

**BELIEVE  
IN GOD**

BUT HOW?

By,  
Charles R. Chesnutt, Sr.

For God so loved the world that He gave  
His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes  
in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.  
John 3:16

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## About the Author



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The author's wife, Mary Chesnutt aided significantly in writing this work.

Through no merit of his own, the author came to know Jesus Christ in the manner described in this booklet in December of 1973. That experience continues to this day.

## Chapter 1

### **Believe in God. But How?**

BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST,  
AND YOU WILL BE SAVED

ACTS 16:31

**L**et's face it. If God is really there, why can't we see Him? Is there really some huge invisible God out there who never speaks and never makes Himself known? How can this God, who is said to have created us, not be able to communicate? Why should anyone believe that? And why should anyone believe some ancient Jewish religious writings that talk about Him?

Isn't it true that people believe in God because they need an invisible friend, or because they need a psychological crutch? Where is this God? If there is such a God, He must be hiding.

Let's see what those ancient Jewish religious writings (the Bible) really do say about God. Then you can form your own opinion.

So, does the Bible say that God is hiding Himself?

Yes, it does.

Does that mean that He makes Himself known to some but not others?

Yes, it does.

God does not make Himself known to everyone,<sup>1</sup> only to those who seek Him with all their heart.<sup>2</sup>

So, it is certainly not unusual for people who do not know God to ask the question, “If God is real, why can’t we see him?” Or, “Why is he silent?” This booklet tells you when and how God discloses Himself in no uncertain terms so you can know for yourself.

Let’s start from where Jesus says that God hides Himself. Jesus was conversing with a man named Nicodemus was wondering the very same question. This is what Jesus said:

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God.<sup>3</sup>

Jesus was saying that not everyone can see the Kingdom of God (the presence of God) because the Kingdom of God is hidden from everyone who is not born again. Therefore, we might as well give up trying to perceive or experience the Kingdom of God by any means other than being born again.

Then Nicodemus asks a very obvious question:

How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb can he?<sup>4</sup>

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1. Second Corinthians 4:3 “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,”

2. Jeremiah 29:13 “You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.” Searching for Him with your whole heart means that you will yield yourself to His commandments not to sin.

3. John 3:3

4. John 3:4

Jesus answers:

...Unless one is born of water [his mother's womb] and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.<sup>5</sup>

Jesus was saying that in order to enter the Kingdom of God we must be “born of the Spirit.”

So it's a spiritual thing. There is a spiritual reality that we can't see unless we are born again. It is, perhaps, like another dimension. But how can there be a spiritual dimension that we cannot perceive? Nicodemus wonders about this too, and Jesus answers him:

Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.<sup>6</sup>

Jesus was saying that being born again is like someone who feels the wind blowing. You know the wind is there because you can feel it, but it is invisible. So, Jesus is telling us that we can experience the Kingdom of God just as surely as we can feel the wind. But we can't see it. It's a spiritual thing.

And it is hidden from all who are not born again.

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5. John 3:5. Here, Jesus specifies that one must be born of water because the right to be born again extends only to humans and not any other created being, such as angels.

6. John 3:7,8

Jesus continues to explain by using an analogy from the Old Testament:

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so the Son of Man must be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.<sup>7</sup>

The account of Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness says:

Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived.<sup>8</sup>

Jesus was saying that He will be like the bronze serpent that Moses put on a standard (a standard is like a flagpole with something on top). As the account reads, the people were being bitten by snakes and dying from the bites. But God intervened and gave a miraculous cure. He told Moses to make a statue of a snake and put in on the top of a pole. He told him to lift up the pole so the entire camp could see it. In order to be healed, all the people had to do is look. The cure was therefore miraculous.

Jesus was drawing a picture of Himself. All we have to do is look and we can be healed of sin. Why do we need to be healed from sin?

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7. John 3:14-16

8. Numbers 21:9

Because when we sin we die spiritually because sin causes spiritual death.<sup>9</sup> We were bitten by the serpent of sin. When we are spiritually dead we cannot experience the reality of the Kingdom of God or experience eternal life because it is hidden from us.

It is hard to believe that when Moses lifted up the serpent on the pole, some people would not even bother to come out of their tents and *look*. But it true. Some would not even look and just died. He was separating the sheep from the goats.

And we have all been bitten by the serpent of sin.<sup>10</sup> The only cure is Jesus Christ.<sup>11</sup>

Just like the statue of the serpent that was lifted up on a standard, anyone who looks to Jesus Christ for spiritual life will have it and be healed. But you have to have to look.

He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.<sup>12</sup>

That's why Jesus is so important. We cannot see the kingdom of God without Jesus Christ.

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9. Romans 6:23 "The wages of sin is death."

10. Romans 3:23 "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

11. John 14:6 "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.'"

12. First John 5:12



But why did Jesus compare himself to a serpent when the serpent represents sin? Because in order to save us, Jesus became sin for us.<sup>13</sup> He died on the cross to pay our penalty for sin (death). But after His death, He was resurrected and in that resurrection he made us righteous in God's sight.<sup>14</sup>

But how can we believe in Jesus Christ when He is not here? How can we believe in someone or something that we have neither seen nor experienced?

The key is in the meaning of the word "believe."

Believing in Jesus just means to trust in Him. It is like trusting enough to go outside and look Moses' serpent on the pole. No ritual, no church, no nothing. Just you and Him and trust.

It is the same type of trust that we place in a doctor that we have never met to perform an operation. You don't have to understand everything he is going to do. All you have to do is trust him to do it. Except when we trust in Jesus Christ, we have absolutely nothing to lose.<sup>15</sup>

But trust Him for what? Trust that through Him all of our sins have been totally forgiven. Like the serpent in the wilderness, all we have to do is look to Him and we will live.

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13. Second Corinthians 5:21 "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

14. Romans 4:25 "He was delivered over to death for our sins, and He was raised to life to make us right with God." NIV

15. The original Greek word means to trust. See *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, by Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich (Second Ed. 1958, Univ. Of Chicago Press), s.v. πιστεύω, "believe (in), trust."

This is a leap of faith, but it is not a leap to the point of certainty; it is a leap to the point of trust. Trust is what faith is and it is impossible to please God without it.<sup>16</sup> Faith is trust, not certainty.

God resolves our doubts *after* we trust in Christ because if God resolved these doubts before we come to Christ, there would be no faith. We would always wonder if we had just talked ourselves into believing. The awareness of God has to come from outside of ourselves or we will always be doubting.

So how does it work?

Seeing the Kingdom of God is a two-step process. Some people do both steps at once. Others don't.

The first step is to come to obtain forgiveness for all of our sins because it is sin that causes spiritual death. This a free gift. It has to be free because the price of sin is death<sup>17</sup> and we can't pay it and live. The whole point is to avoid the death-penalty—we can't really know that we are spiritually dead until we are made spiritually alive. Or maybe we do. Who are the dead? Is it you?

Christ died on the cross to pay for our sins so that we can be forgiven<sup>18</sup> all we have to do is to look to Him to receive forgiveness. If we won't look to Him we will remain dead because we have all been bitten.<sup>19</sup>

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16. Hebrews 11:6 “And without faith it is impossible to please God...

17. Romans 6:23 “The wages of sin is death.”

18. Romans 5:8 “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were sinners, Christ died for us.”

19. Romans 3:23 “All have sinned...”

Trusting in Christ is simple. He made it easy so anyone can do it. No theology is involved and no church. Just trust.

For instance, pray “God, I come to You and I am trusting in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of all my sin.” You may pray this prayer (or one like it) even though you are not certain that anything at all will happen. All you have to be is sincere. That is what faith is. It is trusting even though you are not certain.

How much real faith does one need? Just enough to trust sincerely in Christ. Some people trust in Him and some do not, but the invitation is open to all.<sup>20</sup>

Jesus explained it pretty well in Matthew 13:31-32. He said the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, which is a seed that is the size of a pinhead. But when the mustard seed is planted, it grows up and becomes the largest plant in the garden.

The mustard seed is a picture of the faith necessary to come to Christ. Coming to Christ is just a pinhead of faith that grows into something wonderful. It grows into the most wonderful thing that one can ever imagine.

It grows into a life without emptiness,<sup>21</sup> a life filled with God’s peace and assurance,<sup>22</sup> a life of spiritual equanimity and it grows into a life where one actually knows God, a life that is

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20. Revelation 22:17 “The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.”

21. The internal void is spiritual death. It is cured by the forgiveness of sin and a true commitment to obey God’s word.

22. Philippians 4:7 “And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts...”

a life in the way it was intended to be lived, a physical life and spiritual life that is eternal.<sup>23</sup> And when a husband and a wife both come to Christ and sincerely follow Him the mustard seed grows into a family that is bound firmly together by cords of love that are as soft as a kiss and as strong as iron.

And it starts with a leap of faith that is little more than a hop just to see if it all is really real. When one comes to Christ, the faith that one needs is small but afterwards it is an entirely different world. It is a spiritual world called the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of God is not of this world.<sup>24</sup> It is spiritual dimension of this life.

We are spiritually dead before coming to Christ.<sup>25</sup> Spiritual death often presents itself as an internal void or an emptiness that can never be filled. When someone who is spiritually dead trusts in Christ and makes a heart-felt, sincere surrender to God's will (a complete yielding), then he or she will experience a salvation that is quite unexpected. The void disappears and in its place there is an inner peace that is beyond comprehension.<sup>26</sup> That peace never leaves. Salvation is what happens when we trust in Christ. It means that we have been saved from spiritual death.

Sound inviting? It is indeed and it is real.

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23. John 17: 3 "This is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

24. John 18:36 "My kingdom is not of this world..."

25. Ephesians 2:1 "...you were dead in trespasses and sins"

26. Philippians 4:7 "And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

The beauty of it all is that God does it. We don't. If we did it we would always wonder if it was us and not God who did it. At the back of our mind, we would never know if we had found God or found nothing more than religion. That's why He does it and not us. The real experience of knowing God can be neither faked nor imagined. So when He does it, He leaves no doubt. That's why it has to be Him and not us.

Awake you that sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ [Christ, not us] shall give you light.<sup>27</sup>

Trusting in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of all sin is all that is needed for eternal salvation. However, it is not all that is needed to really experience the presence of God.

Indeed, some people who have trusted in Christ experience nothing as a result of it. Some people don't feel any different as a result of trusting in Christ and many believe that one can never really experience the presence and peace of God. Others simply pretend. Why do some people who have trusted in Him never really know Him? Why?

The answer to that is the second step.



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27. Ephesians 5:14

## Chapter 2

### Knowing God

WHOEVER HAS MY COMMANDMENTS  
AND KEEPS THEM... I WILL LOVE HIM  
AND REVEAL MYSELF TO HIM

JOHN 14:21

The first step to knowing God is to get forgiven. The second step is to yield.

Yielding means to yield to God's will. It means to obey Him and that means to turn away from sin. After all, if we trust in Christ for the forgiveness of sin but don't care enough to turn away from committing the very sins that He died to save us from, what then? What is the purpose of being forgiven for sin today if we intend to commit the same sin tomorrow? It makes a mockery of the cross.

But what if we are forgiven today and do not intend to commit the same sin tomorrow—but falter when tomorrow comes? Or what if we really want to turn from sin but can't seem to do it? That's different. That's what Christianity is all about. It is an upward movement toward good. It is a series of discoveries that sin is really quite squalid and righteousness is a lot more rewarding than sin. It is growth and change from the inside out and done because we *want* to and *when* we want to. Christianity is not a stairway to heaven. It is a golden road.

Yielding, which is explained in this chapter, is essential because it results in knowing God and knowing God is something that we experience. Knowing God is what makes every day Christianity really worth while. Trusting Christ without bothering to know Him is like being given a gift certificate for

dinner at the finest restaurant in town and leaving after eating the bread and butter. You were there, but you never got what you came for.

Truly knowing God is the apex of all human experience. It is beyond marvelous; *that's why people spend their lives getting to know Him better and better.* Christians are not looking for a psychological crutch. They have found something and it is immensely rewarding.

They have discovered the knowledge of God<sup>1</sup> and discovered that it is real. They have discovered for themselves that God's love is a relationship and that His love is totally accepting and unconditional.<sup>2</sup> It is the love that took Jesus Christ to the cross.<sup>3</sup> It is not just a lifestyle. It is life.

How to know God is no secret. Jesus taught us how in crystal clear terms:

He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself [make myself known] to him.<sup>4</sup>

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1. John 17:3 "This is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." Romans 11:33 "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" Proverbs 2:4 "If you seek her as silver And search for her as for hidden treasures; then you will discern the fear of the LORD And discover the knowledge of God."

2. This love is described in First Corinthians 13.

3. John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whoever believes [trusts] in Him will have eternal life."

4. John 14:21

Jesus is telling us that if we have His commandments (that is if we bother to find out what He is saying), and then, knowing the commandments, if we *keep them* then we have shown ourselves to be someone who loves Him. And as a result, “I will disclose Myself to him.”

This is what knowing God is. It is when Jesus Christ makes Himself known to us. Christianity is an experiential relationship with Jesus Christ. To know Christ is to experience eternal life first hand.

Now this is eternal life: that they know  
You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ,  
whom You have sent. <sup>5</sup>

Christianity is knowing God; knowing God is to experience eternal life and we come to know Him by yielding to His word.

Notice how carefully these scripture are written. They are not formulas; they are love notes, “I will love Him and disclose Myself to Him.”<sup>6</sup>

Keeping His commandments to get God to do something will not get us there. But keeping His commandments in order to know Him will. Just like a human love affair, the thing that makes a difference is heart. It’s all about experiential spiritual love. This is why the scripture says “He who has my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves me.”

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5. John 17:3 “And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”

6. John 14:21



Jesus Christ is a spiritual lover saying “Be faithful, be good, be right, and I will never leave you. And if you fail Me, its OK.<sup>7</sup> What I want is *heart*.”

It’s a relational thing, not a *duty* thing; it is a love thing, not a set of rules. It is all about love because that’s what God is. God **is** love.<sup>8</sup> But although it is a spiritual love affair and love is all over it, don’t worry about loving Him enough, so quit trying. He takes care of the love part. When He makes His presence known, you will love Him. You won’t be able to stop yourself and you won’t want to. All you do to start is to yield sincerely to Him. He does the rest.

But there is a problem and that problem is sin. Sin kills love and sin kills relationships. It kills relationships with other people. We all know this. And it kills our relationship with God. Sin kills us spiritually in this life and ultimately forever. From cover to cover the Bible repeatedly warns us that sin kills.<sup>9</sup> Like a loving spiritual Father, God works with us, enables us, encourages us and weans us away from sin by replacing it with Himself. He changes us from the inside out, but make no mistake about it; He is very serious about sin. Move away from sin. Sin is spiritual death.

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7. First John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

8. First John 4:8 “...God is love.” God is love, but He is not just love. He is much more. God’s love is described in First Corinthians 13.

9. See Appendix

That is why God requires us to have His commandments and *keep them* in order to know Him. Christ is spiritual life.<sup>10</sup> Sin is spiritual death.<sup>11</sup> Spiritual life and spiritual death do not mix well.

Scripture spells out what sin is. Among other things, turning away from sin means sincerely committing not to lie,<sup>12†</sup> and not to cheat, steal,<sup>13</sup> injure,<sup>14</sup> commit adultery,<sup>15†</sup> fornicate,<sup>16†</sup> or commit homosexual acts,<sup>17</sup> do drugs, or fail to forgive.<sup>18</sup> It means never to be greedy; and never take

10. John 14:6 “I am...the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

11. Ephesians 2:9 “You were dead in your transgressions and sins.”

12. † Lying is viewed as a very significant sin. Revelation 21:8 “...all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

13. Exodus 20:15 “Thou shalt not steal”

14. Ephesians 4:31 “Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.”

15. Exodus 20:14 “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” † To adulterate means to pollute. Adultery in scripture is not limited to sexual infidelity. A marital relationship can be polluted by flirtations.

16. First Corinthians 6:9 “Do not be deceived; neither fornicators nor idolaters or adulterers...will inherit the kingdom of God.” † To fornicate means to copulate with someone other than a spouse. God limits the sex act to those who are married because 1) of procreation and 2) the emotional bond that it is intended to create between the participants.

17. Romans 1:26 “God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another...”

18. Matthew 18:21,22 “Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.”

advantage of others.<sup>19</sup> And it also means never to condemn and never judge anyone (including ourselves) for whatever sins others commit<sup>20</sup>† and never ever gossip about anyone ever, under any circumstances.<sup>21</sup>† We should turn away from sin because sin separates us from Him.<sup>22</sup>

The Bible is not a book about religion. The Bible is a book about spiritual life and spiritual death. It is a warning that sin kills spiritual life<sup>23</sup> and a book that shows the way

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19. First Corinthians 6:8-10 "...you yourselves cheat and do wrong, even against your own brothers! Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the ... greedy, nor drunkards, nor verbal abusers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God..."

20. Luke 6:37 "Do not judge [criticize], and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven." See also Matthew 7:1. † In this magnificent passage lies the secret to true freedom and inner peace: the relinquishment of all condemnation of ourselves and of others. The word condemnation in this passage means to be critical. To be critical is to be accusatory. To be accusatory means to assume the role of Satan (Revelation 12:10; Job 2:1; Zechariah 3:1). These passages do not necessarily apply to judicial proceedings.

21. Romans 1:28 "God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips..." † Gossip is a critical statement made about a third party to someone who is neither part of the problem or part of the solution."

22. Galatians 5:19,20 "The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, and debauchery; idolatry and sorcery; hatred, discord, jealousy, and rage; rivalries, divisions, factions, and envy; drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God..."

23. There are 50 scriptures teaching that sin kills, too many to quote here. They are exhaustively listed and discussed in *Fate of Unbelievers, the Book* found in biblebooks.co.

to experiencing spiritual (eternal) life in the here-and-now. It is a warning that those who live a life of spiritual death will ultimately die an eternal death.<sup>24†</sup>

We live in a world that is filled with people who are spiritually dead and know it. We have all been there to one extent or another. The most prevalent symptom of spiritual death is an internal void, an emptiness that will not go away. Some people spend lifetimes trying to fill this emptiness but they never succeed because the void is spiritual death and nothing will fill it except spiritual life.

Spiritual life is the life that Christ gives<sup>25</sup> and the experience of spiritual life means to know Christ.<sup>26</sup> In order to know Christ we must yield our will to His.<sup>27†</sup> That is the only way to fill the void.<sup>28</sup>

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24. † The eternal punishment for sin is (eternal) death (Romans 6:23; Revelation 21:8), not eternal torment.

25. John 14:6 “I am...the life.”

26. John 17:3 “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

27. John 14:23 “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him.” † This scripture is saying that if you keep His word because you want to know Him, God will come to you and reveal Himself.”

28. John 14:6 “I am the way, and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.”

The analogy of scripture is a sheepfold, a pen where sheep are fed and protected. The door to the sheepfold is Jesus Christ<sup>29</sup> because Jesus Christ gives spiritual life. Once inside the sheepfold we are fed with spiritual food<sup>30</sup> and we drink the water of spiritual life.<sup>31</sup>

Jesus Christ is the light of the world<sup>32</sup> but He cannot be known outside of the sheepfold.<sup>33</sup> So don't expect to find Him or understand anything about Him<sup>34</sup> until you walk through the door<sup>35</sup> and discover for yourself that it is all true. Outside of the sheepfold, one can learn about Jesus. But to know Him, we have to trust Him and yield to Him.

Knowing God does not automatically happen when we cease from sin and it does not automatically cease because we fall back into sin. It is a not a contract or a formula. It is a relationship, a spiritual love affair. Sin does kill, but we can

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29. John 10:9a "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved." Note that the door is not a church, not a religion, not a denomination. The door is Jesus Christ and .

30. John 10:9b "... if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture."

31. John 4:10 "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

32. John 8:12 "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

33. John 1:9 "There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him."

34. First Corinthians 1:18 "For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."

35. John 10:9a "I am the door..." John 14:6 "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

always repent and find forgiveness.<sup>36</sup> But just like human lovers who kill love with sin, knowing God will eventually cease when we choose darkness rather than light.<sup>37</sup>

Any Christian who is sincerely trying, haltingly perhaps and sometimes unsuccessfully, to turn from sin by turning to Jesus Christ will experience the presence and the peace of God and that Presence will strengthen him and empower him to turn from sin.

So if God is all powerful, why doesn't He just stop all sin? Because love is the most important thing to Him. *Love is the one thing that we can give to Him* and free will (the freedom to choose) is essential to love because love must always be a choice. One cannot love if one is not free not to love. Love without the freedom to choose is not love; it is duty. Religion because of fear is duty; religion because of obligation is duty; religion because of habit is duty. God does not settle for duty. Nor do you. Neither God nor any of us are content with a lover who loves out of obligation because that is not love. Duty may well be an expression of love, but it is not love. Love is affection. Duty is not affection.

God does not settle for imaginary love nor should you settle for an imaginary God.

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36. First John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

37. First John 3:19 "And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil."

Does that mean that we have to be sinless in order to know God? No. God does not require perfection from His children any more than you require perfection from yours. God created us with imperfections and weaknesses and He had an excellent reason for doing so. Don't ever think that He is not fully aware of your imperfections, weaknesses and sins. Indeed, our fallen nature is the reason why Jesus Christ died on the cross. Don't ever think that God requires perfection. God does not require perfection. What God requires is heart. God is all about heart.<sup>38</sup> Why? Because Christianity is a relationship, not a religion.

Why does He want heart? He wants heart because ultimately what He wants is *you* and He will not settle for fake.

He made us to be imperfect and He knows it. Christianity on the outside is a progression from sin toward sinless. But Christianity on the inside is a magnificent journey of knowing God better and better. It is a journey that is motivated *because* of the relationship, not for the purpose of *obtaining* a relationship. The relationship and the yielding occur together. We do not journey because of obligation or because of fear, but because of a relationship.<sup>39</sup> God is all about heart because *love* is all about heart and God is all about love because God *is* love.<sup>40</sup>

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38. First Samuel 16:7 “God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

39. See Second Peter 1 (the entire chapter)

40. First John 4:8 “God is love...” First John 4:8 “The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.” See the author's *Endless Love* which discusses the three human loves and the fourth love, which is God's love.

Christianity is a progression toward righteousness in this life.<sup>41</sup> But are already righteous in Christ,<sup>42</sup> so our Christian life is our progression toward conforming to the righteousness that we already have.<sup>43</sup> It is based upon knowing Him because it is only through knowing Him that we can continue to be righteous after having sinned. He empowers us toward righteousness through our relationship with Him. Everything is based upon knowing Him. He *makes* us righteous<sup>44</sup> all we do is cooperate:

His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness through the true knowledge of Him...<sup>45</sup>

Not only does He grant us everything pertaining to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him, but He also enables us to partake of His divine nature.

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41. Second Peter 1:1-10. This entire progression is enabled through the actual knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:2,8).

42. First Corinthians 1:30 “But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness...”

43. Romans 8:29 “For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son...”

44. Second Corinthians 5:21 “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Philippians 3:8,9 “I count all things as loss compared to the surpassing excellence of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God on the basis of faith.”

45. Second Peter 1:3



He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature...<sup>46</sup>

That's the tree that we were discussing, the tree that grows from the mustard seed. It can grow slow or it can appear suddenly. It all depends on the sincerity and the depth of our surrender. It starts with salvation and grows into a tree of internal peace and freedom when it is watered with righteousness and heart. He plants and we water and it grows by means of a power that is not our own.<sup>47</sup>

When we yield to Him, He lives in us.

If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.<sup>48</sup>

And when we sin, we can confess and He forgives us.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.<sup>49</sup>

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46. Second Peter 1:4

47. Matthew 13:23 "And the one on whom the seed was sown [the Gospel of Jesus Christ] on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundred fold..."

48. John 14:23.

49. First John 1:9

The result is knowing God, and one of the greatest benefits of knowing God is a supernatural peace:

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.<sup>50</sup>

Once a person has truly perceived and experienced a full measure of this peace, he cannot turn away. It is magnificent and irresistible. But it is spiritual,<sup>51</sup> not physical. It is like the wind. One can feel it but not see it.

The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from or where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.<sup>52</sup>

That is why we cannot simply decide to believe in God. Someone who is spiritually dead cannot experience the things that are spiritually alive.

The natural man does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God. For they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.<sup>53</sup>

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50. Philippians 4:7

51. John 18:36 “My kingdom is not of this world.”

52. John 3:8

53. First Corinthians 2:14 (Berean Study Bible). See also the King James translation, “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

It is for this reason that Jesus taught that one must be born again before perceiving the Kingdom of God.

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God<sup>54</sup>

Try it yourself and see. He does it; not you.

To the one who truly wants to find God but wonders if there is a God to find, let me say that the author has been where you are. I was just as doubting as you are or even more so. But I found God exactly as this booklet describes.

I found Him by trusting in Christ for the forgiveness of all sin and the sincerely yielding to Him at the same time. I did this through a silly, fumbling prayer that I prayed one evening long ago—doubting all the time but meaning every word.

I had no idea what would happen, if anything. But I found out. He came to me with His immense peace and love and He is still there. He made me new and I read about it in the Bible after it happened to me:

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.<sup>55</sup>

He will do the same for you when you come to Christ and sincerely yield to His will.

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54. John 3:3

55. Second Corinthians 5:17

All it takes is a decision to trust in Jesus Christ. After that, it is all about heart.

My time was in 1973. Your time is now.

