



WEEK FOUR: HOW DOES GOD SEE ME?

Appetizer

One of the most difficult things about being a kid is those times when you mess up and get in trouble with your parents.

(Teachers: As soon as you have all of your kids present, begin by telling a story about a time when you messed up as a kid and got in trouble for it. Then ask your group if they have ever been in trouble. Have a couple of volunteers share stories about those not-so-good memories.)

What is the worst thing about being in trouble?

For some of us, the worst thing about being in trouble is the guilt we feel for disobeying an authority figure in our lives. For others, it is having to anticipate the punishment that we receive for our wrongdoing. But perhaps the worst part of getting in trouble is knowing that your parents are disappointed with the decision you made to do the wrong thing. There may not be anything worse than knowing or feeling like your parents are frustrated, mad, or disappointed in you.

But we don't always mess up. Sometimes we do something really well, and our parents are thrilled about what we've done, and they let us know about it.

(Teachers: Have a couple of volunteers share stories about this. Have one of your own ready in case the group participation is slow to come.)

It feels good to do things right, doesn't it? Why do we like it so much when our parents point out things that we do well? It's because when you catch a ball or make an A on a test or do well in a piano recital, our parents and other adults tell us that we've done well and celebrate our success. We know in these times how proud they are of us.

Main Course

There was a time in the Old Testament when God the Father wanted to tell His children a few things about what He saw in them. In that day Moses would go to the top of the mountain to hear from the Lord. Then Moses would go down to the bottom of the mountain where all of the people were waiting to hear what God had to say. That's exactly what happened in this passage.

Read Exodus 19:3-6

That day, God wanted to tell His children three things that would change the future of their lives as His people. Moses used these three adjectives to describe Israel in verses 5 and 6.

What were they?

(Teachers: Guide your group to help them discover these three for themselves.)

God wanted the Israelites to know that they were:

1. His treasured possession
2. A kingdom of priests
3. A holy nation.

It was a huge deal for God to say this about His people. He wanted them to know that they were the apple of His eye, that He wanted to be in a close relationship with them, and that He had set them apart to make a huge impact in the world. That's incredible!

Do you think God said these things to the Israelites because they were perfect people? No way! They were not mighty, they were rarely reliable, they hardly ever obeyed, and they were nowhere near perfect.

(Teachers: Consider giving your group a couple of examples from Scripture of how Israel was not a perfect nation and how it blatantly disobeyed God their Father.)

The miracle of this story is that God did not call Israel these three things because of all their accomplishments. He did not give them these blessings because they had done all the right things and had never messed up. God called His children these things for this simple reason - **He passionately loves His people**. God loved being Israel's Father, and He was proud to call them His children. Because of that He wanted to tell the whole world about His love.

Dessert

The way God sees you is not changed at all by the things you do or fail to do. On your day of greatest obedience or your worst day of messing up, God loves you the same every single second of the day.

If God were to come behind you, wrap His arms around you in a bear hug, lean over, and whisper something into your ear today about the way He sees you, what do you think He would whisper?

(Teachers: Have your students take a minute to write some of these things on a piece of paper. Help your students get a good image of a loving Father longing to whisper true statements into the ear of His treasured people. After a few minutes, have some volunteers share some of these things with the entire group. Celebrate together the things that God whispers into our ears and our hearts every single day. Whisper them out loud so that your students can experience hearing these statements.)

When God sees us, He sees people He loves, people He likes, people He is proud of, people He loves to call His children, people who are alive, people who are beautiful, people who will be used for incredible things in this world, and people who have great purpose. The list never stops! This is what God sees when He looks at us.

So here's one last question: Why is it important that you know how God sees you? It's because when you know how God really sees you, it changes everything about the way you live. You do not have to impress God, because He is already proud of you. You do not have to earn anything, because He has already given His Son Jesus for you. You do not have to live with guilt or fear, because He longs to give you life with complete abundance. So let's believe together today that what He sees in you is true. May your life point others to God because of how much you enjoy the thoughts our God thinks about you!