

How Do You View God?

Series: Understanding God Helps You To Understand You.

How would you explain God to someone?

Are there aspects of God that you do not understand?

How you view God helps you understand yourself since we are made in His image.

The world becomes a strange, mad, painful place, and life in it a disappointing and unpleasant business, for those who do not know about God. Disregard the study of God, and you sentence yourself to stumble and blunder through life blindfolded, as it were, with no sense of direction and no understanding of what surrounds you. This way you can waste your life and lose your soul.

J. I. Packer, Knowing God

What Does The Bible Say?

Five main reasons we have a distorted view on God:

Satan

For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44 NLT)

Parents

Church you grew up in

The God we want

Our limited knowledge

How Can You Obey?

Take the time to learn about God as He has revealed Himself to us.

The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. (Psalm 19:1 NLT)

God reveals Himself through the Creation.

16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 17 God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16–17 NLT)

God reveals Himself through the Bible.

15 They demonstrate that God’s law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right. 16 And this is the message I proclaim—that the day is coming when God, through Christ Jesus, will judge everyone’s secret life. (Romans 2:15–16 NLT)

God reveals Himself through the conscience.

Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. (Hebrews 1:1 NLT)

God reveals Himself through the prophets.

2 And now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. (Hebrews 1:2 NLT)

God reveals Himself through Jesus.

Understanding God will change how you see yourself, others and creation.

Additional Notes:

If you would like to use your home to disciple others, check out our training at www.crosswaveschurch.com/host. Cross Waves has produced short videos to train you how to use your home to reach others for Christ. So please check it out.

Notes:

Today's Insights to The Biblical World comes from Heiser, M. S. (2018). Brief Insights On Mastering The Bible: 80 Expert Insights On The Bible, Explained In A Single Minute (p. 37). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. Plus the following websites:

<https://answersingenesis.org/tower-of-babel/native-americans-and-the-bible/>

<https://answersingenesis.org/genesis/josephus-and-genesis-chapter-ten/>

<https://answersingenesis.org/racism/what-about-extra-biblical-tables-nations-genealogies-that-go-back-noah/>

<https://answersingenesis.org/tower-of-babel/from-ararat-to-the-americas-in-a-few-thousand-years/>

Notes:

This series is originated from the book, Thurman, C. (2017). The Lies We Believe About God: Knowing God For Who He Really Is. Colorado Springs, CO: David C Cook.

Explore:

To begin the process of renewing your mind, it is important for you to face that you have some degree of distortion and misperception in how you view God. To put it bluntly, you believe lies about God—and not just the lies we cover in this book.

First, some of the things you believe about God are lies because they are part of the “flat-out wrong” category. Let’s say you believe that God’s love is conditional. Here I would suggest that you have a belief about God that is completely wrong. As you read this book, be honest with yourself about whether you hold any of these ten beliefs about God that we explore, because all of them are flat-out wrong. Ask God to help you reject these ways of thinking about Him and move in the opposite direction.

Second, some of the things you believe about God are lies because they fall into the “mixed bag” category. For example, let’s say you believe that God is just and that because He is just, He always administers appropriate consequences when people do something wrong. Here I would suggest that you have mixed together the truth that God is just with the lie that He always disciplines people when they do something immoral. The truth is that sometimes God doesn’t give people what they deserve when they sin, because not only is He just, but He is also merciful, gracious, and forgiving. As you read this book, be on the lookout for where you might have taken something that is true about God and mixed it together with a lie. Ask God to help you hold on to what is true and let go of the part that is false.

Third, some of the things you believe about God are lies in the sense that they belong in the “kinda believe it” category. In other words, there are things you believe about God that are accurate but that you don’t believe with much conviction. Let’s say you

believe that God is in control of the universe. Here you believe something about God that is true but probably don't believe it strongly or confidently. The Bible says, "You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder" (James 2:19). The demons know that there is only one true God, but they are still demons. As you read this book, watch for the right beliefs you have about God that you don't believe with much assurance or certainty. Like the man who doubted that Jesus could remove the evil spirit from his son, say to God, "Help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24).

Thurman, C. (2017). *The Lies We Believe About God: Knowing God For Who He Really Is*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C Cook.

Explore:

John 8:44

The devil is the enemy of life and truth. By a lie he brought spiritual and physical death to mankind (cf. Gen. 3:4, 13; 1 John 3:8, 10–15.) He still distorts truth (there is no truth in him ... he is a liar and the father of lies) and seeks to lead people away from God, the Source of truth and life (2 Cor. 4:4). Since these Jews wanted Jesus' death and since they rejected the truth and embraced the lie, their family solidarity with Satan and his desires was certain. How different from having Abraham as their father!

Blum, E. A. (1985). John. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 305). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Explore:

Cosmic Eloquence

Even before the prophets of old, the cosmos was filled with God's eloquence. One summer one of my associate pastors and I

were walking home together on a particularly clear night. We looked at the North Star, the Big Dipper, the Pleiades. My fellow-minister identified the Dog Star Canis Major (Sirius), the brightest star in both hemispheres. Then we began to joke about how all this happened “by chance.” The vastness and precision of our cosmos declares the necessity of a magnificent God!

The argument from order is overwhelming. If I put ten pennies in my pocket and number them one to ten, then put my hand back in my pocket, my chances of pulling out the number one penny would be one in ten. If I place the number one penny back in my pocket and mix all the pennies again, the chances of pulling out penny number two would be one in a hundred. The chances of repeating the same procedure and coming up with penny number three would be one in a thousand. To do so with all of them (one through ten in order) would be one in ten billion! Noting the order and design of our universe, Kepler—the founder of modern astronomy, discoverer of the “Three

Planetary Laws of Motion,” and originator of the term satellite —said, “The undevout astronomer is mad.” David sang:

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. (Psalm 19:1–4)

The cosmic eloquence of God is deafening, but many will not hear it. And even those who hear, hear partially. As Job said, “And these are but the outer fringe of his works; how faint the whisper we hear of him! Who then can understand the thunder of his power?” (26:14). The eloquence of God is always there for the believer willing to hear it. So often those who have heard it best have heard it when life was darkest—perhaps while

persecuted or in prison. Bunyan, Rutherford, Bonhoeffer,
Solzhenitsyn, Colson—

all looked through the bars and saw the stars.

Prophetic Eloquence

God's people have always had more than the eloquence of the heavens, for they have had the prophets. "In the past," says the writer, "God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways" (v. 1)—literally, "in many parts and many ways." The emphasis here is on the grand diversity of God's speech in the Old Testament. God utilized great devices to instruct his prophets. God spoke to Moses at Sinai in thunder and lightning and with the voice of a trumpet. He whispered to Elijah at Horeb in "a still small voice" (1 Kings 19:12, KJV). Ezekiel was informed by visions and Daniel through dreams. God appeared to Abram in human form and to Jacob as an angel.

God declared himself by Law, by warning, by exhortation, by type, by parable.

And when God's seers prophesied, they utilized nearly every method to communicate their message. Amos gave direct oracles from God. Malachi used questions and answers. Ezekiel performed bizarre symbolic acts. Haggai preached sermons. And Zechariah employed mysterious signs.

The significance of this immensely creative and variegated communication is that it dramatically demonstrated God's loving desire to communicate with his people. It was never hackneyed, never boring, never inscrutable, never irrelevant. It was always adequate for the time. It was always progressive, revealing more of God and his ways. It was always in continuity with the previous words of God.

Through God's cosmic and prophetic eloquence men and women rose to live life on the highest plane. Abraham achieved the faith

to offer his own son. Moses withstood Pharaoh through mighty miracles. David slew Goliath. Daniel achieved and maintained massive integrity in Babylon. But in all of this (its adequacy, its progressiveness, its continuity, its power), God's eloquence was never complete. As grand as it was, it was nevertheless fragmentary and lacking.

Hughes, R. K. (1993). Hebrews: an anchor for the soul (Vol. 1, pp. 20–21). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Question 1 of 5

How has your view of God affected the way you've lived?

Question 2 of 5

Which of the five main reasons we have a distorted view on God had the most negative impact on your view of God?

Question 3 of 5

In what ways do you think your view of God differs from who He really is?

Question 4 of 5

Why would ancient Chinese writings have a similar story about the flood as the Bible?

Question 5 of 5

How would you explain how people first arrived here in North and South America?