

## READING AND DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR

# *The Knowledge of the Holy*

by  
A. W. Tozer

1. *The Knowledge of the Holy* was written in 1961, yet A. W. Tozer's preface rings true more than fifty years later. What would Tozer think of Christian culture today and our view of God? How have things changed since this book was written? Has there been "further loss of religious awe and consciousness of the divine Presence" (p. vii)? Or is the church getting back on track?
2. "Always the most revealing thing about the Church is her idea of God, just as her most significant message is what she says about Him or leaves unsaid, for her silence is often more eloquent than her speech" (p. 1). Is the church being silent today on topics on which you feel it should speak up? What does that silence say about what we truly believe about God?

3. “The essence of idolatry is the entertainment of thoughts about God that are unworthy of Him” (p. 3). Is this your understanding of idolatry? How do you determine whether thoughts are unworthy of God?
4. Though God is incomprehensible, we can return to a proper understanding of him by focusing on his attributes, or “names given to whatever we know to be true of the Godhead” (p. 78). This book, then, is an examination of the attributes of God. Which attributes do you find most familiar? Which are regularly discussed in your community? Which attributes do you tend to ignore and need to focus on?
5. How do we fall into the habit of reducing God to “manageable terms” (p. 8)? How can we keep that from happening?
6. Tozer says that God has provided answers to our questions through three sources: nature, scripture, and the person of his son (p. 13). Which of these do you have the most access to? How might you build up your spiritual practice to find him more deeply in the other places?
7. Have you ever considered the concept of everlastingness as “necessary to give any meaning to any Christian doctrine” (p. 39)? Why is this attribute of God so important?
8. In the chapter on the self-sufficiency of God, Tozer tells us, “God does not need our help” (p. 34). Do you sometimes consider yourself to be God’s worker bee?

How can that diminish our view of God as we try to serve him?

9. When Tozer writes about God's immutability, or inability to change, he reflects beautifully on the peace that this constancy brings to the Christian's heart. And yet man's ability to change is key to our salvation. How is it that change can be a gift for us and yet not an attribute that God can possess?
10. When discussing God's omniscience, Tozer says, "He is never surprised" (p. 56). What does this phrase evoke for you? Are you relieved? Scared? Frustrated?
11. Tozer urges us to trust in God's wisdom and fully turn over our lives to his constant guidance. Do you tend to struggle along on your own, forgetting to turn to God? How might reflection on this attribute help you let go and learn to follow?
12. While discussing God's transcendence, Tozer encourages us to remember what it is to fear God—to be completely humbled, to feel "a nonrational dread, an acute feeling of personal insufficiency in the presence of God the Almighty" (p. 71). This concept has all but disappeared in the current Christian climate. How should terror, dread, and dismay play a role in your spiritual life? When is the last time you felt such emotions when thinking about God?
13. God's omnipresence imparts great value to our lives and provides comfort in difficult times. What does it

mean to you that God is everywhere? When have you felt his presence when you were least expecting it?

14. “The greatness of God rouses fear within us, but His goodness encourages us not to be afraid of Him. To fear and not be afraid—that is the paradox of faith” (p. 84). After encouraging us to learn to fear God in chapter 13, in chapter 16 Tozer focuses on God’s goodness. There we learn to not be afraid, but to approach God with penitence and humility. Why are both necessary in the Christian life?
15. Why must God be just in order for God to be good?
16. Tozer waits to discuss the love of God until the end of the book. He worries that we have overemphasized John’s statement that “God is Love” and forgotten the rest of God’s attributes. How could focusing on God’s love as his sole attribute distort the gospel? Alternatively, what do we gain by considering all his attributes together?
17. Tozer’s goal in this book can be summed up by his exhortation to “acquaint thyself with God” (p. 114). In his concluding chapter, he provides six steps we must take. Which step do you struggle with the most? How can you commit yourself to this undertaking?