



**NOW!**

## ***Friendship with God Guidebook***

**by Donna Corso**

### **Excerpt: Chapter 1 Summary**

For most of us our beliefs begin in early childhood and reflect the belief system of our parents, grandparents, teachers, and others of influence in our formative years. Our cultural background provides a context for beliefs that are often taken for granted. This guidebook invites you to take a deeper look at those beliefs. Neale begins this chapter with his memory of the first time he felt the 'fear of God' when at six years old, he was told by his aunt that his mother would go straight to hell for trafficking with the devil because she was reading cards for her friends. His child mind could not understand a God who would punish his mother, the most benevolent person in his life, for a simple act of reading cards. This was the moment the fear of God became imbedded in his being as he acquired an idea about how easily God could become angry. This affected him on a physical level as he remembered literally quaking with fear.

This fear stayed with him for many years because it was continually reinforced by his family, society and his cultural environment. An inquisitive child, Neale asked many questions of the nuns in his Catechism class and received responses that seemed to confirm that God could become angry if 'His' demands were not met. When he was thirteen, Neale was invited to be an usher in a friend's wedding which was being performed in a Lutheran church. Although the nun told him it was forbidden, Neale accepted the invitation and participated in the wedding anyway. Yet the fear was again felt on a physical level as he sweated through the ceremony, literally waiting to be struck down by an angry God!

Where do these ideas about God come from? Perhaps the bigger question is, why do we accept these ideas with such blind faith? Chapter One helps us to identify beliefs we have been taught that would prevent us from even *wanting* to form a friendship with a Being Who seems to be capable of such revenge.

*"Fear of God is created by many religions and is, in fact, encouraged by many religions."*

*~ Friendship with God, Chapter One*

*“It has been two thousand years since the birth of Christ, twenty-five hundred since the time of the Buddha, and more since we first heard the words of Confucius, or the wisdom of the Tao, and we still haven’t gotten the Main Questions figured out. Will there ever be a way to turn the answers we have already received into something workable, something that can function in our day-to-day lives?”*

*~ Friendship with God, Chapter One*

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**Excerpt:**

### **Chapter 1**

#### **Key Definitions**

- Mystic: a person initiated into esoteric mysteries; a believer in mysticism; one who professes to undergo mystical experiences and to comprehend intuitively truths that are beyond human understanding
- Divination: the act or practice of trying to foretell the future or explore the unknown by occult means; a prophecy; intuitive perceptions

#### **Principles and Objectives**

**The New Spirituality Principles that apply to this chapter are:**

- The illusion that God has agenda (need exists)
- The illusion that there is something you have to do (requirement exists)
- The illusion that if you don’t do it, you will be punished (condemnation exists)

**Learning Objectives:**

- To explore any beliefs about God that no longer serve us
- To discover their origin in preparation for releasing them.

We are sweeping out the chambers of the heart to clear the way for friendship.

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## **Excerpt: Chapter 1**

### **Discovery Exercise**

The purpose of this exercise is to discover what old ideas about God may be lurking in your consciousness, ideas that no longer support you.

Let's take a walk down memory lane, shall we?



There are a couple of ways this could be done. If you have photo albums with pictures of your childhood, that would be a great place to start. Or perhaps there might be a portfolio of your pre-school and elementary school drawings in the attic.

If no photos, drawings or other mementos are available, a visit with someone with whom you were close during your early years could also work. Open up a dialogue that may shed some light on the source of your earliest understandings.

Enjoy reminiscing about your childhood. Make it a fun adventure! Be on the lookout for clues regarding beliefs about God that were born and nurtured during your tender, formative years.

### **Journal Questions:**

Now then, how was that? Did you remember to have fun with your exploration?

It's journal time, so find a quiet place where you will be undisturbed. Clear your mind ... breathe ... relax. The following questions will get you started in your discovery.

Write in as much detail as you can.

1. Describe who/what you thought God was when you were very young. Did it have a form? a gender? Was it visible? invisible? Something else?
2. What beliefs were you taught about God, either consciously or unconsciously? Were these beliefs stated outright or by inference?
3. Did you accept these teachings? Did they feel 'right' to you then?