

DISCOVERING What God Actually Thinks About You

Part 1: Does God Actually Love Me?

Genesis 1

INTRO:

Tired stuff

Most people believe there is some kind of God. But who is God

Unknowable mystical force? Universal power or consciousness?

Or more like traditional idea of a supreme first cause being?

And if that's the case... Is he good? Angry? Distant? Does he care about what happens here?

Really I think the deeper question we all ask in some way... If there is a God what does he think and feel about me?

How we answer that question has the ability to shape not only our view of God, but how we see others, and ourselves and our place in the world.

So, let's talk about it together.

WE: The question we all ask is... if there is a God what does he think and feel about me?

I think for many of us, who believe there is a God, whether we put it into these words or not often feel...

"Sure he loves me (b/c he has to), but he's often annoyed, angry, or disappointed in me."

Kind of like that annoyed/frustrated parent in walmart... "Yeah you're my kid and I'm not going to leave you here but, if you ask for one more thing/throw one more tantrum.... UGH!!!"

For many people God seems like an annoyed parent at best.

And of course add on top of this is what we're told/taught about him either directly or indirectly from the religious people...

He likes those who have all of their stuff together, the clean people, the ones who try really hard to believe and act nice, keep all the rules

God likes the people who don't drink, smoke, swear, watch the shows I like to watch.

What it seems like is if there is a God, he wants us to be FOR him and the stuff he likes and if we do good enough and "measure up," then he'll be FOR us and hopefully give us a less hard life. Right?

The problem... we don't really know WHO GOD IS. We think he is like us... critical/judgemental/easily annoyed

We're pretty sure someone or something exists but if it or he does how could we ever know what he's like?

We know what we've been told, what we feel, but who is God really?

One of best ways to find out is to look at how he has interacted with others in the past...

This is not new problem...

In fact it's the exact same question the ancient Israelites asked when they escaped Egypt.

After 400 yrs slaves... steeped in Egyptian culture and mythology they saw amazing things done by this unknown God.

"There's something/someone out there that I can't explain... but what or who is it? What are they like?"

They need to know who this God is that rescued them is... so God had Moses write about that in what we call the book of Genesis.

1st 3 chapters are an amazing poetic description of God creating the world and the first people.

But the focus isn't what many make it out to be, the main point isn't HOW God created... but who God is.

B/c... **God wants us to know who he really is.**

So as God introduces himself to this new nation... what is the first thing he wants them to know about him?

GOD:

Gen 1:1 God created everything out of nothing. The uncaused first cause.

Not a scientist at all... (my 2nd worst subject).

Physicists have been able to basically figure out everything that happened in the first picosecond of the universe.. After the big bang and its results... but the cause, what happened before... where did all this matter that rapidly expanded come from?

I know it might seem simple... but sometimes the simplest answer is the best... Moses said what was before... was God.

But if it was God... why did he do it? What's the point? If he was already existing just fine in the "Before," why do it?

He wanted to. God created everything b/c he wanted to. Including us. You.

God created you because he wanted to.

But it gets better... Moses then goes through the very familiar story of God creating the world in a week. I remember in my Xian school having to memorize what was created each "day".

Could it have been 7 days? Maybe. Science would say no.

“Wait?! So you’re saying...” I’m saying I don’t really care. I care about the main point...

The point of what Moses wrote wasn’t to give us a step by step of HOW God created everything. The whole point, the big picture of this very poetic passage is to explain WHY God created... what does the universe, creation, tells us about God?

Gen 1:3-4

Goes on to say the same thing about everything else that is created oceans/plants/animals/stars... saying the same phrase over and over... “God saw that it was good.”

Why? Is he checking his work? Reassuring himself since this might be his first time making a universe?

If something is good, what or who is it good for? God didn’t need them. He existed without them...

Gen 1:26-27

Once God had everything ready and good (like getting the house ready when a new baby is coming) then he created humans. (How exactly? Not the point)

The point is... **God created the universe FOR us.**

Benji’s prayer... “Thank you for getting everything ready and then making us.”

Means... originally every sunset, forest, fern, ocean discovery created for us to survive, enjoy, thrive.

Why do you think so many of us feel close to God when we are in nature?

Why do we have the capacity to appreciate the beauty, grandeur, wonder of the world and universe around us? We don’t need that to survive?

God not only created the world for us he gave us the ability to enjoy and appreciate what he made for us.

But there’s more...

Gen 1:28 God made everything good and then simply gave it to us... why?

Why did he do ALL of this... create the laws of physics and nature and everything we see and don’t see... why do all of that for us?

Think about it... We hadn’t done anything to deserve anything from God... we had just been given consciousness.

He created all of it and then gave us all of it... **b/c he wanted to.**

See this is easy to skip by but it shows one of the most fundamental truths about who God is...

God loves to give. It's one of his main things. Read the biblical writings... he always giving.

Gen 1:29 Every tree. They didn't need every. They needed a modest farm.

They hadn't prepared the soil. They hadn't cleared the rocks, plowed, planted, watered, fertilized, pruned... They did nothing and were given everything.

God's love is always infinitely beyond what is needed, deserved or earned.

And that is what we so often miss when we think about God... or when we think about what God thinks about us.

"If God ever thinks about me, he's at the very least disappointed. I don't measure up to what he wants. If I just get my act together, get back to church, then he'll be happy with me and I'll have his love back."

But God doesn't work that way.

God loved you before you existed. Loved you before you could do anything for him. And what could you give God now that he doesn't have that will make him love you more?

Even if we've been told this before... it is so easy to forget... **God's love is not dependent on you.**

Paul- Nothing can separate us from God's love. No thing. Nothing he created (including you) can make him stop loving for you... not just tolerating you... but delightedly loving you more than you could ever need.

I don't care if you've been following Jesus for 80 years and this seems "basic" or if you're not even sure God exists and this seems "too good to be true wishful thinking"

But sometimes the simple truth is the best truth.

God chooses to love you b/c he loves you... he likes you, he enjoys you, he delights in you

He is not mad at. He is not annoyed with you. He is not being passively aggressively distant from you... he has always been, is, and always will be FOR you.

God has been for you before the beginning of time .

YOU:

You know what's weird. Sometimes people reject/downplay/ignore this aspect of God b/c it seems too easy. Or even selfish.

Something in us says it's too good to be true, or we're being self-centered by focusing so much on God's love FOR US and not working harder to make sure we have sufficient love FOR GOD.

Like for some reason this seems like a watered down version of God.

Them: "Jon, this is so basic. Where's the deep truths? Why are you always talking about God's love?"

Me: "Why aren't you? Love is the core of who God is."

You can't love God until you taste how much he loves you. And even further...

The better we grasp God's love for us the better we love others.

Knowing and experiencing God's love inspires our love for God and others.

So I'm giving you permission to focus on/meditate on/purposely and consciously enjoy God's love for you.

Soak in **Psalm 139:1-18.**

Pray: God, Thank you for loving me. Help me to see it, accept it, experience it.

WE: Think about it...

This simple truth is when God sees you he sees his child he created on purpose, who he chooses to love unconditionally, who he enjoys entirely, and loves to give to extravagantly.

What if we didn't brush it off b/c it's simple or basic. What if the core of who you are was founded in the fact that you are personally known, cared for, and created by the infinite, eternal, all powerful God.

How would that change your view of each day? Your view of others? Your view of yourself?

It's not wishful thinking and it's not something for just a select few... God is FOR you and there is proof all around you...

The universe is proof that God loves you.

Summary:

The question we all ask in some way is... If there is a God what does he think and feel about me?

The answer we find has the ability to shape not only our view of God, but how we see others, ourselves, and our place in the world.

Discussion Questions:

1. What was something that stood out to you in this week's message?
2. What is one thing you think God likes about each person in your group? (If you're not in a group, what are three things you think God likes about you?)
3. Why do you think it is often difficult to grasp and/or accept God's unconditional love for us?
4. Take the time to read Psalm 139:1-18 together. What ideas, feelings, or questions come to mind?
5. How can your group pray for you this week?

Episode Breakdown:

Main Points:

- The question we all ask is: if there is a God what does he think and feel about me?
- For many people God seems like an annoyed parent at best.
- God wants us to know who he really is.
- God created you because he wanted to.
- God loves to give.
- God's love is always infinitely beyond what is needed, deserved or earned.
- God's love is not dependent on you.
- God has been for you before the beginning of time.
- Knowing and experiencing God's love inspires our love for God and others.
- The universe is proof that God loves you.

This week's Challenge

Meditate/Soak in Psalm 139:1-18.

Thank you for loving me. Help me to see it, accept it, experience it.

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SHOW NOTES

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