

# I want to believe, but... 1 On-demand God

## I want to believe 1 Bumper

Welcome to Redemption Church. We are a mighty Church in Plano Tx. We are a church that reads the Bible and then believes God can do those amazing things in us.

Welcome to everyone in the room. And welcome to all our friends experiencing the Word of God over the the internet. God bless you all... or as we say in Texas... God bless ya'll.

We are starting a new sermon series today called "I want to believe, but..."

Can we be honest for a moment and just admit that it is sometimes difficult to believe.

## Anonymous Text Line

I want you to pull out your phone and text our anonymous text-line. Tell us what has been the hardest thing for you to believe concerning God. Maybe it is something you have overcome, or maybe it is something you still struggle with... but either way I think it would be so great to admit that we have all had "I want to believe, but" moments.

Our anonymous text-line is 214-856-0550. The text is completely anonymous. If you would like to talk through faith issues just let us know, we would love to do this... but we also think it would be so beneficial for us to simply admit that ***faith has not come naturally to us.***

I think most people on the face of the planet would say they want to believe in God... but..

## I want to believe, but...

I am 38 years old, and over the course of my life I have seen the world change in the area of faith. Growing up it was rare to meet someone who didn't believe in God. In the 80's, living in the Bible belt buckle called Waco, Tx, it was all but assumed that you believed in God and belonged to a local church.

All these years later there is a very much different culture around us. I would say that there are on the extremes people who absolutely do not believe in God, and those that absolutely do believe in God, and then in the middle are the majority of people who "want to believe, but..."

They want to believe, but there is a reason they are struggling to believe. Over the next weeks we are going to be looking at these reasons.

Here is what I believe. I believe that most people are having trouble believing in God, because they have the wrong beliefs about God. **I believe that you may not be rejecting the true God, but that you are rejecting the distorted view you have of God.**

## **All our distorted views of God actually need to be rejected**

**Your faith struggle is a truthful & beneficial & purifying spiritual experience.**

Over these 4 weeks we will be looking at 4 distorted views of God that need to be rejected.

Today we will be talking about an “On-demand god.”

In week 2 we will be discussing a “kill joy god.”

In week 3 we will be talking about a “goosebump god.”

And finally in week 4 we will reject a “heartless god.”

I know that you have friends and family that are struggling in these areas. Please bring them. Please share this sermon with them through social media.

I also want to say that in this series we will actually use less Scripture. Not because we can't find scripture to back up our claims, but because we want to ask more questions as a way of confronting our distorted views of God.

In fact, in a very controversial act, I am going to take my text today from atheist, Richard Dawkins book “the God Delusion.”

**“We are all atheists about most of the gods that humanity has ever believed in. Some of us just go one god further.” – Richard Dawkins**

Let's think about this for a moment.

### **One God Further**

Are you atheist (a theist) when it comes to Zeus , the sky & thunder god of Greek Mythology? That is to say that you don't believe in Zeus... You have looked at the information and gone one god further by rejecting Zeus.

Are you an atheist when it comes to Ra the Egyptian sun god...? Do you not believe in Ra? Have you gone one god further when it comes to Ra?

**This world is filled with false gods and they should be rejected when we find them to be untrue.**

We mentioned some false god's who had statues built for them... but not all false god's have statues. There are some things we can make a god.

Materialism can become your god. I suggest you reject that god.

Pride can become your god. You should go one god further and leave behind pride.

You can begin to worship what other people think about you. You can hold your job or your family to the place of god. Even religion could become your god... There are GOOD THINGS in life that can start to be treated as GOD THINGS.

This is what we call Idolatry... When we take things that are not God, yet worship them as God.

Do not worship GOOD things as GOD things. Only God should receive your adoration.

We need to go one god further from false religious god.

We need to go one god further from idolatry.

But here is where we need to be very careful...

**Be careful that your distorted view does not cause you to reject the true God.**

Many people move one god further from the God of the Bible, because they have a distorted view, an incorrect belief, or a misunderstanding of scripture.

We need to reject our distorted views so that the true image of God may appear.

With this understood I want to present to you a distortion I call "On Demand God."

**On Demand God**

When I was a kid during the summer I had weeks all to myself at the house while my teacher parents were teaching summer school. I would wake up at

the crack of... “The price is right.” I would grab a bowl of cereal and crash on the couch and watch the price is right... and then I had other shows I would on different stations and I had a set plan and order to watch them... After “the Price is right” I would watch “Green Acres” then “Knight Rider” and then my favorite... “The A-Team.”

Now this might be hard for our younger crowd to understand so I will explain it slowly. If I wasn't in front of the TV at the right time and on the right station I couldn't watch the show.

- I had to be on channel 2 at 9am or I wouldn't see who would “come on down.... You're the next contestant on the Price is Right!”
- I had to switch to channel 6 to catch Green Acres at 10am or I wouldn't know that Arnold the pig had been drafted into the US Army.
- At exactly 10:30 I had to move over the station to 7 to see that crime fighting car bail out David Hasselhoff and catch the bad guys.
- And then 11 I had to stay on that station to watch the A-Team or I wouldn't know how the “Plan came together.” “I pity the fool who didn't watch the A-Team.”

And no point could I pause the episode and watch it later. I couldn't decide that I would go ahead and watch tomorrow's episode today. I couldn't binge watch the entire season. I had to watch it today and be back tomorrow to see what happened next.

It was a hard life young people!

We live in an “ON DEMAND” generation. At anytime you can go to HULU and pull up your favorite show and watch it when you want. You can pause your Netflix and go to use the restroom... we had to wait for the commercial and then HURRY! Your smart TV will automatically start the next show for you so that you don't have to spend the energy to push a button on the remote.

On Demand means it happens whenever you demand. Our entire society has adopted this way of life. You don't even have to grab your keys and drive down to walmart, you can buy your item online and a drone will fly the package to your house!

Today I want you to stop believing in an On-Demand God. Today I want to take a look at your faith struggles and see if maybe you have superimposed a “ON DEMAND god” distortion on the true God of the Bible.

Here is how the ON DEMAND God distortion works...

- A young child prays for their divorced parents to back together, yet they stay separated.

- I give, I try to do good, yet I still struggle financially.
- More than anything I want to have a baby, yet medically I can't. We try and pray, and try and pray, yet we are still childless.
- I prayed for them and they still died in the hospital.

**When God doesn't do what you think he should do—  
Some conclude "God isn't real, He isn't powerful, He isn't  
good, He doesn't care."**

I did what I was supposed to do... I prayed... I gave... I believed... I worshipped... I went to church... I helped people... Where was my "on demand god?"

## **On demand god does not exist**

We need to reject this on demand god distortion... if this is the god you have believed in you are probably struggling to believe. It is time to move one god further from on demand god.

God is Not our... Celestial Sugar Daddy, Genie in the sky, Cosmic Coke Machine!

Here is God & you... Let's see you if you can fill in the blank...

- God is Creator and you are Created
- God is Potter and you are Clay
- God is Lord & Master you are Servant
- God is Shepherd you are the Sheep
- God is Father and you are His Child

You are not the main character of the Bible... God is the main character. Do not treat God like Netflix? Do not demand God to start his performance now. Don't try to push pause on God. Do not treat his miracles like binge worthy entertainment... That was a good episode what will you do next...

**If anyone has the power to demand in our relationship with God, it is definitely God and not us.**

If God is not ON DEMAND GOD... then who is He?

## God is LOVE

Properly loving people is not easy. Parenting has taught me this so well.

As a parent there is never a time you don't LOVE your kid. Yet there are times when you don't do what your kids want. And you have to explain to them that just because you didn't do as they DEMANDED, you still love them.

There are times when you kids ask you to DO SOMETHING FOR THEM, but they really need to learn to DO FOR THEMSELVES. So they ask and you say NO. It is time that you learned how to tie your own shoes like I have been showing you.

God loves us in the proper way at all times.

1 John 4:8 (NIV2011) Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Love is not just what God does... Love is who God is. He personifies love! He has never been UN-loving toward you. SOMETIMES THAT IS HARD FOR US TO SEE... Just like it is hard for our children to see when we correct them.

Scripture says that we should correct our children as an act of loving them. It goes so far as to say that if we withhold correction from our children we are actually hating them! (Proverbs 13:24) God does this for us. He corrects us out of love.

Too often we think that God shows us He loves us because He does stuff for us. This is completely a ON DEMAND GOD distortion. Here is how God shows love.

Romans 5:8 (NIV2011) But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Who is God?

## God is LOVE

And God is HIGHER

## God is HIGHER

**When we demand of God we are really foolishly thinking that we know what God needs to do better than God.**

Isaiah 55:8 (NIV2011) "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord.

Isaiah 55:9 (NIV2011) "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

There are some things we try to explain and understand... that are really higher than us...

- Why did that natural disaster happen and all those people were killed and hurt?
- Why was that child born with medical problems... deformity... leukemia... autism?
- Why was that good person killed by a drunk driver?

We are asked these questions and we could talk about that we live in a fallen world because of sin and that there is collateral damage from evil... but really sometimes a more appropriate answer is "I DON'T KNOW... BUT I BELIEVE GOD DOES..."

The truth is that many times in my life, if God had done what I thought was best it would have messed up everything. Looking back I realize that God's ways were higher!

- There were times where doors closed that I really wanted open, but God opened up another door AND IT WAS BETTER.
- You may be crying over a break up. You thought they were the one... but you just watch God has a higher way for you. He knows what He is doing.
- God may have taken something away from you because it was going to hurt you.
- God may have moved you because he was really positioning you.
- I have seen parents love a deformed child in ways that I can't help but feel God used that natural struggle to bring out a supernatural love.
- You may not understand... maybe one day you will understand... but I guarantee to you right now that if you don't give up one day you will see God's faithfulness.

His ways are higher! Don't demand of God, follow Him and trust Him!

God is LOVE, God is HIGHER, and God is ENOUGH.

**God is ENOUGH**

**What happens to me is not more important than who is with me.**

Psalm 23:4 (NIV2011) Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

## **God is ENOUGH**

The struggle reveals just how true the phrase “God is enough.”

We would love to avoid the darkest valley... but if we never traveled the darkest valley would we really understand that He is with us and that He is enough?

- His presence is enough for me.
- His promise is enough for me.
- His grace is enough for me.
- His plan is enough for me.

He is Love, Higher, and Enough.

On Demand God

### **Musician**

Any God who jumps when you demand “jump,” is a god you need to reject.

Any God who does everything you say, is a god you need to move one god further from.

Here is the truth... The biggest problems in my life... I caused them. It would be so foolish to try and force a God to things in my imperfect way.

Earlier I made the statement that faith hasn't come easily... faith hasn't come naturally to us. It is because faith comes super-naturally. Faith is something that God does inside of you. You don't make faith happen... God does. God makes faith happen in you. You respond to the faith he has placed in you and this is what it really means to believe.

We are about to pray. I want to challenge you today...



Stop believing in an on demand god. Tell God that He can do whatever he wants right now. Tell Him His love is actually what you need. Tell Him ways are higher than your own. Tell God that He is ENOUGH...