

DOES GOD REALLY CARE?

INVITATION

Are you willing to rethink your current concept of God?

Life can be a tangled mess — our relationships, our jobs, our health, even our thinking can get so confused. From one day to the next, we never know what kind of tangle is going to pop up, but there's certainly going to be one.

So, what do we do when life is tangled and we feel alone? When we wonder if He's really with us? Where is God in the middle of our chaos?

To answer these questions, we need to first look at how we view God because if we're asking God to be in the middle of our chaos, we need to know who He is. And the truth is, just because we know things about God, it doesn't mean, on those really bad days, that we experience Him that way. Our feelings, beliefs and thoughts may not always line up with what we know. And although correct theology is important, it doesn't untangle life.

As we walk through this study, we're going to look at the character of God and compare it to what we believe about God on our hardest days — those days when we beg Him to change our circumstances, take our pain and rescue us from it all. The days we wonder why our Father who is all-powerful, and all-knowing, won't just snap His fingers for us and change it all. Who is God? What is He like?

Are you willing to rethink your current concept of God?



Is it possible that some of the fear, anger or confusion you're experiencing stems from a skewed concept of God? Our prayer for you today is that, as you work through this study, you will open your heart and your mind to see God in a new way, and that you will allow Him to show you His true character. Oftentimes God doesn't change our circumstances, but instead, changes us. Bringing us to a place where experiencing Him on the inside, causes us to be okay on the outside. Will you let Him change you? Will you let Him reveal His true character to you?



THE KNOT

God reveals many of His characteristics to us in His Word, but is He really who He says He is? Or is He who we think He is? This isn't something we tend to think too much about until our lives get tangled up in some way. It's at these times when it takes a little bit longer to get in touch with the true character of God because we don't always see His love and care for us in the midst of our pain — in fact, these are the times when our skewed beliefs of God make us feel that we are alone, forgotten or unloved.

So, where does our concept of God come from?

Well, often our concept of God can be attributed to our upbringing from parents, teachers, relatives, ministers — really anyone who played a role in shaping us into the people we've become. How we saw those people and their love and care for us then become the characteristics we attribute to God. For example, if your parents were never home, or home but too busy to spend time with you, you may have the belief about God that you are alone in this life to figure it all out, or that you are unimportant to Him. A.W. Tozer wrote, "Nothing twists and deforms the soul more than a low or unworthy concept of God." An unworthy or inaccurate view of God will stop us from experiencing the true character of God.





THE UNTANGLE

So, who is this God we're talking about? What are some of His characteristics? Scripture reveals to us that:

God is love.

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love... We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him” (1 John 4:7-8, 16).

God is for us.

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, ‘For your sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.’ But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:31-39).

God gives us good things.

“Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him” (Matthew 7:9-11).



God comforts us.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

God is patient and kind.

“Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance” (Romans 2:4).

“The Lord is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his deeds” (Psalm 145:17).

“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

God is just.

“For the Lord is a God of justice; how blessed are all those who long for Him” (Isaiah 30:18b).

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts nor are your ways my ways,’ declares the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8-9).

God is unchanging.

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

God is compassionate and merciful.

“You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful” (James 5:11b).

“Therefore the Lord longs to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you” (Isaiah 30:18a).



“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us” (Ephesians 2:4).

Obviously these are only a few of the characteristics of God. Certainly there are too many to list.



Who Is God to Me?

Below are 14 questions to take you deeper into your journey with Christ, and to untangle any lies you’ve been believing about God. Take your time. Your answers should be based on how you think and feel about God when life feels tangled — not on a day when everything in life is going as you dreamed it would.

Be honest and put aside any desire to answer as you think you should or what you know intellectually. Give God time to speak with you, to work in you, and to reveal any skewed beliefs about Him that may exist. It is through this honest time of reflection that you can be set free to experience the beautiful character of your Heavenly Father.

When I think about God, I feel...

When I have to trust God, I feel...



When I think about God, I wish...

Sometimes I get angry with God when...

It frustrates me when God wants me to...

I really enjoy God when...

The one thing I would change about myself to please God is...

When I think about God's commands, I feel...

Sometimes I wish God would...

I can really depend on God when...

In my relationship with God, I am always sure that He will...



The one thing that frightens me about God is...

God surprises me when...

The one thing I am afraid God will do is...

My Concept of God

Take some time and ask God to bring to your mind a time when your circumstances were difficult or painful — a time when life felt very tangled. Then draw a picture of your concept of God below. Is God near you or distant from you? Is He big or small? Is He even there? What expression does He have on His face when He looks at you? What body language does He display? Be as detailed as you can.



WRAP-UP & PRAYER

As you've taken some time to reflect, do you feel that you have had a tangled view of God throughout your life? What is the most significant truth God has spoken to you during this study?

Our concept of God is crucial, and until we actually stop and take a moment to ask God to show us our skewed beliefs of Him, we will live in fear, full of anger and resentment. Oh, how He longs to change our tangled views of Him! My prayer for you is that regardless of your childhood experience in your family, you will know that God is the perfect Father. He is not bound by human limitations — He can carry the weight of your world on His shoulders. He is never mad at you, disappointed with you, nor is He distant from you. He is for you and with you. He will not forsake you.

Even if you have negative thoughts, doubts and beliefs about God, they are not true. Truth is what God says regardless of what we think or feel. I pray that you will be honest with Him and ask Him to show you His true Self in the middle of your chaos and to untangle the lies that are knotted up in your thinking.

Blessings to you,

Pam & Scott

References:

The Best of Tozer, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1978; pp 120.

All Scripture taken from the NASB version of the Bible unless otherwise indicated.



Are you feeling bogged down and tangled up in your circumstances? It happens so easily in this world. Regardless of where you're at in your journey, Life Untangled wants to help you experience the love and power of God in a truly meaningful way. God sees you and your circumstances, and He longs to heal your wounded soul and lead you to a place of hope. If you would like to speak with someone on our team you can do so by contacting www.lifeuntangled.com/contact-us.

We offer a safe place where you can find hope and help on your journey of healing. Our experienced Christian counseling staff helps you discover God's good intentions for your life, especially when your life feels tangled. We guide men, women, and couples through understanding unwanted behaviors, difficult emotions like anxiety, depression and anger, and most importantly, to experience God's design for victory in life.

You are not alone.

