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## WHERE IS GOD?

There are more than two hundred religions in America. Some differ sharply from others in thought and purpose.

Even among those that are similar there is much contradiction.

You may be confused by the teaching of so many different churches. Or maybe you are committed to one of them without experiencing the assurance that you are indeed reconciled to God. As the apostle John writes in his first Epistle I John 3:14a- **"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. . ."** -That means God's children, not false brethren-

He also writes: I John 5:2- **"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments"**.

Does reading the Bible seem confusing to you? Or have you failed to find the Word of God 'alive and powerful'? As Paul writes, **"sharper than any two edged sword"**.

Let's ignore for a moment that which is confusing concerning religion and the Bible. Then let us think of the one aspect of religion which is most important; and that is your relationship with God.

If you have had the experience of being Born-Again; then you know something about the blessedness of peace in the heart, and the comfort of knowing that your sins are forgiven. The question is, are you maintaining that relationship with God?

If you have not been Born-Again, or reconciled to God by a living faith in Jesus; or if you have not maintained that relationship, then you may be aware of a real emptiness in your life. Look at the words of the apostle Paul to the Ephesians: Ephesians 2:12- **"That at that time ye were without Christ being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, (that is, they were not a part of God's church) and strangers from the covenants of promise, having**

**no hope, and without God in the world."**

Man without God is living an empty life, as if he were living over the pit of Hell, into which (for all he knows) he might fall at any moment! He experiences physical rest after a day of activities, yet he has no rest in his soul. He lives in the light that God gives to this world, yet his soul remains in darkness. Does he have peace? He does not have it deep down in his heart. Does he have joy and happiness? It is only in the body from which he will be separated at death. If his existence here is lamentable, how much more so in eternity where every last experience of hope, peace, joy, happiness, and well being, will be swept away forever.

Hebrews 9:27- **"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."**

If you are not reconciled to God in this life, then you don't know God. You will find out too late, that in ignoring or rejecting God, you have ignored, and rejected: life, peace, joy, rest, righteousness, truth, and all goodness. All that is left for the lost soul at the end of this life is **eternal death**; which according to the Word of God is **not nonexistence**. It is a total separation from the presence of God; where there is no light, no peace, no joy, no rest, and no hope; only darkness, pain, torment, smoke, and burning.

If we consider that this is the lost condition of man, then there can be nothing at all in life more important than to be right with God. However, in this important area of life we find religions multiplying like a cancer. Even in the fellowship of true believers there is danger of trusting in a Born-Again experience, of the past, but not keeping a day to day victory. Nor can one trust in just having church membership without a spiritual walk with God.

But there is no need for confusion, if you turn to the Lord with all your heart. Confusion belongs to darkness, but God is light. And you can be delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son. John 3:16- **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him**

**should not perish but have everlasting life."**

You can have no other provision, and no excuse. If you find religion confusing, then ignore that which is confusing, but turn to God with all your heart. The only religion that is valid before God is that which God will give you as you obey the gospel, which simply consists of REPENTANCE, confessing your sins, receiving Christ and turning from sin to obey God. I John 1:9- **"If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."**

"FAITH", Hebrews 11:6- **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: (God) for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."**

"OBEDIENCE", Romans 6:17- **"But God be thanked, that (although) ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."**

Commit your life to God's Son Jesus; acknowledging Him as your Saviour and Lord. Endeavor to obey those things which He has commanded in His Word, being baptized in His name for the remission of sins. Ask God for the promised Holy Spirit to be in you, and to give you a living hope, guiding you into all truth.

Matthew 13:44- **"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."** Now when Jesus spoke of the kingdom of heaven He was speaking of that relationship with God, in which God rules our life and we share in Heavenly blessings. But he is also speaking of the Church of God, which is in Jesus Christ. Many scriptures testify that the Church is separate from the world, and disciplined by the Word.

You see it takes nothing less than a full commitment, to become right with God. But it's worth whatever it takes. Jesus said, Mark 10:29-30: **"... There is no man, (no person) that hath left**

house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's.

**But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life."**

This is the Word of God. The choice is yours. You can be sure that anything you have to give up will be worth it.

This may seem like a hard way, and indeed it is hard of the sinful nature of man. However, you do not have to be a slave to your sinful nature! God in His great love, and mercy, has made it possible that you can choose to be free.

You might turn your back to the pleasures of sin, which are of this world, and are soon gone, but God can change your heart so that you won't even desire them. The choice is yours. Do not follow the crowd so that your only chance to be saved would be if those around you would turn to the Lord.

This is not a time of great revival with many turning to God. Yet, this is your time. You have the right to respond, as well as, ignore the salvation of your soul. Please do not let the fear of any man or woman keep you from being reconciled to God, and do not let any one deceive you. In the end we must all come before the judgement seat of God and face the responsibility for those things done in the body, whether they are good or bad. Then the wishes and opinions of those around us will mean nothing, but we will confess that Jesus is Lord.

If you find yourself in a church where there is more compromise and twisting, or ignoring, of the Word than there is of faithful response to the Word; then you need to consider how this will affect your relationship with God. "Faith is the victory that overcomes the world." If you're part of a church which is being overcome by the world, consider how such a fellowship will affect your faith. I Corinthians 5:6b- "... a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." You must come out from among

them and seek a more spiritual church.

Since God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten son to die on the Cross for our sins; how ungrateful, and wicked it is if we neglect the salvation of our souls. John 3:16, Hebrews 2:2-3.

Now salvation is not only for the wise and strong, or some privileged people who are of a religious nature, but it's for those who receive Jesus as Saviour and Lord. John 1:12- **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."**

Matthew 7:7- **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."**

If you find yourself unwilling to give up your present life, then you should consider the words of Jesus, Matthew 16:25- **"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it"**.

This message was written with the earnest desire that you might lose your life for Jesus' sake and find it.

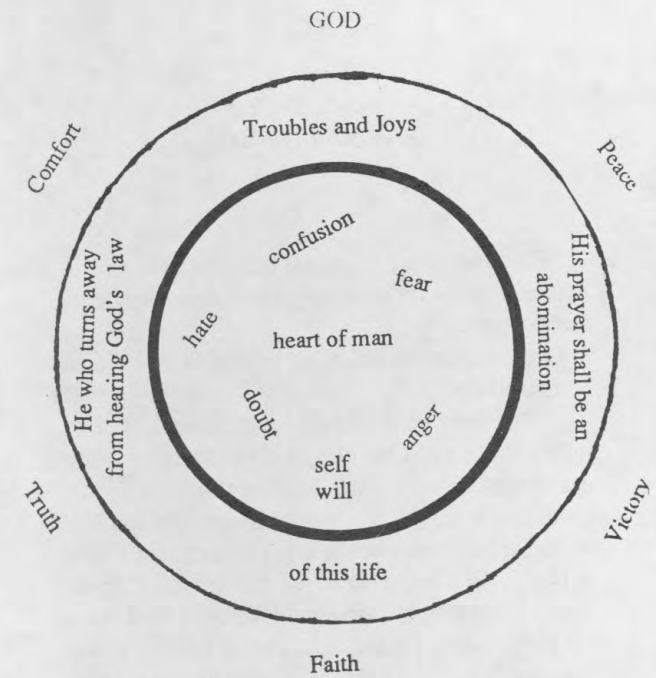
Would you make this short poem the theme of your life?

Whether we climb,  
Or whether we plod,  
Only one task will short life lend,  
To choose the path that leads to God  
And keep it to the end.

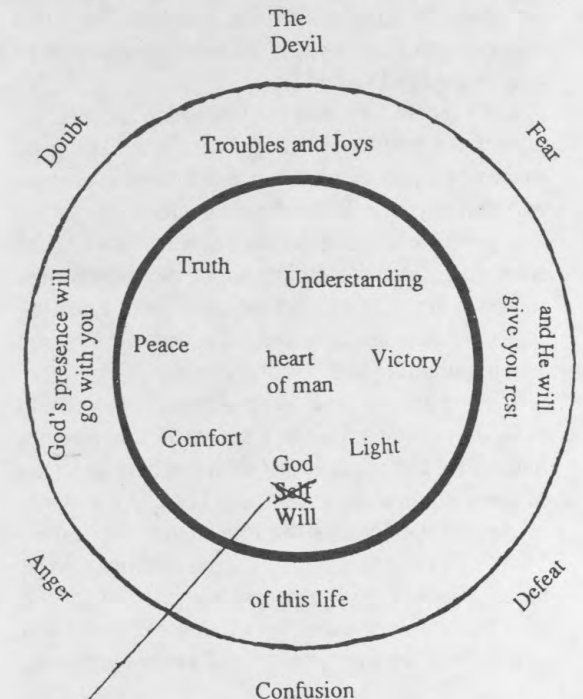
Matthew 16:27- **"For the Son of man (Jesus) shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."**

If you find this message helpful and are responding to it: Praise the Lord who made it possible that we have the message of salvation to give; then pass it on.

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## Where Is God?



† Crucified  
With Christ

Mennonite Historical Library  
Goshen College, Goshen, Ind.