

The Secret

Acceptance

There are always things in life that we don't like and that we can't avoid. There are always going to be things that we are powerless to change...about ourselves and about our circumstances. The first move of the spiritual life is "to accept the things I cannot change". This paves the way for recognizing God in the present moment and for choosing happiness rather than waiting for something to change before you can find God and joy in life.

Discussion Questions

1. What is one thing about you that you know you can't change? When did you first notice it? Was it an easy thing to "get over" or did it bother you for a long time?
2. Have you ever been able to see a weakness as a strength? Has there ever been an experience in your life that was devastating at the time, but turned out to ultimately be an opportunity for good?
3. Do you have a favorite underdog story?
4. Saint Paul wrote that "My eager expectation and hope is that I shall not be put to shame in any way, but that with all boldness, now as always, Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death". He seems to indicate that there are no limits to God's ability to be present in all circumstances. What do you think about that?
5. Talk about a time when you felt defined by your limitations rather than your potential. Talk about a time when you were able to forget your limitations because you focused on your potential.
6. Do you think that "acceptance" always has to mean "approval"? Do you think that "acceptance" always has to mean "resignation" or "despair"?
7. How important is embracing Jesus "in-the-moment" when it comes to embracing reality "in-the-moment"? Do you think that Jesus' presence changes things? How so?
8. Share an example of something that you (or someone else) might have considered to be an obstacle to God that in fact was an opportunity to get closer to God.

God in Real Life

- I. "Acceptance" is a way of affirming that God is able and willing to enter into every area of your life. It is the trust that things do not have to be perfect (and you do not have to be perfect) before you can experience the joy that God has for those who love Him. Pray for the grace this week to accept reality with hope because you are accepting reality with Jesus.

Be Transformed

See the story of Joseph in the Book of Genesis with special attention to Joseph's words, "You had meant this for evil, but God meant it for good." (Genesis 37-50)

"For to me life is Christ, and death is gain. If I go on living in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. And I do not know which I shall choose. I am caught between the two. I long to depart this life and be with Christ, [for] that is far better. Yet that I remain [in] the flesh is more necessary for your benefit." Saint Paul to the Philippians 1:21-24

"In all things may the most holy, the most just, and the most lovable will of God be done, praised, and exalted above all for ever. Your will be done, O Lord, your will be done. The Lord has given, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord now and always. Amen."