

THE SEVEN MAIN ASPECTS OF GOD by Emmett Fox

Have you ever asked yourself the question: What is God like? We are told to pray by turning away from the problems and thinking about God; but how are we to think about God? What is his nature? What is his character? Where is He? Can we really contact Him, and if so, how?

The first and most fundamental thing to realize is that God is not just a superior kind of man. The Bible says that God is spirit and that they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. To worship Him in spirit means to get a spiritual understanding of his nature. To define God would be to limit Him, but we can get an excellent working knowledge of God by considering different aspects of His nature. Of these there are seven main aspects more important than the others. These are seven fundamental truths about God, truths which never change. Thinking of any aspect of God will solve a problem in time, but if you select the right aspect you will get your results more quickly and more easily.

For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead... (Romans 1:20).

GOD is LIFE

The first main aspect of God is Life. God is not just living, nor does God give life, but God is Life. Where God is, there Life is.

When you are sick you are only partly alive. When you are tired or depressed or discouraged, you are only partly alive. Few people express God in an adequate way because they lack the sense of life.

Joy is one of the highest expressions of God as Life. Actually it is a mixture of Life and Love, and the Bible says, "The sons of God shout of joy". When we realize our divine sonship, we must experience joy. Joy always has an expansive effect, just as fear has a contracting effect. When a person says, "I can't", there is a retraction. You could not imagine a person saying, "Yes, I can", with a shrinking gesture, or "No, I can't", in an optimistic or forthright way. The body always expresses the thought: and the thought of Life heals and inspires, whereas thoughts of fear and death contract and destroy.

Realizing divine Life heals the sick. Animals usually respond quickly, and the plants very quickly indeed, because they do not have that strong sense of personal egotism that most human beings do. They never make up their minds that they cannot get well or that "sickness is sent for a good purpose". Neither do they give away to discouragement because they have not been healed faster.

For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight Wisdom, and Knowledge, and Joy (Ecclesiastes 2:26).

GOD is TRUTH

The second main aspect of God is Truth. God is not truthful but Truth itself, and wherever there is Truth, there is God. There are many things which are relatively true at certain times and places only, but God is absolute Truth at all times and in all circumstances. As soon as we touch God, who is Absolute, relative things disappear.

To know the truth about any condition heals it. Jesus said, "*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*" (John 8:32).

You should realize God as Truth when you want information on any subject, or if you suspect that you have to deal with deceit. If you believe that someone is trying to deceive you, claim that divine Truth dwells in the person concerned, and is expressed through him. If you realize this clearly enough he will then speak the truth. When you have to transact any important business such as signing a lease or a contract, spend a few minutes realizing divine Truth and if there is anything you should know, it will come out. Of course, people may not have any desire to deceive you and yet for some reason you may not be given the whole story. I know of several cases where serious misunderstandings were prevented because somebody realized God as Truth and so all the facts were brought out. I know also of cases where intentional dishonesty was frustrated in the same way.

GOD is LOVE

The third main aspect of God is Love. God is not loving but Love itself, and it would probably be true to say that of all of the seven main aspects, this is the most important one for us to practice. There is no condition that enough Love will not heal. The Bible deals with the nature of God, and as the Scripture develops, the idea of God becomes clearer until toward the end it says,

...God is Love: and he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God and God in him (I John 4:16).

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another (John 13:35).

Where there is fear there cannot be love. The best way to rid yourself of fear is to realize divine Love. If you love God more than you love your microbe, your sickness, your grievance, your lack, or your fear, you will be healed. We have all heard many stories of exceptional people who were able to go among wild beasts in the jungle without being hurt, and there are many other histories on record of people who passed through extraordinary dangers of other kinds quite unscathed. To realize God as Love is the remedy for fear.

Divine Love never fails, but the important thing to realize is that divine Love must be in your own heart and cannot operate from outside, so to speak. When your prayers are not answered it must be because you have not fulfilled the conditions of the law times in a hundred, it is because you are lacking in a sense of love for all. Practice love every day and watch your thoughts, and watch your tongue, and watch your deeds, that nothing contrary to love finds expression there.

GOD is INTELLIGENCE

The fourth main aspect of God is Intelligence. When you clearly realize that this is an intelligent universe it will make a major difference in your life. In an intelligent universe there cannot be disharmony because all ideas must work together for the common good. Neither can there be any lack. An engine which has been intelligently designed does not have any unnecessary parts and neither are any essential parts lacking.

It is especially important to realize that God is Intelligence because it sometimes happens that when people outgrow the childish idea that God is just a magnified man, they go to the opposite extreme and think of God as a blind force, like gravity or electricity. This means that they have lost all sense of the Love and Fatherhood of God, and such an idea is very little better than a subtle form of atheism.

God is not a person in the usual sense of the word, but God has every quality of personality except its limitation. The Human mind cannot imagine personality which is not limited, but this difficulty arises from the limitations of the human mind itself, and, of course, this does not affect the nature of God. The Bible says, in effect, whatever you think I am, that I will be to you: and this means that if we attribute to God every quality

of an infinite, intelligent, loving personality, God will be just that to us. So we may say that we believe in a personal God.

Children and young people respond very readily indeed to a prayer for expression of Intelligence through them. If you are interested in a young person at college, pray several times a week that Intelligence will manifest through him and you will be surprised to find how his progress in his studies will increase. Remember also the wonderful fact that when you work for a person the result will be with him for the rest of this life.

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!

GOD is SOUL

The fifth main aspect of God is Soul. Soul is that aspect of God by virtue of which He is able to individualize Himself. The word, "individual" means undivided. Most people seem to think it suggests separateness but actually individual means undivided, and God has the power of individualizing Himself without, so to speak, breaking Himself into parts.

You are really an individualization of God. Only God can individualize Himself in an infinite number of units of consciousness, and yet not be in any way separate, because God is spirit. Matter cannot be individualized. It can only be divided. So your real self, the Christ within, the spiritual man, the I Am, or the divine spark, as it is variously called, is an individualization of God. You are the presence of God at the point where you are.

Man may very well be compared to an electric light bulb. The electric current is present in all parts of the circuit, but it shines forth, or one might say, figuratively, becomes self-conscious, in the bulb. So divine Mind becomes self-conscious in you.

Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? (John 10:34).

When you are called upon to perform some task or undertake some responsibility that seems too great for you, realize that you are one with God and the task will become "our business" instead of "my business".

GOD is SPIRIT

The sixth main aspect of God is Spirit. We know that God is Spirit but what does that mean? Spirit is that which cannot be destroyed or damaged. It is the opposite of matter. Matter wears out, but Spirit does not because Spirit is substance. Herbert Spencer defines substance as that which is not subject to discord or decay. Webster says, "That which underlies all outward manifestation....real, unchanging essence or nature....that in which qualities in here....that which constitute anything what it is". All this can only apply to spiritual things.

God is a Spirit: An they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

You are Spirit. Spirit cannot die and was never born. Your true self was never born and will never die. You are eternal, divine, unchanging Spirit, in your true nature. The whole universe is a spiritual creation but we see it in a limited way. You have sometimes seen a window made of fluted glass, and you know that if you look at the street through this window everything will be distorted. Nevertheless, you know that the distortion arises from your seeing wrongly. Our false vision causes us to know ourselves only from a seeming birth to a seeming death: But this is illusion too. This distorted vision of Spirit is really what we know

as “matter”. Eucken says, “Reality is an independent spiritual world, unconditioned by the apparent world of sense”—and this is substance.

GOD is PRINCIPLE

The seventh main aspect of God is Principle, and this is probably the one that is least understood. What does the word “principle” mean?

Consider a few generally accepted principles. “Water seeks its own level”. This is a principle. It is not only the course taken by a particular drop of water in a particular locality. It is true of all water everywhere. “The angles of any triangle always add up to 180 degrees”. It makes no matter what kind of triangle one may consider: as long as it is a triangle, this principle holds. These principles were true a billion years ago and they will be true a billion years hence.

Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

Prayer is answered because God is principle, eternally manifest in the same way. When we pray rightly we bring ourselves into harmony with His law of Being. Prayer does not ask God to change the laws for our temporary convenience, but it tunes us in, so to speak, with divine Principle: If God were to make exceptions because we were in great difficulties, (which, because of His nature, He could never do) we should never know where we stood. If the law of gravity were occasionally suspended without notice, say, because a very important man had fallen off a roof, you know what would happen to the world.

Each of the seven main aspects is a distinct quality like the elements in chemistry. A chemical element, as you know, is just itself and nothing else. Oxygen is an element because there is nothing in it but oxygen. Water on the other hand is a compound, a combination of hydrogen and oxygen. There are many attributes of God, such as Wisdom, for example, is the perfect balance of Intelligence and Love.

Beauty is the perfect balance of Life, Truth and Love. In any true work of art, you will find that these three aspects are balanced. There are many such relationships and interdependencies — “Thou canst not pluck a flower without the trembling of a star”.

...from Emmett Fox, “The Seven Main Aspects of God”