

Kinda Sorta Christian: I'm a Christian, But I Want God My Way

□ www.pursuegod.org/im-a-christian-but-i-want-god-my-way/

In our society, people can customize just about anything from lattes to pizza. Many people also want to create a customized version of Christianity. We want a God who sees the world our way, and who reflects our values and priorities. But then we end up with a god who is only kinda, sorta God. The real God is not a being we would invent from our own ideas and wishes. He is much, much greater than that.

★ God deserves our respect and awe

God is powerful. He created the entire universe out of nothing. The God who sustains everything in existence is not your personal valet. God is holy. He is infinitely far above our level of being.

★ | *Exodus 15:11 (NLT) Who is like you among the gods, O Lord – glorious in holiness, awesome in splendor, performing great wonders?*

God is righteous. His character defines right and wrong. He holds you and I accountable and judges the world according to that standard.

A God like this deserves a certain kind of response, which the Bible calls “fear”. This does not refer to an emotion of terror or fright. It is an underlying attitude toward God, where we approach God his way, not ours. We respect and honor God highly, holding him in deep awe and esteem.

★ | *Psalms 36:1-2 (NLT) Sin whispers to the wicked, deep within their hearts. They have no fear of God at all. In their blind conceit, they cannot see how wicked they really are.*

Sin whispers to us to do whatever we want because God is really no big deal. However, to fear God is to take him seriously.

★ If you treat God with respect, you will be blessed

The Bible gives us several incentives to treat God with honor and respect. First, fear of God leads to wisdom. Those who take God seriously will generally be smarter about life.

★ | *Proverbs 9:10 (NLT) Fear of the Lord is the foundation of wisdom. Knowledge of the Holy One results in good judgment.*

Fear of God is a fountain of life. If you treat God like a big deal, you will experience life at its richest and fullest – and be spared all kinds of trouble.

★ | *Proverbs 14:27 (NLT) Fear of the Lord is a life-giving fountain; it offers escape from the snares of death.*

Fear of God enriches life. The right attitude toward God is rewarded.

★ | *Proverbs 22:4 (NLT) True humility and fear of the Lord lead to riches, honor, and long life.*

★ **If God is really a big deal, you will obey him**

This important attitude toward God will inevitably lead to action.

★ | *Philippians 2:12-13 (NLT) Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.*

If you are a Christian, the results will show. You will want to do whatever God says. The kind of God who deserves our honor and esteem also deserves our obedience. The real God has every right to call the shots. The good news is that God is at work in his people. He gives us the desire to honor him and the power to put that into practice.

In the end, the real God is not one who is made to reflect our priorities and values. He is as he is – in all his glory, majesty, power, holiness, and righteousness. This God is worthy of our deepest awe and highest respect, as well as our obedience.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

[Submit questions](#)

1. **Set Up:** Watch the video together or invite someone to [summarize the topic](#).
 2. What are some ways people try to customize God? Give examples.
 3. How would you describe what it means – and what it doesn't mean – to "fear God"?
 4. Read [Proverbs 14:27](#). How have you seen respect for God lead to blessing in your life or the lives of others? (Remember, the Proverbs express general principles of life, not universal promises.)
 5. What kind of evidence would you see in a person's life that demonstrate that God is really a big deal to them? Or that he is not?
 6. Read [Philippians 2:12-13](#). What is the relationship between fearing God and obeying God?
 7. How is God at work to make obedience possible? How does this make you feel?
 8. **Takeaway:** Write a [personal action step](#) based on this conversation.
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