

Let's Fall in Love with God
FORWARD: Do It Differently
(by John Henry Alan, edited by Bob Clarkson)

FORWARD

Go Back to the Beginning and Do It Again

as if for the 1st time!

It is essential in this journey to look at everything you have believed with fresh eyes. When you reread the scriptures now, push away any teaching you have received from others on the passages you read. Let the Holy Spirit give you fresh revelation in light of the single context of the unconditional love of God for you! When Paul said, "that, I may know Him," Philippians 3:10, he did not mean intellectually, but experientially, emotionally. This means that to know God personally, our spirits must touch and our hearts must touch. Then I will experience conscious intimacy with God.

"Let's fall in love. Why shouldn't we fall in love? Our hearts were made for it. Let's take a chance. Let's fall in love."

Why would we think...

Why would we think that God is so awesome, majestic, powerful, intelligent, all-knowing, superlative and pure that He is untouchable? Why would we think that the most creative being in the universe would create human beings, in His image, just to treat them like mere animals and beat them whenever they behaved badly? Why would we think that a *good* Father would abuse us just because we might wander into the wrong places or

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simply balk at His commands?

Would we have children to treat them in that way? I believe that God must be the kindest person and the most loving parent in the universe. He did, after all, give us each a personal example of who He is, how He thinks and how much He loves, by the very act of procreation. As we multiply and replenish the earth, we establish families to develop and nurture loving relationships with one another. And then we gather into communities to extend those loving relationships to a larger circle. If anyone can think of a better plan, let him step forward and tell us all what that plan is.

To be sure, the quest to know God and to be in a wholesome relationship with Him has been around since the beginning of the human race. Some abandon this quest and become atheists. Others search with many doubts that He exists and call themselves agnostics. Still others decide to follow another supernatural being, Lucifer, and actually sacrifice their own children to this “god” whom they serve in exchange for riches and power. Then there are others who manufacture their own god or idols and are very religious, hoping to reach God by moral integrity or worship of these idols. And there are some who respond to the Gospel of Jesus, commit their lives to Him and become Christians. It is this last group for whom this book is written.

The question posed to everyone, especially Christians, is this, “How can we develop a deeply passionate and intimate relationship, like husband and wife, with God?” Or to put it in other terms, *Can we live*

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in commitment to God and His desires in the same manner as true lovers treat their most significant others on earth? I think that many Christians, possibly even the majority of them, *want* to relate to God more as lovers than slaves to a master or subjects to their sovereign king. So, what is the problem? I suggest that there is something wrong with our system of beliefs. There must be misperceptions about who God is, what He expects of us, and what He wants from us. There is something standing between us and God. And He desperately wants that obstacle to be removed.

Apprehending God — (an article by A. W. Tozer)

To most people God is an inference, not a reality. He is a deduction from the evidence which they consider adequate; but He remains personally unknown to the individual. They know of Him only by hearsay. To many others God is but an ideal, another name for goodness, or beauty, or truth; or He is law, or life, or the creative impulse back of the phenomena of existence. The possibility of intimate acquaintance with Him has not entered their minds.

Christians, to be sure, go further than this, at least in theory. Their creed requires them to believe in the personality of God and the possibility of personal acquaintance. This is admitted, I say, in theory, but for millions of Christians, nevertheless, God is no more real than He is to the non-Christian. They go through life

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trying to love an ideal and be loyal to a mere principle.

Over against all this cloudy vagueness stands the clear scriptural doctrine that God can be known in personal experience. A loving Personality dominates the Bible, walking among the trees of the garden and breathing fragrance over every scene. Always a living Person is present, speaking, pleading, loving, working, and manifesting Himself whenever and wherever His people have the receptivity necessary to receive the manifestation.

Let us examine our current beliefs. Let us discover which of them may be keeping us from this intimate love for God which we strongly desire. And let's have the courage to change what we believe. To do this we must reject some beliefs which we adopted from very trusted sources in our lives. This is not a rejection of those people, it is simply a course correction of faith which God desires for us to pursue. God wants us to be in a passionate love affair with Him!

Special Considerations: Keep these things in mind as you read.

Be honest with yourself and authentic with God.

Cast yourself into every character mentioned in this book, in order to make the teaching practical and memorable. Imagine yourself setting each thing in this book in the context of a holiday meal with your family and God.

Leave Your Comfort Zone

Don't put the book down if it makes you feel uncomfortable. No one ever broadens their horizons of life if they do not leave their personal comfort zone. Don't be afraid that these insights will lead you astray. You know scripture too well for that to happen.

Confirm It to Be True

Be like the Bereans, mentioned in Acts 17:11, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that *they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*" What Paul was teaching was radically different from everyone's former understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures. The Bereans tried to confirm these *new* truths Paul was expressing to them, not to disprove them.

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A Heart Like Jesus

Let Jesus' Gospel prevail in your heart and mind. Develop a heart like Jesus' heart and you will act in the same loving manner as He did. He promoted an up close and personal relationship in worship as opposed to a formal, stuffy, rigid set of rules in set places at set times.

Don't Rush Through It

This is a book of spiritual understanding, not fiction or fantasy. You cannot come to this book as you would come to another type of literature. Too many people in their rush to finish the reading, miss out on the quiet of **experiencing the presence of the Spirit** while reading it. This book is sure to challenge many things you have believed.

The first thing to keep in mind when reading on, is read with a **strong desire to learn**. Come with a strong desire to know God in an intimate way. Be open to **receive something new** and helpful for your life journey. Since it is hard to find time for reading, **set reading and mining goals** for yourself. (For example to read a certain number of paragraphs or pages and list a certain number of new things you have learned. **Shake off all distractions and noise.**

Thought and Concentration

Meditate long and hard on each and every chapter, paragraph sentence, and yes, even word. This book is to be **studied, meditated on, marked up, prayed over and read again and again** as long as it continues to minister to your soul. If you want to do *light* reading, or *thriller* reading or *adventure* reading or *curiosity* reading, please put this book back on your night stand and read something else. But when you have a hunger or thirst to know God better than ever before in your life, read on.

We DO Believe What We CHOOSE to Believe

Most of us fail to realize that the majority of what we believe has been fed to us by others. However, we also fail to consider why we have accepted what was spoon-fed to us from our infancy and continuing until this very day. We have believed some things in order not to disappoint some person whom we love or respect. Other things have been adopted into our belief system out of a sense that there is safety in numbers. Still other beliefs have arisen from the lack of due diligence regarding particular issues. And our beliefs have become concrete in our souls by way of repetition or natural curing over time. The good news is that since we get to choose what we believe, we can change it at will for any reason. Here's how we derive every belief we hold.

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Instead of letting your culture (that which was given to you by your family, friends and other people) and desire (that which satisfies the way you want to live) determine your truth, let God's truth (truth about yourself, others and God) change your desires such that your culture will be transformed by your expressions of love and acceptance of others!