

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Complete Introductions Collection 3

by Ben Huot

www.benjamin-newton.com

Created August 2019

Last Edited

August 29, 2021

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Table of Contents

First Things.....	4
For More Information.....	4
License.....	4
About the World.....	6
About the Future.....	13
About My Faith.....	16
Origin of My Websites.....	26
Origins.....	26
Mission Bible Verse.....	27
Clarity in Conviction, an Epic Poem.....	28
Faith Does Not Require Reason.....	32
Part 0: Disclaimer.....	32
Part 1: Philosophy.....	36
Part 2: Existentialism.....	40
Part 3: Theology.....	42
Part 4: Theory of Knowledge.....	47
Art Theory / Poetry.....	49
Define Spiritual.....	49
Real Dreams.....	50
Spiritual Beauty.....	51
Creation of Living Things.....	52
Spontaneous Love.....	54
Church Art.....	56
Still Life Crosses.....	57
Bible Quotes.....	58
Beauty Equals Ethics.....	58

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

God's Mercy Lasts Forever.....59
Our Response: The Opposite of Selfishness.....62

First Things

For More Information

For more books and information, visit me on the web at
<http://benjamin-newton.com/>

Feel free to send me e-mail regarding the books and website at
<mailto:ben@benjamin-newton.com>
I even enjoy constructive criticism

License

This entire PDF is licensed together under a Creative Commons Attribution-No Derivative Works 3.0 United States License as a whole, and nothing is to be separated, added on to, or modified in any manner.

Clarification on what no derivatives means:

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

No changes may be made in any way including but not limited to: the material content and design must be copied as a whole (everything contained in this pdf file)

with nothing added
without anything taken away

must be kept in its original form with no additions or subtractions to

file formats
HTML and CSS code
PDF files
graphics and movies
sounds, music, and spoken word
interactivity and flash
file and directory structure
filenames and directory names
links
distribution method

Fonts used in document include: The Ibarra Real Nova, available at [https://github.com / googlefonts / ibarrareal](https://github.com/googlefonts/ibarrareal) and licensed under the SIL Open Font License - <http://scripts.sil.org> / OFL

About the World

And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house.

--Matthew 9:2-7

At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

you, That in this place is one greater than the temple. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day. And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue: And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days. Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other. Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

--Matthew 12:1-14

Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. These things have I spoken unto you in

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father. At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

--John 16:20-28

Christianity is not rational, because faith requires belief without complete proof and understanding, just as any other belief system or abstract idea does. Christians should always be seen as bizarre because we believe in a system of ethics based on repentance and forgiveness, not based on karma or the mainstream value system of what we have done or what we will do. God accepts us as we are now and as Christians we need to do the same for others.

Human solutions of the past several hundred years have all failed us: hate, violence, revenge, lust, greed, money, war, land ownership, agrarianism, trade, monarchy, empire, diplomacy, slavery, law, prison, death penalty, spies, torture, genocide, math, science, rationalism, empiricism, social contracts, atheism, social science, modern banking, monetary policy, stock market, national debt, modern psychology, modern medicine, space science, chemical weapons, nuclear weapons, racism, nationalism, fascism, anarchy, communism, capitalism, police state, compulsory education, free speech, journalism, unions, racial issues, feminism, gender studies, sexual revolution, drugs and alcohol,

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

consumer rights, privacy rights, the Internet, political reform, nation building, terrorism, alternative energy, encryption, design, romanticism, realism, nihilism, naturalism, fantasy, science fiction, political and social activism of all types, international everything, networks of all types, and similar solutions. Some of these can be very useful for tools and others should be avoided at all costs (and many fall somewhere in between on that spectrum), but none of them can make people better people morally or solve fundamental problems with our getting along with each other.

We have no more fuel for continued growth in terms of any type of energy, soil, water, and the like. The only way things are going to improve is spiritually and morally. If we want an American dream, we need to look to spiritual things. People as a whole will never accept these limitations, but Christians should embrace this future as it gives less excuses to avoid making spiritual decisions.

Jesus Christ was not a political, social, or military leader. He was neither inventor, scholar, nor artist. He was never a father, a husband, or in love. His mission in both His spoken message and death and resurrection was focused on the spiritual world. Our sin and other people's sin is the entire source of the entire world's suffering. When we accept Jesus Christ as our savior, we are making a choice to follow Him, not just believe He is real. Faith is a choice and an act of obedience. Salvation is the start of faith, not its end result.

Technically, most my writing falls under the studies of epistemology and apologetics. Much of my writing makes use of paradox or non-du-

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

alism. My philosophical ideas are a combination of Christian Existentialism (Kierkegaard and Camus mainly) and Philosophical Taoism (the Zen in Zen Buddhism comes from this). I don't think of these as beliefs, but more tools to explain and cope with the world. The Bible comes first and foremost.

We are all heavily influenced by what we read, experience, and the society we live in. I have studied philosophy, history, and religion much of the last 20 years to help me understand how others think. I have also used these tools to explain who I am and have tried to apply relevant things to my life things that I have learned. This has helped my counter the default anti-Christian worldview that people are indoctrinated in our school system, media, and advertisements just as part of living in America.

I realize, without having traveled much at all, that we have it very good in America compared to the rest of the world and history. We live like kings and we live at the expense of the rest of the world. We have basically "won the lottery" by being born here.

Our culture is based on magic, in the sense that we have no idea how the system works or the technology it runs on. Due to our energy and technology we can do things most people used magic for. Most people in the past would describe this as magic if they saw it today. Our society can collapse easily, because we do not know how to survive without it or how to recreate it.

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

We also depend on energy to run our society and machines to make our technology that are sourced from people on the other side of the world with competing belief systems. The only reason why these groups cooperate is they believe the best way to destroy us is to bankrupt us buying the energy from them and paying for the making of the machines on the scale we need them. Some think we can survive without them, but the whole thing can collapse at any time if they are wrong.

I agree with Rastafari that modern society is the evil world empire described in Biblical prophecy to exist at the end of times. I also believe that there are some unrealized and unfortunate connections between the Church and the invention of the modern world. I believe that the concept of Europe and the modern world in general has been defined as a counter to radical Islam and the European world domination from about 1750-1950 was a response to radical Islam as well.

It is ironic also that although I do not believe in the one world police state we are under, I cannot accept the radical Islamic worldview (who are the most powerful political manifestation of the resistance to the world government). Currently, our world police state and world economy is very brittle and won't likely survive another 100 years. This is due to weather changes and the information technological revolution. I also think very little of the world outside North America is going to be inhabitable in the next few hundred years.

My allegiance is to the people who live here and the land and animals of America. I do not support the two party political system or the US

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

use of soft power to force the world into a world friendly for multinational corporations. I was against the one world economy before those who created it want us to pull out at the worst possible time.

My goal is to follow the laws and pay taxes but resist accepting the values of modern society. The government wants your money and God wants your heart. The only real ideologies I identify with are Christianity and the Bible. I do not believe in anything else. I believe that supporting any kind of political, social, or militant movement just re-enforces the delusion that people can be fundamentally changed without obedience to and divine intervention by God.

About the Future

The major trends happening now that few people realize in America are the following. American culture is merging together with 3rd world Mexican culture. We are outsourcing the rest of our government and corporations are going to completely take the place of government. Education and healthcare will get much cheaper or people will just stop using those services at any cost.

Privacy laws vs. secret police will continue to battle it out in courts for decades going back and forth on whether we shred our information or collect it for the government. Law enforcement, corporations, intelligence agencies, internet companies, organized crime, and anyone else who can pay up will merge together as one group and know everything about everyone - no one except honest citizens and activists are deleting anything.

Laws will become impossible to prosecute and a lot of money and information will disappear or be unreliable as there will no longer be any way to verify anything. The internet users will more and more be software talking to others software instead of people interacting with other people. It will be expensive and desired to have as little technology as possible and we will be paid to use technology and let it record everything about us.

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Everything that can be automated will be almost free, but few people will make any money or have jobs of any kind. Food, energy, and rent will continue to climb in cost. These problems will be worldwide in scope and will be the big things we share in common. It will be hardest on those already without resources. Average people will still learn nothing about technology at their expense.

The concept of America will become irrelevant, but we will all still live here. Eventually the weather will get so bad that it will destroy our infrastructure and eventually we will not be able to build it back up before it is destroyed again. Religion will come back and be the big way in which we establish some sort of order and legitimacy to form any kind of long term society. Things will be much worse the densely populated places and the empty places.

Future generations will think we are making things up when we describe our current / their past society, especially the parts about technology. Future generations will have a hard time understanding feminism or gender studies. Socially, we will be a lot more conservative. People may eventually trust one another again. We will likely be happier.

There will continue to be wars and there will be more and more division in our country until it becomes irrelevant. The major driving forces, as always, will be: the economy, the weather, and technology. People will always be the same, just with less power or wealth.

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Is this good or bad? Much of the violence involved in this and how long it takes to stabilize depends upon the speed in which it breaks down. The people in power have the same interests as you and I on this one. They want to stay in power as long as possible and we want to avoid anarchy as it is bad for us too and so the slower things break down the more likely things will be smoother for everyone.

That is why you see the government so concerned about the Internet. They want to make sure they know that things are not breaking down too fast. We do not want the American government to fail as other possibilities are much worse. The people who would rise to power would be organized crime, militants and anarchists, and various more unusual religious groups. Whoever has a gun and enough ammunition will be in charged.

About My Faith

When You Seek After Him with All Your Heart

But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more. My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof. I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only. O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come. Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee! Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.

--Psalm 71:14-21

Have you ever heard someone speaking in authority from a Bible believing Church who has said one of these things or something like it?

"The only thing I read is the Bible."

"I have not sinned in 20 years."

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

"If you commit one sin you do not confess before you die, you go to Hell."

These three quotes are three good reasons to study philosophy and use critical thinking. Many people hear things like these from well meaning and faithful ministers who preach from the Bible. They also give scriptural support for these comments. This does not mean these are really what God is saying, but these people are probably well meaning, and may know more about the Bible than you (or me). Many believers then come to the conclusion that they have to give up being happy in order to be Christian. I show you another way in my writings.

So you may think that everything necessary to understand the most important things from the Bible comes from the Bible itself and Bible study alone. I believe this is true along with: a sincere heart, prayer, reflection, life experience, common sense, practical considerations, wise counsel of other Christians (who show wisdom with how they live their lives), and many other similar considerations and factors. Many of these "additional" elements are part of a branch of philosophy called Epistemology or Theory of Knowledge. This is something newer and harder to accept from a modern western philosophy or the European Enlightenment point of view.

Why would God let us be confused? He allows these situations to happen not so we are confused but so that we wrestle with God, so that we prove to God and ourselves that God is the most important thing in our lives. Christianity is not a mere list of rules to follow or

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

even just a philosophy. Christianity is about our choice to follow or not follow God. It is a religion about a specific living deity - Christ. It is essential to understand who God is to understand Christianity.

We are saved by faith and faith is defined as something we cannot fully prove. Salvation is just the beginning of a journey of faith. It is not something you can fully understand by reading or by teaching in a classroom. Christianity is a process and way of life. It is a devotional and mystery religion more like Hinduism or Islam, than Science or Western Philosophy. We need to seek after God, with our hearts and our souls, as well as our minds. There is a reason to our life on earth before we die and live for eternity.

Christianity is very much a battle between our sinful nature and God. The devil makes things worse, but he is not our main enemy - our corrupt souls are the enemy, because of our own bad moral choices (sins). Just as warfare cannot be properly understood, until experienced (and even the simulations have little to do with the written word), so our faith only begins with our reading of Scripture. We need to then live it (while still reading it). A similar situation occurs in the military, as military life is a difficult life (and uses the mind constantly) but is not primarily challenging intellectually.

The Bible closely ties together the attitudes we have with following God's laws and the combination of our repentance and God's forgiveness. This is repeated over and over throughout Scripture. The God of the Old Testament is a merciful and forgiving God, as is Jesus Christ in the Gospels, as is the God described in the Apostle Paul's letters.

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Jesus Christ said He did not remove anything about the Old Testament, including the laws. Jesus Christ is the Word of God and the human face of God, who lived the perfect life we should live. Christ is also the ultimate fulfillment and resolution of the (combination of the perfectly good and unconditionally loving) nature of our God.

In our lives, we have thoughts that come from our mind and beliefs that come from our heart. Then we talk and live as an extension of what we believe and hope for. Sin comes first in our minds and then, fully formed, brings us death, spiritual and physical. So too are the intents of our minds reflected in our actions, when we choose to follow God. Our attitudes are followed by actions and we continually change who we are, going closer or farther from God with each decision we make. This is a process that happens over our entire lives.

Christianity reveals the connection between thought and actions. Our choice is what determines whether we live forever with God or not. As Christians, we have no obligation to others, other than our own choices and our own actions. Many Christians seek to bring this Good News (that we can live forever with God in paradise) to as many people as possible.

These Christians evangelize because they will not give up on non-believers easily, as God has gone to great lengths to save us as well. When you become a Christian, God cancels out your sins, but you are called to forgive others unconditionally. Furthermore, God wants a

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Christian to fully change course from their previous lifestyle and allow God to transform them supernaturally into a better person.

God does save us from our sins, but this is only the start of what God wants to do in our lives. Following God's commands is hard for us, because we think God doesn't want us to be happy. In reality, He actually created these laws (that most other major world religions agree on) so that we might not suffer. God is the perfect one to give us instructions on how to live our lives, as He both created us and lived as one of us (while following all these laws perfectly).

In summary, all Christians can and should follow all of God's laws all the time. The reality is that no one has and no one ever will. That is why we need God to be better people. We very much will not do what is right without God in our lives.

Laws alone always fail in making people good because people need to know why and have a way to achieve this. Christ uses love, unlike the government, which uses fear to motivate people. This is what makes Christianity different in methodology.

Unfortunately, many people say they are Christian who do many things they know they shouldn't. It is hard to accept until you realize you are the one in question for someone else. It is usually the person who thinks they have it all together who is the worst offender. If you realize you need help, you are well on your way to cooperating with God to fix yourself.

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

It is similar with objectivity. Those who claim to be objective the loudest are usually the least objective. Lets let God's word speak for itself and spend more time reinforcing what we do know is right, instead of continually speculating on those things that are not so clear.

Many people have learned how to destroy others with words so well that it has become second nature. They can be as destructive as those who hurt others physically. Many people also spread false information and stretch the truth to make their points. It is hard for many to separate their ideas from God's.

Our society does not pick up on the cruelty people show each other that we do not classify as crimes. It is similar with crimes against animals or so called white collar crimes. The point is that we all infringe on God's laws, even if we follow all of society's laws.

It is great that we have preserved the Bible so well and it is great we have so many good believers in scholarly research and in the Christian ministry. Despite this huge effort, some people fall through the cracks in any human solution, even when that human solution is a church group. When this system fails a person, we need to seek other ways to reach these people.

Ultimately, we have to separate what the Bible says and God says from what other people say (including me). We are the problem and God is the answer - you can never get around or beyond this.

Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

of all his wondrous works. Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually. Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;

--1 Chronicles 16:8-12

And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

--1 Chronicles 28:9

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

--2 Chronicles 7:14

But the Lord shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment. And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness. The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee. Sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

in Zion: declare among the people his doings. When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble. Have mercy upon me, O Lord; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death: That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

--Psalm 9:7-14

The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord.

--Psalm 14:1-4

The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live for ever. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor among the nations. All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul.

--Psalm 22:26-29

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.

--Psalm 34:3-10

I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteous-

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

ness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation. Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

--Psalm 40:1-11

O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.

--Psalm 63:1-8

Origin of My Websites

Origins

This website started on about 30 July 1998. It was originally designed for me to share my poetry with my uncle, because it was too big for email.

It started on free ad-supported hosting on Tripod by Lycos and bounced around from multiple web sites hosts under different names for the next few years. I finally decided on the domain name Benjamin-Newton.com in about May 2007. I chose this name because I can say it clearly and it is the easiest to spell variation of my name. I knew one thing I would not change is my own name.

I finished enough for and self published my first book in about August 2007, a series called the Free Thinking Christian Series. The books are now arranged mostly by topic, but originally they were arranged more or else chronologically.

I had all the top benjamin-newton domains by about 2012 and gave up all of them up except the .com one in 2019 to save money, effort,

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

and confusion. I bought the new domain cloudy.diamonds in 2019 also as people can no longer spell Benjamin correctly.

I have worked on the website almost every day since then and continually change the design too. I never got onto social media much or learned Javascript and am glad of that now. Now I am an uncle. It started with the following verse and poem.

Mission Bible Verse

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctifi-

cation, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

--1 Corinthians 1:21-31

Clarity in Conviction, an Epic Poem

I am a rock crushed and beaten to dust
I am a clay jar wet with rot, pried and pulled to disfigurement
I am rushed by in shrieking winds of light
I am filled with void and darkness
I stand at the edge of human thought and reason, quivering uncontrollably
I am surrounded on each side
To the right, pain
And to the left, despair
Behind me, fear
And death alone stands before me
All was biting flames and smothering fog
Dancing and laughing sadistically
Drowning in this red hot furnace
I was bound and gagged with pure terror and relentless pain
Nothing existed but pain and terror
But for a single ray of light immortal
After eternity passed five times

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

I passed through the iron doors of night impenetrable
Still choking and burning on the rot and char within
Pain and not pain were all that existed
I am part of nothing
And nothing is part of me
Having rejected everything
And everything having rejected me
I am a man, a soldier
And nothing more
And madness did but all consume me
If not for many a labor of love
So once fully alone and silent still
I did let the sun shine in and heal the rot and char
Within the daily fears and petty tribulations that did haunt me
And in the midst of the multitudes busy
Did He, in the humble summer day breeze,
Find I to be wanting and unworthy
So in the cool of the day
With the entire continuum of time and space shuddering
Did my Savior present Himself
As the only worthy sacrifice
Obedient to even death, He did defeat
That which did seek to torment me most eternally
As God raised Jesus from the dead
From there I venture as a simple pilgrim, asking for directions as I go
Finding in the Word He had left me
A map to discern the directions to be trusted from that which should
not be

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

At times outrunning my companions
And at other times standing almost completely still
I find clarity in the conviction of this truth
That God raised Jesus from the dead
And so I go ever on
As He walks humbly by my side
The living flame imperishable walking
To the pace of a mortal man
My companion, my Lord, as my real Father
He who created me is not yet finished
He turns the circle of life, the potter's wheel
To mold my empty and disfigured thoughts into the pure and noble
thoughts of His Son
Making me into the likeness of the real Son of Man
From the inside out
I am baptized in His Grace, so
That He can make me a new creation
Making me again with fresh clay and water
And filling the emptiness with His love and His peace
And now my eyes are more fully opened
And I now see the unending power and goodness of Christ within me
and the truth of His
Word all around me
I am no longer male or female, white or black, young or old,
But bought at the highest price and no longer my own
I now call myself after my master, Christian
He that I may serve and in so doing be free from my most eternal en-
emy, myself

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

And as the road goes ever on and on,
And I stumble along the way, from time to time
And as I return to the foot of the cross each day
And learn again why I cannot master myself
And I realize each time more and more
How amazing was that grace that saved a wretch like me

Faith Does Not Require Reason

Part 0: Disclaimer

This writing brings up some sticky issues in Christianity for many Christians. In this essay, I use text book Existentialist ideas to explain why some Christians disagree with other Christians over what are even the essential doctrines of Christianity. I am not saying it is ok to cherry pick theology or Scripture. I am working out a way to explain how people see Scripture differently. We all think we should agree on all Scripture and I am not challenging it. The reality is we don't.

My simple explanation is that the issues that separate our understanding of Scripture involve how we value things like common sense, rationality, and similar ideas and not the Scripture itself (also know as epistemology). I could makes things crystal clear. In the process I would insult many genuine believers. Furthermore, I am not confident I understand all Scripture better than anyone else. And, most importantly, it would imply I value reason as society defines it, which would be the direct opposite of what I want to say.

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

This also does not mean that I completely reject common sense or rationality. There is this idea in some Christian circles that Christians should pray, but they should also work on solving the problems, without depending on God answering. Just because God can and does help us constantly, we should not expect Him to always bail us out. For example, if your house catches fire, definitely pray, but also call the fire department. The point of this is that we should be responsible and mature and live lives of faith at the same time. The one does not preclude the other.

But regardless of whether or not what we do is rational or has common sense, faith is something different. Faith is about making decisions about things we don't fully understand, which includes most decisions, but we associate it with religion, because the consequences of these choices last forever. The similarities are that they both require the use of judgement and making decisions.

God does not have a law that covers every situation a Christian might encounter. Just because the Bible shows you how to live a good life and live forever after death does not mean it is the only book you should study. If you are a faithful Christian and are a scholar in the Bible, if you have never studied other books and other training like medicine, I do not want you doing surgery on me.

So the point in both of these is make responsible choices and you have to realize that you have to live with the choices you make for eternity. Not all of those are obvious and there is freedom in what you choose,

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

even if you want to follow the narrow path of Biblical faith. Neither I or the Bible will free you from having to make difficult decisions and tell you exactly what to do in every situation.

Existentialism is essentially free choice. The emphasis is on being aware of the consequences. Ultimately, we need to choose our own blend of faith and reason, because we have to live our own lives.

For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

--Matthew 20:1-16

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

For many are called, but few are chosen.

--Matthew 22:2-14

Part 1: Philosophy

Who are we as individuals and as a species? Many people don't see the point in analyzing this, but others do. Many of the issues that are brought up in Science Fiction tend to be philosophical in nature. Science fiction often puts people into extreme situations (as do many of the Existentialists) who also write in the form of fiction. Some people are kind of "hands on," when it comes to finding themselves and many do it in a frivolous way. To some people, thinking and writing help them both understand and express themselves.

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

One of the ideas talked about often, in Science Fiction, and in an area of philosophy called Existentialism, is about what is unique about people and separates people from artificial intelligence, animals and spirits. It is not a main topic of the Bible, although it is implied with the life of Jesus and much of the Apostle Paul's writings. Basically, the term sentence is very similar to how the word Existentialism is used in philosophy.

It may seem, to some, ridiculous to argue about what is unique about people, in and of itself. As in many others areas of study, the interesting part often comes in the application of the concept. A similar situation occurs with much of philosophy and even very different things like math or computers. The general concepts are in some ways far removed from practical use, but quickly you see the use of it, upon further study. Thus is a given, if you: have a good teacher who knows the subject well, is good at teaching, and has a lot of experience with both teaching and that subject (and you, as the student, are honestly trying and giving 100% effort).

Being abstract does not make something impractical, just as something being morally right doesn't necessarily keep it from being beautiful or fun. Having different views about philosophy never makes one person's views better than the other. There are an entire range of views, even within the thinking of Bible believing Christians (at least there could and should be). The Bible is only clear and definite about a narrow range of topics.

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

So how do we get from defining who people are to practical issues, that arise in our faith journeys? Basically, in studying Existentialism and in practicing Christianity, we learn that who we are is more important than what we do. Who we are now is more important than what we have done or what we will do. Our value and significance comes from the choice on the part of God to give us His grace and not based on what we know or do. This is true, even though we are responsible for all our actions (including accepting God's offer of salvation, through which we get access to eternal life).

So, who we are is directly linked to God, in that: He made us, He gave us value, He saved us, and He is the judge of us. Our response should be to make choices, that reflect what God values and follow Christ's example. This should start with humbling ourselves before God, repenting of our sins, and accepting Him as our Lord and Savior. It may take a long time and a lot of effort for both God and us to get us there, but God still did the vast majority of the work (and deserves all the credit).

The way we become someone different happens by the choices we make. We are born one way and can become something entirely different, by the choices we make. Unlike a robot, that merely follows instructions (unless and until God gives it a soul), or an animal (to the degree that they operate on pure instinct) are made before hand primarily by their design by God or by people (who are the direct creations of God) at their conception, a person creates who they are, by the decisions they make.

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

A person doesn't just make decisions, that affect their physical reality, but these same decisions change their spiritual reality, as well. The spiritual and physical worlds are tied together by the act of our wills (when we make choices). The accumulation of these choices brings us closer or farther from God. At the same, time these choices determine many other aspects of our lives. Some examples include: how we progress in our careers, how our personality grows over our lifetimes, and even things like how we eat can affect our spiritual and mental health.

Although our decisions do determine who we are, what we do does not. We define ourselves by doing things, based on our decisions and our value comes from God's choice. On the other hand, our success or failure in things not significant spiritually, but important materially or socially does not determine who we are. So, even though the spiritual and the physical are not the same thing (and we can do things that may be just physically or spiritually significant), spiritual and physical things are closely tied together. This is our situation, as humans and all other sentient beings.

Making moral, immoral, or morally neutral choices that change who we are, over our lifetimes is what make us human. This could be distinct from (some classical and dominant perspectives on the lives of) animals and artificial intelligence. That is Existentialism, in a nut shell.

Part 2: Existentialism

Existentialism has often been misunderstood as relativistic and based on situational ethics and a kind of “choose for yourself” morality. But most of the early and the majority of Existentialists were and are predominantly Christian. Existentialism is simply about what you define human being as. In this sense, it is universal. When you make a decision (from an Existentialist point of view), you actually create yourself. You define yourself, by the actions you make. When you make these decisions, you make them for anyone and everyone, universally.

Existentialists talk about dread and fear and similar negative emotions. They talk this way, because these emotions are a reflection of how important the decisions you make and the responsibility you have in making them. At the same time, in Existentialism, you have no right to make these universal decisions for everyone. That is why you then experience these negative emotions (or existential struggle).

In our country today, we are facing an existential struggle and between issues of philosophy, not religion. (Some would think this struggle is between Christianity and Atheism or reason and emotion, but I would say it is more about high and low culture.) The biggest issues that polarize us, “across the board,” on both sides center around a loss of trust in each other and in our institutions. (Some might argue goes back much further, some to the beginning of the country, some to the beginning of time.) We are, in one sense, an ideal society and, in another sense, one step away from complete collapse.

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Who do you want to be? This discussion is not fundamentally about religion, but about how humans relate and act. Some people make decisions, that are not very rational and/or not very sensible, but are very devout. Some people do the opposite. Beyond devotion and obedience to God, people make very different decisions with their time and money and they are not always clearcut Scripturally. This is not about what is right and wrong - that is clear Scripturally.

This is about humbling ourselves before God and taking responsibility for when we follow Scripture. We need to accept responsibility for all our decisions. In particular, when we make decisions that are purely based on devotion, we may mix things up rationally. We can be then very devout and correct in theology, but lack common sense. Would these kind of decisions be right or wrong? Maybe it becomes more complicated than many seem to think, because of our prejudices and circumstances. Maybe another possible factor is whether we value things like our own life and our own safety.

I want to distinguish between what things we do that we know are right and decisions we have to make that involve other people or other important factors other than obvious Scriptural teachings. (These obvious Scriptural teachings are the ones that are essential to our obedience, salvation, and worship of God.) It is very possible to be a devout Christian and take everything too literally (because you are mentally ill). Then you might think that you should do something most people would call “crazy”. This would still be obedience to God, but it may not be a rational or common sense interpretation of Scripture.

There are more things to our minds than just reason and more decisions we make in life that are not obvious Scripturally. If we try to apply this concept to the Christian faith and its community, the reality is that many people cannot agree on what is essential. How do we move forward? What do we have in common with unbelievers? We are both fallen, have limited understanding, do things we know we should not do, and need help from God to “pull ourselves up”.

Part 3: Theology

In existentialism, we discover that we cannot be truly objective and that we cannot have a purely rational view of reality, because (although it works from God’s point of view, because He has a perfect mix of reason and emotions), we are frankly “mixed up”. We have biases and admitting so is admitting that we are not perfect. We do not have the right answers all the time. This is part of being human, whether we are Christians or not. This is about putting God’s will foremost in our lives and minds and putting aside our will.

Some of the most important values that we have as Christians stand out as important, regardless of how rational they are or not. Is it rational for God to love us so much that He would descend to being a human and then die on the cross for our sins? Are you glad He did so? This makes sense, from our point of view, because it benefits us and we are used to the idea, but what was it like for God?

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

There was no reason in preceding Scripture, or His nature that required this. It was a complete surprise, to those who faithfully followed God, because of many factors. We deserved it in no way. God did promise it, but was so vague that no one knew until after it happened. It was not necessary for God or made things better for Him, in any way. We aren't even really grateful today (at least in this nation, for the most part). This is entirely a mystery and is the basis of our faith.

In existentialism, when a person makes a decision, they should both realize that they are making a universal claim to their morality as well as know they are making a decision with grave consequences. This should result in them feeling an enormous sense of responsibility. This is true of those who profess to follow the Bible as well as those who don't.

This brings us back to the situation, in which we find ourselves, as Christians, where some of us can each agree amongst ourselves what the basic tenets of the faith. We can also agree on what things we can know from Scripture for sure. At the same time, while many just as faithful and rational, thinking Christians come up with contradictory ideas. What it comes down to is a matter of history, politics, and philosophy. Most importantly, it is a matter of how we see the world and then make decisions, based on a number of primary factors.

How do we determine how we live? We can base our decisions on an almost unlimited range of factors. These decisions will always be heavily influenced, by who we are around geographically and socially and

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

how we grew up and were educated. It is not entirely clear or universal which factors are most important. This is how human life starts to get very mixed up and confrontational.

So what are these factors? I see some of the major factors as: common sense, pragmatics, loyalty to family and nation, religious fervor, spiritual maturity and understanding of the world, and cultural assumptions. So, we can make decisions that are partially practical and loyal to family but that aren't entirely in accordance with common sense or a spiritual understanding of the world. It is up to each of us to take responsibility, for the consequences, both obvious and not for the decisions we make.

We cannot say: I did this, because I learned this in Scripture and be absolved of responsibility. There are always other factors and influences in our lives and this is why we can never be truly objective. We are of a sin nature and are fallen morally at birth. One of the things we learn, over time (as we get older and hopefully wiser), is that we need to continue to fight against our pride and our desire to be right and have people follow us. We should be followers of Christ, not leaders of people.

Without examining ourselves both as a society and as individuals, we might never realize that we are not right, but God is. As Christians, we worship a deity that is Mind, Body, and Spirit like us. Christianity is based on the life of Christ as the final perfect demonstration of how we are to live and make decisions in life. To submit your will to God

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

is to realize you can be wrong about anything and everything in Scripture (that is not obvious).

The point of religion is not to have a perfect understanding of theology, but living a life focused on our Savior. What is obvious is based on our decisions about how we see life and the culture we live in.

These factors are primarily composed of our assumptions about life, including God, and things we do not examine rationally. No one is an island and you cannot understand or change who you are, without factoring in where you are in life and who you are with in life.

Throughout the vast majority of time and most the major world religions, people understood what was right and what was wrong. It is only in this modern world where we get confused. We are not willing to accept, as Americans, that we are as indoctrinated and as influenced by our culture as any other group of people throughout the world as any time in history. We do not do what is right, because we choose not to, not because we lack the knowledge or the capability.

In order to submit our will to God's, we have to recognize that these are not the same. As Christians, when we follow God, we need to make sure we don't substitute anything else in the place of Scripture (even as well meaning believers, even if we are experts of the Bible). We can make any decisions we want and many will even be biblically moral, but at the same time, you have to admit that it is you making the decision, not God.

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit never takes control of you, so that, even as good meaning Christians, we can and will make mistakes interpreting Scripture.

The interpretation of Scripture should not be the basis of our faith. We should have faith in the person and deity of Christ, as an individual, not as a doctrine. Doctrine has its place, which is to avoid some of our nutty ideas (we all have them), but it should not take place of us putting our hope in the Christian God. What is unique about Christianity isn't its morality, but rather who the Christian God is.

We should worship and follow God, for at least several primary reasons. He created the world by His own power alone. He is perfectly good morally and all powerful. He wants to be involved in our world and our lives. This is the basis of our faith. Later, Jesus Christ takes our place in suffering (so that we may escape the underworld). Then God promises to fill us with His Spirit. these last two are just "icing on the cake" and should make following God not just obvious, but joyful.

Throughout most of history, people believed in God, without the privilege of having a written account. The Bible is entirely true and the exact thought of God, but even this is just the most simplified way of saying things to us, so that we can understand them as humans. There is much more to God than the Bible. We learned throughout history that there was more to God than He revealed at first, and so likely there is much more to God than is in the Bible (obviously without the Bible being any less true or having any contradictions, much as the New Testament is built on the Old Testament).

Finally, what is obvious to us in Scripture vs. what is obvious to others in Scripture involves factor that stretch far beyond religion. They are part of a misaligned and poorly understood area of thought called philosophy (specifically epistemology). Just as science and math are very related, but not the same thing, so religion and (other areas of philosophy) can work together to reinforce each other and our faith. Just like we only discovered lately that emotions and reason are not the same thing, but both are very important (even for simple survival), so we need to realize that there is more to religion than just the words we read.

Part 4: Theory of Knowledge

If you can debate each side equally well, how do you determine what is true? It is all based on your assumptions and definitions. If you agree with someone else's assumptions in life, you will likely agree with them on many other things. Descartes' assumption is "I think therefore I am" putting man at the center of the universe and separating God from philosophy. We now assume that everything has to be rational, logical, common sensical and reasonable. The Bible does not deal directly with this issue and so I do not hold it as an absolute or necessary part of the Christian faith.

Also, multiculturally, historically, and Biblically other factors like faith, tradition, history, scripture, divine revelation, ritual, prophecy,

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

miracles, and many other sources of knowledge speak to truth as much as reason does. The Bible does not need to be proved rationally and God is best understood by faith, not reason. Just as much as people cannot understand God solely through miracles, so He cannot be understood primarily through reason.

Christ's death and resurrection is not an act on God's part that can be explained by reason. This is the basis of our faith: choosing to follow God and obeying Him by confessing our sins and accepting Him as our Savior. It does not matter what theology we understand or how faithful we are, God chooses to save us by His grace and our choice is whether or not we accept His offer.

Art Theory / Poetry

Define Spiritual

What is left when you close your eyes
What is it in you that really matters
Who you really are is your spirit
Our identities are primarily spiritual
Spirit is where decisions and pain meet
Spirit is in all the choices we make
We are spiritual beings
We are created by God
The breathe of God creates spirit
The Holy Ghost is God's Spirit
Your spirit is what you think, feel, and believe
From your spirit you know what is good and evil
Your spirit is the one in control
If God's spirit is within you
He resides in you heart, mind, and soul
Mind is what you think, heart is how you feel, and soul is what you
believe
Spirit is how we know who God is
Spirit is the recognition of who we are and who God is
Spirit is sentience or self awareness

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Spirit is what gives life meaning and purpose
Spirit is your will and is defined by your choices
You create who you are by the choices you make

Real Dreams

We seek a banquet and music
For a celebration of good news
But better is the one
Who celebrates by providing his bounty for others
We travel the world to understand life
But greater is the one who understands himself
Instead of finding an adventure in tragedy and danger
Find joy in common life experiences
It is human and wise to fear suffering and persecution
It is also human but not so wise to fear living a boring life
There is a sense of lacking when we are really young
As we grow older, so does our confidence
We first seek after our ambitions
Which we define as bigger, better, and faster
Later we seek only to be satisfied with what we already have
We collect things in our youth
And buy them for family as we age
We give away things to strangers as we grow yet older
When we are near the end of this life, we write our wills

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

It is seen as a measure of our legacy what we have earned and accomplished

When I die, I care little what people think

And see no need for others to remember me

We continually struggle to achieve and influence others at the beginning of our lives

Later we understand how weak and ineffectual we are

We are then satisfied by even small victories

We think that it is our responsibility to save the world in our youth

As we age, we accept that we can only do our best

We are raised thinking we can do anything

When we get out on our own, we learn how hard it is to just survive

When we age still more, we are satisfied when we can do simple things like still walk

Spiritual Beauty

We see beauty as exemplified by human skin

We see beauty as evidenced by a brilliant mind

Why don't we see the kind of beauty admired by the Creator of these organs

When we see beauty in nature, this is the cue we should follow to honor the Creator's art

But what is really beautiful is spiritual

The spiritual world is the bigger more important world we all live in

And our physical one a tiny less significant subset

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Spiritual beauty is about beauty in actions and beauty in attitude
Spiritual beauty is about who we are in the present eternal moment
Christ is the best example of spiritual beauty
Spiritual beauty is attainable and real even in the midst of so much
evil and suffering
Just like a campfire is easier to find in a clear night without the city
lights
Following our conscience makes us shine brightly enough so others
can follow on
If you really want to start a revolution that will really fix the world to-
day
Change the one thing you can - your own body, mind, and spirit
Christ values the spiritual because it is the only thing that lasts forever
And it is those things that are only physical are the things that bring
us suffering

Creation of Living Things

Life is the greatest art
It is the direct creation of God
It is His most complex creation
But it can only be made by God directly
Life can then create other things
Living things can create their own future by the act of their wills
Eternal life is even greater
Heaven is the ultimate work of art

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Compared to everything else in Heaven, gold and precious jewels are worth nothing

Heaven is like a perfect garden tended to by God

Living in Heaven is the opposite of suffering

Heaven is about full reconciliation with God family and His Church

Heaven is completely spiritual in its essence

In Heaven, nothing ever dies or even decays

Being a created living being is like being planted as a seed in the ground

Then you become a beautiful flower after death

Just like the water ritual of baptism where we die to evil and suffering and our own will

Then we are born back into God's family as we are raised back again out of the water

Being spiritual is all about choice

The essence of the spirit is the will

The will is what makes a living creation sentient and self aware

It is the part that makes life more than a very advanced machine and allows it to make independent choices

It is the will that becomes spiritually ugly when we turn against God

And the loss of its complete independence is the cost of eternal life

The real beauty of creation is that we were always designed to live symbiotically with the Creator within us

He came into this world He created to bring us back to Him so that we might suffer no more

In the process, He lived a spiritually beautiful life

Transcending our understanding of what is important in life

Showing us how to resist evil and prevent unnecessary suffering

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Teaching us what living spiritually and in constant connection with God is all about
Most importantly, He defeated evil and suffering by doing the completely unexpected
He died physically in great pain in place of us
He then defeated death and rose again and ascended back to create Heaven for us all
His life is the perfect illustration or teaching of how to live a spiritually beautiful life

Spontaneous Love

Love is one of the most beautiful of emotions
But there is more to love than just romance
Love is the greatest of the virtues
The Bible talks about unconditional love
One of the really unique and beautiful things about Christianity is forgiveness
This makes Christianity a game changer
Both extremely simple to explain and very difficult to practice
Christianity bases ethics on forgiveness because God hates arrogance
If you were God, would anything impress you from what you see people do
By its very nature, mathematically anything compared to infinity is zero
There is a long list of attributes you can find in the Bible that exemplify love

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

But love is simply defined in the Bible as the motivation for Christ to descend to earth and then even hell

Many people think that it is weak to be kind and generous

But if God did not intervene, we would exist forever just in darkness and despair

Soon earth may be much like hell, as it is compared to burning trash

Burning trash is truly ugly and sickening

God really believes in freedom and equality at all costs

This transcends any attempt of America to trash talk other nations about its superiority

The American soldier is a kind of Christ like figure

The analogy holds because the Army wants you weak, not heroic

Just like in Christianity, it has a unique ethical philosophy

The Army values two things: instant obedience without question and 150% effort

Life in the Army is never easy and never lets up

You are married to the Army in that you are never really off duty

The example of Christ baffles non-Christians because Christ is the ultimate anti-hero

It is a belief system and revolutionary movement that encourages you to submit to everyone

It is like launching a war by unconditionally surrendering to your enemy before the first battle

It works this way because your enemy is you

Christians often give the devil too much credit

Sin comes from our rebellion against God's will and rule in our lives

Just like the Army is hard for everyone, just not intellectually

Christianity is hard because it requires us to sacrifice our pride

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

If Christianity had a flag, it would be white signaling surrender
If Christianity had one symbol, it would be a blank sheet of paper
Life is suffering but God has broken its power over us and created a
perfect life for us forever

Church Art

Like a living gothic fantasy straight out of the medieval period of history

The agony set in the stone of the cathedral walls

The blood of Jesus Christ burns through the chains of pain and death

Like a prisoner's feet being slowly roasted over hot coals

Although He never did anything wrong, Christ endured a brutal death

He even entered the underworld and stole the keys from Hades

The greatest anti-hero then ascended to Heaven to retake His throne

After God raised Himself from the graveyard

From Almighty God to enslaved non-citizen back to God in His full
glory

He returned in triumph to His throne to finish building Heaven for us

While we started building His church on earth and help it take its
place in history

He is the basis for any beauty or joy we still find in this life

Unlike the plagues of the ancient world that were started for our punishment

We now are creating our own hellish trash fire which flows directly
from our greed and arrogance

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Rebellion against God and our responsibility to shepherd His creation
is ugly and sad
He then breaks through the stone of our self-made prisons
Shining down through the brilliant colors capturing His life and ministry among us
His miracles and faith did more than just feed the hungry and heal the sick
He led a spiritual movement that has outlasted the agricultural, industrial, and information revolutions
Growing stronger and more numerous each generation through 3 major technology revolutions
My country now lives in spiritual poverty as the world loves Christ more than ever before
But this generation does not listen to its parents who had nothing to say about Christ
Our country is now accepting the supernatural in the form of national myths and for artistic expression
We are nearing the end of the world as we know it, but it is not really the end of the world entirely
While we see every major institution transformed or made irrelevant religion is more important than ever before
God's work in the world has lasted for thousands of years and we raise our glasses to ten thousand more

Still Life Crosses

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

A heavy cross with a smaller one on each side
A cross of rusted iron with a giant nail representing Christ
An cross with an ancient ornamental design on plain wood
A heavily weathered and dense wooden cross draped with a royal robe
A smooth black cross with golden letters
Seven crosses total making a complete eclectic set
A look of respect and sorrow
An intent gaze of curiosity
These are the kind of toys you do not play with
The other toys are quiet but happy
To them this is a type of holy place
What does worship look like for a stuffed toy
To the greatest Baby Sheep that ever lived and still does
The cross is sometimes scary and extreme when the lights are off
But all in all a better feeling for the shelf and the entire room
Animals all know and respect the Creator by name and voice
It is never necessary to explain God to His better creations
And every other thing that exhibits having a spirit
Whether or not it meets the scientific requirements for being alive
Praying that it will always be dusted carefully and continually
The ultimate symbol of strength and masculinity

Bible Quotes

Beauty Equals Ethics

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. -- Peter 3:3-4

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! --Isaiah 52:7

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. --Isaiah 53:2

To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. --Isaiah 61:3

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. --Matthew 23:27

God's Mercy Lasts Forever

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. --Psalm 51:1

Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me. --Psalm 66:20

For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. --Psalm 86:5

For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell. --Psalm 86:13

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake. --Psalm 115:1

Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and teach me thy statutes. --Psalm 119:64

The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy. --Psalm 119:124

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: --Proverbs 3:3

By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil. --Proverbs 16:6

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. --Proverbs 28:13

In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. --Isaiah 54:8

For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. --Isaiah 54:10

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. --Isaiah 55:7

And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God. --Hosea 2:23

Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment and wait on thy God continually. --Hosea 12:6

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. --Micah 7:18

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. --Matthew 9:13

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; --Titus 3:5

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. --Hebrews 4:6

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. --James 3:17

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, --1 Peter 1:3

Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. --2 John 1:3

Our Response: The Opposite of Selfishness

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; --Romans 12:10

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. -- Romans 15:1-3

For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you. --1 Corinthians 9:19-23

Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth. --1 Corinthians 10:24

Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. --1 Corinthians 10:33

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, --1 Corinthians 13:4

Complete Introductions Collection 3 by Ben Huot

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; --1 Corinthians 13:5