

First Things First
By
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Introduction

You are not the dominant reality of the universe! Neither am I or the other 6,500,000,000 people who inhabit earth, individually or collectively. God is!

Not very many people believe that but I do. It is in fact the basic premise that underlies every word, sentence, paragraph, and chapter that you are about to read. It also permeates every idea and thought that those words, sentences, paragraphs, and chapters convey. God is without rival or kind in the universe.

Certainly, most books these days don't begin that way. In an age of consumer Christianity and hot tub religion, we're advised to grip people right off the bat by appealing to their self-interest. Are you at home in the universe? Do you thrive in the activities, circumstances, and events of your everyday life? Do love, peace, and joy characterize what you are and do? Read, understand, believe, and act upon the contents of this book and you'll eventually achieve those things. Conventional wisdom dictates that we begin books that way.

I don't though because it wouldn't be honest if I did. My overriding objective is not to assist you in achieving those things and I'd be lying to hint that it was. Since God and not you is the dominant reality of the universe, my prevailing concern is His interests not yours. It isn't that He will fulfill you but that you will glorify Him - by loving Him. That is the express purpose for which I've written this book and my deepest desire and prayer for God's life and yours. It's that you will love Him, as Jesus said, with your whole being.

Ironically enough, loving Him that way not only glorifies Him but also ends up achieving for us what everyone who has lived and is living ultimately wants. It makes us at home in the universe and thus thriving in it. The truth is that loving God with our whole being is the only way of achieving that. That's why sensible people, as we'll see later, make loving Him with their whole being the "first aim" of their lives.

Happily, that "first aim" is one that all of us, who decide to at least, can attain. We can because the means to attaining it are so well known. That means is "putting first things first." "Putting first things first" is the organizing principle behind any great and noble achievement including and even especially loving God. If we do that, we will love Him with our whole being. If we don't, we won't. It really is as simple as that.

"Putting first things first" is a well-worn old axiom that most of us have heard or used more times than we can remember. But like many such axioms, it is so familiar to us that it has become unfamiliar. We

hear and use it so casually that we don't fully grasp what it means anymore. But since it is the means to the end of loving God, we need to.