

LOVE &

FULFILLMENT

The Greatest Commandment

By
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Requirements for the Degree of
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Reasoning and Hypothesis

Deductive

Based on data collected in this study, some conclusions are:

*'Most people: 1) consider love to be important
2) believe in God as, creator, love, and source of love
3) do well at loving them self, their neighbor and God,
4) have a religious or spiritual affiliation and
5) have a medium to high
general life satisfaction level.'*¹

Inductive

If we are to fulfill the greatest commandment

*'Love the Lord your God, with all your heart,
and with all your soul and
with all your mind and with all your strength'.
And love your neighbor as yourself.*²

Then, we need to back up from that purpose and look at the dimensions that *'adequately describe it'*.³

The parameters addressed here are:
Worldview - Attitude - Truth - Motivation - Purpose
Love and God.

¹ Nancy S. Mannix *Love and Fulfillment Dissertation: Research Analysis* © 2012 p.1-2

² Matthew 22:36-39 New American Standard Bible Anaheim, California: The Lockman Foundation © 1997.

³ *ibid* 1 p.6-7

Abstract

This project¹ is focused on love and fulfillment in relation to the greatest commandment given to mankind; love God and love others as Christ loved.

(John 15:12)

*‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul
and with all your strength’.* (Deuteronomy 6:5)

And with *‘all your mind’* as Jesus added. (Matthew 22:37)²

As human beings created with a need to love and be loved, programmed into our core as some believe by a loving Creator, there’s no end to the value of additional study in this area. The purpose of this dissertation is threefold.

(1) First, to research for a better understanding, current perspectives regarding love, specifically loving God and others, as well as increasing the ability to love.

(2) Secondly, to develop a strategic or systematic approach to accomplish the greatest command, and directive to love as Jesus loved, by linking that goal to key components of human performance/effectiveness.

(3) Lastly, to reveal correlations and the potential benefit between a belief system, ideally anchored in a love of God, and the ability to love others and live a more fulfilling life.

This project looks at the walls surrounding the subject of love.

The hope is to expand the space, the capacity to love, in order to live out God’s greatest command and realize ultimate fulfillment in doing so.

Studies in this area fall into different categories such as: *religious* – typically Christian and Bible based; *self-help* psychology or *new age* – spiritual but not necessarily Christian. Rarely can a Biblically based, sensitive topic cut through

these diverse audiences. This research project is directed toward blurring these boundaries by 1) eliciting the participation of all belief systems and 2) processing the findings with information related to individual performance that is applicable in a secular environment.

Background

After the investment of time researching the subject of loving God and others to meet the objective of this study, some background conclusions need to be positioned from the outset.

- Much information is available to the average inquirer concerning the Biblical perspectives related to God's greatest commandment to love. There is no need for this author to improve on what other great theologians have already provided. Included however, are carefully selected homilies to provide a perspective that spans 150+ years. One from 2011, by Pete Briscoe³ precedes the literature review section and it's closed with another by Charles H. Spurgeon from 1857.⁴
- Research in the areas of love, belief systems and life fulfillment is not a simple or exact science. It is clear that many important life questions are deep-seeded and can only be answered privately, rather than definitively by data or any outside expertise. To fulfill the purpose of this project the information provided by 426 participants serves as a point of reference and spring board for further personal reflection and study.

Methodology

The wealth of information in this dissertation comes from various sources:

- 1) Inspired scholars and respected authors who skillfully develop the wisdom provided in Scripture. In place of classroom lectures, much of the key learning was gleaned by the author through audio podcasts available through the internet.
- 2) A broad range of secular information is blended with the spiritual/religious field of knowledge and the data mined from individual responses.
- 3) Research from the 'Love & Fulfillment' questionnaire posted on the worldwide web, through Survey Gizmo in March 2011, which resulted in 426 responses.

Outcome

The outcome of this work in its essence is a template outlining critical components for a systematic approach to assist us in achieving a fulfilling life of love. In the process of data collection and literature research specific underlying areas continued to surface that called for a deeper understanding in order to live out God's greatest commandments. They evolved into the following categories and then corresponding acrostic:

Worldview - Attitude - Truth - Motivation & Purpose

We're --- Addressing The - Mountain --- Peaks

These foundational components are mountain size topics which are viewed from a cruising altitude. They were studied and condensed into modules prior to approaching/scaling the expansive subjects of **Love** and **God**.

The deliverable is not a product of the author's philosophy but rather a fresh juxtaposition of what great, and other, minds can teach us to accept or reject. Finally, any and all information included here has been dutifully footnoted, albeit in a user-friendly rather than dissertation-formal style. The method used is a

vehicle to provide additional data related to specific resources.

Format

The presentation of this research is offered in modules.

- 1) Research analysis is followed by a complete report of the 426 responses collected and supplemented with addendums to further document the findings.
- 2) The literature review assimilates key points to help us inculcate a better ability to love (others and/or God). The seven subject areas: worldview, attitude, truth, motivation, purpose, love and God are flanked by homilies and covered individually. Addendums that reinforce or supplement the material are provided separately following each topic. All seven modules have a Scripture **(S)** review with a few questions for consideration. Additional reports, stories, poems, song lyrics **(L)** and personal **(P)** talks or reflections have also been added in certain sections.

Special dispensation is requested for the occasional use of the collective tense as the author walks this process 'of love' along with the reader.

Vitae

The author Nancy Mannix is an American living in Bangkok, with her husband of 35 years and an adult son working in California.

She has her Bachelors in business from Georgetown, an MBA in Organization Effectiveness from University of Dallas, an Associate in Interior Design, a Masters in Biblical Studies and with the completion of this dissertation a Doctorate in Philosophy with Divinity focus. She then returns to teaching and will deliver Leadership and Creative Thinking at a Thailand University.

Nancy's professional career began in sales management with Bristol Myers, and includes: working with architectural firms, establishing her own design business, sales management for Steelcase and Vice Presidency of a private company.

In Asia, as a university professor/lecturer, she's taught *'Managing People, Relationships and Behavior'* to MBA executives and has been a corporate trainer and executive coach.

Weaved throughout her experience were life's challenges and an ongoing quest to find better answers to bigger questions. This project is part of the outcome of that search, offered here with hope that those open to the content find benefit.

Acknowledgements

A special note of appreciation to: Robert Taylor of DREAMDREAMS, UK - <http://www.dreamdreams.org> for his assistance in launching 'Love & Fulfillment' on Survey Gizmo in March 2011.

Many thanks to all who supported this work, especially to the 426 'Love & Fulfillment' survey respondents for their invaluable contribution to this study.

Let us also acknowledge the mentors at Northwestern Theological Seminary and give thanks to God for it is from Him all good things flow.

¹ Referencing: Nancy Mannix *Dissertation Proposal* submitted to and accepted by Northwestern Theological Seminary, January 2011.

² New American Standard Bible Anaheim, California: The Lockman Foundation © 1997.

³ Pete Briscoe was born into a ministry family in England and moved to the US in 1970. He has a Speech Communications major and Bible and Political Science minor plus a Master's of Divinity from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He's been senior Pastor at a growing Dallas church since 1992. <http://www.tellingthetruth.org/about/Bios/Pete.aspx>

⁴ 'C. H. Spurgeon was to nineteenth-century England what D. L Moody was to America'. Spurgeon never attended theological school, by 21 he was the most popular preacher in London, preaching to crowds of thousands for 40+ years. He founded Sunday churches, orphanages, and the Pastor's College. <http://www.spurgeon.org/misc/biopref.htm>

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Introduction

Following is an 'additional comment' from the Love & Fulfillment survey:

*'Ultimately, my goal in life is live happy and fulfilled.
Love is a tremendous part of that and I think God gives the ability to love;
and it's what you do with that love that makes your life.'*
(25-39 yr old – respondent #170)

One Native American Indian #147 thinks love is important, but says having her children find happiness is more important than love. She does not believe God to be the source of love but says *perhaps* God is the creator of the universe. She does not love God at all and adds:

'I automatically do not trust people that are 'clergy' it's all like a big show to raise \$\$\$ for their church. Don't say you are going to Africa (for example) to talk to them about god. I dare you to not talk about your god, but to go and help build clean water stations, schools etc. But don't bring your god into it.'

She reported a high life satisfaction level and added a quote by Chief Seattle who said: *'every part of the earth is sacred to my people'*.

Respondent #20: A European man 55-70, a Buddhist, says nothing in life is more important than love. He watches his relatives to maintain or increase his ability to give and receive love; although he has no role model. This man is somewhat certain about his purpose in life, but uncertain about his spiritual origin or final destination and reports a high life satisfaction level.

A philosophy of life plays a big part in how people see the world and navigate each day. Before we begin, perhaps we backup and consider:

- How important is it to confidently account for our fundamental beliefs or strong convictions?
- How do beliefs play into one's system of thinking? And is there any benefit in attempting to ground beliefs in truth?

In our technology rich society, reflective thinking or quality study of one's own philosophies may be circumvented by the speed of life or a quest for more. This research focuses on issues impacting perspectives on loving God and others, which can potentially affect relational and life change.

We begin this 'thesis' with anticipation of proving a proposition, perhaps to support an argument with data. To that end, 426 respondents to the Love & Fulfillment survey substantiate the premise: those who

1) consider love to be important 2) believe in God as, creator, love, and source of love 3) do well at loving themselves, their neighbors and God, 4) have a religious or spiritual affiliation ---

5) are Christian and participate in communal religious/spiritual activity...

have a medium to high general life satisfaction level.¹

Taking Merriam-Webster's second definition for the word 'thesis' however, we approach this study as '*an essay embodying results of original research*'.² This point of perspective will be more advantageous to consider and potentially embrace the contents here presented.

'In the twilight of our lives, we will be judged on how we have loved.'

St. John of the Cross

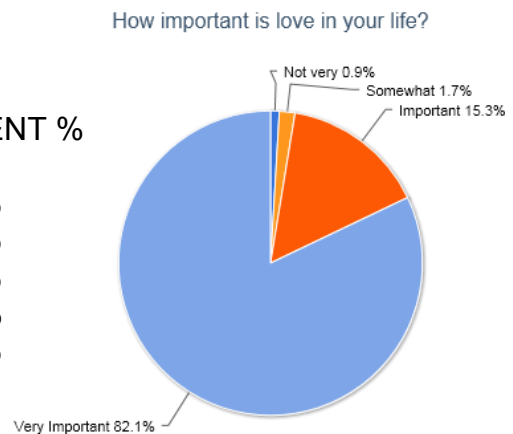
¹ Nancy S. Mannix *Love and Fulfillment Dissertation: Research Analysis* © 2012 p.6-7

² The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Copyright ©1997 by Merriam-Webster, Incorporated.

RD Research Data

RD1. How important is love in your life?

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
Not very	4	0.9%
Somewhat	7	1.7%
Important	65	15.3%
VERY IMPORTANT	348	82.1%
Unimportant	0	0%
Total Responses	424	



82.5% of respondents consider love to be **VERY IMPORTANT** in life.

Adding to that, those who consider love to be **IMPORTANT** the total is **97.4%**.

RD2. Other than your survival & health and that of your family & friends ... what is more important than love in your life?

RESPONSE	COUNT	PERCENT %
----------	-------	-----------

God **135** **33.6%**

Includes: personal relationship with God, Jesus, presence of God, bringing glory to God, pleasing God, etc.

Nothing	86	21.4%
Faith	28	7.0%
Happiness/Joy	23	5.7%
Money/Financial Security	19	4.7%
Fulfillment	18	4.5%

Includes: purpose, making a difference, and giving back

Peace	11	2.7%
Total Responses	402	

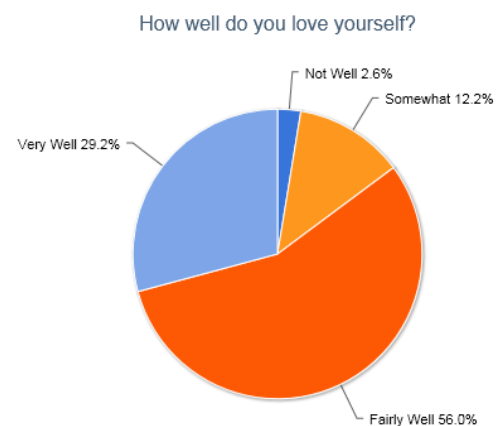
33.6% of respondents consider **God** to be more important than love, some noted that God is love. Adding **faith** in with God the total is **40.6%**. Some who responded 'nothing' also said: *if you consider God the ultimate love, because of my faith as a Christian - love is at the basis of my existence and - that without love we have nothing*. Extrapolating further by including **nothing** as more important to love, along with God and faith, brings the total to **62%**.

Some specific responses worth noting are: *Nothing is more important than*

God in life and God is love so therefore nothing is more important than Love - being the fullest expression of love that I can be - getting to heaven - My first thought was "nothing!", but then I wondered if contentment isn't more important, but can you be content without love? - Because God so loved the world...my very freedom here and eternity is grounded in His sacrificial love. I believe that Life = (Relationships + LOVE) = God For God to continually bless me with Financial Security. To have enough money to pay for day to day necessities for my family: Food, Shelter, utilities, etc. How sad, my answer was \$Money :(

RD3. How well do you love yourself?

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
Not Well	11	2.6%
Somewhat	52	12.2%
Fairly Well	238	56%
Very Well	124	29.2%
Not At All	0	0%
Total Responses	425	

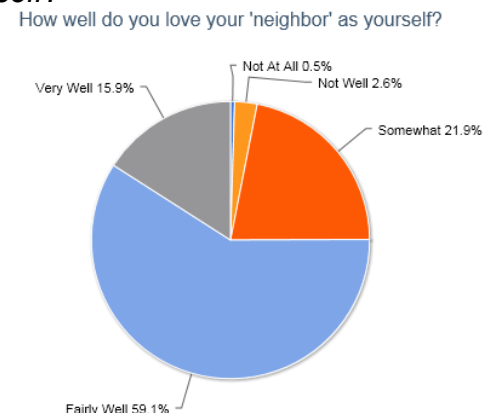


56% of the respondents said they love themselves **fairly well**.

Almost **30%** love themselves **very well**, concluding **85.2%** respond with loving themselves **well**. This has significance when aligning the love of neighbor with love of self.

RD4. How well do you love your neighbor as yourself?

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
Not At All	2	0.5%
Not Well	11	2.6%
Somewhat	92	21.9%
Fairly Very	249	59.1%
Very Well	67	15.9%
Total Responses	421	



59.1% say they love their neighbor as themselves

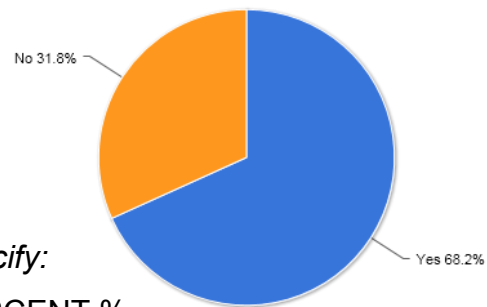
fairly well, an additional **15.9%** say they love their neighbor very well which

totals **75%** of the respondents. Only **3.1%** respond that they **do not** love their neighbor well.

RD5. Do you have a role model or someone you pattern your life after?

Do you have a role model or someone you pattern your life after?

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
Yes	290	68.2%
No	135	31.8%
Total Responses	425	



RD6. If you answered Yes to #5 please specify:

RESPONSE	COUNT	PERCENT %
Jesus Christ/God	98	25% (approx.)
Parents/Family Relations	98	25% (approx.)
Total Responses	402	

Role models varied, specific responses include:

friends, colleagues, teacher/mentors, spiritual/church leaders; Saints (specifically: Paul, Francis, Augustine, Jose Escriva and Mary); individuals cited include: Oprah, Jimmy Stewart, Don Quixote, Helen Keller and Kay Arthur.

RD 7. How certain are you of:

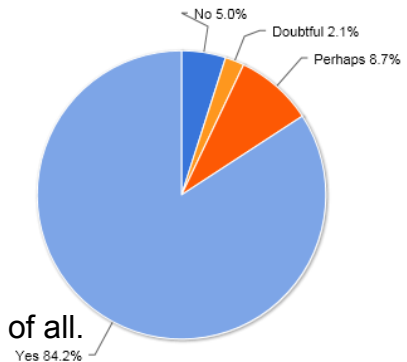
	Uncertain	Somewhat Certain	Very Certain	Responses
a. Your spiritual origin?	6.7%	18.1%	75.2%	420
	28	76	316	
b. Your purpose in life?	9.8%	41.9%	48.3%	418
	41	175	202	
c. Your final destination?	12.3%	27.4%	60.3%	416
	51	114	251	

The majority of respondents were very certain about their spiritual origin, purpose in life and final destination. Of note in the area of life purpose however, is the narrow differential between somewhat (41.9%) and very certain (48.3%).

RD 8. Do you believe in God as the creator of the universe and all that is in it?

Do you believe in God as the creator of the universe and all that is in it?

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
No	21	5%
Doubtful	9	2.1%
Perhaps	37	8.7%
Yes	357	84.2%
Total Responses	424	

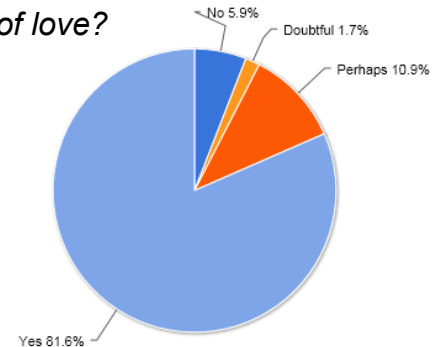


84.2% of respondents believe in God as the Creator of all.

Do you believe God is love and the source of love?

RD 9. Do you believe God is love and the source of love?

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
No	25	5.9%
Doubtful	7	1.7%
Perhaps	46	10.9%
Yes	345	81.6%
Total Responses	423	

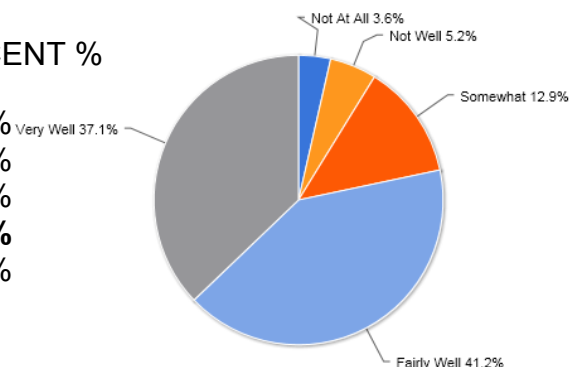


81.6% of respondents believe God is love and the source of love.

RD 10. How well do you love God with your whole heart, soul, mind and strength?

How well do you love God with your whole heart, soul, mind and strength?

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
Not At All	15	3.6%
Not Well	22	5.2%
Somewhat	54	12.9%
Fairly Well	173	41.2%
Very Well	156	37.1%
Total Responses	420	

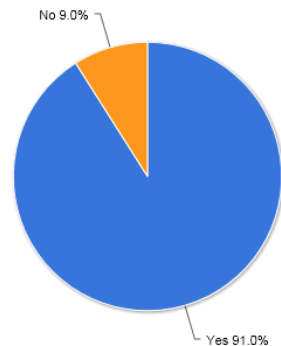


41.2% of respondents love God **fairly well** with their whole heart, soul, mind and strength. Adding the **37.1%** of those who love God **very well** totals **78.3%**.

RD 11. Do you have a religious or spiritual affiliation?

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
Yes	384	91%
No	38	9%
Total Responses	422	

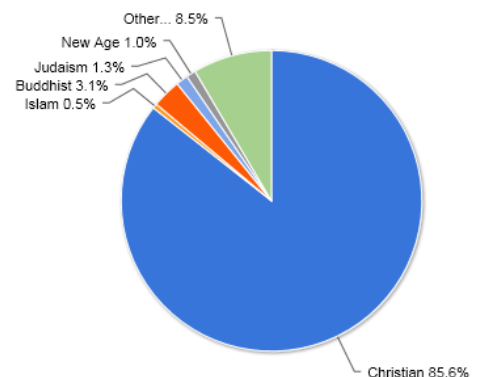
Do you have a Religious or Spiritual Affiliation?



RD 12. If you answered YES to #11 please specify:

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
Christian	333	85.6%
Islam	2	0.5%
Buddhist	12	3.1%
Judaism	5	1.3%
New Age	4	1.0%
Other...	33	8.5%
Hinduism	0	0%
Total	389	

If you answered Yes to #11 ... please specify:



Included in the 'Other' response are:

6 – Catholic, 4 – Roman Catholic, 1 – Baptist = 11 added to Christian. which brings **total Christian to 88.4%**

1 – Messianic Jew, 2 – Jewish = 3; bringing **total Judaism to 2%**.

Specific Responses to Other Religious or Spiritual Affiliations include:

A deep and abiding appreciation for Zen and in particular the master Kido.

American Indian Spirituality (care for the earth & fellow man).

I believe all religions have a single source...Humans, – The Temple of Presence,

I used to be Christian, but now I'm a bit more agnostic. I go to a Unitarian church.

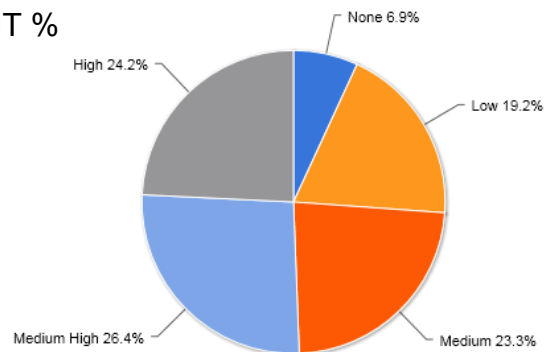
6 – New Thought, which includes Science of the Mind and Religious Science.

3 – Unitarian Universalists, 2 – Spirituality, not religious and 2 – Mix of beliefs.

RD 13. Please rate your participation in communal religious or spiritual activity:

Please rate your participation in communal religious or spiritual activity:

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
None	29	6.9%
Low	81	19.2%
Medium	98	23.3%
Medium High	111	26.4%
High	102	24.2%
Total Responses	421	



The responses in this category indicate only slight differences between low and high communal religious/spiritual participation with a significantly smaller percentage citing no participation.

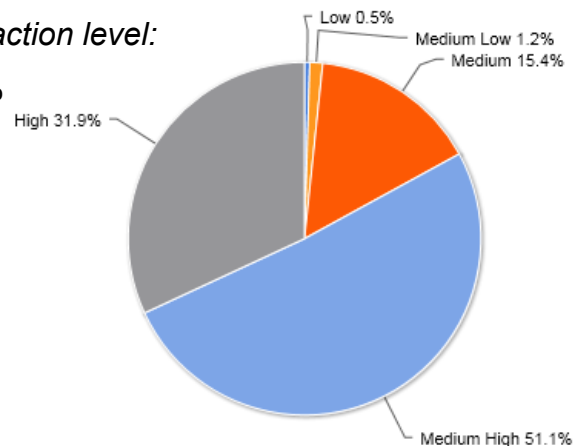
RD 14. What do you do to maintain and/or increase your ability to give and receive love?

Responses to RD 14 are reported separately in Research Data Addendum 1.

Please rate your general life satisfaction level:

RD 15. Please rate your general life satisfaction level:

VALUE	Count	Percent %
Low	2	0.5%
Medium Low	5	1.2%
Medium	65	15.4%
Medium High	216	51.1%
High	135	31.9%
Total Responses	423	

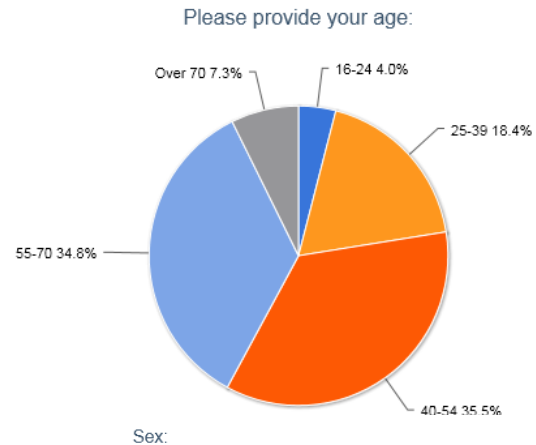


Over half, **51.1%**, of the respondents rate their general life satisfaction level as **medium high**. Combining those responses with the **31.9%** indicating a **high level** of satisfaction totals **83%** of respondents rate their life satisfaction above a mid point.

RDD Research Data – Demographics and Comments

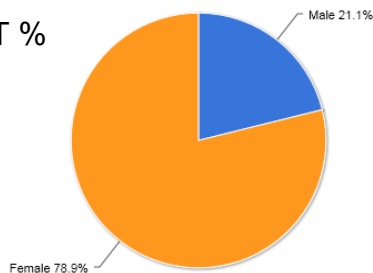
RDD16. Please provide your age:

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
16-24	17	4%
25-39	78	18.4%
40-54	150	35.5%
55-70	147	34.8%
Over 70	31	7.3%
Total	423	



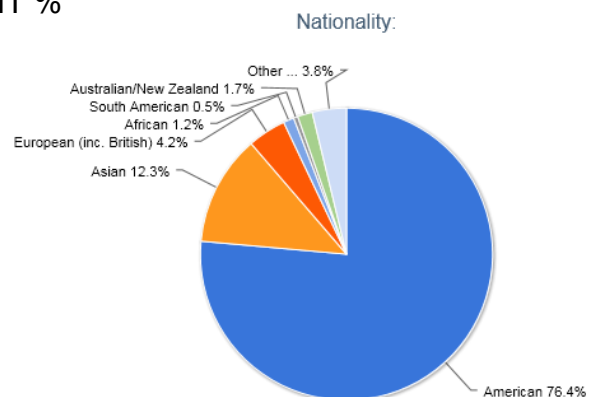
RDD17. Sex:

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
Male	89	21.1%
Female	332	78.9%
Total	421	



RDD18. Nationality:

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
American	324	76.4%
Asian	52	12.3%
European (inc. British)	18	4.2%
African	5	1.2%
South American	2	0.5%
Australian/New Zealand	7	1.7%
Other ...	16	3.8%
Middle Eastern	0	0%
Total Responses	424	



Other nationalities include: 4- Canadians, 1- Canadian/Australian, 2 – Filipinos, 1- Eurasian, 1- Hispanic, 1- Japanese, 1-Singaporean, 1-Thai, 1-South African, 1- Asian American, 1- Native American Indian and one additional Brit bringing the European/inc. British percentage to 4.5%.

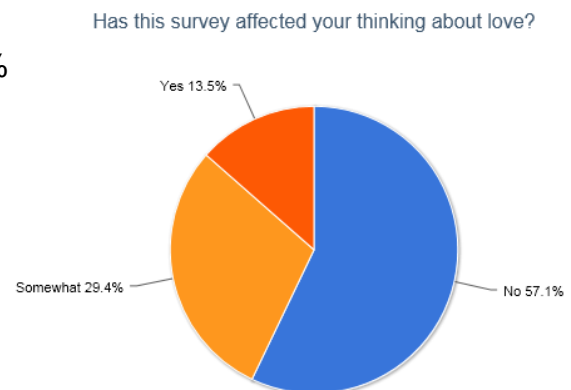
Twenty two countries were represented in this survey as indicated below:

Source Countries

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
Australia	8	1.9%
Canada	7	1.7%
China	5	1.2%
Germany	1	0.2%
Hong Kong	2	0.5%
India	3	0.7%
Indonesia	1	0.2%
Japan	2	0.5%
Korea, Republic of	2	0.5%
Malaysia	2	0.5%
Mexico	3	0.7%
New Zealand	1	0.2%
Philippines	5	1.2%
Russian Federation	1	0.2%
Singapore	7	1.7%
Taiwan	2	0.5%
Thailand	55	13.3%
Uganda	1	0.2%
United Arab Emirates	1	0.2%
United Kingdom	6	1.4%
United States	292	70.4%
Vietnam	8	1.9%
Total Responses	415	

RDD19. Has this survey affected your thinking about love?

VALUE	COUNT	PERCENT %
No	241	57.1%
Somewhat	124	29.4%
Yes	57	13.5%
Total	422	



RDD20. Your additional thoughts or comments related to this survey:

The responses to this question are interesting although difficult to recap scientifically or in totality. Some randomly selected answers follow:

I think I need to reflect further upon my ability to love. I get very focused on directing love towards people who are important to me, but forget myself. I love God, but I've never really thought about how I express that before.

I know that love should play a more important role in my life, I'm just not accustomed to experiencing it. I have a hard time embracing it and accepting it. I tend to push the feeling away.

Love is very fulfilling; however one-sided love can be discouraging even to the one who is always high in spirits. There is so much selfishness, materialism and every sort of negative "ism" in the world today that clouds out the true love (for God, self, neighbor) that should exist as per God's divine design!

I stopped to reflect that I do not have a religious affiliation or practice...I have been thinking I would like to adopt that into my life.

Love has to be active, put into practice; as we work at giving love, and it takes work or practice, we then receive love, and it becomes more natural to love, especially if we grew up in an environment where love was neither modeled nor understood.

It made me think more about purpose of my own life. How much will I practise myself not to get upset about small things? I am above 40 - I should be more stable than this!

To love others is only possible if I am loved. I learnt how to love from my family because they love me. I also have come to know God's love which is so powerful and fills me constantly and overflows.

In the Bible we are commanded to love others. I think we too often associate love with a warm fuzzy feeling when in reality love is often a decision to treat others with respect and to show them the love of Christ. If love was always a feeling it would be impossible to always love others as Christ has commanded.

Please note that Buddhism does not accept the existence of a Creator God, but you cannot assume that because it is atheistic that it is lacking in moral and mental development.

Thought it was trying to find out if people that are religious are happier - which I don't believe they are.

I believe that spiritual/religious persons are more fulfilled, grounded, and loving to those around them than those who are atheist or agnostic.

Religion is in the heart/ love is in the heart/ and God is in my heart!

I do not need god to show me how to love. And I am very happy with my life:)

I do not know how people make it in life without God.

Ultimately, my goal in life is live happy and fulfilled. Love is a tremendous part of that, and I think God gives the ability to love, and it's what you do with that love that makes your life.

God is Love therefore I am Love!

RA Research Analysis

Any analyst looking for definitive data would be elated at conclusive information like the results produced by the survey used in this study. The following recap of 426 responses would lead even a casual observer to make conclusions that would appear well supported.

97.4% consider love to be important or very important in life.

85.2% love themselves very or fairly well.

75% love their neighbor as themselves fairly or very well.

68.2% have a role model or someone they pattern their life after.

The majority responded: they are very certain about their: spiritual origin (**75.2%**), purpose in life (**48.3%**) and their final destination (**60.3%**).

84.2% believe in God as the creator of the universe and all that is in it.

81.6% believe God is love and the source of love.

78.3% love God with their whole heart, soul, mind and strength fairly or very well.

91% have a religious or spiritual affiliation.

85.6% (to **88.4%**) are Christian.

73.9% rate participation in communal religious or spiritual activity between medium and high.

83% rate their general life satisfaction level as medium high or high with

98.4% rating satisfaction between medium and high.

Some of the conclusions that may be drawn from the statistics are:

Most people: 1) consider love to be important 2) believe in God as, creator, love and source of love 3) do well at loving themselves, their neighbors and God, 4) have a religious or spiritual affiliation and are mostly Christians who participate in

communal religious/spiritual activity AND have a medium to high general life satisfaction level. The important connection between these elements should not be discounted or the elation over the number of positive responses minimized.

RA.1 Critical Analysis Although the online survey used to collect this data spans 22 source countries (76.4% respondents are American), a broad age group (mostly 25-70) and 426 people (78.9% of which are female); the results are from a random sampling of people who volunteered to participate. It is not based on a scientific random sampling of a calculated population. At one point in the process there were 280 who ‘abandoned’ the survey without completing it. They could have come back to it again, but that information is not specifically recorded. It is possible that the 280 opened the survey titled ‘Love and Fulfillment’; looked quickly and decided the questions didn’t interest them. Therefore, without assigning margins of error and degrees of validity we can view the information as an assessment tool to serve as a basis for more detailed study. To analyze the data¹ we’ll focus on the minority responses since the majority is quite conclusive, we’ll evaluate a few comparison areas and then a number of profiles comprehensively.

Firstly: between a belief in God as love and the importance of love in one’s life.

Do you believe God is love and the source of love?

How important is love in your life?	No	Doubtful	Perhaps	Yes
Unimportant	0	0	0	2
Not very	0	0	0	6
Somewhat	3	0	1	5
Important	8	3	10	46
Very Important	14	4	35	294
TOTAL	25	7	46	353

Apart from the large majority (340 of 426) that consider love to be very/important, and believe God is love and it's source, the other responses indicate no clear connection. Those who doubt or do not believe God as the source of love also rate love as important in life, while others believe God and yet say love is only somewhat or not very important.

Secondly, the correlation between having a religious or spiritual affiliation and the importance of love does not reveal conclusive data within the minority.

Do you have a Religious or Spiritual Affiliation?

How important is love in your life?	Yes	No
Unimportant	1	1
Not very	4	2
Somewhat	6	3
Important	57	9
Very Important	320	27
TOTAL	388	42

Some who think love is very important have no religious or spiritual affiliation and conversely, others who do not think love is important are affiliated with some religious or spiritual group.

Lastly, when we look again for a connection within the minority, we're unable to find a definitive correlation between life satisfaction and the importance of love.

Please rate your general life satisfaction level:

How important is love in your life?	Low	Med Low	Med	Med High	High
Unimportant	1	0	0	1	0
Not very	1	0	2	2	1
Somewhat	1	1	1	4	2
Important	2	2	19	30	14
Very Important	1	2	43	183	118
TOTAL	6	5	65	220	135

From this data some in the minority who do not consider love important, reveal a low life satisfaction level while others have a medium to high level of satisfaction. Additionally, some who believe love is important indicate a low life satisfaction level.

The comparisons between loves' importance and how well we love God, ourselves and our neighbors is provided in RA Addendum 2 along with addition data relating love to beliefs, origin and purpose. Although within the small minority, some say love is important and report not loving their neighbor AT ALL, as well as also not loving God AT ALL. Fortunately all report loving themselves albeit eleven Not Well. Almost too few to mention report loving God well and also saying love is not very important, and conversely report God as the creator of all and the source of love yet do not consider love to be important. One person's response to the question *'What do you do to maintain and/or increase your ability to give and receive love?'* said, *'stay connected and congruent'*.

RA.2 Comprehensive Profiles

Comprehensive profiles are available from Survey Gizmo in a spreadsheet too large for the parameters of this report. They have been manually condensed for the following analysis and provided in RA Addendum 3, a working document for reference.

1) Only 4 of the 426 responses, less than 1%, say LOVE is NOT VERY important. All 4 are female Americans, 3-Christian: (1) 25-39, (1) 40-54, (1) 55-70yrs and 1(over 70) without any religious/spiritual affiliation who has a Medium-

High life satisfaction level. All 4 of these women believe God is love and the source of love. The 3 Christian women participate in communal religious activities. The youngest however, was the only one to report Medium-High participation, loving God VERY-well, a HIGH level of satisfaction and noted that God should be the most important thing in her life.

2) 7 of the 426 respond that LOVE is SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT noting overall happiness, children, money, or friends/activities and staying in the moment as more important than love. Two men are included in this group: 1-(25-39) without any belief in God as creator or source of love, UNCERTAIN about his spiritual origin, life purpose or destination and reports a HIGH level of life satisfaction. The other, a Christian (55-70) with Medium participation in communal religious activities, indicates a Medium life satisfaction level and that he loves God VERY-well. Also of interest here is a Jewish woman (40-54) who does NOT believe in God as creator or source of love, UNCERTAIN about her spiritual origin, purpose or final destination and records a Medium-High life satisfaction level.

3) Only 7 respondents said their life satisfaction level was lower than medium plus one who left the question blank totals 8. 3 are men, 2 of which are the only 2 reporting a LOW satisfaction in life. Everyone in this category believes in God as Creator, love and as the source of love. Most consider love to be important: 3-very, 3-important, 1-somewhat, and 1 blank. Specifics cited as more important than love are: peace of mind, nothing (2x), don't know, faith-hope and perseverance, my Dog and love of God, and being alone, meditating. All except

for one are Christian, and he is one of the two with low satisfaction. The non-Christian (over 70 American) is somewhat CERTAIN of his spiritual origin, life purpose and final destination. The other, Christian man (25-39 African) with low satisfaction was UNCERTAIN in all three of those areas and cited Hakeem Olajuwon, a Muslim NBA player, as a role model.

One of the greatest rays of hope in this study comes from one of the Christian women in this group who has a Medium-Low satisfaction level and low participation in communal religious activities. She answered that this survey has affected her thinking about love adding, *'it has made me think about my life, what is missing, what I like about it and maybe the spiritual aspect that is missing in my life'*.

RA.3 Analyze or Synthesize

We can over analyze the 426 responses gathered for this study or appreciate all who shared their thoughts, celebrate the overwhelmingly positive results and begin to develop some of the areas underlying the critical questions addressed.

*Dimensions are 'parameters required to adequately describe a thing for a particular purpose. For example, if our purpose is to lift a block, four dimensions adequately describe it: height, width, length, and mass.'*²

If our purpose is to fulfill the *'first and most important commandment'* (Matt 22:36) and *'Love the Lord our God, with all our heart, and with all our soul and with all our mind and with all our strength.'*³ (Mark 12:30)

then, we need to back up from that purpose, even before approaching the breadth of love and God, and look at what dimensions 'adequately describe it'.

The parameters to further investigate in this study are:

Worldview - Attitude - Truth - Motivation & Purpose

We're --- Addressing The - Mountain --- Peaks

Each of these areas could be a 100+ page study in itself, here however, we're attempting to synthesize as opposed to over analyze. Seeking fulfillment in life from a higher vantage point is a bit like climbing to a summit, with love and God at the top. From the basis of the 'Love & Fulfillment' survey ---

we address these mountain peaks:

Worldview - Attitude - Truth - Motivation - Purpose

One respondent in our comprehensive profiles said her thinking about love was somewhat affected by this survey, *'I know that love should play a more important role in my life, I'm just not accustomed to experiencing it. I have a hard time embracing it and accepting it. I tend to push the feeling away.'*

'In the twilight of our lives, we will be judged on how we have loved.'

St. John of the Cross

¹Survey Gizmo results for the Love and Fulfillment Survey are presented without modification from the Summary Report dated March 12, 2012 and Comparison Report dated April 24, 2011. <http://appv3.sgizmo.com/Reports/reports?id=473239>
A special thank you to Robert Taylor of DREAMDREAMS, UK for his assistance in launching 'Love & Fulfillment' on Survey Gizmo - <http://www.dreamdreams.org>

² <http://www.jstor.org/pss/40036309> JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization helping the academic community use digital technologies. ©2000-2012 ITHAKA

³ New American Standard Bible Anaheim, California: The Lockman Foundation © 1997.

RA Addendum 1

The following are highlights from over 390 responses to the question: 'What do you do to maintain and/or increase your ability to give and receive love?'

One asked: *What are the choices?*

A few said: *Not a whole lot. Don't know how or what to do.*

And some mentioned what not to do:

Not be afraid to give and receive love. - Give love not dwell in the past.

Strive to not pass judgment on others. - Not hold onto anger or any resentment.

Forgive came up **23x** which includes *accept and practice forgiveness.*

Practice came up 19x, **Try** - **111x.**

*I make sure my love tank is full and find ways to give it. I **try** to balance my life in the best possible ways I know in the physical, social, spiritual, intellectual and financial aspects of my life. (25-39 Asian Female w/ High life satisfaction)*

*It is hard to BE lovable but I **try** - more now than when I was younger - to see the good in all people and to follow Christ's example of "loving one another."*

*Maintain the **attitude** 'do to others as you would have them do to you'. Plus: 1 - Pay it forward and 1- I believe in karma, what you put out is what you receive.*

My children and I have always volunteered heavily in the community we live in. I don't know if that is love but it is a commitment to bettering the lives around us.

76x – Give, Volunteer, Serve, Do, Help and Care for others

Love by works or love by faith? Love by faith is a free gift. I cannot increase that by anything. It has already been done for me. I can't make people love me. But if I get up every day and try to pattern myself after what Christ teaches, love grows.

*I live life with a sense of **purpose** and a very positive attitude. I try to be **grateful** for everything I have and a life well lived. (55-70 Australian/New Zealand Female)*

*Pray. Stay positive. I am around other people like this and try to be optimistic and **role model optimism** around those who are not positive.*

Fill my mind with positive thoughts of others. For my soul: fasting, meditate and pray.

Common responses: approx. **50x** –Church, Mass, Fellowship, Worship, etc.

105x – Pray which includes all forms of: *Talk to God, Ask God for help, ongoing*

conversation with God and constant thanksgiving. 'First receive love from Jesus, through adoration and prayer.' (25-39 European Male with High life satisfaction)

17x – Listen, 7x –Communicate/Communication

61x – Read/Study Bible Scripture/spiritual, reading

43x – time was mentioned mostly in conjunction with spending time in prayer, study or with others, and:

1x - *Times of solitude. Personal reflection. Personal healing from wounds.*

1x - *Patience & listening - practice being fully present. Time alone is a big thing - Knowing my boundaries.*

Another repeated word was **CONNECT**:

Connect with other people --- Stay connected and congruent.

To be connected as much as possible to the source of love.

I strive to avail myself to my family and friends when they need me and even when they don't. I believe that there is very little in life more important than human connections. My family is my greatest blessing and I treasure the bonds of my friendships....I try to live by that golden rule, 'do unto others, as you would have done to you'.

Connect with God. When I am not connected it is harder to give love, and also harder to receive love. Whether through prayer or reading my Bible, both aspects are very important for me.

Try and connect with others on a one to one basis. Spend quiet time with myself, God and those I love.

I try to value everyone for their strengths and realize we all have weaknesses. Coming from the point that everyone is trying their best has helped me immensely. Manifesting positive energy is important. Unconditional love and acceptance of my family and friends is what I strive for and learning from those I am closest to in my life (instead of running around making new connections).

Prayer keeps me connected to my relationship with God, so that I can be available and present to others. I try to be aware of presence of God in each person around me.

Additional responses:

Open 18x – have/keep an open heart, be open to others and to the possibilities.

Think 54x – includes: reflect, consider, meditate and focus.

Think of others first

(55-70 American Male, No religious/spiritual affiliation, Medium life satisfaction)

RA Addendum 2

How well do you love God with your whole heart, soul, mind and strength?

How important is love in your life?

	Not At All	Not Well	Somewhat	Fairly Well	Very Well
Unimportant	0	0	1	0	0
Not very	0	1	2	1	1
Somewhat	3	1	2	0	2
Important	7	8	8	29	14
Very Important	5	12	45	143	139
TOTAL	15	22	58	173	156

How well do you love yourself?

How important is love in your life?

	Not At All	Not Well	Somewhat	Fairly Well	Very Well
Unimportant	0	0	0	2	0
Not very	0	1	1	3	1
Somewhat	0	1	0	6	2
Important	0	3	14	32	17
Very Important	0	6	37	203	104
TOTAL	0	11	52	246	124

How well do you love your 'neighbor' as yourself?

How important is love in your life?

	Not At All	Not Well	Somewhat	Fairly Well	Very Well
Unimportant	0	0	0	1	1
Not very	0	0	3	2	1
Somewhat	0	0	2	5	2
Important	1	3	20	37	6
Very Important	1	8	67	208	61
TOTAL	2	11	92	253	71

Do you believe in God as the creator of the universe and all that is in it?

How important is love in your life?

	No	Doubtful	Perhaps	Yes
Unimportant	0	0	0	2
Not very	0	0	1	5
Somewhat	3	0	0	6
Important	8	2	8	49
Very Important	10	7	28	303
TOTAL	21	9	37	365

Do you believe God is love and the source of love?

How important is love in your life?

	No	Doubtful	Perhaps	Yes
Unimportant	0	0	0	2
Not very	0	0	0	6
Somewhat	3	0	1	5
Important	8	3	10	46
Very Important	14	4	35	294
TOTAL	25	7	46	353

How certain are you of a: Your spiritual origin?

How important is love in your life?

	Uncertain	Somewhat	Very Certain
Unimportant	0	1	1
Not very	0	2	4
Somewhat	1	4	4
Important	8	17	40
Very Important	19	56	271
TOTAL	28	80	320

How certain are you of b: Your purpose in life?

How important is love in your life?

	Uncertain	Somewhat	Very Certain
Unimportant	0	1	0
Not very	1	3	1
Somewhat	3	4	1
Important	15	26	23
Very Important	22	145	177
TOTAL	41	179	202

RA Addendum 3

The 'Love & Fulfillment' survey responses below have been abbreviated for analysis and align with questions in the following order:

1. How important is love in your life? 2. Other than your survival & health and that of your family & friends ... what is more important than love in your life? 3. How well do you love yourself? 4. How well do you love your neighbor as yourself? 5. Do you have a role model or someone you pattern your life after? 6. If you answered Yes to #5 please specify: 7. How certain are you of: Your Spiritual Origin? Your Purpose in Life? and Your Final Destination? 8. Do you believe in God as the creator of the universe and all that is in it? 9. Do you believe God is love and the source of love? 10. How well do you love God with your whole heart, soul, mind and strength? 11. Do you have a religious or spiritual affiliation? 12. If you answered YES to #11 please specify: 13. Please rate your participation in communal religious or spiritual activity: 14. What do you do to maintain and/or increase your ability to give and receive love? 15. Please rate your general life satisfaction level: 16. Age: 17. Sex: 18. Nationality: 19. Has this survey affected your thinking about love? 20. Additional thoughts or comments.

Question 1 – How important is love in your life?

54 (USA) **Not Very** doing what's right, living with integrity, not well, somewhat, Yes, mother, somewhat certain, somewhat certain, very certain, Yes, Yes, Somewhat, Yes, Christian, Medium High, Serve others Pray for a softened heart Try to accept God's unconditional love for me **Medium**, 40-54 Female American, Somewhat I know that love should play a more important role in my life, I'm just not accustomed to experiencing it. I have a hard time embracing it and accepting it. I tend to push the feeling away.

83 (USA) **blank** Understanding fairly well, very well, No, blank Very Certain, Somewhat Certain, Very Certain, Yes, Yes, blank, Yes, Christian, Worship both with fear and love and appreciate all that has been gifted. **Medium High**, 40-54 Male American no.

120 (USA) **Somewhat** blank very well, fairly well, Yes, blank, somewhat, uncertain, uncertain, No, No, Not at all, No blank, **High** 25-39 Male American no
133 (USA) **blank** blank fairly well, fairly well, no, blank, somewhat certain, Certain, Somewhat certain, Yes, Yes, Somewhat, No, - blank, **blank**, over 70 male American, no

149 (USA) **Somewhat**, I don't know, not well, somewhat, no, somewhat, somewhat, somewhat, yes, yes, not well, yes, Christian, low – be available to help those around me, give little gifts, or do something unexpected. **Medium Low**, female 40-54, American, yes, it has made me think about my life, what is missing, what I like about it and maybe the spiritual aspect that is missing in my life.

189 (USA) **Somewhat**, overall general happiness, fairly well, very well, no, very certain, somewhat, very certain, yes, yes, very well, yes, Christian, low, Be the best person that I can be - helping others showing love and compassion .. and I believe you (I) will receive "love" in return **medium**, female 40-54, American, no

231 (USA) **Somewhat**, my children, fairly well, somewhat, no, very certain, uncertain, very certain, no, no, not at all, no (religion left blank), none, **medium high**, female 40-54, Canadian/Australian, no

280 (USA) **Somewhat**, (blank), fairly well, fairly well, yes, bro, somewhat certain, somewhat certain, somewhat certain, yes, yes, very well, yes, Christian, medium, don't know, **medium**, 55-70, Male, American, somewhat, no

304 (USA) **Somewhat** making enough money to pay for the survival and health. Fairly well, Fairly well, Yes, Mama Pratt, my best friend's mom Uncertain, Uncertain, Uncertain, No, Not at all, Yes, Judaism, I love and help and take care of others. **Medium High** 40-54 Female American no – Thought it was trying to find out if people that are religious are happier. Which I don't believe they are.

367 (USA) **NOT VERY** I have a strong faith, so God should be the most important thing in my life. However, humans have a deep rooted need to love and be loved. It drives us in almost every aspect of our lives on earth. very well, fairly well, no, blank, very certain, somewhat certain, very certain, yes, yes, very well, yes. Christian, medium high, Let myself be vulnerable. For people relationships, I have to let my guard down. For my spiritual relationship I have to be willing to get out of the driver seat and let God take the reigns. **High**, female 25-39, American, no

403 (USA) **Not Very** To be a useful and productive member of this society. This could be as a contributor or just lending a listening ear to someone who needs to vent or is lonely. Somewhat, Somewhat, Yes Try to emulate religious role models in trying to do good for others, being patient, etc- no one person Very Certain, Very Certain, Somewhat, Yes, Yes, Fairly Well, Yes, Christian, Medium Try to put myself in the other person's shoes and try to think how I would feel. Medium 55-70 Female American no

416 (Canada) **Somewhat**, Being with friends, activities, using my brain, traveling, reading, always staying in the moment very well, fairly well, no, blank, very certain, very certain, very certain, yes, perhaps, somewhat, yes, Christian, medium, Respond positively in all relationships and situations **High**, female 55-70, American, no

422 (USA) **NOT VERY**, good friendships, fairly well, somewhat, no, blank, very certain, uncertain, somewhat certain, perhaps, yes, not well, no, blank, none, keep contact with a number of people and try to contribute something to their life. **Medium High**, female over 70, American, no There are many kinds of love. I was not sure of the kind of love the survey wanted to address.

Please rate your general life satisfaction level.

7 (Shanghai China) Important, peace of mind, Somewhat, Somewhat, No (blank) Somewhat certain, Somewhat certain, Somewhat certain, Yes, Yes, Somewhat, Christian, Low, blank, **Medium Low**, 40-54 Female Asian, somewhat, blank

63 (USA) Very Important nothing Fairly Well, Fairly Well, Yes my parents Very Certain, Somewhat Certain, Very Certain, Yes, Yes, Fairly Well, Yes, Christian, Medium Take care of myself. Pray. **Blank** 40-54 Female American somewhat.

133 (USA) blank, blank, fairly well, fairly well, No, blank, Somewhat Certain, Somewhat Certain, Yes, Yes, somewhat, No (blank religion), medium, blank, **LOW**, over 70, male, American, no

149 (USA) **Somewhat**, I don't know, not well, somewhat, no, somewhat, somewhat, somewhat, yes, yes, not well, yes, Christian, low – be available to help those around me, give little gifts, or do something unexpected. **Medium Low**, female 40-54, American, yes, it has made me think about my life, what is missing, what I like about it and maybe the spiritual aspect that is missing in my life. (See also 149 above)

250 (Guadalajara, Mexico) Important, Faith, hope and perseverance Somewhat, fairly well, No (blank), very certain, somewhat certain, uncertain, yes, yes, not well, yes, Christian, Medium High, I try to keep my focus on God's word, and keep in mind the importance of humility and compassion. **Medium Low** 40-54, Male, American, no

329 (USA) Very Important My Dog and the love of GOD, Somewhat, not well, yes, my dad, somewhat certain, uncertain, uncertain, yes, yes, fairly well, yes, Christian, low, Not a whole lot. Don't know how or what to do. **Medium Low** 25-39, Male, American, no – It did not give me very much to think about. The questions it asked are questions that I think about often.

350 (Malaysia) Very Important, nothing, somewhat, somewhat, yes - this person is always in control, calm, at peace. Well grounded. Very Certain, Somewhat Certain, Very Certain, Yes, Yes, Fairly well, Yes, Christian, Medium, various community groups and church functions, **Medium Low** 40-54, Female, American, somewhat

385 (Male African) Important, Being alone meditating, Not Well, Very Well, Yes, Hakeem Olajuwon Uncertain, Uncertain, Uncertain, Yes, Yes, Very Well, Yes, Christian, Low, Try always to encourage the weak, oppressed and underprivileged, **Low** 25-39, Male, African, no – love is blind.

Note: The following 2 respondents completed only the first few survey questions: 163 (USA) Very Important My family's happiness and success Very Well, Very Well, Yes, Mother

360 (USA) Very Important God Fairly Well, Somewhat, Yes, Jesus, dad

Homily 1- Love as Worship

Love as Worship¹ Pete Briscoe, Telling the Truth Podcast November 2011

*(In Pete's prior message 'Love is Risky Business'² he explains that when people hear the word worship many different things come to mind. He gives three options: **1) a specific time on Sunday when we go to celebrate God's grace in our lives, 2) musical stuff and singing, or 3) worship could be a lifestyle that you would live all the time.** He explains further that the word worship comes from the Anglo-Saxon word worth-ship which means we give or communicate to God what He is worth.)³*

'One of the essential characteristics of God is Love. In fact at one point in the Bible it says *God is Love* – it doesn't say love is God. That's what we tried to teach ourselves in the 70's. Love is God - just love everybody – right? It's not love is God – its *God is love*. God has love at the core of His being it's so much an essential part of who He is. You can call Him Love if you want because He is just saturated with love for you and for me.

The essence of a life of worship is the reflection of God's love.

If the essence of His nature is love then the essence of a life of worship is reflecting His love. Ephesians 5:1 says this –

'Be imitators of God therefore as dearly loved children; and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.'

Be imitators of God therefore – how do we do that Paul? - By living a life of love.

Live a life of love, reflect love to Him, and reflect love to those around you. Now if you're going to do this, you need some help because I know you and at the core of your being as a person, as a natural person, you're not a loving person, neither am I.

So we need God to help us and I'm going to walk you through a couple of things that need to happen in order for God to help us do this. But before I do I'm going to pray, will you bow with me please...

(Pete's prayer is condensed here): Lord we quiet our hearts to be available to You, so that You might move in our souls in a very real and permanent way. ... I'm going to ask You, Holy Spirit, to work in people's lives...specifically to feel God's love, experience it in a very new and real passionate way today; so that we may reflect it in a very real and passionate way tomorrow and for the rest of our lives. I pray that this would be a day where barriers would be broken down and boundaries would be crossed and Your love would reach the darkest recesses of our souls and move there. ...

**Two things need to happen if we're going to live a life of love.
The first thing that needs to happen is that we need to accept God's love.
If we're going to reflect it, first of all, we need to accept it.**

Now as soon as I say that some of you say: *'I have no problem accepting God's love – I do it all the time, I grab all the love I can get'. The first time God's love became apparent to me in scripture it just soothed my soul'*. You're saying these things, *'I'm constantly aware of how much God loves me'*.

Then there's lots of you that as soon as I said, You need to accept God's love, you sat there thinking... *'ugh I can't do it'*. You've heard preachers time and time and time again say *'God loves you'* and you thought, *'yeah right, He can't love me, look at me, He can't love me'*.

You had a bad experience with your earthly Dad or you've done things that you're ashamed of and you're convinced that God couldn't possibly love you. I've got some great news, He does and I want you to accept that. Whatever barriers are keeping you from really grasping a hold of that - I'd love to see them break today.

Maybe some of you have no earthly example of what heavenly love looks like and you fight with God, you try to keep Him at arm's length because you're unsure of what He will require of you. There has to be strings attached to love, you think, because that's your only human experience. **God wants to introduce you to unconditional love that is freely given and richly received.**

For those of you who have a hard time accepting God's love let me tell you what to do about it. Spend some time reading the scriptures that describe His love for you. Pour yourself into those scriptures, memorize them, read one scripture every day for a month and saturate yourself in them.

(Pete recommends Psalm 103 as a beautiful description of God's Love.⁴ He also suggests personalizing John 3:16 by putting your own name in there: 'For God so loved Pete that He gave His only begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him, as long as Pete believes in him, will not perish but Pete will have eternal life. And Pete does the same kind of personalization with Romans 5:8).

When you come to grips with how deeply God loves you then you can start reflecting God's love back to Him and to others as well.

So let's talk about the second part of our sermon - reflecting God's love. *(Pete uses a mirror as a barrier to the soul turned one way, or as a reflector turned around.)* Let's read this passage in Mark Chapter 12 (Mark 12:28-31 NIV) that teaches us these things.

*One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating.
Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him,
"Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"
"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this:*

*'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.
Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul
and with all your mind and with all your strength.'*

Now Jesus throws in another one at no extra charge. He didn't ask for the top two but He gave him the top two.

*The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'
There is no commandment greater than these.'*

The reason He puts the two together, love God and love people, is because you can't separate them. When you're reflecting God's love back to Him you will also be reflecting it to others.

(Pete cites John 21:15-17 which has the heading '**The Love Motivation**' in the NASB Translation, and '**Do you Love Me?**' in the Message Bible. Noted added here by author. *This is the passage after the resurrection where Jesus restores Peter's 3x denial. Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him. Peter says – I love you Jesus. Jesus said, then feed My sheep, meaning reflect My love to them. If you love Me, - love the people around you. That's how you communicate love to Me, reflect My love to them. - There's no commandment greater than this.*)

There's a key word in this text, it's repeated 4x in verse 30 alone. Love the Lord your God with **ALL** your heart, with **ALL** your soul, with **ALL** your mind and with **ALL** your strength. It tells us 4 ways we can love Him, we're to love Him in totality, ALL. That's not hard to understand, it's a little difficult to do. To completely, absolutely love Him, fully with everything we are, is not an easy thing to do but it is the goal He's reached out for us. It's the goal we're supposed to seek after.

How do we do it?

Pete shares **ways we are to love God**.

1) First of all we can love God with our **heart** - by expressing our feelings. The word for heart in the Greek language is 'cardia' which denotes the emotional part of who we are.

2) The second way to love God is with our **soul** – by submitting my will to His will. Distinguishing between heart and soul is like splitting hairs. The Greek word is 'suke' – meaning life or breath, defined as who you are when everything else is stripped away, who you are at the very core of your being.

3) The third way I am to love God is with my **mind** – by exercising my brain which makes sense. Pete cites right brainers verses who love to emote but haven't read a book in years. Deuteronomy 6:5 doesn't include loving God with our mind. Jesus makes the point that you don't check your brain in at the door

when you become a Christian. Christianity is a thinking faith, a reasonable faith, you're communicating love to God when you read a good book.
(C.S. Lewis says he reads an old book for every two new books.)

4) Another way to love God with your brain is to **cutting out the pollutants** that mess with it, by protecting your brain - keeping it holy and pure, although not legalistically. *Pete relays a not-to-be-missed great story about going to a violent movie with his wife Libby...he had the audience really laughing out loud.*

5) One other way to love God is with all your **strength**, by exerting my energy. The Hebrew word for strength in the Deuteronomy text is used as a modifier. It emphasizes the other three words meaning love the Lord your God with ALL your heart, mind and soul as MUCH as you possibly can.

Go for it, as they say in athletics - leave nothing out on the field, give it everything you've got. There's an assumption here...that you have some strength.

Pete quotes Lisa Copeland who says: 'The amount of exertion put forth in loving God reveals the depth of our gratitude to Him'. Some of us, because we're not keeping ourselves physically fit don't have much strength to give.

Are you ready for me to rock your world? **Keeping yourself physically healthy is an act of worship.** In fact the Bible talks about us - being the temple of God the place of worship. So if we keep our bodies, the temple of God, physically fit we have that much more strength and energy to exert in glorifying His name.

Pete shows us an interesting note at the end of the story Mark 12:32-33:

"Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

Did you hear that? What he's saying here is corporate worship is lower on God's list of priorities than love is. That's an amazing statement - let's see how Jesus responds to it. Mark 12:34...

'When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.'

God is saying this love thing is so important that I would rather see you love each other and love Me than see you sing praises to My name.

That's how important love is to Me.

(Pete tells another not-to-be-missed family story of kids singing weekly praise to their parents but then going out living self-centered lives, cruel to one another; until the Dad says TIME-OUT kids **'I would rather have elongated love rather than concentrated praise'** - take that home with you.)

To hear Pete Briscoe's complete sermon on Love as Worship please go to:
<http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/telling-the-truth/listen/love-as-worship-240113.html>

¹ *Love as Worship* from the series *Worshipful Living* <http://tellingthetruth.org>.
<http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/telling-the-truth/listen/love-as-worship-240113.html>
Also available online is Pete's free daily devotional *Experiencing Life Today*.

A special thanks to Shari Gores, Manager - Broadcast Admin & Support *Telling the Truth*

² *Love is Risky Business* <http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/telling-the-truth/listen/worship-is-risky-business-240097.html>

³ Strong's Hebrew (OT) dictionary for WORSHIP #7812, from the primitive root; to bow down: pay homage, prostrate oneself. <http://lexiconcordance.com/hebrew/7812.html>
Strong's Greek (NT) dictionary the WORSHIP #4576 from the primitive root; to revere, adore, be a God-fearing worshipper. <http://www.lexiconcordance.com/greek/4576.html>

'True worship also involves having the right attitude in one's mind, and practicing the right acts in one's body.'

Denver Cheddie *Controversial Bible Issues -The True Meaning of Worship* (c) 2001
<http://www.bibleissues.org/pdfs/Worship.pdf> also referencing: Ronald E. Man, *False and True Worship in Romans 1:18-25*, (Bibliotheca Sacra, 2000), 26-30,32,33.

⁴ Psalm 103 copied here from *Biblegateway* Online Bibles New International Version.
<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm%20103&version=NIV>

¹ *Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.* ² *Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—*³ *who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases,*⁴ *who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion,*⁵ *who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.* ⁶ *The LORD works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.* ⁷ *He made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel:*

⁸ *The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.* ⁹ *He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever;* ¹⁰ *he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.* ¹¹ *For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him;* ¹² *as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.*

¹³ *As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;* ¹⁴ *for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.* ¹⁵ *The life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field;* ¹⁶ *the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more.* ¹⁷ *But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children —* ¹⁸ *with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts.*

¹⁹ *The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all.* ²⁰ *Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word.* ²¹ *Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will.* ²² *Praise the LORD, all his works everywhere in his dominion. Praise the LORD, my soul.*

⁵ Song Lyrics, added by author: **More Love, More Power Lyrics** by Artist: Michael W. Smith http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uIT0lgwC_i8

***'More Love, More Power - More of You in my life.
I will worship You with all of my heart.
I will worship You with all of my mind.
I will worship You with all of my strength.
For You are my Lord.'***⁵

1 Worldview

*"We see the world, not as it is, but as we are - or,
as we are conditioned to see it."*¹ Dr. Stephen R. Covey

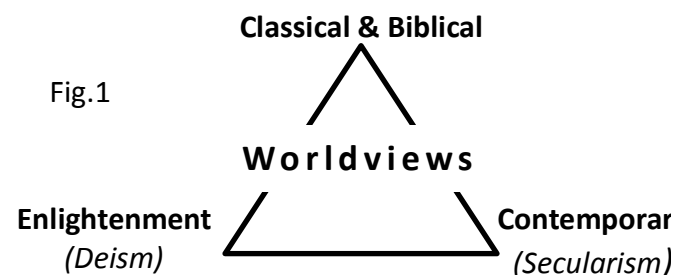
While delivering an MBA course to executives from thirteen countries in *"Managing People, Relationships and Performance"*²; it was clear a starting point had to address the differences in thinking, language, and culture that condition us to *'see the world not as it is but as we are.'*³ Similarly, to launch a study on loving God and loving others also requires that some foundation first is built. An understanding of how the world's view of God evolved provides both a preliminary ground, as well as a bird's eye view, for the expansive subjects of God and love. This particular starting point is beneficial as, consciously or unconsciously, our worldview significantly impacts how we live. What may be required, however, is somehow stepping outside ourselves to objectively evaluate our own, very personal, perspectives. Has our view of the world been inherited, deliberately scripted, or, casually adopted from popular opinion?

In the series 'Battle for Our Minds',⁴ Dr. R. C. Sproul explained the past and present understanding of the relationship between God and the world. The worldviews of the Church and western

civilization are in three divisions. (Fig. 1)

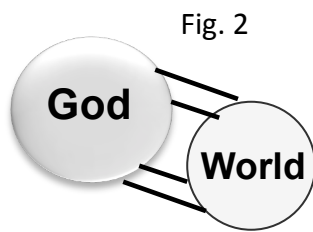
The classical and Biblical worldview was in place until the 18th Century Enlightenment period, a short-lived but impactful

movement that ultimately led to our contemporary worldview.

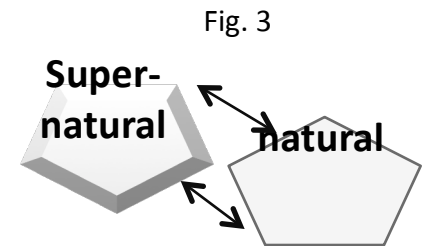


1.1 Classical & Biblical Worldview

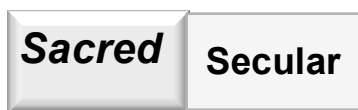
In the classical & Biblical worldview God is closely attached to His creation, Dr.



Sproul describes the relationship as two circles, separate and distinct but connected. (Fig.2) God is omnipresent, He is the 'invisible hand' present in history,



and also in Christianity through the incarnation and the indwelling Holy Spirit. In this worldview, there is two-way communication between the supernatural realm and the natural realm, each providing revelation of the other. (Fig.3). According to Dr. Sproul, *"It is not by our own naked raw power of reflection or reasoning can we ascend into heaven to grasp hold of God; but by reflecting on how God reveals Himself through nature and the Bible and using our reason we can have knowledge,*



cognition and rational understanding of the supernatural."^{4a} The distinction between the ordinary

world, or secular realm and the extraordinary, holy or sacred realm has always been recognized. In the Classical & Biblical view, the common and uncommon are so closely related they appear to touch one another (Fig. 4).

1.2 The Enlightenment Worldview

The Enlightenment or 'intellectual' movement of the 17th and 18th Centuries is also called the Age of Reason. Its goal was *'to understand, through reason based on evidence and proof, the natural world and humankind's place in it –*

solely on the basis of reason and without turning to religious belief'.⁵

The Enlightenment period ushered in a particular form of Theism, (*a belief in the existence of God or gods*), called Deism which is: *'a system of thought advocating natural religion based on human morality and reason, rather than divine revelation'.⁶* Reason prevented the Deists from denying the existence of

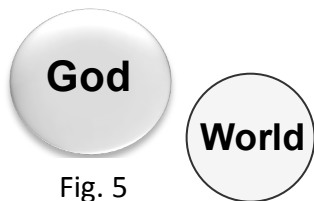


Fig. 5

God, even if at least, as the first cause of all. They believed God to resemble a celestial clockmaker who was not involved in His creation, but wound it up to run on its own natural laws. The parallels for this worldview in Dr.

Sproul's models are: that God and the world are now separate, distinct and unconnected; (Fig. 5) and there is no communication between the supernatural and the natural realm. (Fig. 6)

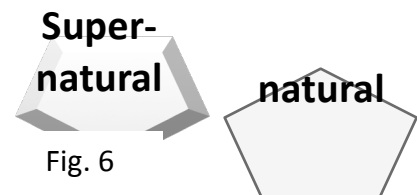


Fig. 6

In essence, man banished God from the garden-world He created. The Deists were however, concerned about ethics. In separating the holy and sacred from

Fig. 7



the ordinary and secular they insisted there had to be some connection for civilization to survive,

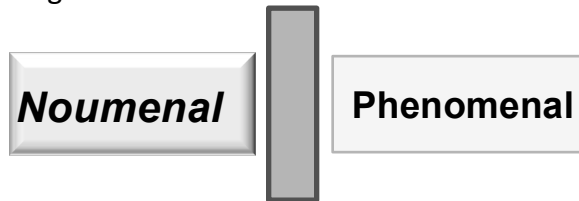
therefore a 'bridge' of ethics between them need exist. (Fig. 7) Dr. Sproul summarizes the theory of Natural Law as *'nothing more or nothing less than a natural manifestation of the supernatural law of God, the law of the creator, who endows people with certain unalienable rights; a natural law that revealed self-evident truths that are objective, rational and eternal.'*^{4b}

1.3 The Contemporary Worldview

Immanuel Kant* is credited with the revolutionary change in thought regarding the existence of God that resulted from his book 'The Critique of Pure Reason'.

Kant, a religious pragmatist, divided reality into the noumenal or unknowable

Fig. 8



realm; and the phenomenal,

observable realm. The

understanding of God's relationship

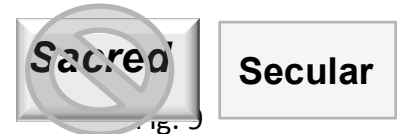
to the world shifted because Kant's

argument concluded that God was ultimately unknowable and any attempt to

seek Him or ultimate truth was a 'fool's errand'.^{4c} Dr. Sproul further explained

the division as an impenetrable barricade between

Kant's two realms which prevented man's intellectual



access to God. (Fig. 8) Connection then was available only by an irrational leap

of faith or through lower methods of mysticism and the occult. This perspective

brought forward the worldview of contemporary secularism, which means worldly

in terms of time and place, that this world is all there is. Seculars are no longer

concerned about the sacred because, according to this way of thinking, it cannot

be known. (Fig. 9) With God and self-evident truth inaccessible from this

viewpoint, what remains is opinion and preference determined by what works for

the individual. Dr. Sproul credits man's divorce from God for alienation and

estrangement, not only spiritually but from one self, others, nature and also from

established institutions.

1.4 'Under Heaven' or 'Under the Sun' Worldview

The two worldviews delineated in the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes are

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either from 'under the sun' or 'under heaven'. One is a perspective limited to this world, the other incorporates the divine and includes God. In Ecclesiastes 12:13 the essence of wisdom is captured in six words: *'Fear (revere) God and keep His commandments'*.⁷ The wise person here is portrayed as one with a long-term view of life, in contrast to one who's valuing only the here and now.⁸ When we take this a step further to encompass God's providence as it's communicated in the New Testament, *Good News*, then the following applies:

"At the heart of the Christian worldview is a living commitment to the concept of the presence of God in our lives. God is above us, He rules over us and He is also here. Everything in this world must be understood in light of Him and His rule". -Dr. R. C. Sproul

If we entertain the hypothesis even briefly, that 'God is love' (1John 4:16b), then easing God out (EGO) of our contemporary worldview has dire ramifications. How we view the relationship between God and the world, and how we perceive God's presence in our life, is critically necessary to an understanding of loving God and others, with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength.

¹ Stephen R. Covey, 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People' (The Free Press, a Division of Simon & Schuster, Inc. NY 1989, 2004) In 2002, Forbes named 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People' one of the top 10 most influential management books ever. Dr. Covey has an MBA from Harvard and a doctorate degree from Brigham Young University.

² 'Managing People Relationships and Performance' is a graduate level Organizational Behavior course at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), delivered by the author in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. 2005-2008

³ From a Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) approach to psychotherapy which explores the relationships between how we think (*neuro*), how we communicate (*linguistic*), and our patterns of behavior and emotion (*programmes*).

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⁴ Dr. R. C. Sproul is the Founder and President of Ligonier Ministries, his degrees are from Westminster College, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and the Free University of Amsterdam. 'The Battle for Our Minds' lecture series is available in 'Renewing Your Mind' broadcasts through http://www.ligonier.org/learn/series/battle_for_our_minds/.

^{4a} The institution of redemption during the Classical & Biblical worldview was the church, during the Enlightenment it was the university, and in the contemporary view it is government.

4b

The United States Constitution and Declaration of Independence were drafted during the Enlightenment period and noted was the language reflecting the worldview of that time.

^{4c} James Van Cleve, The Blackwell Reference Online: A Companion to Epistemology, 1993. From Immanuel Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason' (1787):
"*The adjectives noumenal and phenomenal mark the distinction between those entities or aspects of reality that exist independently of human cognition and those that exist in relation to it.*"

http://www.blackwellreference.com/public/tocnode?id=g9780631192589_chunk_g978063119258916_ss1-11. *Contrast also Kant's later in life statements in 5.2 Purpose.

For further information on the Classical & Biblical worldview – 'The City of God' by St. Augustine is recommended, and on Secularism – 'The Secular City' by Harvey Cox.

⁵ Hackett Lewis, 'The Age of Enlightenment' 1992.
http://history-world.org/age_of_enlightenment.htm

⁶ The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Copyright ©1997 by Merriam-Webster, Incorporated.

⁷ New American Standard Bible (Anaheim, California: Foundation Publications, Inc. The Lockman Foundation, 1997) The full passage reads: 'The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to* every person.'

⁸ 'Renewing Your Mind' '*Fear God and Keep His Commandments*' Oct. 8, 2011, podcast No. 20110817140115 - Dr. R. C. Sproul. <http://www.ligonier.org/search/?q=ecclesiastes>

Worldview Addendum 1.1

Barna Survey Examines Changes in Worldview Among Christians over the Past 13 Years

March 6, 2009

<http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/21-transformation/252-barna-survey-examines-changes-in-worldview-among-christians-over-the-past-13-years> *see end note

If Jesus were to ask, “Who do you say I am,” the question He famously asked his disciple Peter, He would be disappointed by some of the answers He’d receive from contemporary Americans. A new nationwide survey conducted by The Barna Group among a representative sample of adults explored how many have what might be considered a “biblical worldview.” The report from Barna compared current results to the outcomes from a similar survey the company conducted in 1995, 2000 and 2005.

Defining Terms For the purposes of the survey, a “biblical worldview” was defined as believing that absolute moral truth exists; the Bible is totally accurate in all of the principles it teaches; Satan is considered to be a real being or force, not merely symbolic; a person cannot earn their way into Heaven by trying to be good or do good works; Jesus Christ lived a sinless life on earth; and God is the all-knowing, all-powerful creator of the world who still rules the universe today. In the research, anyone who held all of those beliefs was said to have a biblical worldview.

National Results Overall, the current research revealed that only 9% of all American adults have a biblical worldview. Among the sixty subgroups of respondents that the survey explored was one defined by those who said they have made a personal to commitment to Jesus Christ that is important in their life today and that they are certain that they will go to Heaven after they die only because they confessed their sins and accepted Christ as their savior. Labeled “born again Christians,” the study discovered that they were twice as likely as the average adult to possess a biblical worldview. However, that meant that even among born again Christians, less than one out of every five (19%) had such an outlook on life.

The same questions were asked of respondents in national surveys by Barna in 1995, 2000 and 2005. The results indicate that the percentage of adults with a biblical worldview, as defined above, has remained unchanged for more than a decade. The numbers show that 7% had such a worldview in 1995, compared to 10% in 2000, 11% in 2005, and 9% now. Even among born again adults, the statistics have remained flat: 18% in 1995, 22% in 2000, 21% in 2005, and 19% today.

Components of Worldview Thinking Varying numbers of Americans embrace the different aspects of biblical worldview thinking. The survey found that:

- One-third of all adults (34%) believe that moral truth is absolute and unaffected by the circumstances. Slightly less than half of the born again adults (46%) believe in absolute moral truth.

- Half of all adults firmly believe that the Bible is accurate in all the principles it teaches. That proportion includes the four-fifths of born again adults (79%) who concur.

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- Just one-quarter of adults (27%) are convinced that Satan is a real force. Even a minority of born again adults (40%) adopt that perspective.
- Similarly, only one-quarter of adults (28%) believe that it is impossible for someone to earn their way into Heaven through good behavior. Not quite half of all born again Christians (47%) strongly reject the notion of earning salvation through their deeds.
- A minority of American adults (40%) are persuaded that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life while He was on earth. Slightly less than two-thirds of the born again segment (62%) strongly believes that He was sinless.
- Seven out of ten adults (70%) say that God is the all-powerful, all-knowing creator of the universe who still rules it today. That includes the 93% of born again adults who hold that conviction.

Differences among Demographic Segments The research data showed that one pattern emerged loud and clear: young adults rarely possess a biblical worldview. The current study found that less than one-half of one percent of adults in the Mosaic generation – i.e., those aged 18 to 23 – have a biblical worldview, compared to about one out of every nine older adults.

Other groups that possess a below average likelihood of having a biblical worldview included people who describe themselves as liberal on social and political matters (also less than one-half of one percent); Catholics (2%); Democrats (4%) and residents of the Northeast (4%).

Why It Matters Ongoing research by The Barna Group on these matters consistently demonstrates the powerful impact a person's worldview has on their life. A worldview serves as a person's decision-making filter, enabling them to make sense of the complex and huge amount of information, experiences, relationships and opportunities they face in life. By helping to clarify what a person believes to be important, true and desirable, a worldview has a dramatic influence on a person's choices in any given situation. Barna's research has discovered that there are unusually large differences in behavior related to matters such as media use, profanity, gambling, alcohol use, honesty, civility, and sexual choices.

The firm's studies have also pointed out that a person's worldview is primarily shaped and is firmly in place by the time someone reaches the age of 13; it is refined through experience during the teen and early adult years; and then it is passed on to others during their adult life. Such studies underscore the necessity of parents and other influencers being intentional in how they help develop the worldview of children.

George Barna, who has directed this tracking research since the early Nineties, pointed out, "There are a several troubling patterns to take notice. First, although most

Americans consider themselves to be Christian and say they know the content of the Bible, less than one out of ten Americans demonstrate such knowledge through their actions. Second, the generational pattern suggests that parents are not focused on guiding their children to have a biblical worldview. One of the challenges for parents,

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though, is that you cannot give what you do not have, and most parents do not possess such a perspective on life. That raises a third challenge, which relates to the job that Christian churches, schools and parachurch ministries are doing in Christian education. Finally, even though a central element of being a Christian is to embrace basic biblical principles and incorporate them into one's worldview, there has been no change in the percentage of adults or even born again adults in the past 13 years regarding the possession of a biblical worldview."

Barna concluded by noting that the lack of movement in the worldview status of adults reflects the fact that children are not provided with the basic ability to think in ways that correspond to foundational biblical teachings. He noted that Christian families, Christian schools, and Christian churches would be wise to invest more effort and tangible resources into helping young people understand and adopt the core ideas of Christianity, and to reinforce those concepts through their own lives. He pointed out that without such an investment, the current generational patterns indicate that the future Christian Church is likely to be one that has even less of a connection to biblical principles than is evident today.

About the Research This report draws information from four nationwide telephone interviews conducted by The Barna Group, each including between 1,002 to 1,005 adults randomly selected, during the years 1995, 2000, 2005, and 2008. The range of sampling error associated with a survey of 1,000 people is ± 1.5 to ± 3.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Each of the surveys utilized minimal statistical weighting to calibrate the aggregate sample to known population percentages in relation to several key demographic variables. All interviews were conducted among a sampling of adults in the 48 continental states.

As noted, "born again Christians" were defined as people who said they had made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that was still important in their life today and who also indicated they believed that when they die they will go to Heaven because they had confessed their sins and had accepted Jesus Christ as their savior. Respondents were not asked to describe themselves as "born again."

Readers are encouraged to realize that the figures described above regarding a biblical worldview are somewhat different than a similar measure reported by The Barna Group in prior years. The earlier measure included an additional component, which had to do with the source of their worldview. When that measure is included, it typically decreases the percentage of people with a biblical worldview by about half.

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Worldview Addendum 1.2

Alaska Airlines ends decades-old prayer card tradition - 27Jan2012

<http://finance.yahoo.com/news/alaska-airlines-ends-decades-old-prayer-card-tradition-011345991.html>



In this handout provided by Alaska Airlines, a prayer card of the type given to passengers on their meal trays is seen. After 30 years of giving passengers spiritual words to reflect on while they eat their meals, Alaska Airlines is retiring the prayer cards on Feb 1, 2012.

Airline spokeswoman Bobbie Egan says the decision was made after hearing from customers who preferred not to mix religion with transportation. She says the cards began as a marketing ploy to differentiate the regional airline from its competitors. The cards offer a rotating message of different psalms from the Old Testament. (AP Photo/Alaska Airlines)

SEATTLE (Reuters) - Alaska Airlines, America's seventh-largest carrier in terms of passenger traffic, said on Wednesday that it would end a decades-old tradition of handing out prayer cards with its in-flight meals.

The prayer cards, which the Seattle-based airline began offering in the 1970s after an executive spotted them on another airline, were intended to serve as a marketing strategy and to put passengers at ease, a spokeswoman said.

"This difficult decision was not made lightly. We believe it's the right thing to do in order to respect the diverse religious beliefs and cultural attitudes of all our customers and employees," Alaska Air Group Chairman and Alaska Airlines President wrote to customers. "Religious beliefs are deeply personal and sharing them with others is an individual choice."

The quotes came from the Book of Psalms, part of both Jewish and Christian tradition, such as Psalm 118, "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good. His love endures forever."

The decision prompted dozens of comments on the airline's Facebook page, mostly from people expressing disappointment with the change. After several years of reviewing the rise in customer complaints, it was agreed that eliminating the card was simply the right thing to do."

"Over the years, we've received comments from customers who were comforted by the card, but many others felt as though religion was not appropriate on an airplane and preferred not to receive one," she said. "We've seen an uptick in the number of passengers who just simply don't appreciate getting a prayer card on the meal tray."

(Editing by Dan Whitcomb and Cynthia Johnston - with some condensation by author)

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1S Scripture - WORLDVIEW

Before writing about our human history in "The True Story of Man: The Egyptian Chronicle" Dennis Monroe spent more than fifteen years researching: *'volumes written by the greatest minds of our times, century old maps, historic genealogy and life science, along with astronomy and epoch events'*.¹ His work reveals the history of man dating back to Adam, in 3984 BC building on Edwin R. Thiele's research which untangled the chronology of the Hebrew Kings.² Monroe concludes that according to the Roman calendar Moses led Israel, approximately two million people, out of Egyptian slavery in 1447 BC.³

Let us relate to their view of the world and of God at that time in these passages:

Exodus 19:1, 2b-9, 16-17 - Moses on Sinai *In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. ... and there Israel camped in front of the mountain. Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel: 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'* *These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel."* So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the LORD had commanded him. All the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do!" And Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD. The LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will come to you in a thick cloud, so that the people may hear when I speak with you and may also

believe in you forever.” Then Moses told the words of the people to the LORD. So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet

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sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.

Exodus 20:1-6 The Ten Commandments *Then God spoke all these words, saying, “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. “ You shall have no other gods before Me. “You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing loving-kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.”⁴*

1S-Q WORLDVIEW: Scripture Questions

1) Do we need to: *‘obey God’s voice and keep His covenant, to be His own (possession) among all the peoples?*

2) Do we echo the answer of *All the people who said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do!”?*

3) Do we think the *LORD is a jealous God, who shows loving-kindness to those who love Him and keep His commandments?*

¹ Dennis Monroe *The True Story of Man: The Egyptian Chronicle* Bookman Publishing © 2004 See also -<http://www.dennismonroe.com/home.html>

² Edwin R. Thiele *A Chronology of the Hebrew Kings* Zondervan © 1979, 1993

³ www.youtube.com/watch?v=gUHHGqBs-p8 All of Monroe's videos on this subject are available by entering 'dmonroewhit' in the youtube search box.

⁴ New American Standard Bible (NASB) Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation

2 Attitude

In addition to considering the influence of worldviews, attitude is another area to address in building a foundation for this study on God's greatest command to love. James Neill from the Centre for Applied Psychology, University of Canberra provides the following concise information applicable for our purpose.

- Attitude is defined as: '*Belief* and *feeling* that predisposes one to respond in a particular way to objects, people and events'.
- An *attitude* is an association between an *object of thought* and a valence (+ or – evaluation) with 3 components:
cognitive, emotional and behavioral.
- The factors to change attitude are the source (authority), the message (believability) and the receiver (knowledge).
- Cognitive dissonance is perceived discrepancy between attitude and behavior which results in tension or anxiety; we prefer beliefs which are consistent as inconsistent beliefs cause distress.¹

The three aspects of attitude are simply what people think, feel and do; therefore we can view attitude as a triangle (Fig. 1) with congruence between the components as

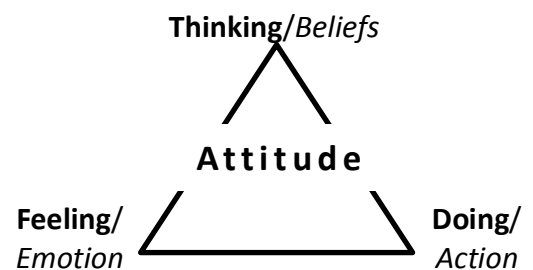


Fig. 1

a desirable condition. ^{1A} Attitudes as a predisposition or habit, and way of judgment, can be resistant to change.

The importance and impact of attitude on life outcome is an axiom often stated, but perhaps not fully understood. According to research at Stanford University

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success is 87.5% attitude, and 12.5% knowledge. John C. Maxwell in his book *'Attitude – What Every Leader Needs to Know'*, expanded on attitude by adding a growth dimension in the following equation:

$$\text{new experiences} + \text{teaching applications} \times \text{love} = \text{growth.}^2$$

Maxwell's growth formula promotes a teachable attitude open to change, continuous learning, improvement, and encompasses love as an important growth ingredient. According to Thomas Merton in *'Love and Living'*,

*"Our attitude toward life is also going to be, in one way or another, an attitude toward love. Love affects more than our thinking and our behavior toward those we love. It transforms our entire life. Genuine love is a personal revolution. 'Love takes your ideas, your desires and your actions and welds them together in one experience and one living reality which is a new you. If you keep your thoughts, desires and acts in separate compartments you will be an artificial and divided person with three filing cabinets: 1) ideas 2) decisions 3) actions and experiences. Such a life does not make sense and is not likely to be happy.'"*³

In contrast we can reference Bertrand Russell, one of the most influential philosopher's of the twentieth century. Russell, an atheist, co-led a 'revolt against idealism' to replace beliefs he viewed as meaningless and incoherent with clarity and precision of argument. ⁴ In a 1959 CBS interview⁵, Russell admitted spending almost all his spare time between the (*youthful*) ages of fifteen

and eighteen thinking about Christian dogmas and decided none of them seemed to be logically valid. Some outcomes of Russell's mindset can be deduced from his autobiographical quote:

"Three passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge, and unbearable pity for the

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*suffering of mankind. These passions, like great winds, have blown me hither and thither, in a wayward course, over a deep ocean of anguish, reaching to the very verge of despair... Love and knowledge, so far as they were possible, led upward toward the heavens. But always pity brought me back to earth. Echoes of cries of pain reverberate in my heart. Children in famine, victims tortured by oppressors, helpless old people a hated burden to their sons, and the whole world of loneliness, poverty, and pain make a mockery of what human life should be. I long to alleviate the evil, but I cannot, and I too suffer."*⁶

Bertrand Russell was heard to say the only thing that he lacked in his life was the understanding and capacity of love.⁷ His famous essay titled *Why I'm Not a Christian* was critiqued 'as devastating in its use of cold logic'.⁸

Merton a theologian and Russell a philosopher may be prime examples to support H. L. Mencken's analogy: *"a philosopher is a blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat that isn't there and a theologian is the man who finds it"*.

Hope, faith and love could be the black cat lost somewhere in the 'idealism' that gets replaced with argument, pragmatism, secularism, or cold logic.

Changing an attitude, according to Neill, involves the authority of the source, the believability of the message and the 'knowledge' on the part of the receiver. The receiver's knowledge can be severely impaired by potentially inaccurate conscious or subconscious presuppositions and prejudices. Maxwell's growth

calculation points to the benefit of continually learning from new experiences and incorporating an ideal, like love, into the formula.

2.1 Thinking/Beliefs Attitude, as defined above, indicates that behavioral responses result from thinking (*beliefs*) and feelings (*emotions*). Many promote

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Fig. 2

thinking as the engineer driving force. A corporation was built out of what Earl

Nightingale called the six most important words, ‘*you become what you think about*’ - which is simply a paraphrase of Proverb 23:7, “*For as he thinks within himself, so he is*”.⁹

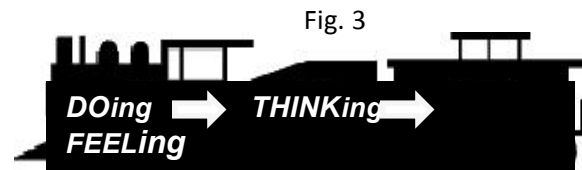
James Allen in his classic ‘As a Man Thinketh’ said, “*A particular train of thought persisted in, be it good or bad, cannot fail to produce its results on the character and circumstances.* (Fig. 2) *A man cannot directly choose his circumstances, but he can choose his thoughts, and so indirectly, yet surely, shape his circumstances*”.¹⁰ (underlining added by author)

To paint a picture of the affect of thinking and attitude on life outcome, two poignant stories are provided in Addendum 2.¹¹ They contrast the results of one who adopted gratitude as a core belief with another, who did not.

2.2 Doing/Action

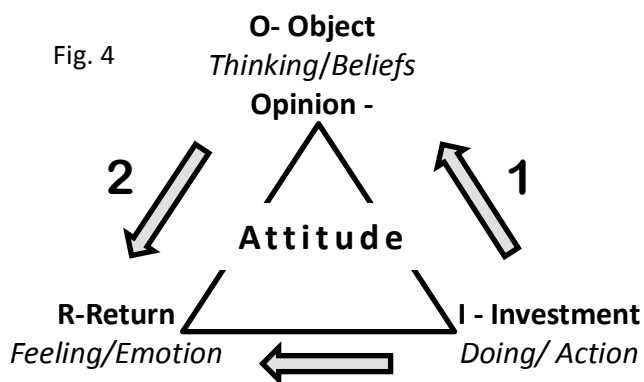
Our thoughts can also be considered an action, in as much as *choose* what to accept and believe. Gary van Warmerdam, an awareness and consciousness counselor, describes thought as simply conceptual ideas that, in and of

themselves, have no power.¹² We are the one who actually gives a thought our 'personal power' which van Warmerdam refers to as faith. In essence, it's the degree of trust or belief we



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attach to a thought that empowers it to affect our emotions and ultimately an outcome. If we apply this to the James Allen 'train-of-thought' then the engine is no longer what we THINK but what we DO with a particular conceptual idea. (Fig. 3) It's whether or not we choose to take an action and give a thought power and allow it to become a belief which then can affect our feelings, character and circumstances. James Allen's quote rewritten would now read: *'A man cannot directly choose his circumstances, but he can choose which of his thoughts he'll give power to, and so indirectly, yet surely, shape his circumstances'*.



Another way of seeing action as the 'first cause' setting attitude in motion is by considering the Doing-Thinking-Feeling triangle in terms of return on investment, ROI. (Fig. 4)

The first step is the decision on whether or not to invest our personal power, or faith, in a particular object. In this case the object is a belief or a thought, it could also be an opinion, or an expected outcome either good or bad. There is also a coinciding decision about quantity of faith, or the amount of energy given to a

particular thought. Awareness is a critical component in recognizing whether the application of power to thought is given consciously or subconsciously. The energy given to a thought will return either positive or negative feelings/emotions often in direct proportion, the more powerful the thought the more powerful the resulting emotion.

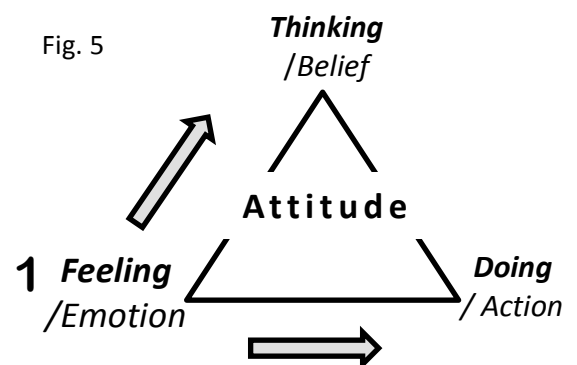
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2.3 Feelings/Emotions

Gary van Warmerdam's counseling focuses on helping people improve self awareness to change core beliefs so that emotions are directed on a 'Pathway to Happiness', the apt name of his website. He simplifies the complexity of the vast array of emotions by dropping all of them into only two buckets, love or fear.¹³ Therefore, the return on the investment in a negative or destructive thought will come from the fear bucket be it anger, jealousy, bitterness, depression, etc. Conversely, a powerful positive thought will return peace, joy, love, happiness, and the like.

Emotions or feelings can also be considered the 'self-system' that can become the major cause or key to attitude. *'We are creatures of emotions – they drive us'* according to Antonio Damasio, a University of Iowa neurologist who's studies indicate that emotions (Fig.5) are the *'key element in decision making, learning and central to the process of rational thought.'*¹⁴

Fig. 5



The engine in the 'train-of-thought' from this

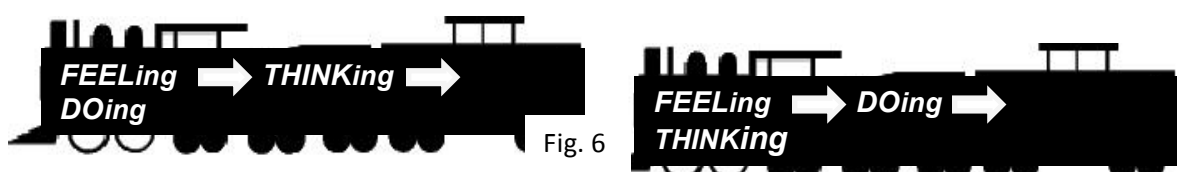


Fig. 6

perspective becomes how we feel about something and that drives how and what we think before we act, or do, before we think. (Fig. 6)

To further substantiate this concept are the following points from a Harvard

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University education brief by Ron Ritchhart:

- If we are serious about promoting good thinking, we have to pay attention to the role of emotions.
- In essence, our first "read" of a new situation is always centered in our emotions ... as such, our emotions are laying the groundwork for the thinking that is to come.
- Our emotion provides us with an immediate reaction when there isn't time to think. In addition, our emotions can direct our thoughts long term.

This brief also suggests ways to '*harness the influence of emotion to promote intellectual character*' and help people from becoming '*cognitive slaves to their emotions*'.¹⁵

2.4 Love – an Attitude: a Core Belief, Feeling and Decision.

Understanding the integration between attitude's three components: belief, emotion and action is beneficial, but only taps the surface to uncovering a condition of the heart where truth and love are seated.

Webster's dictionary defines love as a noun, a strong affection or warm attachment. It also defines love as a verb, to feel a passion for or take pleasure in something.¹⁶ Love is also a choice and as an attitude; it's a way of thinking, an emotion, as well as a behavior.

In *The Greatest Miracle* Og Mandino presents four laws of happiness and success. One is to '*use wisely your power of choice*'... and speaking as the Grand Organizational Designer he adds:

"I gave you ... the power to choose. With this gift I placed you even above my angels ... for angels are not free to choose sin. I gave you complete control over your destiny. I told you to determine, for yourself, your own nature in accordance with your own free will. Neither heavenly nor earthly in nature, you were free to

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fashion yourself in whatever form you preferred. You had the power to choose to degenerate into the lowest forms of life, but you also had the power, out of your soul's judgment, to be reborn into the higher forms, which are divine."

Mandino concludes, *"To fulfill the four laws, do all things with love...*

*love for yourself, for all others and for God."*¹⁷

The author of 'Power Thoughts' says, *"It would be difficult to negate the impact thoughts have on attitude, perspectives, productivity, relationships and quality of life"*. One of the guidelines suggested is 'staying in touch with the control tower'¹⁸ in other words, stay connected with the divine, with God. For those who consider themselves Christian the following also applies from the Common English Bible:

"Adopt the attitude that was in Christ Jesus". Phil 2:5.¹⁹

*"Mind, on the one hand, is the sum of the receptive, logical, and pragmatic powers of knowing. Spirit, on the other hand, discovers the values that lie beyond facts, the freedom that lies beyond law, the kind of existence in which justice is given priority over self-interest. Spirit, thus understood, is not the object of calculation and computer storage; it is correlated precisely with what is incalculable. It is a name for an **attitude** 'which brings happiness to the self by bursting through the limitations of self-centeredness'; an **attitude**, in other words, that requires a decision of the heart, or whole person..."* POPE BENEDICT XVI

¹ James Neill's references include: Lewis, V. (2004). *Social Thinking*. Powerpoint presentation to Psychology 102. Canberra: University of Canberra; Myers, D. G. (2001). *Social Psychology* (Ch. 18). In D. G. Myers (2001). *Psychology* (6th ed.) (pp. 643-688). New York: Worth; Westen, D., Burton, L., & Kowalski, R. (2006). *Psychology*. Australian

and New Zealand Edition. Queensland: Wiley.
<http://wilderdom.com/psychology/social/introduction/Attitudes.html>

^{1A} The 'Attitude Triangle' is a concept solidified for the author while delivering an MBA Course in Managing People, Relationships, and Performance. (See footnote 2 in Worldviews). An additional reference to this specific visual can be found at:
<http://www.ta-tutor.com/!atttri/xatt6p.htm>.

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² John C. Maxwell, '*Attitude – What Every Leader Needs to Know*', Review by Professor M.S.Rao © 2011 MSR Leadership Consultants India, <http://profmsr.blogspot.com>; and <http://profmsr.blogspot.com/2011/01/book-review-attitude-authored-by-john-c.html>. See also: '*The Importance of Attitude*' by Chuck Swindoll, Insight for Living - 8/17/07, http://daily.insight.org/site/News2?page=NewsArticle&id=7807&news_iv_ctrl=1781.

³ Thomas Merton, *Love and Living* (Originally published: New York: Farrar, Straus Giroux, c1979.) p.28

⁴ http://www.biographybase.com/biography/russell_bertrand.html.

⁵ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2aPOMUTr1qw> - Bertrand Russell CBS interview 1959

⁶ *The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell: 1872-1914*, (Boston: Little Brown, 1967), p.3-4. <http://afterall.net/quotes/158>. Refer also to Russell's work titled *Love, Knowledge & Pity*.

⁷ Dr. Ravi Zacharias, '*Just Thinking*' <http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/just-thinking/player/in-search-of-meaning-part-4-90541.html> The Ohio State VERITAS Forum

⁸ *Why I Am Not a Christian*, <http://users.drew.edu/~jlenz/whynot.html>, is a 1927 essay by the British philosopher Bertrand Russell is listed in the New York Public Library's list of the most influential books of the 20th century.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Why_I_Am_Not_a_Christian.

⁹ James Allen, '*As a Man Thinketh*' (Published by: Barnes and Noble Inc, 1992) p.20 First published in 1903, *As a Man Thinketh* has become accepted worldwide as a classic of inspirational thought.
Nightingale-Conant is the World Leader in Personal Development Since 1960

¹⁰ New American Standard Bible (Anaheim, California: Foundation Publications, Inc. The Lockman Foundation, 1997)

¹¹ Appendix 2 contains 2 stories delivered by Bil Gebhardt - Fellowship in the Word, <http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/fellowship-in-the-word/player/a-thankful-attitude-165087.html>

¹² Gary Van Warmerdam – Faith podcast
<http://www.pathwaytohappiness.com/insights.htm>

¹³ Gary Van Warmerdam – Happiness podcast
<http://www.pathwaytohappiness.com/insights.htm>

¹⁴ Damasio, A. (2005) *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*. New York: Penguin.

¹⁵ Of Dispositions, Attitudes, and Habits: Exploring How Emotions Shape Our Thinking - By Ron Ritchhart <http://learnweb.harvard.edu/alps/thinking/docs/article1.html>

¹⁶ Merriam-Webster Dictionary (Merriam-Webster, Inc. Philippines © 1997) p.439
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¹⁷ Og Mandino, *The Greatest Miracle* Published by Bantam Books, 1975.
A summary is provided at <http://www.peace.ca/greatestmiracle.htm>
A personal note: *Mandino's 'laws' were included in a 9Feb97 letter to the son of this dissertation's author as he was preparing for his public confirmation of faith and included on 7Feb11 for this study.*

¹⁸ Joyce Meyers, *Power Thoughts – 12 Strategies to Win the Battle of the Mind*, (New York: Faithworks © 2010).

¹⁹ Biblegateway Passage Lookup
<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=phil%202:5-8&version=CEB>

Addendum 2.1 Attitude

The following 2 stories were delivered in a radio broadcast by Bil Gebhardt¹:

1) Dr. W. A. Criswall went door to door visiting people when he first became a pastor in Chickasha, Oklahoma. One time he knocked on a door and a woman answered who he said looked 'more wretched with her countenance than anyone I had ever met before'. He told her he was a new Pastor just coming to visit. She said, '*there's no need for anyone like you around here*'. He persisted and reluctantly she let him in, adding that she didn't believe in God and even cursed him.

The terrible story of her life came out...since she moved to Oklahoma, her husband died, her children were scattered leaving her alone, she lived in poverty, her eyesight was almost gone, and she was bitter and angry at everyone. Then she recited some of her poetry from memory which started with: '*I hate Oklahoma ...and ended with Oklahoma being... where water and food are an eternal lack, where a man's best friend sticks a dagger in your back – I hate Oklahoma*'. She was an unthankful, bitter old woman and saw only the difficult things in life and that's what she dwelled on.

As it turned out, a few weeks later the woman died and the pastor was asked to do the funeral service. Dr. Criswall said it was the only funeral he delivered that no one attended. (*This version of the story is abbreviated.*)

2) The 92-year-old, petite, well-poised and proud lady... who is fully dressed each morning by eight o'clock, with her hair fashionably coifed and makeup

perfectly applied, even though she is legally blind... moved to a nursing home today. Her husband of 70 years recently passed away, making the move necessary. After many hours of waiting patiently in the lobby of the nursing home, she smiled sweetly when told her room was ready.

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As she maneuvered her walker to the elevator, I provided a visual description of her tiny room, including the eyelet sheets that had been hung on her window. 'I love it', she stated with the enthusiasm of an eight-year-old having just been presented with a new puppy.

'Mrs. Jones, you haven't seen the room - just wait.'

'That doesn't have anything to do with it', she replied.

'Happiness is something you decide on ahead of time.

Whether I like my room or not doesn't depend on how the furniture is arranged ...it's how I arrange my mind. I already decided to love it ...

It's a decision I make every morning when I wake up.

I have a choice;

I can spend the day in bed recounting the difficulty I have with the parts of my body that no longer work, or get out of bed and be thankful for the ones that do.

Each day is a gift, and as long as my eyes open

I'll focus on the new day and all the happy memories I've stored away ...

just for this time in my life'.²

- Author Unknown

¹<http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/fellowship-in-the-word/player/a-thankful-attitude-165087.html>

²http://www.spiritual.com.au/articles/stories/happiness_attitude_uk.htm

Addendum 2.2 Attitude

1 -The Eagle Who Thought He Was a Chicken:

A baby eagle became orphaned when something happened to his parents. He glided down to the ground from his nest but was not yet able to fly. A man picked him up. The man took him to a farmer and said, "This is a special kind of barnyard chicken that will grow up big." The farmer said, "Don't look like no barnyard chicken to me." "Oh yes, it is. You will be glad to own it." The farmer took the baby eagle and placed it with his chickens.

The baby eagle learned to imitate the chickens. He could scratch the ground for grubs and worms too. He grew up thinking he was a chicken.

Then one day an eagle flew over the barnyard. The eagle looked up and wondered, "What kind of animal is that? How graceful, powerful, and free it is." Then he asked another chicken, "What is that?" The chicken replied, "Oh, that is an eagle. But don't worry yourself about that. You will never be able to fly like that."

And the eagle went back to scratching the ground. He continued to behave like the chicken he thought he was. Finally he died, never knowing the grand life that could have been his.

2 – Fable of the Eagle and the Chicken:

A fable is told about an eagle who thought he was a chicken. When the eagle was very small, he fell from the safety of his nest. A chicken farmer found the eagle, brought him to the farm, and raised him in a chicken coop among his many chickens. The eagle grew up doing what chickens do, living like a chicken, and believing he was a chicken.

A naturalist came to the chicken farm to see if what he had heard about an eagle acting like a chicken was really true. He knew that an eagle is king of the sky. He

was surprised to see the eagle strutting around the chicken coop, pecking at the ground, and acting very much like a chicken. The farmer explained to the naturalist that this bird was no longer an eagle. He was now a chicken because he had been trained to be a chicken and he believed that he was a chicken.

The naturalist knew there was more to this great bird than his actions showed as he “pretended” to be a chicken. He was born an eagle and had the heart of an eagle, and nothing could change that. The man lifted the eagle onto the fence surrounding the chicken coop and said, “Eagle, thou art an eagle. Stretch forth

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thy wings and fly.” The eagle moved slightly, only to look at the man; then he glanced down at his home among the chickens in the chicken coop where he was comfortable. He jumped off the fence and continued doing what chickens do. The farmer was satisfied. “I told you it was a chicken,” he said.

The naturalist returned the next day and tried again to convince the farmer and the eagle that the eagle was born for something greater. He took the eagle to the top of the farmhouse and spoke to him: “Eagle, thou art an eagle. Thou dost belong to the sky and not to the earth. Stretch forth thy wings and fly.” The large bird looked at the man, then again down into the chicken coop. He jumped from the man’s arm onto the roof of the farmhouse.

Knowing what eagles are really about, the naturalist asked the farmer to let him try one more time. He would return the next day and prove that this bird was an eagle. The farmer, convinced otherwise, said, “It is a chicken.”

The naturalist returned the next morning to the chicken farm and took the eagle and the farmer some distance away to the foot of a high mountain. They could not see the farm nor the chicken coop from this new setting. The man held the eagle on his arm and pointed high into the sky where the bright sun was beckoning above. He spoke: “Eagle, thou art an eagle! Thou dost belong to the sky and not to the earth. Stretch forth thy wings and fly.” This time the eagle stared skyward into the bright sun, straightened his large body, and stretched his massive wings. His wings moved, slowly at first, then surely and powerfully. With the mighty screech of an eagle, he flew.

– *In Walk Tall, You’re A Daughter Of God, by Jamie Glenn*

<http://lifelessons4u.wordpress.com/2009/09/25/encouragement-even-eagles-need-a-push/>

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Addendum 2.L Attitude Lyrics What Faith Can Do

Song & lyrics by Scott Davis & Scott Krippayne - Performed by Kutless

*Everybody falls sometimes; you've got to find the strength to rise,
from the ashes and make a new beginning.*

*Anyone can feel the ache, you think it's more than you can take,
but you're stronger, stronger than you know.*

*Don't you give up now, the sun will soon be shining,
you've got to face the clouds... to find the silver lining.*

*I've seen dreams that move the mountains,
hope that doesn't ever end even when the sky is falling.
I've seen miracles just happen, silent prayers get answered,
broken hearts become brand new...*

That's what faith can do!

*It doesn't matter what you've heard, impossible is not a word,
it's just a reason for someone not to try.*

*Everybody's scared to death, when they decide to take that step...
out on the water, but it'll be alright.*

*Life is so much more than what your eyes are seeing
you will find your way... if you keep believing.*

*Overcome the odds ~ when you don't have a chance,
when the world says you can't...*

It'll tell you that you can!

*That's what faith can do ~ even if you fall sometimes
you will have the strength to rise.*

Listen and lyrics <http://www.jango.com/music/Kutless?l=0>

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2S Scripture - ATTITUDE

Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, founder of the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, compared post-it note reminders to small cubed shaped leather boxes worn by Jews for thousands of years to remind them of God's greatest commandments. The boxes, called tefillins or phylacteries in Greek, contained four sections of Scripture including the Shema*: *"Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."* (Deuteronomy 6:4) One box on the left arm resting against the heart and another around the head are still worn today by observant Jews during Morning Prayer. They are a reminder to submit every part of life: heart, mind, arms and actions to God.¹

Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18, 37 - Idolatry Forbidden

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. 'You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD. You shall thus observe all My statutes and all My ordinances and do them; I am the LORD.'"

Deuteronomy 6:1-9 - Obey God and Prosper

"Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land

where you are going over to possess it, so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on

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your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.²

2S-Q ATTITUDE Scripture Questions

- 1) Do we** *take vengeance, or bear any grudge against the neighbor we are commanded to love as our self?*
 - 2) Are we** *observing all God’s statutes and all His ordinances and doing them – are God’s Words on our heart?*
 - 3) Are we** *teaching God’s commands diligently to your sons (and daughters) and talking of them in our house, when we walk and when we lie down and rise up?*
-

* Shema literally means 'Hear'.

¹ Holy Land Moments *The Tefillin* <http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/holy-land-moments/listen/the-tefflin-193915.html> June 27, 2011

² New American Standard Bible (NASB) Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation

3 Truth

*"Love grows by means of truth, and truth draws near to man by means of love."*¹ Pope John Paul II

The question's been asked: *'If you were an airplane and able to choose two wings to fly through life with...what wings would you select?'* Many of my students select love and God, but for this exercise they're seen as only one wing since *'God is Love'* (1John 4:16b). The wings offered for consideration as most beneficial are love and truth.

The current attitude toward truth however, doesn't generally associate truth with love, and may even discount truth's value. TV talk show host, Dr. John Ankerberg said, *"We increasingly live in a culture that says truth doesn't matter, its okay for you but it's not for me. Have you ever noticed that people demand truth in every area except religion? When you visit your doctor you want answers, not to be told that all roads lead to the same place."*²

3.1 Principles of Reason

Ten universal principles accepted by secular societies are recapped in a recently published book. The three general principles of reason provide an important framework for logical thinking.³

1) The principle of **complete explanation** – recognizes the idea or theory that explains the most data and provides the most comprehensive explanation.

2) The principle of **non-contradiction** – recalls the fact that no two contradictory statements can be true; something cannot be both true and false at the same time and place.

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3) Principle of **known evidence** – if a theory is arbitrarily asserted without objective evidence, then it can also be arbitrarily denied.

Since beliefs are accepted truths that significantly influence emotional and situational life outcomes; the challenge becomes an awareness of the measurement process used in differentiating truth/fact from myth/fiction.

Consciously or sub-consciously we calculate a ‘range or degree of reliability’ on a simple scale:

FICTION ▶ _____ ◀ THEORIES ▶ _____ ◀ FACT

0% ----- Less Certain ----- 50% ----- More Certain ----- 100%

Everything that is not a 100% proven fact is a theory with a certain degree of reliability.⁴

The ability to differentiate opinion from real knowledge or truth inarguably holds great value, albeit a value that seems to be increasingly discounted. Plato addressed this area as ‘confusion’ and clarified it by defining *opinion* as relative, changeable and unanchored; whereas *truth* and *knowledge* are unchanging,

fixed, absolute and eternally true. He saw truth and knowledge as unaffected by space or time and the eternal as real.⁵

3.2 Objectivity versus Subjectivity

Soren Kierkegaard provided insight into the different ways people think about truth. His 1846 work titled *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* was an inquiry that explained how objectivity differs from subjectivity.⁶

The chart below summarizes the contrast:

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Objective Truth/Thinker:

Outer /outward truth

Attempts to stand apart from his/her existence to view it objectively.

Indifferent to truth of subjectivity

Finds truth by approximation

Quantifies certainty or probability

Sought in speculative philosophy

Interested in what defines existence

Falsehood of objectivity revealed by:
lack of need for personal commitment
and decision-making.

Useful to explain matters where faith
is not necessary.

Subjective Truth/Thinker:

Inner /inward truth

Realizes one cannot stand apart from existence and that the truth of it is found in his/her own subjectivity.

Finds eternal happiness, an absolute good attained by faith, in subjectivity.

Finds truth by appropriation

Accepts uncertainty

Sought in religious faith

Interest in how existence is defined

Truth of subjectivity revealed by:
need for personal commitment and
decision-making.

Matters involving faith must be
answered subjectively.

*"I believe so that I can understand." – "Faith is to believe what you do not see;
the reward of this faith is to see what you believe."*⁷ St. Augustine

Saint Augustine's words reveal his subjective thinking. (Fig. 1) Faith, which can be considered both a

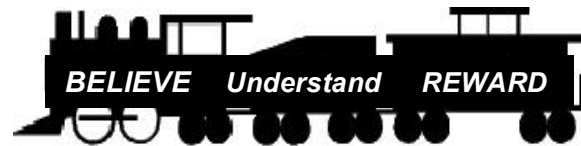


Fig. 1

decision, as well as a God-given gift, allows one to see truth. Christians believe



Fig. 2

God's Word in Scripture to be the truth, based on factual history. In promoting the Christian belief system, Campus Crusades

uses a train illustration (Fig. 2) depicting fact as the engine, faith in those facts as secondary, and feelings as the result, or caboose.⁸

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3.3 Love, Truth and Beauty

"Since love grows within you, so beauty grows.

*For love is the beauty of the soul."*⁹ Saint Augustine

In working with clients over the years, a counselor found essentially two aspects in helping people transform their lives. First was to find and dissolve false belief paradigms and then shift the point of view from those illusions, to seeing the world with new eyes that embrace love, truth and beauty. He said:

"In that quest for truth and beauty and love, it's a very nebulous target because people can ask: What is truth? What's beautiful? What's love? And these are not concrete factual things that can be described with words. In talking about truth – we're talking about Truth with a capital T because there are a lot of truths that have lower case t. And there's another kind of truth, that if you believe something - it's true for you and that's your truth, but it doesn't mean it's the absolute Truth... of life, the universe and everything. That's a capital T kind of Truth, that's the kind of Truth that transcends words; you could say it was even born before words. So when you find the truth

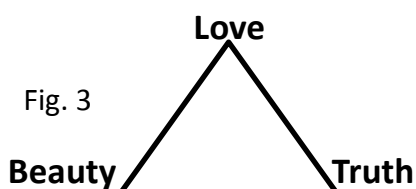


Fig. 3

*you find love as the emotional experience of the truth and you see with the eyes of love, the eyes of truth, you will find beauty. (Fig. 3) If you find one; truth, beauty or love you're in the presence of all three."*¹⁰

- Gary Van Warmerdam

Dismantling false paradigms to develop eyes that embrace love can be challenging since erroneous beliefs often grow deep roots over long periods of time. Theologian John S. Dunne explained four 'consents' people make in the development process. The first consent as a child is the acceptance of basic goodness in people and nature. The final consent in adulthood is the willingness to be transformed. This transformation requires death to the false self which some fear even more than physical death. *"The full transmission of divine life*

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*cannot come through and be fully heard if the static of the false self is too loud."*¹¹ This process of transformation might require substituting truth for error and may be a critical element in building a foundation to fully embrace the greatest command to love.

3.4 Truth, Faith and God

*"Truth is the agreement of our ideas with the ideas of God."*¹²

Jonathan Edwards

A well published Christian meditation author, speaker and priest explains the way of faith as *"not a dogged adherence to one point of view and to the belief systems and ritual traditions that express it";* but rather as *'a transformational journey that demands that we move in, through and beyond our frameworks of belief and external observances—not betraying or rejecting them but not being entrapped by their forms of expression either.'* He continues:

Faith is thus an open-endedness, from the very beginning of the human journey. Naturally, we need a framework, a system and tradition. [But] if we are stably centered in these, the process of change unfolds and our perspective of truth is continuously enlarged.”¹³

During a VERITAS Forum at Ohio State, apologist Dr. Ravi Zacharias said:

“As painful as it is, truth by nature of its definition is exclusive, it’s more possible for all religions to be wrong but it is impossible for all of them to be right. It is more reasonable to say they’re all wrong – it is a totally nonsensical statement to say they’re all right.”¹⁴

“I am the Way, the Truth and the Life” – Jesus (John 14:6)

If the greatest commandment to love God and our neighbor is true, then it is a capital T kind of truth, an absolute Truth of *‘life, and everything’*.

¹ Pope John Paul II ECCUMENICAL CELEBRATION IN CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL, Great Britain. Saturday, 29 May 1982.
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/homilies/1982/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19820529_canterbury_en.html © Copyright 1982 - Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
Following is an excerpt of His Holiness’ speech:

“On the eve of his Passion, Jesus told his disciples: “If you love me, you will keep my commandments” (Jn 14:15). We have felt compelled to come together here today in obedience to the great commandment: *the commandment of love*. We wish to embrace it in its entirety, to live by it completely, and to experience the power of this commandment in conformity with the words of the Master: “I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you forever, even *the Spirit of truth*, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you”. (Jn 14:16-17)

² Dr. John Ankerberg – 2010-08-19 #20110810145458 TRUTH, 2011-09-20 #20110912130702 – LIVE TRUTH, www.jashow.org

³ Robert J. Spitzer SJ, PhD; Ten Universal Principles, A Brief Philosophy of the Life Issues. © 2011 Ignatius Press, California

⁴ Nancy Mannix, summary of an original text by Dr. Johnson C. Philip – Founder of Trinity Graduate School of Apologetics & Theology, Text 013A1 Analysis of Scientific Truth. p10.

⁵ <http://jmerritt.net/documents/Philosophy/History/Ancient/Plato.htm>

⁶ <http://www.angelfire.com/md2/timewarp/kierkegaard.html> Kierkegaard's Concluding Unscientific Postscript

⁷ Saint Augustine quotes <http://www.great-quotes-on-life.com/saint-augustine-quotes.html>

⁸ Campus Crusade Website, "Answers to Tough Questions,"

<http://www.greatcom.org/resources/toughquestions/tq14/tq14d.htm>.

From 'Loving God' Dissertation by Dr. Darrell Ferguson: "This train diagram illustrates the relationship among fact (God and His Word), faith (our trust in God and His Word), and feeling (the result of our faith and obedience) John 14:21. The train will run with or without a caboose. However, it would be useless to attempt to pull the train by the caboose. In the same way, as Christians, we do not depend on feelings or emotions, but we place our faith (trust) in the trustworthiness of God and the promises of His Word."

p.7 www.foodforyoursoul.net/abc/articles/Loving_God.rtf

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⁹ <http://www.famous-quotes.com/author.php?aid=338>

¹⁰ Gary Van Warmerdam - Truth podcast

<http://www.pathwaytohappiness.com/insights.htm>

¹¹ Thomas Keating, *Invitation to Love – The Way of Christian Contemplation*, © 2006 The Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc. NY p 45-47.

¹² http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/75887.Jonathan_Edwards

¹³ Laurence Freeman OSB excerpt from "Dearest Friends," Newsletter of the World Community for Christian Meditation, Vol. 32, No. 3, September 2008, p. 4.

¹⁴ Ravi Zacharias The Pursuit of Meaning Podcast part 3 of 4.

<http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/just-thinking/listen/the-pursuit-of-meaning-part-3-of-4-183249.html>

Addendum 3.1 Truth

'Black and White' – Cowboy poetry by Joel Crager

*The popular culture of our day writes its rules in shades of gray,
wonders around with impaired sight,
unable to focus on wrong and right.*

*Ignored today is the God of creation,
replaced by our ethics of situation.*

The modern world is losing its way - its map is printed in shades of gray.

*We live in a world engulfed by fear,
following a map that isn't clear.*

*We're off the path we're going astray;
we follow lines of neutral gray.*

*Eternal **truths** God once concealed stands above how people feel.*

God's Word forever is a shining light, He writes His map in black and white.

*The **Truth** revealed once by the Lord will sever confusion as a two-edged sword.*

*He patiently waits to offer His light that again we'll see in black and white.
If we submit to His mighty hand, He'll deliver His people and save our land.
The choice is ours to make today, black and white or shades of gray.*

Profile of Joel Crager by Scott Benjamin
<http://www.musicradio77.com/joelcragerprofile.html>
Joel Crager started at ABC in 1952 and over the decades did network newscasts, local newscasts for WABC AM and FM and even hosted a talk show on WABC-FM!

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Addendum 3.2 Truth



The Plain Truth Online Sept-Oct 1998

<http://www.ptm.org/98pt/sepoct/elephant.htm>

The Trouble with the Elephant by Greg Koukl

In the children's book, *The Blind Men and the Elephant*, Lillian Quigley retells the ancient fable of six blind men who visit the palace of the Rajah and encounter an elephant for the first time.

The first blind man put out his hand and touched the side of the elephant. "How smooth! An elephant is like a wall." The second blind man put out his hand and touched the trunk of the elephant. "How round! An elephant is like a snake." The third blind man put out his hand and touched the tusk of the elephant. "How sharp! An elephant is like a spear." The fourth blind man put out his hand and touched the leg of the elephant. "How tall! An elephant is like a tree." The fifth blind man reached out his hand and touched the ear of the elephant. "How wide! An elephant is like a fan." The sixth blind man put out his hand and touched the tail of the elephant. "How thin! An elephant is like a rope."

An argument ensued, each blind man thinking his own perception of the elephant was correct. The Rajah, awakened by the commotion, called out from the balcony. "The elephant is big," he said. "Each man touched only one part. You must put all parts

together to find out what an elephant is like."

This fable is often used to illustrate one of two points. The *religious application* holds that every faith represents just one part of a larger truth about God. Each has only a piece of the truth, leading to God by different routes. Advocates of Eastern religions are fond of using the parable in this way.

The second application, a *secular application*, is used by skeptics who hold that *cultural biases have so seriously blinded us that we can never know the true nature of things*. This view is often called *post-modernism*.

Post-modernists hold for all areas of truth, including the rational, the religious and the moral. They argue that morality is not objective. Those who believe that cultural biases blind us are making a strong assertion about knowledge.

Post-modernists essentially believe that all claims to know objective truth are false because each of us is imprisoned in his own culture, incapable of seeing beyond the limits of his own biases. Therefore, truth is relative to culture and no objective standard exists. But, there are three serious problems with the elephant argument.

Talking Elephants

The first serious limitation is that even though the men are blind, the elephant isn't

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necessarily mute. What if the elephant speaks?

Christianity claims that human beings don't learn about God by groping. Instead, discovery comes about through God's own self-disclosure. He is not silent, leaving us to guess about his nature. God tells us what he is like and what he wants.

God makes himself known, giving us a standard by which to measure all other religious claims. The parable of the blind men does not take this into account. Yet three of the world's great religions -- Christianity, Judaism and Islam -- make this claim.

There is a second problem with the parable. It presumes that Christians reject pluralism merely because they lack exposure to other beliefs, much as the blind men erred because each had explored only a part of the elephant. Christians are just uninformed and narrow-minded.

This is not the case. Christians reject pluralism, in part, because the defining elements of different religions contradict each other. It's not an inductive problem of discovery; it's a problem of coherence. Contradictory claims can't be simultaneously true. Religious pluralism is false on deductive grounds, not inductive.

The Suicidal Elephant

The third objection is the most serious. The application of this parable to issues of truth is doomed before it gets started.

There's only one way to know if our cultural or religious biases blind us to the larger truth that all religions lead to God. Someone who sees clearly without bias must tell us so. The Rajah was in a position of privileged access to the truth. Because he could see clearly, he was able to correct those who were blind.

Such a privileged view is precisely what advocates of both religious pluralism and the skepticism of post-modernism deny. Completely objective assessments are illusions, they claim. The truth lies in some combination of opinions or, for the more skeptical, is out of reach for any of us. However, this is precisely the kind of thing the parable does not allow one to say.

The problem becomes obvious by offering this challenge. Ask, "Where would you be in the illustration? When you apply this parable to the issue of truth, are you like one of the blind men or are you like the king?"

This dilemma is unsolvable. If the story-teller is like one of the six who can't see -- if he is one of the blind men groping around -- how does he know everyone else is blind and has only a portion of the truth? On the other hand, if he fancies himself in the position of the king, how is it that he alone escapes the illusion that blinds the rest of us?

At best, this parable might justify agnosticism, but not religious pluralism. All one could really say is that it may be the case we're all groping about with no one in full possession of the truth -- but this can't be known for sure.

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The King Sees

If everyone is blind, then no one can know if anyone else is mistaken. Only someone who knows the whole truth can identify another on the fringes of it. In this story, only the king can do that -- no one else.

The irony is that the parable of the blind men and the elephant is, to a great degree, a picture of reality. It's just been misapplied.

We are like blind men, fumbling around in the world searching for answers to life's deepest questions. From time to time, we seem to stumble upon things that are true, but we're often confused and mistaken, just as the blind men were.

How do I know this? Because the King of the Kingdom, whom we also know as Jesus Christ, has spoken. He is above, instructing us, advising us of our mistakes and correcting our errors. The real question is: Will we listen?

Greg Koukl *The Trouble with the Elephant* The Plain Truth Online Sept-Oct 1998
<http://www.ptm.org/98pt/sep/oct/elephant.htm> *Greg Koukl is the founder and director of Stand to Reason, an organization which trains Christians for the public defense of their faith.*

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3P Personal - Truth

Nancy Shuster Mannix: **Testimony** as delivered to:

The Agape Outreach Church – Vietnam

May 29, 2005 - Revised Sept.2010

Just for a moment let's think about...

-God's voice when he spoke to Adam and Eve in the garden after they ate the forbidden fruit,

he called to the man and said, "where are you?" Gen 3:9

-and let's think about the Lord speaking to Moses in the wilderness In Num 12:8
God said that He speaks '*face to face*' with Moses.
and one more...

-Can you almost hear Jesus when he conversed with St. Paul on his way to
Damascus... '*Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?*' Acts 9:4

Henry Blackaby uses these examples in his book 'Experiencing God – Knowing and Doing the Will of God' to validate scripturally that God still speaks to us *today*...through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, and His church of believers (p132). The possibility of hearing God's voice might take a leap of faith for some of us...but for others it could be simply, slowing down enough to listen.
In any case, it is a privilege to share a part of my faith experience with you in this church today. I pray our time together will be a source of encouragement - in His name.

Matt 18:20 “For where two or three have gathered together in Christ’s name, God promised to be in our midst.”

He also promised in Matt 7:7 that - if we Ask, it will be given...if we seek, we shall find; and when we knock, it will be opened to us.

Knock - Knock – Knock

I knocked...I knocked myself out searching and knocking all over the place...for **34** years.I just didn’t know exactly **where** to knock, or **what** I was looking for, so I really didn’t know, **who** to ask, **how** to ask...or even...**what** to ask for!

Over the years I knocked on a lot of doors, I probably knocked on God’s door too but, maybe from a safe distance, with a little lukewarm ‘tap tap’.

“Hello? - is God there?- and is God really there for me?”

Well, I knew God was there...somewhere, I went to church and knew He was the creator of the universe but I wasn’t quite sure about getting up close or personal.

In fact, when I heard people talk about a having a personal relationship with Jesus – I thought that was a bit over the top... *do you know what I mean?*

Now that I look *back* at my 34 years of seeking,

I can almost track the steps in my faith journey - from Aug. 1968 to Nov. 2002.

My knocking started when my father died very suddenly in 1968.

He was here with me one day and SNAP, gone the next.

I was abundantly blessed for 13 years to have had the love of a father that mirrored an experience of God, since God = Love.

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The absence of my “Daddy” created a huge void, a hole in my heart extremely difficult to fill.

And...the concept of being here today, and then...SNAP gone tomorrow left a lot of unanswered questions in my teenage mind.

Thankfully, my parents raised us in the faith. But, at that time I didn’t understand *how to* knock on God’s door and ask Him for help.

What I lacked in the asking and knocking areas...I made up for in the seeking department.

In fact, when I grew up, people could actually describe me using one word, Nancy the...‘seeker’.

I tried reading as many books as possible to help me learn the ‘Meaning of Life’* or the ‘Habits of Highly Effective People’**.

There was always a new best seller that I couldn’t wait to get my hands on - I was like a magnet for self-help material.

I would listen to ‘The Journey’ a Christian radio station in the morning getting ready for work. While driving my car I would turn on audio tapes...

I even talked my wonderful-husband into weekend seminars.

In continuing my search for some ‘enlightenment’, I *swallowed* a lot of New Age fluffy stuff, which wasn’t terribly bad or negative just not necessarily the best Truth. The problem was the feel good ‘stuff’ didn’t have enough substance. I’m

most grateful for the many people who really were lights along my path steering me in the right Way to God.

Over the years I went to church, attended bible studies, completed a 12-step Spiritual Journey and actually read the bible...cover to cover.

Somewhere, I heard that St. Peter at the gates of Heaven might ask if we read *God's* best seller before letting us enter the Kingdom. So, I checked off every box on a chart to 'read the bible in a year', although it took *me* 4-years. The Word wasn't alive to me, then, as it is now.

After over thirty years of searching, God moved my wonderful-husband and I out of the United States. We left our native country, our family, friends, home – *My car, my nice job, title and salary...*and we moved to the other side of the world -Seoul, Korea.

Just about everything in our life changed dramatically. The Korean lettering doesn't even look anything like the English alphabet. It was a bit like landing on Mars...God has a great sense of humor sometimes, *doesn't He?*

Fortunately, God is also true to His word. Once settled in Seoul, I continued knocking, and it was there...that He opened the doors for *me!*

I will forever be grateful to my friend Gay – her name means merry, bright and lively.

She's is one of God's faithful servants and took me under her wing.

On a bus tour of Buddhist Temples Gay asked me if I ever read the bible.

Proudly, I told her that I read the whole thing, as well as A LOT of other 'stuff' -

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like the Indian Sanskrit literature dating back to 800bc...the Course in Miracles...and whatever.

Then, - her message came through so clearly - she had such conviction in the Bible being the one Truth, and she asked me if I'd be interested in learning HOW to study the bible.

Knock...knock – the doors opened wide - once Gay shared *her* love of the Word with me.

The Lord delivered on His promise in Prov8:17 He said:

"I love those who love Me, and those who diligently seek Me will find Me."

Hallelujah! Finally, I had ears to hear and eyes to see -the Way -the Truth and - the Light.

One of the key things I learned through my journey is...faith is a *gift*, a gift *from* God. That reminds me of another story...

St. Peter was giving a newcomer to Heaven a tour of the Kingdom. They came to a HUGE storage area over-flowing with trillions of boxes and the resident asked what was in ALL the boxes. St. Peter answered and said...the boxes were filled with gifts God *wanted* to give away, but no one *asked* for them.

Along the way I also learned that everyone's walk with God is a unique, a one-of-a-kind masterpiece, something like the fingerprints He gave us.

Even though there is a treasure map, everyone's formula to find answers for

themselves will become their own life's work of art. God reveals His truth – *His way* - in *His* time...after all He created the world, so He makes the rules.

Finding a “formula” to work for my life has been quite a journey...and I thought I’d put some of the key parts together for you in an acrostic for the word:

FORMULA

F Matt 6:33
FIRST “Seek **FIRST** His Kingdom AND His Righteousness and He will give us all things.” The Kingdom of God is Heaven.
Seeking His Kingdom gives us a slice of heaven here on earth, not *only* in our after-life, but right here and now!

Seeking His Righteousness puts us on the correct path to the right destination – and the best route from point A to B has always been a straight line.

God promises to give us everything we need if we seek Him **FIRST** and everything we need to be happy are...

The fruits of His Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. Gal 5:22-23

O Seeking God’s Kingdom, is accepting Him and *His* rules for our life.
Obey In Micah 6:8 “The Lord tells us what is good, He requires us to do justice¹, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.”
‘*We delight the Lord when we obey His voice.*’ (a psalm or proverb)

R **RELATIONSHIP**
Jesus said, “You are My friends if you do what I command you, I call you *friends*, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.” Jn 15:14-15
Now I can ask myself (Nancy):
-How well do I know my (good, better...) *best* – friend God/Jesus?
-Do I spend time with Him?
-Am I *relating* with Him in prayer/conversation or through His Word?

M **MODEL**
Thank God, He came down Himself in Christ’s human form to be *our* role model.
Jn 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.
WWJD - What would Jesus Do or say, how would Jesus act?
He’s the (good, better...) *best* role model to follow

U **UNITED/UNITY** with our creator God, our brother Jesus Christ – and in fellowship with each other through the Holy Spirit.

"We are to attain the unity of faith, and of knowledge of the Son of God...so that we are no longer children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine." Eph 4:13-14

Having one clear 'true' direction and measuring line for life is truly the *best* gift of all.

**L
LOVE**

Matt 22:36 First and Foremost is LOVE...and God is Love

The GREAT command from God through Moses to us- is to *"Love God with all our heart, soul and mind."*

This means loving Him with an undivided heart.

This is not a lukewarm knock on God's door.

Rev 3:16 So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.

This lines up directly with the gospel according to the same author John vs. 3:16 – *"For God so loved the world he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life."*

Jesus added, many years after Moses, the 2nd greatest commandment - to "Love our neighbor as yourself." Matt22:39

He tells us also to love our enemies and in Paul's letter to the Colossians chapter 3:14-17 we're reminded that

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Beyond all things put on love which is the perfect bond of unity.

I guess we can't go too wrong if we do EVERYTHING in love and with love.

lastly

A

APPRECIATION – in ALL things give thanks.

-Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts and be thankful...Col 3:15

-Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you...singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God Col 3:16

-Col 3:17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks *through* Him to God the Father.

'D'

DELIGHT – a 'D' was added to this formula in June '08 after reading John Piper's (370 pg) book titled "Desiring God" in which he fully develops this one sentence:

"The chief end of man is to glorify God by Delighting in Him forever."

Knock – Knock

After thirty four years of knocking on **SO** many doors to find answers to the meaning of this wonderful life, I finally found God knocking on my door, and I couldn't be more grateful to have heard His knock.

Rev 3:20 Behold, He stands at the door and knocks; if anyone hears His voice and opens the door, God promises to come into them and dine with them and they with Him.

Closing Song: **‘Change my heart O God’**

Change my heart Oh God, make it ever true...

Change my heart Oh God, may I be like You.

You are the Potter, I am the clay...

Mold me and make me, this is what I pray.

Change my heart Oh God, make it ever true...

Change my heart Oh God, may I be like You.

*Man’s Search for Meaning, Victor Frankl
**7 Habits of Highly Effective People,
Stephen Covey

Personal objective of talk: to be God’s vehicle in messaging my experience with Him to hopefully encourage others in their faith walk. For it is only through an intimate relationship with God, through Christ, that we can truly be His good and faithful servants - completely available to love and serve the Lord and each other.

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3S Scripture – TRUTH

To consider truth scripturally, a New Testament passage as well as a few Psalms will be referenced.

‘The Book of Psalms is one of the greatest collections of songs, prayers and poetry. These Psalms express the deepest passions of humanity. In their pages, we can hear the psalmist’s desperate cry in the midst of despair. We also hear his emphatic praise for his Provider and Comforter. We can hear him pouring out his soul in confession, but also bubbling over with joy! The Psalms lead us through the valleys and peaks of human experiences and in the end guide us to the praise of our loving Creator.’¹

The verse at the very center of the Bible is Psalm 118:8:

‘It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.’ (NKJV)

Psalm 15:1-2 *O LORD, who may abide in Your tent? Who may dwell on Your holy hill? - He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart.*

Psalm 25:4-5 *Make me know Your ways, O LORD; Teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; For You I wait all the day.*

Psalm 86:11-13 *Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name. I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, And will glorify Your name forever. For Your loving-kindness toward me is great, And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.*

Psalm 145:17-20 *The LORD is righteous in all His ways and kind in all His deeds. The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He will also hear their cry and will save them. The LORD keeps all who love Him, But all the wicked He will destroy.*

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John 4:19-24 *The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus said to her,*

*"Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."*²

3S-Q TRUTH Scripture Questions

1) Are we speaking truth in our heart, asking the Lord to lead us in His truth and teach us His ways?

2) Are we glorifying God's name, recognizing that His loving-kindness toward us is great and are we calling upon Him in truth?

3) Are we worshiping the Father in spirit and truth?

¹Ted Phillips edited and expanded by BibleStudy.org
<http://www.biblestudy.org/basicart/psalm-construction.html>

² Sheol is translated as grave, pit, or abode of the dead – according to Wikipedia the free encyclopedia.

³ New American Standard Bible (NASB) Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation

4 Motivation

Having reviewed truth, attitude and the influence of worldview, we now add motivation as another area to investigate in this foundation for the great command to love. Personally and professionally, the right motivation, like attitude, has significant impact on an outcome and so deserves adequate understanding.

Simply defined:

mo·ti·va·tion/ ,mōtə'vāSHən/n; is: 1) *the reason one acts or behaves in a particular way*; 2) *the general desire or willingness of someone to do something*¹

At the core of the motivation process is desire. Natural human tendency is to do what we *want* to do, or what we *think* will satisfy our real or perceived needs.

*“Desire is the starting point of all achievement, not a hope, not a wish, but a keen pulsating desire which transcends everything.”*²

Fig. 1



Desire is an engine on the train causing behavior which involves our biological, social, emotional, and

cognitive (thinking) forces.³ We have healthy and unhealthy desires, some powerful, others weak and often they're conflicting. Some desires may be goals to achieve, real needs to be met or 'treasure' to be had.

*“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*⁴

4.1 Motivation Theory

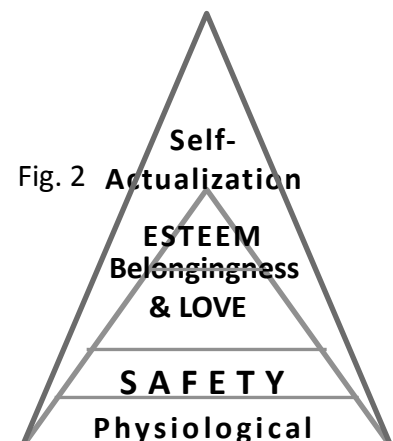
Abraham Maslow's early theory of motivation is widely accepted, not necessarily for its stunning clinical research but perhaps for its intuitive relevance. Maslow's

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later and less familiar work built on his classic needs hierarchy model and includes *being* or growth needs, called meta-needs, which apply to our study.⁵

4.1a Hierarchy of Needs – early years

Maslow's pyramid depicts the order in which needs must be satisfied before one seeks to

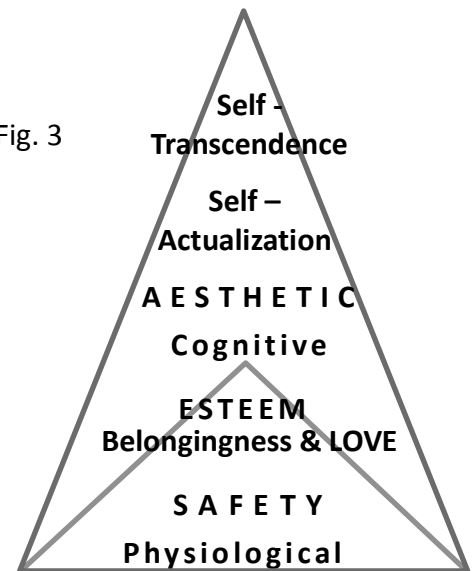


meet a higher level need. The subtle difference in this particular graphic (Fig. 2) is that self actualization, a meta-need, is located in an area separate from the lower basic needs which are satisfied in priority order.⁵ These are deficiency needs as they come from things that are lacking and can only be satisfied by an external source, they are considered extrinsic motivation.⁶

4.1b Hierarchy of Needs – later years (Fig. 3)

Needs dealing with being and growth, meta-needs, are realized in random order based on circumstances. They are categorized and defined as: *COGNITIVE - being free of the good opinion of others, learning for learning alone and contributing knowledge. AESTHETIC - doing things not simply for the outcome but because it's the reason you're here on earth, at peace, more curious about the inner workings of all things. SELF-ACTUALIZATION - know exactly who you what you want to accomplish,*

Fig. 3



a state of well- being.

SELF-TRANSCENDENCE - a level that emphasizes visionary intuition, altruism, and unity consciousness. Self-transcendence is also referred to as a 'transegoic' level, where one moves beyond or transcends the limitations of their personality and ego. It is a 'higher, psychic, or spiritual state of development'.⁵

The higher level meta-needs, or desires, are intrinsically motivated growth needs which have an internal, as opposed to external, reward. According to Maslow's hierarchy, if one gets 'stuck' at a deficiency stage, in need physiologically or of acceptance, love or recognition; then the motivation to satisfy higher level growth needs may not be realized. We can posit that one cannot give away what they don't possess. In terms of the greatest command, the giving and receiving of love resides in both need triangles, although in different ways. Actual examples are provided in Addendum 4.1 for illustration.

The more aesthetic, spiritual states often fall outside the comfortable majority realm, and may be left untapped for lack of role models or desire. Satisfaction with the good or better, as opposed to the best, can also suppress the need or motivation to strive for the highest state of transcendental development.

4.2 Flow Theory and Motivation Components

The *optimal state of intrinsic motivation*, or *completely focused motivation* was coined 'flow' by Mihaly Csíkszentmihályi, a Hungarian psychology professor.

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His book: '*Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*' looks at tasks where both the challenge and skill levels are high explaining further that flow is:

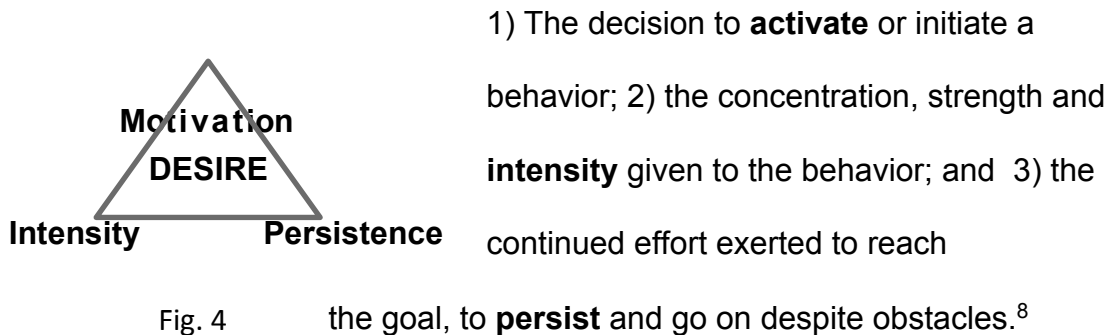
- "Where the person is fully immersed in what he or she is doing, characterized by a feeling of great absorption, engagement, fulfillment, and skill—and during which temporal concerns (time, food, ego-self, etc.) are typically ignored."
- "It is a single-minded immersion and represents perhaps the ultimate in harnessing the emotions in the service of performing and learning."

- “In flow, the emotions are not just contained and channeled, but positive, energized, and aligned with the task at hand.”⁷

If the concept of flow could be creatively harnessed and applied to loving God and others, the mission to love with our whole being would permeate one’s desire and focused motivation. The optimum experiences in life may be more closely related to our holistic ability to love than is commonly realized. This may be the prime area to heighten our challenge and skill levels.

Motivation Components

The parts or components of motivation (desire) are somewhat intuitive yet worth considering in terms of their application to how well we love.



As questions related to love, the components in this model (Fig. 4) ask us...*if* love is a desired result: when do we initiate the action to love; how much effort are we willing to make; and how long will we stay with the mission - to love?

4.3 Deepest Motivations

In a 'Running to Win' series titled *The Joy of Generosity*, Dr. Erwin Lutzer's goal was to probe his audience's deepest motivations regarding time, talent, finances and affections. The introduction to one lesson on affection was:

*"1st place... the thought of winning a race drives athletes to excel, to give their all to cross the goal line first. Believers are to give God 1st place in their lives, running life's race for no other reason than to express their love for Him. * In fact, we're commanded to love God supremely; everything else is to take 2nd place."*⁹

**Express and* reflect God's love from within by loving others. -added by author.

Dr. Lutzer further explained that it all comes down to how we make choices, especially tough choices on behalf of others. We know from experience that choices, especially tough choices, often come with a price tag. Our true motivation will be the engine driving our decision and behavior so if our response is to love, then that must be our deepest desire.

Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) wrote the classic book 'On Loving God' in which he answered a Cardinal/Chancellor's question: "*Why should we love God – and how much?*" The Cardinal/Chancellor was seeking Spiritual counsel concerning his meta-needs. The Saint's answer to the question was:

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"the reason (motive) for loving God - is God Himself and the measure of that love due to Him is immeasurable. God Himself is sufficient cause. We are to love God for Himself because nothing is 1) more reasonable or 2) more profitable. When we think of what we gain by loving God ...we gain God Himself. What better gift could He offer? God's claim on our love is that He loved us first. God deserves our love for His gifts. God gives us everything, including the essentials

for life: food, air, sunshine, light to every eye. Man is to seek the higher gifts by free will – his dignity, recognizing the source of this dignity is wisdom, and virtue the fruit of them both. Virtue seeks for an author and when finding Him clings to Him yet more eagerly to give Him His due...all glory.”¹⁰

This wise Saint provided sound logic in an attempt to ground and fuel a true desire for loving God which offers both internal, external and eternal rewards.

Before addressing his congregation a Pastor said, *“We’re not going to be meeting felt needs today because...we don’t even know what we need.”¹¹* He was communicating the fact that issues often get solved by indirect means. Pastor reminded the audience of Jesus’ advice that the greatest thing was to:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself.”¹²

Pastor then provided the equation:

KNOWING God more + DELIGHTING in the knowledge = POWER

And said “the power is in the BALANCE...

light and heat, truth a flame --- that’s when you’re loving God.”¹¹

This Pastor was convinced that heeding the greatest command would meet all other ‘felt’ needs.

4.4 One (1) Thing

We can cite ‘Seven Habits of Highly Effective People’ – *“the main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing”* in *putting first things first*;¹³

or the movie ‘City Slickers’ when Curly (Jack Palance) tells Mitch (Billy Crystal)

that the secret of life is: *“One thing, just one thing. You stick to that and the rest don’t mean _____;”*¹⁴ or we can reference Christ’s words to Lazarus’ sister:

*“Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”*¹⁵

The logic of putting priorities in focus has been packaged in many ways, but sometimes without highlighting the underlying motivation where desire, the starting point to any achievement, resides. Ideally, our one main desire is to *flow* from a point closely connected to loving God and others.

“One thing I have asked from the LORD, this I shall seek:

*That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life.”*¹⁶

¹ <http://www.google.com/search?sourceid=navclient&aq=0&oq=define+motivation>
Synonyms of motivation are: motive - incentive - stimulus – impulse.

² Napoleon Hill, *Think and Grow Rich* <http://www.great-quotes-on-life.com/napoleon-hill-quotes.html>. (*Business Week Magazine's Best-Seller List ranked **Think and Grow Rich** as the sixth best-selling paperback business book 70 years after it was first published*).

³ Kendra Cherry, *What Is Motivation?* About.com Guide
<http://psychology.about.com/od/mindex/g/motivation-definition.htm>

⁴ New American Standard Bible, © 1997 The Lockman Foundation - Foundation Publications, CA. Matthew 6:21, and Luke 12:34.

⁵ Maslow, A. (1968). *Toward a Psychology of Being*. (2nd ed.). New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold; Maslow, A. (1970). *Motivation and personality* (2nd ed.). New York: Harper & Row. Maslow, A. (1971). *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*. New York: McGraw-Hill <http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leadhb.html>;

“In Maslow's (1971) later years, he become more interested in the higher order or meta-needs and tried to further distinguish them. Maslow theorized that the ultimate goal of life is self-actualization, which is almost never fully attained but rather is something we try to always strive for. He later theorized that this level does not stop it goes on to self-transcendence, which carries us to the spiritual level, e.g. Gandhi, Mother Theresa, Dalai Lama, or even poets, such as Robert Frost. Maslow's self-transcendence level recognizes the human need for ethics, creativity, compassion and spirituality. Without this spiritual or transegoic sense, we are simply animals or machines.”

⁶ <http://www2.fiu.edu/~cryan/motivation/intrinsic.htm>

⁷ Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. New York: Harper and Row. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mihaly_Csikszentmihalyi;
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flow_\(psychology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flow_(psychology))

⁸ *ibid.* 3, <http://psychology.about.com/od/mindex/g/motivation-definition.htm>

⁹ Dr. Erwin Lutzer, Running to Win '*The Joy of Generosity*' series: rtw_11-03-15_christ-lord-of-affection2. <http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/running-to-win/listen/christ-the-lord-of-our-affections-2-of-3-169765.html>

¹⁰ Saint Bernard Clairvaux (b.1090-d.1153), *On Loving God* - In the Public Domain @ <http://librivox.org/on-loving-god/> "On Loving God is one of the best-known and most influential works of Medieval Christian mysticism". Chap 1 and 2. Text courtesy of Paul Halsall, HALSALL@MURRAY.FORDHAM.EDU. Sister's Bookshelf Jacksonville, Illinois http://christianmystics.com/Ebooks/On_Loving_God/OntheLoveofGodbyBernardofClairvaux.pdf

¹¹ Dr. James MacDonald, Walk in the Word, '*Love the Missing Piece*' series. <http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/walk-in-the-word/listen/loving-god-part-2-45175.html>

¹² *ibid.* 4, Matthew 12:37,39.

¹³ Stephen R. Covey, '*The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*' (The Free Press, a Division of Simon & Schuster, Inc. NY 1989, 2004)

¹⁴ *City Slickers*, Castle Rock Entertainment, 1991
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0101587/quotes>

¹⁵ *ibid.* 4, Luke 10:41-42

¹⁶ *ibid.* 4, Psalm 27:4

Addendum 4.1 Motivation

The following brief profiles help illustrate how different love, as a deficiency, can be from love, as an intrinsic desire motivated toward being and growth.

- In a Harper's Bazaar interview actress Demi Moore was asked to convey her greatest fears and responded:

"She originally feared being abandoned but said her biggest fear now is 'not having the courage to reach her full potential'. She explained: 'There is no way to reach your fullest potential if you don't really find the love of yourself.'

Then added: 'What scares me is that I'm going to ultimately find out at the end of my life that I'm really not lovable, that I'm not worthy of being loved.

*That there's something fundamentally wrong with me.'"*¹

ABC news reported the 911 emergency to rush Demi Moore to a hospital after she apparently overdosed on a party drug.²

In his book, *Invitation to Love*, Thomas Keating provides this warning: *"The drive for affection, esteem, and pleasure; and the drive for power and control may turn these instinctual needs into centers of motivation that can dominate our lives."*³

- When asked how she could go from kissing Elvis to becoming a nun: Reverend Mother Dolores Hart answered: *'How much closer to Heaven can you get?'*⁴

This former Hollywood star had beauty that compared to Grace Kelly, and gave up the spotlight for God. She's been an enclosed nun since 1963; but assisted

in the film *'God is the Bigger Elvis'* an HBO documentary short nominated for a 2012 Oscar.

“Hart discovered an inner peace and contentment in the cloister that had been absent on stage and screen, and in her engagement to a California businessman. Hart has confessed its tough explaining the change in vocation, but has described it as: *‘Falling in love. One falls in love with the Lord.’*”⁵

¹Harper's Bazaar *Hearst Corporation, New York February, 2012 issue - Amanda De Cadenet, interviewer.* <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-2082207/Demi-Moore-opens-biggest-fears-Harpers-Bazaar-magazine-interview.html#ixzz1oDddFBw0>

² abcnews.go.com › Entertainment 27 January, 2012

³ Thomas Keating, *Invitation to Love -The Way of Christian Contemplation* © 2006 (The Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc; NY) p.105.

⁴ *Internet Movie Database - Dolores Hart*, <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0366247/bio>

⁵ *The Front Row*, Thelma Adams. Yahoo - February 21, 2012.
<http://movies.yahoo.com/blogs/oscar/love-tender-mother-dolores-hart-elvis-her-big-225445357.html>

The following is from a transcript of a talk delivered by Dr. Darrell Ferguson, pastor of Agape Bible Church in Fort Collins, Colorado. (With permission - below)
Dr. Ferguson can be heard on KRKS 94.7 FM at 5:30 a.m. and Noon.

Desire = Worship Loving God with all your Heart - Part 3 1 John 2:15-17

“Summary: Loving God with your soul means looking to God to satisfy your desires – is that man-centered? Only if your desire is for something other than God. But if it is for God it is worship (desire for anything else is idolatry). God must be the only object of our love, because love for God and love for the world are mutually exclusive – since they come from different sources and are based on different beliefs.”

The source of your desires

1 John 2:16 For everything in the world – the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of possessions, comes not from the Father but from the world.

“Think about the implications of that word “from.” Did you know that your desires do not come from you? We tend to think our desires are just built in to our DNA like our eye color or our gender. But that is not the case. Your desires are not built in - they have a source outside of you.”

Appetite vs. Desire

“Now, to explain that we need to differentiate between appetites and desires. Appetites are general, and desires are specific. Craving for food in general – that is an appetite. Craving for a hamburger specifically – that is a desire. Whatever it is that you think will satisfy your appetite – that is what you desire. We all have the same appetites, but we have different desires because we have different beliefs about what would satisfy those appetites. Two people are hungry, and one of them says, “I think a piece of cake would hit the spot,” but the other one says, “Not for me – I need some meat right now.” The same basic appetite (hunger), but two different desires because of two different thoughts about what would hit the spot and satisfy that appetite. Whatever specific thing you think would hit the spot – that is what you desire.

And what John is saying is, your desires are not built-in – they come from an outside source. Your appetites are built-in. We all have the same appetites. But when you have a desire, that desire is there because some outside source made you think that thing would hit the spot. If you are feeling down because your life seems pointless and meaningless, that means your God-given appetite for meaning and purpose is going unfulfilled. So what do you desire? If you desire a lot of human praise and accolades from various people around you, that is because someone led you to believe that the praise of men would fulfill that appetite. If you desire the approval of God then it is because someone led you to

believe that would hit the spot.

So general appetites are built-in, but specific desires come from outside sources. And John tells us what those sources are. There are two of them – God and the world.

1 John 2:16 the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of possessions, comes not from the Father but from the world.

The world is constantly preaching to you to persuade you that its temporary pleasures will hit the spot, and God is telling you that only His river of delights will satisfy. And so if you desire the world's solution it is because you were convinced by the world's argument; and if you desire God it is because you were convinced by what God said. And it is hard because the preaching of this world is relentless. People who say they do not like to be preached at, and they do not like to be told what to believe – those people should really hate the world, because the world crams its ideas down everybody's throat relentlessly. Commercials, books, movies, TV shows, talk shows, idle conversation at work – hammering away, sermonizing every hour of every day to persuade you that the pleasures of this world will satisfy. Happiness will come from a car. Joy is a product of recreation. Having a relationship with some wonderful person of the opposite sex will make you happy. A promotion at work will give your life meaning. When you watch enough of their commercials, and listen to enough of their music, and sit in enough of their classrooms, and immerse yourself deeply enough in their conversations, and read enough of their magazines or websites, or spend enough time window shopping in their malls – over time your soul will be persuaded by their message: Yes! Joy is to be found in temporal things in and of themselves. Satan has a lot of pulpits that preach his message. And if we do not figure out which of those pulpits is having an effect on our thinking and shut it down, we will become worldly.

That's why they cannot coexist

This is why love for God is exclusive. Love for the world and love for God cannot possibly coexist because desire for the world originates from different beliefs than desire for God. Love for the world means desiring the world, and desire for the world comes when you believe the world's message. Love for God means desiring God, and desire for God comes when you believe God's message. And you cannot believe both at the same time. I can love all my kids simultaneously because love for them all comes from the same source and arise from the same beliefs. But love for God and love for the world come from opposite sources, and they rise from opposite beliefs, so they cannot coexist.”

RE: my dissertation + your permission! FROM: Food for Your Soul(ffys@foodforyoursoul.net)
TO: 'nancy mannix' Tuesday, March 13, 2012 1:52 PM Hello Nancy, Thank you for the encouraging words. And yes, it's fine for you to use any of my material any time for any kingdom-building purpose you like. The LORD bless you and keep you, Darrell

Lyrics: As The Deer

Song Lyrics¹ Written by Martin Nystrom Performed by various artists

*You alone are my strength my shield
To You alone may my spirit yield
You alone are my heart's desire
And I long to worship Thee*

*As the deer panteth for the water
So my soul longeth after Thee
You alone are my heart's desire
And I long to worship Thee*

*You're my friend
And You are my brother
Even though You are a King
I love You more than any other
So much more than anything*

*I want You more than gold
Or silver
Only You can satisfy
You alone are the real joy-giver
And the apple of my eye*

¹ http://www.music-lyrics-gospel.com/gospel_music_lyrics/as_the_deer_9551.asp
A hymn based on Psalm 42.

Since I visited with you last month – MUCH has happened in our lives.

For one thing:

I went to the states and spent 3 weeks with my sister. We had a 10 day vacation in California - 7 of those days we tried to **focus** on *working* our mind, body and spirit. We did some of the things recommended to prevent deterioration of the mind – like solving puzzles and playing cards (*I'm now hooked on Sudoku*).

My sister and I are quite competitive so we enjoy challenging each other.

For our bodies - we developed a **formula** of diet and exercise –
and we both *somehow* GAINED two pounds.

It's *possible* – we wanted to *enjoy* ourselves *more* than we desired to loose weight.

Then to **feed** our spirits...we prayed...

and read daily from scripture and a book called 'Speak to my Heart God'.**

During our walks sometimes we'd just break into spontaneous prayer.

My sister and I did pretty well in the 'spirit' department *because*...

we have a lot of love – and that surfaces when we're together. (God = Love)

A highlight of the trip was going to Church with my son, Ryan - two weeks in a row. The three of us were delighted to be together – *especially* being together with the Lord.

I share all that because it leads us to the one key scripture passage we're going to focus on today. Psalm 37:4 ***"Delight yourself in the LORD and He will give you the desires of your heart."***

Let's ask ourselves a few questions ...

What do you truly 'delight' in? --- What gives you great joy and pleasure?

Now, to be honest...aren't these the things we plan for and focus on?

Say for example:

we *desire* to be physically fit – because maybe - we want to look or feel good
or live a longer more healthy life.

If that is a true desire **then** we'd be highly motivated to make a plan,
and work the plan to achieve that goal – *right*?

It's been said – ***'fail to plan – then plan to fail'***.

Does anyone know the

starting point of all achievement?* _____ (*desire*)

Desire is a *longing* (or craving) for something that promises enjoyment or satisfaction.

To reach any goal - we have to 1st and foremost...*want* it – *really* want it.

Otherwise, we simply won't put forth the time or the effort – *do you agree*?

It makes perfect sense...desire and achievement are like two sides of the same coin. Just like the two sides of Psalm 37:4

the LORD giving us the desires of your heart.”

When it comes to God – here are the BIG questions...

Do we want God for what He can do for us *or give us* so we can get the results we want? Do we *desire* Him...out of need - because He's our daily bread, the air we breathe and our source of living water?

Or do we want God simply because He's God – our all loving Abba Father?

Now – this could be humbling *but...*

On a scale from 1 to 10 – let's rate how much we *desire* or *long for* God just for who He is.

I'm *slowly* working through this 370 page book. (*hold up book*)

It's the 3rd edition of “Desiring God” by John Piper who's a Dr. of Theology and Baptist Pastor.

The purpose of the book is to scripturally substantiate this 1 sentence:

“The chief end of man is to glorify God by enjoying Him forever.” p.18

We know from the Purpose Driven Life*** that

‘living for God's glory is the greatest achievement we can accomplish with our lives’.

To build on that ... from Desiring God –

‘we need to give glory to God in the way He Himself has appointed...and

God's design is that we ***‘delight*** in Him’.

Ps 37:4 gives us a great command

“Delight yourself in the LORD AND it also gives us a GREAT reward...

He will give you the desires of your heart.”

Like two sides of the coin:

If we DESIRE to DELIGHT in the LORD –

He promises to give us what we really need and truly seek – the fruit of God's

Spirit: ***love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, goodness,***

faithfulness and self-control. (*And that includes all the acceptance, forgiveness, and everything else we could ever ask for.*)

Psalms 37:4 continues with ... “Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him...(5a)

So my friends...our goal then is clear – it is to ‘delight’ in the Lord and enjoy Him - forever!

This may be a BIG paradigm shift for some of us. Especially if we think that committing our ways to God will *limit* our ‘pleasure’ instead of *bring* us ‘pleasure’.

Plus it isn't always ‘easy’ to develop a focus and a formula to ‘*delight in the Lord*’.

This takes discipline...and if we don't clearly see distinct benefits – then

we simply won't devote the time and energy. (*That's just our human nature*)

It's critical that we define what we consider ‘achievement’ and then evaluate our level of desire related to it.

The word achievement comes up 11 times in the New International Version Bible.

Generally it refers to the chronicled achievements of various Kings.

With one exception in the book of Ecclesiastes 4:4:

“And I saw that all labor and all achievement spring from man's envy of his neighbor.

This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.”

Ecclesiastes is part of the Wisdom books in the Bible. It's concerned with the purpose and value of human life – and admits that the existence of a divine plan, is considered hidden from man who seeks happiness without being able to find it outside of heaven. The author of Ecclesiastes (thought to be King Solomon) uses the phrase “vanity of vanities” for the things of this world - everything under the sun. (NASB p. 686)

My friends – we do not want to be chasing after the wind...

God willing He will grant our one true desire --- and that is to delight in Him forever.

So...I began by mentioning that MUCH has happened in our lives since we were together last month. The next BIG ‘thing’ is that we will be moving to Bangkok probably by August 1st and this may be the last time I'll have the privilege to share in our Sunday worship. The first time Pastor Vinh asked me to speak here was over three years ago. He asked me to deliver my testimony. In it I reflected upon *how* my relationship with God developed and how my life became more **focused** on Him. In it I included a personal acrostic for the word **FORMULA** – some things that helped with a method of walking with the LORD.

F-first (seek Him), O-obey, R-relationship, M- model (Jesus), U-united (in fellowship), L-Love, and A-appreciation. Today the letter **D** (like my sister Dee/Deanna) was added to the FORMULA – so it's now FORMULA-D --- for the **Desire to Delight** in God.

We've copied it for you today in the hope that you'll continue to develop your own personal ‘formula’ – one that matches with your unique God –given fingerprint.

We also copied for you another excerpt from our favorite daily devotional ‘Experiencing God’ by Henry Blackaby. His focus on the Lord and his life formula shows in his words...

“Your relationship with God ought to bring you more joy, satisfaction, and pleasure than any other relationship, activity, or material possession you have. Scripture exhorts you to delight yourself in the Lord, finding your greatest pleasure in God and the things dear to His heart.”

I pray that you may always...

“Delight yourself in the LORD and (may) He give you the desires of your heart.”

God Bless.

Amen

The Desires of Your Heart

From Experiencing God Day-By-Day; Henry T. Blackaby and Richard Blackaby p.200

“Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.” Ps 37:4

“Your relationship with God ought to bring you more joy, satisfaction, and pleasure than any other relationship, activity, or material possession you have. Scripture exhorts you to delight yourself in the Lord, finding your greatest pleasure in God and the things dear to His heart.

How can you find pleasure in what God enjoys?

Only as you spend time with Him will you begin to take delight in the things God loves. As you spend intimate time with God and allow Him to show you your situation from His perspective, you will begin to see things as God sees them.

As you adjust your self to God, your heart will begin to desire the same things God's heart desires.

When you pray, you will find yourself asking for the very things God desires. Matters foremost on God's heart will be preeminent in yours. Your first request in prayer will not be for yourself, but for God's name to be exalted and His kingdom to be extended (Matt. 6:9-10).

Have you been asking God to give you the desires of your heart without first seeking to understand what is on His heart?

God places this important requirement for those who pray: that we seek His priorities and make them our own. This great qualifier prevents us from asking out or selfish-ness. As we find joy in the Lord, we will see what is truly important, and we will long for things as the Father does.”

*Napoleon Hill – Think and Grow Rich

**Speak to my Heart God by Kay Arthur

***Rick Warren – Purpose Driven Life pg.54

Pastor Dr. Darrell Ferguson knew at a young age that God was important in his life and made the decision early to pursue work serving Him. As an educated minister he did just that, but without very much passion in the relationship or joy in the process. When he sought counsel from spiritual mentors they instructed him to continue on in obedience and that feelings were not a significant factor. Dr. Ferguson was not satisfied with that guidance however, and took two years off delivering pizza while searching for better answers. He was motivated to satisfy his desire to experience a joy like the Apostle Paul had when singing in prison after being mauled by the crowd and beaten with rods.¹ (See Acts 16:16-40) Perhaps that's the passionate love for God, and desire to please Him, we need to cultivate in order to love, even our enemy, as we're called to.

Matthew 5:38-48

"You have heard that it was said, 'AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.' But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.

"You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."²

4S-Q MOTIVATION/Desire Scripture Questions

- 1) **Do we** *resist the evil person – turn the other cheek and go the extra mile even with one who wants to take our shirt?*
 - 2) **Are we** *loving our enemies and praying for our persecutors or just loving those who love us?*
 - 3) **Are we motivated** *to be (holy) perfect, in imitation of our heavenly Father?*
-

¹ Pastor Dr. Ferguson *Loving God With All Your Heart* is a 26 part lecture series in MP3 format available for download @ <http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/food-for-your-soul/listen/> or @ Food For Your Soul http://foodforyoursoul.net/ffys_v2/?page_id=185

² New American Standard Bible (NASB) Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation

“Without knowing what I am and why I am here, life is impossible.”¹

Leo Tolstoy

Many people exist without confidently knowing *what they are* and *why they’re here*. Tolstoy invites the consideration of a higher possibility, living in the peace that comes with answers to critical life issues concerning existence and purpose.

5.1 Being Human

The obvious commonality in all animal life is: a time to show up on earth, eat, exist/live and then physically expire. *However, animals don’t think about where they came from, their purpose beyond existence, or their ultimate destiny;*

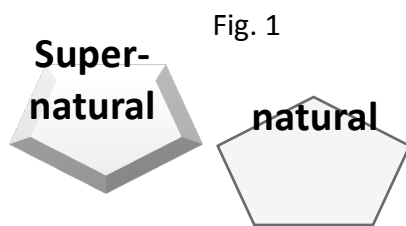


Fig. 1

whereas human beings look beyond the natural into the supernatural and question. The etymology of the word ‘human’ from the Greek ANΘΡΩΠΟΣ is *anthropos (ano throsko)*; and references the human

quality to gaze up high, look upward, and be predestined for a higher purpose.²

This definition highlights one of the most significant differences between the animal and human; it also beckons additional clarification between the material human and the spiritual being. Immanuel Kant, an enlightened thinker of practical reason, questioned and said:

“Two things awe me most, the starry sky above me & the moral law within me.”³

5.1a Human and Divine?

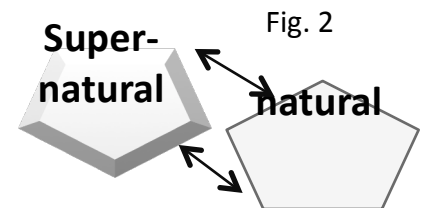
Before answering life question part B, *why I’m here*, it makes sense to first resolve part A, *knowing what I am*, or where I came from. The multiple choice

responses to this question can range from ‘my common ancestor is a chimpanzee who lived some eight million years ago’;⁴ to ‘I was created by God, in His image, and my ancestors date back to include Adam and the Patriarchs’. If we are from the chimpanzee, we evolved through an undirected process of natural selection that presumes life from non-life. Even the theory’s creator was challenged in accepting his own solution without reservation, Darwin said:

“The difficulty of believing that a perfect and complex eye could be formed by natural selection, though insuperable by our imagination, can hardly be considered real.”⁵

Those who hold the belief that humans come from an all intelligent Creator, recognize a natural connection to the supernatural.⁶

It’s been said that it takes a bigger leap of faith to believe we came from a random occurrence than from purposeful design. The big bang theory was compared to an explosion in a paper factory with the end result being a perfectly alphabetized, unabridged and bound dictionary.⁷ Additional categorization is included in Addendum 5.1.



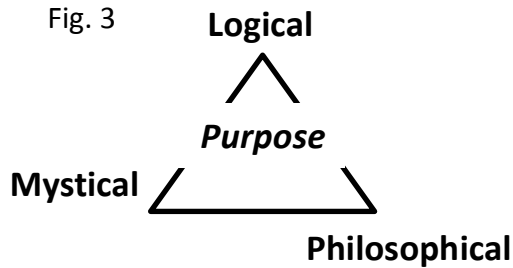
“All the findings point to evolution being so unpredictable, that there had to be a Great Designer and at a certain epoch of time He breathed His Spirit into mankind and man became a living soul.”⁸

5.2 Approaches to Finding Purpose

Dr. Rick Warren, author of the #1 New York Times Bestseller, *The Purpose Driven Life – What on Earth am I Here For*, outlined three ways for finding

purpose in life.⁹ (Fig. 3)

1) The New Age, mystical approach looks within for insight or intuition to attain immediate knowledge of God or an ultimate reality.¹⁰



Personal experiences in this area didn't yield great or lasting peace, but did however; provide great flexibility to create one's own God and one's own truth.

2) The philosophical approach looks outside of oneself to adopt the ideas of another, somewhat like a buffet of limitless life purpose possibilities. The range is vast with some options being:

a) *'eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die'* (a Nihilism or extreme Atheist cliché); or **b)** *"Happiness is the meaning and the purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence."* (Aristotle).¹¹

c) The ultimate purpose for all Buddhists, irrespective of their school or stream, is to become a Buddha (*enlightened, or free from the wheel of transmigration between six illusory realms* - included in fn 12); although the ways to reach this state vary between sects.¹² Additional information on Buddha's teaching, as an example of a philosophical approach to find meaning, is provided in Addendum 5.2. Lastly, another life philosophy could be **d)** that 'life is empty and meaningless' and *'Until you know that who you are - is empty and meaningless, you don't know anything.'* (Werner Erhard, founder of est).¹³

3) The logical or Biblical approach would complete Buddha's 'detachment' and Erhard's 'empty and meaninglessness' with the Ecclesiastes passages which

contrast: all things *under the sun* or without God, to all things *under heaven*, which includes God:

'I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.'

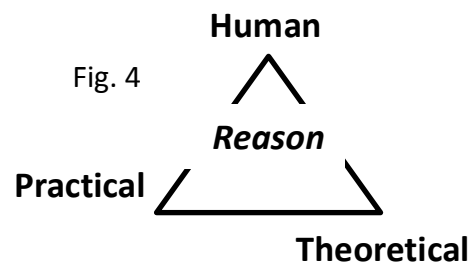
Ecclesiastes 1:14, 12:13-14 (NIV) ¹⁴

Some form of rational reasoning is involved in the various approaches to finding life purpose. The issue lies in our humanity, our supernatural dimension spanning beyond what can be proved or disproved through scientific methods or pure reason.

Great minds have long dissected the reasoning process, referencing Kant for

example; we see theoretical reason relating to knowledge; practical reason relating to will and human reason determining *how* to act/live, after determining *what* it can know. Toward the end of Kant's life he concluded that:

'Faith in God, freedom, and immortality (going against ideas of right and wrong) are rational beliefs because their existence makes an orderly and moral world a possibility.' - In questioning the outcome of man's freedom, Kant insisted that *'practical reason assumes the immortality of the soul and the existence of God as the conditions for true freedom.'* ¹⁵



5.3 Human: Temporal or Eternal?

A critical key in establishing purpose deals with accepting or rejecting the belief that man/woman is an immortal soul. Soul is defined as:

1. *the immaterial essence of an individual life*; 2. *the spiritual principle embodied in human beings or the universe*; 3. *an active or essential part*; 4. *the moral or emotional nature of human beings*; 5. *spiritual or moral force*.¹⁶

The soul can also be considered what is left of a person when everything else is stripped away. In one of Dr. Wayne Dyer's¹⁷ many self-help books, he described life to be the short passage of time within parenthesis, between the beginning of creation and eternity, for the body to be in its physical form.

◀ **beginning** ◀----- (- *life* -) -----▶ **eternity** ▶

Kant explained faith as rational because of its outcome (see fn 18). If *practical reason* is extrapolated into *human reason*, and *how* to live, the following equation can be drawn:

humans are purposefully designed (*God exists*) + man is a living (*immortal*) soul
= the human purpose is connected to God and His purposes.

*"The difference (human versus animal) is that to be **anthropos**, one must attain a personal connection to God, becoming fully human through that direct connection."*

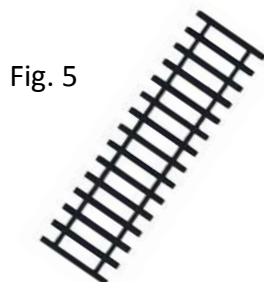


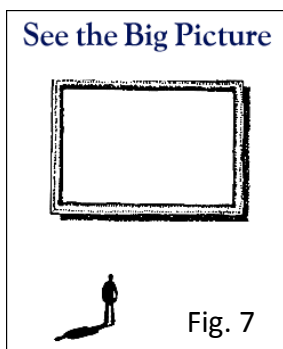
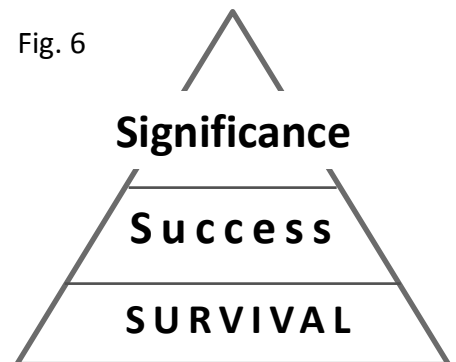
Fig. 5

*"The fully realized man or woman, the **anthropos**, knows what his or her promise is and works consciously toward fulfilling it."*¹⁹

God's sovereignty and man's responsibility have been compared to the rails on a train track, connected and running parallel in the same direction. (Fig. 5)

5.4 Survival – Success – Significance

In the classic novel *In Search of Meaning*,²⁰ Viktor Frankl drove home the value of purpose by describing how it gave holocaust victims a reason to stay alive. Dr. Rick Warren in an interview²¹ explained how people move from a survival mode of being controlled by circumstances, to the success of enjoying freedom and control. (Fig. 6) He then addressed the void successful people experience when they think they're life has no real purpose and they feel insignificant (*lack meaning, esp. a hidden or special meaning; unimportant, without influence*²²). According to Dr. Warren, the feeling of significance results from knowing the meaning of life, living out the purposes designed by God for man and knowing God's love (*Ref: Warren's 5*



purposes in fn 21). The lack of fulfillment common in our technologically advanced, progressive society may well be rooted in the disconnection between God and man; or perhaps in our lack of interest and/or limited ability to look upwards and see the big picture.²³ (Fig. 7)

5.5 The Physicist, Mathematician, Philosopher & the Cheshire cat

Three great minds were asked in a forum to answer the question:

*What does life mean to you?*²⁴

➤ The physicist answered: *“To me, and I have to be subjective in this - I cannot claim what life means to the next man, to me the essence of life is to discover the fullness of God and His interest in me as a person and how that ultimately relates to my family and fellow man is simply the next chapter. Let me put this in the negative sense, if someone could convince me there is no God, life would lose all meaning for me immediately.”*

➤ The mathematician said: *“To me the meaning of life is the yearning, the search to come to know Him who has ordered the universe in such a way that the resonance levels of oxygen and carbon are just so beautiful that all of us can be sitting on the panel today. To me the ultimate meaning of life is to not only search but to find Him who is the alpha & omega, the beginning and the end of my faith even Jesus Christ of Nazareth.”*

➤ The philosopher added: *Let me tell you what I think it takes to find meaning. Every person who says they have meaning needs these 4 components: 1st a sense of wonder (the alternative would be boredom/monotony); 2nd you need to have the knowledge of truth, just because I find meaning does not mean therefore - it is meaning, it should be within the confines of truth, otherwise LSD in my veins could give me meaning; 3rd the experience of love and 4th the confidence of security; when you have those 4 components you find meaning.”²⁴*

Another quote that helps us consider afresh the value of purpose is a conversation between Alice and the Cheshire cat in Wonderland.

Alice: *Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?*

The Cat: *That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.*

Alice: *I don't much care where.*

The Cat: *Then it doesn't much matter which way you go.*

Alice: *...so long as I get somewhere.*

The Cat: *Oh, you're sure to do that, if only you walk long enough.*²⁵

5.6 Purpose: Human and Divine

When mere humans seek divine guidance to satisfactorily answer the question: 'what is the purpose of man?' we learn it is to know, love and humbly (added by author) serve God in this world.²⁶ We can either accept or reject that mission and choose to spend each day of our lives moving closer to knowing and loving God or not. Dr. John Piper wrote a 370 page book titled *Desiring God*²⁷ for the purpose of scripturally substantiating this one sentence:

"The chief end of man is to glorify God by enjoying Him forever."

¹ Russian writer (1828-1910) <http://en.proverbia.net/citastema.asp?tematica=982>

² <http://engforum.pravda.ru/index.php?/topic/144072-anthropos-human/>

³ *Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) German Philosopher and one of the foremost thinkers of the Enlightenment*; <http://thinkexist.com/quotes/top/occupation/philosopher/4.html>

⁴ Darwin's theory stresses a purely naturalistic (undirected) "descent with modification". Complex creatures evolve naturally over time from more simplistic ancestors, random genetic mutations occur, beneficial mutations are preserved aiding survival – called 'natural selection', which is then passed on to the next generation. Over time, the result is an entirely different organism (not a variation, but an entirely different creature). <http://www.darwins-theory-of-evolution.com/>

In 1859, Darwin published his theory of evolution in a 490 page book entitled *On the Origin of Species*. It was very popular, controversial and sold out its first day. It went through six editions by 1872. http://anthro.palomar.edu/evolve/evolve_2.htm

⁵ http://www.darwin-literature.com/l_quotes.html

⁶ Genesis 2:7 ‘Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.’ New International Version Translation
<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%202:5-8&version=NIV>

⁷ Quote included in a lecture delivered by Ravi Zacharias without specific reference @ the Evangelical Church of Bangkok, Thailand 2009.

⁸ Dr. Louis Alberts, University of Oxford Physicist - ‘Just Thinking’ Q & A broadcast with Dr. Ravi Zacharias in Johannesburg, South Africa 23, July 2010. <http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/just-thinking/listen/mind-and-heart-qa-part-2-of-4-122105.html>

⁹ Dr. Warren’s *The Purpose Driven Life*, 2002 has sold 30 million copies, twice that of *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, 1989 by Dr. Stephen Covey and less than half of Napoleon Hill’s 1937 *Think and Grow Rich* which has sold 70 million copies.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_best-selling_books

¹⁰ The Merriam-Webster Dictionary Philippines Merriam-Webster, Inc. © 1997 pg. 489
Mystical approach is also through contemplation or visions.

¹¹ Aristotle quotes (Ancient Greek Philosopher, Scientist and Physician, 384 BC-322 BC)
<http://thinkexist.com/quotes/top/occupation/philosopher/4.html>

¹² Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai, *The Teaching of Buddha* Kosaido Printing Co., Ltd. Tokyo, Japan © 1966

Six illusory realms: 1) **Deva**: are privileged, have exalted status, live in luxury, have long lives; they are blinded to other’s suffering yet have neither wisdom nor compassion and will be reborn in another of the Six Realms. 2) **Asura**: are strong, powerful beings, marked by their fierce envy sometimes seen as enemies of the Deva, their hate and jealousy causes rebirth in the Asura Realm. 3) **Hungry ghosts**: are associated with addiction, obsession and compulsion. They look outside themselves for new things to satisfy their insatiable hunger. 4) **Hell beings**: have a short fuse, everything makes them angry, they attack and use aggression, they drive away those who shows them love and kindness and seek the company of other hell beings. 5) **Animal beings**: are marked by stupidity, prejudice, complacency and marked by ignorance. They live sheltered lives, avoid discomfort and the unfamiliar. 6) The **Human Realm** is conditioned by passion, doubt and desire. ‘Enlightenment is at hand in the Human Realm, yet only a few open their eyes and see it.’ <http://buddhism.about.com/od/basicbuddhistteachings/tp/Six-Realms-of-Existence.htm>

¹³ EST <http://www.wernererhard.com/est.html>;
<http://blog.gaiam.com/quotes/authors/werner-erhard/46853>

¹⁴ Scripture from the New International Version Bible, www: Biblegateway.com (NIV) – “*Ecclesiastes asks the most basic existential question: Is life worth living? ‘All is vanity.’ says the author, and nothing in life seems worthwhile. But the book ends by concluding that fearing (revering – added by author) God and keeping his commandments are the things that make life worth living.*” Scott Hahn *A Pocket Guide to the Bible*, Our Sunday Visitor Inc. Huntington, IN © 2008 pg. 59.

¹⁵ Encyclopedia of World Biography, <http://www.notablebiographies.com/Jo-Ki/Kant-Immanuel.html> which includes the following references:
Kuehn, Manfred. *Kant: A Biography*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
Scruton, Roger. *Kant: A Very Short Introduction*. Rev. ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
Sedgwick, Sally, ed. *The Reception of Kant's Critical Philosophy: Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
Stuckenbruck, J. H. W. *The Life of Immanuel Kant*. London: Macmillan, 1882. Reprint, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986.

¹⁶ *ibid.* 10 The Merriam- Webster Dictionary p. 695

¹⁷ Wayne W. Dyer, Ph.D., an internationally renowned author and speaker in the field of self-development, his doctorate is in educational counseling. www.DrWayneDyer.com

¹⁸ Although out of the scope of this study, it is interesting to follow how Kant's thinking evolved from his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) to his *Critique of Judgment* (1790) as he attempted to reconcile conflicting ideas. This philosopher is considered a brilliant mind.

¹⁹ Kathleen McGowan *The Poet Prince* (fiction) New York: Simon & Schuster © 2010
<http://www.wordnik.com/words/anthropos>

²⁰ Viktor E. Frankl, *In Search of Meaning* Boston, MA: Beacon Press © 2006 (last print)

²¹ Dr. Rick Warren was interviewed by Dr. Richard Land, Dec 31, 2007– Jan 1, 2008 on *For Faith and Family* Radio Broadcast <http://faithandfamily.com/radio/program/the-purpose-driven-life/>

The Purpose-Driven Life is a manifesto for Christian living in the 21st century, a lifestyle based on eternal purposes, not cultural values. God's 5-purposes for each of us:

- We were planned for God's pleasure, so your first purpose is to offer real worship. (worship = know and love God)
- We were formed for God's family, so your second purpose is to enjoy real fellowship.
- We were created to become like Christ, so your third purpose is to learn real discipleship.
- We were shaped for serving God, so your fourth purpose is to practice real ministry.
- We were made for a mission, so your fifth purpose is to live out real evangelism.

See also: <http://www.purposedrivenlife.com/about/aboutthebook/> and
<http://mp3.rapidlibrary.com/mp3.php?file=435787&song=purpose+driven+life+-+i>

²² *ibid.* 16 p.679

²³ Roger Von Oech *Creative Whackpack* (cards) © 1992
<http://blog.creativethink.com/2007/06/see-the-big-pic.html>

On the Big Picture Card is written: 'In 1866 an Iowa farmer watched the construction of the transcontinental railroad near his fields. After seeing the track laid and a locomotive steam through, he thought, "So that's what railroading is all about: tracks and trains." What didn't he see? That he could get his products to more markets more quickly, and that once there they would have to compete against products from many more places.

That people could travel from coast to coast in less than a week. That more ideas would be shared, and that different people would meet and get married. He saw the steel and the wheels, but he didn't see the consequences.'

²⁴ *ibid.* 8 Dr. Louis Alberts, Physicist, Dr. David Block - professor of applied mathematics and astronomy at Witwatersrand University in South Africa, also a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society of London elected at age 19; Dr. Ravi Zacharias, philosopher has three doctoral degrees, including a Doctor of Laws. He is presently Senior Research Fellow at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford University in Oxford, England.

²⁵ <http://quotations.about.com/od/moretypes/a/alice4.htm>

²⁶ The Baltimore Catechism Online <http://www.catholicity.com/baltimore-catechism/lesson01.html> The first catechism written for Catholics in North America – the standard Catholic school text in the US from 1885 to the late 1960s.

²⁷ Dr. John Piper, Desiring God Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books © 1986, 1996, 2003, 2011 <http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/online-books/desiring-god> pg.18

Addendum 5.1 Purpose

The question '*what, if anything, gives meaning to life*' has been answered by notable philosophers for thousands of years but it is only within the past 50 years that this question has become a distinct field of analytical philosophy.

Various views on the ways life could obtain meaning have been categorized:

Super-naturalists: attribute meaning to a right relationship with a spiritual realm. They are further divided into God-centered (all knowing, good, powerful source of everything physical), soul-centered (immortal) or the necessity of the two.

Naturalists: attribute meaning in a world that's known solely by science.

And if an individual is loved from afar, can it affect the meaningfulness of her "life" (Brogaard and Smith 2005, 449)?

Further development of these questions goes beyond the scope of this project but is areas valuable for additional study. Some resources include:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/life-meaning/#Sup>

Metz, Thaddeus, "The Meaning of Life", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2008 Edition)*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL =

<<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/life-meaning/>>.

Publisher: The Metaphysics Research Lab Center for the Study of Language and Information Stanford University Stanford, CA 94305-4115, ISSN 1095-5054.

5L Addendum Lyrics - Purpose

Lord I Offer My Life to You – Lyrics

Authors: Claire Cloninger & Don Moen

All that I am, all that I have
I lay them down before you, oh Lord
All my regrets, all my acclaims
The joy and the pain, I'm making them yours

Lord, I offer my life to you
Everything I've been through
Use it for your glory
Lord I offer my days to you
Lifting my praise to you
As a pleasing sacrifice
Lord I offer you my life

Things in the past, things yet unseen
Wishes and dreams that are yet to come true
All of my heart, all of my praise
My heart and my hands are lifted to you

What can we give
That you have not given?
And what do we have
That is not already yours?
All we possess
Are these lives we're living
That's what we give to you, Lord

Lord, I offer my life to you
Everything I've been through
Use it for your glory
Lord I offer my days to you
Lifting my praise to you
As a pleasing sacrifice
Lord I offer you my life

http://www.6lyrics.com/lord_i_offer_my_life_to_you-lyrics-hillsong.aspx
Listen with slides at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=03wO1DAM0cM>
with this note: PLS. NO COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT FOR MY AUDIO.
I'M JUST EXPRESSING MY FAITH.. THANXXX!! GODBLESS...

5S Scripture – PURPOSE

We've heard the expression that nobody on their death bed says they wish they spent more time at the office. However, some people at the end of life express the hope of meeting their Maker, face to face, and seeing Him smile. The following describes a life; quite possibly one lived on purpose, and worth considering before reflecting on the selected Scripture.

'Last week my Grandfather-in-law went home to be with the Lord. He was 95 years old and a very strong Christian. While his death was not unexpected it is still a loss for those of us who knew and loved him. One of my memories of him will always be of sitting in his living room discussing theology while a baseball game quietly played on the TV in the background.

You see, there were four things that he loved (in this order): Jesus, his family, baseball, and cherry pie.

I have a lot of respect for the way he lived his life, and I pray I'll be able to live out the remainder of my Christian life the way he lived his; he ran the race, he kept the faith, he finished the course, and last Tuesday he looked his Savior in the face as he heard Him say, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord."¹

Deuteronomy 10:12 *"Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*

Isaiah 46:9-11 *"Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, 'My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure'; calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.*

Jeremiah 29:11-14a *“For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the LORD, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you,’ declares the LORD.*

Micah 6:8 *He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.*

Romans 8:28-31 *And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?²*

5S-Q PURPOSE Scripture Questions

1) Do we *live out what God requires – that we revere Him, walk (humbly) in all His ways, love and serve Him with all your heart and soul?*

2) Are we *seeking God with all our heart – seeking His plans for our welfare, future and hope?*

3) Do we know *God is causing all things to work together for good because we love Him, and know we’re called according to His purpose?*

¹ *Well Done Good and Faithful Servant* - Posted by Christopher Wednesday April 22, 2009 on The Christian Journey – ‘a collection of Bible teaching and devotional writings designed to challenge your faith and draw you into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ’. <http://sacred-lion.blogspot.com/2009/04/well-done-good-faithful-servant.html>

² New American Standard Bible (NASB) Copyright © 1995 by The Lockman Foundation

6 Love

The English word *love*, especially in relationship to God and others, must be one of the most challenging to fully understand or comprehensively define. At many weddings we hear a timeless explanation of what love is, what love does and doesn't do, from a letter written in 56 AD to the church in Corinth.¹ A

writer/teacher currently known for his love of words and poetic pen says: *'love is a heartfelt decision to do whatever's in the best interest of another'* and *'love is a relationship, not a means to an end'*.² Another consideration is love's absence.

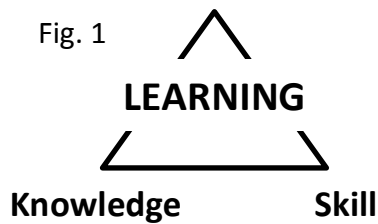
*"But if I do not have love, I am only a noisy bell or a crashing cymbal. I may have the gift of prophecy. I may understand all the secret things of God and have all knowledge, and I may have faith so great I can move mountains. But even with all these things, if I do not have love, then I am nothing."*³

Relating then these great spiritual gifts to our material world means: if we cure cancer, invent another i - phone, pod or pad; and save lives on the operating table; but do it without love, we're nothing in God's economy.

*"The supreme purpose of life on earth is not pleasure, fame, wealth or any other form of worldly success, but learning agape love. In the ultimate social order of the universe (the kingdom of God) rank will be determined, not by talent, magnetic personality, intellectual acumen, earthly success and affluence, but by one thing and one alone – agape love."*⁴

6.1 Learning Love

When Leo Buscaglia PhD was a university professor one of his students committed suicide, he then began offering an optional course in love and later became known as Dr. Love. Surely the learning objective was for the students



to not only acquire more information (*knowledge*) about love, but also develop new ability (*skill*) and adopt more effective habits (*attitude*).^{5a} What the first 400 'Love Class' members learned was recapped in the book *Love* and includes this

definition:

"Love is not a thing. It's not a commodity that can be bartered for or bought or sold, nor can it be forced upon - or from- someone.

*An individual's love is theirs to give."*⁵

We may know that well, although it's worth considering again in our relationship to God. Since our Creator/Father God *needs* nothing, and has given man every life necessity, in addition to free will; the one thing He wants us to *freely* give is our *agape* love. (Agape refers to an unconditional love and is further explained in 6.1a)

6.1a Types of Love

There's one word for love in English but Greek, as a more precise language, has four different words that mean love. Agape is the mountain peak of love and may best be understood by seeing how it differs from the other loves which are: phileo, storge and eros. For the purpose of this study we'll supplement ⁶ and reference *The Four Loves* by C.S. Lewis.⁷

Eros is the Greek word for sexual love or passionate love, from which we get English words such as erotic. It is the sense of being in love. It refers to sexual attraction and as a proper noun, to the Greek god of love. In Greek mythology

Eros was the son of beautiful Aphrodite and in English eros means desire.

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This is a taking kind of love in contrast to a love that gives. An example is a man saying to a woman 'I love you' when he really wants something from her; and then no longer 'loving' her when she doesn't make him feel good anymore.

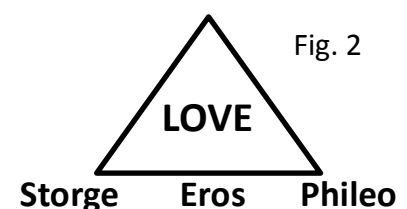
The Greek word *eros* does not appear in the biblical text, and need not be further addressed here except to consider the difference between an eros kiss and the kiss between parent and child (a storge kiss).

Storge is the most wide spread of the four loves. It's defined as familial affection or love of family, especially of parents to children. Lewis saw this as the base for other loves and believed that *'whatever tangible and consistent life happiness we find can be explained by affection according to storge'*.⁸ This type of love ignores barriers between species and resembles the instinctual affection animals have for their young. It is modest, organic and humble, a love we cannot take pride in. It is also the most comfortable; Lewis compares it to an easy chair or worn slippers. Storge approaches agape's power in loving the unlovable, as a mother loves an unlovable son, except that in doing so she's also satisfying her own needs. (See addendum 6.1) Storge love relationships display both give and take.

Lewis also mentions the perversions of affection such as jealousy, possessiveness, and bad manners that 'sneak in' and deserve corrective attention.

The only Greek words used for love in the New Testament are phileo and agape.

Phileo means friendship; it is a love between friends. Philadelphia is a US city named after the Greek term for brotherly love. This is an emotional kind of give-and-take love that involves much feeling. Generally we're willing to go out of our way to help a friend we love and even delighted for the opportunity.



Agape love expresses itself in action as opposed to emotion or feeling. Out of great love, mothers would

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give up life to save their child, perhaps also to avoid inexpressible pain. Agape love however, is an even higher call; it is to give when it's not called for, when there is no expected return.

“Agape love is the love which loves because of its own inherent nature, not because of the excellence or worth of its object.”⁹

Agape is the very nature of God, for ‘God is love’ (1 John 4:7-12, 16b).

Agape is unconditional love. In the Christian sense it is God's love for man and explains how

‘God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son’ (John 3:16a).¹⁰

‘The way we came to know love was that He laid down His life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.’ (1John 3:16)^{10a}

Agape relates to selfless giving, it's the love we're to have even for an enemy.

LOVE = OBEDIENCE, how we're to respond to God's greatest command, in return for His great love for us. We're created in His image and God is love.

“If what we call love doesn't take us beyond ourselves, it is not really love. If we have the idea that love is characterized as cautious, wise, sensible, shrewd and never taken to extremes, we have missed the true meaning. This may describe affection and it may bring us a warm feeling, but it is not a true and accurate description of love.”¹¹

6.2 Love Languages

After twenty years of marriage counseling, Dr. Gary Chapman concluded there are basically five ways or languages by which people communicate love:

words of affirmation - acts of service - quality time - physical touch and - gifts.

He explained how people give and receive love in languages that can be as different as Chinese and English and stressed the importance of learning one

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another's primary (and secondary) love language.¹² In his book *Love as a Way of Life*¹³ Chapman says *'the key to finding joy in loving others is to focus on giving love, not on getting it.'* One example he cited was a married man who understood his wife's love language to be acts of service and then said *"if it takes washing dishes, vacuuming floors, or doing the laundry for my wife to feel loved you can forget it."* Dr. Chapman assessed this man as having the knowledge of love but not the attitude of love. He explained authentic love as primarily an action which originates in attitude and that typically self-centered relationship transactions are addictive cycles which can be broken.

6.2a Loving Characteristics

In continuing to explore why some people are 'loving' and others so self centered Dr. Chapman collected answers to two questions: 1) can you name someone you consider to be a loving person and 2) what is it about that person that makes you think of them as loving? It ended up that a loving person displays a cluster of specific traits which fell into seven categories: kindness, patience, forgiveness, courtesy, humility, generosity and honesty. (Further explanation included in footnote 13) Chapman says these traits are more than *'vague feelings or good intentions but habits we practice to become more authentically loving people'*. It is interesting that the loving characteristics researched in 2000-something are not

very different than those written in 56 AD and still read at weddings today. (See addendum 6.2)

6.3 Loving Others

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*Loving Well*¹⁴ is a weekend retreat and study developed by Beth Moore to help attendees embrace the biblical mandate to love and develop skills for loving others. The first strategy is seeing people, we're called to love, in four different groups, as the: **Joy - Testy - Foe and - Far.**

The **Joy** is someone who's simply a joy to love and can be almost anyone who is easily lovable: a spouse, child, friend, relative, co-worker, etc.

The **Testy** is someone difficult to love, a person God uses to help us improve our ability to love. Generally this is someone close enough to really test our patience that we need to maintain relationship with. Your Testy may think you're also a Testy, as they say 'it takes two to tango'.

The **Foe** is someone you hate; they're seen as the enemy of the soul as we're called to love our enemies and often fail to do so.

*"On the spiritual journey, there is usually someone whom we cannot endure, someone who has a genius for bringing out the worst in us. The person who gives us the most trouble may be our greatest gift from God. It's an invitation to a new depth of relationship with Him."*¹⁵

(Perhaps through a new depth of dependence on Him - added by author)

The **Far** is a stranger, the clerk at the check-out counter, someone we often don't have, or make, time for. Loving the Far may require only a smile or kind word.

Recognizing the perspective we bring to the situation in which we're called to

love, helps us rise more consciously to the specific challenge. We also benefit by emulating the Joy to love as we continually grow in becoming more lovable.

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The second strategy to *Loving Well* is personally accepting and inculcating the following Biblical truths:

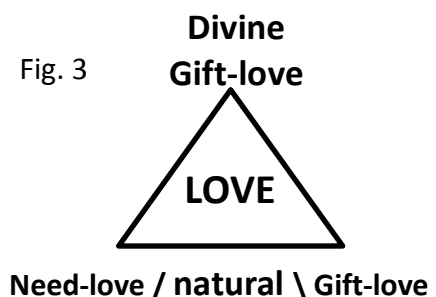
- 1) God is perfect love. 2) Nothing can separate me from God's perfect love.
- 3) God pours His perfect love into my imperfect heart. (Romans 5:5)
- 4) Accessed (#1-3), I can love anyone through anything.

It takes just a bit of practice to categorize people we encounter as the Joy, Testy, Foe or Far. However, it can take a lifetime of practice, learning to fully access God's love *in* us, to love others as we're called to do - and there's no higher call.

6.4 Love: Additional Types

*"Divine gift love in a man enables him to love what is not naturally lovable — lepers, criminals, enemies, morons, the sulky, the superior, and the sneering."*¹⁶

In *The Four Loves*, C.S. Lewis explains that God has built natural Need-love and Gift-love into human nature. He differentiates *need-love* from *gift-love* using the examples of a lonely or frightened child running into its mother's arms (*need-love*) and a man who works selfishly for the future well-being of his family even without seeing them (*gift-love*).¹⁷ These loves have a self seeking motive in contrast to Divine Gift-



love which is *'Love (God) Himself working in man (woman) and desires what is simply best for the beloved'*. Divine Gift-love is

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agape, also referred to as charity; the mountain peak of love which Lewis believes *'purifies, preserves and perfects the natural loves'*.¹⁸

1) Gift-love is: a) purified, because even at its best it is not devoid of self-interest; b) strengthened, because grace allows us to love those who we do not find naturally loveable; c) elevated, because it enables us to exercise a Gift-love toward God, to whom as creatures we have only the relationship of Need-love.

2) Need-love is: changed because the awareness of God's love for us allows us to accept the love of others even when we feel we don't deserve it.

3) Divine love offers what we want most – freedom – and from an unexpected source: Someone outside ourselves.¹⁸

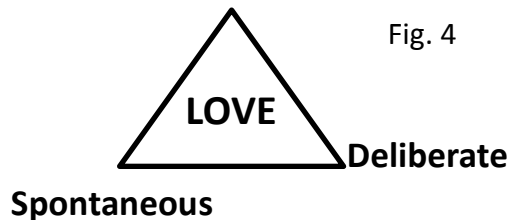
*"If the natural loves are allowed to stand in the ultimate place that only the love of God should rightly hold, they will be distorted and destructive. The rivalry comes, not because we cherish these human loves too much, but because we do not love God enough. This love cannot be measured by feelings but by the intention of the will."*¹⁸

6.4a Love: Spontaneous - Deliberate – Appreciative

*"Need-love cries to God from our poverty; Gift-love longs to serve, or even suffer for, God; Appreciative love says: "We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory." Need-love says of a woman "I cannot live without her"; Gift-love longs to bring her happiness, comfort... But Appreciative love gazes and holds its breath, is silent and rejoices that such a wonder should exist even if not for him..."*¹⁹

Lewis calls a love that longs to express gratitude 'Appreciative-love'. It is differentiated from Spontaneous-love, which is a matter of feelings, and Deliberate-love, which involves our choice. We're duly cautioned not to

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measure the depth of our love by the intensity of our emotion – it is a matter of will. Ronald Knox, one of Lewis' contemporaries, offers sound psychology:

"We may think the saints experienced a passionate love for God, while our relationship to Him strikes us as a marriage of convenience, but we should recall that the saints themselves experienced periods of intense desolation. It is a mistake to try to turn deliberate-love into spontaneous-love."

Knox provides a new beatitude: 'blessed are those who have not felt, and yet have loved'.²⁰

6.5 Love: a Mission and Gift

Dr. Chapman believed if we pursued becoming a loving person then everyone we impact would be enriched, an encounter with us would be an encounter with love. He then gives two reasons to embark on the mission: 1) the deepest satisfactions in life are found in relationships, nothing is more powerful than the power of love; and 2) at the end of the journey the most satisfied people are those who gave their life away in the service of others.²¹

A rape survivor/advocate, speaker and author met Mother Teresa, face to face, and said it was like looking into the eyes of liquid love.²²

Mother Teresa's become an icon of love, her words²³ are worth pondering:

• *"I have found the great paradox, that if you love until it hurts, there can be no more hurt, only more love."*

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• *"I try to give to the poor people for love what the rich could get for money. No, I wouldn't touch a leper for a thousand pounds; yet I willingly cure him for the love of God."*

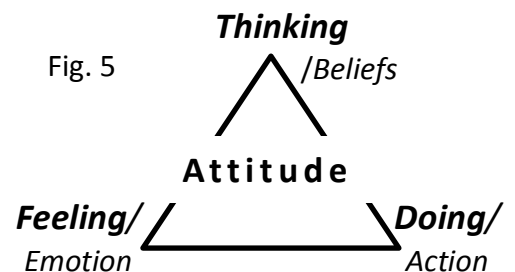
• *"I am not sure exactly what heaven will be like, but I do know when we die and it comes time for God to judge us, He will not ask, 'How many good things have you done in your life?', rather He will ask, 'How much love did you put into what you did?'"*

• *"... We will be judged by 'I was hungry and you gave me to eat. I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless and you took me in'."*

• *"In this life we cannot do great things, we can only do small things with great love."*

Mother Teresa's attitude, the thinking, feeling and doing of this modern day saint, is certainly extraordinary. She may not be a popular role model but sets a lofty goal out for us, like a beacon.

C.S. Lewis closes his book *The Four Loves* with a theme that runs through much of his writing, our natural loves only function properly when related to the love of God. When our limited ability to love is united and placed beneath the ultimate love for God, our source of life, it's transformed; as



the greatest gift is to love God in Himself.²³

To feel every encounter we have with others is an opportunity for them to see love, and to do small things with great love may require we believe loving God is the greatest gift, the mountain peak of love.

Fig. 6

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“Perhaps for many of us as, all experience defines the shape of the gap of where our love of God ought to be. It is not enough. It is something.”²⁴

¹ 1Corinthians 13, New American Bible Saint Joseph Edition New York: Catholic Book Publishing © 1970 fn 1Corinthians 13, 4-7 The original Greek contains 15 love does/doesn't verbs. pg.258

² Max Lucado UpWords®, The Teaching Ministry of Max Lucado, exists for the sole purpose of encouraging others to take one step closer to Jesus Christ. www.maxlucado.com/articles/category/daily_text/upwords_2011-10-28_love-is-a-decision_20111014164506, [upwords_2011-06-13_love-is-patient_20110524121657](http://www.maxlucado.com/articles/category/daily_text/upwords_2011-06-13_love-is-patient_20110524121657)

³ The Holy Bible, New Century Version® The Devotional Bible Word Publishing, a div of Thomas Nelson, Inc. © 1987, 1988, 1991 p.1400

⁴ Paul E. Billheimer *Don't Waste Your Sorrows* – New Insight into God's Eternal Purpose for each Christian in the midst of Life's Greatest Adversities. Fort Washington, PA: CLC Publications © 1977 p. 35

^{5a} The 3 dimensions of learning: knowledge, skill and attitude have been a starting point in the classes I've delivered over the past ten years; the original source is unknown.

⁵ Leo Buscaglia *Love A Warm and Wonderful Book about the Largest Experience in Life* New York: Fawcett Crest Books, a unit of CBS Publications, Inc. © 1972 p.93 see also: *The Art of Being Fully Human* www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmfWSQspSo4

⁶ John Schoenheit *Truth or Tradition? article: Four [4] kinds of love, three [3] in the Bible.* <http://www.truthortradition.com/modules.php?name=News&file=print&sid=743>, Ryan Maher podcast recording http://www.stfpodcast.com/File/dec2004_loving_is_giving.mp3

⁷ C. S. (Clive Staples) Lewis *The Four Loves* NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich © 1960

⁸ Chuck Colson introduction <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7o5fcxnpm0w> Scripture passages Phileo/Agape http://www.godandscience.org/love/what_is_love.html

⁹ Ibid. 4 p.10

¹⁰ New American Standard Bible Anaheim, CA: Foundation Publications © 1997 p.186

^{10a} New American Bible New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co. © 1991 p.377

¹¹ Oswald Chambers *My Utmost for His Highest*: Nashville, TN Thomas Nelson Publishers © 1995 original edition © 1935, February 21

¹² Dr. Gary Chapman *The Five Love Languages The Secret to Love that Lasts and How to Express Heartfelt Commitment to your Mate* Chicago, IL Northfield Publishing © 1992, 1995, 2004, 2010

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¹³ Dr. Gary Chapman *Love as a Way of Life* New York, Doubleday © 2008
The Seven Character traits of Love: 1) Kindness - words and actions for others 2) Patience - accepting others imperfections 3) Forgiveness - finding freedom from the grip of anger (loving people do not live with anger inside) 4) Courtesy - comes from two Greek words meaning the mind and friend and means treating everyone you encounter as though they were your friend 5) Humility - stepping down so that someone else can step up, 6) Generosity - giving money, time and ability to help other people 7) Honesty - caring enough to speak the truth.

Reference also: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBncCfxZQHI> and http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ka_uunDkqWw&feature=relmfu part 1 and 2.

¹⁴ Beth Moore *Loving Well* 4 downloadable video sessions of this study is available for purchase through: <http://www.lifeway.com/Product/loving-well-retreat-in-a-box-video-sessions-M00000127> Information included is from personal retreat notes.

¹⁵ Thomas Keating *An Invitation to Love – The Way of Christian Contemplation* New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group © 2006 p. 17

¹⁶ Ibid 7, Chapter 6 <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/questionofgod/ownwords/loves.html>

¹⁷ Ibid 7

¹⁸ Milton Walsh *Second Friends C. S. Lewis and Ronald Knox in Conversation* San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press © 2008 p.209

*Note: Both C.S. Lewis and Ronald Knox sought an intellectual foundation for belief. In his youth C. S. Lewis explored spiritual expressions of various cultures and concluded all religions to be false. p.51 He later came to faith through 'the path of intellectual exploration' like most adult converts, although recognizing the 'profound religious encounters' some have like the Apostle Paul. p.54

¹⁹ Ibid 7 p. 192

²⁰ Ibid 18 p. 219 From Knox *Laymen and His Conscience* p.34 and *Retreat for Lay People* p. 81

²¹ Ibid 13

²² Rosemary Tribble *Fear to Freedom* Camp Sherman, OR: VMI Publishers - now DeepRiver Books © 2009 (and seminar at ECB Church Bangkok, Thailand Dec. 2011)

²³ *Tribute to Mother Teresa 1910-1997* www.cfc-canada.org/docs2/motherteresa.ppt

²⁴ Ibid 18 p. 211

²⁵ Ibid 13 p. 192

6.1 Addendum - Love

God's Wings

After a forest fire in Yellowstone National Park, forest rangers began their trek up a mountain to assess the inferno's damage.

One ranger found a bird literally petrified in ashes, perched like a statue on the ground at the base of a tree. Sickened by the eerie sight, he gently knocked over the bird with a stick....

When it fell over, three tiny chicks scurried from under their mother's wings. The loving mother, well aware of impending danger, had carried her offspring to ground and gathered them under her wings, instinctively knowing that the toxic smoke would rise.

She could have flown herself to safety but refused to abandon her babies. When the blaze arrived the heat scorched her small body, but the mother remained steadfast ...because she was willing to die, so those under her wings would live.¹

He will cover you with his feathers.

He will shelter you with his wings.

His faithful promises are your armor and protection.

Do not be afraid of the terrors of the night,

nor the arrow that flies in the day.

Psalm 91:4-5 (New Living Translation)

¹ <http://www.snopes.com/glurge/birdwing.asp>

'This story of a mother bird's self sacrifice originated as an inspirational story that originated in 1945. In that parable from long ago, the bird was not a wild creature in the forest but rather a hen living on a farm. As the fire engulfs the farm she gathers her chicks under her and protects them, giving her life for theirs.'

As an email it included these notes: 1) 'A little 'something' - to put things in perspective'
2) 'Being loved this much should make a difference in your life and 3) Remember the One who loves you, and then be different because of it.'

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6L Addendum Love Lyrics

Unfailing LOVE – song lyrics

by Chris Tomlin

Songwriters: Abel, Jon / Pierce, Carl Richard/ Chaffer, Don / Johnson, Jeff Lee

*You have my heart - And I am yours forever
You are my strength - God of grace and power*

*And everything You hold in Your hand
Still You make time for me I can't understand...
Praise You God of Earth and sky
How beautiful is Your unfailing Love ~ unfailing Love*

*And You never change God You remain
The Holy One... my unfailing Love ~ unfailing Love
You are my rock - the one I hold on to
You are my song - and I sing for You
I will praise You
Praise you God of earth and sky
How beautiful is your unfailing Love ~ unfailing Love*

*And You never change God You remain The Holy One and
My unfailing Love ~ unfailing Love*

Listen and lyrics: <http://www.jango.com/music/Chris+Tomlin?l=0>

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6P Love - Personal

It seems incomplete to write a philosophy dissertation on the greatest command to love, without inserting something personal that addresses the author's experience and hope.

6P.1 Past: Storge Love

C.S. Lewis may be spot-on in seeing storge affection as the basis of all other loves; for me it was also the base for experiencing tremendous loss and sorrow.

The abundant blessing of a loving family, and the unconditional love of a wonderful father, drove home how devastating the *love-lost* void can be.

At thirteen my daddy (*Abba**) father was here one day and gone the next, without any warning. His sudden heart attack in 1968 didn't make sense...it all seemed like a big mistake. How could we be together at a family celebration one night and in a funeral home 24 hours later?

Thirty-eight years later my mom passed away, at age 96, living all those years missing the love of her husband. Hardly a day goes by without wishing I had another chance to demonstrate again love for my mother.

6P.2 Present: Storge, Phileo and Agape Love

Without a how-to manual but by the grace of God, (and loving examples from our parents) my husband and I so enjoy loving our one and only son - unconditionally. His near death car accident was a very clear message of how fragile life can be.

My husband and wife love experience of thirty-five plus years has also been

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severely stretched by life circumstances, different cultural influences ...and whatever. The love of friends, family and especially God has been the priceless thread weaved throughout all the good and challenging times.

6P.3 Present and Future: Agape Love

The question then remains: am I continuously learning to better live out *agape* love through all of life's peaks and valleys? If time on earth is a one-shot chance to be in a physical 'tent', and learn how to live in God's economy where the legal tender is *agape* (unconditional) love, then the most important question to ask myself daily must be - *'how well am I loving?'*

At the end of my days, I hope to say I loved well, giving all thanks to God - knowing it's His greatest gift of all.

**Abba* – an affectionate term for Daddy (Father) in Aramaic and Modern Hebrew. Mary Rose D'Angelo. Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. 111, No. 4 (Winter, 1992), pp. 615-616

<http://aramaicdesigns.blogspot.com/2009/06/abba-isnt-daddy-traditional-aramaic.html>

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6S Scripture – LOVE

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:34-35

Dr. Erwin Lutzer called Jesus’ *new* commandment the 11th commandment. It is the way Jesus summed up the deco log, literally ten words written on stone tablets given to teach people how to live. Obeying this 11th commandment means obeying all ten written by God so long ago and sums up a lifelong process people adopt to live on a higher plane.¹

Dr. Lutzer has been senior pastor of the Moody Church in Chicago since 1980. One of his responsibilities is to prepare sixty to seventy new sermons each year. In March 2011 he preached for the first time on the greatest command to love God (Mark 12:28-31) and said it caused him such ‘*emotional convulsion*’ he almost changed the topic. In his sermon, Dr. Lutzer considered himself a ‘*fellow struggler*’ and admitted his desire to love God with passion like the psalmists.^{1a}

Our natural inclination is to love ourselves first...so to love others, as Jesus loved, takes supernatural power. As the greatest messenger of love, Jesus not only perfectly exemplified what it means to love God, He also clearly explained it through parables and directives which apply to us today.

Luke 10:25-37 *And a lawyer stood up and put Him (Jesus) to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?" And he answered, " **YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.**" And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; **DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE.**" But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"*

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The Good Samaritan *Jesus replied and said, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan*, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.' Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?" And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."*

John 21:15-17 The Love Motivation *So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My lambs." He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do*

you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Tend My sheep.

6S-Q LOVE Scripture Questions

1) Do we accept the challenge to love one another, as Jesus loved His friends, the disciples?

2) Do we stop for a stranger in need, and go out of our way to show mercy?

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3) Are we any more loving to others because we know that’s how to fulfill the greatest command and express our love for God?

4) Are we about God’s business – instead of our own – tending and feeding His flock?

¹<http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/running-to-win/listen/christ-the-lord-of-our-affections-1-of-3-169764.html>, [2-of-3-169765.html](http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/running-to-win/listen/christ-the-lord-of-our-affections-2-of-3-169765.html), [3-of-3-169766.html](http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/running-to-win/listen/christ-the-lord-of-our-affections-3-of-3-169766.html) March 14-16, 2011.

^{1a} <http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/running-to-win/listen/the-eleventh-commandment-1-of-3-190247.html>, [2-of-3-190248.html](http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/running-to-win/listen/the-eleventh-commandment-2-of-3-190248.html), [3-of-3-190249.html](http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/running-to-win/listen/the-eleventh-commandment-3-of-3-190249.html) June 9-10,13, 2011.

<http://www.lightsource.com/ministry/running-to-win/broadcast-archives.html>

Dr. Lutzer’s messages are available for any donation at 1.800.215.5001. Following is the note introducing his messages *that ‘not only interpret the parables but also help us to apply them to practical issues such as forgiveness, prayer, and wise investments’.*

‘You Can’t Redo Life *The parables of Jesus are ordinary stories with extraordinary lessons that expose our superficial faith and values. With His penetrating understanding of human nature, Jesus shows us the foolishness of seeing life from our limited, worldly perspective, while ignoring what God sees and values. His parables teach us how to live this life in light of the next. We are challenged to live for the day when we will be called to account for how we lived on earth. This is life-changing truth for all believers.’*

² New American Standard Bible (NASB) Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation

*It is significant to understand that the Jews hated the Samaritans. The following website answers why - http://www.biblechristiansociety.com/newsletter_details.php?id=174 and includes this information: *'The Jews (the tribe of Judah) of Jesus' time considered the Samaritans to be no better than dogs because they felt the Samaritans had turned away from the religion of their fathers. To the Jews, the Samaritans were like traitors, and there is nothing so hated by a people as when one of their own betrays them. That's how the Jews looked at the Samaritans - as having betrayed God and as having betrayed their brother Israelites.'* For a thorough historical recap see: <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/13059-samaritans>

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7 God

*"I am He, that is to say, I am He, the power and goodness of Fatherhood; I am He, the wisdom and the lovingness of Motherhood; I am He, the light and the grace which is all blessed love; I am He, Trinity; I am He, the unity; I am He, the great supreme goodness of every kind of thing; I am He who makes you to love; I am He who makes you to long; I am He, the endless fulfillment of all true desires."*¹ -God's Revelation of Himself to Dame Julian of Norwich (1340-1426)

The contemplative Dame Julian asked God directly why He had created the world. 'The answer came back to her in ecstatic whispers':

*"You want to know your Lord's meaning in what I have done? Know it well, love was His meaning. Who reveals it to you? Love. What did He reveal to you? Love. Why does He reveal it to you? For Love."*²

The most common description of God may be that He is love, His essence, character and nature is love, His name could even be changed to Love. Although a friend reminded me that *'too often we try to ascribe the wonderful traits of God to Him, like love or mercy, when in fact it is God who Himself defines them'*.³ We

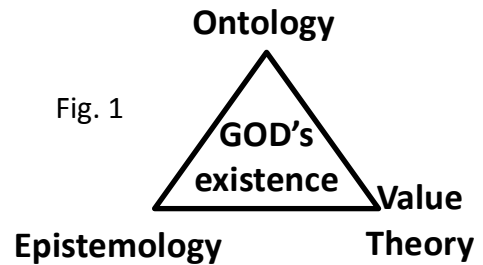
also see God partially, subjectively, and not objectively as our limited minds cannot fully comprehend His omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence.⁴ Our purpose here, is to look at God through the lens of His greatest command for us to love, which requires we Him multi-dimensionally with respect to His holiness and justice. (Reference: God Addendum 7.1)

7.1 God's Existence

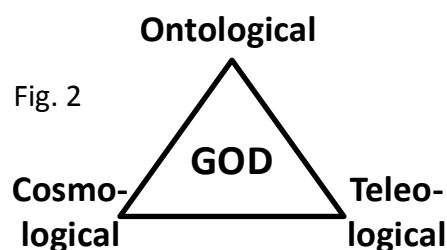
The broad lenses used to discuss the existence of God in the first place include:

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- 1) Epistemology, the study of knowledge,
- 2) Value theory which deals with evaluating degrees of goodness, etc. in moral, social, political etc. philosophies; and
- 3) Ontology which is concerned with the nature of being.⁵



From these expansive fields of consideration we come then to basically three



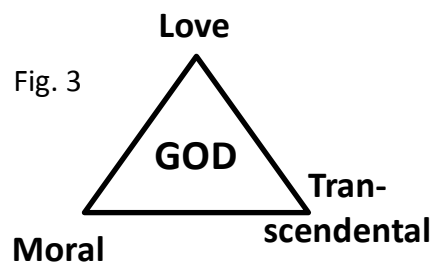
main vantage points used to support the existence of God. 1) The cosmological approach stems from the word 'cosmos' for world, and means: *'the universe seen as a well ordered whole'*.⁶ It identifies God as the 'first cause' in the essential order of cause and effect. Thomas Aquinas' position was that this 'first cause' was not temporal but rather a sustaining cause.⁷ 2) Teleology comes from the Greek words 'telos' meaning end-purpose or design (as opposed to cause) and 'logos' meaning reason. This argument holds that the universe's order and complexity

are best explained by reference to a creator God,⁸ that order in the world cannot be accidental and since there is design, there must be a Designer.⁹ 3) The ontological argument, from its Greek root, is the study of being. It is credited to the 12th century theologian/philosopher Anslem, his concept of God is *‘that which nothing greater can be conceived’*. It doesn’t take its evidence from the natural world but posits the logical possibility for God (a necessary being) to exist, so therefore He is.¹⁰

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7.1a Additional Approaches + Faith & Knowledge

Other interesting approaches have surfaced to substantiate God’s existence,



among those are: 1) Moral law: God must be the originator and basis of morality as it cannot exist accidentally, 2) Transcendental arguments hold that logic, science and ethics don’t make sense without God, and 3) the love approach to

God’s existence is grounded in love, *‘the existence of love is the compelling reason for the truth of theism*’*.¹¹

We know belief in God requires faith, even though believing in what is not seen, or fully understood is actually quite common. We believe the sun will rise again tomorrow, a chair will hold us and somehow a 400-ton plane will fly through the air. However, any ‘argument’ in the God arena whether from the perspective of: historical people or events, empirical data, personal testimonies or deductive - inductive reason, may be an unproductive debate if faith and/or love is lacking.

In his lecture series *'Answering the Tough Questions about Life and God'*, Dr. Ken Boa's premise is *"The heart cannot rejoice in what the mind rejects"*. He used a large circle to represent the area of all knowledge, all that can be known of the cosmos and universe. Then he asked the participants to draw a circle within it to represent their amount of knowledge. He said *'someone would have to be quite an egotist to draw too large a 'dot', even if their dot could fill a thumb-size, rather than a pinky-size, thimble'*. Boa added, for someone to declare there is no

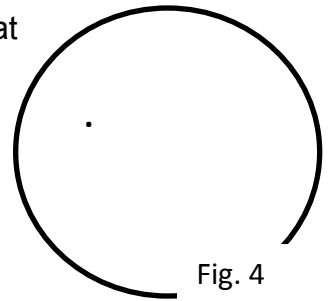


Fig. 4

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God is like saying they believe they possess all knowledge.¹²

When Moses asked God His name, God replied, *'I AM who I AM'*; which means 'I am the self existent one', God Himself, defines existence.^{12a} (Exodus 3:14 NAB)

Concerning one's belief in God, there are only three real options to choose from:

1) NO, God does not exist, 2) Perhaps there's a God or 3) YES – there is a God. If one believes God exists then the next critical question is whether God is personal or impersonal.¹³

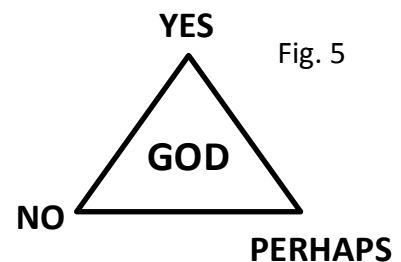


Fig. 5

7.2 Knowing God

For thousands of years people have communicated their encounters with God, one would have to be quite skeptical to declare them all bogus. We've heard of, and even possibly witnessed, people who have walked through life so connected with their God; that perhaps the logical conclusion is God *can be* very personal.

Billy and Ruth Graham's grandson, Tullian, wrote about growing up in a loving home, watching his family live out their faith, and knowing a lot about God yet not knowing Him. Tullian's story is about rebellion, dropping out of school, being escorted out of his parent's home by police and hedonistic pleasure seeking. He said, *'The more I drank from the well of worldly bliss, the thirstier I became; the faster I ran toward godless pleasure, the further I felt from true fulfillment.'*¹⁴

Tullian writes of his transformation, in answering what it means to truly know God he says, *"God reveals Himself and wants to be known by us, that He is knowable*

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*and that we can know that we know Him. The point is: if you really want to know God, you have to enter into a personal relationship with Him.'*¹⁵ Tullian also writes about what separates us from God, what brings us to God and what kind of bond we experience once we're in genuine relationship with Him. These are critically important facets of *knowing* God to live out His command to love, although beyond the scope of this project but open to all for further investigation.

7.2a Knowing God + Everyday Reality

Dr. Deepak Chopra combined quantum physics, religion and neuroscience in a book Dr. Wayne Dyer called a *'course in knowing God, rather than knowing about God'*. Chopra said according to some polls as much as 96% of people believe in God, adding that God is the source of every impulse of love; that truth and beauty are children of this God. The issue he addresses is the huge gap between belief and everyday reality and the 'subjective transition zone' where the brain responds to the presence and light of God.¹⁶ He says:

“If you compare any 2 minds – Moses or Buddha, Jesus or Freud, St. Francis or Chairman Mao – each projects a different view of reality with a matching God. No one can shoehorn God into a single box. We must have a range of vision as vast as human experience itself. Atheists need their God, who is absent and non-existent; while at the other extreme mystics need their God, one of pure love and light. Only the brain can deliver this vast range of deities.”^{16a}

Dr. Chopra segments the different perceptions we can have of God in relation to our need and the way God presents Himself to meet those needs. For simplification this concept has been summarized by the author in the chart below:

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<u>RESPONSES</u>	<u>GOD is:</u>	<u>Our NEED is to:</u>
1) Fight or Flight – facing danger	Protector	Survive
2) Reactive – personal identity	Powerful lawmaker	Achieve & compete
3) Restful Awareness – peace in chaos	Peace	Navigate turmoil
4) Intuitive – to know ourselves	Understanding and forgiving	Be validated as good
5) Creative – to birth new thought	Inspiration and Creator	Invent and create
6) Visionary connection – to blessed light + joy	Deliverer of healing and miracles	Explain magic in the mundane
7) Sacred connection – to source and origin	pure being and Source	Have a foundation for existence

Dr. Chopra believes that ‘*God is another name for infinite intelligence*’ and ‘*to achieve anything in life a piece of this intelligence must be contacted and used*’. He draws the respective parallels between our level of need, how God is presented in response and how life fulfillment is then obtained.¹⁷

RESPONSE/need:

Life Fulfillment through:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) God is Protector – Survival | family, community, a sense of belonging and material comforts |
| 2) God the Almighty – Achievement | success, power, influence, status and other ego satisfactions |
| 3) God of Peace – Peace | centeredness, self-acceptance and inner silence |
| 4) Redeemer God – Potential | insight, empathy, tolerance, forgiveness |
| 5) Creator God – Exploration | inspiration, expanded creativity in art and science and unlimited discovery |
| 6) God of Miracles – Miraculous | reverence, compassion, devoted service, and universal love |
| 7) God of Pure Being – I AM | wholeness and unity with the divine |

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God reveals Himself to us as we are and *'we're all capable of going beyond our material bonds, yet we often fail to value this ability'*.^{17a}

7.3 Relationship with God

In the movie *Eat, Pray, Love* the protagonist went in search of herself and pronounced the discovery: *'God dwells within me - as me.'*¹⁸ Perhaps her real need was peace, and she found her God of peace through centeredness, self-acceptance and inner silence as indicated above (in 7.2a). This approach to know God, aligns well with our self perception, general revelation of God and some postmodern, 'new age' forms of spirituality. However we're not God, God is God, God is unfailing perfect Love and we're made in His image not vice versa.

In his series *Know What God is Like*, Dr. Ed Young says *'The image of God that we create - that's the God we worship, that's the God we believe in, but that God is not God.'* He explains how human nature wants to be the play write or the conductor as opposed to just the *'piccolo player in the back row'*.¹⁹

More than simple general revelation may be necessary to see the God beyond a God of protection, power and peace. It's quite possible a special more personal revelation, or vision of God, is required to see Him as Redeemer, Creator, the God of miracles, and Pure Being. This is the vision aligning with a life is fulfilled through universal love, compassion, service and unity with the divine. (Reference: previous page) Dr. Young asked the question directly: *'How in the world can you and I in the 21st century have a real, genuine, alive, living relationship with God?'*

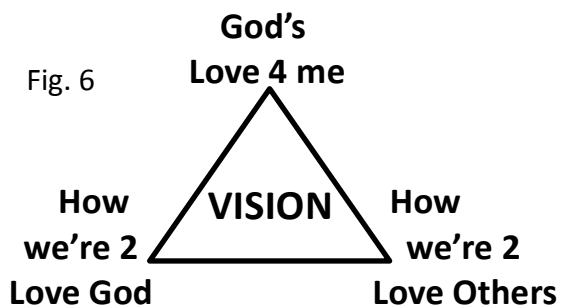
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His logical and also direct answer was: *'Study the Word of God'*.²⁰

'God is a Person, and in the deep of His mighty nature He thinks, wills, enjoys, feels, loves, desires and suffers as any other person may. In making Himself known to us He stays by the familiar pattern of personality. He communicates with us through the avenues of our minds, our wills and our emotions. The continuous and unembarrassed interchange of love and thought between God and the soul of the redeemer man is the throbbing heart of New Testament religion.' (A. W. Tozer - The Pursuit of God)²¹

7.3a Relationship with God - *'To know Him is to love Him'*

In his lectures on *The Love of God*, Dr. Boa stresses how important it is to have



the right vision of God's love for us, in order to then - love Him and love others. The basis of *this* love is that God never changes, there's nothing we can do to make Him love us more or less. His love is not about our work, it's about faith.

'And without faith it is impossible

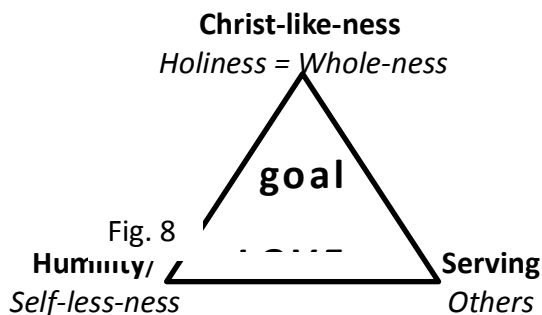
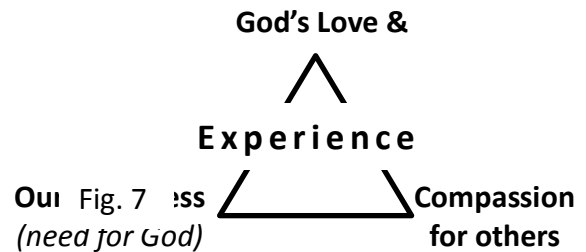
to please God'.

(Heb 11:6 NASB)

Boa says, *'the righteousness God requires is the Righteousness His righteousness requires Him to require'*. God Himself also defines righteousness; it is right standing in His eyes. Our initial response is to receive God, His Way - through faith in His incarnate Son, Jesus Christ. We're *then* transitioned into His light, life and love; (1 John 1, 2, 4) and *then* the content of our faith is continually enriched by progressive revelation. *'It's a process of understanding, once receiving Him, my ongoing response is to abide in Him, in His life'*.²²

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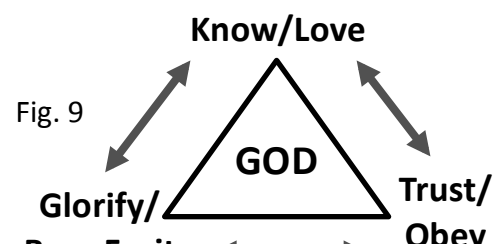
The plentiful material on this subject consistently cites our humble need for God's love and forgiveness as the



catalyst for accepting His agape love. It is this critical connection, our re-defining vertical love for God, that gives us the horizontal ability to love and forgive others. By 'abiding' in God, He manifests His love

for others *through* us.

'I believe the key to loving God is - knowing Him. The way you get to know God is by spending time with Him in communion and communication and taking the risks of trusting Him and obeying Him. And the better you know Him



*the better you will love Him and the more you love Him the more you trust Him,
- the more you trust Him the more you're able to obey Him and the more you
obey Him the more you bear fruit and the more
you bear fruit the more you glorify the Father. We are called to know Him,
become like Him and reflect Him.'*²²

-Dr. Ken Boa

7.4 Fulfilled, Happy, Blessed

After investigating worldview, attitude, truth, motivation, purpose, and love the final thought in this discourse on God addresses fulfillment and happiness.

*'It is the lot of mankind to be ever engaged in the pursuit of happiness.
Happiness is elusive. What we want is not temporary happiness; we ache for a*

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*happiness that is permanent. Such is the quest of the soul, the destiny for which
we were created. It includes a holistic satisfaction that touches the soul, the
mind, the will, indeed the entire inner person. Beatitude is what we seek.'*²³

Happiness in biblical terms parallels with blessedness.

'Blessed (happy) are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed (happy) are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.'

(Matthew 5:6, 8 NAB)

In *The Searcher*, a book review of *Tolstoy: A Russian Life*, the writer retells a story about Tolstoy when he was 5 years old his oldest brother told him that somewhere in their garden a green stick was buried and written on it was the key to human happiness. *'Tolstoy never stopped looking for that key and when he died was buried somewhere near where his brother said that stick might be.'*²⁴

We may however, find better direction in A. W. Tozer's wisdom (below) to prevent an aimless life search for the happiness and fulfillment God so graciously bestows upon His children.

- *'If we would find God amid all the religious externals we must first determine to find Him and then proceed in the way of simplicity. Now as always God discovers Himself to "babes" and hides Himself in thick darkness from the wise and the prudent.'*
- *'We pursue God because, and only because, He has first put an urge within us that spurs us to the pursuit.'*
- *'The evil habit of seeking God-and effectively prevents us from finding God in full revelation. In the "and" lies our great woe. If we omit the "and" we shall soon find God, and in Him we shall find that for which we have all our lives been secretly longing.'*

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- *'We need not fear that in seeking God only we may narrow our lives or restrict the motions of our expanding hearts. The opposite is true.'*
- *'When religion has said its last word, there is little that we need other than God Himself.'*²⁵

¹ Dame Julian of Norwich (1340-1426) *Showing of Love - The Long Text* 59th Chap written in 1393. <http://www.saieditor.com/stars/julian.html> The three versions of Julian's *Showing of Love*. 1368, 1393 and 1413 are owned by Westminster Cathedral, and on loan to Westminster Abbey. See also: <http://www.umilta.net/westmins.html>

Dame Julian lived a solitary, contemplative life serving the spiritually hungry as she was considered a holy woman. She was an ' anchoress ' not one cut off from the world but 'anchored' in it.

² Deepak Chopra, M.D. *How to Know God – The Soul's Journey into the Mystery of Mysteries* New York: Harmony Books, of Random House, Inc. © 2000 p.5

³ Thomas R. Siebert: Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam April 13, 2012
His Word says God's traits are: *"love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness and self-control."* (Galatians 5:22-23, NIV)

⁴ Classical theism holds that God possesses every possible perfection, including omniscience, omnipotence, and omni-benevolence –Wikipedia on Existence of God

⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Existence_of_God

^{5a} <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/value-theory/>

⁶ A Google search for the meaning of cosmos. Cosmos means the universe. It means everything that exists. *'When you look at the night sky, you are looking at the cosmos'* from www.directhit.com

⁷ <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/cosmological-argument/>

⁸ Ibid. 5

⁹ P. C. Gasson, *Theory of Design* (1973); and N. Rescher, ed., *Current Issues in Teleology* (1986) also <http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/society/A0848083.html#ixzz1sIXDeYZj>

¹⁰ <http://theologicalstudies.org/resource-library/philosophy-dictionary/85-5-branches-of-philosophy>

¹¹ Tom Wright *Simply Christian* London: Nicholas Thomas Wright, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge © 2006 p.33 *Theism is a belief in the existence of a God or gods.

¹² The lecture series 'Answering Tough Questions About Life and God' is based on Boa's book: *I'm Glad you Asked* by Ken Boa and Larry Moody. Dr. Kenneth "Ken" Boa holds 142

a Bachelor of Science degree from Case Institute of Technology a Master of Theology degree from Dallas Theological Seminary , a Doctorate from New York University , and a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Oxford in England.

http://www.kenboa.org/audio_and_video/mp3teaching

^{12a} Max Lucado *The Devotional Bible Experiencing the Heart of Jesus* New Century Version Exodus 3:14 footnote: *"The Hebrew words for I...I AM ... are like the name 'Yahweh'. This Hebrew name for God, usually called 'LORD', shows that God always lives and is always with His people."*

¹³ Dr. Kenneth (Ken) Boa *Does God Really Exist?* Part 3 and 4 of 7, Sept. 8-9, 2006 http://www.kenboa.org/audio_and_video/mp3teaching?series=5

¹⁴ Tullian Tchividjian *Do I Know God? Finding Certainty in Life's Most Important Relationship* Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books © 2007 p.17-18

¹⁵ Ibid 14, pg. 15-16

¹⁶ Deepak Chopra, M.D. *How to Know God – The Soul's Journey into the Mystery of Mysteries* New York: Harmony Books, of Random House, Inc. © 2000 pg.1-2,6

^{16a} Ibid 16 p.8

^{17/17a} Ibid 16 p.16, – Note: summarized charts are adapted from the text by this author.

¹⁸ yourspiritualtruth.com/2010/11/29/god-as-me/

¹⁹ <http://www.winningwalk.org/www/player/audio/audio.aspx?play=http://files.second.org/data/website%20files/WinningWalk/audio/win20120404.mp3&prod=118>

²⁰ <http://www.winningwalk.org/www/player/audio/audio.aspx?play=http://files.second.org/data/website%20files/WinningWalk/audio/win20120405.mp3&prod=118>

²¹ A. W. Tozer *The Pursuit of God – The Human Thirst for the Divine* ‘As the hart panteth after the water brooks; so panteth my soul after thee O God’ – Psalm 42:1 Cape Hill, PA: Christian Publications © 1982, 1993 chapter 1 Also available as free online book and audio <http://www.worldinvisible.com/library/tozer/5f00.0888/5f00.0888.01.htm>

²² Dr. Kenneth (Ken) Boa *The Love of God* 2-part series 7,9 Feb 2011
http://www.kenboa.org/audio_and_video/mp3teaching?series=64

²³ Dr. RC Sproul *The Soul's Quest for God – Satisfying the Hunger for Spiritual Communion with God* Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. © 1992 p. 229-231

²⁴ Gary Saul Morson – The Wall Street Journal Asia Edition 9-11 December, 2011
Review of Rosamund Bartlett Tolstoy: *A Russian Life* London: Profile Books © 2010

²⁵ Ibid. 21

Addendum 7.1 God

The un-copyrighted information below on *Understanding the Trinity* is from Purdue University. It is condensed here and available in its entirety at:
<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~brower/Papers/Understanding%20the%20Trinity.pdf>
The selected portions below are provided verbatim with respect to the authors.

UNDERSTANDING THE TRINITY

JEFFREY E. BROWER AND MICHAEL C. REA

In no other subject is error more dangerous, inquiry more difficult, or the discovery of truth more rewarding. —Augustine, De Trinitate

The doctrine of the Trinity poses a deep and difficult problem. On the one hand, it says that there are three distinct Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and that each of these Persons “is God”. On the other hand, it says that there is one and only one God. So it appears to involve a contradiction.

The difficulty isn't just that the doctrine of the Trinity is mysterious. Rather, it is that the doctrine appears to be logically inconsistent—the sort of thing that couldn't possibly be true. And yet we must believe it if the rest of our faith is to

make sense. For example, the Bible forbids us to worship any being other than God. (Ex. 20:3-5) So Jesus is worthy of our worship only if he is God. But the Bible also makes it clear that the Father deserves our worship (Mt. 7:21), and that Jesus is not the Father (Jn. 1:14, 18). So, if we are to go on worshipping both Jesus and the Father, we *have* to say that Jesus is God *and* that the Father is God. But, again, we cannot say that Jesus *is* the Father, nor can we say that they are *two Gods*. (Deut. 6:4) Likewise in the case of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:26-27)

It is important to emphasize that Christians are not at liberty to reject any of claims (1–3). For each has been affirmed by the Church to rule out a specific heresy. Claim (1) is intended to rule out ***polytheism***, the view that there is more than one God. Claim (2) is intended to rule out ***subordinationism***, the view that not all of the Persons are divine, or that the divinity of one or more of the Persons

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is unequal with, or subordinate to, that of the others. Claim (3) is intended to rule out ***modalism***, the view that the Persons of the Trinity are not really distinct from one another but merely different manifestations in which the one God presents himself. The first heresy is, perhaps, familiar: it's just the denial of monotheism. The other two require a word of explanation.

There were two opposing tendencies among early Christian monotheists...The first was to emphasize the distinctness of the Persons while neglecting their divinity. The other was to emphasize the divinity of the Persons while neglecting their distinctness. The first tendency: ...like every other son, the second Person of the Trinity is a creature who came into existence at a definite point in time. The second tendency:... is that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are just different manifestations of God—just as Superman and Clark Kent are, according to the *Superman* comic books, different manifestations, or disguises, of a single man. ...God just manifests himself as Father in the act of creating, as Son in the act of redeeming, and as Holy Spirit in the act of distributing grace. Both of these tendencies were condemned at councils of the early Christian Church.

Among the most popular analogies for the Trinity...are the “water” analogy and the “egg” analogy. ...The problem with both analogies is that instead of explaining the orthodox view, they actually lead us *away* from it. Liquid, vapor, and ice are three *states* or *manifestations* of a single substance, water; thus to say that the Persons of God are like them is to fall into modalism. On the other hand, shell, yolk, and albumen are three *parts* of an egg; but neither shell, yolk, and albumen *is* an egg. So...neither Father, Son, nor Holy Spirit is God—they are merely parts of God. Over the past four decades, however, various philosophers and theologians have developed some more promising analogies, or models, for understanding inter-Trinitarian relations.

The Social Analogy: Throughout the gospels, the first two Persons of the Trinity are referred to as ‘Father’ and ‘Son’. This suggests the analogy of a family ... since there’s no contradiction in thinking of a family as three and one, this analogy removes the contradiction in saying that God is three and one.

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‘God in His deepest mystery is not a solitude but a family; since He has in Himself fatherhood, son-ship and the essence of the family, which is love.’

John Paul II (inserted here by author)

Psychological Analogies: Many theologians have looked to features of the human mind or “psyche” to find analogies to help illuminate the doctrine of the Trinity. Thomas V. Morris has suggested that...just as a single human being can have multiple personalities, so too a single God can exist in three Persons.

Material-Object

The Statue-Lump Analogy... invokes what might be called the ‘relative-sameness’ assumption. This is the assumption that things can be the same *relative to* one kind of thing, but distinct *relative to* another. Consider Rodin’s famous bronze statue, *The Thinker*. It is a single material object; but it can be truly described both as a statue, and as a lump of bronze. A little reflection, reveals that the statue is distinct from the lump of bronze. For example, if the statue were melted down, we would no longer have both a lump and a statue: the

lump would remain (albeit in a different shape) but Rodin's *Thinker* would no longer exist. This shows that the lump is something distinct from the statue, since one thing can exist apart from another *only* if they're distinct.

Shouldn't we just accept the doctrine as a divine mystery and leave it at that? We believe that the answer to this question is 'no'. **As Christ himself tells us, our two greatest commandments as Christians are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and to love our neighbors as ourselves.** (Matt. 22:37) One way of loving God with your mind is to meditate on the divine nature and to try to understand it, even if you recognize, in all humility, that you will never fully succeed. Again, one way of loving your non-Christian neighbor is to try as you might to remove stumbling blocks to faith. This, presumably, is part of why Peter urges us to be ready always to defend our faith and to give an account of the hope that is within us. (1 Pet. 3:15) Few problems pose as great a stumbling block to the faith as the problem of the Trinity.

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Addendum 7.1a God - Tough Questions about Life & God

I'M GLAD YOU ASKED - 12 Questions with sub-questions by Kenneth Boa

1. Is There Really a God?
2. Why Believe in Miracles?
3. Isn't Christianity Just a Psychological Crutch?
4. How Accurate Is the Bible?
5. Why Do the Innocent Suffer?
6. Is Christ the Only Way to God?
7. Will God Judge Those Who Never Heard about Christ?
8. If Christianity Is True, Why Are There So Many Hypocrites?
9. What about Good Works?
10. Isn't Salvation by Faith Too Simple?

11. What Does the Bible Mean by Believe?

12. Can Anyone Be Sure of His Salvation?

1. IS THERE REALLY A GOD? OFTEN-ASKED QUESTIONS:

Can you actually prove that God exists?

Since God's existence cannot be proved, isn't agnosticism the most reasonable position?

Hasn't science demonstrated that the idea of a God is unnecessary?

Why postulate a God when evolution explains the origin of life and man?

2. WHY BELIEVE IN MIRACLES? OFTEN-ASKED QUESTIONS:

How can a rational person today accept the stories of miracles in the Bible?

Aren't miracles contrary to the laws of modern science?

There is no historical basis for the miracles in the Bible — aren't they simply
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myths and legends designed to create religious faith?

If there were miracles then, why doesn't God perform miracles today?

3. ISN'T CHRISTIANITY JUST A PSYCHOLOGICAL CRUTCH?
OFTEN-ASKED QUESTIONS:

Isn't Christianity, like all religions, just a crutch for emotionally weak people?

Don't people just create God in order to cope with the future?

Why should it matter what you believe as long as you have a sincere faith?

If you were raised to believe in God, can you ever deny that preconditioning?

What if I don't need religion?

4. How ACCURATE IS THE BIBLE? OFTEN-ASKED QUESTIONS:

Isn't the Bible full of contradictions and errors?

The Bible has been copied and translated so many times—hasn't this process

led to errors?

How can you be sure that the Bible is the same now as when it was written?

Didn't the church arbitrarily decide which books should be included in the Bible and which books should be rejected?

So many people have different interpretations of the Bible —what makes you think that yours is correct?

How can you place your faith in a book that condones genocide and slavery? Doesn't the Bible make a number of claims that are scientifically inaccurate?

5. WHY DO THE INNOCENT SUFFER? OFTEN-ASKED QUESTIONS:

If God is all-good and all-powerful, why did He make a world with so much suffering?

Why do innocent people suffer from things like disease and natural disaster?

If God is so good, loving, and powerful, why doesn't He put an end to suffering now?

How could a loving God send people to hell? Did God create evil?

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If God knew man would sin and bring evil into this world, why did He bother to create him in the first place?

6. IS CHRIST THE ONLY WAY TO GOD? OFTEN-ASKED QUESTIONS:

Isn't Christianity too narrow?

Since all religions are basically the same, does it matter what you believe?

Isn't the choice of which religion you take just a matter of personal preference?

An estimated 75 percent of the world population is not Christian —can they all be wrong?

Christ can be the only way to God for you, but how can you claim that He is the only way for everybody?

7. WILL GOD JUDGE THOSE WHO NEVER HEARD ABOUT CHRIST? OFTEN-ASKED QUESTIONS:

Would God condemn an innocent heathen simply because he never heard about

Christ?

What about religious people who don't know about Christ and call their god by a different name?

What happened to people before the coming of Christ?

What about infants and people who are mentally incapable of understanding the Gospel?

8. IF CHRISTIANITY IS TRUE, WHY ARE THERE SO MANY HYPOCRITES?
OFTEN-ASKED QUESTIONS:

Too many Christians I know are phonies. If that's what Christianity is all about, why should I become a Christian?

If Christians are really concerned about others, why don't they show it?

Some non-Christians I know seem to live better lives than a lot of people who go to church —doesn't this show that Christianity isn't all it claims to be?

How can people who profess to be Christians still be full of racial hatred, materialism, and social insensitivity?

Many churchgoers seem to have holier-than-thou attitudes. Why should I join the

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ranks of the self-righteous?

9. WHAT ABOUT GOOD WORKS? OFTEN-ASKED QUESTIONS:

If people try their very best, won't God let them into heaven?

I know many non-Christians who are far better people than most of the Christians I've met Would God really refuse them?

Doesn't God require me only to be better than the average human?

Don't I have to have faith in Christ and live a good life if I want to go to heaven?

10. ISN'T SALVATION BY FAITH TOO SIMPLE? OFTEN-ASKED QUESTIONS:

Isn't just believing too easy?

You don't get something for nothing. Why should it be any different with salvation?

Doesn't the Bible say} "God helps those who help themselves?" What happens to the incentive for being good?

Why would anyone appreciate salvation if it were free?

11. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE MEAN BY BELIEVE?
OFTEN-ASKED QUESTIONS:

How much faith do you have to have?

Doesn't everyone believe in Christ and His existence?

What if I want to believe but still have doubts?

Don't you have to stop sinning to believe in Christ?

12. CAN ANYONE BE SURE OF His SALVATION?
OFTEN-ASKED QUESTIONS:

Can't a Christian simply stop believing in Christ?

Aren't there certain sins that could cause a person to lose his salvation?

Will God let someone into heaven who claims to believe in Jesus but lives an immoral life?

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Salvation is appropriated by faith, but doesn't a person need to maintain it?

Don't some verses teach that a Christian can 'fall from grace'?

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Questions: http://www.kenboa.org/text_resources/free_articles/6090
Answers: http://www.kenboa.org/audio_and_video/mp3teaching
select Answering the Tough Questions about Life & God Series I, II, III

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7L Addendum - God

Lyrics to: Power Of Your Love

Artist: Hillsong

*Lord I come to You, let my heart be changed, renewed
flowing from the grace - that I found in You.*

*And Lord I've come to know, the weaknesses I see in me
will be stripped away - by the power of Your love.*

*Hold me close, let Your love surround me
bring me near draw me to Your side.*

*And as I wait I'll rise up like the eagle and I will soar with You,
Your Spirit leads me on - in the power of Your love.*

*Lord unveil my eyes,
let me see You face to face
The knowledge of Your love
as You live in me.
Lord renew my mind
as Your will unfolds in my life
In living every day
in the power of Your love.*

Listen and lyrics <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4ei16-y5o0>

A note left on this web page/blog:

'When the peace of God takes hold upon a soul there is a love for God and His law. It is impossible to love God and not love His law just as it is impossible to love the Father and not love His Son; likewise all they who love the law of God also love the great giver of that law the Lord Jesus Christ our Prophet, Priest and King'. - LAStreetPreacher

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Addendum 7.3 God – Chuck Colson

Chuck Colson went to prison for seven months after pleading guilty to the Watergate break in. He was called a 'master of dirty tricks' and described as the 'evil genius' of the Nixon administration. Colson said: *"I shudder to think of what I'd been if I had not gone to prison. Lying on the rotten floor of a cell, you know it's not prosperity or pleasure that's important, but the maturing of the soul."*

Upon his release, *'it was not part of his game plan'* to spend the rest of his life ministering to prisoners. He said *'God ordered my steps every moment, day by day.'* A former prisoner recounted: *'The first time I met Chuck Colson I was in state issued clothes. He shook my hand and told me there's a different way to live, a path I must take'.* Colson died April 22, 2012 – upon his passing it was

said: *'if he's going to be remembered for anything, he's going to be remembered as a person who had a complete turnaround in his life.'*

We close this study with Colson's words:

'Where is the hope? The hope is not in who governs us or what laws are passed or what great things we do as a nation. Our hope is in the power of God working through the hearts of people.'

<http://chuckcolson.org/?r=colson> Video: *Together, let's celebrate the life of Chuck Colson — a man transformed by grace, dedicated to serving our Savior, and now living in eternal glory with the Lord.*

Jessica Gresko, Associated Press <http://news.yahoo.com/watergate-figure-charles-colson-died-80-203333577.html>

Colson wrote more than 20 books - Royalties from all his books have gone to his Prison Fellowship Ministries (created in 1976), as did the \$1 million Templeton prize -for Progress in Religion, won in 1993. Colson also wrote a syndicated column, His daily radio feature, BreakPoint, airs on more than 1,000 networks.

An interesting note: the prisoners' national anthem is Amazing Grace.

7S Scripture – GOD

"Charity Is the Christian Difference" VATICAN CITY, JAN. 31, 2010

From an address given by Benedict XVI:

1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13...*Paul shows the "way" of perfection. This way, he says, does not consist in possessing exceptional qualities: speaking new languages, knowing all the mysteries, having a prodigious faith, or doing heroic deeds. It consists rather in charity -- "agape" -- that is, in authentic love, that love that God revealed to us in Jesus Christ.*

Charity is the "greatest" gift, which confers worth on others, and yet "does not boast, does not puff up with pride," indeed, "it rejoices in truth" and the good of others. He who truly loves "does not seek his own interests," "does not keep

track of evil received,” “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

In the end, when we will meet God face to face, all the other gifts will disappear; the only one that will remain in eternity will be charity, because God is love and we will be like him, in complete communion with him.

For now, while we are in this world, charity is the Christian difference. The Christian’s whole life is summed up by charity: what he believes and what he does. There are two parts that correspond to the two components of charity: its meaning and its practice. Love is the essence of God himself, it is the meaning of creation and history, it is the light that gives goodness and beauty to every man’s existence. At the same time, love is the “style,” of God and the believer; it is the comportment of him who, responding to God’s love makes his own life a gift of self to God and neighbor. In Jesus Christ these two aspects form a perfect unity: He is Love incarnate. This love is fully revealed to us in Christ crucified.¹

It’s been said that the Old Testament in one sentence is:

“You will be My people and I will be your God”.

The New Testament in one sentence is:

“Christ in me, I in Christ”. ~ And the Bible in one word is: Love.

Let us reflect on ‘abiding’ in God’s love through these passages:

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John 15:9-10 *Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.*

1Corinthians 13:12-13 *For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

1 John 3:16-18 *We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love*

of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

1 John 4:11-13 *Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.*²

7S-Q GOD Scripture Questions

1) Are we *keeping God's commandments, and abiding in His love?*

2) If the *love of God is abiding in us...are we loving in deed and truth and not just in word?*

3) Do we know and live out *that we abide in God and He in us, through His Spirit and that God's love is 'perfected' through us?*

¹ <http://www.zenit.org/article-28210?l=english> (some consolidation by author)

² New American Standard Bible (NASB) Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation

Homily 2

A Sermon (No. 162) Delivered on Sabbath Morning, November 8, **1857** by the REV. C. H. Spurgeon* at Royal Surrey Gardens. (Condensed by author)

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment." Mark 12:30.

I shall divide my discourse thus—

first, *What saith this commandment unto us?* - Secondly, *What say we unto it?*

Intro:

OUR SAVIOUR said, "This is the first and great commandment." It is "*the first*" commandment—the first for **antiquity**, for this is older than even the ten commandments of the written law. Before God said, "Thou shalt not commit

adultery, thou shalt not steal," this law was one of the commands of his universe; for this was binding upon the angels when man was not created. It was not necessary for God to say to the angels, "Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not steal;" for such things to them were very probably impossible; but he did doubtless say to them, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;"

- It was binding upon Adam in the garden; even before the creation of Eve, his wife, God had commanded this; before there was a necessity for any other command this was written upon the very tablets of his heart—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God."

- "The first commandment," again, not only for antiquity, but for **dignity**. This command, which deals with God the Almighty must ever take precedence of every other. Other commandments deal with man and man, but *this* with man and his Creator. Other commands of a ceremonial kind, when disobeyed, may involve but slight consequences upon the person who may happen to offend, but this disobeyed provokes the wrath of God, and brings his ire at once upon the sinner's head. He that stealeth committeth a gross offense, inasmuch as he hath also violated this command; but if it were possible for us to separate the two, and to suppose an offense of one command without an offence of this, then we must put the **violation of this commandment in the first rank of offences**. This is **the king of commandments**; this is the emperor of the law; it must take precedence of all those princely commands that God afterwards gave to men.

It is "the first commandment," for its **justice**. If men cannot see the justice of that law which says, "Love thy neighbor," if there be some difficulty to understand how I can be bound to love the man that hurts and injures me, there can be no difficulty here. "Thou shalt love thy God" comes to us with so much Divine authority, and is so ratified by the dictates of nature and our own conscience, that, verily, this command must take the first place for the justice of its demand. It is "the first" of commandments. Whichever law thou dost break, take care to keep this. If thou breakest the commandments of the ceremonial law, if thou dost

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violate the ritual of thy church, thine offence might be propitiated by the priest, but who can escape when this is his offence? This mandate standeth fast. Man's law thou mayest break, and bear the penalty; but if thou breakest this the penalty is too heavy for thy soul to endure; it will sink thee, man, it will sink thee like a mill-stone lower than the lowest hell. Take heed of this command above every other, to tremble at it and obey it, for it is "the first commandment."

"*Great* commandment," and so also it is. It is "great," for it containeth in its bowels every other. *Comprehensiveness*,

I. And in discussing the first point, WHAT SAITH THIS COMMANDMENT UNTO US? we shall divide it thus. Here is, first, the duty—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God;" here is, secondly, the measure of the duty—"Thou shalt love him with all thy heart, mind, soul, strength;" here is, thirdly, the ground of the claim, enforcing

the duty—because he is "thy God." God demandeth of us to obey, simply upon the ground that he is our God.

1. To begin, then. This command *demand*s a duty.
That duty is, that we should love God.

A) One class of men do break it willfully and grievously; for **they hate God**. There is the infidel, who gnashes his teeth against the Almighty; the atheist, who spits the venom of his blasphemy against the person of his Maker. You will find those who rail at the very being of a God, though in their consciences they know there is a God, yet with their lips will blasphemously deny his existence. These men say there is no God, because they wish there were none.

B) Another class of men know there is a God, but **they neglect him**; they go through the world with indifference, "caring for none of these things." "Well," they say, "It does not signify to me whether there is a God or not." They have no particular care about him; they do not pay one half so much respect to his commands as they would to the proclamation of the Queen.

C) There are some who do not forget that there is a God; no, they are astronomers, and they turn their eyes to heaven, and they view the stars, and they **marvel at the majesty of the Creator**. They, whenever they think of God, think of him with the deepest awe, with the profoundest reverence. But ah! my friends, this is not enough: this is not obedience to the command. God does not say thou shalt wonder at him, thou shalt have awe of him. He asks more than that; he says, "Thou shalt love me!"

D) There are others, too, who delight to spend time in **contemplation**. They **believe** in Jesus, in the Father, in the Spirit; they believe that there is but one God, and that these three are one. It is their delight to turn over the pages of revelation, as well as the pages of history. They contemplate God; he is to them a matter of **curious study**; they like to meditate upon him; the doctrines of his Word they could hear all day long. And they are very **sound in the faith**,

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extremely orthodox, and very knowing; they can fight about doctrines, they can dispute about the things of God with all their hearts; but, alas!

They can contemplate, **but they cannot love**; they can meditate, but they cannot commune; they can think of God, but they can never throw up their souls to him, and clasp him in the arms of their affections.

E) Another man starts up, and he says, "Well, this command does not bear on me; I attend my place of worship twice every Sunday; I have family prayer. I am very careful not to get up of a morning without saying a form of prayer; I sometimes read my Bible; I subscribe to many charities. Ah! my friend, and you may do all that, without loving God. Why, some of you go to your churches and chapels as if you were going to be horsewhipped. It is a dull and dreary thing to you. You dare not break the Sabbath, but you would, if you could. You know very well, that if it were not for a mere matter of fashion and custom, you would sooner by half be anywhere else, than in God's house. And as for prayer, why, it

is no delight to you; you do it, because you think you ought to do it. Some indefinable **sense of duty** rests upon you; but you have **no delight** in it. You talk of God with great propriety, but you never talk of him with love. Your heart never bounds at the mention of his name; your eyes never glisten at the thought of his attributes; your soul never leapeth when you meditate on his works, for your heart is all untouched, and while you are **honoring God with your lips, your heart is far from him**, and you are still disobedient to this commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God."

You say, "I never do anything against God." Nay, my friend, that is not it: it is not what thou dost not do—it is this, "Dost thou *love* him?" "Well, sir, but I never violate any of the proprieties of religion." No, that is not it, the command is, "Thou shalt *love* him." "Well, sir, but I do a great deal for God; I teach in a Sunday school, and so on." Ah! I know; but dost thou *love* him? It is the heart he wants, and he will not be content without it. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." That is the law, and though no man can keep it since Adam's fall, yet the law is as much binding upon every son of Adam this day, as when God first of all pronounced it. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God."

2. That brings us to the second point—*the measure of this law*. How much am I to love God? Where shall I fix the point? I am to love my neighbor as I love myself. Am I to love my God more than that? Yes, certainly. The measure is even greater. We are not bound to love ourselves with all our mind, and soul, and strength, and therefore we are not bound to love our neighbor so. The measure is a greater one.

We are bound to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

And, we deduce from that, first, that we are to **love God supremely**. Thou art to love thy wife, O husband. Thou canst not love her too much, except in one case, if thou shouldst love her before God, and prefer her pleasure to the pleasure of the Most High. Then wouldst thou be an idolater. Child! Thou art to love thy parents; thou canst not love him too much who begat thee, nor her too much who

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brought thee forth; but remember, there is one law that doth override that. Thou art to love thy God more than thy father or thy mother. He demands thy first, and thy highest affection; thou art to love him **"with all thy heart."**

Say, say hearer, hast thou kept this commandment? I know, I have not; I must plead guilty before God; I must cast myself before him, and acknowledge my transgression. But, nevertheless, there standeth the commandment—

"Thou shalt love God with all thy heart"—that is, thou shalt love him supremely.

Yes, there is to be in our love to God a heartiness. We are to throw our whole selves into the love that we give to him. --- our heart is to have its whole being absorbed into God, so that God is the hearty object of its pursuit and its most mighty love. See how the word **"all"** is repeated again and again. The whole going forth of the being, the whole stirring up of the soul, is to be for God only. "With *all* thy heart."

Again: as we are to love God heartily, we are to love him with *all our souls*. Then we are to love him with all our life; for that is the meaning of it. If we are called to die for God, we are to prefer God before our own life. We shall never reach the fullness of this commandment, till we get as far as the martyrs, who rather than disobey God would be cast into the furnace, or devoured by wild beasts.

And, next we are to love God with all our *mind*. That is, the intellect is to love God. Now, many men believe in the existence of a God, but they do not love that belief. They know there is a God, but they greatly wish there were none. Some of you to-day would be very pleased, ye would set the bells a-ringing, if ye believed there were no God. Why, if there were no God, then you might live just as you liked; if there were no God, then you might run riot and have no fear of future consequences. It would be to you the greatest joy that could be, if you heard that the eternal God had ceased to be.

But the Christian never wishes any such a thing as that. The thought that there is a God is the sunshine of his existence. His intellect bows before the Most High; not like a slave who bends his body because he must, but like the angel who prostrates himself because he loves to adore his Maker.

And, once again, this love to God is to be characterized by *activity*; for we are to love Him with all our heart, heartily—with all our soul, that is, to the laying down of our life—with all our mind, that is mentally; and we are to love him with all our *strength*, that is, *actively*. I am to throw my whole soul into the worship and adoration of God. I am not to keep back a single hour, or a single farthing of my wealth, or a single talent that I have, or a single atom of strength, bodily or mental, from the worship of God. I am to love him with all my strength.

Now, what man ever kept this commandment? Surely, none; and no man ever can keep it. Hence, then, the necessity of a Saviour. O! that we might by this commandment be smitten to the earth, that our self-righteousness may be

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broken in pieces by this great hammer of "the first and great commandment!" But oh! my brethren, how may we wish that we could keep it! for, could we keep this command intact, unbroken, it would be a heaven below. The happiest of creatures are those that are the most holy, and that unreservedly love God.

3. And now, very briefly, I have just to state *God's claim* upon which he bases this commandment. "Thou shalt love him with all thy heart, soul, mind, strength." Why? First, because he is the Lord—that is, Jehovah; and secondly, because he is thy God.

Man, creature of a day, thou oughtest to love Jehovah *for what he is*.

Mark ye him who spread the earth, and created man upon it. And hear ye what he is. He is all-sufficient, eternal, self-existent, unchangeable, omnipotent, omniscient! Wilt thou not reverence him? He is good, he is loving, he is kind, he is gracious. See the bounties of his providence; behold the plenitude of his grace! Wilt thou not love Jehovah, because he is Jehovah?

But thou art most of all bound to love him *because he is thy God*. He is thy God *by creation*. He made thee; thou didst not make thyself.

Again, consider, he is *thy* God, for *he preserves thee*. Thy table is spread, but he spread it for thee. The air that thou dost breathe is a gift of his charity; the clothes that thou hast on thy back are gifts of his love; thy life depends on him.

II. This is what the commandment says to us. I shall be very short indeed upon the second head, which is, WHAT HAVE WE TO SAY TO IT?

What hast thou to say to this command, O man? Have I one here so profoundly brainless as to reply, "I intend to keep it, and I believe I can perfectly obey it, and I think I can get to heaven by obedience to it?" Man, thou art either a fool, or else willfully ignorant; for sure, if thou dost understand this commandment, thou wilt at once hang down thine hands, and say,

"Obedience to that is quite impossible; thorough and perfect obedience to that no man can hope to reach to! Some of you think you will go to heaven by your good works, do you? --- But remember, you cannot be saved by your works, if you can not obey this entirely, perfectly, constantly, forever.

"Well," says one, "I dare say if I try and obey it as well as I can, that will do." No, sir, it will not. God demands that you perfectly obey this, and if you do not perfectly obey it he will condemn you. "Oh!" cries one, "who then can be saved?"

Ah! that is the point to which I wish to bring you. Who, then can be saved by this law? Why, no one in the world.

Salvation by the works of the law is proved to be a clean impossibility.

"Oh!" saith he to the commandment, "Commandment I cannot keep thee, but my Saviour kept thee, and what my Saviour did, he did for all them that believe; and now, O law, what Jesus did is mine. Hast thou any question to bring against me? Thou demandest that I should keep this commandment wholly: lo, my Saviour

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kept it wholly for me, and he is my substitute; what I cannot do myself my Saviour has done for me; thou canst not reject the work of the substitute, for God accepted it in the day when he raised him from the dead.

And after that—and here I conclude—O child of God, I know what thou wilt say; after thou hast seen the law satisfied by Jesus thou wilt fall on thy knees and say, "Lord, I thank thee that this law cannot condemn me, for I believe in Jesus. But now, Lord, help me from this time forth for ever to keep it.

Lord, give me a new heart, for this old heart never will love thee! Lord, give me a new life, for this old life is too vile. Lord, give me a new understanding; wash my mind with the clean water of the Spirit; come and dwell in my judgment, my memory, my thought; and then give me the new strength of thy Spirit, and then will I love thee with all my new heart, with all my new life, with all my renewed mind, and with all my spiritual strength, from this time forth, even for evermore."

*Charles Spurgeon was known as the Prince of Preachers, the greatest preacher of his time. Before he was 20 Charles had preached over 600 times. He typically read six books a week, His personal library contained 12,000 volumes, 1,000 of which had been printed before 1700. Spurgeon's Sunday sermons were delivered extemporaneously from rarely more than a one page outline - all 4500 seats filled and people congregating outside to hear his words. His sermons were taken down in shorthand by a secretary and revised by him on Monday mornings - then published every Thursday, translated and sold as far as Australia and America. In 1865 Spurgeon's sermons were selling 25,000 copies every week. They were translated into more than 20 languages. Spurgeon's sermons were issued weekly until 1917, by which time sales had totaled over 100 million copies. Paraphrased from information available at:
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Conclusion

This study approached *'seeking fulfillment in life from a higher vantage point, like climbing to the summit where love and God are at the top'*. From the basis of the Love & Fulfillment survey *'we addressed the mountain peaks'* of:

Worldview - Attitude - Truth - Motivation & Purpose

The greatest commandment challenges us to love with our ALL.

*'Love the Lord your God, with all your heart,
and with all your soul and*

with all your mind and with all your strength’.
And love your neighbor as yourself.

One can conclude that doing so requires:

God to be: forefront in our worldview, seen as *‘the Way, the Truth and the Life’* (John 14:6); and love to be: the core of our attitude, motivation and purpose.

The first question in the Love & Fulfillment Survey is *‘How important is love in your life?’* followed by *‘What’s more important than love...?’* The survey also asks how well we do in the areas of loving our self, our neighbor and God.

Another conclusion may be there’s always room to improve one’s ability to love. This project also set out to look at *‘the walls surrounding the subject of love’*.

With the *‘hope of expanding the space, the capacity to love, in order to live out God’s greatest command and realize ultimate fulfillment in doing so’*.

Connections and conclusions by the author and reader have been drawn throughout these preceding pages needing no reiteration. However, the two key

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questions posed by Spurgeon in 1857 deserve restating.

‘What saith this (greatest) commandment unto us? - And, What say we unto it?’

‘In the twilight of our lives, we will be judged on how we have loved.’

St. John of the Cross

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Appendix 1

Love & Fulfillment Survey

This survey is being used to gather information for a Philosophy dissertation with a Divinity focus.

1.) How important is love in your life?

☐ Unimportant ☐ Not very ☐ Somewhat ☐ Important ☐ Very Important

2.) Other than your survival & health and that of your family & friends ... what is more important than love in your life?

3.) How well do you love yourself?

☐ Not At All ☐ Not Well ☐ Somewhat ☐ Fairly Well ☐ Very Well

4.) How well do you love your 'neighbor' as yourself?

☐ Not At All ☐ Not Well ☐ Somewhat ☐ Fairly Well ☐ Very Well

5.) Do you have a role model or someone you pattern your life after?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6.) If you answered Yes to #5 please specify:

7.) How certain are you of:

	Uncertain	Somewhat Certain	Very Certain
a. Your spiritual origin?	—	—	—
b. Your purpose in life?	—	—	—
c. Your final destination?	—	—	—

8.) Do you believe in God as the creator of the universe and all that is in it?

☐ No ☐ Doubtful ☐ Perhaps ☐ Yes

9.) Do you believe God is love and the source of love?

☐ No ☐ Doubtful ☐ Perhaps ☐ Yes

10.) How well do you love God with your whole heart, soul, mind and strength?

☐ Not At All ☐ Not Well ☐ Somewhat ☐ Fairly Well ☐ Very Well

11.) Do you have a Religious or Spiritual Affiliation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

12.) If you answered Yes to #11 ... please specify:

☐ Christian ☐ Jewish ☐ Islam ☐ Hinduism ☐ Buddhist
☐ Other...please specify

13.) Please rate your participation in communal religious or spiritual activity:

☐ None ☐ Low ☐ Medium ☐ Medium High ☐ High

14.) What do you do to maintain and/or increase your ability to give and receive love?

15.) Please rate your general life satisfaction level:

☐ Low ☐ Medium Low ☐ Medium ☐ Medium High ☐ High

16.) Please provide your age:

☐ 16-24 ☐ 25-39 ☐ 40-54 ☐ 55-70 ☐ Over 70

17.) Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

18.) Nationality: ☐ American ☐ Asian ☐ European (inc. British) ☐ African
☐ Middle Eastern ☐ South American ☐ Australian/New Zealand ☐ Other ...

19.) Has this survey affected your thinking about love?

☐ No ☐ Somewhat ☐ Yes

20.) Your additional thoughts or comments related to this survey are welcome.

Thank you for your time and participation!

