

Seeing God Clearly

Lesson 1 of 4 in the series: "Seeing Clearly in 2020"

I. This side of heaven, we will struggle to see things clearly.

"Now we see things imperfectly as in a cloudy mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely." 1 Corinthians 13:12 (NLT)

- a. Our own selfish desires can blind us to truth. (1 John 2:11)
- b. Bad counsel from others can lead us the wrong way. (Luke 6:39)
- c. The devil will do his best to keep us in the dark. (2 Corinthians 4:4)

II. To make the most of the year ahead, we need to see God clearly.

- a. God is all-powerful.

"For nothing is impossible with God." Luke 1:37 (NLT)

Life Application: If we see God clearly, we will bring all of our problems to Him instead of worrying.

"Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you." 1 Peter 5:7 (NLT)

- b. God is all-knowing.

"How great is our Lord! ...His understanding is beyond comprehension!" Psalm 147:5 (NLT)

Life Application: If we see God clearly, we will trust His guidance more than our own limited understanding.

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the LORD and turn away from evil. Then you will have healing for your body and strength for your bones." Proverbs 3:5-8 (NLT)

- c. God is love.

"The LORD is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever. He does not punish us for all our sins; he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth." Psalm 103:8-11 (NLT)

Life Application: If we see God clearly, we will run to God NOT away from God when we fail/sin/mess up.

"'Come now, let's settle this,' says the LORD. 'Though your sins are like scarlet, I will make them as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, I will make them as white as wool.'" Isaiah 1:18 (NLT)

- d. God is everywhere.

"Is there any place I can go to avoid your Spirit? to be out of your sight? If I climb to the sky, you're there! If I go underground, you're there! If I flew on morning's wings to the far western horizon, you'd find me in a minute—you're already there waiting!" Psalm 139:7-10 (MSG)

Life Application: If we see God clearly, we will not be fearful or afraid no matter what happens this year.

"...overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:37-39 (NLT)

III. Three things that will help us see God clearly in 2020:

- a. God's Word. (Psalm 1:1-3, 119:18)

Please join me in completing The Essential 100 Bible reading plan via the You Version Bible app:
<https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/25-the-essential-100/together/21577249/invitation?token=H5ZLvne0silZjSI9rAyE9A>

- b. God's people. (Galatians 6:1, Hebrews 10:24-25)
- c. Prayer. (Psalm 27:8, 116:1-2)

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Connect Group Questions:

1. Share one New Year's resolution you've made for 2020. What might hinder your ability to keep this resolution? What might help you?
2. Do you feel like you see God clearly right now? If not, what's clouding your vision?
3. Discuss the following list of characteristics of God. Look up and share the Scripture references for the characteristic that means the most to you.

God is all-powerful. (Job 42:2, Jeremiah 32:27, Luke 1:37, Revelation 19:6)

God is all-knowing. (Psalm 139:1-3, 147:5, Isaiah 46:9-10)

God is everywhere. (Proverbs 15:3, 139:5-10, Isaiah 66:1)

God is eternal. (Psalm 90:1-4, 106:1, Revelation 1:8, 22:13)

God is the creator of everything. (Genesis 1:1, Colossians 1:15-17)

God is unchanging. (Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8, James 1:17)

God is love. (Psalm 103:11, Psalm 136, John 3:16, 1 John 4:7-10)

God is great. (Deuteronomy 10:17, Psalm 95:3, 145:3, 147:5)

God is good. (1 Chronicles 16:34, Psalm 100:5, 145:9, Nahum 1:7)

God causes everything to work for our good. (Romans 5:3-5, 8:28, James 1:2-4)

God is patient. (Exodus 34:6, Numbers 14:18, Romans 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9)

God is forgiving. (Isaiah 1:18, Psalm 103:8-14, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 John 1:9)

God is always with us. (Joshua 1:5-9, Psalm 23:4, Matthew 28:20)

God is our provider. (Psalm 103:5, Matthew 6:25-34, Philippians 4:19, James 1:17)

God is our refuge. (Psalm 18:1-3, 46:1-3, Psalm 91, 2 Corinthians 1:8-10)

God is our guide. (Proverbs 3:5-6, 23:1-3, 32:8, 37:23-24, Isaiah 30:21)

4. Spend some time as a group praising God by turning the characteristics listed above into statements of praise (i.e. "I praise you Lord for you are all-powerful, and nothing is too difficult for you").
5. Read Psalm 1:1-2. In your opinion, how important is it to read the Bible every day? How do you plan to read your Bible in 2020?
6. Read 2 Corinthians 4:4. Why does the devil want to keep us spiritually blind?