

Experiencing God



Who is God to you?

Friend?

Miracle Worker?

Father?

Teacher?

Vending Machine?

School headmaster?

Experiential Learning:

- ▶ Process of learning through experience
- ▶ Learning through reflection and doing

“As it is impossible to verbally describe the sweetness of honey to one who has never tasted honey, so the goodness of God cannot be communicated by way of teaching if we ourselves are not able to penetrate into the goodness of the Lord by our own experience.”

St. Basil

“If a person wants to get an idea about the Pyramids of Egypt, he must either trust those who have been in immediate proximity to the Pyramids, or he must get next to them himself.

There is no third option.

In the same way a person can get an impression of God: he must either trust those who stood and stand in immediate proximity to God or he must take pains to come into such proximity himself.”

St. Nicholas of Serbia

Exercise Time:

- ▶ Write down different names when God encountered you at different times in your life:
 - ▶ Healer
 - ▶ Refuge
 - ▶ Guide
 - ▶ Peace
 - ▶ Help
 - ▶ Comforter
 - ▶ Whisperer

Which type of a Christian are you?

- ▶ **Under God** → following the commandments without understanding just because they are afraid to go to hell!
- ▶ **Above God** → living their life thinking they own the world, and they can get away with anything because God is merciful!
- ▶ **From God** → they only go to God when they need something from Him & abandon Him once they get it

Which type of a Christian are you?

- ▶ WITH God → They seek God for WHO He is not for what HE provides. They live in His presence and seek to have HIM present in their lives.

“It is only necessary to seek one thing: to be WITH Jesus. The man who remains with Jesus is rich, even if he is poor with regards to material things.”

St. Ignatius Brianchaninov

“A man in this world must solve a problem: to be with Christ, or to be against Him. And every man decides this, whether he wants to or not. He will either be a lover of Christ or a fighter of Christ.

There is no third option.”

St. Justing Popavich

Why do you want to Experience God?

Out of Desperation & pain?

You actually miss Him?

Curiosity?

How do we EXPERIENCE God?

1) Realize my NEED for Him:

- ▶ No one seeks something they already have; they only seek what they lost, or what they don't have!
- ▶ Nothing can be achieved in busyness & distractions!

“Let us search out and examine
our ways and turn back to the
Lord.”

Lamentations 3:40

“Everyone is always seeking. They seek & find something, but after they’ve found it, they cast it aside and start seeking all over again, so that they may once again cast away what they find. So it goes endlessly.

This means that they are seeking the wrong thing in the wrong place. Isn't this tangible proof that there is a force in us drawing us away from the earth & earthly sorrows towards Heaven?"

St. Theophan

2) Take small & consistent steps:

- ▶ Avoid running too fast or walking too slow in your Spiritual life!
- ▶ Avoid falling in the trap of comparison.
- ▶ Avoid putting too much pressure on yourself.

“Sometimes you must take the first uncertain steps if you wish at all to draw near to God.

Don't be anxious about your clumsy beginning;

don't yield to shyness & uncertainty, and the

mocking laughter of enemies who try to persuade

you that you are behaving ridiculously.”

“Prayer is action, to pray is to be highly effective. It is by speaking a foreign language that one learn it, and by praying one learns to pray.”

3) ABIDE:

- ▶ Remain, stay, wait, and be patient.
- ▶ Repeated 112 times in the NT!

“I am the vine; you are the branches. He who ABIDES in ME and I in him, bears much fruit; for without ME you can do NOTHING.”

John 15:5

“As much as our hearts are being purified, as much as our desire increases towards God.”

Fr. Seraphim El Baramousy

“To know YOU is joy, to worship
YOU is happiness, to be near YOU
is peace. This is Heaven.”

Bilquis Sheikh

Recap:

- ▶ Experiential Learning
- ▶ 4 Types of Christians:
 - ▶ Under God
 - ▶ Above God
 - ▶ From God
 - ▶ WITH God
- ▶ Why do I want to experience God:
 - ▶ Desperation/Pain
 - ▶ Missing Him
 - ▶ Curiosity!

Recap:

▶ How do we experience God?

1. Realize our need for Him
2. Take small & consistent steps
3. ABIDE in Him

“Yesterday is gone, tomorrow has
yet to come. We have only today.

Let us begin.”

Mother Teresa