heard it. Unbelief gives poor digestion of the Word of God. It is easy to be critical of those people, but we are warned – ***"Take care brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart leading you to fall away from the Living God"***. (Heb. 3:12)

If you are not living in rest, is the cause unbelief? Don't you believe that what God says, He will do? Are you churned up with doubt? **Rest!** Believe God is working for you today. Believe God's promises!

The Pursuit of rest

Rest doesn't just happen. It requires labour. (Heb. 4:11)

I struggled and wrestled to win it.
The blessing that setteth me free.
But when I had ceased from my struggles,
His peace Jesus gave to me.

"For we who have believed enter that rest."

Charles Wesley wrote:

Lord, I believe a rest remains
To all Thy people known,
A rest where pure enjoyment reigns
And thou art loved alone

Oh that I now that rest might know
Believe and enter in.
Now Saviour now the power bestow
And let me cease from sin.

God has no favourites. What others have received from God, we may all have. Read a little booklet called **Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret**. It is about how he found rest. His favourite hymn was:

Jesus, I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art.
I am finding out the greatness of your loving heart.

Steps to Rest

- Say frequently, *"I believe there is a life of rest and freedom into which Jesus, my heavenly Joshua, can lead me".* It is doubt that effectively closes the door on a life of rest.
- *"I am not enjoying that rest now."* Be honest with God. No progress is made until there is honest confession of failure and of self-effort for self-glorification. Acknowledge that you have been unbelieving and disobedient.
- Claim that the life of rest is for you now – today. Don't protest that your character is unstable, your will weak, your temperament is hasty and it won't last. Don't limit God by your unbelief. Never measure His power by your past experience.
- Relinquish every sin and weight to gain rest. God is not willing to condone or tolerate any sin. God is willing to co-operate to the uttermost if we renounce all that is known to be contrary to His will.
- **Now** trust your Heavenly Father to lead you into rest and to make good in your experience the life of rest.

A story to end with!

A man wanted to cross a broad and rapid river. There was no bridge or ferry. The man was a poor swimmer, but he thought he could make it so he started across. But he began to sink from exhaustion. A boat was passing by and the man in the boat shouted, *"Grab hold of the boat!"* The man could do this and he did so. Now his struggling ceased. He was clinging to the boat and he was saved from drowning. But then he saw another man sinking. What could he to do? He knew that if he left the boat to help the other man, he too would drown. But he wanted to save the other drowning man. The man in the boat told him to **get into the boat**. He did this and he immediately he went from clinging to **resting**! And now, from the security of the boat, as he leaned out of the boat, he was able to grab the other man!

So only resting believers are in a position to help others!