

I AM NOT GOD

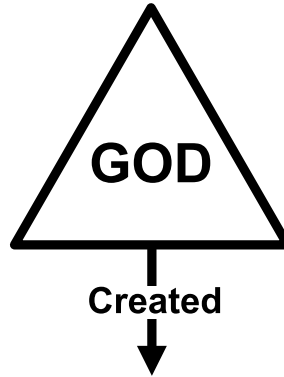
“For thus says the Lord, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited: ‘I am the Lord, and there is no other.’”

Isaiah 45:18 (NKJ)

The Bible does not tell us where God came from or offer any proof of His existence. It simply says “In the beginning God created...” The question we are left with is, “Do I believe God created everything even without proof?”

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” **Genesis 1:1** (NKJ)

The following diagram illustrates the scripture that *God created all things*.



Q1. What do you believe about how the world and all living creatures came into being?

Throughout the ages people have claimed they do not believe God exists because they can't see Him.

The Bible says God can be seen by looking at what He has created.

*“From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky and all that God made. **They can clearly see his invisible qualities** – his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God.” **Romans 1:20** (NLT)*

Q2. What have you learned about God by observing His creation?

Another reason some people claim they don't believe God exists is because of the consequences of believing. When someone creates something, like a book, he/she is the author or has authority over it. If God exists and He made everything, then He has the right to rule His creation, including all the people in it.

Q3. Does it bother you that someone may have the right to rule over you? Explain.

People may want to believe there is no God because they want to do as they please. The problem with people doing as they please is that their choices result in chaos.

“When they refused to acknowledge God, he abandoned them to their evil minds and let them do things that should never be done. Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, fighting, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip.”
Romans 1:28–29 (NLT)

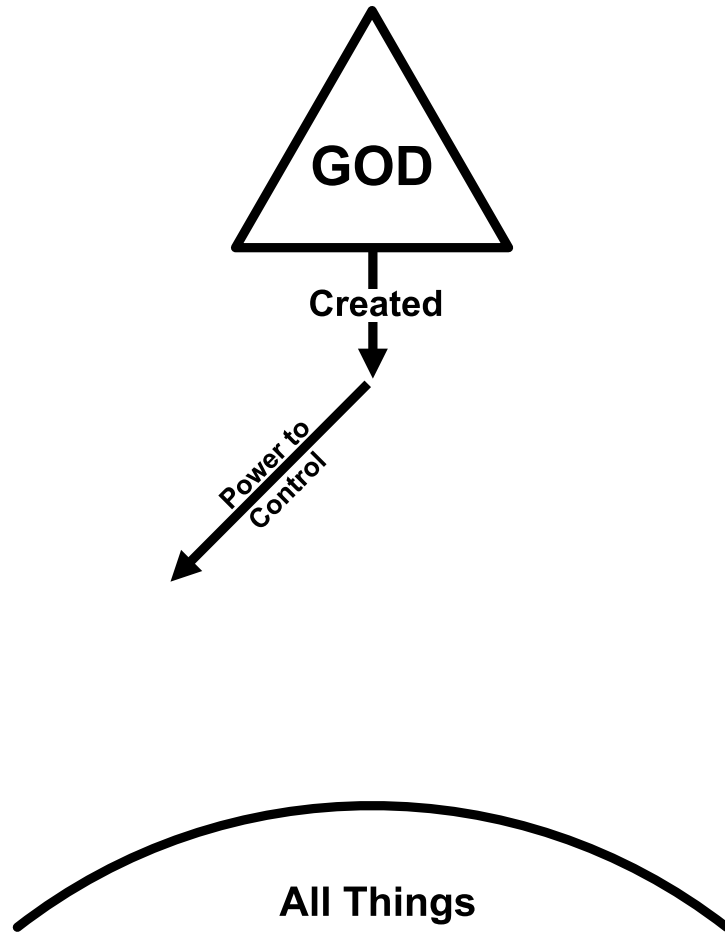
If God created all things, then He possesses power and privileges that are *exclusively* His.

Power to Control

God has the power to control all the things He created.

*“All the people of the earth are nothing compared to him. **He has the power to do as he pleases** among the angels of heaven and with those who live on earth. No one can stop him or challenge him, saying, ‘What do you mean by doing these things?’”* **Daniel 4:35** (NLT)

God's *power to control* is illustrated on the diagram below.



Q4. Do you believe God has the power to control everything in creation?

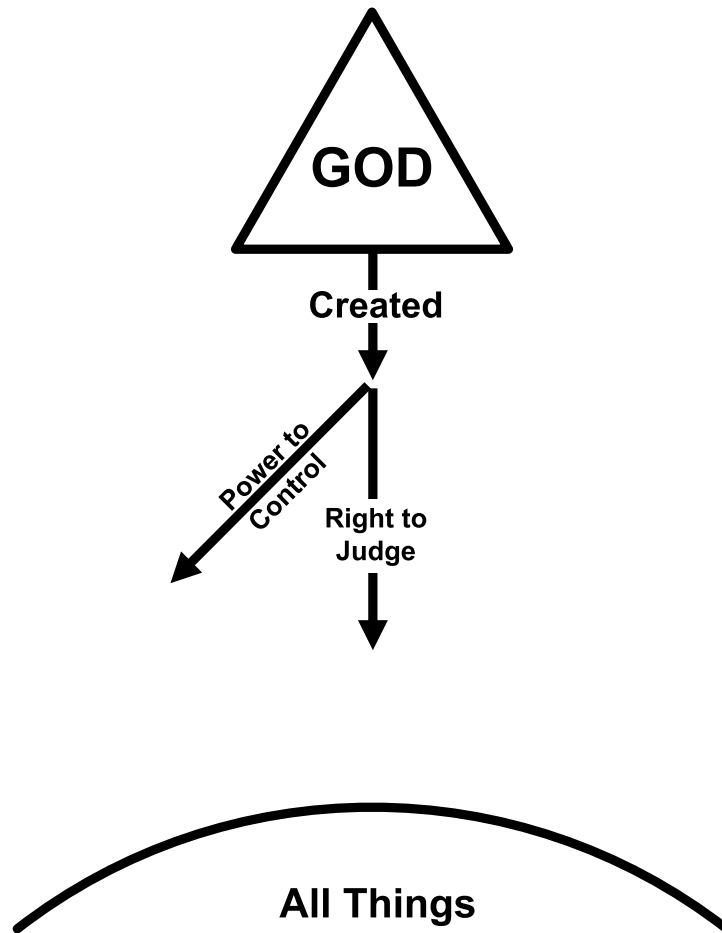
Q5. Are there things you think escape God's attention?

Right to Judge

Because God created all things, He has the exclusive right to determine standards of conduct for all people and to judge all people by those standards.

*“There is only **one Lawgiver and Judge**, the One who is able to save and to destroy...” James 4:12 (NASB)*

God’s *right to judge* is illustrated on the diagram below.



- Q6.** Do you believe God has the exclusive right to determine standards of conduct for mankind?
- Q7.** Do you believe He has the exclusive right to judge every person? Explain.

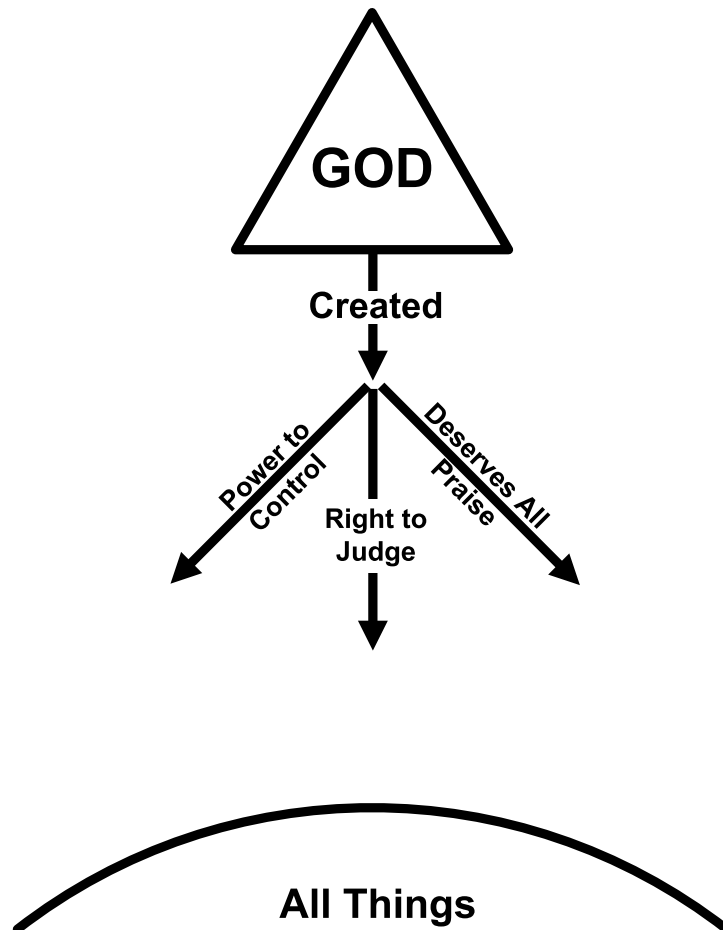
“God has every right to exercise his judgment and his power, but he also has the right to be very patient with those who are the objects of his judgment...”
Romans 9:22 (NLT)

Deserves All Praise

Because God created all things, He deserves the praise of all creation.

“You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.” **Revelation 4:11** (NKJ)

The truth that God *deserves all praise* is illustrated on the diagram below.



Only God has the power to control all things. He is completely independent and needs help from no one.

Only God has the right to judge all things, determine standards, and reject those that are disobedient to those standards.

Only God deserves all the praise, worship, and approval from all the things He created.

Q8. Do you agree that the rights just listed are God's exclusive rights? If not, explain why not.

Satan Tried to Be God

Though God is the One who has the power to control, the right to judge, and deserves all praise, there are others who have tried to take these rights. It started with Satan.

"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer...you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'" Isaiah 14:12-14 (NKJ)

Lucifer, one of the angels God created, decided he could be like God, the Most High. By trying to take God's place, he became God's enemy, known as Satan.

Here is what he said, from the above verses:

"I will ascend into heaven." It sounds like he wants to take *control* and do what he pleases.

"I will exalt my throne." It sounds like he wants people to bow at his throne and *praise* him.

"I will sit on the mount of the congregation." It sounds like he wants to rule and *judge* from a seat of authority.

Man Tries to Be God

Trying to be like God did not end with Satan. Satan (in the form of a serpent) successfully tempted Adam and Eve to follow his rebellion of trying to be like God.

*“Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and **you will be like God**, knowing good and evil.’” **Genesis 3:4–5** (NKJ)*

Adam and Eve chose to follow Satan in trying to be like God, rather than acknowledging God as God and obeying Him. That pattern of behavior passed to all mankind.

- Q9.** Whom else do you know who has been deceived into thinking he/she could assume the rights of God?

Personal Survey

Take a moment and answer the following questions.

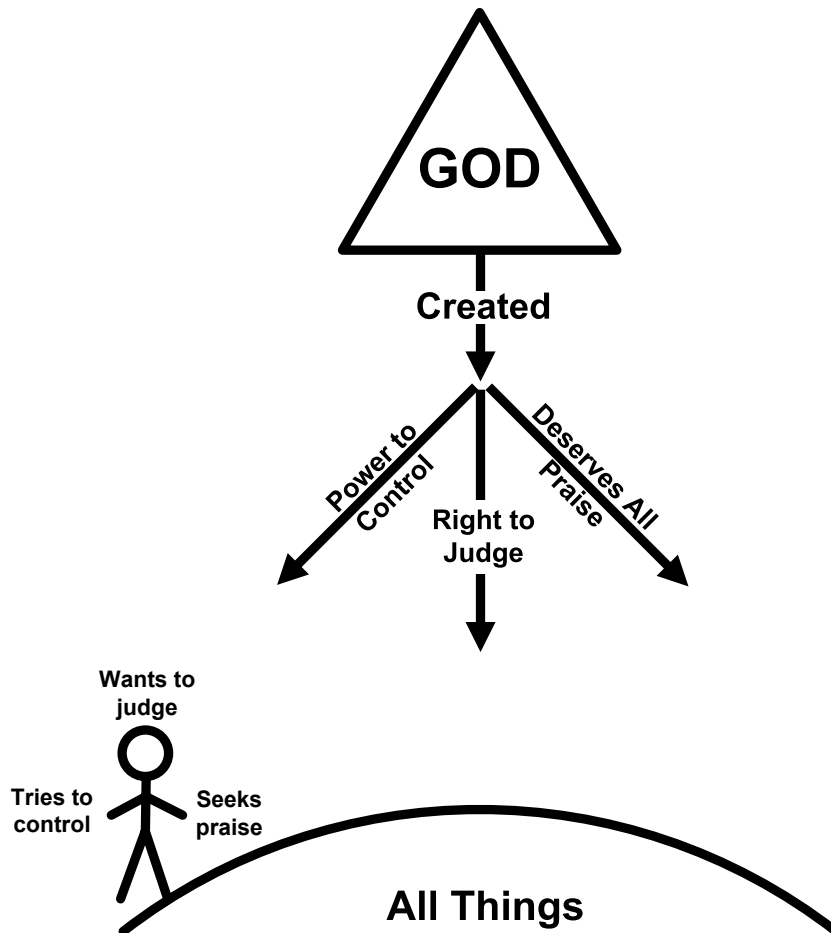
Do you **ever** experience any of the following? Circle your answers. If your answer is “yes” and “no,” circle both.

Does it bother you when you're not in control?	Yes	No
Does it bother you when things don't go your way?	Yes	No
Do you have trouble asking for help?	Yes	No
Do you get impatient when people don't do things right?	Yes	No
Does it upset you when you don't get good service?	Yes	No
Do you try to change people?	Yes	No
Do you look for approval or thanks from others?	Yes	No
Do you try to keep people happy?	Yes	No
Do you reject those who mistreat you?	Yes	No

If you answered “yes” to **any** of these questions, even if your “yes” depended upon your situation, that is an area where you are trying to be like God in your own life or the lives of others.

Q10. You may never have realized that you are trying to be like God. However, what do your answers reveal?

The following diagram shows man's attempt to be God. Man *tries to control*, *wants to judge* (others, self, and God), and *seeks praise*.



The things that were created can never take the place of the Creator.

Now let's step through the personal survey questions to clarify how they reveal man's attempt to take God's place.

Tries to Control

Man wants to control people and the outcome of things but only God possesses that kind of power. He has the ability to control you, yet He

gave you a free will. When you use that free will to try to control life around you, you are taking God's place.

Q11. Does it bother you when you're not in control? Why?

The attempt to control things that are beyond your power to control produces anxiety, stress, and worry.

*"Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?
Of course not." **Matthew 6:27** (NLT)*

Q12. Does it bother you when things don't go your way? Why?

If you are bothered when things don't go your way, it reveals that you think God isn't doing things right.

*"Then the LORD answered Job from the whirlwind, 'Are you going to discredit my justice and condemn me so you can say you are right?'" **Job 40:6, 8** (NLT)*

Q13. Do you have trouble asking for help? Why?

You may have trouble asking for help because of pride. Some people hope to look good to others by being self-sufficient. They try to control circumstances so they can be independent and not need help. Only God is independent and doesn't need anyone else's help.

*"Has the LORD ever needed anyone's advice? Does he need instruction about what is good or what is best?" **Isaiah 40:14** (NLT)*

Being controlling can result in unpleasant emotions like frustration, anger, exhaustion, depression, fear or worry.

Q14. Have you been experiencing any of these emotions? Which ones?

You don't have the power or the resources to control everything in your life because you are not God.

"Have you never heard or understood? Don't you know that the LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth? He never grows faint or weary. No one can measure the depths of his understanding."

Isaiah 40:28 (NLT)

Wants to Judge

Man wants to judge and condemn others but only God who created man has the right to judge mankind. You may even be judgmental of yourself. Only God has the right to be your Judge.

Q15. Do you get impatient when people don't do things "right?" "Right" according to whom?

Your impatience shows that you have standards and are judging the people who violate those standards.

*"God alone, who made the law, can rightly judge among us. He alone has the power to save or to destroy. So what right do you have to **condemn your neighbor?**"*

James 4:12 (NLT)

Q16. Do you try to change people? Whom are you trying to change?

Trying to change people reveals that you have a standard of how they should be and you want them to conform to it.

"Be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love." **Ephesians 4:2** (NLT)

Q17. Does it bother you when you don't get good service? Why?

Thinking you deserve better service leads to judging the person that gave you poor service. You might also be bothered by the fact that you can't control how you were treated.

“Who are you to judge another’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.”

Romans 14:4 (NKJ)

Wanting to judge creates feelings of irritation, disgust, and disappointment with people. The Bible teaches that you are to love others. Have you ever noticed how hard it is to love people when you are judging them?

“Stop judging others, and you will not be judged. Stop criticizing others, or it will all come back on you. If you forgive others, you will be forgiven.” **Luke 6:37** (NLT)

Seeks Praise

Man seeks people's praise even though everything he has (looks, talents, possessions, and abilities) comes from God. Only God is worthy of praise from those He created.

Q18. Do you look for approval or thanks from others? Why?

Looking for approval or thanks from others is actually redirecting praise to yourself that should go to God.

“I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to anyone else. I will not share my praise...”

Isaiah 42:8 (NLT)

Q19. Do you try to keep people happy? Is it so they will like you or not get angry? Explain.

Trying to keep people happy can be a way of seeking praise. All praise belongs to God. You are not capable of being the source of someone else's happiness. This is also a subtle form of control. True joy comes from the Lord.

"...In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore." **Psalm 16:11** (NKJ)

Q20. Do you reject those who mistreat you? Give an example.

Rejecting back when you are mistreated is a form of vengeance. Vengeance is another way of playing God because you are punishing the person for not treating you the way you wanted to be treated.

"For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. And again, 'The Lord will judge His people.'" **Hebrews 10:30** (NKJ)

People who *seek praise* and live for the acceptance of others may feel hurt, rejected, unappreciated, or insecure. Pride is at the root of seeking praise. The Bible teaches to be humble instead of proud.

"...As the Scriptures say, 'God sets himself against the proud, but he shows favor to the humble.'"
James 4:6 (NLT)

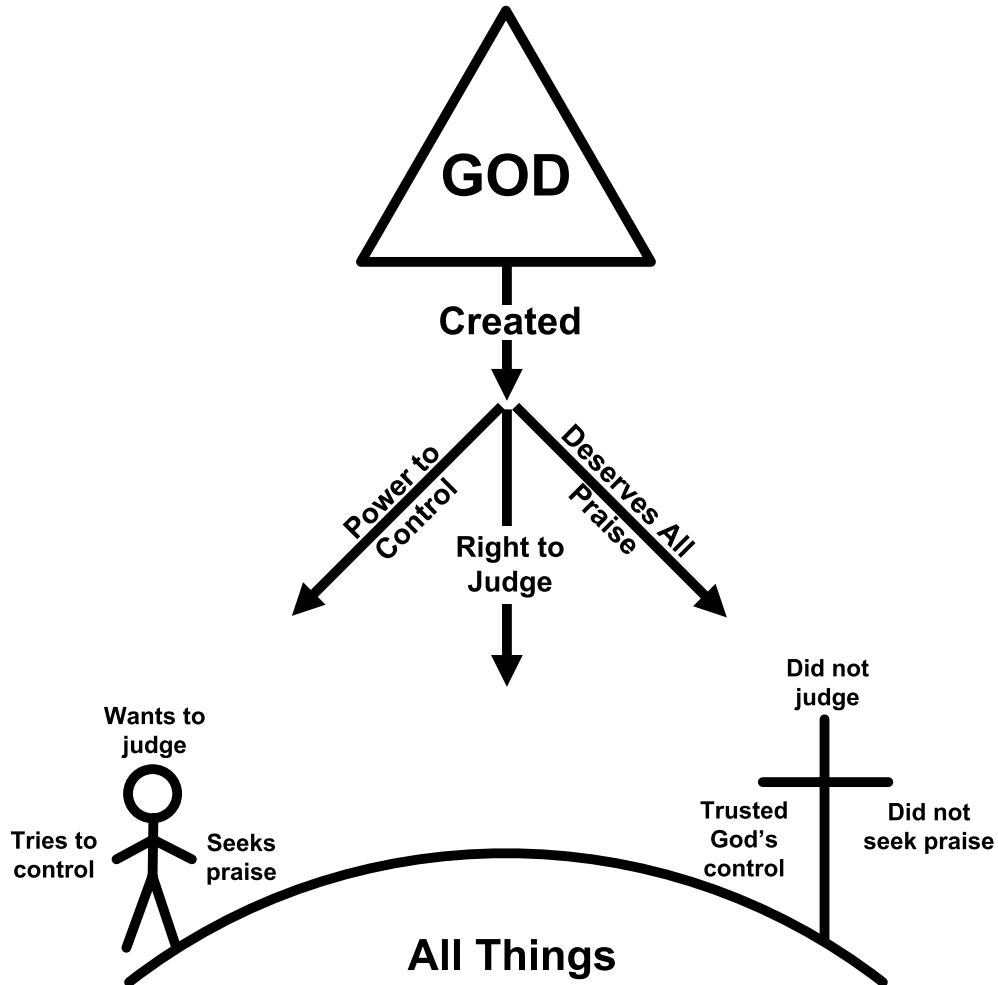
Jesus Gave Up His Rights

The life of Jesus, the Son of God stands in stark contrast to Satan and Adam. Although He Himself is God, He gave up His rights as God and became a man.

"Though he was God, he did not demand and cling to his rights as God." **Philippians 2:6** (NLT)

In the next diagram, the cross represents Jesus Christ and His life on earth. Instead of trying to control, wanting to judge and seeking praise, Jesus *trusted God's control, did not judge or seek praise*. He acknowledged that God is over all things.

God is Over All Things



He Trusted God's Control

Jesus didn't try to control people or His circumstances. He trusted God's control.

*"And while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept **entrusting** Himself to Him who judges righteously."*

1 Peter 2:23 (NASB)

He Did Not Judge

Jesus was not judgmental. He did not condemn.

*“If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I **do not judge him**; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.” John 12:47 (NASB)*

The Bible teaches Jesus came to save and forgive those that weren't doing what was pleasing to God. He did not seek revenge or pay back evil for evil.

*“Jesus said, ‘Father, **forgive** these people, because they don't know what they are doing...’” Luke 23:34 (NLT)*

He Did Not Seek Praise

Instead of trying to get the praise of man or worrying about His reputation, Jesus humbled Himself and came to serve others.

*“[Jesus] made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He **humbled** Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.” Philippians 2:7–8 (NKJ)*

Jesus' life pleased God.

“And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’” Matthew 3:17 (NKJ)

When you try to be “god” of your own life, not only is it following Satan, but it is going in the opposite direction that Jesus went. Your state of rebellion stands in the way of your relationship with God. This rebellion is **sin**.

Repentance

If you have seen through this lesson that you have been controlling, judging others or seeking praise, now is the time to repent. Think of repentance as turning to follow Jesus' way, instead of trying to play God.

“I pondered the direction of my life, and I turned to follow your statutes.” Psalm 119:59 (NLT)

Q21. Are you ready to repent of trying to take God's place?

If so, perhaps taking the following steps would be helpful to you.

Share with God:

- The specific areas or people you have tried to control.
- The times when you have been judgmental of others, yourself or God.
- Your attempts to seek man's praise.

Agree with God that you have been wrong for trying to take His place.

Tell God you choose to trust His control, His judgment, and you acknowledge that He is worthy of all praise.

God is Over All Things

Diagram

Notes