



# Listening to God in Ordinary Places

Discovering the possibilities that are present in the pursuit of spiritual development can be the most exciting experience you will ever have. It is amazing that relatively few Christian people have even bothered to inquire. Fortunately, however, spirituality, which has an elongated but sparse history around the world has now come into its own within the past few generations. It is now front and center stage. What is this powerful phenomenon all about?

Spiritual growth and development occur whenever we open ourselves to the transforming power of God's Holy Spirit and learn to live within the *mystery of God's presence and the miracle of God's power*. Nothing in all of creation can trump that.

Spirituality is different from religion, religious activity and/or religious belief with which we are most familiar. One can note this very significant difference between religion

and spirituality by looking at the content of the Apostles Creed versus that of the Lord's Prayer. Creed (product of the church): *I believe in God the Father Almighty . . .*, a strictly religious statement versus the Lord's Prayer, (a gift from Jesus): *"Father in heaven, holy be your name . . .*, a profoundly spiritual exaltation.

Likewise, look at the difference between the words of the pastor when making announcements about functions and activities of the church which are religious in nature versus pronouncing the Words of Institution: "Take and eat this is my body. Take and drink this is my blood shed for you." The latter announcing the spiritual reality of Christ's presence in our midst.

Also look at the difference between going on the working trip to Nicaragua that was a most worthwhile religious activity versus the transformation of the lives of those who went, which is a unique spiritual experience.

Religion and spirituality are often related, but so much is missed if our religious functions are truncated without including spiritual growth and transformation, which all too often is the case.

If we become more open to the spiritual dimensions of our lives and the concomitant transformation that can occur, we can measure our growth by monitoring our prayer/mediation life. We will find ourselves meditating more and more. *Meditation* is simply *listening to God*. We learn to allow God to speak to us by His directing our thoughts as well as our picking up messages that jump out at us as we listen for them in ordinary places. We learn to recognize when God presses in on us and we sense the awesomeness of this life giving experience.

I would be delighted to function as your personal spiritual guide if you wish to pursue your spiritual journey.

