

DIGGING DEEP

WORKBOOK **KEY**

Making a deeper connection with Christ for some comes at great cost. Christians have given their lives for what they believe. There may come a time when we have to make that kind of commitment. Do we really believe this truth enough to give our very lives? Are we convinced enough to stand for what we believe no matter the consequence? How can we come to that place of commitment? What are the outcomes of such a commitment and where do we start? In this series of lessons we want to Dig Deep into the Word of God and discover the key to a deeper, richer relationship with God. One that will bring us so close to the Heavenly Father that nothing shall be able to separate us.

“For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).



LESSON 1 - Aerate the Ground - Personal Preparation

Repent

1. When you are preparing a garden, the first step is to look at the ground. Is the soil rich in nutrients?
2. Have we prepared the soil and removed all the hinderances?
3. In the same way, we evaluate our hearts. How do I look for growth? Does my heart need to be Aerated?
4. I need to prepare the ground, my heart for this beautiful garden of commitment that I will offer God and others when I'm done.
5. Aerate the ground - This literally means to supply the soil with air. It is softening up the ground so that when you plant the seed, the ground will embrace it.
6. Aerating the ground is a bit like repentance - clean your heart of all distractions. This may need to be done daily to keep your heart conditioned for God's work.

“Search my heart”

Psalm 139

1

O Lord, You have searched me and known me.

2

*You know my sitting down and my rising up;
You understand my thought afar off.*

3

*You comprehend my path and my lying down,
And are acquainted with all my ways.*

4

*For there is not a word on my tongue,
But behold, O Lord, You know it altogether.*

5

*You have hedged me behind and before,
And laid Your hand upon me.*

6

*Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is high, I cannot attain it.*

7

*Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your presence?*

8

*If I ascend into heaven, You are there;
If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there...*

13

*For You formed my inward parts;
You covered me in my mother's womb.*

14

*I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Marvelous are Your works,
And that my soul knows very well...*

23

*Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me, and know my anxieties;*

24

*And see if there is any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.*

7. Search me, O God, and know my **heart**. Ask Him to dig down deep and reveal anything that would come between you and Him.
8. David had a **repentant** heart. He is a good example. He left no rock unturned. He knew who God was and what God knew about Him...EVERYTHING!

Reach - Long for Him

We are aiming for good, healthy earth for the seed to be planted - a pure, ready heart for His Word to take hold. Reaching for God is like a small child reaching out to his parent; arms wide open; totally vulnerable; never a thought of rejection; just pure trust.

1. "O God, You are my God; Early will I **seek** You; My soul **thirsts** for You; My flesh **longs** for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water" (Psalm 63:1).

2. “My soul longs, yes, even faints For the courts of the Lord; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God” (Psalm 84:2).
3. “I spread out my hands to You; My soul longs for You like a thirsty land. Selah” (Psalm 143:6).
4. David put it this way: “As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God” (Psalm 42:1). So thirsty - gotta have Him! So needy - gotta have Him now! So dependent - I can’t go another step!
5. If you will long for God, He will stay fresh in your soul. If you are always reaching for Him, asking Him to hold you closer, you won’t ever get so far you can’t feel His heart beat or hear His voice.
6. Read His Word - God’s word is just that. He speaks through His Word. Because He has ordained His Word and it was in the beginning with God and was God (John 1:1).
7. God’s Word is is living and powerful.

“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

8. Talk to Him every day - communication is the surviving tool of any relationship. If it is absent, the relationship is sure to crumble.
9. The word “communicate” has the word “commune” in it. This means to communicate intimately, on a very personal level¹.
10. Communication is a two-way conversation. Yes, we must talk to God, but then we must be quiet for Him to talk to us. Talk, Listen, Obey.

¹ Webster’s Dictionary; online at: www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/commune; accessed 3-5-15

Guard Your Heart

1. Before we are ready for the seed to be planted the last thing we must do is take some preventive measures. We must secure the lot. We must make sure no animals can get in to destroy the flower garden. So we build fences to keep out the prey and gates to allow the gardner to come in at will. Fences and Gates are vital to the growth of our garden.
2. Fences - We must guard our heart against the invasion of the enemy. The devil wants to destroy you. He is NOT your friend.

“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

3. Fences - We must also protect our heart against conforming to the world. If sin alienates us from Christ, then wouldn't He be pleased if we stay as far away from that ugly animal as possible? We don't have to look like the world! We don't want to look like the world! We want people to see Jesus! Not the world!

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:2).

4. *Conform* definition - to be similar to or the same as something; to obey or agree with something; to do what other people do: to behave in a way that is accepted by most people.²

² Webster's Dictionary - online at <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/conform>; accessed 3/5/15

NLT-Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

The Message -Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

5. Gates - I will keep an **open** heart for God to work. Even when He needs to do a little **weeding**, I will gladly welcome Him back to see the progress.

“Behold, I stand at the door and **knock**. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will **come in** to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelation 3:20).

6. I must respond to God's presence at the Gate. **IF** I hear His voice and open the door, **THEN** He will come in. I have a part in this relationship. He is a gentleman and will not force himself in. But the joy is unspeakable when I accept His presence into my life!
7. Gates - We are looking for the day God will **return** and say, “Come Home my child. Well done!” That is when we will walk through those pearly gates! If we open the gate for Him, He will one day open His gate for us.

“His lord said to him, ‘Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord’” (Matthew 25:21).

