

### Volume 1, Day 8: Religion Was Never Meant to Work

Religion was never meant to be the final answer. This relationship, Christianity, works very differently from the way we were taught to build it on our own. So the most important question at this point is how do you see God when you're thinking about Him or talking to Him or listening to Him? How do you picture Him in your own mind? Is He cold and distant so that you have no hope of getting to know Him? Is He stern and angry so you don't even want to know Him? Or is He so disappointed in you that you feel like you have to crawl out of a huge hole before God would even think of smiling at you?

How you think of Him is incredibly important to not just this journey, but everything in life. You won't enjoy a relationship with Him if you don't know Him as the Abba, that tender Father, whose lap you can crawl up into like a daddy or a grandpa. That's the image Jesus wants us to have. We're not to fear God. We are to be endeared to Him because He's endeared to us. "Perfect love casts out fear!"

Now, how do you get there? You must begin it in your own heart and mind. You must explore who God really is. He says of Himself, "God ***IS*** Love!" And how do you come to love Him? Look at your own experiences. But don't be informed by religion or poor father role models. If you do, then you will likely **not** think God is an endearing father. Also watch the lives of your friends who have found God to be very dear and very near and incredibly tender, compassionate and patient. He is actually **for** us, not against us. He's not trying to get you to imitate His life. He wants you to enter into a relationship with Him, which will then make you desire to do everything in your life God would want to accomplish.