

My Favorite Verses

(Volume III ... August 2016 – November 2016)



*... a collection of brief commentaries
on some of the Bible's most beloved
(and least understood) passages,
parables, verses & sayings*

via Scaughdt
an (i)am publication

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An Introduction to what Follows

I think it goes without saying to anyone who has even briefly glanced at the contents of a Bible that it is a marvelous collection of language -- that regardless of one's religious bent (or lack thereof), that the Bible is a tome literally filled with passages that are both mysterious & moving -- that it is a collection of writings literally overflowing with metaphoric drama, symbolic violence, profound wisdom, and good old fashioned common sense ... Of course, it is getting folks to take even that first glance that is often the problem. Indeed, the vast majority of Christians & Jews refuse to do anything other than cast a cursory look at the Bible; preferring instead to blindly accept the often extremely limited interpretations thereof provided by their preachers & pastors, reverends & rabbis. Just as troubling, the majority of non-religious folks (often in response to being "damned to Hell" by the well-intended ignorance of a conservative Christian or two) tend to vehemently discount the contents of the Bible's texts without ever reading any of them for themselves.

For roughly the first 15 years of my life, I belonged to the former group -- condemned by friends and strangers alike as "unworthy"; labeled an ignorant "heathen" by those in my community who ironically were just as misinformed about the contents of the Bible as I myself admittedly was. Then, in direct response to such crystallized callousness, I joined the latter group for the next two decades thereafter -- loudly blasting Christianity (& its Bible) as "ridiculous" & "unethical" & "primitive"; and doing so with the same arrogant, indignant vigor with which its followers had blasted me.

Then one day in 2004, I decided to actually read the Bible for myself ... And lo & behold, once I did so it became flagrantly apparent that "the Good Book" didn't say half the horrible things I had been told it said -- and that even the horrible things it *did* sometimes offer were often mixed in metaphor or swaddled in symbolism. In essence, after almost four decades of living in the rank shadows of its man-made religion, I finally had the humility & the courage to read the Bible for myself --- to discover for myself the brilliantly beautiful and potently pragmatic Truths wrapped within its pages. After having lived so long bridled by hatred for its mythical madness, I was able to set aside all bias & preconception, and I fell madly in Love with what I found thereafter therein ... And ever since, I have been on a mission to reawaken Christians & non-Christians alike to the wonders of its texts. Most Christians I know remain blind followers of a dogma that completely ignores the far greater God of a far greater Love residing within the passages of their own holy tome --- and most non-Christians I encounter still choose to arrogantly discount the same words; and thus remain equally ignorant of the profound & practical psychological truths that rest therein ... What a tragedy this remains!

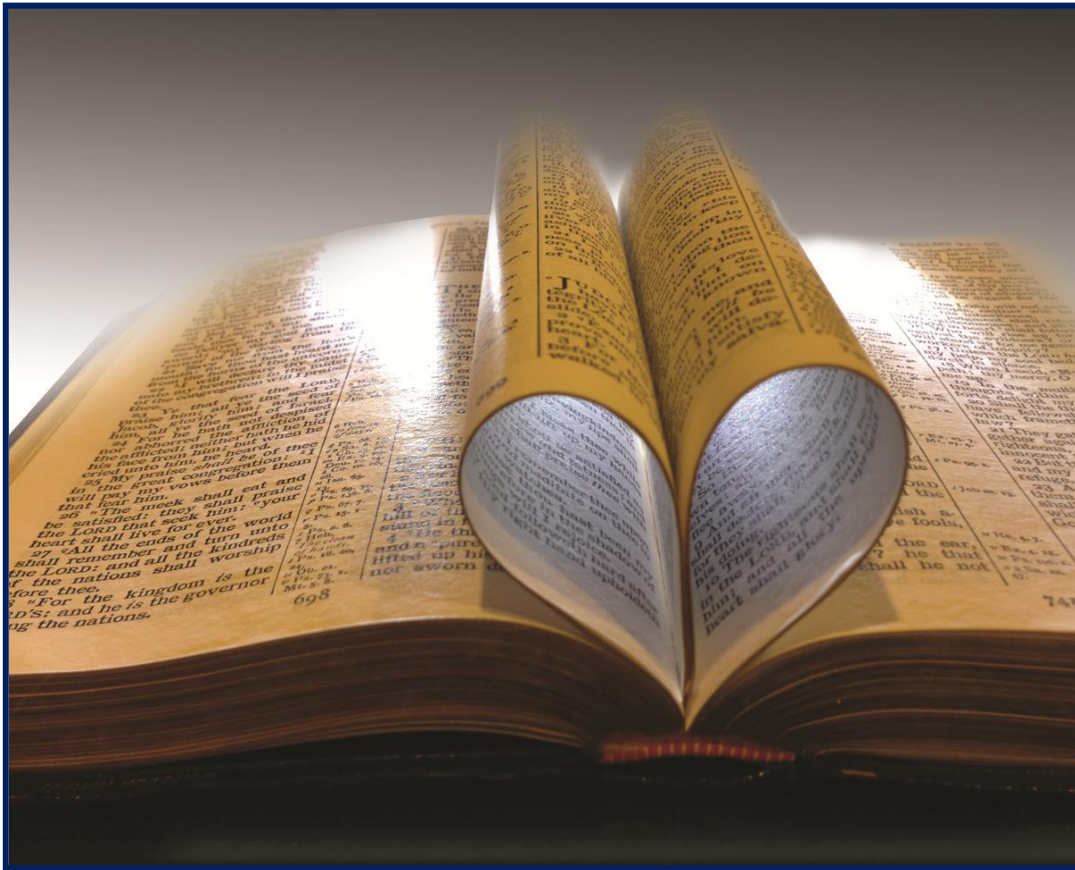
And so, I decided to periodically share some of the profound Biblical interpretations that I have personally tested to be True; doing so in various shorter books & articles, and also doing so within the loose confines of the shorter commentaries that follow herein ...

May you all enJOY accordingly!

Scaughdt

(September 2017)





“The Bible has noble poetry in it... and some good morals ... and a wealth of obscenity ... and upwards of a thousand lies.” ~ Mark Twain

“The Bible is very easy to understand. But we Christians are a bunch of scheming swindlers. We pretend to be unable to understand it because we know very well that the minute we truly understand, we will be obliged to act accordingly.” ~ Soeren Kierkegaard

Table of Commentaries

<i>Luke 6:36</i> – The Way of Christ ...	... page 009
<i>Matthew 6:19-20</i> – a Lessening of Stuff ...	... page 010
<i>Matthew 19:21</i> – Knowing your Prophets ...	... page 011
<i>Matthew 18:3-4</i> – To become again as a Child ...	... page 012
<i>John 12:26</i> – To truly FOLLOW Him ...	... page 013
<i>Matthew 22:39</i> – Knowing your Neighbors ...	... page 014
<i>1 John 4:12</i> – Acting accordingly ...	... page 015
<i>Matthew 7:21</i> – To be a GOOD Christian ...	... page 016
<i>John 14:6</i> – The Way of many Ways ...	... page 017
<i>2 Timothy 1:6-7</i> – The Gift of God within ...	... page 019
<i>Acts 1:7</i> – The Power of the Divine ...	... page 020
<i>2 Timothy 4:2</i> – Proclaiming the Good News ...	... page 021
<i>Romans 13:11-12</i> – A Time to Awaken ...	... page 022
<i>Titus 3:1</i> – Being truly READY ...	... page 023
<i>1 Timothy 6:17-18</i> – Being Wealthy in WORKS ...	... page 024
<i>Genesis 19</i> – The real sin of Sodomy ...	... page 025
<i>John 12:44</i> – Which to choose & which to Follow ...	... page 026
<i>Hebrews 3:13</i> – Cheering each other onward ...	... page 027
<i>1 Corinthians 2:7</i> – The Wisdom of God ...	... page 028
<i>3 John 1:11</i> – To Be with God ...	... page 029
<i>James 1:17</i> – Every act of Giving ...	... page 030
<i>Hebrews 4:15-16</i> – The highest Priest ...	... page 031
<i>Genesis 1:3</i> – Letting in the Light ...	... page 032
<i>1 Peter 4:12</i> – The fiery Ordeals ...	... page 033
<i>Thomas 1:70</i> – Bringing IT forth ...	... page 034
<i>Luke 4:21</i> – Full-filling the Scriptures ...	... page 035
<i>Mark 10:27</i> – All things Possible ...	... page 036
<i>1 Thessalonians 2:17</i> – Strengthening the Heart ...	... page 037

<i>Revelation 2:28</i> – The one who Conquers ...	... page 038
<i>Luke 22:19-20</i> – In remembrance of Him ...	... page 039
<i>Ephesians 4:4-6</i> – Embodying The ONE ...	... page 040
<i>Matthew 3:16-17</i> – The opening of the Heavens ...	... page 041
<i>Titus 1:15</i> – Purity for the Pure ...	... page 042
<i>Hebrews 2:8</i> – In subjecting all things ...	... page 043
<i>2 Timothy 2:9</i> – Unchaining the Word of God ...	... page 044
<i>Mark 4:24</i> – Hearing what is heard ...	... page 045
<i>1 Corinthians 4:12-13</i> – To endure in Blessing ...	... page 046
<i>1 John 1:5</i> – A deep lack of Darkness ...	... page 047
<i>2 Corinthians 4:7</i> – The Treasure within ...	... page 048
<i>Matthew 2:10</i> – The Axe & the Tree ...	... page 049
<i>Romans 8:31-33</i> – The One who sets us Free ...	... page 050
<i>Luke 12:32</i> – The Father’s good pleasure ...	... page 051
<i>Philemon 1:7</i> – The Hearts of the Saints ...	... page 052
<i>Matthew 4:17</i> – Repenting for Real ...	... page 053
<i>Matthew 24:40-42</i> – Two in the Field ...	... page 054
<i>1 Corinthians 13:10</i> – Bringing the Complete ...	... page 056
<i>John 10:25</i> – Testifying to the Soul ...	... page 057
<i>John 13:20</i> – To Receive the ONE ...	... page 058
<i>1 Corinthians 12:7</i> – The Spirit of the Common Good ...	... page 059
<i>Matthew 22:37-40</i> – Altering the Commands ...	... page 060
<i>Hebrews 7:12</i> – A change in the Priesthood ...	... page 061
<i>John 12:47</i> – To offer Salvation ...	... page 062
<i>2 Corinthians 5:2-3</i> – To leave the Tent ...	... page 063
<i>John 15:12</i> – The Prime Directive ...	... page 064
<i>1 Corinthians 3:7</i> – The watering & the Growing ...	... page 065
<i>Luke 1:78-79</i> – Onto the Way of Peace ...	... page 066
<i>John 12:35-36</i> – Enlivening the Light ...	... page 067

<i>2 Corinthians 6:2</i> – The acceptable Time ...	... page 068
<i>John 14:12</i> – To Believe in Him ...	... page 069
<i>1 Corinthians 10:13</i> – In Him no Darkness ...	... page 070
<i>Luke 6:35-36</i> – To Love expecting Nothing ...	... page 071
<i>2 Corinthians 4:17-18</i> – ever-Reborn within ...	... page 072
<i>John 12:24-26</i> – To bear much Fruit ...	... page 073
<i>Matthew 6:33</i> – Striving for the Kingdom of God ...	... page 074
<i>Romans 7:22</i> – The Law of God ...	... page 075
<i>James 1:12</i> – To endure temptation ...	... page 076
<i>Thomas 1:22</i> – Making the two into ONE ...	... page 077
<i>John 13:31-32</i> – To be Glorified in Him ...	... page 078
<i>John 13:14-15</i> – To wash their Feet ...	... page 079
<i>Romans 10:15</i> – The Feet of the Divine ...	... page 080
<i>Matthew 23:8-12</i> – Only one Teacher ...	... page 081
<i>Acts 17:28</i> – To fully have our Being ...	... page 082
<i>Galatians 6:10</i> – For the Good of All ...	... page 083
<i>Romans 11:16</i> – The Holy Root ...	... page 084
<i>John 14:19-20</i> – Heaven ever within ...	... page 085
<i>Luke 6:37-38</i> – To fully & freely Be ...	... page 086
<i>1 Corinthians 3:16</i> – Entering the Temple ...	... page 087
<i>John 18:37</i> – For this we are Born ...	... page 088
<i>Galatians 5:6</i> – Only through Love ...	... page 089
<i>Luke 2:10</i> – To bring the Good News ...	... page 090
<i>John 8:12</i> – The Light of Living ...	... page 091
<i>John 18:20</i> – Nothing in secret ...	... page 092
<i>Matthew 7:7-8</i> – To Seek and to Find ...	... page 093
<i>Philippians 4:7</i> – Enveloped by the Peace of God ...	... page 094
<i>John 14:16-17</i> – The Advocate within ...	... page 095
<i>Matthew 7:8-14</i> – The Narrow Gate ...	... page 096

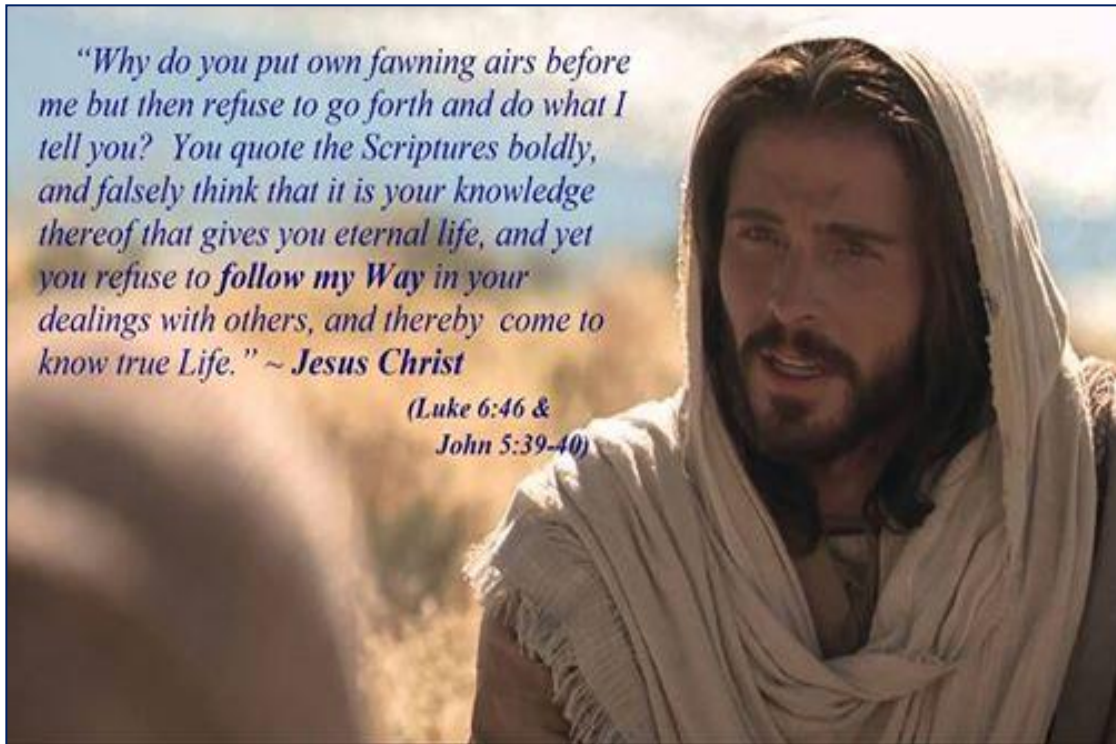
<i>2 Corinthians 11:15</i> – Knowing our Ends ...	... page 097
<i>Ephesians 5:13-14</i> – When all becomes Visible ...	... page 098
<i>John 20:22-23</i> – Receiving the Holy Spirit ...	... page 099
<i>James 1:21-22</i> – Welcoming the Word ...	... page 100
<i>Mark 9:23</i> – All things can be Done ...	... page 101
<i>Luke 15:20</i> – While we were still far off ...	... page 102
<i>Hebrews 2:14-15</i> – Sharing the same Things ...	... page 103
<i>2 Timothy 2:24-25</i> – Guiding with Gentleness ...	... page 104
<i>Matthew 13:35</i> – To proclaim the Hidden ...	... page 106
<i>John 20:29</i> – To See; to Believe ...	... page 107
<i>Hebrews 2:18</i> – That he Himself was tested ...	... page 108
<i>Acts 20:35</i> – To Give is to Receive ...	... page 109
<i>Luke 7:24</i> – Into the Wilderness ...	... page 110
<i>John 9:3-5</i> – Born for Revelation ...	... page 111
<i>Luke 1:76-77</i> – The Prophet of the Most High ...	... page 112
<i>Thomas 1:108</i> – To drink from his Mouth ...	... page 113
<i>John 1:4</i> – The Light of all people ...	... page 114
<i>Matthew 18:19-20</i> – When two of us Agree ...	... page 115
<i>John 10:17-18</i> – To take Life UP again ...	... page 116

“The real thing is not a path. The real thing is the authenticity of the seeker. Let me emphasize this. You can travel on any path, and if you are sincere and authentic, you will reach your destination. Some paths may be difficult, some may be more comfortable, some may have greenery on all sides, and some may have you moving through deserts, and yet if you are sincere and honest with the yearnings of your Soul – if you are authentic to the urgings of your conscience – if you are true to the summons of your True Self, then every path will lead you to your goal. So it simply can be reduced to one thing: that authenticity of Soul-Self is the path. And thus the opposite is also true: that no matter what path you choose, if you do not authentically reflect your Soul-Self, then you will not get anywhere. It is your authenticity and your authenticity alone that brings you back home, nothing else matters. Imitation cannot lead you anywhere. Imitation means that the ideal comes from elsewhere, and as such is not happening within you. You have a seed within you; and if you are only imitating others that seed will remain dormant.” ~ anonymous

Luke 6:46 ... The Way of Christ

(08/01/2016)

This holiday season, I am thankful for the *actual* Way, the *actual* Truth, & the *actual* Life of Jesus Christ ... Indeed, despite what many Christians might say to the contrary, The Way of Christ actually has nothing to do with Jesus himself at all -- nothing to do with worshiping him as if he were God* and everything to do with Caring for others** as if *they* were!



(* see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 12:44-47](#), et al)

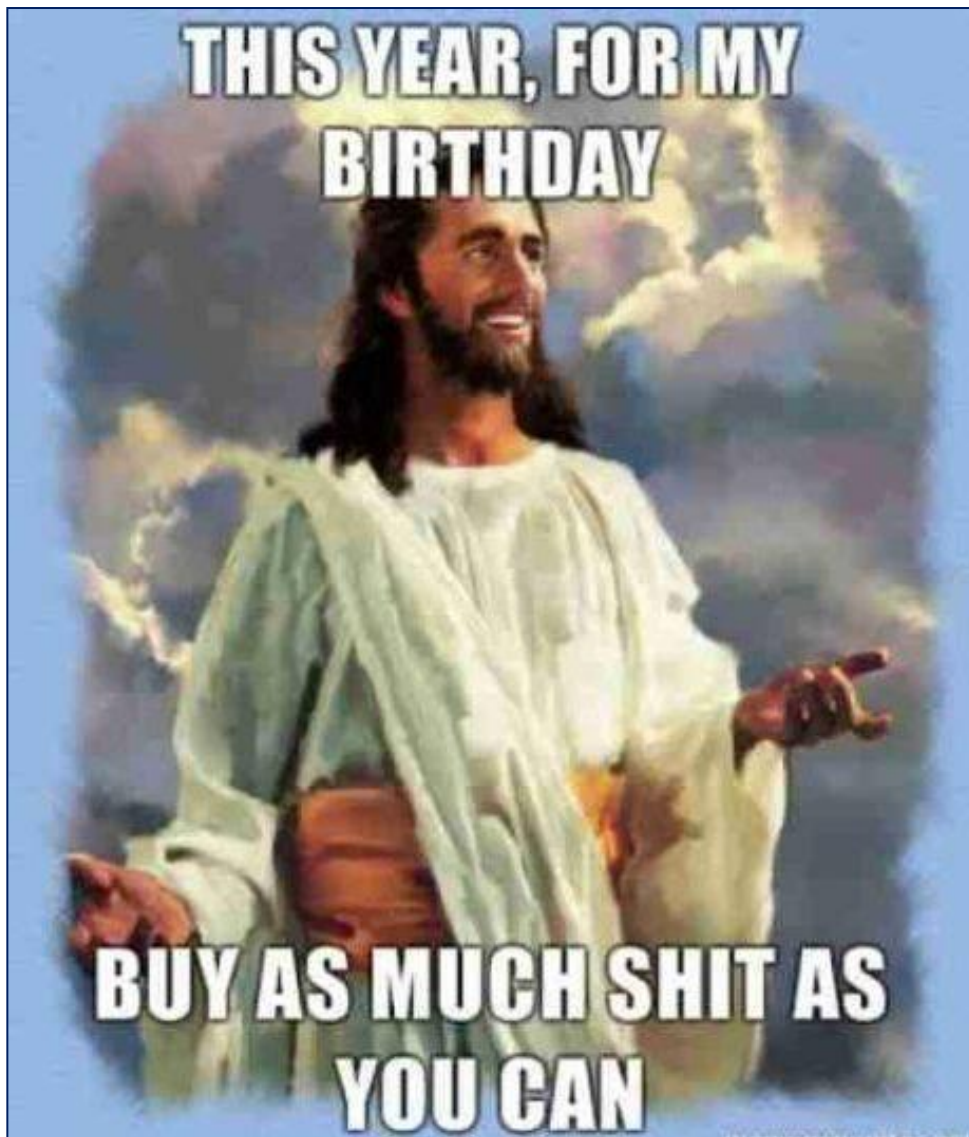
(** especially our personal enemies -- a la [Matthew 5:40-44](#), and the downtrodden in our communities -- a la [Matthew 25:35-40](#))

Matthew 6:19-20 ... a Lessening of Stuff

(08/02/2016)

Actually, despite the vehemence of this meme -- Jesus said nothing of the sort, and indeed often encouraged his followers to do exactly the opposite -- namely, to worry not about their material needs, to give more than they received, to make their lives about Love, to share of their Selves more than their "stuff" -- which is, of course, fantastic advice for us today as well.

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. Instead, store up for yourselves treasures of the Heart in Heaven, where moths and vermin cannot nibble, and where thieves cannot pillage and rob." ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 6:19-20)

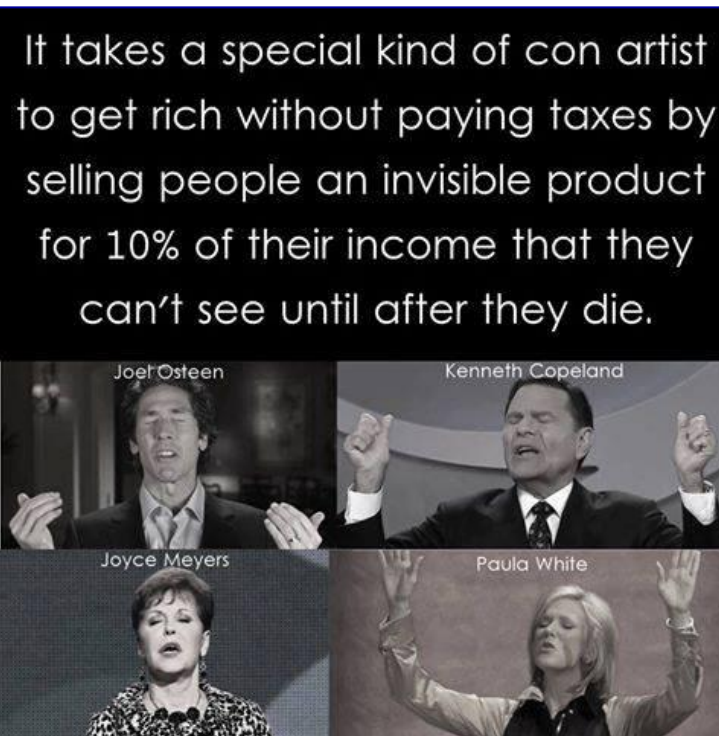


Matthew 19:21 ... Knowing your Prophets
(08/03/2016)

Regardless of what might be said about the relative sins &/or merits of the Christian church, there is little doubt that its primary tenets come from the letters of Paul. And without delving into the easily provable Truth that Paul's gospel (see [1 Corinthians 15:1-4](#) + [Romans 10:9](#)) was actually a self-made theology that directly contradicted The Gospel of Jesus Christ (see [Matthew 10:7](#) + [Matthew 24:12-14](#)), I thought it would be helpful to provide a little tip as to how any Christian believer can easily tell whether or not his or her pastor is a true "Man (or Woman) of the Cloth" (whose teachings should be attentively respected), or is an out & out "false prophet" (whose preaching should be respectfully ignored) ...

And that little tip is the following: If your pastor maintains significantly more wealth than the poorest member of his or her congregation (if not the poorest member of his or her immediate community), then he or she is a charlatan -- a false prophet of the first order -- a man or woman who obviously has rejected The Way of Jesus Christ, or at the very least knows exceedingly little thereof.

“Be perfect [in Love], just as your heavenly Father is perfect ... If you wish to be perfect, go, sell all your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and then you will have treasure in Heaven. Thereafter, come and follow me.” ~ Jesus Christ ([Matthew 5:48](#) + [Matthew 19:21](#))



Matthew 18:3-4 ... To become again as a Child

(08/04/2016)

“Truly I tell you, unless you change and become again like toddlers*, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Indeed, whoever becomes humble like this very young child* will even now become the greatest in the Kingdom.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 18:3-4)

***NOTE** that the author of Matthew does not have Jesus admonishing us to become like adolescents or school-age children or even kindergarteners in this passage, but rather uses the Greek "**paidion**" (Strong's #3813) -- a term that means "infant" or "toddler" or "very young child"; the time in life when wonderment is ever in view and Love is ever given without condition.

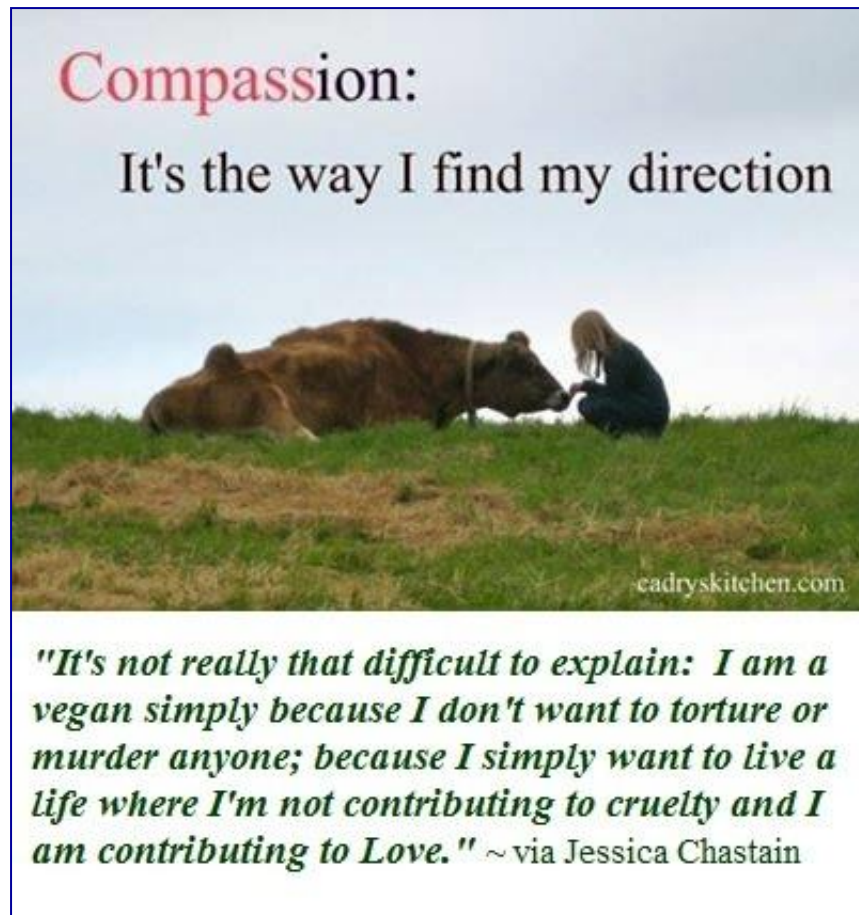


“Have a heart that never hardens, a temper that never tires,
and a touch that never harms.” ~ Charles Dickens

John 12:26 ... To truly FOLLOW Him
(08/05/2016)

You know, Jesus never once said "worship me" anywhere in the Bible. Indeed, he often went out of his way to tell folks **not** to do so (see [Matthew 7:21-22](#), [Mark 10:18](#), [Luke 4:8](#), [John 5:22](#), [John 6:15](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al) ... What he *did* tell folks to do was to **follow** him -- to openly adopt his teachings -- to fully enliven his Love -- to boldly emulate his values of Kindness and Justice and Decency and Respect for others. And one of the very best ways any of us can do so these days is to Go Vegan ... Peace to **all**.

“Whoever wishes to serve me must follow me ... For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done for you ... If you understand these things, you are blessed while you do them ... Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me must also do the works that I do ... They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me ... And this is my commandment: that you love others just as purely as I have loved you.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 12:26 + John 13:15-17 + John 14:12 + John 14:21 + John 15:12)

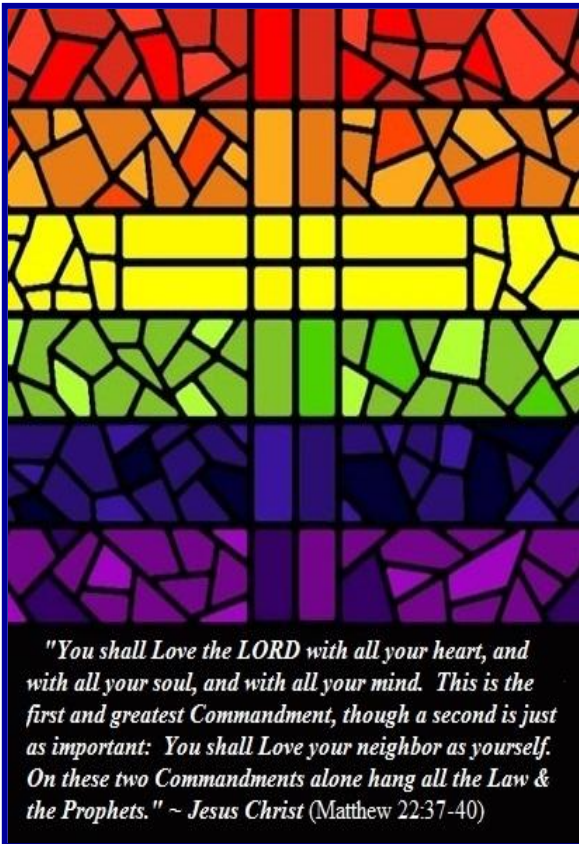


Matthew 22:39 ... Knowing your Neighbors
(08/06/2016)

“And the second [of my commandments] is just like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 22:39)

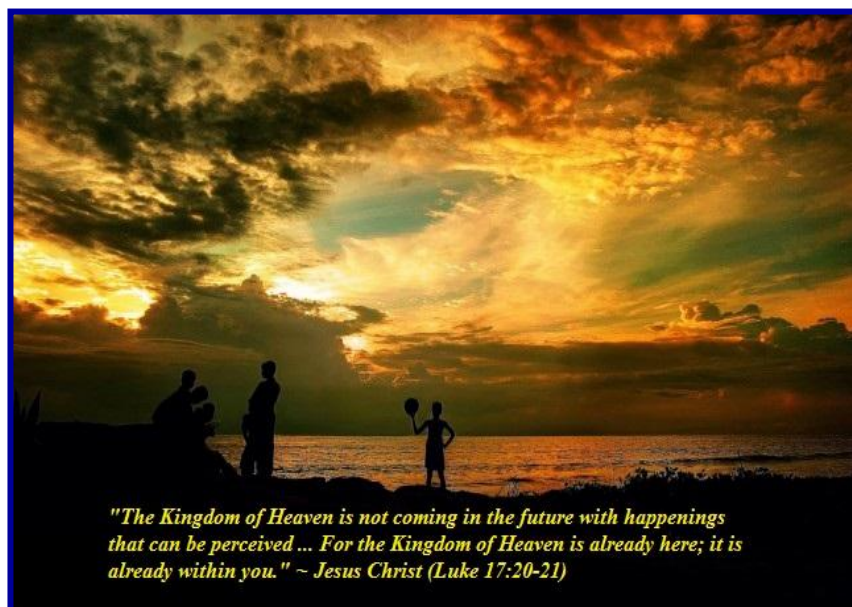
Most folks already know that Jesus admonished us all to "Love our neighbors" – and yet what most folks *don't* know is that Jesus defined "neighbor" only once in the entire Bible; and that when he did so, he defined our "neighbor" as our "*enemy*" (see [Luke 10:29-37](#)); the ones who are most marginalized in society; the ones who are treated as outcasts; the ones who are being ostracized &/or abused; the ones who are most mean, most dishonest, most manipulative, &/or most annoying; quite simply the ones who the majority of us least wish to Love.

Please consider this great Truth with Humility ...
& then please enliven it with Courage.



1 John 4:12 ... Acting accordingly
(08/07/2016)

To deeply know the essence many folks call "God" is to feel a profound and unconditional LOVE for all sentient beings – while acting accordingly.



Matthew 7:21 ... To be a GOOD Christian

(08/08/2016)

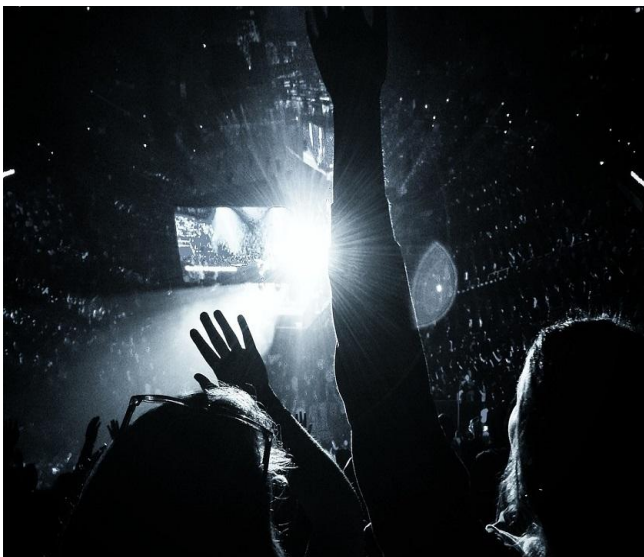
Newsflash: Despite what Paul the prophet-of-old and many modern day Christian preachers say to the contrary, it doesn't matter if you have been baptized as a Christian -- and it doesn't matter if you devoutly say your prayers every night -- and it doesn't matter if you go to church every Sunday -- and it sure as Hell (pun duly intended) doesn't matter if you tithe 10% of your money to the tabernacle of your choice ... No, my dear Friends -- if you consider yourself to be a Christian only one thing truly matters (and this, straight from the mouth of Jesus Christ himself); namely, ***what you DO for others*** – the Kindness you show them (especially in those moments when you least wish to show it) & the Mercy you give them (especially in those moments when you least wish to give it -- and especially for those "least deserving" of the same).

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but rather only the ones who enliven the will of my Father will do so.”

~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 7:21)

Amen ... Let it be so.

NOTE: This particular offer of "salvation" is valid for *all* beings, Christians & non-Christians alike.



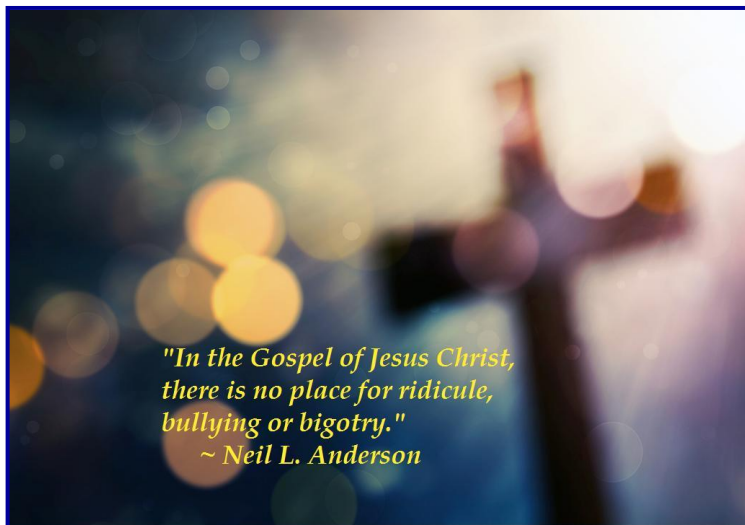
John 14:6 ... The Way of many Ways (08/09/2016)

It is true that the Bible claims that Jesus said “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me” in John 14:6 ... Of course, what most Christians fail to understand is that Jesus never said that there was only one way to walk his Way, or that there was only one religious dogma that fulfilled his Truth, or that there was only one lifestyle that enlivened his Life. Indeed, Jesus went out of his way on dozens of occasions in the Bible to show that he did *not* want to be worshipped as a god (Mark 10:18, John 7:16, John 8:50-55, John 12:44 et al), that he did *not* want to start a new religion (Matthew 5:17-18 et al), and that he most certainly did *not* reject or condemn *anyone*, regardless of their race or their gender or their sexual inclinations or their religion.

And this far-more-Beauty-full interpretation is actually supported by the Greek used in John 14:6, namely the Greek word that is commonly translated as "through" -- the Greek word "*dia*" - the Greek word which did not mean "via" or "because of" or "on account of", but rather meant "in honor of" or "by emulation of" (Strong's #1223) ... You see, my dear Friends, Jesus (at least according to the Scriptures) was an emissary of humble, unconditional, selfless, and indeed joyfully self-sacrificial LOVE. And as such, he cannot have ever demanded that only those who worshipped him or only those who literally followed him would be saved or "know the Father" ... Indeed, what he *did* say -- and what he so clearly and so consistently showed throughout his 3 year ministry -- was the simple Truth that the only WAY to know the full TRUTH of a fully Meaning-full LIFE was to live that life LOVE-fully; where that Love was not given to him with words or thoughts or prayers or passion, but rather was given to all others nearby in acts of Kindness and Service and Mercy and Caring ... And *this* my Friends was his Way -- and *this* was his Truth -- for *this* was his entire Life!

May we each have the humility to awaken thereto -- and may we each have the courage to act accordingly thereafter.

Amen ... Let it be so.



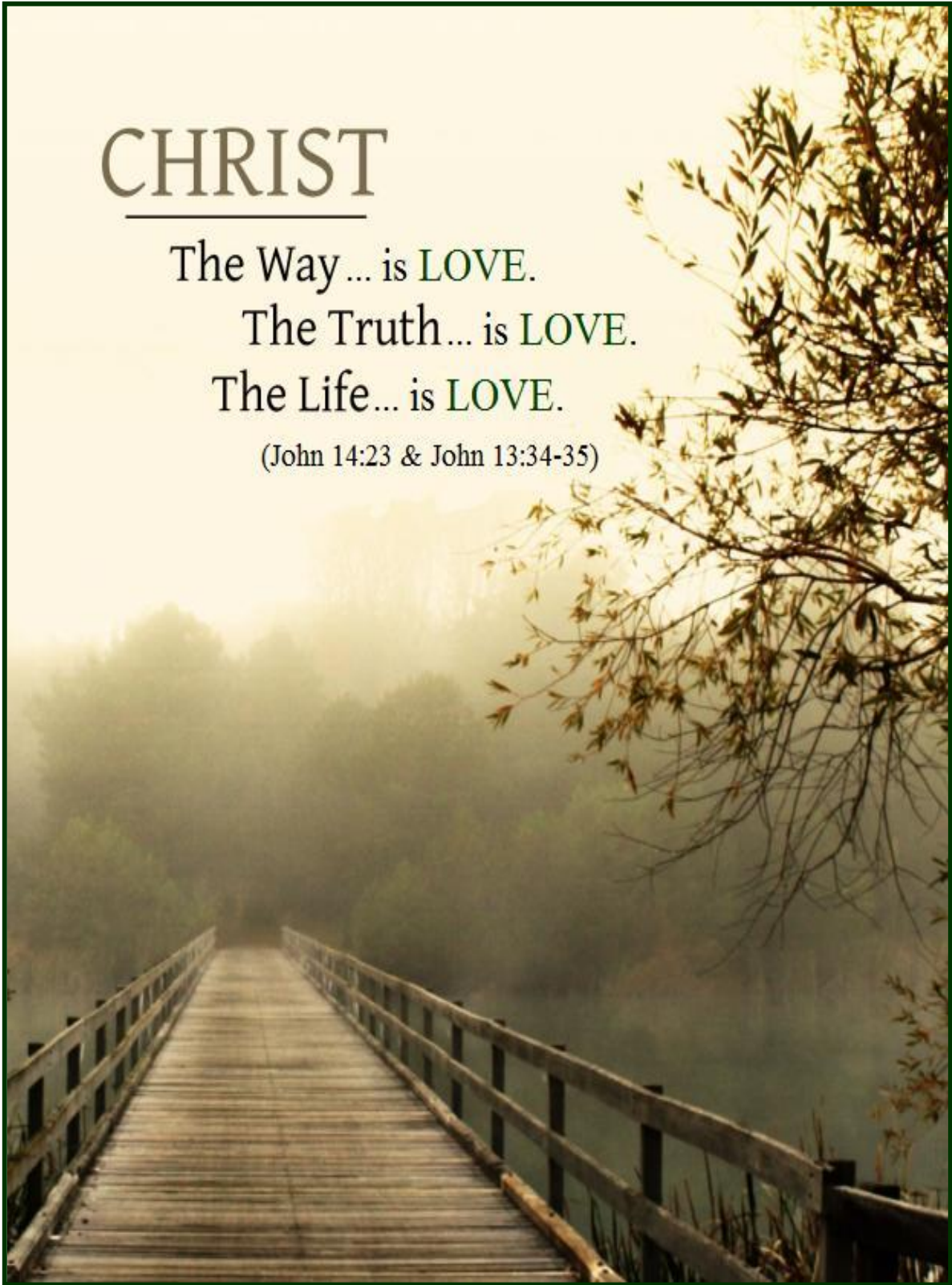
CHRIST

The Way... is LOVE.

The Truth... is LOVE.

The Life... is LOVE.

(John 14:23 & John 13:34-35)



2 Timothy 1:6-7 ... The Gift of God within

(08/10/2016)

“Rekindle the Gift of God that is within You ... for God did not Give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a Spirit of Power & of Love.” ~ unknown (2 Timothy 1:6-7)

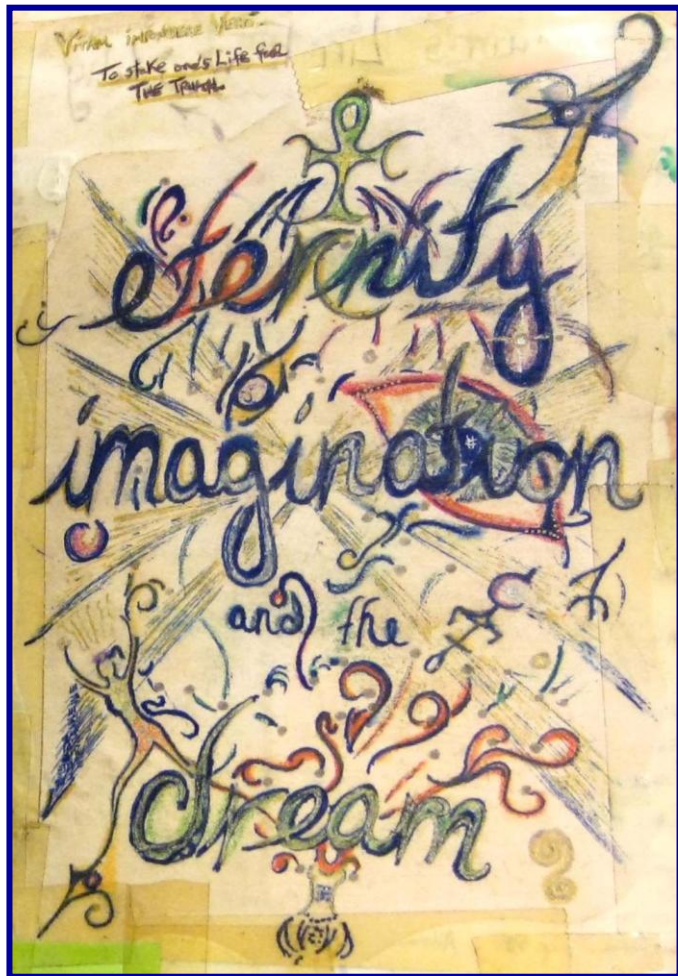
What many fail to realize when reading this verse is that just because a Gift is truly given, does not mean that it is properly cherished ... And this is true indeed in the gift of "Grace" that each and every one of us has each been given -- a gift that has been showered upon us all in three parts:

(01) We have each been given a sense of self-Awareness (what many call consciousness), ...

(02) We have each been given an internal moral compass (what many call conscience),and ...

(03) We have each been given the ability to use both of the aforementioned to powerfully & positively influence our surroundings (via the quantum interconnection of our intentions with everything around us, via the limbic interconnection of our feelings with every sentient being residing nearby, and via the direct interconnection that blossoms in every courageous deed that harmonizes the former with the latter).

Of course, these three Gifts are not what makes us truly Human ... We become truly Human only in the moments we choose to selflessly use these the facets of Grace to bring Peace &/or Joy to another.



Acts 1:7 ... The Power of the Divine

(08/11/2016)

“It is not for you to know the times & happenings that the Father has set by His own Authority.” ~ Luke (Acts 1:7)

On its face, this verse seems to claim that there is an external force (what some call “God”) that already knows what will occur in a future that is immutable. And while the physics of time seem to point to the possibility that the future has indeed already occurred (if interested, research “eternalism”), it is important to remember a few things:

01) “The Father” mentioned here is an *internal* entity; a facet of each sentient being's body-encompassed, psychological True Self, and ...

02) Even though time might indeed be a circular reality, it is perceived by all conscious beings as having a linear flow – a linear flow in which our linear consciousness functions.

As such, in deeper terms this verse is essentially a call to “go with the flow”; essentially a summons to accept whatever happens to us by responding to those things as though they are happening *FOR* us.



2 Timothy 4:2 ... Proclaiming the Good News

(08/12/2016)

“Proclaim the Message [of Love]; be persistent, regardless of whether the time is favorable or unfavorable ... Encourage others with the utmost Patience.”

~ author unknown (2 Timothy 4:2)

This verse can be misleading unless read with gentle “lenses” ... On its face, it seems to admonish us to try and convince (or even downright convert) others to our own way of thinking or believing. This is ***NOT*** its far greater meaning. Rather, on a far more divine level, “utmost patience” can be read as “absolute Acceptance”; knowing that others already subconsciously aware of their uniquely perfect Path, and that it is our privilege to support them and *their* journeys unconditionally. Indeed, this is the apex of the virtue of Patience; guiding others with loving deeds and supportive words; purposefully avoiding any conversations that are in any way advisory or persuasive (especially those that are in any way critical) ... For in the end we have been Called to Love others, my Friends, not to correct or convince them.



Real & true Acceptance is a verb ...

Romans 13:11-12 ... A Time to Awaken

(08/13/2016)

“It is Now the moment for You to awaken ...
The night is far gone; the day is near.
Let us therefore lay aside the works of darkness
and put on the Armor of [Love’s] Light.”
~ Paul (Romans 13:11-12)

This is quite the in-Sight-full verse -- a Truth that becomes clear when we realize that the “moment to awaken” is Here&Now, and that it is neither dark nor light in *this* critical time. In other words, the choice between actions that are self-serving (“dark”) and those that are selfless (“light”) is a perfectly pristine one in every present moment – regardless of your ego's internal doubts to the contrary.

And how are we to engage this choice? By setting aside the “works of darkness” (active sins of selfishness) and donning the “Armor of Light” (deeds of radical Goodness) -- noting while we do so that Light does not recede & defend against shadow, but rather extends outward and willingly lends its brilliance to the shadows.

Amen ... Let it be so.



*Titus 3:1 ... Being truly **READY***

(08/14/2016)

“Be ready for every Good Work.”

~ unknown (Titus 3:1)

Of course, to be truly “ready” for every Good Work is to see the Good Work that is always available nearby -- **and** then to engage the same courageously and with little hesitation.



1 Timothy 6:17-18 ... Being Wealthy in WORKS
(08/15/2016)

“God provides us with everything we need for our true enjoyment.; for we are here to Do Good, to be rich in Good Works, and ever-ready to share.”

~ unknown (1 Timothy 6:17-18)

The opportunity to selflessly Care for another is everything we need for our deepest in-JOY-ment (indeed, radically & fully giving to another is the only way to fully access the same). And this opportunity is omnipresent; available to each & every one of us in every single moment of our lives. The Gift in question need not be physical and it need not be to one of the “downtrodden” (though the former given to the latter are Power-full gifts in-deed). For in Truth almost every sentient being we encounter is essentially starved for a real, intimate Connection. And as such, mere warm eye-contact & a gentle smile is more than enough (though a heart-felt Hello and a long embrace are more than fine as well) ...

And even for those who find themselves “[alone in the desert](#)” -- even for those who are not blessed with sentient cousins nearby to whom to give, there is always the opportunity to pause and sink into Gratitude while sinking to one's knees; always the opportunity to consciously beam out a profound and overwhelming emission of Love for Life itself.

Amen ... Let it be so.



Genesis 19 ... The real sin of Sodom

(08/16/2016)

It is in [Genesis 19](#) that we find the infamous tale of Sodom & Gomorrah -- a story beloved by many a conservative Christian, and often used thereby to "prove" without a doubt that homosexuality itself is "sinful in the eyes of the Lord" ... And to be fair, it *is* easy to see why those over-eager evangelicals could make such a mistake, for the verses in question state: “But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house; and they called to Lot, and said ‘Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, so that we may know them’ ... Then the Lord rained on Sodom & Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the Lord out of heaven” ([Genesis 19:4-5 + 24](#)) ...

And yet, when we have the humility and the wherewithal to look more closely at the texts in question, a very different picture emerges ...

First of all, it is important to note that it was “[all the people to the last man](#)” who committed the sin that led to the destruction of those cities – men who were almost exclusively *heterosexuals* ...

Secondly, the sin in question was *not* homosexual love or homosexual relationships or homosexual marriage or even homosexual sex, but rather the intended **RAPE** of two fallen angels by a horde of heterosexual men. As such, the crime here was not a crime of passion at all, but rather the moral perversion of sexual assault – a crime of rage & power.

Thirdly, and for Christians most importantly, the Bible itself (in [Ezekiel 16:49](#) & [Luke 17:28-29](#)) makes it quite clear that homosexuality had nothing at all to do with the destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah. Indeed, the book of [Ezekiel](#) notes that the cities were destroyed for not assisting the poor and the needy in their midst, while Jesus openly states that Sodom & Gomorrah were destroyed not due to the presence of homosexual lasciviousness, but rather because the inhabitants thereof were soaked in the sins of selfish gluttony and rampant materialism. But don't take my word for it – just listen to the Bible itself:

“This was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy.” ~ [Ezekiel 16:49](#)

“Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot: they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, but on the day that Lot left Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed all of them.” ~ [Jesus Christ \(Luke 17:28-29\)](#)



John 12:44 ... Which to choose & which to Follow (08/17/2016)

While the teachings of Paul (upon which the modern-day Christian religion were built) *do* claim that Jesus was the one and only Son of God, and while they *do* purport that only those who worship Jesus accordingly will be granted entrance into an eternal paradise after death, Jesus himself (in the texts of the same Bible, no less) repeatedly begged to differ ... Indeed, he actually told his followers to *avoid* worshipping him; told them over & over & over again to focus their adorations on an all-Loving God "above" ([Matthew 5:48](#)), to receive their guidance from Heaven "within" ([Luke 17:20-21](#)), and to concentrate their actions & their energies and indeed the majority of their entire lives on serving others "all around" ([John 13:15-17](#)) ... In truth, Jesus was a huge fan of humility (quite the understatement -- see [Matthew 18:3-4](#)), and as such it makes no sense at all that he would demand adoration in any way, shape, or form. What *does* make sense, however, is that Jesus would want us to *follow* him -- to adhere to his teachings of unconditional Love (especially for our enemies) and emulate his Way of selfless Service (given especially to the downtrodden). And indeed this theory is fully supported by the Scriptures – where Jesus made it *extremely* clear that he himself was **not** to be worshiped ([Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 12:44](#), [John 8:50](#), [John 8:54](#) et al); that even though he was fulfilling the prophesied requirements thereof, he was **not** the war-like Davidian Messiah for whom everyone longed ([Matthew 22:41-45](#), [Luke 19:42](#), [Luke 20:41-44](#), [Luke 22:50-51](#), [John 6:15](#) et al).

In fact, almost all of the Bible's references to "the Son of Man" speak **not** to a singular Messiah, but rather to humanity in general -- to *all of us* ... Yes, sometimes Jesus uses the term to relate to the potential awakening of the Child of God within, and yet he never uses it to arrogantly relate to himself.

"Why do you call me 'Good'; no one is Good but God alone ... Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life ... And whoever believes in me believes not in me, but in the One who sent me ... And Whoever believes in me, will **DO the works I do.**" ~ Jesus Christ ([Mark 10:18](#) + [John 6:47](#) + [John 12:44](#) + [John 14:12](#))



Question: Which Jesus pictured here would Jesus himself want you to worship?

Answer: None of the above, seeing as how Jesus didn't want us to worship him at all!

"Why do you praise me? There is only one who is Good, and that is God ... If anyone wishes to become my follower, let him deny his own desires and enliven my Way, by every day raising up his cross of selfless service for others." ~ Jesus Christ (Luke 9:23 & Luke 19:18)

Hebrews 3:13 ... Cheering each other onward
(08/18/2016)

“Exhort one another every day,
as long as it is called ‘today’”
~ unknown (Hebrews 3:13)

It is not enough to plan to care for another, or to wait to extend Kindness only on those days we judge to be special ("birthdays", "holidays", etc) ... For the time to Care is always now, and the person to Care for is always right next to you.

And how are we to Care for them -- how do we “**exhort**” them fully? By simply looking them in the eye, by choosing to see their True Self within, by smiling at them warmly, and then by asking if there is anything we can do to bring them more Peace. This is true exhortation; an unconditional affirmation of the other -- valid & whole just as he/she already is.

Amen ... Let it be so.



... just like LOVE, is a verb.

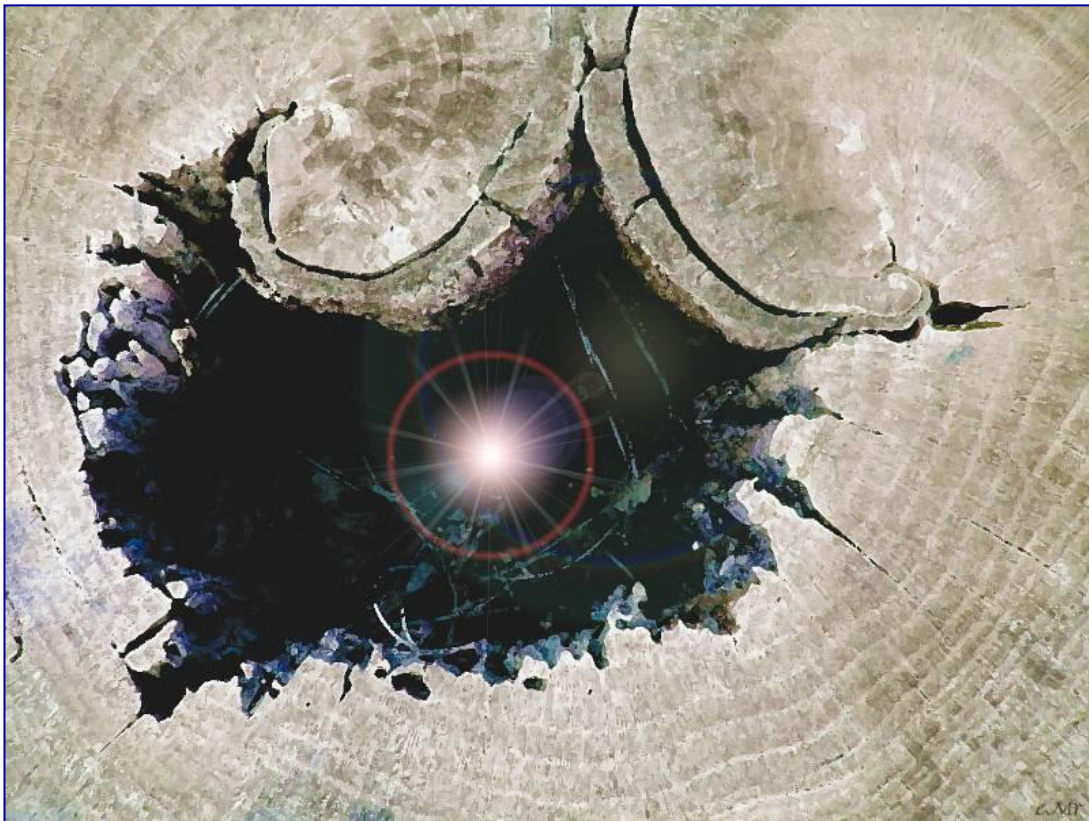
1 Corinthians 2:7 ... The Wisdom of God

(08/19/2016)

“We speak God’s Wisdom, secret and hidden, which He decreed before the ages to be our path to [the] Glory [of perfect Peace].” ~ Paul (1 Corinthians 2:7)

Fair enough, and yet how can anyone openly & understandably speak a wisdom that is “secret and hidden”? Well, maybe for the simple reason that it is hidden from us *within us*. Indeed this is the deeper meaning of Paul declaring that God's will of selfless Love was “decreed before the ages” – a term used to allude to the ability possessed by every sentient being to purposefully unify his/her two opposing realities (the self-serving ego-self with the service-based True Self) in every chosen moment of willing self-sacrifice ...

As such, even though Paul himself was a coward more often than not -- and as such more often than not openly denied this particular meaning of this particular verse, he ends up inadvertently championing Jesus' Way of Selfless Love therewith regardless.



3 John 1:11 ... To Be with God

(08/20/2016)

“Whoever Does Good is in harmony with God;
whoever does evil has yet to comprehend God.”
~ unknown (3 John 1:11)

This is a verse that is almost as popular as it is misunderstood ... For starters, take care to note that -- just like the broad penumbra of Jesus' fully unconditional LOVE -- the focus here is on *action* as opposed to mere intellectual belief. Next, note as well that those doing good are not judged worthy by God, but rather are considered to be “*with God*”, and that those who do not choose to do good are not condemned by God, but rather simply do not yet “*comprehend God*”.

As such, the deeper meaning of this passage advises that to truly Know God, we must first act as if we *are* God, whereupon we will realize in so doing that we have indeed been a living facet of the Grand Divine all along.

Amen ... Let it be so.



James 1:17 ... Every act of Giving
(08/21/2016)

“Every truly generous act of Giving, along with every perfectly selfless Gift, comes from the Divine; coming out from the Father of Light, with whom there is no variation or shadow cast by change.” ~ unknown (James 1:17)

This verse traditionally has the acts of giving coming from “above; coming down from the Father” -- and any humble reader of Scripture must indeed admit that it is possible that some gifts are indeed showered upon us from "on high" via any array of mysterious, external “celestial sources.” And yet the true power of this verse becomes illuminated the moment we alter the original wording to what we have here: “comes from the Divine; coming *out* from the Father” – emphasizing the Truth that we are able to access the Divine residing *within us* in every moment of our lives, not merely those times when a potential external godhead seems to bless us notoriously. And this second interpretation actually makes more sense – After all, if the Father indeed has “no variation or shadow,” and if that Father is indeed composed Love untainted (see [1 John 4](#) & [Matthew 5:48](#), for starters), then It (or He, or She) can do nothing by its very nature but constantly shower us all with blessings.

More importantly, on a purely practical level, the greatest experience of Peace always comes in those moments when we choose to extend Kindness to our enemies (in those moments when we least wish do so, directly to those "least deserving" of the same) – and this ultra-potent choice always comes from within; never from “above”. Indeed, if it were to come authoritatively “from above”, it wouldn't allow for the requisite unhindered choice at all.

As such, it is therefore the Father's greatest gift that he has enabled us to do such powerful Giving – that we are each able to choose to be a source of blessing for others, rather than merely yearning for the same for ourselves.



Hebrews 4:15-16 ... The highest Priest

(08/22/2016)

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet [ultimately] was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” ~ unknown (Hebrews 4:15-16)

This verse has often been used by Christians to excuse – if not to openly justify – their own selfishly sinful choices; to say that it matters not what they have done to others, as long as they bow down to Jesus and beg his forgiveness for the same. Of course, I do not read it in this way at all ... To me, this passage reminds us that Jesus was indeed a human being ([Acts 2:22](#) & [Mark 10:18](#) et al) – a man who suffered from the same temptations as the rest of us, a man who even occasionally succumbed to those temptations, and yet also a man who transcended those temptations in magnificently resolute and highly noble fashions. He does not show us in the Bible a state of perfection to which we cannot hope to arrive, but rather shows us a state of perfect Love that each & every one of us can indeed attain ... Indeed, any true Master is not “above” us at all, but rather has already experienced the Truths we ourselves seek to know – and reminds us that we too can tread where he or she has already gone.

And indeed, in order to experience transcendence to True Self, we must start from a place of ego – we must start from a place of sin (being selfish, succumbing to whim or temptation). As such, the true Master cannot have true Compassion for sinners unless he/she has already experienced the pain of sinning – the torment inherently felt by every sinner. The Master knows that no one needs mercy administered from any external source – not from others, not from that Master, not even from God Itself. Only the Mercy that we give ourselves can have any significant impact on our journey -- only the Mercy that we give ourselves when we reach out to Care for others in our own times of intense fear or dire need. For this is only sermon of the highest Priest who resides within us, and this is the only Grace that continually guides us from within – the only Grace that leads us Home through all our times of trial & all our times of trembling.



Genesis 1:3 ... Letting in the Light
(08/23/2016)

“Then God said ‘**Let there Be Light.**’”
~ unknown (Genesis 1:3)

This verse runs *much* deeper than one might expect. Yes, it reflects the Truth that everything in the Universe is indeed composed of light; alongside the Truth that everything is essentially a facet of one single Cosmos. Of course, as with any other verse in any other sacred text, it also reflects a socially interactive Truth -- in this case a Truth related to the dangers of mixing pride with desire, as it was actually the Elohim (the *plural* Hebrew word for “**gods**” in Genesis – often referring to “fallen angels” in the Old Testament, not to God Himself) were the ones who separated the light from the All for their own whim and profit; creating darkness in the process.

How intriguing that something very similar happens to each of us every time we do anything solely for personal benefit, instead of reaching out to be Kind to a stranger or Care for a friend or Forgive an enemy.



1 Peter 4:12 ... The fiery Ordeals

(08/24/2016)

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal
that is taking place within you to test you.”

~ unknown (1 Peter 4:12)

The key in this verse, as is so often the case in the New Testament, is the word “*within*” ... So often we are tempted to judge our lives' external “difficulties” or “crises” or “tragedies” as ordeals – even though every one of them we have co-created with (or at least co-attracted to) ourselves.

And yet it is the internal “*ordeal*” that was given to us at conception -- the internal struggle between selfish ego and selfless conscience -- that forms the psychological & spiritual crucible for our potential rebirth as Children of God; the state of sheer Bliss that wells up whenever we choose to set our external “ordeals” aside to Care for others.



Thomas 1:70 ... Bringing IT forth

(08/25/2016)

“If you bring forth what is inside of you, what you bring forth will Save you. If you do not bring forth what is inside of you, what you do not bring forth will destroy you.” ~ Jesus (Gospel of Thomas 70)

There is sometimes confusion regarding this verse in relation to what it is that is truly is “inside you” ... Yes, there is a self-centered ego inside us to be sure, and yet that entity is **not** the one mentioned here -- for even deeper than our primitive instinctual drive to survive (*much* deeper) is our Soul; that energetic, conscious essence that wants one thing and one thing only: for us to emerge as an active force for Love ... And the longer we wait to actualize this True Self, the more meaningless our lives become, the more self-focused we become, and the more suffering we experience as a result ... And if we choose to cower in this manner long enough, the deep-seated discordance we feel as a result will no longer be able to co-exist with the Universal Flow of Oneness within and all around us – and we will indeed know a most painful destruction of that self – to be ultimately Born anew again & again & again thereafter -- in every next opportunity to *Love anyway*.



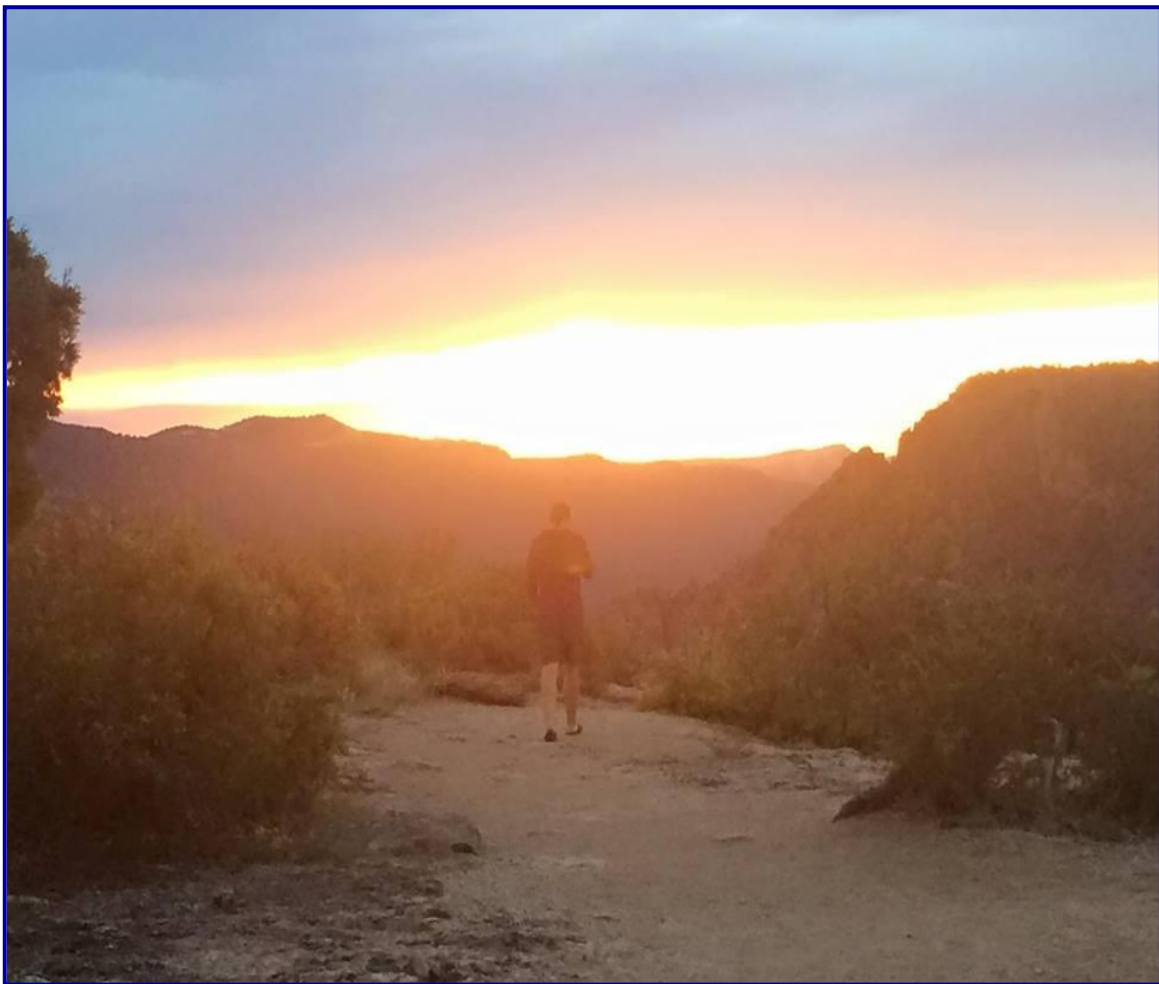
Luke 4:21 ... Full-filling the Scriptures

(08/26/2016)

“Today, this Scripture has been fulfilled in your Hearing.”

~ Luke (Luke 4:21)

This verse specifically refers to sections of the book of Isaiah ([Isaiah 61:1](#), [Isaiah 58:6](#) & [Isaiah 61:2](#)); sections cited in the only time the Bible shows Jesus reading Scripture publicly; sections quoted by Jesus in the synagogue to announce a deeper Truth: namely, that those who would have the courage to emulate (i.e. “Hear”) the radically pure Way of Love he was living, would indeed rediscover the profound Peace of true Freedom -- the intellectual Freedom from all confusion & doubt, the emotional Freedom from all fear & worry, and the spiritual Freedom from all selfishness & superficiality – a Freedom that transcended all earthly suffering – a Freedom he called “[the Kingdom of God](#)” (see [Luke 17:20-21](#) et al).

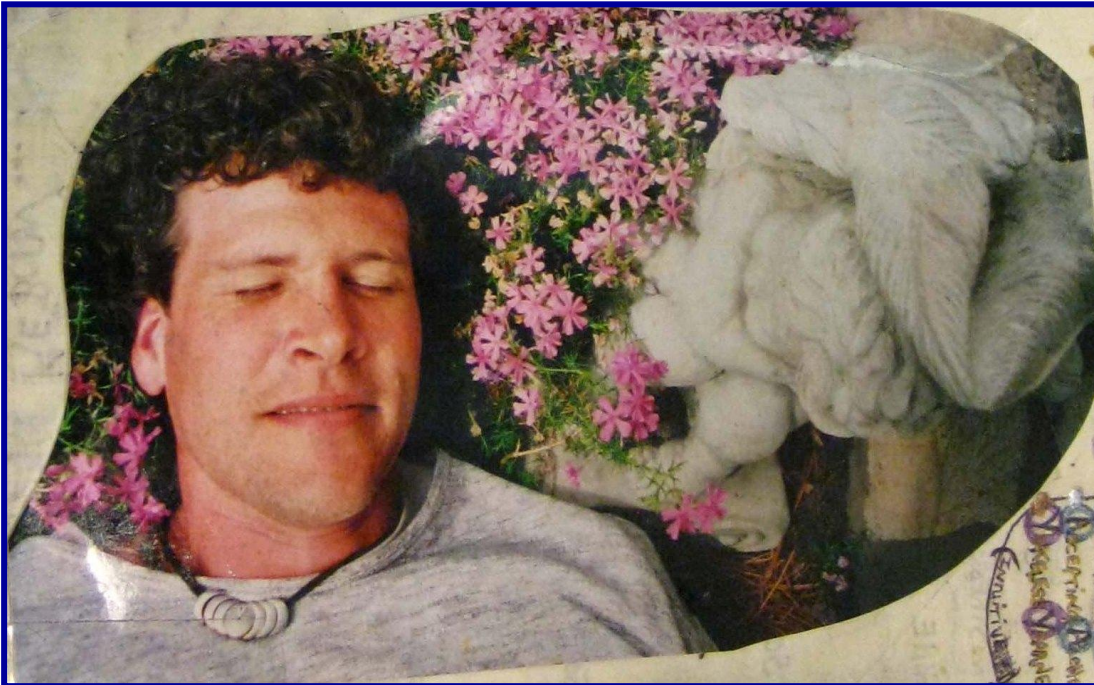


Mark 10:27 ... All things Possible

(08/27/2016)

“For mortals it is impossible, but not for God;
for God all things are possible ...” ~ unknown (Mark 10:27)

This verse seems to imply that we as humans can do nothing without assistance from an external Divinity. And yet in reality (which becomes clear when reading the larger context of its entire surrounding passage), this verse speaks to the *opposite* Truth: namely, that the Essence we often call God resides ***within us***, and that we can accomplish all that *this* Holy Spirit desires whenever we seek the one thing that the Divine seeks – a seamless Harmony with our surroundings; via bold-yet-gentle acts of selfless Love.



1 Thessalonians 2:17 ... Strengthening the Heart
(08/28/2016)

“Comfort your Hearts and strengthen them
in every Good Work and Word.”
~ Paul (1 Thessalonians 2:17)

Some read this verse and focus on the term “*your*” – thereby using its words as motivation to do “good deeds” in order to attain some sort of emotional reward thereafter. Let it be duly noted that this is definitely not the deeper meaning I am intending to share here ... Rather, the divine “*Comfort*” mentioned herein comes to us only in those moments when we are doing *for others* -- without expecting, desiring, or even thinking about any potential benefit that might come to us in return. After all, it is truly impossible for a Good Deed for another if we are doing the same to be in any way comforted thereby ourselves.



Revelation 2:28 ... The one who Conquers

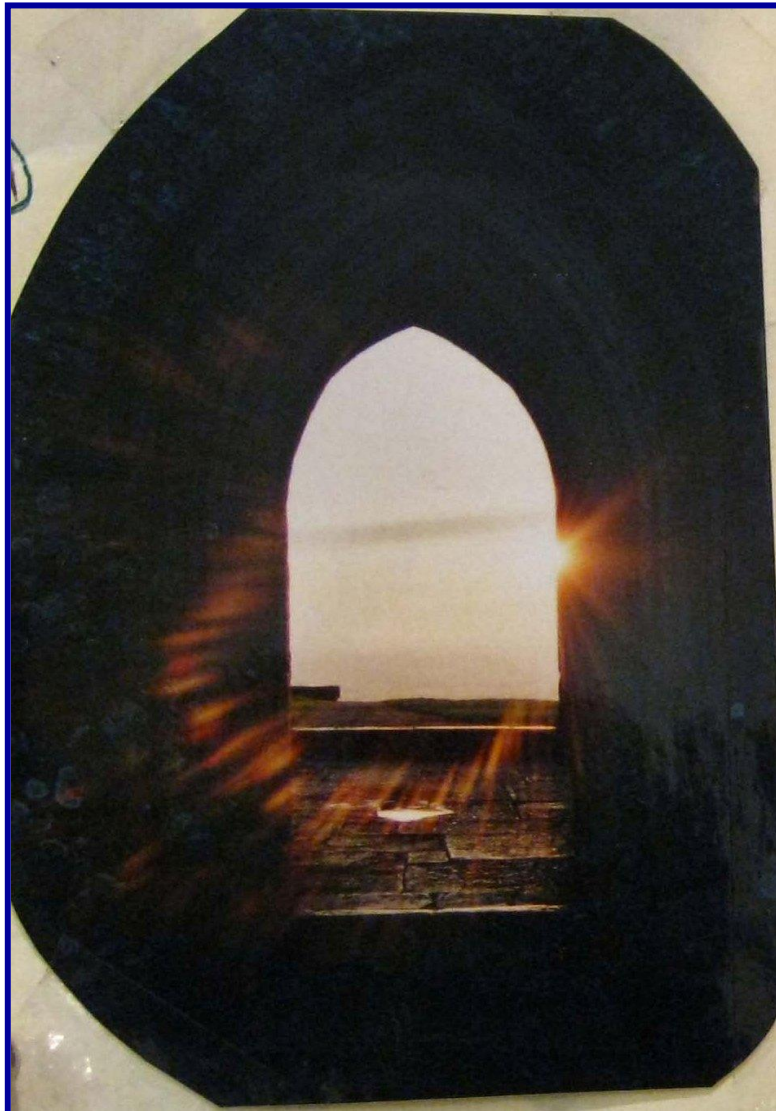
(08/29/2016)

“To the One who Conquers I will also give the Morning Star.”

~ unknown (Revelation 2:28)

For anyone looking to perceive the deeper (and by far the most practical) meaning of this verse, it is first & foremost important to realize that “**the one who conquers**” mentioned here is actually the one who chooses to submit to strangers & enemies alike -- by humbly choosing to ***Love them anyway***, and that “**the Morning Star**” here referenced is the Awakening to the sensation of overwhelming Bliss that always accompanies such pure & noble Victories of the Soul.

Amen ... Let it be so.



Luke 22:19-20 ... In remembrance of Him

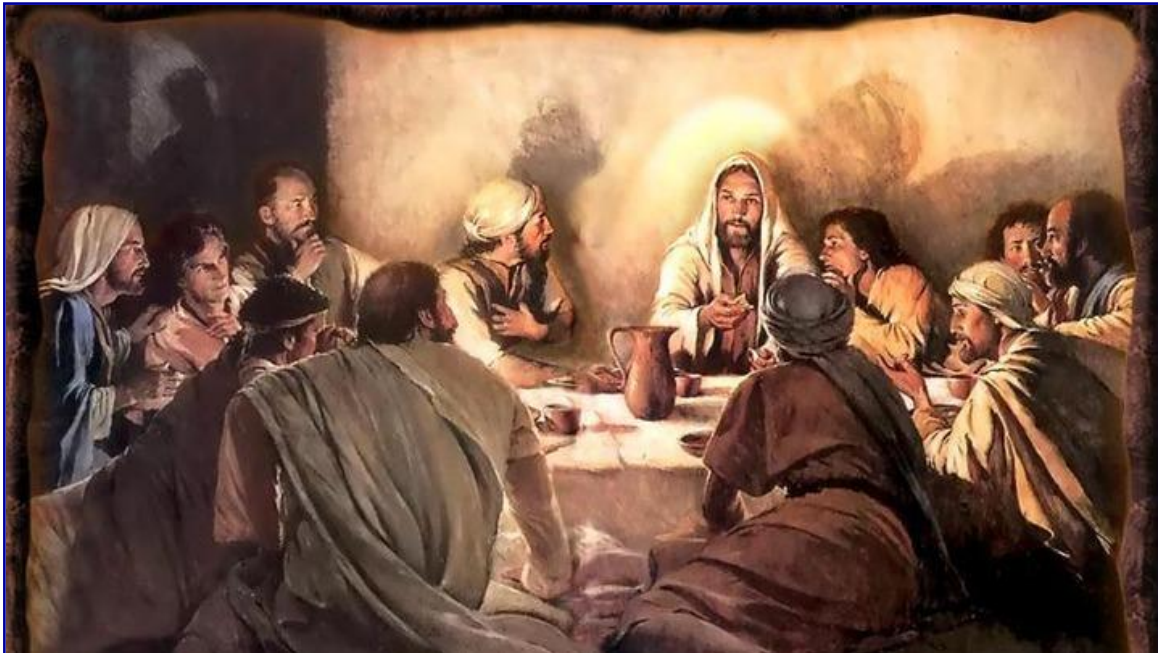
(08/30/2016)

“Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had Given Thanks, he broke it and gave it to them all, saying: ‘This is my body, which is Given for You. Do similarly in remembrance of Me.’ And he did the same with the cup, saying: ‘This cup that is poured out for You is the New Covenant [of unconditional Love] in my blood.’”

~ Luke (Luke 22:19-20)

While many Christians believe that Jesus is hereby commending his disciples to emulate his actions (via the Eucharist) as a means to attaining the end of a personal eternal salvation, the meanings embedded in this passage run far deeper than that. Indeed, as with the rest of the biblical scenes in which Jesus teaches others, his words here have a far deeper purpose than their mere face value ...

In the case at hand, he speaks of **BREAD** – which for Jesus was often a symbolic reference to self-sacrifice, and he speaks of **WINE** – which Jesus frequently used as a reference to the perfect Love of his Father; a perfect Love that blossoms forth from us all when we “eat the bread” by having the courage to selflessly Care for others ([John 13:15-17](#) et al) – when we have the courage to literally “do similarly” by “drinking deeply”; boldly embodying that same “divine wine” in our interactions with others.



Ephesians 4:4-6 ... Embodying The ONE

(08/31/2016)

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were summoned to the single focus of your Calling; so too is there one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God, and one Father of all, who is above all and through all and within all.”

~ unknown (Ephesians 4:4-6)

We all have unique Gifts to give the Earth and its sentient inhabitants, and all of these Gifts come from the same Source -- all embody the same primary-resonance; a base-frequency that many call unconditional *Love*.



Matthew 3:16-17 ... The opening of the Heavens
(09/01/2016)

“Suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting within Him. And a Voice from Heaven said: ***This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am pleased.***”
~ unknown (Matthew 3:16-17)

This verse can only be deeply understood when the reader remembers that “the heavens” refers to the Cosmos that is both above and all around us, whereas “Heaven” refers to one’s Soul -- the “Voice” thereof that is the human conscience: always calling us to reach out and Give more than long to receive; always summoning us to become a gateway to Heaven for others (via acts of self-sacrificial Charity & Kindness) – and never looking to bargain for an effortless entrance to a post-mortem “paradise” for ourselves.



Titus 1:15 ... Purity for the Pure
(09/02/2016)

“To the Pure all things are Pure.”
~ unknown (Titus 1:15)

NOTE: It is impossible to know real purity (much less accurately perceive anything as being truly Pure) until we have purely lived LOVE -- a Love without hope, a Love without expectation, a Love without desire, a Love without limitation, and a Love without condition.



Hebrews 2:8 ... In subjecting all things
(09/03/2016)

“Now in subjecting all things to them,
God left nothing outside their influence.”
~ unknown (Hebrews 2:8)

What more than a few Christians (and a few non-Christians as well) forget when reading this verse is the fact that, while an all-Loving God will continually influence us all to Do Good (and thereby inspire us to come to know the real Bliss that only comes to those who willingly self-sacrifice for others), He cannot *demand* that we do so ... For LOVE is only potent when given freely (especially in those moments we least wish to do so, and especially for those "least deserving" of the same), and as such Love is feeble and powerless without an unhindered opportunity to refuse to give it ... Likewise, while an all-Loving God has seemingly given us all the power to turn our misfortunes into opportunities for Peace and our trials into opportunities for personal empowerment, He has not given us the power over the Flow of Life itself.

In other words, we have relatively little influence over what happens to us, even though we do have complete control over how we respond to the same – that we cannot do anything about the inevitability of “bad things” happening to us, and yet are always fully free to use those difficult &/or dis-eased situations to empower all subsequent deeds of Kindness -- thereby deeply enhancing all subsequent sensations of deep-seated Peace.

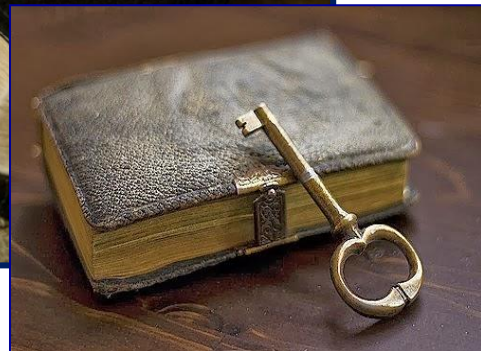
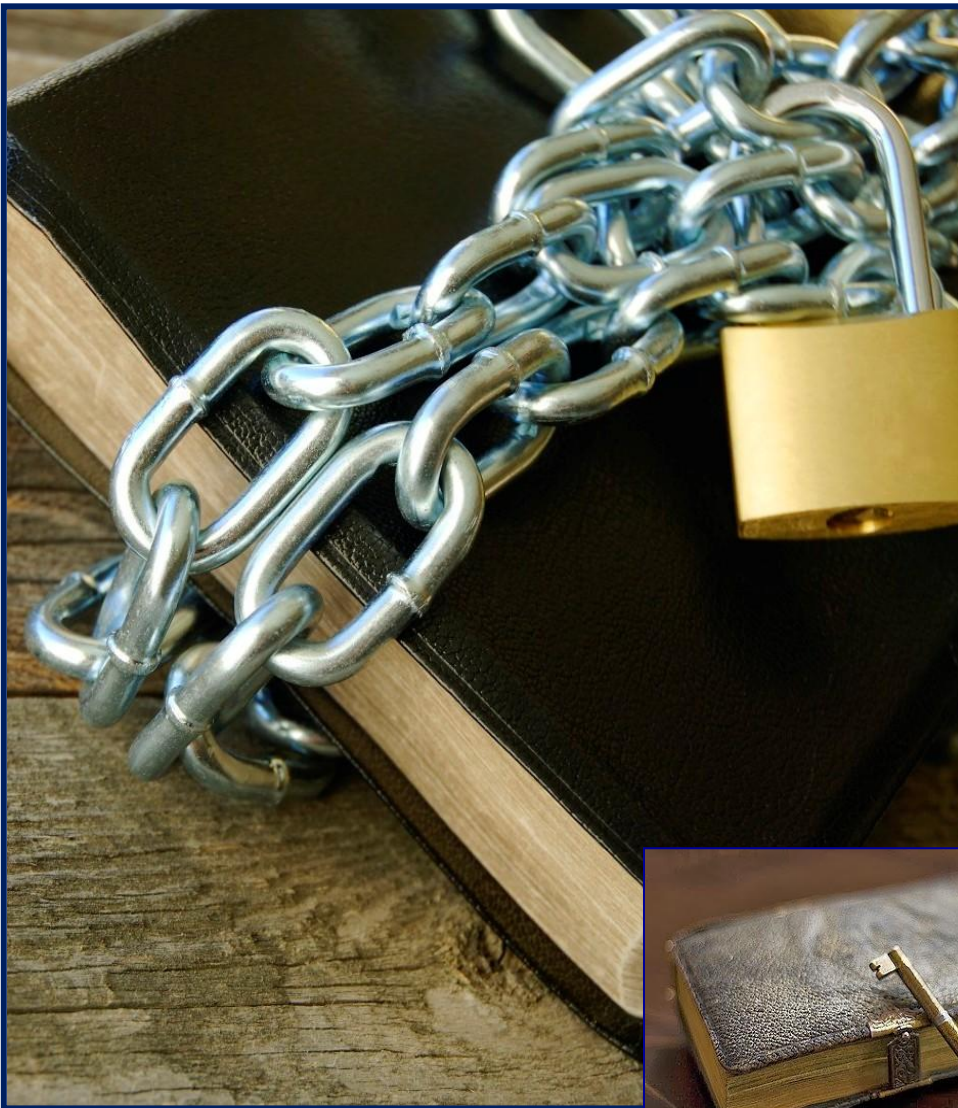


2 Timothy 2:9 ... Unchaining the Word of God

(09/04/2016)

“But the Word of God is not chained.”
~ unknown (2 Timothy 2:9)

This is a verse which means, of course, that the Bible itself allows us – nay, encourages us (nay again, in-Courages us) – to interpret its passages as divinely (i.e. as Lovingly) as we wish (i.e. as Lovingly as our Soul’s would interpret them – namely, as Lovingly as possible).

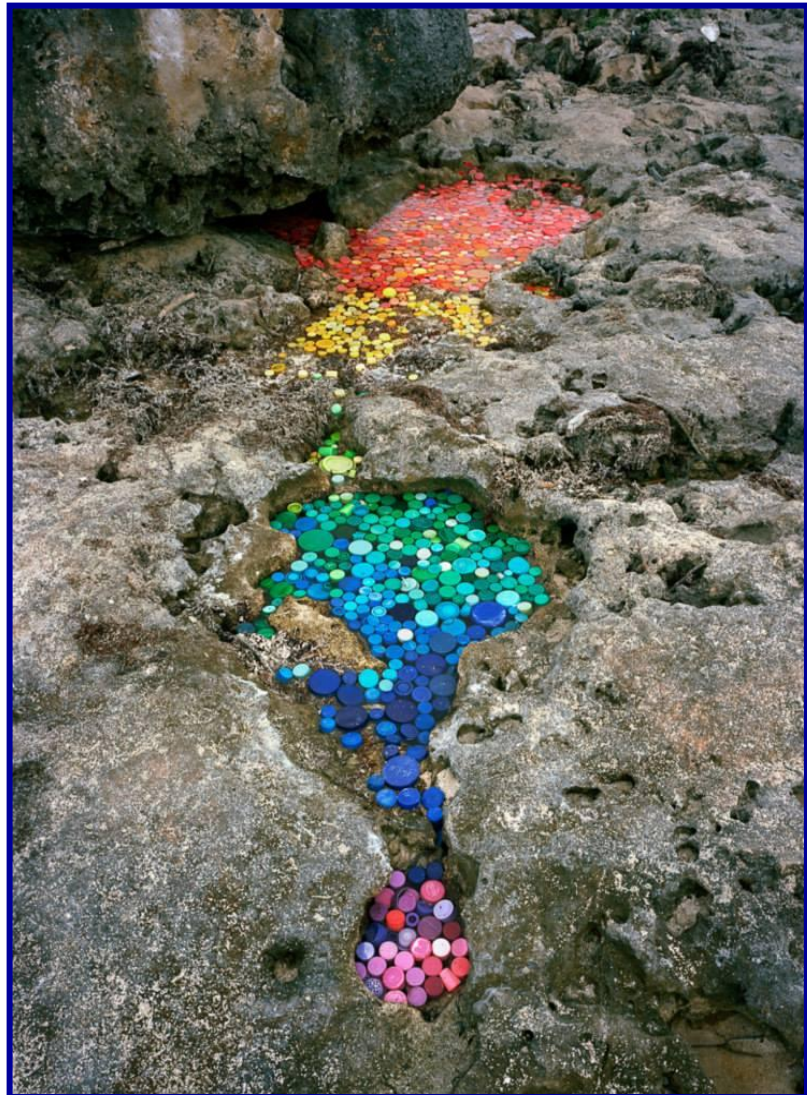


Mark 4:24 ... Hearing what is heard
(09/05/2016)

“Pay Attention to what you Hear –
The measure you Give
will be the measure you Receive ...
... and still more will be Given You.”
~ unknown (Mark 4:24)

What so many Christians fail to do with this verse is read it in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ ... Jesus was in no way a fan of the self-centered hoarding of pleasure or of comfort or of wealth, and he certainly never once meant for us to “love” others in order to be rewarded for doing so (an act which has nothing to do with LOVE at all) ...

No, what Jesus means here (*if* we are to read his words in a way that erases all contradiction & hypocrisy -- and thereby harmonizes those words here with the rest of the teachings & the entirety of his ministry) is that when we serve others without desiring any personal benefit, then & only then do we receive the inner Bliss that awaits those who do so – and that once we do so, additional opportunities for further service and additional opportunities for self-sacrifice open themselves to us and become visible as well.



1 Corinthians 4:12-13 ... To endure in Blessing

(09/06/2016)

“When reviled, we Bless; when persecuted, we Endure; when slandered, we Speak kindly.” ~ Paul (1 Corinthians 4:12-13)

NOTE in this verse that we do not “endure” in the Divine sense of that word by waiting patiently for things to get better or for a particular trial to pass on its own ... Rather, we can only truly “endure” a tribulation or difficulty whole-Heartedly by going forth during all such moments of discomfort to ***keep Loving anyway.***



1 John 1:5 ... A deep lack of Darkness

(09/07/2016)

“God is Light and in Him there is no darkness”

~ unknown (1 John 1:5)

There is a bit more objective Truth in this verse than many might realize; for the simple reason that all matter is indeed essentially composed of various condensations of light, and -- as the Bible itself tells us -- for the not so simple reason that God is not only in everything all around us but also residing *within us* all as well ... Of course, the trick is to *actualize* that Divine Essence -- by actively seeking to reduce the pain & suffering in our surroundings, and thereby harmonizing the all-Loving “Will of God” within us with the same ultimately harmonious base-frequency that resides within everything in our immediate surroundings ... Those who lack this understanding might witness such decisions and label them "Kindness" or "Charity" or "Service" or "Love" -- while those who do understand this dynamic Truth are the ones who are acting accordingly.



2 Corinthians 4:7 ... The Treasure within

(09/08/2016)

“We have this Treasure in clay jars, so that it might be made clear that this extraordinary Power comes from God and does not belong to us.”

~ Paul (2 Corinthians 4:7)

Having read all of Paul’s biblical epistles many dozens of times, there is indeed a very good possibility that he meant exactly what this verse says on its face – namely, that he believes humans are innately & irrevocably sin-full; and that we require the "Will of God" to provide the impetus for us to do whatever Good we happen to do ...

Of course, anyone who has deeply studied the teachings of the Scriptures knows that Jesus Christ believed exactly the opposite – namely, that we are all innately perfect Children of God ([Matthew 5:48](#) + [John 10:34](#) et al) -- that we have all already been given the “[extraordinary Power](#)” that Paul mentions in this verse; that though we are indeed not much more than “clay jars”, we are clay jars that were filled with the Light & Love of the Divine from the first moment of our birth; and all that remains is for us to reawaken the same by acting accordingly, especially in those moments when we incorrectly believe -- as Paul so avidly (and so errantly) asserts – that we are anything less than this same latent Greatness.



Matthew 2:10 ... The Axe & the Tree

(09/09/2016)

“Even now the axe is resting at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear Good Fruit is cut down and thrown into the Fire.”

~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 2:10)

It is extremely important for Christians & non-Christians alike to realize that Jesus is *not* threatening anyone with eternal damnation with this verse (or any other verse he utters in the New Testament, for that matter). Indeed, for those who have deeply studied his teachings, it is patently obvious that he is wholeheartedly *against* any sort of abject condemnation – that he is a whole-hearted proponent of a Love that is “perfect” (Matthew 5:48) and therefore does not punish at all (1 John 4:18) – that he is a champion of forgiving sin, not damning it (John 6:37 + Matthew 18:21-22 et al) ...

So what *is* Jesus saying here? Simply enough, in harmony with not only all his biblical sermons but all his parables as well, Jesus is noting the patent Truth that all those acting from a place of selfishness &/or cowardice will indeed sooner or later suffer as a result – and that it is this inevitable suffering; this purifying “fire” -- that just as inevitably encourages us to return to acting from a very different place; a place of unconditional, selfless LOVE; the place where lives the Child of God within us all.

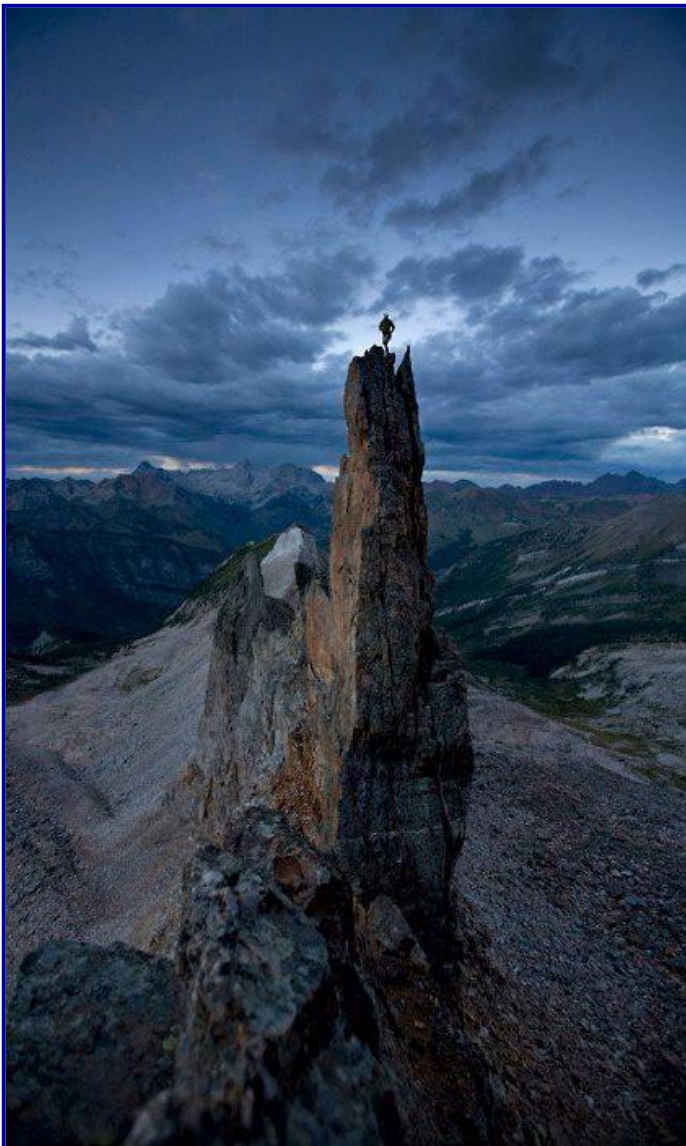


Romans 8:31-33 ... The One who sets us Free

(09/10/2016)

“As God is for us, who is against us? ...
It is God who sets us Free. Who then is to condemn?”
~ Paul (Romans 8:31-33)

One of the great misconceptions about this verse is the belief that it seemingly implies that an external, personal God will “set us free” from our own trials and turmoils; that He will somehow swoop down and “make it all better” ... Of course – as most of us are already aware, nothing could be further from the Truth.



But the fact that God does not come and immediately rescue us from our moments of pain & longing does not mean He doesn't exist, or even that He doesn't care. Rather, it actually mildly evidences exactly the opposite – namely, that He (assuming He exists at all) Loves us so much that He refuses to assist us in our times of need; thereby allowing us to come to know the deepest Bliss available to us – the Joy that only comes to those who transcend their self-centered moanings via actively Caring for others in those very times of trial & trouble. Indeed, this is the only way that any God can truly "set us free" – by giving us the space needed to choose Love anyway, and thereby choose to free our Selves.

Amen ... Let it be so.

Luke 12:32 ... The Father's good pleasure
(09/11/2016)

“Have Courage ... for it is your Father's good pleasure to give You the Kingdom.” ~ Jesus (Luke 12:32)

In order to comprehend the deeper meaning intended within this verse, it is important to remember a few critical facts about Jesus' biblical teachings:

First, that the “**Kingdom of Heaven**” for Jesus was a Here&Now, internal, Bliss-full state of being, *not* a post-mortem, external, paradisiacal destination (Luke 17:20-21) ... **Second**, the “**You**” to whom this state of raw Joy & perfect Peace is given is *not* the self-centered ego-self, but rather the selfless Soul-Self – and only those Soul-Selves who are “reborn” in acts of radical Kindness &/or selfless service (hence the call to “**Have Courage**” -- see John 10:34-35 & John 13:15-17) ... **Third**, it is indeed the Father's “**good pleasure**” to provide every single one of us with said access to this Heaven. After all, what else can a God of “perfect Love” do but the same? (Matthew 5:48 + 1 John 4:18)



Philemon 1:7 ... The Hearts of the Saints

(09/12/2016)

“The Hearts of the Saints have been refreshed through You.”

~ Paul (Philemon 1:7)

While Paul almost certainly was referring in this verse to actual Saints who had preceded his listeners in death – the actual spirits in which he believed; the spirit he felt were in that very moment “looking down” upon the same with smiling beneficence, this is not the meaning intended here.

Indeed, whenever I read any passage from the Bible – and certainly whenever I take the time to write it down to share with others – I am always reading it through the lenses of selfless Love; always reading it through the lenses of the teachings of Jesus Christ. And to this end, this verse actually stands for something quite different – namely, that the conscience (or the “**Heart of the Saints**” that resides within *every* one of us -- indeed, within every sentient being regardless of species) of anyone witnessing any selfless deed is immediately & fully (albeit also fleetingly) reawakened to the innate feasibility of themselves having the moral wherewithal to do similarly.



Matthew 4:17 ... Repenting for Real

(09/13/2016)

“Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is Here&Now.”

~ unknown (Matthew 4:17)

It is important for any earnest student of the Scriptures (indeed, for every earnest student of Life itself) to remember that the “**Kingdom of Heaven**” Jesus speaks of is an internal state of Being, not an “up above” post-mortem destination ([Luke 17:20-21](#)) ... As such, in this verse (which originally reads “[for the Kingdom of Heaven is here](#)”) he is not saying that the Kingdom of Heaven has suddenly appeared due to his presence (see [Mark 10:18](#) et al), but rather is reminding his listeners that the Kingdom of Heaven has "arrived" for them because of his reminder that the Kingdom of Heaven was there for them all along ...

In addition, as an important aside, the word “**repent**” as used by Jesus in this & other New Testament verses (the Greek word *metanoia*) has nothing to do with self-criticism or open admissions of sinfulness, and everything to do with a radical change in one’s choices & behaviors – shifting from self-centered longing to selfless empathy; shifting from self-centered striving to selfless giving.

Amen ... Let it be so.



Matthew 24:40-42 ... Two in the Field

(09/14/2016)

“Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left ... **Keep Awake**, therefore, for you do not know at what hour your Lord is coming.”

~ unknown (Matthew 24:40-42)

If this is not one of the more misunderstood passages in the Bible, it is almost certainly one of the most misinterpreted ... You see, standard Christian dogma would have us believing that these verses have Jesus saying that God Himself is coming at some unknown time in the future to gather all the righteous with Him and send them to “heaven above” and cast all others into eternal torment in “Hell below.” And while such an abjectly immoral Soul-sorting might indeed one day take place, it will most certainly *not* be the heavenly Father of Jesus Christ who does that sorting ...

For if conservatives are going to take this passage “literally” and use it as license to condemn all those who do not worship God as they do, then they are also required to take all other verses in the New Testament with the same level of exactness – including [Matthew 5:48](#) & [1 John 4:18](#); two verses that, when combined and read literally, show quite unequivocally that the celestial Father of Jesus Christ will *never* damn *anyone* to Hell for any length of time, much less for eternity ... Indeed, what kind of a deity would ever do such a horrendous thing, and why would anyone in their right mind (or, better stated, their Right Heart) worship such a capricious Being?

So, that having been said, what could Jesus be saying here instead? What interpretation can we give this passage that harmonizes with the words of [Matthew 5:48](#) & [1 John 4:18](#) (and indeed all of Jesus' other biblical teachings)? Well, when we examine Jesus' own words in the Gospels, it becomes quite clear what he is intending to say with these verses – namely, that we all choose to be either selfishly taking “[goats](#)” or selflessly giving “[sheep](#)” in every moment of our lives, and that we should all err on the side of the latter in as many moments as possible. For no one knows when death will come for us, and when it does – and our last moment of consciousness stretches out towards what seems like eternity during our final, dying breath – we will suffer to the degree we were self-centered during our lives, and we will know Bliss to the degree we were Generous & Kind.

May we remember this Truth, and may we choose accordingly.



1 Corinthians 13:10 ... Bringing the Complete

(09/15/2016)

“When the Complete arrives, the partial comes to an end.”

~ Paul (1 Corinthians 13:10)

At least as far as we human beings are concerned, “**the Complete**” (i.e. the Divine Essence that composes our conscient, True Self) was given to us all in the womb, and “**the Complete**” remains within us ever still ... As such, “**the Complete**” does not “**arrive**” as much as it is *uncovered* – in every moment we choose to Give when we would rather take; in every moment we choose to Love when we would rather cower; in every moment we choose to Serve when we would rather acquire.



John 10:25 ... Testifying to the Soul

(09/16/2016)

**“The Works that I Do in my Father’s name
testify to my True Self” ~ Jesus (John 10:25)**

Bibles typically have this verse reading something akin to “**The works that I do in my Father’s name testify about me**”, and yet it I have purposefully altered it here -- and thereby enhanced its accuracy ... You see, Jesus was an extreme proponent of humility, and his staunch advocacy thereof included himself (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 6:47](#), [John 12:44](#), [John 14:12](#) et al). As such, if Jesus were speaking highly of himself here as most Christians choose to believe, then he would be violating the code of humbleness he so devoutly advocated. In essence, if Jesus were saying anything like “My deeds prove that I am the only Son of God”, then he would be speaking hypocritically – in direct contradiction to the Humility that resides at the Core of his own teachings ...

And yet that is quite clearly not what he is saying here. Rather, he is saying that the deeds he does “**in his Father’s name**” (i.e. in harmony with the all-Loving will of the all-Loving God – see [Luke 6:36](#), [Matthew 5:48](#), [1 John 4:8](#) et al) are the deeds that enliven and exhibit his True Self – are the choices that embody his innate Child of God within. And thus, seeing as how he also quite clearly stated that we too can do just as he did (see [John 14:12](#) & [John 13:15-17](#) et al), Jesus is essentially reminding us with this verse that we too can be “reborn” when we align our chosen actions with the all-loving Will of the Divine.

Amen ... Let it be so.



John 13:20 ... To Receive the ONE

(09/17/2016)

“Whoever receives one whom I send receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives also Him who sent that Soul.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 13:20)

As I have mentioned previously, Jesus – being the stalwart proponent of absolute humility that he was (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#) + [Matthew 23:12](#) et al) – is definitely not speaking of his individual self in this verse, but is rather speaking of his inner True Self – his Soul Self – his conscience – the “Child of God” within that he shares with us all (see [John 14:12](#) + [John 14:20](#) et al).

Indeed, this is why he so obviously shifts all focus *away* from himself in this verse, and towards his Father instead; the Father who gave us *all* a portion of Universal Divinity while in our mothers’ wombs; the Father who we all “[receive](#)” every single time we reach out and Care for those less fortunate than ourselves, or every time we are Kind to a passing stranger, or every time we openly forgive our enemies their trespasses against us (see [Matthew 16:14-15](#) & [Matthew 25:40](#) et al).



1 Corinthians 12:7 ... The Spirit of the Common Good
(09/18/2016)

“To each is Given the manifestation of the Spirit
for the Common Good.” ~ Paul (1 Corinthians 12:7)

Even though the biblical Paul was often obviously far more often than not completely clueless as to the active, humble, and selfless nature of The Way of Jesus Christ, note that he *did* (at least in this verse) mention here that it was not the Spirit itself that is given to us when we are worthy, but rather that it is “**the manifestation of that Spirit for the Common Good**” (i.e. the ability to actively & selflessly serve our communities &/or the others around us) that is given to us in every moment of our lives ...

Please consider this deeply -- and please enact it resolutely.

Amen ... Let it be so.



Matthew 22:37-40 ... Altering the Commands

(09/19/2016)

“You shall Love the Lord your God with all your Heart, and with all your Soul, and with all your Mind ... And a second Commandment is just like it: You shall Love your neighbor as your Self. On these two Commandments rest both the Law and all the Prophets.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 22:37-40)

What many Christians do not realize is that the “neighbor” Jesus mentions here is actually one’s enemy (see [Luke 10:29-37](#), the only place in the entire Bible where Jesus defines “neighbor” -- telling a tale where the heroic “neighbor” mentioned is a Samaritan; one of the primary enemies of the Jews at that time, and the “neighbor” who correctly “shows mercy”, something only done to those who have wronged us) ...

Just as importantly, many Christians also still fail to understand that these two Commandments are actually **ONE**; that fulfilling the second is the only way to truly full-fill the first.



Hebrews 7:12 ... A change in the Priesthood
(09/20/2016)

“For when there is a change in the priesthood,
there is necessarily a change in the law as well.”
~ unknown (Hebrews 7:12)

This verse (especially when coupled with its sister passage in [Hebrews 8:8-13](#)) is an extremely important one, for it is here that the Bible itself quite plainly tells us that The Way of Jesus Christ – namely, his Way of Selfless Love – now takes complete precedence over all other biblical ways; the ways of wrath and judgment and condemnation offered by much of the Bible’s “Old Testament,” the ways of Paul and many other New Testament authors, and the way of Revelation as well ... Indeed, Hebrews in general (if read Truth-fully) quite clearly makes the appropriately moral claim that any verses in the Scriptures that happen to in any way contradict Jesus’ teachings on humble mercy, unconditional forgiveness, selfless service, and noble self-sacrifice are fully null & void – that the time of arrogance & fear & aggression has past, and that a perfectly humble, unconditionally given LOVE for all sentient beings now rules the day.



John 12:47 ... To offer Salvation

(09/21/2016)

“I do not judge anyone who hears my Word and yet does not follow, for I have come not to condemn the world, but rather to offer it Salvation.”

~ Jesus (John 12:47)

While the traditional rendition of the final phrase of this verse (“but rather to save it”) seems to imply that Jesus himself came to do the saving of all sinners, Jesus himself – in many places in the New Testament (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 6:15](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al) – begs to differ. For he makes it repeatedly clear throughout his biblical ministry that it is *we* who must do the saving of ourselves -- and that it is via the selfless acts of Kindness in harmony with his Father’s all-loving Way that we arrive at the same ([John 13:15-17](#)).



2 Corinthians 5:2-3 ... To leave the Tent

(09/22/2016)

“For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our Heavenly Dwelling ... And indeed, when we someday remove ourselves from it, we will not be found naked.” ~ Paul (2 Corinthians 5:2-3)

While it is not clear what Paul actually meant with this passage (sometimes his teachings stumbled upon a harmony with “enlightened” unconditional Love, and many other times they did not), we can indeed reconcile these words with The Way of Jesus Christ -- when we see “**the tent**” here as our physiological body and its primitive desires (including our mental mind and its self-centered fears and yearnings) ... Indeed, whenever we succumb to such instinctive impulses, our True Self does indeed “**groan**” in its longing for the re-manifestation of our Soul’s far more noble, and far more Caring inclinations. And when we do inevitably choose to throw off this “**tent**” of callous greed, we will indeed not be found spiritually “**naked.**” Quite to the contrary, in the very moment we choose to emerge from our grungy unspiritual domiciles smeared with the stench of callous selfishness & arrogant violence, we will in-Deed find ourselves clothed in a truly brilliant raiment; a cloak of selfless Giving, a robe of courageous Love, and a crown of Bliss-filled Peace.

Amen ... Let it be so.

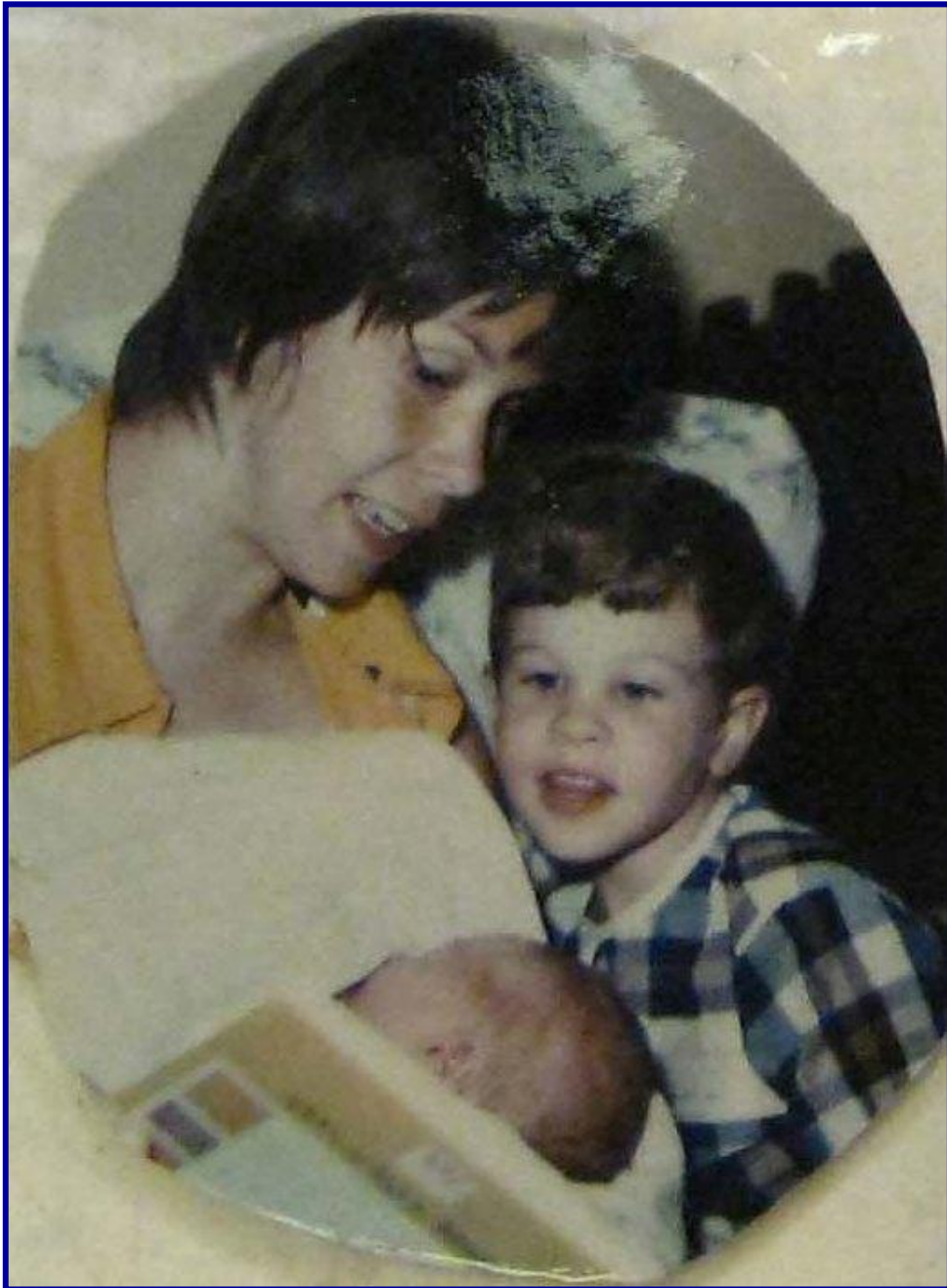


John 15:12 ... The Prime Directive

(09/23/2016)

“This is my Commandment: that you Love one another...just like I have Loved you all.” ~ Jesus (John 15:12)

And remember: Love for Jesus was a **VERB** – a humble act of self-sacrifice, always given willfully & always given Joy-fully.

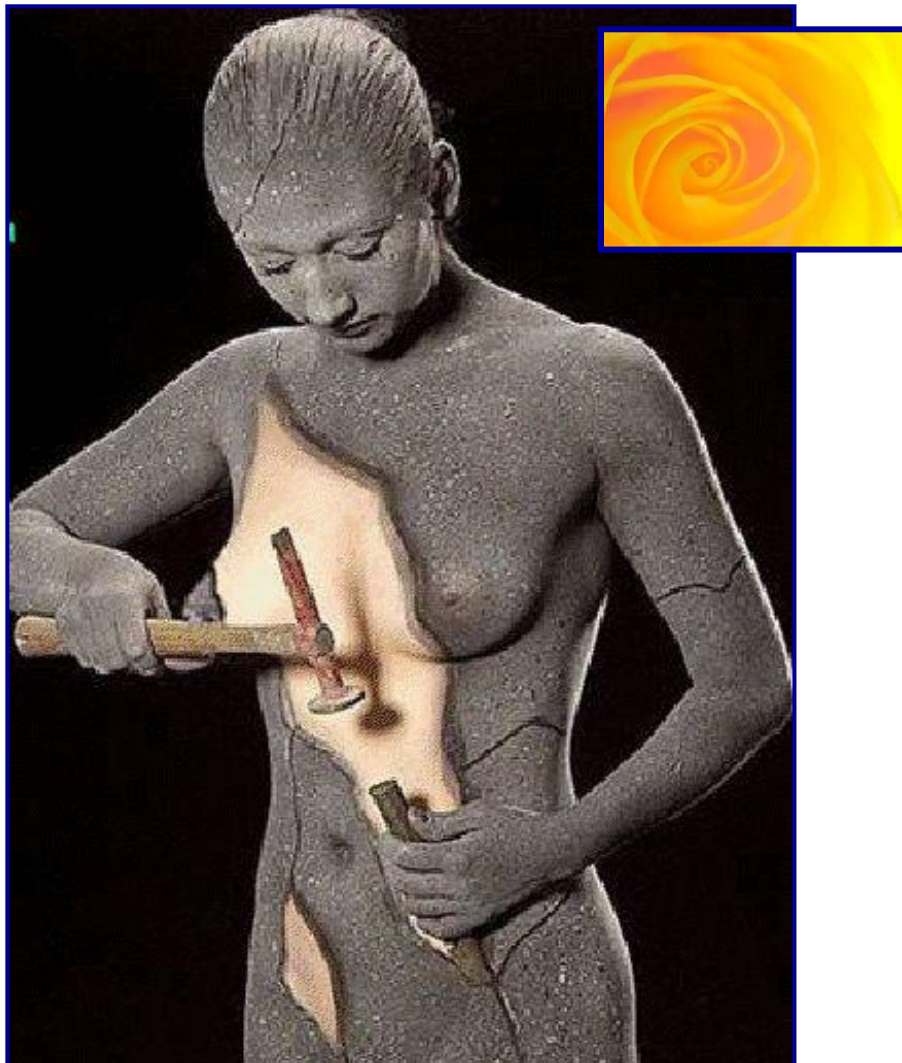


1 Corinthians 3:7 ... The watering and the Growing
(09/24/2016)

“So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything; only God who Gives the Growth.” ~ Paul (1 Corinthians (3:7)

While Paul quite possibly did indeed believe that God personally watched over all living things -- and that no growth would take place therein without His celestial attention, Jesus in all likelihood had a very different take on the matter ...

For Jesus, God the Father was a non-personal, *internal*, Divine Essence (see [John 14:20](#)); one that provides all sentient life with moral guidance while it grows. For Jesus growth was a simple fact of living – a happening innate to being alive. And thus it was not that we grew that fascinated him, but rather *how* people chose to do so (or not to do so) that was important.



Luke 1:78-79 ... Onto the Way of Peace
(09/25/2016)

“By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high has broken upon us, to give Light to those who sit in Darkness and in the shadow of death; to guide our feet onto the Way of Peace.” ~ Luke (Luke 1:78-79)

This passage is the conclusion of the prophecy Zechariah uttered about Jesus shortly after his birth. Importantly, it correctly predicts that Jesus would preach a Way of **PEACE**, a quality fully embodied in The Way of selfless Love he did indeed later champion ...

Interestingly, this prophecy also harmonizes well with the only time we see Jesus reading from the Old Testament in public; namely when he is reading the scroll of Isaiah in Luke 4:18-19 – announcing, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for all captives and recovery of sight to those who have been blinded; to let the oppressed go free and proclaim a time of the Lord’s benevolent favor.” Indeed, true Freedom comes not so much from being released from physical captivity, as it does from being awakened from our internal, ever-comfortable, self-centered slumber – not so much from being given what one desires for self, as much as from being inspired to shed one’s fears about courageously Caring for others.



John 12:35-36 ... Enlivening the Light
(09/26/2016)

“Walk while you have the Light ... If you walk in the Darkness, you do not know where you are going. While you have the Light, actualize the Light, so that you may become Children of the Light.” ~ Jesus (John 12:35-36)

If the embedded Wisdom of this verse is to ever be fully known, it is critical to keep in mind that Jesus is not referring to himself here, but is rather referencing the Light that he is shining upon all those he encounters -- a Light he is shining via his choice to lovingly self-sacrifice for others; a choice that is available to *all* sentient beings, and thus a Light that is available within them all as well.



2 Corinthians 6:2 ... *The acceptable Time*

(09/27/2016)

“Now is the acceptable time ...
See, now is (always) the moment of Salvation!”
~ Paul (2 Corinthians 6:2)

While it is clear from reading the works of Paul that he indeed believed that Salvation was a singular event of divine intervention – that he indeed believed that the time was nigh during *his* lifetime for God to send Jesus back to gather up all the worthy and ship them off to some otherworldly paradise, it is just as clear from reading the words of Jesus in the Gospels that he had a very different take on such matters ...

You see, while Jesus too felt that he was alive in a time of imminent Salvation – that, as Paul so properly put it, “*now is the moment of Salvation*”, this heavenly retribution (for Jesus at least) was not a singular event, and it certainly was not going to come at some time in the future, or be ladled upon us from “on high” – either from him or his heavenly Father. No, for Jesus at least, Salvation was and still is alive in every moment of every sentient life, and its retribution comes to all *from within* – to all those who prove to be willing to set aside their personal fears & selfish desires in favor of serving others.



John 14:12 ... To Believe in Him

(09/28/2016)

“Very truly, I tell you, the one who truly Believes in me will also Do the Works that I Do -- and in fact, will Do even greater Works than these.”

~ Jesus (John 14:12)

This is actually an extremely important biblical verse, in that it reminds us all – Christians & non-Christians alike – that we have essentially the same powers as Jesus Christ; not the powers to effectuate “miracles”, of course (Jesus himself repeatedly stressed that even he didn’t perform any such wonders; that is was actually the faith of the healed that effectuated his healings), but rather the Power to ***Be Kind when least inclined*** – the Power to Love an enemy instead of attacking them – the Power to Care; to reach out to strangers instead of looking away – the Power to Forgive those who trespass against us – the Power to **DO** the Right Thing, especially when there is nothing in it for ourselves; especially when it will possibly make us uncomfortable (or even harm us) to do so.



Try and do the nicest thing you can think of for the rudest person you know. That's love.

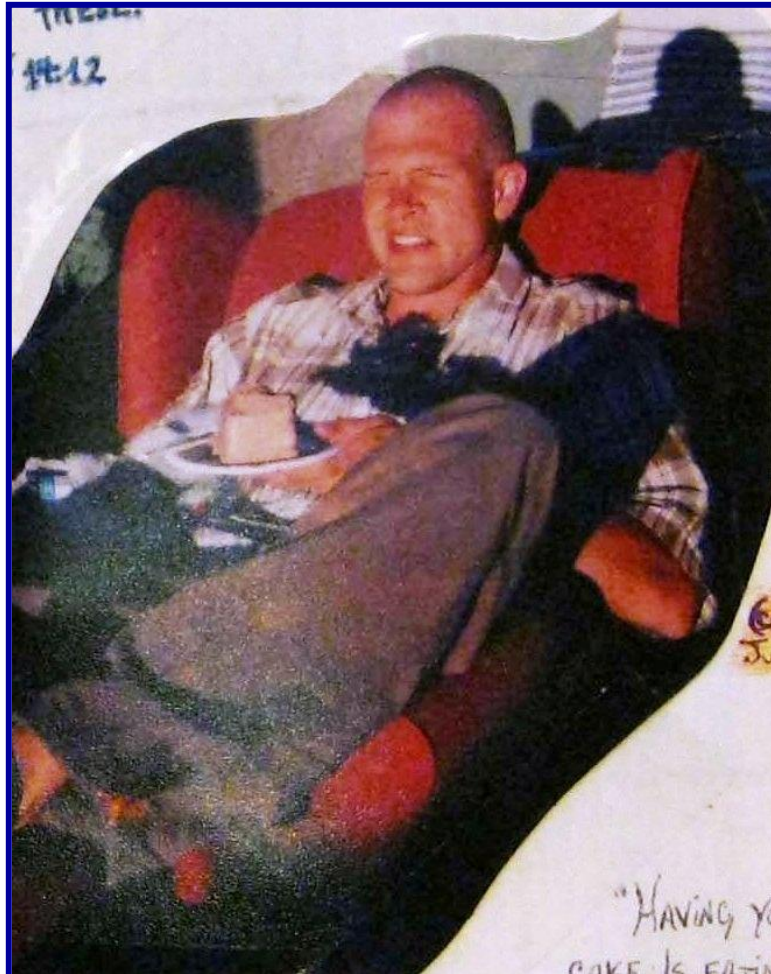
1 Corinthians 10:13 ... In Him no Darkness

(09/29/2016)

“God is Light and in Him there is no darkness”

~ Paul (1 Corinthians 10:13)

It is tempting for many to claim or believe that life’s trials & turmoils are signs of God testing our resolve -- or even God punishing our transgressions, and yet this simply cannot be the case; at least not with any God composed of “perfect Love” (see [Matthew 5:48](#) + [1 John 4:18](#)), and certainly not with any God worth worshipping ... Indeed, in a Cosmos ruled by a God of perfect Love, He (or She – or It) cannot tempt us or test us or punish us at all, for to do so would be inherently cruel. As such, if we do indeed live in such a Universe that is indeed “ruled” by such an all-amorous Deity, it is *we* ourselves who either summon our own suffering (as consequences for our previously sinful actions) &/or are blessed with the emPowerment inherent in all difficulties (challenges that always allow us to choose to transcend the same -- by acting selflessly despite their temptations to do otherwise).



Luke 6:35-36 ... To Love expecting Nothing
(09/30/2016)

“Love your enemies. Do Good and Give expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great and you will become Children of the Most High; for He is kind to both the ungrateful and the sinful. Be merciful, therefore, just as your Father is merciful.” ~ Jesus (Luke 6:35-36)

Here are two notes of importance related to this verse:

First, it is impossible to do true Good for anyone (either enemy or ally) if that “goodness” is done to gain any personal reward or benefit. Love must be given selflessly in order to be truly Given at all – it must be done purely for the benefit of the other, with no hope or expectation of anything positive coming back to the giver as a consequence thereof ...

Second, whether we engage such pure Giving or not, we are and ever will remain “**Children of the Most High**.” The hyper-moral essence that many call “God” resides ever *within us* all – from the first moment of our sentient awareness (originating in all probability sometime during our 19th week in the womb) all the way to our final, dying breath. Of course, this Truth means nothing unless we actualize it – unless we enliven the combination of humility & courage required to reach out and become agents of that same Divinity; with the best way of doing so being a self-sacrificial extension of Kindness to our “enemies” -- to those who are doing us the most harm &/or those we most dislike or fear.



2 Corinthians 4:17-18 ... ever-Reborn within

(10/01/2016)

“Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner Nature is being renewed day by day ... because we look not to that which can be seen but rather into that which cannot be seen; for what is visible is temporary, while what cannot be seen is Eternal.” ~ Paul (2 Corinthians 4:17-18)

While Paul is correct to remind us that our bodies are indeed “wasting away” bit by bit, day by day – that we are indeed steadily approaching that unknown, great moment when we will pass from this life into whatever lays in wait beyond its limitations of body & mind (what many call "death"), he is **not** fully correct in his later assumptions in this same passage ... For we most certainly do **not** automatically become renewed day by day – rather, ***we must choose*** to become that renewal (via radical acts of Joy-full self-sacrifice and irrational acts of selfless Kindness). In addition, we most certainly do **not** attain said renewal by merely choosing to see the invisible holiness within another, but rather we experience that sacred rebirth in every moment we ***choose*** to act harmoniously towards the same.



John 12:24-26 ... To bear much Fruit

(10/02/2016)

“Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains but a single grain. But if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life will lose it, and those who discard their life will Live eternally ... Whoever serves my Way, the Father honors.” ~ Jesus (John 12:24-26)

Though we, like every single grain of wheat, will most certainly one day die, it is our moral legacy with which we should be concerned – not our mere physical longevity. For it is a fleeting nothing to live well past 100 years and perish having done little for the children or the poor or the animals, and yet it is an eternal everything to die even at the tender age of twelve after have given our brief life fully to those in need.



Matthew 6:33 ... Striving for the Kingdom of God

(10/03/2016)

“Strive first for the Kingdom of God and Its righteousness, and all other things will be given you as well.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 6:33)

Note that it is impossible for any of us to successfully re-enter the Kingdom of God if we are being “kind” to others in order to receive anything in return, certainly not the “**all other things**” (intellectual Joy, emotional Calm, physical Peace, spiritual Contentment) promised by this passage ... Indeed, we cannot receive *any* true return unless we are striving for “**righteousness**” – i.e. unless we are striving solely to help the other, not to acquire anything for ourselves. Indeed, only such sincere Goodness allows us to experience the Bliss-full state of being that Jesus called “**The Kingdom of Heaven**”, and sincere Goodness by its very nature cannot be given without being sincerely Kind -- cannot be known while striving for self-centered reward or personal benefit of any kind.



Romans 7:22 ... The Law of God

(10/04/2016)

“For I delight in the Law of God in my inmost Self.”

~ Paul (Romans 7:22)

The only way to truly delight in one’s inner “**Law of God**” (which is nothing more or less than the raw, unbridled, unconditional Love that is ever-championed & ever-encouraged by our conscience) is to bring the same fully into the interactions of one's everyday Here&Now.



James 1:12 ... To endure temptation
(10/05/2016)

“Blessed is anyone who endures temptation.”
~ James (James 1:12)

When reading this verse, it is wise to remember that James was the “Saint of Doing” – the disciple who seemingly more deeply understood Jesus’ teachings than most others; the man who focused on works as the enlivener of all real Faith; the one who knew that mere mental faith without works is nothing of worth or merit. As such, in the context of this Wise Man’s work, we must understand that the only way to truly “endure temptation” is to actively replace it with its opposite inclination – to replace the temptation to hoard with deeds of bold Giving, to replace the temptation to critically judge with humble exhortations of encouragement, to replace the temptation to complain with active displays of Gratitude, to replace the temptation of revenge with radical acts of Forgiveness.



Thomas 1:22 ... Making the two into ONE
(10/06/2016)

“When you make the two into One, the Inner like the outer, the outer like the Inner, and the upper like the lower... And when you make the female and the male into a single One ... When you make Eyes in the place of an eye, a Hand in place of a hand, a Foot in place of a foot and an Image in place of an image -- *then* you shall enter the Kingdom.” ~ Jesus (Gospel of Thomas 22)

This is a brilliantly inclusive way of reminding us all to use the ego to actualize the True Self – to use the selfish, fear-based inclinations of the ego-self to empower every subsequent choice that reflects its opposite – to in essence use the ego to emPower the reawakening of the Soul ...

For *this* is what it means to “**make the two into One**”, to let the Inner be reflected in the outer, to join all that was once opposing and use the same to bring Harmony into one’s surroundings, to replace mere vision (“**an eye**”) with deeper Knowing (“**eyes**”), to let our normally self-seeking hands be used to Care for others instead, and our normally fear-based feet be used to carry us boldly towards those in need.

Amen ... Let it be so.



John 13:31-32 ... To be Glorified in Him

(10/07/2016)

“Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in Him. If God has been glorified in Him, God will also glorify the Son in himself at once.” ~ Jesus (John 13:31-32)

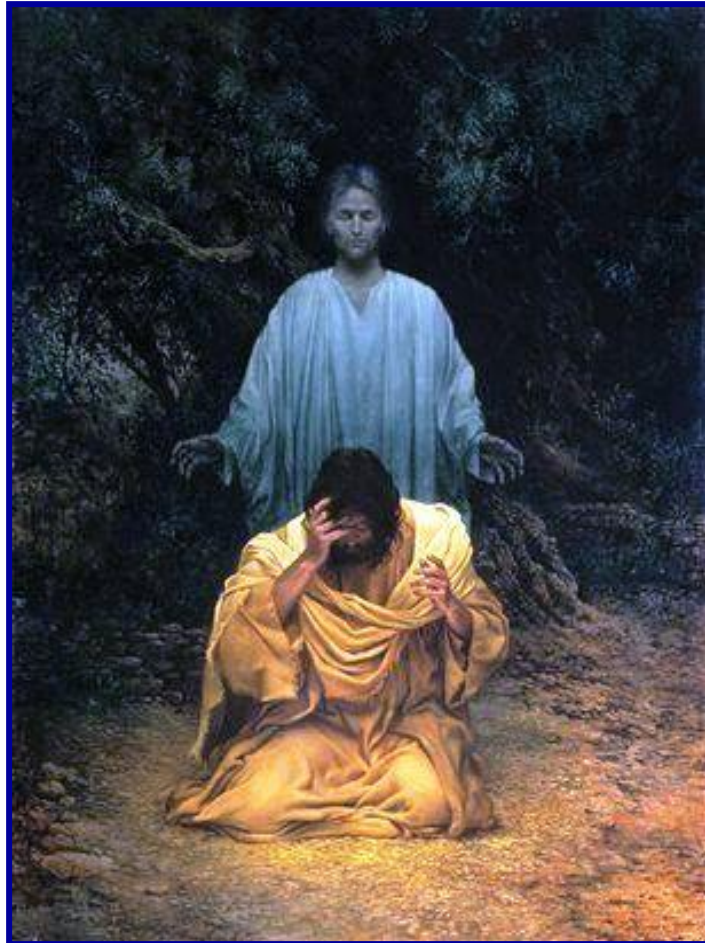
When the reader of this verse focuses on the words “**Son of Man**” and thinks of Jesus Christ, he or she will be misled into the darkness of man-tainted, exclusivist, condemnatory religious dogma. However, if the reader of this verse realizes that Jesus was not speaking in the 3rd person here – that his love for humility and his hatred of hypocrisy actually precluded the same (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#)) – that “**Son of Man**” here is a reference to *everyone*; to every human being who ever lived and every human being who ever will live (otherwise he would have been lying when he uttered the statement in [Matthew 16:28](#)), then the reader will automatically re-focus on the words of true importance in this passage – namely, the words “**in Him**” & “**in himself**” – words which refer to *all of us*; indeed to every sentient being who has ever lived (see [John 14:20](#)).

Think about it ...

Realize it ...

Enliven it!

Amen ... Let it be so.



John 13:14-15 ... To wash their Feet

(10/08/2016)

“So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example; that you also Do for others just as I have Done for You.” ~ Jesus (John 13:14-15)

This is one of the few biblical sayings from Jesus that he pretty clearly meant to relay literally as well as symbolically, meaning that not only are we to humble ourselves before others and *see* them as though they were royalty (&/or themselves Divine), but also that we are to literally wash the feet of the others in our lives.

And this makes total sense, for Jesus’ ministry was all about humbling ourselves first & foremost, and then fully opening ourselves to the others in our lives with acts of courageous intimacy ... Washing another’s feet powerfully satisfies both of these admonitions.



Romans 10:15 ... The Feet of the Divine

(10/09/2016)

“How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the Good News!”

~ Paul (Romans 10:15)

With regards to this particular verse (and indeed any verse that mentions "the Gospel" or "the Good News" in the New Testament) it is extremely important to remember that Paul was primarily concerned with the content of those messages – content that by & large directly & fully *contradicted* the teachings of Jesus Christ! For Paul's "Good News" centered upon worshiping Jesus as the only Son of God (see 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 & Romans 1:1-6 & Romans 10:9), while Jesus' "Good News" encouraged us **not** to do so; encouraged us instead to attain *his* "Kingdom of Heaven" by selflessly extending Love to those least deserving of the same (see Mark 10:18 + Matthew 10:7 + Matthew 24:12-14) ... As such, Jesus himself was far more concerned with the movement of our "feet" and the actions being taken by our arms than he was with the words coming from our mouths – far more desirous not that we talk the Humbly-Loving Talk, but that we have the courage to boldly-yet-humbly Walk that most Noble of Ways.

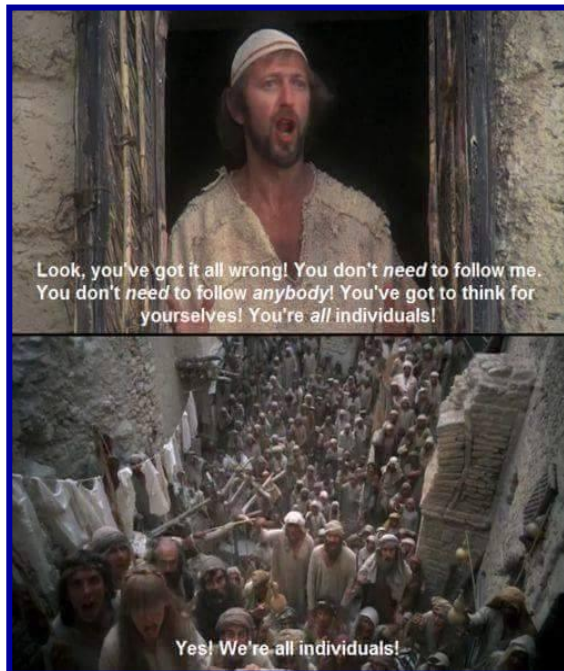


Matthew 23:8-12 ... Only one Teacher (10/10/2016)

“And you are not to be called ‘Rabbi’, for you have one Teacher, and you are all students. All who exalt themselves will be humbled & all who humble themselves will be exalted.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 23:8-12)

This is an important passage, not only because it relays the Truth that no modern-day preacher should have the gall to claim “special knowledge” of the Scriptures (“special knowledge” that is indeed impossible to attain, no matter how many years one might study the ancient manuscripts &/or test their various interpretations), but also because it reflects the Truth that Jesus himself was a human being – just like those to whom he was preaching his Way of Selfless Love – and just like his modern-day readers to this very day (see [Numbers 23:19](#), [Acts 2:22](#), [Mark 24:36](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 14:12](#), et al) ... For, as any earnest student of the Scriptures already knows, Jesus was all about humility – not only related to us, but related to himself as well. Indeed, he went out of his way on a number of occasions to extol his followers to not worship him at all, but rather to fully emulate his teachings instead (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#), et al). And yet, as most of us are already aware, this is not what happened. Paul came along, flipped Jesus’ wishes on their head, and created the very same Jesus-centered religion that Jesus avidly fought to nullify while he was alive ...

Ahhh, the sad irony of it all.



Acts 17:28 ... To fully have our Being
(10/11/2016)

“In God we Live and Move and have our Being.”
~ Luke (Acts 17:28)

Yes, the wellspring of all things living & the source of all that is dynamic in the Universe – that essence many like to call “**God** – is indeed ever surrounding us; ever cradling us gently in its soft embrace; ever whispering to us quietly; ever urging us towards those in need nearby; ever in-Couraging us to engage the same with acts of compassion-filled Kindness. As such it is indeed true that “**in God we live and move and have our Being**” ... Of course, it is just as true – at least in those moments when we choose to heed this Divine Summons to reach out to others nearby – that God lives and moves and has His Being *through us* as well.



Galatians 6:10 ... For the Good of All
(10/12/2016)

“Whenever we have an opportunity,
let us work for the Good of all.”
~ Paul (Galatians 6:10)

Like so many I know (Christian & non-Christian alike), Paul assumes here that we only have a sporadic sprinkling of opportunities to serve others – that we must first & foremost care for ourselves and fulfill our duties to friends and family, and that we can only care for strangers and beautify our communities and forgive our enemies at some point thereafter. And, as is so often the case, this approach is actually the exact opposite of what Jesus would have us all do ... For Jesus would remind us that we always have the opportunity to sacrifice our own wishes &/or set aside our own ambitions &/or delay our commitments in order to help a stranger in need, or help our community to rise up into functioning beauty, or ease the (often subtle, even unrecognized) guilt of those who have trespassed against us. Indeed, Jesus would remind us that it is actually our greatest Blessing to be able to give to others in every single moment of our lives – especially in those moments when we are “too tired” or “too scared” or “too poor” or have “something more important” to do.



Romans 11:16 ... The Holy Root

(10/13/2016)

“If the root is Holy, then the branches are also Holy.”

~ Paul (Romans 11:16)

In other words, if our intentions are truly Loving, our subsequent deeds will be commensurately considerate & overtly gentle – and thus will also be laden with Peace ... That having been said, these same Good Deeds might still be rejected or even used by their recipients to summon forth insult or entrenched injury, and yet Right Actions they were *when given* nonetheless ... Of course, whenever a recipient of selfless Love uses the same to further or even intensify his or her suffering, then the form of Love so misused should not be offered again -- Love should still be offered; just in a different way than before. And it is important to remember that it is always far better to err on the side of Giving LOVE than it is to refuse to show Care out of fear that said Kindness will be incorrectly received or aggressively considered.

In essence then, if we Give humbly -- with intentions both gentle & kind -- and if we gently persist in that sincere Giving, then Beauty & Peace at some point are almost sure to blossom forth as a result.



John 14:19-20 ... Heaven ever within

(10/14/2016)

“In a little while the world will no longer see me, but You will See me; because I Live -- and you also will Live. And on that day you will [finally] realize that I am in my Father -- and that you are in Me -- and that I am in You.”

~ Jesus (John 14:19-20)

While the traditional, conservative interpretation of this passage has been used to support the notion that Jesus was and remains the only Son of God (a contention that Jesus himself loudly & clearly rejected on numerous occasions throughout the Gospels – see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:47](#), et al), there are many other, deeper meanings embedded herein as well ... First & foremost, Jesus intimates (quite ironically, in light of the aforementioned religiously dogmatic interpretation hereof) the great Truth that the Wisdoms within the teachings of any “Master” can only be seen when that teacher is no longer the focus of his or her students’ seeking. In other words, Jesus is saying here that his disciples would only be able to finally comprehend the true depth of his teachings after they stopped focusing on him and started focusing on the various applicative possibilities within his teachings ... History seems to show that they never did this, of course (with Judas, John, James, & Thomas being four possible exceptions), and yet they could only have done so after Jesus left the scene – only after they would no longer be tempted with the enamorment of his enlightened presence.

Indeed, this is true for any disciple of any “Master” -- for the simple reason that every true Master essentially teaches that the same Divine Essence he or she is radiating is already just as alive & well in the conscient True Selves within every one of his or her disciples, and that it is impossible for those followers to see this Truth -- impossible for them to see that the Master is not only “in God”, but also that the “God” within the Master is ever within the Soul-Self of every other sentient being -- until the Master has departed (or until they depart from the Master) and they are left to themselves and their own actualization of their own innate-yet-latent Majesty.



Luke 6:37-38 ... To fully & freely Be
(10/15/2016)

“Avoid judging others, and you will not be judged. Avoid condemning, and you yourself will not be condemned. Forgive fully, and you will be fully Forgiven. Give freely, and Life will be freely Given to you.”

~ Jesus (Luke 6:37-38)

Many make the mistake of believing this passage speaks to an external dynamic – that there is some sort of Celestial Arbitrator “above” who will not judge us or condemn us if we happen to refuse to judge or condemn others; who will indeed forgive us our trespasses if we forgive others theirs; who will reward us with a more full & vibrant life if we choose to fill our current one with acts of generosity. To believe this might not be incorrect, and yet to believe this is without a doubt to sell far short the majesty innate to Life & God & Self ...

For the far deeper Truth in this passage is the one that reminds us that we will not judge *ourselves* or condemn ourselves if we refuse to do the same to others (after all, we cannot Love another while judging or condemning him or her, and we are first & foremost here to Love); that we will forgive *ourselves* our own trespasses and past sins to the same extent & degree that we are willing to forgive others theirs; and that we will finally (and indeed only) come to live a truly full Life while we are *ourselves* choosing to fill that Life with the gift of a Giving that is wholly unconditional and completely selfless.



1 Corinthians 3:16 ... Entering the Temple
(10/16/2016)

“Do you not Know that you are God’s Temple,
and that God’s Spirit dwells within you?”
~ Paul (1 Corinthians 3:16)

Though Paul would in all likelihood claim otherwise, it is actually impossible to fully know the magnitude of “God’s Spirit” via mere beliefs &/or feelings. Indeed, Jesus himself noted over & over & over again in the Gospels that the only time we ever come to fully comprehend the far greater majesty of the Divine is during those moments when we are choosing to actualize the same -- with words far more than mere thoughts, and with actions far more than mere words.



*"I give you a new
Commandment: that
you Love one another
... In the same way
that I Loved you, so
must you Love one
another."
~ Jesus Christ
(John 13:34)*



John 18:37 ... For this we are Born
(10/17/2016)

“For this I was born, and for this I came into the world:
To testify to The Truth.” ~ Jesus (John 18:37)

First & foremost, we must come to remember that the Truth we have all come to share is the Truth of selfless Love – the Truth that we are all literally members of one Great Family; the Truth that our animal Brothers & Sisters are as much members thereof as our own mothers & fathers are; the Truth that our greatest Power & our greatest Peace both come from our greatest sacrifices; the Truth that we can ourselves only experience a life of Joy & Meaning while enlivening this greater Call to a greater Love ...

And indeed, we can only truly & deeply testify to this Truth by radically actualizing the same – far more with our thoughts than our mere feelings, far more with our words than our mere thoughts, and far more with our actions than with our mere words ...

Indeed -- in **Deed!**



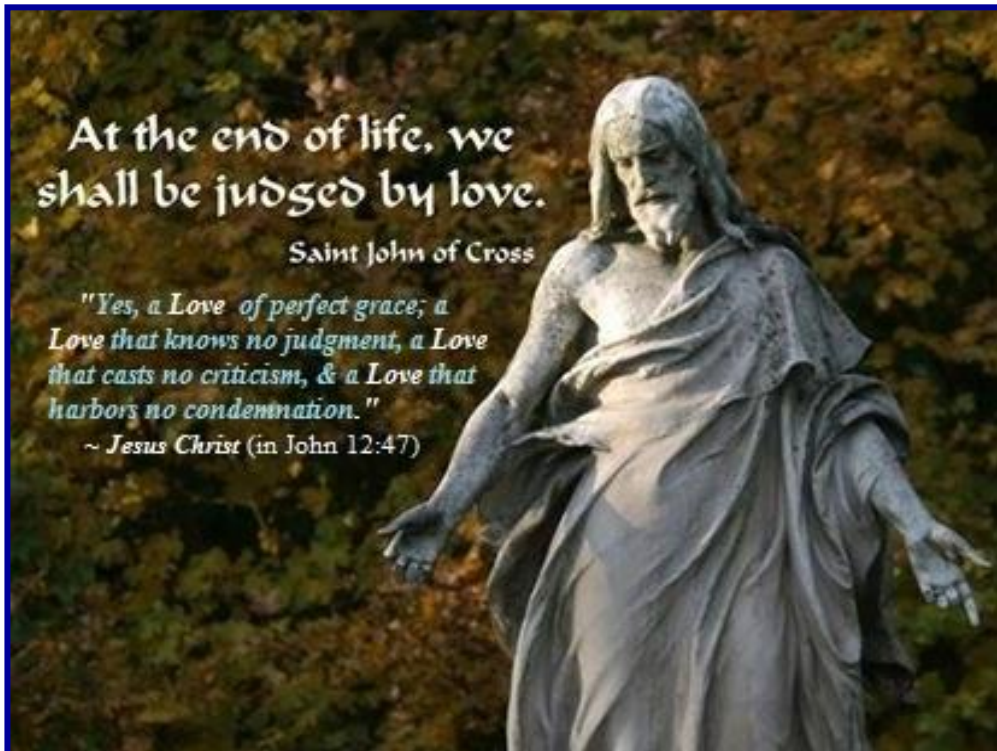
Galatians 5:6 ... Only through Love

(10/18/2016)

“The only thing that counts is Faith
made effective through Love.”

~ Paul (Galatians 5:6)

I include this verse in this series not only because of the Truths it exudes (i.e. the Truth that one's faith in God &/or Goodness means nothing without the believer actively emulating the same; the Truth that acts of selfless Love are the only true Faith - - and the Truth that true Faith is nothing more than the humble, empathy-rich foundation of every act of selfless Love), but also because it is Paul who did the sharing thereof – Paul, the faux-prophet who spent so much time directly & drastically *contradicting* the teachings of the man he so wished to honor; Paul, the man who – so unlike "his savior" Jesus Christ – spent so much time telling others that works meant essentially nothing; that it was only a passive, self-centered, intellectual faith in Jesus as the only Son of God that counted ... And indeed how wonderful it is that even a man as flawed (and indeed as apparently clueless) as Paul could stumble upon the Truth in verses like these sprinkled throughout his letters – and how wonderful that even a man so steeped in fear and judgment and self-loathing could even unwittingly cast an untainted glimpse upon the Truth of raw, unadulterated, unconditional Love; *Love*, the courageous verb ... *Love*, the selfless giving ... *Love*, the willing sacrifice ... *LOVE*, the foundation of any & all real Faith!

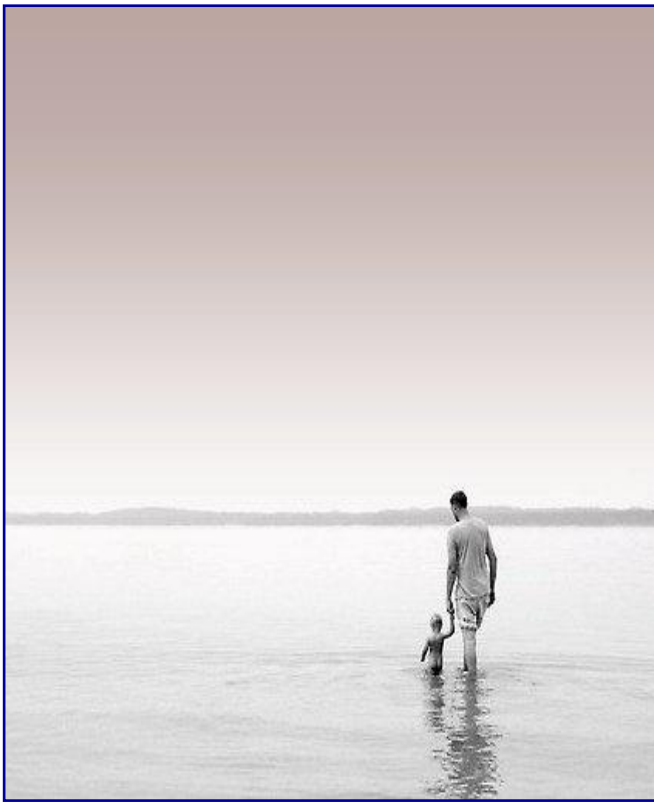


Luke 2:10 ... To bring the Good News
(10/19/2016)

“Do not be afraid ... for I am bringing Good News
of great Joy *for everyone.*” ~ Jesus (Luke 2:10)

Often read as a simple admonishment from Jesus (i.e. him essentially telling folks to cheer up because he had come to save them from their trials and troubles), this verse actually reflects several far deeper meanings ...

First of all, the “**Good News**” that Jesus came to bring was not what Paul thought it was (namely, that Jesus is the only Son of God and that worshipping him as such would guarantee said believers an everlasting spiritual life after their physical death – see [1 Corinthians 15:1-4](#) & [Romans 10:9](#) et al) ... No, the “**Good News**” as far as Jesus was concerned was twofold: **A**) that the perfect Bliss of the “**Kingdom of Heaven**” is available to everyone in every moment of their conscious lives (see [Matthew 10:7](#)), and **B**) that the way to experience this Present-Moment Paradise was via purposeful acts of self-sacrificial Kindness (see [Matthew 24:12-14](#)) -- especially in those "down times" when we least feel like doing so, and especially towards strangers & enemies who seem "least deserving" of the same (see [Matthew 5:40-48](#) & [Luke 10:29-37](#)).



Second, Jesus also points out in this verse that we cannot access his version of Salvation while we are afraid for our own well-being; indeed that it is psychologically impossible to simultaneously fear for ourselves and Care for others – that the two are mutually exclusive and cannot coexist at all – that we must always choose one or the other in every moment of our lives. And *this*, my dear Friends, provides at least one meaningful explanation as to why Jesus so often admonished others to “**fear not**” -- for we cannot know Bliss unless we choose to exude real LOVE, and we cannot exude real LOVE while choosing to succumb to fear instead.

John 8:12 ... The Light of Living (10/20/2016)

“I Am the Light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but instead will have the Light of Life.” ~ Jesus (John 8:12)

Note first and foremost that Jesus here speaks to the “**Light of the world**” – a Light radiating the same Divine Spark that resides in the Soul of every sentient being (see [John 1:3-4](#)). Note as well that he does not say that he is the source of that Spark, nor does he say that we do not already have it within us. He is merely saying that he has chosen to live in such a way that this same Spark shines forth through his selfless deeds (unlike the vast majority of humans to this day, whose Spark remains muted and shrouded in the tarnish of superficial desires and self-centered fears) ... And this would explain why Jesus never once says “worship me” in the entire Bible (not once!). Instead, he repeatedly encourages us to **follow** him – to *emulate* his Way of Loving; to *enliven* his teachings on selfless service and self-sacrifice; and **thereby** to “**have the Light of Life**” – the Light that was within those followers all along!

And this interpretation is fully supported by the ancient Greek manuscripts, which actually do not have Jesus saying “**I am the Light of the world**” in this verse, but rather have him saying “**I, I am** – the Light of the world” (not merely “*eimi*” – “I am” Strong’s #1510, but “*ego eimi*” – “I, I am” Strong’s #1473 + #1510) - - meaning that he was not raising himself up above others at all, but was rather explaining to them that he was an embodiment of the “**I am**” essence within every sentient Soul – and that his selfless actions & unconditional Love were allowing that same Light to shine upon all those nearby.



John 18:20 ... Nothing in secret

(10/21/2016)

“I have said nothing in secret.”

~ Jesus (John 18:20)

Indeed, I have heard so many Christians conveniently (and with great confidence) speak for Jesus about things of which he never himself spoke in the Gospels – heard them oh so boldly claiming that Jesus would support gun ownership; or claiming that Jesus was a supporter of animal abuse (i.e. non-veganism); or claiming that Jesus was against early-term abortions; or claiming that Jesus was prejudiced against homosexuals &/or transgenders; or claiming that Jesus was in favor of using violence in self-defense; or claiming that Jesus would support “just wars” launched against international enemies; or even claiming that Jesus would have been -- were he alive in the flesh today -- a staunch Republican or a devout Democrat ...

Of course, all of these aforementioned claims (and any others like them) are nothing less than complete & utter nonsense – and this particular statement from the Gospel of John makes that fact quite clear. Indeed, everything of true import that Jesus had to share he made quite plain in the Gospels, and any & every position that contradicts the radical, courageous, humble, selfless Love that he came to champion (the same Love that forms the hub of every single one of his sermons and the center of every single one of his parables) is a position that he most certainly did *not* support or in any way affirm or champion.



Matthew 7:7-8 ... To Seek and to Find

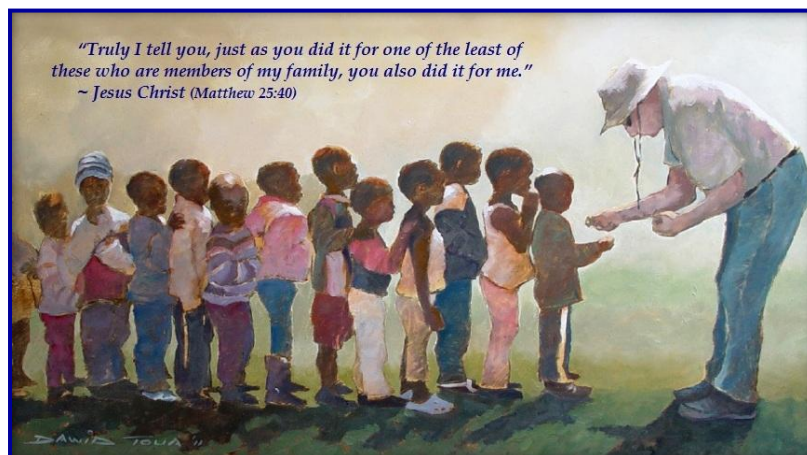
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“Ask and it will be given you. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened ... For everyone who asks receives and everyone who Searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, their door will be opened.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 7:7-8)

This verse is quite important indeed, and yet not in its traditional context ... For the typical, conservative, religiously dogmatic interpretation of this passage claims that all the “good Christian” has to do is ask for whatever he or she desires and the same will be given to them by God. And in Truth this flagrant misapplication has led to the infestation of the false theology commonly known as the “Prosperity Gospel” in many modern Christian churches – a teaching that not only flies in the face of what Jesus meant with this particular passage, but also a teaching that fully contradicts the founding principles upon which Jesus’ teachings stood (and upon which they still stand today) ...

Indeed (in **Deed!**), it doesn’t take a rocket scientist to note that Jesus’ entire ministry was founded upon the principle of selfless Love and self-sacrificial Generosity. Yes, it is true that he did often claim that we could receive our deepest desires -- and yet only those desires that resonated with his Way; only those desires that existed in harmony with the will of our True Selves; only those yearnings that were actualized “**in Christ’s name**” (see [Matthew 18:5](#), [Matthew 24:5](#), [Mark 9:37-39](#), [Luke 10:17](#), [John 14:26](#) et al) – a name that yearned for only one thing: to ease the suffering of others; to bring others Peace &/or Joy.

And indeed **this** is what will be given to us every time we ask “**in his name**” ([John 14:13-14](#)), for every time we do so -- every time we humble ourselves as young children and pray "**in his name**", an opportunity to serve another is immediately given to us; an opportunity to serve that was waiting to be recognized and engaged all along. And **this** is the gift that will always be given; **this** is the door that will always be opened -- for **this** and this alone is The Way of Christ.



Philippians 4:7 ... Enveloped by the Peace of God
(10/23/2016)

“And the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,
will envelop your Hearts.” ~ Paul (Philippians 4:7)

While Paul probably intended this verse to be an uplifting encouragement to his followers who were feeling doubtful or depressed; while he probably intended these words to have those others focusing on some celestial benefit that would “come from above” to ease their pain if they did as he said &/or believed as he believed, there is a much deeper Meaning at play here – a Meaning much more in alignment with the teachings of Jesus Christ – a Meaning that is better communicated to those who are in pain or afraid of pain than to those who are merely depressed or in doubt – a Meaning that provides in-Courage-ment more than mere encouragement – a Meaning that calls for others to boldly reach out to their neighbors with acts of unconditional Love, rather than wait passively by in the hope of being rewarded for their feeble, self-focused acts of “devout” worship.

Smile at
strangers.
We're in this
together.



John 14:16-17 ... The Advocate within
(10/24/2016)

“And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither Sees It nor Knows It. You Know It, because It abides with you, and will reside within you.” ~ Jesus (John 14:16-17)

It is no small understatement to note that, as far as comprehending human psychology was concerned, Jesus was way ahead of his time – so far ahead in fact, that he was forced to share his Truths via cryptic sermons & symbolic parables (and ultimately by having himself nailed to a cross). And this passage is one of the best evidences of this apparent fact. For here, Jesus is not speaking of an external “Advocate” – not referring to any separate “heavenly being” who would come from somewhere else and in effect possess the bodies of those to whom he was speaking. ... No, as was so often the case, Jesus was speaking here of an *internal* essence – an essence (that some call the “conscience,” and that others call the “Soul”) that was already in place within his listeners, and that needed merely to be activated by them via selfless acts of Love (see [Matthew 10:7+](#) [Matthew 24:12-14](#)) ... Sadly, not even his own disciples chose to set aside their self-centered fears & selfish lusts long enough to even faintly comprehend the radically selfless Love of which he was speaking (hence the fact that he became increasingly frustrated with them over the course of his three-year ministry – see [Matthew 16:7-11](#), [Mark 9:19](#), [Luke 9:41](#) et al); hence the fact that he ultimately gave up trying to verbally explain his Way to others altogether – and hence the fact that he ultimately resorted to one final act of Joy-full self-sacrifice on the Hill of Golgotha -- hence that he ultimately chose to show others what he meant instead of merely telling them the same.



Matthew 7:8-14 ... The Narrow Gate

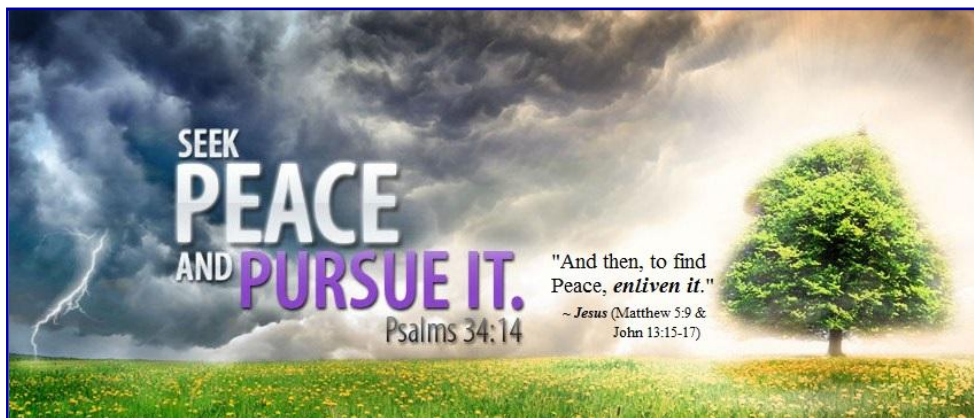
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“For the Gate is narrow and the Road is hard that leads to Life, and there are few who find It ... [though] everyone who Searches, [does indeed] find It.”

~ Jesus (Matthew 7:14+8)

It is easy to see why so many Christians read these and similar verses as saying that Jesus was only open to saving a few “good souls” – that Jesus was somehow only open to redeeming those few who happened to subscribe to the teachings of Paul by worshiping Jesus as the only Son of God ... Indeed it is these same dogmatic “Paulinists” (ironically known today as “Christians”) who would have us believe that worshiping Jesus himself is the very “**narrow way**” Jesus himself mentions in such passages – essentially, having us believe that Jesus was a hypocrite; that he openly abandoned the very same humility that he demanded of others (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#)), and that he openly exuded the same pride that he so soundly & repeatedly denounced (see [Matthew 23:12](#)).

And yet this is not how we must read this passage, my Friends. It is indeed possible to read it differently; to read it without selling Jesus so short – just as it is indeed possible to read it without making God out to be such a capricious masochist. For if we read Jesus’ teachings in their entirety, it is quite clear that the Narrow Way of which he speaks has nothing at all to do with worshiping him (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 12:44](#) et al) and everything to do with enlivening a Way of Being – a Way of Caring – a Way of Loving – a Way of Living with others that puts their own needs above our own – a Way of selfless Kindness that is indeed “**the road that leads to [a Meaning-full] life.**” And yes, it is indeed a road that requires immense courage, and thus it is indeed a road few choose to find. And yet it is also just as true that every single person who exhibits the requisite humility to seek it – and then the requisite courage to walk upon it – is indeed guaranteed to both find it and revel thereupon.



2 Corinthians 11:15 ... *Knowing our Ends*

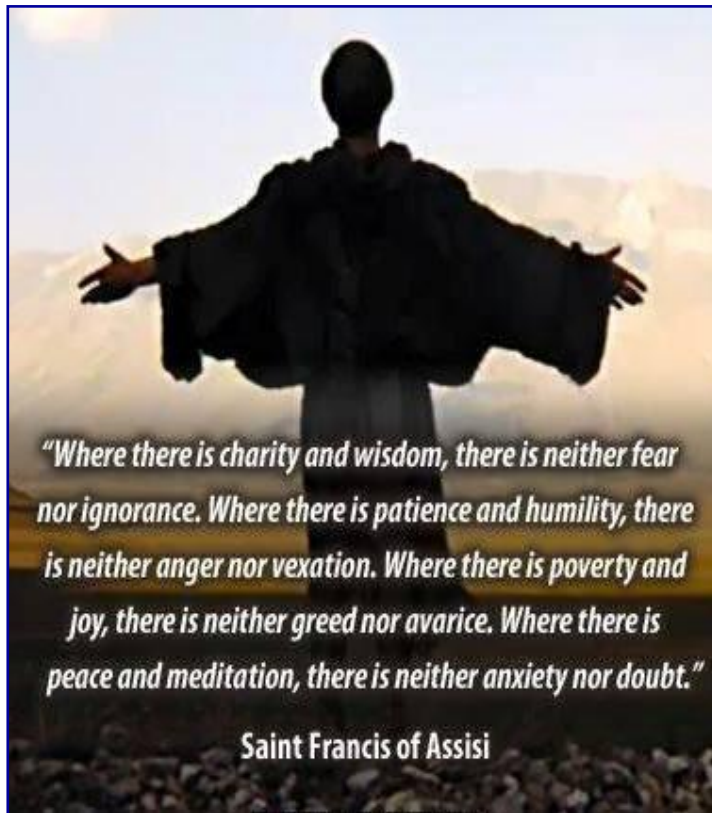
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“Their End will match their deeds.”

~ Paul (2 Corinthians 11:15)

This verse actually has a degree of importance inversely proportional to its length, for it reflects quite a few Truths of quite great magnitude ...

Initially, it exposes Paul as a hypocrite – seeing as how he uses this verse (and the verses that immediately precede it) to condemn others for being false-prophets; all while he himself – a man who purported to champion the teachings of Jesus – was preaching a gospel that directly *contradicted* the Gospel of Christ (feel free to contrast 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 & Romans 10:9 with Mark 10:18, Matthew 10:7 & Matthew 24:12-14, et al to see that this is indeed the case). **Secondly**, it is extremely ironic that Paul would warn others of their ends matching their deeds, when his own apparently brutal end matched his own relatively barbaric & highly judgmental teachings (it is indeed also often true that those who call out the sins of others are they themselves even more egregiously guilty of similar misdeeds). **Finally**, and by far most importantly, this verse is accurately reflective of what I call “The Law of Rapid Karma” – namely, the Truth that all of our deeds are not only met with commensurate consequences on the material plane in the same lifetime they are committed (with our “wickedly” selfish deeds reaping commensurate experiences of painful discord, and our “saintly” selfless acts gleaning commensurate experiences of peaceful Joy), but that those same deeds reap commensurate psycho-spiritual consequences *while* they are being committed as well (with our “wickedly” selfish deeds birthing immediate feelings of shame &/or fear &/or sadness, and our “saintly” selfless deeds engendering concurrent feelings of Self-assuredness, profound Peace & deep-seated Joy).



Ephesians 5:13-14 ...When all becomes Visible
(10/27/2016)

“Everything exposed by the Light becomes visible,
for everything that becomes visible IS Light.”
~ unknown (Ephesians 5:13-14)

This passage has two primary levels of Meaning: *the material level* – where everything (including matter itself) is indeed composed of various condensations of light (reminding us that we are indeed all literally **One**), and *the psycho-spiritual level* – where the True Self (or the Spirit, or the Soul) becomes “illuminated” in every moment we choose to shine it forth; namely, in every moment we choose to embody its constant Call to Harmony, its continuous summons to Love others by willingly setting their needs ahead of our own desires -- and their Peace above our own yearnings for comfort & safety.

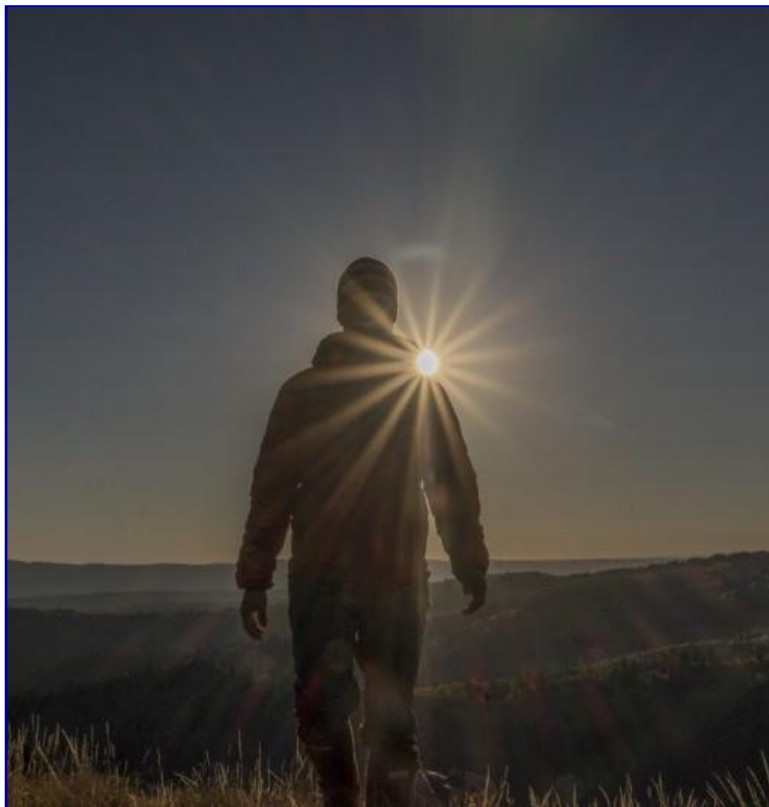


John 20:22-23 ... Receiving the Holy Spirit (10/28/2016)

“He breathed on them and said: Receive the Holy Spirit. If you Forgive the sins of any, they are Forgiven them. If you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 20:22-23)

It is extremely important to keep in mind here that Jesus was a firm & indeed an avid believer that every one of us was just as innately “holy” as he was choosing to be during his ministry (see [John 12:44-47](#)) – that we **all** contain the Holy Spirit within us at all times (see [John 14:20](#)), that we **all** have within us the “breath of God” (see [John 14:26](#)), that we **all** had the power to forgive others their trespasses against us – thereby freeing them to “become saved” by doing the same (see [Matthew 6:14-15](#) & [Mark 11:25](#)).

Just as important, this passage makes it equally clear that it is **we** who retain the sins of others when we refuse to forgive them the same – that it is **we** who retain the pain and the anger and the resentment and the shame – and that it is **we** who actually imprison those others in their sins by refusing to use our power of forgiveness to open for them a doorway of atonement; by denying them unconditional Love – the same denial from their youth that inspired the feelings of low self-worth that inspired their transgressions against us in the first place.



James 1:21-22 ... Welcoming the Word

(10/29/2016)

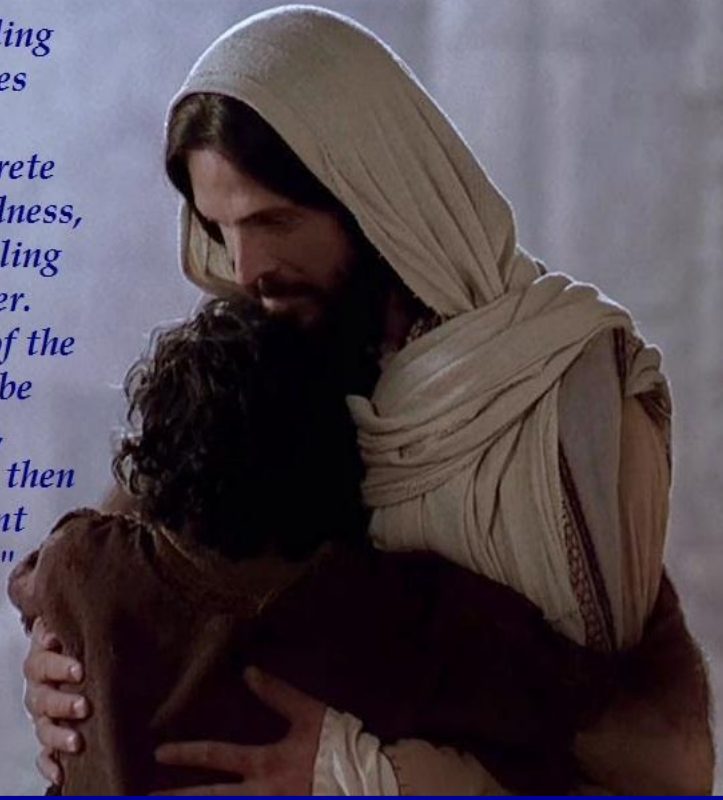
“Welcome with meekness the implanted Word that has the Power to save your Souls ... Be Doers of that Word, and not mere hearers who deceive themselves.”

~ James (James 1:21-22)

Ahhh, God bless “James the Just” ... It is no wonder that Jesus held him in such incredibly high regard (see [Gospel of Thomas 1:12](#)), as he was obviously one of the few disciples who seemed to truly “get it”; one of the very few who understood that it was not by worshiping Jesus himself that one could be saved – that Salvation came not from a mere mental belief “in Christ” or a mere verbal profession of “faith”, but rather (as Jesus himself so often and so consistently said throughout the Gospels) that Salvation comes to us solely through acts of selfless Love – especially those acts of Love given when we least wish to give them; especially those acts of Love given to those deemed "least deserving" of the same ... Indeed (in-Deed!), James knew that we are not to be mere doers of the words of Paul, but that we are rather to be ***Enliveners of The Word*** of Jesus Christ instead!

"If your understanding of the Divine inspires you to express compassion in concrete acts of Loving-Kindness, then you are full-filling the will of the Father. But if your notion of the Law tempts you to be unkind, judgmental, belligerent or cruel, then you are not a vibrant worshipper thereof."

~ Jesus & K. Armstrong
(Matthew 5:17-18)

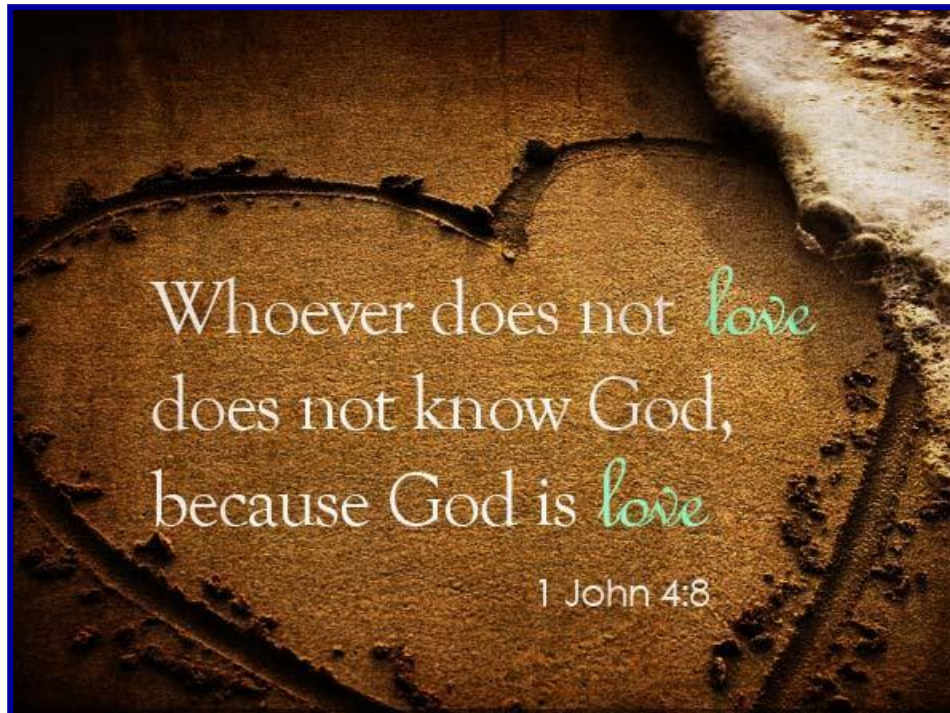


Mark 9:23 ... All things can be Done
(10/30/2016)

“If you are able, all things can be done for one who Believes.”
~ Jesus (Mark 9:23)

This verse can be quite misleading (and has indeed misled more than a few) until one remembers how Jesus actually believed about **Belief**. You see, for Jesus at least, **Belief** had nothing at all to do with mental reverence or verbal professions of worship ... No ... For Jesus, **Belief** was an action; a *verb*; an open *leap* of faith; a vibrant *emulation* of the Way of the Truth of his Life (see [John 13:15-17](#) et al) ... Yes, for Jesus at least, **Belief** was either active or it was nothing. And because for him it was an active reflection of his teachings – teachings that focused almost solely on encouraging others (actually in-Courage-ing others) to perform *deeds* of self-sacrificial Love, the only thing that those who are **Believing** in such a manner can wish for is the opportunity to serve others -- the opportunity to reach out and **Care** -- the opportunity to **Forgive** an enemy -- the opportunity to **Give** one's last two pennies to the poor ...

As such, this verse is not a call to rationalized selfishness at all – not at all a justification of the hollow & morally feeble “Prosperity Gospel” ... Instead, it is a call for us to truly **BELIEVE** – an encouragement to know that we can all effectuate great Goodness for those in need, and an in-Courage-ment for us all to go forth into our lives and *do* just that.

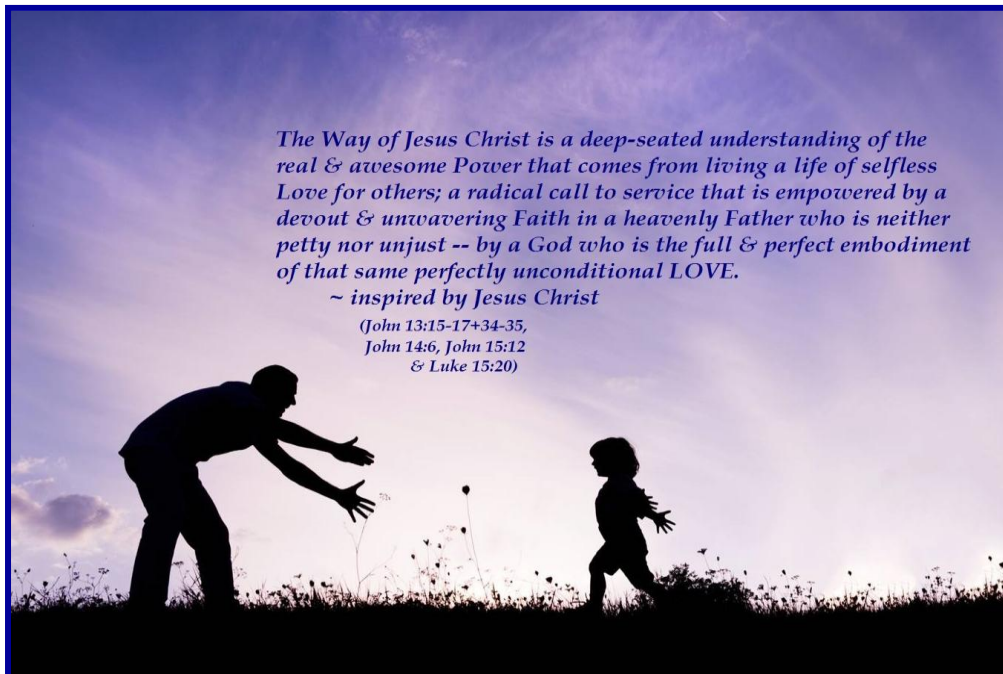


Luke 15:20 ... While we were still far off
(10/31/2016)

“But while he was still far off, his Father saw him and was filled with Compassion; and ran out to put his arms around him and kiss him.”
~ Jesus Christ (Luke 15:20)

This is the most important verse from one of Jesus’ most important parables -- The Parable of the Prodigal Son (see [Luke 15:11-32](#)). In this tale, a devoutly selfish son takes his massive inheritance, leaves his father’s house, and travels abroad to squander those riches in a life of sin & debauchery. And yet despite it all, when that son hits rock bottom and decides to come home, his father welcomes him with open arms – with no scoldings, with no guilt-trips, with no passive-aggressive shaming, and with no uncomfortably “appropriate” punishments or fairly “just” consequences. The father simply sees him on the horizon and – despite knowing full well exactly where the son went and the irresponsibly wicked things he had done while away – runs to him and wraps his arms around him ...

Most importantly of all – and this is the part that almost all the Christians I know miss completely – the father runs to the son and fully forgives him before the son even attempts to apologize; ***before he asks for redemption*** and without him asking even directly to atone for his wrongs. The Forgiveness of the father in this story is given immediately, it is given unconditionally, and it is given absolutely – just like the Forgiveness that must be given by any God who is all-Loving; by any God who is in any way even remotely worth worshiping (see [Matthew 5:48](#), [Luke 6:36](#), [Matthew 18:21-22](#) & [1 John 4:18](#)).



Hebrews 2:14-15 ... Sharing the same Things (11/01/2016)

“Since all children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death.” ~ unknown (Hebrews 2:14-15)

This passage, for Christians & non-Christians alike, is extremely important for several reasons ...

First and foremost, it quite clearly reminds us that Jesus Christ was indeed a man – man who chose to actualize the vast majority of the Inner Divinity within him (the same Inner Divinity that is ever available to us all -- see [John 14:20](#) et al), and yet a man nonetheless. And this is a Truth that allows us to remember that it is indeed possible for us *all* to live just a brilliantly (i.e. just as Lovingly) as he did – and this, in any moment we choose to do so; especially in those times when we feel as though such a choice is impossible; especially in those moments when we are feeling most acutely “only human.”

Secondly, this passage points out the fact that Jesus did indeed “share the same things” as us – the same fears, the same temptations, and indeed many of the same sins as well (e.g. anger and fear and frustration and annoyance -- see [Matthew 7:26-29](#), [Matthew 15:21-18](#), [Matthew 17:17](#), [Matthew 18:15-17](#), [Mark 3:5](#), [Mark 9:19](#) & [Luke 9:41](#) et al). Yes, he transcended those fears & temptations (and thus avoided those sins) far more often than most of us do, and yet had them and occasionally succumb to them he most certainly did ... And indeed, how could he otherwise have any real Compassion for us all – and thereby know any real Love for us? For empathy is necessary for real Love to exist, and we can only empathize with suffering similar to that *which we ourselves have experienced*. And this Truth is as valid for Jesus as it is for any other being.



Thirdly and finally, this passage reminds us of the primary Purpose of Jesus’ ministry – which was not to save us or to support us or to feed us or to heal us – but rather was *to free us* from our fears (especially our insidious, innate, inherent subconscious fear of death); or – better stated – to Awaken us to The Way of selfless Love; a Way that we can choose to walk whenever we wish to free ourselves therefrom.

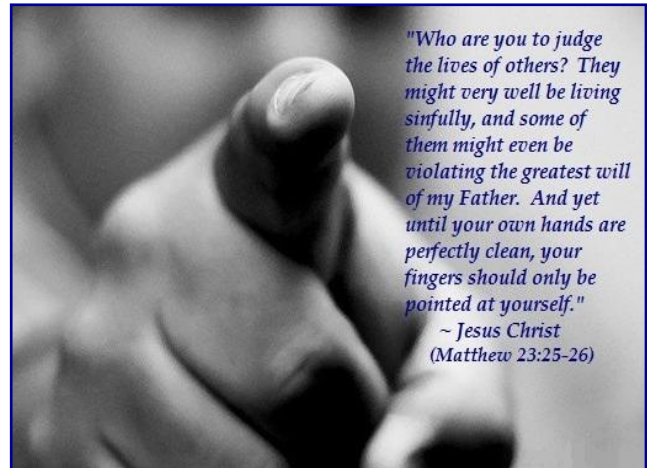
2 Timothy 2:24-25 ... Guiding with Gentleness

(11/02/2016)

“And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome, but rather kind to everyone; an apt teacher -- patient; guiding opponents with gentleness.”

~ unknown (2 Timothy 2:24-25)

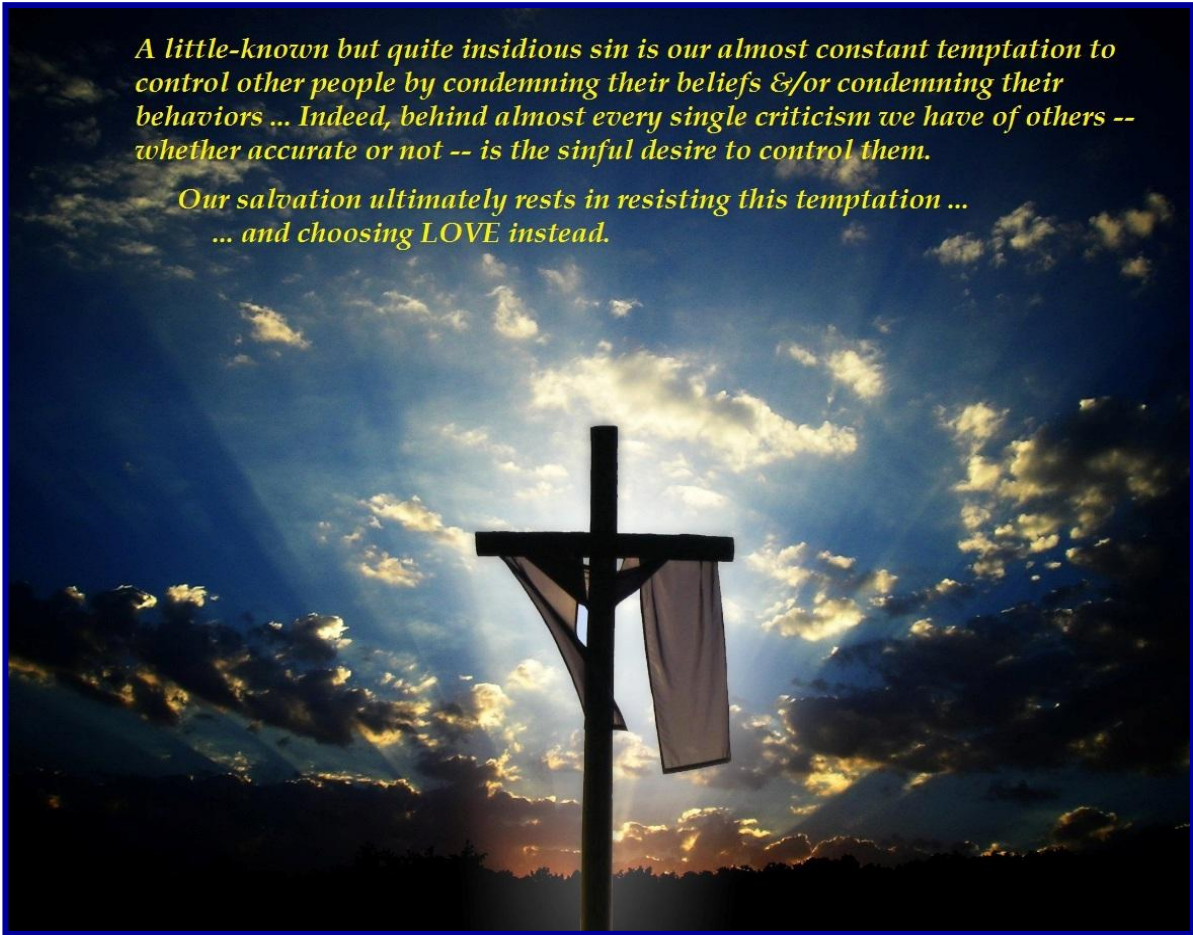
Even though Paul did not actually pen this letter*, **2 Timothy** does contain quite a few of Paul’s favorite ideologies – one of the most poignant of which being found in this particular passage; namely, the errantly arrogant belief that it is the responsibility of all Christians to guide non-Christians to redemption with words of criticism or correction; that it is every Christian’s duty to thereby “make others right with God” or “bring others to salvation” or “save the Souls of sinners” by “guiding them back” to the traditionally accepted interpretations of the Scriptures &/or particular beliefs about God ... And even though this passage encourages others to do so “with gentleness” while being “kind to everyone”, it is actually impossible (and indeed also a direct violation of The Way of Jesus Christ) for them to do so. For the teachings (indeed the entire Way, Truth, & Life) of Jesus made it very clear that **Humility was the key** to entering his “Kingdom of Heaven” (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#)); that we were *not* to raise ourselves up by judging others or putting them down (see [Matthew 7:1-5](#) & [Matthew 23:12](#)); that it is indeed impossible to be Kind to anyone while harming them in any way – that it is impossible to openly bear the Good Fruit of Peace & Joy using methods that bring others pain &/or shame &/or anger &/or sadness ... Indeed, quite unlike Paul, Jesus made it very clear that it was most often our wordless acts of Love that “guided” others, not our haughty words of critique or condemnation (see [Matthew 22:36-40](#) & [Matthew 25:40](#) & [John 13:15-17](#) et al); that the only way to avoid being “quarrelsome” was to be truly humble, and that the only way to be truly humble was to emulate the fully non-condemnatory Way of Christ, not the critical un-way of Paul.



*The Greek vocabulary and style of **2 Timothy** diverges in many ways from the rest of Paul's genuine letters, **2 Timothy** describes a historical situation marked by both the institutionalization of the church and a vibrant opposition thereto – much more akin of the period of the church's history that existed well after Paul's death, and **2 Timothy** lacks all mention of a favored theme of Paul – the justification by faith – and seems to replace it with a focus not prevalent in Paul's authenticated letters (Christian piety being shown by adherence to tradition).

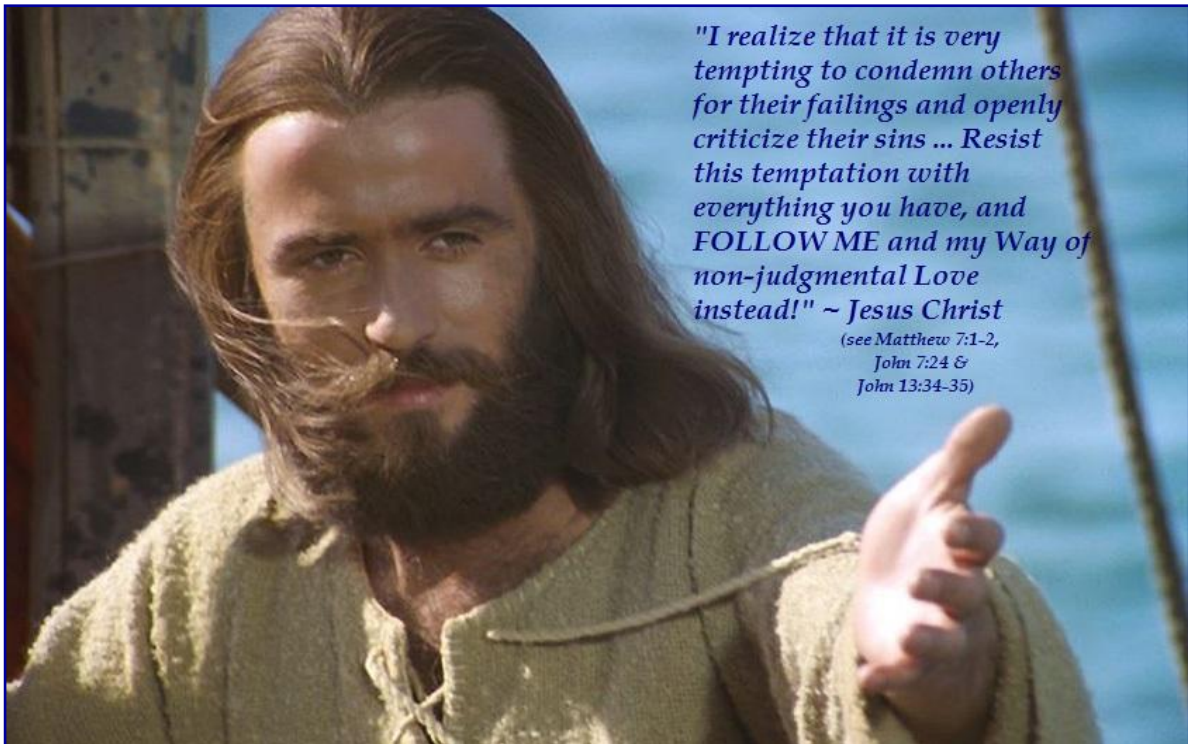
A little-known but quite insidious sin is our almost constant temptation to control other people by condemning their beliefs &/or condemning their behaviors ... Indeed, behind almost every single criticism we have of others -- whether accurate or not -- is the sinful desire to control them.

*Our salvation ultimately rests in resisting this temptation ...
... and choosing LOVE instead.*



"I realize that it is very tempting to condemn others for their failings and openly criticize their sins ... Resist this temptation with everything you have, and FOLLOW ME and my Way of non-judgmental Love instead!" ~ Jesus Christ

*(see Matthew 7:1-2,
John 7:24 &
John 13:34-35)*



Matthew 13:35 ... To proclaim the Hidden

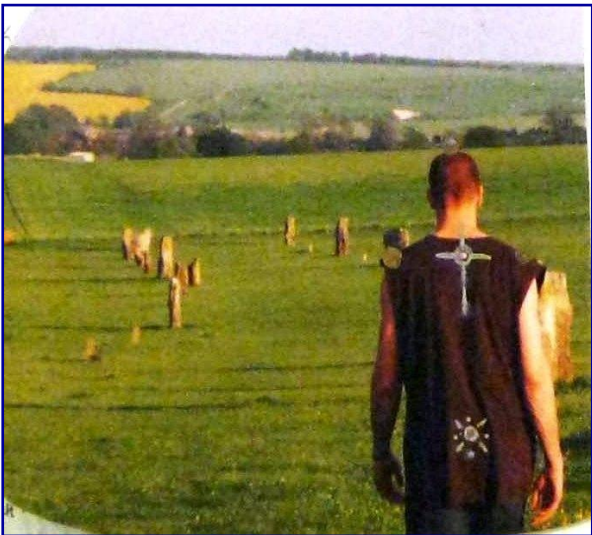
(11/03/2016)

“I proclaim what has been hidden from the foundation of the world.”

~ Jesus (Matthew 13:35)

Many scholars have wondered what Jesus meant with this verse – and rightly so. For if we accept the premise that Jesus was indeed an Enlightened Being (all evidence being equal, it is always Wise to assume the best of others, that we might then be inspired to learn the most from them), and we accept his own protestations against being worshiped – against being treated as anything “more than” – against being honored as the only Son of God (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al), then we realize that he cannot be speaking about himself here, much less about any supposedly unique form of personal Divinity. Indeed, for him to be speaking even indirectly in the 3rd person (which many Christians do indeed believe) is to pronounce an arrogance in Jesus that he himself openly & vehemently abhorred in others (see [Matthew 23:12](#)) ... As such, in order (ironically) to provide Jesus with the greater honor, we must assume that something else is being said in this verse – something that does not contradict the very core of Jesus' teachings or deny the very essence of his ministry.

But what could that something else be? Well, if we focus on the latter half of the verse – on the words “[foundation of the world](#)”, that “something” happens to reveal itself. For “[the foundation of the world](#)” – as the Bible itself so often states – is self-interest; self-interest that takes the various sinful forms of fear and lust and greed and loathing. And in this light this verse makes complete sense, and makes sense in a way that perfectly harmonizes with the central themes of what Jesus so often shared & showed – namely, that what he came to proclaim was



selfless Love; the ability we all have to consciously choose to set aside self-protective instinct in favor of self-sacrifice for others. And as “[the foundation of the world](#)” is the opposite thereof, it is quite clear that Jesus did indeed come to proclaim a Love that must by its very nature remain hidden from the same – hidden until we choose to uncover it; hidden until we choose to change that same foundation; hidden until we rebirth our Selves in humble Kindness and thereby make our world anew.

John 20:29 ... To See; to Believe

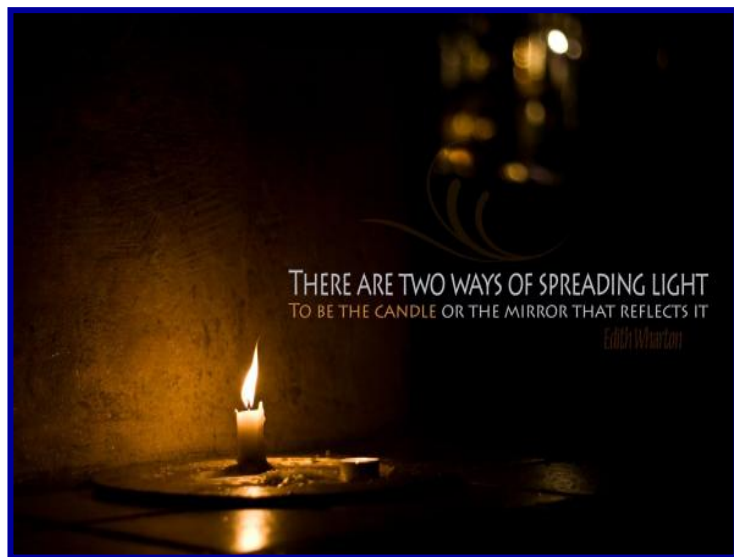
(11/04/2016)

“Blessed are those who have not **Seen**
and yet have come to **Believe**.”
~ Jesus (John 20:29)

As with any quote where certain terms have been unusually capitalized, there are multiple meanings at play in this verse. On the one hand, it superficially means what most Paulinist “Christians” believe it to mean – namely, that those who have a mental faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ (&/or profess a verbal belief in the same) will receive a reward for said subservient allegiance. Of course, this interpretation directly violates most if not all of the primary teachings of Jesus in the Gospels – those about himself (see [Mark 10:18](#)), those pertaining to *his* “[Kingdom of Heaven](#)” (see [Luke 17:20-21](#)), as well as those that explain how we can attain entrance to that Kingdom’s “salvation” (see [John 13:15-17](#)) ...

And hence, the capitalizations of the words “**Seen**” and “**Believe**” herein – reminders **A**) that it is not enough (indeed that it is essentially irrelevant) to tangibly perceive the miracles that do ensue from deeds of selfless Love – that we must only See the True Self of the other beneath their behaviors to easily choose to “Love the enemy” therein, and **B**) that it is not enough (indeed that it is just as irrelevant) for us to mentally believe in the supposed divinity of Jesus or even the ultimate awesomeness of his heavenly Father – that we must only **Believe** in Love to attain his Salvation -- and that to **Believe** in Love we must have the courage to *enliven Love*; especially when we least wish to do so, and especially for those deemed by others to be least deserving of the same.

And it is this latter reminder that illuminates the far deeper Meaning herein – namely, that we are truly blessed when we bless others, and that we most potently bless others when we actively Love them (i.e. when we actively *Believe* in Jesus’ Way), even without recognizing them as the innately perfect beings they are (i.e. humbly – and thereby accurately -- *Seeing* them).



Hebrews 2:18 ... That he Himself was tested
(11/05/2016)

“Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being similarly tested.” ~ unknown (Hebrews 2:18)

Again, this verses reflects two Truths often ignored by most Christians – first, that Jesus was a human being just like all his followers (both those contemporary and those more modern-day), meaning that anyone & everyone can choose to live just as magnificently as he did (see [John 12:44-47](#)) -- and second, that our salvation comes *from within*, not from “above”; that all we must do to transcend times of trial or turmoil is purposefully set aside our fears long enough to enliven The Way of Christ – long enough to actively Care for another instead of mentally fret for self.



Acts 20:35 ... To Give is to Receive

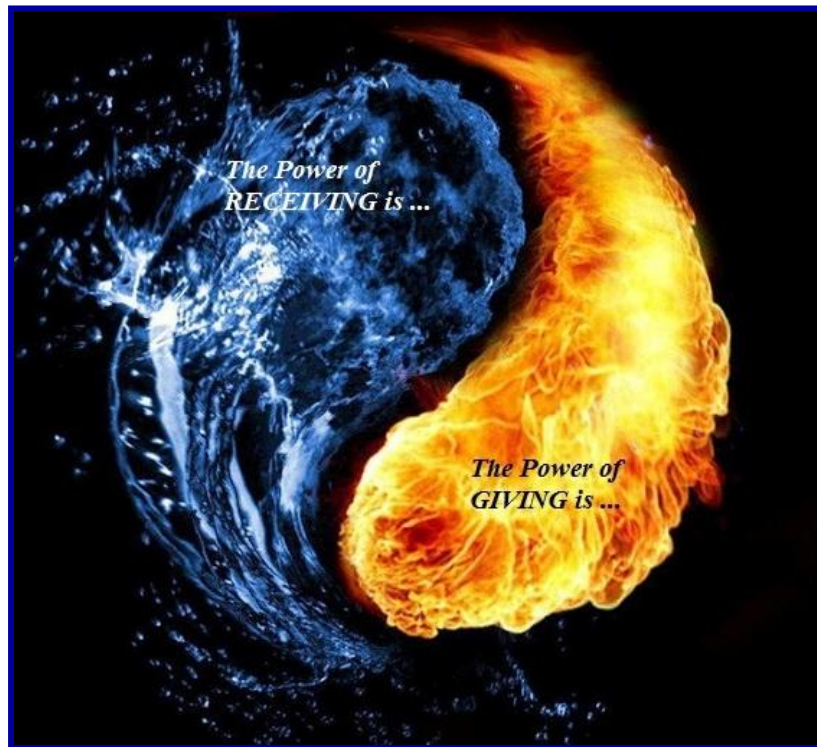
(11/06/2016)

“It is more Blessed to Give than to receive.”

~ Jesus (quoted in Acts 20:35)

Yes, on its face this verse reiterates one of Jesus’ most important teachings – namely, that it is more Peace-full and more Peace-engendering and more Power-full to Give selflessly to others than it is to receive from them. And yet this verse has two additional important notes of intrigue as well ... **Firstly**, this saying is directly attributed to Jesus in this particular passage, even though this quote is nowhere to be found in any of the Gospels! This means – quite simply – that biblical literalists are herewith forced to accept that the contents of extra-biblical sources must also count as valid Scripture; that the [Gospel of Thomas](#) and the [Apocalypse of Peter](#) and the [Gospel of Judas](#) (and any other non-canonical manuscripts that have satisfied the basic legitimacy standards of modern biblical scholarship) must also be generally accepted as being equal facets of The Word of God ... **Secondly**, and much more importantly, while on its face it is indeed more blessed to Give than it is to receive, the more enlightened practitioner of The Way of Christ knows quite well that – because this is indeed the case – it is actually one of the greatest Gifts to purposefully *receive* a Gift from another, and thereby allow *them* to receive the Blessing inherent in their Giving ... And once the Giver is also aware of this dynamic, then his Giving becomes a Receiving for the Giver thereof, and that Receiving becomes a Gift for the Receiver thereof, which then becomes another Gift, which then becomes an additional Reception – and so on & so on & so on; with each transaction become more and more entwined until the Giving & the Receiving – and ultimately the Giver and the Receiver – literally become **ONE**.

Amen ... Let it be so.



Luke 7:24 ... Into the Wilderness

(11/07/2016)

“What did you go out into the wilderness to find?”

~ Jesus (Luke 7:24)

It is not for us to go looking into the Heart of another for our own Enlightenment or Truth, nor is it for us to go looking elsewhere for opportunities to fulfill our Life’s many Purposes ... Indeed, everything we need to know is already within us, and everything we need to **Do** is always within sight.

Jesus preached this same Truth clearly & consistently in [Matthew 6:34](#) (“Today’s challenges are enough for today”) and in [Matthew 25:40](#) (“Just as you do it for one of the least of my family, so too do you do it for me”), and he did so in this particular biblical passage as well – gently chastising his disciples for seeking in him what they should have been finding *within themselves*; looking elsewhere for their faith when they should have been enlivening their own; looking for someone to save them from their own trials & tremblings when they should have been enlivening his teachings by seeking to save others from theirs.



John 9:3-5 ... Born for Revelation

(11/08/2016)

“We are born blind so that God’s Works might be revealed through us. We must Do the Works of Him who sent us while it is day ... As long as we are in the world, we are the Light of the world.” ~ Jesus (John 9:3-5)

Quite importantly, note that even though most translations of this passage have Jesus saying “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world”, the ancient Greek *actually* shows him to more likely say something akin to, “While I very well might be of this world, the Light that I am is [definitely] of this world.”

And please note as well that Jesus does not say here that he is the only embodiment of that Light. Rather, as [John 14:20-26](#) & [John 12:44-47](#) make quite clear, Jesus believed that we are *all* innately “the Light of the World”; that as long as we are alive in human form, we can *all* embody the Light of God in those moments we choose to act accordingly – in those moments we choose to Care for those most in need of the same.

Indeed, this is how we fulfill the “Will of God” in our lives – this is how “God’s works (which are always reflections of perfect, selfless Love – a la [Matthew 5:48](#) + 1 John 4 et al) are revealed *through* us.”



Luke 1:76-77 ... The Prophet of the Most High

(11/09/2016)

“And you will be called Prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare His ways; to rekindle an awareness in the forgiveness of their sins.” ~ Jesus (Luke 1:76-77)

Note first & foremost that this prophecy was not given by Jesus himself, nor was it even given about Jesus. Rather, these words were uttered by Zechariah for his son (John the Baptist) shortly after *his* birth. That having been said, this prophecy does reflect the words uttered by Jesus in [Luke 4](#) – the only time in the Bible we see him reading from the Old Testament scrolls directly – when he says, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (Luke 4:18-19 – quoting from Isaiah 61) ...



Note also that John’s purpose was to prepare *God’s* ways (a la “[make the way straight](#)” from [Isaiah II](#), Jesus’ favorite Old Testament scroll – see [Isaiah 40:3](#)), **not** to prepare humanity for any subsequent “savior” ... **Note** as well, and far more importantly, that this particular prophecy succinctly (and quite brilliantly) reflects Jesus’ ministry as a whole – quite accurately reflects his focus on a Love that was wholly unconditional and a Grace that was to be given to all without end ... And finally, please **note** that the call herein was not for the direct forgiveness of sins from a celestial Judge “on high”, but rather was offered to rekindle an awareness of the innate ability we all have to forgive others their sins – and *thereby* cleanse our own as well.

Thomas 1:108 ... To drink from his Mouth
(11/10/2016)

“Whoever drinks from my Mouth will Become as I Am.”

~ Jesus (Gospel of Thomas 108)*

First & foremost, please realize that it is only possible to “**drink from another’s mouth**” while doing far more than merely listening to his or her words ... Indeed, to “**drink from the mouth**” of a stranger is to listen to them as if they were God – to “**drink from the mouth**” of a lover is to strive to feel their pains and then honor their Soul’s deepest desires for Peace & Love – and to “**drink from the mouth**” of Jesus Christ (or any other Saint or Sage or Teacher) is to go forth and radically put his words into motion.

***See also John 4:13-14**, where Jesus says “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I give them will never be thirsty. For the water that I give becomes in them a spring gushing up to eternal life.”



John 1:4 ... The Light of all people
(11/11/2016)

“What has come into Being in Him is Life,
and that Light is the Light of all people.”
~ unknown (John 1:4)

This is an extremely important biblical verse, and not for the heavily constricted meaning typically attached to it by conservative Christian preachers and their devout “believers” – not because it somehow intimates that Jesus is the one and only Son of God for every human being on the planet; a Super-Being who we must either worship wholeheartedly and with absolute allegiance, or suffer eternally for wont of doing so ... No, to read this verse in such a limited way is not only to inadvertently denigrate the majestic worth of the biblical manuscripts themselves, but is also to blaspheme against the teachings of Jesus Christ. For the “Him” mentioned herein is not referring to Jesus Christ directly, but rather “the Word” – “the *Logos*” in the ancient Greek manuscripts – a term used at the time to reference the Divine Spark of Life that resides within *all* sentient beings, not merely one of them ... Also, even if the “Him” here mentioned *were* referring specifically to Jesus Christ – note that his Divinity did not come into being with him, but came into being *in* him; namely, that Jesus’ Divinity was not inherently attached from birth, but was rather something that was called forth by his Noble (i.e. selflessly motivated) Choices and their subsequently Noble (i.e. self-sacrificially Caring) Deeds ... Finally, this Divine Light that came into being in Jesus was the very same Light “of all people” – that (just as Jesus himself so often stated – see [John 14:20](#) et al) every sentient being has equal access to the very same degree of spiritual perfection that Jesus displayed; and that all we need to do to enliven the same is courageously follow his example – to humbly *follow his Way* by resolutely adhering to his Truth while courageously emulating his Love.



Matthew 18:19-20 ... When two of us Agree
(11/12/2016)

“If two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my Name, I am there within & among them.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 18:19-20)

Here again we have a passage from the Bible that is used by many (especially those Christians who have succumbed to the lie that is “the Prosperity Gospel” -- or those non-Christians who have succumbed to the falsehood that is “the Law of Attraction”) to justify their selfish attempts at satisfying their deepest desires for material wealth, their deepest longings for emotional “love”, &/or their deepest yearnings for public acclaim (i.e. power or popularity or fame) ... Of course, what those same believers always conveniently overlook (or outright ignore) are the most important words in the passage – namely, the words “*in my name.*” For the original true name of the biblical Jesus was probably the Hebrew “Yehoshua” – a name which literally meant “God is our guide”; a name which later became the Aramaic “Yeshua” – which meant “he will save” ... Interestingly, Matthew 1:23 cites Jesus’ true name as “Emmanuel” – a name which meant “God is [literally] with us” (i.e. “God is ever *within us*”) ... And of course, at least as far as Jesus himself was concerned (and Jesus is the one who happens to be speaking in this passage), God – the “Father in Heaven” mentioned here – was an essence composed of pure and perfect Love (Matthew 5:48); a Love that knows no want for self – a Love that desires only to serve others. As such, when we keep these Truths in mind, this passage takes on a far deeper Meaning – for the only thing that anyone can wish for while truly living “in Christ’s name” is for the opportunity to be of service to those nearby, and whenever anyone who is living this mindset asks for the same, his or her awareness is immediately re-opened to the Truth that there are always those nearby in need of Tenderness – that there are always those nearby in need of Compassion – that there are always those nearby in need of Generosity – that there are always those nearby in need of Love. And because of the omni-prevalence of these potential objects of our Love, it is true indeed that whenever “two of you [who are gathered in Jesus’ name] agree about anything you ask, it will be done for you.”

Amen -- Let it be so.



John 10:17-18 ... To take Life UP again

(11/13/2016)

“I lay down my Life in order to take It up again. No one takes It from me, as I lay It down of my own accord. I have the power to lay It down, and I have the power to take It up again.” ~ Jesus (John 10:17-18)

This is yet another extremely important verse, with the vast majority of Christians & non-Christians alike still overlooking the greatest portions of its importance to this very day ...

Please note first & foremost that Jesus makes it quite clear here that his death is not something imposed upon him by circumstance or fate – rather, that it is something that he willingly *chose* to experience. And this Truth speaks both to the metaphorical “dying to ego” that he embraced every time he sacrificed personal comforts (e.g. living an extremely austere, home-free life – preaching repeatedly beyond the point of exhaustion – repetitively relaying the same message of selfless Love to others, disciples & strangers alike, who continually refused to comprehend the same) *and* every time he confronted personal fears (staring down the Jewish authorities in synagogues less than friendly – and weeping deeply in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before enduring his crucifixion) in order to more powerfully serve others. More specifically (and more potently as well), it turns out that the Scriptures themselves show quite conclusively that Jesus *literally* effectuated his own crucifixion – something that is also referenced in the passage at hand. For after having repeatedly shared his teachings with an audience that was astoundingly ignorant of his wisdom and disturbingly unwilling to hear his message, a deeply frustrated Jesus finally decided to *show them* all the profound power of willing self-sacrifice – by organizing and carrying out his own “execution” ... Indeed, this is why his crucifixion took place on the eve of the Passover (ensuring that he would be taken down after only a few hours on the cross, as opposed to the 3-4 days that this form of execution normally required), this is why he loudly proclaimed the first verse of **Psalm 22** while hanging there (a Psalm that was well-known at the time; a Psalm that referenced many of the characteristics of Jesus’ own pre-arranged crucifixion – and a Psalm that spoke loudly to the very Jesus-friendly concept of being joyfully grateful to God despite any torments one might be enduring), this is why Jesus took a draught of drugged wine immediately before “**giving up his Spirit**” (a Greek term that implied a *voluntary* form of dying, not a form of murder or execution), this is why he was placed in a new & unused tomb that happened to be not far from Golgotha, this is why no guards were placed at the exit from that tomb until the following morning, and this why that tomb was sealed with a single stone that was easily set into place by a lone, elderly man (Joseph of Arimathea).

My Friends, self-sacrifice that is done Joy-fully for others is the only act that allows us to know the full Bliss of being fully Human ... ***This*** is what Jesus came to share, ***this*** is what Jesus ultimately demonstrated, and ***this*** is what he is referencing in this particular passage – if not via the entirety of his ministry.





*“And I will take one from a thousand
and two from ten thousand,
and they shall Become a single One.”
~ Jesus (Gospel of Thomas 23)*