



Day thirty-four

For the next 40 days we are offering us all a challenge to consider 40 things that are sucking the life out of us. The challenge is to examine these and through confronting God's word, his Spirit, and his community of faith as we seek to be filled with his life and his love again. At the conclusion of each challenge there will be an opportunity to engage about this with another person and/or the larger community.

Today the thing we are asking us to explore giving up is:

a small view of God.

Confronting the text

You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures. (James 4:2-3).

Confronting my self with God

Like the author of the below post I too read J.B. Phillips book "Your God is Too Small" when I was in high school.

Quotes from JB Phillips' Your God Is Too Small

<http://cwhisonant.blogspot.com/2012/01/quotes-from-jb-phillips-your-god-is-too.html>

I was introduced to JB Phillips many years ago.

He is probably most famous for his New Testament in Modern English (a somewhat paraphrased translation of the New Testament, but very well done with a great story behind it!). You can [read it online here](#). But he also

wrote a short (140 pages) book titled *Your God Is Too Small*.

I read most of it a few years ago I picked it up and started it again.

The first half of the book is about many of our misconceptions of God.

The second half of the book does not set out to provide a list of proper views of God, but instead discusses how God came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ to give us a right understanding of God's nature.

If you have a chance, it's a great read. Below are around a dozen quotes I resonated with as I was reading through it for myself. I believe all the quotes stand on their own without any further explanation, but if you have any questions, please let me know.

We can hardly expect to escape a sense of futility and frustration until we begin to see what God is like and what His purposes are.

To speak the truth was obviously to Him more important than to make His hearers comfortable: though, equally obviously, His genuine love for men (sic) gave Him tact, wisdom, and sympathy. He was Love in action, but He was not meek and mild.

So far from encouraging them to escape life He came to bring, in His own words, "life more abundant," and in the end He left His followers to carry out a task that might have daunted the stoutest heart. Original Christianity had certainly no taint of escapism.

[Some Christians] prevent themselves from growing up. So long as they imagine that God is saying 'Come unto Me' when He is really saying "Go out in My Name," they are preventing themselves from ever putting on spiritual muscle, or developing the right sort of independence quite apart from the fact that they achieve very little for the cause to which they believe they are devoted.

God will inevitably appear to disappoint the man (sic) who is attempting to use Him as a convenience, a prop, or a comfort, for his own plans. God has never been known to disappoint the man (sic) who is sincerely wanting to co-operate with His own purposes.

It is refreshing, and salutary, to study the poise and quietness of Christ. His task and responsibility might well have driven a man (sic) out of his mind. But he was never in a hurry, never impressed by numbers, never a slave of the clock. He was acting, he said, as he observed God to act - never in a

hurry.

All poetry and music, and art of every true sort, bears witness to man's (sic) continual falling in love with beauty, and his desperate attempt to induce beauty to live with him and enrich his common life.... Is it the eternal spirit in a man (sic) remembering here in his house of clay the shining joys of his real Home?

We can visualize a beautiful thing, but not beauty; a good man (sic), but not goodness; a true fact, but not truth.

It was the motive and attitude of the heart that He called on men (sic) to change, for once the inner affections are aligned with God the outward expression of the life will look after itself.

Further, many people who have a vague childish affection for a half-remembered Jesus, have never used their adult critical faculties on the matter at all. They hardly seem to see the paramount importance of His claim to be God. Yet if for one moment we imagine the claim to be true the mind almost reels at its significance.

But let a man (sic) once see his God down in the arena as a Man, suffering, tempted, sweating, and agonized - finally dying a criminal's death, he is a hard man (sic) indeed who is untouched.

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ([John 16:7 ESV](#)) - He knew very well, for example, that the followers of His own day would very quickly collapse when the support and inspiration of His own personality were removed by death. He therefore promised them a new Spirit who should provide them with all the courage, moral reinforcement, love, patience, endurance and other qualities which they would need.

Listening to God's people

Where are you limiting God?

How would your life look different if you didn't limit him?