



The God Quiz

A tool for starting spiritual conversations

BY JEFF GRANT

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"We can trace
all our human
problems to
our view of
God."

As I considered these words from Cru co-founder Bill Bright, they made sense. A clearer view of who God is puts everything else in a right perspective. But could this concept apply even to evangelism?

I was curious when I saw the opportunity to take a seminar on using a View of God quiz to start spiritual conversations. Challenged to be God's witness to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8), and believing it's important to stay in touch with how the world communicates, I was excited to hear what the presenter, Brad Bright, would say. Brad, president and CEO of Bright Media (an affiliate of Cru) and national director of Discover God, is carrying on his father's mission to help the world know who God is.

Brad explained that, in 2006, Baylor University hired the Gallup Organization to help conduct a massive study on what people believe about God's involvement in and judgment of the world. The results produced four views of God:

JUST

God will judge us but is not very engaged with us. Someone with this view believes God will judge in the afterlife, but is not very involved in the here and now. As a result, this worldview tends to have minimal impact on behavior.

DETACHED

God is neither engaged nor judging. Those who hold this deistic/clockmaker view of God are functional atheists because their belief in God has no impact on their thinking or behavior.

BENEVOLENT

God is engaged but tends not to be very judging. Those with this view see God as a type of cosmic Santa Claus; loving but often permissive.

BALANCED

God is both fully engaged and actively judging right and wrong. This is God as the Bible describes Him: a judge with a heart, both caring for us and holding us accountable for what we do today.

Brad then contacted Baylor, and they collaborated to produce a wallet-sized, 10-question quiz (available at www.discovergod.com) that evokes life-changing conversations in a casual way. “The average person will spontaneously start explaining their view of God even before they finish the quiz,” says Brad, “which can quickly open the door for conversation about who God really is and why it matters.”

Excited to see this in action, my friend Nathan Sorrel and I took the quiz to a local coffee shop. In a single hour, we approached seven people and only one declined to take the test. While most claimed to be Christians, their views of God ranged across the four-point grid. “Everyone who took the test seemed to enjoy the experience,” Nathan says. Starting conversations was as simple as could be: “Would you mind taking this 10-question quiz about your view of God?”

Deron Davis, an Orlando sales representative, explains his reaction to taking the quiz. “I was hesitant at first but, once he explained what it was, I was OK with it. I liked it a lot better than I thought I would. Mall quizzes are generally kind of rigid, but this one focused truly on my opinion. In fact, I would take that to my church so we can use it there.”

People tried to expound on their answers before even finishing the quiz. We asked them to complete the quiz first, then conversation flowed very naturally as we asked a few follow-up questions: “What did you think of the quiz, and how well do you think it describes how you view God?”

After people have an opportunity to explain their view, Brad suggested I transition into a brief story of how I came to know God and offer to show them how they can start a relationship today. For those willing, I can read through the evangelistic booklet *Would You Like to Know God Personally?*

Brad explains that the quiz can also help with Christian discipleship. “Once we know how [people] view God, we are in a better position to actually address their real issues, not just their surface behavior,” says Brad. “For instance, because my dad saw God as infinitely faithful, he honestly did not see challenges as problems but as ‘opportunities to see God work.’ Bill Bright’s view of God was his real genius.”

The quiz asked me to rate how much I agreed with descriptions of God as “severe” and “wrathful,” which made me want to start explaining right away: “Yes, but because of Jesus . . .”

What a great issue to wrestle through. Brad says these questions are carefully worded to not only find what people think about God, but also how they most deeply feel about God, which almost inevitably evokes conversation.

Seeing where people fall on the scale of these four views also helps us understand what part of God’s character they need to learn more about. A person with a “*just*” view of God, for example, appears to have a hard time grasping God’s love. I would encourage them to read Psalm 139 and show them God’s invitation to a personal relationship. I found many resources on the Discover God website to help people better grasp God’s love, mercy and faithfulness.

Those who fall into the “*benevolent*” quadrant, far from the “*balanced*” border, probably have confused tolerance (“whatever works for you is OK”) with love (“yes, you blew it, but I’m committed to you no matter what”). I would have them read Ecclesiastes 12:14 and John 3:36 and visit www.discovergod.com for more resources focusing on God’s holiness and justice.

Someone with a “*detached*” view of God can benefit from seeing the love of God demonstrated or modeled by Christians. Brad says that this was how his own father viewed God before becoming a Christian. “He came to faith,” Brad remembers, “because of a few successful businessmen who said, ‘Making money is great, but the most important thing in my life is Jesus Christ.’ It was because of the words of someone he respected, due to their accomplishments, that he paid attention.”

Bill Bright believed God is the point of life (Romans 11:36) and he spent his last years focused on helping people understand and love God more. Brad has created Discover God with that same goal. I anticipate spending the rest of my life getting to know the rich character of our amazing Creator, and inviting others to know Him as well. ■

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ACTION POINT

Sign up for the Discover God eDevo, located at the top of www.discovergod.com. It takes the attributes of God and the Spirit-filled life and breaks them down into a simple, bite-sized piece each day.

95% OF AMERICANS VIEW GOD IN 1 OF 4 WAYS.

What do you think about God?

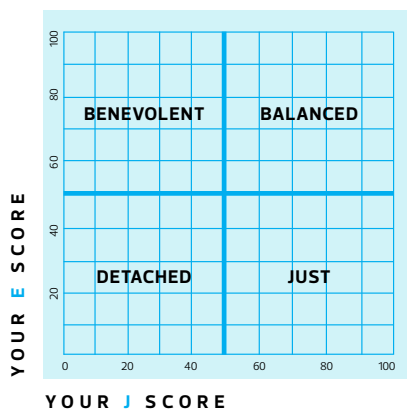
What you think about God affects every area of your life, including how you view social, political and moral issues.

Cover or fold back the bottom of the page along the dotted line. Circle the number that best represents your answer to each question. Then write the number in the open box to the right. After you answer all 10 questions, separately add the numbers in the “E” and then the “J” columns. Now, reveal the bottom of the page and mark your “E” and “J” scores on the graph.

WHAT DO YOU THINK GOD IS LIKE?	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	E SCORE	J SCORE
1. Concerned with the well-being of the world	0	4	8	15	20		
2. Angered by my sin	0	4	8	15	20		
3. Directly involved in affairs of the world	0	4	8	15	20		
4. Concerned with my personal well-being	0	4	8	15	20		
5. Angered by human sin	0	4	8	15	20		
6. Directly involved in my affairs	0	4	8	15	20		

HOW WELL DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS DESCRIBE YOUR VIEW OF GOD?	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	E SCORE	J SCORE
7. Punishing	0	4	8	15	20		
8. Severe	0	4	8	15	20		
9. Ever-present	0	4	8	15	20		
10. Wrathful	0	4	8	15	20		
TOTAL							

COVER OR FOLD BACK ALONG DOTTED LINE BEFORE TAKING QUIZ – REVEAL AND MARK FINAL SCORE ON GRAPH.



Mark your “E” score on the vertical scale. Mark your “J” score on the horizontal scale. Then follow the grid lines until they cross to show which view of God you identify with most closely.

BENEVOLENT:

Loving, not very judging.
Sees God as: Loving but often permissive.
Tends to view God as a kind of Santa Claus figure.

DETACHED:

Totally unengaged.
Sees God as: Distant or missing in action.
Tends to view God as largely irrelevant.

BALANCED:

Fully engaged with humanity.
Sees God as: Loving but firm.
Tends to view God as a Judge with a heart.

JUST:

Judging, not very loving.
Sees God as: Stern and unapproachable.
Tends to view God as Judge, but primarily in the next life.