

The background is a dark blue space filled with various celestial elements. There are numerous stars in yellow, orange, and light blue. Several constellations are drawn with thin white lines connecting dots. A large, detailed moon with craters is in the top right. A smaller, cratered planet is in the bottom right. A red comet with a long tail is on the left. A green atom symbol is on the right. A small globe is in the center right. A large, stylized heart is in the center, between two hands.

**God's**  
eye view on

**RELATIONSHIP**

**Matt Rawlins<sup>PhD</sup>**



**A little book that's yours to give away.**

**A special thank you to editorial help and wisdom: Scott Tompkins**

**Designed by: Kelvin Marc Tan. Veritas Branding & Marketing Pte Ltd**

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**God's eye view on Relationship © Matt Rawlins**

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Hi, My name is Matt  
and I try to live out  
my faith every day.



What does that mean?

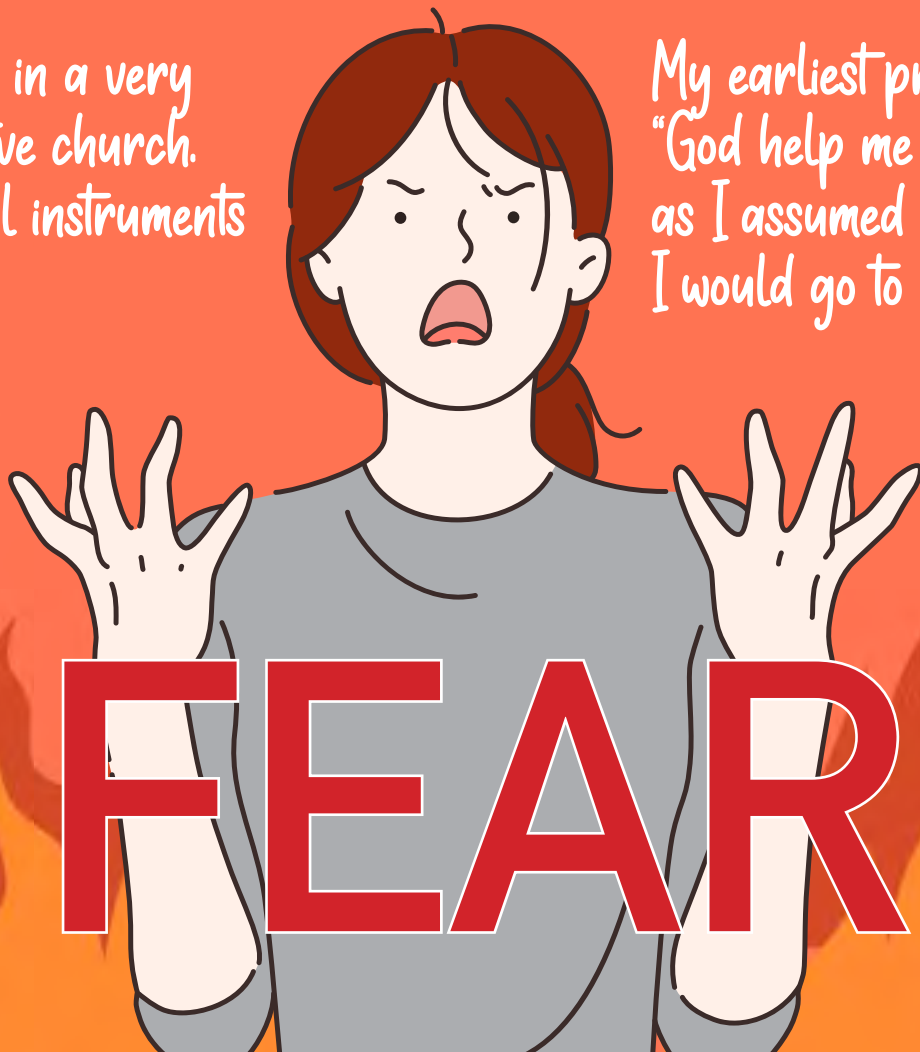
If I heard someone say  
that when I was younger,  
I would have thought...



**HOW BORING!**

I grew up in a very  
conservative church.  
No musical instruments  
allowed.

My earliest prayers were,  
"God help me not to swear,"  
as I assumed if I did  
I would go to hell



**FEAR**

FEAR was a  
pretty strong  
motivator when  
I was young.

Then my hormones  
kicked in.

I still went to church on Sundays  
to appease my FEARS, but it was more  
fire insurance than anything else.

The rest of the week was more about pleasure.

How much pleasure can I pack into an hour?

A day?

A weekend?

I'm trying to capture  
what was going on in me  
because I figure  
you might be like me.

The wrestling, the struggle  
between the desires of life  
and *religion / fear*.

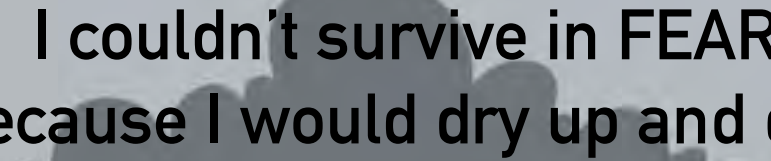




I didn't give  
myself to pleasures  
because of the guilt.



I didn't have the guts to push deeply into the pleasures  
and desires to see if they were what I really wanted.



I couldn't survive in FEAR  
because I would dry up and die.

I didn't have the guts to face my fears or allow them  
to push me to go deeper to find the longings of my soul

So I tried to live on a **starvation** diet of both.

I guess if I had to put words to it I would say I was

lonely and afraid.



I was looking for the meaning and purpose of life and didn't know it.

Some friends said it was a question of faith.

Can faith really make a difference to the quality of my life?

Can faith help me to understand healthy desires and fears?



[illegible]

# FAITH:

A spiritual thing that only happens to a few 'select' people.



Sort of like fairy dust.  
It drops from on high  
and changes the ones  
it lands on.

Okay, not exactly a dictionary definition,  
but a pretty good idea of how I felt about it.

I like the idea of meaning and purpose,  
but NOT the idea of religion and fairy dust.



I wanted a relationship with **God**  
but didn't know how to get it.

I started by being honest with  
God about being alone and  
afraid and needing help.



It was the first honest  
conversation I had with Him.  
I even shed a tear or  
two in the process.



He shocked me by being  
honest in return with me.



I felt His love. A mystery I can't  
really explain too well. I just had  
a sense of who He was and that  
He liked me, a lot.



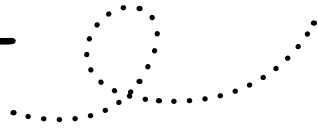
**NOW WHAT?**

I wanted more -



But my definition of faith  
(fairy dust)  
was messing with me.

I can't grow fairy dust.



I figured I better start to look around  
as I'm sure others had struggled with this.

I even pulled a crusty old Bible  
off the shelf and started reading it.



*I found lots of people around me asking questions like these:*




I realised these are faith questions.  
Everyone has faith of some kind  
and are looking for someplace to put it.



Would you mind if I jump to a  
verse that radically changed my  
thinking and view of what faith is?

It's (even) an Old Testament verse  
taken from the life of Moses.



Who by the way talked  
face-to-face with God.

Moses is concerned for how the Egyptians would see God.

Otherwise the land (Egypt) from which you brought us may say, "Because the LORD **was not able** to bring them into the land which He had promised them and because **He hated them** He has brought them out to slay them in the wilderness."

Deuteronomy 9:28

Another way of saying it is that Moses is captivated by the Glory of God.





## SUMMARY:

Two lies that would destroy faith and diminish God's glory.

1 God was not able!

2 God hated them!

WHOA





Otherwise the land (Egypt) from which you brought us may say, "Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land which He had promised them and because He hated them He has brought them out to slay them in the wilderness."

Deuteronomy 9:28

I like those words. They are not big theological words. Moses puts them in a language I can understand.

# First LIE

The people of the land would say:

**God was not able**

It was a question of power.

How strong  
is God?

It was also a  
question of wisdom.

What can  
God do?

How wise  
is God?

It went to the very foundation of His **capacity**

It was about His **NATURE**





As Moses was keeping it very simple,  
I will do the same.

How Big is God?

The bigger He is, the more I can trust Him.

Trust is a FAITH word.

# Second LIE

The people of the land would say:

**God hated them**

It was a question of choice.

What does  
He do with  
His capacity?

It was about how He **relates** to creation.

The word **HATED** jumped out at me.

It was a statement about His **CHARACTER**

Who did He choose to be?



Keeping it simple.

# Is God good?

The more 'good' He is,  
the more I can trust Him.  
Again, trust is a FAITH word.



How mysteriously Big is He?

How perfectly Good is He?

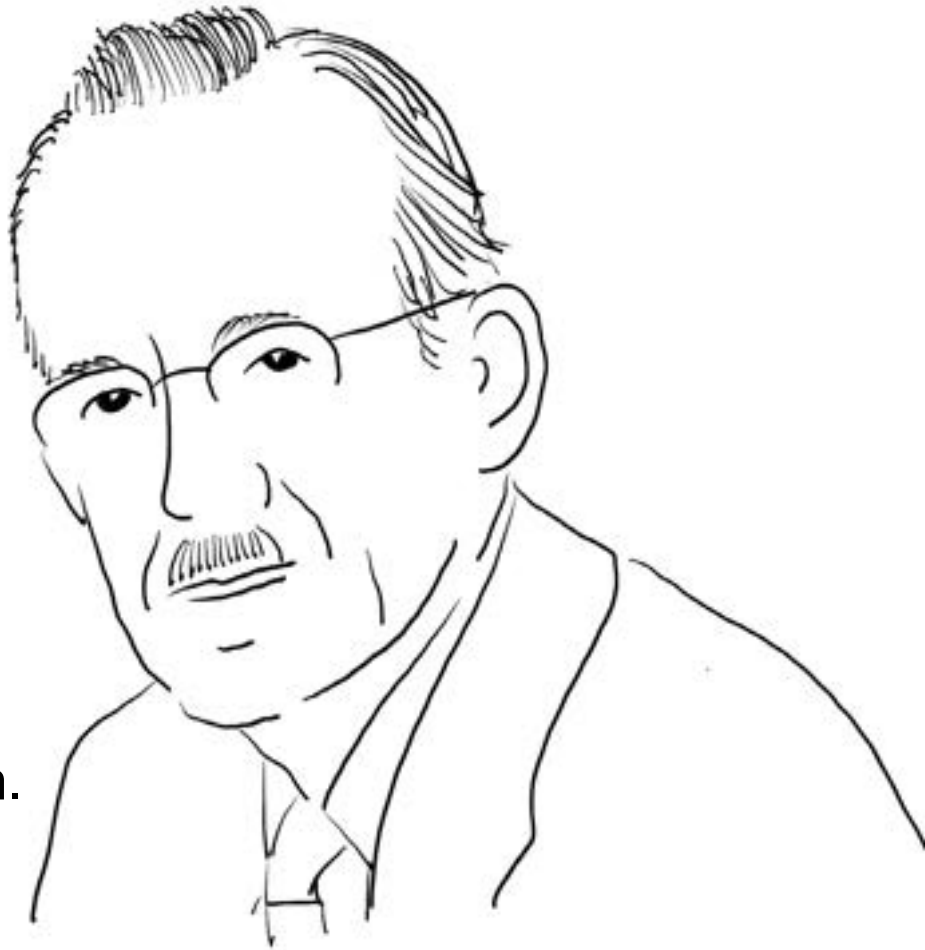
Is it possible that these two areas were the foundation,  
the very basis for my faith?



**Truth has Two Wings**

**A. W. Tozer**


**Understanding my faith.**





God is Big Enough.

First Wing of Truth

A full-page background image showing a person's silhouette standing on a dark, rocky horizon. The person is looking up at a vast night sky filled with stars and the prominent, colorful band of the Milky Way galaxy stretching diagonally across the frame. The sky is a deep blue and purple, with the galaxy's core glowing in shades of pink, orange, and yellow.

How Big is Big Enough?

If I stretch my brain as far as I can,  
God is bigger than I can imagine.

**Raw, unmeasurable power produces  
AWE / RESPECT**

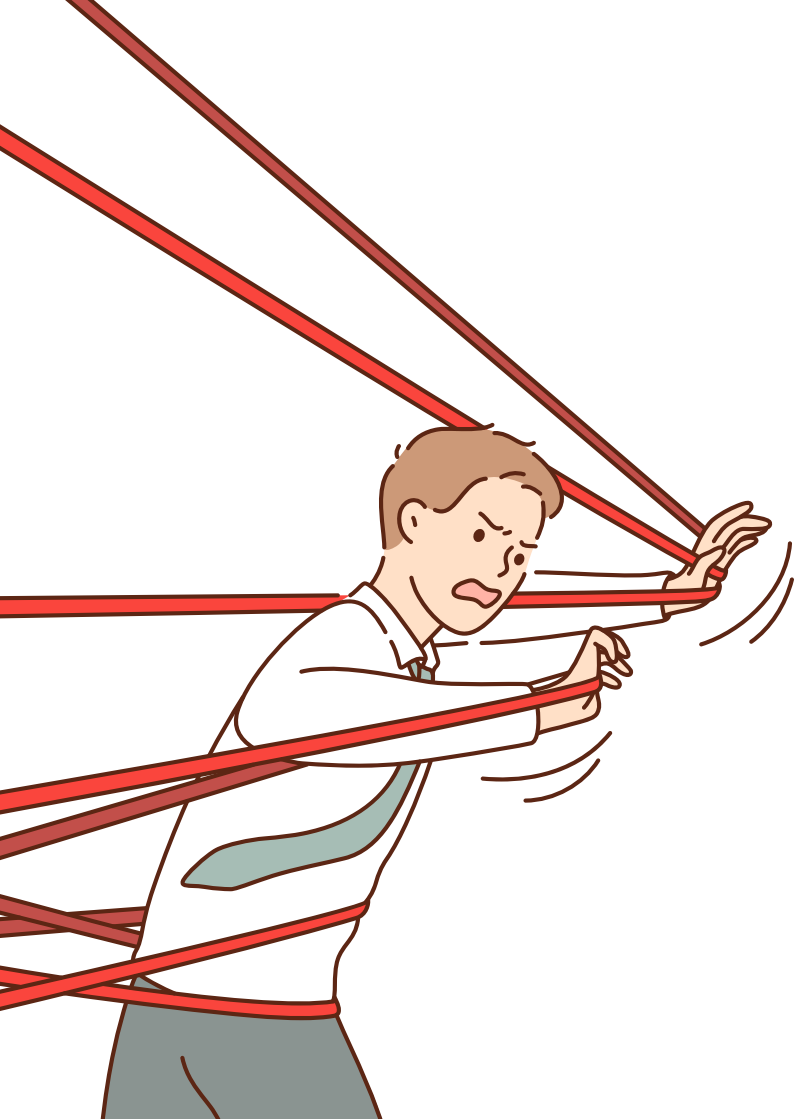
**He has infinite resources in His Nature.**

**All knowledge and power produces wisdom.**



He is Big enough to know what He is doing.





Everyone in the Bible  
had a hard time understanding  
how powerful He is.

They struggled with it and  
had to grow in their faith.

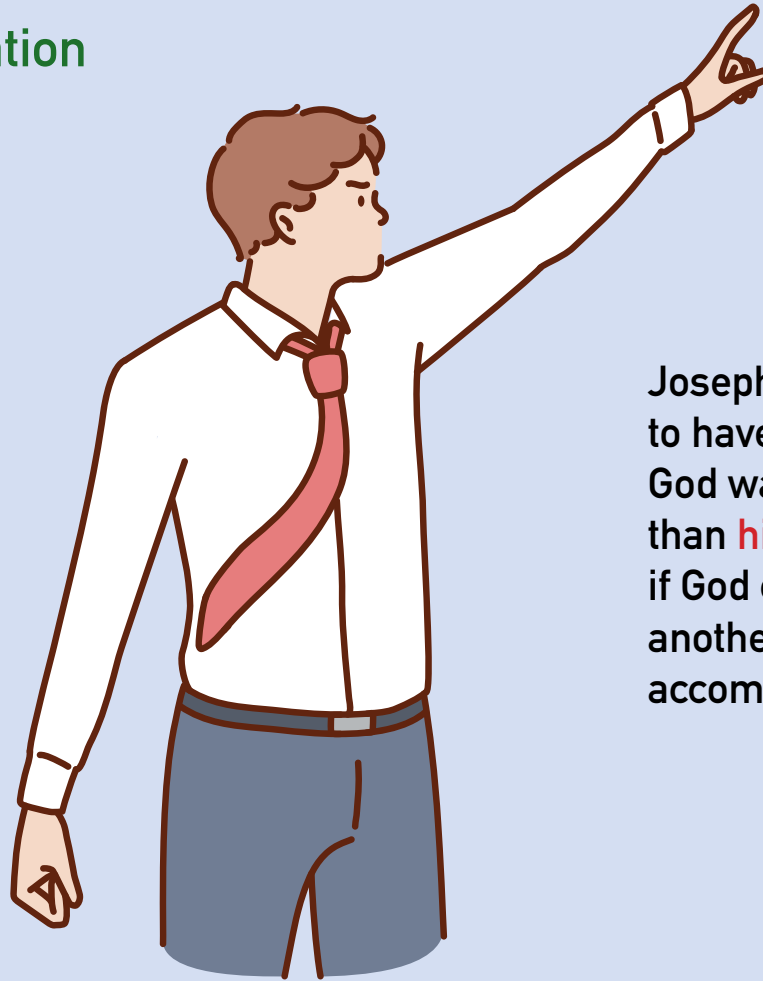
Some examples...

## Physical limitations



Abraham and Sarah struggled to believe that God was big enough to give **a child** to a couple too old to have one.

## Family and vocation



Joseph struggled to have faith that God was bigger than **his family** and if God could use another nation to accomplish His will.



## Politics and the economy



Moses struggled to have faith that God was big enough to use him in national **politics**.

Then later, was He big enough to supply meat for a nation of 3 plus million people?



Culture, slavery and power



Esther struggled to have faith in a God that was big enough to **protect** her (and the people) from her husband (also a powerful king).

Gideon struggled  
to have faith that  
God was big  
enough to use  
Him as a **leader**.



The list goes on  
and on.  
Each character  
struggling to  
live out their life  
in light of a God  
who is Big enough  
for what they face.

It took years but it slowly began to sink in.

My struggle with growing my faith was  
directly related to my view of how **Big God** is.



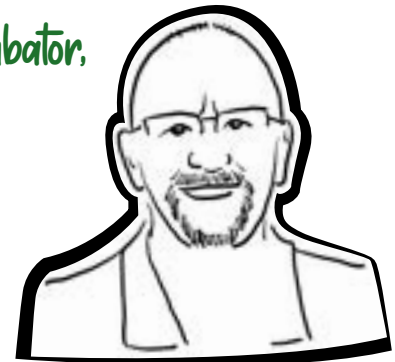
This is not an abstract theological idea.

When my son was born 2.5 months early and weighed 3.3 lbs., was God bigger than that?

Could I trust God to be in charge of my son in an incubator for 5 weeks?

That was a faith question for me on how Big God is. I had to really grow my faith in a God Big enough.

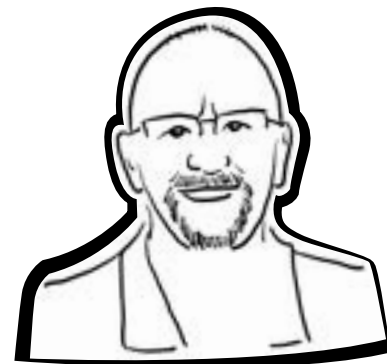
The doctor said to me, "if we don't put in enough oxygen into his incubator, he will have brain damage. If we put in too much oxygen, we will ruin his eyes. We don't know how much oxygen to put in."



Was God bigger than the limitations of a doctor in a hospital?

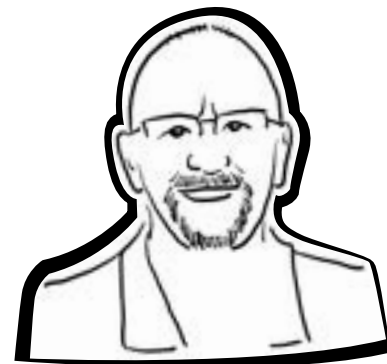
My son is now a healthy man, with a sharp mind and good eyes.

At that time, I had no idea what the future held for him and us.



As I lived out this belief, my awareness of His greatness grew and produced respect and reverence for God.

I wanted to listen to Him because He knew what He was doing. My faith was built on His greatness.



God is Good.

Second Wing of Truth

How Good is Good?

It looks like a ridiculous question,  
but it is a very important one.





*The intimacy In my relationship with God  
and thus my ability to trust Him is determined  
by how good I think He is.*



The disciples of Jesus represented humanity.

They were distracted by culture,  
social issues and their own interests.

They wanted a powerful Messiah  
who would save them.



*A Good God was not a priority.*

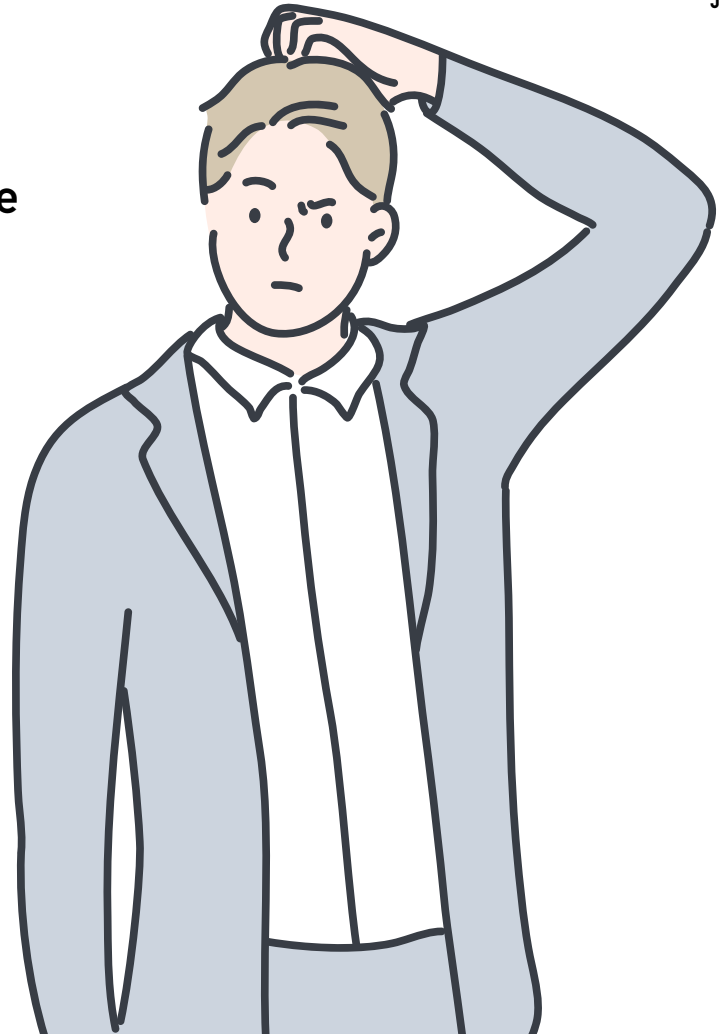
It took much longer for them to see  
Jesus as a perfectly Good God.

loving  
just  
sacrificial  
servant  
merciful  
longsuffering  
faithful

...

...

...



When Jesus speaks of a love that is expressed in sacrifice (death), Peter takes him aside and rebukes Him.

A vulnerable love to lay down His life was not a thought allowed in Peter's mind.



James and John wanted to be seated on Jesus' right and left hand of the throne.

The other disciples heard them ask for it and were angry because they wanted power and position.

Jesus washed their feet and modeled to them a good servant.

*It made no sense to them. None at all*



No matter how much time  
they spent with Jesus,  
God's sacrificial love was outside  
the realm of their thinking.

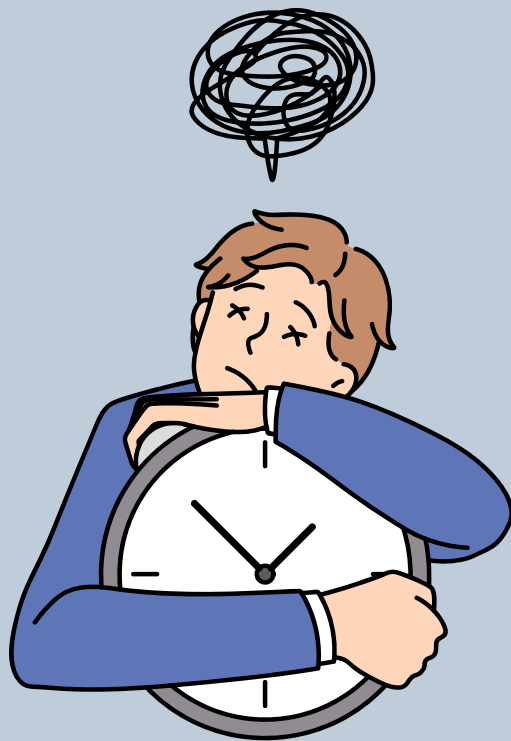
They never had encountered  
such a love and would not even  
allow Jesus to suggest it.

*Salvation was through  
power and power alone.*



The lyrics of the song,  
"What's love got to do with it?"  
would fit their thinking perfectly.





It took years for me to realize my faith was directly connected to how Good I believed God is.

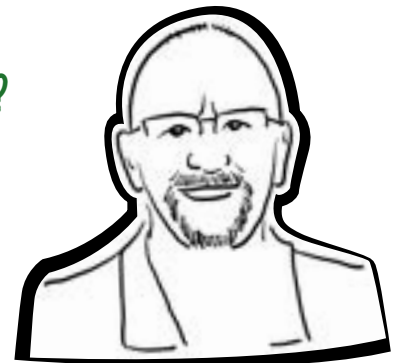
My mother was dying of cancer.  
She was only 57 and had so many years ahead of her.  
I was a missionary on the field and went home  
with my wife and 2-year-old son to be with her.

The last six weeks of her life tore my heart out

Could a God of love allow someone I love to suffer?

How can a Good God allow such suffering in people who Love Him?

If you have the power to stop suffering and  
don't, does that disqualify you from being Good?

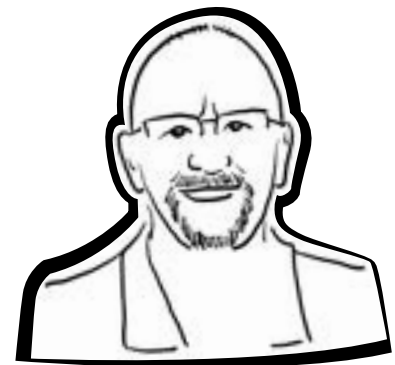




My emotions were raging,  
and my flesh desperately wanted to blame God.

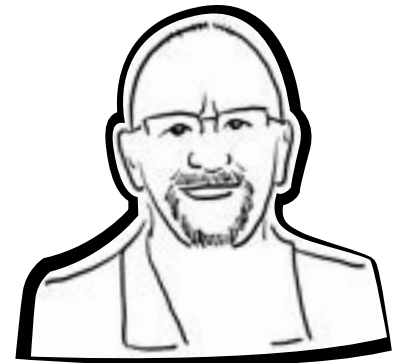
It was not an abstract theological argument

I had to decide as I watched her slowly die  
whether I would trust God  
when life happened in ways  
I didn't understand or agree with.



Was God big enough to  
take care of a premature child or  
my mother with cancer?

Was God good enough to  
care deeply about the  
pains of life and do something  
greater through it?



Those are hard questions.

# Seeds planted in my early years began to make sense.



I discovered my young fear  
was rooted in my need for reverence.  
Someone bigger than me  
that I could follow and  
be in AWE of.

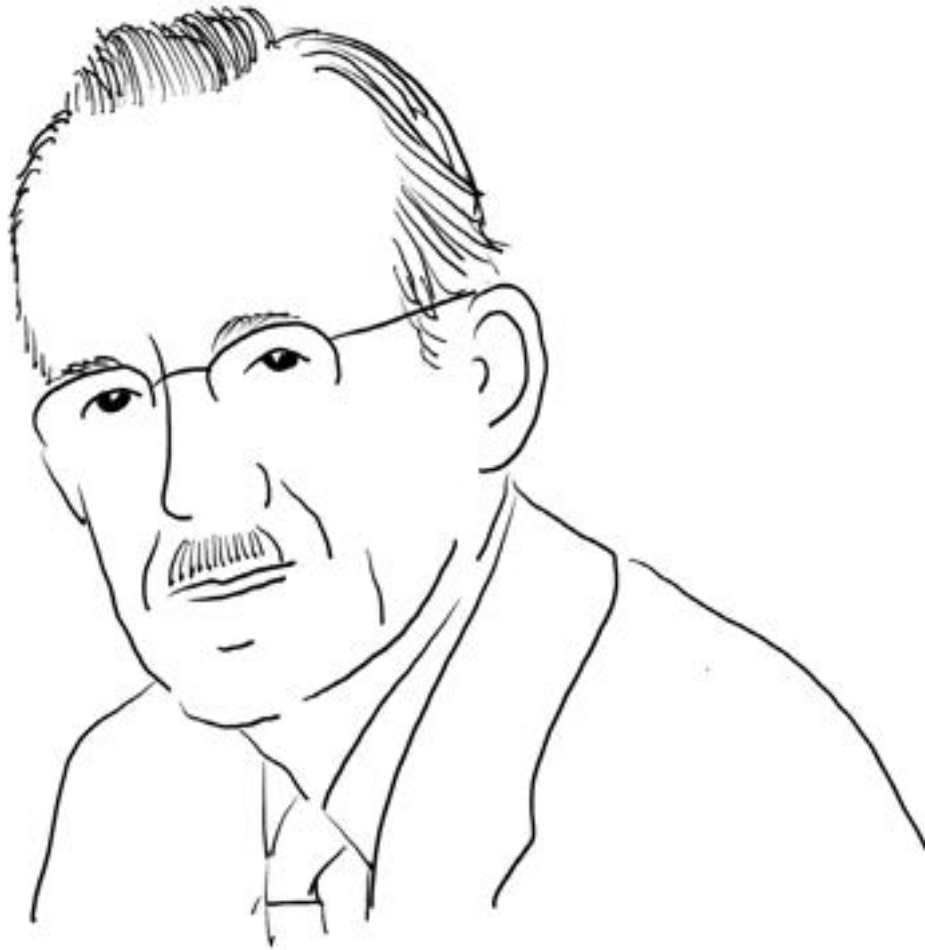
I discovered my young love  
(misunderstood as pleasure)  
was looking for intimacy and  
that was only to be found in  
an intimate relationship with God.

Truth has Two Wings

A. W. Tozer

is worth repeating...

You need revelation in  
BOTH aspects of who  
God is to have and grow  
a real living faith in Him.



The challenge is that they are in tension with each other.

If you have reverence or respect without intimacy, you end up with a faith full of fear. God becomes Frankenstein and you do what you are told... or else.

If you have intimacy without respect and awe, you end up with Santa Claus. We think He exists to meet our needs and give us gifts... right now.

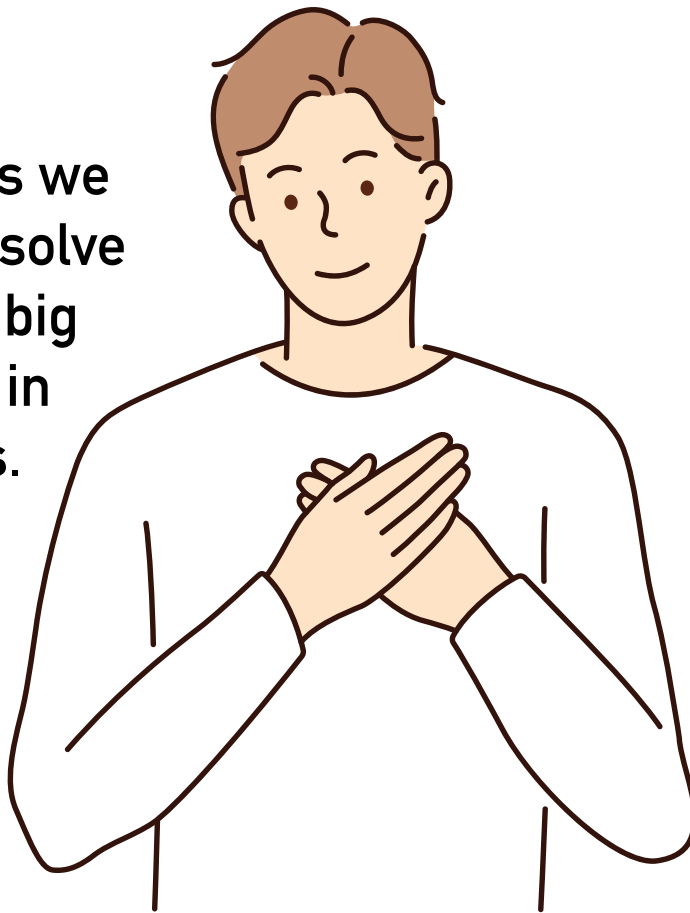




INTIMACY

RESPECT

God knows we  
need to resolve  
these two big  
questions in  
our hearts.



So,  
He  
answered  
them  
clearly.



A full-page background image showing a person's silhouette standing on a dark, rocky horizon, looking up at a vast night sky filled with stars and the Milky Way galaxy. The galaxy's bright, colorful band stretches diagonally across the frame. The text "Is God Big Enough?" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Is God Big Enough?

*God's primary answer is: "Look to the stars."*

## Isaiah 40:25-26

To whom then will you liken Me  
That I would be his equal?" says the Holy One.

Lift up your eyes on high

And see who has created these stars,

The One who leads forth their host by number,

He calls them all by name;


Because of the greatness of

His might and the strength of

His power,

Not one of them is missing.





He says He measures the heavens  
by the span of His hand.

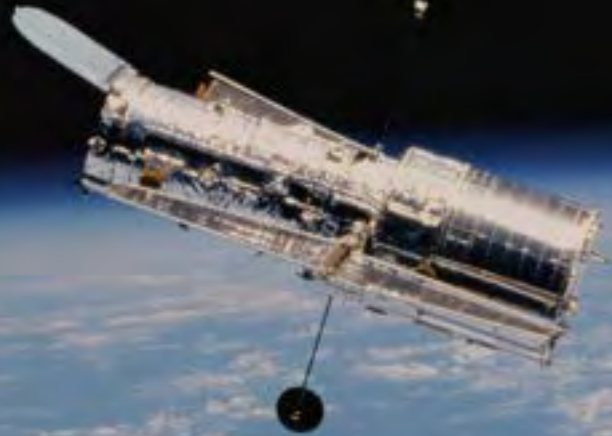
He makes it very clear that if we want to  
understand how Big He is,  
investigate creation.

The more we discover  
about its size and beauty,  
the more we will  
respect God who says  
He is far greater than  
the universe He created.

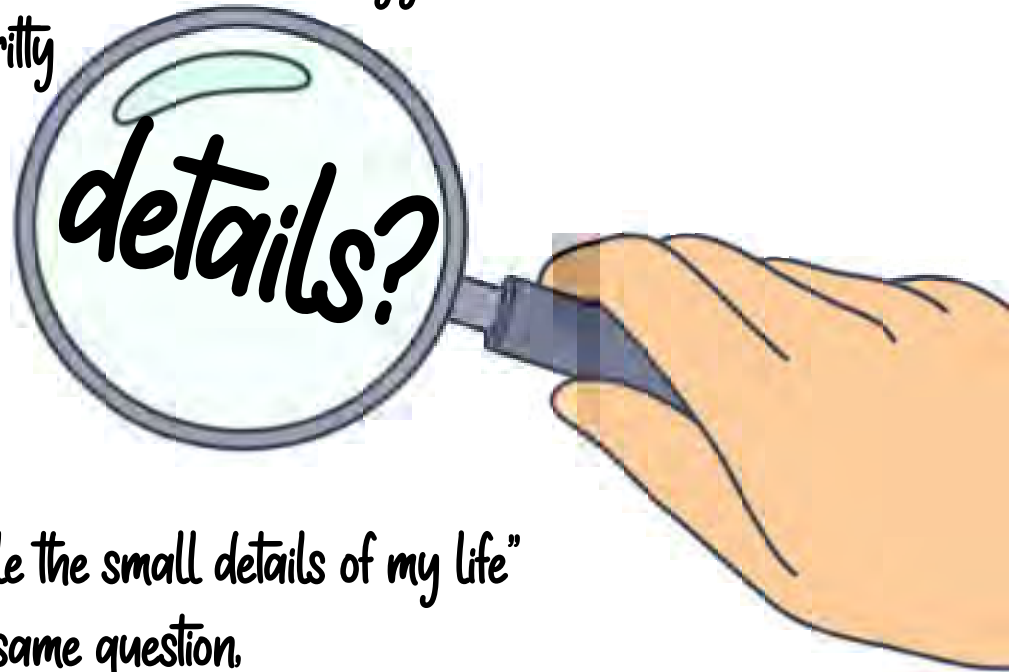
If you want to have some fun,  
look up the [Hubble Telescope](#)  
and explore the vastness  
of the universe by watching  
videos posted on its website.

Prepare to have your mind  
blown as our finite little mind  
cannot grasp the wonder of  
traveling at the speed of light  
(186,000 miles per second)  
for 13 billion years to reach  
the edge of what we can see.

His greatness is beyond our  
capacity to grasp, and we are  
left with our jaw dropping in  
absolute AWE.



When we see the vast universe,  
some will project onto God our own human struggle.  
What about all the nitty, gritty



Strangely, "can God handle the small details of my life"  
is just another form of the same question.  
Is God big enough (to handle the details)?



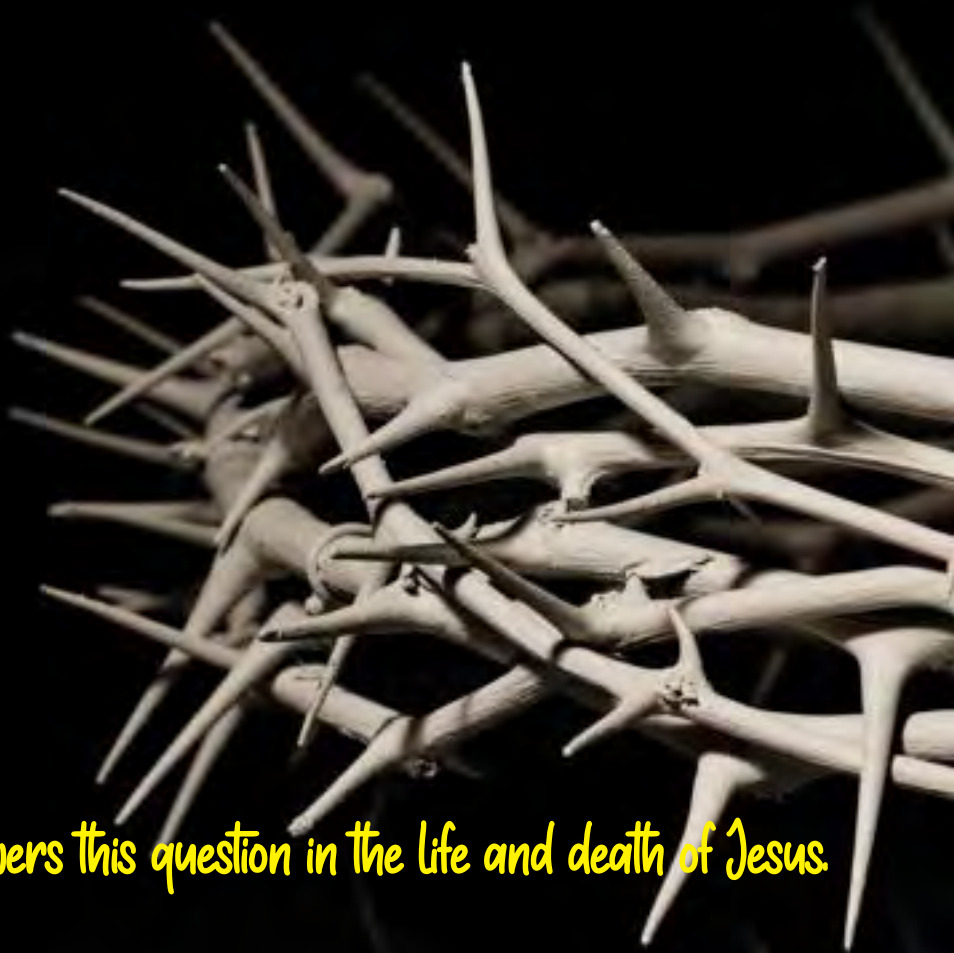
Is God Big Enough?

YES!



Is God Good Enough?

*God answers this question in the life and death of Jesus.*



## John 3:16

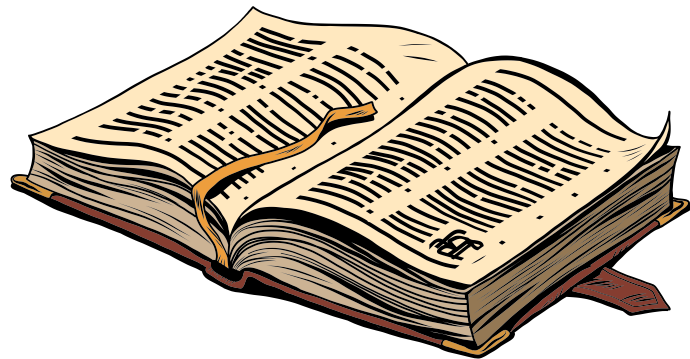
For God so loved the world,  
that He gave His only begotten Son,  
that whoever believes in Him  
shall not perish,  
but have eternal life.





## Romans 5:8

But **God demonstrates**  
**His own love toward us,**  
in that while we were yet sinners,  
Christ died for us.



He emptied Himself of power,  
came to earth in the form of a man.  
He died a horrible death on a cross by our hands.  
This exposed our hearts and revealed His.  
He was raised from the dead on the third day  
and now sits on a throne in heaven.

There is no greater love.

**NONE. NOWHERE.**



Is God Good?



If I am honest  
there are times I want Him to personalize it  
very specifically for my life as if He needs to  
**prove it to me.**

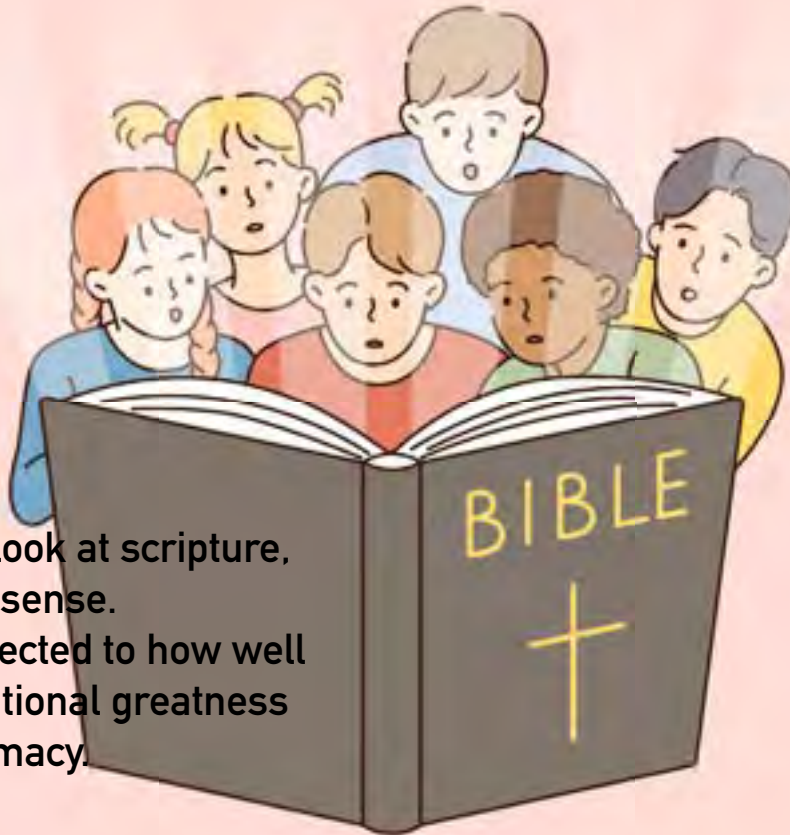
He has done great things in my life,  
but I can see that He never did it  
to prove anything more to me.





On a side note,  
I didn't get the new revelation of who He is  
until I lived out the revelation I already had.

Listening and living out the revelation  
made space for new revelation in me.



When I started to look at scripture,  
it started to make sense.  
My faith was connected to how well  
I lived out His positional greatness  
and relational intimacy.

Let's look at a few scriptures and see  
if you can start to see the two wings of truth  
God is revealing to us in them.

## Mark 12:29-31

Jesus answered,

“The foremost is, ‘Hear, O Israel!

**The Lord our God is one Lord;**

**and you shall love the Lord your God**

with all your heart, and with all your soul,

and with all your mind,

and with all your strength.’”

*One Lord - His nature and greatness.*

*Love - His character and relational intimacy.*

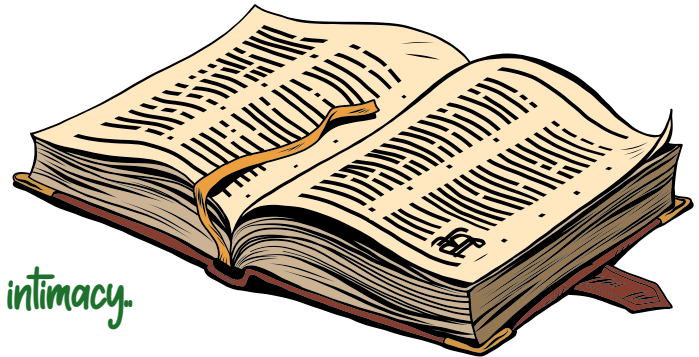


## Hebrews 11:6

And without faith  
it is impossible to please Him,  
for he who comes to God  
must believe that **He is**  
and that **He is a rewarder**  
of those who seek Him.

*He is - His nature and greatness.*

*Rewarder - He responds to us in relational intimacy.*





## Romans 1:20-21

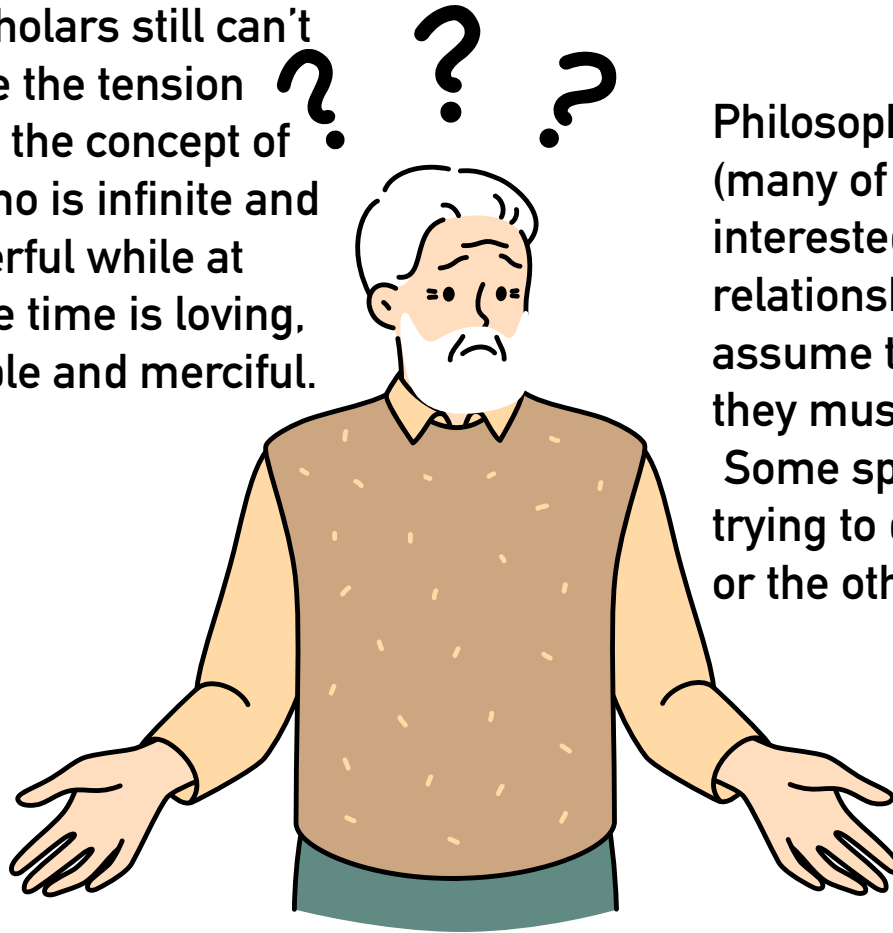
For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes,  
His eternal power and divine nature,  
have been clearly seen,  
being understood through what has been made,  
so that they are without excuse.  
For even though they knew God,  
**they did not honor Him as God or give thanks,**  
but they became futile in their speculations,  
and their foolish heart was darkened.



*See also: Hebrews 12:28-29 / Psalm 62:11 / Acts 9:31*

# Greatness and Goodness of God

Many scholars still can't reconcile the tension between the concept of a God who is infinite and all-powerful while at the same time is loving, vulnerable and merciful.



Philosophers/theologians (many of whom are not interested in personal relationship with God) assume this is a problem they must solve.

Some spend their life trying to defend one side or the other.

If you want to dissect these two beautiful mysteries,  
you can build a case for your view from the Bible.  
The frustrating part is that you will find  
ample evidence for either side in God's word.

Scriptures on the greatness  
or Sovereignty of God are all over the place.  
So are ones about the vulnerable love of God.

It is not a problem we can solve,  
but a dilemma we embrace and carry.  
Yes, tension is at the heart of it.  
However, this should not surprise us  
as even the description of God has tension in it.  
Is He three or one?

God doesn't  
want to be  
solved.



He wants to  
be respected  
and loved.



**Some key points to remember:**

**Are you drawn to Sovereign acts of power?**

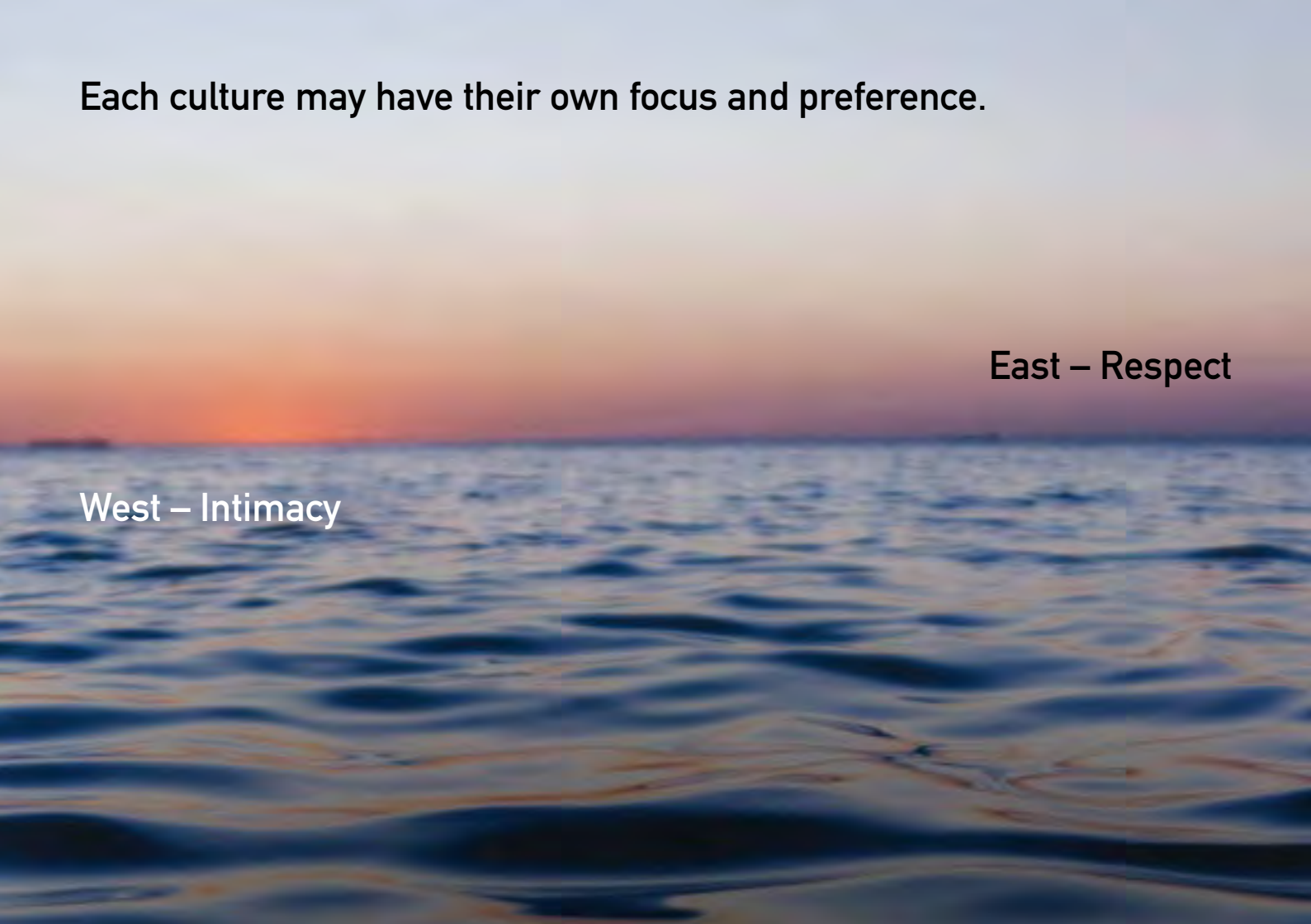
**Or are you one who loves intimacy with Abba Father?**

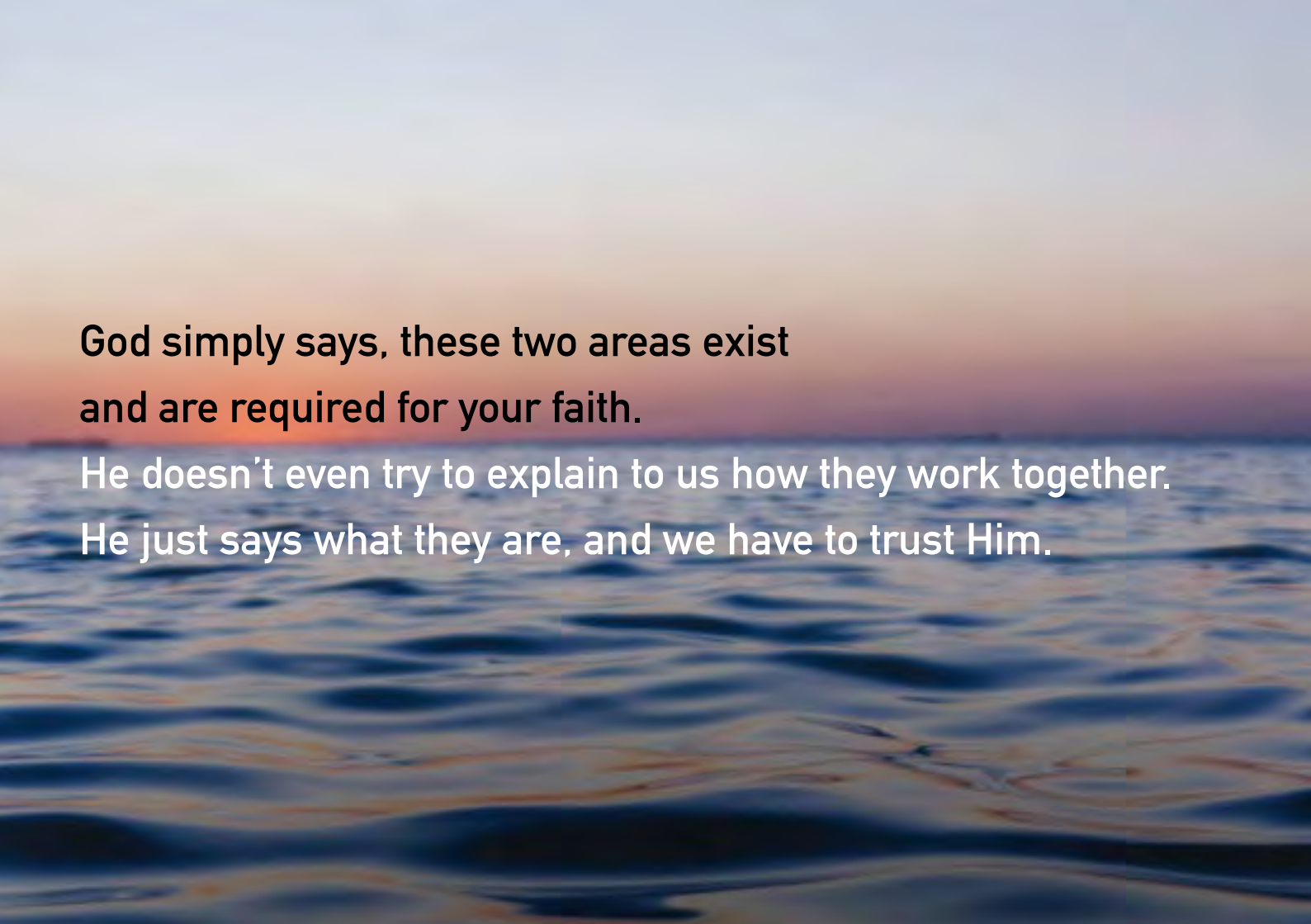
**At different times and seasons of your life,  
you will need to lessen your focus on one  
and submerge yourself in the other.**

Each culture may have their own focus and preference.

East – Respect

West – Intimacy





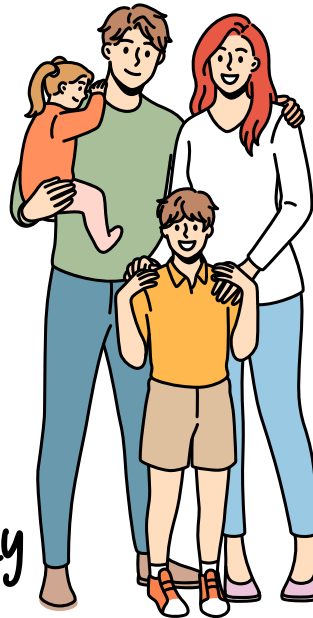
God simply says, these two areas exist  
and are required for your faith.

He doesn't even try to explain to us how they work together.  
He just says what they are, and we have to trust Him.



God thought these two areas so important  
He built it into the very fabric of the family  
so that a child could experience them in the  
reality of growing up.

Husbands –  
love your wife.  
Model sacrificial  
intimacy to  
your children.



Wives –  
respect your  
husband.  
Model respect  
to your children.

Both are needed for a family to work together.



The lie of Satan was  
to confuse these two areas.  
He told Eve she could be  
like God in her nature.

Let's be clear, we are not  
and never will be anything  
like God in our nature.  
We are called to be  
like God in our character.

To have FAITH in God -  
Is to **KNOW** He is **Big Enough**  
and **Good** to all.



To Trust Him in every situation,  
challenge and relationship  
**KNOWING** that He who began a  
good work in me (and you) will  
perfect it in Christ Jesus.



Please come and check it out and hang out with us.

Online Marketplace training: [www.matthewrawlins.com](http://www.matthewrawlins.com) (It's on Thinkific)

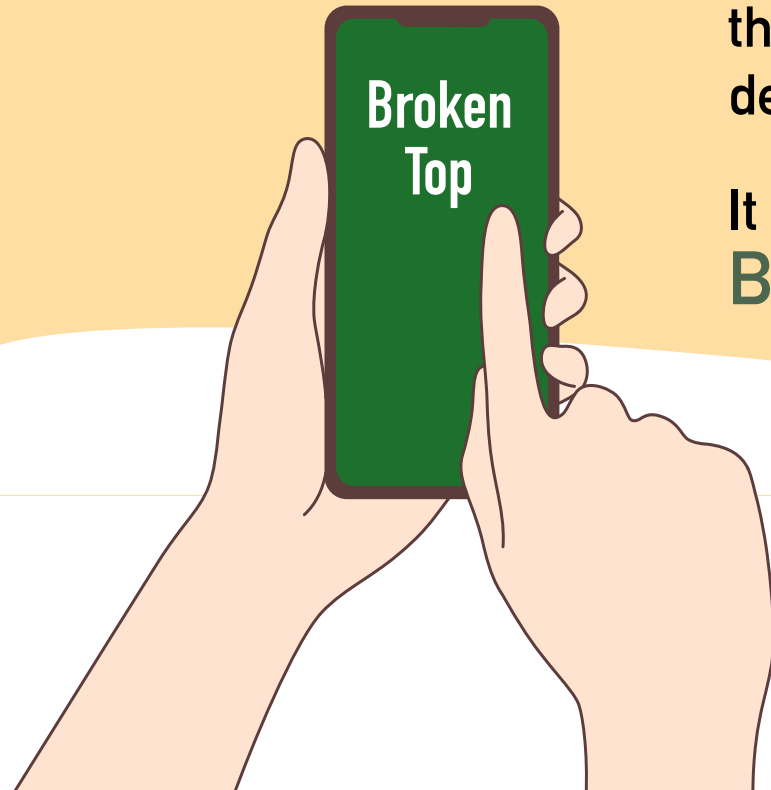
Ministry: [www.brokentopleadership.com](http://www.brokentopleadership.com)

Marketplace work: [www.thegreenbench.com](http://www.thegreenbench.com)

email: [mrawlins@mac.com](mailto:mrawlins@mac.com)

Devotions for  
your mobile phone.  
It has daily devotions  
that will help you go  
deeper with God.

It is called:  
**Broken Top**



[Click here to download](#)

## **Other books I wrote to help Christians deepen their relationship with God.**

### **Rediscovering Reverence**

The path to intimacy

### **The Question**

Is God good to all?

### **The Namer**

How do I find my true identity?

### **Emails from Hell**

Evil schemes to undermine a leader

### **Walked Naked into the Land of Uncertainty**

5 keys for leadership into the unknown

### **Guardian**

A journey to the heart

### **Humility**

### **Emails from Heaven**

An angels advice to his young apprentice.

### **The Long Sacred Journey:**

#### **Volume One**

Reflections along the way

**These are some I wrote to help leaders in the business world.**

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How do you prepare yourself for the unknown?

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