

The Kindness of God: How God Cares for Us

Paul Robb

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"There He stood! I scrambled to my feet—it was impossible to remain sitting—and turned to face Him. I thought to myself, 'I wonder if I should kneel', and immediately got his reply... 'That's not the kind of relationship God wants with His children.'" In *The Kindness of God*, Paul Robb relates his encounter with God during which he calmly talks with Him and has the presence of mind to ask how God sees time.

Paul Robb is not a theologian or minister, he is an engineer with an experience. "I fully appreciate the religious beliefs of all of our readers," he writes, "and far be it from me to tell anyone what they should or should not believe." One of his main points is that the "experiences of these people [those who have experienced God in this book]...flatly contradict the view of God...as a tyrant-king, jealous, vengeful, arbitrary, and even cruel, imposing punishments for finite transgressions...much the same as a sick human might." Robb characterizes the first-hand knowledge of God as kindness, compassion, gentleness and caring. "God...is incapable of giving off anger or hatred or vengeance or jealousy or punishment." He states the purpose of his book is to show through collective experience that "God loves all of us without exception."

Robb goes on to supply us with 150 accounts of people who have experienced God. Readers aren't told how the people knew it was God—like the author, 'they just know.' Some of the stories were solicited by a survey that asked, "Have you ever been aware of or influenced by a presence or power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday self?" Others were gathered from books, or from the Religious Experience Research Center.

And not all the subjects have actually seen God: sometimes it's just a light, a warmth, a feeling or presence, sometimes a voice, or even a physical touch as in the case of the nurse who helped a small boy say 'goodbye' to his dying mother. "I felt a whack on the back of my head. I turned thinking that the child had hit me, but he was just standing there...I then heard a voice, which I recognized as God's saying... 'Help him.'"

Most of these accounts are touching or inspiring, and while a few sound like hallucination or dream, many could well be God reaching into the lives of ordinary individuals. However, *The Kindness of God* should come with a 'CAUTION' label. It poses questions without answering them, and will need to be read with a discerning mind. While anyone might feel inspired and drawn to God by this book, the theology needs to be carefully sorted out by rational evaluation. Ideas range from Christian to Buddhist, from prayer and praise to trances and out of body travel. Theology aside, many people will certainly enjoy comparing their own religious experience with these stories of other's encounters with God.

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