

SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

- 1) Commune with Him In loving fellowship for a period of time each day.
- 2) Search His Word, not merely for religious truth but for a personal revelation of Himself.
- 3) Ask Him to give you a deep love for Himself.
- 4) Feed your love for Him. Starve your love for the world. Feed you mind and spirit on materials that uplift our lovely Lord. Drop those forms of entertainment and distraction which do not.
- 5) Speak of Him often. Share what you learn of Him in the Word and prayer with others.
- 6) Make it your desire to take Him into every circumstance and consideration. Try not to make any decision without Him being at the center of it.
- 7) Lift your heart to Him in prayer communion as often as possible. Be disappointed if you go for long without speaking with Him.

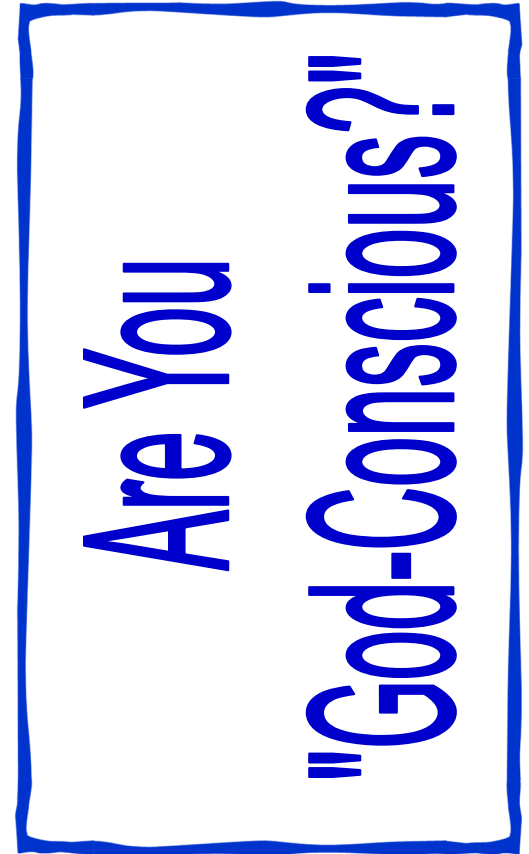
These are seven very practical ways in which every Christian can begin to exercise himself to become more God-conscious and more God-responsive.

But you know what you're really going to learn? –That you can't. You'll fail. And in this failure is your greatest hope! In your failure may you be cast on the Lord Himself as your hope.

By Pastor Ron Marr

*Please write to us
and request extra copies for distribution.*

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I don't like hearing people swear and take the name of the Lord in vain. It grieves me to hear folk speak approvingly of sexual immorality, abortion, and other evil practices. But if you want to make me unhappy, all you have to do is sit me down in the middle of a group of Christians who are talking about everything and everyone else but God.

I wonder to myself, Why? Why? Why?

If they know Him, don't they love Him?

If they love Him, how can they help but talk about Him? How can they?

It's unfortunate that so many Christians

IS GOD THE CENTER OR MERELY AN INCIDENTAL APPENDAGE?

are so preoccupied with the cares of this life that God seems merely to be an incidental appendage.

And, while you may find them often speaking of "church," "fellowship," "Christian friends," "Christian ministries," "Christian service," "Christian radio and TV," and even occasionally "Christian witness," rarely do you find them speaking in loving terms of their God and His Christ.

I think every Christian must surely feel he ought to be God-conscious and God-

responsive.

We say of non-Christians around us, as did God through the Psalmist David of every wicked person: "God is not in all his thoughts" (Psalm 10:4).

But I wonder whether many Christians don't feel that this is too close to the truth in their own lives as well.

Oh yes, when it comes to the big issues of life, we recognize that we need God's guidance. ...Things like education, and marriage, and vocation, and geographical location ...or even, perhaps, buying a home or making other major investments.

And when we are uncertain, or afraid, or in danger, or in need of course we cry out to God ...perhaps not too differently from the way many a non-Christian does in times of trouble. This is, of course, merely fox-hole Christianity, and doesn't deserve the name Christian at all.

But every truly born-again child of God in whom the Holy Spirit has taken up residence knows that this is not a satisfactory degree of God-consciousness or God-responsiveness.

And since he doesn't know what to do about it, since most of his Christian friends and acquaintances are in the same boat, and since he has no expectation that it will

ever be very different, he tends to ignore it.

If he can't ignore it, he may get defensive about it.

- "I have private devotions morning and night."

- "I go to church four times a week."

- "I read my Bible."

- "I teach a Sunday School class."

- "I ask the Lord every day to make me a good witness for Him."

... "and how dare you suggest I'm not adequately God-conscious or God-responsive? How dare you?"

OK. Let's drop the subject, all right?

But the Holy Spirit won't let it drop, will He? He knows, doesn't He?

It is He who feels neglected, and deserted, and grieved, and quenched!

It is He who cries out for your loving attention.

He will not be still!

Paul advised the younger Timothy, "Exercise yourself unto godliness." Here are some excellent and very practical exercises to which even the youngest Christian can give himself that may result in growing God-consciousness: