

Chapter 1: God and Us
Based on Paragraph 8; Lines 1-3

“Some days the distance between us and God may seem a very long way. But his is our perception, not God’s.”

Society has always fabricated classes based on wealth, status, politics and a variety of other things. In our day-to-day relationships we promote some to celebrity status, and distance ourselves from others. Shame and insecurity, manufactured by our egos, keeps us from seeing ourselves the way God sees us. It is natural. A teenager trying to find his or her place in the world must first pass through the gauntlet of feeling emotionally and physically out of step with their environment. How much more out of step are we with God?

The difference between our relationship with our community and our relationship with God is that God ALWAYS meets us where we are. While seeming to travel the “very long way” that separates us from God, in fact God is always with us. The love of Jesus removes any distance.

The best scriptural example of this love is found in John chapter 21 where Peter is forced to face the ego that caused him to doubt Jesus’ love for him after the infamous three betrayals when the rooster crowed. In response, Peter is prompted to repeat three times his love for Jesus. This act liberates Peter from the guilt he pressed upon himself. Had it not been for Peter’s inaccurate view of himself, Jesus would have never begged the questions. However, He knows us better than we know ourselves.

Our perceptions of God are based on our experiences as revealed in life and scripture. Our perceptions of ourselves are limited to the feedback of our peers, our errors, and our successes. Living up to the standards of Jesus is not only hard, it is impossible. It is our acceptance of the challenge to love God with all of our hearts and love our neighbors as ourselves that we please God. Relationship with Jesus actually strengthens when we depend on him because of our inability to succeed without him. Jesus did not come to the celebrities and politicians. He came to immerse himself in the experience of the struggling.

When we feel ourselves to struggle in our own faith journey and feel removed from God, we are actually right beside God.

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