

Chapter Nine: *Drinking Deeply*

Getting Connected

What's your favorite beverage to drink on a regular basis? How about when you're *really thirsty*?

Was there a difference in your answer to these two questions? Consider why or why not.

How could this insight relate to what this chapter is all about?

Highlights and Insights

In your own words, how would you *briefly* summarize Chapter 9?

Was there anything that really caught your attention, challenged or confused you in this chapter? Do you find yourself struggling with applying it to your life in any way?

How does the teaching in this chapter complement what you've been learning from the book so far?

The author points out that part of our difficulty in being constantly aware of Christ's presence is our struggle in being *present*.

On a day-in, day-out basis, how difficult is it for you to be present in the moment? Do you have any ideas as to why this is the case?

What would you say are the two most common barriers that keep you from being aware of God's presence with you in the midst of your life's routines? Write them here ...

- 1.
- 2.

Biblical Focus

Read John 7:37-39 and Jeremiah 2:13.

What do these passages tell us about what faith looks like?

Good News For Those Trying Harder, by Pastor Alan Kraft

Why do they say that faith is so important?

What's your immediate, response to the following question (remember you're among friends):

When you think about inviting Jesus into *every* area of your life, what emotions does this stir up?

Did your answer surprise you? Why or why not?

On page 172 the author defines sanctification as "*the process over time whereby we become more and more like Christ*". From this chapter or from your own experience, how would you describe the sanctification process in your own words?

How does it happen in people's lives?

How do you see it happening in *your life*?

The Heart of the Matter

As a group, spend a few minutes practicing being fully present. Here are three suggestions of what you might do. Choose one or more.

- Spend 3-4 minutes in complete silence. (Pages 176-177). Tune into your senses. What do you hear? What does your body feel?
- Break into pairs and practice being present with another person. (Page 177)
- Spend a few minutes practicing the presence of Christ. (Pages 178-179)

What was the experience like for you?

In Conclusion...

Moving forward, how might you begin to consistently practice being more present ... in life, with other people, and in your relationship with Jesus? Conclude by praying for one another and the spiritual longings that have been shared as a part of your discussion of this chapter. You might also pray for those barriers that are keeping people from being more aware of God's presence with them in the midst of life's routines.

On page 178, the author writes these words describing the "practicing the presence" exercises:

"Of course, the operative word is *practice*. This does not come naturally to most of us given the pace and busyness of our lives. But it is something we can practice and learn so that it becomes a more natural part of our everyday lives, including our experience with Jesus."

How much of a stretch is it for you to engage with exercises like this, and why?

How might you begin to practice and learn to be more present?