

III. WHAT ARE SOME STEPS I CAN TAKE TO BECOME MORE REAL IN MY CHRISTIAN LIFE?

One way is by just thinking about the reality of God's presence and activity in the world, and particularly in the environment in which we live. The more we become consciously aware that God is present everywhere at all times, that He is always with us, that we live and move and have our being in Him, and that we are always in His presence; the more God will become real to us and the more we will come to love Him supremely, especially as we reflect on His great love and mercy and grace. Brother Lawrence called it simply "the practice of the presence of God." Notice: this is not pretending that God's presence is real; it is realizing a fact and practicing a conscious awareness of that fact until it becomes a natural part of our lives.

Another way Christians can try to be more real is by refusing to put "off-limits" signs on any areas of their lives. The temptation to exclude God from certain aspects of our lives is very strong; and we must resist it and open each "room" of our hearts to His cleansing and lordship. This means bringing our secret thought-life under the control of the Spirit of God and the scrutiny of the principles of right and wrong conduct found in Scripture.

Yet another way we can become more real is by going to God more frequently in prayer. I do not personally think it is essential to spend hours each time we pray; I rather think it is more important to go to Him more frequently and with greater focus and earnestness. Hebrews 11:6 says that anyone who comes to God "must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him." Since we are not heard because of our much speaking, we need to use fewer words but make them count.

As an example of the use of few words I am reminded of Nawang Gombu, the Sherpa climber who guided James Whitaker to the summit of Mount Everest. When asked by a reporter what he thought about when he stood at the summit of the world's tallest mountain, he replied, "How to get down."