

Alive to God I: SEEING GOD

By Maureen Newburg

Mother of God Prayer Meeting
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Introduction

A. Topic

We are continuing our series on healing. "Seeing God" is the first talk in the sub-series on Being Alive to God.

B. Speaker

Maureen Newburg has been associated with Mother of God Community since 1970. She is a Licensed Clinical Psychiatric Social Worker in private practice. She is also the proud mom of 3 children. Maureen, Bob and kids are conveniently located about 2 miles from MOG. Maureen would be happy to talk with anyone further about the content of this talk.

C. Preparatory Remarks

- When we are able to see God more clearly for who He is, it brings us better in touch with who we are.
- God continually wants to give us this new vision. Daily! God has a lot He wants to show us. High expectations are good.
- Topic may be difficult for some. Please keep heart and mind open.

D. Opening Prayer

Comprehending/Seeing God

A. Cognitive understanding

- Our culture places great emphasis on our brains and abilities. Highly developed aspect of who we are.
- We spend a great deal of time thinking about God and our prayer life may be primarily on this plane.
- As good as our intellect is it can get in our way at times when it comes to the spiritual life.

B. Heart Knowledge

In the scriptures faith and conversion begin in the heart.

- John 6:69 Peter speaks of heart to head connection. "Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy one of God."
- Rom 3:22 "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe"
- Eph 1:18-19 makes it very clear that heart knowledge provides the touch of the Holy Spirit that really changes us: "I pray also that the eyes of your heart

may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which you have been called, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints and his incomparably great power for us who believe."

C. **Discrepancy**

What we feel in our hearts to be true is often at odds with what we know. examples:

"I know God forgives me but I still feel guilty" "God says He will care for me and I know that but my heart is fearful"

Models Of God

A. **Early Exposure**

1. Very young children do not have the ability to grasp the meaning of God - they don't have that capacity.
2. Initial exposure to God comes from parents (often in a particular way fathers) Why? Children and infants come into world powerless and dependent. They rely fully on their care takers for all their needs. This is a God like role.
3. Parents need to be surrendered to God themselves as they represent God to their children.
4. Parents are responsible to demonstrate the heart and purposes of God to their children.

B. **Needs of a child**

Children have needs as they come into the world. Need to be:

- welcomed
- wanted
- loved unconditionally
- affectionate touch
- teaching
- protected
- appropriate discipline
- valued
- praised
- comforted
- given a sense of belonging
- gender validation
- encouragement
- taught appropriate boundaries

Gary Smally in his book The Blessing sums up these into three areas:

- meaningful touch
- spoken word that is safe & affectionate
- expression of high value (praised for who we are and not what we do)

C. **Our Experience**

0. Our current picture of God will reflect aspects of our encounters with parents and others in authority over us. To see God clearly we need to look at any faulty images we may have learned. Isaiah 51:1: You who pursue righteousness, who seek the lord. Look to the rock from which you were hewn and to the quarry from which you were dug.
1. For some, early life experiences were difficult. It is good to examine this in prayer. What of my experiences could be affecting me currently?
2. If there was a lack of a truly godly parent(s) we may have projected onto God those beliefs.
 - example... A father who did not protect his children from harm will produce potentially fearful children who feel unprotected.
3. Wounds are recorded emotionally. Often, no amount of reason as adults will dislodge it.
4. Cumulative effect
 - Wounded children can often see other painful experiences in their lives through the original wound.
 - example... A child who feels rejected by father/mother. As an adult this individual may strive to find love "in all the wrong places" Because of unstable relationships rejection is inevitable thereby confirming original rejection.
5. Good Parenting
 - Family loyalty is good and many of us had parents who did a good job.
 - Important to remember that children form accurate and inaccurate perceptions about parents. Even very good parenting is often misunderstood by children.
6. Other Authority Figures.
 - Must look at relatives, older siblings, teachers, church.
 - Mother of God
 - Prior to community reorganization we had a community that for some represented the family we never had. For others we adjusted to community life because aspects of the community felt familiar - similar to our families.
 - Must look/pray for any wounds, bitterness or resentments that are still there.

Healing

- A. Goal is to see God more clearly for who he really is

Mt 5:8: Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. If hearts are unhealed we won't be able to experience the pure love of God.

- B. God has so many blessings for us. If we have anger, bitterness, resentments or false images of God we will choke off what God has for us.
- C. Ask God to show you faulty images/beliefs you may have.
- D. When trouble comes up or issues come up consider it a blessing. Do Not repent and move on.
- E. Bring whatever comes up in you to the light (ie to another person)

1 John 1 5-7 This breaks down isolation.

- F. Ask God to forgive you for any sinful ways you may have responded to being hurt.
- G. Extend Forgiveness

Col 3:13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Mt 6:14 For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly father will also forgive you. Can be done on faith even when you don't feel ready to forgive.

Questions for Discussion

1. What were my models of God like?
2. Do I see ways in which I define God by my own projections?
3. Do I harbor anger, resentment, or bitterness towards parents or any authority figures in my life?
4. Can I embrace my struggles as a gift from God?