

Introduction

Hi, I am an idiot, but Jesus loves me. He has shown this to me over many years and in many ways. I really do not like a lot of what churches do, but I absolutely love the church. I only dislike churches because they are just like me. As hard as we try, we end up turning our church into an Idol; something that we belong to, yet limit and control who is welcome. Even though we say everyone is welcome, what we really mean is... you are welcome, but God is going to change you... He just needs to change you to be just like us or you will need to join a different country club... I mean church.

If I were tasked with the mission to find the 1000 best people in the world, I would start in the churches. If I were tasked with the mission to find the 1000 worst people in the world, I would start in the churches.

A church is not the answer, it is a tool that God uses as part of His will ... that none, no, not one... should be lost. A church can be part of "the" Church, and it gives us an opportunity to participate in God's will. NOTE: God does not need you to perform his will, no matter what any pastor says, that Saturday afternoon garage sale is not a hard requirement. It is an opportunity to participate though, not in your community, not in your church, but in God's will. God is giving you an opportunity to participate in His will, but he does not need you, your church or your pastor to accomplish His will.

Chapter 1 - Jesus loves me

On the surface, “Jesus loves me” is simply the main verse in the child’s song, ‘Jesus loves me’. It is the first introduction to God most Christians had as children. For those of you who don’t know this song, close this book, go read the lyrics and ask God to reveal himself to you and you do not ever need to read the rest of this book. Anything I am writing will never compare to your personal experience with God through the Holy Spirit because of Jesus.

“So, are you saying Jesus loves me is the starting point”? Kind of... I personally believe this is the starting point, the ending point and everything in between... including the good, the bad and the ugly.

“... Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to Him belong,
They are weak but He is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so...”

The lyrics from the verse above contain everything you would ever need to know.

You may not be at the point yet where you can say ... “This I know” ... so how would you get there? The answer just might be in the second line... “For the Bible tells me so” ... You might be shaking your head and saying “... convenient for those of you who believe the bible...” Unfortunately, the bible has sometimes been misused as a means to keep people from God versus bringing them to God, it has also been conveniently misinterpreted for self-gain.

Look, if you are at a point where you question the bible... good for you... you are farther ahead than many people who grew up in the church and are so terrified of God they think asking God a question is questioning God’s authority. Sadly, they are terrified to open the bible and study it for themselves with the Holy Spirit revealing its meaning as they go. Unbeknownst to them, they are serving an image of God, one either they created, or their churches created for them. It is much easier to deal with a God we define than one who defines Himself.

Sorry, I just lost you with some gobbledy-gook christianese that probably sounds against Christians. I would contend... you can offend a human playing Christian, but you can not really offend a true Christian. By my own simplistic definition of a Christian (which is not exhaustive, but I believe might be sufficient) is someone who understands that they do not fully know God, they fully understand that Jesus fully knows them, and is revealing Himself to them continually through the Holy Spirit. Jesus was the only possible perfect sacrifice (verified death) on the cross and His divinity was proved by His confirmed resurrection 3 days later and by His witnessed ascension into heaven 40 days later, which brought the gift of the Holy Spirit for us now. God does not force you into this relationship, you must

accept it after being drawn by the Holy Spirit. Do not worry, none of that will probably make any sense until you spend some time in the bible with the Holy Spirit revealing it to you.

Second apology, just so you know, nothing I am saying is important. I am basically trying to emulate the most important road sign you will ever see in your life... I am just pointing you to Jesus. I have complete faith in the Holy Spirit doing all the work and guiding you to the right information, places and people for your journey.

Blah- Blah-Blah... You might be thinking, that I said the bible had the answer to Jesus loves me... and I should start there...

Correct, so the bible is a very big, complex book of books with all the information you will ever need. It is where I got the term sufficient not exhaustive, as one teacher explained to me, It almost sounds like that downgrades the authority of the bible. Perish the thought! That word sufficient does not mean: I guess it will do and will work since that is all I have. It means that it has absolutely everything you will need including the answer to life's most important question. It is not exhaustive, because it does not tell you which shoestrings to wear in your shoes on Tuesdays when there is a full moon and it is raining.

I need to come clean right here... not only do I believe that the bible is the word of God, accurate in the original manuscripts, I believe that the word of God, the Bible, is Jesus. That sounds insane... I can not deny my insanity, but at some point in your journey with God that will be obvious; both my insanity and Jesus is the Bible and God.

The first Bible verse any Christian learns is John 3:16, if you are going to memorize one, memorize that one. More important than memorizing it, understanding what it means.

ESV: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

You say "... cool, that probably makes sense to you and every football fan waiting for a field goal, holding a sign with that verse... but to me it seems like a nursery rhyme to help someone sleep through the night..."

God, the creator, "so" loved the world. Why? Simple answer... He created it. Our creations our part of us, even as a human we understand we have a deeper connection with the things we make. This verse does imply that for some reason the world needs to be saved or it will die. The implication is something happened to make God's perfect creation become in a state that is separated from him. Just know there is separation between you and God. God is holy, you are not. I know, more Christian words that we just assume everyone else understands... bear with me... I get it... it is tough to understand with the human mind. God is very terse in speaking. He packs a lot of information in very few words.

God gave his "only" Son... You might say "What the heck... God had a son? " Obviously... Jesus. There is a lot packed into that one sentence. I answer that it is Jesus. But know you could dive very deep into that statement, the answer will always be Jesus... but you can gain an even deeper understanding when you study it (meaning revealing by the Holy Spirit). Lots of complexity in the word "only" here... you

have heard it also as “one and Only” or “only begotten”, these themselves can be deep deep studies (all very good studies I encourage), but if I can try to over simplify it for this purpose...Jesus is God, who came to earth in human form, but always existed with God as God, as did the Holy Spirit. Jesus fully man (yet, still fully God, and people tell me the bible is boring... you can meditate on that for hours) is completely aligned in doing exactly what God’s will is, because Jesus is God. How is that for muddying the water via oversimplification. Yep, Jesus was not born to come and give everyone a big hug, although he basically did. The main purpose was to be the perfect sacrifice, so we could all wear crosses around our necks. Once you study this on your own, it is very cool, and not some bloody ritual that God demanded.

That “whoever” believes in Jesus... I put emphasis here on “whoever”... just to upset the country-clubber Christians. All these clubs - churches, although usually not intentionally, change this verse unknowingly, not with doctrine, but with attitudes and actions... That “whoever” means anyone ... and I mean anyone... not just someone who dresses nice for church, who is baptized, does good things, or gives money to the church or charity.... ANYONE! We do not get to choose who the Holy Spirit draws to Jesus for salvation.

The next key word is believes... it does not just mean that you believe that there is a GOD, It means that you believe that God’s Son, Jesus, who is God, provided the way for you to be reunited with God. The crucifixion was a sacrifice, a perfect sacrifice that even the devil did not understand, or he would have tried to stop it. The only thing the devil has of any value is a claim on you because of sin, and he knows that is his only value. There is nothing you do, or someone else does for you... the answer is Jesus, it is only Jesus. You must believe that. That is not an easy thing to accept, that is something that must be revealed by the Holy Spirit. No man of his own accord can confess Jesus as Lord without the Holy Spirit speaking it through them. (And no, I don’t mean a person has to speak in tongues, not that they can’t, just that you will not decide based on human wisdom, that Jesus is Lord, the Holy Spirit will reveal that to you and give you that understanding).

You say, “I am a little lost in the last paragraph, but let’s say I believe... what do I get? You said I would not be separated from God... Ok... is that it?” Yes, that’s it... but separation from God is hell! In this world you might be able to comfort yourself in this separation by pretending there is no God because the misused-tool science, which God gave man, tells you so. Your soul craves to be re-united with God, until that happens nothing will ever feel complete, everything will be lacking. The Holy Spirit helps us fill that hole on earth as believers, but it does not compare to an eternity of being united with God in his Presence.

Really, hell? Once you know there is a God, and once a person dies. they will know. To know you will be eternally separated from God... that is hell to me... nothing else that can be done to you will be worse than knowing you are separated from perfect love and the true meaning of your existence. <Note: the hell preachers will want to add to this... feel free... trust me, my definition of hell is far worse than a worm or physical thirst... if you break your arm, that hurts... if you forget to play the winning lottery numbers, that is agony...). DON’ T MISS out on the only thing that matters for eternity, I am not saying

there are not some things in this present time that do not matter, they just do not even come close to comparing to God's continual presence, His Glory.

If you made it this far... I would encourage you to stop and pray for God's grace to understand Salvation if you are not saved; if you are saved, pray for God's mercy in your sanctification. And for Heaven's sake never equate salvation and sanctification!!!! Also, put this stupid book down and open your bible, I promise you that Jesus is there.

Chapter 2 – Jesus, God in the form of His one and only Son.

I'm exhausted from that last chapter, also titled, Chapter 1. I am having a hard time not wanting to play a game on my phone instead of pressing on.

So hopefully, you did not have to journey onto Chapter 2. Mostly because my smarminess gets worse. Most of it directed at me and my fellow Christians. Why? Why? Must I do that... well Jesus... seemed to direct most of his vitriol at the church leaders of his day... Plus... when I say Christians... it is a convenient way for me to complain about myself, without having to directly say I do these things and they are wrong.... Lucky for me... I have plenty of company in my little Christian club... I usually tell new Christians who tell me they can't wait to be like other Christians, that pressing onto maturity is great, but becoming like other Christians is probably not the best way to get there.

Ok, so back on point. Jesus... in that first chapter, in hopefully what you found to be the most important part when exploring John 3:16... this whole Son of God thing... Jesus.

Let me say this up front. The name of Jesus is the most important word (not just name) in all of existence. It truly is the name above all names, which just means that everything is derived/created from this name and is under its authority.

You might say, "What in the world are you talking about... is this like 'the secret' or something... I just say this name... and like magic I get everything I could want?" Yes, If you were a fully mature Christian and completely aligned with God through the Holy Spirit because you believe everything Jesus said.

Now you are definitely saying "Awesome!!!!" ... but... wait... slow down... I embedded some stuff in my answer... Once you become what I said, which no one ever has or ever will... except Jesus (but I don't count that, because He is also God). In maturity, the things of this world that seem so important to us begin to fade away... and you won't want bigger houses, nicer cars, more money and dare I say ... even health... once you have Jesus (as in you understand that you belong to Jesus, he does not belong to you) everything of this world begins to fade away.

You might say, "That is not what I was hoping for... but still... you are telling me I really won't have any more problems because I will only be focused on Jesus, that is almost as good..."

Wait, wait... remember I said no one will ever get to that point, no one. We are human, we have desires and wants, and because we still have free will... we will always be in a constant battle with our own will aligning with God's will.

You say, "oh... the catch... this is where I will get punished for doing what I want and not what God wants" ... No, NO! You will be corrected and disciplined for your own future good (and not just eternity, but your earthly future). Just like you must teach and train children, God must do that with us. And there has never been a time... after the fact... sometimes a long time after the fact... I have not been thankful for God's correction.

Back to Jesus... now that I just tore up your lottery ticket and you lost your Ferrari before the first insurance payment was due.... So, who really is Jesus... This seems complex. Jesus is complex, by his very nature of being God, it is impossible to fully (exhaustively) know Jesus with a human mind. The good news is.. Jesus says we only need to believe in him, who he is, what he did, what he will do and that is sufficient. (Can you answer those questions, yet? The bible does).

Continuing on, some of the most confusing bible verses to me as a new Christian, were John 1:1-4. Seriously, the book of John is where most people recommend people start reading the bible for the first time, but those first 4 verses are like an enigma wrapped in a riddle multiplied by infinity. It is now one of my favorite passages, because what it tells me about Jesus. I really don't think you have to land on these passages and sojourn for a long time as a new believer, the passages that follow will eventually bring you back to this point in time. But these passages are fun!

John 1:1-5 NASB **1**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2**He was in the beginning with God.**3**All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. **4**In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. **5**The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

"Dude... you just told me you were going to tell me who Jesus was in more detail... and you just post these passages that do not even mention Jesus!!! And your editor is awful... because you said verse 1 through 4, but you included verse 5!!!"

Sorry... Sorry... I did not set it up very well... did I. If you notice something interesting about the passages I posted... the word "Word" is capitalized. That is the key item as to why I used these verses first to define Jesus. Jesus is the Word. So, Jesus was in the beginning...

You might say, "Wait..." Jesus was born of Mary... do you mean like the year 1 A.D , but not the beginning of time?". No, John didn't, or I should say the Holy Spirit did not mean that. He means the very beginning. As in Jesus was always with God and wait for it... was God. Jesus is God, that is important, not everyone believes Jesus is God. As soon as I hear anyone say Jesus is not God, that is a warning sign to me of potential false doctrine/ misinterpretation. Before Adam and Eve, Jesus existed. And to drive this point home further as these passages state, Jesus was the creator of everything and everyone, that is kind of a big deal, but as you can see... these verses are so packed full of studyable information that you could spend a lifetime enjoying them. Whew, I must pause in awe of how big Jesus is, and how little I am. And the more I study and learn, the bigger Jesus gets and the smaller I get.

To respond to your point about verse 5.... I left it in there on purpose... That verse is one you will use every day of your life in Jesus as the enemy tries to scare you away. It requires a book all by itself. I love it.

Ok, I just gave you a text book, high level definition of Jesus, that really is not what you would expect. So, let's find the verses that are probably more appropriate for where we are in our Journey. But make

no mistake, I want to make sure you are overwhelmed by Jesus, this Jesus created science and religion, neither created or destroyed Him as hard as both have tried.

Normally I would start with John 3:16 at this point, but we already exposed that verse in Chapter 1. Just note, that introduction would apply right here.

Above, I gave you Jesus as God, his divinity. which is beyond impressive. How about we now show Jesus in the Flesh, the Word made flesh so to speak.

World English Bible: Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born. To us a son is given; and the government will be on his shoulders. His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Notice, I used an old testament verse.

You might be thinking, "But I think Jesus was in the new Testament?" ... He is, and the new testament is directly quoted from the old testament, well at least 25 percent of it is. Shocking I know, I always have to look that up to verify it each time I encounter it. The important aspect of using the old testament is to show that Jesus was God in the beginning. Also, it was always the plan for Jesus to come in the flesh (be born of man) to redeem us. I am not going to go through each of the subset of names of Jesus (as prophesied by Isaiah in this verse). You should read each one slowly and think about who Jesus, the word made Flesh, was prophesied to be. Those are big titles, big titles. But make sure you land on "Mighty God" for a few minutes and let that one sink in.

Cool, so Jesus/God, this awesome, beyond human words, especially English ones... is coming(at the time the verse was written, has already came in our present time)... Why again?

Separation? And I want to introduce the concept of sin. That would be a book in and of itself. I am oversimplifying it here, it means more than what I am about to say... But sin is what causes the separation from God, and yes... you sin... even that one "perfect pastor" who thinks he can go without sinning... you didn't, you haven't, and you couldn't. If you could... you would nullify the need for Jesus. And yes, I mean pre and post salvation. As God is in the process of sanctifying you (freeing you from personal sin) you will still be sinning. Unfortunately, sometimes knowingly continuing to sin can be extremely dangerous, but the key here is... someone who is saved will have the Holy Spirit convicting them of sin and causing them to repent of their sins. Don't deceive yourself... no one outside of Jesus is without sin. But sin is not without its consequences and salvation does not remove earthly consequences of sin, just the eternal ones. God's grace and mercy sometimes nullify consequences of sin for us as we are being matured in Jesus, thank God.

The Message: Hebrews 10: 14-18. It was a perfect sacrifice by a perfect person to perfect some very imperfect people. By that single offering, he did everything that

needed to be done for everyone who takes part in the purifying process. **15** The Holy Spirit confirms this: **16** This new plan I'm making with Israel isn't going to be written on paper, isn't going to be chiseled in stone; This time "I'm writing out the plan in them, carving it on the lining of their hearts." **17** He concludes, I'll forever wipe the slate clean of their sins. **18** Once sins are taken care of for good, there's no longer any need to offer sacrifices for them

Jesus was a perfect sacrifice, because He was God as he said he was, and that perfect sacrifice overcame sin and made a path to bridge the separation we have from God. How did he do that? The answer is the Crucifixion and the resurrection. The Crucifixion, when they hung Jesus on the cross until he died was the perfect sacrifice, nothing else was required. Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit was resurrected (Came back to life as witnessed by others), proving he was God, putting an exclamation point on being the undisputed perfect sacrifice. When I say undisputed, I mean it cannot be disputed by the devil, most definitely he will try to lie about it, but he cannot dispute it. Everyone who is already saved will still cry when reading that passage above. Something was done for you by someone that is too overwhelming for words. And by the way, No one else could have or could ever do this, only Jesus.

I know if you are new to Jesus and these concepts, this can still be confusing. We keep using the term perfect sacrifice, just remember, that was Jesus being crucified on the cross. I would like to encourage you to stop here. Pray, which simply means to ask for God's help. The Holy Spirit has been right beside you the whole time you have been reading this. Be patient with yourself, The Holy Spirit is... Ask him to reveal this meaning to you in a manner you can understand.

And if you are moved to do this. Accept Jesus as your savior so you can have the benefit of what Hebrews 10: 14-18 talks about. Simply Say... Jesus, I believe you are who you say are, and you did what you said would do and will do. I was separated from you because of my sin, but because I now believe in you, I am no longer separated. Your name is written on my heart and the Holy Spirit will continue to guide me through maturity. Your grace and mercy will be there as I stumble along in our relationship. I know you love me. Jesus loves me.

As John said, there is not enough room in this world to store all the books about things Jesus did... I would highly encourage you to pick up your bible and you can even start with a search of Bible verses about Jesus. Let that be your introduction into reading the bible for yourself. NOTE: I don't trust you will understand it all, but I trust the Holy Spirit will guide you. He will also begin to bring other believers into your life inside and outside the church to help you along the way. You will not be able to do this alone, it is a hard life.

Chapter 3 – God the Holy Spirit, God the Helper/You’re only friend

So by now, you are probably really freaked out... especially if you prayed the prayer at the end of Chapter 2. What in the world did I just do. You may not have believed there was even a God an hour ago, and suddenly you believe that some man named Jesus who claimed to be God was God and died once for all sins.

I believe, and have believed for a long time, and that still makes me dizzy... but it is more an overwhelming dizziness of just how amazing this is...

You could be thinking, “this sounds too good to be true... I know I prayed that prayer... but I’m not sure again... this can’t be true can it...”

Without doubts, you really can’t have faith... most people who don’t have doubts, don’t have faith, they have blind faith, and Jesus heals the blind so there is no need to have blind faith.

And you might hesitate before saying, “still... I am a little nervous... and kind of scared, I can’t do this on my own, I know I can’t”

Welcome to being an honest believer in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I absolutely agree, you can’t do this on your own. No one could, No one has, and No one ever will. If someone says they have ... run from them.

Jesus already knows that not only could we not follow the law that Moses communicated from God to the people, he knows that even after you are saved you can not do it on your own.

Are you thinking? “oh, you mean, like going to church and being with other believers...?”

No, I don’t! At least not yet. Your help does not come from other believers or the church. Your help comes from the Lord. That help comes from the Holy Spirit. If you do not understand that is your first line of defense... so to speak... You will end up creating an Idol out of your Church, Pastor or even church friends. Your help comes from the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit only... If you can understand that, it will save you a ton of grief.

Once you do understand the concept that it is the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit only helping... then the church is a must, and you must be around other believers. They are going through the same trials as you. Yes, new and old Christians alike. And once you find a good church, impossible on your own, let the Holy Spirit lead you. You will discover the lies that the enemy, the devil, the demons are telling you ... the church will judge me, and those church people are so much better than me, I can’t do what Christians are doing... will get trounced by your personal experience with the church and Christians. Those same churches and people are being led by the Holy Spirit which is why I say your help does not actually come from the church or other believers. It comes from the Holy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit uses the willing and will work through your church and other Christians to help you.

I will caution you, the church is full of people just like you, imperfect people, some good and some bad. It is why it is important to understand it is the Holy Spirit first. There are even some bad intentioned pastors, as well as good intentioned bad pastors out there, but mostly good intentioned good pastors. Many Christians have been seriously harmed by the bad ones, both types. Pray, Pray, Pray and talk to other Christians the Holy Spirit will lead into your life to find a safe church. No church will ever be perfect, if you ever find one... run... You will either ruin it with your imperfections... or more than likely you just found a cult that thinks just like you do instead of trusting the Holy Spirit to mature you, and do not lean on your own understanding.

Are you now thinking? “whew this is a lot.... You said to pray about this... How do I do that” I thought I already prayed above... I have to keep doing that?” There are many books on prayer, I am not going to even try to pretend to cover that here. But there is a verse that comforts me greatly when I pray.

ESV Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

Before you even pray, just know that the Holy Spirit is interceding for you. That word interceding simply means the Holy Spirit is praying for you. Much like many of us cannot really perform surgery on ourselves, we have an expert do it for us. When it comes to prayer, the Holy Spirit is already praying, so you cannot mess this up.

“That’s cool, so I don’t have to pray...” You got me there. I didn’t mean you shouldn’t pray, just realize that there is no perfect prayer, there are no perfect words for prayer, if there were, the Holy Spirit would not need to groan during prayer. But yes, you really must pray.

First, I will give you some of my tips, which will eventually be useless for you as you will surpass me in your understanding of prayer. Please do not forget to pray for me.

1. Just pray.... The bible says to pray without ceasing, in a simple but not complete context, just pray. Your first thought shouldn’t be I wonder what google has to say about this... pray first...
 - a. ESV: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: Rejoice always,¹⁷ pray without ceasing,¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

2. How do I pray? First let me tell you how not to pray. We are the Gentiles in the verse below... It is not that long prayer time is bad... it is that trying to impress God with your biblical knowledge and spiritual knowledge versus just coming with a humble heart is not going to move you to the front of the class. There are some other good bible verses that illustrate that. You will find them.

- a. ESV: Mathew 6:6 And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words.

3. "I heard if you do not have Faith, God won't answer your prayer." Before I start any prayer, I remind myself, of the father of the boy in the story below... and I say, "help my unbelief Lord". It is probably the most important thing I have learned about prayer. How little I have to do with anything involved, and how much the Holy Spirit does.
 - a. NASB Mark 9:21 And Jesus asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. **22**And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." **23**And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible for one who believes." **24**Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" **25**And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him and never enter him again." **26**And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, "He is dead." **27**But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. **28**And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" **29**And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer."

4. Then follow Jesus example. The Lord's prayer. Yes, if you google this prayer you will find many studies condemning the Catholics for just reciting it over and over... I don't know their hearts and if that is true... but I will say... if this is the only prayer you ever pray and truly mean and understand it, it covers anything you would ever pray for.
 - a. Matthew 6:9-13 New American Standard Bible (NASB) "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.¹⁰ Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹'Give us this day ^[a]our daily bread. ¹²'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from ^[b]evil.

5. Lastly, just annoy God to death... Not to get what you want... but just keep praying... what you will find out is that God is aligning you to himself in this process... So be honest. if you are mad, be mad, if you are sad, be sad.... God is a "big boy" not the restaurant chain... but you know what I mean by that...

- a. Luke 11:5:11 NIV: Then Jesus said to them, “Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; **6**a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.’ **7**And suppose the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ **8**I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need. **9**“So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. **10**For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

So, that is my ultra-simplistic approach to prayer... but in saying that, I will tell you that I have been in some pee-my-pants scary situations and that is how I pray, and in those situations, I never get passed the item I listed, Jesus! Help my unbelief! And I have had times where just thinking Jesus pulled me through because that is all I could muster. Understand the depth of the name Jesus is different to all of us, so it is not some magic word, you must know that Jesus knows you or you will get your butt kicked. There is a specific bible verse here I am referencing, you’ll find it when you need to know it, I don’t want to scare you now. Once you have journeyed you will realize there is nothing to be afraid of (Even when the night changes, it will never change... you and me[Jesus]... sorry, but there is a story behind that for me...)

Chapter 4 - God the creator, the answer to Why.

I can't say that I am exhausted from the last chapter, talking about prayer energizes me. "So why in the world would you wait till Chapter 4 to talk about God?" Technically I didn't, but allowing for poetic license... I get what you might be thinking...

Here is why I put it here...

Every single human being in the world has one question, every single one of us... Why am I here?

The answer is... because God made you.

Ok, there is a reason why I like writing this versus telling someone in person. Because you would be fully justified in punching me in the face as hard as you could for such a trite answer to a sincere question. Now, in my defense, the answer is correct, but only at a five hundred-thousand-foot view, which would make no sense to a non-Christian and most Christians as well. The Christian answer to that question is the entire bible, it is a big answer, and you specifically are in the bible, you will find yourself, just keep looking. God made you for a reason. He also made me for a reason, I like to think it was to aggravate everyone around me, I do so enjoy it. My brother used to tell me that I was so annoying, I would even aggravate the devil, I hope that is true.

Ok, God, the creator. I know you want to know about the 6 days of creation, you see even most Christians get it wrong when they say the bible says God created everything in 7 days. He did it in 6. Look, this is one of my favorite and most humbling topics. Just like I gave you a high-level answer that is not very helpful about why you are here, a lot, and I mean a lot of Christians are terrified of science because they think it conflicts with the bible. I can 100 percent tell you that beyond any shadow of a doubt, a proof (not hypothesis) in science will never conflict with the true meaning of the bible.

You see science was a gift from God, he gave us a great tool to learn about how He does some of what He does, science in and of itself is not exhaustive but it is sufficient. Oh boy... are you equating science with the bible. Yes, they are both ways for God to speak to you. Unfortunately, just like some people confuse a hypothesis and a limited subset of results with absolute scientific truth (you know how we have never ever in the existence of the world scientifically thought one thing to be true then found out later it wasn't). Unfortunately, the same can be said of bible doctrine (Religion). Some well-meaning, and some ill-willed bible scholars have corrupted the meaning of some of scripture to suit their own agenda via religion. So be humble, but always pursuing... The study of the events of creation are amazing. God is an amazing creator, beyond our human comprehension, but that does not mean he wants us to just parrot the bible without diving into what He is really saying. If you really want to know the answer to this question, I would recommend you study Creation from a scientific perspective with the Holy Spirit. Starting with the premise that God (Jesus, remember...) could not have created everything (poetic license with the use of everything) in 6 days. I too often find Christians afraid that to

really explore God's word for fear his Truth would somehow be proven false... I feel sorry for them. Let the Holy Spirit lead you. Maybe it literally means 6 days, maybe it is a way to explain creation so the audience at the time would understand it... I let the Holy Spirit lead you in that... I really do not care what conclusion you pause at, I know the study will bring you closer to God.

In this section, the key word here for me, is not God, it is Jesus, as God Creator, it is humbling. The more I study about science the more I realize just how powerful God is and how we as Christians continually try to put him in our doctrinal boxes so we can control him; thus making him an Idol of our own creation, and not God. God is Scary big, God is scary powerful, beyond our comprehension with a human mind in His totality. The good news is, He reveals some of this to us in the bible, and in science. The Great news is, that God, that creator, that Jesus... He loves me, and that is without exception. God even loves the sinner. Mostly because his love is not our love, it is perfectly complete.

Is there life on other planets: God is a creative God, I have no idea... maybe yes, maybe no... There are arguments for each. I would just be very careful if aliens showed up saying they are Christians. Just like some people call themselves Christians but aren't, a demon could do the same thing. By the way, God is an alien, as in ... He existed before earth, so technically He is not of the Earth (which is my simplistic definition of an alien).

Seriously... I want you to explore science... it will make you fall even more in love with God, just be mindful of people who call themselves scientists but are just atheists with an agenda. They are no different than Christians with an agenda other than God's will, both will end up in the same place unless they repent. Don't get drawn into the science versus the bible debate, it is not one or the other. The Bible is proven by science, we do have gaps in our science right now, but it is catching up... be patient and give it time. Do not draw conclusions too soon, and always leave the door open for the Holy Spirit to mature your thoughts beyond what you currently think.

I purposely left out bible verses here. I really feel like creation is done in John 1:1-4 as we already talked about. Some people will argue that is only speaking about Jesus time and mission on earth. I see it as Jesus truly being the creator of all, so I would start there. The Holy Spirit has an amazing path for you. Sadly, you only have about 80 years to study this and you could easily be entertained for a 1000 times a 1000 years just studying God's creation.

1. Science without the Holy Spirit - tells us we can be gods and to worship knowledge.
2. Religion without the Holy Spirit. Tells us we can put God in a box and control him.

