

## HOW BIG IS GOD?

**Jeremiah 32:16-27**

**Matthew 19:26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.**

**Mark 10:27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.**

**Luke 1:37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.**

Just about as soon as children are old enough to talk, their parents start asking them this question: “How big are you Johnny?” Little Johnnie will think a minute, spread his arms out as wide as he can and answer, “I’m sooooooo big!” Good parents will teach this to their children because they know that the way children think of themselves matters. We don’t want them to think of themselves as small, weak and lacking adequate strength to handle the challenges of life.

At times I wonder how big we think God is. Do we think God is sooooooo big? I believe that the way we live is a consequence of the size of God...in our mind. The problem too many Christians have is that their God is too small in their mind’s eye. They are not convinced that they are absolutely safe in the hands of a fully competent, all-knowing-ever present really really big God.

When we wake up in the morning, what happens if we live with a small God?

We live in a constant state of fear and anxiety because everything depends on us. Our mood will be governed by our circumstances. We will live in a universe that leaves us deeply vulnerable. If we don’t live in the security of a big God’s acceptance, we become slaves to what others think of us. We may try to get credit for something at work that does not belong to us because we don’t trust in a Big God who sees in secret and will one day reward openly.

If somebody gets mad at us or disapproves, we will get all twisted up in knots – we will not have the security of knowing that a giant God is watching out for us.

When human beings shrink God, they offer prayers without faith, they work without passion, serve without joy, and suffer without hope. It results in fear, retreat, loss of vision and failure to persevere.

So, how big is your God?

Most people know the universe is "vast," but until we visualize it, we shortchange ourselves of some healthy awe. The heavens glorify God, but should also humble us—as should become apparent in the following mental journey.

Recently, the New Horizons spacecraft blasted off on a ten-year express flight to Pluto. (A manned flight to Pluto, at the maximum speed of the Apollo astronauts, would take about 17 years.) Since Mars (1/26 the distance to Pluto) seems at the limit of our reach, human travel to the stars beyond must remain a dream for now. But Pluto is very near compared to the stars; if the Sun-Pluto distance were represented by a one-foot ruler, the nearest star would be over a mile away.

Movies mislead us with their talk of warp speeds; real interstellar travel is limited by the speed of light—186,282 miles *per second*. In our imagination (and ignoring relativistic effects) let's aim for the nearest star at light speed. First, we would be disappointed at how slowly the scenery changes. Only after 4.3 years would Alpha Centauri appear larger than a pinpoint of light. Star-hopping within our galaxy, we would be amazed at how much is empty space.

Turning up out of the plane of the Milky Way, it would take 100,000 years for the full spiral of our galaxy to become visible. Though stars at our sun's radius orbit the center at nearly 500,000 mph, the galaxy would appear motionless. A whole human lifetime would pass with no apparent change except for the rare supernova. As for the earth—if the galaxy were represented as the size of North America, our entire solar system would fit in a coffee cup somewhere in Idaho.

Astronomers estimate that there are as many galaxies outside the Milky Way as there are stars in it. The Hubble Ultra Deep Field, taken in 2004, imaged 10,000 galaxies in a cone of space so slim you could cover it with a grain of sand held at arm's length. Integrated over the entire sky, that would mean there are more than 100 billion galaxies in the visible universe, many with more than 100 billion stars each. According to Psalm 147:4, God calls them all by name. **Psalms 147:4 He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.**

Contemplating such things is humbling, but also raises questions. Can a God of such a vast domain really care about us? It's important to understand the Biblical doctrine of omnipresence in answering this question. Learning that God is everywhere does not mean that part of Him is here, part there, and part in a distant galaxy, as if His love were spread thinly across all of space. No; omnipresence means that *all of God* is present at every place, at the same time.

This means that no matter how large the universe, and how many beings reside within His kingdom, each of us can have His full and undivided attention in our own hearts. As the country song insightfully claims, "How big is God? He's big enough to rule His mighty universe, yet small enough to live within my heart."

So, how big is **your** God? Is He big enough to keep your salvation? Or do you have a smaller God that causes you to doubt it from time to time? Is your God big enough to supply your every need? Or do you worry and fret about your day to day needs? Is your God big enough to protect you and your family from the perils of today's living? Or do you constantly fear for your safety and your families?

When a person wants to be stronger physically, they begin an exercise regimen. They lift weights or ride a bike or use a treadmill. Maybe join a health club. Then they have to be faithful to that program to build big muscles. And so it is with having a Big God. You have to exercise, but this exercise does not take place in a weight room, on a bike or on a treadmill. No, it happens like this....

Look at what Paul said to his preacher boy Timothy:

1 Timothy 4:7-8 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

“Timothy .. you want to have a big relationship with a big God? Exercise yourself unto Godliness. Exercise your relationship with God. And why?

1 Timothy 4:10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

Young David had a big God. We know the story. Puny, ruddy shepherd boy defies the big mouth champion of the Philistine army. Even King Saul was afraid to go against this Giant of a man who stood about 10 feet tall. Listen to this exchange between young David and the King of Israel:

1 Samuel 17:33-37 And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. (Saul had a very small God) And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, The “Really big God” that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. (what David was saying was “I have a God that is sooooo big!) And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee. David had no doubt about that.

Three Hebrew boys had a big God. When the king demanded they bow down and worship his image, they stood firm and said they would worship no other gods. Ol King Nebuchadnezzar had a question for them: Daniel 3:14 Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? Look at their response: Daniel 3:16-18 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our “Really Big” God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. They said we have a God that is sooooo big, that he will save us from any fiery furnace. And the rest of the story is proof of that statement. The King had his mightiest men stoke that furnace seven times hot and tossed those boys in. What happened? According to God’s word, the King was “astonished”, Daniel 3:24-26 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high “Really Big” God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire. The king learned about a Big God!

Doctor Luke understood about his Big God when he wrote: **Luke 1:37 For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Luke 18:27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with “our really big” God.**

The Apostle Paul had a “sooo Big God”: **Ephesians 3:20-21 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.**

Moses had a personal relationship with a very Big God. Listen as he counsels God’s people: **Deuteronomy 7:21 Thou shalt not be affrighted at them: for the LORD thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible.** That same God has not shrunk in size over the last 3000 years.

So, how big is your God? How big is the God of The Olde Tyme Baptist Church? Are we limiting God by our unbelief? Having faith does not mean never having doubts or questions. It does mean remaining obedient. I believe we have recently witnessed a miracle with the healing of Jane’s sister Joy. What was our first thought when we heard that God had brought her through this desert? Was it, “hmmm, wonder how that happened” ... or maybe, “guess the doctors were wrong”. If your God is small, that would be your first thoughts. But if your first thought was “Praise God!” followed by a moment of pure worship and adoration, and you truly believed that this was brought about by the dunamis power of a Holy and Mighty God, then you might be serving a soooooo big God.

Do we fully believe that our God can grow the ministries of the Olde Tyme Baptist Church? Or do we live in doubt. Wrong area, wrong people, wrong time, wrong place. Our God is too small to work miracles in an area like the Northeast. Israel doubted God’s ability to defeat the giants of the promised land and they limited God’s blessings. Oh, God was truly big enough to take care of a few oversized bullies. But the people’s lack of faith caused doubt, and defeat. The formula has not changed over the years. We must put our total faith and trust in a God that is soooooo big. A God that is big enough to knock down a few barriers and move a few puny little mountains.

Lastly? How big is God? He’s big enough to save us from our sins. He’s big enough to take a lost sinner like me, cleanse me from the sin that separated us and put me on the right track. And, he’s certainly big enough to keep me, no matter what I may do that disappoints Him. He’s big enough to save my family. He’s big enough to save every man, woman and child in Calgary. And, He’s big enough to save you. “I’m too bad! You don’t know what I’ve done!” Doesn’t matter! God’s big enough.

Christian, God is big enough to set you free from whatever is holding you back from having a close, personal relationship with Him. His love is not restricted by the barriers that we place upon it.

God is also big enough to meet us at this old fashioned altar this morning. Are we big enough to meet Him?

We serve an awesome God, let’s act like it.