

Bible Study Collection 2 By Ben Huot

# **Bible Study Collection 2**

By Ben Huot

[www.benjamin-newton.com](http://www.benjamin-newton.com)

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Inspired by a Bible study on Job and research on study Bibles

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# Psychology

## Trying to Help

Like a hunter stalking their prey  
Emotions tend to sneak up on you  
Like being startled by a sudden noise  
Depression can come out of nowhere

It is hard to define how I feel  
As emotions change like the direction of the wind  
In a series of waves like the ocean tide  
I am easily overcome with feelings

Depression is a feeling of hopelessness  
While paranoia is an instinctual terror  
Depression makes a person feel like not trying  
Paranoia often drives a person to try too much

When the hurting is not visible  
Other people don't know how to understand  
When the hurting is not something they have experienced  
Other people do not know what to say

Even while hurting and alone  
It is important to remember  
Only so much can be expected of others  
People can only give of themselves so much

Our energy is not endless  
And all of us can be pushed over the edge  
Eventually professional help is what is needed  
One individual will burn out  
If they do the job of four people

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Like trying to be politically neutral  
Or making a church multicultural  
There is little a church can do  
That will help all mental needs

It is endearing and extraordinary  
To want to help everyone  
But some things are just too complex  
And require too much time and energy  
To bring about a stable condition

Too often we expect religion  
To solve all problems  
Or think that just knowing God  
Will resolve longstanding difficulties

Some pain and misunderstanding  
Will be there until Christ returns  
As the consequences of sin are grave

Spiritual death is no small thing  
Whether it is us or the world that has died

I can empathize with with those  
Trying to understand  
How to deal with issues  
They cannot relate with  
Either by experience or training  
But still wanting to help

Maybe we have to accept imperfection  
In the Church

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Whether it is doctrinal or cultural issues  
Medical or financial

The Church has faced many crisis  
As do their members  
Sometimes daily  
As the song goes  
“I need thee every hour”

Today the American church faces an existential crisis  
What role does the church play in society?  
How are we to work in a world  
That has given up on God?

We cannot give up on them ever  
As God never gives up on us  
Maybe we just need to be silent  
And wait upon God to respond

We need to learn from our history  
We need to sever political connections  
We need to more gentle about evangelizing  
We need to speak out on financial inequality

We need a parallel church  
That would be everything the American church is not

It would be mystical, personal, and small  
It would focus on the needs of a neighborhood  
And not identify with any political issues

It would make peace with unbelievers  
And it would accept

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That not all things  
Can be solved through doctrine

The Church does not need to give up on meetings  
But maybe the way we structure churches  
Could benefit from radical change

Maybe a house based Bible study church  
Would be a successful model  
For a society where the Church is being marginalized

Instead of us resisting cultural threats  
To our race, class, and language  
We need to celebrate these demographic revolutions

When there are so many problems  
And such limited time and resources  
We need to find a way to prioritize

If evangelism is our priority  
We need to let things go  
That sidetrack this objective

What does the Church want to be known for?  
Race, class, and language  
Or faith, patience, and self-control

Who do we want to be as Christians?  
We need to not just repeat  
What we have heard from others

We need to make a choice  
And we will have to live with the consequences



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Now much of society sees Christians  
Like they see the mentally ill

It would be good if they keep from  
Seeing us as a serious threat  
We don't want to set up ourselves for persecution  
If we suffer it should be for God  
Not for cultural issues

## Being Different

I have been told I am unique  
But I think it is more  
That I have an unusual combination of views

Other people thought of these ideas long before me  
And these ideas would not be considered to be so unusual  
At almost any other time in history

Many people today want to be different  
But being truly different does not make you famous  
And it is much harder to sell truly original things

Being unusual makes it harder to fit in  
This is not a good thing  
This makes you feel uncomfortable within every group

There are so many people in the world  
There must be many people in your same position  
No matter how original you think your ideas are

One of the ways to find joy in life  
Is not to be at the center of attention  
Living for something greater than yourself  
Brings joy and fulfillment

Not everyone can or should be a leader  
If there are no followers  
There is little point in creating a group

Some people do have their own culture

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But you can get to be so different  
That other people cannot comprehend a word you say

Having a common purpose is important for national security  
Ideology is more important than the military for a nation

Every country has a slightly different social contract with the  
people  
This is their justification as to why they should rule  
And their competitors shouldn't  
This is one of the major drivers of history

I do not comfortably fit in to any group  
I have to get good at explaining myself  
I have to quickly justify why I think the way I do

Unique or different may be cool  
In some regions or cities in this country  
But things are developing in the opposite direction  
In other regions and cities in this country

There are certain specific behaviors  
That are more accepted today  
But none of these involve accepting different ideas

Creativity is a great strength  
That I hope everyone can master  
But it is most effective in solving problems

Being creative is not entertaining for the most part  
But it does help a person cope  
With problems they encounter in their lives  
With the common goal of living with less pain

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Conforming to other people's ideas  
Has gotten a bad reputation lately  
But when you have any kind of movement or organization  
You inherently already have mass conformity

Most successful attempts at free expression on a large scale  
Have been successfully sabotaged  
By corporations seeking to sell more things  
To make a mockery of independent thinking

No one wants you to have your own ideas  
And if you want to really change something  
That would affect many people  
You will inherently run into opposition

Our situation was designed the way it is  
This wild ride we are on through technological change  
And its various effects on our culture  
Is not accidental

People in power deliberately created the situation  
That we are in today  
Because they wanted the things to happen  
That most people see as negative

Whenever you try to make a meaningful change  
You are inherently challenging their power  
And they will effectively resist your efforts

If that is not effective at making your ideas  
Not work or not be adopted  
They will keep changing tactics

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Eventually they will go after  
Your family or your reputation

But in cases that require this  
You may simply disappear  
And wake up at a dark site

Some hole somewhere with very good security  
Likely on some boat in the middle of the ocean  
The kind of place designed to hold agents  
And keep them from escaping

I learned as a kid to try to change the world  
Later I learned the world is a very cruel place  
And trying to change this at scale  
Will make your life miserable

But one thing you can change is yourself  
You can change your thinking  
And this will change your actions  
This will improve your life more  
Than any external factor

This is also the way to making lasting change  
In the world today  
It is hard to argue with someone  
Who wants to improve their own morality

And this will have ripple effects  
This will produce changes too subtle to track  
And no one will be willing to accept  
That this was the cause

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Remember evil does run this world  
But Christ has overcome death and hades/hell  
The devil can only do limited damage  
As he has to get permission from God  
To do anything of significance

## Joy of Uselessness

All of us seem to encounter  
At least one life changing crisis  
Over the course of our lives  
Some we may not even want to survive

There are many things in life we cannot avoid  
Today everything of interest is public or will be soon

But today like throughout recorded history  
We have been able to avoid being targets  
Of powerful and violent people  
The trick is to truly offer no value to such people

There really is no point in being famous in America today  
We have transformed our society  
Into one where you can technically express yourself  
But only in very specific ways

Today America's world empire  
Is being backed by an ideology  
With complete and blind acceptance and ownership  
No matter what the personal cost  
By at least millions of people in the homeland

The Church which constantly fears their ideas  
Might shift a little in different cultures  
To adapt to different needs and different expressions of faith

Have without any kind of reservation or reflection  
Decided that you must accept Evangelical culture

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To go to Heaven and be right with God  
And similar ideas have been synchronized  
With the Christian faith in many cultures

The greatest ideological threat to the Church  
Outside America is its connection to America

If Americans get to claim  
They are closer to God and more devout  
Because they have more wealth and a more powerful military  
Why can't Christians in other countries  
Have an even better claim to be true believers  
As they are more likely to suffer for their faith?

This arrangement only advantages a few rich people  
Who have no loyalty to anyone but themselves  
And are not in any way meaningfully affiliated with Christianity  
But have the Church's unwavering and unconditional support

Democracy never had a chance  
They don't want to leave  
The important issues up to a vote  
If they did that then  
The outcome might not be easy to control

America is hated throughout the world  
Because we want the world's resources cheaply  
But we don't want to bother  
To learn about any other culture  
Because we think people in other countries  
That reject our culture are evil for doing so

We think the solution to problems



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The world has struggled with for millennia  
Can be solved in a few years  
If we send in our military

We think we can destroy their country  
But save their lives  
And get them to abandon their culture in appreciation

This is one of the reasons  
Why I would never travel outside America  
In my military service I very closely missed  
Getting thrown into some very scary situations

This is why I now take as few risks as possible

I deliberately talk in generalities  
When I criticize what I think is wrong in the world  
And have no interest in connecting the dots  
That would identify those who control such things  
Or the means in which they control these things

I do not try even if I could  
To get in any position of power  
I try to treat others as gently as possible  
And interact as little as possible online

I learn enough about technology  
To stay a little ahead of the curve

There will likely be a time in the near future  
That I will not be able to speak as freely  
Because of the unintended consequences  
Of legislation targeting tech companies

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Or evolution of technology  
That makes writing irrelevant

Everything has a cost  
You cannot make money off of free  
You may find someone to serve as your patron  
But they will want something valuable in return

I am in the unusual situation  
That I have never made any money  
Off of any of my creations

Throughout history most writers needed financial backing  
They could not speak as freely as I do  
Because they needed money to survive while creating  
And writing has always been a niche market

We see the academic world today as very biased  
But this has always been true

Most writing has had extremely political  
Motivations and meanings  
This is why writers are often persecuted  
If they are viewed as relevant  
To established powers

The biggest protection of a country is its ideology  
And the best protection of an individual  
Is to not stand out

So you may question why  
I do not promote my ideas better  
I see little advantage in doing so for anyone

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Some ideas are only relevant  
To a very small group of people

Americans have the freedom of expression they do  
Because a few companies control all the means of publication  
Individual voices are lost in the static of millions of others

This is a good thing and makes me happy  
It only sounds negative  
To those who would not be interested  
In what I am trying to communicate

It is almost completely nonsensical  
For society to adopt individuality  
On a massive scale

This has been a strategy of the powerful  
To destroy the message of those  
Who want to live differently

I am not afraid of that outcome  
As there is no easy money to be made  
With my ideas  
As too few people  
Would care about my ideas

## Mature Faith

I have often thought that I should  
Do everything I can  
To prepare for any scenario

But I have recently realized  
That just like Christ told us  
To prepare for His second coming  
By being kind

So the best method of protection  
Is to pray to God

We cannot expect God to prevent  
Anything bad from happening to us  
But He does love us unconditionally

If we want God to forgive us  
No matter what we have done  
We should accept whatever God sends our way

Just like if we want God's mercy  
We must forgive our enemies  
A relationship has to work both ways

We live in God's world  
And we have to accept Him  
Despite not knowing our future

Like joining the military  
You make a commitment

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Before you have any idea  
Of what you have committed to

God truly controls everything  
So it make sense to go to the top position  
If He is willing to listen

I cannot reject God  
Even if I disagree with Him on some things  
Because He accepts me  
And I know I have done things He disagrees with

The best antidote to fear is thankfulness  
If we are going to fear trials  
And question why God allows them  
It is only fair to feel gratitude  
When something good happens

If we want a mature relationship with God  
We have to put in some work as well

God does not need to be forgiven  
Because He cannot do evil

Maybe we need to accept  
That it is acceptable to disagree with Him  
But we still need to obey Him

Is it true that God gives us rules  
That we need to follow  
To have a happier life  
But it is enough that He commands us

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We need to follow Him  
Even when we don't understand  
Or the answers are not always given

There are many things beyond our understanding  
Suffering might just be one of those things

It is good to be responsible  
Treating others kindly and avoided accidents  
Wisdom can help us escape  
Some of the worst fates many times

But we need to accept that this is not our home  
And we are not the ones in charge here

God is good and wants the best for us  
Suffering does not negate this  
I just means that we do not have a simple answer

The Bible is not always comforting  
Especially for non-believers  
Or believers shortly after sinning  
But it is always true

I have trouble getting myself to read the Bible  
But afterwards I am always glad I did

Unfortunately we live in a dangerous world  
And we still have a very limited understanding  
Of even just the physical world  
There are factors we cannot comprehend

Furthermore we have very little wisdom

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As reflected in the problems  
That we get ourselves into

The only sure thing is that Christ  
Has made a way  
To be reconciled with our Creator

It cost Him everything  
But it is available to all people  
This should give us hope

We should be gracious about it  
Because He was willing to suffer for us  
He will never leave us alone  
Or force us to do  
Anything we don't want to do

Maybe the best way to deal with suffering  
Is to do everything we can do  
To stop the suffering of others

The only thing we can really change  
Are our own actions and beliefs  
Maybe even simple kindness  
Is more powerful than we think

# Philosophy



## Church of One

Drowning in a sea of voices  
All angry and all loud  
Surrounded by crowds  
Of various sizes

I choose to speak so softly  
That only a few can hear  
Deliberately limiting my message  
To only be relevant  
To other minds like mine

A place of quiet  
The voice of just one person  
With no followers

How do we prove  
We are not the same  
As the rich and powerful  
Feeding off the poor and marginalized?

Think small in all ways  
Be inefficient and subtle

Do not fight your enemy  
Simply go around him

Struggle against the noise  
By being even more subtle and gentle

Do not go for numbers

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Refuse to engage people who disagree  
Keep your group from organizing  
Strive to stand as individuals

Never agree on doctrine  
Be nowhere and therefore everywhere  
Be so soft and warm  
That your ideas dissolve in the culture

Form a different culture  
For every single person  
Be the anti-movement

Seek to do small things  
For only a few people

Put great time and effort  
Building one person's character  
Rather than trying to change a nation

Stop trying to compete with opinion leaders  
Be peaceful and unconcerned  
With message or followers

Deliberately refuse to be an institution  
Of any kind or form  
Be only known by your first names

Treat others as they are more important  
Than an entire country or culture  
Stand alongside those who do not fit in  
But not in any visible or quantifiable way

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Try to be so unsuccessful by today's standards  
So that you do not attract businesses  
Be so unorganized that you keep no list of people

Do not accept any request for media coverage  
Never set up any infrastructure  
So that corruption is inconceivable  
Do not make a logo or use a name

Believe that the only way for salvation  
Is to seek God with all your heart

Do not be all things to all people  
Only be one thing to one person

The way to spread the Gospel  
Is to hide it in your heart

The great battles of today are not physical  
Do not concern yourself  
With things outside your immediate sphere of influence

Spend all of your time  
Outwitting the evil in your own heart

Forget what you have learned in school  
And give up on having any influence  
In material or social spheres

Be not who you are  
Rather be who God says you are

Do not concern yourself with

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The heresies of other people  
Worry more about  
The corruption of your own mind

Do not try to save the world  
Try to save yourself

Do not try to solve the Bible  
Accept that most things in life  
Especially concerning God  
Will forever be a mystery

This is the faith as I see it

## Freedom Equals Wealth

Many Christians today  
Believe everyone should be a theologian  
There is even a book by that name  
By a famous theologian

Protestantism did so well in America  
Because we express our devotion  
Through materialism

A million variations of very similar beliefs  
Is not useful to spread the Gospel  
But it is useful for capitalism

The best way to limit the power of the Church  
Is to marginalize the spiritual

The Church in America has always had a fear  
Of both the supernatural and traditional ethics  
In any Church contexts

When you ally yourselves with the rich and powerful  
Like with major political parties  
You take on their negative associations as well

If the American Church wants to associate itself  
With the poor and marginalized  
It must make some major political, financial, and theological  
changes

For a while it was sustainable

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For the ultra wealthy to get richer  
And for regular Americans to not get poorer

But now that the Middle East, China, and India  
Have a little of our wealth  
We now have to share the wealth

Regular Americans can no longer afford high margin items  
That only Americans can produce  
So there are no more opportunities to grow  
The American share of the world's wealth

Americans now are faced with a situation  
Where they have to make choices  
Outside what luxuries to buy

Do we want freedom or security?  
Do we want independence or unity?  
Do we want wealth or to be compassionate?

Every American thinks they are poor  
But 75% of the world's population  
Would be considered below the poverty line in America

If everyone in the world received the same wage  
Most Americans would be much poorer

The same groups that want to bring the Gospel to the Muslim  
world  
Are creating an Apocalypse in the same areas of the world  
In some ways, they are preaching a self-fulfilling prophecy

The inconvenient truth is that

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Many ideas of America's wealthiest  
Do not align with the values  
Of a literal interpretation of the Bible

The same people that denounce southern Californian culture  
Have the culture and freedoms they do  
Because it is being exported to Asia

Ideology protects America more than the military  
This is the international equivalent of the saying  
"You cannot lock up everyone"  
That is used in reference to domestic policing

## God and Uncertainty

People fight over theology  
Because the Bible is often unclear  
And appears different  
To different people

The purpose of this has eluded many  
I now think the purpose  
Is to build our faith

When Jesus came to earth  
He could have revealed He was God  
In a way that would be obvious  
He could have proved Himself to everyone  
So everyone would believe Him

Jesus also could have given an account for Himself  
Or why we have to suffer  
But He did neither  
He remained silent on these issues literally  
He did address these issues by His actions

The consequences of sin are greater  
Than we can imagine  
This is why God hates sin  
This is what really angers God  
Because it really hurts us literally

Maybe Heaven will require faith too  
In the famous passage about love  
In 1 Corinthians 13



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Three things are important in Heaven  
Faith, hope, and love

Faith to understand God  
Love to get along with others  
Hope for something I don't know

I think today especially  
We want to and expect to  
Know everything and see everything  
We all want complete transparency  
We have to as we no longer have any trust

Many people are very interested in prophecy  
Because they do not apply their faith  
And trust God has good reasons  
Why He doesn't reveal this

Certainly the first time He came  
Turned out really good for us  
So why would His second coming  
Be any less positive?

To understand the future  
We need to understand the past  
To understand the Gospel  
We need to understand the Old Testament  
This is a good reason to read the Bible

God came through before  
So we know He will in the future

The great Christian mystics of the Middle Ages

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Did not want to have any supernatural experiences  
Even positive ones from God  
Because they were concerned about becoming proud

Some of the reasons why we don't see spiritual things  
It would be detrimental to our faith  
Another reason is that it would be too intense  
And finally it would likely develop into an addiction  
Even in Heaven we will have physical bodies  
The physical world was created by God so it is good

Science and religion are often antagonistic to each other  
Science doesn't like faith  
Because they only think in terms of what is rational  
So they feel this undermines their ability  
To influence others through their discoveries  
Most of their political objectives are very noble though

Religion should not like Science  
Because people begin to think  
That they do not need God  
As the spiritual seems irrelevant  
If you only concern yourself with what can be measured

Religion never changes  
Science changes very fast  
Religion requires people to slow down  
Science makes it hard to do this

Many people think we can have our cake and eat it too  
They think we can embrace both science and religion  
Because they think rejecting science  
Makes them seem less educated

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This is very much not true

We want to have faith  
But we never want any struggles  
We say we will stay with God  
No matter what  
But give up or run  
At the slightest obstacle

The disciples of Jesus did the same thing  
But they did overcome this later  
And grew spiritually beyond this

The Apostle Paul wrote about this  
As we are as Christians very immature spiritually  
We think some sins are insignificant  
We focus on the very first part of salvation  
But we do not commit ourselves to developing spiritually

We want God in our lives  
When we need Him  
But do not stay in contact  
In both the exciting and mundane times  
Maybe that is why  
Christians have the same divorce rates  
As unbelievers do

I think of uncertainty as something to dread  
But this is not emotionally healthy  
I know something about fear  
As I have Schizophrenia  
As a result of my military service

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We have to believe  
God will never give us  
More than we can take

Religion is very difficult  
Because it requires sacrifice  
We keep asking and trying to get more  
But we might be happier with less

When we read the Bible  
We often think it is boring  
And that is part of the point in reading it  
As this helps develop discipline

But the bigger issue is  
The Bible requires us to make decisions  
God doesn't want people not fully committed  
Many people think this is unfair

But why would you want to go to Heaven  
If you do not like God?  
Ultimately God makes the rules  
As it is His Heaven and His earth

Even the devil has to follow them  
And is often forced to  
If someone is in power in the underworld  
It will likely be one of God's angels  
Not the devil

## Positive Developments

One of the biggest traits  
That I see exemplified by God  
Both in the life of Jesus Christ  
And in the interaction with The Lord  
Over the millennia of history covered in the Old Testament  
Is the value called kindness

I have seen a tendency  
For some in the Church to reject this  
Much as their is widespread rejection  
Of animal rights and the possibility of racial issues

I see the idea of random acts of kindness  
And some of the proposed expansions of civil rights  
And constitutional protections  
From excessive force by the justice system  
As an aspect of society that could be driven  
By the moving of the Holy Spirit

I have realized from talking to my sister  
That there are positive developments in society now  
This is one of the biggest issues I am aware of

Even technology that scares me  
For how easily it can be abused  
Could be used responsibly and be genuinely useful  
If it is used to empower those with limitations  
Due to various disabilities

Some Christians now believe that there needs to be

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A line drawn in the sand  
And that we have to choose one end  
Of the political and social spectrum

If the choice is between fascism and communism  
I choose to drop out or only vote for 3rd parties

I do not know where this places me ideologically  
But I believe the biggest problems today  
Arise from a lack of kindness across the board

Our first inclination seems to be switching over time  
To acting fast and choosing not to think  
We should all be able to agree being gentle and slow acting  
Should be a sign of maturity  
And not merely a sign of weakness

For those who reject violence  
Under any foreseeable circumstance  
It is hard to understand this drive to win  
Any kind of debate just makes me want  
To avoid interacting in those situations

Obviously I too struggle with  
All of my ethical deficiencies as well  
Some are just harder for me to understand

I see many problems with the modern world  
Living at the expense of our descendants  
And the majority of the world population  
Plus the pollution of the planet  
And the elimination of entire species

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For even useful things like medicines  
This seems very short sighted

There are some great medicines today  
Especially for pain management  
But we cannot use them for uses they were designed for  
Because so many have used them improperly

This shows that the problems we have  
Are not solvable by science for the most part

Our biggest problems are not that we lack  
Understanding or intelligence  
But rather that our lack of empathy  
Is a more primary limitation and source of conflict

Science answers most questions that revolve around  
The answer to how should we do something  
But fails badly when we try to use it solely  
To determine what we should do

The problem we cannot resolve is  
Why should we do these things

To do this we might need to value the arts and humanities  
In order that we might address these deeper sources of division

Another related area of interest for me  
Is the growing awareness of the emotional aspects  
Of being human or animal

That has great potential value for improving who we are  
This is a relatively recent realization

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But we have only scratched the surface of possibilities

We are not just body and spirit  
But emotions matter too  
And complex problems need to be dealt with  
By realizing that there are interactions  
Between all these elements

It is truly encouraging that a few people see no conflict  
Between physical, emotional, and spiritual approaches  
To problem solving  
Some are even devout believers within Christianity

If earlier civilizations had a very basic level of understanding  
In the fields of modern psychology and the social science of  
economics  
This would be like having a superpower level ability  
To avoid war and debt and adapt to social changes  
This might have preserved the Roman Empire to this day

Certainly we would be better off trading  
A better understanding of technology  
For insights into people

Technology cannot solve problems  
If people are unwilling to change  
How they live and learn new habits

Many modern sources of death  
Could be resolved better by discipline than technology

It is great to know about new medicines  
But it is usually better to prevent the disease



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From happening at all

We are getting much better at surgery  
Largely because of cutting as little as possible  
But you cannot just take something out  
And put something else in  
And expect everything to work as before

Even the military and veterans are now embracing  
Traditional Chinese Medicine  
And pushing education to prevent disease

Again the big obstacles often lie  
Within our minds and in our choices  
We need to discipline our thinking and actions  
In place of merely adding more procedures

# Religion

## Jesus Revolution

Jesus was so revolutionary conceptually  
That we still poorly understood Him

Jesus most challenging topics  
Are the ones concerning His teachings  
If we listen to His silence and actions  
Maybe we can understand His words

God wants us to seek Him  
He wants us to choose Him

We see struggles in life  
As something to solve and move past  
He wants to be with us  
And guide us through the fear

We often have a hard time  
Making a place for God in our lives  
Maybe we should just try to be more like Jesus  
Rather than just following what He said

It is true that Jesus did not change the rules  
In a way He simplified them

We are to prioritize God over everything else  
If we follow our conscience  
The rest will follow naturally

What God asks us to do and not do  
Are not hard to understand

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They are actually very similar  
To other world religions and governments

One way to look at the Bible  
Is we are gradually being revealed  
More and more about God

Job knew much less about God  
But surprisingly He did better  
Dealing with a very traumatic situation

He realized much about God  
Although he was taught very little  
In terms of theology and doctrine

Today we are overloaded with information  
This distracts us from God

This makes it much harder  
To seek God  
And let Him transform our minds  
This is no small thing

One of the things Jesus kept doing  
When He encountered more and more stress  
Was He prayed in solitude

It is interesting that when we think of bad habits  
We think of addictions  
Maybe good habits can be a counter addiction

Maybe those with a predisposition to addiction  
Should not try to overcome their personality

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But rather change the focus and what they pursue

Part of Christianity is about building constructive habits

Our entire culture and economy

Is focused on what we want and not on what we need

We get so busy making ourselves look and feel good

That we do not pay attention to our health

Jesus came to earth at a certain place and time for a reason

Had He come today with our culture and technology

We would put Him into an institution

He would be thought of as unpredictable and impulsive

The government would be afraid of Him causing a revolt

Jesus was very comfortable in who He was

But He was very uninterested in fame or power

His lifestyle might today be described

As a kind of homelessness

Christ could have come into any family

And yet He chose a very common one

He was born into an oppressive empire

Where His people were weak and persecuted

He was seen as being totally defeated

And publicly shamed and made an example of

He remained silent when speaking up mattered most

He was so uninterested in His own welfare

That He knowingly triggered the powers that be

Not to express Himself or become famous

He did it because He was focused on His mission

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No religion wants followers that just  
Go through the motions

God believes in us too much  
To allow us to continue habits  
That hurt us and keep us from Him

We often ask what we should do  
To get into God's Heaven?  
Maybe we should ask  
What can we do to please God?

Instead of being saved from hell  
Maybe we should delight  
In being reconciled with our Creator

I wonder if we will have chores in Heaven  
If Christ is the direct living example of God  
I wonder if we may be asked  
To do boring things in Heaven

Some of the times I most vividly remember  
Of encountering very good leaders  
When I was growing up  
They were the ones that helped teach me  
When something needs to get done  
The leaders and everyone else  
Just starts doing what is needed

You shouldn't spend the time arguing  
That you could be better used as a supervisor  
I saw that once growing up as well

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So Christ showed us not the bare minimum  
He showed us the very most we can give  
Is what He wants

That is why Christianity can be so difficult  
God is not content to have you comfortable  
He wants you to experience Heaven  
Long before you get there

## Faith in America

The problem with the Church today  
Is not what we believe  
But how we affect change

The ideas we talk about  
Are noble indeed  
But they have unintended consequences

We seem to always be fighting the last battle  
But at that same time  
Refuse to learn from history

When we uses money and power  
Or determines for ourselves objectives  
Not explicitly mentioned in Scripture  
We fail to win the hearts and minds  
Of the people we wish to attract

Considering people in different cultures as the enemy  
Has not worked and never will

We do not need to compete  
We need more faith and patience  
We need people to follow God not us

It is interesting that at the end of Matthew  
Jesus answers all the basic questions  
Christians always fight over about the end times  
Then He spells out exactly what to do to prepare  
Jesus tells us to do simple kind things for other people



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This implies to me that the Church's biggest problem  
Would be we are so focused on fighting outward enemies  
And less on winning over others by our example

Our battle is not with unbelievers  
Our battle is not primarily with the devil either  
Our primary battle is between our flesh and spirit

The devil is much more interested in what happens  
In our minds or Christ's Church  
Than he cares about unbelievers

As Christians, we, like unbelievers  
Like to blame others for problems we create  
This is called projecting in modern psychology

The Church has gone so far fighting  
The battle over the existence of God  
That they have not emotionally accepted  
That God is the Person we are made in the image of

We are so afraid of external threats  
That we pay too little attention  
To what happens within us

The few people trying to come to faith today  
Can't even understand what Bible to use  
Because this is one of the biggest ideological battles  
In the Church today

No one needs to oppose us  
Because we are fighting ourselves

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We are basically chasing our own tails

Luckily the survival of Christ's Church  
Does not depend on us

Most Americans today think of Christians  
As mentally ill people  
That enjoy arguing with each other  
Over things they do not understand

Although this is a vast oversimplification  
And is not completely accurate  
This is an unfortunate element of our culture  
That we have synchronized our faith with

We are told not to start revolutions  
But there is nothing in the Bible  
That encourages us to impose our ideas on others

The point is not to control people's opinions about culture  
But to start thinking more like Christ

We need to accept that the American church  
Is also an ethnic, linguistic, and socio-economic group

We have to approach evangelism in our own country  
The same as we prepare  
To send missionaries to other countries  
If we want to have any hope  
Bringing this parallel culture to Christ

We need to empathize with them  
And not try to change things

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We disagree with  
If they are not clearly part of Scripture

The real obstacle bringing Christ  
To the rest of America  
Is to decide amongst ourselves  
What is Biblical and what is cultural  
About what we believe

If we can find a way to cross subcultures in America  
We can share the concept worldwide  
To every culture introduced to Christianity

We are often more concerned with being correct  
Then following the actions and silence of Christ  
Maybe we need to change things through prayer and example  
Rather than power and money

We need to follow our idea of relying  
Only on scripture to its logical end  
We need to stop adding traditions, confessions, and  
interpretations to Scripture

We do not need to clarify what God has said  
When the focus ends up being a list of things to do  
We start to be seen as the Pharisees

The focus should be on God  
Because the point is not for  
Our ideas and experiences to  
Be validated  
But for God to bring people to Himself

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We are God's hands and feet  
We need not do His thinking for Him  
The Bible does not need to fit into our minds  
We don't need to civilize God

God needs to be followed in spirit and truth  
We need to fit into God's creation  
Not try to make it fit us

## Reasons for Faith

When is a Person and an idea  
One and the same?  
Is it possible to support a cause  
But be loyal to a specific Person?

To outsiders religions all look like cults  
But I can testify about my faith

I have no allegiance to any organization  
Or any position of leadership  
I have loyalty to God, family, and believers  
In that specific order

I feel closer to other believers everywhere  
Than people living in the same city as me

If I had more than one life to live  
Maybe I would devote one  
To helping my fellow Americans  
Beyond my military service

But both my city and country  
Are entirely different  
Than the ones I grew up in  
I expect greater changes  
By the time I reach senior citizen age

It seems to be so easy for me to have faith  
When I have such proof  
In both my life and our world

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I expected the world system  
To collapse before I turned 30

But the fact that we have not destroyed each other  
Is enough to convince me of there being  
A God who is active in His creation

Many Christians feel a need  
To find intellectual proof for their faith

I have direct experiences in which  
The only rational explanation  
Is that God intervened directly

One proof is that I was able to  
Leave the military early honorably  
By simply asking for it

Another is that despite having Schizophrenia  
I can still understand abstract thought  
My mind seems to be healing over time

I now have a church close to me  
That is the closest thing I have found  
To what the people in Heaven would be like

There are more examples  
But these are some of the best

When people think of the supernatural  
They think of real life special effects  
That they can see, hear, and touch

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But anytime God intervenes in our lives  
Is equally supernatural in nature

God is much more subtle than the devil  
Likely because the devil lies, kills, and destroys  
But God is the Creator and is still creating  
He intervenes constantly in ordinary life

One proof is that His Church is still here  
The Church is so dysfunctional  
That the only thing explaining its continued existence  
Is God's divine intervention

Read the letters of the Apostle Paul  
If you think the Church succeeded  
Because of the ability of early church leaders

Christianity is both simple and complex  
The Bible is easy to understand but hard to follow

God wants to make us think and feel  
About the decisions we make  
So we can make better ones

So what is the draw of Christianity?  
How is Christianity still relevant  
With everything that has changed in society  
Especially with all the advances in science and technology?

Global warming is a good example  
Of our need for God  
And the devastating effects of sin

## Bible Study Collection 2 By Ben Huot

Modern technology has a high cost

We have largely solved the problem of hunger  
In this country at least  
But we get more cases of heart disease and diabetes  
Because we eat too many carbs

We have great pain medication  
But many people abuse them  
So they end up with addictions  
And people can't get them when needed

We have extended people's lifespans  
But now have more cancer

Many people helped build the Internet  
To empower individuals  
And share information freely

But it ends up being used for surveillance  
And angrily debating things  
We don't even understand nor do we care about

People create works of art more efficiently  
And more people can express themselves  
But the value of art drops to nothing  
And many people try to make money  
Off another person's work

We have the most powerful military  
In the entire world  
And we are almost impossible to invade  
And yet we are more afraid of other countries



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Than ever before in our history

We fight more major wars that any nation ever  
And win them all quickly and easily  
But the situation after we leave  
Is worse for everyone involved

Many people have more access to books than ever before  
And more people are publishing than ever before  
But most people have stopped reading

Maybe we are the problem  
And we need to seek a solution  
That does not involve us