

FFWPU USA: What If God Was One Of Us? What's God Really Like?

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Imagine you see a man walking down the street toward you - not looking too happy despite the pleasant weather. Unbeknownst to you, he's just been scolded at work, where he feels misunderstood and undervalued by his boss and colleagues. He's worried he won't get the raise he'd been hoping for, which could've made it easier for his daughter to take the art lessons she wanted. So now on top of everything, he feels concerned for his children's happiness. If we knew all this about a simple stranger on the street, wouldn't our hearts instantly go out to him?

If we can't get inside the head of a stranger on the street, imagine how much harder it is to know God - an invisible being who has the whole world's sorrows to concern Him. Doesn't God have all the same thoughts, feelings, concerns, and hopes as the man on the street? Perhaps not about the raise, but surely the parental concern for the happiness of His children? Or the universal desire to feel understood by someone else? As Joan Osborne sings: What if God was one of us?

Sometimes trying to get to know God is like fathoming the magnitude of the universe and the origin of time - there's a part of us that simply can't grasp it, and then we turn on the TV before we go mad. But, what if God was closer than we think? Not a being that speaks words of unattainable wisdom or holds impossibly high standards for us, but a parent, experiencing the exact same things we are, going through the rough and dry times as well as the celebrations? What if He can understand us better than anyone else on earth because His heart feels the same as ours?

If God is like us, could we simply look in the mirror to know God's heart? Father Moon asked: "Where does God exist? He is not in heaven, but in our heart - the center of our heart," (World Scripture, 29).

If God is like us, then maybe we can come to know Him by looking at the journey we ourselves take in coming to a greater level of empathy for others. Perhaps we can even understand our fellow people better as a result.

Does God Have a Personality?

One of the first things that stands out when we meet someone is their personality. If we could get to know God, what might we discover His innate personality to be? Now, everyone has their own personal journey to get to know God - to speculate if there is a God. On the basis that our relationship with God is what makes God alive and real, we can base our thoughts on God much like we think about our relationships with other people - our friends, our family, that stranger on the street. In that light, Father Moon describes God as personal, driven and filled with love for us:

"If God exists, He has to be a personal God; He has to be like a person. As a personal God, He must possess intellect, emotion and will. Based on these attributes, all His feelings and desires, and all of the goals He sets according to His will must become concrete," (Cheon Seong Gyeong, 61).

What do you think? Can you imagine a personal God who's with us every moment of the day? One that brushes our teeth with us, cooks dinner with us and feels every emotion with us? Just like the stranger on

the street, He could have a diverse background, a wide array of hopes, dreams and concerns...He could want the same things we want. What if, throughout history, God even grows and matures, like we do throughout life as we develop our personality and mature as people?

What's God Really Like?

If God's personality is the combination of His intellect, emotion and will, what about His overall nature: What defines Him? What is His true essence? Father Moon dedicated his life to understanding this aspect of God, and he came to the interesting but logical conclusion that God (and all of His creation) has dual characteristics - that is, male and female traits:

"Externally, God resembles men and internally He resembles women. While God is strong, all-knowing and omnipotent, He also has a merciful heart that can embroider flowers on Buddha's smile. He should also have a heart like that of the most feminine woman. Only then will these two sides have life," (Cheon Seong Gyeong, 69).

It's true - the world is very yin and yang, and the more you think about it, the more you realize how "dual" everything really is: the positive and negative attractions in molecules, the stamen and pistil in flowers, males and females. Just like everything else in nature, we might further realize just how different yet complementary men and women can be.

If everything in the universe, which reflects God, has dual nature, wouldn't understanding the importance of healthy relationship between men and women be at the heart of substantiating God's very nature and expressing the core of who He is in our day-to-day relationships? Think about it: if men and women are outward expressions of God's essence (male and female) then the unity of them would be like making God visible in His whole form on the earth. How can we substantiate God in all areas of our lives? How is our life journey a reflection of God's journey?

What are His Desires?

If God is just like us, then what is He passionate about? What are His fiery desires? Most people possess an innate desire to have children - to become a parent. Assuming that God is our creator and we are His beloved children, the parent-child relationship (having a family built on true love) would be the very pinnacle of His desire and the purpose of creating the world:

"A child is the fruit, the manifestation of the parents' love, an extension of their life and the embodiment of the parents' ideals. Children are born on the basis of the parents' love, life and ideals; thus, the more the parents see them, the more lovable they become, the more they become ideal people to relate to and the more vibrant life becomes," (Cheon Seong Gyeong, 65).

What are our own desires? Maybe there's something we truly want, like starting a business or becoming a chef or writing a book, and we didn't realize how much God might be able to relate to it.

Bottom line: if God is a personal God who, at His and Her core, is our Heavenly Parent, then maybe He wants to have a relationship with us and not only be involved in our lives, but be deeply affected by them.

Who is God to you? Is He a "stranger" you want to get to know? Take Him out for a stroll in the park and have a chat.