

Series: **Palm Sunday 2022**
Today's Title: **"An Accurate Picture of God"**
April 10, 2022 - Selected Passages

OBJECTIVE: To help people understand that God is loving and gracious toward them - eager to forgive them, not eager to judge them.

A popular, modern view of God is He is eager to judge - eager to lash out against anything that is wrong.

It's a belief that God is harsh, angry, annoyed, upset.

He has a divine temper waiting to give us what we deserve!

This leads many people to have a fear of God - to avoid Him.

I believe this is an incorrect view / a false view of God.

This view of God is not a new phenomenon... It's been a view throughout human history - it was even something that Jesus encountered.

The Bible paints a much different picture of God.

The God of the Bible certainly does - and will judge sin, but He is not *eager* to judge sin.

The Bible tells us God is longsuffering and patient with us - even when we sin.

Psalm 86:15

"But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness."

God is certainly Holy - He is just - and He is righteous.

But we need to realize those attributes of God are not dominant - they aren't primary - and His attributes of love, grace, truth, kindness, mercy are not secondary.

All of God's attributes are in perfect balance.

His attributes of love and grace compliment and support His holiness, righteousness, and justice.

He is holy - and just - and love.

He is righteous - and gracious.

All His attributes work in perfect harmony / they are in perfect symmetry.

This morning, we're trying to paint a picture through song...
A picture of God - a picture of His love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness.

A picture of God that lets you see His love for you - His desire for you to know Him - to be forgiven of your sins.

A picture of God that might be vastly different than the one you've had in your mind for many years!

My favorite comic writer is Gary Larson.

He retired years ago - at the top of his game - but his comics still make me laugh.

One of his well-known comics was this one - that pictures God - watching the innocent guy walking down the street - just waiting for him to do something wrong - so he can hit the 'SMITE' button on his computer.

For many people - this is their view of God.

But the message this morning is clear - and paints a much different picture.

- God loves you.
- God chases after those who wander off.
- God loves you as you are!
- He wants to save you - forgive you!
- He is alive - and He wants to have a relationship with you.

Here's what the Bible says about God's heart.

John 3:17

“For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned...”

His desire is to save you - not judge you - not condemn you!
On another occasion - near the end of His earthly ministry - He taught this parable.

Matthew 18:12-13

“What do you think?

If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray?

And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray.”

- I'm not sure I would leave the 99 sheep to go find the 1 who wandered off!

- If I go to look for the 1 wandering sheep...what happens if 3 or 4 others wander off when I'm gone?
- What happens if a predator approaches the 99 when I'm gone looking for the 1?

But God's heart is to go and find the 1 who wandered off.

Maybe you're 1 that has wandered away from God - wandered from the Chief Shepherd.

Maybe God's been looking for you!

Consider the songs the choir has sung this morning.

"You Are the God Who Saves"

"The Reckless Love of God"

"Come As You Are"

"How Deep the Father's Love for Us"

"Oh, The Wonder"

And...in a moment...we'll hear:

"Christ is Risen"

2 Peter 3:9

"The Lord...is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."

God's been patiently waiting for you to come to Him.

He loves you - wants to forgive you.

Won't you come to Him - today - right now?

Close in prayer