



WEEK 1

LOOK TO GOD'S CHARACTER.

When we are steeped in worry, we often spend a lot of time swimming in dark thoughts, negative mantras and hypotheticals we've convinced ourselves will become our reality. We can let our heads swim in these unhelpful places for so long that our worry grows worse and our anxiety increases. I find it's much more helpful to swim in God: His goodness, His grace, His provision, His might, His compassion and His mercy. Diving into God's character and reminding ourselves who He is, who He has been and who He will be helps walk me through stress and hardship. And it will help you too. We can give ourselves pep talks reminding all those scary lies what is true. But we can't do that if we don't know what is true.

So many things have lied to us about God's character.

CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE LIED. They have told us that God doesn't care about hardship, that God is a no show, that God is too busy for people like us.

PEOPLE HAVE LIED. They have told us that we aren't worthy of being chosen. We will be ditched. We aren't enough. "They think so and God must agree," we started believing.

PAIN HAS LIED. It has told us that somehow we deserve this. God wants us to learn a lesson. God will always let us struggle.

OUR FEELINGS HAVE LIED. They have told us that controlling how things go is safer than trusting God. They have told us we will be better off trusting ourselves than God. They have convinced us that God will show up for everyone else except us because that's how it feels.

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Reflect

Which of the lies above has your worry been feeding on? Go back and highlight, circle or underline the things that have been working up your worry and lying to you most.



When we listen to every fat lie our circumstances tell, we often can't see past today. We can't see a way out. We can't believe in miracles, nor can we even see a different story is possible. We often get very stuck when we pay more attention to our circumstances than our God. Instead of listening to their lies, we need to listen to our God for the way out of our stuck and worried places.

Reflect

How has your circumstance been discouraging you?



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When we decide who God is based on hearsay, we often make up God's character. So often people have created their own image of God based on their own experiences with God's people. God is not your gossipy next door neighbor. God is not your judgy sister-in-law. God is not your abusive father. Your experiences with people who hurt you have also hurt your experiences with God. It's time, friend, to place blame where blame is due. It's time to stop projecting onto God what was never His in the first place. If you have been hurt by people who claim they are "Christian," God mourns with you. God is hurting alongside you. The beginning of healing your broken view of God, might be to start by recognizing the brokenness you experienced that was caused by others.

Reflect

How have you been hurt by Christians?

And how has that pain been projected onto God? And who did you start to believe God is because God's people hurt you?

How do you feel about the idea of placing blame where blame lies rather than blaming God for the pain caused you by broken people?

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Pain lies everyday. Our loneliness likes to tell us we deserve to feel it. Our chronic pain likes to convince us God doesn't hear our prayers. Our infertility likes to tell us we don't deserve to be a mom. Our divorce likes to chatter that it was all our fault. And you know what? You can listen to your pain lie to you all day, everyday. But it really starts to get in your head. The next thing you know your pain is louder than your God!

Reflect

How has your pain been louder than your God lately?

Our feelings are shifty. One minute we can be elated that we got invited to something special and the next we can be anxious because we didn't get the promotion. One minute we can be laughing hysterically at some slapstick comedy and the next we can be weeping at a hallmark commercial. One minute we can be full of joy with our family and the next we can be irate that someone is making a mountain out of a molehill. If we allow our feelings to start directing our steps, setting the tone for our days, forecasting our future and shaping our knowledge of who God is, we are in trouble because our feelings change all the time.