

PUT GOD FIRST

Bill Wright – 19 Jan 2019

-3 words that can change your life –

PUT GOD FIRST

Why? How? When? ... Ask us.

"PUT"

The word PUT comes from the Latin word "putare", which means to THINK. The same root word is in compute, depute, dispute and repute. It is a very active word.



Think of the design of your brain. It's far more powerful than a computer because it has been designed by God for thinking as well as for information storage and processing.

Your brain has huge potential, particularly when it's connected to the mind of God. You can then download wisdom, understanding and knowledge to a far greater extent and on a much higher level than worldly learning in schools, from text books, politicians, journalists, authors, philosophers, psychologists or from the internet.

There is widespread ignorance about God, creation, the mind, our spiritual nature and the God-given foundations for morality, ethics, values, freedom, good government and sustainable culture.

Put God first. The opportunity is immense. It can transform your life and change the world.

You too, using the freedom of choice He has given you, can choose to stay connected and learn, grow and live happily together in accordance with His design.

There is no other sustainable strategy than to put God first.

Don't accept fake alternatives which put self, the State or some other activity or famous person first - that's a slippery slope into sin and ruin as history has already demonstrated.

We have to see that our minds stay connected to His.

His design manual is the Bible.

We would be foolish not to read it and find out how to re-connect and stay online with Him.

Social media is child's-play compared to this.

This is for real men and women and our children too.

Evidence for God?

Plenty..... including:

- His book (the Bible).
- His design in creation of the physical and moral order.
- Your own conscience.
- The changed lives of hundreds of millions of people, including really great leaders across the board.
- The God-based Constitutions of free, democratic nations.
- And most of all - the reality of the birth, ministry, death and resurrection of His own son, Jesus Christ.

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE ABOUT “WHO IS GOD?”

- a. **As to identity** - He is the living God, eternal, self-existent and self-sufficient. He is the only true God, invisible, transcendent (above all) and immanent (in all).

- b. **As to role** - He is the Creator and Sustainer of all that is other than himself. He created everything and keeps it in being and is the ultimate Controller of all. He has purpose. He has will and is free to exercise his will and can “intervene” as he wills. God has authority and He is the Lawgiver. He is to be worshiped, loved and obeyed. He may be known and he should be known. He deals with individuals and he has an attitude: he may be pleased or displeased.

- c. **As to character** - He is holy and he requires holiness. He is trustworthy and righteous. He is consistent and does not change his mind or lie.

- d. **As to capability** - He is conscious and has, or is, Mind and has Knowledge and Wisdom. He discriminates and chooses. He has power and exercises it. He not only speaks; he acts.

“FIRST”

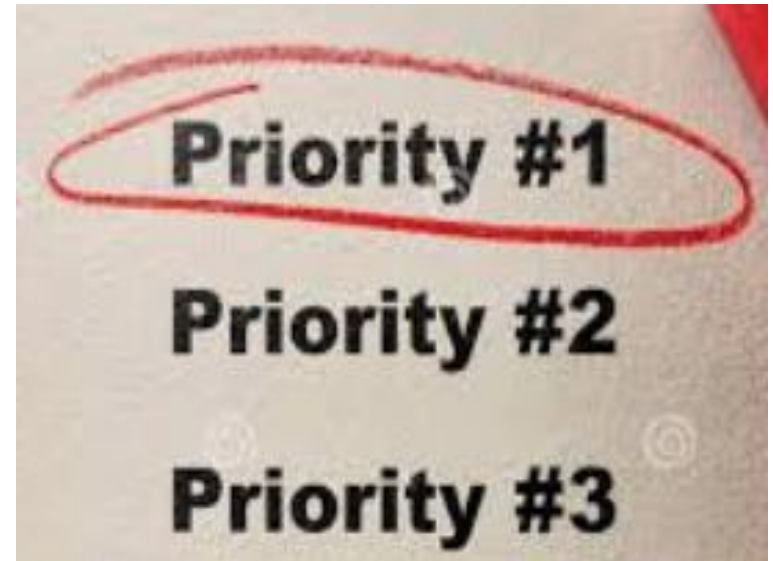
Means God as the top priority for you in all your:

- thinking
- conversation
- creativity
- planning and problem-solving
- decision-making and implementation

at home, work, recreation and relationships with others - at 3 levels -

- family
- community and
- nation.

No area of life should be excluded, even the way you vote.



Put God first and He'll make everything work so much better - even governments.

In fact, we should only vote for people of character and integrity who put God first.

Only then we will get the right policies, direction and decisions to optimise our physical, economic and human resources.

Like a compass points north, so must our minds always focus on Him.

Put God first and get into a whole new way of living. It's your choice.

Put God first and be on the winning side or fake it - or reject Him - and lose big-time.

The love of money, recognition, fame and power spells danger.

Man can't close the strategic gap between where we are now and where we should be if we leave God out of the picture.

History has proven that time and time again. So let's make a fresh start. Let's go!

THE COST-BENEFIT CASE FOR "PUT GOD FIRST"

Now we're going to talk strategy about closing the gap.

In so doing you will see a God-led rising-up of a new, fresh people-power community movement - based on God's character, sovereignty, power and authority ... just watch.

Let's look in a non-financial way at the costs, benefits, profitability and return on investment for the time and effort involved in a "Put God First" strategy.

Jesus said "*what shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul*".

Obviously, the first plus is to avoid that foolish outcome.

A huge plus is to learn, see and do some real team-work in real unity between God and man and marvel at the pace, extent and character of the transformation in our quality of life.

THE BENEFITS OF THE "PUT GOD FIRST" STRATEGY

When we think about quality of life and being happy we often think of 3 dimensions - being, belonging and becoming. Let's explore what the Bible teaches about God's design for these 3 quality of life dimensions

THE PRO-GOD (put God first) way is, according to the Bible, the Kingdom way.

It was, is & always will be the only effective & sustainable strategy for:

- 1. Personal character development & finding meaning, purpose, security, peace & satisfaction**
- 2. Building individual responsibility, freedom & adding value to the public interest & the common good**
- 3. All effective & sustainable strategies, structures, cultures, values & change management programmes for groups, churches, communities & governments (local, State, national, international)**
- 4. All leaders (church, business, community, political, legal, environmental, military etc)**
- 5. The Reformation (and for any last-days revival or transformation of Church, State and society)**
- 6. The development of Western Civilisation (and to prevent its collapse via apathy to anti-God forces)**

BEING

<u>healthy mind</u>	<u>freedom of thought & speech</u>	<u>meaning, purpose and identity</u>	<u>inter-personal relations</u>
<u>avoid division and disunity</u>	<u>experience the love journey</u>	<u>the essence of humanity</u>	<u>the danger of technology</u>
<u>the joy of being who we've been designed to be</u>			<u>what is the source of all of these truths about "being"?</u>

healthy mind

-the joy of discovery of how to have a healthy mind, based on the right diet of fresh mental food and the right mental exercise (called thinking).

-Switch some of the time you spend chasing a healthy body into ramping up a healthy mind.

freedom of thought & speech

- being free to think for yourself is very satisfying.
- Being force-fed, propagandised and deceived by others is not - far from it.
- Avoid mind-control and manipulation from people with hidden agendas.
- Avoid the social pull of "group-think", peer-group pressure and political correctness.
- Social media will tell you what to think (mostly fantasy), not how to think and deal with truth and reality.
- Try reading, thinking, questioning and face to face conversation instead.
- become clear on what sort of person you should be and can be, rather than drifting towards being who you should not be - by avoiding truth, swallowing lies, shallow thinking, wrong associations, self-absorption and self-gratification.
- Individual creativity comes from the freedom to think, freedom to speak and freedom to act.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

**FREEDOM IS GOD-GIVEN & BASED ON TRUTH
JESUS SAID “THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE”**

**Freedom of speech is like the air we breathe;
we don't value it until it's taken away.”**

meaning, purpose and identity

-you'll get a crystal clear understanding of meaning, purpose, role, rights and responsibility and who you really are and what you are on the inside.

-You will gain a clear identity based on being sons and daughters of the living God and a clearer picture of how God sees you - being found rather than lost.

inter-personal relations

- with your new understanding about yourself will come a new awareness of the value and dignity of each other human being of any colour, creed or character - including your enemies.

avoid division and disunity

-this respect for others is the best way not to cause offence to God and others.

-We can also avoid being sucked in to the trend of "being offended", which has become like a new religion where you're OK but it's the person who disagrees with you who is your foe and an enemy of the State.

-That's not open-ness, freedom and unity - it's divide and conquer for personal gain.

-Everyone loses.

experience the love journey

-for God and others.

-We all are to look deeper than first appearances and try to connect with others on common fundamentals rather than to judge them (playing God) and arguing about differences.

-We must look to what might unite us rather than what divides us.

-Anti-God forces always focus on a divide and conquer tactics - to satisfy their hidden agendas in their blind and destructive quest for self-enrichment, fame and power over others.

the essence of humanity

-love is what real humanity and real religion and real self-government is about.

-God's love is active - it focuses on seeing a need in others and doing something about it on an unpaid basis

- not abdicating that job most of the time to government, where we pay people to do our job, despite them often being too far away from the point of need to be effective in thinking, doing and spending our money on their "solutions".

the danger of technology

- the Bible talks about people with itchy ears running to and fro after knowledge in the last days (before Jesus comes again).

There are 3 internet related forces now seriously undermining our freedom, quality of life and pursuit of godliness

-globalised media,

-addiction to social media and

-government surveillance.

-Internet technology is failing humanity badly in these areas and the way it is happening is a poor way for us to learn and practice "loving God and loving our neighbour".

-Such technology can become an end in itself and often a tool for social engineering and to purposely break-down of our values and culture.

the joy of being who we've been designed to be

-happiness in heart and mind comes from learning and using the unique talents and gifts God has given us for serving Him as His representatives.

-God is not only Creator, He is the Sustainer - the only source for effective sustainability (not Man).

- So only by working His way, with Him, can we effectively accelerate the change process for improving our lives, the lives of others and help make a better world.

-That's where true joy comes from and how it works. It's the outcome of faith, hope and love working on our being, belonging and becoming.

what is the source of all of these truths about "being"?

- learn where in the Bible all these ideas about being come from.
- Ask an active Christian.
- Go to www.putgodfirst.org/being and see a selection of 64 Bible verses on these matters, grouped under powerful topic headings like
 - "kingdom"
 - "gospel"
 - "life"
 - "spiritual" and
 - "worship".
- Read each verse. Think about them. Write down questions. Experience how truth from God grabs you.
- Select one verse that really connects. Say it over. Memorize it and
- talk to God about it (pray) in your own way, for example

"please God, open this verse up to me so it gets written in my mind as a new neural pathway that my mind can recall and apply for the rest of my life. Help me please Jesus. I want to stay connected to your mind on this so I can be what you want me to be. Thank you. Amen".

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE - OUR “BEING” IS FRACTURED BY SIN

God is the object of hostility and revolt by the devil, the world and individual men. He is thus sinned against.

The heinousness of sin is attested by the variety and extent of the language which describes it.

Sin relates to sinful being (nature & character) and sinful belonging and becoming activities (in their minds, speech and actions).

Sin is self-assertive desire and disobedience. Sinners are lawless and they transgress God's moral laws.

Sinners are deceived, erring or “wandering,” ignorant and blind. In their weakness they fail to attain to the ideal—they “fall short.”

Sin is unrighteousness, impiety, ungodliness, uncleanness and defilement.

Sin “hardens” into fixed character and is marked by utter unbelief.

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE - GOD'S RESPONSE TO SIN

1. GOD AGAINST MAN – HE IS JUDGE

- **God is not pleased and he accuses and blames men.**
- **He is the One to whom they are responsible and to whom they must render account.**
- **He warns of the punishment for sin and the eternal destination of sinners to Hell.**
- **God's attitude, decision and action is one of wrath and he is unapproachable.**
- **He is a God of judgment and his judgment may be inflicted in history or it may await its fullness at the Day of Judgment.**
- **It is his personal prerogative and is logical, deserved and just. It is penetrating, inescapable and terrifying. It culminates in death, destruction, perdition.**

2. GOD FOR MAN – HE IS FATHER & SAVIOUR

- **He is Father as well as Judge.**
- **On the other hand judgment may be postponed or even avoided.**
- **There may be a day of salvation when God invites men to come to him. For he loves them.**
- **He continues to reach out to sinful humanity with love, mercy, patience, kindness and grace, without removing man's freedom of choice, to reject Him or put God first.**
- **He is a God of longsuffering, kindness, grace, mercy and peace.**

BELONGING

<u>get a new sense of belonging</u>	<u>experience true unity</u>	<u>experience true power</u>	<u>practice citizenship</u>
<u>join a real church</u>	<u>then join the "Put God First" movement</u>		<u>what is the source of all of these truths about "belonging"?</u>

get a new sense of belonging

- discover the joy of belonging to God, talking with Him,
 - getting the downloads of wisdom, understanding and knowledge,
 - finding His plan for your life and the whole of humanity,
 - experience His promises,
 - think about the place He has already prepared in heaven for you where you will live for ever.
- WOW!**

experience true unity

- with God first then others.
- Explore the potential for family unity, community unity, national unity and international unity, rather than continual division, discord and destruction.
- Learn how great teams work on 3 core principles
 - concern for God
 - concern for work and
 - concern for people.
- Find the joy in working with like-minded people getting things done, sharing stories, issues, problems and opportunities - and supporting each other in prayer.

experience true power

-learn that power is the ability to get things done - God's way.

-That's because true power comes from God.

-It's called "grace" in the Bible.

-It's really empowering.

-It blossoms when unity with God and others is in place and honoured.

practice citizenship

-sure your citizens in your own country.

-But belonging as part of the family of God makes you citizens of heaven.

-You then take on the role as ambassadors for the kingdom of heaven to improve the citizenship environment across the nation by loving your neighbour as yourself.

-New citizens in Australia makes this oath - *"From this time forward, under God, I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people, whose democratic beliefs I share, whose rights and liberties I respect, and whose laws I will uphold and obey"*.

-This picks up the opening words of the Australian Constitution, which applies to all Australians.

-If we all were aware of this we could develop a strong sense of belonging at a micro and macro level.

-The oath would be a common banner and powerful principle for working in unity, particularly on common problems.

-Citizenship responsibility would be a key feature for re-building our national culture and quality of life.

-The alternative is to abdicate personal responsibility and pay others in government to love our neighbour, which is not God's way.

join a real church

-God loves choosing and working with the most unlikely people.

-They all have one thing in common - they put God first by suppressing self-interest and allowing God's wisdom and power to create the change.

-He can turn sinners and nations completely around and put them back on track.

-God calls a group of like-minded people working in unity with Him and each other for change a "church".

-A church is centred on people obeying God's commands and helping others, not buildings, physical assets and organisation structures.

then join the "Put God First" movement

- this has always been a grass-roots movement characterised by God working for change using the lowest and least expected people for change from the bottom-up.
- The problem with hoping for top-down change is that many existing centralised structures are often way off course, particularly when they ignore, forget or reject the living God.
- Instead they are motivated and preoccupied with their own personal agendas for fame, fortune and power rather than for the public interest and common good.
- This orientation is completely opposed to what God wants - as the Australian Constitution says "*humbly relying on the blessing of Almighty God*".
- Watch what they do,
- They keep outsourcing their legislative responsibility to more centralised structures, like the UN.

what is the source of all of these truths about "belonging"?

-learn where in the Bible all these ideas about belonging come from.

-Ask an active Christian.

-Go to www.putgodfirst.org/belonging and see a selection of 49 Bible verses under such topics as

-"connecting"

-"family"

-"freedom"

-"law-abiding"

-"love"

-"pleasing God" and

-"serving God".

-Follow the same process referred to above. then pray something like
"help me please Jesus. I want to stay connected to your mind on this and the whole theme of belonging to you and to others in my family I love and care deeply about and to anyone else I meet. Thank you Jesus. Amen"

BECOMING

<u>check you have the right foundations</u>	<u>try to be fruitful</u>	<u>improved vision</u>	<u>problems and suffering</u>
<u>honour being fathers and mothers</u>			<u>what is the source of all of these truths about "becoming"?</u>

check you have the right foundations

-once the foundations of being and belonging start being laid then the becoming process is transformational, challenging and exciting.

-The more we hear and do what God is saying to us and how He wants to lead us and empower us, the stronger we become on all 3 dimensions

- in our being (particularly in our personal freedom and integrity)

- our belonging (particularly in our contribution to family, church, work and public life) and

- our becoming (our active role in the change process for a better life and a better world).

try to be fruitful

-when we get the being and belonging inputs right the transformation change process kicks in and we see healthy outcomes becoming real.

-This is called being fruitful, and follows a similar process to what God has designed in nature

- first clearing
- then ploughing
- seeding
- fertilising
- watering
- weeding
- pest-control
- nurturing and
- harvesting.

-And it's fruit that remains.

-God calls this "fruit of the Spirit" - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

-We don't see enough of these nowadays.

-Plenty of room for improvement. A job for all. Let's go!

improved vision

-as you go from blindness to seeing, a whole new dimension of opportunity will open up.

-Your vision will improve greatly and you will start to see and experience new ways of thinking, speaking and doing.

-New, creative, innovative solutions will pop up and get people excited.

problems and suffering

-these are a part of life and help us draw closer to God for answers and to develop the fruit of the Spirit.

-They help the growth process and keep us on track.

-Hang in there.

-You are still getting traction on life's journey and developing the way to become what God wants you to be in all respects.

honour being fathers and mothers

-God has designed godly marriage to be between a male and a female, because there are only two sexes.

-In the family situation, despite the differences and common areas of role and responsibility, both parents have to see that children learn and practice to put God first.

-Don't you want all these being, belonging truths and dynamics for your children, grand-children and future generations?

what is the source of all of these truths about "becoming"?

-learn where in the Bible all these ideas about belonging come from.

-Ask an active Christian.

-Go to www.putgodfirst.org/becoming and see a selection of 69 Bible verses under such topics as

- "character"

- "health"

- "joy"

- "leadership"

- "mind"

- "truth"

- "provision & blessing"

- "strategy" and

- "transformation".

- Follow the process set out above - think about each verse etc then choose one to grasp and pray it through, including something like the words

"help me please Jesus. I want to stay connected to your mind on this and the whole theme of becoming what you want me to be and meeting you and living with you forever. Thank you. Amen"

Christ For Us

- The problem of the coexistence of Judge and Father in the one God is solved by the work of Christ for us.
- He provides a way of escape from this judgment and the consequences of sin through the Cross of Jesus Christ - who is "the way, the truth and the life".
- There is no other way. Christ is a portal for us and in us.
- In the love, grace, mercy and righteousness of God a way out has been found. Its method is not law but gospel.
- For God had a gospel before Creation. It is not an afterthought.
- God has a Son, an eternal Son. He sent him into the world and he became incarnate as Jesus.
- He was obedient and sinless. He voluntarily endured death on the cross and his sufferings were real.
- This was the climax of his obedience, for the cross was God's purpose, plan and achievement.

- **On the cross Jesus, as high priest with a superior and permanent ministry, gave himself as a sacrifice for sin and made purification for sin.**
- **As Bearer of sin and curse he redeemed men.**
- **He bore, removed and set aside their sins.**
- **He made propitiation, peace and reconciliation of God to men.**
- **After the death on the cross came the resurrection, ascension and exaltation.**
- **Now Jesus appears before God for us in permanent intercession, opening a way into God's presence for humanity.**
- **He is thus the Mediator between God and humanity and will appear finally at the Parousia as Judge.**

Christ In Us

Four “movements” may be distinguished in the work of Christ in us:

(a) We Offer (by promoting the Word-out to others)

- The way into Gods presence lies open.
- But before men can walk in it they have to be told.
- The story of the cross must be brought to them.
- This is the Word of God.
- Christ and Christ crucified must be preached, with a clear emphasis on fact, meaning, offer and invitation.

(b) We Accept (by taking the Word in, obeying it, repenting, invoking His Word, exercising faith, confessing our sin and drawing near to Him)

- In the response of men may be discerned the work of Christ in us.
- For he is able to save.
- Whether they are saved depends on their positive response to the Word of the cross.

(c) **He accepts** (with His saving-power, justifying us and forgiving us)

(d) **He changes us** (by us being quickened by the Holy Spirit)

- gifting us for different roles
- adopting us as His children into the Family of God
- setting us up for effective relationships with Him and others
- saving us
- giving us certainty about Him and His promises and
- training us to be a strong, courageous yet humble disciple to worship and serve Him effectively

Those that escape in this way are taken into the amazing "Kingdom" zone:

- OF TRUE & EFFECTIVE CONNECTIVITY TO GOD AND OTHERS
- OF TRUE & EFFECTIVE BEING, BELONGING & BECOMING
- OF TRUE & EFFECTIVE QUALITY OF LIFE BASED ON LOVE, FAITH & HOPE
- OF TRUE & EFFECTIVE ETERNAL LIFE – DURING THIS LIFE & THE NEXT