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# *Experiencing God*

**H**ow does a person establish a relationship with God? What does it mean to "connect vertically?" How or what does a person feel when he relates to God? Is it possible to have a "skin touch" encounter with God? Does that entail a spiritual experience, such as seeing visions or hearing voices? What happens—are certain places in the heart touched and moved? A relationship with God seems somehow elusive, somehow unattainable, yet at the same time, somehow within reach.

What should a person think about when he approaches God? What is the essence of God, and how in the world can we reach Him? God is the Almighty One, the Creator of all things, and He seems so far away. How is it possible to bring God into our heart? Is it possible that He can walk beside us, and indeed live *within* us? I don't think any of us want to keep this relationship in the abstract, trapped within our brain, or tucked in an "intellectual"-type pocket within our heart. Instead, we always hope to discover new pictorial vistas of God's grandeur. Let's face it: all of us want to be able to close our eyes and envision God whenever we feel the need. But that is so difficult.

The relationship which you, as a Unificationist, develop with God, can become quite solid. You have pledged to give your very life to Him. Are you ready to do that? Would you drop everything for God—even your beloved family? Would you roam a desert that had very few oases, or ford a stream with swift and strong currents, if God asked that of you? We must be ready to prove that we love Him more than life itself. That is the kind of conviction He hopes we have.

All of us are involved in so many details of what we call "life," yet we may not always be aware of the presence of God. We know He is around somewhere, even though we may not be able to see His face. But if you are not sure that you are experiencing God on a daily basis, have you ever wondered who gives you the strength to keep on going? Who it is that makes you go year after year, exposing yourself to all kinds of situations—some of which make you agonize, and some which make you feel ecstatic—and still have the energy and aspiration to pour out love and energy? Is it totally you? No, at least not completely. It is our God, it is *your* God. Whether you realize it or not, He is with you at all times, even those moments you feel you are grasping to reach Him, but wonder whether He has abandoned you. But you are not the one who finds the strength to go through every day. God is not walking someplace ahead of or behind any of us; He is right within you, right within me. During this age of transition, every human being is partially driven by the spirit of God, and partly influenced by Satan. But the spirit of God is strong enough to overpower Satan, *if* we allow that to happen.

If we can believe these points is it possible to continue having inferiority or insecurity complexes? Can you allow yourself to be consumed by negative feelings? The evidence that God is with you—in you—must become apparent. God called you to His service, therefore He must have found you worthy enough to abide in your heart, and use you as a temple. Understand that when you accuse yourself or minimize your qualities, whether or not you intend to, you minimize Him at the same time.

It is very hard to compare the relationship a Unificationist is able to develop with God, to the kind of relationship many of the people in secular society cultivate with God. Even though many clergymen have solid faith in God and have been speaking to Him for years, most have not had the courage to wade past the shallow waters and dive deep into the heart of God. They may long for God, but still not know much about His character or where to find Him. Yet this could be a source of embarrassment to them, and therefore they find it hard to admit such a thing to anyone.

Don't underestimate God. But don't underestimate yourself, either. Once in awhile it is good to examine who you are, and to probe your actual relationship to God, not just fantasize about an ideal relationship with Him. After you uncover some of the elements of your relationship to God that are presently hidden, you will feel the sheer pleasure it is possible to feel by just being honest with Him. Call out to Him, "Father, here I am." You can talk to Him—experience Him—even as you whisper your longing to know Him. And you probably won't have to wait long for the answer; He will be happy to respond to you. I am sure He will speak loudly enough for you to hear!

Some people feel God is so sophisticated, *the* corporate executive of the skies! Actually, He is so *uncomplicated*, and relating to Him is so simple. All it takes is surrendering yourself to Him. Give up your life and your own will, even your plans and dreams, and allow Him to direct your life. Mean it when you tell God that you are ready, willing, and able for Him to be the sovereign head of your life. There is no doubt in my mind that that is the time you will have an experience with the heart of God!

Some people hold back, and consequently don't experience God. People may know what the next step should be, and that is even *why* they stop short. It is not fear of the *unknown*, but rather fear of the *known*! They simply do not want to surrender themselves to God. Are you willing to give God certain parts of you, but at the same time discourage Him from touch-

ing other areas of your mind and heart? Perhaps you feel that you are weak and vulnerable, and unable to give yourself to Him totally. Do you feel afraid of life, but unwilling to banish your fears, because they are convenient to hide behind? If you have daily experiences with God, such insecurities will take leave. The way to do that is to surrender your life to Him.

**A**lthough we Unificationists willingly go into "hell" in an attempt to bring people out, we surely confront difficulties in witnessing to people, and must do our best to shake them off and simply persevere. When we do this with confidence, we only become stronger spiritually. If you have already experienced the heart of God one thousand times, do you really need more guarantees that He is with you? What more would actually convince you that God is involved in your life, or that you are on God's side?

You no doubt sometimes feel great empathy for the suffering people of the world. That heartfelt emotion should reassure you that God is within you, and that you are experiencing His heart. By acting on behalf of God and the Messiah, you can become strong and feel confident God is within you, and that the two of you are close in heart. That knowledge alone can help you tackle anything! It is during those battles that you will experience God, and feel His power surging through you.

How can we experience different levels of the love of God if we only stay as His children, simply receiving love all the time? We can perfect our hearts when we also begin to return love to Him. God needs us to penetrate higher levels of love, and ultimately come to love unconditionally, in the position of a true parent. He longs to have such an experience through us.

**W**e naturally draw closer to God once we begin our walk of faith. Once we know how our behavior affects God, we will no longer nervously look to hide in back streets or steal through alleyways. If we feel that God is watching us at all times, we will strive to cleanse and purify our hearts daily. But this is not an automatic process; it takes time and effort to reach the stage where we can encounter God in daily life. We may begin by repenting, and seeking the forgiveness of God. Yet this action also demands forgiving ourselves for our lack of sensitivity to God and others. God knows that sooner or later we will cease running away from living with God, but stop in our tracks, turn around, and proceed to run back home to Him.

**T**he call God made to man has echoed throughout history. Some

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people today can detect how desperately God is crying out for people to come back. But if they ignore Him, or worse yet, downright refuse, His call will be in vain. God holds no meaning to those people; both His word and His love are insignificant and those people simply do not experience His love.

Yet those of us who want to communicate and have experiences with Him must create the necessary foundation and indemnity conditions to serve as the springboard for God to enter our hearts. Once He lives within us, He will help transform us into new creations. And then we will begin to act differently from the people in society. An experience with God could be termed as a rebirth, allowing us to start a new life, this time as His true son or daughter.

Although it is important to work hard for the will of God, *the* most important thing is to become a true mediator, a channel for God to work through. God must be able to speak through us. When we allow Him to do that, we will step aside completely. So often we become a mixture—half divinity, half fallen nature. But that is not really acceptable to God; He cannot work through impure beings.

We absolutely *must* come back to God. It is not a question of *if*, but rather a question of *when*. Ultimately, all of us have to walk that narrow path toward Heaven. This is God's will, something He predestined. Even if we become confused about life to the point of wanting to hide from God, we may sojourn to a "foreign" land away from God and possibly stay there for a long time, but ultimately God will tug at the secret heartstring within us that no one else knows about or can reach, and as He pulls us home, we will surely have experiences with Him.

It is the love and determination of God which has the power to attract us. Our original mind can be moved by certain words which in turn ignite our desire to return to living with God. We might initially react by screaming and kicking in protest because life is hard, but then come obediently, crying tears of remorse when we finally become aware of God's longing for us. We cannot help our reaction; we have had a close encounter of the "God" kind, and we are hooked!

When we experience the love of God, we must be open enough to then be led and directed by Him. How would God react if we just received His love and then said, "Okay, God. Thanks a lot. It feels real good, but

that's enough. I'll take over from here." Surrender to God. Instead say, "Father, You showed me what You can do. Now show me what You can do for another person *through* me. Unless You tell me how to proceed, I'm in real trouble. I just don't know what to do." Speak to Him with that kind of resolve; make Him happy. Declare your dependency upon Him. God is a great resource—of love, of energy, of wisdom. But don't be fooled. God is no different from us in this aspect: God needs to be needed. If you gratefully accept the love He has to offer, *then* you can tell Him to work through someone else because you can take over from here. Then you can encourage someone else who is in need.

Our relationship with God has to be a constant one, and we must work hand-in-hand with Him. Unless God is with us, what can we accomplish? Can we really reflect the image of True Parents if we ourselves are not connected to God or receiving steady input from Him? We have to make sure that we surrender to God—experience God—so that we become a pure channel for Him to speak and act through.

A sensitive person will ultimately be able to detect any blocks within himself. We often publicize, not only through our words but also through our actions and attitudes, how we feel about ourselves and something about our relationship with God. How can God work through us if we are blocked? God cannot breathe in an atmosphere of fear; He can only breathe in love. If you want to experience God be natural and free internally. That is when the spirit of God can flow through you. That is when you can encounter God, and God can experience you.

Our own capacity is so limited. We may try one method or another, but nothing seems to work. Why? It is because *we* insist on doing something. We persist in doing things ourselves and yet fail to invite God to accompany us. Yet we can only touch the heart of another person or work at our full capacity if the energy and love which flows through it is greater than our own power. All too often we admit that we are inadequate. Minutes, even hours every day we dwell on our failures; silently and sometimes verbally we express to ourselves and others that we are incapable in so many areas. Yet in the next breath, we declare how much we long to come closer to God, and experience His love and His power. We may all be as "dust" before our Creator, but what we don't always remember is that we must eventually come to resemble our Heavenly Parent. The moment we have such a realization is the time we should find God.

No matter how dejected or depressed a person may feel, God still

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lives within him. Many people who live in spiritual "slums" give the impression that they want to be left alone. They refuse a visit from a spiritual "social worker" and further reject help to alleviate their suffering. They deny seeing the new Jerusalem as it is being constructed. Yet if a person could see that the hand of God is right in front of him and then grabbed hold of it, he could be raised out of his doldrums. That would be an unforgettable experience with God!

Experiencing God absolutely depends upon fulfillment of the Principle. If we have learned the intricate points of the Principle yet fail to put them into practice, we will experience static in our communication with God, and consequently find it hard to cement our bond with Him.

The Bible reminds us that we must knock before the door will be opened to us, to seek before we will find. Once you *do* knock loudly enough, God will respond—the door will be opened and you will meet the King of Heaven. But if you stay three feet away from the door, or only go close enough that your fingertips can reach the door, you will still be too far away to rap on the door. And He simply won't hear you. You may try to use your fingernails to "knock," but only succeed in scratching the door. You could work so hard doing that, that you wear your fingernails down to the nub, but God still won't hear you. You might get frustrated and even angry, and begin to complain that knocking on God's door just does not work.

This problem is a recurring one. We are so close to having daily adventures with God, yet still so far away. We may want to blame it on God, and wonder if He is really there after all. Let me assure you: He is there. The difficulty is that most of us don't understand that we have a hard time reaching Him basically because we compromise.

All of us need experiences with God, yet the "how" of experiencing God has become our dilemma. I have learned that a person can experience God when he does something that society might consider more atypical than typical. Father has coined the idea that Unificationists should be "crazy for God." What does this mean? if we go through the day like people in secular society and just behave "normally," nothing "abnormal" will happen, and we may not experience God. But if we seek to do the *unusual* in an attempt to evoke the spirit of God to accompany us throughout the day, then something "drastic" might happen as a result: He'll be there! For instance if you are cooking, invite God into your kitchen and ask Him to

help you prepare the meal. He might inspire you how to liven up a usually bland dish—He knows just the right spice to add!

Experiencing God is based on mutual desire. The yearning to have an encounter with each of us is certainly there on the part of God, but can the same be said of us?

Consider yourself watched and guided by God at all times. Like a parent, He watches His children as they grow and mature. Out of His deep love, He wants you to become a stable and faithful person. That is why all of us go through many kinds of endeavors and confrontations, and each day is so different from the next. Learn a new lesson from the experiences you have each day. God is compassionate; He understands your problems well.

Sometimes you receive judgment. That too is an experience with the spirit of God. Remember hearing about the god, Thor? Legend has it that he created thunder and lightning when he threw his hammer down from the heavens in anger. But who's to say that thunder and lightning aren't good? They and their companion, rain, have the ability to clear the air. A refreshing breeze usually follows a thunderstorm, and it too is an experience with the spirit of God. If you are judged, you will feel liberated when you are able to accept what was said. Have you stopped to reflect upon all the different ways that you experience Him?

A reflection of the living God is to be found not only in True Parents, but in all people. The living God can be found in the people who walk past you on the sidewalk and those who zoom past you in their cars. Our God can be found in both the princes and the paupers of this world. But certain elements of Him can also be found in the different kingdoms—animal, plant, and mineral. A zebra in the wilds of Africa, a staff of wheat growing on the Canadian prairies, and even a piece of iron ore—those too are manifestations of our Heavenly Father. By observing all these different entities, we will know something more about God, and find it easier to "experience" Him in everything we do.

The relationship we can have with God is not only created by relating to God and talking about Him for a few hours. The relationship

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must continue in some way, not necessarily through speaking or listening, but through reflecting Him—through our involvement and activity. It is when we try to manifest the divinity and nature of God that we will develop a more intense and heartfelt relationship with Him.

God thinks before He experiences. He imagined first, *then* He created. What about us? I think we often act quite opposite from God. Too many times we experience first, and *then* we think. What is our world of thought? What can we comprehend? What can we envision? Although we can fantasize, it is our collection of experiences which gives us our best insights.

The fact that God ponders over something *before* He experiences it is one major difference between God and man. God deals with the cause first. We generally deal with the effect first. For instance, we look at the result—God's creation—and marvel at its beauty. Only after we drink in its splendor with our eyes do we begin to dissect the panorama and see all the different components that comprise it. We finally notice the magnificence of the shoreline and perhaps wonder how many grains of sand it took to form the beach. Such thoughts could even be considered experiences with God. I feel all of us should experience God as much as possible! When we do, we will more automatically begin to think of God and feel God at all times. That will prompt us into action.

See what you can draw from God's reservoir. Through His word, and even through other people, you can see God manifested in people, and in things of the creation. Investigate. Digest. Experience. God is all-pervasive. And He is ready for us to come to know Him deeply. After many years of experiencing God through people and the creation, our vision will surely expand. Even if sometime in the future we are forced to live in solitary confinement in a dimly lit prison cell, or were to lose our eyesight, we could still envision all of our past experiences with God. They have the power to refresh us, and enable us to live with Him always.

You are never a minority with God.

Sometimes God needs us to be parental toward Him. Sometimes He wants to be our partner, not always "our Lord." Yes, He is our parent, but based on the relationship of love we create with Him, our status will evolve and grow to new levels.

Have you ever experienced that your relationship with another person became strained because you both changed so much, you no longer found it easy to embrace and love each other? Did the quality of your love change so drastically that you could no longer find harmony? Unfortunately, none of us knows how to love one another unconditionally. That *is* characteristic of God's love for us. An experience of that kind of love can bind us to Him no matter how much we change. Because of it, the experience we can cultivate with God has the potential of always being new and vitality-generating, not stagnant or problematic. We have to let that experience of love develop and unfold naturally; it is a spiritual process.

Displaying humility before another person or through your work will not detract from your basic value as a child of God. It is not necessary for you to dwell upon your position at all times, however, because spirit world always recognizes it. Sometimes I see in your faces that your self-respect is reduced to almost nothing, and I know it is because of your attitude. I find this really sad. Such behavior does not necessarily reflect your true nature, or how close you *can* come to God. You are still a child of God, and you can have experiences with Him every day. Never forget that; God surely doesn't!

A person who has never before prayed in his life or is not so oriented toward spiritual things may have a hard job when he is suddenly confronted with God, for God is a being he cannot see. It may seem almost inconceivable to the person that he can build up a relationship with Him. In this fast-paced technological society of ours, we human beings lack sensitivity and often don't notice the physical manifestation of God because we become so wrapped up in the details of life and everything is quite "dog-eat-dog." The first problem is to convince a person that God exists. Let us assume that we have done that, and it prompted a tremendous conversion experience within that person. The next step is to show him how to connect with God on a daily basis and how to build up his prayer life so that he feels prayer is as necessary as his "daily bread."

Some days you may feel very uninspired and want to remain snuggled in your bed. But how can you experience God if you stay in bed? The alarm goes off and you permit one of your eyes to peek out from under the covers. You see that one of your companions—maybe even your mate or your child—is filled with spiritual fire and dynamism. He or she speaks to

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you enthusiastically about wanting to do something to bring the world back to God. You still have only one eye uncovered, but through it you can see the brightness of spirit shine in his or her eyes as he or she stands at the foot of your bed, goading you to join in. But this particular day you can't stand that kind of enthusiasm, pull the covers completely over your head, sink further into the recesses of your comfortable mattress, and groan that you want to be left alone. Perhaps you feel the person is acting alone, and you don't recognize it is God inspiring you through him or her. You think you are having an experience with another person, when actually you are experiencing *God!* And you fail to realize that it is God, not the person, who pulls those covers off you, in an effort to evoke at least some response!

As a people, we Unificationists generally have a great desire to be with God and do something about showing others the road that leads us to our true home with Him. But how often can we feel that in our daily conversations with one another the "revelations" we receive are actually from God, that our normal communication is a way God answers our prayers, and that the smiles and sometimes the frowns we see on each other's faces comprise one method He uses to convey certain answers to us!

**Don't** judge yourself too harshly. Judgment is certainly not God's intention! He would prefer that each of us act as though we were His partner. Just pour out what you have—all your longing and all your feelings. Give totally. You will be surprised how highly He thinks of you, and how special His embrace is.

**G**od is all around you—remember? Life provides such marvelous opportunities to experience God—to talk to Him, and to listen to Him. Let Him work through other people to lift you up or even humble you. Experiences with others should be regarded for what they are—episodes with God.

How can we experience God? Sometimes we will feel Him when we are working quietly by ourselves. If He calls for you to be on the frontline, however, then go there. If on the other hand, your job seems rather insignificant, carry it out to the best of your ability. You won't have the same job forever. Realize that if you don't give up, despite any setbacks, you may stumble, but you won't fall down. Don't worry; God will find ways to experience life with you once you get back up and start running again.

**I** can never forget one magic night when I had a very special experi-

ence with God. I opened the window and gazed at the evening sky. The clouds were chasing one another, and I remember one was especially persistent and finally overtook its comrades in the race. While the sky seemed to dance before my eyes, I talked to God with a deep longing in my heart. It was during my first years of pioneering the movement in Austria, a time when I felt in spiritual "solitary confinement." I had no brother or sister to talk with; I only had my God. It was very hard to witness to people. Even when I managed to speak a few words, nobody accepted what I said about God, and I was often shunned. That particular night, I was alone as usual, and I felt tremendously lonely. I needed an encounter with someone, so I turned to God. In fact, I felt lonely especially for *Him*. I simply looked into the clouds, and as I watched them create a three-dimensional picture, I whispered words of love to God that one would use to talk to his lover.

I had such a profound experience with God—of His embrace, His tender touch, His tears, and His joy. I am convinced that any person can experience this if he constantly works on nurturing his relationship with God. Once you enter the secret garden of God's world, that is where you will ultimately desire to live always. The relationship which I developed with God through prayer and communication nurtured tremendous feelings of love within me.

It is so easy to constantly fluctuate in our relationship with Him; this happens because we do not take communicating with God seriously enough. Experiencing God does not only come through flashes of light and the sound of thunder. It is not only by seeing auras, spiritual visions, or hearing choirs of angels sing. We can experience God in the cooing of a baby, the softness of a summer breeze. We can encounter God by looking at the rays of the sun form a prism of colors on the waters of an ocean. But we must go further; we should allow God to "experience" us, too. We have to open our mind and heart to Him. Once we do, we can be sure that it is God who speaks and acts through us.

If you start up praying about yourself and continue in that vein, God will not give you much of an answer. The more deeply you dig into the suffering of the world, however, the more you will feel the heartbeat of God. And anytime you feel the heartbeat of humanity, you feel God. You might feel as though you are right in the midst of China, or Turkey, or Fiji—for God lives in each of those places. When you really feel for humanity, you will be able to detect the pulse of the world. That is one sure experience you can have with God; He is intimately involved in the life of the world, constantly checking whether its pulse is fast or slow.

God is not a dictator, nor the commander of an army battalion, even though He may implore you, "Please get up and move!" He may tell you, "Originally I wanted the world to be like this. Now it is like this. See the difference? You can make the difference if you change *this* world into *that* world." You can experience God through your conscience, for when you hear that inner voice, realize it is often Him speaking to you.

Even if you do not break through in prayer and communicate with God, He is there nonetheless. If you pray deeply, you may become spiritually open and perceive His presence. Yet if your prayer is more superficial and for whatever reason you cannot break through, He is still there. You may feel He is always off to the other side of the world, or at least the other side of town. But this is an inaccurate perception.

God knows everything about you, but He wants to *experience* many things about you and with you. Yes, He can see how your personal problems often cloud your perception and how they keep you imprisoned; He suffers along with you because of it. Do you have more moments of happiness or sorrow? Realize that He wants to feel your *joy*, not just your pain. He feels far too much pain already. And He wants you to experience *His* joy, too. He knows it is something so grand and glorious, you will never want to live without it.

Experiencing God is a question of perceiving Him. If you do not detect His presence, then you also will be unsure that He is alive within you. Martin Luther said, "If God is with me, who can be against me?" Have you ever had that feeling? If you know God is standing right beside you, you can go out and fight any battle. Yet if you doubt that, problems and insecurities can easily seep into your mind and heart, and your vision become impaired. That is when you will feel as though you are alienated from God.

What we are doing here today, what we have done yesterday, and also what we will do tomorrow is to work on strengthening our faith, our position, and our character. We say we want to reflect God's nature, but to do that, we must think and act upon the truth. We are going through a process of development to become stable personalities, to become the image of God on the basis of the Principle. We begin as children spiritually and as a result we are exposed to certain things, but may not necessarily experience much depth. Sooner or later we have to probe deeper and mature.

We can shy away for a while, but eventually we will have to experience the heart of God. It is important that we be strong enough to deal with it. Therefore, we should create the foundation for this to happen. We build that foundation by extending love, compassion, and trust to other people, and accepting the same elements from them. We must feel taken care of and comfortable in the relationship we make between brothers and sisters. However, we come into trouble if we desire to stand all on our own. Then we can easily sink into a depression. But if a certain security belt is created—such as a warm and embracing family atmosphere—then people will feel drawn by love, and we would naturally want to take care of them, especially if we noticed a person was suffering. We would want to give one another some much-needed stability. That kind of relating is one way to experience God.

Certain people are terribly insecure and riddled with guilt. They are deeply affected by their inadequacies and iniquities. However, what they might not know is that their entire burden can be removed through even one powerful experience with God. That alone can help heal a person's broken spirit. If the person would offer a tearful repentance before God, he is sure to feel forgiven and then can begin to believe that his sin is totally cancelled. The barriers may just melt away, and he would forget to erect any more defense mechanisms. That is the opening God needs; He will then be able to enter the person's heart and fill it with something of great substance. It is not a case of simply receiving new "blood," but an actual "transfusion." Such an experience with God is life-giving; the person is filled with positivism because all the negativity is washed away.

Life is an amalgamation of experiences. Life with God is similar. Life of faith experiences round out the picture, providing us with a greater understanding of the purpose of life. They also enhance a person's view of God. We should strive to have the kind of relationship with God that brings us many experiences, and we should strive to perceive the essence of God. We should feel as if we "marry" God in living our life of faith. Once husband and wife are together for several years, they become more unified in heart. In the end, those marriage partners feel, and in fact, *are* inseparable. That is the kind of relationship to create with God—an inseparable one.

In our movement there is such emphasis put upon developing the vertical relationship. Why? We all feel a subconscious longing for our eternal home—and God is that home. God is a magnet of love, and He draws us as if we were a piece of iron. This is a built-in attraction, making

us long for His love both subconsciously and consciously. Our soul is made in such a way that we can only find fulfillment in perfect love—and we can find total fulfillment in God. Love itself is a spiritual quality, but nonetheless it hungers to be shared.

This desire to live in true love is an inherent part of man's nature because it is also the nature of God. Although a person can be happy in his marriage and family life, and feel fulfilled by going to school, acquiring wealth, power, or fame, nonetheless, he is still consumed by a certain longing that is not so identifiable. Fallen man always longs for something—perfection. That longing goes much further than wanting material things, or even love as we know it. We have the desire for yet another type of experience—an experience with God. It is not something we can put into words; there is no explanation, but no matter how many "things" we attain, that longing simply does not go away.

Yet this longing is a good longing, something instilled within man's original mind. God certainly knew what He was doing when He planted it! It is the yearning that emanates from what some people call conscience, and what the Principle calls the original mind. The original mind is what connects us to God; if we did not possess it, there would be no possibility for us to be saved or brought back to Him, because we would be incapable of feeling His drawing power of love. No matter how far entrenched a person is in Satan's world, and how buried his conscience becomes, the original mind can never be totally submerged. As you come closer to God, the magnetism of His love pulls you that much more. And your desire and longing only increase.

We need this longing to be satisfied, and we do that step by step, perhaps even starting out in fear and trepidation. But with every move forward, we are sure to feel confirmation that we are indeed on the right track. As we come closer to God, we naturally feel more secure because we experience more of God's love. The longing may become so strong that we cannot bear to stay away from God any longer, and we mostly think about the time we will live with Him in the Kingdom of Heaven.

God is very sensitive; sometimes we are aware of this, sometimes not. Even those of us who desire to build and nurture a relationship with Him don't always consider how He feels about certain things. We must allow God to deal with us as He likes, when He likes. It is actually up to Him what He does, yet in our insensitivity, we often dictate what He can and cannot do with us. Therefore, we have to open ourselves to the workings of God, and not order Him around. God has a timetable of His own. And the

"calendar" according to which He answers even our most silent prayers, is invisible to us. Whereas we might like to demand an answer to our questions by next Tuesday, He could have quite a different idea.

Since we often ignore or neglect God, He is forced to continue trying to pull us near Him. Time and again God tries to tell people, "I am like this and that. Can't you see that? Why don't you come to Me?" Become sensitive enough to understand every opportunity which God uses to talk to you. They may come when you study His word, or when you are in conversation with someone. Don't avoid situations that may bring you closer to God. Open your heart and mind to the glory of experiencing God at every possible moment.

I know one thing for sure. One day I will be home. One day this life will end; I will have "made it." I am not just referring to the fact that I will leave my physical body behind someday. I am convinced that one day I will reach God, that I will be perfected in heart and love.

But we Unificationists also derive great satisfaction when we notice other people coming closer to God. Whether they realize it or not, many are being pulled into the front yard of God's castle. Even though they are sitting before God's palace, some of them are still complaining about hell. All they have to do is lift up their head, and they will see that the castle is right in front of them. They might still be on the other side of the drawbridge, but nevertheless are very near. If only they looked up, they might even catch a glimpse of God standing in the doorway.

Far too many of us often have our heads in the sand, and unfortunately some people have even buried their heads in the mud! What do you see when you look into the garbage?—dirt and eggshells; banana peels and coffee grounds. It is normal to see many kinds of garbage when you look into a trash can. Likewise, when you bury your head in the sand, there is no way you can see God. You have to look up from, not into the dirt.

When you come before God, you look at Him face to face, not at His feet or only as far down as His belly button. Your eyes long to meet His eyes, for you can just imagine what kind of experience that would be. The essence of your soul is reflected in the deep pools of your eyes, especially when they glisten with tears. Remember that God's reservoir collects your tears, and He has the power to transform those tears into droplets of love that He showers upon your heart, bringing you an experience of liberation and salvation.