AWKWARDNESS – Eating fruit a snake told you that you should

a range of experiences, feelings or information that may be painful, hard to understand or interpret, bring temptation or difficulty and humility or humiliation.

AWE -

Worship

In being freed from flesh and lies, integrating or repenting in acceptance of truth, we can now marvel in awe of God as He truly is, and worship as we truly are in Spirit & Truth

AWARENESS -Eyes Opened

The deep need for revelation light to come to the interior places; a process usually catalysed by awkwardness

ACCEPTANCE – God’s clothing

The transformational posture, the integration of self; a function of the soul, bringing life to the full in all its domains as we accept Truth and expel falsehood as it is revealed in awareness by The Spirit.

In (very) short summary this discipleship process in the emotionally healthy spirituality space is about these difficult experiences (**awkwardness**) being the vehicles God uses to bring **awareness** in us that we would never otherwise come to, because they are areas of our life Jesus is wanting to bring under His rule; to bring us more and more into wholeness as per His design (progressive sanctification) … and we may either be resisting, or there are other blockers to our seeing. As the Light reveals and we become aware, the challenge is to move to **acceptance**. The risk of not moving here is getting stuck…stuck in cycles of many sorts, including endless inward navigation. We move to acceptance by a) yielding or repenting, and giving back to Jesus what is His, for on the cross He bore our infirmities; all of them, and they are no longer ours to take up, take back or play with. But some awkward things we become aware of we cannot give up; so acceptance may also be b) where Jesus is asking us to take up our cross daily (as per Luke 9) or reminding us like He does Paul with his thorn (that he pleads 3 times to be removed as per 2 Cor 12), that His grace is sufficient for us. How do you live with these wounds, and these ‘shadows’? Do you think God might redeem and use even these, as you live as one of His ambassadors? How do you integrate what you can’t get rid of, and not live in deception or repression of them but in honesty before God; with a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart (these sacrifice’s He will not despise as per Psalm 51). For the goal of life, the goal of discipleship, is worship of God. And God’s commitment to us is transformation into the likeness of Jesus (as per Romans 8) that we might do just that, so we worship Him, as per Jesus’ words to the Samaritan women at the well, in Spirit and Truth (not flesh an lies). The worship posture can be described as ‘**awe**’; awe of who He really is, and what He has done for us as we really were (dead in our trespasses & sins as per Eph 2), bringing us to who we really are (new creations as per 2 Cor 5!) and where our real life is hid (in Christ as per Colossians 3!). But if we don’t see these things as they really are; if for example we see God as a tyrant and ourselves as useless, or our life purposeless…how can we worship him because it isn’t Spirit or Truth?

So much more could be said, but this whole process has as its aim the true Worship of God.

Questions for reflection.

What do you make of the ‘flow’ or cycle of Awkwardness to Awareness to Acceptance and to Awe?

What do you make of the idea of Shalom or wholeness being in the spaces between God, Self, Other & Creation?

**Towards Awkwardness**

Have you ever become aware of something that needs changing without it being ‘awkward’?

What do you think about Daz’s comment on the idea of much of Jesus’ ministry bringing awkwardness?

What would it look like to embrace and or expect ‘awkwardness’ as a community that follows Jesus?

Who do you let ask you difficult questions (God, self, other & creation)?

What practices of self-imposed ‘awkwardness’ do you have? (for example, silent retreats/spaces alone with God, a Genogram, mercy ministry with ‘difficult’ people etc).

**Towards Awareness**

How have you experienced moments of ‘awareness’ catalysed by awkwardness? Would you share this with the group?

What do you make of the concept of God searching you, and the partnership between your spirit and God’s Spirit as per Dallas Willard’s comments on Proverbs 20:27 & 1 Corinthians 2:9-16? (read).

How do you think people receive you?

**Towards Acceptance**

Have you been trying to remove ‘awkward’ things from your life that God isn’t removing but is using (Paul’s thorn)?

Have you avoided or repressed things you have been made aware of? What is the fruit of this? Would you consider sharing them with the group; maybe for the first time, as per James 5 and the promise of healing in confession?

How have you ‘accepted’ or integrated some ‘awkward’ things you became ‘aware’ of in your life? (Shadows). Have you learned to master them? How? What changed? Has it freeing and transformative?

Have you repented of things you should that you have been aware of? Would you share with the group what this looked like?

**Towards Awe**

What do you make of the place of thanksgiving in this journey?

What do you make of Jesus words that He came to bring life, and life to the full? How might that link with Shalom?

What does worship mean to you?

Are you ever in awe of who God is? As you answer honestly, why do you think this may or may not be?

Can you enter true worship without something like this process of awkwardness to awe via awareness and acceptance? Why or why not.

What do you make of Jesus’ words that we worship in Spirit and Truth?