

SEVEN QUESTIONS YOU (OR YOUR FRIEND) MIGHT BE ASKING ABOUT FAITH.

**PLUS THE ONE QUESTION
INSIDE ALMOST EVERY HUMAN HEART.**

HI FRIEND,

My prayer is that this resource is a gift for you and encourages you to engage in deep conversations with people you love. I love Jesus Christ and I've loved talking about Him with people for as long as I can remember. I'm definitely not an expert in evangelism or Christian apologetics. I am still learning! But this resource is first of all, based on real conversations I've had and genuine doubt I've encountered with beloved friends over the years. Because of my own skeptical nature, my desire to find something real not just for myself but also for people I love, I've looked for answers. I've spent years of my life dedicated to learning more about human behavior (hello Masters in Counseling and raising kids), the Bible and investigating the hope of the Gospel (studying, listening to talks, lectures, reading books and articles, etc.). I've prayed and asked God repeatedly for wisdom throughout my personal journey. At times, I've discovered that some questions may not have great answers this side of eternity. But I've also discovered more reasons, evidence, and assurance for faith than I ever expected. God has been faithful as I have searched for truth and understanding. The bottom line is: I want Jesus and the evidence for Him being exactly who He said He is— well, I believe it is overwhelming. This resource is designed for those who similarly desire truth and understanding. It's for the skeptic who doesn't believe any of this, but still wonders. It's for the seeker who wants to know if this could be real. It's for the believer who is struggling to know if she can trust the God she gave her heart to when she was younger. And it's for the friend who knows someone who is wandering, wondering, or struggling. My hope is that this resource will spark loving and honest conversations. Conversations that start with love, listening, and a humble heart. I believe these dialogues are so critical especially nowadays when we are taught that to disagree is to not love. That is simply not true. Loving well doesn't require agreeing on everything and it doesn't require pat answers. You may feel uncomfortable having conversations about faith with someone who comes from a different belief system— But I encourage you to push past the insecurity and awkwardness. If you are a believer, ask the Holy Spirit to empower you with boldness. I believe Jesus Christ is offering Restoration, Eternity, Authenticity, and LOVE. I want what He's offering this world because I've found it nowhere else. That's a conversation worth having with a world that is also desperate for something REAL.

Until Next Time,
~JANELL

QUESTION 1

WHY FOLLOW JESUS?

JUST WONDERING...

I GREW UP IN A CHRISTIAN HOME, BUT WHAT IF I HADN'T? WHAT IF I WAS RAISED MUSLIM OR BUDDHIST OR ATHEIST? WOULD I STILL FIND THE MESSAGE OF JESUS CHRIST COMPELLING AND THE EVIDENCE FOR HIS EXISTENCE OVERWHELMING? WHAT MAKES JESUS CHRIST SPECIAL IN A WORLD FULL OF OPTIONS, INFORMATION AT OUR FINGERTIPS, AND PLURALISTIC THINKING?

WHY THIS QUESTION...

ACCORDING TO A BARNHA RESEARCH STUDY CONDUCTED IN 2018, FIFTY-EIGHT PERCENT OF AMERICAN TEENS AND SIXTY-TWO PERCENT OF AMERICAN ADULTS, AGREE WITH THIS STATEMENT: "MANY RELIGIONS CAN LEAD TO ETERNAL LIFE; THERE IS NO 'ONE TRUE RELIGION.'"

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS...

"I AM THE LORD, AND THERE IS NO OTHER. BESIDES ME THERE IS NO GOD." ~ISAIAH 45:5a

"JESUS ANSWERED, 'I AM THE WAY, AND THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE. NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME.'" ~JOHN 14:6

"FOR THERE IS ONE GOD AND ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN, THE MAN CHRIST JESUS, WHO GAVE HIMSELF AS A RANSOM FOR ALL MEN..." ~1 TIMOTHY 2:5&6a

RESOURCES...

THE CROSS OF CHRIST BY JOHN R. W. STOTT

JESUS, THE ONLY WAY: 100 VERSES BOOK BY GREGORY KOUKL

THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 2, EPISODE 17 W/ CHAN ARNETT

THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 3, EPISODE 2 WITH JOSH WHITE

REFLECTIONS...

"I AM TRYING HERE TO PREVENT ANYONE SAYING THE REALLY FOOLISH THING THAT PEOPLE OFTEN SAY ABOUT HIM: 'I'M READY TO ACCEPT JESUS AS A GREAT MORAL TEACHER, BUT I DON'T ACCEPT HIS CLAIM TO BE GOD. THAT IS THE ONE THING WE MUST NOT SAY... EITHER THIS MAN WAS, AND IS, THE SON OF GOD, OR ELSE A MADMAN OR SOMETHING WORSE.'" ~C.S. LEWIS (*MERE CHRISTIANITY*)

CONVERSATION STARTERS...

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ABOUT JESUS?

HAVE YOU EVER INVESTIGATED HIS CLAIMS FOR YOURSELF?

DO YOU BELIEVE THERE IS MORE THAN ONE WAY TO GOD? WHAT MAKES YOU THINK SO?

QUESTION 2

DOES MY LIFE REALLY MATTER?

JUST WONDERING...

HAVE YOU EVER FELT EMPTY? HAVE YOU EVER SEEN FRIENDS HAVING A GOOD TIME WITHOUT YOU OR WATCHED OTHERS ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING YOU WANT BUT CAN'T HAVE, AND WONDERED WHAT DIFFERENCE YOU MAKE? HAVE YOU EVER FAILED OR BEEN REJECTED AND FELT HOPELESS ABOUT THE FUTURE? HAVE YOU EVER FELT LIKE YOU JUST WEREN'T ENOUGH? HAVE YOU EVER STRUGGLED WITH SELF-DESTRUCTIVE THOUGHTS?

WHY THIS QUESTION...

ACCORDING TO A RECENT ARTICLE IN THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUICIDE RATES IN THE USA HAVE INCREASED BY 35% SINCE THE YEAR 2000. FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, THOSE RATES JUMPED OVER 50% BETWEEN 2007 TO 2017, WITH SUICIDE NOW BEING THE SECOND-LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH FOR THOSE BETWEEN THE AGES OF 10-24. IN DATA COLLECTED BY THE US CENSUS BUREAU IN APRIL 2020, NEARLY HALF OF RESPONDENTS REPORTED FEELING DEPRESSED OR HOPELESS.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS...

"FOR IN HIM ALL THINGS WERE CREATED: THINGS IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH, VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE, WHETHER THRONES OR POWERS OR RULERS OR AUTHORITIES; ALL THINGS HAVE BEEN CREATED THROUGH HIM AND FOR HIM."
~COLOSSIANS 1:16

"FOR WE ARE GOD'S HANDIWORK, CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS TO DO GOOD WORKS, WHICH GOD PREPARED IN ADVANCE FOR US TO DO." ~ EPHESIANS 2:10

"NEITHER HEIGHT NOR DEPTH, NOR ANYTHING ELSE IN ALL CREATION, WILL BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD." ~ROMANS 8:39

RESOURCES...

THE SEARCH FOR SIGNIFICANCE BOOK BY ROBERT S. MCGEE
WHAT'S SO AMAZING ABOUT GRACE? BOOK BY PHILIP YANCEY
THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 2, EPISODE 30 W/ JASON EARLS
THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 3, EPISODE 11 W/ MELANIE C.
THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 3, EPISODE 10 W/ CRYSTAL H.

CONVERSATION STARTERS...

DO YOU EVER STRUGGLE WITH FEELING LIKE LIFE IS MEANINGLESS?
DO YOU EVER WONDER WHAT LIFE IS ABOUT?
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE IDEA OF GOD CREATING YOU FOR A PURPOSE?

QUESTION 3

AREN'T CHRISTIANS JUST A BUNCH OF HYPOCRITES?

JUST WONDERING...

HAVE YOU EVER FELT DISTURBED BY THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY? HAVE YOU EVER WANTED TO DISASSOCIATE FROM THE CHURCH BECAUSE OF THE PEOPLE YOU ENCOUNTERED? HAVE YOU EVER HAD A SO-CALLED CHRISTIAN TREAT YOU LIKE A THROW-AWAY PERSON? HAVE YOU EVER BEEN DEEPLY HURT BY SOMEONE WHO CLAIMS TO LOVE JESUS AND THOUGHT, "IF THIS IS CHRISTIANITY I WANT NOTHING TO DO WITH IT?"

WHY THIS QUESTION...

HYPOCRISY AMONG CHRISTIANS HAS BEEN CITED AS ONE OF THE TOP BARRIERS TO FAITH ACROSS GENERATIONS. WHILE A 2017 BARNA STUDY FOUND THAT NEARLY 60% OF U.S. TEENAGERS IDENTIFIED AS CHRISTIAN, ONLY ONE IN ELEVEN TEENS WAS CATEGORIZED AS BEING "ENGAGED CHRISTIANS." THE RESEARCH SUGGESTS THERE IS A LARGE DISCONNECT BETWEEN THOSE WHOM REPORT FAITH AND THOSE ARE ACTIVELY PURSUING IT.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS...

"FOR ALL HAVE SINNED AND FALLEN SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD." ~ROMANS 3:23

"WHOEVER SAYS HE IS IN THE LIGHT AND HATES HIS BROTHER IS STILL IN DARKNESS." ~ 1 JOHN 2:9

"IF WE CLAIM TO BE WITHOUT SIN, WE DECEIVE OURSELVES AND THE TRUTH IS NOT IN US." 1 JOHN 1:8

RESOURCES...

THE EXPLICIT GOSPEL BOOK BY MATT CHANDLER

THE TRUTH ABOUT US BOOK BY BRANT HANSEN

TIMOTHY KELLER SERMONS PODCAST

THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 2, EPISODE 13 W/ CALLIE LINDSEY

REFLECTIONS...

"PEOPLE SAY YOU KNOW THE CHURCH IS FULL OF HYPOCRITES. THE SAME GRACE THAT LETS THEM IN LET'S YOU IN. I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE ALL LOOKING FOR A PERFECT CHURCH YOU WOULDN'T GET IN IF YOU FOUND IT."
~ MIKE GLENN

CONVERSATION STARTERS...

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN HURT BY SOMEONE WHO CLAIMED TO LOVE GOD?
HOW HAS CHRISTIAN HYPOCRISY IMPACTED YOU?
DO YOU THINK WE'RE ALL HYPOCRITES? WHY OR WHY NOT?

QUESTION 4

DOES GOD REALLY CARE ABOUT HOW I LIVE MY LIFE?

JUST WONDERING...

HAVE YOU EVER FELT LIKE GOD HAS A WHOLE LOT OF BETTER THINGS TO DO THAN TO CARE ABOUT YOUR PERSONAL CHOICES? HAVE YOU EVER FELT LIKE YOUR PERSONAL CHOICES ARE NONE OF HIS BUSINESS? HAVE YOU EVER QUESTIONED IF THE BIBLE WAS CREATED TO LOCK PEOPLE INTO AN IMPOSSIBLE MORALISTIC STRUCTURE THAT FEELS OUTDATED AT BEST AND HATEFUL AT WORST?

WHY THIS QUESTION...

WHEN SPEAKING ABOUT REASONS WHY YOUNG PEOPLE TURN FROM RELIGION IN 2016, NYU SOCIOLOGY PROFESSOR MICHAEL HOUT SAID, "THEY REJECTED THE IDEA THAT A GOOD KID IS AN OBEDIENT KID. THAT'S AT ODDS WITH ORGANIZATIONS, LIKE CHURCHES, THAT HAVE A LONG TRADITION OF OFFICIAL TEACHING AND OBEDIENCE... AS A RESULT, THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE A "DO-IT-YOURSELF" ATTITUDE TOWARD RELIGION."

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS...

"SO, WHETHER YOU EAT OR DRINK, OR WHATEVER YOU DO, DO ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD." ~1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

"AND HE SAID TO ALL, "IF ANYONE WOULD COME AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF AND TAKE UP HIS CROSS DAILY AND FOLLOW ME." ~LUKE 9:23

"ARE NOT TWO SPARROWS SOLD FOR A PENNY? YET NOT ONE OF THEM WILL FALL TO THE GROUND APART FROM THE WILL OF YOUR FATHER. AND EVEN THE VERY HAIRS OF YOUR HEAD ALL NUMBERED SO DO NOT BE AFRAID; YOU ARE WORTH MORE THAN MANY SPARROWS...."
MATTHEW 10:29-31

RESOURCES...

WHY DOES GOD CARE WHO I SLEEP WITH? BOOK BY SAM ALBERRY

CRAZY LOVE BY FRANCIS CHAN

THE GOSPEL COALITION PODCAST WITH JACKIE HILL PERRY (JULY 10, 2020)

THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 1 EPISODE 7 WITH HILLARY MORGAN FERRER

CONVERSATION STARTERS...

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED IF GOD CARES ABOUT HOW YOU LIVE?
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE IDEA OF GOD BEING IN CHARGE OF MORALITY?
IS IT POSSIBLE TO REALLY LOVE SOMEONE AND NOT AGREE WITH THEIR LIFE CHOICES?
DO YOU BELIEVE THAT GOD CAN LOVE US WHILE THE DETAILS OF OUR LIFE ARE MESSED UP?
(ROMANS 5:8)

QUESTION 5

HOW CAN I KNOW THAT GOD ACTUALLY EXISTS?

JUST WONDERING...

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT THAT MAYBE SCIENCE DISPROVES THE BIBLE? OR HAVE YOU WONDERED IF SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES MAKE GOD UNNECESSARY? HAVE YOU EVER PRAYED AND QUESTIONED IF YOU WERE JUST TALKING TO YOURSELF? HAVE YOU EVER JUST FELT LIKE GOD WAS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE? IF GOD EXISTS THEN WHY SUFFERING?

WHY THIS QUESTION...

WHILE A MAJORITY OF AMERICANS STILL SAY THEY BELIEVE IN GOD, IN 2019 PEW RESEARCH, THOSE IDENTIFYING AS ATHEISTS DOUBLED FROM 2% (IN 2009) TO 4%. THOSE IDENTIFYING AS NON-RELIGIOUS GREW FROM 17% IN 2009 TO 26% IN 2019. ACROSS THE GLOBE, ATHEISM & NON-BELIEF HAS GROWN TO (BY SOME ESTIMATES) 500-750 MILLION PEOPLE WORLDWIDE (WIKIPEDIA).

SCRIPTURE...

"EVER SINCE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD, GOD'S INVISIBLE QUALITIES—GOD'S ETERNAL POWER AND DIVINE NATURE—HAVE BEEN CLEARLY SEEN, BECAUSE THEY ARE UNDERSTOOD THROUGH THE THINGS GOD HAS MADE. SO HUMANS ARE WITHOUT EXCUSE." ~ ROMANS 1:20

"THE HEAVENS DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD, AND THE SKY ABOVE PROCLAIMS HIS HANDIWORK." ~PSALM 19:1B

"WORTHY ARE YOU, OUR LORD AND GOD, TO RECEIVE GLORY AND HONOR AND POWER, FOR YOU CREATED ALL THINGS, AND BY YOUR WILL THEY EXISTED AND WERE CREATED." ~REV. 4:11

RESOURCES...

MIRACLES BOOK & "SCIENCE INCREASINGLY MAKES THE CASE FOR GOD" ARTICLE BY ERIC METAXAS
HOW TO KNOW GOD EXISTS BOOK BY RAY COMFORT
WHERE IS GOD IN ALL THE SUFFERING? BOOK BY AMY ORR-EWING
THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 2 EPISODE 15 W/ ALLEN CROSTIC
THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 2 EPISODE 18 W/ BRANDON CLEAVER

REFLECTIONS...

"MY ARGUMENT AGAINST GOD WAS THAT THE UNIVERSE SEEMED SO CRUEL AND UNJUST. BUT HOW HAD I GOT THIS IDEA OF JUST AND UNJUST? A MAN DOES NOT CALL A LINE CROOKED UNLESS HE HAS SOME IDEAL OF A STRAIGHT LINE. WHAT WAS I COMPARING THIS UNIVERSE WITH WHEN I CALLED IT UNJUST?" ~ C. S. LEWIS

CONVERSATION STARTERS...

IF YOU BELIEVE IN GOD, WHY? WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HE EXISTS?
IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN GOD, WHY NOT? WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HE'S NOT REAL?
DOES THE PROBLEM OF SUFFERING MAKE YOU QUESTION GOD'S EXISTENCE OR GOODNESS?

QUESTION 6

HOW CAN GOD EXTEND FORGIVENESS TO EVERYONE?

JUST WONDERING...

HOW CAN A LOVING GOD ALLOW MERCY TO SOMEONE WHO LIVED A TERRIBLE LIFE? ISN'T THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL UNFAIR? WHY DO I NEED FORGIVENESS IF I'M A GOOD PERSON? WHY SHOULD I FORGIVE SOMEONE WHEN THEY'VE HURT ME?

WHY THIS QUESTION...

ACCORDING TO BARNAS RESEARCH PUBLISHED IN 2019, 23% OF PRACTICING CHRISTIANS REPORTED THAT THEY HAD PEOPLE IN THEIR LIFE THAT THEY WERE UNABLE TO FORGIVE. ONE OF THE MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND OTHER RELIGIONS IS AN EMPHASIS NOT ON HUMANITY'S GOOD WORKS BUT ON GOD'S GRACE.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS...

"IN HIM WE HAVE REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, THE FORGIVENESS OF OUR TRESPASSES, ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE." ~EPH 1:7

"FOR IF YOU FORGIVE OTHERS THEIR TRESPASSES, YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER WILL ALSO FORGIVE YOU," ~MATTHEW 6:14

"HE DOES NOT PUNISH US FOR ALL OUR SINS; HE DOES NOT DEAL HARSHLY WITH US, AS WE DESERVE. FOR HIS UNFAILING LOVE TOWARD THOSE WHO FEAR HIM IS AS GREAT AS THE HEIGHT OF THE HEAVENS ABOVE THE EARTH." ~PSALM 103:10 & 11

RESOURCES...

THE CASE FOR FAITH BOOK BY LEE STROBEL

FORGIVING WHAT YOU CAN'T FORGET BOOK BY LISA TERKEURST

FORGIVENESS: OVERCOMING THE IMPOSSIBLE BOOK BY MATTHEW WEST

THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 1 EPISODE 4 WITH ALYSSA

REFLECTIONS...

"TO FORGIVE IS TO SET A PRISONER FREE AND DISCOVER THAT THE PRISONER WAS YOU." ~LEWIS B. SMEDES

CONVERSATION STARTERS...

DO YOU THINK OUR ABILITY TO FORGIVE OTHERS HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH OUR UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS OF US? HOW?

IS THE GOSPEL GOOD NEWS? WHY?

WHAT IS GOD'S FORGIVENESS BASED ON?

HOW HAS GOD FORGIVEN YOU?

HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU BELIEVE FORGIVENESS IS TO GOD?

QUESTION 7

CAN I ACTUALLY TRUST THE BIBLE?

JUST WONDERING...

ISN'T THE BIBLE JUST A BUNCH OF ANCIENT STORIES COLLECTED BY DOZENS OF AUTHORS OVER CENTURIES? HOW CAN WE BELIEVE IT AS GOD'S WORD? WHAT MAKES IT UNIQUE? AND WHY DO WE BELIEVE IT AS GOD'S WORD?

WHY THIS QUESTION...

PERSONALLY, I'VE HAD MANY CONVERSATIONS WITH FRIENDS ABOUT THIS QUESTION. ACCORDING TO BARNAS RESEARCH, SKEPTICISM IN THE BIBLE'S RELIABILITY HAS GROWN, ESPECIALLY AMONG YOUNGER GENERATIONS ([HTTPS://WWW.BARNA.COM/RESEARCH/THE-BIBLE-IN-AMERICA-6-YEAR-TRENDS/](https://www.barna.com/research/the-bible-in-america-6-year-trends/))

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS...

"THE GRASS WITHERS, THE FLOWER FADES, BUT THE WORD OF OUR GOD STANDS FOREVER." ~ISAIAH 40:8

"DO NOT THINK THAT I CAME TO ABOLISH THE LAW OR THE PROPHETS; I DID NOT COME TO ABOLISH BUT TO FULFILL. FOR TRULY I SAY TO YOU, UNTIL HEAVEN AND EARTH PASS AWAY, NOT THE SMALLEST LETTER OR STROKE SHALL PASS FROM THE LAW UNTIL ALL IS ACCOMPLISHED." ~ MATTHEW 5:17 &18

"FOR THIS REASON WE ALSO CONSTANTLY THANK GOD THAT WHEN YOU RECEIVED THE WORD OF GOD WHICH YOU HEARD FROM US, YOU ACCEPTED IT NOT AS THE WORD OF MEN, BUT FOR WHAT IT REALLY IS, THE WORD OF GOD, WHICH ALSO PERFORMS ITS WORK IN YOU WHO BELIEVE." ~ 1 THESSALONIANS 2:13

RESOURCES...

THE BIBLE JESUS READ BOOK BY PHILIP YANCEY

CAN WE STILL BELIEVE THE BIBLE? BOOK BY CRAIG L. BLOMBERG

77 FAQs ABOUT GOD AND THE BIBLE BOOK BY JOSH MCDOWELL & SEAN MCDOWELL

THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 1 EPISODE 2 WITH THOMAS

THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 3 EPISODE 4 WITH LEAH CHAPMAN & ANDREW FOSTER

REFLECTIONS...

"WHEN WE COME TO THE BIBLE AND TRY TO LISTEN TO ITS CLAIMS, WE CAN EASILY MISJUDGE THOSE CLAIMS IF WE HEAR THEM ONLY FROM WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF OUR OWN MODERN ASSUMPTIONS. LETTING THE BIBLE SPEAK FOR ITSELF, THAT IS, LETTING IT SPEAK IN ITS OWN TERMS, INCLUDES LETTING THE BIBLE SPEAK FROM WITHIN ITS OWN WORLDVIEW RATHER THAN MERELY OUR OWN."
~VERN POYTHRESS

CONVERSATION STARTERS...

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ABOUT THE BIBLE?

HAVE YOU EVER RESEARCHED FOR YOURSELF HOW IT WAS PUT TOGETHER?

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK IT IS OR IS NOT A DIVINELY-INSPIRED WORK?

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT JESUS? HOW DID JESUS REFER TO SCRIPTURE WHEN HE WAS ON EARTH?

FROM A HISTORICAL STANDPOINT, THE BIBLE IS INCREDIBLY UNIQUE AND MORE ANCIENT COPIES OF IT EXIST THAN ANY OTHER MANUSCRIPT. WHY DO YOU THINK IT IS SO CONTROVERSIAL?

BONUS QUESTION

IF GOD IS FOR REAL, DOES HE LOVE ME?

JUST WONDERING...

HOW CAN I KNOW THAT GOD LOVES ME? NO ONE KNOWS WHO I REALLY AM WHEN NO ONE IS LOOKING. NO ONE KNOWS ABOUT THE MISTAKES I'VE MADE, OR THE REGRETS I HAVE, OR THE SECRETS I'VE KEPT. NO ONE KNOWS HOW MUCH I FEEL LIKE I'M FAKING. IF GOD IS REAL, HE KNOWS EVERYTHING. SO HOW CAN HE LOVE ME WHEN HE SEES WHAT A MESS I FEEL LIKE I REALLY AM?

WHY THIS QUESTION...

I WATCHED A MOVIE CALLED RAGAMUFFIN GOSPEL A FEW YEARS AGO. IT WAS THE STORY OF MUSICIAN RICH MULLIN'S LIFE AND IN IT, HE LISTENS TO BRENNAN MANNING'S WORDS, "I AM NOW UTTERLY CONVINCED THAT ON JUDGMENT DAY THE LORD JESUS WILL ASK ONE QUESTION AND ONLY ONE QUESTION, "DID YOU BELIEVE THAT I LOVED YOU?" ...I DON'T KNOW IF THAT IS THE ONLY QUESTION GOD WILL ASK US BUT I DO BELIEVE THAT QUESTION RESONATES. WHAT'S THE ONE THING WE ALL NEED TO KNOW? WHAT'S THE DEEP LONGING IN ALL OUR HEARTS? ISN'T IT TO BE FULLY LOVED? AND I PERSONALLY BELIEVE, WHAT OFTEN KEEPS US STAGNANT IN OUR LIVES, IS NOT FULLY ACCEPTING GOD'S INFINITE LOVE FOR US.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS...

"FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE." ~JOHN 3:16

"GREATER LOVE HAS NO ONE THAN THIS, THAT SOMEONE LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS" ~JOHN 15:13

"SO THAT CHRIST MAY DWELL IN YOUR HEARTS THROUGH FAITH—THAT YOU, BEING ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE, MAY HAVE STRENGTH TO COMPREHEND WITH ALL THE SAINTS WHAT IS THE BREADTH AND LENGTH AND HEIGHT AND DEPTH, AND TO KNOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST THAT SURPASSES KNOWLEDGE, THAT YOU MAY BE FILLED WITH ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD." ~EPHESIANS 3:17-19

RESOURCES...

GOD LOVES YOU: HE ALWAYS HAS- HE ALWAYS WILL BOOK BY DAVID JEREMIAH

THE LOVE OF GOD: AN INTIMATE LOOK AT THE FATHER-HEART OF GOD BOOK BY OSWALD CHAMBERS

GENTLE AND LOWLY: THE HEART OF CHRIST FOR SINNERS AND SUFFERERS BOOK BY DANE C. ORTLUND

THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 2 EPISODE 13 WITH CALLIE LINDSEY

THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 1 EPISODE 13 WITH BOB LUHN

THE FINDING SOMETHING REAL PODCAST SEASON 2 EPISODE 16 WITH RICHARD DAHLSTROM

REFLECTIONS...

"I SUPPOSE THE MOST MISUSED WORD IN ALL THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IS THE WORD 'LOVE.' BUT, YOU KNOW, THE WHOLE BIBLE IS A LOVE STORY; GOD'S LOVE AFFAIR WITH THE HUMAN RACE." ~BILLY GRAHAM

CONVERSATION STARTERS...

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT GOD LOVES YOU? OR DO YOU EVER STRUGGLE TO BELIEVE THAT? HOW HAS GOD DEMONSTRATED THAT HE LOVES US?

HAVE YOU EVER ASKED GOD TO OPEN YOUR EYES TO SEE HIS LOVE FOR YOU?

DO YOU THINK SOMEONE'S LIFE COULD BE DRASTICALLY CHANGED BY BELIEVING GOD LOVES THEM?