

God for All Children, And Grandchildren

By Daniel Raphael, PhD

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— *opus unius hominis vitae* —



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God for All Children, and Grandchildren

Preface

Writing *God for All Children, and Grandchildren* fulfills a personal moral obligation that I perceived as I was writing *Clinics for Sustainable Families and the Millennium Families Program*.¹ That obligation is to provide a theological cornerstone to parents who believe in God and who want their children to have a solid spiritual foundation for their lives. I see this small book as a personal commitment to providing a “Loving-God” belief system for the children of over 5 billion people who practice some belief in God.

The primary reason for writing the “Clinics” paper was to provide a means for “bending the culture” of western civilization toward social stability, peace, social justice, social equity, “what is fair,” and the common good. It is my belief that only by improving the social competence and a personal sense of social responsibility in each new generation will our democratic societies have a reasonable possibility of becoming socially sustainable. That paper described the functions of local community “clinics” that would educate, train, and prepare parents-to-be and parents with the “best practices” of parenting and child rearing.

It is only in early infancy and childhood that the basic mechanics of healthy intra-personal and interpersonal relationships are formed in the mind of the child. That era offers a once in a lifetime opportunity that is only effective if the parents know *what and how* to socialize, enculturate, and

¹ Raphael, Daniel 2017 *Clinics for Sustainable Families and the Millennium Families Program* is available as a free downloadable PDF from :

<https://sites.google.com/view/danielraphael>

train their children using the “best practices” of parenting and child rearing that are common in all cultures.

Social stability, peace, and social sustainability of our societies are dependent on children who grow into adulthood to become socially competent and responsible citizens, innovators, leaders, and decision-makers. The missing “original cause” of that development is a society-wide program that teaches parents how to raise children that way. This is not a utopian idea, but one that holds true to the highest ideals of social evolution beginning with the parents before the child is born. This program also implements the values of decision-making that have sustained our species for over 8,000 generations.

Conjointly, *God for All Children, and Grandchildren* provides those same parents with simple explanations of God and the relationship that exists between God and the child. What parents and children will come away with after reading this small book is that 1) there is someone in charge, 2) who cares about each person, and 3), who has a personal “plan of life” for each person that will guide them to develop all of the potential they brought into life at birth.

Who knows, maybe parents and grandparents may get something out of this, too. ☺



Introduction

There is a “best practice” of parenting and child rearing that I did not mention in *Clinics for Sustainable Families and the Millennium Families Program* ² that is essential for families where God is a part of their family and spiritual interaction. That “best practice” is to teach, train, socialize, and enculturate children from their infancy into their early adulthood about God and the mutual loving relationship that exists between God and the child.

It is one of my dearest hopes for God-centered parents that they have a very clear understanding of what and who God is and the loving nature of our Creator. In many ways, this small book is for parents as much as it is for their children.

As for not teaching about God, the eventuality is that most children growing up will feel as alienated from themselves, as do their parents. The search for meaning and purpose in life is inextricably linked to understanding the “original cause” for the origins of our species.

I need to clarify four topics before we begin Chapter 1.

First, my motivation for writing *God for All Children, and Grandchildren* has its origins in my childhood. My Grandma Dorothy had always told my sister and me that God was a God of love who truly loves us and has only good for us in our lives. But when I went to Sunday School what the teacher told us about God was very different from what I learned from my Grandma. As a child I was too young yet to prove the truth of what Grandma Dorothy had taught us; but over the next 42 years I developed a proof that God is truly a God

² See footnote page 5.

of Love and only love — and I am sharing that with you in this book.

Second, because God is eternal, God is not a man or a woman — God is not human. God is not a “him” or a “her” but really an “It”. I know that using the “It” word in the book may cause some readers to stumble over that word as they read the sentences. Please do not be confused. It is really important to know that God is God-the-Creator, and not human. Using the “It” word to describe God is necessary in order to have a clear understanding of God’s relationship to each of us.

Third, “love,” as it is used in *God for All Children, and Grandchildren*, is not emotional love because God is not human. Not being human, God does not have human emotions. We simply interpret God’s love for us in terms of goodness, wholeness, integrity, honesty, truthfulness, respect, loyalty, devotion, faithfulness, recognition, acceptance, appreciation, validation, patience, forbearance, forgiveness, authenticity, genuineness, listening, supporting, caring, tenderness and many more. These also exemplify the best of enduring love of one person for another.

Fourth, you will find a “NOTE TO THE ADULT READER” in several places in the book. This notifies the reader that what lies ahead may be too difficult for young listeners and readers to understand. Knowing this, the reader can prepare to discuss those difficult sections in their own words for their child’s level of understanding.

My hope in writing this small book for parents and their children is to fill the void of ignorance about the individual’s relationship to God, and God’s relationship to them, individually.



1

Does God Exist?

A belief is something that cannot be proven. We cannot prove that God exists, and no one can prove that God doesn't exist.

At one time in history everyone believed in God. Today, many people are not so sure. Getting to know that God exists is like getting to know a new kid in school. The only way to get to know him or her is to introduce yourself and start talking and inviting them to join you.

Only you can know if you believe in God. If you do believe God exists, then think of God as being an idea. And, if someone says God doesn't exist, that is like them saying you don't have an idea in your head, when you know you do!

At one time, you were an idea. So was I, so were your mother and your father and your grandparents. Everyone was an idea at one time. You have many ideas, and from some of your ideas you created something. Whether you use your electronic tablet to create something, or you play-create buildings and cities in your backyard, or draw something on a pad of paper with a pencil, it all starts with an idea.

God is like your ideas. You are unable to measure your idea or see it, but you know it exists; you know you have an idea and can create a lot of things with your ideas. So, we say that God exists, probably in the same way as your ideas.



God for All Children, and Grandchildren

2

Only One God

This chapter covers the belief that there is only one God. We cannot prove that; neither can anyone prove that there is more than one God. So, we believe that there is only one God.

For this belief, we think of God as the Only God. If there were two, three, or more gods, then who brought them into existence? Would they have a mother and father? Then, who would have brought that mother and father into existence? None of that makes any sense.

So for this belief, we keep it simple and believe that there is only one God.



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3

God Is Eternal and Created the Universe

When you look up into the sky at night and see the black blanket of empty space and all of the stars sprinkled around, you must be curious, aren't you, to know when all of that came into existence. Curiously, too, "What existed before the stars and universe were created?" Aren't you curious? "Curious George"³ would be curious!

And I am pretty sure that God is curious, as curious as any of us could be. God has ideas and probably was curious to know what It could create with Its ideas. I suspect that when God had the idea of the universe the stars were created. And now we see them at night across the sky.

Some things we do *know*. We know we live in a really big universe because with a telescope we can see billions of stars. And, we know we live on a planet that revolves around one of those stars.

We ask, "What was there before the universe came into existence?" No one really knows, but we *believe* it was just God and eternity – a "place" that existed before time.



³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curious_George

Summary of Chapters 1, 2, 3

These first three chapters outlined our beliefs about God. Even though we believe those things about God, they really don't give us any direction for our lives. Until we find our direction in the remainder of the book, we will need to "Be Like an Angel and Wing It!" as my Guardian Angel, Leah, says.



4

Getting to Know God

Because we believe that God lives in eternity and that there is only one God, then God did not have any parents! No mother, no father, no birth, no death, just eternal by Itself.

When you think about that, then you realize that without a mother and a father, God is not a female or a male. God has no sex. Therefore, I call God "It" rather than "He" or "She." In fact, God does not have a body. Like an idea, God is pure energy that we call Spirit. God is Spirit.

And it is this energy, together with God's will, that created the universe. No one really knows what that looked like or how that happened, except that God thought it would be a good idea to make a universe as part of Its plan for what was to come along later. When you realize how big the universe is and how many stars exist, you get the clear idea that God is very powerful.

You might not have thought of this, but because God existed before time and the creation of the universe, God is perfect. We know this because if God were not perfect, neither would the universe be — God would have gotten sick and died, and the universe would have fallen apart in one way or another. The universe, however, continues on as it has from the beginning and it will continue to be that way forever. As we get to know God we will surely want to ask the following question:

Why did God create the universe? I like to think of the reasons in a similar way as asking, "Why do you go on vacations?" The answers to both questions are really very similar. God created the universe as a way to get to know

Itself better. Just as you go on vacations to enjoy something new, God created the universe to get the *experience* of creating something. Vacations give us an experience that we enjoy. Creating something is also very enjoyable.

The other part of why God created the universe was to get to express and know Its capabilities. You see, even though God is complete and whole, the one thing God does not have is the experience of Itself. For us, it's a bit like doing something you have never done before, and in order to know if you will enjoy it or not, or whether you can even do it, you decide to try. Learning to ice skate is a bit like that.

You say to yourself, "Hmmm, I have never ice skated before. It looks like fun to glide across the ice really fast, then stop and twirl, and then skate some more. I think I will try it!" If you read that last sentence slowly, you realize that you were curious to know what ice skating would be like. You are curious; God is curious. Being curious is a natural trait of humans and God. And that's a good thing, when it leads to good experiences.

What God got out of creating the universe was the experience of Itself creating something. That experience included thinking about creating the universe, developing a list of options for that creation, choosing an option, deciding to take action, then taking the action to create the universe. And that is what we do when we make good decisions — followed by our enjoyment of the experience of taking action, and then enjoying the results of what we have created.



5

God's Problem After Creating the Universe

The problem with going ice skating is that we enjoy it so much that we want to skate more and more! "Let's go ice skating today, tomorrow, and the next day, for weeks!" The possibilities could almost be without limit for us to explore our curiosity about skating. Think of figure skating, speed skating, playing hockey, and many other options. Think of the skills you could develop if you skated every day.

Well, God had the same problem. God had the experience of creation, but once the universe was created, there was no other means yet to experience Itself. It had just created the infinite, material universe of time and space and had gotten to know that part of Itself. But God knew that even if It created more and more universes, It would just be repeating that same experience. I think God wanted more than that. I think God wanted the universe to provide a means for experiencing Itself as a continuing process, just like we do for ourselves.

"Hmmm," God must have mused to Itself. Then pondering Its situation in the eternal universe, It must have come to the conclusion that It needed to duplicate Itself in a way that allowed It to experience the ongoing process of living. Now, that may sound a bit silly to you, but think of God this way; God is perfect, eternal, and complete by Itself, BUT! It lacked an ongoing process for gaining experience, until It created people.

NOTE TO THE ADULT READER: The following paragraph may be a bit “deep” for a child, but I have included it to help you understand something really odd about God’s situation.

God exists, is eternal, and is perfect, but God is not alive as we are alive. And, not being alive, God is also not dead. God just *IS*. Remember, an idea is very much like God. It is neither alive nor dead, it just is. And, an idea is nothing more than just an idea until we put some experience behind it, so the idea is made into something that we can experience. I think God was in pretty much the same place after It had created the universe. It must have asked, “Now what?!”



6

The Experience of Living

“Why did God create people?” That’s the question that really needs to be answered.

In the last chapter we noted that God is perfect and whole but is lacking in experience. Experience, as you know, is earned by living. We can experience life more thoroughly when we live life consciously, meaning that we are thinking about our experience of living as we live those experiences. Some people call this “conscious living” or “living in the moment.” Oh! Sorry. I got a little carried away with myself in that explanation. (embarrassed)

Some of you may have a question, “*How* did God create people?” Here in this book, it does not really matter HOW God created people. Some people believe that God created people in an instant, just as we are today. Others believe that God created people through an evolutionary process of one step at a time.

Now, back to the “**why?**” question: that answer is pretty simple, actually. *God wanted to be partners with us so It could experience life and living as we live our lives.* For an explanation that is easy to understand, think of God as a bottle of wonderful perfume. What God gave us is Its “fragrance” that is God in every way, just not the whole bottle! You may think it is hard to understand that God is in us, but remember the time you smelled a bottle of nice perfume. The fragrance entered your nose, and you smelled the perfume. Now, days,

months, or years later you can recall the actual fragrance of that perfume you smelled. It became a part of you! That's how God's presence is in us, too. I call it "the Fragrance of God" in us.

So, the point of God being in you is that God gets to experience life WITH YOU, as you live your life. God is not just watching you like watching a sports game on television. The Fragrance of God is actually with you enjoying you as you live your life, and enjoying the experience of you enjoying your life. Simple!

Ahhhh, I see.... You are wondering what good that does for you, right? The good that does for you is when you ask It a question and you get an insight, one of those "Ah-ha!" moments when an *idea* comes to your mind. You know the answer to a problem or know how you want to draw a picture, or you have an answer about your relationships with other people. In many ways the Fragrance of God is right there with you in your mind, helping you find answers to the problems in your life.

As you may be thinking, this also involves some other ideas about life and living. So, turn the page.



7

What's Next?!

Many of you have heard your minister, priest, rabbi, Imam, or pastor tell you that we are to "...become perfect as God." You might ask, as I did when I was much younger, "But, what for?!!! That doesn't sound like any fun."

The situation is really pretty simple. People are born, live, and die. But, what comes after you are dead? The great religions of the world, and the prophets such as Jesus and others, have told us that there is life after death. Jesus proved this by rising from death three days after he was killed. He told us that he went to visit his Father (God, the creator) in Paradise (Heaven).

Jesus told us that we can do the same. But there is something necessary we need to do. In order to enter heaven, we need to try to become as "perfect" as God. Well! You and I know that is impossible! What we have been told by Jesus and the other prophets is that our *INTENTION* for living is what is important, and then trying to fulfill that intention. Look at it this way, some people require their visitors to remove their shoes before entering the house. Most of us accept that as a pretty normal request. By removing our shoes we have shown our willingness to be good guests and visit with our friends. For us to enter heaven, the only request that is made for us to enter is to live with the intention to become the best person we can be in this lifetime.

Because the “Fragrance of God” is within each of us, It gains the experience of what it is like for us to become the best person we can in this lifetime. This is the most intimate and vicarious relationship that can ever exist between God and us as we make decisions and experience living life from moment-to-moment, and decision-to-decision. It is by our decisions and our actions that we learn how to live this life without creating conflicts with other people, and trouble for our self. As we live life, God’s Fragrance helps us understand those decisions better so that we make good decisions that contribute to this life and to our life after death.

That’s probably a lot to understand whether you are 8 years old or 18 years old. Some people will easily understand that, and some may never understand it. The final result of living is that you are responsible for your decisions. Some people try to play it safe and not make any decisions, but you are also responsible for your failure to make decisions that help your life and others. Choosing not to make a decision is a decision!

As you live your life, you will see others who seem to have an easy life, people who don’t have to make decisions, either tough ones or easy ones. The problem with an easy life is that there are no challenges to learn from. Learning how to live life and grow through its challenges is much like learning to play tennis or lacrosse, for example. Sometimes you will decide how to strike the ball, and it will go where you want it to go. At other times, it may go somewhere else. Life’s decisions are like that, too. And sometimes it just helps to have a coach to help you with your stance, swing, running, and positioning. When in doubt about a decision, ask someone who has already made that decision correctly.



8

We're Not Perfect, Why?

The answer is fairly simple. God created us that way.

Then, "What is it about being IMperfect that helps God know Itself better?"

Only through imperfect beings who have total freedom and total responsibility for their choices and for their decisions could God experience the process of living from imperfection to perfection. Remember, earlier we said that the thing God did not have was the *experience* of becoming perfect *as a process of living*.

A similar question for us is this, "What is it like to be perfect?" For God, the question becomes, "What is it like to be IMperfect and to experience life as a process of becoming perfect?"

So, God created imperfect beings, then gave us Its Fragrance that lives within our minds so It can participate in the process of living and becoming perfect. How we become more and more perfect is to gain experience, learn, make wiser and wiser decisions, and create a more fulfilling life. We learn to live in harmony with others, then with our planet, and then the universe. The benefit for us is that as we live life, we learn to become perfect, and someday in the "afterlife" we will get to meet God in person.



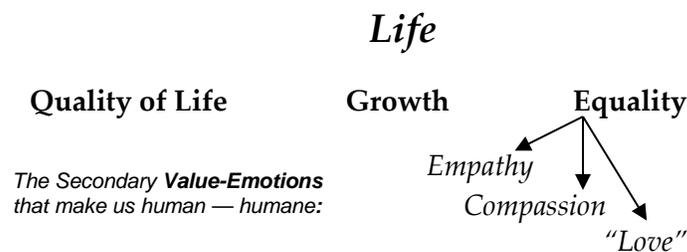
God for All Children, and Grandchildren

9

Special Tools for Making Decisions

Because values always underlie decision-making, God gave us the freedom and the right values to make good decisions that would contribute to the success of our spiritual growth, maturity, and evolution — to eventually become more like God, loving in all our thoughts, decisions, and actions.

The Values that Sustain Families, Societies, and Civilizations



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NOTE: “Love” is in quotation marks because love is the value-emotion that points to: Honesty, truthfulness, respect, loyalty, devotion, faithfulness, recognition, acceptance, appreciation, validation, discretion, patience, forbearance, forgiveness, authenticity, vulnerability, genuineness, listening, supporting, sharing, consulting, confiding, caring, tenderness and many more. These values constitute the operational definition of love. (Source: *Sacred Relationships, A Guide to Authentic Loving*, Daniel Raphael, 1999. Origin Press.)

“Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries.
Without them humanity cannot survive.”
— Dalai Lama

The seven values above are organic to us by being embedded in our DNA. They identify us as being human, and humane. These values have motivated and sustained our species for over 200,000 years, and have prompted us to progress as individuals and as societies. They have particular

characteristics that have helped all people for all time to improve the condition of their lives.

Living our life to become more perfect would be pretty hard to figure out if God had not given us these values for making good decisions. Living life this way is like “coloring inside the lines.” The lines help us color the object so that we can clearly see what a bird, or dog, or cat, or tree looks like with all of its colors when we are done coloring the object. These seven values provide us with guide “lines” for consistently making good decisions. Living life without these values would be like trying to repair your bicycle without a repair manual. So, God made us imperfect, but gave us the tools for making good decisions.

Let’s check out these values so that you understand what they are all about.

LIFE — If you have life, you want to stay alive.

Quality of Life — *Everyone wants to have a better quality of life.* If you are out hiking and it starts to rain, you want to put on a rain coat. If you are lonely, you want to have friends to share your experiences with. If you live in a cave, you would like to have a house with hot water, heat, a roof, and toilets. Each of these examples are related to wanting a better quality of life.

Growth — *Everyone wants to grow into the potential they brought into life when they were born.* To grow is to be human. If you heard someone sing and you liked what you heard, you might want to learn how to sing, too. To sing like that you would need to practice and grow into your capability to sing.

Equality — *Everyone, and I mean EVERYONE, wants to improve the quality of their life and to grow into their potential.* To do that, everyone needs to have an equal opportunity to try.

Empathy — Sometimes we see someone who is in a bad situation. Maybe we see that their home has burned down and we feel bad because they don't have a home. Empathy is that feeling you get when you see someone who needs help.

Compassion — When our sense of empathy rises in our hearts, we want to do something for that other person. When we reach out to help them that is an act of compassion. Compassion is helping someone who has a need to improve their quality of life and to grow into their potential just as we would do for ourselves.

“Love” — This kind of love is the “love of humanity.” That means that we have empathy and compassion for all of humanity just as we would for ourselves. It is a generalized kind of love for all people.

Characteristics of These Values —

Self-Evident — The three primary values, (quality of life, growth, and equality), are as self-evident as the values stated in the famous sentence in the United States Declaration of Independence, *“We hold these truths (values) to be self-evident, that all [people] are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”* We know

they are self-evident because when people around the world are asked whether they would like to enjoy an improved quality of life, they always say, “Yes!”

Universal — These seven values are universal to all people of all races, cultures, ethnicity, nations, and genders. Ask anyone, whether they live in Bangladesh or Baltimore, Houston or Hanoi, or any other city, if they would like to improve the quality of their life with an equal opportunity as anyone else would or could. The answers are always, “Yes!!”

Irreducible — The three primary values, (quality of life, growth, and equality), are the most important values of humans. There simply are no other values that so clearly and simply explain human motivation for what people do.

Organic / Innate / Timeless — Even though I cannot prove it, evidence seems to suggest that these seven values are organic to our DNA and have been a part of our human existence from the earliest of times.

When you live life making decisions that use these values, then you are “coloring your life inside the lines” that lead to more wisdom for yourself and for others. This kind of living is what gives “ordinary” people the greatness to become extraordinary in how they live life.



10

Be Careful, You are Powerful

The thing I have not mentioned is that you are powerful and so is everyone else. The power God gives to each of us is the freedom to make decisions and to be responsible for our actions. What makes our decisions so powerful is that there is a rule in the universe that God tied to our lives: our decisions cannot and will not be changed by God or any of Its angels. This is called “free will” and is a necessary part of learning to make better decisions by being totally responsible for them.

If this rule were not in place, then our decisions would not mean very much if God or the angels could change what happened. Tough, huh? We have the power to destroy our lives by making bad decisions, or the power to create our life to be something we can be proud of, and have everyone else be proud of what we became. Greatness is not something that is tied to wealth, big houses, expensive cars, or the college or university you go to. Greatness is using your life to your greatest advantage by using the values we discussed in the last chapter.

In our greatness and in our powerfulness we should not hurt or destroy the greatness or capability of anyone else. When we live life using these values we are in every sense truly human and humane, becoming more capable of making good decisions.



God for All Children, and Grandchildren

11

Understanding God a Little Better

As you probably have figured out, God is totally powerful in every way. But because we can make decisions that God will not change, our world can get pretty messed up. What this tells us is that although God is totally powerful God does not change the rules.

God gives us free will. (“Free will” means that we are free to decide what we want, but we are also totally responsible for our decisions.) Fortunately, God gave us the seven values to guide us to make better decisions, and a “plan of life” to give our life meaning and purpose for those decisions.

Just because God gave you a plan of life does not mean that you have to follow it. (All people have a plan of life, but many have never asked about it.) It just means that as long as you follow your plan of life, later as you look back over your life and all of its developments, your life will make sense to you, and it will give you wisdom for making new decisions.

A plan of life is something like a travel plan to go somewhere. For example, imagine your plan of life as a travel plan that empowers you to go around the world. The ticket is guaranteed for your whole life. On this travel plan you can stop at any location in the world, stay as long or as briefly as you like, take side trips, complete your final destination, or stop the trip and not continue. It is your decision to use the travel plan of your life, or not — and you are responsible for your decisions.

How you proceed on your journey of life is by asking the Fragrance of God to bring you *opportunities* to explore your plan. It's that simple.

The nice thing about knowing you have a plan of life is knowing that it was made by God just for you. The Fragrance of God within you will help you through your life to make good decisions, and take good actions as the opportunities come to you. Or, you can take total control of your life if you want to. There are no "rules" for following this plan of life. It is just a very good guide for your whole life.

You have a plan of life because God wants you to have a fulfilling life, with purpose and meaning. It doesn't mean that you will be rich, famous, and powerful, and it doesn't mean that you will be poor, lonely, and powerless. It just means that you will have help to work through the tough times, and you will have help to enjoy the opportunities.

Life plans are to help the individual grow into the potential they brought with them when they were born. Part of that process is for you to explore what you like to do and what you are good at doing. You may not know what that is yet, so until you know, it is important to explore lots of different things as you go through your life.

Curiosity is the one trait of God that It shared with us to explore who we are and what we can do, no matter where we are. Some people keep exploring their potential into their elder years. Keeping your mind busy with good thoughts, good words, and good actions will help keep you as young as you are now. So, begin exploring who you are and what you like to do. It's your choice and your decision — enjoy the adventure!



12

Good God or Bad God?

Earlier we talked about God being perfect, and that if God had any flaws then so would the universe, and it would have collapsed a long time ago. So we believe that God is eternal and perfect. Only “good” can sustain the universe or a society into the future.

So, we believe that God has only one nature, *perfect and loving* because any other nature would lead to the ending of the universe. Think of God as being a gardener who has prepared a HUGE garden for Its human children. Like a gardener, God provides all of the nutrients that vegetables, fruits, nuts, and berries need to grow and become ripe.

Like a good gardener, God does not walk on the new plants or put harmful materials on the plants, but simply lets them grow in the rain and sunshine to become full and whole. God does that for us, too! God does not harm us or cause us problems. God is good, whole, and complete — and enjoys us growing and experiencing life to become the best people we can become.

In fact, God is so good that we call God “loving.” That is the perfect and complete expression of being good.

In three words, God is love. God created and creates everything as a loving idea. What is in the universe stems from the pattern of making good decisions using the values that God gave our species. What is not-loving comes from the free will decisions of people who do not use the pattern and

values for good decision-making. Some people have been confused about the hurtful things that occur in the world. When they see hate and violence against others, it is not God that started that. It is people.

Martin Luther King, Jr. had much to say about the power of love and the ends that love can bring, in his sermon, "Loving Your Enemy."

"Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend. We never get rid of an enemy by meeting hate with hate; we get rid of an enemy by getting rid of enmity. By its very nature hate destroys and tears down; by its very nature, love creates and builds up...." ("Strength To Love," 1963:521.)

Taking Dr. King's advice, when we focus our intent and decisions only on love, we can move forward into a new development of our relationship with God — as partner and co-creator. Our partnership with God supports our responsibilities to aid the healing of our planet and ourselves — learning to love more completely.

We will have no confusion about our relationship to others when we understand clearly that our relationship with God has only one nature. When we feel safe in God's universe and we feel safe in our relationship with God, then we can trust God and ourselves to act and make decisions that move us into loving, sacred relationships.



13

What God Is Not

This is actually a pretty funny title for a chapter. On one hand, we could make a list a kilometer long of what God is not. On the other hand, if God is not all of those things, why list them? So, this is just an exercise to help us know what God is, and what God is not. That way we can have a better relationship with God.

God is not human. Because God is not human, God does not have emotions! Having said that God is not human really puts an end to much more discussion about what God is not! Yes, we have said that God is loving, but that is our interpretation for how God treats us. God treats us with respect, loyalty, devotion, faithfulness, recognition, acceptance, appreciation, generosity, kindness, validation, discretion, patience, forbearance, forgiveness, authenticity, vulnerability, genuineness, and by listening, supporting, and many more. God is good, and that is how I would identify someone as being loving.

When you pour your heart out to God about some situation where you are hurt, embarrassed, or have been foolish, God does not slap your face and say, "You stupid kid!" No, that is not God. That's not God as I know God.

Think of God as you would a good neighbor you have never met and don't ever see, but whose presence is very evident in many intriguing ways. Suppose she quietly planted flower bulbs and seeds in the fall, which in the spring surprised you

with blooming flowers. Suppose she quietly arranged it so that you got the right job that helped you fulfill your family's needs. Suppose she was able to put you into situations where you had to grow, and though the times were rough, you were glad you had gone through them because you had grown. And suppose she was able to mysteriously answer your sincere requests that were in keeping with your highest good. If you had a neighbor like that, you would interpret his or her actions as "loving." Think of God as a neighbor who is eternally, universally, unconditionally, and unlimitingly generous and "good." We interpret God's unlimited and unconditional benevolent behavior toward us as "loving."

You may wonder why I wrote that paragraph using "she" and "her" as someone who is feminine, even though we have already discovered that God is not male or female. I did so to help you to see God in different ways. And, it makes the story a bit more life-like to use words that portray God as being a good neighbor.



14

Confusing "Bad Things" With the Nature of God

In really simple terms all that exists in the world is either “of people” or “not of people.” If there were no people, then everything else would be “not of people.” For example, without people all that would be left are mountains, oceans, weather, plants, animals, ice caps, rivers, and so on. Even things that people have made are really “not of people” because cars, buildings, bridges, houses, ships, roads, and so on are just “things,” not people.

Bad things are caused either by 1) nature, 2) decisions other people make, or 3) our decisions that result in “bad things.”

“Bad Things” Due to Nature.

You might ask, “Well Daniel, what about the bad things of nature? Didn’t God cause that?” Let’s look at it this way — suppose that you are on vacation driving along a highway under a steep, rocky cliff, pulling a travel-trailer behind your car. Suddenly a large boulder crashes down onto the trailer. That is a “bad thing,” as most all of us would agree, that occurred as an act of nature. Nothing personal about it — it just happened.

Yes, God created the earth and everything that followed, including gravity, and the rock that flattened your travel trailer. God put all of this into motion at the time that this planet was created, but God didn't actively cause the rock to

fall down and ruin your vacation. Your trailer just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Nothing personal about it. Had you passed earlier or later, the boulder would have merely cratered the highway rather than your trailer. Remember, God didn't intentionally act to harm you.

On the other hand, although God didn't actively cause the accident, God also didn't keep you from harm either. You might ask, "Why didn't God save our trailer from that act of nature that destroyed it?" The answer is this: since God is all-wise, there is no need to change the initial decisions made on how reality, including nature, should work. Once set in motion, it does what it is supposed to do, even when we get in the way. If God protected us in all the events of our lives, we would come to expect God to do it all the time, and we would give up searching for personal growth and maturity. We would not be challenged by life. Life would become easy and we would become lazy, uncreative, unchallenged, uninventive, and so on. Further, we would eventually feel that our lives were being controlled, and we would resent God for interfering in all of our plans. If God intruded into our lives to prevent harm, we would not be challenged to grow, mature, develop values, and pursue the ennobling qualities of our humanity.

If we prayed for a successful trip on our vacation and our trailer was hit by a boulder, I would give great thanks to God that the boulder did not hit the car and kill or injure us! Was our prayer answered or not?

"Bad Things" Due to Decisions by Other People.

Probably the most difficult problem we have to deal with is the decisions people make that hurt other people. God does

not interfere with those decisions, because all decisions made by humans are irrevocable, meaning they will not be changed by God or anyone.

Some people ask, “Why doesn’t society do something about this problem?!” The answer is that societies do not make decisions. People make decisions, not societies, not organizations, not governments. People make decisions and are responsible for their part in the decision, even when it is carried out by governments or organizations.

“Bad Things” Due to Our Own Decisions.

This situation is really the same as “decisions made by other people.” We are responsible for our own decisions, just the same as other people. When we make a decision that results in “bad things,” we know now that God will not change those results. However, we can ask our Fragrance of God to help us make the situation better and to learn from this situation, so we do not repeat that bad decision again.



God for All Children, and Grandchildren

15

The Problems People Have

It's time for us to discover why people have illnesses, congenital problems, physical, mental, and emotional problems. To answer this question we will need to go back to the evolutionary creation of our species, Homo sapiens.

I hope this doesn't get too complicated for you to understand. Let's give it a try. If you understand a bit about genetic replication, this will make sense pretty quickly. What that means in simple language is that at the time the mother's chromosomes combine with the chromosomes of the father, any weaknesses and strengths in the genes are carried forward to the new child.

The causes of those problems occur when the chromosomes join. Damaged genes in the chromosomes are carried over to the new child. Sometimes, however, the opposite occurs. Sometimes the genes join in such a way that the person has exceptional skills, balance, stability, and intelligence. That's what makes each of us so unique. In either case, any damage and later problems are not caused by God.



God for All Children, and Grandchildren

16

God, Churches, and Religions

If you are curious (I hope you are!) you probably will ask, “What is the relationship between God and churches?” The short answer is this: Not much!

Actually, here is a better question, “What do religions have to do with God, and what does God have to do with religions?” The short answer is this: A lot!

About Churches.

Churches are buildings. They are just places where people go to worship God. But of course you can worship God anywhere! You can worship God at home, in the car, at the beach, in the mountains, while you are waiting in line to check out groceries – anywhere. You don’t have to go to a church to worship God. Churches are just convenient places where people of that religion go to worship together.

Worship is really just a personal activity you do by yourself, even when you are next to another person in church who is also worshipping God. And you don’t need a priest, minister, pastor, rabbi, or Imam. The Fragrance of God is within your mind, so you can worship God anywhere you go.

About Religions.

As you know, there is only one God, BUT there are many religions. Let’s try to answer this question, “Why are there so many religions when there is only one God?” The answer is that religions were founded by a person who usually had a personal experience with God and got so excited that he or

she began telling everyone about that experience, and those people wanted an experience like that, too. They probably asked, “How can we have an experience with God like you had?” Usually what occurred was that the person began writing down the instructions for “knowing God” based on their experience with God, and that became the new religion.

What is the Purpose of Religions?

The answer to that question is actually hidden in the paragraph above. The purpose of religions is to teach people how to worship God.

Worshipping is what people do who have a feeling of profound love and admiration for God. They admire, adore, love, and see God as the great provider of all of the good that they see around them and that they have in their life.

Worship is a process of giving great thanks to express gratitude for their lives and the beautiful things they have in life.

When religions teach people how to have a personal, even intimate, relationship with God in Paradise and with the Fragrance of God within them, then the religion is fulfilling its purpose to help people know God in a personal relationship.

Unfortunately, most religions confuse people with their rules, rituals, and ceremonies. In fact, most religions have almost forgotten how to teach people *how to worship and talk to God*. That’s a pretty sad situation in my opinion.



Seven General Truths for Understanding Our Spiritual Growth

NOTE TO THE ADULT READER: The following truths may be a bit “deep” for a child who is reading them on their own. I have included them to help you explain these concepts to your children in your own terms, if you choose.

The following seven “doctrines” tell us some general truths about our life and our spiritual growth on our spiritual path to become more like God.

1. The Doctrine of Innocence: All children are born morally perfect and without humanly defined sin.

What this means is that all babies are good people when they arrive in the world! They haven’t made any decisions or taken any actions to hurt themselves or anyone else.

2. The Doctrine of Fallibility: All human children grow from a perfect state of innocence to the point where they will make their first moral decision. It is inevitable that children who have reached this age will make a fallible moral decision.

What this means is that at some time that perfect new baby will grow up and make a decision that is not good! Everyone does it, so making mistakes is just a part of growing up.

3. The Doctrine of Perfection: Having made a fallible moral decision, it is our choice to decide to strive to become perfect once again. Having made this decision and taken action, our Fragrant essence of God will do what we allow it to do to help us. It will give us options so we can choose the right action for our growth.

What this means is that first we need to make the decision to make better decisions. What is really handy is that the Fragrance of God within us will help us with those decisions.

4. The Doctrine of Separation: God, being perfectly loving and having given sovereignty to the free-will decisions of human beings, has provided that people can choose *not to* participate in their plan of life, and not to meet God person to person.

What this means is that sometimes life is so tough for some people that they refuse to make any decisions for their greater good and refuse to participate in God's plan for their life. They just sit on the bench of life and watch other people make decisions. For some people life can be very, very difficult because they were never taught how to make good decisions. Others just keep messing up and messing up... and that is not something that helps them or anyone else.

5. The Doctrine of Wholeness: The universe and its functions are whole and unified. All aspects of universe-function operate in oneness, where any one aspect affects the rest, and the whole has an effect upon the single aspect. (The universe does not exhibit "fracturing," where parts operate distinctly from the

whole. Only beings with self-will who choose to live outside of wholeness exhibit "fracturing.")

What this means is that the universe has an order and pattern that work together for the good of all people, even those who don't make good decisions. The flow of the universe can make life a lot easier when we don't try to control everything in our life. That's why sometimes it makes good sense to take a year off before going to college, or doing something like that. That year off gives Spirit a chance to open up opportunities for you that may not have been there if you were controlling everything. This doctrine fits very nicely with the next one about "Flow."

6. The Doctrine of Flow: All aspects that exist in alignment with the greater universe flow in agreement with the universe. "Good" (divine order, divine timing, divine serendipity, and coincidence) is evidence of being in the flow of the universe. The greater our alignment, the greater we are in agreement with the flow of the universe, and the more that divine order, divine timing, divine serendipity, and coincidence can work in our life.

What this means is that our view of the universe and all the events of our life are knitted together. We have a powerful effect on how divine order, divine timing, divine serendipity, and coincidence work together in our lives. When you see them in your life, then you know you are "in the flow of the universe."

Here's an example: Suppose that during the summer your folks have to work at their jobs, but don't want to leave you home alone. Your best friend's mom

unexpectedly calls up your mom and asks her if she would allow you to go along with your best friend for the summer so your friend won't be alone as they travel to all of the national parks. That would be totally unexpected, in divine order, and a great example of serendipity.

Definition: Serendipity — Good luck in making unexpected and fortunate discoveries.

7. The Doctrine of Conscious Participation: The rate of development and evolution of our ascendant spiritual career is immensely increased when we consciously participate by making appropriate and timely decisions that are in alignment with the nature of God. Our rate of growth is further augmented when we consciously choose to establish and maintain a co-creative relationship with the Fragrance of God in our mind.

What this means is that real help comes along when you ask the Fragrance of God in your mind to help you with the options, choices, decisions, and actions. Then life will get really interesting and one development will lead to another that takes you along in life in a good direction.



→ For those readers who want a far more detailed understanding of their relationship to God and God to them, please visit:

<https://sites.google.com/view/danielraphael>

Click on "Free Downloads," and scroll down to

God for All Religions

BIO: Daniel Raphael, PhD

Daniel Raphael is an independent and original thinker who is a Viet Nam veteran; with 18 years experience working in adult felony criminal corrections; father of three and grandfather of three children; former volunteer fireman; small business owner, inventor, manufacturer of a household sewing machine product; self-taught theologian; holistic life coach and principal of Daniel Raphael Consulting since 2003; author and publisher of numerous books, papers, and articles. Daniel enjoys public speaking and has taught social sustainability and spirituality classes and workshops nationally and internationally and is well prepared to enlighten and entertain you.

Remarkably, he has had an almost prescient sense of the future since his early childhood. This skill and his deep meditation practices have enabled him to become an effective holistic life coach and spiritual counselor, and have given him insights into the lives of his clients, and into the macro perspectives of the world. These gifts have been useful to him to see the necessity of social sustainability.



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- (1992) *The Development of Public Policy and the Next Step of Democracy for the 21st Century*
- (1992) *Developing A Personal, Loving-God Theology*
- (1999) *Sacred Relationships, A Guide to Authentic Loving*, Origin Press
- (2002) *What Was God Thinking?!*, Infinity Press
- (2007) *Global Sustainability and Planetary Management*
- (2014) *Healing a Broken World*, Origin Press
- (2015) *Social Sustainability HANDBOOK for Community-Builders*, Infinity Press
- (2016) *The Progressive's Handbook for Reframing Democratic Values* ‡
- (2016) *Organic Morality: Answering the Critically Important Moral Questions of the 3rd Millennium* ‡
- (2017) *Designing Socially Sustainable Democratic Societies* ‡
- (2017) *A Theology for New Thought Spirituality* ‡
- (2017) *God For All Religions — Re-Inventing Christianity and the Christian Church —
Creating Socially Sustainable Systems of Belief and Organization* ‡
- (2017) *God For All Children, and Grandchildren* ‡
- (2017) *Democracy for 2017 — The Political Empowerment of Local Citizens* ‡
- (2017) *Clinics for Sustainable Families and the Millennium Families Program* ‡
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