

MY DOG KNEW ME.



Among the ten German Shepherd puppies scrambling around my feet, she was the puppy whose teeth locked onto the hem of my trousers. So I picked her. Because of her coloring and appearance, I named her SandyBear.

What did SandyBear know of me personally?

She knew me instantly by sight, sound, and smell. She knew I was her master and she was my doggie.

Her breed can have dominance issues, so early on and often, I would flip her onto her back, pin her paws to the ground with my hands, kneel over her nose to nose, look her right in the eyes and say, "WHO'S THE BOSS? NOT SANDY!!" She would happily lick my face.

SandyBear knew I would provide for her. All those years, I fed her and made sure she had water. As far as I know, I never missed a day. She was an outdoor dog, but had a nice warm house and bed, and a comfortable crate inside when it was too cold out.

SandyBear knew I would protect her. Once, as a puppy, she was attacked by two dogs off-leash in a park. I punched one in the nose (got my hand bitten in the process) and kicked the other away.

Another time, when she was a full-grown dog, while we out hiking and crossed a rocky stream, her claws couldn't grip the tilted rock she was trying to climb over. She began to slide backwards into the rapidly flowing stream. I ran over the rocks to her, grabbed a handful of fur on her back, and hauled her to safety.

SandyBear knew I would discipline her when necessary. Not in anger, but to teach her a lesson. She also knew I would forgive her after the discipline. She loved to hear (evidenced by the wagging tail) "You're a GOOD girl, SandyBear!"

SandyBear came to know the different tones of my voice as well as my hand gestures. She knew I was in charge, but she never cringed in fear. The sound of my car in the driveway was her signal to come greet me, tail wagging.

On August 19, 2017, a slipped disc pinched her spinal cord and paralyzed her back end. The next day, I lifted her up and carried her in my arms to my car and drove to the vet. That

Sunday afternoon, holding her face in my hands, tears running down my face, thanking God for her, I petted her as she went to sleep.

I'm SO grateful for the 13 years and 5 months we had together.

SANDYBEAR KNEW ME PERSONALLY.

True, she did not have a CLUE about the vast majority of her master's thoughts and activities. For me to kneel down and explain the Pythagorean Theorem or the Aorist tense in Greek would have meant NOTHING to her. Nor would she have cared. Instead she would have run to get her ball.

But for the important things in her life, she knew I COULD BE TRUSTED.

I claimed her at the beginning as my own, and cared for her all the days of her life. We enjoyed many adventures together, loved each other's company, and when she died, I held her.

Is this not the same position we find ourselves in with God?