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EXPERIENCING
GOD

Knowing & Doing
the Will of God

ADULT TEACHING PLANS

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EXPERIENCING GOD

ADULT TEACHING PLANS

As the resource teacher, remember that the strongest reinforcement of the seven realities will be Scripture and personal testimonies from visiting team members who have studied *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God*.

GUIDELINES

FOR ADULT RESOURCE TEACHERS

- Complete *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God* at least once and, if possible, lead a group through it.
- Work through the teaching-session plans that follow and the Adult Participant Guide available on lifeway.com/egleader.
- Remember that you are introducing the study. Don't teach all of the content. Deal with the seven realities and the personal application.
- Make it personal. Get it in your heart before you attempt to teach it. Use visiting team members to share testimonies about each reality.
- Adhere to the time frame for each teaching session. The personal testimonies from visiting team members and the small-group discussions will reinforce your teaching.
- Work closely with the weekend coordinator before and during the weekend.
- Know the direction each session is taking. Each session builds on the previous one.
- Be prepared to review all seven realities in about 45 minutes during the Sunday School hour. Remember that seven testimonies from visiting team members are included in the 45-minute time frame.
- Read the summary statements of each unit in *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God* to review the key thoughts.

- Use the PowerPoint® slides to introduce the main point of each reality.
- Continually evaluate the weekend. Ask for comments from the pastor and church staff, church members, and visiting team members.
- Keep the study simple and understandable.

The following material is provided as a guide to help you teach during the weekend. Include as many personal experiences as possible. Stay within the time frame. Cover the material that corresponds to the Adult Participant Guide and keep the focus clear in each teaching session. The following material is in script form; ideas in parentheses are further instructions.

PRAYER

(FRIDAY, 7:30–8:15 P.M.)

Introduction

Most people who have been involved with a church for long have certain perceptions about God, church, and the Bible. Much of what we perceive is wrong. We've complicated the Christian life and made it something mechanical, not what God had in mind. We need to get back to some basics.

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(Call attention to p. 1 of the Adult Participant Guide and encourage participants to fill in the blanks and take additional notes as God speaks through the session.)

1. The Bible is your guide for faith and practice.

The Bible is God's Word to you. The Bible is your source of authority as you listen to identify where God is at work. Every time you sense God working in a certain

area, it must always line up with what Scripture says. God never works in a way that is contrary to His Word.

The Holy Spirit is your personal teacher. He is the One who guides you to hear the voice of God through the Word of God and to apply it to your life.

2. Jesus is your Way.

(Share the illustration about the map on p. 10 in *Experiencing God* or an illustration from your own experience about Jesus being the map for your life.)

When you come to the Lord Jesus to seek His will for your life, which of the following requests is most like what you say to Him? “Lord, what do You want me to do? When do You want me to do it? How shall I do it? Where shall I do it? Whom do You want me to involve along the way? And please tell me what the outcome will be.” Or do you say, “Lord, just tell me what to do one step at a time, and I will do it.”

Isn't the first response more typical of us? We ask God for a detailed road map. We say, “Lord, if You could just tell me where I am heading, then I will be able to set my course and go.”

God says, “You don't need to know. You need to follow Me one day at a time.” We need to learn to respond to Him like that every day.

Jesus said, “I am the Way.” He wants us to learn to hear Him speak, to know where He is working, and to become involved there. Christ wants us to be His servants.

What does that mean to you? (Allow participants to respond before proceeding.)

3. To be a servant of God, you must be moldable and remain in the hand of the Master.

(Share the lesson of the potter and the clay found on p. 16 in *Experiencing God*.)

Let's remember that—

- a servant is always under construction, being molded by the Master;
- a servant remains tuned in to the Master on a daily basis so that God can use him or her any way He chooses. Since God made the servant, He knows best how to use him or her.

4. To know God, you must experience Him.

John 17:3 says, “This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and the one you have sent—Jesus Christ.”

In order to have eternal life, we must know God and know Jesus Christ, whom God sent. Knowing God doesn't happen through a program or a method. It happens when we have a relationship with Him. It is an intimate, loving relationship in which God tells us what's on His heart, and we hear Him and join Him in His heart concerns. We cease being self-centered and become God-centered. When we obey Him, God does things through us that only He can do. That's when we know God in a more intimate way—by experiencing God at work through us.

The study *Experiencing God* will help you move into that kind of intimate relationship with God. Jesus said in John 10:10, “I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance.” You can experience life to the full if you are willing to respond to God's invitation to an intimate love relationship with Him.

5. God is love. His will is always best.

As you begin to experience God, you learn that God is love. His will is always best.

(Read the following Scripture references to support this truth: Ps. 37:23–24; 139:1–6; Prov. 20:24.)

We must remember that God desires to build our character and to make us more like Jesus. Everything in our lives happens because God loves us and wants to use each situation to mold us into His image. God cannot make a mistake because (move into the next point) ...

6. God is all-knowing. His directions are always right.

God knows everything. He understands things we could never understand. God sees things we can't see. And God always directs our steps in the right ways because of His all-knowing nature.

7. God is all-powerful. He can enable you to do His will.

When we come to believe that God's will is always best and right, then He will demonstrate His power. God can enable us to do His will.

Philippians 2:13 says, “It is God who is working in you both to will and to work according to his good purpose.” We need to recognize that what God has worked in us is His will for us. It is something different for each of us, but it is perfect. God is love, and His will is always best. If God has been in the process of molding us for His use, we can confidently proclaim Philippians 4:13: “I am able to do all things through him who strengthens me.”

Reality 1: God is always at work around you.

(Instruct participants to turn to p. 3 in the Adult Participant Guide. Ask the designated visiting team member to give his or her testimony related to reality 1.)

Display PowerPoint Slides 4–5

(Read John 5:17,19–20. Ask the following questions and allow time for participants to answer. Be conscious of the time remaining. Encourage note taking.)

- According to John 5:17, who is always at work? (God, the Father)
- How much can the Son do by Himself? (Nothing)
- What does the Son do? (Only what He sees His Father doing)
- Why does the Father show the Son what He is doing? (The Father loves the Son)

Right now God is working all around you and in your life. All through the Bible we see that God has been involved in the world from the beginning of time. And God always takes the initiative and involves His people in His work. God chooses to work through people to accomplish His purposes.

- When God was ready to judge the world, He came to Noah.
- When God was ready to build a nation for Himself, He came to Abraham.
- When God heard the cry of the children of Israel and decided to deliver them, He appeared to Moses.

Look at Jesus' example in John 5:

- The Father has been working right up to now.
- Now God has Me working.
- I do nothing on My own initiative.
- I do what I see the Father is already doing.
- The Father loves Me.
- He shows me everything that He Himself is doing.

It's easy to see God at work in the Bible and through Jesus' example, but what about in our own lives? Most often, even though we desire to experience God, we don't realize that He is working every day, and we aren't able to recognize Him.

Experiencing God will help you learn ways to clearly recognize God's activity in and around you. Once

you begin to recognize God working around you, you will learn how to adjust your life and join Him in His work.

John 12:26 says, "If anyone serves me, he must follow me. Where I am, there my servant also will be. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him."

How do we do this?

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1. Find out where the Master is; that is where you need to be.
2. Watch to see where God is working and join Him. This is not a step-by-step approach for knowing God's will. This describes a love relationship through which God accomplishes His purposes through those who love Him.
3. People often ask, "What is God's will for my life?" Is that the right question? Henry Blackaby says it's not. The right question is "What is God's will?" Once you know God's will, you can adjust your life to Him. Once you know what God is doing where you are, then you can know what you should be doing. The focus needs to shift from your life to God.

God's will is what you would do if you knew all the facts. God's work is what Jesus would do in your place. Remember reality 1: God is always at work around you.

TEACHING SESSION 2

(SATURDAY, 9:10–10:15 A.M.)

Introduction

Remember reality 1: God is always at work around you. In this session we will continue with reality 2.

Reality 2: God pursues a continuing love relationship with you that is real and personal.

(Ask the designated visiting team member to give his or her testimony related to reality 2.)

Display PowerPoint Slides 7–10

(Go through the slides, using personal comments to illustrate the points.)

How does God build our character to match the assignment? Here's how:

Display PowerPoint Slides 11–12

Every assignment God gives you is a new venture of faith. You know Him, love Him, believe Him, trust Him, and obey Him so that you can know Him, love Him, believe Him, trust Him, and obey Him for the next assignment. God pursues a continuing love relationship with you that is real and personal.

(Invite participants to turn to p. 6 in the Adult Participant Guide. Instruct them to form groups of three and work together through “A Love Relationship.” Give them 8 to 10 minutes. At the end of that time, ask groups to share their responses.)

This leads us to reality 3.

Reality 3: God invites you to become involved with Him in His work.**Display PowerPoint Slides 13–14**

(Ask the designated visiting team member to give his or her testimony related to reality 3.)

The Bible is not primarily a book about individuals and their relationships with God. It is about the activity of God and His relationship with individuals. The Bible is the record of God’s activity in the world. In it God reveals Himself (His nature), His purposes and plans, and His ways. The focus is on God and His activity.

Two factors are important to your ability to recognize God’s activity around you:

1. You must live in an intimate love relationship with God.
2. God must take the initiative to open your spiritual eyes so that you can see what He is doing.

Unless God allows you to see where He is working, you will not see it. Recognizing God’s activity depends on your love relationship with Him and His taking the initiative to open your spiritual eyes to it. Consider these principles.

- You never find God asking persons to dream up what they want to do for Him. He takes the initiative. When God is about to do something, He takes the initiative and comes to one or more of His servants. God lets them know what He is about to do. God invites them to adjust their lives to Him so that He can accomplish His work through them. Amos 3:7 says, “The Lord God does nothing without revealing his counsel to his servants the prophets.”
- Understanding what God is about to do where you are is more important than telling God what

you want to do for Him. God is in control. The issue is whether you have acknowledged that and have given Him control of your life. God never follows. He always leads.

- God’s revelation of His activity is an invitation for you to join Him. You may wonder, How does God invite me to be involved with Him? Go back to page 1 in your guide and look again at Jesus’ example in John 5:17,19–20. (Briefly review the section on Jesus’ example). How did Jesus know what to do in His Father’s work? How did He respond? Jesus said He watched to see what the Father was doing. Then He (Jesus) joined him (God) in that work. The key word in the fourth statement is watch. Jesus watched the Father to see what He was doing. When you see the Father at work around you, that is your invitation to adjust your life to Him and join Him in that work.
- You cannot know the activity of God unless He takes the initiative to reveal it to you. When God reveals what He is doing, that is the time for you to respond. God speaks when He is ready to accomplish His purpose. That is true throughout Scripture. Remember, though, that the final completion may be a long time off. Abram’s son was born 25 years after God’s promise. The time God comes to you and reveals where He is working, however, is the time for you to respond. You need to begin adjusting your life to Him. You may need to make some changes in your plans. You may need to rearrange your calendar or even your life. Isaiah 46:11 states: “I have spoken; so I will also bring it about. I have planned it; I will also do it.”

Isaiah 14:24,27 states:

The Lord of Armies has sworn:
As I have purposed, so it will be;
as I have planned it, so it will happen.
The Lord of Armies himself has planned it;
therefore, who can stand in its way?
It is his hand that is outstretched,
so who can turn it back?

God says that when He lets His people know what He is doing, it is as good as done. God Himself will bring it to pass. What God speaks, He guarantees that it will come to pass. This truth holds enormous implications for individual believers,

TEACHING SESSION 3

(SATURDAY, 10:30–11:30 A.M.)

churches, and denominations. When you come to God to know what He is about to do where you are, you also come with the assurance that what God indicates He is about to do is certain to come to pass. It may be necessary to remind ourselves often of His promise in Philippians 1:6: “he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

- There are some things only God can do. When you see one of these things happening, you can know God is at work.

Display PowerPoint Slide 15

There are some things only God can do:

- God draws people to Himself.
- God causes people to seek Him.
- God reveals spiritual truth.
- God convicts the world of guilt about sin.
- God convicts the world of righteousness.
- God convicts the world of judgment.

When you see one or more of these things happening, you know God is at work. When you see someone coming to faith in Christ, asking about spiritual matters, coming to understand spiritual truths, being convicted of sin, and being convinced of the righteousness of Christ and of the coming judgment, God is at work. Begin adjusting your life so that you can join Him in that place.

Consider the incident of Jesus and Zacchaeus. As Jesus passed through a crowd, He always looked for where the Father was at work. The crowd was not the harvest field. The harvest field was somewhere within that crowd. When Jesus saw Zacchaeus in a tree, He knew Zacchaeus had gone the extra mile to see Jesus and must have really been seeking Him. So Jesus left the crowd and concentrated on Zacchaeus. Jesus said, “Zacchaeus, come down here. I’d like to spend some time with you.”

What happened? Salvation came to Zacchaeus that night.

Jesus always looked for signs of God’s activity around Him and then joined the Father.

(If time permits, share the story of the college-campus Bible studies on p. 31 in *Experiencing God*.)

Display PowerPoint Slides 16–18

(Encourage participants to fill in the blanks as you review the six principles. Answer any questions.)

Dismiss for a break before the next session.

Introduction

Let’s review the first three realities.

Reality 1: God is always at work around you.

Reality 2: God pursues a continuing love relationship with you that is real and personal.

Reality 3: God invites you to become involved with Him in His work.

In this session we will continue with reality 4.

Reality 4: God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, and the church to reveal Himself, His purposes, and His ways.

(Ask the designated visiting team member to give his or her testimony related to reality 4.)

Display PowerPoint Slides 19–20

“This is why you don’t listen, because you are not from God” (John 8:47). Keep in mind that hearing God speak depends on our love relationship with Him. Turn to page 9 in your Adult Participant Guide, and let’s look more closely at reality 4.

1. In the Old Testament God spoke in many ways. That God spoke is the most important factor, not how He spoke.

a. When God spoke, it was usually unique to that individual. For instance, Moses had no precedent for a burning-bush experience. He couldn’t say, “Oh, this is my burning-bush experience. My fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had their burning bushes, and this is mine.” There were no other examples of God speaking this way. It was unique because God wants our experience with Him to be unique to us. He wants us to look to Him rather than depend on a method or technique. If Moses were alive today, he would probably be tempted to write a book titled *My Burning-Bush Experience*. Then people all over the world would try to find a bush like Moses’. The important thing is not how God spoke but that He spoke. That fact has not changed. God still speaks to His people today.

b. When God spoke, the person was sure God was speaking. Because God spoke to Moses in a unique way, Moses had to be certain it was God. Scripture says Moses knew immediately that “I

- AM” was speaking with him. Could Moses logically prove to someone else that he had heard from God? No. All Moses could do was testify to his encounter with God. Only God could cause His people to know that the word He gave Moses was a word from the God of their fathers.
- c. When God spoke, the person knew what God said. Moses knew what God was telling him to do. He knew how God wanted to work through him. That is why Moses raised so many objections. Moses knew exactly what God expected. This was his crisis of belief.
 - d. When God spoke, that was the encounter with God. Moses would have been foolish to say, “This has been a wonderful experience with this burning bush. I hope this leads me to an encounter with God.” That was the encounter with God. When God reveals truth to you, by whatever means, it is an experience of His presence in your life.

Display PowerPoint Slide 21

2. In the Gospels God spoke by His Son. (Ask someone to read Heb. 1:1-2.)
3. In Acts and to the present God speaks by the Holy Spirit. (Ask someone to read John 14:26; 16:13-14.)
4. Knowing God’s voice comes from an intimate love relationship with Him. If you want to know the will and voice of God, you must spend time and effort cultivating a love relationship with Him.
5. God speaks when He has a purpose for your life.
6. The moment God speaks to you is God’s timing.

Display PowerPoint Slide 22

7. You never discover truth. Truth is revealed. Sometimes we do not hear God because our love relationship with Him is lacking. We may need a spiritual tune-up. (Ask someone to read John 8:47.)
8. God reveals Himself to increase your faith. God reveals Himself to increase faith that leads to action. You need to listen attentively to what God reveals to you about Himself. This will be critical when you come to the crisis of belief.
 - You have to believe God is who He says He is.
 - You have to believe God can do what He says He will do.
 - You have to adjust your thinking in light of this belief.
 - Trusting that God will demonstrate Himself to be who He says He is, you then obey Him.

- When you obey, God does His work through you and demonstrates that He is who He says He is.
 - Then you will know God by experience.
 - You will know God is who He says He is.
9. God reveals His purposes so that you will do His work. What you plan to do for God is not important. What He plans to do where you are is very important. God speaks with a purpose in mind. When God came to Noah, He did not ask, “What do you want to do for me?” He came to reveal what He was about to do. It was far more important to know what God was about to do. God was about to destroy the world, and He wanted to work through Noah to accomplish His purpose of saving a remnant of people and animals to repopulate the earth.
 10. God reveals His ways so that you can accomplish His purposes. God’s goal is always to reveal Himself to people to draw them into a love relationship with Himself. God’s ways are redemptive. He acts in such a way as to reveal Himself and His love. God does not simply wait around to help you achieve your goals for Him. God comes to accomplish His goals through you—and in His own way.

God’s purposes, accomplished in His ways, bring glory to Him. You must learn to do Kingdom work in Kingdom ways.

During the study of *Experiencing God*, you will learn how God also speaks through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, and the church to reveal Himself, His purposes, and His ways.

Display PowerPoint Slides 23–25

(Briefly explain each slide. If you need additional material, see units 5–6 in *Experiencing God*.)

Now we come to a critical point in the process.

Reality 5: God’s invitation for you to work with Him always leads you to a crisis of belief that requires faith and action.

(Ask the designated visiting team member to give his or her testimony related to reality 5.)

Display PowerPoint Slide 26

(Invite the group turn to p. 10 in the Adult Participant Guide and answer questions 1–3, based on the Scriptures on the slide.)

Display PowerPoint Slides 27–28

When God reveals His activity in a situation, it creates a crisis of belief. In a crisis of belief you have to make a decision about what you really believe about God. It is a turning point in your life.

We know that without faith it is impossible to please God. An encounter with God requires faith and action. Sometimes the required action can't be explained by common sense. Encounters with God are always God-sized, not human-sized. Our world is not seeing God because we are not attempting anything that only God can do. What we do in response to God's revelation (invitation) reveals what we believe about God. Faith is a Person. Faith in God always requires action of some kind.

Display PowerPoint Slide 29

(Share at least one example on the slide. Invite the group to turn in their Bibles to the reference and follow along. Encourage participants to take notes as you illustrate a crisis of belief.)

Where does God have you right now? What is He doing in your life?

(Close the session in prayer.)

TEACHING SESSION 4

(SATURDAY, 7:30–8:15 P.M.)

Review the first five realities:

Reality 1: God is always at work around you.

Reality 2: God pursues a continuing love relationship with you that is real and personal.

Reality 3: God invites you to become involved with Him in His work.

Reality 4: God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, and the church to reveal Himself, His purposes, and His ways.

Reality 5: God's invitation for you to work with Him always leads you to a crisis of belief that requires faith and action.

In this final session we will look at realities 6 and 7.

Reality 6: You must make major adjustments in your life to join God in what He is doing.

God never works the same way in two persons' lives. However, common points can be identified when God is

working in people's lives. Luke 14:33 says, "Every one of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple." That verse states certain truths about following God.

Display PowerPoint Slides 30–34

(Refer participants to p. 12 in the Adult Participant Guide. Work through the nine points on the slides. Ask participants to add names to the lists of positive and negative examples.)

(Ask the designated visiting team member to give his or her testimony related to reality 6.)

Display PowerPoint Slides 35–36

(Talk about the kinds of adjustments that may be necessary, using experiences from your life to illustrate. Include at least one testimony from a group member about adjustments he or she has made in experiencing God.)

Reality 7: You come to know God by experience as you obey Him, and He accomplishes His work through you.

Display PowerPoint Slide 37

John 14:15,21,23–24 says, "If you love me, you will keep my commands. The one who has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. And the one who loves me will be loved by my Father. I also will love him and will reveal myself to him. If anyone loves me, he will keep my word. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. The one who doesn't love me will not keep my words."

(Ask the designated visiting team member to give his or her testimony related to reality 7.)

Display PowerPoint Slides 38–39

(Briefly share the following eight points. Encourage the group to fill in the blanks and to take notes on p. 13 in the Adult Participant Guide.)

1. Obey what you already know to be God's will. Obey His commands.
2. Affirmation comes after obedience. (Read Ex. 3:12.)
3. Obedience is the outward expression of your love of God.
4. Disobedience is costly. God does not always give second chances. (Briefly reference the experiences of Nadab and Abihu in Lev. 10 and Jonah.)

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5. If you have an obedience problem, you have a love problem.
6. If you love God, you will obey Him.
7. The reward for obedience and love is that God will reveal Himself to you. (Read John 14:21,23.)

Display PowerPoint Slides 40–41

8. God reveals Himself to His people by what He does.
(Read the examples on the slides. If time allows, read two or three Scripture references.)

(Have a testimony from a visiting team member about one or more of these points.)

In closing, let's review the seven realities of experiencing God.

Display PowerPoint Slides 42–43

(Review. Close with an invitation to Sunday's activities. Pray that God will work in participants' lives throughout the remainder of the weekend.)

Stay within the time frame for the Sunday-morning service. The invitation should begin on time. If you sense the Holy Spirit moving during the invitation in an unusual way, explain that those who need to leave should feel free to do so. With the pastor's permission, extend the invitation as long as appropriate.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Provide an overview of the seven realities during the regular Sunday School time. Adults and youth will meet together. Some of them will not have attended previous weekend activities. For these people you will need to be clear and precise in your presentation. For those who have attended all weekend, this will be a time of review and reflection.

Make handouts of PowerPoint slides 42–44 to distribute during Sunday School. Have one or more team members give brief personal testimonies on each reality. Be sure the team members understand that their testimonies need to clearly explain each reality.

Make any necessary comments to further clarify the reality.

MORNING WORSHIP

As you prepare for the weekend, be sensitive to what God is saying to you personally. Sunday morning's sermon should be an overflow from your experience with God. Your message should be a fresh word from God. The desired outcome of the message is that the congregation will see how the seven realities apply to the body of believers.



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VISITING SMALL-GROUP LEADERS

Correspondence-and-materials committee: Duplicate and mail the following pages to the visiting adult small-group leaders as you receive their confirmation cards.

has put you there to meet that need as a group. Ask a volunteer to pray for the person and the need. Allow enough time for the Lord to minister through you and the group. A person's need is God's first priority.

INTRODUCTION

Facilitating a small group can be a rewarding experience. This may be the first time you have led a small group. To make the small group more effective, consider the following suggestions.

1. You are a facilitator. That means you do not teach the material; you lead an open discussion of the material shared during the teaching sessions.
2. You will ask questions to motivate open discussion among your small group. When you ask a question, don't be afraid of silence. Allow time for members to think and formulate a reply. Don't panic and feel that you have to fill the silence. If after a minute or two no one responds, call on an outgoing person for his or her thoughts. Be prepared to help participants verbalize their thoughts, but don't fall into the trap of answering for them.
3. Ninety percent of your time should be spent in listening to your group.
4. Learn how to deal with individuals who dominate the discussion. Listen for a pause and then say, "That's a good observation. What do the rest of you think about that?" Usually, someone else will be ready to join the conversation. If not, go on to the next question.
5. You aren't expected to have all the answers. Sometimes it will put the group at ease if you ask, "What do you think?" Most groups respond best when they sense an openness from the leader. Don't be afraid to be vulnerable.
6. When a person expresses a personal need or concern, stop at that point and minister to that person. God

FRIDAY-EVENING

SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION

Teaching session 1 introduces the weekend and covers reality 1 of experiencing God. Put the group at ease by having participants introduce themselves. Ask if they have had the opportunity to study *Experiencing God*.

Tell the group that during the small-group discussions they need to participate only as the Holy Spirit leads and as they feel comfortable.

Ask the following questions and allow ample time for response.

- What does experiencing God mean to you?
- What is your impression of tonight's session?
- Which of the seven realities are you most interested in learning about? Why?
- What do you see God doing in your church?
- What do you see God doing in your life? In your family?
- Has God said anything specific to you tonight? Would you share this with the group?
- What do you sense that you need to do to join God in His work around you or your church?

Close the small-group discussion with conversational prayer and return to the worship center.

SATURDAY-MORNING

SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION

Teaching session 2 covers realities 2 and 3. Teaching session 3 covers realities 4 and 5. The small-group discussion comes at the end of the morning. Invite members to introduce themselves. Remind them that they should feel free to join in as the Holy Spirit leads. Pray for individual needs and requests as they come up during the discussion.

Ask if anyone would like to share something God impressed on them this morning. The response may help you choose the next question.

- Reality 2 says, God pursues a continuing love relationship with you that is real and personal. Has God revealed His love for you in a special way? Would you share it with our group?
- Reality 3 says, God invites you to become involved with Him in His work. Has there ever been a time in your life when God invited you to join Him in His work? How did you respond?
- Reality 4 says, God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, and the church to reveal Himself, His purposes, and His ways. Has God ever spoken to you in a special way? If so, would you share it and tell us how He spoke to you [prayer, circumstances, Bible, other Christians]?
- Reality 5 says, God's invitation for you to work with Him always leads you to a crisis of belief that requires faith and action. Although you might not have thought of it in those terms before, when did you experience a crisis of belief?
- Do you see things God is doing in this church or in the lives of your friends, family, or yourself that you did not see before today?
- What do we as a church or you as an individual need to do to respond to what God is revealing to us this weekend?

Close with conversational prayer. Remind the group of tonight's schedule.

SATURDAY-EVENING

SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION

Teaching session 4 covers realities 6 and 7. Break the ice with quick introductions and remind participants to join in as they feel led by the Holy Spirit.

Explain that tonight they will try to determine what God has been doing in their lives. Ask them to react to this statement: you come to know God as you obey Him, and He accomplishes His work through you. Use the analogy of secular friendship: true friendship is based on shared experiences over a period of time. Discuss that concept as it applies to a relationship with God.

Ask, Has there ever been a time when you had to make a major adjustment so that God could work through you? If so, what happened as a result?

Remind your small-group members that God is more interested in their love relationship with Him and with developing their character than He is with the things they do for Him. God often develops character through the events in their lives.

Explain that there are usually times in our lives when we are sure God has guided us in a decision, given us direction, or been with us through a significant experience. These times are spiritual markers. Like a road map, these significant times form a pattern that gives us an idea of what God has been and is doing in our lives. And like a road map, we can often get an indication of where we are going from where we have been and the road we are on.

Have participants turn to page 14 in the Adult Participant Guide. Allow 15 minutes for them to complete the Spiritual Markers Worksheet. Remind them that what they write down is between them and the Lord. You as the facilitator should also do this exercise. Before members begin, lead them in prayer asking God to reveal to them their spiritual markers and what adjustments need to be made so that they can obey God and allow Him to work in their lives.

After 15 minutes, invite the group to the worship center for a time of prayer and commitment. Remind them that others may be praying as they enter. Suggest that when they finish, they should pick up their children and move somewhere else if they plan to fellowship.

Lead the group to the worship center. Form a circle of prayer. Tell them that you will begin and end the prayer. Invite those who would like to pray out loud to pray about the adjustments and commitments the

Lord is leading them to make. When the prayer time concludes, remind them that visiting team members will be around to talk and pray with them.

SUNDAY-MORNING RESPONSIBILITIES

All adults and youth meet together for Sunday School. Though your small group does not meet together, you need to be present through the morning worship service to assist the weekend coordinator and to be available for counseling.