ORDER IN CHAOS

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CHRIS DOWNS

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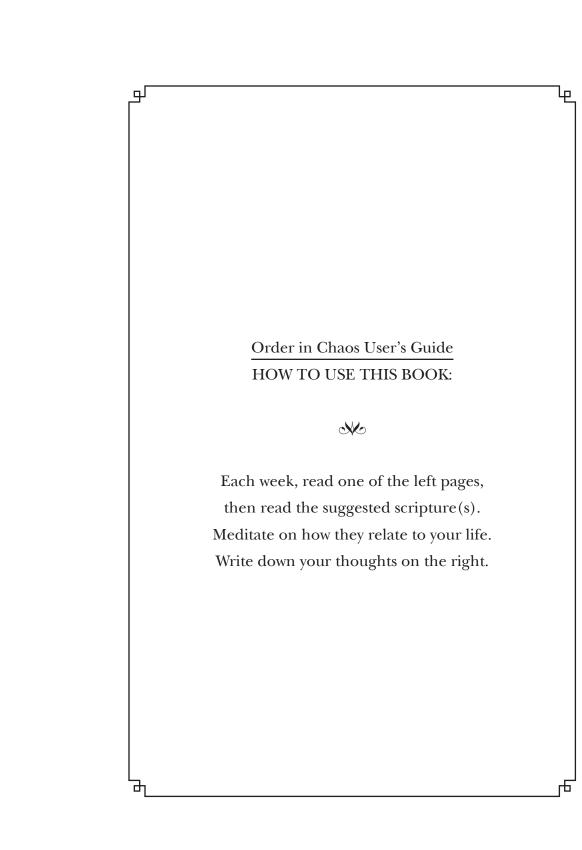
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ORDER IN CHAOS



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ORDER IN CHAOS

BASEBALL

Imagine the world as a baseball. God's the pitcher and you're up to bat. God can choose to throw the ball in any direction, but when it comes in range, you can choose to be prepared and go for a home run, bunt and try to take life base-by-base, or simply strike out and let someone else take over.

Many people wait all across the field of life to catch your ball and prevent you from making it home, whereas God will always throw the pitch right to you. It's just your responsibility to be ready for the right time to swing. Miss it by a fraction and the ball (your world) may not go where you need it to in order to gain a home run.



Suggested Reading 1 Peter 5:8

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ART

Take a piece of art and scrutinize it in your mind. Critique every last detail until you've come to be firm in your judgment of its quality. Now know that even after divulging in all it's beauty, you only have a slight glimpse into what kind of person the artist is.

In the same sense, take the smallest bit of creation you can understand, try to grasp how many more of them exist across the universe and then know that even after realizing this, you still only have a small glimpse into how creative God really is.

Add up all the brightest minds to ever exist, and this still would only be a small fraction of the intellect, creativity, knowledge, wisdom, and power that God has.



Suggested Reading
1 Corinthians 3:19

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SIN

Take all the pain, suffering, sorrow, heartbreak and tears you've experienced, multiply them by how many billions of people have ever existed and know that all this pain is caused by sin. Now realize that sin is what makes God cry. Even after suffering on the cross, God still endures countless unfathomable amounts of pain because of the sin we humans commit. It's not just a cross that gave him a splinter.



Suggested Reading
Revelation 21:4

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RIGHTEOUSNESS

To be righteous is to walk upright; being noble and wise. To be noble and wise you must have God in you as all things good are of Him. Therefore, to not have God, would mean you're nothing, whereas to have Him, you are something. The better you want to be, the more of God you need.



Suggested Reading Ephesians 5:3

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3rd DIMENSION

Each person in life views things through his own eyes. When more than one person observes any given object, they will always have their own points of view. In the same way, some claim the gospels are riddled with contradictions, whereas in truth, it is merely different points of view to show Jesus in 3D to give us more depth into who he really is.

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Suggested Reading Romans 1:20

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FASTING

Some say we don't need a diet to worship God. Ever consider that fasting is a denial of the flesh, a constant prayer, and that we do it everyday anyways? (Refer to break-fast). Also, fasting is relying on God to sustain you, which helps us grow our faith. You don't have to fast from food, maybe just from fast food. In this form of prayer and worship, we show God we mean business. I recommend reading "Fasting" by Jentezen Franklin.

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Suggested Reading
Matthew 6:16

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PRAYER

Amen. We don't need to say amen and hang up on God. If we want God to speak to us, maybe we should leave the phone off the hook and listen all day. Maybe it's wise to pray continually, killing two birds with one stone. If we pray continually, it gives us the opportunity to pray for everyone we daily encounter, while also reminding us that God's connected to our daily thoughts; a way of keeping ourselves in check (who would think dirty thoughts knowing God's still listening).



Suggested Reading
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

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SCIENCE

Who says string theory isn't just God singing? Who says gravity isn't God's way of showing us we can fall? Who says God, the maker of all, couldn't cram millions of years of dinosaurs and other stuff into a few simple days, just so that we'd have oil? Who says God didn't set up a system that can govern itself so he can use his time to focus on us? Science. The act of not knowing while trying to understand. What does science try to understand?..creation. I like both.

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Suggested Reading Matthew 6:26

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TIME

Here's a little tick talk for you: Time is a scarcity that, while constantly being added to, it is constantly diminishing. You have your lot, the set number of days God has allowed for you to be in this life, so use them wisely.

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Suggested Reading Colossians 3:23

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DEATH

The subject people dread. If you're right with God, you get into Heaven. Yet people still tell me they're scared of Heaven. They say it sounds boring to end up spending all eternity "constantly worshiping God." Who's to say that in Heaven, we aren't just overjoyed to the point where we can't help but saying "Whoa God! That's awesome! You're the best!"

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Suggested Reading Psalms 100

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22 Order in Chaos

A AND O

Are some people chosen for heaven, while others are born doomed? I think not. I see God as the Alpha and the Omega; the beginning and the end. Outside the bounds of time where he can see all at once, control all, yet still leave us with our own free will. Only thing is we're tied to a time-line, allowing us to look back on our past mistakes, learn from them in our present, to succeed in our future. God doesn't need this since he doesn't make mistakes.

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Suggested Reading Revelation 22:13

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EVOLUTION

I don't think we came from monkeys, but I do believe in evolution. I believe that God set up a system for nature to govern itself, whereas mankind was in itself the unique of all creation. I believe that He could have created creations till he finally thought "okay, these ones aren't doing it for me so I guess it's time to just make them in our image." Does it matter if evolution is real or not? No. What matters is that we're here, God's real, and we breath the air He made.



Suggested Reading Genesis 1:27

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RACE

I believe race to be diversity as we have with ethnic foods. God simply didn't want everyone to be one color, just as within each color, people have many different faces. Imagine a world with only one race, and soon you'll be bored. I'm glow-in-the-dark white, probably because generations of my ancestors lived in cloudy areas of Europe, whereas some people are darker, and have genealogies that came from equatorial areas of the planet (sunny places). Does this mean one of us isn't human? No, it just means God never stops creating.



Suggested Reading Revelation 7:9

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TIME PARADOX

If God created all things, then how did He create himself? It's simple, He didn't. He's outside the bounds of time and has always been, and will always be.



Suggested Reading
John 1:1

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PARALLEL

Are there parallel universes? You bet! Heaven and hell. Can scientists find proof of them? Yes, if they keep denying God or finally choose to accept Him...it's their choice.



Suggested Reading 2 Thessalonians 1:9

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Order in Chaos

BAD THINGS

If God cares then why does He let bad things happen? When I was a kid, my dad let me play with an extension cord...right next to a power outlet. He warned me I'd get electric-shock if I touched both ends, but it took me actually touching both ends to understand what electricity was.



Suggested Reading Romans 8:28

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ATTITUDE

When it comes to how we act, it's pretty simple. We can choose to act in the flesh, causing more problems for the world, or we can act in a Godly manner, being like Christ by denying the flesh.



Suggested Reading Romans 12:2 and Galatians 5:16-26 and Proverbs 4:23

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TURN THE CHEEK?

When Jesus said to turn the cheek he wasn't showing weakness. Imagine him as a super soldier getting interrogated, turning the cheek, and then saying "Is that all you got?" "Kill them with kindness" is another way to phrase this saying. If you return evil for evil, it begets more evil; whereas turning the cheek throws the enemy into confusion, simply because he's the enemy and he doesn't know how to respond to this.

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Suggested Reading Luke 6:29

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PEDESTAL

Everyone is born with a pedestal before them. It's their choice on what they wish to have placed there. Whether you choose Jesus or something else, you can only choose one. You can only bow down to one master.



Suggested Reading
Matthew 6:24

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DIET

Even though all food is good, it must be taken in regards to your health. As your body is the temple of God, you must keep it clean. This can also be applied to smoking, as smoking is slowly killing yourself and ruining God's temple.

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Suggested Reading 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

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CREDIBILITY

It takes a lifetime to build, and in the blink of an eye, it can be destroyed. A man is judged by his word, and in keeping it, he remains who he says he is. In defying it, he is defying himself and the credibility he once had with those whom he converses with.

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Suggested Reading
Proverbs 12:22

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ONE WAY

There's only one way into Heaven, and to know this you must know that Jesus is "the way, the truth and the life." The enemy wants you to believe anything else but this, because he knows if he can keep you from true salvation, he'll have you forever away from God.

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Suggested Reading
John 14:6

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JUDGING

God is the great judge. He's who decides where you'll spend eternity, but he doesn't send you to hell. Only you can choose to go to hell by denying Him. Also, do not judge others as there is only one judge. Who are humans to judge others when we are all created equal and born into the same sin?



Suggested Reading
Matthew 7:1

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HYPOCRISY

We cannot and must not live in a way that goes against what we preach. It's been said to "practice what you preach," but I say to live what you preach. Practice might make perfect, but it's not for the actual game. When time comes to act decisively, you must live what you preach to show your word is not only your word, but your life.

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Suggested Reading
Matthew 7:5

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THEFT

There is only one kind of sin in my point of view. And this sin covers all sins. Think about this: If you steal from your neighbor, you've committed theft, but if you cheat on your wife, you've thieved her out of her trust in you. If you lie to someone, you've stolen the truth they deserve. If you murder someone, you've stolen the rest of their life from them. If you worship other than God, you've stolen his due worship. So all in all, any sin can be considered theft.

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Suggested Reading
Exodus 20:15

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SIN

God didn't create sin, but He did allow for its existence. Just as darkness is the absence of light, so is sin the absence of God. Now, knowing that God is everywhere, you'd think that sin should not exist. But know that it is only when we push God out of our lives that sin becomes apparent.



Suggested Reading
Psalms 1:1-6

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SWORD

The Bible says that those who live by the sword will die by the sword, but it also says that during the end times he who doesn't have a sword should pick one up. But what is a sword? It is the sword of the Spirit which is God's word. So to live by the sword and to know that you shall die by the sword, be at peace knowing it is because you chose to pick up God's word that it will be with you till the end.

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Suggested Reading Ephesians 6:13-17

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OT

Some say that the Old Testament is useless. I disagree. Isaiah 46:10 states that "I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come..." NIV.



Suggested Reading Isaiah 46:10

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PYRAMIDS

Some say that the pyramids were built by aliens. I look at the biblical story of the Tower of Babel, where mankind was one society, trying to be like God and creating the Tower to try and reach him. I think after God cast these peoples around the world and caused the confusion of languages, man still had it in him to build megalithic structures.

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Suggested Reading Genesis 11:8

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ALIENS

Do they exist? Would it change the fact that we were still created if proof was found? Who's to say that angels aren't what we think of as aliens? Who's to say that God, in all his infinite creativity couldn't create another species out there somewhere just to have more creation under his belt? Why should it matter if they do or don't exist?

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Suggested Reading Psalms 91:11

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CUSSING

The Bible clearly states to let no vile thing come from your mouth. The reason: the words that are vile can be damaging to those who hear them. The language can become so twisted that once innocent words now become vulgar ones, and texts that were once useful in the edification of the Body of Christ can now be seen as vile. Think of how the word gay has changed its meaning. Or ass, how it used to mean donkey. Don't cuss if you want to be right with God; especially when talking with him.



Suggested Reading Ephesians 4:29

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CURSING

"But, didn't you just talk about cursing?" No. Cursing and cussing are two very different things, while both are for evil works. Cussing is language, whereas cursing is like casting a spell. Think of it this way: If you tell a kid he's worthless and will never amount to anything, you've put a curse on him by making him think he's nothing. Maybe he'll live the rest of his life depressed and feeling useless, when he could have been much more had you not cursed him. So in short, don't curse.



Suggested Reading Leviticus 19:14

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CHURCH

"Did God really say you have to go?" That question comes from the pit of hell, and death follows it. Yes, God says we're required to go. It doesn't mean it has to be in a building. As long as it's a congregation, in worship, in study, in faith, in prayer, and in alignment with God's word, then it's church. Keep the Sabbath holy. Don't let any excuse keep you from going to church and worshiping God with fellow Christians. Be thankful you're in a country where you can worship Him!



Suggested Reading Exodus 20:8

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THE LORD'S PRAYER

Break it down, personalize it, use it, and it will work! You can and should pray the Lord's prayer the way He said to, however, these are thoughts I have when I pray it: "God, our Father, who is in heaven (higher than us), HOLY is YOUR name, name above all names, thy kingdom come (You're kingdom will come), thy will be done (YOUR will will be done!), on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day (today) our daily bread (all we need), and forgive us and help us to be forgiving of those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation to do evil, but deliver us from the evil, the enemy, all his plots, plans, tricks, schemes and snares, for YOUR'S IS THE KINGDOM, POWER, AND GLORY FOREVER!



Suggested Reading Matthew 6:9-12

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PRIDE

Is it good to have? No. When I hear people say "I'm proud to be American," I think instead, "I'm thankful that I'm American." I could have been born in a third-world-country, picking up blood-diamonds, making only a few cents per day. So no, I'm not proud to be American, but with a resounding yes, I'm thankful I am one.

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Suggested Reading
Proverbs 16:18

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RESISTANCE

Where should this apply? Anywhere the devil is. The Bible says to resist the devil and he will flee from you. If you don't give in to the devil's temptations, then eventually he'll give up. That's not to say he won't try again later, but it will be with a different temptation. So resist him every time he strikes and eventually he'll run out of options.

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Suggested Reading
James 4:7

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WALKING

We do it everyday. But I challenge you to pray everywhere you walk. See where your walk takes you and keep praying. Knowing that God is with you, I challenge you to challenge yourself. If you see someone in need, help them. If you see someone who needs prayer, pray for them. In doing this you will notice your walk is now with God and not worldly.

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Suggested Reading
Psalms 84:11

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PATIENCE

How often do you find yourself spending minutes looking for the remote when you could just walk up to the TV instead? In today's society patience is almost completely illusive. Yet God has been spending eternity waiting for us to walk in *His* will and not that of our own. Try to be patient in knowing that God still loves you and is always watching over you.

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Suggested Reading
James 5:7-9

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TALKING TRASH

Makes us trash. To pass judgment on others for how they look is talking trash on God's artwork.



Suggested Reading
Exodus 23:1-2

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FEAR

The devil's favorite card. Do you fear rejection? Do you fear being put down? Do you fear commitment? Do you fear betrayal? Do you fear others? Realize the only fear you should have is the fear of the Lord! Know that He unconditionally loves, but always carry the fear that if you step out from His will, you can incur His wrath.

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Suggested Reading Proverbs 9:10 and Isaiah 41:10

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CORRECTION

It is my own personal belief that anyone who ignores correction is either too lazy or selfish to make himself into a better person. We daily can find ways to correct ourselves. We can always be on the lookout for how we can better serve God's Kingdom and we can always accept correction with a big smile. If we don't, then we must think we're already perfect...and we all know that's wrong.



Suggested Reading
Proverbs 12:1

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FIRST TO LAST

We all know that God's Kingdom seems to be "upside-down," from ours, but know that if you're in the back of the line, you can be first to get seconds.



Suggested Reading
Matthew 19:30

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SOBER

How can anyone justify not being sober when it impairs their walk with God? The Bible says to be of sober mind. So be it! Even if your crutch is smoking cigarettes, are you really going to let that little cancer-stick control you?



Suggested Reading 2 Corinthians 7:1

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LUST

The big one in life. Whether it's lusting after a celebrity, or lusting after an object; it's still wrong in God's sight. When the Bible says to remove what makes us sin, I see this as: If you're addicted to porn, toss out your computer; if you want your neighbor's wife, move out of town; if you can't handle it, confess it to a fellow believer. Just do what it takes to have thoughts that God would approve of.



Suggested Reading
Ezekiel 6:9 and Mark 9:43-47

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LOVE

God's favorite word. I know it must be since God is love. All things good are of God, yet the devil wants us to believe opposite of that. True love is truth of God. Living God's word, living on the path he has for each of us, and living upright in obedience with His will. It is true that all you need is love when you realize that love is God and God is love.

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Suggested Reading
1 John 4:8

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FAITH

Though we've all heard that the faith of a mustard seed is enough to move mountains, how can we increase that faith to move mountain ranges? It's simple, ask God to increase your faith; but be forewarned: the devil will try to keep you from growing stronger (=spiritual attacks).



Suggested Reading
John 14:13 and Hebrews 11:1-31

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BEING USED

It isn't really a bad thing if it's God who's using you. However, the most dangerous prayer you can pray is to ask God to use you. I guarantee it! Try asking Him this and see just how far He takes you. Asking God to use you might be the best prayer you can pray.



Suggested Reading
1 Peter 2:9 and Psalms 116:16

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UNDERSTANDING

Understanding what God wants us to do can seem like an unsolvable mystery at times, but I want you to know that asking Him to show you is the first step. If all else fails, then just live life according to His word and you will be in His will.



Suggested Reading
Psalms 25:9

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TRUST

Seems impossible to have for people, but trusting in the Lord is always a worthy task. You might find yourself in a lack of trust in God, but always know that however bad life seems, in all things God works for the good of those who love Him.



Suggested Reading
Proverbs 3:5-6

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GIFTS

It's my firm belief that when God gives to us abundantly, he expects us to share the wealth. How much of whatever could you possibly need that you don't have enough to share? Whatever God has gifted you with, put it to use in His Kingdom. Whether gifts of ministry, or gifts of wealth, give back to God and I promise you, He will bless you even more.



Suggested Reading
1 Corinthians 12:1-11

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THREE IN ONE

How can God be three unique persons (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), and yet still be one? Water can be liquid, ice, and steam, yet it's made of the same elements. Who are we to question God? We are, after all, created from dirt.

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Suggested Reading
Matthew 1:23

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DEPENDENCE

We depend solely on God for anything to work right in life. It is through God that all things are possible, and without Him that nothing can exist. To have more possibilities in life, we must have more of God in us.



Suggested Reading
Psalms 62:7

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FORGIVENESS

How can anyone expect God to forgive if they themselves are not forgiving? How can we be forgiven if we still act in a way that needs forgiveness? If we don't forgive those who wrong us, then we can't expect forgiveness for our sins.



Suggested Reading

Matthew 11:25 and Colossians 3:13

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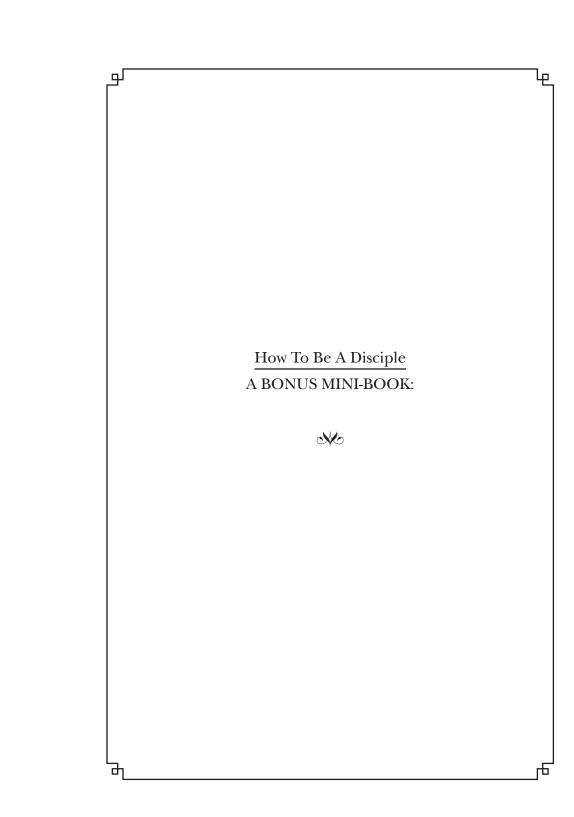
DENOMINATIONS

There is only one true path to salvation, and that is through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. There is no other way to God except through Him, and this is why I don't understand denominations. The true body of Christ isn't solely Presbyterians, Baptists, Evangelicals, or Pentecostals, no, it is a unified body that ascends all denominations to those who accept Jesus as the only way to heaven.

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Suggested Reading John 3:16-17

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Introduction

We've all heard of the 12 Biblical disciples (apostles) of Jesus. We all know that they were all humans just as we are. What we don't always know is how to be a disciple God would approve of.

In this mini-book I will discuss not only what a disciple is, but how we, as followers of Christ, can become better disciples for Him.

In Part One, I will discuss the definition of a disciple. What it is to be one, and how being a disciple of Christ is far more demanding than being a disciple of anyone or anything else. In Part Two, I will discuss forgiveness. Not only how it applies to being a disciple, but also how it's required of us to be forgiving. In Part Three, I will discuss what I call "spiritual cleansing." The cleansing that is needed for what I describe in the Fourth Part, which is spiritual growth. Pretty simple to know what I'm talking about, but doing it is a whole different thing. In Part Five, I will explain how hope is not only necessary, but required by God to be a good disciple. In Part Six, I will talk about how trust is one of the most important overlooked

II4 ORDER IN CHAOS

qualities we need to have for God to be the way He wants us. And finally, in Part Seven, I will talk about the one thing we all lack: patience.

Of course to be a good disciple, it takes a whole lot more than just reading a book, it demands studying God's Word with diligence, helping others where God calls us to, and most importantly: LIVING OUR LIVES THE WAY HE COMMANDS!

PART ONE DEFINITION OF A DISCIPLE

1

Let's start by reading a verse from John:

"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

- John 13:35 NIV

When Jesus is speaking about how to be recognized as His disciples, it's a no-brainer that He had to include love. By loving one another you are acting in a way which pleases God. But this also makes it a commandment; that to be recognized as a disciple of Christ, you MUST love one another.

But what is a disciple? A disciple is defined as one who studies a discipline. So to be a disciple of Christ, we not only have to have love, we also have to study under Christ. Learn his teachings, delve into their meanings, absorb His message, and then try to become as much like Him as possible.

Moses, The Pharisees, John the Baptist...they all had disciples, but the goal of this book is for us to become better disciples of Christ. Everyone who is a disciple of someone other than God is a disciple of one who is not perfect. I don't know about you, but

II8 ORDER IN CHAOS

I'd rather be a disciple of someone who *is* perfect so that I know I'm not only learning from a pure source of wisdom, but that I'm also on my way to being purified.

Part Two Getting Forgiveness

2

Let's start by reading a verse from Luke:

"...Forgive and you will be forgiven."

- Luke 6:37 NIV

It would be a nice life if we didn't have to have forgiveness. Imagine a world where everything is perfect...no one does wrong, and no one has any expenses. But the world isn't that way and because of the sin we humans commit, forgiveness is actually a blessing considering how much we really have made God hurt over the years.

If someone were to hit you, and then ask forgiveness while honestly feeling bad, they might have learned a lesson to not hit you anymore. However, if someone were to hit you continually while still asking forgiveness, how could you forgive them if they keep on hitting? In the same sense, we must ask God for forgiveness only when we are truly sorry and will do our best to not commit that sin again. But in order to have forgiveness, it is required of us to be forgiving to those who do sin against us. How can we expect God to forgive if we ourselves aren't forgiving?

PART THREE

SPIRITUAL CLEANSING

Let's start by reading a verse from Proverbs:

"Who can say, "I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin?""

- Proverbs 20:9 NIV

Of course we all know the answer to that is JESUS! However, doesn't the Bible say that we are to try our best to become as much like Him as possible? After forgiving others so we can be forgiven, we need to be cleansed of our old ways. Not only to be renewed in our minds (Romans 12:2), but also to have anything which is the appearance of evil, removed (Ephesians 5:3).

It's important for us to take a shower every day, because dirt, among other things, makes ourselves unclean. In the same way, we should daily be cleansed of our sins, asking God with humble and contrite hearts, to forgive us as we are nowhere near perfect. This allows us the freedom to start the day off clean. It also makes it easier for us to catch any "slips" during the day where we fall because of "getting in the flesh."

Think about it this way: if you don't have any sin on when you wake up, then one splash of muddy sin will stand out unlike

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if you were already covered with it. Plus it makes us have more freedom to worship God in our lives the way that pleases him, with "...a broken and contrite heart." -Psalms 51:17 NIV

Part Four Growing

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Let's start by reading a verse from 2 Peter:

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...."

- 2 Peter 3:18 NIV

Funny how knowledge comes after grace. Remember that "...it is by grace you have been saved...." (Ephesians 2:8 NIV). What I'm getting at here is that in order for us to have the kind of spiritual growth we desire, we must first acknowledge the fact that Christ gave us His grace to save us. It's because of Jesus that we even have the ability to be alive this very moment!

Now, onto the tougher part...the knowledge of Christ. How can we grow to have His infinite knowledge? In this life we can't. Our brains would probably explode if any of us even had a fraction of His true knowledge. But we can have what He has allowed, which is knowledge offered divinely through the scriptures, and revelation knowledge (where God reveals to us somewhat like epiphanies).

Part Five Hope

5

Let's start by reading a verse from Jeremiah:

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

- Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

Obviously God IS in love with us! We might not always know where He wants us to go, or what He wants us to do, but we can rest assured knowing that His plans for us always include divine hope. God doesn't want us believing the lies of the enemy, or anything that would keep us from growing on the path He has for us. God wants us to thrive in this life, not just in Heaven. He has plans to prosper us and to not harm us. But in order for us to have this, we must TRUST in Him.

Part Six

Trust

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Let's start by reading a verse from 2 Samuel:

"O Sovereign Lord, you are God! Your words are trustworthy, and you have promised these good things to your servant."

- 2 Samuel 7:28 NIV

We have to start off first by acknowledging that God is trustworthy. Anything He says comes into existence, which means anything He says has to be true. God can't lie. Then we can move onto learning how to trust Him.

In order to trust God, I believe you have to go through some struggles. That's not to say that someone couldn't be born just naturally trusting Him, I just believe that God allows us to strengthen our trust in Him through trials and tribulations. This is why we go through stuff...to learn *how* to trust Him.

Part Seven

Patience

Let's start by reading a verse from Colossians:

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."

- Colossians 3:12 NIV

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Let's start by acknowledging that we ARE God's chosen people. Secondly, acknowledging that He has made us holy and has loved us dearly. Then, let us conform to the design which He has made us to which is to have "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." After this, know that we are alive. Lastly, knowing that if we are in fact alive, it's because He still has plans for us. If He still has plans for us, then isn't it necessary to remain patient, knowing that the Almighty has something in store for each and every one of us? By His Spirit we are alive!