

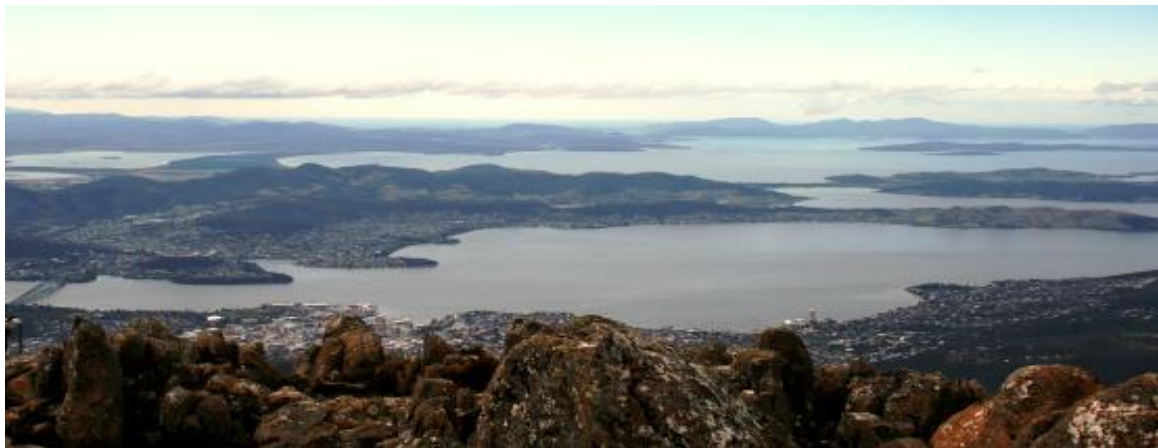
30. *Distant and Seemingly Safe*

Why do we keep God distant? The presence of intense light is blinding, we long to experience God, and have lots of knowledge about Him, but staying away from Him is comfortable.

By dipping my toe in the ocean while maintaining a safe distance, God the dispensing machine, the eternal policeman, my good luck charm and other distorted pictures I create are under challenge.

He is intolerant of my sin, and is not keen on me doing it *My Way*. I would rather seek to provide for myself, than become increasingly dependent on a supernatural being. What is God going to change me into? This faith life I am called to, with trust and obedience will take me where...? New ways of thinking, new behaviours, I am finding this renewal process is threatening.

I have invested so much in making myself special and forming a façade for others. If they love and esteem my façade— will they still love the individual that I will end up being as I journey further into God?



I like proving myself to God, and doing the Christian teaching thing on my terms. My lifestyle, like my current pair of shoes, is OK, new ones are going to be uncomfortable-let alone a new lifestyle, a new mind, a new identity and a new.....where will all this end, I can see no terminus from where I look out from today. Sanctification is a moving of me more and more out of the centre of my life, and a journey into holiness. *Whoever wants to save his life, loses it*, says The Teacher. I am not sure I can handle the discipline of this.

I struggle with diets and the routines of fitness, and maintaining order and I am not confident that I can do this new thing I am called to. There are times I feel I can take it all on, but for so much of the time the longing is subdued. Jesus needs to put a new heart in me and invade me. I need a divine virus to wipe out and take over the selfish, cynical and insecure part of me, the doubting part that prefers to sleep in extra time, rather than get up and pray for my students and ministry. I need to kneel before this transforming God

systematically with His Word before me. Will you help me Jesus to stop seeking independence from you in so many areas of my day? Release your Spirit into these places that I hold behind my back, and don't trust into your care. I don't really want to stay stuck where I am. My students and my dreams all demand much more of me than that, so God I am ready for whatever spiritual surgery you intend for me in this day. Nothing cosmetic, I need the real deal. Transform me more into the likeness of The Teacher!

*For whoever wants to **save** his **life** will lose it, but whoever loses his **life** for me will find it.*
Matthew 16:25

*Watch your **life** and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will **save** both yourself and your heart.* **1Timothy 4:16**

*As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and then led me through water that was ankle-deep. **4** He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep. He measured off another thousand and led me through water that was up to the waist. **5** He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in--a river that no one could cross. **Ezekiel 47:3-5***

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding' in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. **Proverbs 3: 5 – 6***

*My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" your face, LORD, I will seek. **Psalms 27:8***

*O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down' you are familiar with all my ways. **Psalms 139: 1 – 3***