

Self Help Collection

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Table of Contents

Part I.....22

First Things.....22

 Chapter 1.....23

 Chapter 2.....23

 Chapter 3.....24

Part II.....24

Encouraging Words.....24

 Chapter 4.....24

 4.1 Logo.....24

 4.2 For More Information.....24

 4.3 Introduction.....25

 Chapter 5.....25

 5.1 Discover the Website.....25

 5.1.1 Why So Serious?25

 Childhood Experiences.....25

 The Military Experience.....25

 College Experiences.....26

 Experience with Mental Illness.....26

 Experience Recovering.....26

 The World Today.....27

 5.1.2 Main Ideas.....27

 Why Study the Old World?27

 Main Objective.....28

 How I Can Both be a Free Thinker and a Christian.....29

 My Style.....30

 5.1.3 Research Issues.....32

 Why Spend So Much Time and Effort?32

 The Scope of My Research.....32

 Why Reading is Good Research.....33

 Frustrations with Web-Based Content.....34

Why I Didn't Read in the Original Languages.....	35
5.1.4 Distribution Issues.....	36
Reasons for Websites.....	36
Why I Don't Sell My Books in Stores.....	36
5.1.5 Religious Issues.....	37
Philosophy and Religion.....	37
Popular Misconceptions about Philosophy and Religion.....	37
The Kind of Christianity I am Promoting.....	38
Another Perspective on Orthodoxy.....	39
Rich White Men.....	40
5.1.6 Artistic Approach.....	41
Overview.....	41
World Beliefs Illustrations Book.....	41
Ethics and Discovery Illustrations Book.....	42
5.1.7 Other Issues.....	43
Philosophical Issues	43
Family Values.....	44
5.1.8 Branding.....	44
Website Themes.....	44
Logo Explanation.....	45
5.2 Discover My Life Story.....	46
5.2.1 Childhood.....	46
5.2.2 High School.....	46
5.2.3 Army.....	47
5.2.4 College.....	48
5.2.5 Schizophrenia.....	49
5.3 Discover My Disability.....	49
5.3.1 Background Information.....	49
General Information.....	49
Common Misunderstandings.....	50
5.3.2 Dealing with the Illness.....	50
Symptoms.....	50

Treatment.....	50
Medicine and Side Effects.....	51
5.3.3 Living with the Situation.....	51
Daily Life.....	51
Unqualified Workers.....	52
5.3.4 My Situation.....	52
Paranoid Schizophrenia.....	52
Behavioral Strategies.....	52
Chapter 6.....	53
6.1 The Bible and Making Decisions.....	53
6.1.1 What Defines Us.....	53
6.1.2 What does Freedom Mean?	54
A Summary of the Biblical Concept.....	54
Passages that Talk about Biblical Freedom.....	55
6.1.3 The Biblical Approach to Suffering.....	58
Western vs. Non-Western Attitudes.....	58
Who is Responsible.....	58
Encouraging People Who Suffer.....	58
Environment and Prophecy.....	58
Understanding God’s People.....	59
6.1.4 Heaven, Eternity, and God.....	59
Eternal Perspective.....	59
Roses and Heaven.....	59
Indian Mystic Poets.....	59
Understanding Revelations.....	60
6.1.5 What We Should Do.....	60
6.2 Thinking Long Term.....	61
6.2.1 My Perspective.....	61
6.2.2 My Vision of the Future.....	62
6.2.3 Patience.....	62
6.2.4 Perseverance.....	64
6.2.5 Ways to Develop Discipline.....	67

6.3 Learn to be Kind and Patient.....	68
6.3.1 First, Learn from Others' Experiences.....	68
6.3.2 Second, Broaden your Reading.....	68
6.3.3 Third, Get your own Unique Perspective.....	68
6.3.4 Fourth, Understand that Differences are OK.....	69
6.3.5 Fifth, Learn Communication Skills.....	69
6.3.6 Sixth, Learn to Think Empathetically Instead of Purely Fact Based.....	69
6.3.7 Seventh, Learn from Experience.....	69
6.4 Being Creative and Helping Others.....	70
6.4.1 How to Think Creatively.....	70
Get Ready to Think.....	70
Think About the Idea.....	70
Try the Idea Out.....	70
Get Ready for Future Ideas.....	70
6.4.2 Creativity and Saving Money.....	71
Living Without a Car.....	71
What Riding the Bus is Like.....	71
Bus People.....	71
Alternatives to the Bus.....	72
Re-Occurring Expenses.....	72
6.4.3 Theft or Charity.....	73
The Meaning of Free Culture.....	73
The Situation Today.....	73
Loss of Trust.....	73
Foreign Workers.....	74
The Best Way to Fight.....	74
Serve your Country.....	74
6.4.4 Reasons to Create Rather than Consume.....	75
Help Yourself.....	75
Enhance Your Self-Esteem.....	75
Learn New Things.....	75
Help Others.....	76

6.4.5 Why Volunteer?	76
Getting Perspective.....	76
The Way the Youth Live.....	76
Lazy Employees.....	77
Greater Expectations.....	77
No Easy Way.....	77
Be a Patriot.....	77
6.5 For the Kid in All of Us.....	78
Chapter 7.....	78
7.1 General Ideas.....	79
7.1.1 Psychology in Philosophy.....	79
7.1.2 Ethics and Consistency in Philosophy.....	79
7.1.3 Creativity and Philosophy.....	80
7.2 Schools of Philosophy.....	81
7.2.1 Paradox (Also Known As Non-Dualism).....	81
7.2.2 The Supernatural and Asian Philosophy and Religion.....	81
7.2.3 Confucianism.....	82
7.2.4 Taoism.....	83
7.2.5 Existentialism.....	84
Chapter 8.....	85
8.1 Letters from Family.....	85
8.1.1 Dated.....	85
2000.....	85
2003.....	85
2004.....	86
2005.....	87
2006.....	87
2007.....	88
2008.....	89
2009.....	90
8.1.2 Undated.....	90
Valentine's Day.....	90

Self Help Collection

Easter.....	91
Birthday.....	91
Mother's Day.....	92
Mom's Birthday.....	92
Halloween.....	92
Christmas.....	93
Thank Yous.....	94
8.2 Public Domain Hymns.....	94
8.2.1 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God(rhythmic).....	94
8.2.2 All Creatures of Our God and King.....	95
8.2.3 Amazing Grace.....	96
8.2.4 Be Still My Soul.....	96
8.2.5 Be Thou My Vision.....	97
8.2.6 Beautiful Savior (also known as Fairest Lord Jesus).....	98
8.2.7 Blessed Assurance.....	98
8.2.8 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus.....	99
8.2.9 Crown Him With Many Crowns.....	99
8.2.10 Holy, Holy, Holy.....	100
8.2.11 I Know That My Redeemer Lives.....	101
8.2.12 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise.....	102
8.2.13 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee.....	102
8.2.14 Nearer, My God, To Thee.....	103
8.2.15 O For A Thousand Tongues.....	103
8.2.16 [.....	105
8.2.17 What A Friend We Have In Jesus.....	105
8.3 The First Existentialist.....	106
8.3.1 Romans 7:6-25.....	106
8.3.2 1 Corinthians.....	107
1.....	107
2.....	109
3.....	110
4.....	111

9.....	112
8.3.3 2 Corinthians	114
3:1-6.....	114
4:5-18.....	114
10.....	115
11:16-31.....	116
12:1-11.....	117
8.3.4 Colossians 2:4-8.....	118
8.3.5 Ephesians 6:10-20.....	118
8.3.6 Philippians 2:1-12.....	119
8.3.7 1 Thessalonians 2:1-17.....	119
8.4 Ephesians.....	120
8.4.1 1.....	120
8.4.2 2.....	122
8.4.3 3.....	123
8.4.4 4.....	124
8.4.5 5.....	126
8.4.6 6.....	127
Part III.....	129
Positive News.....	129
Chapter 9.....	129
9.1 For More Information.....	129
9.2 Introduction.....	129
Chapter 10.....	130
10.1 The Cause of My Epiphany.....	130
10.1.1 The Books.....	130
2 Books.....	130
She is Like Me.....	130
How We are Different.....	131
How the Book Affected Me.....	131
10.1.2 My Problems.....	131
My Veteran's Pension.....	131

My Limitations and World Problems.....	132
What Drove Me.....	132
I am Not Responsible.....	132
10.2 My Life.....	133
10.2.1 Where I am Now.....	133
Finishing Up.....	133
Things to Write About.....	133
10.2.2 What I have Learned.....	133
Normal to Fail.....	133
The Psychological Approach.....	134
Why Wait to Get Antidepressants?	134
10.3 My Core Problem.....	134
10.3.1 Exploring the Problem.....	134
Recognizing the Obvious.....	134
Obstacles to Taking a Break.....	135
Negative Social Factors.....	135
10.3.2 Finding Possible Solutions.....	136
Enjoying the Process.....	136
Bettering Ourselves.....	136
Relaxation Strategies.....	137
10.3.3 Reasons and Motivations.....	137
Overworking isn't Biblical.....	137
Bible Teaches Rest.....	137
Christ has Already Won.....	141
10.4 Being Without Doing.....	141
10.4.1 The Solution.....	141
By God's Grace.....	141
God Does all the Work.....	142
10.4.2 Spiritual Laws.....	142
Different Rules.....	142
How Americans Think.....	142
10.4.3 Real Freedom.....	143

God Values Our Freedom.....	143
Why and How Bad Things Happen.....	143
Acknowledging Reality.....	143
Only 2 Choices.....	144
10.5 True Humility.....	144
10.5.1 God’s Perspective.....	144
The Other Side of Humility.....	144
God Doesn’t Want us to Suffer.....	144
God’s Objective.....	145
10.5.2 Living a Happier Life.....	145
What is Life For?	145
Consequences of Free Will.....	145
Enjoying Life.....	146
10.6 Problems with Theories.....	146
10.6.1 Background.....	146
I Love Theories.....	146
How I Write.....	146
Writing Style.....	147
10.6.2 My Theory on Theories.....	147
Bad Theories.....	147
Reason for Failure.....	147
People are Different.....	148
My Approach.....	148
Opposite Problems.....	148
10.6.3 The Biblical Approach.....	149
More than a Philosophy.....	149
Relationship with God.....	149
Point of Life.....	149
What God Wants.....	149
Who God Is.....	150
Take Life Seriously.....	150
10.7 Being Realistic.....	150

10.7.1 Working with People.....	150
The Reality of Fame.....	150
Romantic Ideals.....	151
Hard to Meet People.....	151
Problems with Virtual Dating.....	151
Finding Friendships.....	151
Lack of Maturity.....	152
10.7.2 Anxiety for No Good Reason.....	152
Downsizing Our Lives.....	152
Problems with Journalists.....	152
We Worry Too Much.....	153
Why Life is Short.....	153
The Cost of Being Healthy.....	153
Staying Inside is Good.....	153
The Best Location.....	154
Chapter 11.....	154
11.1 American Problems and the Bible.....	154
11.1.1 Where I am Coming From.....	154
Historical Perspective.....	154
No One Knows When.....	155
Unique Perspective.....	155
11.1.2 American Problems.....	155
Not So Bad in America.....	155
American Ignorance.....	156
11.2 World History.....	156
11.2.1 Role of Technology and Economics.....	156
Origin of Middle East Problems.....	156
Technology and History.....	156
Roman Empire Success.....	157
Ascension of Europe.....	157
Technology vs. Morality.....	157
11.2.2 European Experience.....	157

Rome Not First Church.....	157
Parting Ways.....	158
Christianity and Paganism.....	158
Viking Legacy.....	158
Christianity as Unifying Factor.....	159
11.2.3 Asian Experience.....	159
Asia was the World.....	159
Reasons for Spread of Islam.....	159
Europe Fights Off Islam.....	160
Ethnic Cleansing of Christians.....	160
11.3 The US and the World Today.....	160
11.3.1 American Perspective.....	160
Baseless Worrying.....	160
We Can Feed Ourselves.....	161
Life will Return Soon.....	161
Importance of Economy.....	161
11.3.2 Rest of the World.....	162
China’s Problems.....	162
Indian and Russian Problems.....	162
Europe’s Problems.....	162
11.3.3 Comparing the US to the World.....	162
Europe is Falling Apart.....	162
Non-US Economies Weak.....	163
US Not Like Europe.....	163
11.4 Limits of Studies.....	164
11.4.1 Limits in Reading.....	164
My Focus of Study.....	164
Polytheism.....	164
What the Bible Forbids.....	164
11.4.2 Limits in Worship.....	165
Christian Rituals.....	165
Places of Worship.....	165

11.4.3	Limits in Travel.....	165
	Disadvantages of Traveling.....	165
	Regional Problems.....	166
	Life is Good Here.....	166
11.5	Why I Wrote my Books.....	166
11.5.1	Documenting My Experience.....	166
11.5.2	Why Re-Write the Classics?	167
	The Value of my Work.....	167
	Increasing their Survivability.....	167
11.5.3	Restoring Asian Christianity.....	167
	Asian Religions are Not New Age.....	167
	Christianity is Not European.....	167
	Christianity in Europe.....	168
11.6	Gifts from Europe.....	168
11.6.1	New Ideas.....	168
	Uniquely European.....	168
	New Understanding.....	168
11.6.2	Physical and Spiritual World Complimentary.....	169
	Both Realities are Important.....	169
	Both Aspects Need Each Other	169
11.6.3	Value of New Ideas.....	169
	New Concepts of Freedom.....	169
	The Asian Burden.....	169
11.6.4	Combining the Two.....	170
	Living a Balanced life.....	170
	The Best of Both Worlds.....	170
11.7	Technological Progress.....	170
11.7.1	New Priorities.....	171
	Mobility and Simplicity.....	171
	Reliability over Function.....	171
11.7.2	Current Trends.....	171
	New Technologies.....	171

Land Warrior: Finding Things Faster.....	172
Land Warrior: Being Aware of Its Limits.....	172
11.7.3 Future Trends.....	172
Sci Fi Tech.....	172
A Generational Thing.....	173
11.8 The Apocalypse.....	173
11.8.1 Making Predictions.....	173
What Christians Think.....	173
Every Prediction was Wrong.....	174
11.8.2 God will Help Us.....	174
God is in Control.....	174
We Know Very little.....	174
No Reason to Worry.....	175
Trust in God.....	175
11.9 Peak Oil Worries.....	175
11.9.1 Moderating Factors.....	175
Not like the Dark Ages.....	175
Preservation of Information.....	175
It will Happen Slowly.....	176
11.9.2 Advantages.....	176
Violence will Decrease.....	176
No More Red Tape.....	176
Increasing Church Involvement.....	177
We will Be Healthier.....	177
11.9.3 Likelihood of this Situation.....	177
Somewhere in the Middle.....	177
American Future is Bright.....	177
11.10 Worst Case Scenario.....	178
11.10.1 First Obstacles.....	178
Full Scale Invasion of the US.....	178
Our Military Strength.....	178
11.10.2 Secondary Obstacles.....	179

Special Forces and Intelligence.....	179
More Sources of Weapons.....	179
11.10.3 Final Obstacles.....	179
Weapons of Mass Destruction.....	179
We Won Last Time.....	180
Final Limiting Factors.....	180
Chapter 12.....	180
12.1 Stop Getting Mad.....	181
12.1.1 Why They Hate America.....	181
Unpredictability.....	181
Naïve Americans.....	181
Find Out Why.....	181
12.1.2 Lose-Lose Situation.....	182
We Lose.....	182
They Lose.....	182
12.1.3 Money is Power.....	182
Money=Politics.....	182
Money Runs the Media.....	183
12.1.4 Recognizing the Problem.....	183
Cost of Advertising.....	183
Keeping Kids Safe.....	183
Unequal Politics.....	184
12.1.5 The Solution.....	184
Divide and Conquer.....	184
Stop Getting Mad.....	184
12.2 Everything is Useful.....	185
12.2.1 For Individuals.....	185
Personality Traits.....	185
Useful Skills.....	185
The Most Important.....	185
12.2.2 For Society.....	186
Don't Cut Taxes Now.....	186

Every Service is Essential.....	186
The Downside of Efficiency.....	186
Everything Fails.....	187
Preparing for the Unlikely.....	187
12.2.3 What You Can Do.....	187
Necessities Not Glamorous.....	187
Don't Procrastinate.....	188
Prepare Now.....	188
12.3 Affecting Change.....	188
12.3.1 Learning Helpful Concepts.....	188
Memories and Attitude.....	188
Realistic Ambitions.....	188
Mind Body Connection.....	189
Stop Doing.....	189
12.3.2 Starting with Ourselves.....	189
Changing Our Own Minds.....	189
Time to Think.....	189
Attitude Trumps Action.....	190
Thinking for Ourselves.....	190
12.4 Learning to Say No.....	190
12.4.1 Total Situations.....	190
Definition.....	190
My Situations.....	191
Psychological Impact.....	191
Truth in Experiences.....	191
12.4.2 Limits.....	191
Everyone has Limits.....	191
Limits Improve Relationships.....	192
12.4.3 Humility Requires Weakness.....	192
Pace Yourself.....	192
Be Patient with the Process.....	192
It's Ok to Have Needs.....	193

12.5 Little Things Matter.....	193
12.5.1 We Worry Too Much.....	193
12.5.2 Assault on Christianity.....	193
Focused Attack.....	193
Ok to Bash Christians.....	194
Being the Scapegoat.....	194
Factually Wrong.....	194
Christianity Won Anyway.....	195
12.5.3 Spiritual Battle.....	195
Finding Small Solutions.....	195
Ok to Be Emotional and Weak.....	195
Focus on Relationships.....	196
See with Faith.....	196
Chapter 13.....	196
13.1 Before Psalms.....	197
13.2 Psalms.....	197
13.3 Isaiah.....	199
13.4 After Isaiah.....	204
13.5 New Testament.....	205
Part IV.....	208
More Insights and Inspiration.....	208
Chapter 14.....	208
14.1 Politics, Religion, and Empathy.....	209
14.1.1 Empathy.....	209
Understanding the World.....	209
Risking Empathy over Objectivity.....	209
14.1.2 Creativity.....	210
Creativity and God.....	210
Outmaneuvering His Enemies.....	210
God's Personality.....	210
14.1.3 History Lessons of God's Work.....	211
Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.....	211

The Threat of Islam, Then Atheism.....	211
Total Reversal.....	211
Christ has Already Won.....	211
14.1.4 American Social Split.....	212
Bitter Division.....	212
Religious Motivations.....	212
Politically Correct.....	212
Finding Common Ground.....	213
Win-Win Solution.....	213
14.2 History and the Future.....	213
14.2.1 Religion and History.....	213
Religious Tolerance.....	213
Patriotism=Faith.....	213
Major Christian Churches.....	214
Success of Islam.....	214
Islam as a Unifying Factor.....	214
Latin Church as Unifying Factor.....	214
Paganism and Christianity.....	215
Importance of Middle East.....	215
14.2.2 No Rules.....	216
Why Liberals are Progressives.....	216
The Slippery Slope.....	216
Not Enforcing Laws.....	216
Taking Risks with Safety.....	217
Fear of Hard Work.....	217
Too Cheap.....	217
Unwillingness to Save/Invest.....	217
14.2.3 Fundamental Problem.....	218
Victim of our Success	218
Exponential Growth.....	218
Exponentially Greater Problems.....	218
Out of Our Control.....	219

14.2.4 Solutions.....	219
The “Easy” Solution.....	219
Many More Solutions Necessary.....	219
Will God Return?	220
God’s Return will Surprise Everyone.....	220
The Best Solution.....	220
Chapter 15.....	221
15.1 Dealing with Self Esteem.....	221
15.1.1 The Military.....	221
Soldier with Schizophrenia.....	221
Recognizing Ranks.....	222
Rifle Training.....	222
15.1.2 Coping with Stress.....	223
Deflecting Criticism.....	223
Biggest Deflectors.....	223
Other Deflectors.....	223
15.2 Dealing with My Illness.....	224
15.2.1 Power Issues.....	224
Avoiding Abuse.....	224
No Control.....	224
15.2.2 Breakdown of Trust.....	225
Chemical Weapons.....	225
My Psychotic Break.....	225
Lessons Learned.....	226
Mental Health.....	226
15.2.3 Other People’s Problems.....	227
Taking Advantage.....	227
Too Good to Be True.....	227
Religious Boundaries.....	227
15.3 Going Forward.....	228
15.3.1 My Decisions.....	228
Leaving the Stage.....	228

Internal Growth.....	228
15.3.2 Who I am.....	229
Highly Sensitive.....	229
Honesty.....	229
Uniquely Me.....	229
15.3.3 Building Relationships.....	230
Equal Relationships.....	230
Deepening Relationships.....	231
Rejection.....	231
Avoid Simple Formulas.....	232
15.4 Artistic Freedom.....	232
15.4.1 Emotions.....	232
Controlling Emotions.....	232
Religion and Emotions.....	233
15.4.2 New Developments.....	233
My Life.....	233
The Fall.....	234
15.4.3 Sources of Strength.....	234
Parent’s Influence.....	234
Divine Intervention.....	235
Personality Traits.....	235
My Understanding of God.....	235
Chapter 16.....	236
16.1 The Power of One.....	236
16.1.1 The Individual	236
Don’t Give Up.....	236
Just One Person.....	236
16.1.2 As a Group.....	237
Lessons from History.....	237
More Power than We Think.....	237
Power of American Citizens.....	238
16.1.3 Keep Working Hard.....	238

16.2 Usefulness of Crises.....	238
16.2.1 Psychology of a Crisis.....	238
Local Example.....	238
Apathy to Despair.....	239
Afraid of Hard Work.....	239
16.2.2 Short Attention Span.....	239
Crises are Helpful.....	239
Understand the Reason Why.....	239
Homeland Security Example.....	240
16.2.3 The Solution.....	240
Hit the Reset Button.....	240
People are Irrational.....	241
People Cannot Decide.....	241
16.3 A Different World.....	241
16.3.1 Political and Social Changes.....	241
Defeat of Atheism.....	241
Ascension of Christianity.....	242
One World Economy.....	242
US Power will be Regional.....	242
Biggest Changes.....	243
16.3.2 Future of Society and Technology.....	243
Do It Yourself.....	243
Mass Media.....	243
All Information Public.....	244
Insignificance of Government.....	244
Huge Industries.....	244
Reaction Against Technology.....	244
16.3.3 Why I Am Certain.....	245
The Future is Now.....	245
Computers are Dumb.....	245
Problem with Engineers.....	245
The Next Generation.....	245

Applications to Politics.....	246
16.4 Finding Your Approach.....	246
16.4.1 Background.....	246
Rationale.....	246
Easier Routes.....	246
16.4.2 Information Laws and Rules.....	247
Major Laws.....	247
Ask Permission First.....	247
Copyrights.....	247
16.4.3 Software Rules.....	248
Proprietary Programs.....	248
Variety of Proprietary Licenses.....	248
Open Source Licenses.....	248
Other Common Licenses.....	249
16.4.4 Media Rules.....	249
Background.....	249
Privacy Laws.....	249
Royalty Free.....	250
Creative Commons.....	250
Public Domain.....	250
16.4.5 Other Information Laws.....	251
Patents.....	251
Trademarks.....	251

Part I

First Things

by Ben Huot

Chapter 1

For More Information

For more books and information, visit me on the web at <http://benjamin-newton.com/>

Feel free to send me e-mail regarding the books and website at <mailto:ben@benjamin-newton.com> I even enjoy constructive criticism

Chapter 2

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Chapter 3

Introduction

The first part of this book, *Encouraging Words*, is for those who need motivation and will pump you up. The second part of this book, *Positive News*, is for workaholics and will mellow you out. The third section, *More Insights and Inspiration*, is there to make you think and self reflect.

Part II

Encouraging Words

by Ben Huot

Chapter 4

First Things

by Ben Huot

4.1 Logo

4.2 For More Information

For more books and information, visit me on the web at <http://benjamin-newton.com/>

Feel free to send me e-mail regarding the books and website at <mailto:ben@benjamin-newton.com> I even enjoy constructive criticism

4.3 Introduction

This book contains background information about myself; information about developing values; the purpose of philosophy; and quotes from: the letters from my family, public domain hymns, existentialist quotes from the Apostle Paul's letters, and the entire text of Ephesians.

I hope this book encourages you like living its contents have me for many years.

Chapter 5

Background

by Ben Huot

5.1 Discover the Website

5.1.1 Why So Serious?

Childhood Experiences

I am a very unusual and a very complex person. I also had an unusual childhood and have had untypical experiences as a young adult. School was really boring to me, but I enjoyed learning on my own through reading, especially: historical novels, news magazines, and encyclopedias. I was also very silly and had a slap stick style of humor. I grew up in the 90s when the economy was going good, America was thought of as the good guy, we had relative peace in the world, and it looked like people in power were going to take the environmental problems seriously and fix them before they got real bad.

The Military Experience

But all this changed, when I joined the military. In the time that I got off the plane, to when I met my first Drill Sergeant, I lost all my appreciation for the lighter side of life. When I signed up for the

military, I didn't realize the life and death decision I made, until I went into the Gas Chamber at Basic Training. This is the time that the psychiatrist that first diagnosed me believed I had my first psychotic episode. A few months later, I got an allergy induced (not contagious) pink eye, which I suffered with constantly, until I was on my first antipsychotic in the hospital for a week (I realize that my allergic reaction was increased dramatically, due to the stress of being mentally ill, without medication).

College Experiences

I went to college, when I got out of the military, for 2 years and I picked up another year, after I tested out of a year of college, at the end of my time in the military. I was only in the military for 13 months, but I completed all my training and made it to my permanent duty station, before I left the military. I started taking business classes, because I thought it was the best way to get a good job, but hated it. I was in constant pain due to my pink eye. I changed my major later on to Journalism, shortly before I ended up in the mental ward of a local private hospital.

Experience with Mental Illness

After I was diagnosed with Schizophrenia, I had trouble reading or writing, but finally started again and then, at the end of that summer, I entered into a group home, with 8 other mentally ill men. I didn't have much money: less than \$300 a month, at first. Then the following summer I got my permanent pension, from the VA (100% disability) and I got my first apartment. I got my disability a few months before September 11 and, if that had not happened, I would likely be an infantry soldier in Iraq now.

Experience Recovering

We tried various in home care workers, to help me with cleaning my house and making sure I took my medicine, but got so frustrated working with them that I entered a retirement home, for two years. After being picked on for all that time by senile people, I left for my own apartment again, next to an apartment complex for the mentally ill, who had their medications managed for them, and I contracted their services for about 6 months. Now I live totally independently.

The World Today

The situation in the world today is a very serious one. We don't just have an economic recession. We are at the very limits of what our planet can provide in terms of oil, soil, and drinkable water. At the very least our economy has permanently contracted. We cannot leave Iraq or Afghanistan any time soon, even if all of Congress and the White house were in agreement. Whenever oil gets too expensive, our entire economy will collapse very quickly and we will have to learn to live without electricity and modern plumbing. We are also going to have some great problems with most major cities having to deal with sea level rises, we will be getting El Nino every year on the west coast of the Americas, and New York city and Boston and everything down to Florida will be getting hurricanes bigger than Katrina, every year. Europe could go into another ice age and India is going to have a major water shortage.

Being intelligent does not make life easy and knowing the answers to problems does not help, because the people in power don't listen to us.

5.1.2 Main Ideas

Why Study the Old World?

- Have you attended public school but didn't like it precisely because you wanted to learn and you were bored out of your mind?
- Were you more interested in clubs and extra curricular activities because your school work was so repetitive and dull?
- Did you get so disillusioned by the public school system that you decided to put off college and join the military or start out in a trade?
- Do you enjoy reading and learning about other cultures and are tired of studying the American Revolution and the American Civil War?
- Are you tired of reading white American and English literature?
- Do you enjoy learning about other cultures?
- Do you see the supernatural as important in everyday life and realize that Science is not the solution to our fundamental problems?
- Have you had trouble classifying yourself into a particular social group and are more

interested in helping a few friends and close family than becoming famous?

- Do you really want the world to be transformed and realize that God is the answer?

If you have had similar experiences and feelings, I invite you to Discover the Spiritual Old World with me.

Main Objective

Broader World View

When I present different ideas of mine, I am not doing so to persuade you, but to stimulate your thinking and help you find a broader view of the world. I think that the world is becoming too analytical and is relying too much on facts and on Science as their only sources for truth.

Holistic Worldview

It is not that there is no place for linear thinking, but that there is also value in holistic, artistic, and creative approaches to problems as well. I am not trying to get rid of Science, but rather show people that the spiritual world is just as important and that emotions are as useful as facts in decision making.

Think For Yourself

I could have argued some of my main philosophical ideas more directly to the point that they would be much more persuasive, but I am more interested in getting you to think for yourself rather than just getting my ideas adopted. I want people to come up with their own ideas and take responsibility for their outcomes rather than just regurgitating what they were told.

What God Wants

I believe this idea of coming up with your own ideas is an integral part of the Bible. God wants us to freely choose to follow Him and to choose to follow him with our intellect and emotions as well as our spirit. He wants us to really believe in what He values and take risks in applying these truths we need to accept whether we understand them or not in the best way we know how.

Christ and Christianity

We need to see beyond a set of doctrines and realize that Christ is more than what a systematic theology can explain and accept Him as a role model and as an individual. We need to pursue a life as it was lived by Christ in its entirety and to do so we must use our intellect and emotions to apply His personality and values to our very different situations.

How I Can Both be a Free Thinker and a Christian

Christianity is about Free Choice

Many people associate free thought with Atheism and Science. But the most real part of the world is the spiritual world and the thing that defines humanity is our free choice. Although Science is not rejected by specific Biblical Scriptures, a worldview that sees things only from a material perspective misses out on so much.

Christianity is Multicultural

Many colonial powers tried to use Christianity, to control people in the third world and in their own countries. But, if you read the Bible and talk to most people in the world who call themselves Christians, you will realize that they come mostly from the third world and are very often very anti-western. Christianity is the world's most popular and culturally diverse belief system and it did not get to the point it is today, by advocating the domination of people.

Christianity is Misunderstood in the West

The reason why Christianity has been used to support the establishment is because it is a poor person's religion, but all the negative ideas people have tried to make the Bible say are not in there. People in the West need to read the other books of the Bible that you don't here often in Western churches, like the Prophets and they need to re-read the Letters of Paul in a totally different context, to really understand what the Bible is all about.

The Church is not the Problem

The Church dominated Western Civilization, in Medieval Times, but the basis for Democracy and Capitalism has nothing to do with the Bible. The basis for modern ideas of toleration are often thought of as a result of the Enlightenment. But, if you read John Locke's Letter Concerning Toleration, you will realize that the basis for not pressuring someone into believing in something comes from Biblical concepts.

Why Christianity is the Best Religion

Christianity is the best belief system, because it effectively deals with our spiritual selves, in a way that no other belief system does. The Bible explains the way to freedom and dignity, for all those suffering. Christ is a loving God, who saves us from destroying ourselves and we are now seeing the destruction of Revelations taking place before us. We are beginning to realize that our Apocalypse is self induced and the environmental disasters, that we will be experiencing, are all the direct result of sin and greed. Our problems are not a matter of us not being smart enough or things

that can be avoided through technological advancement.

Solving our Problems

Our true enemy is not the devil, but our own selfishness. God wants us to be creative and happy in life, but He knows, as He has lived as one of us, that we need Him in our lives, to find fulfillment and joy. We need to embrace the spiritual side of life and live as God intended us to, or else we will destroy ourselves, not just economically, but morally and emotionally. But God wants us to make this choice of our own free will. And God has different paths for all of us, but they start with a simple prayer.

My Style

What is Unique About Me

What makes me unique is not the topics I write about, but the situation I am in, as well as my passion and commitment to pursuing truth. I have lots of time, unusual experiences and a unique perspective, and I don't have to earn a living, so have pursued education in a number of areas. Since I enjoy helping others, I decided to give back, by writing about what I have learned. I even give away my creations for free. I can promise you that I will not write about something, unless I thoroughly understand it and can give a unique perspective on the topic. I also do not profit from anything I write about.

Clear and Concise

The simplest explanation of why my books are so short is that I believe that people don't have much time, so I don't want to waste it with unnecessary repetition. I find it hard to read long books and believe that most books can be shortened to a twenty page essay. I also find repetition very frustrating, as I get it the first time. I was inspired, by seeing how brief some of the most famous Chinese writings were, like the Tao Te Ching. My books are a compilation of many shorter essays and poetry.

Why Non-Fiction

I write mainly non-fiction as I that is what I read. I read non-fiction, because reading is very difficult for me, since I have Schizophrenia and if I make the effort to read, I want to learn something. Reading is not enjoyable in and of itself for me, but I do enjoy learning. I have also liked reading mostly non-fiction as a kid, as well.

My Interest in Philosophy

Many people study philosophy to learn how to debate and are interested in the technical subtleties of the discipline. Philosophy affects me very personally and in very practical ways. My interest in philosophy is about learning to make better use of my life. To me, one of the most important parts of philosophy is ethics. The reason I have been interested in philosophy so long and why Asian philosophy interests me so much is the passion mystics and philosophers have for their beliefs. If you read Hafiz, Kabir, Rousseau, or Nietzsche, you will understand what I mean about having passion for their beliefs.

I write about what I know and what I have read a lot about. I started reading philosophy in college, as I found out I was good at it and the Existential and Chinese Philosophies I studied in school explained much of why I thought the way I did. I actually had been a Christian Existentialist and Philosophical Taoist as a kid and just had not known the proper terminology. As early as middle school, I understood paradox and believed that people couldn't be objective.

When I was in college, it seemed like every class blamed White Christian Males as the source of all the problems in the world, but I realized that things started getting exponentially worse as atheism became more acceptable and mainstream. The world was not nearly as screwed up in medieval times when the church was in power, as it has in the twentieth century, where atheist ideas were the basis for policy. Most of the world that was supposedly persecuted by Christianity is now more Christian, than any other religion. Most people in the developing world understand that Christianity has nothing to do with Western Civilization.

Managing Complexity

There is something more to my style and how I design. My desire is to keep things as simple as possible. I constantly have people I know say that what I write or explain is too complicated and people who think they are experts say that I am oversimplifying. My desire is to make my communication as clear as possible, while being faithful to the message.

I already think that most things in life tend to be too complicated for not a good enough reason. Simply said, I hate splitting hairs, using advanced words, and do not use subtlety much at all. I want to be very clear about what it is I believe and what it is I stand for and I don't want to waste people's time with unnecessary details.

I do at the same time strive to keep things complex enough to do them justice. I can simplify things down to certain point, but beyond that people need to realize that not everything is as simple as operating an iPhone. Not everything can be reduced to a Powerpoint presentation or bullet points.

5.1.3 Research Issues

Why Spend So Much Time and Effort?

I have been studying and writing about philosophy, religion, literature, history, and art (the humanities), for 11 years, for a number of reasons. First, I am a disabled veteran and get a full pension from the VA, and do not work for an income, so I have lots of time. Second, I want to make a difference and when I do something I fully commit to it. Third, I have chosen a very complex and broad field, so it has taken this long to get enough material for writing books. Fourth, I enjoy it and have complete control over it, while I do not have that kind of control in many areas of my life. Fifth, it helps me to deal with my mental illness by keeping busy.

To really be good at something and to make a difference in the world requires a tremendous effort and a big commitment. Things that are worth doing take a long time. You cannot expect to accomplish something important without a real struggle and a lot of patience.

Books are not written overnight and websites are very difficult to design and maintain. Many people want to put as little effort into something as possible, while I do the opposite. It really shows how much you know, when you write about something. You cannot take the easiest route and get good results. We only live once, so we need to get the most we can out of it.

The Scope of My Research

The books which I have read and recommend, which are the basis of my understanding of philosophy and religion, were chosen very carefully. I have deliberately chosen not to read certain books, for various reasons. I only chose books that were well written and clear and concise. I have focused my reading mostly on Asian classics and most the books I have found to be helpful in improving myself.

I have specifically avoided many typical Greek, Roman, and white American and English writings, because they are so over read and recommended and represent a very narrow view of the world and most of what I want to change. I usually only read one book by each author, unless I feel it is very important. I also have avoided books that were very expensive and/or very difficult to find. I don't read many female authors as I usually cannot understand them. And most importantly, I have avoided reading certain book or areas of philosophy because the Bible forbids them.

The following list includes my exact reasons that I have quoted from my Book of Lists, which lists the books I recommend, as well as survival equipment and various other things as well.

- If you see a book that you think should be on the list but is not, likely I have already read it and didn't include it because it was too hard for others to read or it was poorly written including being too repetitive or not being clear and concise.
- I have also particularly focused on Asian and classical texts, and have especially tried to limit the Greek, Roman, white American and English writing to as few works as possible, because I think those areas are over read and I have little interest in them after having to read so many of them in high school.
- Most of the works I have included I agree with or at least partly agree with and believe can be useful for personal growth except for most the books or the topics contained in "History - Establishment" categories which I believe are only worthwhile for understanding history.
- I also have usually only included one book by each author and not necessarily the most famous, but rather the most useful one.
- Another consideration is the cost and availability of the works. For works that are difficult to find or expensive to buy, I have generally stayed away from.
- I generally avoid female writers as most of them I cannot understand.
- This is also a great list for Christians who want to study world religions and philosophies without studying the occult.

Why Reading is Good Research

Misconceptions about Expertise

Many people learn most of what they know from conversations. Many people also think that if someone is a different religion or that they are from a different part of the world that they are an expert on the subject. Many people think I am an expert on Schizophrenia because I have the disease. This is all nonsense.

Most Knowledge is in Books

The bulk of knowledge is contained in books (and most of that is only in print). I remember the first time I heard about the Library of Congress being available online. I was really impressed that they had scanned in all the books, until I found out that they just digitized the directory system. I remember in the early 90s people thought that all information was going to be available in digital

form, but Amazon.com understood that books were going to be around for a long time and made a business with it, entirely with people who already had access to the Internet.

Books Work Better

There is a reason colleges still use text books and have people write papers. It is hard to get the same amount of information put into video or multimedia presentations. I first tried to explain philosophy in multimedia, but it did not work well.

Writing Preserves Information Better

The written word helps preserve things as they were originally designed. Have you ever spread a rumor around and found out after going through several people that it evolved into a life of its own. People even when they are witnessing the same situation like a car accident give totally different explanations of what happened.

Culture is in the Written Word

The only way to reliably transfer information into the future is through the written word. And that is one of the sad things about this generation becoming functionally illiterate and having little interest in reading anything is that the basis for our culture is in writing. How could you turn the philosophy of the Enlightenment into a movie or explain the Bible in a multimedia presentation?

Frustrations with Web-Based Content

Problems Networking

At one time, I had hoped to expand upon my work and get other people motivated to create their own, from their point of view, but I have found there is no interest. I see great things on web pages sometimes, but it is all copyrighted and I can never get anyone to return my email. Most people put everything in the junk folder, unless they already know the person and are so afraid of scams that it is very difficult to network with other web site owners.

Barriers to Sharing

The problem with anything good you find on the web is that you cannot use it or copy it, but that the same time the person who created it takes it off the web very soon, so we lose all record of it. Also, people seem very resistant to putting thing in PDF files, which make it much easier to archive information. Then most people, if they can write well or produce great art, cannot produce a site that is not visually offensive, or know so little about it that it is inaccessible to even the most advanced users.

Why I Do It Myself

Since no one else is willing or able to create free content and keep it available consistently, I think long and hard before I link to someone doing something similar to what I do. And most people are motivated solely by money, so I would have to pay, to get anyone to contribute anything, but I don't have the money. I hear people all the time recommending I use professional Adobe software, but I cannot afford to, as no one will pay me for what I do.

Why I Didn't Read in the Original Languages

Another branch of the humanities that I have not gone into is languages and linguistics. There are several reasons for this. One is that I cannot speak or listen very well and the other is that it would be impractical and for not much gain.

I have wanted to learn Chinese and Arabic, but I took French in school and never learned it very well, as I have trouble hearing different words that sound similar. I was also very bad in Speech Club in high school. I even have trouble speaking and understanding English.

I don't move my lips enough, because I have learned to not move my lips, while thinking out loud, as I don't want my thoughts to all be public, for people who can read lips. This happened once in high school. I also speak very fast and have such a wide range of knowledge that it is hard for many people to keep up with me.

Another barrier for me learning another language is that, if I have to do something every day, it really stresses me out. To keep up languages skills, you have to practice daily. I also would have to find someone who knows the language to practice with and then I have to meet with them at regular times.

If I wanted to read even the most basic selection of Asian philosophy and religion in the original languages, I would have to learn at least 10 languages and many of those are not in modern usage. A tremendous number of the most important texts have modern English translations, so I did not have to limit my reading, by not knowing the original languages.

5.1.4 Distribution Issues

Reasons for Websites

I am giving my books, songs, and artwork away for free, because I am a disabled veteran and if I sold them, I would jeopardize my pension. Another reason is that I think too many things in life cost too much money. Where most people who want a free culture express these views by stealing music and movies, because they think they cost too much money, I have taken a proactive approach and have instead released my books, songs, and artwork for free.

The greatest things in life are free and the greatest works have no copyright. If I want my work to last, the best way to do it is to not sell my copyright and license it for free distribution. Like most good writers and revolutionary thinkers, I will likely be thought of as more important after I die. As it is, the only writers who make much off their books are people who are already famous.

The website also allows me to reach people all over the world with similar interests with relatively little cost. And as media is going more and more digital, it makes sense to make use of this relatively new media.

Why I Don't Sell My Books in Stores

If I wanted to have my books sold in store, I would have to sell all rights (the copyright) to each of my books and would likely only get \$5,000 for each. Then I would not be able to release them for free or sell them at cost or distribute them online or in any other way at all.

Second of all, I would jeopardize the long term survival of my books. When you sell your copyright, since copyrights extend for 75 years after the author's death or 95 years after the date of creation, unless my book sells well enough for that entire 75-95 years, then it will be discarded and totally lost to future generations during those years. No one else will be able to distribute or copy the book until that period is over, so there would be no way to "save" it.

To promote a book in just one store costs \$10,000. I tried giving my books to my local library, but they turned me down when they saw the word "Christian" on some of the books. Also, it is more likely for me to find several hundred people interested in my work worldwide than I would find in my home town.

Also, I think most people who would be interested in this kind of work already have Internet

access. As my books are freely distributable provided you don't change anything in them, you can print them out and give them to other people you know who don't have Internet access.

5.1.5 Religious Issues

Philosophy and Religion

Philosophy is Going Beyond the Basics

So you already have a religion and you wonder why you need philosophy. Philosophy is to religion, as math is to science. You can be born again and have eternal life without learning much about philosophy, but if you are the kind of person that just does the basic to get by, than all means don't bother. You don't even have to be literate, to be born again. Many people get by without the most basic understanding of math or science.

Philosophy is not for Most People

Not everyone has time to learn about everything in depth. Philosophy is not for everyone. Society needs many more engineers, than it needs philosophers. But if you don't want to learn about philosophy, because you already have done the bare minimum for you religion, then you might at least want to re-examine your attitude, as it will not get you far in life. Doing the bare minimum will keep you at a boring, unfulfilling job, for the rest of your life.

What Kind of Person are You?

Philosophy is for those who want to get more out of life, for people who know life is short and they want to discover what is most important in life. They want to understand why things are the way they are and what they can do to change things. Philosophy is for people who cannot live life without examining themselves and their place in the universe. Philosophy is for people who cannot be satisfied, by a one sentence answer. Philosophy is for people who enjoy thinking and learning.

Popular Misconceptions about Philosophy and Religion

Just as with any other topic, in philosophy and religion the same word can have more than one meaning and most people have an inaccurate perception of the way things work. Just like in

computers, the popular sound bites are based on people writing about something that they have not read enough about and many people who do know enough about it have agendas and are trying to push a certain viewpoint (which they have no problem compromising the facts in order to do so).

The bulk of my books are used to explain how different things like Christianity, Existentialism, Taoism, Mysticism, Paradox, Liberal, and other terms are used incorrectly or have alternate meanings (that are different from what people imagine them to have). These inaccurate conceptions are the result of faulty common knowledge and the oversimplification of writers.

One very widely held misconception about Eastern Philosophy from the Christian community is that it is somehow related to the New Age movement and so is incompatible with Christianity. The reality is that Christianity has already been synchronized with Greek Philosophy and Paganism, which has kept the Christian community divided, because of a lack of understanding of paradox (which is the basis for most Biblical theology). The New Age movement has taken things from every religion and has taken as much from Christianity as it has from Eastern Philosophy and what it has taken from Eastern philosophy does not include the ethics or emphasis on discipline, which are the most important parts.

The Kind of Christianity I am Promoting

I do not wish to change the theology of Christianity. I take both sides of most divisions in the church in theology. I believe that Jesus was a man and eternally is God, that salvation is by faith alone and still by faith plus works, that Free Will and Predestination are both true, and that Jesus came at the end of the 1st century AD and will come in the future at the same “time”.

What I do wish to change is everything else. I do wish to change the philosophical, political, artistic, generational, regional, organizational, and perceived opposition aspects of the way Christianity is practiced in America. Philosophically, I wish to bring the church in America to a mystical and existential Christian approach to Scripture. Politically, I wish to bring a fiscally liberal approach to Scripture to the church in America. Artistically, I wish to bring a multi-cultural approach to Scripture to the church in America. Generationally, I wish to move the focus onto the generations succeeding the baby boomers, to the church in America. Regionally, I wish to bring a developing world center of gravity and approach to Scripture to the church in America. Organizationally, I wish to have the church in America organized by network, instead of top down and linear. Finally, I wish to move the focus on threats to the church from Atheism to Paganism.

Another Perspective on Orthodoxy

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

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Some would say that I have an more open view of what is acceptable for Christians, but in reality I just have a different view of what is orthodox and Biblical and what is not. I am really hesitant to learn anything about spiritual warfare or the occult especially from non-Christian sources.

One of the reasons why I have studied about Asia so predominantly is because I am interested in other cultures but I didn't want to get involved in or learn too much about Animism which is an important part of many ancient African and Latin American cultures.

I also believe that the Church has been synchronistic in its use of Greek philosophy and religion in the development of Christian doctrines and the the study of Scripture. The warning against that comes from the first part of 1 Corinthians before the Apostle Paul starts to talk about sex and is quoted above.

The Bible is fundamentally Asian and makes more sense and is more accurately interpreted if thought of from a traditional Asian worldview. A good way to get this point of view is by reading classical texts in Asian philosophy, literature, and religion.

I also do my best to avoid learning about mythology other than the specifically Christian-based Tolkien view on English mythology.

Rich White Men

Some people have assumed when I refer to “rich white men” that I am talking about community leaders or small business men. This is totally not true. When I talk about “rich white men”, I am referring to, at the most, a few thousand people who control most of what goes on in the world. I am referring to organizations like the Council on Foreign Relations or 33rd degree Freemasons and similar groups.

I believe that these kinds of secret societies are pushing for a one world government and are pushing the ideology of the New Age movement and are supportive of an occult worldview. This sounds like a conspiracy theory, but there is little secret about these groups’ objectives.

I believe that the Theosophy movement was one of the early organized efforts to bring about these objectives. I believe that this is also a white male dominated group who are principally English and American in nationality.

The methods of these groups consist mostly of starting big wars to shift the balance of power in the world and have infiltrated public education and the media to promote the occult and a one world dictatorship. I believe that all of the national leaders of most world powers and anyone else who has a chance at winning an election at that level are supportive of these objectives or realize that they do not have the power to work against this movement.

Either way, no one consequential in world politics is working against this effort and many are willing participants. I do not believe that we really have a democracy in America, but rather that people’s souls are owned by the media and public education, so that there is no effective resistance to this effort politically , economically, or socially.

5.1.6 Artistic Approach

Overview

I do most my art with the computer and the themes I illustrate are typically based on my reading and writing which is primarily about the religion, philosophy, and literature of Asia. I am not talented at the technical skills of drawing and painting but I do have an eye for what looks good and that cannot be taught.

I have had basically no formal training in art and like doing so as a release and a way to relax, so I am not interested in learning new artistic skills, at least in the short term. I use my skills on the computer to craft my illustrations. I use a wide variety of different programs to get different effects. I generally use free programs and programs from small companies, often with restrictions, so that I almost never pay over \$150 for any one graphics program.

The last part of the book is done with Scribus and Inkscape, 2 open source graphics programs. I vectorize the illustrations with Inkscape by: clicking on the PNG image I open up, then choosing “Path”, then “Trace Bitmap”, choosing the “Colors” option, and then clicking on “OK” to apply. I then move the vector image over and delete the bitmap version, move the vector image back to where it was, and then save as in the default SVG format. I use Scribus for the publishing program part. I import the SVG versions of the graphics, resize them to fit on the page, and then I create the PDF, with the following options: under General, choose “PDF 1.3” for “Compatibility”, check “Compress Text and Vector Graphics”, choose “Lossless – ZIP” for “Compression Method”, “Maximum” for “Compression Quality”; under Fonts, choose “Outline All”; and under Color, choose “Screen/Web”. This works well for publishing with Lulu.com.

For the screen versions, I use the PNG versions with iPhoto and export to web page for the web gallery version and with Keynote I use the plain black theme at 800 x600 resolution, export to Quicktime format for the interactive slideshow version, and then I compress it in Zip format to reduce the size.

World Beliefs Illustrations Book

My first illustrations book, World Beliefs Illustrations, is organized by belief systems and I used a wide variety of programs for each illustration that looks like it was done in a different style.

I used Expression before Microsoft bought it, the “lite” version of Painter, Toon Boom Studio Express with Photoshop Elements filters, Gimp, and drew some by hand which I later scanned in.

Ethics and Discovery Illustrations Book

For my latest illustrations book, Ethics and Discovery, each image is generally a composite of work done in multiple programs. Most of these illustrations has a photographic component.

The first part, Justice and Common Sense, was done with my photos plus using a plugin in Photoshop Elements. I used the Alien Skin nature textures plugin, I purchased separately, in Photoshop Elements to create the effects in the illustrations plus I used the shapes and layer styles features, that comes with Photoshop Elements, and this was all done on top of and with my my own personal photographs. The ideas the graphics were illustrating different are things that bother my a lot about modern society including injustice and just plain stupidity.

The second part, Discover the Old World, was done with a variety of different programs. The graphics come from web graphics used for my website. I also included some of the original images used to create the various composites.

I used Carrara Express for most the logos, the “Discover” word with the lighted candle, and for the landscapes which also utilized a number of models, I purchased at the DAZ3d online store plus what I was able to download free from them, and what came with Carrara Express. The logos are explained in the website themes section. The landscapes have some other features on them including Asian art form my previous book as well as a rendering of water, done with a Photoshop plugin called Flood.

The background for most the images is a spotlight on a golden-orange-yellow textured background. I created this each time it was used from scratch, with Photoshop Elements, by first creating a layer with just one color, applying the golden textured layer style, simplified the layer. Then I created another layer, by choosing black and a yellow orange for the foreground and background colors, and then applying the render clouds filter on a new layer. Then I changed the opacity on this new layer, so that you could see a glow over the golden texture, and then merged the 2 layers. I then applied the same render lights filter setting each time. This background was to symbolize the idea of “discover” with the concept of someone using a flashlight to explore a dark and undiscovered treasure with a gold surface.

The maps were copyright free from 1812 or were given away for free online and a lot of the

lettering was done with a Mac OS X only program called Art Text, which utilizes the built in Mac only graphics feature, that small developers can use to differentiate their programs and be able to sell for a very low price.

I use Toon Boom Studio Express for a lot of drawings, because the limitations of this cheaper version apply to the animation abilities and the draw features are very impressive, especially with the latest version, after they have added most my suggested features. A number of the original images, used for the different website type of content/multimedia sections, were created originally in Toon Boom Studio Express. I then I used the “auto paint” feature, with different settings for each drawing, in Painter (the full version) to give a more natural painted and organic look, to the simple 1 dimensional illustration. Then I brought the image into Photoshop Elements, cut out the white parts, and then applied various artistic filters to each image. I later added a cut out photograph, I took from living nativity, to each section to make it look more Asian.

5.1.7 Other Issues

Philosophical Issues

As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him.

2

Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

3

The ideas come together like this: I don't think that anything happens as an accident. I think there is a reason for everything and everything fits together to form a meaning. We just aren't able to understand it because of our limitations. We assume that because we have free choice the universe can't be planned. We think that because of suffering and uncertainty that life is meaningless, because we can't accept that God places limits on himself too. I accept that there is meaning in life with faith, not by reason. God respects and values our freedom to the extent that he will allow us to spend forever in Hell if we want to reject His love and His plan for our lives by the simple step of

22 Samuel 22:31

3Psalms 2:12

praying a prayer of accepting that God is greater than us. God also allows much suffering to happen on earth because he values people and want them to carry out His plan for reducing the world's suffering. Unfortunately, few people follow God's lead and because of this we are primarily responsible for the world's suffering.

Family Values

The main problems that this site deals with are not things I learned from reading, but things I have felt from an early age. My family was influential in fostering my imagination, independence, and my concern for others. Naturally I was interested in philosophical problems of suffering, uncertainty, and free will. Recently, I have had to learn about limits very quickly to deal with a recent living situation. So it is natural that I devoted a website to sharing with the world some of the the things that are important to my family.

5.1.8 Branding

Website Themes

All my website addresses are named benjamin-newton with different extensions, including: benjamin-newton.com (Simply Ben), benjamin-newton.us (The End of the Beginning), benjamin-newton.net (Ben Academic Fast Track), and benjamin-newton.info (Ben Labs).

The Simply Ben (pink and orange benjamin-newton.com) website is named so because it is a simplification of my website which was reduced to about 1/10 its number of files mainly due to assembling the texts together as complete books and narrowing down the number of photos on the website. It is more streamlined and clearer in organization. The logo is of a cross and the yin yang symbol as my philosophy is based on Christian Existentialism and Chinese Philosophies (Taoism, Neo-Confucianism, Zen Buddhism) and the wheel symbolizes influences from the major Indian belief systems (Bhakti Hinduism, Theravada Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikh faith) elements.

The End of the Beginning (blue and tan benjamin-newton.us) website is based on the idea of a new era of my works. It is has an African and New World theme. The logo is of a guy praying to God, either Muslim or Christian as those are the major rapidly growing world religions of the 21st Century.

The Ben Academic Fast Track (green and blue benjamin-newton.net) website is themed after the

concept of a business school in Portland, Oregon for working students going back to college to further their education. It is the Fast Track to getting all my books together with maximum efficiency. The logo is of the front of a tall building.

The Ben Labs (black and orange benjamin-newton.info) website is the place for my new developments before I can find a place for them. The logo is a “play on words” as Taylor was my sister’s dog who was a black Labrador Retriever or “Lab” breed. If you see writings here, that later disappear, then they are likely in the books section. Follow the link “philosophy books” from any of the front pages, to get there.

Logo Explanation

I should explain what the logo is meant to be representing. The guy is a pen, which is me, which comes from my first poem in Philosophy Core, called Creative Process, where I refer to myself as doing Tai Chi, with my pen being my body. The idea is based on “the pen is mightier than the sword” so I created “the Bible is mightier than the pen”.

The Bible is shooting out flames because in Ephesians it talks about spiritual warfare and the Bible is the only armament that is offensive. (It means offensive instead of defensive. These are common terms used in combat. The sword is the only spiritual weapon. All the other armaments expressed in Ephesians are protective and defensive in nature like a shield, a helmet, a breastplate, etc.)

The flames are meant as in James when it talks about being purified by fire or struggles with temptation in our lives. Isaiah also was purified by a live coal to his lips by a Seraphim. So the usage of fire is not evil or anything violent. Think of it as purifying.

I would ideally like it to show the sword turned inward to his chest, symbolizing like in many fantasy books that when they defeat the great evil force in the world, they are left with the greatest task, which is to defeat the evil within. The Bible is said to be a 2 sided sword, with the ability to cut between bone and marrow, and show the truth. Christ’s tongue is said to be a 2 edged sword in Revelations, to defeat the Devil with. The reason I didn’t show this is it looks like he is committing suicide.

The spiritual warfare is not against people, ideas, or even spirits. It is about fighting for the purity of our own minds. It is an internal thing. Like the Native American proverb “my greatest enemy is myself.” This purity is in regard to our own sins and does not refer to purity in any other sense. But this is a process, not an outcome, as it is not possible for us to live without sin.

This warfare is only spiritual in the sense that it is not militant, social, economic, or political. This is for my own moral and ethical development and consists of practical qualities I try, with Christ's help, to cultivate like humility, compassion, kindness, and seriousness and do not correspond to anything supernatural.

5.2 Discover My Life Story

5.2.1 Childhood

I was born in 1978, and in Middle School, I saw the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, starting with the breaking down of the Berlin Wall. I grew up in the 90's when the world was much simpler. We didn't have any major wars going on and the economy was growing. Computers were simple and most people didn't have access to the Internet.

I was involved in church and Scouting from an early age. I started out in Tiger Cubs in 1st Grade and finished by becoming an Eagle Scout, just before I graduated from high school. I spent the years between 8 and 18 at an Evangelical Quaker church.

Elementary School was boring, while Middle School I was unpopular and it was a living hell. One of the things that made Middle School so bad is that I had some huge warts on my hands, which I had to get removed by acid, liquid nitrogen, and then by minor surgery. I also had a newspaper delivery route near my house and had to get up at 4 am twice a week, for several years. I had to collect the money, by going house to house and it was like pulling teeth, to get people to pay a couple bucks a month, for the newspaper.

5.2.2 High School

High School was much more fun, as I spent most my after school hours in a variety of activities and clubs. My junior year, I was involved in 12 extra curricular activities. I also became popular ,after I spent a year on the Cheerleading Team, as the Yell King and Spirit Man. I also ran Cross Country and Track the other 3 years and my senior year I took weightlifting and conditioning, to get ready for the military.

I spent 2 of my summer vacations, during high school, working at Boy Scout summer camps. One was in the middle of a national forest in the mountains, by a small lake and the other was on the

coast, with direct beach access. One summer, I also went to Washington, D.C., because I won first place in my state in a national peace essay contest, sponsored by the US Institute of Peace. In DC, we did a simulation of the conflict in Somalia during the mid 90's and got to meet important government and organizations like our congressional representatives, the State Department, the Red Cross, and more. We also saw the Smithsonian and toured the capitol.

During the school year, I participated in many clubs, including: Model United Nations, Speech, French Club. My junior year I also did Peer Counseling, Catering Club, and started my own Political Club. I missed so many days of school, due to my extra curricular activities, that I should have had to repeat most my years of high school. Most the activities I was involved with, I was bad at, including: Speech, sports, and Scouting. This influenced me to later focus on things I was good at, including the humanities and the arts.

5.2.3 Army

My junior year, I signed up for the Army, in the Delayed Entry Program. One reason I signed up was for the money for college, but I also believed that was what God wanted me to do, as preparation for something later. I left for the military a month after I graduated from High School. The military was very stressful, but very exciting. I knew I was doing something important, but I also was terrified of a number of the risks involved, especially of the threat of chemical weapons.

One of the things we had to do in Basic Training was go into a gas chamber for 5 minutes, with CS gas (which is a kind of tear gas) and then take off our masks, while we were inside. I felt like I was being burned alive. I figured if the training gas was so bad, then the real chemical weapons must be infinitely worse. Later, the psychiatrists that diagnosed my with Schizophrenia thought that the gas chamber was the time when I had my first psychological break with reality.

I was in the military from 2 July 1996 to 15 August 1997. I finished all my training, to work with computers and I was stationed in Hawaii from February to August 1997. I really enjoyed Hawaii. I was on the island of Oahu – the one with Honolulu and most the tourist sites on it. I got to see almost every thing there for tourists. I also took and passed several college classes and tests that counted for college credit. I ended up completing my Freshman Year of college, during my stay in the military. What I enjoyed most about Hawaii was the people at the churches I went to.

I left the military with an Honorable Discharge under the regulations for discharges for combat stress. I was diagnosed with Schizoid personality disorder. I left in 5 weeks, after going to my

commanding officer, and asking to get out. I was obviously out of my mind, at the time. Never do it this way. Even dishonorable discharges take longer than this.

When I was in the military, they had a number of different discharges, including: general, other than honorable, etc. In the military, you can get what is called an Article 15, for minor infractions, like being late to formation or having food in your locker. You get fined a couple hundred dollars and get several weeks of extra duty, after your work. Any NCO can give one of these out, for almost anything, no matter how minor. If I had one of these, since I was only in for a year, I could have gotten one of the other discharges, like general, which would have kept me from being able to get my disability pension later on. Luckily, I had none of these.

When I left Basic Training, I got chronic allergic conjunctivitis (also known as pink eye), which I had for several years more, until I got started on my first anti-psychotic, when I first got diagnosed with Schizophrenia. My eyes itched and burned all the time until then.

5.2.4 College

When I left the military, I started at a local Community College for a year, to complete my lower division required courses, for business management. I hated the business classes, but I believed that this was the way to a good job and so I did it anyway. I had to take accounting 5 times to pass it, although I did very well in economics. After continuing for a year at the local University in town, I finally decided to change majors, to Journalism, as I enjoyed and was good at writing and I believed it would get me a good job.

I tried taking a Chinese language and a History of Philosophy series of courses, but stopped taking Chinese, because I couldn't learn the language fast enough and the philosophy courses, because I forgot to do the first paper which would have given me an F. I also had to drop an advanced Feminist Anthropology course, because I couldn't figure out what phrasing the teacher wanted me to use for my papers and I had to drop a required course in Statistics, because my ability to do basic math left me.

Along the way, I took a Chinese literature series of courses, for my breadth requirement, a class on Existentialism, and one on Ecofeminism, to make up for courses which I failed, plus an advanced class on Beauvoir and did well in all of them. This was when I realized I was good at philosophy. This is also when I started the website and started writing poetry about God and religion.

5.2.5 Schizophrenia

Then on 11 December 1999, I had a break down and had my first psychotic episode. My parents found me walking on the street and took me to the hospital emergency room. I was talking a mile a minute. The doctors thought I was on methamphetamine, until I took a urine test. Then they sent me to the psychiatry ward of another local hospital, where I went in voluntarily. I spent 10 days (until my dad's insurance stopped) and then left in my parents care.

I found out a month later that I had Paranoid Schizophrenia. I just watched TV, for the first several months, but then started reading, where I left off, in my Chinese Literature and Existentialism classes. I then wrote up my paranoid episode and started writing poetry again.

That fall, I left my parents home and stayed in a local mental health group home with 8 other mentally ill men. I stayed there until I got my veteran's pension. Then I moved out into my own apartment and had an in home care worker help me with cooking and cleaning. I later spent some time in a retirement home, after having trouble with the in home care and to make sure I remembered my medicine. I stayed there for 2 years and had to eat terrible food and deal with some very nasty and delusional old people.

Then I left, for my own apartment again. I chose one next to an independent living arrangement for the mentally ill and they monitored my medicine. Now I am completely on my own and I published 4 books with what I had written up until then and then continued to write.

5.3 Discover My Disability

5.3.1 Background Information

General Information

Schizophrenia describes a wide spectrum of mental health disorders. Schizophrenia is a thought disorder and is the worst mental illness one can have. It is not known what causes it. There is a genetic tendency and then it is brought out by a stressful situation, most commonly, military service. About 1% of the population has Schizophrenia worldwide and it has the same rates of infection across the globe, in every country and culture. Diagnosis doesn't generally happen until the affected

person has a psychotic episode and breaks a minor law, so they can be sent to a psychiatric hospital (I never committed a crime and voluntarily signed myself in). The illness generally starts for men in their 20's and for women in their 30's, but it can easily take a decade to admit they have a problem and to get properly diagnosed and on effective medicine.

Common Misunderstandings

Schizophrenia has nothing to do with multiple personality disorder and is very different from bipolar disorder and clinical depression. Schizophrenia has no effect on your intelligence, independence of thinking, or creativity. Schizophrenia is often confused with some sort of existential crisis of spirit or as a sign of someone having the special spiritual ability, but in reality having spiritual powers has nothing to do with Schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is a mental disability and does not give the person any special gifts. In fact, a person with Schizophrenia has less control of their mind and would find things like meditation to be very difficult. Confusing spiritual powers and mental illness is insulting to both groups as it creates the perception that spiritually aware people are somehow disabled and it insults people with Schizophrenia who try to avoid the spiritual world.

5.3.2 Dealing with the Illness

Symptoms

The symptoms of Schizophrenia are grouped into positive and negative categories, positive meaning what you have in addition to what a normal person has and negative meaning lacking something a normal person has. The positive symptoms can include paranoia, auditory hallucinations (hearing voices), and delusions. The negative symptoms include depression, lack of motivation, and lack of facial expression.

Treatment

Schizophrenia was only successfully treated to some extent since the 1950s when it was discovered that tranquilizers, also known as sedatives, helped. Sedatives are the only treatment that has had any degree of success. Counseling can help as a secondary treatment. There is no traditional

medicine treatment that works for Schizophrenia. Before the 1950s, a person with Schizophrenia would starve to death, because when a person goes into a psychotic episode, they stop eating.

Medicine and Side Effects

The medicine brings the positive symptoms under control, but it does not get rid of all of them, so that you can deal with them and either causes or does not alleviate the negative symptoms. The medicine does not make you any less creative, any less independent of thought or affect your intelligence. The medicine slows things down and make you very sleepy and gain a lot of weight. The newest medicines are supposed to not cause sleepiness and weight gain and just target the mind, but they still have those same side effects for me. Only certain drugs work on certain people and for many people the newer drugs aren't effective on them or they cannot afford them. It is very hard for a person with Schizophrenia, to remember to take their medicine. Many people stop taking their medicine, because they have less symptoms than before and they think they don't need it any more. This usually results in having to go back to the hospital and starting from scratch.

5.3.3 Living with the Situation

Daily Life

A third of people with Schizophrenia just stare at the wall all day, a third are in assisted living and a third are mostly independent. People with Schizophrenia are no more violent than anyone else, but are often the victims of crimes, as people try to get them involved in various scams and they also often live in poor neighborhoods, as most have to live on a state pension that is very small. Many people with Schizophrenia cannot read anything longer than a newspaper article and although there is often an increased interest in religion, it is almost impossible for someone with Schizophrenia to understand philosophy, regardless of intelligence. Schizophrenia is related to anxiety disorder, but many degrees of magnitude greater. People with Schizophrenia are often uncomfortable around other people and live isolated lives.

Unqualified Workers

Many people are hard to diagnose as to what mental illness they have, which is made worse by the fact that many mentally ill individuals have tried to self medicate with various street drugs and many of the workers in the mental health system do not have adequate training and try to push certain agendas like telling people to treat their symptoms by some kind of diet, some sort of meditation, or to reduce the amount of medicine they are on which are all ineffective.

5.3.4 My Situation

Paranoid Schizophrenia

I have Paranoid Schizophrenia. This is the worst kind of Schizophrenia. What is most disabling symptom to me is paranoia. Paranoia is basically a kind of terror – think fear on steroids. Paranoia and delusions are similar, but usually distinguished by paranoia being a fear of people coming after you and delusions include other situations you imagine, all of which are not real. My diagnosis is definite, as I have been diagnosed to have the same mental illness by 3 independent psychiatrists, and no psychiatrists since then have ever challenged my diagnosis (psychiatrists are the only ones qualified to diagnose mental illness, which have much more training than a psychologist, even one with a Ph.D.). I also have never taken any street drugs or abused prescriptions, which made it easier to diagnose me.

Behavioral Strategies

In addition to the medicine I take, I have several other methods, that help keep my symptoms under check. I have to be careful what I watch on TV and read on the Internet, to avoid things that trigger increased paranoia. I keep busy with projects, to avoid paranoid thoughts and voices. I also get out, as often as possible, to keep myself grounded in reality. I try to limit what I do, at any one time, so that I don't get stressed out, to avoid depression and paranoid thoughts. I have also have a PRN medicine I can take, when I am having acute symptoms.

Chapter 6

Developing Values

by Ben Huot

6.1 The Bible and Making Decisions

6.1.1 What Defines Us

It is common to see human development as either or both nature and/or nurture, but the most important factor that influences your quality of life is your decisions. One of the reason why Existentialism is so relevant today and is so universally important is that the true thing that defines humanity is free will. Our wills are the most important elements of what defines what is important in life and form the most integral part of our identity. We actually start out as a mostly blank slate, but we form our individuality by the choices we make.

This doesn't change the fact that we are not born into equally difficult circumstances nor are we born with equal abilities or health, but we can choose the direction that we take in life, even if we cannot determine our future to the extent we hope for. Many people start with some great limitations in life, but because of the choices they make, they become a genuine person that is trying to make the world a better place. No matter how wealthy or how popular a family you are born into, if you make bad choices, you will end up in a bad place and your life will get worse and worse.

Even if you came from a bad home or had parents who didn't learn from their parents how to raise kids, you can improve your attitude and the kind of person you are. Whether you are wealthy or not does not make your life better if you are not able to be happy when you are alone. No matter how many rules you get a way with breaking or how lenient society becomes in enforcing laws, your true freedom comes from your ability to make up your own mind about who you want to be.

6.1.2 What does Freedom Mean?

A Summary of the Biblical Concept

Most people think of freedom as the ability to choose what they want to do. The irony is that most people are driven by the desire for pleasure, actually become addicted to sin, and end up destroying themselves, as a direct result of their free choices. It is ironic that so many Americans died for their citizens to experience freedom and yet most Americans are so desperate to belong to a social group that they make the exact same choices as everyone else.

As you can now see, theoretical freedom is not the same as real freedom, because our greatest enemy is ourselves and our own selfishness. The Bible talks about how we are slaves to our own greed and that to be free is to be adopted back in to God's family, being reconciled with our Creator, and being forgiven for our mistakes. Freedom is only achieved by understanding the concept of sin, realizing that some choices lead to destruction, and then accept that we must submit ourselves to Christ in order to be truly free.

We have one of two masters: we serve money (the devil) or God. We cannot keep from choosing sides. If we don't make the decision to repent of our sins, then we are making the choice to continue in sin and we will be in servitude to a master, who want us to have no freedom. There are many times in which there are multiple decisions we can make and none are bad decisions. Life does not allow simple choices very often and even simple choices can be hard to make. But for us to know the truth about our relationship with God is the starting point in which we can fight against our greatest enemy, our stubborn will.

Being free is related to being humble. This is a paradox that few understand. There is no freedom in an addiction and if we live to satisfy our desires, we will never be happy or at peace with ourselves. The only path to freedom must begin with acknowledging that we cannot be free, with no commitment to God. Being free is really about accepting that we cannot be happy on our own. We need to go back to the relationship we have all been estranged from. We must come back to our Heavenly Father with respect and humility. Grace is the route to freedom and it is given freely. We just need to accept the reality as it is.

Passages that Talk about Biblical Freedom

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

4

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

5

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the

4Psalm 51:12

5John 8:31-36

servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature

waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

7

6.1.3 The Biblical Approach to Suffering

Western vs. Non-Western Attitudes

To many Western Christians, passages about prophecy and about how suffering builds character make God seem like a sadist or a masochist. But in Africa, Revelations is the most popular book of the Bible. Why do different cultures see things so differently and how can talking about suffering be positive?

Who is Responsible

I must first assure to you that God is not responsible for our suffering and neither is the devil. God restricts what the devil can do to us (like we read about in Job) because God wants us to be responsible for our actions and have a free will, so that we can choose our own destiny. The part that doesn't make sense is that good people suffer because of what bad people have done and the bad people often live without any ill effects.

Encouraging People Who Suffer

So the point of talking about the suffering we will have is not to say that it is worthwhile nor even ok that we suffer, nor is to scare us about the future, but rather to communicate to those who are already suffering, that it is not for nothing. In other words, it is to encourage us. I think, for many in the West, we are relatively rich and do not suffer physically anywhere near like it is in the Third World, so we misinterpret prophecy about the future as some sort of punishment, for us who believe.

Environment and Prophecy

We are learning now about the world, things that were prophesied to happen at the end of time. These birth pains are already occurring, which we label as environmental disasters. These we have caused, because of our own lust, selfishness, and sin.

Understanding God's People

This goes back again to what it means to be a Christian and what group of people Christ has targeted for His Kingdom. Christianity is a religion for the materially poor and the spiritually rich. We will never understand who Christ is, until we understand what the majority of the Christians in the world, throughout history or even now, are like in their circumstances and in their spiritual make up.

6.1.4 Heaven, Eternity, and God

Eternal Perspective

I have thought about what Heaven might be like, for a long time. Time would obviously be different, if we are to live forever, so that we don't need to have an endless list of things to do. I think we see part of this in Taoist writings, and when we get very good at something, we are in the process of performing the action, and we are in the moment or in the flow, time goes by at a different rate. Compare kissing your girlfriend or wife with getting your hand burned. In one situation, time goes by faster than in the other situation. I think one of the reasons why God still sees us as sinners, even if we have repented many years ago, is because for God, everything happens at once (this is really a vast oversimplification), so God sees everything we have ever done as the real us, instead of what we are at an given time.

Roses and Heaven

I took some close-up pictures of some roses, while visiting my parents, and they were so perfect and beautiful that they gave me a feeling of peace, joy, and awe. The roses remind me of how I imagine Heaven. At the end of the Book of Revelations, Heaven is described as a golden city, with precious jewels and a garden. I used to think that this seemed inconsistent with how God speaks in support of values, instead of material wealth, throughout the rest of the Bible.

Indian Mystic Poets

But I remember reading some of the writings of South Indian Mystic Poets and how there is a

branch of the Bahkti Hindu movement (this is a movement based on the devotional path of Hinduism) that believes God cannot be explained and so can only be talked about in mystical terms. This school believes similarly to how Moses Maimonides talked about how God can only be described in terms of what He is not, instead of what He is. God is not finite, He is not mortal, He is not defeatable, God was not created, and He is not limited by anything. The Indian mystic poets that believe this way, include some of the most famous: Kabir, Guru Nanak, and Meera. But this other school of the Bhakti movement understands God as a celebration and that living a spiritual life is one of splendor and rich in spiritual qualities.

Understanding Revelations

Revelations starts out as a very scary horror film or nightmare scenario. We read this book of the Bible and are terrified of ever having to live through this, but throughout most of the history of the Church, Christians have found comfort in reading Revelations, because it gives them hope. Have you ever gone on a camping trip? How did you feel when you came home, took a shower and then slept in your own bed? Have you ever had a hard workout on a very hot day? What did you feel when you got to drink a cold drink? That is what Heaven is like. Heaven is about comforting us after all we have suffered in our lives. We will truly appreciate it, after all we have been through in our lives.

6.1.5 What We Should Do

Many Christians believe that there is one specific job they must do and that they need to figure this out or they are not following God's will. If you want to know what God expects of us, read the Psalms and the Prophets. God does not require us to know anything that is not in the Bible. It is not likely that God or an angel will come and give you a vision of an exact job God wants you to do, but if God wants you to do something, you will have no doubts about it. All roads will lead to it and you will be reminded of it all the time, no matter what you do or where you go.

God's will for us is not something hard to figure out. God also treats us all equally. God wants us to be a certain kind of person, rather than doing a certain kind of job. God wants us to have a good attitude and to try to follow in Christ's example of humility and compassion. The qualities God want us to emulate are abstract values, not specific actions.

Jesus says it with the Sermon on the Mount and the Golden Rule. He says the same in the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament. What God wants you to do is to use your natural gifts with a

passion for who Jesus is. If you believe for a long time that something is important and the Bible doesn't speak against it, then if you do it, then you are following God.

6.2 Thinking Long Term

6.2.1 My Perspective

Although I believe that it is impossible for anyone to be objective but God, I can assure you that I have no financial interests in anything I write on, because I am a disabled veteran and make all my money because of my disability, regardless of what I do or do not do, and I cannot receive extra money from any other source and keep my pension. This website has never made me any money nor ever will (although it has cost me a lot) and all my books are sold at cost.

When you read my books, you will realize that I am not interested in pushing any particular ideology, except for people to think for themselves and think more broadly. I believe and practice everything I say and my main aim is to improve the quality of life of people and animals. I also do not write anything unless I already have done a great deal more research than most people would before writing about any particular topic.

Another unique element of my perspective is that I see the world as bigger than myself. If some change in the world would make other people's lives better at the expense of or with no direct effect to me, I would welcome it.

Take for example software and computers. Although I don't play games on computers, I still see the value in it, because games accelerate the investment in the graphical processing power of computer chips, which will in turn allow me to improve the quality of my graphics. Even though I don't have an iPod, people buying iPods makes my computer experience and what I can create with it better, because Apple can invest more in computers. The success of mobile computing, although I am not very interested in that in itself, is good because it gets more standards compliant browsers out there, that allow web sites to be designed easier and with more features.

I also see things from a longer period of time than most people. Governments think the farthest ahead and that is only a generation at the most. I am planning hundreds of years ahead of time. I don't form my perspective on what exists currently, but on what could be very important long into the future. That is why I think trends in society that last for many years are very important to consider (because they will shape the kind of society we will have in the future).

I also have decided to focus on things that I am good at and a things that won't be done by other people. I realize that the world needs many more engineers than philosophers. I could make a great contribution to the world designing software, but if I didn't some one else would. If I don't try to prepare people for the future, no one else will. I can afford to pay for someone to clean my house, cook my food, and write the software I use, but I couldn't afford to pay someone to do my work, or even the most basic parts, to my standards with the amount of money I have.

6.2.2 My Vision of the Future

I see our future as a challenge and an opportunity. To think that we will just give up, because life becomes very different or more difficult is a response that doesn't comprehend the extent of human creativity and ignores the reality of a benevolent Creator, who has proven His desire to help transform us and the society we live in.

People have lived throughout most of history at a level of basic subsistence and we have only had fossil fuels, electricity, and modern plumbing for a very short period of this history. While the small group of people that controls most that goes on in the world has made some decisions that were not made within the context of potential long term technological, political, economic and social evolution and adaptation, we are not going to be totally annihilated.

Now is the time to rethink what is important in life and what our priorities should be. Before we get into major engineering projects which are costly in time and money, we need to work on the kind of expectations we need to have of our children to prepare them physically, emotionally, morally, and spiritually for a world we cannot yet imagine.

We need to learn to do more with less, develop disciplined habits in spending, physical fitness, and energy use. We need to rethink whether or not we need each and every thing we spend time or money on. Things are changing fast and will accelerate, so we need to start planning what we want life to be like, before all our decisions are made for us. Define your future instead of just passively accepting what others have decided for you.

6.2.3 Patience

Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

8

It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.

9

But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

10

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

11

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

12

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

13

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

14

Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

15

Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

16

8Ecclesiastes 7:8

9Lamentations 3:26

10Luke 8:15

11Romans 8:25

12Romans 15:4

13Galatians 6:9

14Colossians 1:10

151 Thessalonians 1:3

161 Thessalonians 5:14

And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

17

That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

18

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

19

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

20

Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

21

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

22

6.2.4 Perseverance

Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.

172 Thessalonians 3:5

18 Hebrews 6:12

19 Hebrews 10:36

20 Hebrews 12:1

21 James 1:3-4

22 Peter 1:5-8

23

The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.

24

Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.

25

Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

26

The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

27

And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

28

And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

29

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

30

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this

231 Chronicles 16:11

24Job 17:9

25Psalm 37:24

26Psalm 73:24

27Psalm 138:8

28Jeremiah 32:40

29Matthew 10:22

30Luke 22:31-32

is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

31

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

32

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.

33

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

34

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or

31John 6:37-40

32John 8:31-32

33John 10:27-30

34John 15:4-9

nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

35

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

36

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

37

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

38

But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

39

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

40

6.2.5 Ways to Develop Discipline

1. Find role models who are disciplined
2. Pray for God's help to become disciplined
3. Read the Bible

35Romans 8:30-39

361 Corinthians 15:38

37Ephesians 6:18

38Hebrews 10:23

39James 1:4

401 Peter 5:8

4. Fast or go on a diet
5. Save money or give to charity
6. Volunteer
7. Learn a foreign human or computer language
8. Learn a martial art
9. Meditate
10. Exercise consistently
11. Do anything constructive for a long time
12. Even developing a schedule is a start

6.3 Learn to be Kind and Patient

6.3.1 First, Learn from Others' Experiences

1. Find others to emulate who are kind
2. Pray for God's help to become kind
3. Read the Bible

6.3.2 Second, Broaden your Reading

1. Read about a wide range of history
2. Read a variety of ethical writings
3. Read up on common manners
4. Read biographies of famous people

6.3.3 Third, Get your own Unique Perspective

1. Learn your family history
2. Write your own autobiography
3. Discover or develop your own beliefs
4. Understand why you think the way you do

6.3.4 Fourth, Understand that Differences are OK

1. Read things that conflict with your beliefs
2. Find similarities to your beliefs in these writings
3. Try to understand the reason why others think differently

6.3.5 Fifth, Learn Communication Skills

1. Understand how you say things is as important as what you say
2. Learn to be direct
3. Learn how to read body language
4. Learn to evaluate situations from an emotional perspective

6.3.6 Sixth, Learn to Think Empathetically Instead of Purely Fact Based

1. Read writings of famous mystics
2. Read poetry
3. Practice being kind to animals
4. Learn to be subtle
5. Listen to highly sensitive people

6.3.7 Seventh, Learn from Experience

1. Spend time around people that are hard to get along with
2. Spend time around people in pain
3. Volunteer to help those who are disabled
4. Listen to what others say, when you disagree with them

6.4 Being Creative and Helping Others

6.4.1 How to Think Creatively

Get Ready to Think

1. Get plenty of sleep
2. Give yourself as much time as possible
3. Thoroughly research the topic
4. Don't limit your options unnecessarily

Think About the Idea

1. Prioritize what is most important
2. Be willing to make trade-offs
3. Discuss the idea with other people
4. Take a lot of time to think about it

Try the Idea Out

1. Make controlled experiments
2. Roll out your idea in stages

Get Ready for Future Ideas

1. Be willing to try new things
2. Practice thinking differently
3. Take calculated risks
4. Try things you haven't before

6.4.2 Creativity and Saving Money

Living Without a Car

One of the big ways to save money is to not own a car. This involves a real sacrifice and can be isolating. It is not for everyone. The alternatives are most commonly: taking the bus, walking, riding a bike, and taking a taxi. Each has its own purpose and more than one can be used, based on the situation.

What Riding the Bus is Like

If you have good bus service in your town, this could be a solution by itself. One of the things to plan for is to live at a major intersection in town, so that they are unlikely to cut your stop or route, because, at least in my town, they make service cuts every year. One of the things about the bus, at least in my town, is that a bus may not come at the scheduled frequency (they are never on time), if the bus is full or they are behind schedule, so you have to allow extra time. Another thing that is frustrating is dealing with the drivers, who: will often not stop at the right stops, will want you to hurry on the bus at some times and then at others make you wait for people to get off (that you can't see), and they often don't give you time to sit down or to get off before driving off. In my town, the service is good weekday mornings and afternoons. You also cannot carry big packages or luggage, drink or eat, or listen to load music on the bus.

Bus People

The people on the bus can be frustrating too. Most people who ride the bus do so, because they cannot afford any other options. Most people who ride the bus are: kids, the elderly, people with various disabilities like those in wheelchairs and the developmentally disabled, the poor, and people who have lost their licenses to drive, due to reckless or drunk driving. Many people on the bus have bad manners and have a hard time getting along with others. Usually there is at least one person who is very annoying, who does something like: making loud repetitive sounds, staring at you, going on and on with irrational ramblings, or trying to start a conversation with you or the bus driver. I try not to make eye contact with anyone and avoid smiling, which helps keep people from harassing me

directly. I also avoid certain times and routes to avoid certain annoying people.

Alternatives to the Bus

If I want to get anywhere on the weekends, I either walk or take a taxi. I have tried using a taxi, to get to a meeting, at a certain time, but I found that, if you call them too early, they forget and that not very many taxis are running on the weekend. There must not be much competition for taxis in my town. Riding a bike around town works well, in my town, because of all the bike paths, but you will have to find somewhere to put your bike (there isn't much room on the bus for them) and you should avoid getting a nice one as they are often stolen. Riding a bike in the rain is not fun either and it is hard to carry packages.

Re-Occurring Expenses

Another big way to save money is to reduce re-occurring expenses. Some of these include cell phones, cable TV, Internet, games, movies, music, computers, software, and eating out. Not everyone needs every electronic device out there. People survived fine for thousand of year without cell phones. Most people do not have much time to watch cable TV, so for most people that is a bad investment. You can get the entire season of a show on DVD or on iTunes and just see what you want, without paying, for all the stuff you never watch on cable. The Internet is vital for most people, but check the rates from different companies and different plans, not usually advertised, and you can also get free wireless network, at many different businesses in many areas, like restaurants and coffee shops. You can save money on music, by just buying the songs you want on iTunes, instead of purchasing an entire CD, for one song. You can also save money, by buying movies on iTunes, rather than buying them on DVD or Blu-ray. Many people can actually save money on a Mac, due to not having to pay lots of money for constant repairs, because Macs last longer, and Macs have much higher resale value. You can save on software, by using open source software, instead of paying hundreds of dollars, for Microsoft and Adobe titles.

6.4.3 Theft or Charity

The Meaning of Free Culture

Free culture is a movement primarily Internet based and is an information era application of a much older reason for publishing. Most alive today people can't remember what it was like before people created art, music, literature and that kind of thing, without the primary reason being to make money. In fact, most of the intellectual property created in the last hundred years is also not worth the same as what was created before.

Compare, for instance, sacred religious texts with popular culture creations like Disney movies. Would you more likely risk your life for the Bible or for the animated Cinderella? I believe that there is a direct connection between why something is created and its value.

The Situation Today

Today, most things that are created for profit are not very high quality. Think of a recent movie or song that you thought would be worth preserving. The reason for this is that there is a whole network of powerful people, who act as gatekeepers of information. To reach a wide audience, you need an advertising campaign, which requires an investment of a tremendous amount of money.

Loss of Trust

The Internet is making it much cheaper to publish information and therefore, we can reach each other, instead of having to get approved by a magazine editor or TV news producer. People used to trust their newspapers and TV reporters, before my generation which has seen a tremendous number of people in the establishment caught, pushing their own agendas and publishing for the advertisers, instead of for the readers. The thing that people get really upset about is when the journalists keep on supporting the establishment, no matter what it does and then, at the same time, claim to be objective.

Foreign Workers

Another thing that is lowering the bar to getting published is that people in third world countries and major Asian nations are now taking over the jobs of American journalists, engineers, and managers. Now one seemed to care when the blue collar workers lost their jobs, because we didn't mind people of color doing menial labor, but when they moved up the ladder to white collar jobs, now everybody gets defensive and cries out about the injustice. If it is ok for factory workers to lose their jobs to foreign workers, it is also ok for white collar workers to lose their jobs as well (and it is about time).

The Best Way to Fight

Many people's response is to steal songs and movies, because they don't find them worth the cost. But the problem with this is we just end up with less control over our media purchases and many people go to jail. The better way to fight the establishment and their control over our information, is to produce the content ourselves. I cannot single handedly provide enough information for everyone in America, but together with hundreds of thousand of others, we can cover a lot of ground.

When someone got a degree in a field, they used to have a certain level of competence, but the professional community has lowered its standards of both integrity and work ethic, to the point that diplomas don't mean much anymore. We may not be able to match the resources to do the same amount of research, but we can contribute without a profit motive, which makes us much more "objective".

Serve your Country

We need to have a free culture in America worth the sacrifices of our military service members and other Department of Defense and State Department workers. Especially as I am a veteran, I believe that it is very important that our military doesn't become an arm of corporations and their desire to get more money and power, at the expense of the average citizen. I do not believe that Disney movies, the NASCAR, or the Wall Street Journal are worth dying for. So if you want to help America and don't want to get burned alive and have permanent brain damage form serving in Iraq or Afghanistan, you will serve your country very well at home, by making sure we have something in

America worth sacrificing lives for.

6.4.4 Reasons to Create Rather than Consume

Help Yourself

- you can promote the things you have interests in
- you can be in control
- you can become famous
- if you want something done right, do it yourself
- you know best what you like
- you can pass the time
- you can get a better job
- you can create a market for your job
- you can create things for advertising

Enhance Your Self-Esteem

- you can take pride in your creation
- you can expand your interests
- creating for others provides meaning in your life
- you can find a new hobby
- you can see beyond your circumstances

Learn New Things

- you can enhance your experience
- you learn best by creating based on what you learn
- you can learn a new skill or perfect a skill
- you can make a good resume and portfolio
- you can learn to be patient
- you can learn discipline

- you can develop a work ethic
- you can expand your knowledge

Help Others

- if no one created, there would be nothing to consume
- you can influence others
- you can leave a legacy for your children
- you can meet other people
- you can be a role model
- you can contribute to your community
- you can make your family look good

6.4.5 Why Volunteer?

Getting Perspective

When a person has plenty of money, they have a nice family, and they still feel a lack of purpose or joy in life, a good psychologist will often recommend the client becoming a volunteer or, in some other way, donating their time, for the benefit of others. One of the great things about spending your time making other people's lives better is that it gives you perspective. Many of us in the modern United States have lived very sheltered lives and have little perspective on how the majority of the world lives.

The Way the Youth Live

Basically, we are often spoiled rotten, in comparison. Many of us don't know what difficult really means. We spend most our youth going to school for a few hours day and don't have to even try to pass classes. Most children spend most their free time playing games, chatting or texting on a mobile phone, or hanging around at the local mall. This generation expects more than even my generation did. Kids now expect to be entertained, in order for them to put any effort, into learning at school.

Lazy Employees

Employees, even my parents age, typically do nothing but complain all day. It seems that people's greatest fear these days is actually doing their job correctly. We get paid so much more than any other country and yet we feel no loyalty to the company who pays us and have no pride in what we do. It is true that we have made some great progress, in the last couple generations, as far as rights for women and people of color, but we seem to have gone too far the other way now.

Greater Expectations

The biggest problem today is that people are lazy, because their parents never taught them any work ethic. We need to raise the expectations in our children, if we want to have responsible adult citizens. And some how this generation needs to learn discipline as adults. If we don't learn the easy way, we will be forced to learn the hard way. The easy way is to learn these values by our own choice and in our own way, but if we fail to learn this way, we will be forced to learn as a result of our country falling apart and the economy coming to a complete standstill.

No Easy Way

To have joy in life, we need to have more outlets than just work and play. Some people help others just with their jobs, but most people will not find fulfillment in working alone. If we do nothing after work, but entertain ourselves with corporate media, we will not feel at peace. Constantly distracting yourself does not keep you from having to find meaning in life. There is no substitute way to get self esteem, without putting effort into something. There is no pill that will make you happy, all by itself.

Be a Patriot

It breaks my heart to see the service members give their lives and their health, just for us to be able to consume more. There is no point in fighting for our freedom to choose Coke or Pepsi, Toyota or Honda, Republican or Democrat, and the like. We need to make choices that involve sacrifice. We need to delay our gratification, in order to exercise our free will. The things that are really worth doing require a tremendous effort. Writing a book, running a marathon, spending a year overseas,

joining the Peace Corps, becoming an Eagle Scout, participating in local theater, working on a political campaign, and raising money to help the environment are all things that will help you be grateful for the things you already have.

6.5 For the Kid in All of Us

The value of Imagination, Independence, and Compassion

Beary, Bow, Patrick, and George are stuffed toy cows. They are leaders of their herd of stuffed cows. They live in my apartment.

They can't go outside of my apartment because they might get wet and dirty. If that happens, and if they don't go into the washing machine and dryer soon enough, they can get sick and they can lose their softness.

I can't always be there to keep them entertained, so they have numerous toys to keep them busy. They have a brown tent, a zebra striped couch, and a yellow dump truck.

Since they don't always have me to play with them, and they can't go outside, they have to think hard to find ways to keep doing fun things despite this situation.

They can go on adventures even though they can't move very fast. They like to hide on the cow spots blanket, or change the TV remote with their hooves.

They hold meetings with the other cows and sheep. They hold elections and vote on things important to stuffed toys. They also go on dates with their girlfriend stuffed toy cows too.

They also talk to me while I am out around town and they help me think of ways to make drawings and photos with them in it. They also have made up some short songs for me.

They support a real cow that lives in California on a farm. This cow was abandoned by his mom and wouldn't even sell for 1 dollar.

Instead of letting him die from hunger, people now take care of him. He now has no worries and gets to eat, sleep, and play. He doesn't have to do any work.

Chapter 7

The Purpose of Philosophy

by Ben Huot

7.1 General Ideas

7.1.1 Psychology in Philosophy

Do you keep on trying to solve the symptoms of your problems, and are never able to deal with the source of your problems? If you constantly try to improve yourself and your life and are tired of the over simplicity of pop psychology, you can get deeper insights and more sophisticated and useful answers by reading philosophy. Philosophy is more than just an intellectual exercise and has more applications than just ethics.

Reading philosophy is like reading an inspirational self help book but with much more creativity and originality. Good philosophy is always very practical. Any good theory should be a useful guide in real life situations. If you have found philosophy to be overly abstract, difficult to understand, or not very practical, you should try reading Eastern philosophy or Existentialism.

Some people who are religious don't feel a need for philosophy, but philosophy is not a substitute for religion or a competitor to religion. Religion and philosophy add value to each other. Religion naturally brings up philosophical problems and philosophy is completed and answered by religion. You must commit to a particular philosophy and religion to understand them and find practical uses for it. But the answers to the questions philosophy brings up are not immediately resolved by religious doctrine.

You will find answers to what you struggle with over a long period of time, after experiencing a wide variety of different situations and spending years reflecting on all of this. Just because the answers are not quick does not mean that you are not doing it right. The reason why you haven't already solved the problems you have is that they are difficult to deal with and just because you can see a simple solution to your problem does not mean it will be easy. But philosophy and religion are worth the time involved in their discovery and they are one of the most effective ways to find meaning in life.

7.1.2 Ethics and Consistency in Philosophy

Philosophy reveals what kind of person you are by forcing you to prioritize your values. By forcing you to choose what standard you evaluate truth and morality, you learn more about yourself. Are you the kind of person who puts utility above all, do you believe that avoiding pain or staying

alive is the most important value, or do you find that being strong and independent in thinking is best? Do you believe that moral standards should be followed because God says so, because they are good for you in the long run, because they are practical, or do you believe that you need to develop your own standards?

Philosophy teaches ethics by emphasizing consistency, which is another word for fairness. No matter what philosophy you go by, you make a deliberate decision to be the same in your expectations of yourself as you expect in others. This is one of the reasons why Existentialism talks so much about anxiety and despair: when you make a decision in how to behave, it is only fair that you have the same expectations of everybody else in that given situation and this should cause you to feel an awesome sense of responsibility (in making this kind of decision).

Philosophy can help you find a purpose and depth to your life. The reason I so enjoy reading the writings of major philosophers is their passion. If you read from Rousseau, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Camus, Hafiz, Meera, Kabir, Chuang Tzu, Bodhidharma, Dogen, and other major philosophers, you will realize that important philosophers have often had difficult lives fighting for their belief amongst much opposition and have made immense sacrifices in the way they live their lives to be consistent with their beliefs.

7.1.3 Creativity and Philosophy

Philosophy and religion are very creative fields, except instead of producing some sort of physical art, philosophy and religion creates new ideas. Just like artists use different types of media concepts to express their creative ideas in, philosophers start out with a basic set of concepts known as a philosophical or religious school.

Examples of philosophical and religious schools are: Stoicism, Epicurianism, Empiricism, Rationalism, Existentialism, Sufi Islam, Bhakti Hinduism, Sikhism, Theravada Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, Pure Land Buddhism, Jainism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Legalism/Realism. Some of the greatest philosophers and religious leaders have actually successfully combined more than one school, like: Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Hegel, Kabir, Chu Hsi, and Bodhidharma.

Another way in which philosophy and art are related is that much of Asian philosophy and religion and Existentialism are expressed in visual art, literature, and music. The concepts are philosophy, but the creative work is art. Often there is an elaborate symbolism that is used to create a bridge between the two.

People can express their devotion to God and to ethical principles by creating artistic works. In the West, we often see religion as a set of doctrines that have to be accepted in their totality or not at all. In the East, it is commonly considered acceptable to mix and match different aspects of different philosophies and religions. You don't have to accept a fixed doctrine that someone else has put together.

One of the big differences between Asian and European art is that in the West, we often create a picture, because we think that it looks visually attractive, without necessarily illustrating a philosophical or religious idea. We feel free to express ourselves, with any style or combination of styles, without committing to any belief system. In the East, it is traditional to evaluate art by how well it conforms to a specific classical tradition, or how it illustrates a particular concept, in a particular school of religion or philosophy. There are established symbols and methods of writing literature or painting and conforming to this tradition is what makes it beautiful.

7.2 Schools of Philosophy

7.2.1 Paradox (Also Known As Non-Dualism)

Paradox is often seen as a synonym for a contradiction, but that would be non-sensical and is not used in philosophy in this way. Dualism is a descriptor for opposite concepts like male and female or kindness and seriousness. Non-dualism or paradox acknowledges that often things that appear to be true opposites are actually related, just as the yin yang symbol represents: there is a seed of the yin in the heart of the yang and vice versa. Good and evil are often thought of as a duality, but philosophies generally have a system of ethics, so good and evil are not related paradoxically, although society's conception of right and wrong could be a paradox.

7.2.2 The Supernatural and Asian Philosophy and Religion

Many Christians think that studying Eastern philosophy and religion will somehow push people into the occult. The answer to this assumption is not a simple one, but I can explain the situation very clearly.

To explain the reality of the situation, a person needs to understand the basic progression of religion. The earliest phase was that of Animism, where everybody worshipped fallen angels and each country had their own gods, while 1 person or one small group of people worshipped the Creator (who was later understood to be Jesus Christ). The next phase was that of the revealed religions, which started in Asia mostly and are the basis for most major mono-theistic religions and then there were also the major non-religious philosophies of China and India that occurred at the same era. The latest phase came out of the west, with the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, based on the Greek and Roman animism, which is the basis for modern Atheism, Science, and the Theosophy movement, and modern Paganism came as the final phase.

So the Bible forbids doing any activity that involves the supernatural, without being done by God, in the way that is described in the Scriptures. So, as a Christian, I am not going to read any type of books about supernatural practices of Animism or modern Paganism (New Age). The way things that are supernatural are dealt with in traditional Indian and Chinese philosophies is that there is no understanding of this Biblical concept and in addition, a lot of these philosophies don't distinguish between and are many times combined with different forms of Animistic supernatural practices. This occurs because Indian and Chinese philosophies and religions are not exclusive, like Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, in that it is perfectly acceptable to take parts of the Chinese and Indian philosophies and religions and combine them with any other belief system.

On the flip side, there are many writings (most of the most important) that only contain philosophy and no supernatural practices, so if you go by my list in the Book of Lists or read about each work in depth, before reading it, you can get a very deep understanding of the Indian and Chinese philosophies and religions without getting involved in any Animist supernatural practices.

7.2.3 Confucianism

Confucianism is a philosophy indigenous to China. The Chinese philosophies are unique in that they are mostly concerned with ethics. In Chinese philosophy, like Chinese medicine, is not overly concerned with why something works, but rather that it does work.

The proof for various historical schools lie in the belief that in ancient China, that the government was more virtuous and that the society was much more peaceful and stable. In Confucian and Taoist texts, the arguments are given support by how previous sages ran the government in the past by quoting decisions individual leaders made and their historical results.

When Confucius was writing his philosophy, he based it not on his original ideas, but on how the previous dynasty ran the government. He got famous for editing the classical Book of Songs, which was a collection of love stories taken from all over China. Confucius interpreted this romantic love as love of the state.

He believed that ethics was made up of humanity and ritual. Ritual is similar to what we call manners or protocol and humanity refers to paying attention to people's feelings and situation. He believed that the scholar should run government and that in reading the classics that the scholar would learn to be ethical.

Later on, the government gave tests for people, who wished to be leaders (as the government ran all business, which was mostly farming) and to qualify, the candidates had to prove how much they understood Confucianism, by writing poetry about its concepts. Even though China had much more advanced technology in the past, they got past over economically and militarily by Europe, because instead of rewarding advancements in technologies of war, the Chinese government rewarded the study of the arts and the humanities.

7.2.4 Taoism

Taoism has two major schools, both of which are fundamentally different. There is Religious (or Esoteric) Taoism, which is a form of animism, based on the pre-Confucian indigenous religion of China. And then there is Philosophical Taoism, that is based on the philosophy of the I Ching, without the religious elements and is described in the writing of Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, and Lieh Tzu.

The philosophical Taoism is the original Taoism and is how the scholars of China practiced Taoism. When I refer to Taoism, I mean philosophical Taoism. If you find Taoist texts written after the time of Chuang Tzu and Lieh Tzu, they are mostly of Religious Taoism.

Taoism is the paradoxical counterpart to Confucianism. Whereas Confucianism is a government supported philosophy that advocates the idea of sacrificing your own self for the good of the society, Taoism stresses individuality and independence of spirit. Whereas Confucianism is concerned mostly with human affairs and the cultivation of reason, Taoism is more focused on nature and on the human spirit.

Taoism is not a religion, although it does deal with the spiritual side of life. Taoism acknowledges a creator God, but is very vague about what that entails. Taoism, like Confucianism, is about ethics, primarily. The highest good in Taoism is staying alive, at the expense of material gain or social

standing.

Taoism stresses a very extreme form of non-dualism. In Chuang Tzu, the “Discussion on Considering All Things Equal” warns of false distinctions. Taoism teaches that society has mixed up true right and wrong as it originally was understood and works against the natural state of man and so has lost its virtue. Taoism claims to be the original philosophy of China, predating the dynasty that Confucius celebrates.

The values of Taoism are humility and compassion and Taoism considers all sentient beings (including animals) to be equal in worth and to be respected equally. Taoist virtue is described as a state of spontaneity and tranquility, that is felt, while an experienced athlete is in the middle of performing, or an experienced artist or craftsmen is in the middle of creating something.

Taoism is often mixed up with Buddhism, because Zen Buddhism is a synchronization of Buddhism and Taoism, but Taoism predates Zen Buddhism by at least hundreds of years. Buddhism and Taoism are actually very opposite in nature. There is a famous picture of Confucius, Lao Tzu, and Buddha in front of a honey pot. Buddha abstains, Lao Tzu dives in, and Confucius deliberates.

7.2.5 Existentialism

Existentialism was made famous by Sartre, who named a philosophical school, in which he included many philosophers both before and at his time, many of which vigorously rejected the label. Modern Existentialism originated with Kierkegaard and was Christian in its origins. The basis for Existentialism is in the writings of the Apostle Paul and in the writings of Augustine.

Existentialists talk frequently about the distinction between subject and object. Kierkegaard believed that we cannot be objective because of our fallen state. According to Kierkegaard, the only being that can be objective is God. Kierkegaard and most other Existentialists believe that any system of thought cannot adequately describe the human spirit, because free will is what defines human being (human being is what Existentialism literally means).

Kierkegaard and Camus talk considerably about the absurdity of life. Kierkegaard is also obsessed with humility. Kierkegaard sees Christ’s being a man and God at the same time as the greatest paradox. He also believes that our relationship with God is paradoxical too. He believes when we are most conscious of our sins and faults that we are actually closer to God than at any other time.

Kierkegaard and Sartre believe that we should feel a tremendous weight of responsibility when we make choices. Kierkegaard and Sartre both stress the importance of the freedom of will.

Kierkegaard, although a committed Christian who obviously wants everyone to go to Heaven, does not believe in proselytizing, because he believes that saving faith only exists, when we believe in Christ, without anybody pressuring us into it. Kierkegaard believes that a Christian should resist the pressures of social conformity. He even goes so far to say that when everybody is Christian that nobody is Christian.

Chapter 8

Quotations

by Ben Huot

8.1 Letters from Family

8.1.1 Dated

2000

3 November 2000

Benjamin,

I am praying for you to get over your cold quickly. Also, remember the Lord is there and wants to help you when you worry about school or other future decisions. He is always there for you. He has also blessed us both giving us each other to love and support. You know you are an inspiration to me. You have helped me to deal with my illness more honestly and practically. I sure am proud of you. We love you dearly.

God Bless, Mom

2003

3 September 2003

Ben,

Self Help Collection

I found this card I bought for you some time ago. I sure enjoyed seeing you – although we have to work on your kitchen clean up skills! ! It is just really hitting me lately that granny is gone. So much a part of my life for nearly 50 years. I know she wasn't always easy – but I guess we weren't for her either. Thanks for being patient with me.

Love, Mom

17 October 2003

Ben,

Thanks for all you did to make my birthday such a fun time. As always your gifts were very thoughtful. You are too generous. It was such a nice family time with the 4 of us. I know you make a great effort because it isn't easy for you. I want you to know I realize this. I am very blessed to have such a loving and caring son! !

All my love, Mom

2004

8 January 2004

Benjamin,

“Holy Cow..it's Christmas again! ” and New Years! “Hope your holidays areudderly divine.” a little late!

Love, Mom

24 April 2004

Ben -

Wishing you love, joy, peace and every good and perfect gift from the Lord.

Love, Dad and Mom

24 April 2004

Dear Ben,

Happy 26th! I treasure your friendship each day.

Love, Rebecca (sister) and Taylor, Jack, and Jill

6 December 2004

Hi Ben,

Have fun with your new camera.

Love, Mom

15 December 2004

Benjamin,

Looking forward to spending the Holidays with you!

Love, Mom

2005

24 April 2005

Dear Ben,

This card seemed very appropriate for you. I know we have told you many times how proud we are of you. I want you to know we don't say this merely in passing. You are truly an amazing individual. You have accepted the very difficult life given to you and handled it with strength and humor – not allowing it to overwhelm you every single day getting up to face the many challenges and pushing yourself to achieve the goals you set. We love you so much and feel very privileged that you include us so much in your life. May your 27th birthday be as special as you are.

Ben, you are a remarkable young man. You have many fine qualities.

“Follow your dreams; for as you dream, so shall you become. – James Allen”

All our Love, Dad and Mom

20 December 2005

Benjamin,

I couldn't imagine a more loving and fun son. I often think of the gift God has given us in our relationship. Looking forward to Christmas together.

Lot's of love, Mom and Dad

2006

24 April 2006

You are a wonderful son – loving, caring, generous and full of humor. Thanks for sharing your life with us and enriching us both. God has blessed us deeply with the gift of you as our son. We want you to know you fill our hearts with love and pride. Have a wonderful day. Looking forward to our trip to Portland!

All our love, Mom and Dad

8 November 2006

“Thank you 'beary' much for your kindness! I 'beary' much appreciate it.”

I thought Beary would like this card. Thanks for making my birthday so special. I really appreciate and can use the books. I will make up a recipe for you when I am up to it. It is such a joy and special blessing to have a son like you who thinks about me and cares. You are a tremendous encouragement to me.

Love, Mom

2007

22 March 2007

We are so proud of the service you gave to our country. I don't know why you had to pay such a high price. You have accepted the sacrifice asked of you with such courage and tenacity that I am challenged to reach higher in my life, too. I suppose there is a reason God does not answer all these questions we have of why. When I feel so overwhelmed I think of your faithfulness each day and that nothing, nothing can separate us from the love of God. The love that created us, sustains us, and will receive us home for eternity. Praise God.

Ben,

You are our hero.

All our love, Dad and Mom

Snuggles, Teddy, Sam, and ducks.

22 April 2007

Ben,

Hope you are well by now. All my motherly love and desire to take care of you has been with you. I know you are enjoying your new program. Looking forward to your birthday lunch on Saturday.

Love, Mom and Dad

Rocky and Snuggles

24 April 2007

Dear Ben,

I enjoy our relationship so much! I'm honored to be related to you and I always enjoy the wonderful and intellectually stimulating conversations that we have. Enjoy your last year of your 20's!

Love, Rebecca (my sister)

Self Help Collection

5 June 2007

A big Moo_____ooo to Beary, Bow, Norm, Patrick, George, Gracie, Little Ben, and Rainbow Ben,

“Your friendship is a bright spot in my day” It truly is. Your phone call cheers up my whole day. Thanks for being one of my best friends! What a privilege it is to have my son care so much about me. I am very blessed.

Love, Mom

1 October 2007

Ben,

“I don’t just dressup like this for just anyone...but you’re special Happy Halloween.”

Thought you might enjoy these pics. Sorry I’ve been out of it so much lately. I am really trying to rest up so I can get my strength back. You are such a good friend to me. Your love and support encourage me a great deal. You are one of the joys in my life.

Love, Mom

23 October 2007

Ben,

Thank you for all the lovely gifts. You are so thoughtful and generous with your gifts. I sure appreciate your morning phone calls. They are encouraging to me. Thanks for meeting a real need in my life.

Love, Mom

December 2007

Ben, Beary, Bow, Patrick, George, Norm, and the whole herd

All our love to a wonderful son. We hope this is your best Christmas yet. You are one of God’s greatest gifts to us. Your love and sense of humor add joy to every day.

Mom and Dad

2008

17 May 2008

Ben,

Thank you for the lovely radio and book? (I’m not sure if I am to keep it) You made my day so special. I really enjoyed the time with you. You are fun and generous and thoughtful. I am blessed to

have such a loving son.

Love, Mom

2009

14 February 2009

“My Son, I wonder if you know how great it is having a son like you...it’s always meant so much to me to hear you laugh, to listen to your ideas, and watch you grow...I wonder if you know how proud I feel whenever I get to tell someone, ‘That’s my son...’ What a perfect day to stop wondering and simply tell you. Happy Valentine’s Day.”

This card said exactly what I wanted to say!

All my love, Mom

2 April 2009

Ben,

We enjoyed the boat trip and the delicious meal. That is the best salmon I’ve ever had. Bandit had fun, too! It was very generous of you to treat us all. I hope it was a fun Birthday excursion for you.

Love, Mom and Dad

8.1.2 Undated

Valentine’s Day

1

Benjamin,

Thanks for being such a good friend to me and a loving son. You are a special young man and it’s a privilege to have you share your thoughts with me.

Lots of Love, Mom

2

Ben,

“Lots and lots of valentine wishes- just for being your own loveable self! Happy Valentine’s Day”

We miss you. We send you woofs, licks, purrs, and rubs.

Love, Rosie, Sammy, Teddy, and Pippin

Easter

1

He is risen! He is risen indeed 'Jesus told her, I am the resurrection and the life those who believe in me, even though they die like everyone else, will live again. They are given eternal life for believing in me and will never perish.' John 11:25-26 Happy Resurrection Day

Love, Dad and Mom

2

Ben,

Not perfect but I am learning. Thanks for all your help on the computer. You have made things so much easier for me and given me so many programs. Thanks for all your tech support. I've got my own computer expert whenever I need. You are a patient and very good teacher when it comes to explaining things. Love you, Happy Easter.

Love, Mom

Birthday

1

Benjamin,

Happy 30th birthday to a wonderful son. We are so proud of the man you have become. You are kind and generous, hardworking, caring, tenacious, and growing in wisdom and godliness.

All our love, Mom and Dad

2

I think back on the day you were born. I remember it very well. You cried so much your first 4 months. I always thought it was because you were taken before you were ready to be born. After that you were happy and cheerful. You loved to play with blankets and rolled all over the place. You didn't do much crawling, just rolling and then you walked! The Lord has given me such a wonderful gift in you as my son. You are truly my best friend and it means the world to me. I love you honey. Thanks for loving me. Wanted you to get a greeting on your day. Do something special for yourself – the whole day.

Love, Mom and Dad

3

Happy Birthday, Bow and Beary! Thanks for being such good companions for Ben.

Melissa

4

Ben,

“Bee Happy - It’s your birthday - Hope it’s a honey of a day”

Have a wonderful, wonderful day

All our love, Mom and Dad

Mother’s Day

Thanks for making Mother’s Day so special for me. Spending time with you is the best gift! I love the pictures you drew and I can use the devotionals every night – I keep it by my bedside. Next time I see you, I’ll be on the mend. Have a great day.

Love, Mom

Mom’s Birthday

Thank you for making my birthday so special. Ben, I appreciate all the lovely books. Rebecca, the necklace is lovely. The day was so much fun, too. You both made me feel very special and loved. Thank you.

Love, Mom

Halloween

1

Ben,

“Jack-O’-lanterns brighten Halloween...but you brighten every day! ”

This card was just perfect for you! You do brighten every day for me.

Love, Mom

2

Dear Ben, Beary, Bow, Patrick, Norm, and George

“Hope it’s a hoot! Happy Halloween”

Looking forward to seeing you soon!

Love, Mom and Dad

Christmas

1

Hi Ben,

Happy new year! I am writing you this note to wish you joy and peace in this new year. I am also writing to thank you for taking out your time to spend Christmas with us. I had a really good time with you and was very glad you could be with us. Not only are we proud of you and your many accomplishments but we also enjoy your companionship. I really liked the Christmas gifts you bought for me. I use the mug every day and it reminds me of you. We have already used the atlas a number of times. It is good to have a current one. You put a great deal of thought and effort into selecting these gifts.

Best wishes always,

Dad

2

Dear Ben,

Thanks so much for your thoughtful gifts. I love the journal with your logo. I have been doing lots of the crosswords too. They are just right in hardness and I like the variety too. The only ones I can't do are the British crosswords. I don't even understand the clues! ! You are always so thoughtful and generous in your gift giving. I had such a good time on Christmas Day. It was a fun time all together, wasn't it? I also thought our dinner at Olive Garden was lots of fun. The Lord has given us something very special in our family. A close, loving and fun relationship is a great blessing and brings me so much joy....God bless you sweetie

Love, Mom

3

Hi Ben,

And hope you like the rabbits. I was looking for cards, and was very happy to find them. All my best to you, Ben. You are a very good fellow to think of, when I do in a day. I know you will feel a very nice Christmas, there in Oregon, close to you.

Love from your Uncle Clive

Thank You

Wow, Ben!

I'm really impressed with your accomplishments! You have read widely, related a new (?) of strands of religious thought and expressed your thoughts and feelings visually as well as through poetry and essays you have shared personally and through the Internet. I am glad your generous heart and intelligent accomplishments are now recognized. I applaud you!

Love, Great Aunt Ruth

8.2 Public Domain Hymns

8.2.1 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God(rhythmic)

1. A mighty Fortress is our God, A trusty Shield and Weapon; He helps us free from every need That hath us now o'ertaken. The old evil Foe Now means deadly woe; Deep guile and great might Are his dread arms in fight; On Earth is not his equal.

2. With might of ours can naught be done, Soon were our loss effected; But for us fights the Valiant One, Whom God Himself elected. Ask ye, Who is this? Jesus Christ it is. Of Sabaoth Lord, And there's none other God; He holds the field forever.

3. Though devils all the world should fill, All eager to devour us. We tremble not, we fear no ill, They shall not overpower us. This world's prince may still Scowl fierce as he will, He can harm us none, He's judged; the deed is done; One little word can fell him.

4. The Word they still shall let remain Nor any thanks have for it; He's by our side upon the plain
With

His good gifts and Spirit. And take they our life, Goods, fame, child and wife, Let these all be gone, They yet have nothing won; The Kingdom ours remaineth.

Words: Dr. Martin Luther, 1529; Translation composite circa 1868 Pennsylvania Lutheran Church

Book.Music: 'Ein Feste Burg' Dr. Martin Luther, 1529.

Setting: Evangelical Lutheran Hymn Book, Edition of 1931.

copyright: public domain.

This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2006 Revision.

8.2.2 All Creatures of Our God and King

1. All creatures of our God and King Lift up your voice and with us sing, Alleluia! Alleluia! Thou burning sun with golden beam, Thou silver moon with softer gleam! O praise Him! O praise Him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

2. Thou rushing wind that art so strong Ye clouds that sail in Heaven along, O praise Him! Alleluia! Thou rising moon, in praise rejoice, Ye lights of evening, find a voice! O praise Him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

3. Thou flowing water, pure and clear, Make music for thy Lord to hear, O praise Him! Alleluia! Thou fire so masterful and bright, That givest man both warmth and light. O praise Him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

4. Dear mother earth, who day by day Unfoldest blessings on our way, O praise Him! Alleluia! The flowers and fruits that in thee grow, Let them His glory also show. O praise Him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

5. And all ye men of tender heart, Forgiving others, take your part, O sing ye! Alleluia! Ye who long pain and sorrow bear, Praise God and on Him cast your care! O praise Him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

6. And thou most kind and gentle Death, Waiting to hush our latest breath, O praise Him! Alleluia! Thou leadest home the child of God, And Christ our Lord the way hath trod. O * praise Him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

7. Let all things their Creator bless, And worship Him in humbleness, O praise Him! Alleluia! Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son, And praise the Spirit, Three in One! O * praise Him! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Words: Francis of Assisi circa 1225;

Translated by William H. Draper, 1919.

Music: 'Lasst Uns Erfreuen' Geistliche Kirchengesäng Köln 1623.

Setting: Ralph Vaughn Williams, 1906.

copyright: public domain.

This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2005 Revision.

8.2.3 Amazing Grace

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now am found, Was blind, but now I see.

2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my fears relieved; How precious did that grace appear The hour I first believed.

3. Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come; 'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home.

4. The Lord has promised good to me, His Word my hope secures; He will my Shield and Portion be, As long as life endures.

5. Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail, And mortal life shall cease, I shall possess, with in the veil, A life of joy and peace.

6. The earth shall soon dissolve like snow, The sun forbear to shine; But God, Who called me here below, Shall be forever mine.

7. When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun, We've no less days to sing God's praise Than when we'd first begun.

Words: John Newton, 1779. last verse author unknown, before 1829.

Music: 'New Britain' James P. Carrell and David S. Clay, 1831.

Setting: E.O. Excell, 1900.

copyright: public domain.

This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2006 Revision.

8.2.4 Be Still My Soul

1. Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side. Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain. Leave to thy God to order and provide; In every change, He faithful will remain. Be still, my soul: thy best, thy heav'nly Friend Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

2. Be still, my soul: thy God doth undertake To guide the future, as He has the past. Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake; All now mysterious shall be bright at last. Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know His voice Who ruled them while He dwelt below.

3. Be still, my soul: when dearest friends depart, And all is darkened in the vale of tears, Then shalt thou better know His love, His heart, Who comes to soothe thy sorrow and thy fears. Be still, my

soul: thy Jesus can repay From His own fullness all He takes away.

4. Be still, my soul: the hour is hast'ning on When we shall be forever with the Lord. When disappointment, grief and fear are gone, Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored. Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past All safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

5. Be still, my soul: begin the song of praise On earth, believing, to Thy Lord on high; Acknowledge Him in all thy words and ways, So shall He view thee with a well pleased eye. Be still, my soul: the Sun of life divine Through passing clouds shall but more brightly shine.

Words: Katharina A. von Schlegel, 1752.

Translated by Jane L. Borthwick, 1855.

Music: 'Finlandia' Jean Sibelius, 1899.

Setting: from Jean Sibelius, 1900.

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8.2.5 Be Thou My Vision

1. Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart; Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art. Thou my best Thought, by day or by night, Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

2. Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word; I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord; Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son; Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

3. Be Thou my battle Shield, Sword for the fight; Be Thou my Dignity, Thou my Delight; Thou my soul's Shelter, Thou my high Tower: Raise Thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.

4. Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise, Thou mine Inheritance, now and always: Thou and Thou only, be first in my heart, High King of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

5. High King of Heaven, my victory won, May I reach Heav'ns joys, O bright Heaven's Sun! Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

Words: Attr. Dallan Forgaill, 8th Century.

Translated by Mary Byrne, 1905 and Eleanor Hull, 1912.

Music: 'Slane' Traditional Irish.

Setting: Mark Hamilton Dewey, 2007.

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All portions of the setting that were not already public domain were released to the public domain by the arranger on 27 July 2007. He already had released the parts and the versification (except for a few changes in the third verse, which he released to the public domain in 2007) to the public domain in 2006.

8.2.6 Beautiful Savior (also known as Fairest Lord Jesus)

1. Beautiful Savior, King of Creation Son of God and Son of Man! Truly I'd love Thee, truly I'd serve Thee, Light of my soul, my joy, my crown.

2. Fair are the meadows, Fair are the woodlands, Robed in the flow'rs of blooming spring; Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer, He makes our sorr'wing spirit sing.

3. Fair is the sunshine, Fair is the moonlight, Bright the sparkling stars on high; Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer Than all the angels in the sky.

4. Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations, Son of God and Son of Man! Glory and honor, Praise, adoration Now and forevermore be Thine!

Words: written by German Jesuits, published 1677;
translated by Joseph A. Seiss, 1873.

Music: 'Crusaders Hymn' Silesian folk song, 1842.

Setting: Richard S. Willis, 1850.

copyright: public domain.

This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2005 Revision.

8.2.7 Blessed Assurance

1. Blessèd assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine! Heir of salvation, purchase of God, Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood. This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior, all the day long; This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior, all the day long.

2. Perfect submission, perfect delight, Visions of rapture now burst on my sight; Angels descending bring from above Echoes of mercy, whispers of love. This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior, all the day long; This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior, all the day long.

3. Perfect submission, all is at rest I in my Savior am happy and blest, Watching and waiting, looking above, Filled with His goodness, lost in His love. This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior, all the day long; This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Savior, all the day long.

Words: Fanny Crosby, 1873.

Music: 'Blessed Assurance' or 'Assurance' Phoebe P. Knapp, 1873.

Setting: Methodist Hymnal, 1909.

copyright: public domain.

This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2008 Revision.

8.2.8 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

1. Come, Thou long expected Jesus Born to set Thy people free; From our fears and sins release us, Let us find our rest in Thee. Israel's Strength and Consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art; Dear Desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart.

2. Born Thy people to deliver, Born a child and yet a King, Born to reign in us forever, Now Thy gracious kingdom bring. By Thine own eternal Spirit Rule in all our hearts alone; By Thine all sufficient merit, Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Words: Charles Wesley, 1745.

Music: 'Jefferson' from Southern Harmony, 1835.

Setting: Southern Harmony, 1835, alt.

copyright: public domain.

This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2008 Revision.

8.2.9 Crown Him With Many Crowns

1. Crown Him with many crowns, the Lamb upon His throne. Hark! How the heav'nly anthem drowns all music but its own. Awake, my soul, and sing of Him who died for thee, And hail Him as thy matchless King through all eternity.

2. Crown Him the virgin's Son, the God incarnate born, Whose arm those crimson trophies won which now His brow adorn; Fruit of the mystic rose, as of that rose the stem; The root whence mercy ever flows, the Babe of Bethlehem.

3. Crown Him the Son of God, before the worlds began, And ye who tread where He hath trod, crown Him the Son of Man; Who every grief hath known that wrings the human breast, And takes

and bears them for His own, that all in Him may rest.

4. Crown Him the Lord of life, who triumphed o'er the grave, And rose victorious in the strife for those He came to save. His glories now we sing, Who died, and rose on high, Who died eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die.

5. Crown Him the Lord of peace, Whose pow'r a scepter sways From pole to pole, that wars may cease, and all be prayer and praise. His reign shall know no end, and round His pierced feet Fair flow'rs of paradise extend their fragrance ever sweet.

6. Crown Him the Lord of love, behold His hands and side, Those wounds, yet visible above, in beauty glorified. No angel in the sky can fully bear that sight, But downward bends his burning eye at mysteries so bright.

7. Crown Him the Lord of Heaven, enthroned in worlds above, Crown Him the King to Whom is given the wondrous name of Love. Crown Him with many crowns, as thrones before Him fall; Crown Him, ye kings, with many crowns, for He is King of all.

8. Crown Him the Lord of lords, who over all doth reign, Who once on earth, the incarnate Word, for ransomed sinners slain, Now lives in realms of light, where saints with angels sing Their songs before Him day and night, their God, Redeemer, King.

9. Crown Him the Lord of years, the Potentate of time, Creator of the rolling spheres, ineffably sublime. All hail, Redeemer, hail! For Thou has died for me; Thy praise and glory shall not fail throughout eternity.

Words: Verses 1, 4, 5, 6 & 9: Matthew Bridges, The Passion of Jesus, 1852; verses 2 & 3: Godfrey Thring, Hymns and Sacred Lyrics, 1874.

Music: 'Diademata' George J. Elvey, 1868.

Setting: PD from Lutheran Worship, 1982.

copyright: public domain.

This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2008 Revision.

8.2.10 Holy, Holy, Holy

1. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee; Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty! God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

2. Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee, Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea; Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee, Who was, and is, and evermore shall be.

3. Holy, holy, holy! though the darkness hide Thee, Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see; Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee, Perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

4. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty! All Thy works shall praise Thy Name, in earth, and sky, and sea; Holy, holy, holy; merciful and mighty! God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Words: Reginald Heber, 1826.

Music: 'Nicaea' John B. Dykes, 1861.

Setting: PD from Lutheran Worship, 1982.

copyright: public domain.

This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2005 Revision.

8.2.11 I Know That My Redeemer Lives

1. I know that my Redeemer lives; What comfort this sweet sentence gives! He lives, He lives, who once was dead; He lives, my ever living Head.

2. He lives to bless me with His love, He lives to plead for me above. He lives my hungry soul to feed, He lives to help in time of need.

3. He lives triumphant from the grave, He lives eternally to save, He lives all glorious in the sky, He lives exalted there on high.

4. He lives to grant me rich supply, He lives to guide me with His eye, He lives to comfort me when faint, He lives to hear my soul's complaint.

5. He lives to silence all my fears, He lives to wipe away my tears He lives to calm my troubled heart, He lives all blessings to impart.

6. He lives, my kind, wise, heavenly Friend, He lives and loves me to the end; He lives, and while He lives, Ill sing; He lives, my Prophet, Priest, and King.

7. He lives and grants me daily breath; He lives, and I shall conquer death: He lives my mansion to prepare; He lives to bring me safely there.

8. He lives, all glory to His Name! He lives, my Jesus, still the same. Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives, I know that my Redeemer lives!

Words: Samuel Medley, 1775.

Music: 'Duke Street' John Hatton, 1793.

Setting: "The Church Hymnal, Revised and Enlarged" (Episcopal), 1905.

copyright: public domain.

This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2007 Revision.

8.2.12 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

1. Immortal, invisible, God only wise, In light inaccessible hid from our eyes, Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days, Almighty, victorious, Thy great Name we praise.

2. Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light, Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might; Thy justice, like mountains, high soaring above Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

3. To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small; In all life Thou livest, the true life of all; We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree, And wither and perish but naught changeth Thee.

4. Great Father of glory, pure Father of light, Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight; But of Thy rich graces this grace, Lord, impart Take the veil from our face, the vile from our heart.

5. All laud we would render; O help us to see 'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee, And so let Thy glory, almighty, impart, Through Christ in His story, Thy Christ to the heart.

Words: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1876.

Music: 'St. Denio' Welsh Traditional published first by John Roberts, 1839.

Setting: The Episcopal Hymnal, 1940.

copyright: public domain.

This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2005 Revision.

8.2.13 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

1. Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee, God of glory, Lord of love; Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee, opening to the sun above. Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; drive the dark of doubt away; Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day!

2. All Thy works with joy surround Thee, earth and heaven reflect Thy rays, Stars and angels sing around Thee, center of unbroken praise. Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea, Singing bird and flowing fountain call us to rejoice in Thee.

3. Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blessed, Wellspring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest! Thou our Father, Christ our Brother, all who live in love are Thine; Teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

4. Mortals, join the happy chorus, which the morning stars began; Father love is reigning o'er us, brother love binds man to man. Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife, Joyful

music leads us Sunward in the triumph song of life.

Words: Henry J. van Dyke, 1907.

Music: 'Ode to Joy' Ludwig van Beethoven; Adapted by Edward Hodges, 1824.

Setting: Methodist Hymnal, 1909.

copyright: public domain.

This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2005 Revision.

8.2.14 Nearer, My God, To Thee

1. Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee! E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me, Still all my song shall be, nearer, my God, to Thee. Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee!

2. Though like the wanderer, the sun gone down, Darkness be over me, my rest a stone. Yet in my dreams I'd be nearer, my God to Thee. Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee!

3. Nearer, my Lord, to thee, Nearer to thee! Who to the cross didst come, Dying for me! Strengthen my willing feet, Hold me in service sweet Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee!

4. Nearer, O Comforter, Nearer to thee! Who with my loving Lord Dwellest with me! Grant me thy fellowship! Help me each day to keep Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee!

5. But to be nearer still, Bring me, O God, Not by the visioned steeps Angels have trod. Here where thy cross I see, Jesus, I wait for thee, Then evermore to be Nearer to Thee!

6. There in my Father's home, safe and at rest, There in my Savior's love, perfectly blest; Age after age to be, nearer my God to Thee. Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee!

Words: st. 1-2 by Sarah F. Adams, 1841; st. 3-5 by Hervey D. Ganse (1822-1891); st. 6 by Edward H. Bickersteth, Jr. (1825-1906).

Music: 'Bethany' Lowell Mason, 1856.

Setting: The Evangelical Lutheran Hymnal (Ohio Synod), 1908.

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8.2.15 O For A Thousand Tongues

1. O for a thousand tongues to sing My great Redeemer's praise, The glories of my God and King, The triumphs of His grace!

2. My gracious Master and my God, Assist me to proclaim, To spread through all the earth abroad

The honors of Thy name.

3. Jesus! the name that charms our fears, That bids our sorrows cease; 'Tis music in the sinner's ears, 'Tis life, and health, and peace.

4. He breaks the pow'r of canceled sin, He sets the prisoner free; His blood can make the foulest clean, His blood availed for me.

5. He speaks, and, listening to His voice, New life the dead receive, The mournful, broken hearts rejoice, The humble poor believe.

6. Hear Him, ye deaf; His praise, ye dumb, Your loosened tongues employ; Ye blind, behold your Savior come, And leap, ye lame, for joy.

7. In Christ your Head, you then shall know, Shall feel your sins forgiven; Anticipate your heaven below, And own that love is heaven.

8. Glory to God, and praise and love Be ever, ever given, By saints below and saints above, The church in earth and heaven.

9. On this glad day the glorious Sun Of Righteousness arose; On my benighted soul He shone And filled it with repose.

10. Sudden expired the legal strife, 'Twas then I ceased to grieve; My second, real, living life I then began to live.

11. Then with my heart I first believed, Believed with faith divine, Power with the Holy Ghost received To call the Savior mine.

12. I felt my Lord's atoning blood Close to my soul applied; Me, me He loved, the Son of God, For me, for me He died!

13. I found and owned His promise true, Ascertained of my part, My pardon passed in heaven I knew When written on my heart.

14. Look unto Him, ye nations, own Your God, ye fallen race; Look, and be saved through faith alone, Be justified by grace.

15. See all your sins on Jesus laid: The Lamb of God was slain, His soul was once an offering made For every soul of man.

16. Awake from guilty nature's sleep, And Christ shall give you light, Cast all your sins into the deep, And wash the Æthiop white.

17. Harlots and publicans and thieves In holy triumph join! Saved is the sinner that believes From crimes as great as mine.

18. Murderers and all ye hellish crew In holy triumph join! Believe the Savior died for you; For me

the Savior died.

19. With me, your chief, ye then shall know, Shall feel your sins forgiven; Anticipate your heaven below, And own that love is heaven.

Words: Charles Wesley, 1740.

Music: 'Azmon' Carl G. Gläser, 1828.

Setting: Lowell Mason, 1839.

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This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2007 Revision.

8.2.16 [

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow (Doxology; see also 'Awake, My Soul, And With The Sun')]
Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow (Doxology; see also 'Awake, My Soul, And With The Sun')
1. Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Words: Thomas Ken, 1674.

Music: 'Old 100th' Genevan Psalter, attr. Louis Bourgeois, c. 1551.

Setting: Sternhold and Hopkins' Psalter, 1561.

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This score is a part of the Open Hymnal Project, 2006 Revision.

8.2.17 What A Friend We Have In Jesus

1. What a Friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer! O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

2. Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere? We should never be discouraged, take it to the Lord in prayer. Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share? Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer.

3. Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care? Precious Savior, still our refuge, take it to the Lord in prayer. Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer! In His arms He'll take and shield you; you will find a solace there.

4. Blessed Savior, Thou hast promised Thou wilt all our burdens bear May we ever, Lord, be

bringing all to Thee in earnest prayer. Soon in glory bright unclouded there will be no need for prayer
Rapture, praise and endless worship will be our sweet portion there.

Words: Joseph M. Scriven, 1855.

Music: 'untitled' Charles C. Converse, 1868.

Setting: PD from Lutheran Worship, 1982.

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8.3 The First Existentialist

Passages of the Letters of the New Testament written by the Apostle Paul

8.3.1 Romans 7:6-25

6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

8.3.2 1 Corinthians

1

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

3 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;

5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;

6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I

of Christ.

13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;

15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

2

1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

3

1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in

their own craftiness.

20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;

22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

4

1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

7 For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

8 Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

9 For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised.

11 Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace;

12 And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it.

13 Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.

14 I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.

15 For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

17 For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

18 Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.

19 But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.

20 For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

21 What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?

9

1 Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord?

2 If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.

3 Mine answer to them that do examine me is this,

4 Have we not power to eat and to drink?

5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?

6 Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?

7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?

8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?

9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

10 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that

ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

12 If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

15 But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.

16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!

17 For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.

18 What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

8.3.3 2 Corinthians

3:1-6

1 Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?

2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit. for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

4:5-18

5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I

spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

15 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

10

1 Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you:

2 But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

7 Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's.

8 For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:

9 That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.

10 For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.

11 Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such

will we be also in deed when we are present.

12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

13 But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

14 For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ.

15 Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

16 To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.

17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

18 For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

11:16-31

16 I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.

17 That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.

18 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

19 For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.

20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.

22 Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.

23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

12:1-11

1 It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.

3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)

4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

5 Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

6 For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me.

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

11 I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

8.3.4 Colossians 2:4-8

4 And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

5 For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.

6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.

7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

8.3.5 Ephesians 6:10-20

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make

known the mystery of the gospel,

20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

8.3.6 Philippians 2:1-12

1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

8.3.7 1 Thessalonians 2:1-17

1 For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:

2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

3 For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

5 For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God

is witness:

6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,

12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

14 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men.

16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

8.4 Ephesians

8.4.1 1

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

2 Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence,

9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.

11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named,

not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.

22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

8.4.2 2

1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity

thereby:

17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

8.4.3 3

1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,

4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

8.4.4 4

1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But ye have not so learned Christ;

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

27 Neither give place to the devil.

28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you,

with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

8.4.5 5

1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth:)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

13 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in

your heart to the Lord;

20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

8.4.6 6

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)

3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

5 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

7 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men.

8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

21 But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:

22 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.

23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

Written from Rome unto the Ephesians by Tychicus.

Part III

Positive News

by Ben Huot

Chapter 9

First Things

by Ben Huot

9.1 For More Information

For more books and information, visit me on the web at <http://benjamin-newton.com/>

Feel free to send me e-mail regarding the books and website at <mailto:ben@benjamin-newton.com> I even enjoy constructive criticism

9.2 Introduction

When reading my books, you need to first identify what type of person you are. If you are a person that is new to Christianity, you are an average person emotionally, you are resistant to other people's advice, and your life is bad because of your lack of motivation, then reading my books is good for you. You are a person that would benefit from discipline and need to try harder.

On the other end of the spectrum there are what is called a highly sensitive person. A highly sensitive person may or may not be Christian but they are ambitious people who want to make the world better and have put that as the highest goal in life. These people are trying too hard and need to cut back, simplify their life, do less for others, and enjoy life more.

These people need to realize that it is normal to fail, to sin, to relapse, and to be in pain and suffer and that you will never get to the point where all your problems are all solved. The only way they will get victory over sin is to be honest about where they are at and give up on trying to do

everything alone. The secret is that failure is a natural part of maturing in life and that you will never totally overcome all your problems. God want this to happen because it keeps you humble and realizing that you need God and other people. Enjoying life comes from enjoying the process of maturing and not focusing on the outcome.

Both of these types of people would benefit greatly from meeting with other people they trust which ideally should be what the church is should be about, but many times the church is the last place to go.

Chapter 10

Myself

by Ben Huot

10.1 The Cause of My Epiphany

10.1.1 The Books

2 Books

I wanted to thank the authors of 2 books, for their help in my epiphany, as well as the Holy Spirit, who is my muse and inspires in me me the words to write. The first book is “Christian Beliefs” that Can Drive You Crazy: Relief from False Assumptions by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend. The second is book is Eat, Pray, Love by Elizabeth Gilbert. There is a movie coming out soon, that stars Julia Roberts, based on the book, with the same name. Elizabeth Gilbert is probably the person most emotionally similar to me, that I have ever found (at least in a currently living person).

She is Like Me

She was raised by workaholics, taught to be totally independent and self reliant, she is very intelligent and spiritual, as well as being a gifted writer and teacher. She has trouble relaxing,

accepting her limitations, and being patient with herself; she worries too much about things she has no control over; and she is a very talkative and likable person. She also suffered from a year of depression, like I just have, and is within a couple years of my age.

How We are Different

The things different about her is she lives in New York City, she is a world traveller and has a great network of friends, she follows what some call the Perennial Philosophy and has studied in the Indian Religious Tradition, and she has been married before. The other big difference is that I am a disabled veteran and have lived with Paranoid Schizophrenia for over 10 years. I also don't have a movie made about me.

How the Book Affected Me

I found her book to be a very fast read. I read her book in about 3 sittings. I found her book very easy to read and a very worthwhile read. She helped me to come to several epiphanies about myself and discovered what core issues I need to work on. I feel guilty, that I don't have to work for a living and so have kept myself constantly doing work mainly in reading and writing books. As unbelievable as it sounds, I would greatly prefer working a job, even if it was only minimum wage, then have Schizophrenia, but I was never given a choice.

10.1.2 My Problems

My Veteran's Pension

As far as the veteran's disability is concerned and even how I left the military were both under very unusual circumstances. I left after 13 months, in the space of 5 weeks, with an honorable discharge. Even when the military knew about my mental problems, they wanted me to stay. It bothered me, for a long time, how people who have been burned seriously, often get less of a veterans pension, than me, but as my mom says, I have given my mind for my country. There is a good reason why I get more money, than people with physical disabilities. It is very hard to get any pension at all, as it costs a lot of money for the government, and they are very selective about who

gets a pension and how much they get.

My Limitations and World Problems

It is very hard for me to accept my limitations. I wanted, before I became mentally ill, to be an international business man, working in the distribution side of marketing. I had to scale down from this, after I left the military and became mentally ill. I still felt responsible, to help out the world and try to at least speak out about all the injustice in the world. It bothers me greatly, that we in America live the lifestyle we do, because we are living at the expense of those in the Third World. Our lives are as good as they are, because we have taken away, from other people, whose lives have been made worse, as a direct result.

What Drove Me

Just living independently is a great achievement for someone, with my mental illness, and I have also written 50 books and I am only 32. I have pushed myself tremendously, to get this done, because of the uncertainty of our future. Even before I learned how precarious our situation is and how easily we can go back hundreds or even thousands of years in technology, if the price of oil increases too much, I knew that the world as we know it may not last long. I am even more concerned about our future, if we do find enough energy, to continue our world economy, as some of the new technologies made possible will give people too much power and it will then be too easy, to abuse the situation.

I am Not Responsible

I also have a hard time being patient with myself. I need to accept that I am only responsible for myself and only need to worry about my actions. And it doesn't matter what other think of me or what I do. I need to accept where I am and who I am. I need to expect less out of myself. Just as people do not expect diabetics to eat too much candy or developmentally disabled people to do brain surgery, so I cannot expect myself to be able to do things that increase my stress. I already have done more than most people accomplish in a lifetime and I should be happy with where I am now. There is no need for me to worry about world problems, as I did not cause them, cannot change them, and am not responsible for them.

10.2 My Life

10.2.1 Where I am Now

Finishing Up

I have been looking for new directions in my life, for the last few years. I finished my independent study of the humanities and I have suffered from severe depression, for about a year and found out finally, after trying everything else, that I needed a change in my anti-depressant. I ended up stopping writing for a month and got my iPad. I just finished writing the last of Technical Collection and Book of Lists.

Things to Write About

I also have had some time to think about things, while I have been avoiding the news and other types of TV and movies, that cause depression or paranoia. I have moved to another part of town, so can get out on the weekends now. I have finally thought of some new things that I wanted to write down. Some of this inspiration comes from talking to my family about some of the world problems we are facing and I found a very encouraging book, that showed me that I have bought into some very common Biblical sounding ideas, which I acknowledge are wrong intellectually, but I still believe on an emotional level.

10.2.2 What I have Learned

Normal to Fail

I have finally accepted that it is normal to be in pain, to fail, to sin, to not have progress for a while, or even regress. I now know that the reason why God gave me some of the big problems I have had to deal with, at a young age, that few people have to deal with, is that the thing that scared my most was becoming arrogant. But I have so many problems, that I never have to worry about that. I have finally accepted where I am and am ok with it. I think I really am happy and at

peace now.

The Psychological Approach

I have realized that a skilled Psychologist is the best approach, to my problems and that it might be best to stay away from churches, as I believe that they contain more negativity and are the source of more problems than they help with. I am not alone in thinking this and believe that this is the best way to improve my relationship with God. I think for me to live like a life that is patterned by Biblical teaching I need to avoid the Church and focus more on my emotional and physical well being.

Why Wait to Get Antidepressants?

There are several reasons for why I did not ask the doctor to change my antidepressant medication at first. One of the reasons why is that depression can be caused by different things and psychiatric medicines only work when the symptoms are caused by a chemical imbalance rather than behavioral/lifestyle causes. Another reason is that I also suffer from Schizophrenia, so I take an anti-psychotic medicine as well. On the simplest level the anti-psychotics work as sedatives/tranquilizers and so they make you more tired and generally bring you down from your excessive thoughts and the antidepressants often do the opposite and keep you from being depressed by elevating your energy and mood. Often times an increase in the antidepressant can work against the anti-psychotic medicine. Another reason is that I suffered from what I can best describe as a combination of both depression and paranoia, which is supposed to be impossible.

10.3 My Core Problem

10.3.1 Exploring the Problem

Recognizing the Obvious

My core problem is that I am a workaholic and all through my writings I talked about the mystical aspect of Christianity, the importance of rest, and the importance of humility. I understood all of that

very well in an intellectual manner, but have just began to accept these ideas on an emotional level. I am one big paradox as we all are. But realizing that life is based on paradox is not sufficient – we need to look for the correct aspects of these paradoxes. I have thought of being either a mystic or being an analytical person as I saw in the paradoxical relationship of Taoism and Confucianism. I have learned a lot about both of them but it has been hard for me to take the best of both.

Obstacles to Taking a Break

The Bible speaks about this a lot, but people with my personality and background miss the main point, which appears to us as a very subtle idea. There are various reasons for my feeling this way, including how I became so serious after serving in the Army and having a very serious and difficult disease to deal with in my diagnosis of Schizophrenia. For people who know little about this illness, it does more than just cause paranoia, voices, and delusions. It even goes farther than causing apathy, having inappropriate expressions, depression, very strong anxiety and obsessive compulsive disorders which all make it hard to get along with others. It goes as far as making it difficult for the person with Schizophrenia to even find joy in doing anything. I didn't find out about this last part, until this last year and that, in addition to my study of survival topics, was a big part of what made me feel so seriously depressed for such a long time. The anti-psychotic (Schizophrenia) medicine causes many, including myself, to be completely exhausted constantly and to never feel rested up. Often the person has to choose from the pain of trying to stay awake during the day or the pain of paranoia. This is even on the newest medications. They just aren't as smart and focused as there developers intended.

Negative Social Factors

A lot of people who suffer with Schizophrenia are so preoccupied with dealing with the paranoia which is rarely overcome due to people not being able to accept that they need to take the medicine. It also doesn't help when so many people use the word crazy as being a way of describing someone as being worse than evil or as an insult when they disagree with you. It also doesn't help when someone with a mental illness commits a crime and although it is not politically correct or socially acceptable to attribute their motive to be based on race, age, or physical handicap, it is considered acceptable to attribute their motive to mental illness. It also doesn't help that whenever someone has Schizophrenia on a TV show or movie they are always violent criminals. And one of the most

destructive thing people say who have used psychiatric medications that didn't need them tell everyone that it is a sign of weakness or personal failure to be taking psychiatric medicines.

I feel that being as rational as I am while having Schizophrenia is more painful (not just mentally but physically as well) because I see really understand what it is that I lost due to my disease.

10.3.2 Finding Possible Solutions

Enjoying the Process

So what I have finally realized, which probably is very obvious to the average person, is that Christianity is not defined by a certain result, but is rather a process. Just as the means determines the end (while many people say the end justifies the means), so doing good works to become closer to God is having everything mixed up. We are supposed to grow, by God working in our lives and the fruits of this may be good works. Being a Christian is exactly that, being, rather than doing something. God wants use to grow spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually, as well as take care of ourselves physically. I think we are finally realizing that there are a multitude of things that interact with each other, that form who we are, just as there are many aspect to what produces a healthy nation, or a healthy social group.

Bettering Ourselves

I think Christians are too focused on fighting an outside spiritual evil. We go out, as if to war, when we should rather focus on self improvement. People are given much more freedom than evil spiritual forces do and the battleground is mostly in our minds. We need to break our desire to do what we want and rather decide to do what God wants. This is the real battle. For people like me (who are more like Martha than Mary Magdalene) following God means that we are taking care of ourselves, but doing so by faith in God's power, over time, with other people and not try to do everything ourselves. Excessively doing good works doesn't get us anywhere spiritually, if it destroys us physically an/or emotionally.

Relaxation Strategies

I think one of the things that has kept me from spending time relaxing is that I like to be busy doing things. It is very hard for me to just sit and do nothing. I think that it would be good for me to combine some activity, that doesn't use my mind, with relaxing. One of the reasons why I wanted to join the military after high school was that I was so overwhelmed by all the work in high school that I looked forward to not having to use my brain for a while. And my inability to motivate myself to relax probably goes back to my experience in the military, when I was never able to relax, because I never felt safe.

10.3.3 Reasons and Motivations

Overworking isn't Biblical

For those unwilling to do anything for themselves, think of it this way. The Martha approach is like that of the Pharisees. If you think that you need to do more than others, then you think of yourself as better than others and if you think that these good works are necessary to improve society, than you are saying that God needs you. Either way, excessively doing good works, to improve yourself or to help others, is a sign of arrogance and sinful pride. You are also not a good witness to others, when your example implies that it is not possible to both be happy and to follow God. And, eventually, you will be locked into a very miserable existence or else you will give up God. It would be better for you to give up on your projects instead. And by pacing yourself and by giving yourself resting time, you will actually be more productive, in what you can accomplish for God.

Bible Teaches Rest

Not only is overworking unbiblical, but there are many examples of resting in the Bible.

The first is that God rested on the first day, after He created the world.

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

41

The second is one of the ten commandments: the sabbath.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

42

Third is the command to let the land rest on the 7th year.

And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof. But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy oliveyard.

43

Fourth is a command called the Year of Jubilee.

And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubile; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field. In the year of this jubile ye shall return every man unto his possession. And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another: According to the number of years after the jubile thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, and according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee: According to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it: for according to the number of the years of the fruits doth

41Genesis 2:1-3

42Exodus 20:8-11

43Exodus 23:10-11

he sell unto thee. Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am the LORD your God. Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety. And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety. And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase. Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store. The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me. And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land. If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold. And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it; Then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it; that he may return unto his possession. But if he be not able to restore it to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubile: and in the jubile it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession. And if a man sell a dwelling house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; within a full year may he redeem it. And if it be not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house that is in the walled city shall be established for ever to him that bought it throughout his generations: it shall not go out in the jubile. But the houses of the villages which have no wall round about them shall be counted as the fields of the country: they may be redeemed, and they shall go out in the jubile. Notwithstanding the cities of the Levites, and the houses of the cities of their possession, may the Levites redeem at any time. And if a man purchase of the Levites, then the house that was sold, and the city of his possession, shall go out in the year of jubile: for the houses of the cities of the Levites are their possession among the children of Israel. But the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be sold; for it is their perpetual possession. And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God. And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant. But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubile. And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and

shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return. For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen. Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shalt fear thy God. Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour. And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother that dwelleth by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family: After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him: Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or any that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if he be able, he may redeem himself. And he shall reckon with him that bought him from the year that he was sold to him unto the year of jubile: and the price of his sale shall be according unto the number of years, according to the time of an hired servant shall it be with him. If there be yet many years behind, according unto them he shall give again the price of his redemption out of the money that he was bought for. And if there remain but few years unto the year of jubile, then he shall count with him, and according unto his years shall he give him again the price of his redemption. And as a yearly hired servant shall he be with him: and the other shall not rule with rigour over him in thy sight. And if he be not redeemed in these years, then he shall go out in the year of jubile, both he, and his children with him. For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

44

Then there was Elijah who was given food and rest by an angel.

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and

eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

45

Jesus and His Disciples rested.

And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught. And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

46

Christ has Already Won

I have felt like I need to fight, to struggle for what is right. I often imagine myself dropping out of a plane and parachuting to a battle, when I think of what might be my ultimate fate. But Jesus Christ already defeated the devil. Christianity has successfully spread beyond Europe and now outnumbers Islam 2 to 1, with most of those still practicing indigenous religions preferring Christianity over Islam, even though Islam had a thousand year head start and Christianity has only had a hundred years, in most parts of the Non-European world. We also are not responsible for the conversion of others to Christianity. God brings people to himself. We may be able to be a good witness, but it is not our responsibility beyond that. Only the disciples and those called to the ministry are charged with spreading the Gospel.

10.4 Being Without Doing

10.4.1 The Solution

By God's Grace

I have realized that the way that we become is not through doing. And the way we become more

451 Kings 19:4-8

46Mark 6:30-32

Christ like and mature as Christians involves 3 aspects: us being willing to change, God giving us maturity as a free gift by His Grace, and allowing time for this to take place. Praying ourselves as well as having other pray for us will enhance this effort.

God Does all the Work

The reason why it works this way (that God does the whole thing by Himself once we give Him permission) is because this is how God chooses to work with us. Despite our lack of belief in the power of the spiritual in our lives does not mean God is not constantly defying physical laws, to the benefit of those who want to serve Him and to bring others to Himself. Just as God has chosen for us to become righteous enough to enter Heaven, by our faith and His grace, again with God doing essentially the entire thing for us, so He will do almost everything needed, for us to mature in a similar fashion, if we would only consent to His desire to do this.

10.4.2 Spiritual Laws

Different Rules

Most people have a very flawed understanding of how God works and why things happen the way they do in the physical world and we also have a poor understanding of the spiritual world, which makes the former seem more confusing. The way we see the world from our human vantage point, we see throughout history that when one group of people becomes more powerful through technology, economics, weather, or any other factor it dominated the other weaker group of people. The spiritual world also has laws and things also work according to a predictable pattern, but the pattern is different, because of the different rules God governs this realm by.

How Americans Think

One of the big reasons why the US is hated throughout the world and we get ourselves into unwinnable wars is because we don't study history. Many of the same groups, who feel discriminated against and marginalized, did the same thing to others earlier on in history. The US needs to understand, that there are no good guys and in many parts of the world, so we need to

choose between the lesser of two evils, or just not get involved. The only other alternative is to occupy a country, for at least a thousand years and the US is not likely to exist in its present form that far in the future, nor does our country have that kind of patience and resolve nor is it unwilling to make the sacrifices necessary for this to happen.

10.4.3 Real Freedom

God Values Our Freedom

Many people have a poor understanding of God's perspective, motivations, and personality. Great thinkers often spend their entire lives trying to explain why we suffer, when God is all powerful and also perfectly morally good in nature. In America believe we really value our freedom. We think that freedom comes from having more choices and less restrictions in life. But God really values true freedom, especially of people, and God also likes to use people, so that people can be in control of their future.

Why and How Bad Things Happen

God allows bad things to happen, because all these things all arose, from our rebellion against God. God created everything, so that it worked together perfectly. We then screwed it up, by our decision to follow what we assumed was our own will. Many people might also wonder why, if there are powerful evil spiritual forces in the world, why have they not already enslaved us and why we have waited so long for the End of Times. In the spiritual world, God greatly restricts what other spiritual forces are allowed to do. God allows people much more latitude. That is probably why the anti-Christ is a person and why a lot of powerful people are trying to advance technologically and corrupt people morally – they are not allowed to do as much spiritually, so they take the physical approach.

Acknowledging Reality

Our true enemy though is not an outside force, but ourselves. What we need to worry about first is our own lives and how we treat others. We need to “submit to God” which is really a bad

approximation, because God already is infinitely powerful and controls everything that happens. How do we really praise God, when the best things we say about God are not flattering, but factually true. To submit ourselves to God is really only about acknowledging reality. What we need to do, to allow God to work in our lives, is to accept His help. So salvation is not so much about faith or about repentance per say, but really just acknowledging what we already know is true.

Only 2 Choices

The only thing we need to do is to ask God to rule our lives and for His will to be done in us and not our will. Some people would say this is not freedom and they are allowed to follow, what they think is their own choice. But there are only 2 choices spiritually: serve God or serve money (the devil). Just like in an addiction, what feels right is not always best for you, nor are you always in control, when you have your own way.

10.5 True Humility

10.5.1 God's Perspective

The Other Side of Humility

I think one of the things that has held me back in my spiritual growth is that I saw God's desire for us to be humble as Christ was as a one sided equation, where we know we have blown it so bad, that we have no reason to have a high opinion of ourselves. I thought of it as that basically all our problems are our fault. The other side of the equation, which I am only now discovering is that God does say that we have failed, but because of His choice and His grace, we are given direct and supernatural help, to become better people.

God Doesn't Want us to Suffer

God doesn't just judge us and then expect us to become more moral, by our own effort. God only wants us to be humble, so that we are willing to ask God for help. God allows things bad to happen to us, but we do not grow by becoming more willing to deal with pain, because we have learned to

be more patient and persevere. The reason why God allows problems in Christians' lives is to get their permission to enter their lives, so that God can remove the obstacles and strengthen us, by His grace, so that we learn to stop trying to do everything ourselves.

God's Objective

God is not trying to discipline us, with punishments, like some parents have or the legal system does, to get us to behave better. God has realized that we can't do things by ourselves and so He wants to help. We are worthy of being happy and at peace, not because we earned it, but because God decided to take the penalty Himself and gave the ultimate sacrifice. So even though we are not highly esteemed, by our actions, God does value us more than the protection of His Son (who is also God Himself).

10.5.2 Living a Happier Life

What is Life For?

We are not just to endure life, but to have a happier and more peaceful life. We don't deserve this, but God has decided to give this to us, because He chooses to. A Christian's life is not supposed to be a constant struggle, with no time for rest and recovery, but rather a meaningful and positive existence, where despite our failures, we have hope and the ability to improve our lives (but only by God's divine intervention). God gives us things to do, that we cannot do, not for us to fail, but for us to ask for help. It may be surprising to many people that despite our terrible track record with responsibilities given to us, God really enjoys being with us and is willing and able to take the time, to change anything in us and in our circumstances, to make our lives better.

Consequences of Free Will

We will never get the credit, but we can have better lives. It is hard to understand why God doesn't just force us to do what is best for us. But God values our freedom and is unwilling to give that up just so that things work out better. God wants us to make the right choices, but ultimately sees us as adults and wants us to choose of our own free will, because love cannot be forced. We

are allowed to makes bad choices, only as a logical consequence of having the ability to love God and His creation, while still retaining a free will.

Enjoying Life

God doesn't want us to settle for good enough. He doesn't want us to just grin and bear it and just stay alive, because God doesn't want us to commit suicide. Neither is our life's purpose to get some project completed or to help so many people. When we die, the only things we take with us are our identity, personality, and our memories. The most important thing we can do in life is to first be honest as to where we are at, then to learn more about God and get His help, and finally to have a good relationship, with the people we know. If God really wanted us all to be perfect, at any cost, He wouldn't have given us a free will.

10.6 Problems with Theories

10.6.1 Background

I Love Theories

Most of what I write about is not about practical things, but rather theory. I am a person who loves working with ideas and I am very creative about it. I make mosaics of ideas by combining pieces, that I have cut out of other theories, much like people cut out pictures in magazines to make a collage, or people make scrapbooks out of photos. What I do is like a kind of abstract art.

How I Write

You may wonder how I plan out what I am going to write about and stay disciplined to write on related topics. But I was never good at making outlines and I have learned in school to think in complete sentences and to write very rapidly. This makes it possible to write, without having to be disciplined about it.

Writing Style

I write what I do directly and then fix it for typos, but I never rewrite or re-think what I have written. I very rarely throw any of my writing away or rewrite something. I can also keep the idea in my head long enough for me to get back to my house, so that I can write it directly in my word processor. I don't keep a list of things I want to write, as this stresses me out. This approach actually creates a problem for me in writing books, in that I never know when I am finished with them.

10.6.2 My Theory on Theories

Bad Theories

Many people do not like studying theories, as they find them very impractical. I did not feel this way about philosophy though, but the reason why I think people feel this way is that many theories are not a very accurate explanation of reality. I read somewhere (I think in reading some of the philosopher Hume's writing) that reality is the truest judge of any theory. If you ever run into a situation where the theories you learned about it are not useful, then the person who taught the theory needs to rethink it and develop a better theory.

Reason for Failure

One of the big reasons why theories fail to help explain reality is that they don't allow for failure, contradictions, and inconsistencies. What people think is often not well explained by philosophy, because philosophers are too consistent and rational and people aren't. We philosophers often strive for perfection and this ends up not being very useful, to those who study philosophy. I think it is hard to reconcile the way the world works with any theory, because there are many factors that influence the major events, that happen in the world, over the course of history and there are also many factors, that determine why people decide how to respond, to the situations that they were born into.

People are Different

Whenever you try to explain history or an individual's beliefs, by finding just one theory developed from just one perspective, it often fails. One of the problems with reducing people and history down to one theory is that people are very different and things that work for one person, in one time of history, in one situation do not necessarily help another person, in a different situation. I recognized early on that in my writing that I needed to explain things differently, for different people, with different strengths, weaknesses, and situations.

My Approach

I also realized that I was setting myself up for inevitable failure, if I asked for followers, because I could not predict what someone else would get inspired to do, from what I have said. That is why I have asked people to use my writing to inspire them, but to decide on what is important to them by themselves and not try to take an approach that works for me and expect it to work for them. You can also feel responsible, for people abusing your theories, if you try to convince other to believe the same as you.

Opposite Problems

This is the problem with trying to get different people to approach problems in the same way: it doesn't work, because often some people have exactly the opposite problem of other people. Just like people have very different tastes in music and different sense of humor and often don't appreciate different styles, so it is hard for a person to understand how someone else has entirely different needs and problems than another person. It is interesting that, when people asked Jesus what to do to be saved and go to Heaven, Jesus told everyone to do something different than everyone else.

10.6.3 The Biblical Approach

More than a Philosophy

There are a few things that I believe are absolutely true, which the Bible is very clear about, but most things in the Bible are not that simple. Just as Buddha gave different kinds of people different advice, based on their level of understanding, so the Bible is not arranged, so that we can make a detailed theory to consult, to solve our problems. There is no way we can find a philosophy of the Bible, because it is more than a philosophy. The Bible is the word of God, simplified so that we can understand it, but it was designed to work for billions of people, over at least thousand of years of history. That is why it is not easy to explain everything in the Bible by one theory.

Relationship with God

It is often said so many times, by a certain type of really intense Christian, that the Bible is about a relationship with God. I cannot argue with this as there is a good deal of truth to it. But there is more to life than just relationships and that is not the only way to approach God. I think too many people dismiss large portions of the Bible, thinking they are outdated and are not useful for them to study. I also think many people make what God asks of us too complicated.

Point of Life

God simply wants us to be happy. He wants us to live better lives and become better people. But trying to find some sort of goal is missing the point. The best way of understanding the eternal perspective of God, that I know of, is to think of God as existing in a kind of eternal moment. Living is a process and consists of a variety of experiences and dealing with a variety of emotions and situations.

What God Wants

God wants us to experience His presence in the world and not worry so much. God doesn't require us to know something specific, or attain a certain level of faith or of understanding of

theology. Being a Christian means that you decide things for yourself, based on a lot of different types of information. The Bible is the most important one, not because it explains everything, but rather that everything it says is true and accurate.

Who God Is

We can always depend on God, but God will never be able to depend on us. A relationship with God is not like a close friend, where you are complete equals. God is not a drinking buddy. He is our Lord and Savior. We need to understand that, in dealing with God, we need to have a sense of wonder and awe about Him, revere Him, and we need to express this by living serious lives, and in taking things like sin seriously.

Take Life Seriously

When we see Jesus as God, we need to understand that God is also God the Father and God, His Holy Spirit. God definitely does have a sense of humor, but God knows that there is a place and time for it and does not elevate having fun at the expense of our safety and well being. There is a reason why the Bible is not very funny. Life is an experience and the only things we take with us are our minds, emotions, spirit, and everything else that we can't see. We need to focus on what is everlasting and we need to do this by maintaining a balanced existence, just like God is balanced.

10.7 Being Realistic

When people are young, they all think they will be famous and that they will be able to solve all the world's problems, all by themselves. I used to want to be famous, so that I could help solve world problems.

10.7.1 Working with People

The Reality of Fame

The thing is that when most people become famous, they are only famous for a short period of time, which is often not at the end of their life. This sets up a situation, where you are going to

experience a low of the same magnitude of your high. That is the same reason why drugs cause depression and destroy people. Another thing about fame is having a lot of money. But wealthy people have the same problems everyone else does. In fact, for people making over \$50,000 a year, an increase in wealth does not improve the person's life.

Romantic Ideals

I think we also have unrealistic expectations of others, that we have relationships with. One of the big reasons for divorces among young people is that they expect too much of their spouse. You have to be happy alone, before you can be happy married. Everyone has habits that will make you angry and they will fail you when you need them most. The only one who will unconditionally love you and consistently be there for you, when you need them, is God. The closest thing we can find in physical form is an animal.

Hard to Meet People

I used to be upset and feel myself to be a failure, because I have a hard time finding friends. But I am not the only one. In fact, this is quite common. It is ironic that, in a world filled with ways to communicate instantly and continually, with almost anyone for almost no money, we actually feel more lonely than ever before. The Internet, as many have found out, is a bad way to meet people.

Problems with Virtual Dating

The biggest problem with meeting people first online is that people lie, when they can get away with it. The idea of sharing intimate ideas with someone, before you meet them, is not a good way to start a relationship. I want to see the person first, so that I can find out basic things about them, like whether they are a woman or a man, instead of investing all sorts of time and emotions in someone, who could be making up everything and you have no way of being sure it is not a scam or a stalker.

Finding Friendships

I also have more problems forming relationships than other people, as I have trouble getting to

things that start at a certain time repeat in a schedule. I get tired very easily and I have a lot of anxiety about how I will get along with other people that I don't know. I feel bad that I don't know more people, but when I see people in public, who work at the places I buy food from, or I see on the bus, I would rather be alone than be around these people. My sister said the other day that it would be really easy for her to find a bunch of really annoying friends, but that the hard part is finding people who are worth getting to know.

Lack of Maturity

I would like to marry someone in their twenties, but I think it is unrealistic to expect someone of that age, to have the maturity, to stay in the same marriage, for the rest of their lives. Most women over 30 are single today. I think most people marry young and then get divorced, before they start to even get to know who they are and what they want out of life. In the past, people were more mature at a much younger age, but today people seem to mature, at later and later dates, as time goes on. Most religions consider this time in history to be one of the most immoral and corrupt.

10.7.2 Anxiety for No Good Reason

Downsizing Our Lives

I think it is also unrealistic of us to think that we can continue to consume more and more resources and to not pay back our debts, while continuing to increase them. The earth is a finite place. There is only so much water, so much energy, and so much room. The way of the future will be to downsize our lives and have simpler and more basic ambitions. We can change the world, in our homes and in our lives, and we need to narrow our focus on this area, and not worry about the decisions everyone else makes.

Problems with Journalists

I think one of the problems with the liberal counterculture media and even the mainstream conservative media is that they are too negative. All we hear all day is the problems. Maybe reporters should stop bringing up problems, without giving possible solutions for them. I think one of

the reason why the alternative media is so negative is that they expect the common person to give up something for the greater good. And then they are unwilling to work with religious groups, which are the vehicle, for many of the positive developments, in the world today.

We Worry Too Much

At this point, most people are so overwhelmed by our problems and are so busy just trying to keep their jobs, that they get discouraged very easily. If you knew how your life would be 10 years from now, would you really want to know? I think it is unrealistic to expect that we will never get sick again or be depressed or in pain, but knowing about it before then is just unbearable. We need to spend less time worrying and more time enjoying what we do have.

Why Life is Short

Most people will not live past 80 and this has been the case throughout history. And the reason for this is that life is only manageable, for a certain number of years. We are not designed to sustain ourselves, beyond this period of time, in the world, the way it is now. And trying to extend your life does not increase your happiness. Many people now worry about dying, because of heart disease or cancer. Maybe it is ok that we finally die of something. Maybe dying of a heart attack is not the worst way to die. Maybe this is actually progress.

The Cost of Being Healthy

Many scientists now think that we would be healthier and live longer by eating a near starvation diet and work out intensely. Most people have lived this way, throughout most of history, and the people that could afford to not do this, didn't follow that route. Being overweight was once the sign of healthiness and wealth. We also worry about getting fresh air and getting a certain amount of sunlight. We want to travel and vacation outside and in a warm climate.

Staying Inside is Good

There is a reason why people decided to live in a controlled setting, in houses, and in living in the same place. Living a life out in the elements and living off the land is very difficult and the land can

only support so many people. Civilizations were able to start when people settled down together and started living off agriculture, instead of hunting and gathering. The populations increased and the first cities started, because they could finally produce enough food, to sustain a large population.

The Best Location

What people don't often see, about these supposedly ideal tropical islands, is that most people who live on them want to live on the mainland. In the tropics, the bugs are bigger, more aggressive, and more poisonous. Most people, if they lived in somewhere outside of carefully maintained hotels, in these tropical climates, in the third world, would realize that living in a temperate climate, in the US is actually one of the best climates to live in. The most rapidly growing cities are ones, where they are big enough to have things to do like concerts and plays, but small enough, to avoid major inner city problems.

Chapter 11

The World

by Ben Huot

11.1 American Problems and the Bible

11.1.1 Where I am Coming From

Historical Perspective

Anyway, I decided to write this to encourage people today and to give some historical perspective partly gained by now being 32, living on my own for a number of years, my study of history, and my insights about God, that have come to me over the last 12 years. I think it would be best for people to stop watching the news. There are major changes happening in the world today, but I think we should be excited about them and not afraid of them.

No One Knows When

First of all I believe that no one knows the future or controls it except God and that just as the first coming of Jesus was not predicted by anyone, the same will happen in his second coming. I think that studying prophecy should only be done to show how God is in control of history and not to predict future events. The smartest theologians in history could not even understand the most basic theology of the Bible and they have never successfully predicted the future.

Unique Perspective

I also have no clear idea about the future, but I do have an unusual perspective on world history, I am very creative, and am good at connecting things that seem unrelated. First of all, America has nothing to fear in the future. America will no longer be the world power but will likely be a world power. I think that the American big business view of the world is going to be proven wrong and will fail. Things will get harder economically in America, but things will improve in many other ways. One of the things that scares me most is being in the world all alone, but that is unlikely. Even if we have an apocalyptic event like a nuclear war, there will still be a huge number of people left.

11.1.2 American Problems

Not So Bad in America

Another thing that people don't seem to understand in America is that economists have a very poor record of understanding and explaining the present and have an even worse record of predicting the future. I think that we tend to overestimate our weaknesses and underestimate our strengths. I think that a lot of our world problems come from other world rivals trying to make things more difficult for America by distorting what other countries know about America. Just like I think Microsoft will be important in the future as a spoiler so is Russia. Russia still has global ambitions and blames us for its fall. Many of the growing powers in the world may well self destruct long before they threaten the US.

American Ignorance

I think Americans are often very naive about international politics, because we do not study world history in schools. The most important part of history is the very first part and the last couple centuries are actually least important. America is a anomaly in world history. America has lot fewer and less severe problems compared to the rest of the world because of our geography (no enemies on our borders), our abundant natural resources (which were mostly wood and fish), and our low population density. Almost everyone in the world, who is trying to improve the world would choose to live in the US, if they had a choice.

11.2 World History

11.2.1 Role of Technology and Economics

Origin of Middle East Problems

The Middle East was the way it is today because of decisions the people who live there made in the past. The spread of Islam and the Arab people was another anomaly of world history. Throughout most of history, people had far fewer freedoms than we enjoy today and at the most there were a few religious choices that were approved. The others were persecuted.

Technology and History

One of the keys to world history is the level of technology available at the time. For a very long time, throughout most of recorded history, what is now Europe traded with what is now India, Southeast Asia, and China and this was important for the world economy. Our modern way of life is all based on the energy we get from coal and oil. Without it, we will lose our technology very fast. How many people could build a printing press from scratch or know how to make an effective plough. These inventions took centuries and can be lost very easily.

Roman Empire Success

The Roman Empire was made possible because the technology of that era allowed people to navigate the Mediterranean, but was not advanced enough to allow voyage by the major world oceans. Rome became powerful when they took over North Africa (which supplied most of the food for the Roman Empire), Egypt, and the Middle East (which allowed them to financially benefit from the trade that went from the Mediterranean through the Red Sea and into the Arabian Sea to India).

Ascension of Europe

Europe was able to dominate most of the world during the last 500 years, which a big contributing factor was that the Portugese figured out how to go from Europe and around the coast of Africa to India, China, and Southeast Asia. One of the very important things that Europe needed from South and East Asia were spices, because they needed to preserve food and make them taste good enough to eat without modern refrigeration.

Technology vs. Morality

At this same time, Asia became increasingly weak and Europe became much stronger. This was partly because of slight weather changes and European mastery of weapons technology like guns and the shift in warfare technology that favored discipline over personal combat skills and bravery. Another factor that made India and China weak was the desire to focus on moral development and to not pursue technological advancement as aggressively as the west. European nations also gained wealth and power through taking over what they called colonies which were mostly along their major trade routes to the Orient.

11.2.2 European Experience

Rome Not First Church

The Roman Catholic Church has convinced many people that it was the first church, but this is wrong. There were four equal and independent Christian centers and Rome was the least important

(although it and the churches that separated from it after the reformation were the most successful politically for the last 500 years). The centers were, in order of importance: Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, and Rome. The Church out of Alexandria became the Coptic church and the Ethiopian church is part of this, the Church out of Antioch divided into the East and West Assyrian Churches (who were responsible for the Islamic renaissance) who spoke Syriac, the Church out of Constantinople became what is now called the Eastern Orthodox Church who spoke Greek, and the Church out of Rome became the Roman Catholic Church who spoke Latin.

Parting Ways

The Roman Catholic Church has historically persecuted the other churches more than any other church. Each of these centers were political and economic centers as well. Antioch was an important economic center and Alexandria was an important intellectual center. The Western Roman Empire out of Rome became the basis for the church and political power of medieval Europe, but mostly just in the former Roman Empire lands including what is now Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, and England and Ireland shortly afterwards.

Christianity and Paganism

During much of the Middle ages, much of Europe was pagan. Christians, in what is now called England, where pillaged and then if caught were tortured, until they converted to paganism, by the Vikings (from Norway, Denmark, and Sweden). The reason the English came, to what is now called England, was that they were invited from Germany, to fight off the pagan Vikings. The English became powerful enough and pushed the indigenous Celts into Cornwall, Wales, and Scotland and took over what was now England, with what started out as separate kingdoms.

Viking Legacy

The English monarchy starts with when the Normand's invaded England in 1066. The Scots came from Ireland and the King of Scotland eventually inherited the thrown of Scotland and England. They were united in the start of the 19th Century and that is where the Union Jack comes from. England never took over Scotland. The Vikings eventually converted to Christianity and the ones that settled in northern France became the nobility throughout Europe and became the leaders that started

Russia (with the help of the Byzantine Empire). Russia was considered by many to be the third Rome after Constantinople and was a major center of the Eastern Orthodox Church until the Russian communist revolution during World War 1.

Christianity as Unifying Factor

During what Europe called the Middle Ages, Europe regressed technologically and became very religious and the Church was the only unifying factor. People starved for centuries, until they started to join kingdoms together and England, France, Spain, and Portugal united, to form the countries in roughly as they are today, the weather then changed in the 13th century, then after the bubonic plague which killed 1/3 of Europe, the Renaissance was started with the help of the Byzantine (Eastern Orthodox) monks, just before church in Constantinople (more important than the church in Rome) was taken over by the Ottoman Turks and turned into a mosque.

11.2.3 Asian Experience

Asia was the World

During this same period, Asia was the world and Christianity was most active in Syria, Iraq, and Iran (as well as Ethiopia) and a small part of India. During the Roman Empire, Asia was just as important or more with the Persian Empire and the Chinese Empire (Han Dynasty). From the 4th to the 14th centuries Asia was at its zenith. The Church out of Rome and Constantinople persecuted the Church out of Antioch, so the Syriac Christians moved into the Persian Empire.

Reasons for Spread of Islam

Then after the western part of the Roman Empire fell apart, the Byzantine Empire (out of Constantinople) and the Persian empire became weak after fighting each other. Islam started and became a politically uniting force for the Arabs (who lived in what is now called the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) and then they were able to take over the Middle East and North Africa. The Christians there welcomed the Arabs (who were Muslims) into the Middle East, because they feared the Byzantine Empire more.

Europe Fights Off Islam

The Islamic Empires almost took over Europe twice, the result of which would have made Christianity an obscure African religion. The first time was after the Arabs took over North Africa, they went into Spain and luckily were defeated in southern France. Centuries later, the Ottoman Empire almost took over Europe, but were defeated by the Hungarians. The reason why the Muslims were there in Bosnia was that they were settled resettled there by the Ottoman Empire, which was expanding its empire into Eastern Europe (at the expense of the Christian nations there).

Ethnic Cleansing of Christians

Muslims got along with Christians in the Middle East for centuries, but many Muslims began to persecute many Christians about the same time as the Ottoman Empire was born. In fact the word genocide was developed after World War 2 to describe how the Muslims were destroying an entire linguistic and religious group (the Syriac Christians). At the beginning of the 20th Century half of the Ottoman Empire was still Christian. There are still some Christians in the Middle East. 10% of the population of both Syria and Egypt are Christian. There is also a large community of Christians in modern Lebanon (mostly Maronite).

11.3 The US and the World Today

11.3.1 American Perspective

Baseless Worrying

I remember as a kid how we feared Japan would own most of the US and how we thought we couldn't compete in areas like electronics. Now Sony and Nintendo are afraid of Apple and Japan has been declining for some time and has a much grimmer outlook than the US. The problem we have in America with too many old people and not enough young people is much worse in Japan. People seem to be afraid India and China will overtake the US.

We Can Feed Ourselves

The thing that people in our country don't understand is that China cannot even feed itself without food imports and the US still produces 25% of the world's food. Even without modern technology it would be conceivable to be able to feed our entire present population if we were smarter about what we grew, where we grew it, and where we lived. If we lost our modern technologies we would very quickly adapt.

Life will Return Soon

For a few weeks, things would be rough. But there would quickly be less crime. Once one person loots and they are shot for it, people will stop stealing. When the electricity (including hospitals and the sewage system) is off for a week, people will realize that it will never come back again and adjust. People will actually become closer friends as we will need each other. The church will be much stronger because people will feel they need God. People will be so much healthier that most people who need modern medications will no longer need them. Most people will be happier than before and we will likely have a higher literacy rate.

Importance of Economy

I think the thing that is most dangerous to the US is our debt. I think that every country that wants us to fail including the Muslim extremists (there are Christian Arab terrorists as well) are trying to kill us by bankrupting us. Wars have often been one by one side over spending to fight the war. When we spend 100 times what the terrorists spend, then we are losing the war. The key to our economic problems in America is our personal and corporate debt. The most important part of national independence is the economy. Many empires have failed because they didn't understand economics.

11.3.2 Rest of the World

China's Problems

Another problem China has is that its population is growing, so that it needs substantial growth just to keep everyone employed. China is also very polarized between the rich and fast growing eastern coast and the remote inland parts of China where people are of different ethnic groups, very poor, and the agricultural land is being destroyed by sand blowing in. China will likely split into multiple countries. This would make democracy more likely in at least one of the new countries.

Indian and Russian Problems

India and Russia also have large problems. Russia depends a lot on oil prices being high for its economy. Another problem for India which directly affect Russia is that in the next generation or two global warming will likely dry up the major river in India. Russia might have a hard time integrating a billion people into Siberia.

Europe's Problems

Europe will suffer a lot from global warming with increased immigration from the Middle East and North Africa (as they will become uninhabitable in a couple generations). Europe could also become a lot like Siberia very quickly if the major ocean currents change. Europe has a very dense population and even though they have diversified their energy sources more than the US, they still depend on oil, especially from Russia. Europe will not do well in this situation and cannot feed its population without modern technology.

11.3.3 Comparing the US to the World

Europe is Falling Apart

Many people think that Europe will outdo the US economically. But this is unlikely, if we think about the history of Europe and its geography, demographics, and natural resources. Before the 2

World Wars, the UK, France, and Germany were all global power, by themselves. When they lost their colonies, mostly after the next few decades following World War II for France and the UK and World War I for Germany, they almost destroyed themselves from centuries of war after war. Now the UK, France, and Germany have to unite together, to compete against America economically.

Non-US Economies Weak

One of the big weaknesses of Europe and Japan, which makes their economies less resilient than the US, is that they focus on only a few industries and these are dominated by a few big corporations, so when one of these companies loses market share, the whole economy suffers. At this point, there is little still left that can keep European countries at First World economic status, over the next two generations. Many people now think the same fate will fall on the US, but our empire is mostly in the continental US, and we are much bigger and have many more resources than Europe has. We are still the world's main consumers, so China, India, Europe and all the other major economies still want to trade with us, for their own survival.

US Not Like Europe

Another thing to consider is that we have plenty of free space in our country and will have a big increase in our population, which will allow our large quantity of baby boomers in retirement a big enough base of young people, to support them. Of course, we will still go through tough times, in the US, but in Europe, China, and Japan these countries are all going to see a much bigger bubble of retired people, to support, as their countries are shrinking in population and cannot afford to keep increasing in numbers, even if they did have enough kids.

The other major factor, that puts the US in a better position than other major economic powers is that our empire is not far away geographically, nor is one part of our country holding another part of the country under their control. Even if the US split up, into regional countries, we would still be able to provide for ourselves, because most of our country has a least enough natural resources, to survive on their own, especially if they are willing to trade with each other.

11.4 Limits of Studies

11.4.1 Limits in Reading

My Focus of Study

I have studied world religions and philosophies for the greater part of 12 years. I have studied all the major belief system of the world including Chinese, Indian, and Middle Eastern Belief systems as well as the Enlightenment, Existentialism, Nietzsche (based on the Pre-Socratics), Epicureanism, and Stoicism. I also studied about the major events in history focusing on the between the 4th and 14th Centuries and focusing mainly on the Asian region.

Polytheism

There were a number of different religious texts which I did not read. Christians would call these occult, but I have been searching for a word that would explain the same things to non-believers. I have just recently thought of the basic differentiator that separates the occult religions from the major world belief systems (revealed religions) is that the occult religions all worship more than one god. Sometimes people refer to this as Polytheism.

What the Bible Forbids

Some belief systems like Animism or Neo-Paganism I would not read any primary texts, while with Middle Eastern, Indian and Chinese belief systems I have avoided the ones that talk about worship of other gods. The main thing the Bible forbids Christians to take part in are supernatural practices not done by the one Creator God, and not done how it is prescribed to do in the Bible. Christians do have rituals but they are not the same as the ones used to worship other gods.

11.4.2 Limits in Worship

Christian Rituals

Some of the more well known and widely practiced Christian rituals described in the Bible include: The Lord's Prayer, baptism, communion, Pentecost (also known as "speaking in tongues"), laying on of hands, anointing with oil, fasting, testimony, reading scriptures in public, the Sabbath, Easter/Passover, and other various festivals talked about in the Old Testament. Other ones were added later like Christmas, weddings, funerals, dedication of young children to the Christ and His Church, and others, some with less scriptural basis.

Places of Worship

I also do not practice any other religion other than Christianity nor would I attend worship services of a number of religions or go into their places of worship like: Hindu Temples, Tibetan Buddhist gatherings, Religious (or Esoteric) Taoist gatherings. I have attended a zendo meditation and visited a mosque. I would also like to visit a Sikh temple and a Jewish temple. The only one I would worship in other than a Christian church would be a Jewish temple.

11.4.3 Limits in Travel

Disadvantages of Traveling

I also have not traveled outside my country at all and am not likely to travel to Europe, Asia, or Africa. I am not going overseas because it is very stressful for me to travel and I do not do well under stress. I like living in a city where I can go anywhere in town without being in a dangerous neighborhood. It also is very expensive to travel and I think I could use my money more productively. Also, many of the greatest treasures of Asia and Europe are in their written works that I can get modern English translations of them very inexpensively.

Regional Problems

I would also break my heart to see the castles and cathedrals in Europe and know that they had to give up their great forests for these. I would not want to travel to Africa because of the instability of most of the governments there, and the parts of Asia I would want to see would be very polluted, remote, or not a good place for Americans to go. I know many people visit places like China and Russia that they think are friendly to Americans, but I don't want to take a chance. After being in the military I know that traveling outside your country poses many other risks, that many world travelers manage to avoid, but could cost them dearly, if they run into the wrong situation or violate certain laws.

Life is Good Here

I live in a very beautiful and safe part of the world. We don't have many natural disasters, we can grow our own food, we are sparsely populated, we have mild weather (just enough change to see the seasons) we have plenty of water and the best quality of water, and very few poisonous or even biting insects (other than some small mosquitos). We even have many types of environments, including: desert, beautiful unspoiled beaches (although very cold and with dangerous undertows), mountains with enough snow to ski on them, huge forests, even many virgin forests (never before logged). The only bad thing where I live is the lack of jobs. There are also not many young people in my town.

11.5 Why I Wrote my Books

There are a number of reason why I decided to write what later turned into 50 books.

11.5.1 Documenting My Experience

One of the reasons why I wrote these books was to document my personal progress, in learning to cope with Schizophrenia and to document what is happening in the world today, as I believe we are in a time of one of the biggest changes in history. This documentation was prepared, by me, for others, who might be going through similar situations.

11.5.2 Why Re-Write the Classics?

The Value of my Work

I also wanted to keep a record of the most important Asian classics. There are two reasons why I didn't just buy and store a bunch of copies of these Asian classics, in modern English translations. It wasn't because I think I can write on the same level. History will decide what value my books are, but an encouraging sign is my lack of popularity in my own time. Many of the greatest thinkers in history were considered failures in their lifetime.

Increasing their Survivability

One of the reasons then for writing about these great classics was because I was able to condense them into a very small space (relatively), so they would be easier to transport and store safely. The other major reason is that I own the copyright on my own books and can let people copy them freely, but I cannot do the same, for modern English translations, of these Asian classics.

11.5.3 Restoring Asian Christianity

Asian Religions are Not New Age

Another reason for my books is to let Christians know that most major Asian belief systems can be studied, without violating scripture, and also letting them know that the New Age movement takes nothing more from any other Asian belief system than it takes from Christianity. I want Christians to have an appreciation for Asian belief systems other than Christianity, so that they can see Christianity as it was originally understood – as an Asian religion.

Christianity is Not European

One of the things that really changed how Christians practice their faith (for the worse) has been the assumption that Christianity is a European religion. In most of the world it is now understood that Christianity is either or both Asian and/or African, but in America and Europe many still are not

aware of this. In the next couple generations the conception of a white Christian is going to be vary unusual, even in America and in Europe.

Christianity in Europe

Christianity was only considered European, because of the genocide committed in against Asian Christians. Despite this situation, Christianity has taken hold and is on the increase in most parts of the world, which more than makes up for its loses in America and Europe. In fact, the only reason why the European royalty ever accepted Christianity is because the Christian God was more powerful than the pagan gods and they believed this would help them win wars.

11.6 Gifts from Europe

11.6.1 New Ideas

Uniquely European

Europe has often been behind Asia in terms of the value of its contributions to the humanities. There are some positive things that European culture has either taken on or come up with itself. One of the big ones are the Sciences and Social Sciences. Asian cultures did invent things, but they did not use the Scientific Method, per say. I think Europe brought about the idea that there are separate physical forces, that affect us, that are not directly related to spiritual problems.

New Understanding

Understanding that the physical aspects of the world behave according to certain physical laws, that are not directly attributed to spiritual causes was an important discovery. In the not too distant past, people would have thought that I was possessed and they would never realize what is the direct cause of my mental illness (which is chemical) and so not be able to treat it effectively. In the not too distant past, concepts like the idea that the mind could be treated separately from the soul and the concept of studying economics was not even dreamt of.

11.6.2 Physical and Spiritual World Complimentary

Both Realities are Important

I think it is bad to see the world as entirely physical or to think that the physical part of the world is more important than the spiritual world is a grave mistake. I think that people trust Science to solve all their problems and don't realize that most conflicts are spiritual in nature. On the other hand, thinking that everything is spiritual makes it difficult to stay rooted in reality.

Both Aspects Need Each Other

It would improve our society to have people aware of the spiritual consequences of their decisions and behavior, but the world would never function well enough, to allow time to reflect on these kinds of things, without most people working in a concrete, rational, and analytical focused endeavors. In other words, even though the most important parts of society, that makes us human and life worth living comes from what is not necessary, but without most people focusing on keeping the economy going and maintaining basic infrastructure, the former would not even be possible.

11.6.3 Value of New Ideas

New Concepts of Freedom

But another great idea that came from Europe or was developed by Europeans primarily is the concept of personal freedoms, both as a legal concept and as well as a social endeavor. While in contrast to the cultural sophistication of Asia, Europe appears very simple and barbaric, the freedom to express yourself, without conforming to any tradition is uniquely European in origin.

The Asian Burden

One of the things that has increased my stress recently has been trying to think exclusively from an Asian perspective. I think one of the downsides of such a vast wealth of truly inspiring cultural

traditions, that the desire to emulate these traditions causes undo stress. Sometimes I want to just write a poem or draw a picture and I shouldn't feel it needs to conform to some traditional expression of some profound concept.

11.6.4 Combining the Two

Living a Balanced life

A life that is obsessed with the study of ethics and discipline is not a very balanced life. There needs to be a place for relaxation and enjoyment of life experiences and we need to keep ourselves firmly in the here and now. One of the ways to get relief from the focus on self improvement is by doing things that do not require thought. And both can strengthen each other. Often I get my best insights when doing something mundane like copying files, listening to music, watching a movie, or riding the bus. And I when I feel good mentally then I am able to be more positive and useful in my writing.

The Best of Both Worlds

I think it would be great if both East and West could learn from each other and I look forward to a day, when most people are willing to takes the best from every culture and not feel that they need to choose between important ideas, even if they are only paradoxically related. It is in the embracing of the paradox of living in a physical world, consumed with an overflowing of our emotions and in the simple daily tasks we do, to keep our bodies and minds strong, while still being aware of a bigger spiritual world that we also take part in, through our interactions with each other and knowing, that the basis for our sense of purpose and direction, in our lives can only be understood spiritually.

11.7 Technological Progress

Many people are afraid, that everyone will eventually be so focused on technology, that they will end up not having an human contact. But that is not the direction that things are going. Instead of people serving computers, now computers are serving people.

11.7.1 New Priorities

Mobility and Simplicity

One of the biggest changes, in how people use computers and what they expect of them, is the focus on mobility, being the most important requirement, in designing new products. The other big change in computing is the willingness of the average end user, to spend lots of time getting things set up, on their computer, doing computer maintenance, and needing to repair things, that break down over time. The web is changing in the direction of not making the user have to think, to navigate the website.

Reliability over Function

People are not getting more interested and obsessed about how technology works, but rather are losing patience with it taking up so much of their time. To sum this up, computers are becoming mainstream for consumers and people's needs are more simple than the developers think, and they are more interested in improving the way they do things, than what they can do or how it is done. Sometimes the process is more important than the outcome and sometimes the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

11.7.2 Current Trends

New Technologies

Think of the big hit technologies of the past few years, like the new Apple mobile devices, or the Nintendo Wii and other game consoles. People have even tried using the web, to keep in contact with their friends and family, that live far away. Twitter and Facebook have become as important as Google. People used to have fun looking up things, that they heard, that they did not know much about, or enjoyed just surfing the net and following links, but today they are more interested in finding a restaurant, or directions to the nearest movie theater. Google now focuses on giving relevant answers quicker and more directly, rather than making you do all the work. Technology is

changing, to improve people's ability, to engage with others socially.

Land Warrior: Finding Things Faster

There has also been a revolution in technologies used in combat. The Army and Marines are now rolling out into production a system called LandWarrior. It is designed, to allow instant communication, between every soldier, from private to general, instantly. One of the big things it helps soldier, on the ground, do is allow them, to get to the sites, where they have received intelligence about more quickly. This allows fewer soldiers, to be more successful and has helped turn the tide of the war, in Iraq.

Land Warrior: Being Aware of Its Limits

One of the ways, in which this helps soldiers is to give them real time maps, for their navigation. In the past, they had to consult a map and compass, to navigate, but now all they have to do is look in the eyepiece, of their squad leaders computer, and they know instantly where they are. At first, the soldiers would constantly have their eyepiece down, but found out soon, that they only needed to consult it, from time to time. Just as soldiers are finding a way, to make technology serve them, instead of being run around by it, so the consumer is becoming empowered, to use technologies, to improve their lives, instead of the computers wasting their time and making them less productive.

11.7.3 Future Trends

Sci Fi Tech

When you see how computers are used in futuristic Sci Fi films like Star Trek, most the devices they use are simple and small and they only have one traditional computer, in the form of a mainframe, for the ship. The devices they use, that they carry with them, are thin and light and are designed for the most common uses and do not try to do everything every specialist would need, in rare occasions. They have a tablet style computer for writing and reading, a sensor about the size of a smartphone, and specialized devices for things like sensing life and doing medical procedures.

A Generational Thing

While my parents generation see computers as a novelty and are so surprised, with what they are able to do and so intimidated by how they work (their complexity) and my generation is most experienced, with getting things to work for them and has little confidence, in relying upon them, to get work done, the next generation is taking technology, as a given, and are comfortable enough with it, to see it as a tool and nothing more. Just like when phones were invented and many were upset, that people would stop visiting each other, in person, or when VCRs came out the movie industry thought they would never get anyone, to go to a movie theater, so we will find the most useful role, for computers, in our lives and will stop allowing them to be some sort of mysterious and feared monster.

11.8 The Apocalypse

11.8.1 Making Predictions

What Christians Think

Many of the most prominent and influential Christian leaders have thought that we are very close to the End of Times and the Apocalypse. There are several reasons for this. One reason is that there is a certain number of years between the major events in biblical history and the year 2000 timeframe gives the same amount of time between Christ's death and His return. Another reason is that technologies are available now, that would allow people to be able to destroy, on the scale described in Biblical prophecy about the End of Times. The third major reason is the return of Jewish people to Israel and the establishment of a Jewish nation, which was prophesied to happen before Christ's return. The fourth major reason is that we are getting close to bringing the gospel to all the nations on the earth. The fifth reason is because of all the wars going on in the Middle East, where Armageddon is supposed to happen.

Every Prediction was Wrong

This belief in the eminent return of Christ has had profound impact on the focus of Christian efforts. Because so many Christians believe God is coming back so soon, they are not going to invest time in bringing social justice and the relief of suffering to the masses. But this generation is no more likely to be the End of Times than any other time in history. Biblical scholars have all been wrong in their predictions of the End of Times and this is because that Biblical prophecy is very cryptic about when this will happen, just like how people were surprised about the first coming of Jesus.

11.8.2 God will Help Us

God is in Control

Many people think that the devil is planning the apocalypse and we are waiting for him to decide what time, but this is not biblical. God is in control of history and the Apocalypse and the reason why World War II, Napoleon's empire, or the Cold War did not end up being Armageddon is because God said no, even though the devil wanted it to happen then. In fact, the cryptic nature of the prophecy about the Apocalypse was designed not only to keep Christians on their toes and motivate them to do what is right and spread the gospel, but it was also designed so that the angels, including the fallen ones, could not predict the time either. We continue to try to put our preconceptions about reality on God, and we do not see His plans, because we are too focused on worldly endeavors, like politics and business.

We Know Very little

Jesus could come back today or even a hundred thousand years in the future. In fact, when it happens we will likely not even see it, until the end of the first half of the seven year Tribulation. Also, from God's perspective, a day is the same as a thousand years, so the time could be very different than we have guessed, from the prophecy in the book of Daniel. We don't even know whether or not Christians will be in the world during the Tribulation or how to reconcile the battle of Armageddon, which is the last battle, with the battle that seems to follow it, called Gog and Magog.

No Reason to Worry

There is no reason to worry when we know so little about it. God has always been with us and provided us a way to cope with everything, that we have had to deal with, and He will do the same in this situation. The fact is God intervenes supernaturals almost constantly, so we do not need to fear any situation. We should focus on improving our own lives and stop worrying about things we have no control over.

Trust in God

God cares about humans, even though we have done nothing to deserve it, and we are in control of our destiny. We can make choices that make our lives better or worse. We were born into different situations, which we have no control over, but worrying doesn't solve anything. We need to accept the things we cannot change and change the things we can. Besides, what would knowing about the future now help you to deal with it? If there was some way to prepare for it, don't you think God would give us that information. We often cause more worry from fear beforehand than we suffer from the situation we fear.

11.9 Peak Oil Worries

11.9.1 Moderating Factors

Not like the Dark Ages

Many people now worry about, when we run out of oil, how our country will be affected. I had at one time compared what could happen, in the worst case scenario, as similar to the end of the Roman Empire and the beginning of the Dark Ages. There are also many reason why this situation, although very traumatic and serious, will end up being much easier to deal with.

Preservation of Information

The Internet may be the poster child of what is wrong with out society, but it has allowed us to

gather supplies, from the far reaches of the world and preserve books, in many different locations. One of the big things that allowed the Industrial Revolution was the invention of a more effective plow. All the secrets to doing well, without oil, are already in books and they will still be here, if and when modern society falls apart.

It will Happen Slowly

Not only will we avoid a lot of the really bad possibilities, due to the preservation of information, but the shock will not be there, because at this point, if things fell apart, it will happen very slowly. The most dangerous and devastating effects of a break down of the world economy is not the lack of modern conveniences, but, rather the violence and disorder caused by the rapid change. The federal government has a plan to deal with these things, and it looks like bailing out the banks was one of the best ways to start.

11.9.2 Advantages

Violence will Decrease

Another thing that we worry about is that we think society will break down and there will be no political or social order. One of the things that will help deal with a lack of law enforcement is the number of people with guns. Once one person steals something, from another person, after they get shot, the violence will stop suddenly.

No More Red Tape

The biggest reason why people commit crimes is that they think they will not be caught, and one of the big factors that helps them with this is the red tape, of the modern legal system. The beauty of having no official police means that we don't have the problems of a bureaucratic government and we don't have to convince anyone else of what happened or prove it. In Saudi Arabia, they cut off your right hand if you steal, as the left hand is the hand use to wipe your butt, and there are very few robberies there anymore.

Increasing Church Involvement

Another real benefit of this kind of situation is that church attendance will skyrocket and it will be much easier to meet people and form long term relationships. Churches will be a great way to organize and form communities, around those who survive. The Church was the major center of civilization, during the Middle Ages, in Europe, and will likely rise to prominence again in this kind of situation.

We will Be Healthier

This will have a moralizing influence upon the entire population. Many of our addictions to video games, junk food, the Internet, and sex will die down, as they will be hard to maintain, in this situation. Most people, who depend on modern medications, will become healthy enough, so that they will no longer need those medications. And the polluted environment will finally have time to heal and future generations will live better lives, the sooner this happens.

11.9.3 Likelihood of this Situation

Somewhere in the Middle

The most likely thing to happen is some situation in between, where we are now, and the complete breakdown of modern life. We will likely have more disasters, both man-made and natural, in most parts of the world. The US will fare the best, compared to the rest of the world, from the more violent weather, caused by global warming.

American Future is Bright

We may not still be one nation, and we will we have a vastly different culture, but whoever lives in America as our descendants will do well, in almost any likely situation. The only conceivable event, that could destroy America, would be a once in a million years asteroid hit or a once in ten thousand years event, like the eruption of a super volcano.

11.10 Worst Case Scenario

11.10.1 First Obstacles

Full Scale Invasion of the US

One of the things, that scares Americans, in a Worst Case Scenario, is an invasion by China or Russia. Some might think this could be a possibility, if things get bad enough, in our struggle for limited oil, that we decide not to honor our debts, or some other hypothetical situation might happen, so that things get out of control, to the point, where our leaders feel they have no other choices. We can piece together what would happen, if we look at situations, that involved some of these factors, that have happened at other times and places in history and the unique combination factors specific to the US, including: our geography, our demographics, our military readiness, and our willingness to accept loss.

Our Military Strength

Some people might think that a country as large and advanced as China or Russia could take us on and have a chance at winning. The biggest thing that protects America is that we are an ocean away from our major enemies and rivals. Even Hitler wasn't able to reach as far as America during World War II. It is certainly possible, with current technologies, but it is more expensive and slows things down significantly. If our enemies get that far, other factors will hold them back. The first is that our military is the best in the world and is 25 years ahead of the rest of the world, in things like stealth. Even the latest Russian technologies are not as reliable or have the same abilities in key areas, that would allow fewer US tanks, helicopters, aircraft, and ships to inflict as much damage as their opponents.

11.10.2 Secondary Obstacles

Special Forces and Intelligence

Another major factor, if we don't count in the conventional military, is that there are other agencies that would step in. We have very large army of intelligence agents and special forces, which could even, just by themselves, make the war so bloody, that there would be somewhere like 90% casualties. Think of what the success of a tiny group of terrorists can be when they target us. The intelligence agents and special forces use similar tactics, but are much better trained, much better armed, there are many more of them, and they have better intelligence, than those they are fighting against. They have been through training, that makes this kind of situation, as easy to operate in, as it does for a kid playing paintball.

More Sources of Weapons

You also have to figure that the US military has a whole range of technologies, that are unknown, to the rest of the world, but we are ready to use, if we needed them. We had laser guided weapons and night vision battlefield ready in the Vietnam War and we had a whole fleet of stealth fighter/bombers ready to go, when we bombed Libya in 1985. Another thing to consider is that in many rural areas of the United States, the local population is often armed to the teeth already. In many rural states it is legal to have fully automatic military-style assault rifles, and that right is exercised, by a large number of people. Many people have enough ammunition rounds, to last 20 years of war. Our Department of Defense has already planned and prepared, for every possible scenario, including this one.

11.10.3 Final Obstacles

Weapons of Mass Destruction

And as for weapons of mass destruction, we have them too in as large or larger quantities, so that we can drop the same stuff on them. Also, it is not possible to destroy all the nukes of ones

side, because we have nuclear powered submarines with nuclear weapons. No one knows exactly where they are, except the captain on the ship, those missiles can reach anywhere in the world, and they can survive for years, without any more fuel and only need to briefly rise up, to get food, every 6 months. Even if we had a full nuclear war, with a major nuclear power like Russia or China, most people would survive, if they build a simple shelter in their houses. The kind of nuclear bombs, that would be dropped currently would be very small and targeted, because destroying the entire country's infrastructure makes the land gained much less valuable.

We Won Last Time

If the US were invaded, we would have instant unity, between the most fundamentalist Christians and the most extreme feminists. The last time we fought a major world power on US soil, during the Revolutionary War and War of 1812, we won. It is true that the end of the Revolutionary War was a stalemate and the British decided it wasn't worth it, but it doesn't matter how you win a war. The British were the biggest military power at the time and the US was just becoming a nation. In Vietnam, the communists never won a battle against the US and were technically losing the war, yet the US was forced to leave and the communists are still in power, decades later.

Final Limiting Factors

Having a much bigger army does not mean that you will win, even if you have technology that is almost as good. This was proven in a number of wars, when Arab armies fought against Israel. Also you have to consider that even the Soviet Union was forced out of Afghanistan because of public opinion even, with no free press. Another factor is that we would likely be able to arm and train resistance in China or Russia and take the war home to them and could quite possibly break down the public order in their countries.

Chapter 12

How to Respond

by Ben Huot

12.1 Stop Getting Mad

12.1.1 Why They Hate America

Unpredictability

One of the things that makes people hostile to America is not that we are worse than any other empire or even that we are not really promoting democracy and equality, but that we are more than any other thing terribly inconsistent and unpredictable. Many nations are also unstable, but they don't have the most powerful military in the world, in addition to being a very globally aggressive country. People don't know whether the US is going to be involved in the Middle East, support Israel or the Palestinians, is fighting terrorism or Islamic fundamentalism, is going to intervene to prevent unstable regimes from getting nuclear weapons, is going to be a friend or foe of Russia, is going to support or undermine communist China, or is going to work through the UN or going to fight wars unilaterally.

Naïve Americans

As I said before, many Americans are very naïve about global politics. One of the things that Americans don't understand is that all the problems we are experiencing in the Middle East are not our fault and existed long before America was even a British colony. Another thing we don't seem to understand is what we call democracy the rest of the world calls Imperialism.

Find Out Why

We don't really understand that not every country has a political will and infrastructure, and military and economic base to support a liberal democracy like ours. When getting involved in things we have little knowledge about, we need to find out why those who made the decisions, that they did, in the past, before we make a major change in our approach. This is certainly true of not only politics, but also true of almost any situation.

12.1.2 Lose-Lose Situation

We Lose

When we don't have the patience, or the will, to stay in a country, for a thousand years or more, before we overthrow a government, we need to find supporters, in the region, that can stay in power, when we leave. It is not in the interests of either the United States nor the local population in having democracies in the Middle East outside of Israel. The reason why the US doesn't want more democracies in the Middle East and has helped support dictators like those running Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and formerly in Iraq is that we know that the local populations would vote in terrorists as their leaders, if given the chance to vote.

They Lose

The US and Saudi Arabia want to smooth over this reality and not emphasize this situation, as it makes things difficult, for both our countries, if it is announced on the nightly news. Right after the World Trade Center was bombed on 9/11, the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were celebrating in the public streets. Osama bin Laden is revered as a hero in the Muslim world. The Palestinians voted in the Hamas terrorist organization into power in the Gaza Strip. When we invaded Iraq, and the Shiites grabbed power in Iraq, the few Christians still in Iraq suffered worse under them, than under Saddam Hussein. And people think that Bush was loyal to Christians.

12.1.3 Money is Power

Money=Politics

The reason why the people in the Middle East don't want democracy is that it is just another word for imperialism. We say democracy, but what we mean is capitalism. American democracy means more of their kids are getting addicted to MacDonalld's restaurants and Playboy magazines, in the middle of the holy city of Mecca. We think of ourselves as so different from the colonial powers, but we were allied with all of them and helped them keep their empires, before they lost them, over the

last 50 years. The exact same oil companies, that controlled Iraqi oil, when the British owned Iraq are the same ones that control it now. Like any addiction, just because someone indulges in it doesn't mean they want their kids doing the same, or even wants to keep being controlled by it.

Money Runs the Media

American entertainment culture, the media, and the marketing departments of the major multinational brands have the power they do, because they have got people all over the world addicted to their products. Do you really think that you are saving money, by having advertising pay for your TV and newspapers? Do you think that even though the only legal responsibility of a CEO is to make as much money, for its shareholders as possible is going to sacrifice profit, to help the environment or to be non-partisan, in their news reports?

12.1.4 Recognizing the Problem

Cost of Advertising

Do you really think that newspapers are not a business, like every other and that they are run and controlled, by those who pay their salaries, meaning the advertisers? It would be much cheaper for us to buy our media, than support it with advertising. The only reason why companies are willing to give away free entertainment or news is because they know that you and your children will spend more money on their products, than you would spend paying, for the free Cable programming.

Keeping Kids Safe

Just like you don't want your children's values destroyed, by their exposure to sex and violence, so parents of those in the Middle East don't want their children exposed, to this same American culture. When American tanks role in, shortly behind them come Coca-Cola, Disney, Playboy, Time Warner, Nike, Mac Donalds, Walmart, MTV, and all the other top multinational corporations start appearing next to mosques and holy sites. When Muslim men see how typical American women on movies dress and behave, the rights of women in the Middle East go backwards about a thousand years. We like to think that you can separate money from politics, but it doesn't matter what you

think, because they all own your souls and so you will think whatever the advertisers on the American media tell you to believe.

Unequal Politics

Do you think that the current conservative-liberal political divide in America was not invented by mass media corporations? Isn't it surprising that liberals are elected, when the economy goes bad and bail out corporations and that conservatives get in power, when the economy is going well and remove all rules for corporations and give them the seed money, to gamble away, and this money on both situations comes from middle and working class Americans? Why is it that you can steal the retirements of millions of people and not go to jail, but if you rob a convenience store, you serve big time in prison? Why is it that most people who are in prison are poor and most convictions are from plea bargains?

12.1.5 The Solution

Divide and Conquer

The way to beat this thing is to stop watching the news. The way we are manipulated, by the big corporations, is when we get mad at what happens, in politics. Why aren't moral liberals and moral conservatives on the same side? Why aren't social liberals and fiscal conservatives on the same side? Did you know the best way to destroy a country is by siding with one local group and against the other one and then the remaining ally is slowly exterminated?

Stop Getting Mad

Let stop trying to change others minds and start focusing on liberating our own souls. If something happens in the world, that you need to know, they will stop the TV and the radio and break into tour shows or games to announce it. And after you have been watching the news for a while, you will realize it is a waste of your time, because nothing ever changes, year after year.

12.2 Everything is Useful

As it says in Ecclesiastes there is a time for everything and every skill and every person has a place of value.

12.2.1 For Individuals

Personality Traits

Some of the personality characteristics, that are considered to be negative, have a positive side and vice versa. The same people, who make good leaders and can be depended on, for their strength of character can also have problems with anger and have control issues. People who are moody and perfectionists often have surprising abilities like passion, perseverance, and commitment to a project. People who always make jokes and are silly can be very encouraging and optimistic, in situations, where others would break down.

Useful Skills

Some of the things that are valued the least are sometimes the most necessary and useful, depending on the situation. A manager may not have what is considered practical skills, when it comes to building something, but they will prove to be useful, when you need to organize people and solve relationship problems. A computer programmer may not seem important in a survival situation, when electronics break down, but they might be able to use these skills, to solve engineering problems. An engineer may look down on a machinist, but they may need to work together, to complete the building of a machine.

The Most Important

The most important jobs in society are farmer, sanitation worker, truck driver, and the people who maintain the power lines and the pipes that bring us water and electricity. The first thing that needs to be cut in a difficult situation is often the person at the top, rather than the workers. We may not need many people with farming knowledge right now, but if our technology fails, we need

to know how to make a plow.

12.2.2 For Society

Don't Cut Taxes Now

Many people may feel that the police are a waste of money, or that they don't need hospitals, because of their good health. But even when things you don't use yourself stop working, the systems around you, that you do depend on, cease to function properly, when even an unrelated service is interrupted. Just like people who use computers don't need to worry about the technical details, when things break down, you need someone who does have this knowledge. People often want to save money, by not buying insurance, but then are surprised that the police usually don't recover stolen items. People rarely value janitors, until there is a sewage leak and things need to be sanitized.

Every Service is Essential

This is the situation we are in now, where businesses and government decide to cut non-essential services, when the economy goes bad. But the problem is that most government services are necessary and are often preventative measures, that are only visibly necessary, when they are stopped. And they are often more expensive and may take considerable time to restart them. Just like when you are on certain psychological medicines and then you feel better and stop taking them, by the time you then realize what they were doing for you, it makes it that much harder, to restore yourself to your previous state.

The Downside of Efficiency

What makes our society so easy to break down is that people are just doing enough, to keep things going, when everything works fine, so that money is saved and the system is as efficient as it can be. The problem with pursuing efficiency is that your infrastructure becomes brittle, when it does not have fallback support and extra insulation, to protect from those unusual times, when society needs more than is expected or something else fails. When I was in the military, many things

were starting to be done by computers, which had previously been done manually, and I remember many of the NCOs were concerned about relying on computers, because everybody know that computer break, when they are needed most.

Everything Fails

When building and maintaining infrastructure and basic government services, we need to plan and expect things to fail and develop solutions, that need to be maintained, for when things inevitably fail. Just because it is unlikely that most cities other than New York City, Washington D.C., and Los Angeles will be attacked by a terrorist, the severity of the possible damage makes it worthwhile to plan, for this possibility, in every major city.

Preparing for the Unlikely

There are many things that can be done, to prepare us, for things, that are very rare, like asteroid impacts, super volcanoes, or natural disasters, in areas where they were not expected, but they require a tremendous investment, which only pays itself off, when you end up not having to spend as much money, to rebuild after the disasters. New York city doesn't get hurricanes very often, but when it does the glass used in most skyscrapers cannot withstand even minor hurricane winds, and so this would cause enormous loss of life, injuries, and damage, if people are unwilling to invest the money, to replace them with stronger glass.

12.2.3 What You Can Do

Necessities Not Glamorous

Just like the news reporters focus on cars chases and fires, because they look exciting on film, so society seems to want to focus on spending money on exciting things and often decides to pass on the necessary, but unglamorous things. This is one of the reasons why it is good to have survival supplies in place, before disaster strikes. Even in areas that are hurricane prone, most people wait until the last minute to buy supplies and the stores empty in a matter of hours of everything.

Don't Procrastinate

We always see on movies about the elite military and government agencies, that are tasked with preventing catastrophic events, like nuclear wars, that they wait until the very last second, to prevent the disaster. If the Department of Defense really did everything at the very last possible moment, it would continue to run into times, where they had a delay and we would be living in a post apocalypse world tomorrow.

Prepare Now

Everything is necessary, at a time, when you don't think you will need it. Always prepare for the unforeseen events, that are going to happen, at any time. The time to prepare, for living without an income, or outside help and without basic services, like modern plumbing and electricity is now. If you wait until it happens, it will already be too late. There is a reason why the kids you called nerds, in high school you call boss, later on in life. Responsibility and preparation pay off.

12.3 Affecting Change

12.3.1 Learning Helpful Concepts

Memories and Attitude

Just as life is more than choices, ethics is more than how you treat others. The most important things in life our are our memories and our attitude. This means that we need to focus first on our own lives and find peace and joy within who we are and what we do with our time, before we can expect to have fulfilling relationships with others. God comes first, but your family comes before your community or your country. It is better to be family man than a patriot.

Realistic Ambitions

One of the reasons we get to the point, where we have no more energy and are completely without hope, is that we are unwilling, to scale back our ambitions, to what is realistic. Having more

power gives you no more influence, as you sacrifice the degree of influence you have, by extending how the number of people you influence. Who influences your child more: you or the President? When we look to expand our lives into new frontiers, the largest frontier is the human heart.

Mind Body Connection

We often see reason and emotions and mind and body as being opposing forces in our lives, but everything in our lives influences everything else in our lives. Having good self esteem can help you be more rational and getting enough sleep increases your spiritual health. Just as the people, who have the most important jobs are often the least powerful, so aspects of ourselves that we take for granted are the key to our complete health.

Stop Doing

When we think that changing our lives involves buying something or joining something, maybe the answer is to cut back and do less. We often think to transform our mind, that we need to read books, but maybe the answers to our problems are not intellectual. Sometimes taking a nap or watching a movie can give you a better insight, just because you allowed yourself time to think.

12.3.2 Starting with Ourselves

Changing Our Own Minds

We spend so much time increasing our resumes and our relationships with others, that we often forget about how important our own well being is, in creating a better life. To change the world we need to first change our own mind. The most important factor in our growth as a complete person is often a series of experiences over a long period of time. Sometimes being a man of action requires a person to first be a thinking person, in order for the actions to be beneficial.

Time to Think

We spend too much time worrying and too little time allowing our mind enough rest, to work through all possible solutions. Getting enough sleep can be more important than psychological

therapy. The way to improve our lives lies less in what we do and more in how we think about it. Having a job you do not like, while having a lot of free time may be better than enjoying your job, but not having a break from it.

Attitude Trumps Action

Instead of sending more money to the United Way, you may affect greater change by volunteering in your community. Sometimes we are so focused on the tangible influences like sending letters and canvassing door to door, that we don't realize that way we make members of our families feel when we talk to them. There is more to charity than how many people you help.

Thinking for Ourselves

When we learn new things about ourselves, we often focus on acquiring knowledge and forget that we need to spend time thinking and this second part is the more important, in our emotional growth. Stopping doing something harmful to yourself can be more useful for your self improvement than doing more to help others. When we only spend time on how others perceive us our relationships will become more shallow and less meaningful to our lives.

12.4 Learning to Say No

12.4.1 Total Situations

Definition

I have narrowed down the precise reason why I am so intense and serious. I got so serious because of my total experiences. A total situation or experience is where you are in a situation where: you do not want to be there, you have no power or choice over what happens to you, you cannot leave no matter how much pain you are in or how scared you are, you are in the situation 24 hours a day, there is no break or relief, and other people are the ones who make all your decisions for you.

My Situations

Most people never have this kind of experience, but, if you do, it will change you profoundly. My total situations include: my time in the military, being in the gas chamber during basic training, my stay in the psychiatric ward of a private hospital, when I lived in a group home, and when I lived in a retirement home. You can never really appreciate your freedom and having legal rights, until they are taken away from you.

Psychological Impact

I think these experiences made me feel like I didn't have any control over my life, so it drove me to continue to work hard, to create something that I did have control over. It was hard, for me, to take breaks, because I found that I was able to deal with my total situations, by focusing my whole self on something else and taking a break made it harder, to keep my mind off my situation. I think setting limits on myself will be empowering and help me feel more in control, even though it is me that is making the decisions, because I am not really in control, when I have an addiction to work.

Truth in Experiences

Just like when I ran, I didn't focus on running, but rather thought of other things, because I found running to be boring and painful, and I used the same strategy in these total situations. This desire to be in control of my own destiny also made me appreciate being an adult and being able, to make my own decisions, over how I spend my money and my time. I remember during basic training, I was happiest when I was running, because the drill sergeants finally stopped yelling at me and gave me some space during that time, probably because I was fast enough, by their standards, so that they had little to say.

12.4.2 Limits

Everyone has Limits

When people asked for my help in the past, I felt that I should always help, but I am finally ok with

saying no. Everyone and everything has its limits. When I was living in a retirement home in my mid twenties, everyone thought that I worked there and constantly came to me for help. Anything I would do for them was basically pointless as their memory only lasted for about 5 minutes. I think that the CNAs on staff at night may have been tempted to just not give the residents pain medicine or help them with whatever problem they had, because they would ask again 5 minutes later no matter what you did.

Limits Improve Relationships

When giving money to people, either homeless or not, the people you are helping tell others and continue to ask, and become increasingly aggressive, until you finally say no. It is not good to loan money to most people or even give someone money to buy something for you. I remember that one of the guys living in my quad, while I was in advanced training, in the military, I gave him money to buy me some boots, when he went to help the drill sergeants trade in the clothes, that we were issued during basic training, if they did not fit. He never bought the boots and never returned the money and it ruined our friendship.

12.4.3 Humility Requires Weakness

Pace Yourself

Everyone has his limits even Jesus and his Disciples left the crowds, they were ministering to, on occasion. If you allow people to push you too far, then you will end up resenting them and your attitude will be so bad, that it would be better to do less and be positive about it. Everyone needs time to rest and recover. You cannot just do good deeds continually, without pacing yourself, or you will give up and become bitter. It takes a tremendous amount of discipline to stop helping, when your focus is entirely on getting things done.

Be Patient with the Process

Life is a process and not an outcome. Service only needs to be one part of your walk with God. If it becomes the focus, then you will destroy yourself eventually. To grow spiritually, we need have

the patience, to allow God to work with us and ask for other people to help us. We are not islands and we cannot just go into a cave and meditate non-stop. We need to balance our service with rest, fellowship, worship, and prayer.

It's Ok to Have Needs

This idea that we can be happy, if only we had more discipline, is a very destructive and biblically wrong attitude, that many people in churches perpetuate. It is ok to be weak and to need others and God. This is what being humble is all about. Our life as a Christian needs to meet our needs, as much as we need to meet the needs of others. You can only be spiritually strong, when you are emotionally and physically rested and balanced. Before you can be of use for others, you need to strengthen your own body and mind.

12.5 Little Things Matter

12.5.1 We Worry Too Much

When people want to change the world, they often set their sights too high. Then, when they inevitably discover, that the world is the way it is, for a reason and powerful people actually want it to be the way it is, they realize that things are not so easy to change. I think many also find some exciting new theory, which they think will cause a revolution and have a hard time being able to embrace a more subtle and complex worldview. Most people are afraid of and hate change and with change there is always a risk of things getting worse. But nowadays Americans are so beaten down, by current problems, that we have trouble seeing the big picture.

12.5.2 Assault on Christianity

Focused Attack

American Christians are even more worried about the future. They believe that people will find the church irrelevant in these times. Christians have taken a beating, for the last 300 years or more, from all directions, in academia. These ideas are not coming, from individual people and it is not a

coincidence, that so many people were coming up, with such a well thought out plan, to destroy faith in Christ. This was a spiritual battle, that played out in academia. I think one of the reasons why academia was chosen was because the Church, in all its original sects, including the Latin, Greek, Syriac, and even modern Protestant based Christian churches were all very committed to education. The Church became the center of learning, everywhere it existed.

Ok to Bash Christians

It seems that the only acceptable prejudice is to denigrate the Bible and Christians. People who pride themselves on being rational and objective, use entirely emotion-based reasons, which based on their personal experiences, to make Christians seem as backwards and irrational as possible. Academics have gone to such great lengths, to make it sound like Christians have caused all the problems in this world, that anyone coming from another planet would think our intellectuals were not very bright or logical.

Being the Scapegoat

Some of these often repeated messages are factually and historically plain wrong. As I have said a number of times, Rome is not the original church, is not true to the theology of the early church, and European civilization is based on the Enlightenment and on the Greek and Roman classics and has nothing to do with Christianity. Most Christians are not white and that was true throughout most of Christian history and European and American leaders have not ever followed the Bible, especially not for the last hundred years. Europe did not reject Christianity, because it caused world problems, but rather Europe caused world problems, because they rejected Christianity.

Factually Wrong

Christianity was not bad for the environment either – the Bible says that humans are responsible for taking care of the environment and the prophets talk about environmental disasters, in the future, that were caused by sin. It never says anywhere in the Bible that the world is flat, that the earth is the center of the universe, or anything racist. These things all came from ancient Greek thinkers. Christ was never in India, nor is what Jesus said based on Indian or Chinese belief systems. Isaiah gave a complete and accurate prediction about Christ before Buddha, Lao Tzu, Confucius, or

Socrates was born. Most of the major Indian religious, cultural, and literary writings were written down well after Christ was born.

Christianity Won Anyway

But despite all these denigrations of the Bible, Christians, and Christian theology, more people are Christians today than ever before. Pentecostalism and Catholicism are successful international phenomena, that are popular across at least 3 major continents, with very few white people. Christians outnumber Muslims 2 to 1, in the third world and most of the areas with mostly muslim populations converted hundreds of years ago. Christianity only arrived in most parts of Africa and the Orient a hundred years ago and the practices and beliefs of Catholic church in Latin America, for hundreds of years now, is only superficially Christian. And most Africans were converted by other Africans.

12.5.3 Spiritual Battle

Finding Small Solutions

So many Christians and Americans in general are worried about the future and at the same time have no big solutions, nor the power to change things, nor even to have our voices heard. But little acts of kindness, manners, and civility make a big difference. We often feel we are not making a difference, because we do not count everything we do, like the small things, like holding open doors, for other people, or saying thank you. Most of the big political events in history are the result of spiritual warfare and are only one part of the picture. The most important battle goes on in our own minds. The attitude with which we do our work is more of a witness than a televangelist giving a sermon, to hundred million people.

Ok to Be Emotional and Weak

The big reason why many people do not become Christian, or drop out of the church, or the faith is not because they do not believe in the Bible, or find it important in their lives, but that Christians are so negative and unrealistic about what they expect of their members. We can make a difference

in the world today with very humble acts, that we may never see the results of. No one is going to thank the person, that was the final straw, that led them to Christ. We have to realize that Christianity is not a science and we need to understand how God works and His power through faith. Faith can only exist, when you have no sufficient rational explanation for something.

Focus on Relationships

Having a relationship with someone is more powerful than sending lots of money to charities. People are much more influenced, by their friends, than their political or church leaders. It takes time and patience, to really make a difference in someone's life and there are no shortcuts, to real spiritual and emotional growth. It is worth our whole lives, to save just one person, or improve just one person's life. Individual people coming to faith in Christ are more important than which party controls congress or our nation's foreign policy. A few Christians praying together affect more change than all the political leaders in the world.

See with Faith

Stop seeing with your eyes and hearing with your ears. Dream bigger than saving the world. Save yourself and your family. That is the greatest achievement. Stop limiting yourself to the physical world and the rational reasons for your situation. We can only see what really matters through faith and God prefers to work, through people, who have no power and no abilities, so that He gets the credit. We never have to deal with things alone and God wants to fight the battle for us, if only we would open our hearts to Him.

Chapter 13

Bible Verses about Rest and Peace

by Ben Huot

13.1 Before Psalms

And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.

47

13.2 Psalms

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

48

What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. His soul shall dwell at ease, and his seed shall inherit the earth.

49

The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.

50

Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming. The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation. Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous. The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever. They

47Exodus 33:14

48Psalm 4:1

49Psalm 25:12-13

50Psalm 29:11

shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away. The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth. For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off. The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand. I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed. Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore. For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever. The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment. The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide. The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged. Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it. I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.

51

Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

52

I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.

53

Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

54

They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for

51Psalm 37

52Psalm73:25-26

53Psalm 85:8

54Psalm 119:165

ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever. For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity. Do good, O LORD, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts. As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity; but peace shall be upon Israel.

55

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her. The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens. By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew. My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion: So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck. Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble. When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.

56

13.3 Isaiah

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

57

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the

55Psalm 125:1-5

56Proverbs 3:13-24

57Isaiah 9:6

cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

58

And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

59

And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve,

60

And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it.

61

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength. For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust. The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of

58Isaiah 11:6-13

59Isaiah 12:1-2

60Isaiah 14:3

61Isaiah 25:7-8

the needy. The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just. Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD. LORD, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them. LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.

62

And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly. The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful. For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. The instruments also of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right. But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand. Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech. Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women: for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come. Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones: strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins. They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city. Because the palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left; the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks; Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places;

63

O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.

64

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

65

Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

63Isaiah 32:2-18

64Isaiah 48:18

65Isaiah 53:5

Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee. Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness. But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore. Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make ye a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue? are ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood, Enflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree, slaying the children in the valleys under the clifts of the rocks? Among the smooth stones of the stream is thy portion; they, they are thy lot: even to them hast thou poured a drink offering, thou hast offered a meat offering. Should I receive comfort in these? Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set thy bed: even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice. Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrance: for thou hast discovered thyself to another than me, and art gone up; thou hast

66Isaiah 54:1-13

67Isaiah 55:2-12

enlarged thy bed, and made thee a covenant with them; thou lovedst their bed where thou sawest it. And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase thyself even unto hell. Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; yet saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved. And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid it to thy heart? have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not? I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee. When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee; but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take them: but he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain; And shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people. For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him.

68

Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

69

13.4 After Isaiah

Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.

70

Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for,

68Isaiah 57:1-19

69Isaiah 60:20

70Jeremiah 6:16

lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid.

71

Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth.

72

And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.

73

13.5 New Testament

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

74

And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

75

And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

76

71Jeremiah 30:10

72Jeremiah 33:6

73Ezekiel 34:25

74Matthew 11:29

75Mark 6:31-32

76Luke 1:76-79

Self Help Collection

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

77

He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

78

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

79

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

80

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

81

But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

82

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

83

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

84

And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of

77Luke 2:14

78John 7:38

79John 14:27

80John 16:33

81John 20:19

82Romans 2:10

83Romans 5:1

84Romans 8:6

them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

85

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

86

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

87

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

88

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

89

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

90

And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto

85Romans 10:15

86Romans 14:17

87Romans 15:13

88Galatians 5:22-23

89Ephesians 2:14-17

90Philippians 4:7-9

himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

91

John to the seven churches which are in Asia. Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

92

Part IV

More Insights and Inspiration

by Ben Huot

Chapter 14

Introduction

by Ben Huot

91Colossians 1:20

92Revelations 1:4-6

14.1 Politics, Religion, and Empathy

14.1.1 Empathy

Understanding the World

I have come to the conclusion in my 12 years of independent study that the two factors that are the most important to understand if you want to know why the world works the way it does are modern psychology (starting with Freud) and history (especially before 1500 and especially Asian). The key thing to understand about psychology is that most people's decisions are almost entirely emotional.

It is very dangerous to play on people's emotions in things like religion and politics, but it is the key to motivating large groups of people. The key to understanding history is to start from the very beginning and read as much, from original sources, as possible. Read Buddha's explanation of Buddhism, read about the Coptic church and the Syriac churches to understand Christianity. Then continue to follow the development, of the major belief systems, into the major modern branches.

Risking Empathy over Objectivity

The idea that unites both these endeavors is the concept of empathy. Empathy means understanding something, from another person's or group of people's point of view. Most people use the term objective, in their study of people and history, but saying you are objective is like saying you are perfect. Only God can be truly objective.

Instead of ignoring your emotions and others' emotions, embrace them. Feel what others feel. See things as other people see them. It is hard, because you have to not think about your beliefs at that time, but, at the same time, you still need to see with your heart, as you have to care and take a position. Too often students are afraid of having a controversial opinion, but forming an opinion helps you understand the situation much better, because you are forced to give adequate support, for your decision.

14.1.2 Creativity

Creativity and God

There is never just one solution to a problem. And being creative in your solutions will always be more effective than trying to make the most common and obvious move. One of the biggest reason why I continue to be interested in learning more about God and enjoy this pursuit is because God is not just perfect and perfectly objective but that God also feels as we do and is even more creative than the greatest thinkers.

Outmaneuvering His Enemies

God is very subtle and He often takes an approach that appears like He is giving up and forfeiting His success, to those who oppose them, but then ends up outmaneuvering them, because He sees and controls the greater picture. God always takes the hardest route, and allows the enemy a certain degree of success, because He really enjoys being creative and wants to show all His followers, that they need not fear any enemy, or any situation. Where His followers look outnumbered, He wants to grow their faith and surprise them, so that they learn to trust Him by their faith (or our lack of understanding), because of what He has done in the past.

God's Personality

God is always perfectly consistent and His personality is always the same. God always does what He promises and is in direct and complete control of everything that happens, could happen, or could be imagined, but He does so in His own way and in His own timeframe. God knows the future perfectly and has come up with a plan, for everything, that will happen and He follows it. But no one knows what it is now, anytime in the past, any time in the future, or in any different reality. Things are rarely as they appear and truth is much stranger than fiction.

14.1.3 History Lessons of God's Work

Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ

We can look at several major events in history to see how God has out maneuvered His enemies. The first major surprise, that we are all very aware of, is God coming to earth as Jesus Christ and allowing His enemies to kill Him, but then outmaneuvering them, by taking on the sins of the world, rising again from the dead, and defeating death and hell, in the process. His enemies were outmaneuvered, because they thought that Jesus would fight a political and military battle.

The Threat of Islam, Then Atheism

Many Christians are afraid of the growth and the power of Islam today, but the Islam was at its zenith of power, during the time of the Ottoman Empire. If Western Europe had not risen, to become world powers, at the time they did, then Christianity would likely have been wiped out in Europe. Then, as the enemies of God tried to push the entire world, into unbelief, in the last few hundred years, culminating in the Cold War, they focused too much on Europe and America, and at the same time, a much larger part of the world became Christians.

Total Reversal

In just a matter of about 20 years, the situation has turned totally around. Now Christians are afraid of people of other religions of becoming too religious. This is a major victory. Paganism is on the rise in the West, but this next generation has too little knowledge of Christianity, to share their parents rebellion from it, so they are equally interested, in other spiritual things, like Christianity. Christianity has had the most success, in recruiting people, from polytheistic faiths, than from any of the world religions. Most of those, who are willing to convert, are from these polytheistic religions, who already prefer Christianity to Islam.

Christ has Already Won

Islam may be growing and may be the religion of a billion people, but it took over 1,000 years to

happen and Christianity has grown to twice that size, in only the last 100 years. Christianity is still growing much faster and is considered more culturally relevant, to more people, than Islam. The ironic thing is that the enemies of God tried to convince people that Christianity was the religion of the rich and powerful and unbelief was the religion of the masses, but the poor masses chose Christianity when these rich and powerful rejected Christianity.

14.1.4 American Social Split

Bitter Division

In America, we seem to be culturally divided between an emotionally driven conservative movement and a rationally driven liberal movement. There are positives and negatives to both sides, but they seem so bitterly divided so that half the people in America hate the other half of Americans. Then our national foreign and domestic policies flip flop back and forth between 2 extremes after each elections, both presidential and congressional.

Religious Motivations

I think one of the big reasons for their animosity is that there are religious undercurrents that fuel a lot of the divisions. Both seem to only see the negative side of the other one. One of the reasons why I think so many Christians are so emotionally motivated is that many Christians are convinced they had to choose between Christianity and reason and they chose their religion.

Politically Correct

I think much of this goes back to the resentment that many Christians feel towards the education system which has pushed many anti-White, anti-Male, and anti-Christian points of view and so many white male Christians were not going to believe that they were wrong, because of how they were born, and were not going to give up their religion, so they just decided to reject the pursuit of education. We have this term politically correct, where the government claims that you can have any opinion you want, but really only want you to take their position. And they use the word objective, to describe this one politically correct government-sponsored opinion.

Finding Common Ground

Most Christians are social conservatives, in that they oppose the direction society is going, in legalizing many things, that were for most of history considered anti-social and deviant. I and many of my generation are fiscally liberal, in that we want people and animals in need, to be taken care of and, without government funding, these needs will not be met.

Win-Win Solution

Many Christians would be willing to support things like the environment or increased funding for the poor, if the same politicians adopted a more socially conservative point of view. Basically, two opposing groups can pick the things that they want most and compromise on the things that are not as important to them, then everybody gets something they want instead of one group winning and the other losing.

14.2 History and the Future

14.2.1 Religion and History

Religious Tolerance

In America today, we take for granted, that we have one of the most inclusive of religious beliefs historically. In the recent the past, even more religiously tolerant governments, like the Mongols only allowed certain religions. The major writing, that put weight behind tolerance, in modern Europe and America, was written by John Locke and, in his letter, he talked about the reason for tolerating religions, other than the dominant and government supported religion, of the country, but he did not extend this toleration, to those without a religion (atheists).

Patriotism=Faith

Throughout most of history, being patriotic and loyal to your country was the same thing as practicing the state approved religion. One of the reasons why the Church did some of the great

persecutions periodically was because of politics and not due to theology. During the last thousand years or so, Christians from different countries fought each other and politics and religion were intertwined.

Major Christian Churches

This is because each of the different original centers of Christianity were political, intellectual, economic, and linguistic rivals. Most had imperial support, after the first few hundred years of Christianity. The Eastern Orthodox (Greek) church was supported by the Byzantine Empire, the Nestorian and Jacobyte (Syriac) churches were supported by the Persian Empire, and the Roman Catholic (Latin) church was supported by the governments of Western Europe.

Success of Islam

The fighting, between the Persian and Byzantine empires and the persecution of the Syriac church allowed the Arabs, to take over the Middle East, all the way, from Spain, to India. The Christians living there (who were most of the population, for hundreds of years, before and afterwards) actually invited in the Arab armies, as they thought they would be treated better, than under the Byzantine Empire. And they were for hundreds of years. This changed history profoundly.

Islam as a Unifying Factor

This is what allowed Islam, to become a major world religion and, over many hundreds of years, Christianity shifted its center, from the Middle East, to Western Europe. One of the big reasons why it will continue, to be a capitol offense, to convert from Islam, to any other religion, in the Middle East is because just like the Afghan or the Scots, the Arabs are a tribally organized people with a common language. The thing that unifies the Arabic people is the Islamic religion. In other non-Arab Muslim-dominated countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan the country includes multiple ethnic groups and Islam also provides a unifying factor.

Latin Church as Unifying Factor

Christianity also served as a similar politically unifying force, in Western Europe, as Islam was, for

the Arabs. The Roman Empire adopted Christianity, because the emperor at that time believed, that the Christian God was more powerful, than the pagan gods and so believed he would win more battles, if he and his empire became Christian. The Germanic tribes eventually converted to Christianity, for similar reasons. The Roman Catholic Church was then the only institution, that survived the Dark Ages, after the fall of the Roman Empire, and was used to keep the royalty in power, until the French Revolution, when the government took all the money, from the Church, to fund Napoleon's war campaigns.

Paganism and Christianity

The Roman Empire and Greek and Roman culture were preserved, by the Latin Church, during the Medieval period. They are the basis, for modern European culture. The Roman Empire was not the biggest, or most important empire, of its time, even in the Old World and the city of Rome was a backwaters during that time, but Europeans glamorized it, because it was a successful empire run by a white racial group. It is ironic that the Church, that is so afraid of the New Age movement, voluntarily chose to synchronize itself with the pagan Greek and Roman philosophies, religions, and cultures. Some of the big sources of tension between Scientists and the Roman Catholic Church were not over Biblical doctrines, but came about as a side effect of the Latin church adopting pagan Greek and Roman views of the world.

Importance of Middle East

The big reason for the success of the Roman Empire and any other empire, that controlled the Middle East, was because the maritime technology of the time allowed easy navigation, of the Mediterranean, but was not able to allow navigation in an open ocean. Basically, there was some very important trade, that happened, between Europe and the Far East, including China, India, and Southeast Asia. The Middle East was the central point, in this trade, and those who transported these goods back and forth became very powerful and rich.

14.2.2 No Rules

Why Liberals are Progressives

Many people believe the conventional wisdom, that people get more conservative, as they get older, but when people get older, they change less and less. The reality is that society is going more and more in a liberal direction and has since the Renaissance, to as recent as the last 50 years, depending on what part of the world you are living in. The reason why liberals sometimes use the term progressive is because what is now considered liberal will be considered conservative in the future. Liberal is another word for change or “progress”.

The Slippery Slope

I think many of the changes, in the last generation or two, of American society are good, but I think several more generations, in the future, it will be taken too far. The big problem with being more and more liberal is not about being liberal fiscally but about being liberal socially. We now are making it acceptable for two men or two women to marry, which, I think, makes sense.

Many social conservatives see this as a slippery slope, where the sexual revolution goes so far, that certain things, that most people consider morally wrong sexually (even radical liberals) may become common place and socially acceptable, far into the future. I don't see this even starting to happen in my lifetime or even the generation after that's lifetimes, but later on this could well be a serious problem, in the making. Think about how much has changed in the last 50 years and how things are changing, at an accelerated pace. Think about what might happen, if the current trends continue, to be pushed, at a exponentially faster pace. Where will it end?

Not Enforcing Laws

What I am concerned about is something quite different. What I am concerned about is the desire of those in power and the average citizen on making more and more things legal and even not enforcing laws, that are unpopular, but are there for a good reason. For some people, this brings up the idea, that our government makes laws about what the criteria must be, for someone to legally come into the country. Then we decide, instead of changing the laws, that we should just not

enforce them, and so some people, from certain countries, get away with things we would never allow people, from other countries, to do.

Taking Risks with Safety

But even more basic is the unwillingness to follow, even the most simple and obvious laws, designed for safety. For example, people seem to think it is ok to run red lights and not signal, when they turn. This happens so often, that you never know, which way a car will turn. And the reasons for these rules are so obvious and following them so simple, but people are still unwilling to follow even these rules.

Fear of Hard Work

People in various jobs, I come into contact with, refuse to show up on time, or even follow the most simple directions. The average person today is an expert in how to give impressive arguments about why they are unwilling to follow directions. It seems that most people's greatest fear is having to perform an honest day's work. And this still happens, when many people still have no jobs and if someone loses a job, there are no jobs open, but this still doesn't motivate people, to do their work properly.

Too Cheap

Now that we have budget cuts, because of tax cuts and welfare for the big corporations, we have to cut basic services, like public education and law enforcement. We have so little money left, to even keep public order, that crimes against property are not prosecuted. We won't even spend money, to repair bridges, never updated for over 50 years, even though they are crumbling, right before our eyes. We refuse to even provide the most basic security updates, for computers, that run our critical infrastructure, because we are too cheap.

Unwillingness to Save/Invest

Businesses seem unwilling to save up money, before they invest in new projects, so when they lose money, they go bankrupt and the average citizen ends up bailing them out. And businesses seem

unwilling, to invest any of their own money, into improving their business, and never adopt any new ideas, or take any risks, to differentiate themselves, from the other brands and then are surprised by their failure. Most people are deep in debt, because they are don't have the discipline, to save their money, before they buy new things.

14.2.3 Fundamental Problem

Victim of our Success

The fundamental things that is ruining America is that we are the victim, of our own success. Things are too easy for us, which has made us weak. Since even national governments are unwilling, to even think one generation ahead, and the public is unwilling to make any measurable effective sacrifice, things are going to get exponentially worse, before we even realize, what has happened. One the critical amount of momentum has happened, it will be very costly, just to slow down the increase in damage.

Exponential Growth

One of the biggest problems, we are facing today is that our leaders and our citizens can't seem to understand how exponential growth works. Exponential growth explains how when the English came to America, that the fish in the rivers couldn't move, because the rivers were crammed full of fish. We had so much timber in America, that we used old growth wood, that we can't even find today, for firewood, or just cutting it down, to start farms. When we started making cars, we never thought that all of the people in China and India would eventually be able to afford one and that we would have billions of cars.

Exponentially Greater Problems

This is the same way, that diseases spread, from one person, and then infect hundreds of millions. When we wait 10 more years, to solve environmental problems, the damage could easily be 10,000 times harder to fix then. The reality of Global Warming is that when the temperature rises just a little bit, the entire ecosystem falls apart and the natural controls, for the climate stop

working. Then the weather gets exponentially more destructive. This is the reason why environmentalists made such a stink about it, as early as the 1970s.

Out of Our Control

People made fun of Jimmy Carter, when he pushed alternative energies, but how much better would the world be if the country had the political will, to get the problem under control then. At this point, the US has lost their ability, have the leverage, to push other countries, to use less fossil fuels. At this point, the bulk of the environmental losses will be the result of India and China, so that if we give up a certain amount of fossil fuel consumption, they will increase their consumption, to the point, that it will offset our reduction.

14.2.4 Solutions

The “Easy” Solution

I have already talked about a return, to an earlier level of technology, as a way to deal with our current lack of resources, to solve our energy problems. Most people would consider that giving up, but there is another, more popular solution. This solution would involve finding a much greater source of energy. But the problem here is that we need more than just 100 or 1,000 times as much energy, and we need to continue to find exponentially increasing amount of energy, every generation, or else we end up, with an earlier level of technology.

Many More Solutions Necessary

Basically, we are addicted to energy, and our energy desires will increase exponentially, so instead of us needing a one time increase of energy, we need to find, either an almost unlimited amount of energy, or else we need to keep on finding more and more powerful energy sources. So this problem will keep happening, every 20 years, and we will be in the same situation, that we are in now then. That is the biggest problem, with keeping things comfortable, and avoiding a collapse, of the world, as we know it. The largest amount of energy will be needed, to engineer projects, to protect people and society, from the increased destructive power of weather.

Will God Return?

Many Christians think God will come, if society collapses, but that is not Scriptural. Jesus talked about returning like a thief in the night and that no one would know what hour or day He would return. You can basically be sure nothing will happen, at any time, that is forecasted. So, if people give a date, when they think the world will end, you can almost guarantee, that that will not be the time. History proves this.

Very smart and good intentioned people, with great faith, a lot of good evidence, and good scriptural support gave exact dates, when Christ would return, and all were wrong. I think it is a waste of time and resources, to continue this pursuit. Remember, that even the devil and the angels have no idea about this, as well, and they are much smarter, have more resources, have had much more time, and want to know more badly than us.

God's Return will Surprise Everyone

The timing will likely come, when things are very peaceful and society is very stable. Before Jesus comes, people will have tired, of being afraid of His return. We will likely experience things, in a different order, and in a way, as surprising as how Jesus came and what He did, compared to what people thought would happen.

Jesus will return, when there is a spiritual crisis, that we will likely be unaware of, and it will not likely be at a time of a political or environmental crisis. The first half of the tribulation could happen, without us knowing, until we were half way through. Only God knows and controls when this happens. When it does happen and the government wants us to take the mark of the beast, it will be the number 666 exactly and you will be crystal clear of what that is, when it happens.

The Best Solution

The best solution is a solution, that God will bring. Prayer for God's will to happen, keeping a Christ like attitude and doing our best to avoid sins are the best way to help. What is spiritually significant is different than what is socially, politically, militarily, or financially significant. We need to have faith in God and follow His will.

The only way to be sure, that what we attempt, will succeed is to make sure that we are doing what God wants us to do. If God wants you to do something, He will make it crystal clear. And

success will need to be defined, as serving God's purposes, which we will unlikely know how, what we do, will help God's plan. God doesn't need us, but we need God. We will fail God, but God will never fail us.

Chapter 15

Psychology

by Ben Huot

15.1 Dealing with Self Esteem

15.1.1 The Military

As I have said before, I think that my continued study of psychology, compared to studying other things, will give me the best opportunity, to grow emotionally and be a happier person. I believe that my greatest enemy is myself. I believe that the most important factors in how I live my life are the choices I make. One of the things I have realized over time, that causes my great stress, is my low self esteem, coming mostly from my experience in the military.

Soldier with Schizophrenia

I always was more sensitive, than most people, and held onto things others did to me, for too long and was overly occupied, with what others thought of me. But in the military, these situations became much more intense and my emotional response became ingrained, much deeper. A lot of my motivation, to try to make life more fair for myself and others, comes from some of the extreme circumstances, that I had experienced, while in the military. Like most people, I already knew what was important to me, so that later in life, most experiences just re-enforced, what I had believed all along.

Also, as a person with Schizophrenia, the main disability that I have, which covers most symptoms, is that everything in my life is exponentially more emotionally intense, than it was for me

beforehand, or it is for others, like me, in similar circumstances, that do not have Schizophrenia. Some of the things in the military, that caused my great stress was my fear of even tear gas and my constant failures, to be able to perform the combat skills correctly, while under such extreme stress.

Recognizing Ranks

An even bigger stress was, for me, to recognize and correctly respond, to the correct rank of the person walking by me (you only salute officers and you have to use the correct exact rank, when referring to the soldier, whether enlisted or officer - if you get this wrong, then you get into a lot of trouble and are publicly embarrassed). One of the reason why this was so hard for me is that the ranking system works different, depending on service, but also the ranks, for enlisted, are on the upper arm and for the officers, on their shoulders or on their lapel.

This makes it very hard to see what their rank is, when you pass by them. You constantly need to know the rank of everyone in the room, at any given time. This is because the highest ranking person in the room has to tell everyone, to stand at attention, whenever an officer comes in, or stand at ease, whenever an NCO comes in.

Rifle Training

I realized soon on, that if I was in a combat situation, that I would be of no use. I remember, when we did the manual of arms (this is how you learn how to move your rifle, in a marching formation, which also helps you keep your rifle away, from being pointed at others, during basic rifle marksmanship target practice), I had to drop for push-ups, after each move, because I would always get it wrong.

I was so bad at shooting (although I had to shoot and qualify, with my left hand, even though I am right handed) that the drill sergeant gave me the spot on the test range, where it was rigged, for the farthest target to pop-up and do down and it count it as hit, no matter if I hit it or not (when you qualify with the rifle, you shoot at targets, that look like green soldier outlines, which pop up for 3-5 seconds and then go down, to simulated the difficulty, of hitting a moving enemy soldier).

15.1.2 Coping with Stress

Deflecting Criticism

There are many coping mechanisms people, who have low self esteem, use to cope, with their relationships with other people. Some of the major ones are minimizing, blaming, non-competing, overachieving, inflating, and projecting. I use a lot of these, to cope with my low self esteem.

Basically, I try to find a way to deflect any kind of ranking, because I want to find equal relationships and am not interested in fighting for control. Arrogance is what bothers me most and I link that with leadership and any kind of hierarchy or ranking. But it would be good for me to be aware of this, because at an extreme level, this will make it harder for me, to meet new people.

Biggest Deflectors

Probably the ones I use most is non-competing. I am very good at a lot of things, but I never have the ability to perform under pressure. That is one of the reasons why I never enter any competitions, or take any tests or classes, to prove my abilities.

I also would say I overachieve, which is partly because I really care about the future of humanity and the rest of the creatures that live on this earth, but also I constantly run into people, who tell me my life is easy, because I don't work.

Other Deflectors

I also use minimizing as a strategy, because I often find that others will challenge me and say that I am wrong, because they disagree with me, even though I have more experience than them. I don't wish to get in an argument, to prove what I know, partly because I don't think of good responses, while I am under stress.

I think I do projecting often, too, as for most people the things, that bother me most, about others are things I don't like about myself. I don't like anyone who is loud, intense, and controversial.

15.2 Dealing with My Illness

The symptoms of my mental illness expound these problems. One of my most disabling symptom of Schizophrenia for myself is paranoia. I think that people are against me or that they can hear my thoughts. I worry that people will reject me and and that is why I have a hard time making new friends or find new hobbies. In the military I took lots of risks, so now I am very careful not to risk anything important and I over emphasize this, in my mind.

15.2.1 Power Issues

Avoiding Abuse

I also see people sense my fear as a weakness and abuse that knowledge, which happens with abusive mental health workers. These people think that I won't or can't speak up for myself, but, of course this isn't true. Whenever I run into a situation where a person is abusive, I leave the situation, as soon as possible.

There are lot of people on the bus, that are looking for an easy target, to solve their problems, so I keep an unpleasant expression and do not make eye contact. Old people are the worst, in my experiences, and I don't mean retired people, but people who cannot even walk and are very rude and thoughtless and expect everyone else to stop what they are doing and sacrifice their time and energy, to help them.

The most traumatic situations I had to deal with all occurred for me as an adult. My parents weren't perfect, but they did a very good job and I am still friends with them to this very day. My sister and I did not get along well when we were kids, but she has been a close friend, since we became adults. The traumas I experienced are what I refer to as total situations.

No Control

A total situation is where you have no power and no control over almost everything in your life and you have no way of getting out of it, nor is their any break from it. These are situations in which I never was able to relax, or trust the people in power. The total situations, that I dealt with were in the military, being voluntarily committed to a behavioral psychology ward in a private hospital, living

with 9 other mentally ill men in a group home, and living in a retirement home in my mid twenties.

These situations reinforced my sense of wrong and right and my commitment, to do all I could to bring social justice, to the poor and persecuted. They have also permanently altered how I see others and myself, so that I now am able to appreciate even small freedoms in life. It has also convinced me to be very risk adverse and to not trust other people, especially people in the mental health establishment.

15.2.2 Breakdown of Trust

Chemical Weapons

I felt helpless in the military because I had no control over my freedom. I felt that I was lied to by my recruiter. I specifically asked about the NBC training and its possible use in wars. I was told that none of our enemies would use it and that the gas chamber doesn't hurt at all and you only have a little trouble breathing for half a minute.

When I went into the gas chamber, we had our protective masks on at first and I could feel my hands burning terribly. Then we were told to take off our masks and open our eyes all the way. I felt like I was drowning in fire and I could barely breathe. My lungs and my eyes hurt the worst. When I got in my platoon was in the last group so as they added another stick of CS gas for each platoon, we then had the highest concentration. We were in for only 5 minutes, but it felt like an eternity.

My Psychotic Break

I asked to be let out when it was my turn to leave, but the drill sergeant threw me back in to the end of the line. I found out later that you have to go through the gas chamber once a year for active duty soldiers. Other soldiers in my platoon later said my experience sounded like a bad trip on LSD. Later on I found out that during the first and second Persian Gulf wars that the US military expected to be gassed and the front line troops all went in in full MOPP4 gear (protective masks and chemical suits).

This time in the gas chamber was when the Psychiatrist reviewing my pension case for the VA said that my mental breakdown and first paranoid episode occurred. The military is actually the most common stressful event that brings about a mental illness if you have a high genetic probability,

meaning close family with the same mental illness.

Lessons Learned

When people vote for wars in the Middle East, they need to understand that the chemical weapons that will likely be used in future conflicts, are many times more painful than CS gas, by factors of 100 or 1,000, and most often they are not fatal, although most would likely wish to die. People wishing to serve in the military need to understand this very well. The only reason why we do not have as many deaths as in Vietnam as we do in Iraq and Afghanistan is that we keep people alive, that are so badly burned, that they would have died, of their wounds, in any other time in history.

My situation, where I was able to leave the Army, with an honorable discharge, and receive a full pension was a miracle and I would be in Iraq or Afghanistan to this day, if my pension was not approved a few months before September 11th. All enlistments are 8 years long and the military can call you back at any time, especially if you have a specialized skill, or they don't have enough troops. Everyone, who passes through basic training, is considered first and foremost an infantry soldier and no matter what speciality you have, you will be on the front lines, carrying that special equipment, in addition to your combat gear.

Mental Health

I often have trouble making relationships because I do not trust other people. It takes a long time for someone to gain my trust. I am especially untrusting of people in power over me. I remember what it was like to at once point to be honest and let them help me and the next thing I knew I was locked in and couldn't leave. When you admit to having emotional problems, you quickly lose your rights and another person gets to decide what you are allowed to do and what kind of freedom you have.

You lose control over how you spend your time, what you can eat, where you can live, where you can go, and most importantly they are in control of your access to your medication. The people are paid very little and have almost no knowledge of mental illness. It is common for them to never believe anything you say and they are attracted to this field because they enjoy having power over others.

I will never seek help when I have an emotional crisis, because of how I was treated by the mental

health caregivers. My latest experience going to the hospital when I was severely depressed, I was put in a padded room and told I could not leave with nothing to do and a camera focused on myself. When I am depressed, locking me up is just going to increase my stress and my emotional pain.

15.2.3 Other People's Problems

Taking Advantage

I am quick to say no to others and am not very friendly, when I am walking on the street or waiting for the bus, because I know that when you appear weak, people take advantage of it. If I see someone in distress, or someone asks for anything, who I don't know, I always refuse and, if I can, get away as fast as possible. I have learned the hard way, that many people are opportunists and have various scams set up, to make easy money and profit from nice people, trying to help out. Just because I see someone who is dressed in rags or can barely walk, I know that it is likely a trick.

Too Good to Be True

Whenever anything I read seems too good to be true, and I cannot find enough information about it online, then I stay away from that group. I used to try to find another person with a website that is from a Liberal Christian point of view, but all I have found is people mixing Paganism with Christianity, social liberals, or the Christians involved in the paranormal. Whenever I read something about an interesting scientific discovery like quantum mechanics or string theory, new abundant energy sources, or environmental solutions all paths lead to very dark and disturbing places. I have found out that most things alternative are either very depressing, anti-Bible or both.

Religious Boundaries

I think most of the good things going on in the world are done by Christian groups and that there is a good reason why so many Evangelical organizations have decided to be very narrow theologically and conservative socially. When people get creative with theology, they have no sense on what areas they should stay away from. I guess I have a good understanding of what the Bible says, so I know very well what is clear and what is not. It seems pretty obvious to me, but most

people don't research the subject well enough, before making major decisions, that will affect the rest of their lives, like joining groups, purely based on personalities they like. There are certain decisions, that you cannot just undo like: sexually transmitted diseases, drug addiction, committing crimes, and making poor decisions, in other aspects of their lives.

15.3 Going Forward

15.3.1 My Decisions

Leaving the Stage

I have learned, to be happy, without taking major risks, in my life. I know that this part of America is the best part of the world and I have no desire, to see the destruction to the rest of the world and the injustice and violence, that is only intensifying. I have realized, that no one cares about what I say and people do know what to do, to solve the major world problems, but the reason why they won't take these steps is that they would require giving up things, that they are addicted to and cannot imagine living without. I don't know the future, but I won't be surprised if the future looks more like the past, and it might be the best thing for us.

Internal Growth

That is why the path forward for me is focused on making my life, my home, and my family the best it can be. Just as the monks of the Eastern Orthodox church decided to withdraw, to the wilderness and pursue their relationship with God and forsake worldly ambition, as Christian Constantinople fell to the Muslim Turks, so I end my criticism of my generation. I am only responsible for myself and my own actions. Whatever happens to the world will happen, as the result of the collective decisions we make, and even more directly, as God moves it.

15.3.2 Who I am

Highly Sensitive

I am not just sensitized due to trauma and due to my illness, but I am also sensitive by nature. I am risk adverse, by my very nature. I spend a lot of time and effort trying to understand all the factors and consequences of a perceived mistake. I try to prepare for the loss of everything and am religious about making backups of my files. I spent a whole year getting ready for disaster survival, even though few disasters have or even would likely happen, where I live.

I take it personally, when I am rejected or exploited. I am more sensitive to physical pain and social problems. I like calm and organized places like libraries and movie theaters. I do poorly under pressure and am very sensitive to negative feedback. I find the Internet hard to navigate as I am overstimulated, I have too many options, and everyone is so negative and rude.

Honesty

I think that honesty with ourselves and with others we work with is a good start in dealing with stress and trauma. I have found that despite people's lack of education about mental illness and the perpetuation in the media, that we are serial killers and terrorists, that most people are open to the idea of my having mental illness. They don't know much about it and don't seem to hold any stereotypical views about it.

Many people are also very interested, in what it is like, to have a mental illness. Some people, after seeing and talking to me, think that I was too smart and that is there is some connection between insanity and brilliance. That is not true, in any sense, but it is a better stereotype than thinking I am violent. Some people also talk about famous people, who supposedly have mental illnesses, although these people generally have clinical depression or are bipolar (manic depression), which are much less disabling.

Uniquely Me

One of the things, that makes me so unusual, is that I take my medicine regularly and didn't have any trouble accepting my illness. I also am highly motivated and can understand abstract thought and

very subtle ideas. None of this is supposed to be possible. I think that it is a miracle.

The reason why I have been able to write so many useful books about philosophy is just like how God chose a shepherd to be king of Israel, Moses was a person with a speech impediment, and Sarah was elderly when she had a baby – I have this ability because it gives credit to God and not to myself or my training. The reason why I accepted my illness, at first, was that I knew something was wrong with me and then I asked, if it was going to get worse, and I was told that it wouldn't. Only in this last year, when I read about some of the other symptoms of Schizophrenia, was I depressed about what I had lost.

One of the things that helps me most is a good night's sleep. That is the most important thing I can do, to stay positive and motivated. I also produce better work, when I have enough rest.

15.3.3 Building Relationships

I am the kind of person, who wants deep and intimate (emotionally) relationships, with a couple people. When I am in groups, I have learned to say little, so that I do not say anything controversial and end up alienating others. But, since I did not feel relaxed, in these situations, I have a hard time feeling part of the group. Often I am so uncomfortable in these situations, that I end up not going at all.

Equal Relationships

I am looking for equal relationships. One of the ways, to have equal relationships, is to have an equal amount of time talking about yourself, as they do talking about themselves. It is good to be concerned about the other person, but it is not always appropriate to respond, by giving advice, on how to solve the problems they face. Don't ever assume that their situation is like yours.

It is important to think about what the other person is saying and adjust your responses accordingly. And when you ask, for the other person to open up to you, you must sincerely want them to, or it will alienate you. It is important, to get emotionally involved and empathize, with the other person. But most importantly, you must stop trying to use specific formulas, because they can be transparent.

Deepening Relationships

When someone offers help, if you do not agree the first time, they likely will never ask again. Another important factor is that for the relationship to be equal, you must offer a roughly equivalent amount of help, to the other person, in the relationship. When accepting help, make sure that it is something, that the other person is able to do easily, and that you really would be helped by their contribution.

You need to know what to do, at the right time, to ask for something, or reveal more about yourself. The right time will be when the other person is in that place too. Feel out how much they are willing to get involved and allow them to make the decision, without pressure. But you must continue to be honest, straightforward, and direct. Temper this with your friend's point of view and emotional state.

Often asking for input about situations, that you thought went bad, is often a good way to get a more balanced view, on whether you need to improve, as we tend to over personalize other's reactions to us. Giving and receiving must be balanced, in a healthy and equal relationship.

Rejection

When someone rejects you, there are generally four major reasons for the rejection. One of the reasons for rejection is when the other person sees every relationship as a part of climbing the social ladder. Sometimes asking for a relationship with another, in this situation can be considered weak and therefore they are repulsed, by your offer. In some groups, this is the general tone or culture of the group. Try making relationships elsewhere.

Another reason, for why you may be rejected, is that the other person is using a coping skill, for dealing with being under valued. You may get a response that is part of minimizing, blaming, or noncompeting. Let go of trying to respond directly, to the accusations, but understand why the other person feel this way. The best response is to acknowledge the other other person's feelings as normal and empathize with them.

Add that you want to pursue a relationship, with the other person, and admire one of their great qualities. Talk about this situation, in the context of the whole length of your relationship, with them. Keep avoiding blaming either one of you, but keep acknowledging the frustrations, of the other and agree with them.

Some people have a hard time building relationships and are afraid to take the risk, because they think they will always be rejected. There is no way to get them to open up to you, but you can express your concern for them.

Some people will constantly respond to your attempts to form a relationship, by starting an argument. The other person sounds very emotional, but loud and intense, or the other response is that the other person starts a debate and never lets you respond.

If you will never see the person again, then just ignore them. Otherwise, you can try to deal with the other's emotional trauma by refusing to argue, refusing to agree something negative about yourself, by not allowing the other person to blame you, by trying to reduce the other person's shame, and by talking it over the next time you see them.

Avoid Simple Formulas

Make sure you are genuine and honest. You can build on what you have read, but without really caring and acting natural, you will be obviously superficial. The worst thing to do is have some predictable way of responding to people, so it is better to be clumsy and shy than to overemphasize what you have read.

Like no theory explains things for everyone, so must even the best advice must be filtered, through our experiences, and we should not put all our faith, in the latest books we read. People do not like being treated, like some kind of experiment and will respond very negatively, if you seem too predictable.

15.4 Artistic Freedom

15.4.1 Emotions

Controlling Emotions

I wanted to say something about emotions. I believe that emotions are important and useful, but they can also easily spiral out of control. Some people recommend meditation, tai chi, yoga, guided relaxation, and those kind of things. While many of these things can be useful, to certain people, in

certain occasions, it isn't for me.

The big reason why is that it is too difficult and complex for me. Something I can do and look forward to doing more often is to take recreational breaks every so often and to walk a good ways each day. I am starting to like playing simple games, drawing sketches, listening to music, and seeing pictures of maps, art, and scenery on my iPad.

Religion and Emotions

I have some incredibly strong emotions, in my relationship with God. I said recently, that reading a whole chapter of scripture was scary to me, because it felt like I was going to burn up, due to the intensity of God, that I could gather from reading the Bible. Sometimes, when I am swept up in emotions, I think that having no free will, or that not doing anything for myself would make me closer to God.

I have enjoyed Pentecostal/Charismatic churches in the past, because they are one of the few churches, that don't teach you to suppress and dominate your emotions, with your intellect. It is good to be rational and have a good grasp, of the mortal world, in which we live, but I think it is dangerous, to ignore what we think our emotions are telling us.

Faith is a belief in something that you cannot prove and Paul called Christ's death on the cross the foolishness of God, that is greater than man's knowledge. Like it or not, we have a number of parts of us, that need to take control or give up control, much like instruments start and stop, at various points, in the symphony. The key point to remember is that God is the conductor.

15.4.2 New Developments

My Life

One of the things that makes me very grateful and gives me much peace is that God helped me write 50 books. It is inspired by the Holy Spirit as my muse, but I will take credit for the mistakes. I finally feel like I can relax and just enjoy life. My situation is difficult, for a number of reasons. Some of the major ones I just wrote about and the vast majority of people will never have to deal with it. On the other hand, I have some unique assets, that other people would kill for: I have no debt, I can't lose my source of income, and I have plenty of money for what I want to do.

I also live in the best place on earth and my apartment is the best in the town and is close enough, so I can walk to the bus station. My place is also beautiful and a gated community and my landlords are really nice and helpful. It seemed that there were people out cleaning and keeping things up, all summer and they really seem to care about the place. I have my own clothes washer and dryer, that came with the apartment, I am renting an air conditioner, that they set up, my house is very well insulated and the sound doesn't penetrate. I can get up whenever I want to, I can eat whatever I want to, I can spend my money anyway I want to.

The Fall

I am excited that it the fall season has just arrived and I can already imagine the holidays. My sister lives in the same city as me and my parent only live about 45 minutes north of me. My sister just got her own house and so we will likely celebrate, at least one of the holidays there. All of us have put in a tremendous amount of work into improving our lives and it has really paid off for all of us. We also use our creative abilities in unusual ways, that make us happy and help others.

I love the fall, because it starts getting cool, cloudy, and rainy again this time of year. I do badly in the heat and I also have sensitive eyes, so summers can be rough on me. Summers are often downers for me, because hardly anything is going on. If I walk by the local University, in the summer and on a Sunday, the streets are deserted. I likes the fall, as it is like a new beginning, because this is when school starts again. A lot of my best memories happened in the rain and the cold and on cloudy days. A lot of those are memories from high school, when I was on an event for cross country or speech.

15.4.3 Sources of Strength

Parent's Influence

The biggest factors in my resilience and ability to overcome the odds stacked against me in the combination of my personality, my traumas, and my mental illness are prayer and family support. One of the biggest reasons why people are not well adjusted, confident, and content with their lives is that they experienced profound traumas, in their formative years.

The way you raise a child makes the most difference, in what a young adult has to draw from,

when encountering obstacles and tragedies, that arise due to conditions we mostly have no control over. When you can build your sense of self on a good foundation, it makes emotional recovery much easier and more successful.

Divine Intervention

Not only has having a good relationship with my family and being raised in a supportive and healthy environment been a key to my success, but the divine intervention of the Christian God has made all the difference. No matter how damaged you are, due to living through difficult circumstances, God can always transform you into a better person, if you are willing to make the effort. Real spiritual and emotional growth does not come quickly or easily.

God works on a different time frame and in a complex series of events, that we cannot discern. The most important thing that God gives those who are willing to ask is grace. And it is His grace that gives purpose and value, to any circumstance you are in, for whatever reason. This grace is what makes life worth living and gives purpose to our lives.

Personality Traits

The final major influence has been my inheritance of certain personality traits of my parents, like stubbornness and curiosity. As I said before, all character traits have dual aspects. No matter how bad people assume a personality trait is, there is always an equally great positive aspect, to every one.

Stubbornness is often thought to cause people to not ask for help, but, if you have the grace to use it in a useful way, it can be a great source of strength and motivation, to do what is right, even when others don't understand or appreciate the importance, of what you know in your heart is right. Curiosity has sometimes led me to study things that only led to dark and depressing thoughts, but everything I have learned has made me a better person and helped me understand how the world works, how I can change it, and how to get along well with others, who don't share my values.

My Understanding of God

One of the things that makes me so different is the things I am sure of and those I am unsure of.

Sometimes I have no doubt about a certain direction I should take or insights into why things happen the way they do. Other times I doubt everything. The most important thing I just intuitively know is that the God of the Bible is the real God.

I know from nature, from experience, and from intuition that the universe was created by an eternal, all-powerful, and perfectly good God. I know that His personality is the same as the one described in the Christian Bible. And the Bible continues to amaze me, with how well it explains why the world works the way it does, or why I experience life the way I do. I always feel there is so much more that I could understand, when God would choose to reveal it to me. The God of the Bible is beyond everything I could hope for or imagine.

Chapter 16

Ideology

by Ben Huot

16.1 The Power of One

16.1.1 The Individual

Don't Give Up

I am continuing my writing, in order to encourage others, that we can make a difference, as individuals. The bulk of my writing, before the depression started, in 2008, was trying to get people to realize that the problems in the world we keep hearing about are serious and need to be dealt with now, but that many people, who would be willing to make the sacrifices necessary, to make the world a better place, are just getting discouraged and think that it is time to just give up.

Just One Person

I just started reading a book written by the president of PETA, the animal rights organization, and

she make a great case, for how we can make a difference, all by ourselves. Most people would give to charities, if they were wealthy, or try to change the government, if they were able to get into power, but much of history was changed, by a single person, who was just like everyone else, but decided to spend their years on earth making a difference, for others. A few people have changed history starting all by themselves.

16.1.2 As a Group

Lessons from History

In my life time, I have seen the Soviet Union fall apart and atheism lose political power. The Soviet Union was such a huge power that, even as a kid, we feared the Russians, to be our greatest enemy. For much of the Cold War, many Christians were afraid that the majority of the world would give up their faith in religion. My parents saw major changes, in tolerance, for those of other races, within the span of just a decade, so that it is now unpopular and intolerated to be a racist. The US was winning the Vietnam War militarily and the war would have easily gone on, for another ten years, but it was cut short, by the the American people's unwillingness to let the issue go.

More Power than We Think

It is interesting, that we still do not seem to realize, that a government cannot keep itself in power, no matter how much power they have over their citizens, if they push things too far. The reason why the world is in the state it is, is because the US citizens may not want to be aware of some of the dirty things done to maintain our power, but basically expect someone to do those things, and that is the main reason why they are done. For instance, the reason why torture is likely still used, within the intelligence community, is not because it is thought to be useful or justified, by those who perform it, but that the leaders of the country would be held liable, if there were a terrorist attack and the people, who were involved, were in custody and did not give up the information needed to prevent the attack.

Power of American Citizens

Basically, Americans really don't care about what happens to non-Americans and feel justified in doing so, in order to maintain the kind of lifestyle, that we are used to. And yes, as always, I am referring to Americans, when I say we, as we have the ability, to change the world, as someone born in the third world does not have the resources, power, and the protection afforded by our civil rights. The really difficult thing, for us to accept very soon, is both the gravity of the situation, but also the great opportunity, that even one American has the ability to exercise, at little risk to themselves.

16.1.3 Keep Working Hard

The future is not set and we don't need to continue down this road. Things will change tremendously, in this generation, more than things have, for maybe thousands of years, and there will be some major losses, but there are also some great things, that will happen, that we cannot even imagine yet. God still has many wonderful surprises, for all of us. We just need to believe and take a chance.

16.2 Usefulness of Crises

16.2.1 Psychology of a Crisis

Local Example

I have spent about a year preparing, for surviving the end of the world, as we know it, caused by anything, from natural disasters, to the end of cheap oil. I wasn't happy, with the online communities, because people are so mean online, so I looked up about local Peak Oil advocates and I came across an interesting development and controversy. What had happened is that the local advocates brought this scenario, to the community government and after the case was presented, it was decided, that, instead of spending money, to become more self-sufficient energy wise, the budget was spent on improving the infrastructure, for increased car usage.

Apathy to Despair

This decision seemed to anger and frustrate those, who spent so much time and energy, to present their case, but I was not surprised. The thing is that most people today consider not having electricity and modern plumbing is the same as being in the stone age and would likely just give up and wait to die, instead of working hard, to survive, in a more difficult situation. The problem is, when people are confronted with the possibility of a disaster, they quickly jump from apathy to despair.

Afraid of Hard Work

I think the big reason for this is that people who have grown up in the situation, that we are in now, have basically adopted the idea, that a successful society is one that: keeps on getting more and more advanced technologically, has fewer and fewer rules, and requires less and less effort, to keep it going. Since they have adopted this worldview, it is hard for them to think about the possibility, of losing this, and still surviving, in a rational manner. The only thing that seems to scare this last few generations is having to do an honest day's work.

16.2.2 Short Attention Span

Crises are Helpful

This may seem discouraging, but this situation has happened before and people will survive. I know it sounds cruel, but the fewer Americans who survive, the better it is, for those left. People will learn the value of hard work, but it is going to have to take a big shock, to get their attention. Unfortunately, Americans seem to jump from crisis to crisis, but have a hard time staying focused on the same thing, when there is no longer and imminent threat.

Understand the Reason Why

We have seen this happen with Homeland Security. The federal government spent tremendous amounts of time and money making sure, that we would never allow another tragedy like 9/11 to

happen again and then, less than ten years later, we have the same problem, except the disaster was prevented, due to some fast thinking and brave airplane passengers. We also seem to gravitate between huge economic growth and huge depressions, which we could prevent with some simple oversight, but when no one is watching and the economy is going strong, we get rid of these important rules. We need to learn why things were set up the way they were before we start changing them.

Homeland Security Example

We also had a similar situation with joining the different intelligence and law enforcement agencies under the Homeland Security umbrella. The problem was that these agencies had been organized properly beforehand. We purposely separated the CIA and the FBI, even though it is inconvenient, in order to keep from these agencies from getting too powerful and end up like the SS or the KGB.

The other agencies were under different heads for equally legitimate reasons. Immigration does more than deal with terrorism. It also allows people to become citizens and the Coast Guard does more than just fight terrorism. They help in case of natural disasters and the help fight the war on drugs. And similar reasons explain why all the other agencies were arranged the way they were before we formed a Homeland Security cabinet position.

16.2.3 The Solution

Hit the Reset Button

One of the things that really differentiates post World War II America, from before, is that we have no frontier. We need to find a way, to start things over again, as a society, as well as have a way, for people, to start over, as individuals. A big enough disaster may just give us the opportunity, to reorganize the way society operates, into a more healthy way of life. The worst thing that could happen is that we never do get hit by a big disaster and we continue on this same path. Without a major disaster, we will learn to work harder and appreciate the opportunities we have, but it will happen much more slowly.

People are Irrational

Instead of trying to appeal to a person's rational awareness of the world, we need to realize, that people are lead, by their emotions, most of the time. Instead of fighting this, we need to just accept this. We need to stop debating and understand the psychology of the citizens we are working with. This is the big reason why the government will never admit that we are low on oil, because that will cause the very disaster people are fearing.

People Cannot Decide

The government needs to do some things, without telling the people, and needs to avoid going through a public governmental process. Hard decisions need to be made and it does not matter so much what is decided, except that something must be decided and worked toward. The military understands this very well. Most people are not emotionally able, to make their own decisions, or to run their own government. The average person will never have the education or the inclination, to make hard decisions.

The big reason why the government is so indecisive is because the average citizen is indecisive. We seem to jump back and forward, between opposite approaches, to our problems. We are almost evenly divided, between 2 opposing camps, so we give those, who have the most trouble making decisions, the power, to determine our leadership and our future.

16.3 A Different World

16.3.1 Political and Social Changes

Defeat of Atheism

The reason why this is a turning point in history is not just a matter of the decline of the US or the decline of the world economy, but it is the culmination of the downfall of the human ability, to solve our own problems, especially through technology. If the war on terrorism has taught us nothing else is that creativity and drive beats wealth and technology. We have learned that even the smartest

people in the room don't give you the right answers and that pride can beat even the wealthiest. Not only have we seen that we cannot rely on government, to save us, during Katrina, but that capitalism can self-destruct, just as quickly, as communism.

Ascension of Christianity

We used to be afraid that most of the world would lose their faith, but now we fear that people are taking their belief in God too far. During the last few centuries, the Church has seen a huge barrier, to its expansion and its very survival, in Europe and most of America now, but, in the same period, many times the population of America and Europe have converted to Christianity, in every other major continent, in the world. The biggest contribution from the US, to the world, may very well be Pentecostalism.

One World Economy

The US is not going to fall, unless the rest of the world does. What we have is a one world economy, so that no one really wants anyone else to fail, because even the slightest damage done, to one of the major economies, in the world, will damage the others, just as much. The flip side of the US's complete dependence on China for its manufacturing has the side effect of China depending on the US, for both its market and for its ability to produce so much of the world's food. Basically, if the US is hurt too bad, China not only goes bankrupt but starves.

US Power will be Regional

It is true though that the US will return to a more maintainable world status as a major world power instead of the only world superpower. Some of the most successful and happy years of our country came as a result of our ability to focus on our own problems, and let someone else be hated, for interfering, in world politics. It looks like China and Saudi Arabia might be the world's police force, in the future, and people will forget about the US, just as quickly as they forgot about how much they hated the UK, France, and Russia.

Biggest Changes

The next generation will most likely see the greatest changes, in the recorded history, but they will be more social, than technological. The biggest commodities of the future will not only be oil, but water and soil. One of the sad things, that will happen, in just a matter of time, will be the die off of a major part of the world's population, because there are just too many mouths to feed and most likely Africa and Southern Asia will be hit the hardest. The world balance of power will shift, as a direct result of climate change and weather will be the biggest destructive force and the major focus of national security in the future.

16.3.2 Future of Society and Technology

Do It Yourself

There will be many positive changes, especially social. People will be more focused on the local community and will be more self-sufficient. People will be more and more interested in creating things, rather than consuming things. The do-it-yourself community will grow immensely. The big thing that the web based economy will have to do to survive is to focus on selling novelty and the personalization of products.

Mass Media

If Hollywood survives, their market will not be on selling generic products, to a mass audience. Every form of media will be online and there will be no way to get people to pay for it. More and more social groups and individuals will come out with their own media and use it to further their agendas. I think making money purely by advertising will become less and less valuable, as there will be so many more places for ads and so many more companies out there, that they will get lost in the static.

The big companies will be the ones with Big Brands. The big thing that will separate the little players from the big ones will be a matter of how they differentiate themselves. Americans will no longer find it profitable to sell commodity products for commodity prices.

All Information Public

So much information will be available, that the information itself will be less important and the way to sift through it faster will be where the money is. Every piece of information will be available, for everyone, by some point in the future. Scams will become much more convincing as they will be able to make use of this information.

Insignificance of Government

The most important factor in your life will not be the country you live in, but the technology provider that you use to access media and the Internet. The big reason why governments will stop being as big a factor will be because they cannot move as fast as technology can, so people will stop using the government to help them, when someone commits a crime against them.

Huge Industries

People will pay others mainly to give themselves more free time. The thing that will take more time than anything else will be finding things. Even though all information will be online, there will be so much of it that being able to answer meaningful questions will be a major source of income for many businesses. One of the things that people might enjoy most is having a break from technology and creating devices, that are fashionable and easy to use, will be a huge business.

Reaction Against Technology

Eventually people will actually start putting technology into their bodies. About this time, there will be a major reaction against technology and many people will try to exist off grid, but it will be much harder to do so, then ever before. Just like we all have phone numbers and email addresses, but don't have to have them, the same will be true of our access to the Internet and services that help us make sense of all the information.

16.3.3 Why I Am Certain

The Future is Now

One of the reasons why I can say these things with such certainty about the future is because these things are already happening. The reason why they seem futuristic to many people is that they are not mainstream yet because people aren't emotionally ready for them. The biggest changes in the future will be social, not technological.

Computers are Dumb

The big thing in technology, that will take a very long time, if it is ever possible, unless we find some other advanced technology some other way than inventing it by ourselves, computers will not be much smarter in the near future. Many people are afraid of computers taking over the world, but the most advanced robot in the world can just barely walk upright on two feet up stairs.

Problem with Engineers

The social revolutions will be much like what Facebook is now and the reason why it was not done ten years earlier was not a technological problem, but a social one. People were afraid to give out personal information, when the web first came out, although it was designed originally for two way communication. This is the exact reason why the biggest challenge to change in technology is the older generation, especially the engineers.

The Next Generation

Science Fiction writers with little or no knowledge of science often in-vision some of the greatest technological leaps. The first people to adopt a new technology will always be the youngest generation and one of the key things that holds us back is that our leaders are so old and unimaginative. Some of this will only happen as that generation dies off.

Applications to Politics

These things all sound like they are only related to technology, but the same thing occurs on a political level as well. The big reason why I see the major climate changes, shifts of power, and wars over resources will happen is because people are not emotionally willing to make the changes necessary to avoid these changes.

Not all changes are bad, but people who seek to influence people of the future need to understand not just history, but modern psychology, as well. Philosophy is much less important. The real great thing that philosophy provides is training in thinking rationally for yourself, plus philosophy is also a humanity and the humanities encourage cross-discipline study, more than any of the sciences or social sciences. When you study Asian philosophy, you are studying Asian history, Asian religion, Asian literature, Asian art, and Asian music.

16.4 Finding Your Approach

16.4.1 Background

Rationale

It is true, that people tend to be unwilling to change and unwilling to listen to rational arguments and, as individuals, we have little power, to changes the way things are, on a grand scale. But this does not mean that we need to give up. Just like in a job, who you know is more important than what you know. Also, when you want something right, you need to do it yourself. The reality is you can get a lot of people to do small things, if you appeal to their emotions, but the most important and the bulk of the work must be done by you and maybe a few others.

Easier Routes

The most important factors, in determining your ability, to influence the future, is to never give up, work much harder than everyone else and to be creative. There are some things that you could do that would be very valuable, but they take a lot of money to do. Avoid these things. One of the big

things we can now do, with minimal funding necessary, is to advertise and distribute information online.

16.4.2 Information Laws and Rules

Major Laws

Before you do this, make sure you are not violating any laws, because there is a very good chance that you will get caught, sooner rather than later. The big laws you need to worry about, beyond the obvious ones about not scamming people, making things up about people that are not true, distributing drugs, or other similar things are copyright, privacy, patent, and trademark laws. Copyright problems are the most common.

Ask Permission First

The easy way, to avoid running into a violation of someone's copyright, is to understand that everything is copyrighted automatically, as soon as it is created, and that you should ask people's permission, before using anything, that you have not created yourself. Copyrights cover everything, that is a creative work (in the broadest sense), so copyrights can include software, any kind of media like books, pictures, music, and the like. Patents cover a specific implementation of an idea and the patent laws, that you are most likely to run into, are about software and file format patents.

Copyrights

Copyright laws are in some way very logical and in other ways make little sense. You cannot copyright a short phrase, lists, fonts, or designs. You do not need to register, pay money, or to put copyright notices on your work, to protect your work with a copyright. Copyright laws only extend back a short amount of time. Book copyrights only go back to the 1920s, so anything done before then is not copyrighted, but modern translations (done after 1920) of earlier works are still copyrighted. You need to understand every license, that you have, before you use any piece of software. There are a few major categories of licenses, for programs and they can vary widely, but the main concepts are very similar.

16.4.3 Software Rules

Proprietary Programs

The first one is a proprietary program, like Microsoft Word or Adobe Photoshop. Both these programs are considered to be licensed to you and you need to pay, for each copy that you use. One copy means being on one computer at a time. Sometimes, you are allowed to have it on both a laptop and a desktop, but you can't use them at the same time. Many companies, governments, and non-profits often buy a license, for a certain number of users. Many people steal these programs and you probably won't be caught, but if you use them for business and they find out, you can get big fines. The way they find out is that one of the people working for you reports you and gets a big cash reward in exchange.

Variety of Proprietary Licenses

The software companies, who design these programs, often offer better deals, for those who work in education, usually just students and teachers, and for individuals that are not producing anything, that they will make money for. Legally, it would be better to outright pirate (steal) the software, than to use an academic license, for something you are going to sell. The educational licenses are getting stricter and stricter. Some companies monitor whether you are still in school and how many classes you are taking and can revoke your license remotely.

Open Source Licenses

Some people do not like these kinds of restrictions on software, so they use what is called open source software. This basically means, that you can use the software and distribute it all you want, but if a programmer changes the source code and distributes the modified program, then they need to give away their source code as well. Not all open source licenses require this though. Another advantage of open source software is that it survives, even if the company producing it goes out of business, or decides to stop developing it. Open source programs generally use free and open file formats, so you can usually take your work into other programs, to edit or view.

Other Common Licenses

Some other major categories of software include shareware and freeware. Freeware is free, but with the condition that you cannot distribute it, without getting permission. Shareware usually means that a program has a certain time limit or is limited, in what you can do with it, until you buy the program. Other names for shareware include demo ware, donation ware, trial ware and other similar terms.

16.4.4 Media Rules

Background

There are different types of licenses, for media, than for software, which includes every kind of writing, graphics, designs, audio, video, and multimedia. The same concepts apply as before with software. Ask someone's permission, before you use something, that someone else created. No matter what license is given, any rights to the media not specifically granted are retained by the copyright holder and you never get the copyright, unless you get permission stating exactly that. There are also things called moral rights, which means that if you use the images in a way that make someone look bad, then you have to get the rights to these as well. Some of the restrictions on copyrights, when you don't have moral rights, include using the media for things like pornography, racism, or promoting drug use.

Privacy Laws

One of the rules, that is unique, to media, are privacy laws. It is illegal, to use someone's image without their consent, unless you recorded the person in photo or video, in a public place. So, before you use anyone's image, be sure to get them to sign a written permission. Also, I recommend not using pictures of children or women of any age. I just avoid people entirely. More and more things are copyrighted, like the insides of buildings and museum art. The main principle to remember is, if it is not a public space, get permission, before you use the images, or video.

Royalty Free

Many designers keep a number of design elements like fonts, illustrations, photos, video clips, and sound effects, for later projects. The most popular licenses are called royalty free, meaning that once you pay for it, you do not need to pay again, no matter how many copies you distribute. You need to check the exact license, because there are often different fees, for different usages like web, TV, or print. There are also restrictions, to try to keep you from selling these same media collections to others. Generally, most clipart, stock photos and fonts are royalty free.

Creative Commons

There is a new license system, that has come out, in the last 10 years and is mainly used on the Internet. Creative Commons licenses include 4 main parts and most any combination of those. The 4 things, that can be allowed by the creator, without permission, are commercial use, free modification, free distribution, and no credit. So any Creative Commons license can allow or disallow any number of these things. So for instance, I license my books, to allow people to distribute them for free and use them for commercial use, but do not allow modification, and they have to give me credit. I license most of my photos, to allow people to modify them, as long as they give me credit and they allow anyone else, to modify their modification, of my original work.

Public Domain

Public Domain licenses allow you to do anything, with the media in question, without even needing to give credit, or having any others restrictions. After copyrights expire, which currently happens for books 75 years after the authors death, or 90 years after it was written, which ever comes first, they became public domain. This is the main reason why theaters love to do Shakespeare (because there are no royalties, that need to be paid). One of the things, that people think is public domain, that is not is the traditional happy birthday song.

16.4.5 Other Information Laws

Patents

Patent laws usually only affect those publishing media, by having to pay royalties, to use certain patented computer concepts. Some of these are file formats that include MP3, if you use it on a large scale, and recently MP4 video, for any use. I know this sounds terrible and it makes little sense, but because there are so many patents in video compression, that many think it is not possible, to come up with a video compression, that is good enough, to be practical and not violate someone's patent.

Some people have recently tried to sue people for using JPEGs, accessing any files over any network, web browser plugins and equally stupid patents. The big way, to get a lot of money, for not doing anything, is to file a patent, for an obvious and trivial idea, and then wait ten years, for everyone to adopt it, mainly doing so because it appeared to not violate any patents, and then sue a rich company, for violating your patent. This is not how patents were intended to work.

Trademarks

When you start a new company, you can get in trouble, if you use the same name, as another company, in the same industry, especially if the name is not a generic and obvious name. For instance, if you start an office company and you call it Apple, you have no problem, but if you start a software business and call it Apple, you will get into trouble. Logos are not industry specific, so if you make a logo, for any business, that looks like a bite out of an apple, expect Apple, to force you, to change your logo.