

Who Just Moved In?

Our Assumptions About God

You've heard things about the neighbor down the street.

Ever since he moved into the neighborhood, people have been saying negative things about him. This impression is strengthened when you see him out in his yard, mumbling to himself as he pulls weeds. As a result, you never try to speak with him or get to know him. But one day, he introduces himself to you and you both begin talking. It turns out, what you had heard about him wasn't at all accurate, and he's actually a wonderful person.

We tend to make presumptions about God, too.

As in our example, we might never have been properly introduced to God. We may have negative ideas about him from things we have heard from family or friends. We might have an impression of him that is inaccurate or incomplete, and these impressions can keep us from even wanting to seek God out.

What impressions might you have about God?

Perhaps God was never talked about in your family when you were growing up, and so you've never really considered matters of faith to be very important. Maybe you assume that God is just for people who are weak-minded or gullible. You may think of God as a force, an energy, or a higher level of existence, rather than as a person.

Wounds in our heart can also affect our view of God.

If we experienced problems in our relationship with one or both of our parents, we can unconsciously imagine God in the same way. For example, if our father was absent or emotionally distant, we may imagine God as being somewhat detached as well, not caring about our daily needs. If our mother held grudges and never seemed to forgive us, we can find it hard to believe that God is truly merciful and willing to forgive our sins. If our parents were overly demanding and hard to please, we could imagine God in the same way, thinking we have to earn his love by being good.

God has revealed himself as a loving Father.

When Christians speak of God, we mean the infinite being who created the universe and everything in it. He is a person, meaning he is a "someone" who loves and cares for us, rather than an impersonal force or energy. He created the human race and has revealed himself to us so that we can know him and enjoy a relationship with him. Of all the earthly images that he could have used to symbolize how he considers us, his favorite is to present himself as our loving and merciful father.

What might need to be healed for you to seek God?

Over the years, what has influenced the way you think about God? What might be the assumptions that you have about God, perhaps even without realizing it? If there are wounds from your childhood, perhaps you can talk to God about them and ask for healing. Like the neighbor in our example, it could be that God is different than we are imagining, and we will be glad that we got to know him!

