

EXPERIENCING CHRIST

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.” —JOHN 14:16-17

God does not reveal Himself in Scripture simply by stating facts about Himself, but through people’s experiences of Him, and mostly in times of crisis.

Moses, at the burning bush, discovered God’s name was ‘Jehovah’, meaning “I AM WHO I AM”. In other words, “I am always present, always available and always sufficient.” On Mount Moriah, God stopped Abraham from sacrificing his son, and in a thicket, he saw a ram caught by its horns. Abraham discovered ‘Jehovah-jireh’ – “The Lord Will Provide”. Led into battle by Joshua, God gave the Israelites victory over the Amalekites in their first battle ever fought. Joshua discovered ‘Jehovah-nissi’ - “The Lord is my banner”. After seven years of brutal oppression, God gave the Israelites victory over the Midianites. Gideon discovered ‘Jehovah-shalom’ – The Lord is Peace”, and lived out the rest of his days in peace.

When we come to the New Testament, in the Gospel of John, Jesus said some wonderful things about Himself. “I am the bread of life” (6:35). “I am the light of the world” (8:12). “I am the good shepherd” (10:11). “I am the resurrection and the life” (11:25). “I am the way, the truth and the life” (14:6). It’s one thing to know these wonderful things about Jesus, but quite another to experience them. Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Gideon and many other men and women of God all received victory because

they had aligned themselves with God's agenda, and trusted Him. It's when we go out on a limb, trusting God we experience Him the deepest.

Jesus said, "He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him" (John 14:21). That's experiential. We will never be satisfied with simply knowing facts or statements about God. Psalm 9:10 says, "Those who know your name will trust you." Those who have experienced God in hardship and through the tough decisions in life know they can trust God with anything.

When Christ enters our lives, He leads us in a direction we could never go on our own, and it's in our dependence, our obedience, trust and love for Him, He takes us where we would never have imagined for ourselves. We are consciously aware of His presence and live with the amazing anticipation of what Christ will do next in our lives. Scripture gives us many accounts of people experiencing God, and for every man, woman and child, the goal of the Gospel is that we, too, personally and intimately experience Christ in our lives.

PRAYER: Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for the privilege of experiencing Christ in ways I never would have imagined. I pray for everyone to experience Your indwelling presence and know the joy and peace there is in You.

TO REFLECT UPON: How has experiencing Christ in my life changed me the most?