

GOD FOR THE REST OF US

**EXPERIENCE UNBELIEVABLE LOVE,
UNLIMITED HOPE, AND UNCOMMON GRACE**



VINCE ANTONUCCI

APPENDIX

**MY ABC BOOK OF PEOPLE
GOD LOVES**

THIS IS MY ABC BOOK of people God loves. We'll start with . . .

A: God loves Adorable people. God loves those who are Affable and Affectionate. God loves Ambulance drivers, Artists, Accordion players, Astronauts, Airplane pilots, and Acrobats. God loves African Americans, the Amish, Anglicans, and Animal husbandry workers. God loves Animal-rights Activists, Astrologers, Adulterers, Addicts, Atheists, and Abortionists.

B: God loves Babies. God loves Bible readers. God loves Baptists and Barbershop quartets . . . Boys and Boy Band members . . . Blondes, Brunettes, and old ladies with Blue hair. He loves the Bedraggled, the Beat up, and the Burnt out . . . the Bullied and the Bullies . . . people who are Brave, Busy, Bossy, Bitter, Boastful, Bored, and Boorish. God loves all the Blue men in the Blue Man Group.

C: God loves Crystal meth junkies,

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D: Drag queens,

E: and Elvis impersonators.

F: God loves the Faithful and the Faithless, the Fearful and the Fearless. He loves people from Fiji, Finland, and France; people who Fight for Freedom, their Friends, and their right to party; and God loves people who sound like Fat Albert . . . “Hey, hey, hey!”

G: God loves Greedy Guatemalan Gynecologists.

H: God loves Homosexuals, and people who are Homophobic, and all the Homo sapiens in between.

I: God loves IRS auditors.

J: God loves late-night talk-show hosts named Jimmy (Fallon or Kimmel), people who eat Jim sausages (Dean or Slim), people who love Jams (hip-hop or strawberry), singers named Justin (Timberlake or Bieber), and people who aren't ready for this Jelly (Beyoncé's or grape).

K: God loves Khloe Kardashian, Kourtney Kardashian, Kim Kardashian, and Kanye Kardashian. (Please don't tell him I said that.)

L: God loves people in Laos and people who are feeling Lousy. God loves people who are Ludicrous, and God loves Ludacris. God loves Ladies, and God loves Lady Gaga.

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- M: God loves Ministers, Missionaries, and Meter maids; people who are Malicious, Meticulous, Mischievous, and Mysterious; people who collect Marbles and people who have lost their Marbles . . . and Miley Cyrus.
- N: God loves Ninjas, Nudists, and Nose pickers,
- O: Obstetricians, Orthodontists, Optometrists, Ophthalmologists, and Overweight Obituary writers,
- P: Pimps, Pornographers, and Pedophiles,
- Q: the Queen of England, the members of the band Queen, and Queen Latifah.
- R: God loves the people of Rwanda and the Rebels who committed genocide against them.
- S: God loves Strippers in Stilettos working on the Strip in Sin City;
- T: it's not unusual that God loves Tom Jones.
- U: God loves people from the United States, the United Kingdom, and the United Arab Emirates; Ukrainians and Uruguayans, the Unemployed and Unemployment inspectors; blind baseball Umpires and shady Used-car salesmen. God loves Ushers, and God loves Usher.
- V: God loves Vegetarians in Virginia Beach, Vegans in Vietnam, and people who eat lots of Vanilla bean ice cream in Las Vegas.

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W: The great I AM loves will.i.am. He loves Waitresses who work at Waffle Houses, Weirdos who have gotten lots of Wet Willies, and Weight Watchers who hide Whatchamacallits in their Windbreakers.

X: God loves X-ray technicians.

Y: God loves You.

Z: God loves Zoologists who are preparing for the Zombie apocalypse.

God . . . is for the rest of us. And we have the responsibility, the honor, of letting the world know that God is for them, and he's inviting them into a life-changing relationship with him. So let 'em know.

NOTES

CHAPTER 1: GOD FOR THE REST OF US

1. Walter W. Wessel and Ralph Earle, Mark 2:15 footnote, in *The NIV Study Bible, 10th Anniversary Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995).
2. Luke 15:1.
3. Luke 15:2.
4. Luke 15:2.
5. Luke 15:10. See also Luke 15:7.
6. Jeremiah 4:19.
7. I also told the story about Dawson at the water park in *I Became a Christian and All I Got Was This Lousy T-Shirt* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008). Adapted and used by permission of Baker Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group.
8. Jeremiah 4:22.
9. Jeremiah 4:1.
10. Luke 15:18-19.
11. Luke 15:20.
12. Luke 15:29-30.
13. Luke 15:31-32.
14. For a more thorough study of the three characters in Jesus' parable and of how the older brother rejected the father's love through his legalism, read Tim Keller's book *Prodigal God*.
15. Philip Yancey, *What's So Amazing about Grace?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 11.
16. See Matthew 11:19 and Luke 7:34.
17. See Luke 19:5.

CHAPTER 2: GOD FOR THE PROSTITUTES

1. Matthew 21:31-32.
2. Luke 7:36.

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3. Luke 7:37.
4. Luke 7:38.
5. Luke 7:39.
6. Luke 7:40-49.
7. Luke 7:50.
8. Matthew 11:28-29.
9. Luke 7:48.
10. Luke 7:50.
11. See Hosea 3:1.

CHAPTER 3: GOD FOR THE SHAME FILLED

1. Mark 5:25.
2. See Leviticus 15:25-33.
3. Brené Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me* (New York: Gotham Books, 2007), 5.
4. *Ibid.*, 20.
5. Jean Baker Miller and Irene Pierce Stiver, *The Healing Connection: How Women Form Relationships in Therapy and in Life* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997), 72.
6. Mark 5:26.
7. Mark 5:28.
8. Mark 5:29.
9. Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me*, 242.
10. Mark 5:32.
11. Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me*, 155.
12. *Ibid.*, 32.
13. Mark 5:33.
14. Mark 5:34.
15. Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me*, xxv.
16. *Ibid.*, 32.
17. *Ibid.*, 127.
18. See Psalm 46:1; 91:2.

CHAPTER 4: GOD FOR THE ADDICTS

1. Leigh Montville, *Ted Williams: The Biography of an American Hero* (New York: Broadway Books, 2004), 348.
2. See 2 Timothy 2:13.
3. Romans 8:31-34.
4. See Romans 5:6-11.

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CHAPTER 5: GOD FOR THE DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES

1. I also told this story in *I Became a Christian and All I Got Was This Lousy T-Shirt* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008). Adapted and used by permission of Baker Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group.
2. See Mark 3:20-21.
3. Isaiah 53:3, NASB.
4. See Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:14-16.

CHAPTER 6: GOD FOR THE DOUBTERS

1. See Matthew 3:17.
2. Luke 7:28.
3. Mark 9:22 (italics mine).
4. Mark 9:23.
5. Mark 9:24.
6. John 20:25.
7. John 20:27-28.
8. John Ortberg, *Know Doubt: The Importance of Embracing Uncertainty in Your Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 137.
9. Luke 3:1-3.

CHAPTER 7: GOD FOR THE TATTOOED

1. I also told Tommy's story in *Renegade* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013). Adapted and used by permission of Baker Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group.

CHAPTER 8: GOD FOR THE ATHEISTS

1. See Psalm 14:1.
2. See Romans 1:18-20.
3. Matthew 7:15.
4. Matthew 7:16-20.
5. Matthew 7:21-23.
6. John 13:34-35.
7. Philippians 2:15-16.
8. Titus 2:10.
9. James 2:14-17.
10. See, for example, James Martin, "Jesus Was Funnier Than We Think," *Relevant*, March 12, 2012, <http://www.relevantmagazine.com/god/deeper-walk/features/28558-jesus-was-funnier-than-we-think>.

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11. Dionysius quoted in Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 82.
12. Quoted in Joan D. Hedrick, *Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 237.
13. For a detailed discussion of the many positive ways that Christians and the church have impacted society, including some of the ones listed here, see chapter five, “An Undistinguished Visiting Scholar,” in John Ortberg, *Who Is This Man?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 59–73.
14. Nicholas D. Kristof, “Evangelicals Without Blowhards,” *New York Times*, July 30, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/31/opinion/sunday/kristof-evangelicals-without-blowhards.html>.
15. Philip Yancey, *Vanishing Grace: Whatever Happened to the Good News?* (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 2014), 164.
16. 2 Peter 3:9.
17. 2 Chronicles 15:2.
18. Jeremiah 29:13-14.
19. Roy Abraham Varghese, preface to *There Is a God: How the World’s Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind* by Antony Flew (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2008), ix.
20. Tim Keller, *The Reason for God* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2009) 130.
21. Quoted in Francis Collins, *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 75.
22. Quoted in Antony Flew, *There Is a God*, 131.
23. *Ibid.*, 78.
24. *Ibid.*, 136.
25. Steve Paulson, “The Believer,” *Salon*, August 7, 2006, <http://www.salon.com/books/int/2006/08/07/collins/index2.html>.

CHAPTER 9: GOD FOR THE WORRIERS

1. I also told this story in *I Became a Christian and All I Got Was This Lousy T-Shirt* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008). Adapted and used by permission of Baker Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group.
2. American Heart Association, “Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics—At-a-Glance,” http://www.heart.org/idc/groups/ahamah-public/@wcm/@sop/@smd/documents/downloadable/ucm_470704.pdf.
3. Matthew 13:7.

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4. Matthew 13:22.
5. Craig Groeschel develops the idea of Christian atheists in his book *The Christian Atheist: Believing in God but Living as If He Doesn't Exist* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010).
6. Matthew 6:24-34 (italics mine).
7. Matthew 6:33, NIV.
8. Matthew 6:34.

CHAPTER 10: GOD FOR SIN CITY

1. Sally Denton and Roger Morris, *The Money and the Power: The Makings of Las Vegas and Its Hold on America 1947–2000* (New York: Vintage Books, 2002), 101.
2. Jonah 1:1-2.
3. Jonah 1:3.
4. See Jonah 1:5-12.
5. Jonah 1:17.
6. See Jonah 2:1-9.
7. Jonah 3:1-2 (italics mine).
8. Jonah 3:4.
9. Jonah 3:5.
10. Jonah 3:10.
11. See Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:11-20; Colossians 4:3-6; 1 Peter 3:15.
12. See Matthew 22:37.
13. I also told Shawn's story in *Renegade* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013). Adapted and used by permission of Baker Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group.
14. The best treatment of this topic I've read is in John Burke's *No Perfect People Allowed* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007).
15. Philip Yancey, *Vanishing Grace: Whatever Happened to the Good News?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 30.
16. John 7:37-38.
17. John 6:35.
18. John 4:13-14.

CHAPTER 11: GOD FOR THE PIMP

1. I also told Travis's story in *Renegade* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2013). Adapted and used by permission of Baker Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group.

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2. John 8:4-5.
3. John 8:7.
4. See John 8:9.
5. John 8:10.
6. John 8:11.
7. John 8:11.
8. Romans 5:6-8.

CHAPTER 12: GOD FOR THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN TURNED OFF BY CHURCH

1. Matthew 23:1-5.
2. Matthew 23:13-15.
3. Matthew 23:23-28.
4. John 3:1-3.
5. John 3:16-17.
6. See John 19:38-42.

CHAPTER 13: GOD FOR THE FORGOTTEN

1. Genesis 16:2.
2. Ibid.
3. Genesis 16:8.
4. Genesis 16:11.
5. Genesis 16:13.
6. See Ezekiel 1 and Revelation 4.
7. Proverbs 15:3.
8. 2 Chronicles 16:9.

CHAPTER 14: GOD FOR THE BROKEN

1. 2 Corinthians 8:9.
2. Matthew 27:46.
3. Mark 3:21.
4. Luke 7:11-17.
5. Ephesians 1:18, NLT.
6. Ephesians 1:19-20, NLT.
7. Ephesians 2:4-5.
8. See Philippians 1:6.
9. Michael J. Brown, "First God Loves Us," in *God's Man: A Daily Devotional Guide to Christlike Character*, 2nd ed., ed. Don M. Aycocock (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2000), 15.

NOTES

CHAPTER 15: GOD FOR EVERYONE GOD PUTS IN YOUR LIFE

1. See: <http://www.priestsforlife.org/brochures/whowasthejaneroe.htm>, and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flip_Benham, and <http://www.operationsaveamerica.org/misc/misc/aboutUs.html>, and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tOcRxx3PT6Q>.
2. Luke 10:25.
3. Luke 10:27.
4. Luke 10:28.
5. Luke 10:29.
6. I first learned about this story structure and the way it was typically used by Jews in Jesus' time from a sermon by John Ortberg.
7. Luke 10:30-31.
8. Luke 10:32.
9. Luke 10:33.
10. Information from that sermon by John Ortberg.
11. Luke 10:36.
12. Luke 10:37.
13. Luke 10:37.