

SELFISH YOUNG MAN

An Honest Look at
Christ and Christianity
Plus Other Selected Essays



David Allan

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Introduction

So many good things have been given to me during my life, so many hand outs and hand ups. But youth, and the selfish ingratitude that goes with it, blinded me from realizing how deeply indebted I am to those who went before me. This book is a small effort at repayment, given to those who still struggle like me, and those who will follow.

It is not possible that all of my view points will make sense to you, nor should they, for we are all individuals and therefore different by definition. But we are all human, so I know having written open and honestly that some of my perspectives may be of value to you.

I will say this very plainly at the onset: Jesus would be grieved to hear some of the words that have been put in his mouth and to see what some organizations have turned his legacy into.

Although some individual churches may be of benefit to the spiritually dead or spiritually young, organized religions are useless. Generally speaking, the origins of all religions are based on sparks of enlightenment that have been warped into businesses and seats of power by egotistical people. False doctrines abound, presented like facts by charlatans who dare tell us they speak for God, as if they have some access to the Almighty that the rest of us do not.

The Christian religions, like all other religions, are a waste of time for spiritual adults. True religion is a personal matter and nothing about it, except love, is universal to us all.

The bottom line is that we are all gods, we are all christs, we are all members of the spirit, and Love is the only real authority that ever has, does, or will exist.

What I try to do in this book is to address some of these false religious doctrines, making corrections and explaining a number of other little understood things that both the scriptures and common sense reasoning reveal. In addition, I include a variety of essays on other topics and also share some of my personal experiences. My most important objective is to bridge the gap between religion and love, which should be the same thing, but are not in most churches. My hope is to help people realize the childishness of following someone else's opinion about the meaning and mysteries of life, which is what organized religions are, encouraging people instead to regard the spirit of love within them as the only real authority.

Although we should try to listen carefully to each other's opinions, as we will almost always learn something, we should never

subordinate the honest opinions of our heart to someone else's. Therefore, if you and I are both subject to the authority of love, while I may decide your opinion is not right for me, perhaps utterly reject it, not only will I tolerate your view point, I will defend your right to it.

I do not claim all the answers and opinions I put forth here are certain, except as they pertain to me, at this point in time. Indeed, it concerns me that time may reveal to me that some of my understanding was weak, perhaps even wrong. Often I reach a conclusion, only to learn something new that sheds better light and presents more questions. In the past, my reaction to that was to rewrite the part in question to reflect the better understanding. However, it is not possible to understand everything. And if a person waited to speak until he did know everything, then that person would never speak at all. But you can understand to the point of satisfaction, and this point is where I am. So when you judge my effort, I ask you consider: Did I at least get you to think and shed a little light somewhere? Read it, get out of it what you can, leave the rest behind.

I used a number of quotes from the Christian scriptures (sometimes as I recalled them, so they may be paraphrased). Some of the references and their subsequent logical conclusions will not be understood by readers who have not extensively studied the Bible. But everything one really needs to know can be seen through natural philosophy anyway, so even the layman should understand much of what I have to say. I also noted some of the scriptures I referred to so people could more easily find passages they may not be familiar with.

If you are not familiar with the scriptures of various religions, you might consider reading them. I think anyone who has, with an open mind, has benefited a little. However, understand that none of them are truly important and their endless study becomes a waste of time. This is because the spirit of "love one another" is a part of us all, as it always has been, so we all have access to this vastly superior information, if only we will listen.

Criticism of the things I have expressed in this book is certain. So be it. My only response is to say that I have examined myself closely and my heart is right with the spirit, at least as it concerns what I have written. It was the best I could do and I held nothing back if I thought it might help, even to my own embarrassment.

Again, I owe so many people who have done right by me over the years, many of whom did not get back anything of the sort. I sincerely thank you all.

David Allan

An Honest Look

Scriptures

The origin of the writings that became the Christian scriptures is something that most churches never share with their flocks. The following is a very brief overview of the history of those documents, the entirety of which is presented in very general terms.

The first gentile Christian churches had no writings whatsoever for about the first 40 years after Jesus' death. Everything was oral, with people assembling at individual homes and taking turns speaking about whatever they believed was inspired or edifying. Most of these people were converts from pagan religions in which they were already actively involved. Stories about Jesus and anything that might be related to his teaching were the main focus in these assemblies. Individual speaking being what it is, the tales passed from person to person and town to town with omissions or embellishments, pieces remembered incorrectly, or with things misunderstood, sometimes including various fabrications for whatever reason. In short, the stories were never retold exactly the same way in any two places.

Some of these stories eventually found their way into written form, whether mostly or partially true, or not at all. Within a few more decades there were also various letters from Christian leaders. Many of these assorted writings were copied and passed along over time, though not always written the same way when reproduced, and virtually never the same when translated. Given the nature and wisdom of man, even the original orations, written stories, and letters would have contained personal bias, errors, and omissions.

Within 100 years of Christ's death, most individual churches were collecting, some even creating various writings, which were administered by the budding hierarchy of administrators in those churches. The original writings that sprang up in these first churches were sometimes copied and shared with other churches, who then might share their copies with still more churches, and so on and so forth. This resulted in versions of the original writings that varied from one church to another, the differences ranging from just a little to very different. Where these scrolls or codices had gaps or obvious errors, church administrators might fill them in with whatever they deemed most advantageous for their self-interests, though usually they used their best opinions, although not always right.

The churches in some larger cities and a few small towns had outgrown meeting at just one home, so they coordinated meetings in public places, wherever they were not persecuted. They used multiple

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