

MY GOD IMAGE

What words come to your mind when you think about God? Let's go ahead and make a list of words that describe or define our image of what God is like:

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If you listen carefully to hear what people are saying about God, you might hear things like, "He's the man upstairs," as if He is like your neighbor upstairs who is moving around and making lots of noise. Some people say, "He's my higher power," offering a strength that's out of this world. Some people blame God for all the bad things that have ever happened in their lives and use God as a scapegoat. Some people view God as an angry, judging, critical parent just waiting to punish them for messing up. Others are filled with doubts about God's existence saying, "How could a loving God allow..." and list the injustices of our world like sickness, death, poverty, abuse, murder, or national disasters.

While some people are building a case against God, others are building a case for God. Some people base their God-image on feelings, thoughts, or experiences. Some people cut and paste pieces from different world religions and self-serving ideas that make God into a giant teddy bear that makes everyone feel good. Others build their God-image on the truths found in the Bible.

In each of the sixty-six books of the Bible, you will discover different snap shots, word pictures, descriptors, and attributes of God. Together, they form a well-rounded, complimentary image of God. Although we may pick and choose which words we like that uniquely describe God, God is so much bigger, and God is more than we can imagine or grasp. He's the Creator who breathes life into all that is living, but He also ordains our death. He already knows our thoughts and our next words, but He still wants us to share them with Him. He tells us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, and He tells us that we are saved by His grace. Just when we begin to think we understand God and how He works, He'll transcend our understanding and do so much more. Here's how the Apostle Paul described God in Ephesians 3:20:

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen.

You may be wondering, "Why do we have health talks about my God image?" Let me explain why. The Bible says that we were created by God in the image of God. Our image of God, which is either positive or negative, will oftentimes determine how we view ourselves (self-image). Our God-image and our self-image usually impact how we see and treat other people, the kind of values we adopt, and the kind of decisions we make. So you may build a case that our God-image is the most important image we have. Let's talk about it...

- Some of us may have a more negative view of God because...
- Some of us may have a more positive view of God because...
- What has shaped your view of God?
- How does your current image of God affect you?

"Health Talks" are designed to help us learn to talk and deal with one another in ways that build understanding and a healthy, growing, supportive, Christian community.