

**TODD D. HUNTER**

**WHAT  
JESUS  
INTENDED**

**FINDING  
TRUE FAITH  
IN THE  
RUBBLE OF  
BAD RELIGION**



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# AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO THINKS THIS?

## HOW THE CHURCH FAILED US

*[These religious leaders] tie together heavy packs that are impossible to carry. They put them on the shoulders of others, but are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. . . . [They] forget about the more important matters of the Law: justice, peace, and faith. . . . They look beautiful on the outside. But inside they are full of dead bones and all kinds of filth.*

**MATTHEW 23:4, 23, 27 CEB**

*Woe to you experts in religion! For you hide the truth from the people. You won't accept it for yourselves, and you prevent others from having a chance to believe it.*

**LUKE 11:52 TLB**

**Monica's parents were** relentless churchgoers. Only Christian music played in her home. Movies rated R were not just disallowed, they were unthinkable. Monica was raised on the power and goodness of love. And then, in her senior year of high school, her parents divorced in a hailstorm of violent verbal battles. Heavy weights of relational tension crashed into Monica's life, wrecking the joy of her graduation. Because the divorce was so expensive, going away to college was in jeopardy. She did okay-ish in the aftermath, finding posttrauma wisdom in counseling and in the consolation of friends who stuck by her.



Monica later married, only to have her husband leave for someone else who better satisfied his sexual peculiarities. The postdivorce response of her just-turned-teenagers was not as benign as hers had been to her parents. Acting out angrily at home, disrespecting school authorities, partying, and abusing substances followed. She could see that her kids were self-medicating, but they were so emotionally distant that she could not get through to them. She hoped the church youth group would help, but her kids were mostly judged and marginalized there, even by long-term friends, because of their reactions to their parents' divorce.

Next came years of exhaustion from being a single mom. Monica was constantly forced to decide between paychecks, her kids' daily welfare, and self-care. On a humdrum Tuesday evening in February, with the frail winter light receding rapidly around her, having fought the traffic home, she walked through the garage door into the dark kitchen to discover that the kids were out again without telling her where they'd gone. Monica spattered her keys impatiently on the counter, and flung herself, a depressed heap, onto the sofa.

The lights were off, and unknown to her, chill-inducing inner darkness was coming. In the next instant it was like someone pushed a button and blackout window shades came rolling down, thickly covering the openings to her soul, vanquishing the ability to see anything—including God.

Monica was hurt. She was in the grip of disappointment with religion. But she got up—she was tough—she always got up. She flicked on the kitchen light, ate some leftovers while streaming a bit of her favorite show, and went to bed hoping the kids were safe. She tried to morph *hoping* into *praying* but that button was broken on the back of too many dashed expectations.

### FACING CHURCH TROUBLE

Lord knows how many times I have tossed churchly keys and thrown myself on a couch of religious despair. I have felt the

expansive loneliness of not being able to turn apprehension about the church into prayer.

I've been embroiled in the ups and downs of church my whole life. I know how religious sausage is made—both the ingredients and the process. As an insider to the church, I know all the yuck of what we are made of and how we fail to deal with it righteously. Despair, dejection, hopelessness, impotence, irritation, anger, and depression have knocked on the door of my heart with great persistence over a long period of time. To be fair, there are of course wonderful moments in ministry where we see lightbulbs of insight shine bright, healing come with its joy, and deliverance from evil relieve the victim and spread hope and peace to their family and friends.

However, viewed from any number of angles, the church is in oodles of trouble. Modern forms of media make it impossible for the church to hide her sins, her hypocrisy. The church's easy dismissal or even dehumanizing hate for those she deems to be wrong adds to her failure to look and sound anything like Jesus. Compelling or even plausible reasons to consider faith in Jesus and to attend church are, for many, hard to find. Jesus seems eclipsed by the dark shadow of bad religion.

That said, after long years working in the church, both sinning and being sinned against within her, I still believe in the body of Christ—the church. Why? Because I believe in Jesus now more than ever. Jesus summons and establishes the church, his body, the ones elected to keep the movement started by Jesus going.

I am captivated by Jesus' intrinsic goodness and his inherent wisdom, and by the fact that his power was always selflessly exercised for the good of others. I am motivated to embrace his movement by the notion that even right now he is living the most consequential life imaginable as he stewards humanity and all God's creation to its intended fulfillment. I find it stunningly compelling that he invites me, and you, and unchurched

doubters—with our sins, reservations, errors, and confusions—to be in on that story.

### **IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN THIS WAY**

Messed-up church is the way it has always been. Church history does not unfold like a series of ups and downs that one might trace on a line graph: up at the resurrection, down at Doubting Thomas, up at the church fathers, down at Constantine, up at the Reformation, down in our day. No, the reality of church life is that it unfolds like train tracks, protracted stretches of both/and, of simultaneity, of good and bad religion all mixed up together in local churches and in individual people.

The problematic elements in the body of Christ have been in play since, with twelve close friends, Jesus roamed Nazareth, Galilee, Judea, and Samaria. That band of followers, and the historic body of which Jesus is the head, has never been perfect. Skeptical onlookers would have always had ample reason to reject Jesus because of the close company he kept. Peter, after protesting that he would never do so, denied Jesus. “There you go,” an onlooker might have said, “I knew Jesus’ followers were hypocrites!” Like angry marketing agents, whose message was not cutting through the clutter, James and John wanted to call down fire on whole cities who they deemed did not welcome Jesus with enough enthusiasm. I can hear a skeptic saying: “Christians are emotionally unstable and should not be trusted with power!” Jesus washed the feet of Judas the deceiving betrayer, to which someone might respond: “Those friends of Jesus are in it just for the pieces of silver they get out of it!”

The church does not need to be perfect for the purposes of God to advance. But that is not an excuse for the church to be an agent of darkness or abuse that forces unbelievers to grope for the God who is actually very close. Perfection is not the goal—rather,

the goal is to be people whose lives suggest the plausibility of the Christ-story.

### DIFFERENT DETAILS, SAME EFFECT

My details are different—yours too—but chances are you and I have struggled in Monica’s rough, dark-at-the-bottom water.

Many—lots, actually—of my clergy and lay leader friends, who once had vibrant faith, who served the church and cared for the needs of others, no longer participate in weekly worship. They remain good people whom I love. I enjoy their company. I can see that they maintain some sort of private devotion that is important to them.

But they are beaten down in faith, battered in heart, and bruised in soul.

The latest church scandal now seems to arrive, like Sunday football, every week. Some people follow all the muck and—dishearteningly to me—rank the scandals for us. For instance, I found the “Top 10 Evangelical Sex Scandals of 2021.” The subhead line read, “The religion had a busy year!”<sup>1</sup> Most every list of “top religious news stories” of a given year contain at least one salacious story of a fallen pastor. For instance, in the short span of 2020 through 2022, we heard about Brian Houston and Carl Lentz of Hillsong, Ravi Zacharias, Jerry Falwell Jr., and Mark Driscoll. It is depressing in the extreme to hear the latest coverups of sexual abuse by high-ranking leaders in the Roman Catholic Church and the Southern Baptist Convention. One Midwest pastor was caught having had sex with a sixteen-year-old member of his church.<sup>2</sup> A megachurch pastor with a global following estimated to be between 1.4 million and 5 million people, pled guilty in Los Angeles to charges of sex with minors.<sup>3</sup> #ChurchToo has been in our face for a while now, which grieves those in the church who have a conscience.<sup>4</sup>

Outside the sexual arena, our faith-shoulders slump when we are given mental pictures of mass graves of indigenous children who died from neglect or mistreatment at the hands of the church.<sup>5</sup> In a unique form of Christian nationalism, leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church, including Archbishop Krill, are giving Putin's government core rationale for the war in Ukraine.<sup>6</sup> It is unthinkable that there is any justification for Ukrainian elderly, mothers, and children to be sacrificed for a false, utterly un-Jesus-like religious vision. Just before being *killed* they were under his *care*. His priests would have married the women, baptized the kids, and normally would have given last rites to the elderly on a deathbed in a quiet, spiritual home. Now they pray over body parts blown to bits by modern weapons of war—egged on by the worst of bad religion.

But that's just the news. Now it gets personal.

As a decades-long supervisor of pastors, I have had an up-close view of multitudes of fallen leaders, whose bad religion was manifest in extramarital affairs, drugs, alcohol, stealing money, spiritual abuse, abuse of power, and sexual harassment. Each incidence, considering the real trauma to victim-survivors, is a genuine heartbreak. Direct victims and associated victims are left spiritually bleeding in the wake of bad religion. Victims fear they have nowhere to turn to find healing, that if they become whistleblowers, telling their story, the church will revictimize them in order to protect its reputation.

Given all that, only about 22 percent of Americans attend church weekly.<sup>7</sup> And post-Covid church attendance is down 40 to 64 percent.<sup>8</sup> Over the past twenty years, average church attendance has shrunk from 137 to 65.<sup>9</sup> A new Gallop poll shows that belief in God in America is at an all-time low and that this downward trend is driven in large part by young people.

I read a recent article that dug deep into the phenomena of young people struggling with faith. The article stated that



evangelicals in particular are losing their young in epidemic numbers. Young people “resent how politics has shadowed their relationship with God and believe that Christ’s lessons of humility, tolerance, and love have been forgotten.”<sup>10</sup>

The article noted that if young people can’t ask honest “questions and get decent answers, they will bail” on church. One college student said, “Our faith, now synonymous with unwavering support for Donald Trump, is causing many to question how Christians could sell out women, immigrants, Black people, Indigenous people, people of color, the LGBTQ+ community and the poor for the sake of political power. . . . Gen Z sees the hypocrisy of Christians today.” Another student said, “I’ve started to think of Christianity as causing more harm than good.”

The article observed that listening is key: “Most young people don’t care about religion, but if you have young people trying to grapple with their faith—so they can make sense of it, given the world they experience—you should listen to them.”

One young man, who had dreamed of being a pastor since he was a child and had prepared throughout university for ministry, said that “over the last five years, I’ve done a 180- or at least a 90-degree turn, questioning traditional understandings of God.”<sup>11</sup>

Among the larger adult population, only 40 percent of Americans believe God intervenes in human life in response to prayer. Just slightly more than a third of the people in the United States have confidence in the church. Americans are most confident in the military and in small businesses.<sup>12</sup>

Pastors not only experience this rejection and observe this shrinkage daily, they also feel it in their gut in two profound ways: (1) it is discouraging to work hard, with sincere love for others and see dwindling fruit; (2) it is disheartening to pursue Christian virtue only to have the church turn on you for some political reason. Sadly, forms of abuse flow both ways in church. Just ask any pastor who tried to guide a congregation through the

Trump years and the Covid-19 pandemic. Thousands of pastors, members of church councils and church staffs were hounded and hammered by congregations who could not agree about shutting down worship, social distancing, masks, or vaccines. Thirty-eight percent of pastors ponder leaving the ministry to work somewhere else.<sup>13</sup>

In spiritual darkness, with seemingly nowhere to turn, a bright red EXIT sign beckons, and for many church leaders, the church becomes a reality only in their rearview mirror. In moments when bad religion overwhelms the good, the incoherent confusion gives way to what seems a compelling path articulated by a pop-rock lyric from the 1960s: “We’ve got to get out this place if it’s the last thing we ever do . . . ’cause girl, there’s a better life for me and you.”<sup>14</sup>

### TO EXIT OR NOT?

The temptation to exit church has gripped eras of my life like an irritating itch. *Just leave*, the thinking goes, *and the annoying, prickling stings will go away.*

When I was an adolescent, the liberal mainline church my family attended stripped Jesus of anything that made him real. They failed to attribute to him any difference-making power. This antipreaching almost killed my budding faith. It was like spraying spiritual Roundup onto my searching heart, which like a tiny shoot, was straining to break through the hard soil of ignorance and cynicism.

Religion is so infuriating in part because it contains incoherent confusions. I experienced this sad, clouding mixture in the Jesus Movement of the 1970s, in which I found faith in God. We were known for a lot of talk about and practice of love and grace, as well as the acceptance of my generation’s particularities of attitude, mod clothing, and hair styles. This atmosphere

helped us know for sure that God loved and forgave our sexual, drug, and alcohol sins.

The disconcerting confusion crept in when I discovered that this love did not extend to everyone. For instance, it was implied that our faction of the church had all aspects of Christian spirituality right. Our *spiritual movement* was not like those other corrupt *denominations* that had it wrong. Our interpretations of the Bible were dead-on. They contained no ignorance or bias, which meant they were filled with certainty that funded a less-than-humble, self-assured approach toward others. The smallest difference in doctrinal understanding could be weaponized in the war with the people we heard our leaders and teachers ridicule: individuals like Robert Schuller of the Crystal Cathedral or whole groups of people, like Roman Catholics or mainline Protestants.

Later I encountered the good, the bad, and the ugly of the charismatic and Pentecostal worlds. I have seen amazing miracles of healing and seen the aftereffect of people being delivered from evil. I have rejoiced with friends who received Spirit-empowered, life-changing insight from biblical gifts of the Spirit: words of knowledge, words of wisdom, prophecies, and discernment. Wow! Amazing!

Sadly, something else is simultaneously true: more than a few of the most anointed, Spirit-empowered people I have known were also highly manipulative, sexually immoral, and relationally unloving, and they secretly abused various substances—legal and illegal. I've observed leaders using spiritual gifts maliciously and slanderously in order get their way. I loved and admired the people I am here calling to mind. I frequently wished I were as spiritually gifted as them.

But this is also true: I don't think I have ever gotten all the way to the bottom of the crushing *personal* disappointment of their *public* falls from grace. Mulling the effects of bad religion,

I was reminded of the inner work of healing I still need from when the #MeToo Movement morphed into #ChurchToo. Churchly messes spilled into public for any open-minded person to see.

When these things happen, I again quickly imagine the EXIT sign as thousands more people give up on church, on religion, sidelining Jesus in their life.

Continuing my story, in the late nineties I participated in many conversations with young Christian leaders who were wrestling with issues of postmodernism. It is true that in some cases the church had wed herself too closely to elements of modernism that in hindsight were not helpful to spirituality in the way of Jesus. To the degree the church was unconsciously in the grip of modernity, a critique was undeniably called for. But along the way, under a withering criticism of truth that too often became cynical condemnation, I witnessed hundreds of leaders and thousands of Christian believers walk away from faith.

They lost their confidence that *there is a way that things are* apart from and prior to our sensual experience of them, our thinking about them, or the imperfections of the language we use to talk about reality. I get all that.

But it is fundamental to knowing Jesus that there is truth, and that humankind has access to it, even if that access is perplexing due to contextual factors, one's specific perspective, and the limits of language. If there is a Creator-God who is purposeful, wise, and loving, then there certainly is a way that things are. This means there is a truthful reality to be discovered, albeit in the partial way fallen humans see, as through a glass darkly (1 Corinthians 13:12). Thankfully, Paul's idea goes further: some day we will see the Creator-God of Truth face to face. Then our religious and spiritual knowledge will no longer be partial. We will know fully, even as God currently knows us and his whole

creation fully. But we don't have to wait for that moment. We can move in that direction, for in Christ Jesus, God's sphere and God's time have broken into human history.

I grieve that so many of my friends, seeing the rationale for religion crumble around them, have bailed out on the reality that the trinitarian God is superintending history toward his good purposes.

Most recently my heart has broken almost to the point of despair as I've watched large portions of the church sell their soul to both wings of American partisan politics. Some, seeking rightful social change, have joined progressive causes that have become unhitched from the biblical story and biblical ethics, in favor of political paradigms and political practices. Love for Jesus and for enemy is not easily felt among this crowd. The failure to love gets justified by the frame of secular partisan politics.

But this is to lose our way, for anything *social*—persons, patterns, structures, whether broken or finding in-process redemption—comes from, belongs to, and is currently being supervised by God. God is always central. Social issues cannot be properly and fully understood apart from this divine perspective. Therefore, we cannot find full and proper divine justice apart from God working on his terms. The vision for social justice that arises from the narrative of Scripture cannot come to pass based on the chicanery of election cycles or the slanted bombast of cable news.

I have genuine empathy for the frustration associated with the reality that justice seems to always come at a snail's pace. I get the impatience that comes with slowness, with delay. But rejecting the person and work of God in and through his people is not the answer. Rejection of the God-human partnership will bring neither speed nor accuracy to issues of justice. It will result in pseudo justice on the terms of partisan politics, creating

winners and losers that merely perpetuate our present cycles of hatred, condemnation, and dehumanizing of those in one's rival political party.

Others have lost their way at the intersection of right-wing religion and politics by joining a form of Christian nationalism. But *nationalism* can never be *Christian*. A Christian can care about their nation—and in a narrow sense be a *patriot*. But only carefully, self-critically, in a limited, restricted way, as a subset of joining God in his care for the whole world, the entire globe, and all persons, regardless of their nation, tribe, ethnicity, or skin color, whether such persons are stable-in-place or migrants, born in-country or immigrants. The old children's spiritual sings forth the truth of the matter: “Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight, Jesus loves the little children of the world.” Joining Jesus in his love means we cannot restrict our love to our own nation . . . and call such love *Christian*.

My stories are of course multiplied by the millions in the varied experiences of others. Given all that, my keen focus is this: lots of people are losing faith, hope, and love as they react in real time to bad religion and the damage it does to the reputation of Jesus. I respect and love these people. I know from my own experience what it feels like to be personally harmed by churchly malpractice. I have felt the dark clouds of dejection that come upon a person when one witnesses harm to family and friends by the church. I know what it is to feel piercing depression when one sees, again, in the news the fall of a still another famous Christian leader.

Before us now, two roads diverge: one toward hope, healing, and restoration; the other toward bleakness, deterioration, and death. This book is written to gain a fresh hearing for Jesus, and to nudge us down the road to the renewal of faith.

### NOTHING HAS WORKED

My stream of late-twentieth-century evangelicalism was full of activist leaders who wanted to, and expected to, change the world. We came of age in a time when churchly religion was good, not just barely tolerated. The church was gaining power in politics, education, and legislation. We fought for and won seats at tables with presidents, princes, and kings. But with the benefit of hindsight, we paid a huge price in lost street cred. We absorbed major dents to the reputation of the church and the plausibility of Jesus. We fought wrong battles, used erroneous tactics, and lost far more than we won.

It might be impossible, but for the education of it, give it some effort: try to visualize Jesus fighting culture wars by partnering with the political, social, and religious leaders of his day. We quickly see it is nonsense. It is so clear now that we should have modeled our private and congregational piety after him, not political consultants, who are experts in using people manipulatively—including the church.

“Sometimes I think we’ve advanced / but then I look at where we are.”<sup>15</sup>

It pops into my mind in meetings, while driving, or mindlessly folding clothes. It sometimes troubles my sleep, the nightmare dogmatically refusing to stop. Nothing in my generation worked.

Some nuance: I know this statement is not factually true. Lots of good stuff happened because of the church in my lifetime. However, such good is usually quiet and receives no media coverage. Headlines and TV station news crawlers are reserved for stunning sinners.

If I know that is true, then why the pestering thought, *Nothing in my generation worked?*

We had Billy Graham crusades. The worldwide influence of C. S. Lewis. Church growth models. The megachurch movement. The charismatic renewal. Pentecostal movements. The homeschool

movement. The proliferation of Christian schools and universities. The emerging church. Vatican II. Mother Teresa. The ancient-future worship movement. The missional movement. The Alpha movement. The spiritual formation movement. Protest movements.

Despite all that, we have the sobering, if not depressing, realities given us by Gallop and the latest disheartening headline about something sinful in the church.

I suppose identifying all this could just be my perfectionism at work, but I doubt it. I've seen the same reaction in thousands of others with all types of temperaments and with enneagram numbers all around the circle. Additionally, I know there is a counterargument to what I am saying: "Well, Todd, where would the world be without the good the church has done?" Right. I agree.

But at this moment, I am not relying on strict logic or calculating a set of religious debits and credits. I am concentrating our focus on a common feeling—the deep sensation of spiritual loss, of a real and pestering consciousness of religious despair. Countless church leaders have devoted their lives to what in their genuine experience was an intractable church and unyielding world. The church and the world seem worse off than when we started.

Many thousands of lay leaders wonder, *What's the point? We followed the pastor, fresh off the vision-casting seminar he and the staff attended, up the missional mountain, only to find that he was using us and actually did not care for our souls. But he was happy to compute our programmatic participation, count our attendance, and calculate our tithe.*

I know that is a caricature. So why bring it up? Because I have heard sentiments like those described above from far too many people. If we want to get to the heart of many disillusioned Christians, we need to ponder with honesty our worst fear: *Maybe God does not work?*



**REMAIN A CHRISTIAN?**

As you got a peek into my story above, you may have wondered, *Todd, how have you remained a Christian, stayed in the church, been loyal to its institutional forms, and even continued to serve as a leader in the church?*

The answer is this: It may have taken me some time to do so, but in reaction to each of the deep disappointments described, I, all credit and thanks to God, had the foundational, unshakable instinct to always make my way back to Jesus, to his person, words, and works. It only takes a little effort to notice the spectacular pure beauty of Jesus, and, in becoming alert to his inexpressible goodness, to find meaning in and through Jesus for the rest of one's life story—the virtuous and honorable, the corrupt and the unpleasant.

Even if we desperately want to, there is really no place to hide with our church hurts and religious disappointment. If we stop going to church, we still drag our letdowns around like a bag of rocks. They still trouble our soul, driving us nuts like a car alarm that won't shut off. If we cut off people from our old life, we just add loneliness to bad religion. The vast majority of people who have left the church tell me the one thing they regret is the loss of relationships that were facilitated at church.

But by turning to Jesus in the way I suggest, something else happens that is rejuvenating: the Bible, even with all the controversy and doubt that surrounds it, becomes alive and beloved again. The pages of the Gospels become a pop-up greeting card, surprising us, confirming to us again the virtuousness of Jesus and thereby inviting us, if not compelling us, to find life and the meaning of life in him. And more: the letters of John and Peter present testimonies of what it was like to walk firsthand with Jesus, the real Jesus, not the Jesus battered by the long history of bad religion. I always wondered, Could the stories they tell and the ideas they communicate be determinative of

Christian spirituality, rather than the latest study showing the demise of church through shrinking attendance and the effects of bad religion?

It is such a pop-up moment that I hope for in this book—to gain a fresh hearing from Jesus by patiently listening to his aims, on his terms, in his words. In times of war, persons and property are bombed to bits. Occasionally we see a picture of a baby, a mom, or a young, brave, self-sacrificing soldier, or some artifact of cultural value being rescued from the rubble. My hope is to rescue the reputation of Jesus from the rubble of bad religion.

If we paused for a moment of honesty, each of us could enumerate and describe the ways and incidences in which we, individually, along with institutional forms of religion, collectively, have co-opted Jesus for our own biased, selfish, and broken aims, burying him in the wreckage of false spirituality. This book seeks to liberate our understanding of Jesus, to center him in the town square of our hearts and let him speak for himself, revealing his aims, and thereby giving the basis for, and calling us to, human life as God intended.

Monica still struggles with the church and the inconsistent effects it has on people—the truly good and the terribly bad. She recently told me that she is a little better, the shades have come up a bit. Her retreating darkness is giving way to swelling levels of light, revealing a morsel, a mustard seed of spiritual hunger. Small but real, it is a hunger she tells me she would like satisfied.

## EXERCISE

### APPLYING THE AIMS OF JESUS TO MY LIFE

1. Grief and sadness need time and space to rise to the surface and become noticeable. If you are ready, call to mind two incidences of bad religion in your life. They likely exist on a scale from direct abuse to the relational pain of being dismissed by work or church mates. Being gentle with

yourself, but challenging any fear, recall as much detail as you can. It might help you to journal or record a voice memo of what transpired in the incidences you name. Notice what your body is or has been saying to you. (If you are recalling incidences of severe trauma, be mindful and tender to yourself. If you remain traumatized, please seek help from a trauma-informed therapist, spiritual director, or pastor. What we are looking for in these exercises is small steps toward posttraumatic insight and spiritual growth. Such faith development is possible, but it takes patience and expert guidance.)

2. Now notice: in what ways was your faith injured? Loss of confidence in God, the Bible, or church? Cynicism toward Christian leaders? Do you feel lost in some way?
3. In his earthly life, Jesus clearly observed the practices and consequences of bad religion. Today he sees you. He sees the scars you bear in your memory, heart, soul, and social relations. His aim is your healing. Pause now to invite him to do so. Take the risk of opening yourself to the good religion of Jesus.

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You might begin with this prayer:

*Jesus, I am a mixture of faith and fear, confidence and doubt—Lord, help my unbelief. As a first step on the journey away from bad religion I want to turn to the truth of who you are. I want to begin what I know may be the slow, halting pivot to your heart and your aims. I ask you to release me to a free and spacious place in which I am no longer bound by the sins of others.*

What words of your own would you like to add?

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