Chapter 1

THE DIVIDED SELF

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. Are you more naturally inclined toward Striving Adam or Soulful Adam? How is this evident in your life?
2. Do you feel compelled to validate your existence through your education, work, a relationship, your appearance, or in some other way?
3. Do you know anyone who integrates well both the Striving Adam and Soulful Adam parts of themselves? If so, what is that person like?
4. What is the difference between achievement and fruitfulness?
5. How can feeling content lead to greater fruitfulness?

Prayer

Lord, teach me your ways that I may live by your truth. Give me an undivided heart that I might honor you.

—SEE PSALM 86:11
Chapter 2

THE WHOLE SELF

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. Were you able to relate to Augustine’s inner wrestling? Are you tempted by fame or success as a way to validate your existence?
2. Do you know someone like Ken’s mother or Leighton Ford, whose ambitions were transformed by God?
3. Do you ever worry that your life doesn’t measure up? If so, whose expectations do you worry that you won’t meet?
4. How do you feel when you hear that God has already accepted you and you have nothing to prove? Do you find this difficult to believe?
5. What helps you feel loved by God?
6. What blocks you from feeling loved?
7. How could you become less of a slave to success and more of a child of grace?

Prayer

Abba, Father, thank you for making me your cherished child. Train my heart to enjoy our relationship. Send your Spirit to help my heart believe the sweet truth that I am embraced. Make my adoption a reality that governs my thoughts, feelings, and actions.
Chapter 3

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. What practices might help you remember that you are loved by God?
2. How do spiritual disciplines help to cultivate humility?
3. Can you identify a particular vulnerability that you might have? Is there a spiritual practice that might help prevent the “house” of your life from being burned?
4. In light of your temperament, are there one or two spiritual practices that would be especially life-giving for you?
5. If you feel that you are failing in a particular practice, how might you respond in a grace-filled, constructive way?

Prayer

Lord, through the gift of my spiritual practices, help me to open to the work of your Holy Spirit so that I can become the masterpiece you are creating me to be.

—SEE EPHESIANS 2:10
Chapter 4

MEDITATION

Listening to the Music of Heaven

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. What attracts you about spending time with God in silence? What aversions do you have to meditation?
2. Given your temperament, what physical posture might be most suitable as you practice silent prayer?
3. Is there a simple task you do regularly, such as washing the dishes, vacuuming, walking, or running, that could help you cultivate a greater awareness of God’s presence?
4. How might silent prayer help anchor you?
5. How might prayerful meditation affect your relationships with others?

Prayer

Lord, search my heart and excavate what you want to heal in me. Help me sense your abiding love that upholds me and the whole world.

—SEE PSALM 139:23–24
Each morning before breakfast, I take time to sit quietly and meditate in God's presence. To begin, I breathe deeply, inhaling and exhaling through my nose. Then I light a candle to symbolize the light of Christ's presence. After a few moments, I begin to wonder, "How much time has gone by?" To focus, I use an app on my phone called "Centering Prayer," which has a timer. Often I set it for twenty minutes, but sometimes I set it for ten or fifteen minutes. The app has a chime that summons me to attend to God like a bell in a monastery. I am so easily distracted that not long after taking a couple of deep breaths, I usually start thinking of all the things I ought to be doing. To still my mind, I focus on a brief portion of Scripture, such as the phrase from Psalm 46:1:

Breathe in.  
Be still.  
Breathe out.  
Know that I am God.

1. I have also found it helpful to prime my mind for meditation by using a devotional guide such as Seeking God’s Face by Phil Reinders, designed to help us meditate on brief portions of Scripture. Or the Pray as You Go website that plays beautiful sacred music and then offers a brief imaginative guide through a passage of Scripture. If I feel unusually distracted, I breathe in and out, focus on my breathing and start counting breaths from 1 to 10. As I inhale, I will count an odd number and as I exhale I will count an even number. I count only to 10 and then repeat the sequence.

2. Along with meditation, God can also use a wise counselor or spiritual director to foster healing in us.

---

**FOOTNOTES**

1.  I have also found it helpful to prime my mind for meditation by using a devotional guide such as Seeking God’s Face by Phil Reinders, designed to help us meditate on brief portions of Scripture. Or the Pray as You Go website that plays beautiful sacred music and then offers a brief imaginative guide through a passage of Scripture. If I feel unusually distracted, I breathe in and out, focus on my breathing and start counting breaths from 1 to 10. As I inhale, I will count an odd number and as I exhale I will count an even number. I count only to 10 and then repeat the sequence.

2. Along with meditation, God can also use a wise counselor or spiritual director to foster healing in us.

---

**THE SPIRITUAL TELL**

![Diagram of the spiritual tell](image)
Chapter 5

SABBATH

The Rhythm of Resistance

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. Do you currently have a twenty-four-hour period when you completely rest from work (including work-related emails, texts, and social media)?
2. Do you have any fears (or challenges) around living with a twenty-four-hour Sabbath?
3. In what ways might keeping the Sabbath shape your identity as a child of God?
4. How would honoring the Sabbath deepen your trust in God?
5. How might you plan ahead so that you can embrace Sabbath rest?
6. Given your unique character, what would bring you the most life on your Sabbath? What would end up draining you?

Prayer

God of rest, I’m so busy. The demands of life are piled high, and my schedule is a tyrant. Help me catch my breath and enter the gift of your Sabbath once more. Free me to enjoy the goodness of your favor and this life. Forgive me for all the ways I try to justify myself by my accomplishments. Help me to rest every day in your grace. Amen.
Chapter 6

GRATITUDE

Savoring God’s Gifts

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. What are you most grateful for right now?
2. How might a daily practice of gratitude help you become more aware of God’s goodness?
3. Is there a time each day when you could begin a thanksgiving ritual? If doing this every day feels overwhelming at first, is there a time you could do this once or twice each week?
4. If you were to examine your life thus far, how would you complete the sentence: “My life is the story of __________.”
5. How might the prayer of examen shape your character over time?

Prayer

**Lord,**

*You have given so much to me,*

*Give one thing more—a grateful heart.*

—GEORGE HERBERT
1. How does knowing Jesus open the door to a life of greater simplicity?
2. What is the relationship between gratitude and living simply?
3. What, if any, fears do you have about moving toward a simpler lifestyle?
4. List ten things in your home (clothes, books, sporting equipment, etc.) that you have not used in the last year. How would you feel about giving these things away?
5. What are the gifts of a simpler lifestyle?
6. Have you experienced Jesus’ upside-down teaching that you will find life by losing it? If so, describe one such experience.
7. How might living simply enable you to bless others?

Prayer

Lord, free me from a sense of scarcity. Help me be content with all you’ve given. Grow within me a generous spirit toward my neighbor. May I seek the good of others and honor your name in all I do. Amen.
Chapter 8

SERVANTHOOD

Pouring Ourselves Out for Others

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. How does recognizing the power that God has given us free us to serve others?
2. How does serving cultivate humility?
3. Like Ruth Martin, do you ever feel that you won the “lottery” because of your life circumstances? If so, does this inspire you to live in a particular way?
4. How might God be calling you to live a cruciform life?

Prayer

Jesus, you are the way, the truth, and the life. You have called me to love you with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength—and to love my neighbor as myself. Help me embrace this call by filling me with your love. May your humble sacrifice on the cross empower me to serve others.
Chapter 9

FRIENDSHIP

The Art of Mutual Encouragement

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. Like Augustine, can you think of someone who influenced you for the worse? In what ways?
2. Has a friend ever influenced you toward God? In what ways?
3. What role do you think prayer might play in making friends?
4. Are there people who you sense God has brought into your life? And, if so, for what reason(s)?
5. Do you have a friend (or group of friends) who acts as a “custodian of the soul,” someone to whom you can ask vulnerable questions?
6. How can you cultivate friendship(s) of mutual encouragement?

Prayer

Dear Lord,
Give me a few friends who will love me for what I am, and keep ever burning before my wandering steps.
Chapter 10

VOCATION

Discerning Our Sacred Calling

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. What is the relationship between surrendering to God and receiving God’s guidance?
2. What are some of the ways God speaks to you?
3. Are you ever tempted, or have you ever been tempted, toward a wrong vocational choice for vain reasons? Explain.
4. How much freedom do you think God encourages in our decision-making?
5. How does imagining our death foster clarity?
6. How is joy an indicator that we are in God’s will?
7. What are some signs that you might be out of the will of God?

Prayer

*Put me to what You will.*
*Rank me with whom You will.*
*Put me to doing, or put me to suffering.*
*Let me be employed for You, or laid aside for You.*
*Exalted for You, or brought low for You.*
*Let me be full, let me be empty.*
*Let me have all things, let me have nothing.*
*I freely and heartily yield all things to Your pleasure, and disposal. Amen.*

–JOHN WESLEY
Chapter 11

REDEFINING GREATNESS

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. Is there an area in your life for which you long to be recognized? What is it, and why?
2. How is Jesus’ definition of greatness different from the world’s?
3. If most people agree that eulogy virtues are more important than resumé virtues, why do people spend so much time and energy on their resumé virtues?
4. Can you think of an example of an ordinary person who embodied true greatness?
5. How can imagining our death focus our perspective on what matters most?
6. How can you pursue everyday greatness right where you are?
NOTES

Introduction


Chapter 1: The Divided Self

1. Quoted from the Berean Bible Translation.
7. Psychologist Shawn Achor notes that when our brains are in a positive, happy mode, they are 31 percent more productive than in a negative or stressed mode. Salespeople perform 37 percent better, and doctors are 19 percent faster and more accurate with diagnoses when in a positive mindset versus a neutral or a negative one. Shawn Achor, “The Happy Secret to Better Work,” TED Talk | TED.com, May 2011, https://www.ted.com/
talks/shawn_achor_the_happy_secret_to_better_work. Achor
develops the idea in his book *The Happiness Advantage*.

**Chapter 2: The Whole Self**

6. Ibid., 6.6, 108.
7. Ibid., 8.7, 145.
11. Philip F. Reinders, *Seeking God’s Face: Praying with the Bible through the Year* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 399.

**Chapter 3: Spiritual Practices**


**Chapter 4: Meditation**

Notes

6. Ibid., 73.
8. Ibid., 24–29.

Chapter 5: Sabbath

Survival Guide for the Soul

Integrity (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 62–83. I am also drawing from Psalm 92.


Chapter 6: Gratitude


7. Ibid., 9.


9. I am adapting an idea from John Ortberg, Soul Keeping: Caring for the Most Important Part of You (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 169.
Notes

10. Ibid., 172.
11. I learned about Colman’s character in part through my conversations with his wife Joanna Mockler.

Chapter 7: Simple Abundance

5. I write about these rhythms in Ken Shigematsu, *God in My Everything: How an Ancient Rhythm Helps Busy People Enjoy God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013). See also Dallas Willard, cited in *Soul Keeping*, 89.
7. Ibid., 77.
Chapter 8: Servanthood


5. Brooks, The Road to Character, 92.


Chapter 9: Friendship


4. Augustine, 2.5 Confessions, 29.


Notes

11. Carmichael, Friendship, 16.
15. The spiritual direction movement is growing, and there are now more than six thousand spiritual directors under the banner of Spiritual Directors International, most of whom serve in North America.

Chapter 10: Vocation

3. Ibid., 216.

**Chapter 11: Redefining Greatness**

4. Ibid., 799.

**Epilogue**