



BATHING IN THE WARMTH OF GOD

By Richard N. Pierro

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INTRODUCTION

Recently, while contemplating my spiritual life in my cousin's hot tub, I asked Jesus if he ever experienced anything like the wonderful soothing bubbles and warmth of a hot tub. Of course, I knew the question was ridiculous—but that ridiculous question inspired this booklet.

Now approaching the age of seventy, I have been blessed with a healthy life and wonderful family. The first-born son of Italian immigrants, proud, hardworking, Roman Catholics, that came with their parents to start a new life in America. Both of my grandfathers traveled to, and worked in, America before bringing their wife and kids over. Their wives, as the Apostles, left their parents, relatives, everything they held sacred and jumped on a boat, with their children, into the unknown, believing and trusting their husbands—that they needed to be born-again...in America.

I grew up in a little, seaside town called Swampscott in Massachusetts. Our family went to Saint John's The Evangelist Catholic Church, overlooking King's Beach and a panoramic view of Boston, just eighteen miles to the south. My parents were married there in 1947; and that's where my brother, two sisters and I were baptized, went to Sunday school and received first Communion. I also was married there in 1972. My father and mother's funerals were held there, and more than likely, so will mine.

On Sundays, after mass, my friends and I would go to Sunday school, which was in another building through a hallway next to the altar. One of the sisters, as I entered the room, patted my head and said "Richard, one day you will make a good priest." I could not have been more than 10, but I remember that declaration so well that I have searched for God, spiritual truth and moral guidance ever since. All-be-it, sad to say, not so hard at times.

SEARCHING FOR GOD

The Bible

I have read the Old and New Testaments many times, even various translations, as well as, books on ancient and modern world religions. I've watched: TV shows, YouTube videos and documentaries on past and present religions, UFO's and ancient aliens, listened to Christian and Jewish TV preachers and scholars. I've attended Bible studies, Christian retreats, taken two vacations in Israel and participated in an archeological dig at ancient Tiberius on the shores of Galilee—which I highly recommend by the way. Even though all that was good for my mind and soul I always fell back into my self-centered life; superficially acknowledging that I was a follower of Jesus and after a while I would retreat back into my day-to-day routine and worldliness.

Little Talks with God

In 2017, a friend and I went to a three-day religious symposium on art at the Community of Jesus, in Orleans, Massachusetts. While perusing their gift store I bought a book they published called *"Little Talks with God,"* written by a Catholic nun, St. Catherine of Siena, and to my amazement, after reading it, I found her questions and God's answers opened a virtual window to God's infinite wisdom, perspective and expectations, outlined and made known—as best as any lowly mortal with limited knowledge can comprehend.

In her book, God talks about divine providence, preparing our soul, heart and mind, how to pray and the merits of a virtuous and humble life. It also has many insights and instruction in what is expected of us.

Two example verses

LTG page 55: Para 2, *"There are four principal vices that destroy the soul: pride, self-love, impatience and indiscretion."*

LTG page 73: Para 1, *"No one born passes through this life without pain, bodily or mental. My servants bear bodily pain, but their minds are free. That is, they do not feel the weariness of the pain. For their will is in agreement with mine,*

and it is the will that gives trouble to man. They taste the pledge of hell while in this life, my servants taste the pledge of eternal life."

It is the story of girl named Caterina di Giacomo di Benincasa from Siena, Italy, Born into a wool merchant's family in 1347 A.D. Catherine was the twenty-fourth bambina of twenty-five bambini, if you can wrap your mind around that. As a child she was so devoted to Jesus that she committed her life to God at the tender age of seven. As she matured Catherine would stay in her room for long periods of time to pray and talk to God. Eventually she went into a trance-like state of spiritual prayer and began to have visions of God (similar to John in Revelation). During these spiritual moments Catherine asked God questions about faith and religious guidance and He responded with answers and instructions, in which, Catherine published the book "*The Dialogue*," now updated and translated to "*Little Talks with God*."

To me the modern translation, "*Little Talks with God*," compliments the *Book of Revelation*. You may not have the same reaction I did, but you owe it to yourself to at give it a look.

After reading *Little Talks with God*, if you still don't believe Catherine talked with the Lord, consider how it compliments scripture throughout the Old and New Testament and brings to life God's wisdom and requirements when walking with grace, on the straight and narrow path back to Him, by the blood of Jesus. To order the *Little Talks with God* go to the church's website: communityofjesus.org.

Akiane, Her Life, Her Art, Her Poetry

Another book that has inspired my artistic and religious juices is "Akiane, Her Life, Her Art, Her Poetry" by Akiane Kramarik. At the age of four, she said, Jesus spoke to her and encouraged her to draw and paint her visions. Guided by the love of Jesus, Akiane and her pictures of Jesus, Heaven, and other themes surprised even her parents, who were atheists.

At such a young age Akiane was painting pictures that where so professional, when she entered a few into a local art exhibit they didn't believe she had

painted them. She sold her first painting of Jesus for \$10,000. Her work has become world famous and now sells for hundreds of thousands of dollars, much of which she donates to charities that help children throughout the world. She has appeared, with her paintings, on many national and local cable TV programs, including The Opera Winfrey Show. If you would like to see her work Akiane's website address is akiane.com.

Heaven is for Real

Then I stumbled across a movie called "Heaven is for Real." Based on a true story about a five year old child named Colton Burpo who had an out-of-body experience while having an emergency appendectomy. Months later Colton told his father, Todd Burpo, that during the operation he had visited Heaven and talked with Jesus. Somewhat taken back Todd , who is a pastor, began showing Colton traditional paintings of Jesus and asked him if any looked like the person he saw in Heaven. When Colton saw a picture of Jesus painted by Akiane Kramarik he told his father that is what Jesus looks like. The Burpo's website is heavenlive.org.

The Face of Jesus Uncovered

As fate would have it I happened across a documentary on the Shroud of Turin, which aired on the History Channel in April of 2017. The shroud is believed to be the linen cloth that the disciples used to wrap Jesus in after he was taken down from the cross and placed into the burial tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

The documentary showed how the experts unlocked the mysteries of the shroud's photo-like negative image of Christ, blood and all. After many months and experiments they were able to make a 3d image of the shroud image and the face looked just like the portrait of Jesus that Akiane Kramarik painted when she was just eight years old. Checkout The Face of Jesus Uncovered on the History Channel: [dailymotion.com/video/x5luydh](https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x5luydh)

Building a foundation

Each of these unique and inspired things has helped me develop into a better disciple. And, I am proud to say I'm beginning to see a little Heaven through

the trees. Now, I must admit, I've always been a believer but never truly felt humbled to the point of placing God and Jesus first in my life. I said and believed I did, but I would always fall away.

I'm an artist and have always been a visual person and after reading the Bible, "Little Talks with God" and seeing the Shroud expert's and Akiane's pictures of Jesus, I now feel I have found my personal, God inspired spiritual roadmap to Heaven. And to top that off, a visual image of Jesus that helps me flesh-out a one-on-one relationship with my Lord and Savior.

Now, that may unsettle a few Christians, but read on, don't miss out because of your current beliefs. I'm not a religious scholar, just a follower of Jesus that wants to bask in the warmth of God's love. I'm sure you do as well.

All Christians know that the *Book of Revelation* is the final say on the Bible and its teachings. But as you know some the mysteries of God and His teachings have been left for future Christians and Jews to decipher. I've watched and listened to theologians, well versed messianic Jews, Christians, Priests, Pastors and Prophets and believe we are getting close to the Second Coming.

I'm not a theologian, or well versed in all Christian doctrine. Like many of you, I'm looking for answers and nuggets of wisdom and manna to share with my brothers and sisters. I imagine the Apostles were a little rough around the edges and had many questions of faith, doctrine and scripture, as well as, what Jesus taught them up to His' resurrection and gift of the Holy Spirit.

Over the years I have studied a few apocryphal books searching for guidance and spiritual insights in addition to the Bible, but, to date, I've only found St. Catherine's "*Little Talks with God*" the answer to my prayers. Her plausible conversations with God opens a spiritual window into His infinite wisdom, and allows us to see for ourselves what is required to bridge the void to God through Jesus.

After reading this book my faith was energized and I hope it does the same for you. It is a hidden gem now in this Christian's repertoire, so, as I write this

booklet, lets start with setting a foundation in the *Book of Revelation* and then we'll discuss and present verses from the book "*Little Talks with God.*"

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Inspired revelation of God, written by the Apostle John, (NIV Bible)

The *Book of Revelation* is an amazing gift to us. Written within fifty years of the crucifixion for the followers of Jesus, who were mostly Jewish, and may have witnessed His miracles, heard Him speak or were taught by Jesus or the Apostles. It begins with an angel appearing to the Apostle John, telling him to record and bear witness to the word of God and testimony of Jesus.

The Apostle John, in a spiritual state, was commanded to write a book of what was shown to him and send letters to the Apostles living in what was ancient Asia Minor (modern day Turkey) where many followers of Jesus lived. These letters rebuked, and or, complimented each of the seven churches and warned believers (then and now) what had to be done to receive and maintain God's grace, love, and eternal life in Heaven.

An edited version of the letters from the *Book of Revelation* was taken from the *New International Version Bible* (NIV) is listed below. Please read the *Book of Revelation* in total, it is the last book in the Bible, only twenty-two chapters and less than 25 pages depending on the Bible translation; it is a very quick read. Say a little prayer first, Revelation is salted with a lot of spiritual direction that merits multiple readings.

The Letters

Seven letters were written to the followers of Jesus—mature believers to baby Christians. Men and women who believed in the gospel taught by the apostles, and were baptized into the family of God. I'm sure a few were less committed or even unbelievers feigning interest for a free meal or felt safe among God's children. There probably were spouses of believers that were uncommitted as well.

These letters illustrate the strength and weaknesses of each church and how Jesus is warning each and every one of them to stay right with God and remember the love of Jesus they had and were baptized into—if not, they would lose God’s love and grace for the forgiveness of their sins.

In the first letter, Jesus says to the Church in Ephesus, Rev. 2:2, *“I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance.”* Rev 2:4-5, *“Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.”* Rev 2:7, *“Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.”*

In the second letter, Jesus says to the Church in Smyrna Rev 2:10-11, *“Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor’s crown. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who is victorious will not be hurt by the second death.”*

In the third letter, Jesus says to the Church in Pergamum Rev 2:12-17, [...] *“These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword. [...] I have a few things against you: [...] eating food sacrificed to idols and sexual immorality. [...] Whoever has ears, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.”*

In the fourth letter, Jesus says to the Church Thyatira Rev 2:18, [...] *“These are the words of the Son of God.”* [...] Rev 2:23, [...] *“I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds.”* Rev 2:29, *“Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*

In the fifth letter, Jesus says to the Church in Sardis Rev 3:1, [...] *“I know your deeds, you have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead.”* [...] Rev 3:5-6,

“The one who is victorious will, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and His angels. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

In the sixth letter, Jesus says to the Church in Philadelphia Rev 3:8, [...] *“I know you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.”* [...] Rev 3:10, *“Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. Rev 3:13, “Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*

In the seventh letter, Jesus says to the Church in Laodicea Rev 3:14-16, [...] *“These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. Because you are lukewarm I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”* Rev 3:19-21, *“Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on His throne. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*

This is a little snippet of the *Book of Revelation* to wet your religious fervor. Hopefully you are very familiar with this short but powerful book, an insight of what is to come.

LITTLE TALKS WITH GOD (LTG)

Inspired revelation of God to St. Catherine of Siena

What an incredible book. Even though I was brought up Catholic I never heard of St. Catherine, her book, or her teachings. I am beginning to believe the Vatican needs a new PR bishop—or I wasn’t paying much attention during Sunday school.

There must be hundreds of theological books with inspiring stories that lay Catholics are unaware of, in and outside of the Vatican library—covered in dust, yet to be translated.

Saint Catherine lived only thirty-three years, from 1347 to 1380. At the age of seven she committed her virginity to God and devoted her life to Him. At fifteen, despite the wishes of her parents, Catherine refused to marry. When she turned eighteen Catherine joined the Dominican Order in Siena, influenced by its teachings. She also joined the Sisters of the Penance of St. Dominic, a group of married and single women that tended to the poor and needy.

At one point Catherine spent three years communing with God in silence in her room. By the time she turned twenty-one, and for the rest of her life, Catherine experienced spiritual conversations with God while in prayer. One session lasted four hours and because of her motionless, death-like state, caused great concern amongst her family and friends.

Catherine dictated her conversations always in a spiritual state, which were recorded by one of the Sisters of Penance. She compiled a book of her conversations with God and called it "The Dialogue." These conversions were well received and well read due to the fact they were written and printed in the local dialect of Italian, rather than Latin.

Sister Catherine became very involved and influential within the Vatican and her surrounding community. She also was active with the Sisters of Penance helping the sick and poor.

Being a devoted servant of God, Catherine wanted to be a better Christian and asked God questions, during her spiritual prayers, that He responded to, and outlined specific, love-based, detailed guidelines that shook me to the core.

Pope Paul VI, in 1970, designated her a doctor of the Roman Catholic Church. This is the original "physicians heal thyself book," with the guidance of the Almighty. Infinite spiritual food for our soul, nurtured in the truth of Christ,

salted with grace and love, written in a recipe book Jesus calls the *"Book of Life,"* where He will give an account of our deeds—good and bad!

Now, I am sure Catholic scholars, priests, bishops and the Pope all have an inside track on St. Catherine, her life and this wonderful book she wrote. But, for the life of me, and every other person on this planet, Catholic or not, why hasn't this God-inspired, Bible-based directional been bellowed from the Vatican rooftops? Please purchase the contemporary edition of "Little Talks with God," published by Paraclete Press in Orleans, MA. It is under 200 pages...and you can thank me later.

PREPARE FOR THE SECOND COMING

As a lazy Catholic teenager, I never retained much from my days in church or lessons in Sunday school—it was all very boring to me. I do remember the soul being important in one-way or another and the nun's anointment of me. But after reading the Bible and "Little Talks with God," I believe, for good or ill we will make an account of our lives—every moment stored away in the mind, heart and soul as a spiritual DVD, complete with every thought and interaction from birth to death.

Many lost souls believe that to be saved on Judgment Day, all we need to do is die as a believer in Jesus—our Lord and Savior. Yes, thankfully, God's grace was a free gift to us because of Jesus' blood sacrifice on the cross. And, yes, Jesus's death was and is the only pathway to God...but our faith in Him alone will not cover our sins if we keep sinning after baptism into the family of God.

The Bible and "Little Talks with God" both say that we will be judged by how we lived post-baptism as well and only the pure of heart will eat and drink from the tree and water of life—which is Jesus.

Rev 2:23, "I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds."

Please understand that after baptism when we sin we still offend God. I never looked at it that way. I figured that I am saved by my belief in Jesus. And my

sins before and after baptism would be washed away without any consequences and that may be the way many Christians believe.

It says in Rev 3:16, *"I know your works: because you are lukewarm, neither hot or cold, I will spit you out of my mouth."* Jesus is warning us to get serious about walking the walk and repent from sinning.

Romans 6:23, *"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

You should read the New Testament and check out a Bible scripture website like openBible.info, with lists all Biblical verses and cross-references them for an in-depth study.

PURGATORY

Catholics believe in Purgatory and St. Catherine's "Little Talks with God" states God does as well. I never believed in it, but now it makes perfect sense. God the Father is infinite and through His grace will forgive our sins through the blood of Christ so we may have eternal life and become one of Jesus' holy legion of angels.

And, if you have not purged your soul of pride, sensuality, self-love, and replaced your sins with virtue and pure love of God, and total remorse of sins, God may demand payment of the sins committed to be atoned for in Purgatory.

In "Little Talks with God" (LTG) pages 10 & 11, God says, *"In general, though, I do not pardon the punished due to them; I forgive only their guilt, since they are not disposed to receive my love or my servants' love with perfect love. They do not grieve bitterly over their sins, nor do they display perfect remorse for the sins they have committed, so they are not pardoned from the punishment, but only their guilt. Complete forgiveness requires the proper attitude from both the giver and receiver."*

LTG page 36: Para 5, *"A false Christian is punished more than a pagan. The existence of grace they lose, through their own fault."*

Matthew 7:13-14, *“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”*

Rev 21:27 *“Nothing unclean will ever enter Heaven, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.”*

WHAT IS PURGATORY AND IS IT IN THE BIBLE?

According to Dictionary.com, purgatory is “a condition or place in which the souls of those dying...are purified...from sins.” Essentially, purgatory is part of the Catholic doctrine of faith where a “final purification” occurs in order to “achieve the holiness necessary to enter...heaven.

Pope John Paul II, with the support of the Italian Vatican, published a second edition of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) in 1997. It states, praying for the dead was necessary: “All who die in God’s grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of Heaven.” Catechism of the Catholic Church, CCC 1030-31. The last two paragraphs were written by Jessica Galán. <https://www.ibelieve.com/faith/what-is-purgatory-and-is-it-in-the-Bible.html>

There is no reference to Purgatory in the Bible that I have found. This is a personal choice; it sounds logical to me and doesn’t alter my belief in Jesus as my Lord and Savior. No doubt we’ll find out when we get there.

Although, under the old covenant in the Old Testament, Numbers 14:18, says: *“The Lord is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.*

And Numbers 14:20-23, says: *The Lord replied, “I have forgiven them, as you asked. Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the Lord fills the whole earth, not one of those who saw my glory and signs I performed in*

Egypt and in the wilderness but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times— not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their ancestors.”

These two scriptures from the Old Testament speak for themselves, so, I'd rather be safe than sorry...and then in the New Testament under the new covenant, the Apostle James says:

James 5:19-20, “My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.”

That is a very interesting scripture and sounds like the Apostle's comment about saving one's soul from death and covering sins may be two distinct categories on the day of judgment. We'll have to wait for the big day to know for sure, bottom line is to wright our ship before it sinks. Repent while you are alive, if you die in un-repentred sin you're odds of eternal life with Jesus and all the wonders of God and Heaven aren't good.

LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR

LTG pages 13-19, loving your neighbor is very important to our salvation. God demands that we love our neighbor as we love Him. We all remember the Biblical story of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10:30-37. Imagine yourself as that poor soul; beaten, robbed and left for dead. As you lay there, helplessly, you'd hear people pass by, and watch as they avoided eye contact, not giving you a second thought as they scrambled off to do whatever. How thankful would you be when a Good Samaritan stops and saves you from dying on that dirt road?

God wants us to love and have compassion for our fellow man enough to stop and help without question. Now, I know that's probably a hard concept to grasp in today's self-centered, sometimes dangerous world, but at least consider it when it presents itself physically or spiritually—especially if someone is struggling with sin.

ORIGINAL SIN

Adam and Eve were God's creations, made in His image—His guests in a Heavenly paradise called The Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve abused their opportunity to be immortal children of God when they were deceived by Satan and bit into the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge; forbidden to be picked and eaten by their Creator. Boy, would I like a chance to step back in time and scream out to Eve, *"Don't you dare listen to that serpent! Drop the apple and step away from the tree."*

Would you have been able to resist the temptation to take a bite? We all, more than likely, would have failed that test, sad to say. On that day, after Adam and Eve betrayed God's generosity, love and friendship, our Creator banished them from The Garden of Eden forever as guarantors of "Original Sin."

Over the millennia man has continued to disappoint God in so many ways. You'd think that if God took the time to give you a few words of wisdom or advice, you'd listen and consider to whom you are speaking. Our prideful, self-centered and lustful, proclivity only takes a backseat to our stupidity.

So now, Earth is our new Garden of Eden, weeds and all, good and bad, with all the safeguards removed. No more eating from the Tree of Life or drinking from the water of the River of Life. Our fate is destined by free will. Only through the virtuous love and grace of Jesus will we have the chance to be one of His immortal brothers or sisters—living in Heaven, alongside the angels, praising and serving Jesus, God and the Holy Spirit.

When you read Genesis it tells us that Adam lived to the ripe old age of 930 and many generations later Abraham lived to 175. Each generation lost years of life because they couldn't eat the fruit from the Tree of Life or drink the water from the River of Life, which were in The Garden of Eden—along with the Tree of Knowledge, I might add.

A BRIDGE TO GOD

John 3:16, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."*

LTG page 40: Para 2, *"So the loftiness of the divinity, humbled to the earth and joined with your humanity, made the Bridge (Jesus) and re-formed the road (via Christ's crucifixion). Why was this done? So man might come to his true happiness with the angels. Observe, however, that it is not enough that my Son made you this Bridge so that you could have life, unless you are willing to walk on it."*

Are you willing to walk the walk? It's a simple concept that we understand, but have struggled with since Adam and Eve. Satan and his legions have infected us with nihilism, self-love, pride and greed, which are the norms of today. If you are over the age of 50 you have witnessed, in one degree or another, the separation of church and state, a movement to eliminate God from humanity and replace Him with an evolution of man from pond scum.

We are facing a culture embracing atheism, minimal moral guidelines, abortion on demand until the fourth term and socialist dogma that has pigeon-holed us into groups of conservative bigots, racists and evil people that should be removed or secluded from enlightened society.

We are at the crossroads of eternal life and death. If we don't believe in God, who created all that we see, or His son Jesus as our Lord and Savior who died for us, and our sins, we will be tossed in the proverbial lake of fire...a toasted soul lost to eternity.

On a personal level we are all tested daily. Thirty years ago, I ran ads in the Boston Globe sport pages requesting people to stop using Jesus Christ as a swear word. It worked for a quite a while but lately, I've been hearing it again and I find myself struggling to confront a friend or an acquaintance. I actually lost a friend recently over it, sad to say.

In the Bible, Matt. 10:30, Jesus says, *"if you acknowledge me I will acknowledge you to my Father."* So, when I build up the courage, I pull the person aside to tell him, or her, how I feel about using the Lord's name in vain. Most of the time it works but not often enough for me, so I'll say a little pray for them and put it in God's hands. I've also asked God for guidance on how to reply respectfully and this is what we came up with..."Jesus is my Lord and

savior, please refrain from using His name as a swear word." That worked well the first time I said it and the person said he was sorry. Often when I mention it, they say, "what did I say?" The sad thing is Christians, as well as, non-Christians say it without thinking. Over the millennia Satan has worked it into our vocabulary as slang or rote language; part and parcel of his plan to deceive man. How God and Jesus must wince every time their names are used in vain.

VERSES TO CONSIDER

The following verses are edited from the book "Little Talks with God," and after you read them, hopefully you'll appreciate God insights and penalty for sin and want to read the whole unedited book.

THE BASICS

LTG page 55: Para 2, *"There are four principal vices that destroy the soul: pride, self-love, impatience and indiscretion."*

LTG page 56: Para 2, *"No sin takes away the light of the intellect from mankind so much as sensuality."*

LTG page 57: Para 3, *"Misers love no one except for their own profit. Their avarice proceeds from and feeds their pride."*

LTG page 63: Para 2, *"I am God now as then. I can and will help those who want me to help them."*

LTG page 63: Para 3, *"If they do not change their lives while there is time; they will be condemned by the second condemnation that will take place at the extremity of death. Then my justice will cry to them, "Rise, you dead, and come to judgment!"*

LTG page 70: Para 1, *"I have told you that the devil invites men to the water of death, blinding them with the pleasures and conditions of the world."*

LTG page 73: Para 1, *"No one born passes through this life without pain, bodily or mental. My servants bear bodily pain, but their minds are free. That is, they do not feel the weariness of the pain. For their will is in agreement with mine,*

and it is the will that gives trouble to man. They taste the pledge of hell while in this life, my servants taste the pledge of eternal life."

LTG page 74: Para 3, *"My servants bear everything with reverence, deeming themselves favored in having tribulation for my sake, and they desire nothing but what I desire."*

LTG pages 74: Para 4, *"They look to me, who am the supreme Good, and who cannot desire other than good. For that reason I permit these tribulations through love and not through hatred."*

LTG pages 74: Para 5, *"And those who love me recognize this. Examining themselves, they see their sins and understand by the light of faith that good must be rewarded and evil punished. They see that every little sin merits infinite pain, because it is against me, who am infinite Good. I punish them in this life and in this finite time, by their punishment they drive away sin with contrition of heart, and with perfect patience they merit the infinite good with which their labors are rewarded."*

LTG page 75: Para 2, *"Hereafter they know that all labor in this life is small, because time is short. Time is the point of a needle and no more."*

LTG page 75: Para 3, *"It is quite true, that my servants do taste eternal life, they have known my supreme goodness and searched for it where it is to be found, that is, in the Word, my only-begotten Son."*

LTG page 77: Para 1 & 2, *"It is right for you to persevere till you find me, who am the giver of the water of life, through this sweet and loving Word, my only-begotten Son. Therefore of Him I made for you a Bridge. As He told you, No one can come to the Father except by me."*

Three Steps to God

LTG page 77: Para 4, *"Three steps you must climb in order to attain the living water, to which you are invited, and to desire my presence in the midst of you."*

LTG page 78: Para 1, *"In order to have desire to mount the steps, you must be thirsty (for the love of God), because only those who thirst are invited: "Whosoever thirsts, let him come to me and drink."*

LTG page 78: Para 5, *"All the commandments of the Law are completely contained in two; to love me above everything, and your neighbor as yourself. These two are the beginning, the middle, and the end of the Law."*

LTG page 79: Para 1, *"These two commandments cannot be gathered together in my name without three, that is, without the congregation of the powers of the soul: the memory, the intellect and the will. The memory retains the remembrance of my benefits and my goodness. The intellect gazes into the inexpressible love that I have shown you by means of my only-begotten Son. I have placed him as the object of the vision of your intellect, so that, in him, you behold the fire of my love. The will drives you to love and desire me, who am your end."*

LTG page 79: Para 2-3, *"When these virtues and powers of the soul are congregated together in my name, I am in the midst of them by grace. Then one who is full of my love and love of his neighbor suddenly finds himself the companion of many royal virtues.*

"It is then that the appetite of the soul is disposed to thirst—thirst, I say, for virtue, the honor of my name, and the salvation of souls. Its every other thirst is spent and dead, and then proceeds securely without any servile fear, having ascended the first step of affection—stripped of self-love."

LTG page 79: Para 4-5, *"The soul then finds that it has attained to the second step—the light of the intellect. This light is, through Christ crucified, mirrored in heartfelt love of me, for through him I have shown my love to man. "Man finds peace and quiet when the memory is filled with my love."*

LTG page 80: Para 1, *"Having climbed the three steps, the seeker after God finds that the three powers of the soul have been gathered together by his reason in my name. And his soul, having gathered together the two commandments, that is love of me and of one's neighbor, finds itself*

accompanied by me, who am its strength and security. It walks safely because I am in the midst of it."

Thirst for the Way

LTG page 80: Para 2-3, *"Then he follows on with anxious desire, thirsting after the way of truth, in which he finds the fountain of the water of life, through his thirst for my honor and his own salvation and that of his neighbor. For without this thirst he would not be able to arrive at the fountain.*

"He walks on, carrying the vessel of the heart, emptied of every affection and disorientated love of the world. But emptied, it is immediately filled with other things, for nothing can remain empty. And, being without inordinate love for transitory things, his heart is filled with love of celestial things and sweet divine love, with which he arrives at the fountain of the water of life, and he passes through the door of Christ crucified and tastes the water of life, finding himself in me, the Sea of Peace."

LTG page 81: Para 4-5, *"My only-begotten Son came and brought the fire of my charity into your humanity with abundance of mercy, the penalty of sins committed by humanity was taken away. This does not mean that sin is not punished, but that the punishment is reserved—unless the person punishes himself in this life with perfect contrition.*

Perfect Love

1 John 4:18, *"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love."*

LTG page 85: Para 1, *"For those who desire eternal life, a pure love, detached from themselves, is necessary. For to gain eternal life it is not enough to flee from sin for fear of punishment, or to embrace virtue from the motive of the advantage of one's own advantage. Sin should be abandoned because it is displeasing to me, and virtue should be loved for my sake."*

LTG page 85: Para 2, *"Generally speaking, every person is first called by fear, but this is because the soul itself is at first imperfect. From this imperfection it*

must advance to perfection. And it must do so while it lives, by a generous love to me with a pure and virtuous heart that takes no thought of itself. Or, at least, it must do so in the moment of death, recognizing its own imperfection, and having the propose, if it but had time, of serving me, irrespective of itself."

Matthew 16:26, *"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?"*

Hebrews 9:27, *"And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment."*

John 6:40, *"This is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, I will raise him up on the last day."*

Romans 10:9-10, *"Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved."*

Remember, these are just a few excerpts from the Bible and the "Little Talks with God" and if you are interested in reading the unedited text please purchase these amazing books from Paraclete Press or from one of the many retail book websites. There is much guidance and insight into the infinite mind of God that you should take the time to read these books more than once.

BATHING IN THE WARMTH OF GOD

Sometimes when I watch a movie, it will have a tender moment, and my eyes will tear up and a warm glorious flush of empathy will come over me—that's how I want to feel every time I think of God. And, that must be how it will feel in Heaven—24/7/360°, the feeling of pure love permeating every molecule in our DNA for eternity.

The gift of eternal life and Heaven on earth was given to us when Adam and Eve were created and was lost by their disobedience. I wonder how long they lived in the Garden of Eden before Satan talked them into taking that fateful bite?

By the grace of God and the sacrifice of Jesus, the bridge to Heaven and eternal life is again open. Once again it's a two way street that starts in Heaven where the love of God is inoculated into every child delivered into this world and parent's arms.

I see it in my grandnieces' eyes, although, Ava Grace can't talk yet, she emotes the knowledge of God, the maturity that comes with awareness and a confidence of being, or having been, in the presence of a higher power. During the course of a lifetime most people lose that pure love of God. Many even lose the innate knowledge of God's existence.

So, rekindle your love for God and checkout: The Shroud of Turin, the Face of Jesus documentary; the movie Heaven is for Real, and Akiane Karmarik's paintings of Jesus—and read the Bible and Little Talks with God.

Prepare your soul for judgment day and eternity. Talk to God, develop a relationship as you would a trusted friend, relative or love one. Love your neighbor, and don't be stingy, pass on the love of God to one an all.

Until we meet in Heaven,

Richard N. Pierro

P.S. Please pass this booklet along to someone who would appreciate and benefit by it.

P.S.S. If you would like to correspond by letter my address is: 20 Tidd Street, Swampscott, MA 01907, or email: designer's.eye@verizon.net

Front and back over paintings by Richard N. Pierro

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