

A Scriptural Concept of God

Increasing numbers of people have rejected belief in the Triune God revealed in the Bible. They prefer instead to create a concept of God that conforms to their own notions. We believe that there is no living God beside Him who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ and His Word. God is love. He also is holy, righteous, and unchanging. He hates sin but loves sin-fallen mankind.—(LLC Position Statement, Section 2, Item 1)

Self-Produced Concept of God

People today enjoy the freedom of choosing their faith community, and lately, many have also started making individual choices to accept or reject various beliefs within their chosen religious affiliations. Surveys show that an increasing portion of the population deliberately chooses a concept of God that is different from how God reveals himself in Scripture. People like to see God as loving, nonjudgmental and removed from their lives, and choose these characteristics to support their lifestyle choices.

On the other hand, characteristics such as holiness, righteousness and God's unchanging nature are rejected because they upset the selfish desires of the flesh. Thus, faith has become a philosophy where mankind defines God, and excludes God from involvement in life. This phenomenon doesn't only affect those outside of God's congregation. God's children also have carnal minds, and thus, we also have a place of watching amid this strong worldly tendency. Apostle Paul advises, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Rom. 8:6). We do not believe through understanding. But we understand through faith (Heb. 11:3).

God's Revelation

We cannot comprehend God with our mind. We cannot use our mind to find and define God. The only way of receiving true knowledge of God is by His own revelation to us. He does this in two ways. Generally, He reveals indications of His existence through nature, through our conscience, and through phases of history (Jer. 31:2,3; Heb. 1:1,2). This general revelation may assure us of God's existence, but it does not suffice for salvation. In order to be saved, we need faith in the merit works of Jesus Christ and in the Word of God (2 Pet. 1:21; John 7:17; Rom. 8:16).

God is incomprehensible. In describing God, Scripture uses images and parables. One central image of God is that of a loving father (Luke 15). Believers call God our Father (Matt. 6:9, Gal 4:6). We become children of God through adoption, or "new birth in the spirit" (Rom. 8:16,17; 1 John 2:29). God's Word also teaches that those who do not have true faith are not children of God (John 1:11,12; 1 John 3:10).

God as Holy, Unchanging and Righteous

In loving the sin-fallen person, God does not change or depart from being holy and righteous. God is not defiled by sin, and thus does not accept or have fellowship with unrighteousness or the unrighteous person (Isa. 57:15; Rom. 2:2). An unchanging God means that He will not alter His will for mankind, which He partly expresses in the Ten Commandments, for example (Heb. 13:8).

How is it possible, then, for a sin-fallen person to be in fellowship with this holy and righteous God? Our modern culture's carnal answer is to lay aside God's righteousness. In labeling God as merely loving, and ignoring His righteousness, many today expect God to also accept unrighteousness. But Righteous God cannot do this and remain righteous. Thus Righteous God's answer was to send His only Son, Jesus, to redeem the world through Him. Through faith in Christ Jesus, a sin-fallen person becomes righteous and acceptable to God (2 Cor. 5:19). Mankind is marked by original sin and is sinful. But God's grace teaches His child to reject worldly lusts and live soberly and righteously in this world (Tit. 2:15).

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