

# HOW DO YOU RELATE TO GOD?

John 1:1-2



## SYNOPSIS

As we start our advent season, we spend time pausing to reflect on a life with God. The Gospel of John introduces us to the idea of being "with God." That He is Emmanuel, God with us. In fact, all throughout scripture, we see a picture of "withness." Not only the way God interacts with Himself (the triune God), but also the way He interacts with humanity (in the garden of Eden and the new heaven and new earth that is spoken of in Revelation 21. God is one who wants to be with us, and we want to be a people that learn how to live life with God.

There are four different ways that we relate to God that fall short of the full picture of what God desires in a "with God" life. We can live a life from God, a life over God, a life for God, and a life under God. While each reality is true and has some truth to the way we live our life, they ultimately fall short of the "with God" life. Ultimately we want to be like King David who said "Cast me not away from your presence," or Moses who said "We will not go if you don't go with us." We want to value the presence of God and walking with Him above anything else.



## 3 IMPORTANT POINTS

1

### FOUR UNSATISFACTORY POSTURES

Here are four ways that we have perhaps postured our lives when relating with God:

**Life from God** - want God's blessings and gifts, but not particularly interested in God himself. Assumes the world orbits around the self and its desires.

**Life over God** - mystery and wonder of the world is lost as God is abandoned over formulas and things that can be controlled. Assumes natural laws are immutable and at the center of life.

**Life for God** - Views the most significant aspect of life as one that is expended doing great things for God. Assumes a divine mission at the end of all things. Mission can become an idol for us.

**Life under God** - sees God in simple cause and effect way, where if we do what God wants, we will be blessed. Assumes the world as governed by the unpredictable will of God.

2

### LIFE WITH GOD

As people who are created in the likeness of God - we are not only created to be people who need intimacy, but we see that history is leading us towards an end where we will be with God for all of eternity. Just as King David and Moses saw the importance of the presence of God, may we also be a people that value His presence above anything else.



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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

What was the highlight of your Thanksgiving break?

2

Which of the four "unsatisfactory postures" do you gravitate towards?

3

Read Psalm 51 and Exodus 33. In what ways does King David and Moses' response show their desire of being with God. Share some ways we can also embody these prayers.

4

In what ways do you see these unsatisfactory postures as part of your relationships with others (friends, families, coworkers)?

5

What do you imagine a life with God looks like? What are some rhythms that will help remind you of this reality that will one day become the permanent reality for all.



## BIG IDEA

There are many ways in which we posture ourselves in our relationship with God. While there are truths and benefits to some of these realities, they fall short of what God ultimately desires - a life *with* Him. As we go about the advent season - may we slow down to pause and reflect of the idea of a God who is truly with us - Emmanuel. Not only has He come to be with us, He resides in us through the person of the Holy Spirit, and He is leading all of history into an eternity of life with Him.