

Into the Word

It takes nothing away from the absolute holiness and grandeur of God the Father to learn, in His word, that He is more than the sum of this world's vain suspicions regarding Him. If God—even as a spirit—is more human than this world credits Him, He loses none of His deity. If God is tougher, grittier than this world understands, He loses none of His purity. God the Father is all of this and more—and more than mortal man will ever comprehend. We need not waste time and energy recreating or adding to God from our temporal toolkit, for He is already more multidimensional and complete than we can ever imagine.

God does not require our understanding—even recognition—to be who He is. But so that we can, if we care to, He has given us His Book.



Most people's knowledge of God is as thin as the skiff of fragile ice across a mild-winter pond. One step with the full weight of their misguided belief system and they go crashing through the film of misconceptions they hold about God. Thoroughly dunked, wet and humiliated, they haul themselves out of the cold bath of reality—only to turn their back on a God that would so rudely deceive them. But the deception is of their own making.

Working through the Bible in its entirety brings the reader smack against the truth about God the Father—His truth; in His own words. The reader learns that His immensity will not fit into the simplistic cubbyholes created by man for His dwelling.

Is He a God of love? Yes, incredibly so, with a love so deep—so sacrificial—as to leave humankind speechless with gratitude.

We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. We love, because He first loved us.

1 John 4:16, 19

Is He a God of holy wrath? Absolutely—enough to make a strong man lose control of His senses.

And one called out to another and said,
“Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts,
The whole earth is full of His glory.”
And the foundations of the thresholds trembled
at the voice of him who called out, while the
temple was filling with smoke. Then I said,
“Woe is me, for I am ruined!
Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I live among a people of unclean lips;
For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.”

Isaiah 6:3-5

Is He a God who overlooks wrong?
Yes—for a while.

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

2 Peter 3:9-10

Is He a God who punishes wrong? You'd better believe it.

Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who

forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.”

Exodus 34:6-7

Is He a God who forgives? Yes—more than we will ever know or deserve.

“Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through [Jesus] forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.”

Acts 13:38-39



God's written word is a very *human* book. Through its Author, its Enabler, its scribes and its characters, we come to learn of holiness, righteousness, and evil; overwhelming obedience and faith, and cynical betrayal; honesty and deceit; purity and depravity. The Bible is a bottomless well of knowledge and insight into the truths of God. In it we learn of His personality and methods, His vocabulary and reason. We discover through both proclamation and narrative the qualities of God that make Him unique: His omnipotence, His omniscience, His Holiness and power.

God's word was written to be *read*—not just listened to. It was meant to be consumed unfiltered. The teacher or commentator is an invaluable help, but nothing will replace the experience of the saint in solitary communion with God through the reading and studying of His word. There He speaks, while we reverently listen.

