

"What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us."

- A. W. Tozer

Behold your God

Rethinking God Biblically

JOHN SNYDER

LEADER'S GUIDE



Behold
your
God

Leader's
Guide

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PURPOSE OF *BEHOLD YOUR GOD*

Because what we think of God is the single most significant thing about us, this study is designed to bring us into contact with our God as He is described in the Scriptures. Our understanding of God affects every other area of our lives. More importantly, pursuing the highest and most biblically informed views of God is the only way for a people to rightly love and honor Him.

SUGGESTIONS FOR USING *BEHOLD YOUR GOD*

The study should prove beneficial to mature teens and adults of all ages. It is written for believers but is also evangelistic.

The *Introduction* DVD should be watched at the first meeting.

The following week each individual should complete the workbook exercises for Week 1. The Week 1 video should be viewed at the second group meeting. Week 2 workbook exercises should be completed the following week and the Week 2 video watched at the third group meeting, and so on. The workbook is designed to help students discover the biblical principles which form the foundation for the DVD lesson prior to watching the DVD.

Ideally, this study is for a small group with a ninety-minute time frame:

- 10-minute welcome and prayer
- 50-minute video lesson
- 30-minute discussion time

Behold Your God can also be used in a sixty-minute class with any size group. However, this will not allow time for group discussion.

Questions for group discussion may be drawn from those found in the workbook exercises and the sections labeled "For Your Consideration."

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Additional questions based on material found in the DVD lessons may be found in this leader's guide in the section labeled "Questions for Discussion."

Using a New King James Version Bible will simplify the workbook exercises because scripture quotations are taken from the NKJV unless otherwise specified.

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADERS

James warned the New Testament churches:

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. (James 3:1)

Leaders for the study should be believers who are walking humbly in fellowship with God, are actively praying, and are more concerned with God's glory than man's opinion.

If you plan to lead, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is Jesus Christ my only hope? Is He precious to me?
- Is there known sin in my life which I am not willing to repent of immediately?
- Am I depending on God and demonstrating it by a consistent prayer life?
- Am I willing to be misunderstood by the people, if need be, for the purpose of honoring God?

The themes in this study are weighty. They touch upon our most basic understanding of God and the Christian life. They cannot benefit us unless they lead us to some measure of repentance. It is the author's hope that this study will bring people under conviction. Being under conviction is not a pleasant place for anyone to be. You as a leader must be willing to allow people to deal directly with God, without interference. Please do not step in and reassure people that they are "just fine" if their study of the Bible has shown them otherwise. Be kind and sensitive, but do not be guilty like the

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR LEADING A SMALL GROUP

prophets of old who said “Peace, peace” when there was no peace. True love for people calls for you to cooperate with the Holy Spirit by trusting Him, praying for the people, and encouraging them to seek comfort only in Christ. Ultimately, we hope that those who honestly face the truths of this study will come through conviction into those “times of refreshing” that come from repentance.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR LEADING A SMALL GROUP

1. Choose a meeting place with a warm and inviting atmosphere if possible.
2. Be a good listener. Be sensitive to the spiritual needs of the group members.
3. Be well prepared. Do the workbook along with the members.
4. Encourage members to make time for the workbook. Remind them to use that time to seek to know God. Getting the blanks filled in is good, but the ultimate goal is to know Him. Also, encourage members to keep attending the group even if they fall behind in workbook assignments.
5. After you ask a question, give members adequate time to think and respond before you speak again.
6. The workbook and DVD lessons contain many statements that are meant to provoke people to think about things they may have not carefully considered before. It will be easy for discussions to get off onto secondary issues. Be well acquainted with the central truths of the week so that you can wisely guide discussion toward the more important matters and avoid less significant ones. Make note of the key points and the chapter headings. Key points are written in bold.

Finally, it is the Lord Himself who must make the biblical truths effective in our lives. We cannot afford to hope in any workbook, any class discussion,

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or any gifted class leader. As the teacher you must lead by example and help the people to understand the importance of depending upon God to enlighten minds, break hearts, and free wills.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Some generic discussion questions that may be used each week:

1. What did you learn in this week's workbook or DVD session?
2. Was there a truth or passage of Scripture that was particularly meaningful to you?
3. Do you have any questions about this week's lesson or DVD?
4. Is there anything that God is teaching you that you would like to share?

Week 1:

1. What is it about Christianity that attracts you? Is it God Himself, or merely the benefits you hope to derive from Him? Is it really God that you are pursuing in your religion? If so, how?
2. What are some ways that you as an individual, family, or church member might pursue God Himself?
3. Do you struggle with being satisfied with a counterfeit knowledge of God? If so, which of the counterfeit knowledges we read about this week do you find most difficult to avoid?

Week 2:

1. Do you generally deal with the root sins, or merely the embarrassing fruit:

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- when you deal with personal repentance?
 - when you deal with sin in your home?
 - when you speak to a friend?
2. Think of a fruit sin. Can you explain how it is related to one of the root sins?
Example: Explain how pride can produce lying.

Week 3:

1. John Wesley defined religious fanaticism as desiring the goal but not taking the necessary steps that lead to that goal. What spiritual goals do you have that you have not been willing to take the necessary steps in order to reach?
2. What are some ways that you can promote a God-centered approach to the Bible:
 - as an individual?
 - as a part of a family?
 - as a part of a church?

Week 4:

1. How can you return to high views of Jesus Himself? What are some practical steps you could take?
2. Do you see evidence of a low view of God affecting your view of His Son? If so, in what ways is it showing itself?

Week 5:

1. What is your description of the changes that occur in a person when he or she becomes a Christian? What does your definition of salvation tell you about your view of God who saves?

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2. How would you define a Christian lifestyle? What are the essentials? Does this reflect a biblical view of God or a low view of Him?
3. If you see a low view of God reflected in a person's view of salvation and their lifestyle, how can you promote a right view of God in a way that does not cause unnecessary offense? In the end, are you willing to offend people rather than to continue to offend God with wrong views?

Week 6:

1. How would you define holiness? When you see a moral decline all around you in the churches, maybe in your own life or family, do you see how it is connected to one's view of God and not just one's view of the biblical rules for behavior?
2. Hebrews 12:14 says, "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord." What do you think the passage means, in your own words?
3. Have you been tempted to think of holiness as keeping a certain distance from the sins of the culture around you? If so, do you see the danger of this culture-centered view, rather than a God-oriented view of holiness (holiness = being separated unto the person of God)? If culture is the guide, then as culture worsens and you keep an equal distance from it, you too will be sliding downward.

Week 7:

1. How do you define worship? How do you do this:
 - as an individual?
 - as a part of a family?
 - as a part of a church?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

2. What is the difference between innovation and responsiveness in worship? How does God respond to each?
3. If the purpose of gathering with other believers on Sunday is to worship God and to be equipped to better live the Christian life:
 - What are you doing that promotes one or both of these?
 - What are you doing that might be a distraction from these?

Week 8:

1. Historians speak of shallow evangelism producing a “burned over district.” What would that look like in your opinion? Do you live in an area that suffers from this product of careless evangelism?
2. What are some of the dangers that attend an approach to evangelism that relies heavily on the “sinner’s prayer”? What would be a more biblical way?
3. Do you generally, as an individual or a church, engage in evangelism with God’s honor in mind, or only with hell’s existence in your thoughts?
4. How would trusting the Spirit of God in evangelism affect the way you witness?

Week 9:

1. What are the qualities that you and your church look for in a person who is asked to take a position of leadership? Are they the same qualities that Jesus gave us in His pattern? Or are they the qualities that the world looks for in its leaders?
2. Is Jesus really the only pattern for service and ministry, as an individual, as a church?

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3. Describe the differences between religious humanitarianism and Jesus' pattern of service.

Week 10:

1. What kind of God are people encountering when they visit your home? What God do they hear about when they attend your church: in your Sunday School class, your prayer meeting, your song service, your sermons, your fellowships, your business meetings? Could a person come to these activities and then read a Bible and recognize the God of that Bible in your home or church?
2. How would you define idolatry? How might it be slipping into your home or church?
3. Do you see any evidence of practical atheism in your life? Of practical deism?

Week 11:

1. What is pragmatism? Why is it so tempting in religion? Where do you see it in your life, your home, your church?
2. Why are cowards included in the list of those who will populate hell (Revelation 21:8)?
3. Do you see evidence of Jeroboam's sin in your own church:
 - altering God to fit your tastes?
 - altering worship to make it more convenient?
 - allowing anyone who wishes to take a leadership role?
4. Why was Jesus never a pragmatist?

Week 12:

1. Why do you think that the modern churches do not generally distinguish carefully among the three types of God's presence that you have studied in the Bible? Why did earlier evangelical churches speak more about this subject? How does your view of God affect your view of His presence with His people?
2. What would be changed in your life if God were to draw near in an extraordinary way? Would you be willing to change those things which are within your power to change, now, rather than waiting for "revival"?

Behold Your God is a 12-week study for churches, small groups, families, or individuals containing 13 DVD sessions that are reinforced by a 12-week daily devotional workbook.

Behold Your God : Rethinking God Biblically

This leader's guide contains suggestions for using the Behold Your God material and practical helps for leading a small group. It includes answers to the workbook exercises, as well as questions for discussion.

Behold Your God was born out of a desire to see the glory of God manifested once again among His people. The study consistently brings us into contact with God's magnificent self-revelation in the Bible and helps us to apply these descriptions of Him to every area of life.



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