



## DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Deep – Exploring God’s Word, Part 3

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**Main Idea** – God has special, hidden mysteries to reveal to each of us. Once a person receives salvation by accepting Jesus as Savior, s/he should desire to go deeper into the things of God in order to discover these mysteries.

### The Christian experience

- **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. 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.**
- Once a person has received Jesus as Savior, s/he should begin the life-long quest to learn the hidden things God would like to reveal.
- We should seek revelation, not just information.
- These revelations – the deep things of God – are only found through the Holy Spirit.

### One must descend before ascending

- Jesus descended before He ascended back to Heaven. **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.)**
- In a similar way, we must recognize we must do the hard work of “descending” into the deeper things of God before “ascending” to greater understanding.
- When we do what Jesus did, we get what Jesus got.

## **We must be intentional about pursuing the deeper things**

- **Mark 1:35 (NIV)- Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.**
- Jesus got up early in the morning to pray because he had a busy schedule ahead of him each day. He knew alone time with his Father was essential for being effective in the day ahead.
- In the same way, we must be intentional about scheduling time every day to go deeper and seek God – just as did Jesus.
- This might require that we eliminate some things from our schedules that are not a productive use of our time.

## **Parables as a path to deeper understanding**

- Jesus often taught in parables.
- Matthew 13 describes the first parables Jesus taught as a means to reveal deeper truths to his close followers.
- Twice in Matthew 13, Jesus' disciples asked Him for more information about the parables He was teaching (verses 10 and 36.) Jesus told them the reason He had begun to teach in parables was for their own deeper understanding (verse 11.) **“He answered and said to them, ‘Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.’ “**
- These deeper truths, learned through the parables, would be a blessing to the disciples (verses 16-17.) **“But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.”**

## **We learn by the Spirit**

- Jesus is in Heaven right now, but He is also still present with us today by the Holy Spirit. Just as Jesus taught the disciples in person, the Holy Spirit teaches us in person.
- **1 Corinthians 2: 10-12 - 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.**
- Our ability to learn these hidden things of God depends on our earnestness to seek God by going deeper through personal Bible study time, prayer time, and

worship time.

- “Your potential is related to your proximity.”

### **Thermometer or thermostat**

- A thermometer responds to and reflects the air temperature.
- A thermostat controls the air temperature.
- Christians should not merely respond to the environment (like a thermometer) but rather should influence the environment (like a thermostat.)
- In order to influence the environment, one needs a deeper understanding of the things of God.
- Evangelism is for the unbeliever, revival is for the believer.
- Salvation is for the unbeliever, revelation is for the believer.
- Each of us has the potential to receive personal revelation from God. It is not necessary for us to live off the revelation God has given someone else.
- When we receive personal revelation it is a testimony that God is alive and active in the world, and is alive and active in our individual lives.
- Salvation prayers should not only include declarations of faith, but also requests for help to continue living lives that seek the deeper things of God.

### **Reflective Questions for The Deep – Exploring God’s Word, Part 3**

- 1. Pastor Stephen said Christians should seek revelation, not simply information. What is your estimate of the percentage of believers who actively seek revelation from God? Why did you choose that number?**
- 2. Jesus said the hidden mysteries of God were designed to be a blessing to his followers (Matthew 13: 16-17). What are some ways the discovery of a Godly mystery then becomes a blessing?**
- 3. Share with another believer a recent revelation you received through Bible study, prayer, or worship. Why is the revealing of this mystery a testimony that God is alive and active on earth?**