Digging Deeper

Holy Living – Deeper Life

Covenant Sunday 2027



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Read Romans 12:1-21, first using NIV and then again using a different translation.

- **Ask yourself what interests, intrigues, inspires or even irritates you about the text.**

When we hear the phrase 'holy living', it's easy to think about rules, standards, or trying harder to be a better Christian. But the Bible points us towards something much richer. Holy living is really about living more deeply in God.

- **When you hear the phrase 'holy living', what is the first thing that comes to mind?** Perhaps it is striving to do more for God, or learning to live more deeply in God's presence.

Romans 12:1–2: 'Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice.'

- **What is God inviting you to surrender today as an act of trustful abandonment and wholehearted offering?**

Think for a moment about the difference between wilfulness and willingness. One has the tendency to place the self at the centre and says, 'I can do this.' The other is an open, receptive posture toward God and says, 'Here I am – I am available.'

- **What would change if obedience flowed from surrender rather than duty, fear or self-reliance?**

Think Picture

Look at the picture; stop and think about the process of abseiling. There is a moment when, standing at the edge and leaning back over the cliff face, you have to let go of the instinct to cling on. Before you can descend, you must first surrender, trusting the ropes and harnesses around you. Then you abandon the safety of being on land and relax into going down.

Surrendering our lives to God means letting go of self-reliance and placing our trust fully in him. It can be seen as a release of control, effort and fear, grounded in confidence that God is trustworthy.

Pause and consider the questions below:

- **What does it mean for me to place my full weight on God's love and faithfulness in this moment?**
- **In what area of my life do I need to stop striving and learn to rest in God's care?**
- **What does contentment look like for you?**

1 Peter 1:18–21 reminds us that each of us has been redeemed and belongs to God. Meanwhile Romans 12:3–8 reminds us that each member receives gifts according to God's grace. We are given all we need to trust and surrender to him.

- **Where are you striving to be someone other than the person God has made you to be?**

Think Prayer

Spend some time with this prayer of Charles de Foucauld.
Let it speak to you.

- **Which lines in the text are you drawn to?**
- **What would it mean for you today to pray, 'Father, I abandon myself into your hands', and genuinely entrust every part of your life to God?**

Father, I abandon myself into your hands; do with me what you will. Whatever you may do, I thank you; I am ready for all, I accept all. Let only your will be done in me, and in all your creatures. I wish no more than this, O Lord. Into your hands I commend my soul; I offer it to you with all the love of my heart, for I love you, Lord, and so need to give myself, to surrender myself into your hands, without reserve and with boundless confidence, for you are my Father. Amen.

So What ...!

Look at this contemporary interpretation of St Teresa of Avila's poem:

'In the hands of God, I am yours, Lord. You created me, you have loved me, you have called me by name, and you have never given up on me. Here is my life: my hopes and fears, my strengths and weaknesses, my successes and failures, my work, my relationships, my future and my past. I am yours. What would you have me do? Where would you have me go? Who would you have me become? Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'
St Teresa repeatedly asks, 'What do you want of me?'

- **What might it mean for you to surrender your own agenda, abandon yourself to God's loving care, find contentment in his will, and participate fully in what he is doing around you?**

Spiritual Practice: The Stone of Surrender

Take a small stone and hold it in your hand as you read St Teresa's prayer, paying particular attention to the repeated refrain: 'What do you want of me?'

As you hold the stone, imagine it represents whatever you are carrying today: a worry, an ambition, a disappointment, a responsibility, a relationship, or a desire to stay in control.

Reflect on these questions:

- **What am I holding tightly that God is inviting me to surrender?**
- **Where is God calling me to abandon myself more fully to his love and care?**
- **What would contentment look like if I trusted God's will in this situation?**
- **How is God inviting me not merely to let go, but to participate in what he is doing?**

When you are ready, place the stone at the foot of a cross, in a bowl, or simply set it down before you. As you do so, pray:
Lord, I place this into your hands. I surrender what I cannot control. I abandon myself to your love and care. Teach me contentment in your will and encourage me to participate in your purposes.
What do you want of me? [Remain in silence for a few moments, with empty hands resting open on your lap. Notice the difference between holding on and letting go.]
[End by praying:] I am yours, Lord, and for you I was born. What do you want of me today? Amen.