

How to Experience God

John 14:7-12

Hello and welcome to Hope for Today. We are privileged to be here with you, and we are so glad you have joined us. The program you're listening to is produced by Heralds of Hope. We're an international Gospel media ministry. Each week our Bible teaching broadcasts circle the globe in English and 23 other major languages and each week many people like you tune in for spiritual encouragement and blessing.

If you've been listening regularly, you know that we are currently studying in the Gospel of John. Today the title is "How to Experience God" before we get into today's lesson with J Mark, I want to share 2 verses with you as we think about Experiencing God.

The first verse is Hebrews 11:6 it says, But without faith *it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.* This verse tells us we must believe that He is. There are some who cannot get beyond this part. They say I can't believe there is a God. This is unfortunate because then they never be able know God and experience Him. I want to clarify, denying God's existence is not the same as doubting His power or goodness, most people have gone through a hard time where we question God. This is not the same as declaring there is No God. Thankfully God is patient and merciful toward us in either situation.

The second verse is Ecclesiastes 3:11, it says "God has put eternity in their hearts." This verse applies to all people. I love how the Bible is not limited to a specific time or a certain culture. The truth from Scripture is for people everywhere all the time. Now this phrase "eternity in our hearts" explains a reality many of us have experienced. We long for things eternal. Life here on earth can be good and we thank God for all we have. But at the same time things can be very hard. We have diseases and there is death. When we experience these things we long for a better place. We want to live, we want to live where there is no death, where sin has not tarnished a thing.

You see, I think this is "eternity in our hearts" We were created for more than life on this earth. God put that in us, so we don't become satisfied here. So, in the good times and the hard times we are walking with God and worshipping Him, and this is how we can Experience God. We look forward to hearing from J Mark as he teaches us more about Experiencing God. Please turn with us to John 14. Thanks again for joining us, we're so glad you're here.

Many long for God. But where can He be found? Is God real or is He only an idea—perhaps even an escape idea?

I'm glad to tell you God is real. We can see the facts about God all around us. The Apostle Paul writing to the Romans told them, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse" Romans 1:20.

That tells us God has not left Himself without evidence of the fact that He is real, so much so that the Apostle argued that the invisible things are understood by the things that one can see.

Now, let's talk about **HOW TO EXPERIENCE GOD**. When God created the first man, Adam, the Bible tells us that He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and Adam became a living soul.

The Bible further tells us that when God created Adam, He created him in His image and likeness. That means that the first man, Adam, was fit for fellowship with God. That means something else too. It means that every child of Adam has been born with the capacity to fellowship with God. That is why every person has a longing for God. Even those people who claim to be atheists, by the very fact that they deny God, admit His existence. Every effort to get rid of the idea of God is proof that that person thinks God must, after all, be. He is there. He must be there or there would be no need to get rid of Him.

That restlessness can be changed to an experience with God. A great African Bishop of the church many years ago made this statement, "Our souls are restless until they find their rest in Thee," speaking of the true God.

From the words of Jesus in John 14:7-12, we can learn how to experience God.

- 7 *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.*
- 8 *Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it suffices us.*
- 9 *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?*
- 10 *Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.*
- 11 *Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.*

12 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.*

If we desire to experience God we must accept the CERTAINTIES which are set forth in this text.

We must first accept as certain **The Universal Search.**

Jesus made an affirmation when He said, "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father." Here is a direct route from Jesus to God. He made it positively clear that that is the route you must take if you want to experience God. Philip raised the question, the problem all of us face, when he said, "Lord, show us the Father and it will satisfy us." The very fact that Philip would make this statement proves there is what I have called a God-echo in the soul of every man. Because you and I are like Philip. We would like so much to see God. If somehow, He would only make His appearance.

I remember reading when Moses was upon the mountain with God, he had the same problem. He said to the Lord, "Show me thy face". But God said, "No, you cannot see my face."

There is that certainty of the universal search. It proves that there is a God-echo in the soul of every man. Don't you agree, the real search is to experience God?

Then we must accept as certain **The Unusual Statement.**

Jesus first of all established a condition as He replied to Philip in these words, "Have I been so long time with you, and you have not known me, Philip?" Philip had overlooked the evidence. It was right there. He was associated with the evidence. It should have been clear to him. So Jesus wondered why Philip had not been able to understand this. Jesus was there. Philip had seen Him. Then Jesus said clearly, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." That must have been a rather severe rebuke to Philip.

Jesus further instructed Philip, "You must recognize, Philip, that I am in the Father and the Father is in me." This brings me to the truth that belief goes beyond mere flesh. Philip saw a man in the flesh. He should have been able to see beyond that and see God in the flesh.

Jesus went on to say, "The works that I do and the words that I speak are the works and words of the Father who dwells in me." Yes, there is another certainty here: God-unity is a necessary fact.

Now I will freely say, my friend, that this idea is very difficult to come by just in your mind. But Jesus made it clear to Philip, the way to experience God is to accept the unusual statement that Jesus made of the unity between Him and God.

Finally, we accept as certain **The Unqualified Situation**.

Jesus placed the foundation for this certainty in these words: "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me." If that is more than you can do, He said, "believe me for the very works' sake."

My friend, to experience God there is no escape from believing in Jesus. This is the unqualified situation. Many people would like to side-step this. But you can't. If you want to experience God then here is what Jesus said must be, "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me."

The realization of this unqualified situation become clearer as we listen when Jesus also said, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." There is a God-connection here, a beautiful God-connection.

One who believes in Jesus will be doing the same kind of works that He did and even go beyond the works that He did. Well, right now I am talking with you in a way that Jesus could not do when He was here on earth. I am coming to you by way of the radio, and you are listening. Praise God! We are having fellowship together in the words of God, the words of Jesus. Jesus said, "He that believes on me will do greater works than I do because I go to my Father."

Yes, my friend, to experience God you must realize there is that God-echo in the soul; there is that God-unity between Father and Son; there is that God-connection between God and us.

There is a longing in the human soul for God! To experience Him you must consent to these certainties: the universal search, the unusual statement, the unqualified situation. These are certainties which are appropriated by faith. Take your step of faith now, my friend. Reach out and receive them. Know what that God-echo means in your soul, what that God-unity means between Father and Son, and what that God-connection can mean between God and you.

My friend, was this teaching helpful? If you'd like a copy, either in print or on an audio CD, just contact us and ask for it by the title. Or log onto our website heraldsofhope.org

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Now, I urge you to tune in next week as Pastor J. Mark continues our study from John's Gospel. You won't want to miss it. And until then, keep looking to Jesus, He'll give you hope for today!