

# BODYLIFE

The Wonder of Living Loved

March 2010

## How Do I...?

*By Wayne Jacobsen*

“How do I...?” Probably 80% of the questions I get begin with those three little words. I shudder now when I hear them, though I don’t always show it. Believe me, I understand well enough. It used to be three of my favorite words, too.

- How do I get the relationship with Jesus I want?
- How do I find other like-hearted believers near me?
- How do I get my spouse to see what I want him or her to see?
- How do I get my book published, find an agent, or launch a best-seller?
- How do I find my ministry?
- How do I start a house church?
- How do I find an audience for the things I want to share?

The list goes on and on. But I must warn you at the outset that similar questions asked of Jesus didn’t get the answer

most were looking for. This article probably won’t either because the question itself begins with the wrong focus. It already buys into the lie that if we don’t have something we want, there must be something we can do to get it.

We’ve been pressed by four thousand years of religious indoctrination into that conclusion. The life you want is a few good decisions and a lot of hard work away. Fifty years of self-help books have underlined that same self-deifying approach. Give me three steps, five rules or eight keys and I can do it. Except we can’t, and when our efforts fail we only have ourselves to blame with some form of, “I didn’t do enough, I didn’t do it right, or I didn’t have the right steps.” Thus we are left to either find better answers or work even harder.

Now I’m not saying hard work won’t

be rewarded in this temporal world. It will—much more than lying on a couch hoping to win the lottery. But in the kingdom of God human effort and our confidence in it are two of the greatest obstacles



*“We must never forget that God’s speaking to us, however we experience it in our initial encounter, is intended to develop into a intelligent, freely cooperative relationship between mature people who love each other with the richness of genuine agape love. We must therefore make it our primary goal not just to hear the voice of God but to be mature people in a loving relationship with him.”*

— Dallas Willard in *Hearing God*

*LifeStream*

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to living in his joy.

Religious lie #212 is, "If we won't, he can't," and it underlies so many of the ways we motivate people and make them feel responsible. While that may lead people to work hard to do some-

thing great for God it only leads to the disillusioned hopes of self-effort, especially when we think ourselves successful.

Jesus described a very different

Father, one who was working every day in the world inviting us to come alongside him. That's how Jesus lived. He watched what his Father was doing and joined him there. Paul admonished us to do the same. "Watch what God does, and then you do it" (Ephesians 5:1, *The Message*)

One of the signs of his working in us to take us beyond the good intentions and failed hopes of religion is that we are no longer concerned with doing things for God, and instead learn to do things with him. And that begins with the simplest of opportunities.

### Hounded by Luke 14

I've slaved under the lie of self-effort and the frustration it engenders for most of my spiritual life and when you combine that with spiritual passion, the results are disastrous. It wasn't that God didn't try to warn me, but that his nudges were not nearly as compelling as the internal drive to climb the ladders that would make me feel more significant and important than others around me. There was so much God wanted me to do for him, or so I had convinced myself. Looking back, it's hard to imagine that I didn't even notice that the things I thought God wanted of me and the things that would make me successful and important were synonymous. That should

have been my first clue.

God wanted me to write and teach, and I needed an ever-expanding audience to validate that calling and the truth of what I was sharing. I was so driven

to find myself an audience worthy of my imagined calling and spent endless nights in frustration and anger that God wouldn't bless my efforts the way I thought he should or that others wouldn't

help me the way I thought I needed. Oh, how naïve I was.

During this season of my life I had a number of people approach me saying they had a Scripture on their heart for me. After three or four times over a period of five years, I would just look at them and say, "Luke 14." Their eyes would get wide and I knew I was right. "The story about the banquet," I'd add and they would nod with a bewildering look on their face. "You're not the first," I'd reassure them.

The story is found in Luke 14:7-11. Jesus attends a Sabbath feast and notices how everyone comes into the room jockeying for the most honored seats. He warns them not to. Better to take the last place and be invited up, rather than presume the honored one and have to be moved down. He fin-

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to help people on this journey. The first is to re-do *Transitions* this time on video to enhance more group dialog. The other will be to help equip people to read Scriptures without all the religious preconceptions that blind people to the revelation of God in the Bible. We'll probably record these in the Indianapolis area if you'd like to attend.

In the past few months we've added three new audio recordings to the website to tackle some of the most often asked questions after people listen to *Transitions*. Two were recorded in South Africa and one in Tulsa.

- What is the Gospel of Jesus Christ?
- What Do I Do with Scriptures that Make God Scary?
- What Do I Do to Live Loved?

You can find these on the bottom of the *Transition* page of the website and also in our Audio library. Sara and Wayne also did a marriage seminar recently in New London, PA. They shared how this journey of living loved and loving others has shaped their marriage over the last 15 years. One was titled *Only And Always: The Growing Endearment of a Life Live Loved*, and the other was called *Finding Our Way to Us: Unity Where We Don't Agree*. These are also in the Audio Library at [lifestream.org](http://lifestream.org). Sara and I both share honestly from our own lives and how making space for God's work in the other has allowed us at this stage in our marriage to find more joy and partnership than we've ever known. People really enjoyed Sara sharing her story.



### BOOKS by Wayne

- **HE LOVES ME! (\$12.00)**
- **SO YOU DON'T WANT TO GO TO CHURCH ANYMORE (\$12.00)**
- **AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS (\$14.99)**
- **THE NAKED CHURCH (\$13.99 from [createspace.com/3374565](http://createspace.com/3374565))**
- **TALES OF THE VINE (Sorry, this book is out of print.)**
- **THE SHACK (by Wm Paul Young, in collaboration with Wayne) (\$15.00)**



### CD COLLECTIONS by Wayne

- **HE LOVES ME! as read by Wayne Jacobsen** (4 CD set - \$20.00)
- **JAKE COLSEN Book as read by Wayne Jacobsen** (5CD set - \$23.00)
- **TRANSITION: From Religion to Relationship** (8 CD set - \$30.00)
- **LIFESTREAM SUPERDISC** - (All our Audio Collections in mp3 format on 1 CD - \$25.00)
- **THE GOD JOURNEY PODCAST Archive 1-5** (5 CDs in mp3 format - \$12.00 each)
- **FINDING YOUR PLACE IN THE BODY** (4 CDs - \$16.00)
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- **LETTING JESUS TAKE SHAPE IN YOU** (4 CDs - \$16.00)
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Sunday 2009 I started devouring the podcast archive and it was there that I found out about *He Loves Me*, and more recently, "Transition". Thank you for helping my head go where my heart has been for so long.

### Julie in AZ

I wanted to tell you how much it has meant to me being able to meet Father for the first time through your books and testimony. I am 39 years old and have been raised in "church" all my life—saved at 8, re-baptized at 19, and was never really introduced to the Father you know until I read *The Shack* and then *He Loves Me*. It is like the foggy road I have been trying to navigate all these years has somehow turned very clear and full of hope. Thank you for listening to God allowing Him to use you to change mine forever.

### Darlyne by email

Last night I found a link to your LifeStream website and I followed it. Well, what impressed me was your message to live loved.



The last few years have been really crazy and I haven't had near the time I've wanted for writing to do the things I love most. This last year was the worst dealing with circumstances in which people would not honor their own assurances. They added a huge weight to my life and a distraction to my greatest passions. In so many ways I was in a better place to follow God's simple leadings three years ago than my current circumstances currently allow. At the end of the year I was exhausted physically, spiritually, and emotionally. I felt like God asked me to take a seat on the bench and get some rest. I have never heard anything that sounded more wonderful. I am hopeful that the year ahead will bring some resolution and allow me to get back to the writing I've wanted to do for some time. We are adding to our website a new email list

No anger. No grudges. No blaming. I just need to bask in the Father's love. Wow! You don't know how I needed to hear that. How could I have forgotten my "first love"? It is such a relief to remember where it all started for me. With the knowledge that I am loved. The Father loves me. What more could I want? What more could I share?

### Craig in the Navy

I wanted to thank you for *So You Don't Want to Go to Church Anymore* and *He Loves Me*. Your books make Jesus come alive. You have really helped me deal with a lot of things in myself and the environment I am in. I am learning to lean on Father and walk with him however he leads. Just wanted to say thanks.

**Check our website for more letters we couldn't fit here.**



**WAYNE'S TRAVEL**

- Kitale, Kenya: Feb 14- March 2 - Conferences and Trainings
- White Bluff, TN: April 16-18, 2010 - Spring Family Retreat with Wayne and Brad. Registration closes March 1
- Franklin, TN: April 18 - 19, 2010 - Conversations about *The God Journey*
- Dallas, TX: September 3-5 - House2 House Conference
- Germany: November 3-15 (TBA)

We are also praying about invitations to the U.K., Germany, Australia, Wisconsin, Upstate NY, Mississippi, Washington St, and North Carolina

for people who want to either subscribe to BodyLife, be notified whenever something significant happens at Lifestream, or be notified when I will be traveling in their area. If you'd like email updates for any of those three reasons, please go to [lifestream.org](http://lifestream.org) and sign up for "Email notifications". Over the next couple of years I am planning on recording two video presentations

ishes with one of his favorite lines, "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Over a twenty-year period in my life I had different people bring up this story at least a dozen times. Each time grew more frustrating, as I wondered why I hadn't yet learned whatever lesson he wanted me to know. Just how humble do you have to be to merit a wide-ranging ministry?

But that really wasn't the point of the parable or what God wanted me to know. Whenever we set ourselves to be honored above others, or promote our own influence, people only become a tool to our own ends and real life and real love cease. Why did God bring this story to be so many times? I find that he confirms in extraordinary ways the lessons we have the hardest time learning, and this one answers the how-do-I question better than any other I know.

### The Fight For the Top

They came into the party with their eyes glued on the head-table. Who wouldn't? Banquets are designed to draw attention to the front of the room and celebrate the most-honored guests. And few people walk in without wishing they could have that place of honor so that others would know how important they are.

If you're talented enough, or have the right contacts, you can claw your way to the top at someone else's expense, but Jesus warned us here that the

wake-up call from our contrived posturing will be painful indeed for those who think of themselves more highly than they ought to think.

Celebrity is one of the sickest realities of the human family—we stratify

ourselves in terms of perceived relative value usually based on someone's talent, looks, or success, and then believe the lie. Those who sit at the head of the table bask in the perception of their own self-importance, and those who don't wish they were. Jesus let his disciples know that his kingdom works very differently. He was confronting fallen humanity's need to find our significance in comparison to others. It is a trap, and all the better if you get there and still believe the lie.

And yet, there is a dysfunctional drive in broken humanity, especially those with creative gifts, to be the next celebrity. You see it at *American Idol* auditions and hear it in the voices of would-be artists and authors. They think all their dreams will be fulfilled if someone will just "discover them" and offer them the platform they haven't found for themselves.

But it is often true that those who make such big jumps often get twisted by them, and end up crushing others when their influence exceeds their personal character. Perhaps that's what Paul meant when he warned us not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, whether we aspire to a place of influence or already have it and think it gives us a place above others.

Do you know how many people approach me, certain that my work with *The Shack* proves I have the key or the audience to promote their project into the stratosphere? What happened there was the result of three men God brought together along with a lifetime of experiences, pain, work, and relationships to do something that was beyond each of us.

We didn't have a formula to work

**“But it is often true that those who make such big jumps often get twisted by them, and end up crushing others when they have influence that exceeds their character.”**

then and we don't now. We learned that God opens doors as he desires. To be honest, that whole project was far more fun and far more impacting when we'd only sold a few thousand and people felt like they had stumbled upon a hidden treasure. The bigger it got the less it seemed to impact the people reading it. The book became the star instead of the God we wanted people to engage through the book.

### Head Table Wannabes

They are not hard to recognize. They always draw attention to themselves, and scheme for favors to advance their ministry. Most of the ones I meet really think this is what God wants for them. I did too. But that still makes you a user. Their friendships last only as long as the benefit they derive and they easily discard people when their benefit is used up. Those who make it into the limelight become quite different people, enamored with themselves and their famous friends. They treat common people as if they are beneath them and if anyone challenges them, they counter with whispered accusations, or cutting off the relationship altogether.

Interestingly enough, the men and women I know in the world who most live loved by Father and demonstrate that love to others around them, are not household names nor are they people who seek the stage. Most have not written books, nor are they frustrated with the sphere of their sphere of influence God has given them. But they have more impact on the world around them than those with more recognizable names and larger platforms.

I wonder if that is why Jesus never wrote his own book, or started an organization? He knew the limitations of

both and that they would distract from his real mission of shaping lives to live loved by the Father. He would rather have left the world with a hundred and twenty men and women on the road to living loved than anything else he could think of.

But what I don't wonder about any more is what table I'd prefer to sit at. I've sat at head tables.

They are false space indeed. There's not much real conversation there, since people are facing away from each other in more ways than one. Those people are caught up in appearances and posturing and making the next connection to advance their own agendas.

That's why I don't think Jesus' point was to take the last place as a way to get to what you think is first place. Maybe his point was that the last place in a room is really the best place to enjoy him and love others in a way that is meaningful and transforming. Maybe that is why he washed the disciples feet as the greatest demonstration of his affection for them, and encouraged them to do the same.

### The Organic Growth of Service

I don't know of a story that better answers all of our how-to questions. How do I find relationship, fellowship, or an outlet for my creative expression? Instead of looking for what we don't have, Luke 14 invites us into the space of responding to God's working right where we are. Rather than having to make something happen by our own wisdom or ingenuity, the path to God's life comes by loving the people he has already put before us, applying our gifts to their needs. I'm convinced that will create opportunity enough for whatever God wants to give us and what he desires us to share with us.

rings loudly and your sacrificing of your time to be a blessing refreshing. So, once again, thank you Wayne and Sara for sharing your lives unashamedly with the world.

### Shannon in Colorado

*He Loves Me* came to me when I needed God's love the most...I was at the end of myself, my religion and didn't like the God I was taught to believe in. I asked Him to show me who He really is—to sweep out all the lies and start over. Along came your book and God used it to reveal His great love for me. I have not been the same since.

### Devin by blog comment

I cannot tell you how many pastors/former pastors I have passed your stuff on to and the healing it has brought. Wayne, your "Transition" series has utterly changed my perception of Jesus, the cross, and guilt. I have worked in the church for 4 years and have been almost completely burnt out... and in desperation reached out to some friends who I had tagged as having "flaked out" or burnt out or lost sight of the church and was shocked to see the huge world that they had to offer - one of grace!

### Stacy by email

Your book *So You Don't Want to Go to Church Anymore* was on my reading list for over a year before I was brave enough to read it. I didn't want to be given more ammunition for not going to "church" nor did I want to be guilted into going to "church." Your words didn't provide me with an argument for either. It just made me feel a bit more sane. I am not alone in my desire to know God deeper, nor am I alone in my impatient frustration as I try to avoid the church dance. (Ironically, the more I try to avoid the church dance, the more I dance. Ugh.) That said, I still went to the service yesterday. I sat in a room of mostly strangers and listened to the pastor (an old friend of mine) say some amazingly gross stuff. I wanted to stand and scream. Thank you for seeking, for sharing, for making it OK to want more.

### Jerry in Louisiana

*So You Don't Want to Go to Church Anymore* has enlightened the misconceptions I have been walking in for all but the first few weeks of my ten-year journey. As I read it, all of the reasons I resigned from being percussionist in a worship band were illustrated. Having finished the book and retrieved my jaw from the floor in an attempt to re-attach it, I just wanted to let you know that revelation of what I have been seeking has finally taken root and for the first time.

### Duncan in India

I just wanted to thank you so much for your book *So You Don't Want to Go to Church Anymore*. All I can say is that it has ministered more to me than any book I have read for years. I just loved the spirit of your writings – not accusing or aggressive – but just loving truth, which touched the heart. I have so far bought six copies of your book and all have been read by one or more people. Everywhere I go I am recommending your book to people who have been bruised in one way or another by an imperial system.

### Nicole by email

I would just like to thank you both for sharing Jake's journey. Every review I read was true. Jake's journey left me laughing, crying and in complete awe of God's love for me and the plan yet to unfold. I look forward to exploring your websites and to furthering my own journey of trusting God and learning to live loved.

### Roberto in Spain

Over the past 3-4 years the Lord has slowly but decisively brought us out of the box of organized religion. You are the latest footprint in the path. Months ago I "accidentally" ran across a reference to *So You Don't Want to Go to Church Anymore*. I downloaded and devoured it immediately. Then it went to all my English-speaking friends. Then last Easter, in a gathering of folks from several cities in the south of Spain, one of the brothers asked me if I had run across your podcast and I had to say no, I had no idea about it. So, on Easter

place of spiritual arrogance to a real and vital walk with Jesus. I have not arrived, but I have the best guide to get me there—Jesus.

#### **Sara in Illinois**

I just finished your book *So You Don't Want To Go To Church Anymore* and I literally cried at the end since I perceived God's love through all of it. My tears were both because I was very touched and because I finished the reading and I don't have anymore of these amazing chapters left. I needed to know more than ever that Jesus is always with me and that He's always calling me to a deeper relationship with him.

#### **David in Alabama**

God has really given you a gift for putting into language what we know is true in our hearts

#### **Jim in Michigan**

Thank you for writing *He Loves Me*. I hated you and loved you all at the same time. I have never read anything so disturbing yet so freeing. I'm a former pastor who "gets it." *He Loves Me* exposed the lies that I have been hammered with my entire life.

#### **Leslie in Massachusetts**

Thank you so very much for your book *So You Don't Want To Go To Church Anymore*. It has touched my life in a way that has surprised me. I am not much of a reader and I read this book in one day. That to me is a miracle in itself. I just couldn't put it down because I kept wondering, "What is John gonna say next?" It's helping me personally to reevaluate my relationship with the Lord and really opening my eyes to the ways that I might be missing what Jesus has asked of me and wants for me.

#### **Judy by email**

I have just finished reading *He Loves Me!* It is one of the best books I have ever read, and certainly one that helps me understand God's love for me better than any other. I wish I could have known and understood the content of this book from the time I was a child. How different my life would have been! Now a sea-

soned missionary getting close to 60 years of age, I am beginning my journey—a journey I've longed for since childhood—of living in the knowledge that my Abba is fond of me. I have a lot of wrong thinking to overcome, but oh the joys in the moments when I know that I am precious to Him personally, not just as a speck in the sea of humanity.

#### **Carlayn by email**

Confirming. That's the word I'd use to describe *So You Don't Want to Go To Church Anymore*. The message of the book made its way into my heart eight years ago from other resources and since then I've been so incredibly unsatisfied with church as an institution. Still, I go to church out of obligation (I'm told I'm supposed to), pride (if I don't, people will think I'm backsliding), and I now realize fear (how will I connect with other believers?). The last is the most ironic as our family goes to a small church up the road and my husband and I have absolutely no fellowship with anyone there (and we've been there two years!). I know if our family chooses to follow Jesus freely with no confines of an institution our Christian family, friends, and acquaintances will think we're absolutely nuts. This got me thinking about persecution in the Bible and how my belief system is already questioned by mainstream believers. Now they'll be even more perplexed. I wonder if a great many of those verses really talk about Christians being persecuted by other Christians, not necessarily unbelievers.

#### **Chuck in Pennsylvania**

I want to thank you for writing such an insightful and powerful article, *Bait and Switch*, that hits the nail on the cross.

#### **Shean in Alabama**

I wanted to especially thank you for you. Father has placed you in a more visible spot before America and beyond, which has increased your workload quite a bit I'm sure, yet you haven't changed your basic nature of being a brother to Christ's followers all around the world. Your voice of freedom in Christ

Most of our how-to questions focus on our abilities, wisdom, or connections and trying to find what we don't have, rather than allowing us to live freely in what God has already given. It's easy to miss his gentle nudges when we're more focused on our desires or ministry. He knows how to draw us into relationship with him and, it's not by following someone else's steps.

And He knows how to connect us with others near where we live. Most think they have to find an existing group of like-minded people. While that is a wonderful gift if you come across one, it doesn't often happen. What if you just began to love the people that God has already put around your life—neighbors, co-workers, other parents at your children's activities, and even strangers who might cross our paths on a given day? Caring about them would lead to conversations and conversations to relationships and you would soon find yourself a caring part of people's lives instead of attending a group.

As for ministry, trust that the slow reality of organic growth has far more value in this kingdom than flash-in-the-pan promotion the world exalts. As you simply do what God puts before you and let him be concerned with how far it travels and whom it touches. If your life is encouraging others on this journey, opportunities

will come to share that with others. But keep your eyes focused where it counts the most, not on high-visibility opportunities, but occasions to help others. Serving them, rather than getting others to serve you, will open more real doors than the false promises of hype and promotion. It probably won't be as fast as you want, but it

will be real and your focus will be more on the people you're touching than the "ministry" you want to grow.

In the Scriptures we read about a God that transforms over time—of a seed growing into a plant, of Abraham wrestling with the promise of a son for 25 years before Sarah got pregnant, of Jesus spending 30 years as a carpenter before he ever performed a miracle, or Paul, the former Pharisee, sorting out who God was over 17 years in a wilderness before he ever taught anyone else. Why, then, do we keep looking to build a name for ourselves or create a following others will notice?

God is less interested in helping you reach a place of honor, as he is teaching us how to honor the people he has already placed around you.

#### ***Live, Love and Listen***

I often meet people who want to live the way I do, writing and traveling to encourage others on this journey. I get that. I love living where God has placed me, but most have a distorted view of what that is. They don't see the cost and pain that underlies a lot of my journey, or the constant barrage of those who want to use me for their own purposes. And most have no idea that what I live now I did not find by my own scheming, but unfolded organically over years of simply following the gentle nudges on my heart where the consequences

were unseen and the impact seemingly insignificant.

In the end, we are only asked to follow him, not to build an audience or to produce our own trans-

formation. I wrote my first book, *The Naked Church*, back in 1987. That book was not successful by any publishing standards, and I was incredibly frustrated at the time that that book didn't have

“As for ministry, trust that the slow reality of organic growth has far more value in this kingdom than flash-in-the-pan promotion.”

the sales arc of a bestseller. I wrote it to change the course of Christianity in the west and it failed that hope. In spite of my distorted agenda, however, God knew how to take it to all the places he wanted to take it. I still get email from people who were deeply touched by that book way back then, some of them in very remote corners of the planet.

I look back now grateful for what God did with that book, knowing that if it had fulfilled what I wanted at the time, I might well have been destroyed in the process. I now know what those emotions preyed on and if God had satisfied them then, I am fairly certain I would not be on the road I am today. And I wouldn't trade this road for any other. And so much of what I'm a part of today spilled out of that little book and the unintended consequences of it.

Whenever you are frustrated at God for not opening better doors for you, that might be a sign that you're focused at the wrong doors. I have come to trust the organic growth of simple relationships over the substitutes of self-promotion, manipulation and begging favors from others.

So how do you find ministry, find fellowship or live transformed? Simply accept the invitation to live deeply in him, love those around you the way you are coming to understand how he loves you, and then simply listen when he nudges your heart. If you live in that space you will find his power transforming you, his Spirit connecting you to others and everything he wants to do in you will be fulfilled by him.

That's what Jesus wanted his disciples to know. If they had set out to change the world, they would have failed miserably, lost in their own ingenuity and wisdom to accomplish so large a task.

*This is a large work I've called you into, but don't be overwhelmed by it. It's best to start small. Give a cool cup of water to someone who is thirsty, for instance. The smallest acts of giving or receiving make you a true apprentice. You won't lose out on a thing." (Matthew 10:41-42, The Message)*

Jesus knew the most amazing things could begin with a cup of cold water. ☘

#### BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS



### *Bo's Café and The Misunderstood God*

Windblown Media released two new books this fall and Wayne was fortunate enough to be able to help with both of them.

*Bo's Café* is a fictional story of grace written by the authors of *Truefaced*, John Lynch, Bill Thrall, and Bruce McNicol. This amazing story chronicles a young man whose life is being torn apart by his own anger, and who is presented a path of grace that challenges him to the core of his own attempts to save himself.

*The Misunderstood God* is a nonfiction book that examines God's claim of being love itself (1 John 4:16) by holding our view of God up to his own definition of love in 1 Corinthians 13. In humorous and compelling stories, Darin shows how religion has disfigured the God of the Bible, giving him a personality that has more in common with the devil than it does the loving Father Jesus revealed to us. Prepare to have your concept of God renovated as you hold it to the revelation of Scripture.



#### Tony in California

Regarding *So You Don't Want to Go to Church Anymore*. I loved it... and hated it!!! My spirit soared with joy at the rediscovery of long forgotten truth, and my stinking rotten flesh recoiled at the thought of not doing 'church' as we've always done 'it'.

#### Justin in Alaska

Knowing what I know now, I realize that so much of religion is entirely upside down and backwards. There "things" that we are told to do first are not bad in themselves, but they are all outward signs and activities that mask the true condition of a person's heart. A person can do all of these things and be as dead as a grave inside. As Father wraps me in His love and I understand exactly what that means to me, day by day, I am now at such peace that words would fail to describe it. I have stresses at work that no longer worry me. My wife and I are now on the same page in this journey. I find myself changing every day from the brutal, unloving, uncaring, crass, and rude person I used to be, into someone who sees the broken with compassion, the lost with hope, and those around me as an opportunity to love.

#### Vivian in Brazil

I am overwhelmed with everything I heard during (the week you were here). I wanted it to last forever. Now I'm looking forward to starting my journey, reading and enjoying your book so much, and sharing with passion this conquering truth I have learned about the God I love. I had been carrying so much burden that deep inside I knew did not belong to me. I was deeply blessed with your visit! Thank you for your patience, for your understanding, for sharing and living what God has done in you.... It makes such a difference to actually spend time with you, rather than only hearing a teaching, or reading a book you wrote. I have been sharing so much of what I have

learned these days, and I cannot begin to express how light and peaceful I feel. And more than anything, how amazing it is to share it all as a gift and not as a burden.

#### Achim in Germany

I am fascinated by your book *So You Don't Want to Go to Church Anymore*. I am a pastor myself on a long and sometimes painful, but still encouraging journey, towards relational Christianity. Your book put new words in my mouth.

#### Maria in Brazil

I have been going through the "Transition" audios with our older daughter and she is just so receptive to it all. There is not an audio that she listens to that she doesn't say in the end: "Mom, this has always been the way I felt in my heart. I now feel that God actually has been speaking to me as I see that there are others in the world that feel the same way inside – and I don't even know them!"

#### David in Mississippi

I have two more Sundays to pastor and it is rough. I feel like a UFC fighter who is getting the crap beat out of him and the referee won't stop the fight. There are rumors that I have joined a cult, had an affair, my wife has left me, my kids are running wild and I can't control them.....and the list could go on. Some of these people profess to be friends and then spread lies like this. I would have never thought that it would turn this vicious, but I was wrong. I am glad that you have been so honest about what you and Sara went through. It has helped me more than you will ever know. When you tell of how Jesus loved you through it all and you did not defend yourself, it encourages me. I used to think I was walking with Jesus by being what others expected me to be. When that changed their attitude toward me did also. I am still learning that Jesus loves me if I never preach again. I am resting in the reality of who Jesus is even when I don't feel it. I have always been a good performer now I just want to be close to Him. Your material and the podcast have helped move me from a