

# Session 1: Walls, Webs, & Weaving

"Just as, according to our friends at MIT, 'a spider web gets its strength from silk strands working together and their ability to stretch when stressed,' so it is with our faith. New questions, information, experiences, both positive and painful, *will* cause strands to break. It's inevitable. But the spider doesn't tear down the whole web and start a new one. It strings new threads where the old used to be, fresh and strong, yet elastic." p.18

## Westminster Catechism: mid 1600s

Q. 1. What is the chief end of man?

A. Man's chief end is to **glorify God**, and to **enjoy him forever**.

*In other words, what is a human's purpose (in general and when it comes to God)? To glorify God and ENJOY God forever.*

## Which comes first?

Obedience to God, and then a sense of trust in God? Or a sense that God is trustworthy and then a desire to follow God, to obey God, to allow God to lead?



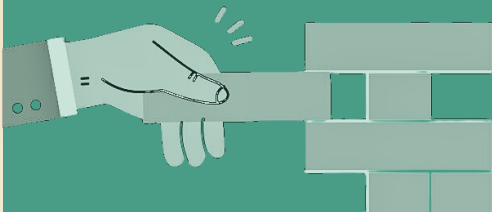
## Modern American Christian Culture: MORALISTIC THERAPEUTIC DEISM

What is a human's purpose, in general and when it comes to God?  
**MORALISTIC**: to be a good person, to obey God (and by extension, authority figures)

**THERAPEUTIC**: God wants me to be happy and will make me happy if I obey God

**DEISM**: God is somewhat distant, there for me in a crisis (maybe), but more of a judgmental entity than anything else. A cosmic Santa Claus.

## Walls versus Webs



Traditionally we think of "building a strong foundation of faith or knowledge about God" as the goal of following God and/or as Christian parents raising children. In the face of a myriad of "Why?" questions, we long for certainty.

But certainty does not bring us the comfort and strength we think it will. When we view knowing God or developing faith as a web, we can face the difficulties of our lives with a flexible sense of grounded-ness, not a rigidity undergirded with fear.

**ANCHOR STRANDS**: the essentials of WHO God is

**INTERNAL STRANDS**: practices and beliefs that explore those characteristics

