

## ***How Do You See God?***

A man once said he saw no need for prayers of thanks, since God had not done anything for him! Quite surprised I began to consider his plight. Having mostly given up on “church” he saw God as a capricious, perhaps even self-centered being who had let him down in life. In reality, he had a serious perception problem. He perceived God as not a loving Father, but as a uncaring power-broker.

Reality: one’s view of God will determine both one’s beliefs about life and his assessment of events. If you believed God to be an ego-centric being who ignores man and his needs, then you will tend to assess positive events in life as being simply your own doing and negative events as God’s ignoring your needs.

If you see God as a loving Father who gave you life and sustains you with sunshine and rain, harvest of grain, then you will have thankfulness in your heart for food on the table and a warm home in which to live. ***One’s view God determines one’s outlook on and response to life’s events.***

Our daughter’s favorite passage since childhood reflects this reality,  
"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28, NASB

Did you catch it? God is working for us not against us (that’s verse 31 of the same chapter). Even in times of heartache, pain or sorrow, *God is working for us!* We may not understand how quite yet, maybe not even in this life. But just as a parent understands the need of a painful vaccination for a small child, our heavenly Father understands what is best for us, whether temporarily painful or not!

Jesus taught us that our heavenly Father will give us good gifts, even better than a loving earthly father (read Matthew 7:7-11). The day a person realizes God’s intense, undying love for him/her, will be the day that person’s view of God will change forever. That person will begin to see the everlasting reality that “God is love” (I John 4:8) and that He is the giver of every good and perfect gift (Jas. 1:7).

God is that loving Father who is blessing the kids who stay home and compassionately welcoming the kids who are coming back home from the “far country,” Luke 15:11-32 (especially verse 20). In heaven’s case, no one is killing a fatted calf to celebrate our return to God. But Jesus shed His own blood to facilitate our return to Him.

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-Ray Wallace