

THE EASY LIFE VERSUS “DIFFICULT IS THE WAY THAT LEADS TO LIFE”

Opening Questions:

- If you claim to follow Joshua of Nazareth, and yet your life does not match up with his teachings, what should that tell you?
- If religious people “do life” in a way that is indistinguishable from non-religious people, what does that say about the religious people?
- Does getting cancer, for example, somehow count as some difficulty that came due to faith in God?
- If a Christian is persecuted for their clothes or their religious meeting attendance or their holiday observances, is that persecution due to faith in Joshua of Nazareth if he does not teach that people ought to do those things?
- What is the difference between one religious person (say a Christian) being persecuted for their religious beliefs or practices and another religious person (say a Buddhist) being persecuted for their beliefs and practices?

Look at the lives of the average Christian in the U.S.A. Would you describe their lives as any more difficult than the non-Christian? In fact, most Christians partake in a comfortable life in the U.S. They have their money making jobs and careers in the world which they spend the majority of time serving with very little if any serious thought to “ministry.” With some smaller percentage of their disposable time and income, they build their religious buildings and have the programs – most of which appeal to entertainment desires – and live just like the agnostics and atheists next door or across town. They have many they call their “friends” and work hard at being popular with as many people as they can. What sacrifices are they making for their supposed faith? What work or “jobs” have they lost because they spoke a bit of Joshua's truth or any truth? How could that in any way be described as “the difficult way” that the Light states will be the norm for his followers?

When confronted with this truth, Christians in nations with Christian majorities will often respond with, “well, my mom and dad just died in a car accident”; or, “my sister just got diagnosed with cancer.” I don't deny those are difficult trials that deserve compassion, but they are *not* trials caused by their faith nor do those trials have anything to do with God! Instead, they are the difficulties and trials and sufferings ALL human beings face each day (Illness,

injury, disease, loss, etc.) and those are **not** what the Light had in mind when he said it would be difficult to follow him.

Contrast this life of the average Christian with what Joshua of Nazareth says will characterize his follower's lives and experiences:

Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow (or difficult) that leads to life, and there are *few who find it*. (Matt. 7:13-14)

If the world (*the people of the earth who don't have Joshua as their leader*) hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but *because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you*. Remember the word that I said to you, "A servant is not greater than his master." If they persecuted (*sought to harm*) me, they will also persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. (John 15:18-20)

Strive (or agonize) to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter (through religion) and will not be able. (Luke 13:24)

Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you *because of me*. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets (those who spoke God's truth) who were before you. (Matt. 5:11)

A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household! (Matt. 10:24-25)

These things I have spoken to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you have difficult troubles, but take courage; I have overcome the world. (John 16:33)

Those are just a few of many sayings that convey the same truth, that the followers of The Light of the world will have a difficult time while living our lives out in this world *due to our faith in the light and speaking and living out his truths*. This makes perfect sense since we believe the Light and speak his unpopular truths like:

- God exists and we will be held accountable for how we live our lives;
- We can know God and He wants us to know Him and He made it simple to know Him;

- God expects us to live out of love for Him and others and not for money or other things;
- Absolute truth exists and can be known – all things are not relative;
- Joshua of Nazareth teaches that human being will be held accountable for their thoughts and behavior in this life;
- Joshua of Nazareth teaches that people love darkness rather than light because people are evil;
- Joshua of Nazareth teaches that HE is the only sure Way to Eternal Life;
- Religion (including Christian or Bible religion) is wrong, misguided and has its primary purpose to hide the Messenger to mankind;
- We cannot live with – or be at peace with - our natural or legal relatives if they refuse to follow the Light;
 - We will live with other followers of the Light – our true brothers and sisters - instead of with others who don't love him and thus who refuse to follow him;
- We are in bondage to fear, self-pride and selfishness if we don't allow Joshua to take us out of our cage;
- God wants us to practice true love towards one another which we are unwilling to do;
- Seeking a materially secure life in this world (refusing to truly share what we have with other disciples) runs contrary to the Life and his teachings;
- There is right behavior and wrong behavior, a right way and wrong way to live one's life;
- You cannot live like everybody else and try and be accepted by everyone if you are going to truly follow Joshua - you *must* be different, and thus...
 - We will be rejected, persecuted, reviled, mocked, slandered, harmed and killed in *all cultures at all times* for repeating and living out Joshua's truths;

That is not an easy life, and that difficult life is totally foreign to the vast majority of Christians in the U.S. and around the earth in western nations especially at this time. Go ahead and ask a Christian, "what persecutions or hardships have you had to endure due to your faith in God?" Most will look at you with a blank stare and ask what you mean.

This author has lived in the U.S. for his whole life, and I have experienced persecution due to my faith. I have had children I love wrongly taken from me due to the corrupt people who run the legal system, and I was not even granted visitation rights unless I didn't talk about Jesus! Just so you are clear, murderers in prison get visitation rights with their children, but I was not even allowed to speak to my children due to my faith. I was told by the legal people running the system that I was not allowed to talk about Jesus to my children or else I would

not be able to see nor communicate with them. The Christians I was seeking support from during that time turned away from me and treated me like I had leprosy. They just assumed my then assistant district attorney wife was correct because of her position in the world and I had something wrong with me.

I have lost work multiple times because I spoke unpopular truths or because I refused to ignore Joshua or because I would not affirm people in the wrong things in which they wanted affirmation. The Christians have rejected me, and when I went into their religious buildings, I didn't last long because I consistently communicated that some of the things they were believed or were doing were wrong. In my efforts to preach the gospel to people publically, I have had stones and bricks thrown at me some ripping my clothes. I have been thrown off of public property (where in the U.S. you are supposed to have a right to peacefully assemble and speak) just for trying to tell people about the real Joshua of Nazareth. I have had my natural Christian family cut me off totally, and my dad even testified against me at the divorce trial that my ex-wife initiated due to my faith. And guess who the majority of that persecution has come through – Christians and Bibilians!

So, I don't speak from an ivory tower or inexperience when I say that disciples of Joshua of Nazareth are persecuted. Disciples' being persecuted and rejected and slandered and mocked is the normal experience in every nation and culture and during all history. The only things that vary are the disciple's faith and courage and the level of hostility of the people of the world. The more faith and courage a disciple has, the more harshly and quickly they will be persecuted.

In addition to pointing to natural problems that affect everyone, many Christians respond with something like, "well, we are in a Christian nation and that is why we have it easy." That excuse and the false things behind it are becoming more and more difficult to defend even for the confused. The U.S. is a Christian nation, but as this book reveals, the description "Christian nation" is a relatively meaningless label. As we have seen, "Christian" is merely a religious label and it is *not* synonymous with being a follower/disciple of Joshua of Nazareth. And even the ethical beliefs that Christians once held based on their religious beliefs are going away so that lawlessness and evil are growing exponentially.

The simple truth is that Christians do NOT follow nor represent Joshua of Nazareth and THAT is why they have an easy life in the U.S. or anywhere else they don't faithfully repeat his truths and attempt to live them out. The Christians are the ultimate examples of the "have your cake and eat it too" principle. Meaning, they love their life in this world, and thus they live no differently than the people they claim "need to be saved"; and yet they think that their religion will "get them into heaven."

Joshua of Nazareth's truths have been unpopular ever since he came some two thousand years ago and in all places. No "culture" is conducive to his truths on how we are supposed to live our lives because human nature is the same no matter what nation, culture or century in which we live. *People create*

cultures, and those cultures reflect their thoughts and ways apart from the Light of the world. Human nature has not changed, and thus people's reactions to the truths of the Light of the world have not changed. That is why he prepared us with timeless sayings like:

If the world (*the people of the earth who don't have Joshua as their leader*) hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you. "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. "Remember the word that I said to you, "A servant is not greater than his master." If they persecuted (sought to harm) me, they will also persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. John 15:18-20

They indeed did persecute Joshua, so, reason that out...

His word was to make him your leader and to follow him. Disciples repeat his words/teachings/truths today and get the same response from the vast majority of people - they did not keep his word, they do not keep our word.

Saying there is a right way and a wrong way to live one's life has always been unpopular due to our nature of wanting to do whatever we want irrespective of its impact on others. People have always been bound in the cage of self-pride and fear and selfishness. When we disciples come along and say, "Hey, did you know you are bound in a cage created by your self-pride and fear and selfishness," the reaction is almost always the same...ridicule, offense, and attack. Ironically, it is self-pride that causes that reaction. We all want to believe we are "free," and we insist on defining "freedom" from merely a physical or outward perspective. As we shall see in the next chapter, this is a great error.

Increasingly, the citizens of the U.S. are some of the most enslaved people of the earth due to their turning away from even a vague God belief and associated ethical standard on which to order rules. While the U.S. is a nation founded on Christian religious beliefs, the simple truth is that not only have the majority of its people abandoned faith in the Bible-god, but they are abandoning even a moral ethic derived from the Bible or their religious sects.

How does the average Christian's live their life? It is indistinguishable from any other person's life, whether people of other religions or non-theists or agnostics. "Earning a good living," code for storing up treasures on earth, is how Christians live.

'So You Deny Christian Persecution?'

Many Christians will respond to the prior truths by pointing out the Christian persecution around the world and saying this somehow disproves my point.

Joshua teaches two types of persecution will gain reward from God:

Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 5)

Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” (Matt. 5)

As you can see, he says that first, those persecuted for speaking out against that which is wrong or immoral or trying to stop that which is wrong or immoral peaceably will gain the kingdom of heaven. This applies to any person, not just disciples. Any person who listens to their conscience and thus practices fighting non-violently against that which is wrong or immoral is worthy of the kingdom of heaven.

Second, he says that when disciples are persecuted because of our love for, faith in and obedience to Joshua – persecuted for being his follower—for our speaking *his truths and expressing our faith in him* - our reward will be great.

Please note he does not say, “blessed are those who are persecuted for being different” or “blessed are those who are persecuted because of their religion.”

The fact is that many different groups are persecuted around the world. *Almost all religious minorities are persecuted to some degree.* The Jews were persecuted by certain German people not too long ago, and are persecuted today in many places. Buddhists persecute Muslims and vice versa depending on where they live and who is the majority. Hindu, Muslims, and Christians regularly persecute one another, and they regularly persecute people of different sects within their religions. There are many dozens of examples of large-scale religious persecution happening today even as there are millions of daily instances or expressions of fear, dislike or hatred towards religious people of all stripes.

It is merely a minority dynamic where the majority persecutes the minority for not conforming to the majority and not taking the majority's religious label or engaging in the "right" rituals or not using the correct “God vocabulary” or beliefs. Religious and racial and nationalistic and tribal persecution has existed for as long as humankind has existed. It is one of the base wrongs of people that self-pride and fear generates. Call it what you will, tribalism, nationalism – the dynamic is the same – “we hate you because you are not like us (different skin color, language, clothing, ways of doing things, etc.) and you refuse to believe like us (religion) or to submit to our great political ruler(s) or our God”.

Dear reader, the kind of religious persecution just described has little or nothing to do with being persecuted for speaking and living out Joshua's teachings. Christians - known through clothing styles or religious organization membership or labels (Catholic, Protestant, Pentecostal, etc.) or holiday celebrations - are persecuted *just because of their religious self-identification*, just like Jews or non-violent Muslims or

Hindus or Buddhists, etc. are persecuted just because of their identification with those religions. They are generally **not** persecuted for speaking or living out the truths of Joshua of Nazareth.

So, for example, if a Christian, who is living in a Muslim majority area, is leaving their place of gathering and some Muslims see them walking down the street after leaving their “church”, that Christian might be beaten or threatened just because they are a Christian, *not* because they speak the Light’s truths or live his teachings out! I hope this book is making clear the difference between a Christian and a follower/disciple of the historical Joshua of Nazareth. Again, in that example, that man is harmed simply because of a religious label or affiliation or self-identification, *not* because he is speaking the Light’s truths or living them out.

I don't minimize the courage that it takes for a Christian to live in areas where they are persecuted due to other religious people being hostile towards them. Although, Joshua of Nazareth does address that if you had faith instead of religion:

But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next... (Matt. 10:23)

If Christians are being persecuted because they are staying where they are and fighting for what is perceived as theirs (“my parents had this house/property, and it is mine...”), then they are partly to blame for whatever harm they might suffer due to their persecution. Of course the other Christians are to blame for not welcoming the persecuted Christians into their communities, but of course, you need to love one another to have and live in communities! Since the Christians do not love one another and thus stay apart from one another, there are virtually no "communities" to which one could bring persecuted Christians. We will see why in the upcoming chapter, *I love Ice Cream, I love You*.

I also don't judge persecuted Christian's faith one way or another. If they are being courageous due to faith and acting out of love and their behavior is consistent with Joshua's teachings, then good for them, they are doing well, and I commend them! However, and as we have seen, it is *far better to know* the God you have placed your faith in because we lose much through ignorance.

This is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and me (*Joshua of Nazareth, not "the Bible"*) whom you have sent. (John 17:3)

When we do something right by chance or in ignorance or without the right motivation, what reward do we deserve? Or if we do something out of ignorance or without the right motive, will that please the person that hopes we would serve them out of love?

Lastly, it is a fact that Christians persecute other non-Christians as well as Christians who belong to a different sect. In contrast, disciples of Joshua

persecute no one because we have overcome the self-pride or fear or selfishness that drive most persecution.

Christianity in a Nut Shell

So, this section has described the sad state of the successful failure that is called “Christianity” and those people who make up the religious system and its organizations in the name of “jesus christ.” The success in drawing people in and collecting money from them to build their fiefdoms – their buildings and programs and “ministries” – all the while failing at carrying out what their proclaimed God says!

This is the successful failure.

Now, there are many well-intentioned and decent people who take some Christian label and participate in Christianity and its local organizational expression they call “the church.” Many are sincere in what they believe and are decent moral people - that is they don't intend to harm people. Some spend some time doing useful stuff like giving poor people money or traveling to other countries for a week to help some materially poor people build housing. Unfortunately, those things, while good, are the minor things that God wants and expects of ALL human beings. In other words, there are Muslims and Jews and Hindus and Buddhists and Agnostics and Atheists, etc. who do the same things the Christians do, and it is NOT because they all have a right understanding of God, but rather that *we all have a conscience given by our Creator*. That conscience encourages us, pushes us, chides us, reminds us, whispers to us, and points us to do good instead of evil.

Here is the problem stated from another perspective. If you don't know the directions to get somewhere, you are highly unlikely ever to get there. If you do know the directions, you have a good chance of getting to the destination, even if you make a few mistakes. Well, the vast majority of Christians and Biblians do not know the Messenger's teachings because they are not listening to him, and thus they don't know the directions! This is what it means to be lost, and yes, it is true, many are lost in their sincere Bible and Christian religion.

So, what is the simple, undeniable truth regarding the human race and love as defined by the Standard given by the Creator? Please hear his words:

This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. (John 3:19)

That the people of the earth – *especially Christians who use the Bible to hide the Light* - love the darkness rather than the Light and their loveless-ness and all it manifests is a great evil!

What is the first reaction from those with no faith or humility? “Oh, I am not evil—my deeds are not evil—I love Jesus...” Unfortunately for many who utter such things, they are merely self-deluded falsehoods based on the *wrong standard* to judge what is evil. The self-deceived religious people say, “I don't murder, and I don't” purposely harm others, and I don't smoke or drink, and I don't use drugs, and I don't...” And the list of “do not's” goes on and on, but they have the wrong standard to judge whether they are evil or not!

The Light says “love one another,” and Christians are **not** doing this and yet they believe that abstaining from overt acts of harming others or one's self is what makes a person acceptable to God or a “good person.” They could not be more wrong, for *what makes a person evil is rejecting our Father's love and truth and therefore refusing to love others!* What is the greatest evil above all others? *The lack of love for our Father and others is the greatest evil!* And what makes a “good person” is a person who cares about what is true and right and tries to help people see they need Joshua as their Leader. People need more than just good moral behavior – more than just abstaining from wrong-doing and doing a bit of “convenience good works” as it fits into my overall selfish life-style.

The sad truth is that the average Christian lives no differently than the average Muslim or Jew or Hindu or Buddhist or Atheist or Agnostic, etc. You will know the Christians only by their love for their book, the Bible, and their traditions; their attendance at their religious entertainment meetings in the buildings they call “the church”; their self-righteousness; and their lovelessness. Sadly, you will also know the Christians by their ignorance of the teachings of the one they call their God!

If you care about what is true, then you will listen to the Light and believe what he says.

This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God. (John 3)

If you care more about yourself and your life in this world, then you will not listen to the Light.

The religious people are the “try and have your cake and eat it too” crowd. They are quite a bit less honest than the non-religious crowd. They are like the most adept tap-dancing lawyer that can turn “yes” into “no” or black into white with a mere few flicks of his/her tongue. They have built up for themselves a self-serving delusion that they are not soon going to give up the house they have built for themselves with its multi-colored, flashing lights.

This is the current sad state – the successful failure – that is Christianity.

In the next section, we will move onto describing the solution to the successful failure. Or stated another way, how we could minimize failure and maximize success according to the One who gets to define those things.

Chapter Summary:

- Joshua of Nazareth teaches that those who choose to follow him will suffer in this world. We will be rejected, persecuted, reviled, misunderstood, mocked, slandered, etc. There are no time or cultural exceptions to that truth—the Way is challenging in all times and cultures because truth about human nature and our ways is an offensive in all times and cultures;
- Christians in the U.S. and many other nations live lives that are indistinguishable from the very people they say “need to be saved”;
- Normal difficulties like illness or accident or loss that all people experience do *not* amount to being persecuted for faith in Joshua;
- Christians are persecuted in various places on the earth, but they are generally persecuted for their religion, *not* necessarily for their faith in Joshua, just like many other religious or political or tribal minorities are persecuted in many parts of the earth;
- Christians persecute other non-Christians and even Christians who belong to a different sects/divisions;
- Christianity, while a success in the world's eyes, is a failure in the eyes of the One who said, "Come, follow me." Christians, in general, do not know nor speak the Light's truths – at least his unpopular ones - and they do not live according to his teachings. If they did, they would be persecuted in all nations, particularly in Christian countries.

Section Summary:

- Christianity is a religion, it is not faith in Joshua and it does not lead to Life;
- Religious people have hidden The Light in the big book they call the Bible. If you surround the truth with enough falsehoods and lies, most people will never find the truth;
- Most of the beliefs about God the Christians consider “essential” or “foundational” are false when compared with Joshua’s teachings, and no sects I am aware of have “love” as their most important belief/concept let alone attempt to practice it;
- The Christian gospel is an admixture of Hebrew religious beliefs and popular beliefs and it presents a “heaven can be gained for free if you just believe this God-stuff” gospel. Christianity’s gospel is significantly different than the good news that Joshua of Nazareth brought to mankind;

- “Going to church” has wrongly become the main Christian work they do to try and be accepted by God, just like “observing the Sabbath” was for the religious people of Joshua’s day;
- Christian leaders attempt to hide the contradictions, falsehood and problems with their religious beliefs using complicated theology or concepts. They nullify The Light’s teachings using various forms of religious relativism and alleged language expertise;
- Christian religion is essentially a hobby for most – albeit a fear or guilt driven one for many – and one of the favorite “chasing unicorn” practices is to “find God’s will for my life”. They do this to avoid actually living according to Joshua’s teachings;
- One reason many people reject God is due to Christianity’s claim that God is all powerful and all loving. They know - since reason, logic and observation inform them as such – that that claim is false. Christians are no different than other religious people in this respect in that they often don’t care about what is true and instead go with their religious dogma;
- Most things that are really worthwhile or memorable or character building in life are difficult. This is very evident in athletics, or where people were injured or disabled and had to work very hard to accomplish something. Being Christian is in no reasonable way difficult for the vast majority of Christians all over the earth, but particularly in the U.S. and Europe at this time. In contrast, following Joshua is difficult in all times and cultures, but it is also the most worthwhile and noble thing a person can do with the life they are given.