

ELBOW TO ELBOW

BOOK 1



Introductory Note

Elbow to Elbow is CLC's relational discipleship experience specifically geared toward young adult men in their 20s and 30s.

In the Great Commission in Matthew 28, Jesus instructs his disciples both then and now to be tenacious about investing in the lives of the next generation. Though there are many platforms for learning and education available to us today, as one of my mentors said: "When the goal of our teaching is life transformation and obedience to Christ, there is no substitute for elbow-to-elbow, kneecap-to-kneecap, life-on-life discipleship."

Elbow to Elbow equips men to lead from a Christ-centered foundation in their homes, churches, communities, and the marketplace. Groups consist of 1 mentor and 3-5 participants and meet weekly for one year.

Christian Leadership Concepts (CLC) was founded in 1982 by Dr. Hal Hadden. Since then, CLC has influenced over 10,000 men in 25 states, 157 cities, and Canada (Alberta and British Columbia). It is our privilege to continue this legacy by offering discipleship groups specifically geared toward young adult men.

Book 1 Overview

Getting to Know Each Other (2 Weeks)

Fence Post (Life) Stories

Spiritual Life (9 Weeks)

Thinking Rightly About God

Living by Grace Part 1: Never Beyond God's Grace

Living by Grace Part 2: Grace Producing Contentment

Living by Grace Part 3: Grace Producing Holiness

The Great Battle: The Spirit vs. the Flesh

Sexual Wholeness

Prayer

The Will of God

Christ-Centered Bible Study

Appendix

Group Discussion Guidelines

The Knowledge of the Holy by A.W. Tozer, Preface and Chapter 1

Excerpt on the Holy Spirit from ESV Study Bible

Christian Beliefs by Wayne Grudem, Chapter 5

A Praying Life by Paul Miller, Chapter 3

"The Will of God: Being Faithful in the Present Moment" by Lloyd Shadrach

"Hearing the Music of the Gospel" by Keith Johnson

Book to Purchase

Transforming Grace by Jerry Bridges (Spiritual Life weeks 2-4)

Book 2 Overview

Overview of the Bible (Weeks 12-18)

What is a Covenant?

Adam: The Fall and Promise of Redemption

Noah: The Context of Redemption

Abraham: A Family of Redemption

Moses: A Nation of Redemption

David: A Kingdom of Redemption

Christ: A King of Redemption

Biblical Manhood (Weeks 19-21)

Men Being Men

Dependence on God: William Wilberforce

Wholehearted Discipleship: Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Book 2 Outside Reading (Weeks 19-21)

7 Men by Eric Metaxas

Book 3 Overview

Dating and Marriage (Weeks 22-25)

Singleness and Dating

Marriage as Covenant

Leadership in Dating and Marriage

Growing Your Family: What You Might Not Hear Anywhere Else

Faith and Work (Weeks 26-28)

The Marketplace: God's Front Line of Ministry

Giving up Power

Work and Rest

What is the Church? (Weeks 29-30)

The Local Church: Participation and Service

The Local Church: Leadership and Shepherding

Investing in Your Community (Week 31)

Group Service Project

Finances (Weeks 32-33)

Giving

Saving and Living

Book 3 Outside Reading

The Meaning of Marriage by Tim Keller (Dating and Marriage)

Book 4 Overview

Apologetics and Evangelism (Weeks 34-35)

Apologetic Methods and Asking Good Questions

The Problem of Evil and Initiating Spiritual Conversations

Christian Ethics (Weeks 36-38)

Introduction to Ethics/The 6th Commandment: Good Beginnings and Endings

The 7th Commandment: Good Relationships

The 5th, 8th, and 9th Commandments: Pursuing the Good of Others

How to Study the Bible (Weeks 39-45)

2 Timothy 1:1-7

2 Timothy 1:8-22

2 Timothy 2:1-13

2 Timothy 2:14-26

2 Timothy 3:1-9

2 Timothy 3:10-17

2 Timothy 4

Book 4 Outside Reading

Questioning Evangelism by Randy Newman

The NIV Application Commentary: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus by Walter Liefeld

(How to Study the Bible)

SPIRITUAL LIFE: WEEK 1

Thinking Rightly About God

*“What comes into our minds when we think about God
is the most important thing about us.”*

-A.W. Tozer²

“We fear men so much, because we fear God so little. One fear cures another...”

-GK Chesterton

INTRODUCTION

Who is God? The Bible describes God as one whose greatness is beyond understanding (Job 36:26), and one in whom no one can compare (Isaiah 40:18). Though no human definition of God is completely adequate, perhaps the most clear and concise definition available to us states: “God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.”

Though God is distinct from His creation, He has revealed Himself to us in two ways. First, we have the category of “general revelation,” which enables people to know that God exists and reveals something about His character. Included in the category of general revelation are the created order of nature, the human conscience, God’s care for what He has created, and a human’s innate sense of God. The second category is that of “special revelation,” which enables people to enter into a personal relationship with God. In special revelation, God reveals Himself in and through historical acts, dreams and visions, the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and Scripture.

Though our finite minds cannot comprehend the infinite, the study of God, if pursued with humility and fervor, will enrich our minds, transform our hearts, and make a practical difference in our lives. In 1961, A.W. Tozer penned a classic Christian book called *The Knowledge of the Holy*. In this work, Tozer begins with an indictment of the church in his day due to its erroneous and inadequate view of God, and states that any change in behavior or lifestyle must begin with addressing our wrong beliefs about God. After describing the church in his day, Tozer then goes on to discuss the attributes that make God worthy of our reverence, affection, and devotion.

WARM-UP

Note to Facilitator: As you begin meeting weekly for group discussion, it’s important to consider the components of a healthy group. If you have yet to read the “Group Discussion Guidelines,” please do so before the first group meeting. These can be found on p. 77 in the Appendix. In addition, please read through the discussion guidelines at the beginning of your meeting this week.

Can you describe a moment when you were in awe? What was the situation and what provoked such feelings?

TRANSITION

Though we tend to experience God's greatness in extraordinary moments or through nature, He has given us his Word in order that we might be struck by His glory and live in awe and wonder of Him on a daily basis. Let's jump into our study of the attributes of God.

DAY 1

We will begin our study this week by learning about the attributes that are unique to God. Read the following Bible passages and write down a brief thought or reflection about each in the margin:

Independence:

Genesis 1:1

Acts 17:24-25

Unchangeableness (Immutability):

Psalms 102:25-27

Malachi 3:6

Eternity:

Psalms 90:1-2

Revelation 1:8

Omnipotence:

Jeremiah 32:17

Omnipresence:

Jeremiah 23:23-24

1 Kings 8:27

Omniscience:

Psalms 147:5

Answer the following reflection question based on today's Bible study:

What was the most meaningful thing you learned about the attributes that are unique to God?

DAY 2

Today, we will continue our study by learning about the attributes that belong to God yet are shared with humans to a certain degree. Read the following Bible passages and write down a brief thought or reflection about each in the margin:

Wisdom and Knowledge:

Romans 11:33-36

Truthfulness and Faithfulness:

Proverbs 30:5

Titus 1:2

Love:

1 John 4:8

Righteousness/Justice:

Deuteronomy 30:4

Jealousy:

2 Corinthians 11:2

Wrath:

Exodus 32:9-10

Romans 5:9

2 Peter 3:9

Answer the following reflection question based on today's Bible study:

What was the most meaningful thing you learned about the attributes that God shares with humans to a certain degree?

DAY 3

Read *The Knowledge of the Holy* by A.W. Tozer, Preface and Chapter 1 (pp. 79-84) and answer the following two-part reflection question:

Based on your background and current life experience, what insights did you gain from the reading? What stood out and what questions did it raise?

DAY 4

Answer the following reflection questions based on *The Knowledge of the Holy*:

Tozer states his thesis in the first sentence of Chapter 1one: "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us." What is your response to this statement?

Tozer wrote *The Knowledge of the Holy* in the early 1960s. How does our modern culture's view of God compare with the culture that Tozer describes?

How has your view of God been affected by the culture around you?

Tozer closes Chapter 1 with a plea for the church:

“The heaviest obligation lying upon the Christian church today is to purify and elevate our concept of God until it is once more worthy of Him – and of her (the church). In all her prayers and labors this should have first place.”

Imagine if God empowered you to think about Him in the way Tozer describes. If this were to happen, what difference would it make in your heart and life?

Note to Facilitator: Another way to foster discussion with your group is to reference their answer to the warm-up question about a time when they were in awe. Then, ask them about their perspective on their problems at the time. When we are on top of a mountain or listening to ocean waves crash, though our problems are still present and real, they often seem much smaller when we behold the face of something great or majestic. The good news about the Christian life is that we do not have to be on top of a mountain or watching ocean waves crash to think rightly about God. He has given us his Word, which enables us to live with a sense of awe and wonder each day, and thus view our daily challenges with the proper perspective.

Closing Thought

Take a moment to close in prayer by:

Choosing one attribute that is unique to God and praising Him for it

Choosing one attribute of God that can be reflected in humans and praising Him for it

Asking God to purify and elevate your concept of Him