

Core Beliefs - The “Big God Mentality” introduction a study for the college and career class at Gulf Coast Baptist Church by Steve Thomas 8/17/25

Introduction

“It’s not that people do not believe in God, it’s that they live as if God is largely irrelevant,” observed Stonestreet and Morris. “That’s what secularism does to us. It doesn’t disprove our faith, it dismisses it. It makes faith an issue of personal, private belief, disconnected from the outside world.” (John Stonestreet and G. Shane Morris from breakpoint.org) Many Believers are living two lives, one with ritualistic worship on the weekends and another life that is absent the faith that they proclaim in their church services. The scriptures are filled with accounts of a God that has spoken the world into existence, a God that sent a worldwide flood, but preserved one family to start over. The Bible tells how God chose one of the smallest nations and preserved them from countless dangers, elevating them to world prominence and many times, making them the epicenter of worldwide events.

The statement - “The Just shall live by faith...” is found in both the Old and New Testaments. The writer of Hebrews tells us that ***Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*** In order to become a believer, the individual must direct saving faith towards the Savior. But where does this faith go in the daily grind of the Christian life? Like Stonestreet and Morris observe, it is often absent from the daily life of the Believer. This lack of faith often presents in anxiety, or in “over-thinking” situations. Most of the Christian life is filled with uncertainty. While God has promised to stay with the Believer, He does not always give us the answers to questions that we have. When Paul asked to be delivered from his thorn in the flesh, God’s answer was that His grace was sufficient. A Big God has a plan that is hard for His followers to understand. A Big God will allow Joseph to be imprisoned unrighteously, so that he would be in a position to deliver the people from a famine some years later. A Big God would allow a stronger force to surround His people so that He could orchestrate a victory that would be recounted for thousands of years.

The same God Who brought Noah and his family through the flood, Who spewed the stars out of His mouth, Who provided the Apostle Paul with daily grace to bear up under the strain, Who elevated Joseph in Egypt, and Who carried the Israelites through the Red Sea is still our God today. He has not become smaller or less powerful. The Believer must direct faith towards what he cannot see in order to live the Christian life in the way that God intended.

Small God means Big Me

1 Peter 5:5-6 reminds us that we are not to think of ourselves too highly. Paul echoes this thought in Romans 12:3. Peter is reminding the believer about the dangers of the Evil One and Paul is about to teach the Romans about their part in the Body of Christ. The Romans needed to hear that they were given as a gift to the Body of Christ to bring value and profit to the Body, not to themselves. Peter pointed out that the Evil One deceives the Believer by getting him to think he matters more than he does. When the Believer reduces God in size, he enlarges himself to replace God.

Is the Church Man-centered or God-centered?

A small god mentality comes when man becomes the focus of everything that God is currently doing. What is the purpose of the Church? Most evangelicals would tell you that God established the church to evangelize the world and spread the gospel. When will Christ come back? Many evangelicals will tell us that when the Body of Christ is complete, when that last soul is saved, that Christ will come to retrieve His bride. Why did God create this universe? Was it only to bring believers benefit? If that is the case then it was and is a colossal failure. More individuals have rejected God's message than have accepted it. God is using the church to reveal the riches of His grace to His creation. God has an eternal purpose to reveal Himself to His creation (Eph 2:7; 2 Tim 1:9). He has graciously allowed the Church to be a part of what He is doing. Just as Israel was not chosen because of their size and strength, the Believer was chosen for God's purposes, not our own.

Many Believers have lost the awe of a mighty and Big God. This study will focus our attention on the fact that we serve a Big God. He is worthy of our worship, and our faith.