

MY ——— View of *God*



Parakaletic
COUNSELING



Your view of God affects every area of your life

HAVE _____ You Ever *Thought?*

"I know I should want people to go to heaven, but if they become a Christian like me, they will probably end up feeling miserable."

"I read my Bible and pray, but right after completing that task I end up becoming angry with my family. What's wrong with me? How is it possible to go from something so spiritual to something so hateful?"

"I'm addicted to _____. Every pastor and mentor I have talked to has told me to read my Bible and pray more. I've increased my time in reading and prayer and even added in Bible memorization but it is worse now than ever."

"I thought obedience to God would shield me from anything bad happening to me, but that has not been the case!"

"I wish I had never become a Christian, because it seems that those who are not Christians are happier."

Write your own statement that you might have kept to yourself about God, your personal life, or your spiritual life:

Have you ever wondered if there is a better way to have a relationship with God? or if there might be something better than the kind of relationship you currently have with God? Do you feel like something is still missing in your faith? Do you feel burned out trying to live this Christian life? Does it feel like you cannot continue?



How have you gotten where you are at? What have you done wrong? Where did it go wrong?

At what point did trying to live the Christian life become a burden instead of a blessing?

Have you been taught or think on your own that the keys to living the Christian life are reading the Bible, praying, going to church, and serving God?

LET'S ——— Take a *Quiz*

Some will try to double their Christian efforts. They will pray more, read more of the Bible, memorize more verses, and add to Christian activities thinking that will bring peace and rest. Often the results are quite opposite of what they are hoping for.

Read John 14:27. What did Jesus say He was going to give us?

Read John 16:24. How much joy did Jesus intend for us to have?

Read John 10:10. What kind of life did Jesus say He came to give us?

Has your life been marked by God's peace, full joy, and abundant life?

If you answered "No," are you ready to admit that something is wrong? Are you ready to let God give you a new perspective?
Is your view of God and how the Christian life is to be lived working for you?



Read each of the questions below and write "True" or "False" beside the statement. Don't overthink your answers and don't give the "Sunday-school" answers. Go with your first response.

1. I worship God because He is a holy God.
2. I enjoy God because He is a loving Father.
3. I am often aware of God's presence in me.
4. I know God loves me no matter what happens.
5. I feel unconditionally accepted by God.
6. I obey God because He loves me, not so He will love me more.
7. I feel very comfortable calling God my "Father."
8. God is more interested in me than in what I do for Him.
9. God loves me just because I am His child.
10. God never gets angry with me.
11. God must love me because many blessings happen to me.
12. I'm afraid of God's punishment when I sin.
13. I feel as though I can never please God.
14. Making my life work seems mostly up to me instead of up to God.
15. I believe I must do the right things to get closer to God.
16. I feel as though God is often disappointed with me.
17. God seems good only when good things happen to me.
18. I need to put myself in the right position for God to bless me.
19. God doesn't really show up when I need Him.
20. Based on what He lets happen to me, God seems mad at me.

THE GOD ———
On Your
Worse Day

What do you feel God is like when He seems silent or seems to ignore your prayers?

What are your feelings about God when the circumstances of your life get worse, not better?

What have you thought about God on your worst day? Not a flat-tire-kind-of-day, but a really bad day where your very foundation seems to have crumbled kind-of-day?

Go back in your mind and remember the raw emotions you felt and write them down:

Do you feel them now?

During that difficult time, what did you feel about God and His relationship with you?

Was God even in your thoughts?

Think about your worst day again. What did you or would you say to God on that day?



Your thoughts defined what you truly believe about God and think or thought of Him. Your view of God goes beyond what you think about Him on your worst day. We get a better idea of what we think about God when we consider God and ourselves together in a relationship. There will be three lenses we will explore that we view God through.

GOD ——— Through the Lens of a *Selfie*

What if you could take a selfie of God the correctly depicted your view of God? What would it look like?

- Would your selfie with God show Him sternly pointing to the next thing He wanted you to do? Would you look half-eager and half-tired, trying to obey?
- Would your selfie be just you standing there alone with God not in the picture?
- Is God in the background, far away from you?
- Maybe in your selfie God is on His throne but the steps to get to Him are broken.
- Perhaps your selfie with God has God holding a great big stick in His hand and you have a terrible look of fear on your face as you wait for Him to punish you for your sin you just committed.
- Some see God with his arms folded and a frustrated look on his face that seems to ask why you can't figure out your life and get it together.
- Or maybe God looks disappointed as both he and you look nervously at the ground beside each other.
- Does God have his arm around you and you have your arm around God?
- In your picture is God on His throne with tears running down His face as you kneel and worship Him?
- Perhaps God is giving you a big hug, or is God mad at you and you are crying because you have messed up once again.
- Maybe God is faceless in your selfie and you are emotionless.

Do you relate to one or more of those selfies?

If so, which ones?

What would you change or add to your selfie with God?



Your view of God does not just come from how you view Him with yourself. It can also be shaped by your family.

GOD ——— Through the Lens of a *Family*



If your view of God is shaped more by your family than what the Bible says, you may struggle with having the right view of God. Your challenge may be believing what the Bible says over your experience or it may simply be that you do not have a thorough knowledge of what the Bible says about God. Often our relationship with our earthly fathers influence our view of God.

If your dad was distant, did not interact with you, or even abusive, you might struggle in your view of God and yourself. Some have dads who they know love them and sacrificially give to them but if they ask you to do a project they berate you or come behind you and redo it telling you all the wrong you did. Perhaps you did a great job on a task you were given but had one small mistake and that was all that your dad focused on. This left you crushed and feelign like anything you did would never be quite good enough. As a result when you view your Heavenly Father you want Him to be proud of you and work hard to obey and serve Him, yet deep down you feel as you could never fully please Him. It is often like God is saying to you, “You missed a spot.”

There are those who have a wonderful father who is loving, affectionate, kind, brings stability, and freely offers meaningful love and unconditional acceptance. You have a great relationship with your father and do not feel like you have to prove anything to your father to earn His love. You know you are loved and as a result want to obey him on that basis.

What kind of relationship did/do you have with your father?

Is there someone else like a brother, uncle, pastor, or grandparent, etc. that could have influenced your perspective on a father figure?



When you think about your relationship with God, what parallels do you see with your family?

GOD ——— Through the Lens of a *Religion*

Would it surprise you to know that God is not religious? Why or why not?

In what ways is God someone who is mostly interested in giving people rules to live by?

Would you define a relationship with God as being blessed when you obey God and punished when you disobey Him?

What does the Bible say about God being religious?

Read Genesis 2:7. What does this say about who God is and His motivations?

Think about what Adam must have experienced being created by God and describe what that must have felt like?

What is the first thing Adam saw as he breathed air for the first time?

Spirit in this verse refers to God breathing His very Spirit into man. The word life is the plural form of lives. This seems to be a clear reference to the fact that the Triune God took up residence in the first man. The word soul is our mind, emotions, and will. It is our personality. When man became a living soul, He had God living in Him. He was the human prototype for every human who was to be born after him. He was originally designed to live in a relationship with God by God indwelling him or her. That is what it means to be fully human.

This verse teaches us that God is your Creator and you were His idea. You exist because God wants you on this earth. Does this give you a sense of value? This verse also instructs us that God's design is for human to live united with Himself. He and He alone is your functional source of life. God wants to be close to you because He loves you and created you to enjoy the depths of His love. He did not create you because He needed someone to love. He is self-sufficient and has all the love He needs in Himself.



GOD ——— Through the Lens of a *Religion*



God was so full of love that He desired to share that with another creation. He desires to unite Himself with you and share Himself with you. You have an invitation to enjoy a relationship with the Triune God. God created you to have a relationship with Him and live with an eternal purpose.

Read Genesis 1:26-28. What was God's purpose for man?

Read 1 Corinthians 10:31. What is God's purpose for you?

Read Genesis 2:16-17. Write out the rule(s) God gave man?

God did not give man a bunch of religious rules to force man to worship and love Him. God gave man one rule and Himself. He gave man His resources and invited man to enjoy a relationship with Him. In addition He gave man one rule that was intended for man's good. If God were religious by nature, he would not have waited thousands of years to give man the Ten Commandments. He did not give you a bunch of rules because He knew you did not need them; He had given man all He needed to live: Himself. However, we know that man did not keep God's one rule and as a result sin entered into the world. It is important to understand that God never stopped loving man because God is not religious.

When you believe God is religious, angry, distant, unloving and impossible to please you will be led to the bondage of depression, lustful habits, discouragement, physical pain, and so much more. God wants to take you from relating to Him only in a religious way to enjoying intimacy with Him. Because many Christians do not have the right view of God they do not know How He views them. The Christian life is easier than you think because you already have everything you need in Christ to live it!

A circular inset image showing a young woman with brown hair, wearing a yellow shirt, holding a black smartphone up to take a selfie. The background is slightly blurred, showing some greenery and a building.

Read 2 Peter 1:2-3. What has God given us to know how to live godly?

Read 2 Peter 1:4. What has God made us partakers in?

Read 2 Peter 1:5-7. What are we to add to our faith?

Read 2 Peter 1:8-9. Compare what happens to those who add to their faith and those who do not:

BUILDING a Better View of *God*

God gave us a book that tells us all about Himself, His characteristics, how He works, His attributes, and everything we need to know to have the right view of Him. Years ago I was struggling with this idea of doing all the right things so I could maintain the right relationship and position with God. I did not understand that I was fully accepted by God because of Jesus! One day I was shown a system in which I could begin to build a better view of God! I started that journey not knowing how God was going to use it in such a mighty way in my life! Years later the book I made is still one of my greatest treasures. It is nothing to look at and quite raggedy to behold but the treasures of knowledge about My God in this book has helped shape my view of God and how He works. When I was presented with the truth of the exchanged life it was an easy yes because God had been first teaching about who He was and how wonderful He is! Realizing I would get to exchange my broken and deficient self with His glorious strength and power was an easy step for me.

Every decision we make in our Christian faith should be impacted by what we believe about God. Satan is the Father of lies and wants us to believe lies about God, so that is why we need to learn what the Bible teaches about who God is and how He works. Any time you have a trial, need assurance or encouragement, waver in your faith, this book will be a great source of truth and encouragement. Your notebook will be full of Biblical truth about who God is and how He works. Meditating on these truths will change your life. We act according to what we believe and what we believe affects how we feel. This notebook can also be used during your prayer time to worship God for who you know and are learning Him to be.



This is a project that will take you a long time to complete. It is a life-changing project that will help you learn about God and begin to know Him.

Supplies Needed:

- Loose-leaf Binder
- Favorite Pen (you will need several)
- Pencil Pouch that Fits in the Binder
- Lined Notebook Paper

Directions:

1. Start by reading the Psalms. They are full of descriptions and attributes of God.
2. As you read begin to note when the Bible talks about God, how it describes Him, what it says He does, etc.
3. Let's look at Psalm 1 for an example.
4. Psalm 1:2 talks about God having a law we can and should delight in. Psalm 1:6 shows how God knows the way of the righteous.
5. On the top of your page write a header. The header should always include "My God is ____" and in the blank fill in the descriptor, e.g. "My God has a law." (Psalm 1:1) On another page write a header: "My God knows my way." (Psalm 1:6)
6. On the first line write the reference and the entire verse that matches the heading.
7. Anytime you come to a verse about God, write out the whole verse under the appropriate category.
8. Sometimes a verse will have more than one descriptor and will end up on various pages.
9. It is very important to place the pages in the notebook in alphabetical order as that makes it easy to find them and put in more verses.