



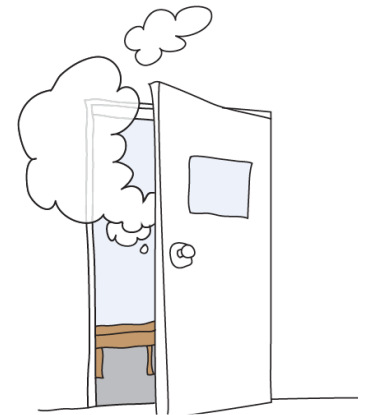
Finding Home

Jesus' Invitation to a Transforming Friendship

"Make your home in me, and I will make my home in you."—Jesus

Spiritual Direction

Let's discuss two essential cautions about the journey with Jesus. First, performance behavior can lead us to focus on results rather than relationship. We can begin loving our experience of achieving more than we love Jesus. Second, a transforming friendship can easily inflame our pride. If we seek to instruct others with the play-by-play of our lives, we open the 'steam bath door' to our souls, allowing the heat of transformation to escape without reaching its potential.



Exploring

Beginners in the spiritual life are apt to become very diligent in their exercises. The great danger for them will be to become satisfied with their religious works and with themselves. It is easy for them to develop a kind of secret pride. Such persons become too spiritual. They like to speak of "spiritual things" all the time. They become content with their own growth. They would prefer to teach rather than be taught. They condemn others who are not as spiritual as they are. They are like Pharisees who boasted in themselves and despised the publican who was not as spiritual as he. The adversary will often inflame their fervor so that their pride will grow even greater. The adversary knows that all of their works and virtues will become valueless and, if unchecked, will become vices. For they begin to do these spiritual exercises to be esteemed by others. They will become discontented with what God gives them because they do not experience the consolation they think they deserve. They begin reading many books and performing many acts of piety in an attempt to gain more and more spiritual consolation. Their hearts grow attached to the feelings they get from their devotional life. They focus on the affect, and not on the substance of devotion. But those who are on the right path will set their eyes on God and not on these outward things nor on their inner experiences.¹

Question

In what ways could your sense of self-accomplishment or pride undermine your relationship with Jesus? In prayer, ask him to show you the vulnerabilities of your heart.

¹ An excerpt from *The Dark Night of the Soul*, John of the Cross.