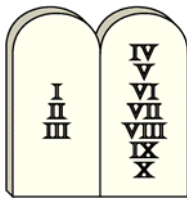


Relational Bible Teaching

By Dave Arch



Although we know that the Bible was given to strengthen a person's relationship with God, too often we can teach it behaviorally as though it were merely a book of rules to be followed. How can we more consistently teach God's Word relationally so that it has the impact He intended?



Explore how to practically teach The Commandments, Bible Stories and even Proverbs so that each of these Biblical components truly strengthens a person's relationship with God.

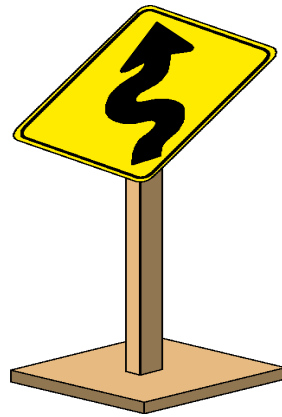




DAVE ARCH, best-selling author, pastor, and internationally recognized trainer of trainers, has written fourteen resource books for the corporate training industry and founded the Ask A Pastor Internet Ministry (<http://www.askapastor.org>) and the Teaching Like The Master™ seminar (<http://www.askapastor.org/teachinglike.html>). Dave's corporate clients include McDonald's, Disney, The Internal Revenue Service, Kraft Foods, General Motors, The National Education Association, and AT&T."

A Personal Introduction

by Dave Arch



How I wish I could take you on a tour of my library! It tells a very visual story of my Christian search for that which satisfies. Each section of my library tells of a journey looking for the essence of what the Christian life might be. As each section was purchased, I tried to find meaning and fulfillment in yet another chapter of my personal walk with God.

Knowing Bible Facts

In this section of my library you'd see my Bible encyclopedia, atlas, and dictionaries along with my survey books of both the Old and New Testaments. I loved studying each book and learning all I could about as many people as possible. I loved accumulating the knowledge and I even must admit felt quite proud of all that I knew. Yet . . . something was missing, and I wasn't sure what that something might be.

Knowing Bible Doctrine

I decided that I must not be studying the Bible deeply enough. In this section of my library are my sets of systematic theology, Greek and Hebrew word studies and my books on the Holy Spirit, Angels, and Prophecy.

This satisfied for a short time. However, I couldn't help but notice that entire areas of my life appeared

unaffected by what I knew. My marriage, my anger, my depression, and most aspects of my job remained untouched.

Knowing How To Live The Christian Life

I became excited to find the Bible did speak to those areas of my life that seemed neglected. It truly is a very practical book. I bought books on marriage, children, emotions, and other counseling topics. I grew. . . I changed. . . I became more passionate about what I was finding. Principles were found in God's Word to speak to me right where I was! I was finally satisfied for awhile. . . and then I found myself feeling empty again.

Knowing Christ

I remember the day that I first read Philippians 3:5-10 (pg. 992-93) and saw the parallel between what the apostle Paul was saying and what I was feeling. He too knew Bible facts, deep Bible doctrine and how to live the law. However, he says in those verses that he found all of those areas to be like trash compared to what he found in knowing Christ Jesus His Lord.

"What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. . . I consider them rubbish. . ." (Philippians 3:8, pg. 993)

But then again I thought that I already knew Christ!

Didn't I?

I knew where Jesus was born, to whom He was born, why He had to die, and even a little about how He could be both God and man at the same time. I had initially trusted Christ for my forgiveness when I was very young. I knew Christ.

But then I realized that there was a very large difference between knowing Christ and merely knowing ABOUT Christ. I had to admit that I didn't know God like I knew my wife and children.

No wonder my spiritual life felt dead. . . there was NO LIFE! Mine was a textbook existence using the Bible as a wise and inspired collection of facts, doctrine and principles to be learned.

Whereas I now began to see Christ is a Person to be known!

My whole definition of the Christian life began to undergo transformation. No longer was the Christian life merely the studying of the Bible for its facts, doctrines, and principles. No longer was the Christian life a certain lifestyle of do's and don'ts to be adopted and rigorously applied.

The Christian life became a relationship to be developed.

But I was lost! How do you go beyond knowing ABOUT a Person to KNOWING a Person???

I knew that I would need to spend time with that Person in a wide variety of situations. My imagination helped me as I began to take Him with me to basketball games and concerts. I visualized Him walking beside me mowing the yard. He came along with me as I played with my children, drove my car and worked in the office. Oh, yes. He continued to go to church with me too.

At first I felt silly as I remembered an imaginary friend I had as a child. However, this was different. I was visualizing Someone who was already there.

**"God has said 'Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you'"
(Hebrews 13:5, pg. 1018)**

An unexpected surprise caught me off guard. When I remembered He was with me, I talked to Him much more. I guess that's prayer. . . but not like any prayer I had ever known. I just began talking to Him about everything I would see and experience. Sometimes I would just be complimenting Him on a piece of His creation. I think they call that "worship." Other times I would be visiting with Him about a concern on my mind. But it was so natural and fun!

Eventually, I had a desire. You can only carry on a monologue so long. I wanted Him to talk back to me! What was He thinking? What was He feeling? Did He like it when I complimented Him? What solutions could He give me to some of the situations that faced me?

Then it hit me!

God's Word. I get it. . . GOD'S WORD! The Bible is HIS WORDS. They are the words He would say to me if He were to audibly talk to me. Instead He wrote them down.

The contents of The Bible became personal words to me -- one half of a delightful conversation between two friends.

Suddenly, I found myself gradually getting to know Him better and better. It became an adventure to learn to know Him more intimately. I wanted to share more of my life with Him too! Take Him more places.

I found myself changing. Not by keeping a list of rules. . . but just by being around Him. He began to rub off on me! How naturally it all happened.

The other books in my library? The ones about facts, doctrines, and principles? I read them often. However, I find that now they have become wonderful doorways into getting to know God better and better.

I realize that taking you on that trip into my personal library did take some time. However, I wanted you to know how I came to write these articles in the Ask A Pastor Internet Library.

In those articles you will discover how to read the Bible with only one view in mind -- getting to know God better. You will learn to take all of the major literary forms in the Scriptures and mine out exciting truths about who God is. Commandments, proverbs, narratives, and Christ's own life will give to you new insights into how God thinks, what He values, and how He acts.

May you never look at the Bible quite the same again. Get ready to be spiritually surprised! I find that God likes to surprise us.

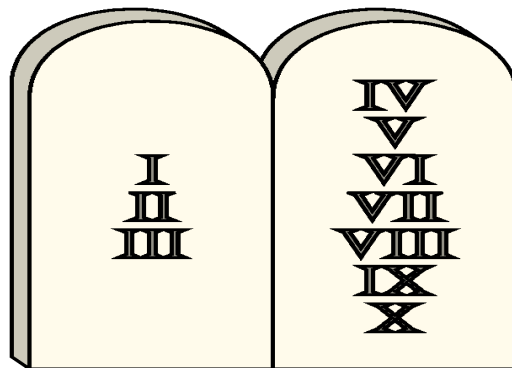
Copyright 2001. Dave Arch. All rights reserved.

To Return To The Ask A Pastor Internet Ministries Homepage . . . [CLICK HERE.](#)

To Return To The Ask A Pastor Online Library Page. . .[CLICK HERE](#)

Learning To Know God Through His Commandments

by Dave Arch



All page numbers refer to the New International Version of The Bible as published by Zondervan Publishing as their Thinline Bible. It is available at all Christian Book Stores and many others too.

Many Christians are trapped in a sad inconsistency! They are being asked to treat others in a different manner than they are being taught God treats them!

It is as though God, as their heavenly Father, is saying "Do what I say, not what I do!" Unfortunately, that view of God undermines His method of teaching His children. With this picture of God asking us to do for others that which He is not first doing for us, rebellion builds in the child of God.

However, as we look at Scripture, we see something totally different and refreshing! In verse after verse, we find God calling us to be like Himself (Romans 8:29, pg. 955; I Peter 1:16, pg. 1022).

The result of this very basic truth is that every commandment given in God's Word contains a wealth of information about God and His characteristics.

This is the concept we want to work with in this paper:

WHATEVER GOD COMMANDS ME TO BE -- HE ALREADY IS!

Let's work together through some of His commandments and discover what we can about this God we desire to know. Later there will be some commandments for you to discover on your own.

"Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers -- not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock." (I Peter 5:2,3, pg. 1025)

These two verses from I Peter were spoken to church Elders in a desire to show them God's method for leading His church. Although that is not the emphasis of this study, if we apply the above principle (i.e. Whatever God commands me to be -- he already is!), we find a world of information about the method God uses in leading us.

What are the attitudes as He leads and works with us? Out of this section of Scripture, one of the most exciting truths to me is that God is EAGER to shepherd me! Taking care of me is not a responsibility that God reluctantly accepts (i.e. just because He's God). Rather He shepherds me with a spirit of eagerness! Many times this has not been my picture of God's attitudes. Sometimes I see Him getting tired of taking care of me. How refreshing it is to see Him clearly!

See how easy it is to use a commandment to give us a clearer view of God? Let's try another!

"This is what the Lord says, 'Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength . . .'" (Jeremiah 17:5, pg. 655)

One of the greatest areas of inconsistency is brought to the forefront by carefully thinking through this commandment.

God says in this verse that we are not to trust nor ultimately depend upon another human being. The reason for this command is shared just four verses later when He says:

"The heart (of man) is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9, pg. 655)

In the previous concept, we apply the fact that God models for us what He wants us to do. Therefore, **GOD DOESN'T TRUST IN MANKIND!** He doesn't lean in a dependent manner on humans to accomplish His tasks!

At first reading, the above statement might seem so elementary that it isn't important. We need only think back to emphases in our past to hear in our minds some sermon that portrayed God as counting on us to get His task accomplished. How inaccurate those presentations become as we see that God NEVER trust

in us!

Although it is true that He works through people to accomplish His work here in earth, His ultimate trust to get the job done resides in Himself! This truth removes an otherwise unreasonable burden from the Christian. Once again a commandment has been used to clarify a proper view of the Person of God. The commandment becomes a check on whether or not we are seeing God correctly.

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves." (Philippians 2:3, pg. 992)

Can it be? Does this verse really say that God might view me as more important than Himself? The Creator of the Universe, the Lord of all lords, the King of all kings, views me as more important than Himself?

If God asks me to have that attitude towards another, then He does indeed first have that attitude toward me! In fact the rest of the passage surrounding Philippians 2:3 shows that Christ was willing to leave heaven in order to come to earth and die for me. His actions speak even louder than His words in showing that indeed He did view us as more important than Himself! The concept is totally staggering but nevertheless totally true.

"So in everything do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 7:12, pg. 818)

Here we find capsulized in one verse the entire concept under consideration. Whatever God wishes us to do for Him, He will first do for us! What a beautiful picture this gives us as to the way He leads us.

All too often we picture Him leading us from a position high in the heavens shouting down to us in a booming voice through a megaphone. He barks the orders and we try to respond.

However, in contrast to that picture, John 13 (pg. 910) gives us a very clear picture of how He really operates in His leadership in our lives. In that chapter Jesus is sitting with His followers at the final meal together before His death. In His conversation with them, He will eventually present them with the following commandment:

". . . you also should wash one another's feet." (John 13:14, pg. 910)

Contrary to some of our first thoughts, he did NOT begin by telling them what to do. Peter probably would have found that easier. If Christ would have said, "Peter, this is what I want you to do. Go around and wash the other disciples' feet!", Peter would have done it! In fact, Peter would have felt good about himself after having done it!

However, Christ had a better way. Christ wanted to lead Peter by serving him. He wanted to first do for Peter that which He would later ask Peter to do for others. Peter's reaction was predictable. He resisted as

Jesus stooped to wash his feet. Who wouldn't? As the account progresses, Christ persists and states that it is absolutely essential that Peter allow himself to be served before attempting to be a servant.

Whenever we resist God serving us, we short-circuit the infinitely wise method of God in teaching us. To the extent that I have not allowed Him to serve me in the area of forgiveness, I will not overflow with forgiveness towards others. To the extent that I have not experienced His viewing of me as more important than Himself, I will have difficulty viewing others more important than myself. Any area in which I am not overflowing in obedience can be traced back in part to the fact that I have not allowed Christ to fully teach me that area by His example to me.

What a God! What a marvelously wise Teacher He is! May each commandment in the Bible fill you with an increased awe of who He is! As a result, may your life be characterized not by overwork, but rather by overflow!

Discussion Questions

1. Put yourself in Peter's place in John 13. If Peter had washed the disciples' feet prior to having his own washed, what in all probability would have been his attitude during and following his washing of their feet?
2. In contrast, how would you characterize his probable attitude AFTER Christ had washed his feet?
3. In what ways is Christ's true method of leading by serving much wiser than the way we tend to typically view His leadership?

Personal Bible Study

Do you remember when you first learned how to subtract one number from another? You placed one number under the other and then entered your answer below the line.

$$\begin{array}{r} 7 \\ -5 \\ \hline 2 \end{array}$$

Do you remember how you'd then in an effort to check your answer add the second number in the column with the answer and you should arrive at the top answer.

God's commandments can now serve as a check on our view of God. After reading the commandment,

we need to be able to see God doing it first for us. If we cannot picture Him doing the commandment first for us, one of two possible problems may exist:

- 1) You may have an improper view of God; or**
- 2) You may have an improper understanding of the commandment.**

In either regard, the check will have been profitable. You will either need to realign your view of God or change your understanding of what the commandment actually means.

Let's try it!

Below are some commandments taken from the Bible. After reading each passage apply the following principle:

WHATEVER GOD COMMANDS ME TO BE -- HE ALREADY IS!

Then answer the question "What does this commandment teach me about who God really is?"

1. Matthew 20:25-28 (pg. 832) _____

2. II Timothy 2:24-26 (pg. 1005) _____

3. Titus 1:5-9 (pg. 1006) _____

4. I Timothy 3:1-7 (pg. 1002) _____

5. I Corinthians 13:4-8 (pg. 971) _____

6. I Thessalonians 5:14 (pg. 999) _____

7. I Thessalonians 5:16 (pg. 999) _____

Copyright 1998. Dave Arch. All rights reserved.

To Return To The Ask A Pastor Online Library Page . . . [CLICK HERE](#)

To Return To The Ask A Pastor Internet Ministries Homepage . . . [CLICK HERE.](#)

Learning To Know God Through Proverbs

by Dave Arch



All page numbers refer to the New International Version of The Bible as published by Zondervan Publishing as their Thinline Bible. It is available at all Christian Book Stores and many others too.

You could actually go to the top of this article and scratch my name off and write you own name as the author. You will be writing the majority of the contents of this monograph. . . and I believe enjoying it too!

For too long the book of Proverbs has been read only to teach the reader "how to live wisely." However, like the rest of the Bible this approach is to miss its deepest application. The goal of Scripture is so much more than just to teach us right from wrong! God gave His Word to guide us into getting to know Him. Every book of the Bible gives us an additional glimpse into just how He thinks, what He feels, and some of the "whys" behind what we see Him doing.

The book of Proverbs is no exception! Inside of each Proverb is an indescribable treasure! Every proverb enables us to see the invisible God more clearly.

Believing that God Himself is the essence of wisdom, and that every proverb is a statement of wisdom; we could arrive at no other conclusion than the fact that God fulfills every proverb in the Bible. Every proverb is a statement of what God is like in one of His attributes or functions.

HIS CHARACTER

These first proverbs have to do with His character. What is He like? What are some of His attributes and characteristics?

"The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases." Proverbs 21:1 (pg. 553)

This one is easy. It just states outright what God is like. He is in absolute control. Even over those that we would term "in control" (i.e.kings), God controls.

"By justice a king gives a country stability, but one who is greedy for bribes tears it down." Proverbs 29:4 (pg. 560)

This one isn't quite as easy. It talks about a man who creates insecurity in his leadership because he is willing to take bribes. The people under his leadership can never be sure that he is going to do the "right thing," since he can be bribed into his decisions.

God is never like that. You will never be able to talk Him out of doing the right thing. You will never be able to manipulate Him with your promises or "bribes." God makes up His own mind, never simply reacts to us, and always brings stability with His justice.

"The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion." Proverbs 28:1 (pg. 559)

Here we find an attribute of God's character that is seldom given any attention. If the righteous are as bold as a lion, how bold must God be?

What is boldness? In what ways is God bold? What would be different in your life if God weren't bold?

Those are some good questions to begin you thinking through for yourself this aspect of God.

Do you now see how to take a proverb and use it to see God more clearly? The remainder of this paper contains other proverbs to help you exercise this new-found skill. After reading the verse(s), jot your own thoughts about what it shows you about God in the blanks below the verse.

"Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self-control." Proverbs 25:28 (pg. 557)

"A patient man has great understanding, but a quick-tempered man displays folly." Proverbs 14:29 (pg. 547)

"A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones." Proverbs 14:30 (pg. 547)

"Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act." Proverbs 3:27 (pg. 538)

"Whoever corrects a mocker invites insult; whoever rebukes a wicked man incurs abuse. Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you." Proverbs 9:7,8 (pg. 542)

"The Lord abhors dishonest scales, but accurate weights are his delight." Proverbs 11:1 (pg. 544)

"A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed." Proverbs 11:25 (pg. 544)

**"A truthful witness gives honest testimony, but a false witness tells lies. Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment. There is deceit in the hearts of those who plot evil, but joy for those who promote peace.
Proverbs 12:17-20 (pg. 545)**

"He who despises his neighbor sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy." Proverbs 14:21 (pg. 547)

"A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense." Proverbs 19:11 (pg. 551)

"He who rebukes a man will in the end gain more favor than he who has a flattering tongue. Proverbs 28:23 (pg. 560)

HIS FRIENDSHIP

The next proverbs deal with the qualities to be found in a good friend. They not only show us the type of friend God is to us, but also help us understand how God defines "a good friend."

It is clear from the rest of the Bible that God does desire to be a good friend to us. What do the following proverbs tell you about the way He will act towards us as a good friend.

**"Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses."
Proverbs 27:6 (pg. 558)**

**"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."
Proverbs 17:17 (pg. 550)**

**"for the Lord detests a perverse man but takes the upright
into his confidence." Proverbs 3:32 (pg. 538)**

HIS FATHERHOOD

God desires to be so much more to us than just a good friend. Often in the Bible, our relationship is spoken in terms of the father-child relationship.

What is God's philosophy of child rearing? If we understood His perspective better, what happens in our lives as He raises us just might make more sense!

What are some of His child rearing principles in the following proverbs? What does He understand to be His parental responsibilities towards us His children?

**"A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children,
but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous." Proverbs 13:22 (pg. 546)**

**"He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him
is careful to discipline him." Proverbs 13:24 (pg. 546)**

"He who fears the Lord has a secure fortress,

and for his children it will be a refuge." Proverbs 14:26 (pg. 547)

"Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him." Proverbs 22:15 (pg. 554)

"Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death." Proverbs 23:13,14 (pg. 555)

"The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother." Proverbs 29:15 (pg. 561)

See how it works?

The entire book of Proverbs lies full of treasure waiting to be mined! Have fun exploring! God is waiting to show you even more about Himself.

Copyright 1998. Dave Arch. All rights reserved.

To Return To The Ask A Pastor Online Library Page . . . [CLICK HERE](#)

To Return To The Ask A Pastor Internet Ministries Homepage . . . [CLICK HERE.](#)

Learning To Know God Through Bible Stories

by Dave Arch



All page numbers refer to the New International Version of The Bible as published by Zondervan Publishing as their Thinline Bible. It is available at all Christian Book Stores and many others too.

If you ever went to Sunday School as a child, you know what I mean. There were pictures of the "famous people" from the Bible thumbtacked to a bulletin board. There was Jonah and the Whale, Daniel in the lion's den, and David and Goliath. There was Moses and the Red Sea, Daniel and the fiery furnace, and Jesus in the manger.

These were "the classics!"

The stories were told with great zest! The teacher would finish with something like "now wasn't that a great story boys and girls!" And we all agreed that indeed it was!

Then the children became adults. The stories remained the same. Unfortunately, childhood patterns are often hard to break. It becomes too easy to read the stories, close the Bible and say "now wasn't that a great story!"

We often don't know how to unlock the "adult truths" that lie deep within the recesses of every historical account in the Bible. This paper will seek to provide the tools necessary to rediscover many of the common stories with new adult freshness.

It must all begin with understanding just why God gave us the Bible in the first place. Although the Bible can be looked at from many different perspectives, there is one purpose that remains supreme in the mind of God. Going beyond that of merely providing historical records or rules for living,

God gave His book so that we could get to know Him better!

Please take a moment to dwell on that last sentence. It is so very important to how you approach that book.

The Apostle Paul says it best when after accounting his search for the central issue of the Christian life, he says:

"What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." Philippians 3:8 (pg. 993)

When we stop short of using the Bible to help us understand and know God better, we have stopped short of the purpose for which it was given. When we read a Bible story and then close the Bible with some comment about it being a nice story, we have retained a childhood pattern that will NOT bring adult satisfaction within our Christian experience!

This article will guide the reader through a process of "reading behind the lines" of Scripture so that every passage will continue to expand his or her understanding and appreciation for the Person of God.

An illustration will help us begin. Imagine for a moment that you are at a carnival standing in line waiting to buy tickets for the rides. The person in front of you is just about to buy his tickets, and you watch the process over his shoulder. The customer hands the lady in the booth a twenty dollar bill and is given his tickets. However, the change he is given is as though he handed the lady a ten dollar bill. He is not given the correct change.

The man literally explodes! He swears at and accuses the lady in the booth of all kinds of cheating, swindling, and improper motives. You even become a little embarrassed by what he says to her.

From observing his outward behavior, what could you tell about what was being felt inside the man? What could you tell about what the man was like?

Now. . . imagine that instead of exploding, you saw the man take his change, count it, recognize that a mistake had been made, but not say anything. Instead, he just hung his head and walked away.

What could you say was probably true about a man exhibiting this second response?

We can tell a lot about a person by observing his external behavior. The same is true about God.

By carefully observing how God handles certain situations, we can learn much about just how He thinks and behaves in keeping with his own priorities and character.

Let's use the familiar Christmas story as a place of beginning. God was getting ready for the most significant event yet in the history of the world. He was about to step into our world and live among the human race in the Person of Jesus Christ! How He chose to do this tells us much about Himself as we learn to read behind the lines.

The place to begin is to simply read the Christmas story again and to make observations. Every observation you make needs to be substantiated by a chapter and verse that indicates where you saw the facts that went into your observation. This paper contains eleven observations about the Christmas story.

Observation #1

God chose a man named John the Baptist to appear on the scene announcing the arrival of Jesus. The man dressed in camel hair clothes with a leather belt and ate locusts and wild honey (Mark 1:2-8, pg. 843).

Observation #2

After successfully and faithfully playing his role in getting the world ready for Jesus, John the Baptist dies by being beheaded (Matthew 14:1-12, pg. 826).

Observation #3

God sent Jesus to a virgin before she had married her husband (Luke 1:26-38, pg. 863).

Observation #4

God worked it out so that Joseph and Mary would be in Bethlehem for the birth of Jesus in fulfillment of a prophecy over 700 years old in Micah 5:2 (pg. 787) (Luke 2:1-5, pg. 864).

Observation #5

Joseph didn't do anything out of the ordinary in order for God to fulfill the Micah 5:2 (pg. 787) prophecy (Luke 2:1-5, pg. 864).

Observation #6

God had Jesus born in a stable (Luke 2:6,7, pg. 865)

Observation #7

God didn't let many people know that this event was happening (Luke 2:8,9, pg. 865).

Observation #8

God chose shepherds to be the first one to learn about what had happened (Luke 2:8,9, pg. 865).

Observation #9

God used a myriad of angels to tell the shepherds His message (Luke 2:9-14, pg. 865).

Observation #10

God told the wisemen about the Jesus' birth through a star (Matthew 2:1-12, pg. 813).

Observation #11

God told only one person before allowing Herod to kill all of the male children in Bethlehem two years old or younger (Matthew 2:13-18, pg. 814).

A good place to begin in using a story to understand the mind of God better is simply to ask this question:

How would you have handled the event differently?

Go ahead and use the lines below to write down your speculations about your handling of this special occasion of God entering the world. How would you have done it differently based upon what you know about yourself?

As for myself, I would have wanted the **WHOLE WORLD** to know that I had arrived! I would have come with every last angel in heaven with me. There would have been much fanfare and celebration! My handling of the situation tells me alot about myself too!

However, God didn't do it that way at all! What does His handling of the situation tell you about Him?

Let's try Observation #2 for an example:

**After successfully and faithfully preparing the way of the Lord,
John the Baptist dies by being beheaded (Matthew 14:1-12, pg. 826).**

Notice first of all that this observation like all of the others has a Bible verse attached to it. It is important that every observation you make have a citation noting where you saw the facts that substantiate your observation. This will prevent you from going beyond the making of observations at this stage of the process. It's important to reign yourself back from proceeding into the making of applications yet.

After listing the observation, we are ready for the next step in the process. We are ready to ask the question:

What does this observation tell me about what God is like or how He acts?

A quick understanding of God from the previous observation might be:

**God doesn't necessarily reward faithful service to Him
with a painless life or easy death.**

After drawing our implication(s), the final stage is crucial! We must check ourselves and our understanding by asking one more question:

Are there any other Bible verses that substantiate the implication drawn from the observation?

In this situation there is a resounding YES to that question. The life of Job, Paul, and Jesus Himself show pain in the midst of faithfulness. In fact II Timothy 3:12 (pg. 1005) seems to promise persecution to the faithful.

Let's try Observations #4 & #5 together:

God worked it out so that Joseph and Mary would be in Bethlehem for the birth of Jesus in fulfillment of the Micah 5:2 (pg. 787) prophecy (Luke 2:1-5, pg. 864).

Joseph didn't do anything out of the ordinary in order for God to fulfill the Micah 5:2 (pg. 787) prophecy (Luke 2:1-5, pg. 864).

Pause for a moment and think about the number of details (i.e. transportation, finances, reason to go, etc.) that God had to work out for Mary and Joseph to get them to Bethlehem. List as many as you can on the lines below:

The list of the little details can go on and on.

However, God got the job done!

God can work even the smallest of details to accomplish whatever He purposes!

That's good to know about God. However, do we have indications anywhere else in the Bible to substantiate that implication drawn from our observation?

How about all of the other Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ? Or the statement made in Ephesians 1:11 (pg. 987) about God's ability to work all things in conformity with His own will?

Furthermore, Joseph didn't even need to know what God was doing! Joseph just went about life in an ordinary mundane manner and God accomplished His purpose in the midst of it all. The miracle is that God doesn't need to work only in extraordinary ways. He weaves His purpose within the fibre of the ordinary.

This last implication can also be seen in God's working with Job in the Old Testament or the disciples in the New Testament. They went about life as God sovereignly set up a flow in their lives that culminated in them accomplishing what He had in mind all along.

Now. . . from those examples, you're ready to take some observations yourself and look behind the lines to learn about God from His handling of the situation.

Take any of the above observations from the Christmas story and complete the following:

What does this observation about the way God handled the situation tell you about Him? How would you have handled it differently?

Do other verses in the Bible substantiate the implication you drew above?

After going through those question with some of the other observations, you will gradually find yourself never looking at Bible stories quite the same way again! You will begin to use the Bible for its intended purpose -- getting to know a Person. Your spiritual life will strengthen!

Now. . . below you'll find another story along with some observations will help you practice your new found skill.

Learning To Know God Through Bible Stories -- Gideon

Judges 7;1-25 (pg. 208)

Observation #1

God was very concerned with the effect that success would have on the nation Israel. therefore, God made sure that when success came, Israel would not credit herself with the victory (Judges 7:2, pg. 208)

What does this observation imply about what God is like?

Do you have any other Bible verses that might support the understanding of God you drew from this observation? Consider I Corinthians 1:26-31 (pg. 963); I Corinthians 2:3-5 (pg. 964); II Corinthians 1:8,9 (975); II Corinthians 4:7 (pg. 976); and II Corinthians 12:7-10 (pg. 981).

Observation #2

God exerted no pressure on the fearful people to stay (Judges 7:2, pg. 208)

What does this observation imply about what God is like?

Do you have any other Bible verses that might support the understanding of God you drew from this observation? Consider Matthew 19:16-22 (pg. 831); Matthew 26:50 (pg. 840); and John 6:66,67 (pg. 902).

Observation #3

God encouraged Gideon and worked with him in spite of his fear (Judges 7:9,10, pg. 185).

What does this observation imply about what God is like?

Do you have any other Bible verses that might support the understanding of God you drew from this observation? Consider Psalm 78:38,39 (pg. 498) and Psalm 103:13,14 (pg. 511).

Observation #4

God was the ultimate cause of their victory (Judges 7:22, pg. 209)

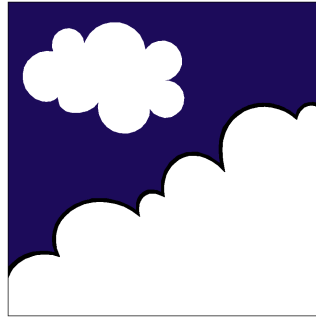
What does this observation imply about what God is like?

Do you have any other Bible verses that might support the understanding of God you drew from this observation? Consider Psalm 33 (pg. 472) and Romans 8:32 (pg. 955).

Copyright 1998. Dave Arch. All rights reserved.

Learning To Know God

by Dave Arch



SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THIS GUIDE

1. Select an attribute of God that corresponds to a need you might be experiencing (i.e. Worry/God Is All-Powerful; Insecurity/God Is Love) or pick one that just looks interesting.
2. Read each of the suggested verses from the Bible as listed for that attribute.
3. Write your own definition of that attribute as seen in the verses you read.
4. Answer on paper the question: "What would be different in my life if this attribute were NOT true about God?"
5. Write a prayer to God expressing your thankfulness for the attribute and telling Him why you're thankful.
6. Read Him your prayer.

GOD IS ABSOLUTE! -- Job 42:1-3; Psalm 145:11-13; Ecclesiastes 9:1; Isaiah 44:6; Daniel 2:20,21; Romans 14:11; I Timothy 6:15,16

GOD IS ACCESSIBLE! -- Psalm 145:18,19; Romans 5:2, Ephesians 2:13,18; Ephesians 3:12; Colossians 1:21,22; Hebrews 4:16; James 4:8

GOD IS ALL-KNOWING! -- Job 34:21; Psalm 33:13-15; Psalm 94:9-11; Isaiah 40:13,14,27,28; Isaiah 46:9,10; Matthew 6:8

- GOD IS ALL-POWERFUL!** -- II Chronicles 20:6; Job 9:4-10; Job 42:2; Psalm 66:6,7; Psalm 89:8,9,13; Isaiah 40:22-26; Mark 14:36
- GOD IS ALL-SUFFICIENT!** -- Exodus 3:14; Job 35:5-7; Isaiah 40:18,28-31; Isaiah 44:6; Jeremiah 10:10; John 5:26; Acts 17:24,25
- GOD IS AWE-INSPIRING!** -- Exodus 15:11; Nehemiah 1:5; Psalm 33:8-12; Psalm 89:6,7; Ecclesiastes 3:14; Jeremiah 10:6,7; Hebrews 12:28,29
- GOD IS COMMUNICATIVE!** -- Numbers 12:6-8; Psalm 19:1,2; Psalm 105:1-5; Psalm 119:9-11,18; John 9:29-31; John 16:13; Hebrews 1:1,2
- GOD IS COMPASSIONATE!** -- II Kings 13:23; Psalm 78:38,39; Psalm 103:3-17; Psalm 111:4; Psalm 145:8; Isaiah 65:1-3; Matthew 23:37-39
- GOD IS CREATIVE!** -- Genesis 1:1-31; Psalm 8:1-4; Psalm 19:12; Psalm 121:1,2; Zechariah 12:1; Romans 1:20; II Corinthians 5:17
- GOD IS DIRECTIVE!** -- Job 42:1,2; Psalm 25:4,5,9; Psalm 32:8,9; Proverbs 3:5,6; Proverbs 16:2-4,9; Jeremiah 10:23,24; Jeremiah 29:11-13
- GOD IS ETERNAL!** -- Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalm 9:7,8; Psalm 41:12,13; Psalm 102:24-28; Lamentations 5:19; Daniel 4:34; Revelation 4:8,9
- GOD IS EVERYWHERE PRESENT!** -- I Kings 8:27; Psalm 139:3-10; Isaiah 57:15; Jeremiah 23:23; Jeremiah 32:18,19; Jonah 1:3,4; Acts 17:24
- GOD IS EXCELLENT!** -- Deuteronomy 32:4; II Samuel 22:31; Psalm 8; Psalm 36:7; Psalm 148:13; Isaiah 12:5; Mark 7:37; I Peter 2:9
- GOD IS FAITHFUL!** -- Numbers 23:19; Lamentations 3:22,23; Romans 3:3,4; I Corinthians 10:13; II Corinthians 1:20; I Thessalonians 5:24; II Timothy 2:13
- GOD IS FATHERLY!** -- Psalm 103:13; Isaiah 63:16; Jeremiah 3:19-22; Romans 8:14-29; Matthew 7:11; Hebrews 12:6-9; I John 3:1,2
- GOD IS FEARLESS!** -- Exodus 15:3-11; Job 42:2; Isaiah 46:10,11; Jeremiah 27:5; Psalm 2:1-5; Daniel 4:35; Nahum 1:3-6
- GOD IS FORGIVING!** -- Psalm 86:5; Isaiah 1:18; Luke 5:18-24; Luke 23:34; Colossians 2:13; Hebrews 10:17; I John 1:9; I John 2:12
- GOD IS FRIENDLY!** -- II Chronicles 20:6,7; Proverbs 17:9; Proverbs 18:24; John 15:14,15; James 2:22,23; James 4:4-6

GOD IS GENEROUS! -- Psalm 4:7; Psalm 84:11; Luke 6:38; Romans 8:32; II Corinthians 8:7-9; I Timothy 6:17; II Peter 1:3

GOD IS GENTLE! -- Psalm 78:38,39; Psalm 86:15; Isaiah 42:1-4; Matthew 11:28-30; Galatians 5:22,23; I Thessalonians 2:7,8; II Timothy 2:24

GOD IS GLORIOUS! -- Psalm 29:2; Psalm 104:31; Isaiah 6:1-5; Matthew 6:13; Luke 2:14; Revelation 4:11; Revelation 21:23

GOD IS GOOD! -- Exodus 33:18,19; Deuteronomy 30:9; Psalm 33:5; Psalm 34:8; Psalm 107:8,9; Psalm 145:9; Isaiah 63:7; Matthew 7:11

GOD IS GRACIOUS! -- Exodus 33:12-17; Deuteronomy 7:6-9; Job 10:12; Romans 4:4,5; Romans 5:2,6,7; Ephesians 1:6; Hebrews 4:16

GOD IS HOLY! -- Exodus 15:11; Deuteronomy 32:4; I Samuel 2:2; Psalm 30:4; Psalm 145:17; Isaiah 6:1-3; I Peter 1:15,16

GOD IS HUMBLE! -- Psalm 8; Isaiah 53:1-12; Mark 15:16-20; John 1:1-14; Philippians 2:1-8; I Peter 2:21-23

GOD IS IMPARTIAL! -- Deuteronomy 10:17; Job 36:5; Acts 10:34; Romans 2:6,11; Ephesians 6:8; Colossians 3:25; I Peter 1:17

GOD IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE! -- Job 11:7-9; Psalm 18:11; Psalm 97:2; Ecclesiastes 3:11; Isaiah 40:12-31; Isaiah 55:8,9; I Corinthians 2:16

GOD IS IN CONTROL! -- Psalm 75:6,7; Psalm 135:5,6; Daniel 4:35; John 19:10,11; Acts 17:26; Romans 9:19,20; Revelation 4:11

GOD IS INFINITE! -- I Kings 8:27; II Chronicles 2:6; Job 11:7-9; Psalm 139:3-10; Psalm 147:5; Isaiah 55:8,9; Jeremiah 23:23,24

GOD IS INVISIBLE! -- Exodus 33:20; Job 9:11; John 1:18; Romans 1:20; Colossians 1:13; I Timothy 1:17; I Timothy 6:16; Hebrews 11:27

GOD IS JEALOUS! -- Exodus 20:5-7; Exodus 34:12-16; Deuteronomy 32:15-18; Joshua 24:19; Isaiah 31:1-3; Nahum 1:1-8

GOD IS JOYOUS! -- Psalm 19:8; Ecclesiastes 2:26; Matthew 25:21; John 15:7-11; John 17:13; Galatians 5:22; Philippians 4:4

GOD IS JUST! -- Deuteronomy 10:17; Deuteronomy 32:4; I Samuel 2:3; Nehemiah 9:33; Psalm 7:9-11; Isaiah 33:22; Jeremiah 32:19; I John 1:9

GOD IS LIFE! -- Psalm 27:1; Isaiah 60:19,20; Matthew 4:16; Luke 2:32; I Timothy 6:15,16; James 1:17;

I John 1:5

GOD IS LIGHT! -- Psalm 27:1; Isaiah 60:19,20; Matthew 4:16; Luke 2:32; I Timothy 6:15,16; James 1:17; I John 1:5

GOD IS LONG-SUFFERING! -- Exodus 34:6; Numbers 14:18; Psalm 86:15; Isaiah 65:1-3; Joel 2:13; Romans 2:14; II Peter 3:9

GOD IS LOVE! -- John 3:16; John 14:21-23; Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:4,5; II Thessalonians 2:16; Hebrews 12:6

GOD IS MERCIFUL! -- Exodus 34:6,7; Numbers 14:18-20; Deuteronomy 7:9; Psalm 145:8,9; Lamentations 3:22,23; Micah 7:18,19; Ephesians 2:4-7

GOD IS PATIENT! -- Numbers 14:18; Isaiah 30:18; Joel 2:13; Romans 15:4-6; I Corinthians 13:4,5; Hebrews 10:36; II Peter 3:9

GOD IS PEACEFUL! -- Job 22:21; Psalm 4:8; Psalm 119:165; Isaiah 26:3; John 14:27; John 16:33; Colossians 3:15

GOD IS PERFECT! -- Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 18:32; Psalm 19:7; Matthew 5:48; Romans 12:2; Philippians 1:6; James 1:17

GOD IS PERSONAL! -- Psalm 23; Psalm 139:1-12; Psalm 139:13-16; Psalm 139:17-24; John 10:11-15; Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:4-7

GOD IS PRACTICAL! -- Proverbs 16:3,4; Ecclesiastes 3:11; Isaiah 14:24-27; John 1:9-13; Romans 8:28; Ephesians 1:11; I Timothy 1:8-11

GOD IS PRESERVATION! -- Deuteronomy 33:12; II Chronicles 16:9; Psalm 3:3; Psalm 31:20-23; Psalm 37:23-28; Psalm 91:1-4; Psalm 97:10

GOD IS PROTECTIVE! -- Psalm 46:1-3; Ezekiel 34:11,12; Acts 17:28; Romans 13:1-7; II Thessalonians 3:3; I Peter 2:13-17; I Peter 3:12,13

GOD IS PROVIDING! -- Genesis 49:24,25; Leviticus 25:20-22; I Samuel 2:7,8; I Chronicles 29:12-14; Psalm 23; Psalm 107; Acts 14:17

GOD IS RIGHTEOUS! -- Ezra 9:15; Job 36:3; Psalm 71:15,19; Psalm 111:3; Jeremiah 9:24; Romans 10:3,4; Revelation 16:5

GOD IS SELF-CONTROLLED! -- Genesis 28:15; Exodus 3:14; Lamentations 3:22,23; Psalm 90:1-4; John 6:38-40; Acts 17:24,25; James 1:17

GOD IS SELF-EXISTENT! -- Exodus 3:14; Deuteronomy 32:40; Job 35:6; Isaiah 44:6; Jeremiah 10:10; John 5:26; Acts 17:24,25

GOD IS SPIRIT! -- Numbers 16:22; Numbers 27:16; Zechariah 4:6; John 4:24; Romans 8:14-16; I Corinthians 2:10-12; II Corinthians 2:18

GOD IS TIRELESS! -- Deuteronomy 20:3,4; Psalm 23; Psalm 41:2,3; Psalm 121:3,4; Isaiah 40:28; Isaiah 41:10; Jeremiah 12:1-6

GOD IS TRINITY! -- Matthew 28:19; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 12:3-6; II Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 4:4-6; I Peter 1:2; Revelation 1:4,5

GOD IS TRUTHFUL! -- Numbers 23:19; Deuteronomy 32:4; I Samuel 15:29; Psalm 25:10; Psalm 86:15; John 4:24; John 8:26; Titus 1:2

GOD IS UNCHANGING! -- Numbers 23:19; Psalm 119:89-91; Ecclesiastes 3:14; Isaiah 40:28; Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17

GOD IS UNDERSTANDING! -- I Kings 8:39; Job 12:13; Psalm 103:14; Psalm 147:5; Proverbs 3:19,20; Daniel 2:20,21; Hebrews 4:13-16

GOD IS UNIQUE! -- Exodus 15:11; II Samuel 7:20-22; I Kings 8:23; Isaiah 40:18-22; Isaiah 43:11; Isaiah 44:6-8; Mark 12:32

GOD IS UNITY! -- I Kings 8:60; II Kings 20:28; Isaiah 42:8; Mark 12:29,32; John 17:3; I Timothy 2:5; James 2:19

GOD IS UNRESTRICTED! -- I Chronicles 29:11,12; I Samuel 2:6-8; Proverbs 21:1; Isaiah 55:11; Daniel 4:35; Romans 9:20,21; Romans 11:34

GOD IS UNSEARCHABLE! -- Deuteronomy 29:29; Job 5:8,9; Psalm 92:5; Psalm 145:3; Isaiah 55:8,9; Romans 11:33; I Corinthians 2:10,11

GOD IS UNSELFISH! -- Psalm 34:10; Psalm 84:11; Psalm 103; Matthew 11:28; Romans 5:16-18; Romans 6:23; Romans 8:32

GOD IS WISE! -- Psalm 37:1-6; Psalm 92:5-9; Psalm 119:97-100; Proverbs 3:19-26; Isaiah 55:6-9; Jeremiah 51:15-17; Romans 11:33-36

GOD IS WRATHFUL! -- Numbers 14:11; II Kings 22:13; Psalm 7:11; Psalm 78:38; Psalm 103:8,9; John 3:17,18,36; Hebrews 10:28-31

Copyright 2000. Dave Arch. All rights reserved.

To Return To The Ask A Pastor Online Library Page . . . [CLICK HERE](#)

120 Studies On God's Attributes by Dave Arch

Below are 120 attributes of God's character with thought-provoking discussion questions and Bible passages for each.

Begin by simply picking one that interests you and watch God show you more of who He is!

They work perfectly for either a small group or individual study.

[God is Accepting](#) (Romans 8:1, 33, 34)

*Have you discovered anything you thought you could do for God but couldn't?

*How does God feel about those failings as told in the verses above?

[God is Accessible](#) (Hebrews 4:16; John 14:6)

*What does God say about how to get to Him? (Hebrews 4:16; John 14:6)

*If God lived in a room in your house (Exodus 25:10-22) and you could go in and talk with Him whenever you wanted, how often would you go in and what would you say?

[God is Alive](#) (Luke 24:1-9)

*What would be different in your life if God died today?

[God is Amazing](#) (Genesis 1:3,6,9,11,40,20,26; Psalm 33:6-9)

*What makes something or someone "amazing?"

*If you could have been present to watch the above verses actually happen, how would you have reacted?

God is Ambiguous (Matthew 15:10-16)

*Why did God speak in parables without public explanation (Matthew 15:10-16)?

*What do you think Matthew 22:14 or Mark 10:31 might mean?

*If God really wanted people to understand, why didn't He just speak plainly?

God is Angry (Romans 5:9)

*How might anger and sadness work together in this situation?

*How do you see anger and sadness in God (Matthew 23:29-26 and 23:37-39)?

God is Angry (Psalm 18:7-15; Isaiah 63:1-6; Revelation 14:9-11)

*How do you feel when you read about God's anger in the above verses?

*What does Romans 5:9 add to your understanding of His anger?

God is Attentive (Matthew 10:29)

*What does Matthew 10:29 tell you about God's ability to pay attention to even the smallest events?

*Why are you glad or sad about this quality of God?

God is Authoritative (Luke 7:1-10)

Acting our Luke 7:1-10 using a narrator and the characters is really fun and will involve everyone in your group (there is a crowd in the story!).

*What did Jesus compliment the soldier for in Luke 7:1-10?

*What examples from people at school shows the differences or similarities between "authority" and "strength?"

God is Awesome (Isaiah 6:1)

*What other times have you seen something that caused your mouth to drop open with awe?

*How would you feel if you were either Isaiah in Isaiah 6:1-7 or John in Revelation 4:1-11?

*Why are you glad (or not glad) that God is awesome?

God is Awesome (Matthew 17:1-8; Romans 12:2)

*In what ways is Christ's transfiguration similar to or different from the way God's "light" changes us?

God is Balanced (Isaiah 40:9-11)

*What are people talking about when they say that a certain meal is well-balanced?

*How is that term used to apply to a person?

*What does Isaiah 40:9-11 tell you about God's balance as a Person?

*Why are you glad or sad that God is balanced?

God is Beautiful (Revelation 4:1-8)

*Why do we find rainbows so beautiful?

*What other things in nature do we usually agree are beautiful?

*What would you have done if you had been John seeing the picture described in Revelation 4:1-8?

*What do you like most about this picture of God?

God is Big (Isaiah 40:12-26)

*In Isaiah 40:12-26, list all of the items in nature that obviously made the writer's jaw drop open due to their size.

*How does God compare to each of those truly "big things?"

*Why are you glad (or not glad) that God is big?

God is Blameless (John 18:38)

*What makes Pilate's statement about Jesus so incredible in John 18:38?

*What would it be like to be around someone like Jesus Who never did wrong?

God is Calming (Matthew 11:28-30)

*What tricks have you found to help you relax?

*What trick to relaxing can you find in the above verse?

*What do you find most relaxing about God?

God is Caring (I Peter 5:7)

*When do you find it hardest to believe that God cares about you?

*What do the following verses add to your understanding as to why He might allow some suffering to occur? Hebrews 12:6-11; Romans 5:1-5; II Corinthians 12:7-10; II Corinthians 1:3,4; Philippians 3:10.

God is Causative (Lamentations 3:36,37)

*Can you remember as a little child when you used to think that one thing caused something else to happen when they weren't connected in any way? (i.e. Santa and gifts,etc.) Give a few examples.

*How do you feel when you read Lamentations 3:36,37 and what it tells us about the ultimate true Cause of all events?

God is Comforting (Isaiah 40:1)

*What do you know about the way our memories work?

*How do we forget bad memories?

*Since the purpose of Isaiah 40 was to bring comfort (Isaiah 40:1), how many comforting statements can you list from the chapter?

God is Committed (Hebrews 13:5)

*What commitments do you know God makes in the Bible to you?

*How do you feel when you read the promise He gives you in Hebrews 13:5?

God is Communicative (Mark 13:31)

*How is a letter better or worse than a phone call?

*Why did God choose to speak to us in letter form (written communication)?

God is Compassionate (Mathew 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20:34)

*How would you define the word "compassion" after reading the above verses?

*Why are you glad or not glad that this quality is part of God's character?

God is Complimentary (I Corinthians 4:5)

*How do you think the following verse ends?

"Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then. . ." (I Corinthians 4:5)

*What does the true ending tell you about God?

*What do Luke 7:1-9 and Revelation 2:2,3; 2:13 add to your understanding of this part of God's personality?

*What do you think God might compliment you for today?

God is Concerned (Ezekiel 20:9, 14, 22)

*What is someone's "reputation?"

*What kind of reputation do you believe God has?

*What do the above verses tell you about His attitude towards His reputation? So what?

God is Confident (Matthew 7:28,29)

*Can you think of instances in Jesus life and teachings when He spoke confidently?

*Have you ever seen someone with "false confidence?" How can you tell the difference between fake confidence and true confidence?

*What has to be true of someone before they can speak with the confidence Jesus exhibited in his pronouncement found in Matthew 16:18?

*Why are you glad God is so confident?

God is Confrontational (Matthew 23:1-36, 37-39)

*Why do we sometimes find it difficult to confront people even when we know they're doing something wrong?

*What do the above verses tell you about God's ability to confront?

*Does this ability of His make you glad or sad? Why?

God is Controlling (Lamentations 3:36,37)

*What does Lamentations 3:36,37 tell you about how God knows what's going to happen in the future?

*How do you feel when you read what God tells us about Himself in Lamentations 3:36,37?

*How do you resolve any conflict you feel about God sending evil as well as good?

God is Controlling (Psalm 135:5, 6; Proverbs 21:1)

How do you feel when you read about God's ability to control in Psalm 135:5,6 and Proverbs 21:1?

God is Creative (Romans 12:4-6)

- *What does it mean to be "creative?"
- *How do you see God's creativity in Romans 12:4-6?

God is Demonstrative (Romans 5:8)

- *Why is learning something from a demonstration usually easier than just learning it from a book?
- *What evidence do you have that tells you God believes in demonstrations?
- *What does Romans 5:8 add to your understanding of His belief in demonstrating what He means?

God is Despised (Isaiah 53:3)

- *What names of people can you list from the history of the world that most would agree are "despised" by nearly everyone?
- *What has to happen usually before someone is "despised?"
- *Jesus never did most of what causes a person to be "despised" , yet He was despised (Isaiah 53:3). Why?
- *Are you personally glad He was despised? Why or why not?

God is Detailed (Luke 12:7)

- *Have you ever known anyone who was really into details?
- *What did you like and not like about them?

*What does Luke 12:7 tell you about God and details?

God is Developmental (I John 2:12-14)

*Why do we enjoy learning new things?

*What are the stages of learning God gives us in I John 2:12-14?

*What are the characteristics of each of those stages?

*Why are you glad or sad that God keeps growing us up?

God is Directive (Proverbs 3:5,6)

*How might we get confused when trying to figure out what God might want us to do (i.e. for a job, a college selection or mate)?

*Why doesn't God just audibly tell us what He wants us to do?

*How did God direct Paul in I Thessalonians 3:1; Philippians 2:25,26; I Corinthians 16:3,4; and Titus 3:12?

God is Directive (I Corinthians 16:8,9; II Corinthians 2:12,13; Colossians 4:2,3)

*How does God tell you what He wants you to do?

*What do the above verses tell you about how to react when God gives you an opportunity to help someone?

*What do those verses tell you about how God directs us?

God is Disciplining (Hebrews 12:6)

- *Has there ever been a time when you felt like you were going to "pop" from the pressure and pain? When?
- *What does Hebrews 12:6 tell us about God's part in some of the pressures we feel?
- *Why are you glad or not glad that Hebrews 12:6 is true?

God is Divisive (Matthew 10:34-36)

- *Do you believe that God helps more people get along or that He causes more people to fight? Why?
- *What does Matthew 10:34-36 tell you about God's effect on some people?
- *How could you ever praise Him for this part of His character?
- *Why are you glad or sad that God is unpredictable?

God is Dramatic (Numbers 16:25-35)

- *What would be a less dramatic way to handle the situation in the above passage?
- *What does the way God chose to handle it tell you about God?
- *Are you glad that God can be dramatic? Why or why not?

God is Eager (I Peter 5:1-4)

- *With God commanding certain attitudes in church leadership, what does I Peter 5:1-4 tell you about what God's attitudes must be in taking care of us?
- *Do you have trouble picturing Him as eager to take care of you? Why or why not?
- *What do you believe would be different in your life if God's attitude was not one of eagerness?

God is Everywhere (Psalm 139:7-10)

- *How do you feel when you read what God tells us about Himself in Psalm 139:7-10?
- *What would be different in your life if God could only be in one place at one time?

God is Experienced (Job 38:1-11)

- *How did God use His experience to put Job in his place in Job 38:1-11?
- *How would you feel if God talked to you that way?
- *Would those be good feelings to have? Why or why not?

God is Exposed (Psalm 19:1; Romans 1:20)

- *What do the above verses tell us about what we can learn about God by just being observant of what's around us?
- *Can you list seven truths you could learn about God by taking a walk in a park?
- *Why do you think the characters in Luke 24:13-31 or John 20:11-18 didn't know Jesus when He was right in front of them?

God is Fair (Matthew 20:1-16)

- *What does it mean to be treated fairly?
- *How is treating people fairly different and/or similar to treating people exactly the same?
- *After reading the passage above, what definition do you believe God would write for the word "fair?"
- *Does God treat people fairly? Why or why not?

God is Famous (Revelation 7:9-12)

- *What does it take before we call someone "famous?"
- *Is God "famous" according to our method of deciding? Why or why not?
- *How does the scene in Revelation 7:9-12 add to your appreciation of God's famousness?

God is Fast (I Corinthians 15:51,52)

- *What does I Corinthians 15:51,52 tell you about the speed at which God can move?
- *What other examples can you think of that shows how fast God can move?
- *Why are you glad or sad that God can act so fast?

God is Fatherly (Psalm 103:13,14)

- *How does Proverbs 13:24; 14:26; 22:15; 23:13,14 help you more clearly "see" God as your Father?
- *What does Psalm 119:71 add to that picture?
- *Why are you glad or not glad that He's that type of Father?

God is Fearless (Proverbs 28:1; Revelation 19:11-21)

- *What causes us to fear something or someone?
- *What do the verses above tell you about God's fears?
- *What would be different in your life if God were afraid of anything?

God is Flexible (Genesis 2:16,17)

*Have you ever known someone who wasn't very flexible and everything had to be done a certain way? How did you feel about them? Why?

*What do the above verses tell you about the flexibility of God?

*How do you feel about His flexibility?

God is Foolish (I Corinthians 1:25)

*What ingredients does some activity need to have before you label it "foolish?"

*In I Corinthians 1:25, what might be some examples of God's foolishness?

God is Forceful (Psalm 32:4)

*When we talk about a person being "forceful," what are we usually referring to?

*Have you ever felt God getting forceful with you? When?

*What do you believe David is referring to when he talks about God's forcefulness in Psalm 32:4?

*Why are you happy (or not happy) that God is forceful?

God is Forgiving (Jeremiah 31:34)

*Do you think God has a good memory? Why or why not?

*What does Jeremiah 31:34 tell you about His memory?

*How does Psalm 103:12 picture the same event?

God is Forgiving (Luke 23:39-43)

*What does Luke 23:39-43 tell you about His forgiveness?

*How does Psalm 103:12 make you feel?

God Is Frank (James 1:23)

*Do you like looking in a mirror? Why or why not?

*In what ways are God's words like or unlike a mirror (James 1:23)?

*What does it tell you about Someone who can make their words like a mirror?

God is Freeing (Psalm 119:45; John 8:32)

*What does it mean to be truly free?

*Is anyone completely free? Why or why not?

*What does Psalm 119:45 and John 8:32 tell you about God's method for freeing us from those things that take away our freedom?

*Can you think of a specific example to show how His method works?

God is Friendly (Proverbs 27:6; 3:32)

*What are characteristics of a good friend? A bad friend?

*How does God stack up to the list we've just made about good friends and bad friends?

*How does He stack up to the list we find in the above Scriptures from Proverbs?

God is Frustrating (Isaiah 55:8,9)

- *What about God in Isaiah 55:8,9 would make Him frustrating?
- *Do you have a time when you got frustrated with God? When?
- *Are you glad God is frustrating? Why or why not?

God is Futuristic (John 14:1-6; Revelation 21:4, 16-22:5)

- *What do you think heaven is going to be like?
- *What do the above verses help you see about heaven?
- *Do you look forward to heaven? Why or why not?

God is Gentle (Isaiah 40:11)

- *Have you ever known anyone that wasn't gentle enough to trust?
- *Is God gentle? Why or why not?
- *How do you feel about God when you read Isaiah 40:11?

God is Giving (Romans 3:10-18, 21-24)

- *How was your struggle with the string like and unlike what God tells us about ourselves in Romans 3:10-18?
- *How is the giving of the salt like and unlike what God tells us about Himself in Romans 3:21-24?

*Do you enjoy giving gifts? Why or why not?

*What other evidence do you have that God enjoys giving gifts (Romans 8:32)?

God is Gross (Ezekiel 16:3-15; II Kings 6:24-30)

*What does something need to like before we'll label it "gross?"

*Do the verses above qualify for such a label? Why or why not?

*What do they tell you God is like?

God is Honest (Numbers 23:19)

*What does Numbers 23:19 tell you about the honesty of God?

*What would be different in your life if God told lies?

*What does I Samuel 16:1-5 and Joshua 2:1-14 (compare with Hebrews 11:31)

add to your understanding of God's honesty?

God is Humble (John 13:5-8)

*What must Jesus be like in order to do what He did in John 13:5-8?

God is Humbling (Daniel 4:28-37)

*What changes do you see in the person described in Daniel 4:28-30 and then in Daniel 4:34-37?

*How did God make the changes and why? (Daniel 4:31-33)

God is Humorous (Psalm 2:4; 37:12,13; 59:6-8; Proverbs 1:25,26)

- *What are five different reasons we laugh?
- *What do those reasons tell us about ourselves?
- *From the verses above what are some different reasons God laughs?
- *What do those reasons tell us about Him?

God is Hurtful (Proverbs 27:6; Hebrews 12:6)

- *When does God hurt us according to the above verses?
- *Have you felt Him hurt you? When?
- *Are you glad He hurts you? Why or why not?

God is Incomprehensible (Isaiah 40:28)

- *When you realize that no matter how closely we look at God or how much we study Him we'll never completely understand Him (i.e. How He thinks or why He does what He does), how does that make you feel?
- *How does looking at Isaiah 55:9 affect your feelings?
- *What would be better and worse if you always could figure out God?

God is Independent (Romans 9:19-24)

- *Who/what influences God according to Romans 9:19-24?

*How do you feel when you read that passage?

God is Indestructible (Revelation 19:11-21)

*Why is something being unbreakable such a big deal in advertising?

*How do you feel when you read the above verses about the indestructibility of God?

*What would be different in your life if God were not indestructible?

God is Inquisitive (Mark 8)

*What can you tell about a person by the type of questions they ask?

*What are all the different types of questions Jesus asks in Mark 8?

*What do they tell you about Him?

God is Inspiring (I Peter 2:21-23)

*Who in your life has inspired you to try new things?

*What do you learn about God's inspiration in I Peter 2:21-23?

*What do you find most inspiring about God?

God is Interesting (Mark 8:32)

*What makes anything or anyone "interesting?"

*What kept the crowd interested enough to listen to Jesus for three days? (Mark 8:32)

*What do you find most "interesting" about God?

God is Intimate (Psalm 139:13-16)

*Have you ever known someone so well that you sometimes knew what they were thinking? Tell us about it. How did it feel?

*What does Psalm 139:13-16 tell you about how well God knows you?

*Do you like the fact that He knows you that well? Why or why not?

God is Invisible (I Timothy 1:17)

*How is God similar to or dissimilar to the wind?

*Did you ever wish that you could be invisible? Why?

*Why are you glad (or sad) that God is invisible?

*Why do you believe He chose to remain invisible?

God is Jealous (Exodus 4:24)

*How would you differentiate between good jealousy and bad jealousy?

*How can anger be an indication of how much people care about something or someone? (Exodus 4:24-30)

God is Judging (Revelation 20:11-15)

*What other things have you found difficult to judge?

*What do you learn about God's judging ability in Revelation 20:11-15?

*How do you feel about the fact that God is judging?

God is Life (Genesis 2:7)

*What does the above verse tell you about God's breath?

*How do you feel when you read that verse?

God is Light (John 8:12)

*What are at least seven ways God is like light?

God is Limited (Hebrews 6:17-18)

*How do you feel about what Hebrews 6:17,18 shows you that God can't do?

*What other activities could you add to the list of God's inabilityes?

God is Love (I Corinthians 13:4-8)

*How does I Corinthians 13:4-8 help you "see" God's love more clearly?

*Which one of those qualities of His love are you most thankful for today? Why?

God is Love (John 11:5,6)

*How could John 11:6 possibly be an act of love?

*What does it tell you about the type of love God has for us?

God is Memorable (John 13:5-9)

*Have you ever known someone who wasn't memorable? They didn't make much of an impression at all? What are those people like?

*How could Jesus have structured the situation described in

John 13:5-9 so that He would have been less memorable?

*When has Jesus been memorable with you?

God is Merciful (Jonah 3:10-4:11)

*Why does Jonah become angry when God showed mercy in the above passage?

*How do you feel about God being merciful to you? To others?

God is Miraculous (John 6:1-7:1)

*Why do most people like magic tricks?

*How many different crowd reactions to Jesus' real miracles can you find in John 6:1-5?

*By the end of the chapter (John 6:66) hardly anyone is still following Him. What happened?

God is Near (Acts 17:27)

*If Acts 17:27 is true, why does God sometimes feel far away?

God is Non-Manipulative (Joshua 7:1-8)

*How could God have manipulated the soldiers to get more to stay in Joshua 7:1-8?

*Do you believe God ever manipulates us? Why or why not?

God is Open (Habakkuk 1-2)

*What is God criticized for in Habakkuk 1:1-4?

*What answer does He give in Habakkuk 1:5-11?

*What is God criticized for in Habakkuk 1:12-17?

*What answer does He give in Habakkuk 2?

*What does all this tell you about what God is like?

God is Opulent (Exodus 38:21-29)

*How would you describe God's attitude towards money after reading Exodus 38:21-29?

*How do you feel about Him having that attitude?

God is Paradoxical (Numbers 15:32-36; Matthew 12:1-8)

*What paradoxes (seeming contradictions) do you find in the person of God? Compare the above two passages for a good beginning to this discussion.

*Are you glad or sad that God has paradoxes?

God is Patient (II Peter 3:8,9)

*What does II Peter 3:8,9 tell you about God's patience in waiting quietly?

*Why are you glad or not glad that God is so patient?

God is Perceptive (Isaiah 1:10-17)

*What do you learn about God's eyesight from Isaiah 1:10-17?

*Are you glad that He can see so much? Why or why not?

*What additional understanding do you get from seeing His observational powers in operation as told in Luke 21:1-4?

God is Perceptive (I Samuel 16:7)

*What do you learn about God's mindreading ability from I Samuel 16:7?

*Are you glad that He can read minds? Why or why not?

*What additional understanding do you get from seeing His powers in operation as told in Luke 21:1-4?

God is Perfect (Matthew 5:48)

*How would you feel if you were around someone who was perfect all the time? Why or why not?

*How does this affect our relationship with God?

God is Personal (John 21:18-22)

*What are some different ways you've seen God solve peoples' problems?

*Why doesn't He treat us all alike?

*How would you put in your own words Peter's question and Jesus' answer from John 21:21,22?

God is Personal (John 21:18-22)

*If you wanted to help someone "see" God, what advice would you give them?

*How would you put in your own words Peter's question and Jesus' answer from John 21:21,22?

God is Persuasive (Jonah 1-3)

*How did God persuade Jonah to go to Nineveh in Jonah 1-3?

*Is this the same as God forcing Jonah to go? Why or why not?

God is Practical (Proverbs 10:19; 14:29; 15:1; 17:9; 18:2; 18:13; 28:23)

*Have you ever known anyone who was extremely impractical and always came up with complicated solutions to everything? Tell us about them.

*What do the above verses tell you about God's practicality?

God is Predictive (Isaiah 46:9,10; 48:3-5)

*Would you ever want to know the future? Why or why not?

*After reading Isaiah 46:9, 10, are you glad God knows the future? Why or why not?

*After reading Isaiah 48:3-5, what are some reasons God appears to glad that He knows the future?

God is Protective (Romans 8:38,39)

- *How has God used other people to protect you?
- *How would you write Romans 8:38,39 in your own words?
- *How do those verses make you feel?

God is Providing (John 21:3-11)

- *How did the fish already get on the fire (John 21:9) in the story found in John 21:3-11?
- *Why did Jesus have the men fish, when I already had the fish for them?

God is Providing (Philippians 4:19)

- *Does Philippians 4:19 mean that no God fearing person has never died of starvation or exposure? Why or why not?

God is Purposeful (Romans 8:28-29)

- *When was the last time you felt like everything was just happening to you with no purpose or thought?
- *What does Romans 8:28-29 tell you about the purpose(s) of God's actions with you?

God is Quiet (Psalm 46:10)

- *What does Psalm 46:10 tell us about how to "hear" God?
- *After reading I Kings 19:9-13, what point do you think God was trying to make in that passage?

*Do you find it difficult or do you find it easy to be quiet? Why or why not?

*Why do you believe being quiet is important in order to "hear" God?

God is Reasonable (I John 1:8; John 15:5; Psalm 103:13,14)

*What does God expect from you according to the verses above?

*How are God's "expectations" and "standards" alike and different?

*Is it possible for God to ever be disappointed in you because He

thought you were going to do something you didn't end up doing? Why or why not?

God is Relational (Luke 10:38-42)

*Do you know anyone you would really say is into relationships (i.e. they are really "a people person?")
What are they like?

*What does the above passage tell you God is like?

*Why are you glad or sad that God is like that?

God is Reminiscent (I Samuel 7:1-3; Genesis 35:9-15; Joshua 4:3-7)

*In the above verses, what is God asking the people to remember? Why?

*When God does something for us, what could we do to help us remember?

God is Secretive (Deuteronomy 29:29)

*What do you suppose are some of the hidden things God is talking about in Deuteronomy 29:29?

*Are you glad that God has "hidden things?" Why or why not?

God is Selective (I Corinthians 1:26)

*According to I Corinthians 1:26, what criteria does God use for selecting members of His family?

*How do you feel about being in His family with that criteria?

*According to I Corinthians 1:27, why did He use that criteria?

God is Self Controlled (Matthew 26:47-54; 27:27-30)

*What is usually meant by the term "self control?"

*From what you know about God, where do you see evidence of His self control?

*What do the above verses add to your understanding of this quality?

*What would be different in your life if God weren't self controlled?

God is Smart (Job 38:19-24)

*What are the questions in the quiz that God gives Job in the above passage?

*How would you feel if God gave you that quiz?

*Would those be good feelings to have? Why or why not?

*What would be different in your life if God wasn't very smart?

God is Sorrowful (Isaiah 53:3)

*What does Isaiah 53:3 tell you about God?

*What sadness do you find in the following passages: Luke 2:41-52;

Luke 22:14-38; Luke 22:39-46; Luke 22:47,48; Luke 23:13-25.

*How do you feel when you know God has experienced these things?

God is Specific (John 14:6)

*Have you ever known someone who wasn't very specific? What were they like?

*Did you like the way they were? Why or why not?

*Is God specific? Why or why not?

*How would you rewrite John 14:6 if it were written by someone who wasn't very specific?

God is Strong (Revelation 18:8)

*What proof can you find in nature that would lead you to believe that God is truly strong (Isaiah 40:12,15)?

*What clues do you get from II Corinthians 12:7-10 and John 9:39-41 as to how we can tap into some of His strength for ourselves?

God is Successful (Luke 10:21,22; Matthew 11:25-27)

*Why do we usually enjoy succeeding and hate failing?

*How is Jesus reaction different when He succeeds (Luke 10:21,22)

than when He fails (Matthew 11:25-27)?

*What do His reactions teach you about what He's like?

God is Supportive (Psalm 124)

*How would you rewrite Psalm 124 with evidence from your life that God isn't out to mess you up?

God is Terrifying (Hebrews 10:29-31; Revelation 16)

*How do you feel after reading Hebrews 10:29-31?

*What does Revelation 16 add to your feelings?

God is Thoughtful (Psalm 103:17,18)

*Do you ever wish you could read God's mind? Why or why not?

*How do you feel when you read the above verses about God's thoughts?

God is Timeless (II Peter 3:8,9)

*What does II Peter 3:8,9 tell you about God's view of time?

*What does the phrase "one day is as a thousand years" tell you about Him?

*What does the phrase "a thousand years is as one day" tell you about Him?

*Are you glad God views time this way? Why or why not?

God is Tireless (Isaiah 40:28)

*What does Isaiah 40:28 tell you about the physical stamina of God?

*What does Isaiah 40:29-31 tell you about how we can tap into His stamina for ourselves?

God is Transforming (Matthew 26:69-75 and Acts 2:14; II Corinthians 5:17)

*How did God change Peter from Matthew 26:69-75 into the Peter we see in Acts 2:14?

*Do you think II Corinthians 5:17 is true? Why or why not?

God is Trustworthy (Hebrews 13:5,6)

*How do you feel when you read what God says about Himself in Hebrews 13:5,6?

*When is it most difficult for you to believe those verses? Why?

God is Trustworthy (I Thessalonians 5:14-22, 23-24)

*When was one time you felt like you were going to "break" from the pressures you were under?

*How do you feel after reading I Thessalonians 5:14-22?

*How do you feel after adding verses 23-24?

*What would be different in your life if God had omitted verses 23-24?

God is Truth (John 14:6)

*What ways do you use to try and figure out what's true and what's false?

*What was God trying to tell us about Himself in John 14:6?

God is Unchanging (James 1:17; Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8)

*What do the above verses add to your understanding of God?

*Why are you glad or not glad that God never changes?

*What would be different in your life if God did change?

God is Understanding (Psalm 78:1-37, 37-39)

*List seven things that the nation of Israel couldn't seem to do in Psalm 78:1-37?

*Why didn't He just destroy them (Psalm 78:37-39)?

*What does this passage tell you about God and what He's like?

God is Unique (Isaiah 55:8,9)

*What do you think might be some of the "thoughts" being talked about in Isaiah 55:8,9?

*Are you glad God doesn't think like us? Why or why not?

God is Unlimited (I Samuel 14:6)

I Samuel 14:1-13 is a great passage for acting out in the meeting. Use a narrator and everyone will have a part. There is an army of people involved in the story.

*Can you think of things you thought couldn't be done but later you found out that they were possible?

*What is the impossibility in the I Samuel 14 story?

*What does verse 6 tell you about God and Who He is?

God is Unpredictable (Mark 1:35-38)

*Do you ever wish that you could predict what's going to happen?

*If you read John 11:3-5, what would you predict Jesus was going to do? Why does verse 6 shock us?

*If you read Mark 1:35-37, what would you predict Jesus was going to do? Why does verse 38 shock us?

God is Unpredictable (John 5:5-9)

*Is John 5:6 a weird question to ask a sick man? Why or why not?

God is Variety (Matthew 20:34; Mark 8:23; 10:52; John 9:11)

*What different methods did Jesus use in solving the problems in the above four Scripture passages?

*Why do you believe He did them all differently?

God is Vengeful (Romans 12:19)

*Why do we sometimes dream about pulling dirty tricks on certain people?

*What do you learn about God from Romans 12:19?

God is Verbal (Exodus 20:2-17; Deuteronomy 6:24; 10:12,13)

*What tone of voice did God use in speaking Exodus 20:2-17? Anyone care to demonstrate?

*What do the above verses in Deuteronomy add to your understanding of what His tone of voice might

have been?

God is Wealthy (Psalm 50:10-12)

- *What do the above verses tell you about God's wealth?
- *If someone were that rich, how would it affect their attitude towards money and possessions?
- *What does Matthew 17:24-27 and Mark 14:1-9 add to your understanding of His attitudes?

God is Wise (Psalm 119:97-100)

- *What do you believe are three of the wisest commandments God ever gave? Why? (Deuteronomy 6:24; 10:12,13)

God is Worthy (Revelation 4:11)

- *What does it mean to prove oneself "worthy" of something?
- *What does Revelation 4:11 tell us about God's worthiness?
- *What qualifies Him as being that worthy?

Copyright 2000. Dave Arch. All rights reserved.