



GOD VIEWS

The Grand Old Man In The Sky

Have participants—either as one large group or smaller groups—make a list of every positive association you can think of for the concept of viewing God as a grandfather. Then have them brainstorm potential negative associations.

■ Positive Associations

■ Negative Associations

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Go over every association as a large group. Then ask for ideas concerning how it may be possible to hold onto the positive associations of viewing God as a grandfather while attempting to minimize the negative associations (Hint: Reading Scripture that describes God as being very different from the negative associations may be helpful).

Discuss also the differences between something being “old-fashioned” versus being “a classic.”



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Read the brief summaries of seven dominant world views (column on left) and then place the number of the definition in the appropriate blank in the column on the right. A key is printed at the bottom of this page.

Essence/Definition

Name of World View

- 1 This world view was clearly dominant in the Western world up to end of 17th century. Believes God is infinite, personal, transcendent, omniscient, sovereign, and good.
- 2 Developed as an attempt to bring unity out of a chaos of theological and philosophical discussion. Views God as “First Cause” but believes He has now left the universe to run on its own. “Clockwork” view.
- 3 Matter exists eternally and is all there is. God does not exist. Human beings are nothing more than complex machines.
- 4 The absolute denial of everything—even the reality of existence itself.
- 5 For human beings alone, existence precedes essence—people make themselves what they are. Each person is totally free in regard to his nature and destiny. Emphasizes importance of relationship.
- 6 The soul of each human being is the Soul of the cosmos. There are many roads that lead to the One (God) and many gods along the way.
- 7 Whatever the nature of being, the self is the kingpin, the prime reality. The human race is on the verge of a radical change that will transform the world.

___ New Age

___ Eastern
Panthieism

___ Existentialism

___ Nihilism

___ Naturalism

___ Deism

___ Christian
Theism

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After matching the above terms with their definitions, consider the following question: Why would it seem appropriate to see the deistic (grandfatherly) view of God as a first step down a “slippery slope”?

Key: The order of correct responses, beginning at the top of the page, is: 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.



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The Bible and church history provide us with a broad array of God's many-splendored character. Try this exercise. Divide into small groups. Have one member slowly read the following list of God's character traits while the other members close their eyes and picture their heavenly Father.

GOD IS...

■ Intellectually...

God is omniscient. He possesses unlimited capabilities. He is immediately, consciously, and comprehensively aware of all eternal and all temporal realities that ever were, are, or will be.

*Psalm 139:2-10; Isaiah 44:7-8; John 21:17;
John 3:20; Revelation 19:11*

■ Ethically...

God is simultaneously holy, just, merciful, and loving.

*Psalm 5:4; Deuteronomy 4:31; Isaiah 40:25; John 17:25;
Acts 17:25; Romans 1:17, 3:21; James 1:13-14.*

■ Emotionally...

God detests evil, and is long suffering and compassionate.

*Genesis 15:17; Lamentations 3:22, Nahum 1:3;
Matthew 15:32; 20:34; Hebrews 2:10, 18*

■ Volitionally...

God is free, authentic, and omnipotent. Nothing is impossible. God can accomplish whatever He wills.

*Isaiah 14:24-27; II Chronicles 7:14; Mark 14:33-36;
Luke 7:30; Romans 1:24; Cor. 2:11, 13:4-5.*

■ Physically...

God is not bound by time or space. He is omnipresent. Wherever you go, there God is.

Genesis 28:16; 1 Kings 8:27; Psalms 139:3; Acts 7:48, 49, 17:24.

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Bible Study

READ REVELATION 12:7-12

⁷And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. ⁸But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. ⁹The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

¹⁰Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say:

*“Now have come the salvation and
the power and the kingdom of our God,
and the authority of his Christ.*

*For the accuser of our brothers,
who accuses them before our God
day and night,
has been hurled down.*

*¹¹They overcame him
by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their
testimony;
they did not love their lives so much
as to shrink from death.*

*¹²Therefore rejoice, you heavens
and you who dwell in them!*

*But woe to the earth and the sea,
because the devil has gone down to you!*

*He is filled with fury,
because he knows that his time is short”.*

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- 1 What does this passage tell us about the nature of God?
- 2 Verse 11 states, “They overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.” Relate to the other members of your group the last time you heard a testimony from a fellow Christian that strengthened your faith.
- 3 Concerning the discussion of testimonies (question #2 above), also share the effect of the testimony on your view of God.
- 4 Discuss how a deistic view of God might benefit the goals of Satan.

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GOD VIEWS

Transparency

Session Outline

I. INTRODUCTION



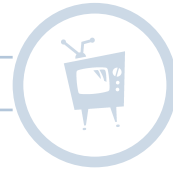
- Welcome
- Prayer
- Review

II. WARM-UP



- Exercises and Discussion
- Three Problems

III. CONTENT



- Video Vignette
- Class Response
- Questions/Discussion

IV. BIBLE STUDY



- Small Groups or All Together

V. SUMMARY



- Review

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