

BRIEF THOUGHTS ON GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES¹

Jesus said, "...this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." (Jn. 17:3-NASB). Before we can pray well, we must know the one we are talking to. In order to live right we must truly know God. Not just know about Him, but know Him.

The Bible says, "...the people who know their God will display strength and take action." (Dan. 11:32). The Bible teaches that knowing God is the most important pursuit in life: "Thus says the LORD, 'Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,' declares the LORD." (Jer. 9:23-24).

In Hosea 6:6 God declares "For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, and in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings." Proverbs states, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding...The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge"(Prov. 9:10;1:7 cf. Ps. 111:10), and in Job we read:"And to man He said, 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.'" (Job 28:28).

Tozer writes convictingly, "It is not a cheerful thought that millions of us who live in a land of Bibles, who belong to churches and labor to promote the Christian religion, may yet pass our whole life on this earth without once having thought or tried to think seriously about the being of God. Few of us have let our hearts gaze in wonder at the I AM..." (Tozer, p. 34)

This brief study is given with the hope that we will know God in a deeper and more meaningful way. For those who wish to pursue the subject further I would recommend four books: "Knowing God," by J.I. Packer; "The Knowledge of the Holy," by A.W. Tozer; "The Attributes of God," by A.W. Pink, and "God: Coming Face to Face With His Majesty," by John MacArthur, Jr..

SO WHO IS GOD? Packer writes, "...to the fourth question in the Westminster Shorter Catechism, 'What is God?' the answer read as follows: 'God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth'-a statement which the great Charles Hodge described as 'probably the best definition of God ever penned by man.'" (Packer, p. 16)

"It is clear, to start with, that 'knowing' God is of necessity a more complex business than 'knowing' a fellow-man, just as 'knowing' my neighbor is a more complex business than 'knowing' a house, or a book, or a language. The more complex the object, the more complex is the knowing of it." (Packer, p. 30).

In getting to know God, we will have to study His attributes. " `What is God like?' If by that question we mean `What is God like IN HIMSELF' there is no answer. If we mean `What has God disclosed ABOUT HIMSELF that the reverent reason can comprehend?' there is, I believe, an answer both full and satisfying. For while the name of God is secret and His essential nature incomprehensible, He in condescending love has by revelation declared certain things to be true of Himself. These we call His attributes (Tozer, p.19).

Tozer writes, "It would seem to be necessary before proceeding further to define the word ATTRIBUTE...It is not used in its philosophical sense nor confined to its strictest theological meaning. By it is meant simply whatever may be correctly ascribed to God... AN ATTRIBUTE OF GOD IS WHATEVER GOD HAS IN ANY WAY REVEALED AS BEING TRUE OF HIMSELF...What is God like? What kind of God is He? How may we expect Him to act toward us and toward all created things?...To our questions God has provided answers; not all the answers, certainly, but enough to satisfy our intellects and ravish our hearts. These answers He has provided in nature, in the Scriptures, and in the person of His Son." (Tozer, pp.20-21)

¹ This paper is simply a compilation of excellent quotes & statements about God, taken primarily from two sources: "Knowing God," by J.I. Packer, & "The Knowledge of The Holy," by A.W. Tozer. I have added most of the Scripture references and a few other quotes regarding the various attributes of God. -Mike Edwards, Baptist Chaplain, Univ. of Goroka. Originally compiled: 3 September, 1993 (Pt. Moresby), revised: 1 May, 1997 & 02 June, 2003 (Goroka, PNG).

"If we would think accurately about the attributes of God, we must learn to reject certain words that are sure to come crowding into our minds-such words as *trait, characteristic, quality*, words which are proper and necessary when we are considering created beings but altogether inappropriate when we are thinking about God. We must break ourselves of the habit of thinking of the creator as we think of His creatures. It is probably impossible to think without words, but if we permit ourselves to think with the wrong words, we shall soon be entertaining erroneous thoughts; for words, which are given us for the expression of thought, have a habit of going beyond their proper bounds and determining the content of thought. 'As nothing is more easy than to think,' says Thomas Traherne, 'so nothing is more difficult than to think well.' If we ever think well it should be when we think of God." (Tozer, p.22)

"The doctrine of the divine unity means not only that there is but one God; it means also that God is simple, uncomplex, one with Himself. The harmony of His being is the result not of a perfect balance of parts but of the absence of parts. Between His attributes no contradiction can exist. He need not suspend one to exercise another, for in Him all His attributes are one. **All of God does all that God does; He does not divide Himself to perform a work, but works in the total unity of His being.**

"An attribute, then, is not a part of God. It is how God is, and as far as the reasoning mind can go, we may say that it is **WHAT God is**, though, as I have tried to explain, exactly what He is He cannot tell us. Of what God is conscious when He is conscious of self, only He knows. 'The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.'(I Cor. 2:11). Only to an equal could God communicate the mystery of His Godhead; and to think of God as having an equal is to fall into an intellectual absurdity.

"The divine attributes are what we know to be true of God. He does not possess them as qualities; they are how God is as He reveals Himself to His creatures. Love, for instance, is not something God has and which may grow or diminish or cease to be. His love is the way God is, and when He loves He is simply being Himself. And so with the other attributes." (Tozer, pp.23-24)

When the old Reformed theologians dealt with the attributes of God, they used to classify them in two groups: INCOMMUNICABLE and COMMUNICABLE.

"In the first group, they put those qualities which highlight God's transcendence and show how vastly different a being He is from us, His creatures. The usual list was-God's INDEPENDENCE (self-existence and self-sufficiency); His IMMUTABILITY (entire freedom from change, leading to entire consistency in action); His INFINITY(freedom from all limits of time and space: i.e., His eternity and omnipresence); and His SIMPLICITY(the fact that there are in Him no elements that can conflict, so that, unlike man, He cannot be torn different ways by divergent thoughts and desires). The theologians called these qualities INCOMMUNICABLE because they are characteristic of God alone; man, just because he is man and not God, does not and cannot share any of them.

"In the second group, the theologians lumped together qualities like God's spirituality, freedom, and omnipotence, along with all His moral attributes- goodness, truth, holiness, righteousness, etc. What was the principle of classification here? It was this-that when God made man, he COMMUNICATED to him qualities corresponding to all these. This is what the Bible means when it tells us that God made man in His own image (Gen. 1:26 ff.)-namely, that God made man a free spiritual being, a responsible moral agent with powers of choice and action, able to commune with Him and respond to Him, and by nature good, truthful, holy, upright(cf. Eccles. 7:29): in a word, godly." (Packer, p.89).

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD (or, "GOD IS..."):

1. INCOMPREHENSIBLE (i.e. beyond man's comprehension). Ezek. 1:13,26-28; Job 12:7-8; Mt. 11:27; Dt. 29:29; Job 11:7; Isa. 55:8-9; Rom. 11:33-34.

"...God is not like anything; that is, He is not EXACTLY like anything or anybody...The effort of inspired men to express the ineffable has placed a great strain upon both thought and language in the Holy Scriptures...the writers are compelled to use a great many 'like' words to make themselves understood...When the Scripture states that man was made in the image of God, we dare not add to that statement an idea from our own head and make it mean 'in the EXACT image.' To do so is to make man a replica of God, and that is to lose the unicity of God and end with no God at all. It is to break down the wall,

infinitely high, that separates That-which-is-God from that which-is-not-God. To think of creature and Creator as alike in essential being is to rob God of most of His attributes and reduce Him to the status of a creature." (Tozer, pp. 14-15)

2. THREE IN ONE (i.e. a TRINITY).

- A. Intimations of a *plurality* found in the OT: Gen. 1:1 ("Elohim"); Gen. 1:26;3:22; 11:7;Isa. 6:8 ("us"); Jn. 14:23 ("Our");
- B. An explicit trinity is taught in the NT: Rom 1:7 cf. Heb. 1:8 & Acts 5:3-4 (all three called "God"); cf. Rev. 1:7-8,17-18 cf. Rev. 22:7,12,13,20 ("Alpha & Omega," "first & last"); Mt. 28:19 (in the "name"); Mt. 3:13-17; Jn. 15:26 cf. 16:26; I Cor. 12:4-6; II Cor. 13:14; I Pet. 1:2; Jude 20-21; (all three associated together); etc.

"In this Trinity, 'runs the Creed,' nothing is before or after, nothing is greater or less: but all three Persons coeternal, together and equal...'How do these words harmonize with the saying of Jesus, 'My Father is greater than I'? (Jn. 14:28). Those old theologians knew, and wrote into the Creed, 'Equal to His Father, as touching His Godhead; less than the Father, as touching His manhood,' and this interpretation commends itself to every serious-minded seeker after truth in a region where the light is all but blinding...In His incarnation the Son veiled His deity, but He did not void it. The unity of the Godhead made it impossible that He should surrender anything of His deity. When He took upon Him the nature of man, He did not degrade Himself or become even for a time less than He had been before. God can never become less than Himself. For God to become anything that He has not been is unthinkable." (Tozer, pp. 29-30)

"The doctrine of the Trinity, as I have said before, is truth for the heart. **The fact that it cannot be satisfactorily explained, instead of being against it, is in its favor. Such a truth had to be revealed; no one could have imagined it.**" (Tozer, p. 31)²

3. SELF-EXISTENT (He has no origin). Gen. 1:1; Jn. 1:1-3; Col. 1:16-17; Ex. 3:14.

"God has no origin...and it is precisely this concept of no origin which distinguishes That-which-is-God from whatever is not God...'What bearing does this have on my life?' (you) may ask. 'What possible meaning can the self-existence of God have for me and others like me in a world such as this and in times such as these?' **To this I reply that, because we are the handiwork of God, it follows that ALL OUR PROBLEMS AND THEIR SOLUTIONS ARE THEOLOGICAL.** Some knowledge of what kind of God it is that operates the universe is indispensable to a sound philosophy of life and a sane outlook on the world scene...For this reason the self-existence of God is not a wisp of dry doctrine, academic and remote; it is in fact as near as our breath and as practical as the latest surgical technique." (Tozer, pp.34-35)

4. SELF-SUFFICIENT (God needs nothing and/or no one). John 1:4;5:26

"God, He said, is self-sufficient (Jn. 5:26); He is what He is IN HIMSELF, in the final meaning of those words. Whatever God is, and all that God is, He is in Himself. All life is in and from God, whether it be the lowest form of unconscious life or the highly self-conscious, intelligent life of a seraph(angel). No creature has life in itself; all life is a gift from God. The life of God, conversely, is not a gift from another...**An elementary but correct way to think of God is as the One who contains all, who gives all that is given, but who Himself can receive nothing that He has not first given.** To admit the existence of a need in God is to admit incompleteness in the divine Being...His interest in His creatures arises from His sovereign good pleasure, not from any need those creatures can supply nor from any completeness they can bring to Him who is complete in Himself." (Tozer, p.39)

"Were all human beings suddenly to become blind, still the sun would shine by day and the stars by night, for these owe nothing to the millions who benefit from their light. So, were every man on earth to become atheist, it could not affect God in any way..."

"Almighty God, just because He is almighty, needs no support. The picture of a nervous, ingratiating God fawning over men to win their favor is not a pleasant one; yet if we look at the popular conception of God that is precisely what we see. Twentieth-century Christianity has put God on charity(the dole). So lofty is our opinion of ourselves that we find it quite easy, not to say enjoyable, to believe that we are necessary to God But the truth is that God is not greater for our being, nor

² For more evidence for the Trinity, see my paper on the Trinity-mwe.

would He be less if we did not exist...Probably the hardest thought of all for our natural egotism to entertain is that God does not need our help..."

"Too many missionary appeals are based upon this fancied frustration of Almighty God. An effective speaker can easily excite pity in his hearers... I fear that thousands of young persons enter Christian service from no higher motive than to help deliver God from the embarrassing situation His love has gotten Him into and His limited abilities seem unable to get Him out of. Add to this a certain degree of commendable idealism... and you have the true drive (unfortunately-mwe) behind much Christian activity today." (Tozer, pp.40-41)

"That God exists for Himself and man for the glory of God is the emphatic teaching of the Bible...Let us not imagine that the truth of the divine self-sufficiency will paralyze Christian activity. Rather it will stimulate all holy endeavor. This truth...will when viewed in its Biblical perspective lift from our minds the exhausting load of mortality and encourage us to take the easy yoke of Christ and spend ourselves in Spirit-inspired toil for the honor of God and good of mankind. **For the blessed news is that the God who needs no one has in sovereign condescension stooped to work by and in and through His obedient children.** If all this appears self-contradictory-AMEN, be it so...'it is God which worketh in you.' **He NEEDS NO ONE, but when faith is present HE WORKS THROUGH ANYONE.**" (Tozer, pp. 42-43)

5. **ETERNAL** (everlasting). Ps. 90:2;93:2; Rev. 4:8; Isa. 46:9-10; Ps. 102:26-28.

"Time marks the beginning of created existence, and because God never began to exist it can have no application to Him. 'Began' is a time-word, and can have no personal meaning for the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity." (Tozer,p.45)

"God dwells in eternity but time dwells in God. He has already lived all our tomorrows as He has lived all our yesterdays. An illustration offered by C.S. Lewis may help us here. He suggests that we **think of a sheet of paper infinitely extended. That would be eternity. Then on that paper draw a short line to represent time. As the line begins and ends on that infinite expanse, so time began in God and will end in Him. That God appears at time's beginning is not too difficult to comprehend, but that He appears at the beginning and end of time SIMULTANEOUSLY is not so easy to grasp; yet it is true...**For Him everything that will happen has already happened." (Tozer, pp. 45-46)

6. **INFINITE** (Limitless, without limits).

"Of all that can be thought or said about God, His infinitude is the most difficult to grasp. Even to try to conceive of it would appear to be self-contradictory, for such conceptualization requires us to undertake something which we know at the outset we can never accomplish..."

"Infinitude, of course, means limitlessness, and it is obviously impossible for a limited mind to grasp the Unlimited....Unfortunately the word INFINITE has not always been held to its precise meaning, but has been used carelessly to mean simply MUCH or a GREAT DEAL, as when we say that an artist takes infinite pains with his picture or a teacher shows infinite patience with her class. **Properly, the word can be used of no created thing, and of no one but God.** Hence, to argue about whether or not space is infinite is to play with words. Infinitude can belong to but One. There can be no second..."

" When we say that God is infinite we mean that He knows NO BOUNDS. Whatever God is and all that God is, He is without limit...Again, to say that God is infinite is to say that He is measureless." (Tozer, pp. 50-51)

"How completely satisfying to turn from our limitations to a God who has none. Eternal years lie in His heart. For Him time does not pass, it remains; and those who are in Christ share with Him all the riches of limitless time and endless years." (Tozer, p. 52)

"God never hurries. There are no deadlines against which He must work. Only to know this is to quiet our spirits and relax our nerves...But there is more. God's gifts in nature have their limitations. They are finite because they have been created, but the gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus is as limitless as God...The mercy of God is infinite too, and the man who has felt the grinding pain of inward guilt knows that this is more than academic. 'Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.'(Rom. 5:20). However sin may abound it still has its limits, for it is the product of finite minds and hearts; but God's 'much more' introduces us to infinitude." (Tozer, p. 53)

7. IMMUTABLE (Unchangeable). Mal. 3:6; Jer. 10:10; James 1:17.

"To say that God is immutable is to say that He never differs from Himself. **The concept of a growing or developing God is not found in the Scriptures-** (cf. the false cult of Mormonism). It seems to me impossible to think of God as varying from Himself in any way. Here is why:

For a moral being to change it would be necessary that the change be in one of three directions. He must go from better to worse or from worse to better; or, granted that the moral quality remains stable, he must change within himself, as from immature to mature or from one order of being to another. **It should be clear that God can move in none of these directions.** His perfections forever rule out any such possibility.

"God cannot change for the better. Since He is perfectly holy, He has never been less holy than He is now and can never be holier than He is and has always been. Neither can God change for the worse...We have seen how God differs from His creatures in being self-existent, self-sufficient, and eternal. By virtue of these attributes God is God and not some other being. One who can suffer any slightest degree of change is neither self-existent, self-sufficient, nor eternal, and so is not God." (Tozer, pp. 55-56)

"The sacred writers, too, face up to man's mutability, but they are healthy men... They have found the cure for the great sickness. God, they say, changes not... In the meanwhile change works for the children of the kingdom, not against them...'But we all,' says the apostle, 'with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.'" (Tozer, p. 57)

"Again the question of use arises. *'Of what use to me is the knowledge that God is immutable?'* someone asks...**What peace it brings to the Christian's heart to realize that our Heavenly Father never differs from Himself. In coming to Him at any time we need not wonder whether we shall find Him in a receptive mood. He is always receptive to misery and need, as well as to love and faith. He does not keep office hours nor set aside periods when He will see no one. Neither does He change His mind about anything. Today, this moment, He feels toward His creatures, toward babies, toward the sick, the fallen, the sinful, exactly as He did when He sent His only-begotten Son into the world to die for mankind.**" (Tozer, p. 59).

"In all our efforts to find God, to please Him, to commune with Him, we should remember that all change must be on our part. *'I am the Lord, I change not.'* We have but to meet His clearly stated terms, bring our lives into accord with His revealed will, and His infinite power will become instantly operative toward us..." (Tozer, p. 60)

8. OMNISCIENT (All knowing). Isa. 40:13-14; Ps. 90:8; Prov. 15:3; Rom. 11:34; I Cor. 2:11.

"To say that God is omniscient is to say that He possesses perfect knowledge and therefore has no need to learn. But it is more: it is to say that God has never learned and cannot learn." (Tozer, p. 61)

9. OMNIPOTENT (All powerful). Ps. 62:11; Rom. 1:20; Rev. 19:6

"Sovereignty and omnipotence must go together. One cannot exist without the other. To reign, God must have power, and to reign sovereignly, He must have all power. And that is what omnipotent means, having all power. **The word derives from the Latin and is identical in meaning with the more familiar 'almighty' which we have from the Anglo-Saxon. This latter word occurs fifty-six times in our English Bible and is never used of anyone but God. He alone is almighty...**God has power. Since God is also infinite, whatever He has must be without limit; therefore God has limitless power, He is omnipotent." (Tozer, p. 71)

"The Presbyterian pastor, A.B. Simpson, approaching middle age, broken in health, deeply despondent and ready to quit the ministry, chanced to hear the simple Negro spiritual,

*Nothing is too hard for Jesus,
No man can work like Him.*

"Its message speed like an arrow to his heart, carrying faith and hope and life for body and soul. He sought a place of retirement and after a season alone with God arose to his feet completely cured, and went forth in fullness of joy to found what has since become one of the largest foreign missionary societies in the world. For thirty-five years after this encounter with God, he labored prodigiously in the service of Christ." (Tozer, pp. 73-74).

10. OMNIPRESENT (Everywhere present). Ps. 139:7-12.

"The word present, of course, means here, close to, next to, and the prefix omni gives it universality. God is everywhere here, close to everything, next to everyone." (Tozer, p. 80)

"Canon W.G.H. Holmes of India told of seeing Hindu worshipers tapping on trees and stones and whispering 'Are you there? Are you there?', to the god they hoped might reside within. In complete humility the instructed Christian brings the answer to that question. **God is indeed there. He is there as He is here and everywhere, not confined to tree or stone, but free in the universe, near to everything, next to everyone, and through Jesus Christ immediately accessible to every loving heart.** The doctrine of the divine omnipresence decides this forever.

"This truth is to the convinced Christian a source of deep comfort in sorrow and of steadfast assurance in all the varied experiences of life...**The certainty that God is always near us, present in all parts of His world, closer to us than our thoughts, should maintain us in a state of high moral happiness most of the time.** But not all the time. It would be less than honest to promise every believer continual jubilee and less than realistic to expect it. As a child may cry out in pain even when sheltered in its mother's arms, so a Christian may sometimes know what it is to suffer even in the conscious presence of God...But all will be well. In a world like this tears have their therapeutic effects." (Tozer, pp. 81-82)

11. WISE (Wisdom) Ps. 147:5; Dan. 2:20-22; I Tim. 1:17.

"**Wisdom, among other things, is the ability to devise perfect ends and to achieve those ends by the most perfect means.** It sees the end from the beginning, so there can be no need to guess or conjecture. Wisdom sees everything in focus, each in proper relation to all, and is thus able to work toward predestined goals with flawless precision." (Tozer, p. 66)

"In Scripture, wisdom is a moral as well as an intellectual quality, more than mere intelligence or knowledge, just as it is more than mere cleverness or cunning. To be truly wise, in the Bible sense, one's intelligence and cleverness must be harnessed to a right end. Wisdom is the power to see, and the inclination to choose, the best and highest goal, together with the surest means of attaining it." (Packer, p. 80)

"**Wisdom without power would be pathetic, a broken reed; power without wisdom would be merely frightening; but in God boundless wisdom and endless power are united, and this makes him utterly worthy of our fullest trust.**" (Packer, p. 81)

"With the goodness of God to desire our highest welfare, the wisdom of God to plan it, and the power of God to achieve it, what do we lack? Surely we are the most favored of all creatures." (Tozer, p. 70).

As Spurgeon once said: "God is too good to be unkind, and too wise to make mistakes. So when I cannot trace the hand of God, I can trust the heart of God."

12. TRANSCENDENT (Transcendence, exalted). Isa. 57:15; Ps. 36:1; Isa. 6:5; Dan. 10:6-9; Prov. 14:27 produces Acts 9:6.

"When we speak of God as transcendent we mean of course that He is exalted far above the created universe, so far above that human thought cannot imagine it. To think accurately about this, however, we must keep in mind that 'far above' does not here refer to physical distance from the earth but to quality of being." (Tozer, p. 75).

"Yet we must not compare the being of God with any other as we just now compared the mountain with the child. **We must not think of God as highest in an ascending order of beings,** starting with the single cell and going on up from the fish to the bird to the animal to man to angel to cherub to God. This would be to grant God eminence, even pre-eminence, but that is not enough; **we must grant Him TRANSCENDENCE in the fullest meaning of that word. Forever God stands apart, in light unapproachable. He is as high above an archangel as above a caterpillar, for the gulf that separates the archangel from the caterpillar is but finite, while the gulf between God and the archangel is infinite.**" (Tozer, p. 76).

13. FAITHFUL. Lam. 3:22; II Tim. 2:13.

"Upon God's faithfulness rests our whole hope of future blessedness. Only as He is faithful will His covenants stand and His promises be honored. Only as we have complete assurance that He is faithful may we live in peace and look forward with assurance to the life to come.

"Every heart can make its own application of this truth...The tempted, the anxious, the fearful, the discouraged may all find new hope and good cheer in the knowledge that our Heavenly Father is faithful. He will ever be true to His pledged word." (Tozer, p. 87)

14. GOOD (GOODNESS, KINDNESS, BENEVOLENCE). Ps. 145:9a; Lam. 3:22; Mt. 5:45; Jn. 14:9; Acts 14:17.

The goodness of God is that which disposes Him to be kind, cordial, benevolent, and full of good will toward men." (Tozer, p. 88). God has an affection for His creatures, though certainly not for their sin.

"Divine goodness, as one of God's attributes, is self-caused, infinite, perfect, and eternal. Since God is immutable He never varies in the intensity of His loving-kindness. He has never been kinder than He now is, nor will He ever be less kind. He is no respecter of persons but makes His sun to shine on the evil as well as on the good, and sends His rain on the just and on the unjust. The cause of His goodness is in Himself; the recipients of His goodness are all His beneficiaries without merit and without recompense." (Tozer, p. 89)

"The whole outlook of mankind might be changed if we could all believe that we dwell under a friendly sky and that the God of heaven, though exalted in power and majesty, is eager to be friends with us... Now someone who in spite of his past sins honestly wants to become reconciled to God may cautiously inquire *'If I come to God, how will He act toward me? What kind of disposition has He? What will I find Him to be like?'* **The answer is that He will be found to be exactly like Jesus.** *'He that hath seen me,'* said Jesus, *'hath seen the Father'* (Jn. 14:9). Christ walked with men on earth that He might show them what God is like and make known the true nature of God to a race that had wrong ideas about Him. This was only one of the things He did while here in the flesh, but this He did with beautiful perfection.

"From Him we learn how God acts toward people. The hypocritical, the basically insincere, will find Him cold and aloof, as they once found Jesus (e.g. Mt. 23:13-33); but the penitent will find Him merciful; the self-condemned will find Him generous and kind. To the frightened He is friendly, to the poor in spirit He is forgiving, to the ignorant, considerate; to the weak, gentle; to the stranger, hospitable.

"The greatness of God rouses fear within us, but His goodness encourages us not to be afraid of Him. To fear and not be afraid-that is the paradox of faith." (Tozer, pp. 89-90)

15. JUST (Justice, Righteousness). Gen. 18:25; Ps. 94:1-3; 97:2; Dan. 9:7; Rev. 15:3-4.

"Justice embodies the idea of moral equity, and iniquity is the exact opposite; it is in-equity, the absence of equality from human thoughts and acts. Judgment is the application of equity to moral situations and may be favorable or unfavorable according to whether the one under examination has been equitable or inequitable in heart and conduct." (Note: The concept of equity is a "level playing field" and with God, He is absolutely righteous and fair!-mwe)

"Justice, when used of God, is a name we give to the way God is, nothing more; and when God acts justly He is not doing so to conform to an independent criterion, but simply acting like Himself in a given situation." (Tozer, p. 93)

"Do you believe in divine judgment? By which I mean, do you believe in a God who acts as our Judge? Many, it seems, do not. Speak to them of God as a Father, a friend, a helper, one who loves us despite all our weakness and folly and sin, and their faces light up; you are on their wavelength at once. But speak to them of God as Judge, and they frown and shake their heads. Their minds recoil from such an idea. They find it repellant and unworthy. But there are few things stressed more strongly in the Bible than the reality of God's work as Judge." (Packer, p. 125)

"Why, then do men fight shy of the thought of God as a Judge? Why do they feel the thought to be unworthy of Him? The truth is that part of God's moral perfection is His perfection in judgment. **Would a God who did not care about the difference between right and wrong be a good and admirable Being? Would a God who put no distinction between**

the beasts of history, the Hitlers and Stalins (if we dare use names), and His own saints, be morally praiseworthy and perfect? Moral indifference would be an imperfection in God, not a perfection. But not to judge the world would be to show moral indifference. The final proof that God is a perfect moral Being, not indifferent to questions of right and wrong, is the fact that He has committed Himself to judge the world." (Packer, p. 130)

"There is nothing in His justice which forbids the exercise of His mercy. To think of God as we sometimes think of a court where a kindly judge, compelled by law, sentences a man to death with tears and apologies, is to think in a manner wholly unworthy of the true God. God is never at cross-purposes with Himself. No attribute of God is in conflict with another.

"God's compassion flows out of His goodness, and goodness without justice is not goodness. God spares us because He is good, but He could not be good if He were not just. When God punishes the wicked, Anselm concludes, it is just because it is consistent with their deserts; and when He spares the wicked it is just because it is compatible with His goodness; so God does what becomes Him as the supremely good God. This is reason seeking to understand, not that it may believe but because it already believes." (Tozer, p. 94)

16. MERCIFUL (Mercy, Lovingkindness). Ex. 20:2; Ps. 145:9b; Lam. 3:20-22; Eph. 2:4; James 5:11.

"Mercy is an attribute of God, **an infinite and inexhaustible energy within the divine nature which disposes God to be actively compassionate.** Both the Old and the New Testaments proclaim the mercy of God, but the Old has more than four times as much to say about it as the New." (Tozer, pp.96-97) (Note: This debunks the Liberal idea that the OT God is a "God of wrath", but the NT God is a "God of mercy."-mwe)

"Whether in the Garden of Eden or the Garden of Gethsemane, God is merciful as well as just. He has always dealt in mercy with mankind and will always deal in justice when His mercy is despised."

"If we could remember that the divine mercy is not a temporary mood but an attribute of God's eternal being, we would no longer fear that it will someday cease to be. Mercy never began to be, but from eternity was; so it will never cease to be. It will never be more since it is in itself infinite; and it will never be less because the infinite cannot suffer diminution." (Tozer, p. 97)

"As judgment is God's justice confronting moral inequity, so mercy is the goodness of God confronting human suffering and guilt." (Tozer, p. 97)

In the words of Dr. Terry Rude, OT professor at Bob Jones University: "'*Mercy*' may be the key OT word!"³ **I have decided to include below his extensive comments on the OT word "mercy", that you might better understand and rejoice in God's mercy to us!** Virtually everything in the following section is taken verbatim from notes taken from one of his video lectures in 1996.

A. BIBLICAL REFERENCES:

- 1) Ex. 20:6 – "mercy" in the Pentateuch. In English alone we might think that it means God withholds His wrath from those who deserve it, i.e. it has a primarily negative connotation here.
- 2) II Chron. 6:42 – "The mercies of David" in a OT historical book. We would think perhaps that David treated people kindly and didn't judge some.
- 3) Psalm 136 – "mercy" or "lovingkindness" in an OT poetic book. The impression here is of compassionate treatment of offenders. In the Bible, God is the '*God of gods*' or '*Lord of lords*' i.e. the ULTIMATE God. These are superlatives. For instance, the '*Holy of holies*' is a superlative. In other words, it is the ultimate! Hebrew repeats like this to communicate the idea of the ultimate 'whatever' - ultimate God, ultimate Lord, etc. (cf.. '*He is All in All*').
- 4) Hosea 6:6 -"mercy" in an OT prophetic book. Here God says that he "desires mercy..." Obviously it must be something more than the previous ideas. This verse also shows us that mercy is not something that God alone possesses. He demands that we manifest this too! True, it means we can withhold wrath...but there is more here. (Pronunciation note: In regard to the Hebrew word for "Mercy" [*Chesed*,

³ The following notes on "mercy" are taken verbatim from lecture notes by Dr. Terry Rude, Bob Jones University, for the graduate level course "Old Testament Theology." Notes taken from video, 16 April, 1996 by Mike Edwards.

or *Hesed*], the “ch” is not pronounced like the “ch” in chew. Rather it is “Keh”, somewhat like the sound of somewhat getting ready to spit: “*Keh-Sev*”).

B. **DEFINITION OF MERCY.** “AN AFFECTIONATE LOYALTY STEMMING FROM A RELATIONSHIP AND RESULTING IN KIND DEEDS.” The key semantic idea is “LOYALTY.” But it is a special kind of loyalty:

- 1) It is loyalty that is rooted in a RELATIONSHIP e.g. a formal covenant like the Abrahamic or Davidic Covenants, or non-theological like the Marriage Covenant.
- 2) The word is often translated as “kindness” or “lovingkindness.” “It occurs around 250 times in the OT. It speaks of good deeds that rise up from those who have mercy (*chesed*) in their soul.”
- 3) II Sam. 16:17. Here Absalom questions Hushai’s LOYALTY to David i.e. Hushai has violated loyalty to David. In Hebrew there is such a thing as “AFFECTIONATE LOYALTY.” In English, loyalty and kind deeds are separate (e.g. kind deeds can be done for someone w/o loyalty to them, and conversely, there can be loyalty to someone such as an employer, even though the worker does not like him and doesn’t do kind deeds for him. But in Hebrew it is different: The kind deeds grow out of mercy (Heb. *chesed*). **Mercy (*chesed*) is an affectionate loyalty that NATURALLY gives rise to kind deeds. It is never the cold loyalty out of duty that you can find in the the English idea.** “Love” is quite similar to “Mercy” (*chesed*). II Chron. 24:2 illustrates the “loyalty” aspect of mercy.
- 4) Mercy (*chesed*) is an EXPECTED loyalty. It’s like doing things for family members that we wouldn’t necessarily do for others, such as strangers.
- 5) Other significant references (look for the “loyalty” orientation): Gen. 40:14; I Sam. 20:14-15; II Sam. 9:2-3.

C. **GOD’S MERCY (CHESED)?** Gen. 24:12, 27. Note that God has a *chesed* (covenant) relationship with Abraham. Ps. 89:1. What are “*the mercies of the Lord.*”? Two complimentary possibilities: a) they are the multitude of good things that God does for David, & b) it can be a plural of amplification i.e. it speaks of the GREAT mercy of God (Note the parallel with “*Thy faithfulness*”).

D. **TO SUMMARIZE: GOD IS LOYAL. He keeps His word! He is loyal to His subjects!** cf. Ps. 89:2. So... **MERCY (*Chesed*) equals COVENANT LOVE (or as some translate it: “loyal love”)**! Remember... the New Covenant is how we are saved! (cf. Heb. 9-10). So when we go back and compare the first set of verses mentioned at the start of this section on God’s mercy, we understand the meaning:

- 1) II Chron. 6:42. What are “*the sure mercies of David.*”? Not His good deeds, but rather the covenant commitments God made to David!
- 2) Psalm 136. The repetition of “for His mercy is everlasting” is to emphasize that God’s commitment to His word is FOREVER i.e. He sticks by His word, He will not change or vacillate.
- 3) Hosea 6:6. What was so important? God is using Hebrew parallelism here. God is saying, “I want you to know me and know what I am like, and be the same i.e. LOYAL.” God rated mercy (covenant loyalty or loyal love) even above sacrifice. An illustration of this kind of covenantal loyalty is found in the story of Rahab. The salvation of Rahab and her family was based on a covenant or commitment made to her (Josh. 2:8-21). Obviously there was no great love involved, since she was not a Jew. She was depending on LOYALTY based on a promise or covenant made by the spies.

17. GRACIOUS (Grace). Gen. 6:8; Ex. 33:17; Jn. 1:17; Eph. 1:5-7; Titus 2:11; I Jn. 2:2.

“Grace is the good pleasure of God that inclines Him to bestow benefits upon the undeserving.” (Tozer, p. 100), or,

“The grace of God is love freely shown towards guilty sinners, contrary to their merit and indeed in defiance of their demerit. It is God showing goodness to persons who deserve only severity, and had no reason to expect anything but severity. We have seen why the thought of grace means so little to some church people—namely, because they do not share the beliefs about God and man which it presupposes. Now we have to ask: why should this thought mean so much to others? The answer is not far to seek; indeed, it is evident from what has already been said. It is surely clear that, once a man is convinced that his state and need are as described, the New Testament gospel of grace cannot but sweep him off his feet with wonder and joy. For it tells how our Judge has become our Saviour.” (Packer, p. 120)

"Grace takes its rise far back in the heart of God...but the channel through which it flows out to men is Jesus Christ, crucified and risen. The apostle Paul, who beyond all others is the exponent of grace in redemption, never disassociates God's grace from God's crucified Son. Always in his teachings the two are found together..." (Tozer, pp. 100-101)

"God will always be Himself, and grace is an attribute of His holy being. He can no more hide His grace than the sun can hide its brightness. Men may flee from the sunlight to dark and musty caves of the earth, but they cannot put out the sun. **So men may in any dispensation despise the grace of God, but they cannot extinguish it...**We must keep in mind also that the grace of God is infinite and eternal...To 'abound' in sin: that is the worst and the most we could or can do. The abound defines the limit of our finite abilities; and although we feel our iniquities rise over us like a mountain, the mountain, nevertheless, has definable boundaries: it is so large, so high, it weighs only this certain amount and no more. But who shall define the limitless grace of God? Its '*much more*' plunges our thoughts into infinitude and confounds them there. All thanks be to God for grace abounding." (Tozer, pp. 102-103)

18. LOVE. Zeph. 3:17; Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8; I Jn. 4:8,10,16.

"The words '*God is love*' mean that love is an essential attribute of God. **Love is something true of God but it is not God.** It expresses the way God is in His unitary being, as do the words holiness, justice, faithfulness and truth. Because God is immutable He always acts like Himself, and because He is a unity He never suspends one of His attributes in order to exercise another." (Tozer, p. 105)

"Love wills the good of all and never wills harm or evil to any. This explains the words of the apostle John: '*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear.*' Fear is the painful emotion that arises at the thought that we may be harmed or made to suffer. This fear persists while we are subject to the will of someone who does not desire our well-being. The moment we come under the protection of one of good will, fear is cast out. A child lost in a crowded store is full of fear because it sees the strangers around it as enemies. In its mother's arms a moment later all the terror subsides. The known good will of the mother casts out fear.

"The world is full of enemies, and as long as we are subject to the possibility of harm from these enemies, fear is inevitable. The effort to conquer fear without removing the causes is altogether futile. The heart is wiser than the apostles of tranquility. As long as we are in the hands of chance, as long as we must look for hope to the law of averages, as long as we must trust for survival to our ability to outthink or outmaneuver the enemy, we have every good reason to be afraid. And fear hath torment.

"To know that love is of God and to enter into the secret place leaning upon the arm of the Beloved-this and only this can cast out fear. **Let a man become convinced that nothing can harm him and instantly for him all fear goes out of the universe...**God is love and God is sovereign. His love disposes Him to desire our everlasting welfare and His sovereignty enables Him to secure it. Nothing can hurt a good man." (Tozer, p. 106)

19. HOLY (Holiness, Separate from sin). Job 25:5; Isa. 6:5; Heb. 12:14; I Pet. 1:16.

"God's holiness is not simply the best we know, infinitely bettered. We know nothing like the divine holiness. It stands apart, unique, unapproachable, incomprehensible and unattainable. The natural man is blind to it. **He may fear God's power and admire His wisdom, but His holiness he cannot even imagine.**" (Tozer, p. 111)

"**Holy is the way God is. To be holy He does not conform to a standard. He is that standard.(!)** He is absolutely holy with an infinite, incomprehensible fullness of purity that is incapable of being other than it is. Because He is holy, all His attributes are holy; that is, whatever we think of as belonging to God must be thought of as holy." (Tozer,p.113)

20. SOVEREIGN (Sovereignty, King, He reigns over all). Isa. 46:9-11; Prov. 16:33; 21:1; Isa. 44:28-45:8; Gen. 50:20; Acts 16:14; etc.

"**God's sovereignty is the attribute by which He rules His entire creation,** and to be sovereign God must be all-knowing, all-powerful, and absolutely free." (Tozer, p. 115). (For a fuller treatment of the subject of God's sovereignty, man's free will, etc., see the separate notes that I compiled on those subjects back in 1978. -mwe).

21. WRATH (Judgment, wrath). Gen. 18:25; Judges 11:27; Ps. 75:7; 82:8; Nahum 1:2-8; Mt. 5:31-46; Rom. 1:18; 2:5,16; Jn. 5:22-29; Acts 10:42; 17:31; I Thess. 1:10; 2:16; 5:9; II Thess. 1:8ff; Heb. 12:23,28-29; James 5:9; I Pet. 4:5; Rev. 6:16; 16:19.

"The wrath of God in Romans denotes **God's resolute action in punishing sin.**" (Packer, p. 139)

"'Wrath' is an old English word defined in my dictionary as *'deep, intense anger and indignation'*. 'Anger' is defined as 'stirring of resentful displeasure and strong antagonism, by a sense of injury or insult'; 'indignation' as 'righteous anger aroused by injustice and baseness'. Such is wrath. And wrath, the Bible tells us, is an attribute of God. **The modern habit throughout the Christian church is to play this subject down...** To an age which has unashamedly sold itself to the gods of greed, pride, sex, and self-will, the Church mumbles on about God's kindness, but says virtually nothing about His judgment. How often during the past year did you hear, or, if you are a minister, did you preach, a sermon on the wrath of God?... **The fact is that subject of divine wrath has become taboo in modern society, and Christians by and large have accepted the taboo and conditioned themselves never to raise the matter.**

"We may well ask whether this is as it should be; for the Bible behaves very differently. **One cannot imagine that talk of divine judgment was ever very popular, yet the biblical writers engage in it constantly...** A study of the concordance will show that there are MORE references in Scripture to the anger, fury, and wrath of God, than there are to His love and tenderness' (A.W. Pink, The Attributes of God, p. 75). The Bible labours the point that just as God is good to those who trust Him, so He is terrible to those who do not." (Packer, pp. 134-135)

"The root cause of our unhappiness seems to be a disquieting suspicion that ideas of wrath are in one way or another unworthy of God...(but)...God's wrath in the Bible is never the capricious, self-indulgent, irritable, morally ignoble thing that human anger so often is. It is, instead, a right and necessary reaction to objective moral evil. God is only angry where anger is called for. Even among men, there is such a thing as righteous indignation, though it is, perhaps, rarely found. But all God's indignation is righteous. Would a God who took as much pleasure in evil as He did in good be a good God? Would a God who did not react adversely to evil in His world be morally perfect? Surely not." (Packer, p. 136)

"**In the first place, God's wrath in the Bible is always JUDICIAL-that is, it is the wrath of the Judge, administering justice.** Cruelty is always immoral, but the explicit presupposition of all that we find in the Bible-and in Edwards's sermon, for that matter-on the torments of those who experience the fulness of God's wrath is that each receives precisely what he deserves."(Packer, p. 137)

"**In the second place, God's wrath in the Bible is something which men CHOOSE for themselves.** Before hell is an experience inflicted by God, it is a state for which man himself opts, by retreating from the light which God shines in his heart to lead him to Himself...Nobody stands under the wrath of God save those who have chosen to do so. **The essence of God's action in wrath is to GIVE MEN WHAT THEY CHOOSE, in all its implications: nothing more, and equally nothing less.**" (Packer, p. 138)

22. JEALOUS. (Zeal) Ex. 31:18; cf. 20:5; 34:14; Num. 25:11; Dt. 4:24; 6:15; 29:20; Josh. 24:19; Ps. 78:58; 79:5; Nahum 1:2; Ezek. 16:38; Joel 2:18; Zeph. 1:18; I Cor. 10:22; James 4:5.

"*The jealous God*'-doesn't it sound offensive? For we know jealousy, 'the green-eyed monster', as a vice, one of the most cancerous and soul-destroying vices that there is; whereas God, we are sure, is perfectly good. How, then, could anyone ever imagine that jealousy is found in Him?...**When God brought Israel out of Egypt to Sinai, to give them His law and covenant, His jealousy was one of the first facts about Himself which He taught them.** The sanction of the second commandment...was this, 'I the LORD thy God am a jealous God'(Ex. 20:5)" (Packer, pp. 151-152)

"...From these passages we see plainly what God meant by telling Moses that His name was 'Jealous'. **He meant that He demands from those whom He has loved and redeemed utter and absolute loyalty, and will vindicate His claim by stern action against them if they betray His love by unfaithfulness.**"(Packer, p. 155)

"...we should not look to pictures of God to show us His glory and move us to worship; for His glory is precisely what such pictures can never show us. And this is why God added to the second commandment a reference to Himself as 'jealous' to avenge Himself on those who disobey Him: for God's 'jealousy' in the Bible is His zeal to maintain His own glory, which is jeopardised when images are used in worship.

"But, we ask, what is the nature of this divine jealousy? How can jealousy be a virtue in God when it is a vice in men?... **The answer to these questions will be found if we bear in mind two facts.** First: biblical statements about God's jealousy are anthropomorphisms-that is, descriptions of God in language drawn from the life of man...When faced with God's anthropomorphisms, however, it is easy to get hold of the wrong end of the stick. We have to remember that man is not the measure of his Maker, and that when the language of human personal life is used of God none of the limitations of human creature-hood are thereby being implied... Thus...God's jealousy is not a compound of frustration, envy, and spite, as human jealousy; so often is, **but appears instead as a (literally) praiseworthy zeal to preserve something supremely precious.** This leads us to our next point.

"**Second:** there are two sorts of jealousy among men, and only one of them is a vice. Vicious jealousy is an expression of the attitude, *'I want what you've got, and I hate you because I haven't got it.'* It is an infantile resentment springing from unmortified covetousness, which expresses itself in envy, malice, and meanness of action...But there is another sort of jealousy: zeal to protect a love-relationship, or to avenge it when broken. This jealousy also operates in the sphere of sex; there, however, it appears, not as the blind reaction of wounded pride, but as the fruit of marital affection... This sort of jealousy is a positive virtue, for it shows a grasp of the true meaning of the husband-wife relationship, together with a proper zeal to keep it intact... **Now Scripture consistently views God's jealousy as being of this latter kind: that is, as an aspect of His covenant love for His own people.**" (Packer, pp. 153-154)

"So God's jealousy leads Him, on the one hand, to judge and destroy the faithless among His people, who fall into idolatry and sin...it also leads Him, on the other hand to restore His people after national judgment has chastened and humbled them..." (Packer, p. 156)

"**The jealousy of God requires us to be zealous for God. As our right response to God's love for us is love for Him, so our right response to His jealousy over us is zeal for Him. His concern for us is great; ours for Him must be great too... Zeal, we note, is commanded and commended in the Scriptures.** Christians are to be *'zealous of good works'*(Titus 2:14). For 'zeal' after rebuke the Corinthians are applauded(2 Cor. 7:11)...When Israel had provoked God to anger by idolatry and prostitution, and Moses had sentenced the offenders to death, and the people were in tears, and a man chose that moment to swagger up with a Midianite party-girl on his arm, and Phinehas, almost beside himself with despair, speared them both, God commended Phinehas as having been 'jealous for his God', 'jealous with my jealousy... so that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy' (Numbers 25:11, 13)." (Packer, pp. 156-157)

23. GREATNESS (Majesty). Ps. 48:1; 93:1-3; 95:3,6; 145:5; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; II Pet. 1:16.

"**How may we form a right idea of God's greatness? The Bible teaches us two steps that we must take. The first is to remove from our thoughts of God limits that would make Him small. The second is to compare Him with powers and forces which we regard as great. For an example of what the FIRST step involves,** look at Psalm 139, where the psalmist meditates on the infinite and unlimited nature of God's presence, and knowledge, and power, in relation to men...Here, then, is the first step in apprehending the greatness of God: to realise how unlimited are His wisdom, and His presence, and His power. Many other passages of Scripture teach the same lesson: notably, Job 38-41..." (Packer, pp. 75-76)

"For an example of what the SECOND step involves, look at Isaiah 40:12-ff. Here God speaks to people whose mood is the mood of many Christians today-despondent people, cowed people, secretly despairing people; people against whom the tide of events has been running for a very long time; people who have ceased to believe that the cause of Christ can ever prosper again. Now see how God through His prophet reasons with them:

"**Look at the TASKS I have done, He says. Could you do them? Could any man do them?** 'Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?'(verse 12). Are you wise enough, and mighty enough, to do things like that? **But I am; or I could not have made this world at all. 'Behold your God!'**" (Packer, p. 77)

"**...we must practice the art of long and loving meditation upon the majesty of God. This will take some effort, for the concept of majesty has all but disappeared from the human race. The focal point of man's interest is now himself.** Humanism in its various forms has displaced theology as the key to the understanding of life." (Tozer, p.123)

24. TRUTH. Ex. 34:6; II Sam. 7:28; Ps. 31:5; 108:4 cf. 57:10; Isa. 65:16; Jn. 17:17 & Ps. 119:160-Word is truth;

"What is a Christian? He can be described from many angles, but from what we have said it is clear that we can cover everything by saying: he is a man who acknowledges and lives under the word of God. He submits without reserve to the word of God written in 'the Scripture of truth' (Dan. 10:21), believing the teaching, trusting the promises, following the commands...His conscience, like Luther's, is captive to the word of God...He is an independent fellow, for he uses the word of God As a touchstone by which to test the various views that are put to him, and he will not touch anything which he is not sure that Scripture sanctions. Why does this description fit so few of us who profess to be Christians in these days? You will find it profitable to ask your conscience, and let it tell you." (Packer, pp. 104-105)

25. SPIRIT (Spirituality). The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 says it well: "The Lord our God is... a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto... having all life, glory, goodness, blessedness, in and of himself... he is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things... to him is due from angels and men, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience, as creatures they owe unto the Creator, and whatever he is further pleased to require of them."⁴ Beneath this general heading I would include several concepts:

- A. **IMMATERIALITY** (i.e. He is a spirit, He does not have a body). Jn. 4:24. The Bible says that "*God is a spirit.*" Contrary to the Mormons (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) that means that God does NOT have a body. This is easily demonstrable by comparing Jn. 4:24 with Lk. 24:39 (cf. Rom. 1:23).
- B. **INVISIBILITY.** Ex. 33:20; Dt. 4:15-19; Jn. 1:18; 6:46; Col. 1:15; I Tim. 1:17; 6:16. God is invisible. Consequently, when like Mormon false prophet Joseph Smith claim to have seen God the Father, they are speaking error.
- C. **PERSONALITY.** I have in mind here the idea that God is not some impersonal force such as the Jehovah's Witness cult teaches. Rather, God possesses personality, i.e. **intellect** (thinking ability, mind) [Gen. 18:19; Ex. 3:7; etc]; **will** (volition) [Jn. 6:38]; and **emotion** (feelings) [Dt. 1:37; etc]. Characteristics of personality are attributed to God in Scripture (e.g. Gen. 1:3-"speaking"; Gen. 11:5-"seeing"; Ps. 94:9-"hearing"; Dt. 1:37-"anger"; etc.
- D. **LIFE.** I Thess. 1:9; Ps. 84:2; etc. God is not inanimate i.e. non-living. On the contrary, He is alive and is the source of all life!

CONCLUSION:

"God is a Person and can be known in increasing degrees of intimate acquaintance as we prepare our hearts for the wonder. It may be necessary for us to alter our former beliefs about God as the glory that gilds the Sacred Scriptures dawns over our interior lives. We may also need to break quietly and graciously with the lifeless textualism that prevails among the gospel churches, and to protest the frivolous character of much that passes for Christianity among us. By this we may for the time lose friends and gain a passing reputation for being *holier-than-thou*; **but no man who permits the expectation of unpleasant consequences to influence him in a matter like this is fit for the kingdom of God.**" (Tozer, p. 123)

⁴ ("*The Baptist Confession of Faith-with Scripture Proofs.*" Reprinted by: Evangelical Press: London, England, 1974, pp. 10-11).