

Writer's Personal Introduction:

Why have I written this *What God Wants Guidebook?* by Kris Stewart

I have always been uncomfortable with the dogmatic side of traditional religions. It did not make sense to me that God is merciful, loving and compassionate *and*, at the very same time, God is to be feared; God is angry, vengeful, or full of wrath for those who do not heed what God wants. I didn't grow up in a "religious household," but the message reached me loud and clear—just as it did most everyone else in the world. Still, since childhood, I have been drawn to intellectually pursue world religions and spiritual traditions. From formal academic studies to perusing the Internet in my pajamas, my personal spiritual journey has been one of immersed meanderings: One book or website would lead to another, and then perhaps to a seminar or retreat, and then to new books and teachings, and so on, all in an earnest search to make sense of this most fundamental contradiction: God is love, *and* God is to be feared.

In many ways, I suppose that confusing dualism motivated the choices I've made in my life much more often than I was consciously aware. For example, my fear of death led me to investigate near-death experiences, which later led me to volunteer work with hospice patients and families. Feelings of disconnectedness with other people fueled my interest in nature, animals and our environment, which led me to investigate Native American traditions and other ancient wisdoms that honor our kinship with others. These spiritual investigations happened alongside my "3D" life of finishing college, going to law school, practicing law, being miserable as a civil litigation attorney (because, in my estimation, the whole system comes down to fear), leaving that career to work with dolphins, and then going back to school to earn my Ph.D. in cultural geography. Each of those professional choices were, of course, very much connected to my fundamental questions about knowing who I am and choosing the "right" path.

I sincerely believe that NOW is an important time in human history—a pivotal time for humanity, for our friends and neighbors in the natural world, and for Earth itself. Thankfully, more and more of us are focused on developing this *spiritual-who is the highest version of me?-what is my purpose?* part of ourselves. That urge—and urge is the right word, I think, because it feels really URGENT to me—to delve even more deeply into my own work here on this planet continues to explode a little more each day inside of me. It is time for me (time for all of us, perhaps) to take what is inside and share it with the rest of the world. That is why I'm thrilled to be writing this Guidebook.

When I read the first of Neale Donald Walsch's books, *Conversations with God*, my experience was not so much intellectual—although the book made sense to me logically—but my heart got the message as well. It was like truth. Like home. There are any number of teachers, guides, retreats, seminars and spiritual lessons that have fed, and continue to feed, my soul as I pursue this journey—but no work touched me as deeply as Neale's *Conversations with God* series. When *WHAT GOD WANTS* hit the shelves, of course I was compelled to pick it up right away. In many ways, it is not an easy book to read. But it is as delicious as it is difficult and dangerous.

Dangerous?

Yes, I have to agree with Neale that it is a dangerous book. And that is one of the reasons I find it among the most compelling of all of his books—it has the potential change *everything*. It did for me.

I wrote this guidebook to show others that—as far as our understanding (or confusion) of God goes—most of us have had it all wrong! With simple lessons and exercises of discovery, we delve into experiencing what God *really* wants. Old paradigms die hard—our path of learning here provides a clear and exciting path to a new understanding about humanity's biggest question. Join me now, as we work, play, explore, and discover *What God Wants*.

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"New Ways of Seeing God"



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