

JOB SERIES ELEVEN
HOW TO GET OUR VIEW OF GOD
DR. ROGER BARRIER
JOHN 9:1-3, 13-18, 24-34; MATTHEW 23:1-4, 13-36
(SERMON 1591)

HOOK: *Malcolm in the Middle* video: View of God with guilt and penance. Forgiveness comes through hard work and cleaning.

Two weeks ago, in the context of our study of the Book of Job, we began exploring our view of God. Unfortunately, it is fair to say that most people have a view of God that does not accurately portray the real God.

As we approached the end of Job God began to reveal Himself to Job. This revelation is the first accurate picture of God, chronologically, given in the Bible. We begin here. God is majestic in His awesomeness. He is also personally wooing everyone into a relationship with Himself. The picture of God that begins in Job culminates in the life of Jesus Christ.

LAST WEEK WE EXAMINED FOUR PRIMARY VIEWS OF GOD.

SLIDE #1: Some view God as primarily DISTANT and uninvolved.

SLIDE #2: "I hardly even know he exists."

SLIDE #3: Some view God primarily as Inspecting (the harsh taskmaster)

SLIDE #4: "I wonder what trouble you're going to get into today?"

SLIDE #5: Some view God primarily as DISAPPOINTED?"

SLIDE #6: "No matter what you do or how well you do it, you will never be good enough."

What does the real God look like?

SLIDE #7: The Real God is intimately and compassionately involved in my life.

Close eyes and raise hands, which view do you have? I will tell you the results.
Get tape or CD from last week.

SLIDE #8: Today we will examine How Our view of God is shaped positively or painfully through:

1. Life events
2. Religious traditions and experiences
3. Growing up experiences

All three of these are seen in John 9.

SLIDE #9: Next week, How Our view of God is reshaped as we walk in the light of God's truth.

1. The light of God's Son
2. The light of God's Word
3. The light of God's people

OUR VIEW OF GOD IS SHAPED POSITIVELY OR PAINFULLY THROUGH:

SLIDE #10: 1. LIFE EVENTS

READ JOHN 9:1-3. John 9 and man born blind: this is a life event.

Painful life experience: blind. How did He view God? Not caring? not powerful? Mean?

This man born blind experiences healing by a compassionate encounter with Jesus Christ.

If the question “Where was God?” is not adequately resolved it will painfully impact our view of God.

STORY: Last Sunday night, man lost 18-year-old daughter to car accident one month ago. Came out here to visit brother and get perspective. If that is not resolved carefully, it can forever alter his view of God.

STORY: Young girl sexually abused by her dad, and unfortunately, his friends. Hard to imagine this, but it happens. Comes to Casas. Where was God? Why did God let it happen? This needs to be resolved.

She remembers an angel on the wall paper: Realized God was there, weeping. God provided for her. Her dad is to protect her and bring security. He was God’s provision. In a wicked world, he failed. This was his responsibility.

The devastation of sexual abuse to a child is monumental: Several of our counselors guided her carefully through her healing: She was baptized here almost two decades ago and found peace with God and life.

Life events can affect us positively like Joseph or Job, or painfully like King Saul.

Consider how tough times made Joseph into a man of God and the same type of tough times produced bitterness and bondage in the life of Saul.

■ SLIDE #11: Saul:

1 Samuel 13:13: Kingdom removed

1 Samuel 28: Saul and the witch of Endor

How did he get here? Never found or resolved with God in his problems.

■ SLIDE #12: Joseph: “You meant this for evil but God meant this for good.”

READ GENESIS 45:1-8.

How we handle and interpret life events

■ SLIDE #: Judy Rohr: People go visit her. “Who is this woman? Strongest faith always cheers me up.”

WWII; Lost husband cancer, Lewis, 8th air force, Rip, Son, Rusty flight surgeon, wings and MD, killed in plane crash.

Back degeneration, rods, Christmas dinner; American flag; “

■ SLIDE #: Daughter Ginger with Justin and Sarah at Sarah’s wedding; lost father, lost brother, husband had his set of issues and marriage failed—it never should have happened. Suffered severe pain in back and hips. Raised two fine children, Sara, soon to be married; Justin, married, Hazen, in Med School at UofA.

Looking for husband.

These women have been through the fire and found God. Resolved the question, “Where Was God?” time and time again. Through it all, God was the Father who nurtured them through the toughest events in life.

■ SLIDE #15: *Exercise: Make a life map to look at positive and negative life events. In that context, rejoice and mourn with people.*

SLIDE #16: 2. RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS AND EXPERIENCES

READ JOHN 9:13-18, 24-34.

The religious leaders heard about the healing. Did they rejoice? No, they put him on trial; and when he gave the “wrong answers,” they kicked him out of the church.

John 9 religious leaders hear about healing. Do the religious leaders rejoice? No, they put him on trial. “Who did this?” “What happened to you?”

Talking with physician,

SLIDE #17: Woman to her doctor: “I have forgiven the church, but I am still going to hell.”

“Hell? Why do you think you are going to hell?”

“Because I went to a Garth Brooks concert.”

“What! Who told you that?”

“My pastor.”

SLIDE #18: Sorry for those of you who have had to forgive the church—for whatever reason.

Too many churches minister condemnation instead of grace. (Not conviction, but condemnation.)

Men’s retreat announcement: Sr. Pastor: “All men stand up...Those registered, sit down. Church, we’ve got to pray for the rest of these men!”

Pastor thought that his role was to convict people and bring them to repentance.

SLIDE #19: READ MATTHEW 23:1-4, 13-36 and consider what Jesus had to say to religious leaders who misled and mistreated the people.

A pastor with an incorrect view of God will pass his view on to the congregation and sow much heartache and despair.

An incorrect view of God will produce a skewed interpretation of Biblical passages.

Too many churches confuse their convictions with Biblical truth. Convictions are personal and optional. Biblical truth is not.

SBC Bible Study for youth on Malachi 1:1-14.

Making it personal:

SLIDE #20: 1. What do you personally put before your relationship with God?

2. When you get caught doing wrong, how do you respond?

3. How do you show contempt for the Lord’s name? Does your life bring glory to God? What sin(s) do you need to confess?

SLIDE #21: 4. If God were to ask you to sacrifice something, what would you be willing to give up for Him?

5. Would you be willing to give up your life to serve God?

6. How is or how has your life grieved God?

7. How would you describe your relationship with God in three words?

They completely omit any reference to or emphasis on verses 2 and 9.

Malachi 1:2: I have loved you," says the LORD. "But you ask, 'How have you loved us?' "Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" the LORD says. "Yet I have loved Jacob,

Malachi 1:9: Now implore God to be gracious to us. With such offerings from your hands, will he accept you?"-- says the LORD Almighty.

SLIDE #22: Picture of the church I grew up in. It was not perfect, but it was overall a very healthy place. Sort out positive and negative views of God I got there.

Brother Baker and dancing at Cary: Home coming king. Brother Baker's call.
Difference between personal convictions and Biblical truth.
Conscience needs to be retrained. Julie has taught me to dance—in the house with the shades drawn.

Many great things from Brother Baker. Played golf with him and dad every Saturday afternoon when I was growing up.
Love for the Bible: Taught me how to tie my notes into the Bible.
Watched misguided men engineer his firing—picked up the pieces of his life and outlived both of those men in profitable ministry.
Mr. Fox.

Picture of Northway: sycamore tree; stones

Marker religious events. Julie and I talking with a pastor in Albany NY.
STORY of pastor being fired, losing house, troubles at church. Invited to Holy Land at last minute by a friend, decides to go. Sunday in Gethsemane: "God, I want to experience what you experienced." Back room by altar. Kneeled to pray.
Tour guide comes to find him. Guide comes in, blood everywhere. Nose capillaries broke and giant nose bleed. Kept handkerchief with blood stains.

In the 21st century church we have to address peoples' concepts of God. We need a fresh message from the church about "Who is the real God?" We need a real view of the right God.

We need to get a real view of the right God: The truth is, He is intimately and caringly involved.

SLIDE #23: 3. GROWING UP RELATIONSHIPS

READ JOHN 9:19-23.

Notice how the healed man's parents abandoned him in his hour of need. Did his family rejoice with him? No, they distanced themselves from him: "Let him answer."

One day the disciples asked the Lord Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray. He began with the words, "Our Father..."

What are the implications of Jesus teaching us to begin our prayers with the words: "Our Father?"
Could it be that Jesus is portraying a God who longs to be caringly involved in our lives?

SLIDE #24: Was your father a wise judge like Ward Cleaver on Leave It To Beaver: "Beaver, since you broke your mother's vase, you'll have to pay for it out of your allowance."

SLIDE #25: Was your father neurotically tied to mom and dad like Raymond on ? He was more of an adult child than any kind of mature father.

SLIDE #26: Was your father a self-absorbed, clueless, good 'ole boy like Fred Flintstone: "Wilma, I'm starving. Where are my brontosaurus burgers? I want them, now!"

SLIDE #27: Maybe your dad was your best friend like Andy Taylor on "The Andy Griffin" show: "Say, Opey, you rustle up some worms and I'll take your and Barney fishin'."

SLIDE #28: Or maybe your dad was Homer Simpson: you can take that any way you want to.

I know that some of you had wonderful fathers; but, I know that many of you did not. As children our fathers greatly shaped our theology—our view of God.

What were your earliest memories of your dad?

Do you remember him as the one you ran to when you skinned your knee or had a bad dream?

Or, was he someone who lived in your house, and delivered the punishment when you disobeyed:

“Just wait until your dad gets home and you’re really going to get it.”

Maybe he had tickle wars with you or took you to ball games.

Or, maybe your dad was not there—perhaps he worked all the time? Or you visited him only on weekends or in the summer because he did not live in the same house as you? Or died when you were too little.

Maybe he read you Bible stories as he tucked you into bed at night? But, perhaps instead you got to bed and pulled the covers up over your head in hiding because he drank too much and you were afraid when he came home.

Our dads powerfully affect our view of God. That is why it is imperative that we go to the Bible to experience what God is really like.

Julie and I were leading a conference for pastor’s and wives in Atlanta. During a testimony time, one woman, with tears in her eyes, shared a childhood experience with her parents. Dad wanted to go somewhere and mom did not want to go. Mom was angry. Daughter was sent to the neighbors to be cared for while mom and dad were away. While at the neighbors, she was attacked by the neighbor’s dog.

She said, “I remember awakening with blood all over my face and chest, my heart racing in terror. “When mom came home, she was angry.” Now she began to sob. “She wasn’t angry at the neighbors, she was angry with me. How could I let this happen?”

I am so sorry. Children are not well equipped emotionally to handle their parent’s anger. Hard to process anger from the one who is supposed to love and care for you.

“But, that’s not all. The dog had not been vaccinated. I remember my parents talking about what to do. Rabies has no symptoms until it is too late. If they took me for shots the neighbors would get upset and they might put down the dog. So they decided not to get me shots. (weeping) I learned that the neighbor’s dog meant more to my mom and dad than I did.”

Talk about rejection, betrayal, disappointment, and hurt.

With parents like that who needs enemies?

SLIDE #29: Mom and dad, dad’s mom and me

Best thing we can do for our children’s concept of God is having a strong family life: acceptance, approval, encouragement, comfort, secure, needs met.

Weren’t perfect: too controlling, fair, confession of sins.

SLIDE #30: my mom’s pictures of me: adorable, angelic, handsome, sweet, lovable, good-looking...No, I am not conceited...it’s all true!

Why do I show you this? To brag, to make you feel badly if your home was not like this?

No. To give an example to all the young parents here to parent well, meet the needs of your children, give them a great picture in your home of what the real God is really like. They will never get over it.

The real God is longing for an intimate relationship with us. He will never reject us or turn away from us based on the relationship He wants to have with us.

Illustration of girl on airplane from LA to TUS. Talked to her, about 23 or 24. Recently married.

Talked about her husband and relationship.

"I am going to Tucson for my Dad's funeral, you know."

"Oh, I am so sorry. This must hurt a lot."

"Well, we weren't very close."

"I will bet that was not your choice."

Dad divorced from her mother when she was a child.

"You must struggle with so much rejection."


"I think it was because as I grew older that I looked so much like my mother and he did not want to have anything to do with me."

Broken relationship: She was hurting. Dad was hurting.

Now what am I thinking. Sorrow for her. Then thought of that dad. What had he missed! He missed a relationship with the lovely young lady sitting next to me. What a loss. She wanted to know and be known, to love and be loved—and he missed it.

For too many, that story describes your relationship with God.

Let me close with a picture of the real God.

 SLIDE #30: MEDITATION: Jesus is on his knees washing their feet. Imagine moment with Peter, Judas.

READ JOHN 13:1-5.

"I am among you as one who serves."

I wonder how long it takes to wash 12 sets of feet? In our culture we would call this "wasting time."

If you were about to be crucified, how many of you would spend time washing feet?

Comes to Peter: "Even if these all desert you, I will follow you." "No, in fact, tonight you will deny me three times." Still washes his feet.

Comes to Thomas: Never seemed to get it. "I am going away and you know where I am going."

Thomas will blurt out, "We don't know where you are going and we don't know the way!"

Space cadet, Resurrected JC will come through walls in spiritual body and Thomas says,

"Where's His beard?" And Jesus washes his feet.

Comes to Philip: "Just show us the father." Jesus with tears in his eyes: "Have I been so long with you and you don't know who I am? If you have seen me you have seen the father." Many of us have been Christians for so long and must admit that we really don't know Him, He has a longing that we know Him. In some strange way He misses it when we don't know Him. And He washed his feet.

Judas is still in the room. Harmony of gospels, Judas has already cut his deal. Probably has thirty pieces of silver on him. Jesus knows all, and in one more out pouring of love washes his feet.

What does it do to your heart to see Him reaching out to Judas in one final try, "What you do do, do quickly."

John 17: "I no longer call you servants, I call you friends because all that the father has shown unto me I have shared with you.

He revealed His secrets to His intimate friends.

The real God is longing for the same relationship with us.