WHO DOES GOD SAY I AM?

ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

C.S. Lewis said, "I read in a periodical the other day that the fundamental thing is how we think of God. By God Himself, it is not! How God thinks of us is not only more important, but infinitely more important. Indeed, how we think of Him is of no importance except in so far as it is related to how He thinks of us... to be loved by God, not merely pitied, but delighted in as an artist delights in his work or a father in a son—it seems impossible, a weight or burden of glory which our thoughts can hardly sustain. But so it is."

Each of us has a view of God that has been influenced by countless voices throughout our lives. Your perspective on God's character and his relationship to you will certainly be affected by your experiences and the people around you. So maybe it's time for a perspective change. The New Testament writers, many of whom were closest to Jesus while he was on earth, tell us not only how we should view God, but more importantly, as Lewis asserts, how he views us. The book of Romans is Paul's letter to the Church in the city of Rome. In it he attempts to strengthen their faith by reminding them of who they are and how God sees them.

Read Romans 8:14–16.

14 For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. 15 The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

God sees you as his child, and wants you to see yourself as under his care and provision. Though it may seem simple, this view can foster radical changes in your life as you approach God with confidence in who he is and who you are in him.

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THINK ABOUT IT

1. God is not the perfect picture of our imperfect earthly fathers, he is the perfect picture of our perfect, heavenly Father. What are some characteristics of your earthly father that you need to begin to separate from your view of your heavenly Father?
2. What were you taught growing up about how God sees you? What about your childhood understanding needs to change? What may need to stay the same?
3. Think of someone in your life who seems to have a close, intimate relationship with God. What characterizes their view of him? Where do you think they have learned that perspective?

APPLY IT

Part of the process of growing in your relationship with God and deepening your understanding of who you are in him is talking to him through prayer. Many of us want to pray and want to be prayed for, but find it difficult to start or make prayer a daily practice. Start simply with a prayer like this, filling in your own words as you go.

Heavenly Father,
I believe that you are...
Because of that I know that I am...
I need...
I am thankful for...
I love you.
In Jesus's name. Amen.

FOR GROUP DISCUSSION (IF DESIRED)

1. Who are some of the people in your life who have impacted your view of God? As you reflect on those messages now, which ones are helpful and true and which are not?
2. Is it difficult for you to believe that you are fully accepted by God? What currently impacts your feelings of rejection or doubt when it comes to your identity as a son or daughter of God?

[1] Norman L. Geisler, "Trinity," Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 730.

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