EXPERIENCING GOD

Reality 1: God is <u>always</u> at work around you.

Reality 2: <u>God</u> pursues a continuing love relationship <u>with me</u> that is real and personal.

1) God desires that we "<u>know</u>" Jesus, not just "<u>know about</u>" Him.

   John 3:16 – *For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*

   John 17:3 – *And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.*

   John 8:32 – "*and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

2) Your relationship with Jesus leads to <u>joy</u>. It is unwavering because it is sure and deep.

   Ps 16:11- You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

   John 15:11 - These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

   John 16:23-24 – In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

   Galatians 5:22-23 – But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

3) God is our <u>Heavenly Father</u> and He loves us.

   Romans 5:8 – *but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.*

   Rom 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

   Romans 8:35, 38-39 – *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?... For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

4) God pursues a relationship with us with a love that is <u>relentless</u>.

   Romans 3:10-12 **-** *as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."*

   John 6:44-45, 65 -- No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will

raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me— And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."

John 14:6 -- Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 15:16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

5) The relationship He desires is real and personal.

Psalm 139:17-18 – How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I would count them, they are more than the sand.

Isaiah 30:21 -- And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.

Discussion Questions

1. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = dead or nonexistent; 10 = vibrant and growing), how would you describe your relationship with God?

2. Describe a time when you were filled with the joy of Christ.

3. How will you intentionally spend time developing your relationship with God?

4. How does the word *father* help you better understand the character of God and what it means to be in a relationship with Him?

5. When do you have the hardest time accepting the fact that God loves you? Why is it hard to feel loved by God? When is it easiest to believe that He loves you?

6. Why is it important to know that God is all-knowing and all-powerful? Why is it equally important to know that He cares for you personally?

Next week's memory verse:

John 14:21
Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves Me. He who loves Me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show Myself to him.