

**Don't Conform.
Be Transformed!**

The Journal Entries
from a
BELIEVER
in God

Commentary By:

Anthony Coleman

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“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to understand God's will-- His good, pleasing and perfect will.”

- Romans 12:2

Disclaimer: I will be honest and say that I don't understand everything that's in the Bible, but I don't think we need to in order to have faith. The main message is most important!

“The Scriptures (Bible) were written to teach and encourage us to have hope.” - Romans 15:4

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Prologue:

For the longest time, there have been two questions that I've been trying to answer. The questions are:

1. Why is there evil in the world?
2. When Satan rebelled in Heaven, why did God send him to Earth instead of Hell?

It took a while, but I think I've finally found those answers! I believe the *Book of Job* is the key! Allow me to explain...

In the *Book of Job*, Satan appeared before God and God asked Satan about his thoughts on a righteous man named Job. God was very pleased with Job, but Satan said that the main reason why Job is righteous is because God blessed him with so much. Satan concluded that if God was to remove those blessings, Job will curse God. God accepted Satan's wager and as we know, Satan lost the wager because Job had remained faithful.

Now, what if this story is telling us EXACTLY what happened in the beginning during Satan's rebellion? Let me explain further...

I believe that God and Satan had a wager about God creating humanity! I believe that when God announced that He was going to create humanity, Satan basically said the same thing to God about Job. I imagine Satan saying something like,

"If you create humanity in a state of pure bliss (*Garden of Eden*), they will obviously follow you because they will have nothing to challenge their conviction. However, if you create them in a state where they are surrounded by negative influences, I bet they won't follow you. They will go their own way, reject you, commit sin, and you would have to punish them. Humanity is a flawed creation."

Because God knows His children will prevail, He accepted Satan's wager and allowed Satan to be the one to influence humanity to go against Him. So, evil/corruption is in the world because that is

the influence of Satan to make us lose faith (*Or stop us from having faith*) in God, and the reason why Satan is on Earth is because God accepted his request to test/accuse us.

I believe that God could easily make His existence known to us if He wanted to, but that would defeat the purpose of Satan's wager. The whole purpose is for us to find and maintain our faith in God while we live in a reality of negative influences. Only those who find/maintain their faith in God will pass Satan's test and will be considered God's children!

Bible verses that supports this theory:

- "Jesus said, 'Simon, listen to me! Satan has demanded the right to test each one of you, as a farmer does when he separates wheat from the husks.'"

- *Luke 22:31 (CEV)*

- "But the dragon lost the battle. It and its angels were forced out of their places in Heaven and were thrown down to the

Earth. Yes, that old snake and his angels were thrown out of Heaven! That snake, who fools everyone on Earth, is known as the devil and Satan. Then I heard a voice from Heaven shout, 'Our God has shown His saving power, and His Kingdom has come! God's own Chosen One has shown His authority. Satan accused our people in the presence of God day and night. Now he has been thrown out!'"

- *Revelation 12:8-10 (CEV)*

• "I was given another vision. This time Joshua the high priest was standing in front of the Lord's angel. And there was Satan, standing at Joshua's right side, ready to accuse him. But the Lord said, 'Satan, you are wrong. Jerusalem is My chosen city, and this man was rescued like a stick from a flaming fire.'"

- *Zechariah 3:1-2 (CEV)*

• "This is what the story means: The seed is God's message, and the seeds that fell along the road are the people who hear the message. But the devil comes and snatches the message out of their hearts,

so that they will not believe and be saved."

- *Luke 8:11-12 (CEV)*

- *Genesis 3:1-6, 13*

- *Job 1:6-12, Job 2:1-7*

- *Mark 4:12-17*

Part 1:

Faith
In
Love

Entry:

#1

"Jesus said, 'Thomas, do you have faith because you have seen me? The people who have faith in me without seeing me are the ones who are really blessed!'"

- *John 20:29 (CEV)*

Did you read the verse above?! Did you know that? If having faith is expected in order to know God/Jesus, then why are there people who say they cannot know God unless they have physical evidence? Doesn't the verse above prove that finding physical evidence for God is unnecessary and futile?

Don't be deceived! Having faith *is* the only way to truly see/know God!

"You have never seen Jesus, and you don't see him now.
But still you love him and have faith in him."

- *1 Peter 1:8 (CEV)*

Entry:

#2

"Jesus said, 'I came into this world to give sight to those who cannot see, and to take away sight from those who can.'"

- *John 9:39*

We live in a reality where we do not need to have faith in God/Jesus to survive. However, that is intentional. Only those who seek life beyond survival will have faith.

"Faith gives us confidence in what we hope for, and we are convinced by the things we don't see.

We hope for something we have not yet seen and we patiently wait for it."

- *Hebrews 11:1, Romans 8:25 (CEV)*

"We live by faith, not by what we see."

- *2 Corinthians 5:7 (CEV)*

"Things that are seen don't last forever, but things that are not seen are eternal. That's why we keep our minds on the things that cannot be seen."

- *2 Corinthians 4:18 (CEV)*

Entry:

#3

Why is faith so important?

Since we live in an unjust world, having faith in God basically says, "we DO NOT accept this unjust world as it is and we have hope that God will correct everything in the end."

When we reject having faith in God, we are basically saying, "we DO accept this unjust world as it is and having hope that everything will be corrected in the end is just wishful thinking."

"Only a fool would say, 'There is no God.'"

- Psalm 14:1 (CEV)

Entry:

#4

When we have faith in God, it isn't just because He is our Creator (*And Savior*), but also because He represents the objective standard of what's right (AKA *Truth*).

**"God's righteousness is an everlasting righteousness,
and His standard is truth."**

- Psalm 119:142

Entry:

#5

God created humanity for the simple fact of inviting us to enjoy His goodness in Heaven for eternity! It's like He is sending out invitations to His party in Heaven and the only ones who can get into the party are those who have their invitations with them. Unlike earthly invitations that can be stolen or forged, God sends spiritual invitations, and to see if you have accepted His invitation, He looks within your heart to see if you have faith!

"We have everything we need to live a life that pleases God. It was all given to us by God's own power, when we learned that He had invited us to share in His wonderful goodness."

- 2 Peter 1:3 (CEV)

"God will say to His children, 'Wonderful! You are good and faithful. Come and share in My happiness!'"

- Matthew 25:23

Entry:

#6

"God doesn't see like humans do: Humans look at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart."

- *1 Samuel 16:7*

"Lord God, You know what is in everyone's heart. So from Your home in Heaven answer their prayers, according to the way they live and what is in their hearts."

- *1 Kings 8:39 (CEV)*

Your heart represents what you cherish in your life. So, make sure your heart has faith towards love!

"Your heart will always be where your treasure is."

- *Luke 12:34 (CEV)*

Entry:

#7

"Jesus said, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. This is the first and most important commandment. The second most important commandment is as important as the first. And it is: Love others as much as you love yourself.'"

- *Matthew 22:37-39*

Do you know how you can tell if you have genuine faith in God? When you can honestly say you (*strive to*) love God, love others, and love yourself. Remember the reason why God created us: *To experience His love that will lead us to perfect peace and unity for eternity!*

There are many who don't have genuine faith because they don't truly understand love. For example, there are those who claim to love God and yet hate others. Do you know why that's impossible? Read verse:

"But if we say we love God and don't love each other, we are liars. We cannot see God. So how can we love God, if we don't love the people we can see?"

- 1 John 4:20 (CEV)

So, if you are someone who is striving to have genuine faith in God, then please know what love is!

Entry:

#8

"Out of faith, hope and love, love is most important. Love is more important than anything else. It is what ties everything completely together."

- 1 Corinthians 13:13, Colossians 3:14 (CEV)

It's love that inspires and leads us to peace & unity! How so? *Because love is the embodiment of goodness. (And to love someone means to cherish the goodness within them.)*

Let's look at a few good acts of love:

- *Discipline*
- *Honesty*
- *Empathy*
- *Justice*
- *Forgiveness*
- *Respect*

Each of these good acts represents the goodness within us and if we want to achieve peace & unity, then we must cherish these good acts in our lives!

"Love should be your guide."

- 1 Corinthians 14:1 (CEV)

Entry:

#9

We were created in the image of God, which means we were created for the purpose of representing love/goodness in our lives. However, in order to represent the goodness within us, we must have it in our hearts to desire righteousness.

**"He is the Rock, His work is perfect;
He loves justice and fairness, for all His ways are just.
A God of truth and love. He is without injustice;
Righteous and upright is He."**

- Deuteronomy 32:4, Psalm 33:5, 2 Corinthians 13:11

"God created men and women to be like Himself. He gave them His blessing and called them human beings."

- Genesis 5:1-2 (CEV)

"You know the Lord is God! He created us, and we belong to Him; we are His people, the sheep in His pasture."

- Psalm 100:3 (CEV)

Entry:

#10

What is it that will cause us to desire righteousness? If we have free will to do whatever we want in life, what would motivate us to use our free will to do what's right?

"Everywhere on Earth I saw violence and injustice instead of fairness and justice. So I told myself that God has set a day when He will judge all people on Earth with fairness and justice. Each and every one of us will give an account to God for our lives."

- *Ecc. 3:16 (CEV), Acts 17:31, Matt. 12:36, Rom. 14:12, 2:16*

If we humble ourselves, we will realize that life isn't fair. However, we can respond one of two ways: 1. *Life isn't fair, but it is what it is.* OR 2. *Life isn't fair and it's not right.*

If your response is #2, then you are on the path towards righteousness. Life is unfair, but since love exist, we can conclude that God will (*must*) enact justice!

Entry:

#11

Did you know that the Kingdom of God
(*Heaven*) could also be called the
Kingdom of Love?

"Then a Kingdom of Love
will be set up,
and someone from David's family (*Jesus*)
will rule with fairness.
He will do what is right
and quickly bring justice."
- *Isaiah 16:5 (CEV)*

"God's Kingdom of Love will be ruled with justice and
fairness; truth and love will be the foundation."
- *Psalms 89:14*

"God's Kingdom of Love is about justice, peace, and joy."
- *Romans 14:17*

"Jesus said, 'I tell you for certain that you must be born
again (*be a child of God*) before you can see
God's Kingdom of Love!'"
- *John 3:3*

Entry:

#12

Did you know you need wisdom in order to love? Why? Because wisdom is to discern what's right from wrong.

**"With wisdom you will learn
what is right
and honest and fair."**

- Proverbs 2:9 (CEV)

**"Please make me wise and teach me the difference
between right and wrong."**

- 1 Kings 3:9 (CEV)

**"Are any of you wise or sensible? Then show it by living
right and by being humble and wise in everything you do."**

- James 3:13 (CEV)

Entry:

#13

"Respect and obey the Lord!
This is the beginning of wisdom."
- *Proverbs 9:10 (CEV)*

Why is respecting and obeying God the beginning of wisdom? Because God represents the (*objective*) standard of what's right!

Entry:

#14

"If any of you need wisdom, you should ask God,
and it will be given to you."

- *James 1:5 (CEV)*

If we continually seek wisdom, God will
give it to us if we seek with a humble heart.

"Be humble in the Lord's presence, and He will honor you."

- *James 4:10 (CEV)*

Entry:

#15

"Wisdom will be found by all who honestly search."

- *Proverbs 8:17*

"Jesus said, 'Search, and you will find.

Everyone who searches will find.'"

- *Matthew 7:7-8*

The purpose of wisdom is to know truth, but truth isn't for everyone to know. Truth is only for those who are willing to seek it. Why? Because only God's children will yearn for God's justice, righteousness, peace, and love.

"God has done all this, so that we will look for Him and reach out and find Him. He isn't far from any of us."

- *Acts 17:27 (CEV)*

"God is close to everyone who calls on Him, everyone who calls on Him in truth."

- *Psalms 145:18*

Entry:

#16

What is truth? *Truth is the objective standard of what's right* and once we embrace truth, we will embrace love, which will then lead us to embrace God!

"Love truth."

- *Zechariah 8:19 (CEV)*

"We love because the truth is now in our hearts,
and it will be there forever."

- *2 John 1:2 (CEV)*

"When we love others, we know that we belong to the
truth, and we feel at ease in the presence of God."

- *1 John 3:19 (CEV)*

Entry:

#17

"Love and truth are joined together."

- *Psalm 85:10*

"Love rejoices in the truth,
but not in evil."

- *1 Corinthians 13:6 (CEV)*

"But God will show how angry and furious He can be with
every selfish person who rejects the truth
and wants to do evil."

- *Romans 2:8 (CEV)*

Since truth is the objective standard of what's right, love is forever without evil and corruption. Also, keep in mind that if we ever reject love, we are actually rejecting God Himself!

"Whoever doesn't choose love doesn't know God,
because God is love."

- *1 John 4:8*

Entry:

#18

As we can see, God's character represents truth and love. Because we are created in God's image, we must never stray away from the standard that God has set for Himself.

"We must follow the truth and not fight against it."

- 2 Corinthians 13:8

**"Invest in truth and wisdom,
discipline and good sense,
and don't part with them."**

- Proverbs 23:23 (CEV)

**"Finally, my friends, keep your minds on whatever is true,
pure, right, holy, good, and proper. Don't ever stop
thinking about what is truly worthwhile
and worthy of praise."**

- Philippians 4:8 (CEV)

Entry:

#19

"We're to honor the Father in spirit and in truth.
For God is Spirit."

- *John 4:23-24*

"The Lord and the Spirit are one and the same, and the
Lord's Spirit sets us free."

- *2 Corinthians 3:17 (CEV)*

"You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

- *John 8:32 (CEV)*

"God has given us His Spirit. The Spirit is truth."

- *1 Corinthians 2:12 (CEV), 1 John 5:6*

"Jesus said, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life!

Without me, no one can go to the Father.

My Father and I are one.'"

- *John 14:6 (CEV), John 10:30*

Based on the verses above, *The Father*,
The Son, and *The Holy Spirit* are one with
truth!

Entry:

#20

"The Spirit will show you the truth. The (*lost*) people of this world cannot accept the Spirit, because they don't see or know Him."

- John 14:17

When we seek truth, we are actually seeking God Himself. That's why we must seek truth with a humble and faithful heart.

"God said, 'When you search for Me, you will find Me; if you seek Me with all your heart.

If you draw near to Me, I will draw near to you.'"

- Jeremiah 29:13, James 4:8

"The Lord looks for those who are wise enough to search for Him."

- Psalm 14:2

"But without faith no one can please God. We must believe that God is real and that He rewards everyone who searches for Him."

- Hebrews 11:6 (CEV)

Entry:

#21

"When we have the Spirit, we have love, joy, peace,
patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
gentleness, and self-control."

- *Galatians 5:22-23*

Do you see how all of this is connected?!
God is love and God's Spirit is revealed
when we faithfully embrace the good acts
of love!

"Love is patient, love is kind, love is generous,
love is humble, love is respect,
love is selfless, love is forgiveness."

- *1 Corinthians 13:4-5*

"Do your best to improve your faith. You can do this by
adding goodness, understanding, self-control, patience,
devotion to God, concern for others, and love."

- *2 Peter 1:5-7 (CEV)*

"We must have genuine love, as well as a
good conscience and true faith."

- *1 Timothy 1:5*

Entry:

#22

"The Lord rewards people who are faithful and live right."

- *1 Samuel 26:23 (CEV)*

"I, the Lord, look for honest people
who try to be faithful."

- *Jeremiah 5:1*

Remember, our faith is a statement that we seek more than what this reality can give us. Our purpose in life goes beyond this world, so don't try to become content in this life without faith! If you do, God won't honor you.

"I, the Lord, refuse to accept
anyone who is proud.

Only those who live by faith
are acceptable to Me."

- *Habakkuk 2:4 (CEV)*

Entry:

#23

"The Spirit makes us sure that God will accept us because of our faith in Christ. God wants us to have faith in His Son Jesus Christ and to love each other."

- *Galatians 5:5 (CEV), 1 John 3:23 (CEV)*

Do you know why Jesus is the foundation of our faith? Because He is the Son of God, He represents absolute truth & love, and most importantly, He was the One who saved us from sin!

"For God showed His love for us in this:
While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

- *Romans 5:8*

"God loved the people of this world so much that He gave His one and only Son, and whoever believes in His Son will not perish but will have eternal life."

- *John 3:16*

"Christ is the only foundation and only he has the power to save! That's why his name is the only one in all the world that we can be saved by."

- *1 Corinthians 3:11 (CEV), Acts 4:12*

Part 2:

We
Are
Saved

Entry:

#24

"Adam sinned, and that sin brought death into the world.
Now everyone has sinned, and so everyone must die."
- *Romans 5:12 (CEV)*

Why is sin so serious? Because it is the direct cause of *all* corruption in our reality that was intended solely for truth and love. Sin is the violation of an absolute, perfect standard of righteousness and the only penalty for such violation is death (*The separation from life, love, and God*). Since we all have done something that violated God's standard, we were all headed for death, but that was before Jesus rescued us!

"Everyone was going to be punished because Adam sinned. But because of the good thing that Christ has done, God accepts us and gives us the gift of life."
- *Romans 5:18 (CEV)*

Entry:

#25

"My friends, live as people who are free, but don't use your freedom as an excuse to do wrong. Live to be children of God! You were chosen to be free, but don't use your freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want. Use it as an opportunity to serve each other with love. All the commandments of God can be summed up in the command to, 'Love others as much as you love yourself.'"

- 1 Peter 2:16, Galatians 5:13-14 (CEV)

Here is the truth: The purpose of our free will is to choose love. However, if we reject love, then we will be brought to justice and judgment. Why? Because we aren't doing what we're meant to do. We're meant to do what's right, not do whatever we want!

"From Heaven God shows how angry He is with all the wicked and evil things that sinful people do to crush the truth."

- Romans 1:18 (CEV)

"The Spirit will come and show the people of this world the truth about sin, God's justice, and the judgment."

- John 16:8 (CEV)

Entry:

#26

"If you don't do what you know is right, you have sinned."

- James 4:17 (CEV)

Since truth isn't clearly evident in the world, it can feel like we didn't do anything wrong whenever we violate it. That's why we have to humble ourselves and realize that if we ever thought/said/did something that wasn't based in love, then we are guilty. We must not fool ourselves! Let's be honest and strive towards faith!

"If we say that we have not sinned, we are fooling ourselves, and the truth isn't in our hearts. But if we confess our sins to God, He can always be trusted to forgive us and take our sins away."

- 1 John 1:8-9 (CEV)

"No sacrifices can be made for people who decide to sin after they find out about the truth. They are God's enemies, and all they can look forward to is a terrible judgment and a furious fire."

- Hebrews 10:26-27 (CEV)

Entry:

#27

"There are those who are pure in their own eyes,
yet are not washed from their sin."

- *Proverbs 30:12*

It's so easy to believe that we are "good" based on our own standard. We think that as long as we don't murder, rape, or steal, we aren't that bad. However, our standard is NOT God's standard (*Truth*). If we ever did something as small as told a white lie or said something disrespectful to someone, we have sinned and are guilty of death (*The separation from life, love, and God*). Why such a harsh punishment for "small" offenses? Because God's standard is perfection!

"Tell the people that they can be saved when
their sins are forgiven."

- *Luke 1:77*

"Jesus said, 'You must be perfect,
as your heavenly Father is perfect.'"

- *Matthew 5:48*

Entry:

#28

"You are stained with guilt (*sin*), and no soap or bleach can wash it away."

- Jeremiah 2:22

Sin is like a permanent mark on our soul and as long as we have that mark, we cannot have the life God intended for us to have. So, let's not be arrogant and believe there's something we can do to remove that mark of sin because it's impossible! The only One who can remove that mark is Jesus/God, which is why we have faith in Him!

"God said, 'Don't think you can start calling yourself good just because of the good you did in the past. You will still be punished because of your sins. Your good acts will be forgotten. Without Me, all of your good acts are like filthy rags.'"

- Ezekiel 33:13, Isaiah 64:6

"But you cannot make God accept you because of something you do. God accepts sinners only because they have faith in Him."

- Romans 4:5 (CEV)

Entry:

#29

"The Pharisees and the religious teachers said to themselves, 'Who does Jesus think he is? He speaks blasphemy! He must think he is God! Only God can forgive sins.'"

- Luke 5:21

If you offend someone, only the person you offended can forgive you. That's why Jesus is God and not just a man. If Jesus was just a man, how could He even have the audacity to think that He could forgive those who offended (*Sinned against*) God? If He was just a man, surely He was a sinner Himself, which makes Him a hypocrite. However, Jesus wasn't just a man!

"Jesus said, 'Go and sin no more. But if you do sin, I'm always willing to forgive you!'"

- John 8:11, 1 John 2:1-2

"Before the world was created, God chose Christ Jesus to come into the world to forgive sinners."

- 1 Timothy 1:15, 1 Peter 1:20

Entry:

#30

"Jesus said, 'I promise you that any of the sinful things you say or do can be forgiven, no matter how terrible those things are.'"

- *Mark 3:28 (CEV)*

Now, it's time to put emphasis on the Good News (*God's message*)! It's true that the moment when we sin, we will receive the permanent mark of sin which will lead us to death (*The separation from life, love, and God*). The Good News is that because of what Jesus/God did, the mark of sin has no power over us anymore! We have been set free! We have been forgiven! We are saved!

"But Christ offered himself as a sacrifice that is good forever. By his one sacrifice he has forever set free from sin the people he brings to God."

- *Hebrews 10:12,14 (CEV)*

"God said, 'I will forgive you so completely that your sin and guilt will disappear, never to be found.'"

- *Jeremiah 50:20 (CEV)*

Entry:

#31

"The god who rules this world (*Satan*) has blinded the minds of unbelievers. They cannot see the light, which is the good news about our glorious Christ."

- *2 Corinthians 4:4*

Yes! The Good News is that we are saved from sin! However, only when we have faith can we be saved, which means that those who do not have faith are still under the power of sin/Satan.

"The devil rules the world, and his spirit has power over everyone who doesn't obey God."

- *Ephesians 2:2 (CEV)*

"Jesus said, 'Go and preach the good news to everyone in the world. I want you to open the eyes of those who are lost, so that they will turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Then their sins will be forgiven, and by faith in me they will become part of God's holy people.'"

- *Mark 16:15 (CEV), Acts 26:18 (CEV)*

Entry:

#32

"We are certain that we come from God and that the rest of the world is under the power of the devil."

- 1 John 5:19 (CEV)

"Children, don't be fooled. Anyone who does right is good, just like Christ himself. Anyone who keeps on sinning belongs to the devil. He has sinned from the beginning, but the Son of God came to destroy all that he has done. God's children cannot keep on being sinful. His life-giving power lives in them and makes them His children, so that they cannot keep on sinning. You can tell God's children from the devil's children, because those who belong to the devil refuse to do right or to love each other."

- 1 John 3:7-10 (CEV)

As we can see from the verses above, either we belong to God or belong to Satan. Who do you belong to?

"If we belong to God, then He will rescue us from the dark power of Satan and bring us into His dear Son's Kingdom, who forgives our sins and sets us free."

- Colossians 1:13-14

Entry:

#33

"Jesus said, 'You cannot serve two masters! You will like one more than the other or be more loyal to one than the other. You cannot serve both God and the world.'"

- *Matthew 6:24*

"Jesus said, 'Do you think that I came to bring peace on Earth? No indeed! I came to make people choose sides.'"

- *Luke 12:51 (CEV)*

If you really think we are here in the world to do what we want, you are sorely mistaken! We are here to make a choice: *To embrace God and reject the world OR to embrace the world and reject God.*

"You people aren't faithful to God! Don't you know that if you love the world, you are God's enemies? And if you decide to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God."

- *James 4:4 (CEV)*

"Jesus said, 'If you are not with me, then you are against me.'"

- *Luke 11:23*

Entry:

#34

God wants everyone to be saved, but not everyone will accept Him. Only a few will accept Him and those few are called God's chosen.

"Many are invited, but only a few are chosen."

- Matthew 22:14 (CEV)

"I beg, encourage, and urge each of you to live in a way that would honor God. He is the One who chose you to share in His own Kingdom and glory."

- 1 Thessalonians 2:12 (CEV)

"God shows how glorious He is when He has pity on the people He has chosen to share in His glory. Whether Jews or Gentiles, we are those chosen ones."

- Romans 9:23-24 (CEV)

"We know that God is always at work for the good of everyone who loves Him. They are the ones God has chosen for His purpose, and He has always known who His chosen ones would be."

- Romans 8:28-29 (CEV)

Entry:

#35

Just because you claim to accept God does not mean you are one of God's chosen. Remember, God sees the heart and He will know if your faith is true or false.

"Jesus said, 'Not everyone who calls me their Lord will get into the Kingdom of Heaven. Only the ones who obey my Father in Heaven will get in. On the day of judgment many will call me their Lord. They will say: We preached in your name, and in your name we forced out demons and worked many miracles. But I will tell them:

I will have nothing to do with you!

Get out of my sight, you evil people!'"

- *Matthew 7:21-23 (CEV)*

"Dear friends, don't believe everyone who claims to have the Spirit of God. Test them all to find out if they really do come from God. Many false prophets have already gone out into the world. And it is no wonder. Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light."

- *1 John 4:1 (CEV), 2 Corinthians 11:14*

But how can we know that our faith in God is genuine? By what we do!

**"There are people who claim to know God, but their actions
prove that they really don't."**

- Titus 1:16

**"Jesus said, 'Why do you keep on saying that I am your
Lord, when you refuse to do what I say?
If you love me, you will do as I command'"**

- Luke 6:46 (CEV), John 14:15 (CEV)

**"My friends, how can you say you have faith, when you
don't do anything to show that you have faith? How can
that kind of faith save you? Faith that doesn't
lead us to do good acts is dead!"**

- James 2:14,17

**"Do something that shows you have
repented of your sins and turned to God."**

- Matthew 3:8

**"If we truly love God, our sins will be forgiven;
if we show Him respect, we will keep away from sin."**

- Proverbs 16:6 (CEV)

**"Test yourselves and find out if you really are true to your
faith. If you pass the test, you will discover that
Christ is living in you. But if Christ isn't
living in you, you have failed."**

- 2 Corinthians 13:5 (CEV)

Part 3:

Spread
The
Word

Entry:

#36

"God said, 'Preach My message to the people. Do it willingly, even if it isn't the popular thing to do. You must correct people and point out their sins, whether they choose to listen or not.'"

- *Ezekiel 2:7, 2 Timothy 4:2*

In order for people to appreciate a solution to a problem, they must first be aware of the problem. Because so many people don't take the problem of corruption/sin seriously, they won't appreciate God's message/solution. However, even if they don't appreciate it, we (*As God's chosen*) must share the Word because it's their only hope and only solution!

"Preach to the people and say,
'Stop sinning and turn to God!'"

- *Acts 26:20*

"Make sure to preach the truth in love."

- *Ephesians 4:15*

Entry:

#37

"Anyone who belongs to God will listen to His message.
But if you refuse to listen, it's because
you don't belong to God."

- *John 8:47 (CEV)*

"Those who reject God's message will say: 'Don't tell us what God has shown you and don't preach the truth. Just say what we want to hear, even if it's false. Stop telling us what God has said! We don't want to hear any more about God. We don't care! We have made plans to sin, and we are going to be stubborn and do what we want!'"

- *Isaiah 30:10-11 (CEV), Jeremiah 18:12*

Because our reality is such a captivating illusion, many people will reject God's message. Only those who seek *and* accept the truth beyond this reality will heed God's message!

"Jesus said, 'I was born for one purpose: To bear witness to the truth. Whoever accepts the truth hears my voice.'"

- *John 18:37*

Entry:

#38

"We, God's chosen, have heard the message, just as those who are lost did. But they failed to believe what they heard, and the message did not do them any good. God's message doesn't make any sense to lost people."

- *Hebrews 4:2, 1 Corinthians 1:18 (CEV)*

"In fact, God thinks of His chosen as a perfume that brings Christ to everyone. For people who are being saved, this perfume has a sweet smell and leads them to a better life.

But for people who are lost, it has a bad smell and leads them to a horrible death."

- *2 Corinthians 2:15-16 (CEV)*

Don't refuse God's message! Once you have heard it, seek to understand it. Study it. Embrace it. Be saved by it!

"Jesus said, 'Go in through the narrow gate. The gate to destruction is wide, and the road that leads there is easy to follow. A lot of people go through that gate. But the gate to life is very narrow. The road that leads there is so hard to follow that only a few people (*God's chosen*) find it. I tell you, make every effort to enter through the narrow gate, because many will try to enter and will not be able to.'"

- *Matthew 7:13-14 (CEV), Luke 13:24*

Entry:

#39

"Memorize God's message and tell it to your children over and over again."

- Deuteronomy 6:6-7

If we claim to have accepted God's message and we also happen to be parents, then one of our top priorities as God's chosen is to instill the message of God in our children. They will be the ones who will continue to share the Word of God!

"Parents, raise your children properly. Teach them and instruct them about the Lord."

- Ephesians 6:4

"Teach children to take the right path, and when they're older, they will not turn away from it."

- Proverbs 22:6

Entry:

#40

In our world/reality, there's so much corruption and corruption happens when people reject God's message, but what exactly does that corruption look like?

"People will love only themselves and money. They will be proud, stuck-up, rude, and disobedient to their parents.

They will also be ungrateful, godless, heartless, and hateful. Their words will be cruel, and they will have no self-control or pity. These people will hate everything that is good. They will be sneaky, reckless, and puffed up with pride. Instead of loving God, they will love pleasure. Even though they will make a show of being religious, their religion won't be real."

- 2 Timothy 3:2-5 (CEV)

"People will do all sorts of indecent things. They are godless, wicked, and greedy, as well as mean in every possible way. They want what others have, and they murder, argue, cheat, and are hard to get along with. They gossip, say cruel things about others, and hate God.

They are proud, conceited, and boastful, always thinking of new ways to do wrong. They are foolish, unreliable, and don't have any love or pity for others."

- Romans 1:28-31

Entry:

#41

If we obey our worldly desires, of course we will reject God's message. However, don't forget that those of us who have accepted God's message used to follow our worldly desires as well!

"You have turned from your own desires and want to obey God for the rest of your life, but you once lived like people who don't know God. You were immoral and followed your evil desires."

- 1 Peter 4:2-3

"Once we were also ruled by the selfish desires of our bodies and minds. We had made God angry, and we were going to be punished like everyone else."

- Ephesians 2:3 (CEV)

We have a great advantage of reaching lost people with God's message! How so? Because we can relate, since we were once lost!

Entry:

#42

Know that we are influenced by our worldly desires to reject God's message!

"People's desires make them give in to immoral ways, filthy thoughts, and shameful deeds. They worship idols, practice witchcraft, hate others, and are hard to get along with. People become jealous, angry, and selfish. They not only argue and cause trouble, but they are envious.

They get drunk, get crazy at wild parties,
and do other evil things as well."

- *Galatians 5:19-21 (CEV)*

But how do we stop obeying our worldly desires?

"First seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness!"

- *Matthew 6:33*

"If you are guided by God's Spirit, you won't obey your selfish desires. The Spirit and your desires are enemies of each other. They are always fighting each other."

- *Galatians 5:16-17 (CEV)*

Entry:

#43

"My dear friends, we must not live to satisfy our worldly desires. If you do, you will die. But you will live, if by the help of God's Spirit you say 'No' to your desires. Only those people who are led by God's Spirit are His children."

- *Romans 8:12-14 (CEV)*

"As a follower of the Lord, I encourage you to stop living like foolish, godless people. Their minds are in the dark, and they are stubborn and ignorant and have missed out on the life that comes from God. They no longer have any feelings about what is right, and they are so greedy that they do all kinds of indecent things. But that isn't what you were taught about Jesus Christ. He is the truth, and you heard about him and learned about him. You were told that your worldly desires will destroy you and that you must give up your old way of life with all its bad habits.

Let God's Spirit change your way of thinking and make you into a new person."

- *Ephesians 4:17-24 (CEV)*

Don't conform to your worldly desires, but be transformed by God's Spirit!

Entry:

#44

Only God's message/truth can free us from the corruption of this world/reality. God wants everyone to be free, but He won't force freedom on us. It's our choice!

"God made great and marvelous promises, so that His nature would become part of us. Then we could escape our evil desires and the corrupt influences of this world."

- 2 Peter 1:4 (CEV)

"God has shown us how kind He is by coming to save all people. He taught us to give up our wicked ways and our worldly desires and to live decent and honest lives in this world."

- Titus 2:11-12 (CEV)

"God said, 'I invite the whole world to turn to Me and be saved. I will save anyone who asks for My help. No matter how far away you are, you can turn to Me!'"

- Isaiah 45:22 (CEV), Acts 2:21 (CEV), Nehemiah 1:9 (CEV)

"God desires all people to be saved and to embrace the truth. Lost people could be saved, but they will refuse to love the truth and accept it."

- 1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Thessalonians 2:10 (CEV)

Entry:

#45

"Then Jesus said to all the people:
'If any of you want to be my followers, you must forget about your worldly desires. You must take up your cross each day and follow me. If you seek to live for this world, you will die. But if you seek to live for me and for the good news, you will live.'"

- *Mark 8:34-35*

Once we have faith in God and become God's chosen, the Good News/God's message must be the foundation of our lives! Why? Because there is no life apart from God!

"I am proud of the good news! It is God's powerful way of saving all people who have faith, whether they are Jews or Gentiles. The good news tells how God accepts everyone who has faith, but only those who have faith. It is just as the Scriptures say, 'The people God accepts because of their faith will live.'"

- *Romans 1:16-17 (CEV)*

"Those who don't know God and won't obey His message will be kept far from His presence."

- *2 Thessalonians 1:8-9*

Entry:

#46

"Jesus said, 'Don't be ashamed of me and my message among these unfaithful and sinful people! If you are, the Son of Man will be ashamed of you when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'"

- *Mark 8:38 (CEV)*

I know sharing God's message can feel awkward and embarrassing at times, but we must remind ourselves that we do not live to please the world. We live to please God!

"Don't be ashamed to speak for our Lord."

- *2 Timothy 1:8 (CEV)*

Because of the world we live in, we will be faced with a lot of challenges because of our faith. However, we must persevere!

"God will bless you, if you don't give up when your faith is being tested. You will be saved if you stay faithful until the end."

- *James 1:12 (CEV), Matthew 24:13*

Entry:

#47

"Once again Jesus spoke to the people. This time he said, 'I am the light for the world! Follow me, and you won't be walking in the dark. You will have the light that gives life.'"

- *John 8:12 (CEV)*

"Be a guide for the blind and a light for all who are in the dark."

- *Romans 2:19 (CEV)*

Jesus represents God's truth/light, so by having faith in Jesus, we also represent God's truth/light. Since we live in a world with so much darkness/corruption, there's so much to do! We must never cease to share God's message in this world. Also, keep in mind that preaching isn't the only way to share God's message! Be creative. Be unique. It's okay to find your own way. As long as the message gets out!

"God chose some of His people to be apostles, but not everyone is called to be an apostle. God has given each of us different gifts to use."

- *1 Corinthians 12:28-29, Romans 12:6 (CEV)*

Entry:

#48

"Finally, let the mighty strength of the Lord make you strong. Put on all the armor that God gives, so you can defend yourself against the devil's tricks. We are not fighting against humans. We are fighting against forces and authorities and against rulers of darkness and powers in the spiritual world. So put on all the armor that God gives. Then when that evil day comes, you will be able to defend yourself. And when the battle is over, you will still be standing firm.

Be ready! Let the truth be like a belt around your waist, and let God's justice protect you like armor. Your desire to tell the good news about peace should be like shoes on your feet. Let your faith be like a shield, and you will be able to stop all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Let God's saving power be like a helmet, and for a sword use God's message that comes from the Spirit.

Never stop praying, especially for others. Always pray by the power of the Spirit. Stay alert and keep praying for God's people."

- *Ephesians 6:10-18 (CEV)*

Know what having faith in God really means!

Entry:

#49

"Every child of God can defeat the world, and our faith is what gives us this victory. No one can defeat the world without having faith in Jesus as the Son of God."

- 1 John 5:4-5 (CEV)

"Jesus said, 'You don't belong to the world. I have chosen you to leave the world behind.'"

- John 15:19 (CEV)

Again, don't be deceived! Faith is the only way to see/know God. Also, understand that whenever you share God's message, dismiss all arguments regarding the need of physical evidence for God. Those who claim to need physical evidence are just making an excuse for not wanting to have faith. Actually, if you want to get technical, we already have all the physical evidence we need!

"From the beginning of creation, God has shown what His eternal power and character are like by all He has made.

That's why lost people don't have any excuse."

- Romans 1:20

Entry:

#50

"Jesus said, 'I tell you for certain that there is rejoicing in Heaven over one sinner who repents and turns to God.'"

- *Luke 15:7*

Do not allow Satan to stop you from having faith in God/Jesus! You don't belong to Satan or this world/reality. You belong to God! Once you acknowledge and accept that truth, never lose sight of it. Never lose sight of God's love for you!

"I am sure that nothing can separate us from God's love— not life or death, not trouble, suffering, and hard times, not angels or spirits, not the present or the future, and not powers above or powers below. Nothing in all creation can separate us from God's love for us in Christ Jesus our Lord!"

- *Romans 8:35,38-39 (CEV)*

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who He loves and who loves Him."

- *1 Corinthians 2:9*

Epilogue:

Believer: “Lord, how long must we beg for Your help before You listen? How long before You save us from all this violence? Why do You make us watch such terrible injustice? Why do You allow violence, lawlessness, crime, and cruelty to spread everywhere? Laws are ineffective and ignored. Innocent people are outnumbered by criminals. There is no justice! You can’t allow this! You can’t condone evil! So why don’t You do something about this? Why are You silent? This is an outrage! Criminals prey on the innocent and You stand around and watch! Lord, where are You?”

(Habakkuk 1:2-4 CEV, Habakkuk 1:13)

God: “Wait for Me! My words will come true. Have faith in what I have said about the future. It may take a long time, but keep on waiting because it will happen! If you truly know Me, then you know I’m coming to judge all people on Earth with fairness and truth. So rejoice and be of good courage! Be patient in time of trouble and never stop praying, for I am with you. I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

*(Habakkuk 2:3 CEV, Deuteronomy 31:8, Psalm 27:14,
Psalm 96:13 CEV, Romans 12:12 CEV)*

What if the Christian faith is false?:

“If Christ wasn’t raised to life, then God’s message is worthless, and so is our faith. If that’s the case, *‘Let’s eat, drink and have a good time in this life.’* Actually, it wouldn’t matter if we were crying or laughing, or if we were rich or completely broke. It wouldn’t make a difference what we were experiencing in this world because tomorrow we die.”

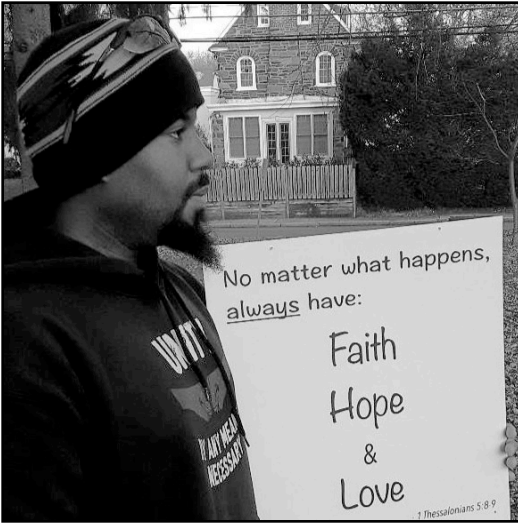
- *1 Corinthians 15:14,32, 1 Corinthians 7:30-31*

What if the Christian faith is true?:

“God will make His home among His children and will reward them for patiently doing what’s right by giving them glory, honor, peace and life that will last forever. He will wipe all tears from their eyes, and there will be no more death, suffering, crying, or pain. These things of the past will be no more.”

- *Romans 2:6-7,10, Revelation 21:3-4*

About The Commentator:



Anthony Coleman is a Christian who's passionate about encouraging other Christians in their faith. In his spare time, he walks around his community wearing a sandwich board to promote his website that's dedicated to those seeking God.

Anthony's website is:

www.PICMinistry.org

These **Journal Entries** are to encourage new believers on their Christian walk!

"Keep alert.
Be firm in your faith.
Stay brave and strong.
Show love in everything you do."
- 1 Corinthians 16:13-14 (CEV)



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