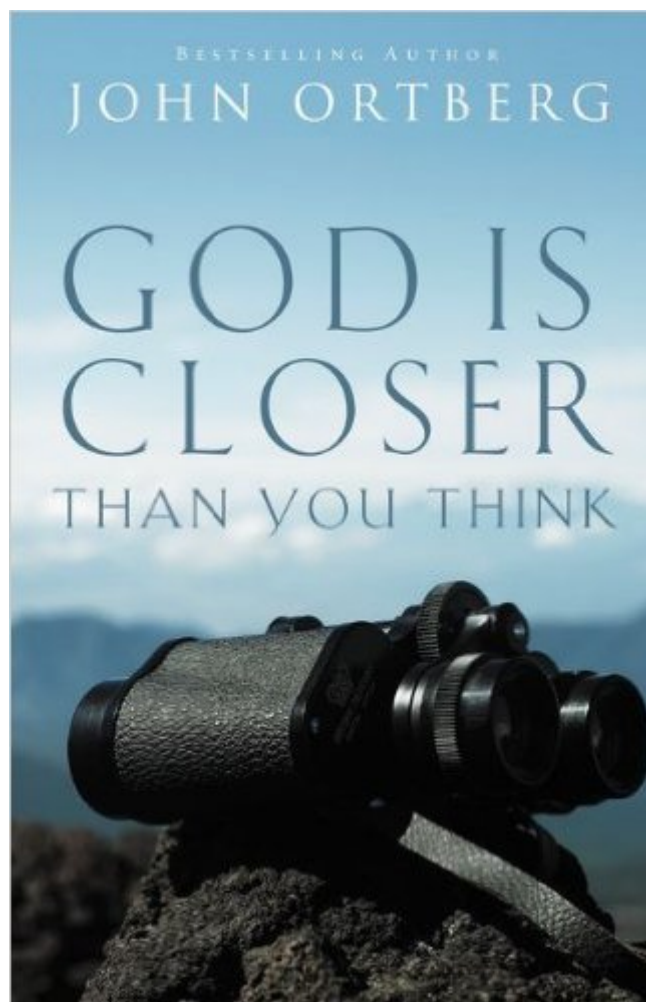


The book was found

God Is Closer Than You Think



Synopsis

What Are You Waiting For? Intimacy with God can happen right now if you want it. A closeness you can feel, a goodness you can taste, a reality you can experience for yourself. That's what the Bible promises, so why settle for less? God is closer than you think, and connecting with him isn't just for monks and ascetics. It's for business people, high school students, busy moms, single men, single women — and most important, it's for YOU. *God Is Closer Than You Think* shows how you can enjoy a vibrant, moment-by-moment relationship with your heavenly Father. Bestselling author John Ortberg reveals the face of God waiting to be discovered in the complex mosaic of your life. He shows you God's hand stretching toward you. And, with his gift for storytelling, Ortberg illustrates the ways you can reach toward God and complete the connection to your joy and his.

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Customer Reviews

If God is always with us, why is he so hard to find? John Ortberg sets out to answer that question in his new book, *God Is Closer than You Think*. It is an insightful, theologically rich, easy-to-read book about experiencing God's presence in the day-to-day routines of life. Ortberg begins the book with two pictures. The first picture is "The Creation of Adam" by Michelangelo, which adorns the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. "Before Michelangelo," Ortberg writes, "the standard paintings of creation showed God standing on the ground, in effect helping Adam to his feet. Not here. This God is rushing toward Adam on a cloud.... It is as if even in the midst of the splendor of all creation, God's

entire being is wrapped up in his impatient desire to close the gap between himself and this man." We sometimes talk about our search for God, but the truth is otherwise. "The story of the Bible isn't primarily about the desire of people to be with God; it's the desire of God to be with people." But how do we spot God's presence in our lives? That brings us to Ortberg's second picture: "Where's Waldo?" You know who Waldo is, right? He's the nerdy guy in funny glasses and a striped cap who's always lost in the crowd. The trick is, you've got to find him. He's always there on the page, somewhere. You just need the eyes to see where. Similarly, we need eyes to recognize God in the details of life. "He's lurking where you least expect him. He's right there on the page. He's anywhere people are willing to see the whole world with eyes incapable of anything but wonder, and with a tongue fluent only for praise." Most of God Is Closer than You Think consists of practice advice about how to see God in our day-to-day routines: We need to make "the decision to live ...

I, like most people, am somewhat familiar with Michelangelo's famous painting of God and Adam that graces the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. The fresco, called "The Creation of Adam," depicts God and Adam the moment before their outstretched hands meet. But in the introduction to his book, *GOD IS CLOSER THAN YOU THINK*, John Ortberg points out something that, in my focus on their fingertips, I'd never noticed before. "If you look carefully at the painting, you notice that the figure of God is extended toward the man with great vigor. He twists his body to move it as close to the man as possible. His head is turned toward the man, and his gaze is fixed on him. God's arm is stretched out, his index finger extended straight forward; every muscle is taut." Ortberg goes on to say that, before Michelangelo, the standard paintings of creation showed God standing on the ground, helping Adam to his feet. But that's not the case here. "This God is rushing toward Adam on a cloud, one of the 'chariots of heaven,' propelled by the angels. It is as if even in the midst of the splendor of all creation, God's entire being is wrapped up in his impatient desire to close the gap between himself and this man. He can't wait." Adam's posture, on the other hand, is more difficult to interpret. His arm is partially extended toward God, but his body reclines in a lazy pose, leaning backward as if he has no interest at all in making a connection. "Maybe he assumes that God, having come this far, will close the gap. Maybe he is indifferent to the possibility of touching his creator. Maybe he lacks the strength. All he would have to do is lift a finger.

In Michelangelo's painting of God and Adam, Ortberg makes the point that God is so close to Adam, all Adam has to do is lift his finger to touch God, but God purposefully left that space in order to leave room for man to choose whether or not to be intimate with Him. This book is written in an easy

almost conversational style; you feel that you are simply listening to the author speak . His spontaneous sense of humor breaks in frequently as his serious train of thought is mentally interrupted by a comical twist . He can't resist - and lets the reader in on the joke (often in brackets). The smile in his words is infectious and you find a smile on your own face in response. Because the author writes with warmth and simplicity you are drawn into the embrace of his message - intimacy in your daily walk with God. Ortberg expresses the invitation of a God who is close - and who yearns for fellowship with those who are His - a God who is there in the mundane moments of our life - as well as our mountain-peak experiences. He is a God who hides Himself in the daily events of our life - not to make it difficult for us to find Him but to give us room to recognize Him or not if we so choose. Ortberg has a way of gently reaching into the heart of the reader revealing what has perhaps been covered over. His gentle rebuke resonates the truth that we turn away from God because we are doing something we don't want Him to see. We hide , just like Adam and Eve in the garden after they had sinned . He talks about the seven pathways in which we most naturally sense God's presence and experience spiritual growth. We are all different and for each of us one pathway will come more easily for us than the others.

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