

## AN ALLUSION TO THE SOLUTION

Opening Questions:

- How important is it to successful communication to have a common language with commonly understood terms?
- If people start moving away from standard definitions of terms/words, will that lead to unity and common understanding or disunity and confusion?
- Can things like religion, politics, psychology or philosophy solve my struggles with things like self-pride, fear or selfishness?
- Can religious beliefs or political doctrine or policies or psychological philosophies free us from our cage of self-pride and fear and selfishness and thus solve problems like greed or un-forgiveness?

Now that we have identified the root problems – and the categories of people we fit into - we have to ask the question, what will solve the root problems of fear, self-pride and the resultant selfishness? *Later we will look in detail at how Christians substitute a false religious problem for the real root problems.*

Now would be an excellent point to define a few critical terms so we can be on the same page when using them. Unfortunately, ten different people will read the word "religious," and each might well have a different definition. In fact, I have used the terms repeatedly already and no doubt ten different readers would have more than one meaning.

Defining terms/nouns correctly is becoming more and more critical as more and more people leave rational thought, turn away from moral absolutes, embrace relativism as their foundational existential view, and thus submit to no standard whatsoever except their personal opinions and emotions to understand what is true or false, right or wrong. We will look at relativism more closely in section three.

### Relevant Definitions

**Accountable:**

“A situation in which someone is responsible for things that happen and can give a satisfactory reason for them.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Cambridge Dictionary, [www.dictionary.cambridge.org](http://www.dictionary.cambridge.org), April 2018

“An obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions.”<sup>15</sup>

**Agnostic:** Those people who believe a person cannot know whether God exists or not.

**Atheist:** Those people who believe God does not exist and who typically make a practice of actively promoting their belief or joining with others of the same belief. Atheists are typically a bit more proactive and outspoken and those characteristics are what set them apart from Non-Theists, who are more individual and quieter in their beliefs and behavior. In general, Atheist for many is synonymous with Non-Theist.

**Bible, The:** The sacred book used to understand God by the majority of Christians. There are two primary versions – the Roman Catholic which has seventy-three books, and the protestant, which has sixty-six books. The protestant bible has two parts – the first part is the Hebrew scripture which is called the Old Testament. The second part is called the New Testament, which contains the four gospel books documenting the life and teachings of Joshua of Nazareth plus mostly Paul's writings.

- Typically, the average Christian does not read the Bible but instead the Bible is read or studied by the Christian leaders, to whom the people look to understand the Bible's contents.

**Biblian:** Those people who look primarily to “the bible” (typically some flavor of “protestant”) as their standard to select their beliefs about God. While they would include the words of Jesus of Nazareth as “in the Bible,” they mostly ignore his teachings in favor of the other bible teachings. So, in reality, the Biblians have a sixty-two book protestant bible instead of a sixty-six book bible, since they mostly ignore and nullify the instructions of The Light of the world contained in the four gospel books with beliefs and teachings from the other sixty-two books and other sources.

**Christ:** One-third of the Tri-God of Christians *not* represented by the historical Joshua of Nazareth as he defines himself by his own words in the four gospel books. Typically, the “Christ” of Christianity is poorly defined and can mean different things to different people, from a person to a religious ideology or philosophy to a mythical figure to merely the source of ethical or moral principles.

**Christian:** A Christian is a person who has God beliefs received primarily from their religious leaders, and other claimed experts, and those leader's and experts understandings of the bible or other “sacred writings.” Christians are those who claim “Jesus Christ” as their God or figurehead yet who do not, in general, live by the historical person Joshua of Nazareth's core teachings as found in the four gospel books.

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<sup>15</sup> Merriam-Webster Dictionary, [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com), April 2018

**Christianity:** The people, organizations, resources, beliefs, and practices of those people who claim some affiliation with the “Christ” preached by their religious leaders or “the church.”

**Disciple of Jesus of Nazareth:** A person who has only the historical Person of Joshua of Nazareth as their Master and thus who looks only to him as the sole objective standard (his words alone as were captured in the four gospel books). Using Joshua's teachings as the foundation, disciples also value and use reason and logic to understand God – who God is, what God is like, what God wants and how to treat and live with other people.

**Ethics:** Essentially the same as, or synonymous with morals. The study of what is morally right and wrong, or a set of beliefs about what is morally right and wrong.

**Existential:** About or relating to one's existence.

**Faith:** A core level or deep trust or confidence in someone or something, typically that which cannot be verified with our senses.

**Hope:**

Nouns:

- “The feeling that something desired can be had or will happen”<sup>16</sup>
- “To cherish a desire with anticipation: to want something to happen or be true”<sup>17</sup>
- “A feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen”; “Grounds for believing that something good may happen”<sup>18</sup>
- “The feeling that what is wanted can be had or that events will turn out for the best”<sup>19</sup>

Verb:

- “To look forward to with desire and reasonable confidence”<sup>18</sup>

Human being need hope to function in a reasonable and positive manner. Hope can be placed in something real or in something that is not real.

**Interpretation:**

“An explanation or opinion of what something means.”<sup>17</sup>

“The action of explaining the meaning of something.”<sup>17</sup>

**Joshua (or Jesus) of Nazareth:** A historical person of humble means who lived about 2,000 years ago, and who performed miracles including defeating death, to validate his message. His teachings would radically transform human life on the earth for better *if* people listened to him and did what he taught.

**Morals:**

“Concerned with the principles of right and wrong behavior.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Cambridge Dictionary, [www.dictionary.cambridge.org](http://www.dictionary.cambridge.org), April 2018

<sup>17</sup> Merriam-Webster Dictionary, [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com), April 2018

<sup>18</sup> Oxford Living Dictionary, [www.en.oxforddictionaries.com](http://www.en.oxforddictionaries.com), April 2018

<sup>19</sup> [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com), April 2018

**Non-Theist:** Those people who reject the existence of a God or god's but who don't make a practice of actively promoting their belief. This distinction with Atheist is not absolute, and Non-Theist for many is synonymous with Atheist.

**Peace:**

These two dictionaries define it from a societal, individually external perspective:

- “A period of freedom from war or violence, esp. when people live and work together without violent disagreements.”<sup>20</sup>
- “The normal, non-warring condition of a nation, group of nations, or the world.”<sup>21</sup>

These two dictionaries define it as individual, personal and inward:

- “Freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions.”<sup>22</sup>
- “Freedom from disturbance; tranquility.”<sup>23</sup>

**Physicalists:** Are those who deny all metaphysical or spiritual realities or stated another way, those who believe reality can be best explained by the model of matter and energy alone. There are relatively few physicalists in terms of the earth's population, but they also typically possess positions of power and influence in the world, a fact that is not coincidental. Physicalists generally are non-theists and usually look to science and technology to solve humankind's problems.

**Politics:** The beliefs and interactions of people who are involved in trying to govern or rule or organize other people.

**Political Correctness:**

A person adopting the popular view/belief to feel some level of acceptance or belonging with others who have the same view, even if:

- A) That acceptance and belonging is vicarious, virtual or has no basis in real relationships;
- B) This view cannot stand the test of reason and therefore is false.

**Relativism:**

“The doctrine that knowledge, truth, and morality exist in relation to culture, society, or historical context, and are not absolute.”<sup>22</sup>

“The belief that truth and right and wrong can only be judged in relation to other things and that nothing can be true or right in all situations.”<sup>21</sup>

There are different levels of relativism, and we will look at that and clarify that later in the book.

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<sup>20</sup> Cambridge Dictionary, [www.dictionary.cambridge.org](http://www.dictionary.cambridge.org), April 2018

<sup>21</sup> [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com), April 2018

<sup>22</sup> Merriam-Webster Dictionary, [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com), April 2018

<sup>23</sup> Oxford Living Dictionary, [www.en.oxforddictionaries.com](http://www.en.oxforddictionaries.com), April 2018

**Religion:** People’s beliefs and practices regarding God things, spiritual things and the afterlife, which beliefs and practices have *no reasonable basis* in the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth.

**Religious Person:** A person who has sincerely held God or spiritual beliefs which beliefs have nothing to do with listening to the person of, nor following the teachings of, Joshua of Nazareth.

A religious person typically has a moral standard derived from their religious beliefs, but all people have some moral standard, so having an ethical standard does not make a person religious. Instead, it is the non-ethical or non-relational practices and rituals that the religious person believes they need to practice to be acceptable to God or to have a positive afterlife experience – even if infrequent or without much conviction—that makes a person religious.

**Responsible:**

“Having the duty of taking care of something.”<sup>24</sup>

“Able to answer for one’s conduct and obligations.”<sup>25</sup>

Here is a clarifying statement for distinguishing between accountability and responsibility:

“You were responsible for closing the gate, and your failure to do so cost the lives of three people, so now we are holding you accountable for that failure and here is the consequence.”

We will define additional terms later as we move through the book.

So, back to the initial question of this chapter, what will solve the root problems and provide the solution that all human being need? *Let us continue by first taking a look at what will NOT solve the root problems for the individual.*

First up is religion. If religion would solve the problem of people operating by self-pride and fear and selfishness, then the world would be a much better place since there are billions of religious people and over two billion Christians! At least there would be significant societies or communities of people – communities in the millions – within each religion that are practicing the tenants of their religion and thus doing better than those who are not part of those communities. For Christianity, the fact is, there are not.

Any astute observer will conclude that religion is not solving people's root problems, and it provided much fuel to the problems of self-pride and fear, which leads to many conflicts. The source of the conflict is often beliefs like, “Our God is the real true God, and yours is false, and our God hates people who tell lies about him...!”

Again, and at least significant problems should not exist within Christian circles if they are addressing the root problems – within the about a 2.5 billion people who take some Christian label. By any measure, this is not so, primarily

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<sup>24</sup> Cambridge Dictionary, [www.dictionary.cambridge.org](http://www.dictionary.cambridge.org), April 2018

<sup>25</sup> Merriam-Webster Dictionary, [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com), April 2018

because "Christian circles" or real communities do not exist and thus cannot be identified! We will look at why this is so later. The reality is that Christians are as unified as political liberals and conservatives! And that in spite of this saying of the real, historical Joshua of Nazareth:

The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. (John 17:22-23)

This predisposition to divide among the Bibilians and Christians accounts for the tens of thousands of bible and Christian sects on the earth at this time.

The morals derived from Christian teachings, for example, have helped certain cultures or societies or nations do better than others. I don't deny that better ethics held by a group of people can make human relationships and endeavors among that group work much better. However, I would also contend that "doing better" by constraining evil or being a bit more generous is not enough as the previous facts about our world reveal. The Christian ethic has been propagated in this world for two millennia, and yet, we still have what we have. Furthermore, there are no significant Christian communities (especially concerning the approximately 2.5 billion Christians currently on the earth) where people can look at the Christian community and say, "Oh, wow, they have solved the problems within their community." We can do better than accepting how the world is and just ringing our hands and at the end of the day going with the selfish path and making sure the ones I care about and I are OK.

How about humanistic psychological philosophies? Well, those beliefs and practitioners have been around for at least as long as religion! The beliefs/philosophies have changed over time, and they come and go and ebb and flow, but the essential beliefs and practices have been here for thousands of years. Mainly, those beliefs are attempts to understand human nature (with newer western beliefs trying to do so without referring to God or spiritual elements) and to find cause and effect – experience and reaction - with significant relationships in one's life. Most contemporary psychological philosophies and beliefs try and understand humans without a creator or metaphysical elements to human nature (remember heart, soul, mind, spirit?); or at least not accounting for the why's of those spiritual or metaphysical aspects of human nature.

To those who put their faith in psychological beliefs, it is to their credit that not too much conflict arises over those beliefs primarily because God-claims are not typically involved. However, while psychological beliefs and practices do not in general generate conflict amongst people, neither do they solve the root problems. In fact, *the practice of insisting on getting paid to discuss these beliefs with someone who thinks these beliefs will help, removes the most critical aspect of human relationships and thus render's it essentially powerless.* If self-pride and fear and selfishness form a cage, then those who advocate psychological beliefs, in

general, seek to operate within that cage and are thus powerless. There is only one thing that can get someone out of that cage, as we shall see later.

Some might say that politics or politicians will solve those problems. Politics and politicians have been around for thousands of years in different forms, and yet their solutions are not working well as history shows. Again, some political systems work better than others, but the ebb and flow of time proves that none can abide the cycle of eventual destruction due to human conflict, usually from within and due to the causes already identified. Specifically, people turning away from a unifying and good ethic for human living.

Politics and politicians are about people governing people and setting rules and laws for groups of people and directing money and resources. The root problems, on the other hand, are first individual in nature. Yes, they affect other people, and as a group of collective people operate under the sway of the root problems, things do not work well. Remember the above examples of some of the problems that are widespread in the world? *Politicians or the rules they make or the money or resources they can direct can never solve the root problems; they can only seek to constrain or minimize the damage of the manifestations of the root problems.* Law cannot cause love or internal peace, just like money or material things cannot generate love or inner peace.

No, we need something else to solve our root problems of self-pride and fear and selfishness. We need something outside of ourselves or higher than ourselves to fix our problem. Or stated another way, we cannot get out of our self-made cage by ourselves. We do not innately have the key to the lock of the self-made cage of self-pride and fear and selfishness. We desperately need help to make it out of the cage. Religion, psychology or politics cannot unlock our cage either, for they are our creations! We made them while in our cages!

Another good illustration depicting our dilemma is a large, self-dug pit. We started thinking there was something valuable down in the earth – even though we heard a small voice from above telling us to look up – so we grabbed a shovel and started digging. Self-pride or fear or selfishness motivated each shovel full, and the pit got bigger and deeper. Finally, at some point when we did not find what we were digging for, we realized that we dug the hole so deep that we could not get out by ourselves. We need someone to reach down and pull us out.

As we explore finding the solution to people's problems, we will need a tool to do that. Finding solutions to vexing problems requires the most valuable tool that we human beings were given, and we shall examine those tools in the coming section. Furthermore, the successful failure that is Christianity – and more generally reality itself - cannot be well evaluated without using these tools well.

Chapter Summary:

- Understanding things by having clear definitions of those things is extremely important—it is the only way to know if something is true or false;
- Many terms/concepts have been redefined or are misunderstood, thereby clouding the picture of reality and hiding essential ideas and truths as well as obscuring or hiding the solutions to problems;
- It is self-evident and objectively true that religion, politics or other philosophies about human beings (psychological or humanistic) do not have the power to set us free from our cage of self-pride and fear and selfishness;
- We need something higher than ourselves to lift us above our flawed human condition—we need someone to unlock the cage or to lift us out of the pit.