

Study Guide
to
The Knowledge of the Holy

by A. W. Tozer

Lesson One: INTRODUCTION

**“You thought that I was altogether like you.”
Psalm 50:21 (NKJV)**

Aiden Wilson Tozer wrote *The Knowledge of the Holy: The Attributes of God: Their Meaning in the Christian Life*, in 1961. Since then, over 500,000 copies have been sold. If you don't have the book yet, **your first assignment is to obtain your own copy**. This study guide is based entirely on Tozer's book. The Guide can be used personally or for a group Bible study. Permission is granted to make copies of the Guide as necessary for group consumption.

The Knowledge of the Holy will lead us into a greater understanding of the character of God by means of a systematic study of His attributes in the Word of God. Without such a study we will tend to arrive at the same conclusion as the individuals to whom the psalmist wrote in Psalm 50:21. We will assume that God is “altogether like you.” We, being human, will describe Him in the only terms we know, those of humanity. According to the psalmist, that would be a great mistake.

As a starting point for this study, write a brief description of what you think God is like based on what you already know about Him. As you write, ask yourself some questions. What color are God's eyes? How tall is He? What color skin does He have? One kindergarten girl told her teacher that she was drawing a picture of God. The teacher said, “But no one knows what God looks like,” to which the girl replied, “They will in a minute.”

We study the words and work of God to discover His attributes. Then we study His attributes to discover His essence or substance. “In applying the categories of substance and attribute to God, we indulge in no merely curious speculation but rather yield to the necessities of rational thought and show how we must think of God, if we think at all” (A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*).

What God does (words and works) tells us what God is like (attributes), which in turn tells us who God is (essence).

Look up the following verses and fill in the chart.

<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Word or Work</u> (What God said or did)	<u>Attribute</u> (What God is like)	<u>Essence</u> (Who God is)
John 4:23-24	“God is a _____”	_____	_____
Exodus 3:14	“I AM.”	_____	_____
I Kings 8:27	“_____ cannot contain thee”	_____	_____
Malachi 3:6	“I _____ not.”	_____	_____
Isaiah 44:6	“I am the ___, and I am the ____.”	_____	_____
I John 5:20	“we may know Him that is _____”	_____	_____
John 3:16	Word: “God so _____ the world” Work: “He _____ His son”	_____	_____

The method you have just used to discover knowledge of God is a Biblical method. If you have trouble completing the chart, don't worry. These are among the words, works, attributes and essence this Guide will cover. Come back to this chart at the end of the study and it will seem easy.

However, a Biblical method is not the only method used as a source of knowledge about God. One subordinate means of obtaining information is the rational method. It uses three arguments.

Negation: God does not possess the imperfections observed in created beings. Example: I am selfish; therefore, I know that God is: _____.

Climax: God does possess in an infinite degree all perfections found in His creatures. Example: I am sometimes capable of loving; therefore, I know that God is: _____.

Causality: God must possess those attributes necessary to explain the world of nature and mind. Example: Many intelligent men have made great discoveries; therefore, I know that God is: _____.

If the rational method becomes our primary source of knowledge concerning God, however, we will eventually face the dilemma posited by the writer of Psalm 50:21. Notice how easily the rational method can create in our minds a God made in our image.

Negation: God does not possess the imperfections found in created beings. Argument: Hatred of evil that leads to war is a major problem in modern society; therefore, God must not possess hatred of evil.

Climax: God does possess to an infinite degree all perfections found in His creatures.

Argument: An abortionist believes abortion is a better choice than bringing unwanted children into the world, therefore God is in favor of infanticide.

Causality: God must possess those attributes necessary to explain the world of nature and mind.

Argument: Sin and suffering abound in the world of nature; therefore, God must be the cause of sin and suffering.

All three are wrong conclusions based upon the rational method. That is why we must begin with scripture to study God's words and works, determine His attributes, and discover His essence.

"The idolater simply imagines things about God and acts as if they were true." A. W. Tozer

As we study God using a Biblical method, we will discover that we CAN know God rationally, because He has revealed His thoughts to us in a Book. We can also know God personally because He has revealed Himself to us through the person of His Son.

Read Isaiah 1:18. Does a Biblical method eliminate any necessity to think or reason concerning God?

What should we do when our reasoning concerning God disagrees with the revelation concerning God?

ACTION AND REACTION!

A man accepts Christ and for several weeks feels strongly that he is sheltered by the love of God. Then a series of disasters occur. His father dies. He is overlooked for a promotion at work. His wife complains about his pre-occupation with church. Reason says God no longer loves him. Scripture says God is love. How can he reconcile the acts of God as he sees them with the essence of God in Scripture?

Your neighbor is a follower of Christian Science. He believes there is no real existence of matter and therefore no sickness or death. All, to him, is part of the All Good Universal Mind. To support his view, he reminds you that the Bible says, "God is Spirit." How would you answer his rational leap from that verse to the position he holds that All is Mind?

Lesson Two: Why WE must think rightly about God

He burns half of it in the fire;
With this half he eats meat;
He roasts a roast and is satisfied.
He even warms *himself* and says,
“Ah! I am warm,
I have seen the fire.”
And the rest of it he makes into a god,
His carved image.
He falls down before it and worships *it*,
Prays to it and says,
“Deliver me, for you *are* my god!”
Isaiah 44:16-17 (NKJV)

Assignment: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter one.

“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.” A. W. Tozer

“Without doubt, the mightiest thought the mind can entertain is the thought of God, and the weightiest word in any language is its word for God.” A. W. Tozer

Since the weightiest word in any language is its word for God, discover as many of the words for God used in the Hebrew Old Testament as you can recall.

Genesis 1:1 _____

Genesis 2:4 _____

Genesis 17:1 _____

Genesis 22:14 _____

Genesis 21:33 _____

Exodus 17:15 _____

Exodus 15:26 _____

Genesis 14:18 _____

Judges 6:24 _____

I Samuel 1:3 _____

What does the fact that the Hebrews had so many words or names for God tell us about them? _____

How many words for God can you recall in English that have not been borrowed from other languages? _____

What does that tell us about ourselves as a people?

What name for God has the greatest significance in your life at the present time?

Do you find yourself thinking about God primarily in terms that refer to Jesus Christ, to the Holy Spirit, or to God the Father? For example, if asked for a list of references to God from anywhere in Scripture, would your list of names begin with “Bread of Life,” “Light of the World,” etc., or Old Testament names? _____

“A right conception of God is basic not only to systematic theology but to practical Christian living as well.” A. W. Tozer

Why is a right concept of God basic to practical Christian living according to II Corinthians 3:18?

What are some truths concerning God that should be evident in believers as they are changed into His image “from glory to glory”?

I John 4:11-12 _____

Ephesians 4:24-32 _____

I Peter 1:15-16 _____

I Peter 2:12 _____

II Peter 1:2-8 _____

The Bible is our primary source of knowledge about God, and we have seen the danger of depending on rational thought alone; but there is another source of God-knowledge that can be valid. What could we know about God even if we did not have access to His self-revelation in

scripture and in the person of His Son? See Romans 1:19-20. _____

“Among the sins to which the human heart is prone, hardly any other is more hateful to God than idolatry, for idolatry is at bottom a libel on His character. The idolatrous heart assumes that God is other than He is—in itself a monstrous sin—and substitutes for the true God one made after its own likeness. Always this God will conform to the image of the one who created it and will be base or pure, cruel or kind according to the moral state of the mind from which it emerges.” A. W. Tozer

If the idolatrous god conforms to the image of the one who created it, and it is wrong to make God in our image, in what sense can we be said to be made in the image of God?
Genesis 1:26

ACTION AND REACTION!

You are invited to a worship experience where a group of people sit, stand, or lie down in various parts of the room without ever acknowledging the presence of others. There is no instrumental music, no prayer, no Scripture reading, no singing, no sermon, no talking of any kind—only silence. In light of Tozer’s comment that “worship is pure or base as the worshipper entertains high or low thoughts of God,” discuss whether or not you think worship really took place during that experience.

Tozer writes, “I believe there is scarcely an error in doctrine or a failure in applying Christian ethics that cannot be traced finally to imperfect and ignoble thoughts about God.” In our objections to modern medical practices such as abortion, we often claim that they violate Christian ethics and therefore the character of God. How could we support our claim by showing that abortion reveals imperfect or ignoble thoughts about God?

Lesson Three: GOD INCOMPREHENSIBLE

**“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* His judgments and His ways past finding out!”
Romans 11:33 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter two.

In his prayer beginning chapter two, Tozer says, “Let faith support us where reason fails, and we shall think because we believe, not in order that we may believe.”

What is the danger in thinking in order that we may believe?

“The child, the philosopher, and the religionist have all one question: “What is God like? This book is an attempt to answer that question. Yet at the outset I must acknowledge that it cannot be answered except to say that God is not like anything; that is, He is not *exactly* like anything or anybody.” A. W. Tozer

Why does Tozer say that God is not “exactly like anything or anybody”?

How do the following Scriptures describe God while avoiding slavish literalism in those descriptions?

Ezekiel 1:26 _____

Ezekiel 1:27 _____

Ezekiel 1:28 _____

Revelation 1:13 _____

Revelation 1:14 _____

Revelation 1:15 _____

Revelation 1:16 _____

Why is it important for us to seek an understanding of God, rather than a vision of God?

How do the following Scriptures describe the process of knowing God?

John 1:18 _____

John 5:36 _____

John 5:46 _____

Calvin Miller in *The Table of Inwardness* writes, “One door opens to the world of the spirit: imagination....to follow Christ we must create in our minds God’s unseen world or never confront it at all. Thus, we create in our minds the Christ.” Ruth Stapleton says, “But as the guided meditation continued, Betty suddenly saw in her imagination Jesus standing before her. His arms went around her and he was saying he loved her.”

A. W. Tozer says, “When we try to imagine what God is like we must of necessity use that which is not God as the raw material for our minds to work on; hence whatever we visualize God to be, He is not, for we have constructed our image out of that which He has made and what He has made is not God. If we insist upon trying to imagine Him, we end with an idol, made not with hands but with thoughts; and an idol of the mind is as offensive to God as an idol of the hand.”

In light of those conflicting opinions, what would you say is the difference between faith in God and visualization of God based on the creative imagination?

What is the inherent danger in depending on visualization for our knowledge concerning God?

If God is incomprehensible, then how can we say that we “know” God?

Tozer writes, “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.”

What do the following Scriptures tell us about the incomprehensibility of God?

Romans 11:33 _____

Job 11:7-9 _____

Matthew 11:27 _____

I Corinthians 2:11 _____

If God is indeed incomprehensible, then what approach must we take to knowing the One Who is “Unknowable”?

ACTION AND REACTION!

A person who belongs to the “Jesus Only” cult, also called “The Way, International,” claims that the only God we know is Jesus Christ, because He alone is the embodiment of God. Can we know the other Persons of the Trinity, and if so, how can we know them?

Several years ago, an individual living in Arizona announced that she had seen the face of God appearing in a tortilla. A shrine was constructed and people made pilgrimages to see God in the tortilla. How do you know that what appeared in the tortilla was not the face of God?

Lesson four: A Divine Attribute: Something True About God

**“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.”
Romans 1:20 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter three.

“For the purpose of this book an attribute of God is whatever God has in any way revealed as being true of Himself.” A. W. Tozer

“If an attribute is something true of God, it is also something that we can conceive as being true of Him. God, being infinite, must possess attributes about which we can know nothing. An attribute, as we can know it, is a mental concept, an intellectual response to God’s self-revelation. It is an answer to a question; the reply God makes to our interrogation concerning Himself.” A. W. Tozer

When you think about the statement that God must possess attributes about which we can know nothing, how does that impact your awareness of the knowledge of the Holy?

See John 3:30 and John 21:25

“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.” A. W. Tozer

God has revealed truth concerning Himself in creation, although Tozer says that idea “is not held with much vigor by modern Christians.” What do the following facts about the world in which we live teach us concerning God?

You could circle the earth seven times in one second at the speed of light, but it would take four years at the same speed to get to Alpha Centauri, the nearest star to our sun. (See Psalm 19)

The bolas spider captures its prey by swinging a single strand of web like a lasso and trapping the insect in it. (See Job 9:1-10)

Summer will always be followed by winter and no matter how cold, summer will return again. (See Gen. 8:21-22).

God has revealed Himself through creation, the Scriptures, and His Son. Which of those revelations must be our primary source of information about God in this present age? (See II Peter 1:19).

Perhaps you have heard that one attribute of God is fundamental to all the others. If so, which attribute has been mentioned in that way? _____.

The two most common answers are holiness and love. Tozer says, "He need not suspend one to exercise another, for in Him all His attributes are one."

How should this statement concerning the divine unity of the attributes affect our view of the correlation between God's justice and holiness and love?

ACTION AND REACTION!

In each of the three areas (Revelation, Creation, Christ) by which God reveals Himself, fallen man still continues to arrive at wrong conclusions about God. Consider each of the following situations.

CREATION: Charles Darwin studied the world of nature and developed his theory of the "survival of the fittest." To him the world was a violent place where only the strongest survive.

Based on that theory alone, what conclusions would we be compelled to arrive at concerning God?

How would you provide a Biblical answer to a person who asked you why death and suffering (survival) occur in a created world that was pronounced “very good” by God upon its completion?

HIS SON: Liberal theologians often speak of God revealing Himself in His Son and then arrive at the conclusion, as A.G. Baker did, that “the only Christ there is, is brotherly love in man.” Neo-Orthodoxy, in reaction to liberalism, declared Christ as a revelation of God that encountered man in His day, but said the incarnation was not a historical fact but an existential experience.

If we must experience an encounter with Christ for ourselves in order to have a revelation from God, what kind of Christ will we come to know?

HIS WORD: Neo-orthodoxy says that the Bible is not a revelation itself, but a witness to revelation, that is, the Bible contains the Word of God rather than being the Word of God.

Why is it important for correct thinking about God to believe that the Bible is the revelation of God, inspired by Him and without error?

Lesson Five: The Holy Trinity

**“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”
Matthew 28:19 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter four.

“Every man lives by faith, the nonbeliever as well as the saint; the one by faith in natural laws and the other by faith in God. Every man throughout his entire life constantly accepts without understanding.” A. W. Tozer

What illustrations can you give of secular examples of those who live by faith in natural laws?

“The church has not hesitated to teach the doctrine of the Trinity. Without pretending to understand, she has given her witness, she has repeated what the Holy Scriptures teach.”

A. W. Tozer

Why should the very fact that we cannot understand or explain the doctrine of the Trinity increase our appreciation and evaluation of God?

What is the difference between studying the Word to discover its meaning, or proper interpretation, and “sitting in judgment upon what is written”?

Why was it impossible for Christ to surrender any of His deity in the act of assuming manhood?

“Everyone who possess the gift of faith will recognize the wisdom of those daring words of one of the early Church Fathers: ‘I believe that Christ died for me because it is incredible; I believe that He rose from the dead because it is impossible.’ It is most important that we think of God as Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Person nor dividing the Substance. Only so may we think rightly of God and in a manner worthy of Him and of our own souls.” A. W. Tozer

How can we reconcile the differences in the two statements of Christ: “I and my Father are One” (John 10:30) and “My Father is greater than I” (John 14:28)?

ACTION AND REACTION!

Considering the Unity in the Trinity and the fact that all acts of God are the work of all three Persons of the Trinity, including salvation, the atonement and the indwelling—How should that understanding change our thinking about those doctrines in the following examples?

Some people teach that the Holy Spirit came upon Christ at His baptism and left at the time of the crucifixion. How would you dispute that based on the unity of the Godhead? (See Hebrews 9:14)

A person comes to you and says, “I know Christ saved me, but I’m not sure God will keep me saved if I grieve the Holy Spirit.” What answer would you give them based on the unity of

the Godhead? (See I Peter 1:2)

Someone says: "I know God inspired the Bible and it specifically says not to commit adultery. But I prayed about this relationship and received a vision from the Holy Spirit telling me that in my case adultery was justified." How would you answer that from the fact that God is a tri-unity? (See II Timothy 3:16)

Lesson Six: THE SELF-EXISTENCE OF GOD

**“And God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM.’ And He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”
Exodus 3:14 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter five.

“Origin is a word that can apply only to things created. When we think of anything that has origin we are not thinking of God. God is self-existent, while all created things necessarily originated somewhere at some time. Aside from God, nothing is self-caused.”

“To admit that there is One who lies beyond us, who exists outside of all our categories, who will not be dismissed with a name, who will not appear before the bar of our reason, nor submit to our curious inquiries: this requires a great deal of humility, more than most of us possess, so we save face by thinking God down to our level, or at least down to where we can manage Him. Yet how He eludes us! For He is everywhere while He is nowhere, for “where” has to do with matter and space, and God is independent of both. He is unaffected by time or motion, is wholly self-dependent and owes nothing to the worlds His hands have made.”

A. W. Tozer

Why is it human thinking to conceive of God being “in” a certain place, or “part of” a certain object? Why is it human and not divine thinking to speak of God as being “everywhere” and “nowhere”?

The name Jehovah (usually translated as LORD) means the self-existent One. Why, in the following verses, do you think God used that name for Himself? Remember, it is the name that indicated He had no origin and is therefore not dependent on anyone or anything.

Genesis 2:4

Genesis 4:1

Exodus 15:26

Exodus 17:15

Psalms 24:10

“For reasons known only to Himself, God honored man above all other beings by creating him in His own image. Man is a created being, a derived and contingent self, who of himself possesses nothing but is dependent upon the One who created him after His own likeness. The fact of God is necessary to the fact of man. Think God away and man has no ground of existence.” A. W. Tozer

How does the self-existence of God impact the idea that man has simply evolved from lower creatures through the survival of the fittest?

What does the Bible teach about the origin of all things including time, space, and matter?

Genesis 1

Colossians 1:16-17

“The natural man is a sinner because and only because he challenges God’s selfhood in relation to his own. In all else he may willingly accept the sovereignty of God; in his own life he rejects it. For him, God’s dominion ends where his begins. For him, self becomes Self, and in this he unconsciously imitates Lucifer, that fallen son of the morning who said in his heart, ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will be like the most High’.” A. W. Tozer

How does the Apostle Paul describe this bent toward self-assertion even in the life of a believer?

Romans 7:15-25

Why does Tozer say that no more accurate description of sin has ever been given than Isaiah 53:6?

ACTION AND REACTION!

Recent court cases involving the teaching of creation and evolution have centered on the teaching of “scientific creationism” as a science rather than theology. Is it really possible to study origins from a scientific viewpoint, arrive at a “creation model” conclusion, and yet claim that the study has not included theology? On the other hand, is it possible to arrive at an evolutionary viewpoint of origins without denying the existence of a Creator?

Universalists teach that all men will eventually be saved or reunited with God. Is that possible in view of God's self-existence and the existence of a Self in man? What would happen if a man with a still rebellious Self was allowed into the presence of a self-existent God?

Lesson Seven: THE SELF-SUFFICIENCY OF GOD

**“For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,”
John 5:26 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter six.

“The Father hath life in Himself,” said our Lord, and it is characteristic of His teaching that He thus in a brief sentence sets forth truth so lofty as to transcend the highest reaches of human thought. God, He said, is self-sufficient; He is what He is in Himself, in the final meaning of those words.” A. W. Tozer

“The Father hath life in Himself” (John 5:26). The Triune God is totally self-sufficient, dependent on no one or no thing outside Himself. How does that Divine Life differ from the life which each human possesses?

“To admit the existence of a need in God is to admit incompleteness in the divine Being. Need is a creature-word and cannot be spoken of the Creator. God has a voluntary relation to everything He has made, but He has no necessary relation to anything outside of Himself. 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.”

“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.”
A. W. Tozer

How should our attitude toward giving offerings to God change when we realize that we can give nothing to God which He has not first given to us?

What do the following Scriptures teach us about the self-sufficiency of God?

Hebrews 1:3

Colossians 1:17

“Probably the hardest thought of all for our natural egotism to entertain is that God does not need our help. We commonly represent Him as a busy, eager, somewhat frustrated Father hurrying about seeking help to carry out His benevolent plan to bring peace and salvation to the world. Too many missionary appeals are based upon this fancied frustration of Almighty God. An effective speaker can easily excite pity in his hearers, not only for the heathen but for the God who has tried so hard and so long to save them and has failed for want of support.” A. W. Tozer

Tozer warns against missionary appeals based on a supposed need, or frustration of God. Since that is not a proper motive for missionary endeavor, what would be a proper motive?

“Again, God needs no defenders. He is the eternal Undefended. To communicate with us in an idiom we can understand, God in the Scriptures makes full use of military terms; but surely it was never intended that we should think of the throne of the Majesty on high as being under siege, with Michael and his hosts or some other heavenly beings defending it from stormy overthrow.” A. W. Tozer

How do the following Scriptures show us that God is the “eternal Undefended”?

Jeremiah 50:34.

I John 4:4.

Revelation 4:11.

Revelation 19:15-16.

“In the meantime, our inner fulfillment lies in loving obedience to the commandments of Christ and the inspired admonitions of His apostles. . . He needs no one, but when faith is present, He works through anyone.” A. W. Tozer

How should we understand Philippians 2:12-13 in relationship to the self-sufficiency of God?

ACTION AND REACTION!

William Carey was rebuked by an older minister with these words, “When God pleases to convert the heathen, He will do it without your aid or mine.” Why is it wrong to reason from the self-sufficiency of God that since God does not need us, He will not choose to use us?

Since God is not dependent upon us, yet has chosen to use us; what will hinder us from accomplishing what He desires to do through us? (See Psalm 4:1-5; John 15:7; Romans 14:23)

During the Civil War, sermons were preached in both North and South about the righteousness of the cause and how God was on their side. What are you acknowledging about your view of God if you assign Him a “side” in a military conflict?

Lesson Eight: The Eternity of God

For a thousand years in Your sight
Are like yesterday when it is past,
And *like* a watch in the night.
Psalm 90:4 (NKJV)

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter seven.

“The concept of everlastingness runs like a lofty mountain range throughout the entire Bible and looms large in orthodox Hebrew and Christian thought.” A. W. Tozer

God has no past or future. Time words refer to human thought, not divine reality.

Note the following Scripture passages and the words they use to indicate the fact that God is eternal.

Deut. 32:40 _____

Psalm 90:2 _____

Psalm 102:27 _____

Isa. 41:4 _____

I Cor. 2:7 _____

Eph. 1:4 _____

I Tim. 1:17 _____

I Tim. 6:16 _____

Rev. 1:8 _____

John 1:1 _____

Jude 25 _____

Hebrews 1:8 _____

“The truth is that if the Bible did not teach that God possessed endless being in the ultimate meaning of that term, we would be compelled to infer it from His other attributes, and if the Holy Scriptures had no word for absolute everlastingness, it would be necessary for us to coin one to express the concept, for it is assumed, implied, and generally taken for granted everywhere throughout the inspired Scriptures.” A. W. Tozer

Tozer suggests that it is possible to infer eternity from God’s other attributes. How can we reason that God is eternal from the two attributes we have already studied: self-existence and self-sufficiency.”

“Because God lives in an everlasting now, He has no past and no future. When time-words occur in Scripture they refer to our time, not to His. God dwells in eternity but time dwells in God. He has already lived all our tomorrows as He has lived all our yesterdays.”

A. W. Tozer

How does the truth that God has already lived our tomorrows give added meaning to the command in Phil. 4:4?

“The marks of the divine image have been so obscured by sin that they are not easy to identify, but is it not reasonable to believe that one mark may be man’s insatiable craving for immortality?” A. W. Tozer

What evidence can you cite to support the view that man has “an insatiable craving for immortality”?

“May the knowledge of eternity not be wasted on me.”

“Since God is eternal, He can be and continues forever to be the One safe home for His time-driven children.” A. W. Tozer

Read the following verses and give practical application of them to our own lives in light of the fact that God is eternal.

Psalms 90:10

Psalms 90:12

I John 2:17

ACTION AND REACTION!

Many people have tried to illustrate the relationship of time and eternity. Tozer gives us an illustration from C. S. Lewis. “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.”

Here are some other illustrations:

Mozart: “All the inventing and making goes on in me as in a beautiful, strange dream. But the best of all is the hearing of it all at once.”

Shedd: “There are two ways in which a person may see a procession: first from a doorway in the street through which the procession is passing; and secondly from the top of a steeple which commands a view of the entire procession at the same instant.”

Meze: “As if all of us were cylinders, with their ends removed, moving through the waters of some placid lake. To the cylinders, the waters seem to move. What has passed is memory; what is to come is doubtful. But the lake knows that all the water is equally real, and that it is quiet, unmovable, unruffled.”

How do these illustrations help us to understand the doctrine of the eternality of God?

Lesson Nine: God's Infinitude

**“But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!”
I Kings 8:27 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter eight.

“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. And here again we must break away from the popular meaning of words. ‘Unlimited wealth’ and ‘boundless energy’ are further examples of the misuse of words. Of course, no wealth is unlimited and no energy is boundless unless we are speaking of the wealth and energy of God.” A. W. Tozer

The infinity of God is a proper subject for our reasoning because it has been revealed to us in the Scriptures. What attributes of God are said to be infinite in the following verses?

Isaiah 26:4

Isaiah 54:8

John 6:40

Psalms 145:3

Daniel 4:3

Psalm 119:142

Psalm 103:17

Romans 11:33

Why does human language fail us when we begin to think about the infinitude of God?

“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. 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. For those out of Christ, time is a devouring beast; before the sons of the new creation time crouches and purrs and licks their hands. The foe of the old human race becomes the friend of the new, and the stars in their courses fight for the man God delights to honor. This we may learn from the divine infinitude.” A. W. Tozer

Why is it important to know that God’s other attributes, such as life, love, mercy and holiness, are infinite?

Why is it important for us to know that nothing except God is infinite, including sin and Satan?

“His love is measureless. It is more: it is boundless. It has no bounds because it is not a thing but a facet of the essential nature of God. His love is everything He is, and because He is infinite that love can enfold the whole created world in itself and have room for ten thousand times ten thousand worlds beside.” A. W. Tozer

How does Psalm 103:11-12 use human descriptions to help us understand the infinitude of God as it relates to mercy and forgiveness?

ACTION AND REACTION!

Pantheists believe that God is one with the universe, and that “all” is therefore “god.” How does I Kings 8:27 show that God is not only omnipresent in the universe, but is also transcendent to the universe because of his infinitude?

Infinitude does not mean extension or division. God is not like a rubber band that is stretched tight to go around an entire package. Nor is He like a dandelion seed pod which is divided so that it can go into many places at once. He is in all places in His completeness yet is not limited or defined or diminished by space in any way. It is not right to point to any specific object and say, “God is in that object.” He does not occupy time or space but rather transcends them.

Think of this truth in relationship to His infinite love.

Is His love stretched thin for Him to love the world? (See John 3:16). _____

Is His love divided so that one person receives a greater or smaller portion than someone else? _____

Now apply the same principle of infinitude to other attributes of God.

Is holiness stretched thin to cover all who are forgiven?

Is wisdom divided so that some have more or less?

Is mercy stretched thin?

Is grace divided?

Is strength stretched thin when events overwhelm us?

Is long suffering divided and portioned out?

What practical effect should the truth of God's infinitude produce in your life this week?

Lesson Ten: The Immutability of God

**“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”
James 1:17 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter nine.

“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. It seems to me impossible to think of God as varying from Himself in any way.” A. W. Tozer

Why do the perfections of God rule out the possibility that He could ever change?

“The immutability of God appears in its most perfect beauty when viewed against the mutability of men. In God no change is possible; in men change is impossible to escape. Neither the man is fixed nor his world, but he and it are in constant flux. Each man appears for a little while to laugh and weep, to work and play, and then to go to make room for those who shall follow him in the never-ending cycle.” A. W. Tozer

How do the following verses describe the mutability of mankind?

Genesis 5:25-27 _____

Psalm 90:9 _____

Eccl. 6:7 _____

“In the meanwhile, change works for the children of the kingdom, not against them. In a fallen world such as this the very ability to change is a golden treasure, a gift from God of such fabulous worth as to call for constant thanksgiving. For human beings the whole possibility of redemption lies in their ability to change.” A. W. Tozer

In addition to the change that takes place in redemption, what do the following verses show us that the Spirit of God seeks to change in the life of the believer?

II Cor. 3:18 _____

Eph. 4:22-24 _____

Immutability is another attribute that qualifies the other attributes of God. In the following verses, what other attributes are described in conjunction with statements concerning immutability?

Psalm 102:27 _____

Malachi 3:6 _____

James 1:17 _____

Although the immutability of God is clearly taught in Scripture, there are also other verses that seem to describe God as changing in some way. How can each of the following verse be explained in view of the clear doctrine of God’s unchanging character?

Genesis 6:6 (Cf. to Num. 23:19)

I Samuel 15:11 (Cf. to I Sam. 15:19)

Jonah 3:4 and 3:10

“In this world where men forget us, change their attitude toward us as their private interests dictate, and revise their opinion of us for the slightest cause, is it not a source of wondrous strength to know that the God with whom we have to do changes not? That His attitude toward us now is the same as it was in eternity past and will be in eternity to come?

God never changes moods or cools off in His affections or loses enthusiasm. His attitude towards sin is now the same as it was when He drove out the sinful man from the eastward garden, and His attitude toward the sinner the same as when He stretched forth His hands and cried, ‘Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’

God will not compromise and He need not be coaxed. He cannot be persuaded to alter His Word nor talked into answering selfish prayer. 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.”

A. W. Tozer

ACTION AND REACTION!

How should the immutability of God affect our attitude toward the Word of God?

How should the immutability of God affect our attitude toward sin and the changing moral climate of our culture?

How should the immutability of God affect our attitude toward prayer, its use and necessity?

The terms “perfect will of God” and “permissive will of God” are sometimes used to attempt to explain the seeming changes of God’s will toward His creatures. How should these terms be understood in view of God’s immutability?

How does the experience of Hezekiah in Isaiah 38 illustrate this seeming disconnect between apparent changes in an unchanging God?

Lesson Eleven: The Divine Omniscience

**“O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.”
Romans 11:33**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter ten.

“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.” A. W. Tozer

“God knows instantly and effortlessly all matter and all matters, all mind and every mind, all spirit and all spirits, all being and every being, all creaturehood and all creatures, every plurality and all pluralities, all law and every law, all relations, all causes, all thoughts, all mysteries, all enigmas, all feeling, all desires, every unuttered secret, all thrones and dominions, all personalities, all things visible and invisible in heaven and in earth, motion, space, time, life, death, good, evil, heaven and hell.” A. W. Tozer

In describing for us the omniscience of God, the Scriptures list many instances of things which are objects of His knowledge. Look up the following verses and tell what God knows according to these verses!

Psalm 147:4 _____

Matthew 10:29-30 _____

Psalm 33:13-15 _____

Acts 15:8 _____

Psalm 139:2 _____

Matthew 6:8 _____

Isaiah 46:9-10 _____

God’s omniscience includes not only the actual, but also the possible. He knows what would happen if a certain choice were made, and therefore, He can warn us about making that

choice. How is this illustrated in I Samuel 23:12?

“Because God knows all things perfectly, He knows no thing better than any other thing, but all things equally well. He never discovers anything, He is never surprised, never amazed. He never wonders about anything nor (except when drawing men out for their own good) does He seek information or ask questions.” A. W. Tozer

Since God knows everything, why does He ask questions in the following instances?

Genesis 3:9.

John 21:15-17.

What should be the reaction of the guilty sinner to the omniscience of God?

What should be the reaction of the believer to the omniscience of God?

We know that the Scriptures, though a perfect revelation of God, are not a complete revelation of God. Why is that understandable in light of His omniscience?

ACTION AND REACTION!

Omniscience includes the actual and the possible, but it does not include the self-contradictory and the impossible, because those are not objects of knowledge. For example: God does not know what the result would be if $2+2=5$ because no knowledge of such a result exists. What other attributes that we have studied would be violated if God knew things which were not objects of knowledge?

We often hear the omniscience of God as a warning against sin, and it is certainly important for us to realize that God knows our every thought as well as our deeds. But for the believer who is walking in the Spirit, how can the omniscience of God be a stimulus to good works as well as a deterrent of evil? (See Ephesians 2:10).

Lesson Twelve: The Wisdom of God

**“Daniel answered and said:
‘Blessed be the name of God forever and ever,
For wisdom and might are His.’”
Daniel 2:20 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter eleven.

“When Christian theology declares that God is wise, it means vastly more than it says or can say, for it tries to make a comparatively weak word bear an incomprehensible plenitude of meaning that threatens to tear it apart and crush it under the sheer weight of the idea. ‘His understanding is infinite,’ says the psalmist. It is nothing less than infinitude that theology is here laboring to express.” A. W. Tozer

God’s wisdom is often associated with other of His attributes. In the following verses, note the characteristic of God that is listed alongside His wisdom.

Job 9:4 _____

Job 36:5 _____

Isa. 40:28 _____

Dan. 2:20 _____

How does it increase our understanding of the word “wisdom” as applied to God when we see it in such close correlation with the attribute of “might” or “power”?

How do the following verses help us to see the inadequacy of the word “wisdom” when applied to the attributes of God?

Romans 16:27 _____

I Timothy 1:17 _____

“In this brief study of the divine wisdom we begin with faith in God. Following our usual pattern, we shall not seek to understand in order that we may believe, but to believe in order that we may understand.” A. W. Tozer

Why is it important to begin with faith in God when studying the subject of divine wisdom?

“The testimony of faith is that no matter how things look in this fallen world, all God’s acts are wrought in perfect wisdom.” A. W. Tozer

How does the omniscience of God work with His wisdom to produce what is best for us?

What is “true faith” according to A. W. Tozer?

“To believe actively that our Heavenly Father constantly spreads around us providential circumstances that work for our present good and our everlasting well-being brings to the soul a veritable benediction. Most of us go through life praying a little, planning a little, jockeying for position, hoping but never being quite certain of anything and always secretly afraid that we will miss the way. That is a tragic waste of truth and never gives rest to the heart.” A. W. Tozer

What can we do with the doctrine of the wisdom of God to make it more than just a tenet of our creed?

“It is heartening to learn how many of God’s mighty deeds were done in secret, away from the prying eyes of men or angels. When God created the heavens and the earth, darkness was upon the face of the deep. When the Eternal Son became flesh, He was carried for a time in the darkness of the sweet virgin’s womb. When He died for the life of the world, it was in the darkness, seen by no one at the last. When He arose from the dead, it was ‘very early in the morning.’ No one saw Him rise. It is as God were saying, ‘What I am is all that need matter to you, for there lie your hope and your peace. I will do what I will do, and it will all come to light at last, but how I do it is My secret. Trust Me, and be not afraid.’” A. W. Tozer

ACTION AND REACTION!

Why will mankind never be right when coming up with plans to improve on the way God is working in the world?

Why do people find it so hard to believe in the wisdom of God when they encounter evil and sorrow in this present world?

How can you personally apply the truth of the wisdom of God to a circumstance in your life which you are facing right now?

Lesson Thirteen: The Omnipotence of God

**“And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!”
Revelation 19:6 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter twelve.

Read the following verses and write down the word commonly used in Scripture to show us that God possesses all power.

Genesis 17:1 _____

Job 11:7 _____

Psalms 91:1 _____

II Cor. 6:18 _____

“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.” A. W. Tozer

The word “almighty” occurs 31 times in Job, very likely the first book of the Bible written. “One cannot long read the Scriptures sympathetically without noticing the radical disparity between the outlook of men of the Bible and that of modern men.” A. W. Tozer

How does the common outlook of modern man reveal a secularized mentality in regard to the omnipotence of God as compared to men of the Bible?

What should we learn about God from studying the natural world (see Romans 1:20)?

“The trustworthiness of God’s behavior in His world is the foundation of all scientific truth.” A. W. Tozer

How does the regular pattern of how the power of God operates allow scientists to discover “laws” of nature?

“Religion is interested primarily in the One who is the source of all things, the master of every phenomenon. For this One philosophy has various names, the most horrendous that I have seen being that supplied by Rudolf Otto: ‘The absolute, the gigantic, never-resting, active world stress.’” A. W. Tozer

How does the God of the Bible differ from the “active great stress” described by the philosopher Otto? (see II Cor. 6:16-18).

“Since He has at His command all the power in the universe, the Lord God omnipotent can do anything as easily as anything else. All His acts are done without effort. He expends no energy that must be replenished. His self-sufficiency makes it unnecessary for Him to look outside of Himself for a renewal of strength. All the power required to do all that He wills to do lies in undiminished fullness in His own infinite being.” A. W. Tozer

How does man replenish strength in ways that God never needs to use?

How does the fact that God “expends no energy that must be replenished” help us face by faith the dangers and stresses and afflictions that occur in our lives?

ACTION AND REACTION!

The following quotes are taken from the book *The Seduction of Christianity* and represent some of the false teaching being offered today in the area of God's omnipotence.

Kenneth Copeland, in a sermon titled "The Force of Love," says "You don't have a God in you. You are one."

How does a knowledge of the omnipotence of God help us recognize how false that statement must be?

Robert Tilton of Word of Faith Ministries writes, "We have the power to create wealth."

Is the power of God something we control, and if so, what would that tell us about God's omnipotence?

Earl Paulk says, "Don't expect the rapture to rescue you. If you want to bring Christ back to earth, you can do it."

Does the life of Christ within the believer also make a believer the possessor of His omnipotence? (See Phil. 4:13).

Lesson Fourteen: The Divine Transcendence

“Therefore, I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength.”

Daniel 10:8 (NKJV)

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter thirteen.

Read the following Scriptures and record the reactions of men when they came face to face with a transcendent God.

Genesis 17:1-3 _____

Genesis 28:16-17 _____

Exodus 3:4-6 _____

Exodus 19:16 _____

Job 42:5-6 _____

Isaiah 6:1-5 _____

Ezekiel 1:27-28 _____

Daniel 10:5-10 _____

Revelation 1:12-17 _____

Read the following Scriptures and record the reactions of men when they came face to face with the incarnate Son of God.

John 8:57-59 _____

John 10:30-39 _____

How can we explain the difference between those reactions? (See Phil. 2:7)

“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. The caterpillar and the archangel, though far removed from each other in the scale of created things, are nevertheless one in that they are alike created. They both belong in the category of that-which-is-not-God and are separated from God by infinitude itself.” A. W. Tozer

How does this quote from Tozer help us gain an understanding of the transcendence of God different from a recognition of the pre-eminence of God?

“When men no longer fear God, they transgress His laws without hesitation. The fear of consequences is no deterrent when the fear of God is gone.” A. W. Tozer

How do you understand Tozer’s distinction between the fear of deterrents and the fear of God?

How does Daniel use human comparisons to give us some idea of the transcendence of a holy God? (See Daniel 10:6-9)

What was Daniel’s reaction to the vision of God which he saw?

What should be our reaction to a personal understanding of God’s transcendence?

“These experiences show that a vision of the divine transcendence soon ends all controversy between the man and his God. The fight goes out of the man and he is ready with the conquered Saul to ask meekly, ‘Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?’ Conversely, the self-assurance of modern Christians, the basic levity present in so many of our religious gatherings, the shocking disrespect shown for the person of God, are evidence enough of deep blindness of heart.” A. W. Tozer

Does the attitude of the average American toward God compare more closely with that of Abraham and Daniel or with that of the Pharisees and Sadducees?

Abraham and Daniel _____
Pharisees and Sadducees _____

Does the attitude of the average church member toward God compare more closely with that of Abraham and Daniel or with that of the Pharisees and Sadducees?

Abraham and Daniel _____
Pharisees and Sadducees _____

Do we prefer to think of God in terms of His humanity or in terms of His transcendent deity?

ACTION AND REACTION!

“Once in conversation with his friend Eckermann, the poet Goethe turned to thoughts of religion and spoke of the abuse of the divine name. ‘People treat it,’ he said, ‘as if that incomprehensible and most high Being, who is even beyond the reach of thought, were only their equal. Otherwise, they would not say, the Lord God, the dear God, the good God.’ This expression becomes to them, especially to the clergy, who have it daily in their mouths, a mere phrase, a barren name, to which no thought whatever is attached. If they were impressed by His greatness, they would be dumb, and through veneration unwilling to name Him.” A. W. Tozer

We all know that the name of God is abused as a swear word, but do you agree that the name of God is abused even among believers in their prayers? If so, what can each one of us do about our personal reaction to transcendence?

Lesson Fifteen: God's Omnipresence

If I ascend into heaven, You *are* there;
If I make my bed in hell, behold, You *are there*.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there Your hand shall lead me,
And Your right hand shall hold me.”
Psalm 139:8-10 (NKJV)

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter fourteen.

Read the following Scriptures and identify the Biblical reasons why we believe in the omnipresence of God.

John 4:24 _____

Genesis 1:1-2 _____

Isaiah 66:1 _____

Psalm 139:7-12 _____

I Kings 8:27 _____

“The belief that God is present within His universe cannot be held in isolation. It has practical implications in many areas of theological thought and bears directly upon certain religious problems, such, for instance, as the nature of the world. Thinking men of almost every age and culture have been concerned with the question of what kind of world this is. Is it a material world running by itself, or is it spiritual and run by unseen powers? Does this interlocking system explain itself or does its secret lie in mystery? Does the stream of existence begin and end in itself? Or is its source higher up and farther back in the hills?” A. W. Tozer

What is the Christian answer to the question of what kind of world this is?

“Canon W. G. H. Holmes of India told of seeing Hindu worshippers 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.”
A. W. Tozer

Some have tried to make omnipresence equal to pantheism, or universal salvation. What does John 1:9 mean in relationship to the omnipresence of God?

Why is it important to understand that though God is present everywhere, He is not confined by tree or stone?

“This truth is to the convinced Christian a source of deep comfort in sorrow and of steadfast assurance in all the varied experiences of his life. To him ‘the practice of the presence of God’ consists not of projecting an imaginary object from within his own mind and then seeking to realize its presence; it is rather to recognize the real presence of the One whom all sound theology declares to be already there, an objective entity, existing apart from any apprehension of Him on the part of his creatures. The resultant experience is not visionary, but real.” A. W. Tozer

What is the practical difference between a visionary presence of Christ and a real presence?

“That God is here both Scripture and reason declare. It remains only for us to learn to realize this in conscious experience. A sentence from a letter by Dr. Allen Fleece sums up the testimony of many others: ‘The knowledge that God is present is blessed, but to *feel* His presence is nothing less than sheer happiness’.” A. W. Tozer

ACTION AND REACTION!

Read the following verses and list the practical applications that should become a part of the life of the believer as a result of understanding the attribute of omnipresence.

Matthew 5:34-37

Since God is present everywhere we should always:

Matthew 6:9-10

What impact should omnipresence have on the conduct of our prayer lives?

Acts 7:48-49

Knowing that God is everywhere present should lead us to what truths concerning worship?

Acts 17:27-28

Omnipresence should affect our daily conduct in what fashion?

Lesson Sixteen: The Faithfulness of God

**“If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.”
II Timothy 2:13**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter fifteen

“In studying any attribute, the essential oneness of all the attributes soon becomes apparent. We see, for instance, that if God is self-existent, He must also be self-sufficient; and if He has power He, being infinite, must have all power. If He possesses knowledge, His infinitude assures us that He possesses all knowledge. Similarly, His immutability presupposes His faithfulness.” A. W. Tozer

How does the immutability of God guarantee that God is also faithful?

“All of God’s acts are consistent with all of His attributes. No attribute contradicts any other, but all harmonize and blend into each other in the infinite abyss of the Godhead. All that God does agrees with all that God is and being and doing are one in Him. The familiar picture of God as often torn between His justice and His mercy is altogether false to the facts.”
A. W. Tozer

Why is it wrong to think of God as torn between His justice and His mercy toward mankind?

What do each of the following Scriptures teach us about God in relation to His faithfulness?

I John 1:9. How is the availability of forgiveness related to the attribute of faithfulness?

I Corinthians 10:13. How does the strength of those sins that tempt us change when we recognize God's faithfulness?

Deuteronomy 7:9. What does the faithfulness of God teach us concerning His covenant of love?

I Corinthians 1:9. What does the faithfulness of God teach us concerning the preservation of our salvation?

I Thessalonians 5:21-24. What does the faithfulness of God teach us concerning sanctification?

II Thessalonians 3:3. What does the faithfulness of God teach us concerning our protection from the attacks of Satan?

“I think it might be demonstrated that almost every heresy that has afflicted the church through the years has arisen from believing about God things that are not true, or from over-emphasizing certain true things so as to obscure other things equally true. To magnify any attribute to the exclusion of another is to head straight for one of the dismal swamps of theology; and yet we are all constantly tempted to do just that.” A. W. Tozer

What does A. W. Tozer say are the basic reasons for the rise of heretical teaching?

ACTION AND REACTION!

As you consider the foundation for the following false teachings, would you identify them as being based on something untrue about God, or on an over-emphasis of something that is true?

The *Da Vinci Code* claimed that Christ fathered a child with Mary Magdalene.

Liberal theology's teaching concerning the "Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man."

The idea that God is so loving that He would never send anyone to hell.

Mormon teaching that man can one day become a God himself.

"The faithfulness of God is a datum of sound theology but to the believer it becomes far more than that; it passes through the processes of the understanding and goes on to become nourishing food for the soul." A. W. Tozer

List some practical nourishment for the soul which we can discover in the Biblical teaching that God is faithful.

Lesson Seventeen: The Goodness of God

**“He loves righteousness and justice;
The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.”
Psalm 33:5 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter sixteen.

“The goodness of God is that which disposes Him to be kind, cordial, benevolent, and full of good will toward men. He is tenderhearted and of quick sympathy, and his unfailing attitude toward all moral beings is open, frank, and friendly. By His nature He is inclined to bestow blessedness and He takes holy pleasure in the happiness of His people.” A. W. Tozer

According to Tozer, “that God is good is taught or implied on every page of the Bible.” Look at the following Scriptures and describe what they reveal to us about the goodness of God.

Hosea 14:4

Ezekiel 37:14

II Kings 22:19

Isaiah 35:10

Luke 15:20

Romans 2:4

How does even the unregenerate world benefit from the goodness of God?

“The cause of His goodness is in Himself; the recipients of His goodness are all His beneficiaries without merit and without recompense. With this agrees reason, and the moral wisdom that knows itself runs to acknowledge that there can be no merit in human conduct, not even in the purest and the best. Always God’s goodness is the ground of our expectation.”

A. W. Tozer

Some would argue that the goodness of God makes necessary universal salvation. How does the above statement from Tozer about the attribute of God’s goodness destroy the false concept that people can be saved by good works?

“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.” A. W. Tozer

How does the life of Christ teach us the truth about the goodness of God?

Why can it be said that God punishes the wicked because of His goodness?

“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.” A. W. Tozer

Explain in your own words what Tozer means when He says, “to fear and not be afraid.”

ACTION AND REACTION!

Tozer says, “the goodness of God is the drive behind all of the blessings He daily bestows upon us.” The familiar hymn encourages us to “Count Your Blessings.” Thinking of the attribute of the goodness of God, start a list of all the ways God has been good to you.

Lesson Eighteen: The Justice of God

**“Clouds and darkness surround Him;
Righteousness and justice *are* the foundation of His throne.”
Psalm 97:2 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter seventeen.

“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.” A. W. Tozer

In the following verses, the same Hebrew word is translated either “justice” or “righteousness” according to the context. Read the following verses, first the way it is written and then with the opposite word. How does that help us understand the relationship between justice and righteousness in God?

Genesis 18:19

Psalm 5:8

Isaiah 9:7

Jeremiah 51:10

Micah 7:9

Why is it impossible to equate justice and righteousness when the words are applied to anyone other than God?

“It is sometimes said, “justice requires God to do this,” referring to some act we know He will perform. This is an error of thinking as well as speaking, for it postulates a principle outside of God which compels Him to act in a certain way.” A. W. Tozer

Why is it wrong to say that “justice” or “love” compels God to do such and such?

Why can God in His goodness be merciful toward sinners and not violate His attribute of justice? (see Eph. 2:4-7)

When David prayed, ‘O Lord, the God who avenges, O God who avenges, shine forth. Rise up, O Judge of the earth; pay back to the proud what they deserve,’ (Psalm 94:1-2), what kept that from being a prayer of personal vengeance?

In light of the justice of God, do we have the right to call for vengeance upon the wicked of the world today? (see Romans 12:17-19)

What does God desire for the wicked of the world in place of vengeance? (see John 3:17 and II Peter 3:9)

“But when the penitent sinner casts himself upon Christ for salvation, the moral situation is reversed. Justice confronts the changed situation and pronounces the believing man just. But God’s justice stands forever against the sinner in utter severity. The vague and tenuous hope that God is too kind to punish the ungodly has become a deadly opiate for the consciences of millions. It hushes their fears and allows them to practice all pleasant forms of iniquity while death draws everyday nearer and the command to repent goes unregarded.” A. W. Tozer

How does the two-fold nature of “justice” and “righteousness” help us understand the relationship between the salvation of the believer and the judgment on the unbeliever?

ACTION AND REACTION!

Inequality and injustice abound in the world in which we live. We are often frustrated with the legal system and its apparent failure to “get things right” when it comes to justice. Knowing that God is just gives us hope for the future, that time when He will set everything right. But what should be our attitude and our actions today in light of the fact that He is just and has established a system of justice in the form of human government?

Lesson Nineteen: The Mercy of God

**“Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for *He is good!*
For His mercy *endures* forever.”
Psalm 136:1 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter eighteen.

“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.” A. W. Tozer

What do the following Old Testament passages teach us about the mercy of God?

Exodus 15:13

Exodus 20:5-6

Exodus 34:6-7

I Chronicles 16:34

What do the following New Testament passages teach us about the mercy of God?
Romans 9:16

Ephesians 2:4

I Peter 1:3

How would you answer a person who said that justice and judgment characterize the God of Israel, while mercy and grace belong to the Lord of the church?

“As judgment is God’s justice confronting moral iniquity, so mercy is the goodness of God confronting human suffering and guilt. Were there no guilt in the world, no pain and no tears, God would yet be infinitely merciful; but His mercy might well remain hidden in His heart, unknown to the created universe. No voice would be raised to celebrate the mercy of which none felt the need. It is human misery and sin that call forth the divine mercy.”

What is the role of God’s mercy in the application of salvation to the believer? (See Titus 3:5)

What would you describe as the difference between the mercy of God and the grace of God?

How has a person who lacks assurance of salvation failed to profit from the truth that God is merciful?

How does the mercy of God help us understand that “it is not by works of righteousness” that we are saved? (See Eph. 2:4-10).

ACTION AND REACTION!

The mercy of God is always active rather than passive. A common description of God’s mercy in the Old Testament is contained in the word “kindness” or “loving-kindness.” The mercy of God is not simply a good deed, however; it is an attribute. It is characteristic of Him every moment of every day. For us, then, it becomes a way of living to the glory of God. Mercy is one way in which we can mirror the character of God and affect the world for His glory.

What are some practical ways in which you could become more like God in your relationships with others by showing mercy (loving-kindness)? (See Luke 6:36)

Lesson Twenty: The Grace of God

**“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins,
according to the riches of His grace.”
Ephesians 1:7 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter nineteen.

“In God mercy and grace are one; but as they reach us, they are seen as two, related but not identical.”

“As mercy is God’s goodness confronting human misery and guilt, so grace is His goodness directed toward human debt and demerit. It is by His grace that God imputes merit where none previously existed and declares no debt to be where one had been before.”

A. W. Tozer

What do the following scriptures teach us about the grace of God?

Genesis 6:8

Psalms 84:11

Exodus 33:19

II Chronicles 30:9

Psalms 86:15

What would be your response if someone said the Old Testament was a book of law and the New Testament was a book of grace?

How do the following New Testament scriptures increase our understanding of the attribute of grace?

Romans 3:24-26

Romans 5:1-2

Ephesians 2:5-9

Colossians 1:2

“No one was ever saved other than by grace, from Abel to the present moment.”
A. W. Tozer

How did God make sainthood (salvation) possible in Old Testament days?

What doctrinal truth is always present when Paul discusses God's grace in redemption?

ACTION AND REACTION!

Grace is to be manifested in our lives as a result of God's grace toward us. The book of Philemon demonstrates this in a very practical story concerning Paul, Philemon, and a slave named Onesimus. Read the book of Philemon and write down your own impression of what it means to live by grace and demonstrate it toward others.

Lesson Twenty-one: The Love of God

**“The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand.”
John 3:35 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter twenty.

“Equating love with God is a major mistake which has produced much unsound religious philosophy and has brought forth a spate of vaporous poetry completely out of accord with the Holy Scriptures and altogether of another climate from that of historic Christianity.”

A. W. Tozer

I John 4:16 says that “God is love.” Why then is it wrong to equate love with God rather than recognizing love as one attribute of God?

We can learn about the love of God by what we already know concerning God’s other attributes. What do each of the other attributes of God teach us about His love?

Goodness

Omnipresence

Wisdom

Immutability

We can also learn about the love of God from how it is demonstrated toward others. Read each of the following verses and describe how and when God expresses love toward others.

Titus 3:3-5

Ephesians 2:3-4

Hosea 14:4

Ephesians 5:25-27

We know from God's character that His love is unchanging. Read each of the following passages and identify the time of God's love and the nature of God's love.

Romans 5:8

Romans 8:35-39

I John 3:1

I John 4:9

Revelation 3:19

According to I John 4:18, “perfect love drives out fear.” Since we know that God’s love is perfect, how does it drive out fear?

“Another characteristic of love is that it takes pleasure in its object. God enjoys His creation. The apostle John says frankly that God’s purpose in creation was His own pleasure. God is happy in His love for all that He has made.” A. W. Tozer

How does Psalm 104 express that joy which God’s love finds in His creation?

ACTION AND REACTION!

In view of what Tozer says about music and creation, why do you think the world-system places such importance on their own music?

If God loves His creation and delights in it, how should that same love be demonstrated

in our relationship to the world in which we live?

From what we know of God's love, how should our love toward others be expressed if it is to be like His love?

Lesson Twenty-Two: The Holiness of God

**“And one cried to another and said:
‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
The whole earth is full of His glory!’”
Isaiah 6:3 (NKJV)**

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter twenty-one.

“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.” A. W. Tozer

Why would it be wrong to think of God as holy because of conformity to a standard of holiness?

How does the very existence of a legal system show that mankind has learned to live with unholiness?

Consider each of the following scripture passages and write down the action of God described in the verses which demonstrates how He is holy in all that He does. Not every verse will contain the word “holy,” but the truth of His holiness can always be seen in His actions.

Genesis 1:31.

Genesis 2:3.

Genesis 3:14-19.

Genesis 4:4.

Exodus 19:10-16.

“Since God’s first concern for His universe is its moral health, that is, its holiness, whatever is contrary to this is necessarily under His eternal displeasure. To preserve His creation God must destroy whatever would destroy it. When He arises to put down iniquity and save the world from irreparable moral collapse, He is said to be angry. Every wrathful judgment in the history of the world has been a holy act of preservation. The holiness of God, the wrath of God, and the health of the creation are inseparably united.” A. W. Tozer

How can Tozer say that “every wrathful judgment in the history of the world has been a holy act of preservation”?

“God is holy with an absolute holiness that knows no degrees, and this He cannot impart to His creatures. But there is a relative and contingent holiness which He shares with angels and

seraphim in heaven and with redeemed men on earth as their preparation for heaven. This holiness God can and does impart to His children. He shares it with them by imputation and by impartation, and because He has made it available to them through the blood of the Lamb, He required it of them as well.” A. W. Tozer

If, as Tozer says, God cannot impart His absolute holiness to His creatures, how are we to understand the command in I Peter 1:15-16 to “be holy: for I am holy”? (NKJV)

ACTION AND REACTION!

Holiness movements have historically emphasized the passivity of a holy lifestyle. Words which characterize holiness include meditation, prayer, fasting, and solitude. Some have even concluded that true holiness demands total physical separation from the world. God’s holiness however is active. Look at the following verses and notice God at work in Holiness. Then ask yourself how we can be like God in this aspect of holiness at work in the world.

Psalm 47:8

Psalm 111:9

Isaiah 6:3

Isaiah 57:15

I Corinthians 3:17

Hebrews 7:26

Rev. 6:10

Lesson Twenty-three: The Sovereignty of God

**“And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:
KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”**

Rev. 19:16 (NKJV)

ASSIGNMENT: Read *The Knowledge of the Holy*, chapter twenty-two.

“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.” A. W. Tozer

You could look in a standard Bible concordance and conclude that the word “sovereignty” is not found in the Old Testament at all. Yet the sovereignty of God is a fact well established in the Scriptures. How do the following verses teach the sovereignty of God?

I Chronicles 29:11-12

Daniel 4:34-35

Psalms 135:5-6

Romans 8:28-30

Revelation 19:11-16

In the light of the absolute sovereignty of God, why is it so important to us that God is also good?

What are the two great questions which arise when we consider the absolute sovereignty of God?

“While a complete explanation of the origin of sin eludes us, there are a few things we do know. In His sovereign wisdom God has permitted evil to exist in carefully restricted areas of His creation, a kind of fugitive outlaw whose activities are temporary and limited in scope. In doing this God has acted according to His infinite wisdom and goodness. More than that no one knows at present; and more than that no one needs to know. The name of God is sufficient guarantee of the perfection of His works.” A. W. Tozer

How does A. W. Tozer’s discussion of “free as a bird” illustrate the limits which are also on the “free will of man”?

“Here is my view: God sovereignly decreed that man should be free to exercise moral choice, and man from the beginning has fulfilled that decree by making his choice between good and evil. When he chooses to do evil, he does not thereby countervail the sovereign will of God but fulfills it, inasmuch as the eternal decree decided not which choice the man should make but that he should be free to make it. If in His absolute freedom God has willed to give man limited freedom, who is there to stay His hand or say, “What doest thou?” Man’s will is free because God is sovereign. A God less than sovereign could not bestow moral freedom upon His creatures. He would be afraid to do so.” A. W. Tozer

How does A. W. Tozer explain man's free will as a part of God's sovereignty rather than something in opposition to God's sovereignty?

For God to be absolutely sovereign He must also possess each of His other attributes in perfection. Explain why to be sovereign God must also be:

Omniscient

Omnipotent

Absolutely free

ACTION AND REACTION!

A debate taking place in religious circles today has become known as the "Openness Theology." They argue that if God has granted genuine freedom, then the future must be genuinely open. God, they conclude, must restrict His own knowledge and simply refuse to know in advance everything we are going to do. Our choices and much of the future are therefore a surprise to Him.

How do the following Scriptures contradict the idea of an "openness theology"?

Hebrews 4:13

Luke 16:15

I Samuel 16:7

Mark 2:6-8
