

## Part 19: My Experience of God

Choose a reader and begin with a short prayer. Share some experiences or growth in prayer this week in regard to your understanding of who God is not. (20 minutes)

### My experience of God

Christianity is 'experience related'. The mature Christian lives on the words of God. All authentic Christian spirituality begins with the experience of God in Jesus Christ, and until there is a real encounter with Jesus Christ, until he is a person to us and we to him, we will remain at a level where religion is law and ritual.

Creeds, codes and rituals all have their place, but in meeting the demands of faith, it is important that the experience is of **living the faith**. It is necessary that we move from 'head knowledge', which is rational and factual knowledge **about God**, to a 'heart knowledge' **of God**. This is personal insight and commitment to God as Father, as Son and as Spirit.

We are the best living authority on our personal experience. We know better than anyone else what our personal experience of God is. It is important that we be **aware of** and **reflective about** that experience and it is vital that we be able to identify and articulate (at least to ourselves), the nature of our God experience.

This **exercise** is a contemplative one designed to help each of us 'get in touch with' our own personal faith experience, and articulate it for ourselves. Complete each sentence as frankly, spontaneously and 'from the stomach' as you can. You are not wanting **idea** answers, but **gut-feel responses**. Write down whatever comes and remember, you need only share what you feel comfortable to. Spend 20–30 minutes answering the questions. Write here or in your journal.

1. For me, God feels like...
26. I seldom if ever feel God as...
27. I feel more 'in touch' with God when...
28. One 'moment' in my own life when I was most aware, most conscious that God's power was working in me beyond my own limits was...
29. My prayer to God is most often...
30. For me Jesus is...
31. I have felt Holy Spirit active in my own personal experience when...
32. What I want most of all to share with someone about my God-experience is...
33. When I am 'in touch' with my own personal sinfulness, I sense God as...
34. What delights me most about God is...
35. When I reflect on God's love for me personally I am...
36. For me, the surest sign of God's presence in my life is...



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**Share with the group** any responses to these questions which you feel comfortable sharing. Remember that for sharing to be effective, we need to be listening deeply to what another is sharing and valuing it as a gift of themselves. What can we learn about this person and about ourselves through their words? We cannot listen if we are waiting to chip in at any time. (30 minutes)

**At home this week**

Meditate on:

Ezekiel 36:22–36

1 John 1:5–2:2

John 3:16–21

Luke 15:1–10

Ezekiel 16:1–22, 53–63.

You may stay with any of the passages that particularly touch you for more than one day.

During your times of prayer with the above passages, notice God's image of Godself. Compare it with your image of God. Talk to God about it.



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