

ATTACHMENT AND DETACHMENT

WHY DO WE TALK ABOUT ATTACHMENTS?

We want to discern the will of God and follow Him.

What does prevent us to see clearly and to fly to Him? Attachments.

How can we enjoy Interior Freedom?

How can we make room to receive a big gift? Through detachment, by letting go.

<p>“Jesus came not only that we might have life, but also that we might have it abundantly.” <i>John 10:10</i></p>
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We are made for communion with God. Everything that can be an obstacle to it, is worth being removed.

WHAT AN ATTACHMENT IS NOT?

Attachment is not the experiencing of pleasure in things. Nor is possessing or using things an attachment to them. Nor is being attracted, even greatly attracted to a beautiful object or person an unhealthy attachment. Then when does a desire become inordinate and therefore harmful?

HOW DO WE RECOGNIZE ATTACHMENTS?

Here are three clear signs of unhealthy attachments:

1. The activity or thing is diverted from the purpose God intends for it.
2. The excess in use.
3. Making a means into an ends.

HARMFUL CONSEQUENCES FROM ATTACHMENTS

- *The dimming of vision:* The human intellect is fogged in its natural capacity and in receiving supernatural wisdom when it clings to finite things for their own sakes.
- *Sinful ramifications:* Seeking things for themselves (rather than as a means of leading to God) not surprisingly leads to all sorts of other aberrations: judging others badly, wasting of time, envy, avarice, vanity...
- *Impediments to prayer and awareness of God:* Many of the distractions we suffer in prayer are due to these disordered concerns and desires. Distractions can be our “friends” because they reveal our attachments.
- *An affront to God:* Preferring something finite to God is an insult to Him.
- *Lessening of joy:* Attachments are kill-joys. The more a person rejoices over something outside God, the less intense will his joy in God be.

- *Diminishing the person*: Love places one on the level of the object loved.
- *Blocking transformation*.
- *Desires beget desires*: The “peanut effect.”
- *Drain of psychic energy*: Our physical energies and our mental resources are limited.

BENEFITS FROM DETACHMENT

Detachment allows us to say: *“Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.”*
The detached person enjoys a great freedom.

HOW CAN WE BECOME DETACHED?

- I. **Be aware** of your attachments (cfr. the quiz)
- II. **Understand** where they come from and take care of the wounds (cfr. the grid)
- III. **Take action**: pray and act

1. Material goods

Detachment from material goods (music, cars, face book, e-mails, make up, computer, books, beer, food, money, clothes, comforts, impure thoughts, memories...) = management of material goods.

I am detached from these things when I am able to share them and when I am generous. (Less shopping, less music while I walk, less TV/Netflix, less time on social media, less comforts, less food, pure thoughts, serve others...)

Ask yourself: “Where are my thoughts? When I think about my house, my car, my clothing, my computer...*do I own them, or am I owned by them?*”

2. My dear ones.

Detachment from my dear ones. (Boy/girlfriend, parents, teachers, friends, priest, coach, etc.... Their opinion. Looking good to them. Not wanting to offer fraternal correction...)

I have to accept that the other people don’t belong to me. I don’t have to possess them or to transform them or please them as the goal of my life. The more you cling to them, the more you lose them.

If we become detached from our relationships, we will not be terrified anymore by the prospect of losing those we love. Every good thing in this world will come to an end, but *each good thing says to us: “Look at me, look at me, I am just a reminder”* (C.S. Lewis)

Many times we want to be liked and loved and we are very sad if this doesn’t happen. If we become detached, we can really love people, serve them and not use them for our gratification. We become free to follow God and be authentic even if it may displease those we love.

3. Ourselves.

Detachment from ourselves (my pride, my opinion, my independence, my career, my success, my ways of doing things, my ideas, my political ideas, my conviction that I am right...).

How do I feel when I am not understood, proved wrong or when I am disliked or despised?

Ask for humility. Ask for the Grace to accept my limits. We are nothing, but with God we are able to do everything. (Give time to others, ask for help, listen to other's opinions, accept your limits, recognize that everything good that you have or you are comes from God, accept being rejected/despised/disliked, ask questions in class, practice gratitude, accept corrections, take responsibility for your mistakes, ask for forgiveness, ...)