

Ben-Free Thought 2 by Ben Huot

Ben-Free Thought 2
5th Generation Philosophy Writings
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Tough Choice

It is easy to say you will be brave
It is easy to be convinced you will win
It is harder to be a good sport
When you feel weak and are in pain

Many think they can survive anything
But with the slightest setback they give up

Is it better to take an oath
Or to pursue the same aim without a pledge?

If you think waving a flag
Makes you a patriot
The military takes almost anyone

We race humans and test their strength
But animals are the real athletes
We think we suffer greatly
But animals endure so much more

How can you be good if you are not kind?
How can you care about your loved ones
But not the loved ones of forest creatures?

If we cannot be civil
Let us sit in silence
If we cannot listen
Maybe we should stop talking

Where do we go from here?

Maybe we need to learn more

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Before we lecture others
Maybe we should understand our opponent
Before we decide to fight them

It is not strong to refuse to think
It is not noble to close your eyes to evil
It is not enough to have faith
You must prove your faith with action

If we want peace
We need to give up our weapons
If we want change
We need to look in the mirror

Instead of trying to save the whole world
Maybe we should focus on just us
And maybe one other person

Our ambitions and desires
Know no limits or constraints
This is not a good thing

You cannot grow forever
And anything or anyone
Can never be truly independent

Freedom does not come from a lack of limitations
Sometimes we all have to work together
And sacrifice by doing what is difficult
To stand against our nature

Without struggle it is easy to be selfish
It is not ok to be too confident
When you have nothing to back it up
This is essentially what fraud is

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For us to seek truth
We must acknowledge God
As He is a servant
So must we be as well

Christ is the most masculine Man of all time
But He had self control
And did not speak without reason

His never denied what was true
Or back down from His mission
But He was not a fan of arrogance
Or of empty ceremony

You may not experience God's voice in your head
But you can still empathize with not knowing
If it is truly God leading you
Tears would stream down your face
If you had to accept a loss of your mind

Many say they understand
But few truly care
At least not when it comes
To spending time or money

We are too distracted to hear God
We are too busy to do the right thing
Soon we will pay someone else
To live our entire lives for us

We are getting so afraid
Of dealing with other people
That we never leave our houses
We are so afraid of death
That we don't want to be alone or think

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Fun is only fun when it is infrequent
If your entire life is entertainment
You will always be a child

With each decision we make
We become more human
With each sin we move closer to darkness
And with each act of kindness
We understand Heaven a little better

If we want to be like Christ
We have to give up on being successful
When will we ever learn
That mixing politics and religion
Is explosive and causes wars?

We need to find a way to disagree
And yet live with each other
If we want the world to turn to Christ
We need to be ready to do what He wants

But we must take time to listen to God

Christianity is a long difficult road
With plenty of suffering
To reduce it to anything else
Is not Biblical

If this is not what you signed up for
You have a tough decision to make

Survey of Reality

How do we determine what is real?
How do we know beyond
What we experience in our minds?

Even our perception of reality
Is based on our experiences, personality and physical body, at
least

If you have one less eye than other people
Then you literally see differently

If you have Schizophrenia
And so your brain can't distinguish
Between what is happening
Inside your mind and outside it
Your reality is not controlled by you

Both scientists and religious people
Operate on the concept of faith
Because you cannot prove everything
And you must assume something somewhere

There are many interesting things in life
We can learn that have no lasting meaning
So exactly how we explain the mechanics
Of some things may be less important
Than how they make you feel
Or what they inspire you to do

So we assume much today about reality
We have been taught to assume

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That we have to rely on experts
To determine what is real to us

We are conditioned to think
That we must conform
To the expectations of others
And work within the limits of their creativity
And within the bounds
Of what they say are valid areas of study

Philosophy breaks all this down

Do not assume anything
Nothing is proven
Unless you accept the proof as valid
Arguments will always be based on assumptions
Which must all be thoroughly investigated

You control your reality and your beliefs
There is nothing else you can really control
Why give up this control?

To make yourself easier to categorize?
To be more easily constrained?
And forced to give up
What makes you an individual?

You are who you are
And you choose what happens in your mind
No one else needs to

Along with this independent determination of your reality
You also have a grave responsibility
Because you cannot just adopt an idea
That applies to just a certain situation or just to you

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Philosophical ideas are universal
And hold true everywhere
This is not science we are talking about

When you are choosing what is real to you
You are choosing for everyone
How they should see reality as well

If not you are being intellectually dishonest
Or don't have any philosophical integrity at all

Reality is your perception and your choice
But one person cannot determine another's reality
Especially if they believe in this degree of freedom

You can choose how you want to live
But you cannot choose to manipulate the lives of others
What justification do you have
To make these choices for others?

You do not have the right
And it would make you inconsistent
And form a poor theory with big holes in it
Making it almost impossible to defend

So you end up with a tension
Between your freedom to choose your reality
And that you are at the same time
Determining the reality of others
While you have no right to do so

An ethical dilemma happens
When you cannot follow 2 of your values
At the same time
Or there is a conflict between
Your values and another person's values

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This puts you into an intellectual and moral struggle
And this forces you to be responsible for your choices
Because the decisions you make affect others

You desire complete freedom
But it is not possible for you to have complete freedom
As well as everyone else to have complete freedom

This is a kind of paradox as well

This is what most philosophers would call existentialism
Existentialism deals with human being or sentience
What makes a person different than a rock?
This is the main topic in the study of existentialism

We often see the defining characteristic of existence
Also called human being
As having free will or free choice

Rationalism answers this question
Of where you start in philosophy
With an arbitrary assumption

Descartes famously based his philosophy on
"I think, therefore I am"

In most Chinese philosophies the justification
For why you should act a certain way
Is based on the assumption that previous
More ancient Chinese dynasties
Were wiser than the world
In the lifetime of Confucius and Lao Tzu

Who both wanted to make Chinese culture
Revert to the way it was

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In one of two different previous dynasties

Neither had original ideas
If they did they would have to find
A different supporting argument

There are actually very few original ideas
And even many inventions were reinvented
Multiple times throughout history

The few original ideas that exist today
Have been discovered or invented
At the beginning of human history
Which was at least a few thousand years in the past

It is almost impossible to come up with something
That no one has thought of before

But as they say the devil is in the details
This is why engineering is as important as science
Or the code behind a webpage
As important as its appearance

The solution to problems caused by these original ideas
Could be as important as the ideas themselves
And these likely will never be solved

Christianity is based on free will as is existentialism
But there is much more to it

In both Christianity as in Chinese philosophy
We have to agree to work
Within the limits of the system
If we still want to use that name for it

They both require you to accept that your free choice

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Does not absolve you of ethical responsibility

Much of both Christianity and Chinese philosophy
Is about the study of ethics
Or what is right and wrong and what we should do

Art and Kindness

Today I saw one of the most beautiful paintings ever
And it was almost entirely designed by software
With a person literally just choosing amongst a number of pieces
And it won a state level art show

In an age of artificial intelligence
Biblical aesthetics still requires people
God's idea of what is beautiful
Is doing kind things for others

Maybe as we find it possible
To create more easily
And art becomes more democratized

We will start leveling the playing field
For those who want to to be creative
But don't have the time or ability

Our teachers were right
That today we can do whatever we want
Everyday of our lives can be like a vacation

The flip side is that we make not make any money at it
Of course that is always a struggle with art
Try making money off a website, writing, or creating software

But ultimately what ability do humans have
That a machine is not capable of doing better?

For those who argue the purity of art
I bring in the example of photography

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I also bring in the example of modern art
And finally I bring in the example of design software

Maybe we can end the elitism
The average person can now enjoy making art too
The process can be more the point
Entertainment transforms into creating

This is only one relatively minor change
That our society will experience over the next 100 years
But this will only be true if no new things are invented

Everything now is up for grabs
What I am writing to you now
May soon be done by a robot instead of a person
Or some sort of artificial intelligence

Most jobs can be automated
This is how blue color workers must have felt
In the later 20th century
When they lost their jobs due to robots and software

It might be that wealth becomes distributed more evenly
Throughout the entire world
And get people to focus on creating rather than consuming

It might also take a bite
Into the power of and wealth of Hollywood

This is just a minor milestone
In the transformation of our lives and economy

So maybe the focus in life can shift
From how much can I get
To how much I can give

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The art of the Bible
Is trying to reduce suffering
This is a much harder task
I wish the robots well
If they ever take on this endeavor

The Bible talks about how
All physical things deteriorate over time
One of the greatest challenges
We have in our country today
Is the preservation of our wealth

A person or society has to guard what it creates
Legally, physically, technologically, or morally
What cannot be secured
Is not going to remain their property

As people become lazier
And do not want to work anymore
This is a gift from God
That we can now do more complex things electronically

Robots work harder and get no pay
What a great enabler of capitalism

Aesthetics or the philosophy of art
Has always been a fun topic to write about
But it is hard because there is little to draw on

Most artists do not like to be self reflective
Because they think it will make them less creative
Many also have little interest in academics or abstract thought

What I look forward to is sharing the joy of creation
With ever more people

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The robots are making the life of the consumer better
And currently they are volunteering their labor
What is not to love about it?

If someone wants to give away something for free
For someone else to sell
Is that not their right?

This is the way government works
The government is well know for giving money to the poor
But it also redistributes wealth to the rich as well

Society will be rearranged
And everything invented
After the transition from a hunter gatherer society
Is up for grabs
Art included

There is nothing sacred about creating beautiful things
Who are we to determine what is beautiful?
Is not beauty to be judged by the individual's perception?

This may appear to be a profound change in society
But it is not conceptually
There will be greater changes

What happens when people can generate
Whole theologies or religions this way?
Maybe this has already happened?

After all we only know what we can experience
And everything else we know by faith

Diversity in Thinking

What if God does not will us
To be politicians, soldiers, or theologians?

Would you vote for Christ
If He had the exact opposite
Or mostly opposite stance on political issues?

When we think of diversity today
We think of people who look or speak different
Sometimes we think of people that act different
But when do we consider people who think different?

Even this is now a commercial slogan

But how do we get from thinking we are always right
To a more thoughtful and less crisis driven path?

Most of us will not change our minds if the earth actually shook
But we expect others to adopt our views at the same time

Maybe being right is not the point
Maybe we need to do less shouting and more reading

We start to grasp some truth on Sundays
And then forget it once we turn on the news
We see what Christ did and do the opposite

A more complex and detailed view of Christ
Does include God being angry at others
But this tends to be directed towards the establishment
And the only thing Christ says about the establishment

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Is to do what they say but not what they do

When it comes to following our leaders
Everything has a cost
We learn that in basic economics

And the cost of being right
Is not always worth it

The cost of our wealth today
Comes at the expense of many others
From animals to children to the poor to our weather

In the future people may actually die of fungal infections
Wars of the future will be fought more over fresh water
Than over oil or rare earth minerals

We have solved many problems in modern society
But most of them just shift the problem
So they are only solved theoretically and not in practice

We make sure everyone we see is rich
We give poor Africans clean water
But charge more than they can afford for it

We create a nation
That is based on kindness and restraint
And conquer the world in the process
Doing what would impress the most cruel dictators

Individual sins are unacceptable
And should not be tolerated
We should in fact hate sin

But sin is also evil
If done by everyone

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Even if it appears unavoidable
Or we have no power to change it

Our society did not get wealthy
By sharing it with others
After all the resources are less than before
And most modern technologies evolve in circles

All of us need to expand our understanding of the world
Reading the Bible should make you want to read other books

If you want to redeem the culture
You need to stop buying from Hollywood

If you want to change those in power
You need to buy less that you don't need
And reconsider what you actually need

Society seems bent on going 2 opposite ways
Each side thinking the other position is immoral
But what if morality does not divide along those lines?

Is it not worth trying to see the Bible
Without the baggage of denominations or theological history?

There are several ways to change your perspective
But all of them require you want to change

One is a cultural shock like joining the military
Or working with another segment of society
That you have little previous knowledge of

Another is challenging your preconceptions
By the study of philosophy
Other ways include living through major social or economic
changes

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The challenge is to allow the situation
To expand your world not shrink it

When was it that Christians became afraid of learning?
Being pure morally is not the same as being uneducated

Reject Darwinism or doubt Science entirely
But do learn about the things you disagree with in some way

How will we ever communicate what we believe
If we cannot understand why others believe what they do?

I don't understand why people think others
Will change their mind without their consent
When no one has their entire life previously

Today we are not up against another religion
Or even a war against unbelief
What we are fighting for is trust

People can be forced to obey
But they cannot be forced to trust

Turning up the punishments
And increasing the laws and surveillance
Does not bring a society together

If we really want unity
We must accept that the government
Has lost the trust of many citizens
And this will not come back easily or soon
This may never come back

We are no longer kind or restrained as a society
And this is a complete break in our social contract

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That the government and constitution are based on

Maybe we should learn to live with differences
Rather than seek comfort in conformity

In an age of anxiety
Where some of our greatest problems
Are actually internal and emotional

The best way to fight
Is to push your mind to expand
Otherwise you will always live in fear
And your world will continue to shrink

Do not fear your neighbors
Fear yourself!

The problems for the Church
Are all within our control

The reason why so many do not want to
Associate with Christianity
Has more to do with politics and social issues
Than it does with theological issues

Time and time again I see in the Gospels and the New Testament
That these ideas are strikingly similar to "Non-Christian" values
Non-Christians see this easily but most Christians do not

That is why the world sees American Christians as hypocrites
Yes some have less knowledge of the Bible
But maybe they understand it in spirit better

To The Conservative Friend

(To no one in particular)

Talking About Politics

Friend in a parallel world
I reach out with open arms

Then I hear your thoughts
They hit me like a freight train
Tears pour down my face
And my face burns

You think what?

Parallel worlds are not so different
When our opinions don't matter

If you try to fight a ghost
How can you win
When you don't even know
Where or who is your enemy?

Talking About Faith

We all are loved by God
And choose to please Him
At all cost

We fail Him regularly and equally
When the alternatives is more suffering
The path forward is obvious, if narrow

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The weight of the cross can be so great
We cannot even always stand upright

It is hard to stand your ground
When your burden outweighs your strength

Usually soldiers crawl on their bellies
To delay the ending of their lives

If you think how your vote matters so much
Why do you invest so much in religion?

When you need every heart
It does not help to break even one

The devil is nothing compared to God
But we are little compared to the power of evil

How do I let God fight my battle for me
When I am so spiritually blind
To all that is good and right?

Calling to God in a dream
And all evil vanishes
And I am wide awake

Maybe the problem is that I take on too much
And should leave this to God

I feel so weak sometimes
That I am not sure I can make my own decisions

When choice ends in continual suffering
You have to find another way
To fight your battles

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Sometimes I wonder if it is good
To have enough knowledge
To stay away from evil
But sometimes this grows
To just enough to pull you in

Everyone thinks they will never fail
Until they deploy to war

Talking About Philosophy

Sometimes being alone
Is less lonely
Than being around people constantly

Sometimes we need room to breathe
And time to think

It is only in self reflection
That we gain self knowledge

It is only in prayer and Bibles study
That we learn the heart of God

Some things we will never understand
And then there are things that
We may never want to understand

So many people plan to ask God many questions
But how many of them will be relevant?

We an easily be sidetracked
Doing noble and good things
Like trying to win

The sad part is that to win

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Someone has to lose

Talking About Competition

How can I not consider my victory
In terms of how the opponent
Experiencing the reverse situation?

But I trust God enough
To never feel sorry for the devil

Only in terms of true evil
Is it acceptable to defeat and destroy

But how can we hate other people
When we know we have just as many problems?

How can we make others suffer
Or experience loss and defeat
When we already know how this feels?

Why can't we treat each other
As friends rather than rivals?

But this is hard when our very survival
Happens at the expense of others
We are safe and happy
Directly because others suffer immensely

The first shall be last
And the last shall be first

Maybe we need to adopt
The leadership style of Christ
Could you imagine a human leader
Who had no ego?

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Is it possible to be like Christ
In a competitive environment?
Is ambition compatible with Christianity?

When we see a problem
Why do we first think
Whose fault is it?
Instead of how can I help?

Part of it is now about trust
It is not wise to say everything you feel anymore
Even if it does not challenge anyone's position of power

If only we could be fully honest
And others would return the favor

But honestly we want what others have
We don't ask God when we need something
And when we do it is for self gain

Another Option

How do we define loneliness
In the midst of family support?
How do we define patience
In the midst of a time of waiting
That the whole world shares in?

In some ways it seems
I experience life in a kind of microcosm
Or the world seems to be a reflection of my mind

As the world comes together
Our country is torn apart
As my mind is continually healed by God
Living long is less enticing

Some see suffering
As best answered by supporting those in pain
I seek to answer suffering
By reducing the amount of pain

It may seem selfish
But I am as interested in reducing my pain
As much as I am interested
In reducing the pain of others

Every decade it seems that life speeds up
With the passing of each law
The powerful get wealthier
With the increase of surveillance
The poor lose out more

A big part of government

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Is in securing the wealth of the country
A big part of its downfall
Is in destroying the wealth of other countries

Getting along with others is hard
Sometimes I find the more aggressive
Homeless and authority figures
Difficult to relate with
Even stuffed toys can have trouble getting along

But if we don't want to be communities of one
Or lack any government
We are going to have to accept
Some degree of difference in society

Unfortunately you cannot choose who it is
That you need to get along with
Much as you cannot always fight countries you agree with

In fact there are voices in each of our minds
Some are louder than others
It tends to be that the louder ones are more negative
And the whispering voices tend to be more positive

It is hard to fight the direction of the world
When you have no interest in violence
And no interest in wealth or fame either

Many see the government or industry as the problem
But what if the problem is within each one of us?
What if the solution to our problems
Comes from changing our minds and lives?

What if instead of trusting other people
We committed to trusting God alone?
What kind of society would exist

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If we saw the problems as the outcomes of our own decisions?

Where we did not seek to make others
Think and act like us?

When a large part of society
Will never work together for the common good
Maybe we need to focus on God
To get people to see the consequences of their actions

Some focus on personal or group sin
But what if they were basically the same thing?
Once everyone realizes we all need to change us
More than we need to change others
We will have evolved morally a little

How do good people divide over such clear cut problems
When it comes to the details?
Maybe instead of expecting someone else to suffer
For what they have done
Maybe we can expect ourselves to forgive them

Because we realize that morality stretches
Far beyond what is legal or not legal
We are all in the same boat morally and spiritually

The struggles I face within me
The pain of just existing
Seem so overwhelming sometimes
That what happens around the world
Often seems easier to solve

Sometimes I wonder why we spend so much time
Worrying what happens at the other side off the world
When we have never spoken to our neighbors

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I wonder how people who are not kind
Can claim to be patriots
Or those who do not believe in the bill of rights in spirit
Can think they are true Americans?

For those who think the military
Is such a great use of government funds
They accept almost everyone
For those who think people at the bottom get paid too much
I am sure those jobs are open for you as well

For those who think it is easy to live in a tent
Or get all those free services
Try living that way for a while

For those irritated that poor people
Sometimes get away with crimes
We all commit sins
What is your sin carried with it a prison sentence?

For all those who think they make too little in America
The poverty line in America is above
75% of the world's income

Kindness and Unity

Do words mean anything
In a world of lies?
Only a promise
From One that does not lie
Can restore order and joy

When the earth shut down for a year
When the human world was fighting a disease
The animals made a comeback

Nature was able to get
A little breath of fresh air
And new life exploded for a while

It only takes a spark
To start a wildfire

As we have seen
In this part of the country
Especially if it is dry and windy

The conditions are becoming so dark
That it is a perfect time
For a spontaneous revival
Not led by a prophet or pastor
But by the Lord Himself

God will speak within all of us
In the midst of our crisis
In the midst of our loneliness
And in the midst of our despair

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Many young people commit suicide
Every year now

What must it be like
For new life to enter such a dark world?

Our schools and many parents
Leave their kids with few tools
To resist he who comes to kill and destroy

Everyone must fight for themselves
Especially in our new Internet frontier

It is just too different a territory
For our current civilization
To understand and react to

We are in a time of great change
We are in the eye of a perfect storm
Things could break down at any time
Just like Christ can return at any time

At the brink of a new world
We hide in fear from the future
There is so much to do to prepare
But few of us can connect the dots

Christ tells us to prepare for His second coming
By doing good works for each other
But this quickly gets political and ugly

How do we transcend social groups
Within the Church itself?
What can we do that is not political
At least in some way?

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Maybe we need to think smaller instead of bigger
Instead of convincing others to believe
We need to convince ourselves

God does not have us convert people
But it helps if we give others a
Positive impression of the Church

Ultimately we are not doing well in this regard
We are essentially
Spitting in the face of unbelievers

By telling them they are being immoral
In their everyday lives
While we promote immorality
On a national scale

If we want the Church to cross cultural groups
Within a single society
We have to do a better job of
Finding what we have in common

We all agree that we all see a crisis
All people today confront the same technology
And we all see society falling apart

We disagree on the details
But we do agree something must be done
Everyone sees morality as going downhill

We need to re-look at the Bible
And see what is clearly says
And what it does not clearly say
And let go of the things it is not clear on

There are many things the Church

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Has taken a stance on
Thought its history

But Jesus focused all His efforts
On feeding, healing, and forgiving
And training others to do the same

Except we cannot forgive sin
Only God can do that

We have to show others
In their language and culture
What kindness means
After all, can't we agree on at least this?

And isn't this a big part of what the Gospel is?
How else could you describe
Christ's death and resurrection?

We don't need to bring everyone
To God by ourselves
It is a miracle of God
When anyone is saved

But we need to stop creating
More barriers to salvation

Kindness may not be random
But it is not contrary to Scripture

Superheroes: The Santa Soldier

Like an inter-dimensional force for good
We are all a kind of spiritual Christian soldier
We are the infantry
We are the hands and feet of God

Like the military we neither choose our mission
Nor can we use our powers for our own gain

We are like a physical conduit
Of God's supernatural power
Serving as the face of God in this world

We are truly of another species
We are not really from this world
Our home world is being
In close proximity to our Lord

Our weapons are there
To bring peace and joy to the world

We are a kind of soldier Santa
But we are not a myth
We are as real as anything you can touch

We are merely mortal people
But within us exists a greater power for good
Than all the gravity of a galactic black hole
A great power packed into a mere person

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What is greater than feeding hungry people
Or healing people of deadly diseases?

The combined three part gift of
God living within you
Spending forever after in
His golden city of paradise
And having the global network
Of support from people like you

We are not trying to recruit you
As God Himself will knock on your door
To give you an invitation

But we do screw things up from time to time
Like the military has a habit of doing
Many of us are clumsy and sick

We also have a variety of issues and emotional baggage
That may actually be harder to deal with
Than the issues you are going through

We understand if you think you have no need for us
But we want to know we are always there for you
And when we can't be our Lord is
He never screws things up like we do

We are but common peasants by birth
Serving in the forces of the King
Our Lord actually does the cleaning
So we feel honored to be able to work in His service

We have a strong desire to include everyone
Good news is we have no ranks
As we are all completely equal

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One of the things negative about us
By some people's standards
Is that we are neither cool nor modern in our thinking

We are working on modernizing our thinking
Please be patient with us in the process
We are also accepting others to help with this

Many of us you hear about live in luxury
But most of our members
Are some of the world's poorest

As far as being cool is concerned
We are ok with being nerds
We do have good times though

We just don't feel the need to do drugs to have fun
Having God live within you
Provides the positive effects
People often seek in taking drugs
But without the dangerous side effects and addiction

We live a life of
Both moderation and engaging with the world
Even though many of us
Strongly disagree on how it is run

We know the King not only created all worlds
But won the battle on our behalf centuries ago

Our biggest problem is that we
Still don't follow orders well

Today we think it not possible to reform people
That society says are bad
And make them change their behavior

Ben-Free Thought 2 by Ben Huot

The King has the power
To restore people to be good
And He has also given us this power as well

He has such power and authority
That what He says becomes reality

He says many good things about us
Even though we are in the process of reformation
We are trying to live up to who He says we are

Some of our beliefs are not just unpopular
They are actually looked down upon
But as we said we come from a different world

We understand that we are so different
So that you may not be ready
To be part of our group

Just remember you can join and
Be just as important as anyone else
When you first join

But realize that some members
May be hard to deal with
Because we take everyone

But we don't really decide on membership
The King does all the recruiting

Just know He will knock on your door
Only a certain number of times

Either way you choose we wish you best
And we will be there to help you out

Ben-Free Thought 2 by Ben Huot

As long as we are still here

After all we are not from this world
We will be returning home sometime
We don't know when
But when it happens it will be fast