

Open Letter from God

Paul Harvey, American radio's premier commentator, read this on his Noon News, Saturday, May 16, 1998. The response was overwhelming. Harvey's Chicago office was inundated by phone calls, mail and faxes. Here's the text:

My dear children, and believe Me, that is all of you, I consider Myself a pretty patient guy. I mean, look at the Grand Canyon. It took millions of years to get it right. And about evolution? Boy, nothing is slower than designing that whole Darwinian thing to take place cell by cell and gene by gene. And I have been patient through your fashions, your civilizations, wars and schemes, and the countless ways that you take Me for granted until you get yourselves into big trouble again and again. I want to let you know about some of the things that started ticking Me off.

First of all, your religious rivalries are driving Me up a wall. Enough already! Let's get one thing straight. These are your religions, not Mine. I'm the whole enchilada. I'm beyond 'em all. Every one of your religions claims that there's only one of Me, which, by the way, is absolutely true, but in the very next breath each religion claims that it's My favorite one. And each claims its bible was written personally by Me, and that all of the other bibles are man-made. Oh, Me. How do I ever begin to put a stop to such complicated nonsense? All right, listen up now. I am your Father and Mother, and I don't play favorites among My children.

Also, I hate to break it to you, but I don't write. My longhand is awful, and I've always been more of a doer anyway. So ALL of your books, including those bibles, were written by men and women. They were inspired men and women, they were remarkable people, but they also made mistakes here and there. And I made sure of that, so that you would never trust a written word rather than your own living heart. You see, one human being to Me -- even a bum on the street -- is worth more than all of the holy books in the world. That's just the kind of a guy I am. My spirit is not an historical thing. It's alive right now, right now, as fresh as your next breath. Holy books and religious rites are sacred and powerful, but they are not more so than the least of you. They were only meant to steer you in the right direction, not to keep you arguing with each other, and certainly not to keep you from trusting your own personal connection with Me. Which brings Me to My next point about your nonsense. You act like I need you and your religions to stick up for Me or win souls for My sake.

Please, don't do Me any favors. I can stand quite well on My own, thank you. I don't need you to defend Me, I don't need constant credit. I just want you to be good to each other. And another thing. I don't get all worked up over money or politics, so stop dragging My name into your dramas. For example, I swear to Me that I never threatened Oral Roberts. I never rode in any of Rajneesh's Rolls Royces and I never told Pat Robertson to run for president, and I have never had a conversation with Jim Bakker, Jerry Falwell or Jimmy Swaggart. Of course, come Judgment Day, I certainly intend to. Now the thing is, I want you to stop thinking of religion as some sort of a loyalty pledge to Me. The true purpose of religion is so that YOU can become more aware of ME, not the other way around. Believe Me, I know you already. I know what's in each of your hearts, and I love you anyway with no strings attached. So, lighten up and enjoy Me. That's what religion's best for. What you seem to forget is how mysterious I am. You look at the

petty differences in your scriptures and you say, "Well, if this is the truth, then that can't be." But instead of trying to figure out My paradoxes and unfathomable nature -- which, by the way, you never will -- why not open your hearts to the simple, common threads of every religion? You know what I'm talking about.

Play nice with each other. Love and respect everyone. Be kind. Even when life is scary or confusing, take courage and be of good cheer, for I'm always with you. And learn how to be quiet, so that you can hear My still, small voice. I don't like to shout. Leave the world a better place by living your life with dignity and gracefulness, for you are My own child. Hold back nothing from life, for the parts of you that can die surely will, and the parts that can't, won't. So don't worry, be happy. (I stole that last line from Bobby McFerrin, but Who gave it to him in the first place?) Simple stuff now. Why do you keep making it so complicated? It's like you're always looking for an excuse to be upset. And I am very tired of being your main excuse. Do you think whether you call Me God, or Yahweh, or Jehovah, Allah, Wakatonka, Brahma, Father, Mother, even the Void of Nirvana? Do you think I care which of My Special Children you feel closest to -- Jesus, Mary, Buddha, Krishna, Mohammed or any of the others? You can call Me and My Special Ones any names you choose, if only you will go about My business of loving one another as I love you. How can you keep neglecting something so simple? No, I am not telling you to abandon your religions. Enjoy your religions, honor them, learn from them, just as you should enjoy, honor, and learn from your parents. But do you walk around telling everyone that your parents are better than theirs? Your religion, like your parents, may always have the most special place in your heart. I don't mind that at all.

And I don't want you to combine all of the great traditions into One Big Mess. Each religion is unique for a reason. Each has a unique style so that people can find the best path for themselves. But My Special Children -- the ones that your religions revolve around -- all live in the same place in My heart, and they get along perfectly, I assure you. The clergy must stop creating a myth of sibling rivalry where there is none. My blessed children of Earth, the world has grown too small for your pervasive religious bigotry's and confusion. The whole planet is now connected by air travel, satellite dishes, telephones, fax machines, rock concerts, diseases and mutual needs and concerns. Get with the program! If you really want to help me celebrate the birthday of My Son Jesus, then commit yourselves to figuring out how to feed your hungry and clothe your naked, and protect your abused and shelter your poor. And just as important, make your own everyday life a shining example of kindness and good humor. I've given you all the resources you need, if only you abandon your fear of each other and begin living, and loving and laughing together.

Now, I am not really ticked off. Not really. I just wanted to grab your attention because I hate to see you suffer. But I gave you free will, so what can I do now other than try to influence you through reason, persuasion, and a little old-fashioned guilt and manipulation? After all, you know I am the original Jewish Mother. I just want you to be happy, and I'll sit in the dark. I really am with you always. Always Trust in Me.

Your One and Only,
God