



VISION

ENCOUNTER GOD
EXPERIENCE COMMUNITY
EXTEND COMPASSION

ENCOUNTER GOD

Vision | Devan Bumstead

A. W. Tozer "The Pursuit of God" Ephesians 3:16-21

I WANT MORE

"Thou hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee."

St. Augustine of Hippo : Confessions

"Nothing can satisfy the entire man but the Lord's love and the Lord's own self. Some have tried to anchor in other harbors, but they have been driven out of such fatal refuges."

C. H. Spurgeon

Ecclesiastes 2:11, John 4:13-14, John 6:35, Matthew 11:28

Ephesians 3:16-21

MISSION: Helping people find and follow Jesus

STRATEGY: Encounter God, Experience Community, Extend Compassion

ENCOUNTER GOD: HUNGER FOR HIS PRESENCE

A. W. Tozer "The Pursuit of God" (See all quotations below)

HEAD TO HEART

John 17:3

- God is personal and knowable
- We know God but don't *know* God

REMOVING THE VEIL

Hebrews 10:19-22, 2 Corinthians 3:18

- We can boldly enter His Presence
- The only veil that exists is our doing

THE ART OF LETTING GO

Matthew 5:3, Genesis 22

- Personal ownership is a result of the Fall
- Our possessions possess us
- Removing value from possessions will reveal the Kingdom

HUNGER AND THIRST

Psalm 42:1-2

1 – Reengage The Spiritual Disciplines as a Body

2 – Foster Spirit-Welcomed Environments

QUOTES FROM A. W. TOZER "THE PURSUIT OF GOD"

"The doctrine of justification by faith – a biblical truth, and a blessed relief from sterile legalism and unavailing self-effort – has in our time fallen into evil company and been interpreted by many in such manner as actually to bar men from the knowledge of God. The whole transaction of religious conversion has been made mechanical and spiritless...Christ may be "received" without creating any special love for him in the soul of the receiver. The man is "saved," but he is not hungry nor thirsty after God." Pg. 22-23

"We have been snared in the coils of a spurious logic which insist that if we have found him we need no more seek Him." Pg. 25

"To most people God is an inference, not a reality. He is a deduction from evidence which they consider adequate; but He remains personally unknown to the individual...The possibility of intimate acquaintance with Him has not entered their minds. While admitting His existence they do not think of Him as knowable in the sense that we know things or people. For millions of Christians, God is no more real than He is to the non-Christian. They go through life trying to love an ideal and be loyal to a mere principal." Pg. 52

"The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God." Tozer Pg. 19

"From all this we learn that faith is not a once-done act, but a continuous gaze of the heart at the Triune God. Believing, then, is directing the heart's attention to Jesus. It is lifting the mind to "behold the Lamb of God," and never ceasing that beholding for the rest of our lives. At first this may be difficult, but it becomes easier as we look steadily at His wondrous Person, quietly and without strain. Distractions may hinder, but once the heart is committed to Him, after each brief excursion away from Him the attention will return again and rest upon Him like a wandering bird coming back to its window." Pg. 83

"Why do some persons 'find' God in a way that others do not? The difference lies not with God but with us." Pg. 65

"Our spiritual receptivity is paramount. But it can be cultivated. It requires a lifelong habit of spiritual response." Pg. 66

"It can be increased by exercise or destroyed by neglect." pg. 67

"The idea of cultivation and exercise, so dear to the saints of old, has now no place in our total religious picture. It is too slow, too common. We now demand glamour and fast flowing dramatic action. A generation of Christians reared among push buttons and automatic machines is impatient of slower and less direct methods of reaching their goals. We have been trying to apply machine-age methods to our relations with God. We read our chapter, have our short devotions and rush away, hoping to make up for our deep inward bankruptcy by attending another gospel meeting or listening to another thrilling story told by a religious adventurer lately returned from afar."

"In this hour of all-but-universal darkness one cheering gleam appears: within the fold of conservative Christianity there are to be found increasing numbers of persons whose religious lives are marked by a growing hunger after God Himself. They are eager for spiritual realities and will not be put off with words, nor will they be content with correct "interpretations" of truth. They are athirst for God, and they will not be satisfied till they have drunk deep at the Fountain of Living Water." Pg. 17

SERMON SUMMARY

Feel free to read this message summary to the group before your discussion to refresh their memory on its central themes.

In this message, Pastor Devan reflects on having a full and blessed life, yet still longing for "more"—not more possessions or experiences, but more of God Himself. Drawing from Augustine's famous prayer that our hearts are restless until they find rest in God, he challenges the church to move beyond head knowledge about God to heart knowledge—truly encountering His presence.

The sermon emphasizes that knowing *about* God isn't enough; we must actually *know* Him personally and experientially. Through Christ, the veil separating us from God's presence has been removed, giving us direct access to Him. However, we often put up our own veils through distraction, busyness, and attachment to possessions.

Devan calls the church to:

- Cultivate hunger and thirst for God's presence through spiritual disciplines
- Practice " beholding" God—turning our gaze toward Him consistently
- Let go of our possessions' hold on our hearts
- Create Spirit-led environments for encountering God together

The core message: True satisfaction and the "immeasurably more" life Paul describes in Ephesians 3:20 comes not from what we have or do, but from intimately knowing and experiencing God's love.

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

Opening Question

What stood out to you most from this sermon? Was there a particular quote, idea, or challenge that resonated with you?

Question 1: Head Knowledge vs. Heart Knowledge

Read John 17:3 - "Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."

The pastor distinguished between knowing *about* God (head knowledge) and truly *knowing* God (heart knowledge). How would you describe the difference in your own words? Where do you find yourself on this spectrum, and what might help you move from head to heart?

Question 2: Removing the Veil

Read Hebrews 10:19-22 - "Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body..."

Jesus removed the veil that separated us from God's presence, yet we often put up our own veils through distraction and busyness. What are the "veils" in your life that keep you from experiencing God's presence? What practical step could you take this week to remove one of those barriers?

Question 3: Beholding and Transformation

Read 2 Corinthians 3:18 - *"And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."*

The pastor talked about "beholding" God—continuously turning our gaze toward Him. What does it practically look like to "behold" God in your daily life? What makes this practice difficult in our modern culture, and how can we help each other cultivate it?

Question 4: Possessing Nothing

Read Matthew 5:3 - *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

The sermon challenged us to examine how our possessions might possess us. The pastor confessed his own worry about health, possessions, legacy, and finances. If you lost everything you own, what would happen to your heart? What "things" do you need to surrender control of to God?

Question 5: Hunger and Thirst

Read Psalm 42:1-2 - *"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?"*

On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your current hunger and thirst for God's presence? What increases your appetite for God, and what diminishes it? How can this group pray for you in cultivating a deeper longing for Him?

Closing Application

The pastor shared two practical next steps: re-engaging spiritual disciplines and fostering Spirit-led environments. Which spiritual discipline (solitude, Sabbath, prayer, fasting, generosity, Scripture, community, service, witness) do you sense God calling you to practice more intentionally? Will you commit to trying it this week and sharing your experience with the group next time?