

Best of Psychology Series 4-8 by Ben Huot

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by Ben Huot

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First Things

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For More Information

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I even enjoy constructive criticism

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From Psychology 4

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As It Is or As It Should Be, An Epic Poem

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Walking Forward

So cold and so dark
An empty calm
A simple choice
A dedication to a plan
A complete course of action
Across the vast expanse
Lonely and windy
Small lights far away
Step by slow step
A great weight to carry
My destination years away
How far can one's mind imagine
In each one of my thoughts
I pass a sign
I only know what to do
When I get there
The journey is all only within my own mind
Tracing circles with feet and hands
The process is the outcome
A relaxed walking stride
An empty but serious expression
The land is flat
With hills and valleys
My walk is straightforward
But my thinking never is

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Varieties of Loyalty

Is it crazier to think God doesn't exist
Or that I do not exist
Is it crazier to not follow My Creator
Or not to follow my own way
We fail to ask the right questions
We are too much in a hurry
To even stop talking and fighting
There are greater things to fight for
Then just political processes
There are loyalties that stretch
Far beyond our own place and time
We think that the most important lines
Are the ones people make on paper
We divide our spoils across
Mountains, rivers, and straight lines
We fear that another group
Just like our own
Will tell us what to do
Is it ever worth it
To suffer for other people
To merely serve under another name
We think we can find a solution
But the situation will need to resolve itself
Many will survive the process
But few people will be alive afterwards

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Internal Struggle

Why does my heart hurt so much
Why does the pain have no cause
Can you hurt for lack of something
Can you succeed by letting go
Is not the greatest obstacle
Our own lack of self control
How do you fight the enemy
When it lives within you
Weapons made by people
Are only effective against other people
But what do you do
When your feud is between your heart and mind
It is often for those who learn to be strong
To hold their heart in captivity to their mind
But how do we define success in self-mastery
When we cannot even define what it means to be rational
What if the crazy is in your heart and not your mind
What if your mind is not strong enough
To hold your heart within its grasp
How can you win
When you cannot even imagine what that would mean

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Fear of What

What is your greatest fear
Is it your country or yourself
We think that the way forward
Is through mastery of technology
But our technology will only enslave us
Because it is what we created
By our own hands to we sink or swim
We may seek swords or mobs of police
To make us feel safe
But it is by our own minds that we will suffer most
You think that a police state is the worst possible outcome
The worst situation is to be captive to your own rotten heart
We think that as we climb higher on the social ladder
The freer we become
But freedom comes from a clear mind and a disciplined heart
The greatest fear for most is pain
The greatest pain for some is fear
Is not the key to wisdom the pursuit of balance
What is more important to control
Your inner or outer life
But who should rule within
Should the mind dominate the heart
Or the heart control the mind

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Everlasting Life

We think within our own page of history
But even this book holds only so many pages
Let us try to think beyond this earth, this galaxy, or this universe
Look beyond what we can see with our eyes or even our minds
Beyond the limits of linear time
Into things not driven by cause and effect
How can we really resolve to live in peace
If we can still have make choices and there are still consequences
of our actions
We have lived long enough to become better people
But we have not and so we never will
How can people live for eternity without war or any conflict
How can we accept our differences are not enough to suffer or
make others suffer
We just cannot get beyond human nature
It is not because we cannot but that we choose not to
What would morality look like if time did not exist?

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Society of Facts

Pile upon pile of paper
Digital file upon digital folder
Our records are in constant flux
We have ceased to be able to distinguish fact from fiction
One minute all this exists
The other minute money no longer exists
One minute a country has a history
The next minute it is forgotten
The meaning of our words
And even the very words we speak and write with
Are no longer within our control
How can you believe in absolutes about laws and countries
When they have become nothing more than
Bullet points in a presentation or cells in a spreadsheet
When people no longer bother to learn
What happens when the truth shifts or simply disappears
How can we live life as we know it
When we do not know who did what
When we know nothing for certain
A society based on facts only works
When you can agree on what those are
If there is no source of truth
How do you know what is real and what is not

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Forever War

What is a person to do today
Who believes in something
Who has unique ideas
Or who has a different perspective
It is hard to consider all possibilities
When only two views are represented
It is hard to find truth
When the only truth people know
Is what they want to hear
When your mind is shut
You can no longer learn anything
But it is hard to hear what someone is saying
When they scream and curse at the top of their lungs
It is only in a quiet space
With time and room to think
That we can start to form ideas
That are not just the same
Or the exact opposite of what we are told
When there are only two points of view allowed
And they each have the same amount of sensibility
And an evenly divided population of followers
This is the recipe for a war the will only end
When one side no longer lives

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Society for the Mentally Ill

What would it be like

To be in a society designed for the mentally ill

A society where people never knew what was real

A society where you could not trust what is right in front of you

A society where you would depend upon others to look after you and tell you how to live

A society where you would be accepted as normal no matter how paranoid you were

A society where you see someone with symptoms of mentally illness as a capable leader

A society where fear is valued and respected

A society that would rather run from a fight than suffer for no reason

A society where you would not accept what you hear at face value

A society where you cannot own a weapon for any reason

A society where you never know what would happen next

A society who knew true fear enough that would not pay for horror stories

A society where no one would be fit for military service

A society that would have to accept that some people are not going to sacrifice themselves for the greater good of everyone else

A society where people would be afraid to speak up for what is right out of fear if society's reaction

Building Momentum

True fear
Is when you cannot trust
Your own mind
Or the voices therein
True cynicism
Only comes from experience
True doubt
Comes from your own failures
How do we start
Climbing upwards
From where we are
As a society
To where we want to be
As individuals
Looking inwards is difficult
And making better choices
Is near impossible
Are we really so bad
Or is our society just too tempting
How do you remain above water
When the waves of desire
Nearly pull you under
With the persistence of a spider
Trying to climb out of porcelain
With the intensity of a political argument
In the spirit of a tai chi master
With the subtle movement of a plant growing
With the gentleness of a hug by a stuffed toy
In the hand of God Himself

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With nothing on our minds but our Savior
It is not in fighting
That you achieve the best victory
The better victory
Is in never having to hurt or sacrifice anyone
While we emphasize the power of evil
The biggest determining factor is our own will
Is it enough to just never give up
Or is there a special strength that can be tapped into
The only weapon a Christian has is his Bible
The only one we really trust is the Lord
With each step
It is more painful
And each setback more discouraging
Is it in failure that we try learn
Is there anyway to stand united
Within our own hearts, minds, and wills
If we cannot decide definitely the goal of the endeavor
How can we begin a major journey
How do we know what to learn
If we don't know what we are working towards
It is only in amount of clarity
That we can see past our own desires
It is only in a series of greater and greater changes
That we can start to build momentum
It is only possible to go towards where we decided
When we see no other way
It is a delicate balance of God and us
A tightly created choreography

Fear and Society

Few people understand fear
Few people experience fear
Outside the occasional dream
Or Halloween season movie
Fear gives you energy at first
But over time it tires you to the core
The medicine is very tiring
But adrenaline can be too
What prepared me best for Schizophrenia
Was my military experience
I was constantly tired
And I never got enough sleep
I was constantly terrified
And I felt close to God
The military is a hard life
So much is expected out of you
And the penalties are so enormous
But the people are the best
An army base is the most depressing
Place in the world to live
But they are filled with churches
Schizophrenia's symptoms are much like an addiction
Schizophrenia often shares a person with other disorders
The same people often suffer from depression, anxiety,
obsessive compulsive disorder, trouble sleeping, and tremors
Fixation is one big part of Schizophrenia
Like a person with autism
One of the common fixations is religion
Religion should be important to us all

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But there is a kind of special connection we have to God
All jumbled up and confused but still very real
God always seems closer when you need Him most
And social thinking often makes God less real to many people
With each year, I feel more awake
The disease has progressed little in 20 years for me
I think I understand better all the time
Why people react the way they do
When you do different things
It is like being a hunter gatherer
Meeting modern society
I understand feelings and spiritual things
But some of the subtlety to how people talk
Is hard for me to pick up on quick or naturally
And I learn all the time
How to be more gentle, careful, and responsible
Ironically, I may be specially suited to life after
The End of The World As We Know It
No one trusts anyone anymore
Everybody is starting to believe in conspiracy theories
They do not know how to be sure of anything
They realize that life is not rational
They are getting ready for surviving scams and disasters
They are becoming closer to those they share view with
They are forming networks and using non-traditional
communications
They are saying less and becoming more reserved
They are becoming more sarcastic and cynical
This is the best time in history to be mentally ill
Maybe we will even be some sort of trusted advisors

The Collapse (Being Exhausted as a Person with Schizophrenia)

What does it mean to be as tired as a person with Schizophrenia
Like a marathon runner who cannot drink any water
While he thirsts beyond measure
Like a soldier crawling through the sand and mud
On his belly everyday without kneepads
Like a wrestler starving and dehydrating himself
For the next competition
Like an addict on his last binge
Like when you drink too much
And only make it back to the bathroom just in time
Like a fan waiting days in life for
Tickets to his favorite band in his town
Like a boy scout after spending all day putting up tents
Finally able to sit down after dark

When you can sleep all day
And still be tired
A kind of weariness that goes down to the bone
When you have to pry your eyes open
To stay awake
When you can barely accomplish
Just one thing a day

When you cannot keep from running into things
And your hand shaking uncontrollably
When you have a hard time getting up in time
To go to the bathroom when you are asleep

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When you cannot trust your attention
Long enough to heat your dinner
When you are so tired you cannot unwind enough to get to sleep
Like when you have been fasting or staying awake for 3 days
straight

When it is stressful just to listen
To the words of a song
When waiting an hour for a movie is painful
When you cannot sit through a class you enjoy
When you cannot stay awake long enough
To finish watching your favorite show
When you cannot stay alert long enough to play a board game
When you are too tired to complete a paper craft

Like after taking long walks in the rain
And having to wear the same clothes that whole day
Like when going on a diet where all you can eat is salad
When you do not have enough patience to take care of a plant
When you realize it is the medicine that makes you too tired
To remember to take the medicine

What is and What is Not

Some roads are not worth going down
Some things are better left unsaid
Some things are not even speakable
Some things you cannot even imagine
Some people are not worth talking to
Some people you should never anger
Some people you should never challenge
Some situations are not worth experiencing
Some things are better left for others
Some things will save you that you do not understand
You cannot always believe what you plainly see
Some times it is better not to understand why
Some times it will be fear that saves you
There is a reason for everything
Everything has already been planned
We are all actors following a script
Speaking words that are not our own
And doing things we do not want to
There are many levels to understand
There are many levels to some secrets
Some dreams you are not meant to pursue
Some goals are not worth achieving
Some things are so clear that you can see nothing else
Some things are so obvious that you cannot stop tripping over
them
We worry so much about the things we cannot change
And fail to doubt what we think appears before us
God can make things very clear
He can also make doors that cannot be opened by anyone

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We all doubt His very existence at times
But some things can only be explained by His presence
He is not just present in everything
He is invulnerable to any trick or power
He created those things that think they can deceive Him
Those that plan against Him are truly foolish
Everyone serves His purposes
Some just delude themselves
Others worship Him as the One True Thing
Everything else doesn't really exist
We count God's power and reality
But maybe it would make better sense to doubt our own
We teach children to be creative and know no limitations
But there are many situations you can get trapped in
And many doors you cannot close
Once your brain has sustained certain kinds of damage
There is only so much you can do to compensate
We are not dolls or action heroes
And fixing us is not as easy as using glue or thread
You can be broken in only a way your Creator can fix
Sometimes there are deeper reason for things
And something worse would happen if you were healed
Much as fear can save your life
Sometimes our illnesses and pain keep worse things from
happening
It is important to understand that things can always get worse
And you can resolve one problem only to find yourself in greater
one
We believe whatever we think we see in front of us
And doubt our beliefs and values
Who is more real
You or God

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That is one of the few questions worth asking
If you can answer that question and live your life by it
You may have found the meaning of life
But you get no special insights in return
Nothing more than those who could never understand
You think you can avoid choosing between God and you
You are already standing before Him
You are not going anywhere
Because you are already there
Blind us to this world
That we may see nothing but your face
Give us the strength to merely survive until Your return
Give us the will to resist until the day we die
Sometimes it is better to forget
Then to know to avoid something
From some injuries you will not recover

Will it Ever Get Easier?

In the instant
It takes to strike a match
To light a candle
So the answers
Come in the utter darkness of my soul
In the depths of a winter night
In an empty feel of grass
A bit of trash shines brilliantly
Pointing towards a better tomorrow
It is like living your life again
Starting as a child
With the smells of crayons and peanut butter
The sound of a ball hitting the ground
Learning again what it means
To discover something for the first time
Sometimes we glorify a return to humble beginnings
It is a romantic notion to think we can recover our direction
While keeping our freedom as can adult
Freedom and direction swirling together like orange and vanilla
It is like when I first left for basic training
When there was still hope in the world
Where we still thought it possible
To solve our problems through human means
The late 90s before the official start of the war
Between the US and the south central part of the world
When global warming could have conceivably been avoided
When we still thought our government cared
And that people still treated each other with respect
Where there were still limits to what we did and didn't say

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A short time of peace for my country
Where we had won the last great war
It is a kind of timeless mythical era of peace
Soldiers are often considered brave and strong
But winning modern wars does not allow for this
The modern army wants conformity and no critical thinking
They want you to be gullible and lack the desire to ask questions
It does not matter what we want in the modern world
Things are decided beforehand
And then the public makes a symbolic vote
That even in its irrelevance reaffirms that
What is easy is what is considered right
The young and uneducated want the easy route
In an effort to not offend anyone and get buy in from the people
To send their children to suffer in and because of war
We manufacture this ridiculous link between God and country
If we want to change history we need to study more than the last
2 centuries
To study only ancient and modern history
Is like not reading the middle 90% of a novel
If we truly want to serve God, we have to think beyond politics
You cannot have 2 masters — choose Christ or people

Perfectly Balanced Life

My life is perfectly calm
Even my dreams are entirely peaceful
People expect the mentally ill
To not act like they are mentally ill
I know how to follow orders
I always try to blend in
I am always completely balanced
I always draw only rainbows and hearts
Even in my dreams I am always upbeat
I express myself in controlled words
Even my thoughts are always steady
I am always stable and ok
Even in my strongest emotions
I never break a blank look on my face
I feel only mild happiness
I never encounter difficult feelings or situations
I am never in need of help
I would never accidentally step on a weed
I would never raise an eyebrow
I will never mispronounce a word
I will never be angry or afraid
After all, I would never be someone
You need to deal differently with
I would never overreact or overstate things
I would never be sarcastic
Under any conditions

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From Psychology 5

I Am Getting Older

We fight time
But maybe it would be better
To embrace it instead
Like a pool of water
With another world at the bottom
We can only imagine
How close we are
To waking from this life dream
Like reaching out at arms length
Maybe Heaven is right before us

What we do know is death
Is not our ending
Life is only the preface
To the books of our lives
Like the trailer for a movie
Gives a poor indication
Of what happens in the movie
Like the movie reviewers
Give unreliable and inconsistent reviews
So we cannot rely on
The advice of so called experts
Like vampires or werewolves
Don't spend this life chasing for
Great experiences or even great peace

Like looking at the shiny wrapper of candy
And then tasting it for the first time

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Like learning how to add and subtract
And then you have to solve calculus word problems
Like listening to music in your own room
And then seeing a live concert
Like not being able to speak clearly
And then win a national essay contest
Like being a generally disciplined person
And then learning to meditate properly

Like studying psychology
And then having to deal with your own depression
Like a young kid being raised to make good decisions
And then seeing the Internet for the first time
Like being in church listening to a sermon
And then having your first mystical experience
Like imaging the military from fiction
And then experiencing it first hand

Like being afraid of bad people
And then knowing you should fear yourself
Like trying to understand complex theology
And then realizing God saves you from death not pain
Like having a good time in Scouting
And then entering the gas chamber in military training

What do we do in life
If not strive to do be better and do better
The best thing to accomplish in life
Is to fight to the very end
To keep the faith
And avoid the most foolish mistakes
We think of becoming famous

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Or solving some great problem
Will make our lives worth more

The only reason why we are still worth anything
Is that was God's decision for that to be
Throughout most of the earth
And throughout most of history
Most people just withstand life
Winning in life gets you no metals
And only adds to your responsibility

Do not seek anything you cannot carry with you
Seek the Lord your God
And this relationship will be the one thing
That will pass with you
Death makes us all truly equal
As we exit without any resume

Dark Things

Things unwritten
Things un hoped for
Things fought within
Things to never speak
Things that bring no joy
Things that are lost
Things that have never been
Things undreamed of
Things without direction
Things implying no belief
Things withdrawn from society
Things never attempted
Things never imagined
Things costless and costly
Things without meaning
Things un genuinely felt
Things without names or descriptions
Things that don't exist
Things less than zero
Things of no value
Things to never trust
Things I cannot remember
Things I cannot buy
Things I can live without
Things without form
Things transparent
Things small and insignificant
Things colder than death

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Things I don't want to share
Things hidden beneath
Things lost in the dark
Things that cannot be defined
Things that are less than more
Things that are not there
Things that never change
Things that oppose everything
Things that dwell within
Things that endlessly spin
Things I cannot see
Things without possibilities
Things we cannot escape
Things we are lost without
Things we cannot make up
Things we cannot accept
Things we pass on to others
Things no one would understand
Things with no place
Things that require patience
Things that accept nothing
Things that wrestle us
Things that require more than we have
Things that never die
Things that are part of us
Things that never slow down
Things that make us sad
Things that frustrate us
Things we do not belong with
Things we cannot reconcile
Things we know are not true
Things we keep in our minds alone

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Things we keep running into
Things we struggle without
Things we cannot stand
Things never compromised
Things never said
Things lost in history
Things we like to forget
Things without relevance
Things we cannot pass on
Things we side step
Things we cannot reach
Things that will never heal
Things we do without focus
Things we do without commitment
Things that have no description
Things that disappear after seeing
Things we cannot destroy
Things we never lose sight of
Things to fear and run from
Things unlike anything else
Things unnatural and artificial
Things that are never special
Things that resist understanding
Things we never conquer
Things we don't ever encounter
Things that don't ever happen

Disruptions in Thinking

A voice says its God
It starts out quiet
And gradually increases
In quantity and volume
How do you know
If God is really talking

Is it okay
To drown out the noise
Useful suggestions
Warnings from danger
Is this really God

I call on the name of God
Like a lightening bolt
I break through layers
And layers of dreams

I hear a knock at the door
Waking me up
From a deep dream
Who would be knocking
On my little door

A sharp pop and a creak
I come out of sleep
Like it is
When the heart burn

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Rush up my throat
What now?

When I hear a buzzing around
Constantly in the background
I wonder who to attribute
This annoying repetition
Does this have significance
What does this mean

I see a strange symbol
On my bedroom ceiling
Is it a shadow
Is it painted over
Stain from some accident
What qualifies as important

My dream is terrifying
A short while after
Finishing a major project
Is it just stress delayed
Or is it more sinister

When I get a thought
When should I pursue
Writing an entire poem
Should I plan ahead
If it stresses me
Should I be entirely spontaneous
But where do I draw the line

What is significant in life

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What is not

When should I push ahead

When should I push back

When do I cooperate

When do I resist

When should I doubt myself

When should I be confident

When should I believe others

When should I believe myself

When should I be afraid

When should I ignore it

We Have a Hard Time

We have a hard time
Understanding the spiritual world
Because we assume too much
We have so little imagination

We have such a poor understanding
Of cultures who understand spiritual things
We assume everything is visual
We assume there is a fixed line
Between physical, mental, and spiritual things
We also doubt the reality of things
That simple math cannot measure
We feel a need to be objective
And are unwilling to accept any mystery
We want everything explained
In terms of our personal experiences

We want things to happen that confirm
Our religious beliefs and other ideologies
We have too much pride
And too little knowledge or experience
With anything outside our neighborhoods
Few of us have had mystical experiences
Few of us can accept limitations
We have little appreciation for sacrifice
We fail to see a connection
Between the supernatural and the ethical
We have a hard time accepting

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The reality and seriousness of sin and evil

We see no connections between religions
Philosophies and mythology
From different cultures and times
We have a very limited
Understanding of time and history
We even have a hard time
Making connections between cause and effect
We think that all religions are equal
We think we can believe anything we want
And that either makes it true
Or it doesn't really matter

We see Christianity and math as western
We see Christianity through western eyes
We do not study the premodern era
We have few records of deep history
And they are not very reliable or accurate
We fail to see connections
Between religion and science
And understand what can be explained
By math and what cannot
We are unwilling to consider
And look down on conspiracy theories
We are too concerned with what other people
In our lives think

We have poor self knowledge
We don't know our place in reality
And what forms our identity
In modern day America

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Few people have anything permanent
About their personality or beliefs
Many fear death
Because they think they have no souls
We want everything documented in simple words
We assume we have words for everything

We expect so much of others
And so little of ourselves
We are impatient
And have short attention spans
We do not want to be alone
We don't ever want to think or read
And we don't want to follow rules
Or accept the need for them

We know very little
But think we know everything

What It Means to Rest

How do we truly rest
How can we achieve
And reach our goals
How do we finish everything
But not have everything end
We need to look beyond
Our understanding of time
We need to be mindful
Of what we are doing now
Instead of living
For the past or the future
We need to live in the now
We give our cares and worries to God
We win when we stop the fight
We are good enough as we are
Of course we can and will improve
But we find contentment in
In where we are now
We need to come to a peace
That we have done all we can
And just accept our limitations
We need to look beyond what we do
And to who we are

Sometimes it is the simplest things
That are the hardest to accept
Sometimes the greatest things
Take up the smallest amount of space

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Sometimes the things that are free
Are worth the most
Some things everyone can do
Are the most special
We can easily fall into a trap
Where we are so frustrated
With the way things are
That we cannot accept
That we cannot end them
It is not a defeat
To understand that we all have limitations
We live in a world
Where good people do bad things
And bad people do good things
There is no system
That will ever explain things
There is definitely no system
That will solve our problems
This world is full of sorrow
But God is greater than the world
We need to not hold ourselves responsible
For things we have no control over

In addition they talk of the serenity prayer
Something like
Grant me the strength to accept the things
I cannot change
And change the things I can
And have the grace to know the difference
In Heaven as in life
It is not the sum of our accomplishments
But a journey that never ends

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If you can imagine
Doing nothing and being happy
And find that peace on earth
You can start to imagine
That God is creative enough
To keep us busy forever
And knows us well enough
To know when we need to rest
Life is not the mere accumulation of memories
But about learning from our mistakes
And being content with what we are
Heaven is not the end but the beginning

Spontaneous Faith

Another voice in my head
This one out of place
Simple clear words
Ageless male voice
Timely, relevant and useful information
Why does God communicate so clearly
In the most tragic and shocking situations
Why does God only shout
When we are in pain
Why does breakthrough
Only seem to happen
In spontaneous bursts
Years and years of struggle
Then understanding comes instantly

Is the Gospel of John
So much better
Than the other Gospels
Do I understand best in poetry
Or do I just like a challenge
Why must simple things
Be so complicated for so long
And then not at all
At one time faith was straightforward
Then it became difficult over time
And the answers were few and far between
Then faith became simpler
All of a sudden

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Sometimes it is easier
To see in the dark
Sometimes the light
Is just too bright elsewhere
We get so many competing thoughts
We get pulled in so many different directions
Sometimes things are so unclear
And there are so few options
Sometimes the choices are so bad
We think the best choice
Is the least bad option

Like the clarity of handwriting
Varies so much according to the person
But on the computer each font renders consistently
According to its exact specification
Sometimes the answer for that situation
Only becomes clear in an instant
Many years later
Sometimes it take us a long time
To work through things emotionally
Even when these questions
Have obvious answers
The Bible talks of having
Only one of two masters
You can only serve one
And hate the other

This comes as hard to understand
In a culture that prides itself
On guaranteed freedoms

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We are really less individuals
Than we like to think
And our idea of what freedom means
Is really warped
Spiritual freedom does not
Make us free from
Responsibility, suffering, or morality
It does not even make us free
From being under authority
When we say freedom
We usually mean belonging
As in being part of something
Greater than ourselves
Only in abusive situations
Is this another individual person

We like the idea of choosing
Every little detail about our lives
When we are young and understand little
We choose to be free of authority
As much as we can at first
We end up choosing something
Or someone else to follow
Some people join the military
Some people join a cult
Some just try to fit in with friends
Some people try to be different
To stand out
But usually this is only done superficially

So what does freedom in Christ mean
It means being part of

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The family of God and His Church
The real true dignity
We have been given
Is in the title of child of God
As the exercise of God's free will
He has chosen to bear
Almost all the sacrifice needed
To reconcile His perfectly good character
With our bad behavior
Then we have the freedom
To accept God's offer or not

The sad part is
That many are unwilling
To submit to His rule
In their lives
And so risk suffering for eternity
For nothing but their pride
In the end in their path
They will have even less freedom
In any sense
Than if they would have
Just followed God
And often then
it will be too late
To accept God's offer

Spiritual faith by definition is spontaneous
But living your faith
Takes your entire life

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From Psychology 6-8

King and Queen

King of Hearts
Queen of Spades

If you lose yourself
To find yourself
If life only matters
In royal service
Who do you fight
And who do you trust

If choosing one
Means offending the other
You cannot please both
But if the choice
Is between joy and misery
Don't you already have the answer
One will dig your grave
The other will be the love of your life

On the board of chess
The King can only move one space
And the Queen anywhere
But only the King matters in the end
Victory goes to the King always

We are only pawns or peons
We struggle with the knights and bishops
In our daily lives

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But what if the King shared his moves
With all the peons
What if they could all become knights
And live on after crossing the board

Maybe the Queen is the problem
Maybe she is only a bishop
And just has delusions of grandeur

Each move goes towards one set of events
One act leads to others
And a course is set
There are only so many moves left
You can find yourself cornered
Before you know it

If only we knew all the possibilities
Would we make all the same choices
But if we knew the ending
Would we try the same gameplay
And would we find success

The possibilities are limitless
But in the end all that matters
Is the heart of the King
And how you make it
To the other side of the board

Each step builds the other
And determines who you are
But the ending is decided in a moment

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And you can reflect so long you lose your turn

Each will be forced to make a move in the end
Sometimes in the very first move
The game pace and strategy is set

Other times the entire board shifts
And the game itself is transformed
Then you are no longer playing chess

And then not even a game
Then you are all alone
And it is just you, the King, and the Queen

Virtues of Doubt

How can a person of faith
Be full of doubts

Doubt is the beginning of faith
For faith must start with honesty
And we are not born with faith
Because faith is a choice

We must always doubt ourselves
Because to have faith in oneself
Is a sure route to failure and heartbreak

Having self doubt is a strength
Everyone except God will fail you
At times you will fail yourself

How sad what it be to believe only in yourself
But faith is a process not an outcome
Faith is the process of getting to know God

In this world we require proof
For the basis of our civilization
In every one of our interactions
The modern world is based on controlled doubt

But doubt is useful in building faith too
For doubt is humility in intellectual matters
To say you do not doubt in your beliefs
Is to say you equal God in wisdom

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Be careful on what you claim to know
For you will quickly find
You can be sure of very little in life

Overextending our faith into human ideologies
Happens when you tie faith too closely to politics
What happens when your faith is shattered
In your human leaders as they always fail

Doubt can literally save your life
It saved my mind because I doubted reality itself
And this allowed me to seek and accept treatment

To be too sure of yourself is a form of pride
The surest way to prevent pride
Is to understand how little you know
Which is also a sign you have a love of learning

Doubt protects from more than just pride
It allows you to see faith from another point of view
And to only believe in what is essential
We need faith on God
Not because we do not understand
Nor do we need more proof of His existence

Faith is choosing to obey God
In obeying God, we follow human laws too
But we are still to doubt the human doctrines of the world

God is thinking on another level
To say you understand even the Bible fully

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Is to say you are equal to God

In existentialism we are never fully sure of ourselves
As it is in other schools of philosophy
This doubt allows us to critically think
About why we make the decisions we do
And take full responsibility for our choices

Existentialism is falsely accused of allowing people
To invent their own ethics that change with their moods
In Existentialism, every decision you make is universal
It forces you to admit that you are making choices
Even when you follow a code of ethics

Existentialism teaches that we create our own futures
By the choices we make
A person is not a rock
A person isn't fully created until they die

Whether we want to admit to or not
All of us know what is right and wrong
No matter if it is written down anywhere or not
To doubt the doctrine of your church
Is not the same as doubting the resurrection of Christ

In any study of theology
We have to ruthlessly stop our pride
From allowing us to be blind to our limitations
That is the problem with any theology
Or tradition or decision of church authorities
That claims to be on par with the Bible

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To the extent that we can not question it
Theology is a necessary evil
Because Scripture speaks for itself
And the point of all life and Christianity specifically
Is the glorification of God
And the redemption of the entire human race
One person at a time as individuals
Of all who are willing to follow God
Theology is not what we worship
But a living God

Ultimately what God calls us to do
We will do whether we like it or not
Believers and unbelievers alike

Think about how the Apostle Paul
Was forced to lead the Church
Even as he was one its greatest enemies
At the time of his salvation

So even when you church leaders fail you
Or you come to see another church
As being more faithful to Scripture
Make sure your faith is in God
And not His servants
One will fail you and the other will not

Allow there to be a distinction
Between what one believer says
And what God says in the Bible
This will save your heart
As well as your soul

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Doubt people and doubt yourself
Have faith in God regardless
As He never loses faith in you

(When you doubt God pray for faith
And continue reading the Bible
And meet with other Christians
Your faith will return)

Making a Life Plan

What is the key to success
In any endeavor
Stubbornness

Every negative-sounding quality
Has a positive aspect to it
And the reverse is also true

People tend to be negative on stubbornness
Because it keeps people from doing
What they want others to do

Why am I still not giving up
On this project I started
Over 2 decades ago now
Stubbornness is the most accurate reason

It is not a pretty trait
Many traits are useful
And the key is to controlling them
And not letting them control you

The biggest problem of why things aren't done
Is because people fail to commit to and complete them
It is kind like will power and a kind of discipline
There are many times you should listen to others
But there are some times you should not

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How do you know the difference
Consulting the Bible and praying are a good start
That you have already worked on something for a while
Is also a good sign that it is worth completing
You have to know when to cut your loses as well

The difference is that life will make it possible
Or you will be kept from doing it by everything
God does not leave these things to chance
Jonah tried to evade God
So God forced him using a miracle

The best way to start is to find something that you find
compelling
That is not a vice and does not hurt you or anyone else
If it also alleviates your or someone else's pain
You are to a good start

Not everyone
Actually very few
Have time to do more than work and raise their kids
This is a very important one
But not everyone has that option either

I think picking one thing you can do
And keeping to it
As long as no one is getting hurt in the process
Is where to start

Ultimately the goal of everyone should be to glorify God
The second thing is we have a big time issue
We have eternity at one end and a very short time period on the

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other

We have to weigh in the eternal things as a bigger focus
Your life really does not start until after you die

So in light of eternity and factoring in what you can do
Decide what to do over time
But do not worry too much about it
Because God is always primarily in control
Not us

And He leaves little to chance or human decision
If it is something that has to be done one way
The other thing to consider is that there are very few things
That have to be done one way

God is creative and combining this with service for God
By helping others out of unnecessary pain
Is a noble type of life focus

As we understand God and spiritual things best through faith
You have to realize you may see no effect in your lifetime
But God can and does use even poorly designed things to great
effect

It is ironic that God can always do a better job than us at anything
God even makes a more believable person than us as well
But He still chooses to use people especially ones without the
proper skills

All in all focus on your eternal life not this one
Save people in both lives and from suffering in each
But realize whatever you create can fall apart

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You have to do your best to preserve your efforts
But ultimately it is God's choice alone as to how long
Or in what ways what you create is used

In my project that I have been working on for over 20 years
I started writing and working on my website
As I needed to stay away from (toxic) chemicals
As I had a sensitivity from the military

I had done poorly in school
After coming back from the military
But had not yet been diagnosed with Schizophrenia yet

I was trying to find another type of career
As I hated Business Management so much at that time
Although I think running a business is one of the greatest
challenges
And I would find it much more interesting to study today

So I switched to another good career choice
Writing in the form of Journalism
Which is a very poor career now
It is on the verge of being entirely done by software
But shortly after this I was diagnosed with a mental illness

I have tried many times to learn programming
But never succeed because it stresses me out too much
And one of the keys to getting the medicine working
Is to also have a low stress lifestyle
Otherwise the medicine is cancelled out by the stress

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But I continue to get ideas to write about to this day
That is the key to writing well is to writing when inspired
Especially when you want to keep your stress low

Writing as a way of communicating is on the way out as well
Everything has been going to video online for years
The only thing that slowed it down was how slow the pipes were
Just like TV overtaking reading when I was a kid

Video has overtaken written content online a long time ago
Even tiny devices do not discourage video consumption
I have also considered using video and multimedia as a way to
communicate
I have found that mixed media is a lot of work and not ideal for
anyone
Video experimentation online for me has been limited by the fees
involved

I have also got interested in making things efficient
And reaching as many people as possible
Who don't have the most expensive devices

In areas with really poorly built infrastructure
In far away places like rural America
And downtown in major American cities

What I Learned from the Army

Life Lessons

Pain can be limitless
In duration and intensity
God will not always save you from it
You cannot trust that your experts
Will actually succeed in lowering your pain
Even if they do understand your condition
Relaxing always helps when in pain
It is almost impossible for me to relax
I do poorly even under moderate pressure
If my life depending on me doing something I would die

Nothing is foolproof
Things can always get worse
Sometimes you can be forced
To do what you find scary
You will fail yourself sometimes
And others will fail you at the worst time

You only have a short time
With those who are important to you
You may never see them again
And never even hear when they leave

The church can and often will give faulty advice
Or steer you in the wrong direction
If you need psychological help
And you are unique or intellectual

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You will need to study philosophy
And write your own self help book

You are often your own worst enemy
And you can get yourself into more trouble
Than those plotting against you

Some things are funny and some are not
If you cannot distinguish easily between the two
Never try to be funny in any situation

Do not be too important or essential
Boring is ok and often preferred

Time can go very fast or very slow
Short periods of time appear very long when you are in pain

When the stress gets too great
Everyone screws things up

It is very easy to control another person
And there are endless ways to cause pain

Sometimes you cannot escape fate
Sometimes life makes little sense

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Caveats

Everything I write about the army only applies to enlisted soldiers

Officers have an entirely different world they operate in
And it is truly a night and day difference

Many things I talk about the military philosophy sometimes precede the birth of the US and are common in other militaries of the world both historically and internationally

I was in the military in the mid 1990s so things have changed a lot since then

Although much has likely not changed

The Army is the main focus although I know to an extent about the other services as well

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How the Army is Different

You hear about the Marines all the time

Because they are sent in first before a war is declared except for the Army and other special forces because of legal reasons

And because it is often more convenient for the US to launch amphibious attacks because of logistical and geographic reasons

The Army is basically the common man service and there is no glory in serving in it

The Army does the really hard work of holding land and routing out terrorists as well as spearheading invasions

The Army special forces have one of the hardest and least advertised job in the military

They go in before any regular troops and find, train, and lead average people in allied groups in the area and make them into a real army

What the Army thinks of themselves as doing best is training

The Drill Sergeant is actually an important position in the Army and it is competitive and difficult to become one

Many of our Drill Sergeants were special forces trained

The Army is the one service that does not get an air force besides small drones and helicopters

Army equipment, even tanks and helicopters are much less expensive than Navy or Air Force equipment

The Navy even not including the Marines was probably bigger than the Army at the time I was in

The big task the US Navy does is patrol every ocean and sea in the entire world all the time

Many army bases allow anyone to come on base as they have nothing bigger than jeeps

And all the rifles and small artillery are locked down

The army is basically all foot soldiers on the front line for any job

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Army Philosophy

The Army does not want you to be smart, self-motivated, or even think at all and does not even promote heroism unless it is specifically necessary for the mission

Our and European countries have fought and won wars by installing a mental mindset called discipline

Discipline is partially about following orders and being a team player but it also extends to your emotional perspective

The Army has its own culture and the reason for that is because people come to the military from a wide variety of backgrounds So when you got to an unfamiliar, hostile, and frightening location far from home you can depend on the military doing things the same way

If you never adjust to this culture emotionally even if you follow orders and work very hard you will have internal emotional struggles your entire time in the service

That is essentially what happened to me and the stress triggered a genetic predisposition I had to Schizophrenia

Most of your time in the Army you are either at the rifle range, cleaning something, or moving something

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Training

The military waves a certain percent of their members on any particular qualification needed to do anything in the military
If you cannot hit a target if your life depended on it or even under no stress

This does not disqualify you from the military

You can't really fail out of most military (infantry type) trainings (except special forces)

You usually just repeat it over and over again

The military doesn't really go under the assumption that anybody actually wants to be there as they have to work people who are drafted (historically)

The military still wants an enlisted soldier to get as much college credit as possible and that is key to advancing even for the enlisted, but it is very difficult to get the time to take the courses, especially in the Army

If you cannot intellectually understand combat training you are below middle school developmentally and academically

Military training is basically hard for one reason

You are under stress while doing it

The reason why they stress test you in training is because combat is hard because people are shooting back at you not that it is hard to blow things up

That is why terrorism is so cheap and easy

So every military training especially the infantry ones are mostly a stress test

One of the big problems the way our country does combat training is that we only allow them to do kind things in training

The only problem with that is that those who we fight wars with generally are not kind to us at least

We often don't treat our enemies very well lately either

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The military also doesn't believe in sleep or time off

In fact if you have a non combat role in the military you continue to still train for combat basically after you finish your job your entire enlistment

These are exactly the same things you learned first in basic training

And all Army go to the gas chamber at least once a year

It is filled with tear gas but it is still very painful

That is why they don't want anyone with any breathing problems enlisting

The reason the Army screws things up constantly is the mission is often the lowest priority

As long as you give 150% and follow all orders you can screw up almost anything in the military constantly and do well in any military assignment

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Entering and Leaving the Army

If you don't like the idea of skydiving into live machine gun fire into a desert or jungle in the middle of the night or you aren't blessed with mechanical abilities

The Army is the wrong place for you

Most people in the military want out as soon as possible as they find these things out no matter where they are stationed or what job they have

Even if you are mentally ill, you need a US member of congress to get you out

Everyone really signs up for a 8 year term and although the extra part is inactive service you can and likely will be called back in this time frame again due to another war

If you want to re-enlist for another tour you usually get a lot of money in cash and get to be a sergeant which is good on your resume

The downside is that you are now responsible for 4-8 new soldiers doing whatever they are told to do for the next 4 or more years and you get paid about the same as before

It takes weeks to get into the Army and months to get out If you are in for less than 6 months it is as if you were never in

There were about 4 plus types of discharges when I was in the military including, honorable, general, other than honorable, dishonorable and medical

But unless you get the honorable discharge you qualify for no veterans or former military government programs

To get most of the benefits and not have most of the downsides, join the Air Force instead

If you are going as enlisted

The only downside to the Air Force is that it is hard to get promoted as enlisted because people stay in so long

Wise Ones of the Soft World

Leaning back on a soft pillow
Day comes in a flash of light
Night comes equally fast
We rest on a wide expanse
A tall rock stands above us

Sometimes we roll and tumble
Due to the disruptions occurring in the dead of night
Our world is smaller than others
But it stands above and beyond our nearest neighbors
We don't travel often or far
Our days are empty of excitement

We all earned a place here
By virtue of our leadership roles
If the clothes fit and we accept
White, black, brown, red, green, and blue
We are products of the rainbow of our creators imagination

The Chinese proverb says
This is where we are mostly from
Softness and warmth are better than hardness and strength
We are soft to the touch
But strong of mind
Our hearts bleed for our friends

We have a white glow that comes from within
We love being hugged and held
We are not tall in stature

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Or strong and in shape
Just like the water we try to avoid
We are subtle
As a reflection of our furnace
We emit warmth

We sit so still that we can pick up dust
But our imaginations race far and wide
Our adventures and growth are usually internal
It is said that the sage never travelled but knew all things
We who live in close quarters
Try not to sit on sharp things

Bits of money sometimes rain down
As well as receipts from new recruits
We are all friends mostly
But we have the occasional revolt
There are only two faction though

We sometimes itch
But there is often someone to scratch us
We get cold in the winter
And summer is equally cold
But the furnace keeps things toasty
Especially at night
We do sometimes get moist with sweat

Our guardian angel is visible
And we can directly ask Santa for presents
We are of many different species
But we all bleed white
Our bodies seldom move

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But we have real souls

We have to leave our soft spot
Every other week
As the expanse shifts and changes color
We accept our role in life
As many have learned to
In your world as well

When we are sad
Our faces show it
So the others can cheer us up
Even though smiles are sewn on our faces

In times of great change
When our world turns upside down
We hold on to each other
There are times when
Our world fundamentally changes

And sometimes things even
Crawl on us in the night
We fight the little invaders
By setting out bad things for them to eat
We don't need to eat
There is nothing those scary little guys can take
Most are very small
As the giant doors close tightly

It seems every few years
We are in a new location
They seem to be getting better all the time

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Several times our world actually shrank
But none were left behind
But each new location was an opportunity
To find new ways to arrange our world
We like challenges
As they give us something to do

We enjoy the live concerts
The voices come from a little blue box
Sometimes the Bible reads itself to us
Other times it sings a wide variety of songs
It blinks blue at night
To let us know it is all right

We watch our guardian closely
More like an older brother
To make sure he takes his medicines
One time he talked of parachuting us
We don't want to take any chances

He seems to sleep a lot
He makes a lot of noise
So we know he is still alive
But many days can be gone half the day
Recently he stays in more often because of a cold

He is not afraid of much
He can even move quite fast
And he can trap and release
The scary little things easily
As he is many times their size
He is bigger and stronger

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Than the biggest among us

Sometimes he gets hurt
If he sleeps on the wrong side
Or if he jumps up in the night with burning heart
We can watch his dreams
Much as we watch his little screens
These are magic boxes
Where people talk
And there are words and pictures
And some even move

Our guardian seems to get up at random times
And we don't see the real sun often
As the window being closed makes us cooler
Recently important things
Now have bright colors attached
We often sit on his wallet and keys
So he can't go out
But he quickly finds them now
Due to the bright colored markings

He also seems to write for quite a while
After the music plays for a while
Or he talks to his father
There is this long list of processes
To put things on a line
He uses a bunch of little boxes
And he goes outside our world
Coming back with his writing
Now written on paper more neatly

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I am glad we don't have to eat
I think he would forget to feed us

No Slack

A coal dropped into
A pot of ice cold water
The room fills with steam
The steam clears
And the water is boiling slow
The pot overflows
And the stove shorts out

When I think about the times
When I had no choice
The freedom I have now is often overwhelming
When you are held down under the water
While swimming in the ocean
By an under current
It is like being in the military

When you effectively have no choice for months
You then get some fairly meaningless choices
But you are separated from family and friends
And you cannot go home for long periods
You are never really finished with training
Even in your relatively free time

You are not told why when you are expected to do anything
Without the privilege of deciding whether it is moral or good for
me
There is no time for questions of any kind
Freedom of expression is extremely limited

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There are no artistic vocations in the military
The military does have its own culture
But it is very stressful even learning about it

You are slowly told more and more
And your training gets more and more difficult
As you descend into the heart of the beast
As if you are being mentally conditioned
To be part of a religious cult
It also gets more and more difficult to leave

The system must only appeal
To people who never question things
Surely philosophy is the direct opposite of military service
It is not that I object
To working hard or following orders
But I never felt safe nor did I trust anyone
I was constantly afraid

From early on in training
I realized we could and would
Be forced to do even things that terrified us
It would likely be for a good cause
But your safety and well being is never considered

You can always screw things up
And have few responsibilities
But you do not potentially even have
Power over your own body

People who have never served
Have no conception of how dangerous and cruel

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The outside world has become
They see marches on TV in their downtowns
And fear that
But if they lived in the Middle East
That would be a slow day

Nothing and no one is really safe today
Even in the middle of America
Our greatest protection is that we are unimportant enough
That no one would risk the wrath of the US
Just to pick on random people like us
If we stay in the United States and are citizens
And we don't have dark skin and speak another language

Believe it or not but there are entire people groups
That have been so victimized
By nameless people in our names
Both officially and unofficially
And through allies and in other countries
That they see us as invading them first

Many of them believe in God too
They also believe that their God
Is the only one true God
But they do not embrace
The forgiveness and compassion of Christianity

They do not believe it wrong
To destroy their own countries
And hurt their own people
They would make us all slaves if they could
They are not the kind of people

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Who accept the place they were born in

They believe they are God's chosen people
They believe they should be
Wealthy and powerful because of this
They attribute their loss of wealth and power
To their not being devout or radical enough

They have long memories stretching back
A thousand or more years
From their point of view
They were the faithful followers of God
And we are morally corrupt
They believe they have the morally superior argument
And they believe they have been
Treated unjustly and persecuted

What do these two things have in common
War and the training for war
In order for us to fight this other culture
Who are willing to fight us
At any cost to themselves or us
As any effective enemy does

We don't though do the same thing
At least that is on official records
But this is purely for propaganda reasons
War is a way of destroying things
And is always very cruel
This does not justify cruelty in war
But it does mean the Army has to train for this

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To make someone tough enough
To survive the current types of combat situations
You have to do some very cruel things in training
To properly prepare people
It also would be reasonable
To organize this as the first training

Because if our military is going to be truly voluntary
Recruits should have an opportunity
To see what they really signed up for
Before having no way to get out
Of course no one would sign up then

Our culture wants all the advantages
But does not want to pay the price
Of a civilization fundamentally built
On technologies that wouldn't work
Without our two wealthiest and most powerful rivals
Being willing to continue to trade with us

Our country tries to play the victim
And that we are the good guys
Much as many empires throughout history have
Saying the world is a little less cruel
Because we control everything that happens in it
They are obviously trying to persuade those
Who are citizens of the empire
Because this is what they want to think
And because no one else would believe them

So the moral of the story
Is to not lie to your people

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Claiming you can win wars
Without hurting people
Or that they should be grateful
That we merely spared their lives
While destroying their homes
And their entire infrastructure
So there is no work left for them

Instead we should stop fighting
So many wars in the first place
If any other country
Had their enemies an ocean away
And had so few social problems
Because of their wealth and social conformity
They would participate in many fewer wars

It is hard to imagine
Given the strength of our military
How we can keep losing wars
But the big way we keep losing
Is that we spend too much money on them
No other country has fought
A large inland war on the other side of the world
And won it quick and easy

Not only are we spending ourselves into the grave
We also are angering most other countries
So if we ever need help of any other country
We are going to be in a tough spot

One of these important international agreements
That we don't want to bother to honor anymore

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Include provisions like not torturing
And not using chemical weapons
Doing so is considered a war crime

There is nothing special about America
We are just in better shape
Demographically and geographically and economically
We could be a moral force in the world
But first we would have to give up
Basing our entire foreign policy
On nothing but economics

But greed is considered good here
You take the social out of the gospel
And no one will listen to you
Social justice is as fundamental
To Christianity as sexual morality
No wonder the church is losing
Rich white members in America