

NEW WORDS

by

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Introduction

As I sit down to write I am a little bit nervous, even though I know and believe that I will be inspired by the Holy Spirit. I could quote scripture as a way to convey to you that is a strong probability, but this writing is meant to be for all people including Atheists, Non-Christians, and Christians. In fact, often as I write I use scripture to support my points, but for this writing I will avoid that and rely on my past exposure to people, ideas, and the Presence of God and produce a document which might be considered “pure Kent B. Mickelson”. In other words, my commitment is that I might write new words to testify to the infinite Love, Goodness, Power, and Wisdom of a true God who created and loves all people.

Why would any Atheist or Fundamentalist or for that matter any Person continue to read? Because my goal is that my writing will have a positive impact on current believers and non-believers in God and in a more efficient and effective way than it would be possible to impact the positions of those who believe or disbelieve in human caused Global Warming. Perhaps, I am hoping for too much? I am hoping that there might be a certain amount of curiosity in what I might include.

Of course, most of what I believe in concerning God has been influenced by the words of the Holy Bible, which I nevertheless am compelled to say is not the whole truth and nothing but the truth. The Bible was written by imperfect human beings who were not manipulated or directly controlled by God. But the observation of nature and circumstance has given me what I consider a more undistorted vision of God for nature is one step closer to the creative influence of God. Nature presents an unaltered view of God’s work. What I mean by that is that nature does not have what we know as free-will that operates contrary to God’s intentions. That said, we can appreciate the fact that God reveals himself in many ways. No matter how perfect my own understanding of a topic might be, or have been, I am readily aware that my communication whether by writing or

speaking is not perfect in content, or in mechanics. I assume the same is true for all people both past and present. Because of that, I will do something that writers sometimes do, and that is I will share the motivation to write this small document:

. I want to craft and share new words that will convey the infinite Love, Goodness, and Power, and Wisdom of the True God that all people could trust in today's world. By writing I want to:

1. Bring more Love, and less hate and rage into the world
2. Emphasize the notion of Love through the words **“Love your neighbor as yourself”**
3. Help others overcome the motivation to crime
4. Overcome the problems associated with Sickness
5. Share the Love, Truth, and Grace of God in such a way that each person will develop a sincere faith, a good conscience, and a pure heart.
6. Promote the idea that somehow God works through people even though people retain their free will
7. Remind people that we have a God who created and loves each person

What are the topics I will include to carry us towards the goals I define? They are:

1. Background and Perspective
2. Understand That All Human Beings are Imperfect
3. What About Truth?
4. Accomplishing the Will of God in Today's World?
5. Realize That People are Different – They can Change
6. Remember Each Person is Unique
7. Making Changes
8. Pondering the Source of All Things
9. A Notion of Freedom
10. Existence of Evil and Choice
11. Heaven and Hell – the Idea of Salvation
12. Ending Remarks

These topics are not stand alone – they interrelated and intertwined!

Back Ground and Perspective

My background is that I was baptized as a Lutheran Christian as an infant and was later confirmed. In spite of that background, I hope I have understood something about non-Christians, and even Atheists. My focus will be the concept **“Love your neighbor, as yourself”**. In fact, that is the initial main goal of this writing, to strengthen and make real that action in all people. Is this focus on love possible in a world where competing ideas cause discord among people? How can we ever hope that in a world full of crime, hate, and terrorism that such a focus on Love might evolve? The first hurdle is to overcome resistance to even beginning to hope for and make such a mission real. I have hope because I do believe in God and the purpose, effectiveness, and power of the Holy Spirit. And that is coupled with the notion that *the “Spirit of God” can work in the hearts and minds of all people*. It is a reality that God created all things, including each person. Furthermore, God loves all that he creates, and afterwards considers it very good. That is easy to say but I surmise that most people might judge the world the way it is to be not so good. Just ask people what they would change to make this a perfect world. They produce a long list of “the world should be ...”, be they believers or non-believers. This document is meant to make all of us pause and say “Why is this so?”, and “What can we actually do to make the world more perfect?” and provide what I believe we should put more focus on to erase the effect of evil in our minds. This will not be easy, even with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Understand that all human beings are imperfect

As we begin, I think we must first admit that we and our fellow human beings are imperfect. This conclusion relates to our thoughts, words, and actions. I think, based on my observation of other people and my understanding of myself, that often we are very apt to conclude this is true for other people and less likely to remember it is true for ourselves. This is not always true because we can recognize two types of unrealistic self-image problems. We can have either an inflated self-image while or a low self-image. Both conditions leave us with an imperfect understanding of who we are. Before we can be whole and healed we must first have a true self-image. Some people seem to take one step further and suggest this state of imperfection is something we should call sin. I am guessing this conclusion comes from this expectation of Jesus which was stated as: **“You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”**

When we go to this extreme, we begin to feel uncomfortable because sin is a term that is often reserved to be something that is applied to behaviors or conditions and their association with God’s standards of perfection. That leads to a problem because much of our imperfection seems to be built into our characteristics as human beings over which we seem to have no control. But, it is certainly not true for all imperfection with which we deal. When we need help the first step to receive it is to admit to some imperfection. We can see this with alcoholics and smokers, but there are many other things where our judgment of an imperfection must precede our recognition of a need for help and often the help itself. Surely everyone can relate to this?

Sin is something similar. Until I recognize my need for help, by seeing that I have sin, I just won’t think that God can help, and in fact I might deny that God even exists. I, myself, recognize many imperfections in my thoughts, words and actions, which can be helped through the fruits offered by the Holy Spirit. This is what I believe, but I also believe that initial admission of the problem comes from the Holy Spirit as well. If you recognize that you are imperfect that is the beginning of the work of the Holy Spirit in your heart and mind. You might not recognize your imperfection as sin, but that is where the understanding begins. I believe that Jesus’ famous words that adorn the Tower at the University of Texas at Austin, **“Ye Shall Know the Truth and the Truth Shall Make You Free”**

are a statement about the Truth we learn when we understand we are imperfect human beings. How does that make you free? Think about how that admission of the alcoholic of his condition begins to cause change in his life. The result is more freedom. What is the first step in becoming free of the habit of smoking? Although much of my writing is written because we fail to accept the influence and work of the Holy Spirit, leaving us as seeing society and our neighbors as only sinners, I must say that before we can improve, we must first see the imperfection, sin or problems that we have – It doesn't matter to me what we call it! Recognition of our problem is the first step towards becoming free from it.

I have been told that before I can permanently lose weight that I must first see the problem for what it is. Then, I must change my self-image in order to see myself in a good light. This does not mean lying about who I am but I must see myself as someone who can succeed instead of fail. At this point I want to admit some passions I have. They are related to the goals I shared in the first section. They are:

- 1. The desire to do the good will of God having him fill me with himself to inspire my thoughts, words, and actions**
- 2. The desire to be a happy person**
- 3. The desire to use my God given talents in an excellent way**

I have been told that happiness just happens during the process of living. You can't have it as a goal. But these are not really goals. I suppose they are a form of prayer for me. Back to our imperfection, the disagreement is not that it exists but whether it relates to an idea called sin. Are we sinners, or are we just imperfect in thought, word, or deed? The choice of the words can be yours. The problem is what do we do as a result for ourselves, or for our society? We have concluded that both recognition of our problems and seeing improvement are part of the work of the Holy Spirit and are consistent with the will of God. Don't you think? Are we thinking clearly?

What about Truth?

I have added this section last. If you remember I have set forth an objective to ***“craft and share new words that will convey the infinite Love, Wisdom, Goodness, and Power of the True God that all people could trust in today’s world”***. That objective seems impossible! As a beginning we have concluded that all human beings are imperfect and I have concluded further that my communications will not be perfect in content or mechanics, even though I believe that I am inspired by the Holy Spirit. How will you be able to trust what I have to say?

To reassure you, I think it is possible for my words to be very accurate even though they will not be perfect. In fact, as I read and correct my own writing I am able over time to be almost perfect in mechanics. I have already made several revisions in this text. However, the content is another matter, for that is a matter of truth. My father has given me this suggestion: ***“base your beliefs on messages that are consistent and persistent”***. But, what if it is possible for me to have a new insight whose consistent and persistent message comes only from within me? How can I, or we, be certain it is true? Every idea we hold as true, at one point, involved an answer to this question. Many Bible readers get around this problem by making the assertion that the words of the Bible were inspired by God to such an extent that they are actually God’s Words. That line of reasoning makes them perfect. In fact, many people conclude that all truth is contained in that Bible and suggest any further thinking or ideas must be classified as false if not verified by words in the Bible. Is this thinking clearly? Does the Holy Spirit reveal new insights in today’s world? The real dilemma is that those Bible words make the assertion that ***“All men have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God”***. As sinners, we must conclude that all of us are imperfect in thought, word, or deed and possibly biased enough to communicate words that fit our desires but fall short of the truth. I myself face this problem even as I write these words.

It is this dilemma that causes the belief in any word, whether they are in the Bible or read or heard elsewhere, to depend on trust in the source of the words. God Himself is the only being in whom it is wise to have absolute trust or faith. I may convey to you words that are 99.9 % true and accurate but any one word can be accepted and believed as true only because of two reasons: 1) your belief in my own knowledge and understanding, or 2) the

inner wisdom with which you, yourself have been enlightened. This is true even when my words are actually inspired by the Spirit of God. People today are no more and no less inspired by God's Spirit than were the disciples of Jesus. If I failed to convey that message then you would have reason to doubt that I myself am trustworthy.

Before we leave this topic, let us review my contemporary understanding of the notion of Truth. In preparation for writing this section, I reviewed several documents about theories of Truth and I was not satisfied that they were the key to provide us the insight we need. So, I decided to start, we should look at the good old Webster's Dictionary to lead us to what we need. There are several definitions and all of them might prove helpful:

1. **a** *archaic* : **FIDELITY, CONSTANCY** **b** : sincerity in action, character, and utterance
2. **a**(1) : the state of being the case : **FACT** (2) : the body of real things, events, and facts : **ACTUALITY** (3) *often capitalized* : a transcendent fundamental or spiritual reality **b** : a judgment, proposition, or idea that is true or accepted as true <truths of thermodynamics> **c** : the body of true statements and propositions
3. **a** : the property (as of a statement) of being in accordance with fact or reality **b** *chiefly British* : **TRUE** **c** : fidelity to an original or to standard
4. *capitalized, Christian Science* : **GOD – in truth** : in accordance with fact : **ACTUALLY**

Now, let us see if we can discover, with this definition, how to approach what we seek: that is the “**truth that will set us free**”. The reason we have to think about this deeply, or even pray about this, is that the understanding we have about both truth, and how we come to have it are necessary to reach the goal of this writing.

Definition “**3**” reminds us that part of what we need to do is deal properly with language in order to ascertain the truth. Most of the time, statements using spoken or written language are the things that we must evaluate to make the idea of truth meaningful. Simple statements like “I am a man”, or “I am a woman”, reveal how the source of the words can cause the same statement to either be true or false. The example above makes this

obvious. This is a simple way of remembering it is fact or reality that will cause a statement to be true or false. Often, the reality that can lead a statement to be true is difficult to evaluate or even perceive.

For the purpose of this writing, the collection of statements that deal with the fact or reality of things, events, and facts will be termed **SCIENTIFIC TRUTH**. This is because all these things involve observations involving sight or sound. Because much of what we classify as **SCIENTIFIC TRUTH** involves the laws of Physics, it will be the same from one moment to the next, if similar conditions exist. In other words, **SCIENTIFIC TRUTH** can involve repeatable observations. There is another group of statements that deal with things like mathematics like the equation “ $2 + 2 = 4$ ” which fall in the category of definition “**2 (3) b**”. These we will classify as **ESTABLISHED TRUTH**. Although related to **SCIENTIFIC TRUTH**, we must designate something we will call **HISTORICAL TRUTH**. Observations about events in the past, that may have been **SCIENTIFIC TRUTH**, which are no longer able to be verified as real today we will refer to as **HISTORICAL TRUTH**. All **HISTORICAL TRUTH** involves an element of faith which makes the understanding of its truth today uncertain when we remember that human beings, both past and present, are fallible when they perceive, speak, think, or write. I will classify this understanding as the **HUMAN FRAILTY NOTION**. It is similar to the idea I have already mentioned which makes each human being both a saint and a sinner. The difference between them is that sin is intentional and **HUMAN FRAILTY** is not on purpose.

There is one definition we have yet to consider. In the definition from Webster’s it is identified as **2 a (1) a transcendent fundamental or spiritual reality**. We will call this type of truth **FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH**. This kind of truth is something we would like to know for us to reach the goal. This is not to say that our other forms of truth are without importance when searching for the “**truth that sets us free**”.

The problem we have when we try to arrive at the understanding we want, is that many of the sources that involve the presentation of **FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH** are often based on **HISTORICAL TRUTH**. This is why different religious organizations classify their **HISTORICAL TRUTH** as inerrant and infallible – for example: the Bible. To achieve this, the Bible is said to be inspired by the Holy Spirit. Many people believe that both human sin and the **HUMAN FRAILTY NOTION** will always be overcome with this inspiration. What, I would claim is that the process of

Divine Revelation or influence is accomplished in spite of the presence of human sin or the HUMAN FAILTY NOTION. One way to overcome both problems is to believe only messages from several unrelated sources which are all consistent. I believe the Holy Spirit continues to inspire people today in spite of both sin and the HUMAN FRAILTY NOTION.

In the final analysis, God is Spirit and even when you believe that he took on human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, your faith rests on the words of sinners who were or are no more trustworthy than you or I. Yet when Peter declared Jesus *“the Christ, the son of the Living God”*, Jesus proclaimed that that did not just occur to him but that it came from His Father in Heaven. This is the same Peter who was admonished by Jesus when Jesus replied to him: **“Get behind me, Satan!”** he said. **“You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.”** How many of our insights might come from God and who will judge their source? In the end we can make a conclusion about ourselves and our neighbor when we begin to trust and understand the words of Paul when he writes *“It is not I who lives, but Christ who lives in me”*. Just what and in whom can we trust? That is an important question we all must answer. As for me, my own experience suggests that I cannot always trust my recall, my typing, or my intentions. It is my hope and intention that the words I have written will work together for good for all people?

Accomplishing the Will of God in today's World?

I have thought more about how to present this topic in the best way and I have decided to make some major changes because I think it is so important. The reason I have emphasized the command **“Love your neighbor as yourself”** is that I am certain that if you do that you will be doing the basic will of God in the world. Although, I mentioned that I don't believe the Bible is perfect, it is one book in which the authors attempt to describe man's history with and some of man's interaction with God. We just have to keep it in perspective and not use it in ways contrary to God's will, which is possible if we forget the basic will of God.

Much that we see in the world is here because God is in the midst of us and is a giving and loving God. He has influenced a lot that we appreciate and take for granted. You might ask “Why should I care about God's will?” For one, God is always doing things for your own good. Although, you might still not believe in him, I believe that the very things you may have faith in like Science and Mathematics owe their existence to the purpose and power of the Holy Spirit. We should want to do God's will because he is infinite in Love, Wisdom, Goodness, and Power. I have concluded in this document that God does not manipulate us but I have also suggested the Spirit of God influences us for our own good. Many people talk about turning over control of their life to Jesus or God. God does not control our lives in the sense that we release control, but rather he works in us through the seed of the Holy Spirit that grows within us through our education, experiences, and relationships. That is the way God the Father worked in Jesus. It is no different for everyone else.

God can work through things and circumstances to influence our choices, and in fact God can influence us through the words of other people like he does through the words of the Bible. Often, words that come to us like that are identical to words God might speak. It is possible for God to speak to us through an Atheist or any person of a Religious tradition different from our own. We don't need struggle to reach a will from God that we do not know. We need to see Good or God inspired goals and work to achieve them. I have always been told that God Works through people. Do you think he excludes you? Perhaps part of the problem is that we have not learned enough about our true self, which was created in the image of God? An obvious question is “What has gone wrong when we do evil

things?” I have said one of the primary qualities about God is that he does not manipulate us – meaning he does not force us to do what we don’t want to do. However he is persistent, meaning he will forgive and teach over and over. Much of what is happening in our lives, I believe, involves the process of inspiring us to want what is in our best interest. In fact, we will find when we become aware, that it was and is the Spirit of God working out God’s will through us and our neighbor to enable that to come about.

Realize that People are different – they can change

The first idea we must bring fourth is that people are different from say rocks and trees in that they can change themselves by thinking in a way that nothing else does. Quite often our thoughts are structured based on historical experience as a way of helping us think correctly in the present. That often makes change difficult. It is a good idea to predict the fall of an object that is dropped, because physical laws that are fairly rigid are consistent with that expectation. However, although we are told that history repeats itself, the world as effected by human behavior is not controlled by the same type of rigid laws, although people act like it is. To move towards a more perfect world we must all stop and say **“can’t we improve on the status quo?”** That is the stimulus I would like this writing to provide. But in doing that we all must remember that we as human beings are not perfect but if we are mindful in our thoughts, words, and actions, we can improve.

Remember Each Person is Unique

Another thing I want to remind people of is that all people are not the same. They understand, and know different things. As a result, their beliefs and philosophies are different. We should not be offended when another person seems to think and believe in a different way. Yet many people are not only offended but possibly threatened when another person has different beliefs and ideas. This kind of discord or problem can often exist between people of different religious traditions (an Atheist has a type of religious tradition in that, for example, his faith might be in mathematics). What I propose is that when faced with this situation we remember this common goal: **“Love your neighbor as yourself”**. A person who has dialogue with another person might realize that another person has a better idea than his existing belief and that insight can produce very quick change. This kind of exchange is what I hope for that could improve the understanding and thinking of each participant. I do not suggest this is easy but Love is always better than hate.

Although each person is unique and thinks and believes in a unique way, we might agree that it is still possible to hold understandings that are the same. I am counting on that possibility. Despite the differences between people, I am hoping there is a common thread between people that will enable a common goal like what I present. That being the idea: **“Love our neighbors as ourselves”**. I can hope that the different histories we all have will lead us to that goal just like we are all led to conclude that fire is hot and ice is cold.

Making Changes

Even if we desire change, doing it is often a challenge. Everybody knows that but for some the process is more difficult. Some problems are individual problems, but we face another type of challenge as well. The question “Why do I lock my home, my car, or my bicycle?” reveals another type of problem which our new goal **“Love your neighbor, as yourself”** might resolve. The fact that we lock things seems to cause others to strengthen their belief that they cannot trust their neighbor, and that would include you and I. Do others have a valid reason in believing we might harm them or steal their things? After all we are imperfect! Why do we lock things? We have a history that leads us to fear what other people might do to us or our things. Changing this situation seems impossible. I am a firm believer that with God ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE. After all God is infinite in Love, Wisdom, Goodness, and Power. What would you do if you were called to help us change the way things are? To start I might ask this question “Is the fact that people are imperfect a sufficient reason for them to commit crime?” If the answer is NO we might be able to have an effect on this kind of situation. Because of the capacity for human thought what has happened in the past does not suggest the future will be the same.

Pondering the Source of All Things

At this time I want you to think about all you know and understand about the Universe. Can you fathom how large it is or understand the working of an atom that gives each element a distinct set of characteristics? Are you amazed at how a strawberry plant draws resource from the air, sun, and soil to produce a bloom that results in a new strawberry? *I hope that right now we can all agree that we are glad and even thankful that all that we see is here.* Even a person born blind who has never seen can surely pause and be thankful for what he has somehow been exposed to. He is able to visualize in his mind from the descriptions of those who can see.

There has been a long discourse over how and why this universe came into existence. I wrestled with the existence of electric charge when I wrote my first book **The Wonder of Electricity**. I just wasn't able to understand enough to describe how positive and negative charge came into being. Yet the existence of them resulted in both voltage and current that are the basis for a whole host of useful products that can help us do things quicker or better in the world in which we live. As I wrote this paragraph, I paused to search the internet and the closest thing I could find to a definition of Electric Charge is "*Electric charge is a fundamental conserved property of some subatomic particles, which determines their electromagnetic interaction*". It reminds me of a book I read called **If God is in Charge?** by Steve Brown. Having studied electrical engineering, that question always brings to mind electric charge while other people think of something different, relating to control. It is worth noting that the electrical energy we use would not exist without both positive and negative charge. That might give a valuable insight as to why opposites are necessary in other aspects of life. What would truth mean if there were no false? A college professor of mine responded this way when I was trying to get an answer as to what made electric charge: "Why do you ask? That's just the way God made things". At some point all of us ask the question about where all the stuff that makes the universe came from. Many will focus all their thought on life itself, but here I was thinking about something more basic. Some people are satisfied with mathematics being the source in which they have faith, and some are led to believe that God is the source of things. Just as science is always open to new explanations as the future brings new learning, at this time I think I would not condemn either person for their conclusion. I believe whichever conclusion turns out true will win the faith of all people

who make a conclusion about the origin and understanding of all that is. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to lead us to associate the beginning with God, whether a person is currently an Atheist or a passionate Christian, or a Muslim Extremist. While that process takes place, my objective is to influence everyone to focus on the **notion “Love your Neighbor as Yourself”**. It is my understanding that when you Love in that way you will actually be demonstrating a love for God as well. Is it possible for even an Atheist to have that kind of Love? I think it is!

A Notion of Freedom

In America one of the cherished ideas is freedom and the notion of “free will”. Philosophers have discussed the idea of free will for ages. Most of my reading suggests man has free will, with consequences. This is particularly true today as man has crafted laws to influence many kinds of behavior. You are free to not pay taxes, but the consequence might be a fine or a period in jail. Gravity itself places limits on our freedom but also adds benefits. For example, you are perfectly free floating in space, but the process of walking has a different meaning. I attended the University of Texas at Austin and at one point noticed these words built into the south face of the Tower building: “YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE”. As we are educated our understanding of truth will change. Some parents or governments censor the way education is conducted in order to pass on an understanding of truth that they hold dear. They want to pass on guidelines that make sense to them. I have grown to believe that the real truth will eventually come to light even if taught with the presence of competing ideas. Because of this competition most people develop an internal set of guidelines or beliefs that help them make choices. After a certain amount of experience, I adopted the following set of principles:

Four Things to Do

*“Four things a man must learn to do
If he would keep his record true:
To think, without confusion, clearly;
To love his fellow man sincerely;
To act from honest motives purely;
To trust in God and Heaven securely.”*

Henry Van Dyke

I am offering these to you because common guidelines might be necessary to prevent those things that can take away the joy of life. Can anyone keep their record true? Even if we see merit in these guidelines, we will probably fall short, while adhering to them might cause more peace and joy in the world. In what or whom do people trust?

But what in the world is the freedom we cherish? Basically, we might say that freedom is the ability to think, act, or speak without compulsion or force. Above, we have concluded that people devise their own set of guidelines so that they can act without being manipulated. Manipulation is a type of force that causes people to conduct their lives in ways contrary to what they want. But then, as we peel this onion, we must pause and consider where those wants originate. Why do we want? That is a complicated question whose answer involves the experiences, education, and other influences from the past of a person. My father who has great influence on my thinking once told me that “*people can take credit for their choices*”. He also expressed his belief that God does not manipulate us. Do we choose all of our wants? It is apparent to me that the seeds of thought that begin before we are born influence those choices and wants that become a part of whom we become. *I hope we can all agree that our freedom begins only after those initial seeds, possibly caused by our genes, give us our start in life.* Do we evolve into who we are by rigid cause and effect from that initial seed, or do we evolve in a way that is due to something even greater? That is, do we have both a mind and a brain? What is each? What about the Laws of Physics? From which does our ability to freely choose come? Those are the thoughts I will leave you with to ponder on your own. By the way it was Jesus who is credited for the words I presented earlier that found their way onto the Tower at University of Texas at Austin. What did Jesus mean by Truth and being free?

Existence of Evil and Choice

I want to make things perfectly clear, that I don't believe, the world is without evil, or even an evil one. There are some words that have meant a lot to me. Some came after I told my father I was uncertain whether the things I did were based on a cause and effect played out by the matter in my body in which I had only imaginary control, or whether they were directly controlled by God. Were they sort of like a ball being dropped on earth? Physical laws that seem to make sense will predict that the ball will always fall to the earth. Was my life sort of like the same thing regardless of whether I experienced good or bad? How do I myself contribute what happens? As I said in the previous section, my father who is older and wiser assured me that I could I could indeed *"take credit for my choices"* That is both good and bad for each of us because no one alive on earth today is a perfect chooser. It has been my experience that when you choose wisely and make good choices, at some point good will return to you. On the other hand, when you make poor choices or even evil choices those choices will often eventually return misfortune.

That leads us to our understanding of good and evil. This is another topic that philosophers have debated along with the idea of free will. How do they arise and how are they defined? One of the paradoxical truths is that Humans are both perfect and imperfect at the same time. A big problem is that no man has perfect knowledge of the history or motives that produce the choices and subsequent actions of another person. Many people assume that because humans are imperfect we must assume that poor choices and evil actions will result. This is a stimulus for today's practice of locking things up and if you choose not to do that in the sight of those who conform to the practice you are considered foolish and possibly criminal.

Sometimes the fruit that your life yields will not be realized until much later, but the Holy Spirit who is in with and under the lives of people has influence that will help produce that fruit. This is true for both the believer and the non-believer. Now, you might say **"How does he do that, without violating our free will?"** This lead us back to electricity: we know that it works, but we don't know where charge comes from. It is similar to the work of God! God Loves and created all people. And remember that God is infinite in Love, Wisdom, Goodness, and Power. Do I have proof? – I have mostly faith, but my experience as influenced by my bias suggests

this is true. I have discovered that even Atheists have faith, but having faith in science or mathematics is purely faith in something that explains, but cannot effect change. I don't have faith, or absolute trust, in myself, because I have found my judgment can be poor or my actions can be inconsistent with my desire. Lest a believer become smug or self- righteous, ***it is only the Holy Spirit's active influence that can produce faith in God.*** In God's wisdom, that influence has not yet born fruit in the life of an Atheist. This leads to another paradox. **The activity of God in the world can produce change in the world without violating man's free will.** In my opinion I believe he can do this by somehow changing things. We know that people are not things. That was drilled into me by my family. It would be true that God would be a master at Physics. Perhaps, it is related to the notion that positive and negative electrical charges exist, with great benefit for mankind, but with no understanding from where they come. Mankind is a recipient of the work of God, with no real understanding of how he accomplishes his plans. Everyone benefits from electricity but as of yet we don't really understand how charge exists. Everyone benefits from the presence of God while no one understands how he came to be or the real nature of his existence. Of course, we do know certain things because God has and will communicate with us. I have always been told that God works through people and circumstances. An Atheist might not see these things that seem obvious to a believer because his mental filter has not yet been altered by the Holy Spirit and sometimes that Spirit works only through other people.

Heaven and Hell – the idea of salvation

The reason why this whole idea of belief in God or Christ causes such passion and emotion rests in the notion of salvation which is connected to the concepts of Heaven and Hell. Those are related to different varieties of religious practice. I cannot speak for other scriptures but the Holy Bible makes it clear that *salvation comes as a free gift through faith and that faith is inspired by the Holy Spirit*. People do not actually earn salvation for their thoughts, words, and deeds can never be good enough to merit salvation. In reality, the real purpose of faith is to enable us to “Love our Neighbor as Ourselves” and that is what actually saves us from sin through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit? But, that said, it is actually God who “earns” our salvation. Are you in doubt of this? **Remember, God is infinite in Love, Wisdom, Goodness and Power!** The notion of salvation if you have forgotten or never known is deliverance from the power and effects of sin. *Being “saved” comes immediately from God, and it is available to all people who call on the name of the Lord*. People who cannot seem to Love or believe in God are excluded from the experience of salvation solely because of the nature of their faith or their thinking. It is understood that it is God’s intention that everyone will be saved. I do not encourage people to hate or judge people who have not succeeded to focus their faith in God. In a way it would be like condemning someone for being confused about the concepts of voltage and current, and many well educated people do not understand exactly what they are. But why shouldn’t people know since electricity is used everywhere and improper knowledge can lead to pain, impairment, and even death? As an electrical engineer my calling is to try to teach and explain using all the gifts I have at my disposal. To me those concepts are very clear, aside from the existence of the charge itself.

Actually, the world as it is can offer both misery and happiness, in spite of what appears imperfect to us. The different ideas and problems we are confronted with enable us opportunities for personal growth. One friend suggested to me that he would be happier if everyone in the world was just like him. Many of our wishes, like that idea, do not offer a clear path to joy and fulfillment. God, in his wisdom, created a world that is best for us. Who are we to use human logic to support whether God exists or whether His intentions and works are perfect or flawed? As many people often say, this is a time we must say **“God only knows”**.

Ending Remarks

My process in this writing has been to provide some seeds to help us think about topics that might accomplish the goals I was compelled to establish. It is possible for us to make this world a better place to experience peace, love and joy. To live in a way that gives us all fulfilling and fruitful lives. We have been provided a good command to make the world a better place involving those qualities. It is simply to **“Love your neighbor as yourself”**. I have offered an extension of this Love in the Four Things to Do, to provide more detail about how we do that. If you think you are on a good path by hating another person, I suggest you are misguided. If you think you are better than another person, I suggest you are wrong. If you think you are smarter than another, I suggest you are called to teach and to share.

We do not have similar gifts and talents, yet I suggest we are to help others with what we have. I was once told by a woman that her Grandfather said “Attitude is everything.” This writer has concluded that from each person can come the highest form of goodness as well as thinking or actions that are completely against the intentions of God. God does not manipulate us but he can and often does inspire us. I would say this is true for the Atheist or the most passionate believer. We are all both saints and sinners. Until we remember this, we will have the potential of hypocrisy which might make us unable to truly Love our Neighbor. This is true for both the Atheist or the Christian or the Muslim or whatever category you might come up with. We all do not measure up to our standards or to those of God and we indeed live or die by the Grace of God. Our attitudes coupled with our talent are needed to change things in the world, if what we see is imperfect. Some of the things that can change are our attitude and understanding of history. Can we trust our neighbor? Or, is that an impossible dream? We do need guidance! On the cross Jesus was reported as saying this prayer” **“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing”**. I suggest that was a prayer for all of us who are alive today.

In the process of writing this the understanding I have found is that my words about some aspects of life, including God, are explained in the best way through reading the Bible itself. I am angry that those who insist that every word of the Bible is perfect and that creative works of God must be explained solely by ancient stories present stumbling blocks to the

understanding of God and the beginning and growth of faith in many people. I believe that the best explanations of science and mathematics enhance our understanding of God because both science and math were inspired by God as a vehicle to learn more about the nature of His work. The nature of God's creation can be quite fascinating and we should appreciate and encourage people who are inclined to understand it better. No one involved in science that I have heard is willing to say they have the final explanation on the way things work. I believe that the understanding of everything will always have an element of mystery. The reason I specifically make this part of my ending remarks is that there always seems to be conflict rather than partnership arising between the work of God and the explanations of science and mathematics. Don't we all want to know the Truth? I hope so! Now how do we "***Love our neighbor as ourselves***"? Do we yet know what we are doing?

The net result of all that I have written is that the focus for our life for the best results now and in the future should be on doing the will of God rather on saving our life. Only God can grant us eternal life. That's why I have emphasized the objective "***Love your neighbor as yourself***". It is my belief that if you remember that truth and persevere it will be found that your life on earth will be rewarding and you will find eternal life in the end. That objective is what is needed for both the unbeliever and the believer. We will see that God truly works in, with, and under each person and as a result the whole society. Life on earth can be full of Peace, Goodness, Hope, and Joy if we focus on the right attitudes. Just what do we want? That is the important question! It has been said that with even the smallest faith, we can move mountains. On my desk at work I display these words: "***And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God***". The emphasis on Love I suggest is the way that we can all Love God. For the believer, you can do that because God commands you, and for the unbeliever, do it because it makes sense.