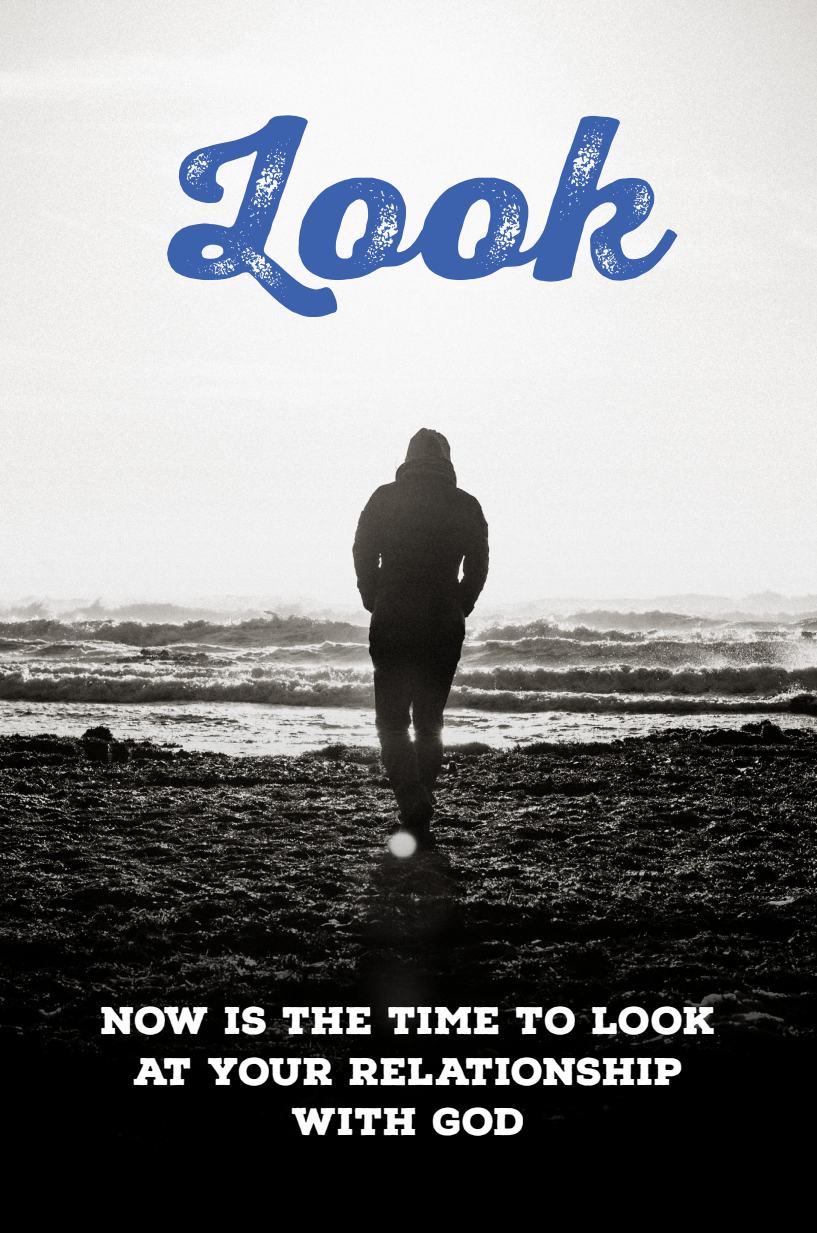


Look

A black and white photograph of a person wearing a hooded jacket, walking away from the camera on a dark, pebbly beach. The person is centered in the frame, walking towards the ocean. The waves are breaking in the distance under a bright, overcast sky. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

**NOW IS THE TIME TO LOOK
AT YOUR RELATIONSHIP
WITH GOD**

Content

3 Introduction to Look

5 *Look #1*

Look at Yourself

10 *Look #2*

Look at Your Biggest Problem

16 *Look #3*

Look at God's Solution

45 *Look #4*

Look at What You Should Do

Look

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

Everyone has some kind of relationship with God. Some deny his existence; others feel he is real, but very far away. Some try to find him inside themselves, others seek to know God through religious teaching or tradition.

But in every case their perceptions of God, their belief or unbelief puts them in some kind of relationship with God.

*What does your relationship with God look like?
How would you define it today?*

Some relationships, like your relationship with the sales lady at your local grocery store, don't have much impact on your life. Others, like your relationship with your parents, or spouse, are hugely significant.

Your relationship with God is one of the most significant. What you believe about him has a profound impact on every area of your life.

The Bible is an amazing source of information about God. For thousands of years people have found answers to the basic questions of life in its pages.

Did you know that your relationship with God is described there? This study is an invitation to look closer at what it says.

To do that you will need to look at four things:

#1 *Look at yourself*

#2 *Look at your biggest problem*

#3 *Look at God's solution*

#4 *Look at what you should do*

*"You will seek
me and find me when
you seek me with all
your heart."*

Jeremiah 29:13

#1 *Look at Yourself*

Are you here on earth just because your parents decided to have a baby, or does your existence have a greater design? Are you just the product of time and chance, or is there a purpose and destiny behind your life?

The gospel of John was written by a man who spent over three years personally traveling with and learning from Jesus. In his book he describes the life and teachings of this man who claimed to be the Son of God. The first chapter starts this way:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.”

John 1:1-13

?

Who was the Word?

If it says he created all things, what does that mean about you?

What do you think John meant when he said “In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind”? In what ways do we need “light” and “life”?

Why do you think John used the phrase “Children of God” to describe a relationship with God?

THERE ARE THREE KEY THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOURSELF

1. You were created by God

“Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.”

John 1:3

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How do you think it impacts your sense of value and purpose if you believe you were created by God?

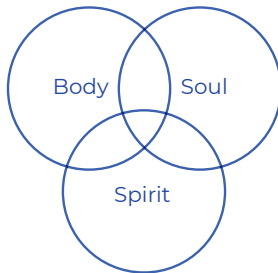
How will it impact you if you don't believe that?

2. *You were created for God*

"He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

John 1:11-12

The Bible says that each of us was created with a body, soul and spirit. Our bodies were designed to need things like food, water, exercise and sleep. Our souls are nourished by learning, by interactions with people, by opportunities for personal growth. Our Spirits were meant to be filled up in a relationship with God, as we communicate with him, experience his help and power, and follow his leading.



If you are doing this study with a believer, ask them to describe how they experience their relationship with God. What does it look like practically? Feel free to ask them any questions you have.

3. *Without him you will be thirsty*

"In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind."

John 1:4

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What do you think happens to your spirit when it doesn't have "life" and "light"?

The great French mathematician and philosopher Blaise Pascal said ""There is a God shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus"

Every person experiences this vacuum or "thirst" in different ways. Just like some people try to fill a vacuum of loneliness by eating, often we try to fill a spirit need by feeding something to our body or soul.

We might try to fill our God shaped vacuum:

Through pleasure

Through friendships

Through accomplishments

By acquiring things

Through travel or new experiences

Through a girlfriend or boyfriend

Through our work

But the vacuum is just too large, and the thirst always returns.

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Have you ever had expectations that one of the things above was going to satisfy you, and then been disappointed? Describe what that feels like.

How do you think most people deal with that disappointment?

*“God, you
have made us
for yourself, and our
souls are restless till
they find their rest in
you.”*

Augustine

In the next lesson we will find out what keeps us from a relationship with God.

A deeper Look

WHERE DID THE BIBLE COME FROM?

The Bible is actually not one book, but a collection of 66 books. It is divided up into the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament was written before Christ, the New Testament contains the life and teachings of Jesus, the history of the first Christians, and letters written to the early church.

Even though the Bible was written over a period of 1500 years, and by 40 different authors, it has a unified message and focus. That is because the writers were guided and inspired by God, as they recorded his revelation and wrote down his message.

The power of the Bible's message is demonstrated by the fact that it has been translated into more languages than any other book, and outsold every other book in existence. No other piece of ancient literature has such enduring popularity.

Another uniqueness of the Bible is the fulfilled prophecy that it contains. Just in the life of Jesus over 60 distinct prophecies were fulfilled – all recorded hundreds of years earlier in the Old Testament, and accurate even to very specific details.