

## RANDOMIZATION

Matthew never saw the SUV. He felt a heavy thud against his right thigh. It happened so quickly. The impact of the turning Outlander drove the motorcycle across the center line. It was at that instant Matthew saw the front grill of the oncoming dump truck.

This an excerpt from my novel *Randomization* (April 2025). It pertains to a dying Matthew (a serial killer) having a conversation with God. The paragraph above, the last paragraph of Chapter 37, is provided simply to set the stage, so to speak. The following pages (Chapter 38) pertain to the conversation. There is actually so much theology packed into the following 12 pages.

A few things to pay attention to:

- The left side representing evil, the right side representing good. Just as in scripture. Pay attention to Matthew's twitching finger representing his final choice.
- if someone does not believe in God, that does not mean God does not exist. There is still judgement for all.
- God gives us so many chances, including up into the very end, to accept Him.
- In spite of Matthew's derisiveness, God remains calm, loving, and offering of yet another chance to accept Him.
- God is love, Love is God. God is pure perfect love.

## Chapter 38

The light was blindingly bright. It was like staring into the sun, except infinitely brighter. And quiet; it was deathly quiet. The peace was simply indescribable.

The light slowly transformed to sheer white, which gradually was recognizable as clouds. The clouds slowly parted. He was standing at a fork in the middle of a dirt road. The right fork continued through a lush valley and then into the gently sloping hills, while the left fork strewn with rocks continued down a dangerously steep hill to the edge of a cliff.

“Hello Matthew, my child,” he more felt the voice than heard it. The voice was not too loud or too soft; it simply was.

“Um, hello?” he replied aloud. “Where are you?”

“I am here, my child.”

“I cannot see you. Where are you? Who are you?”

“I am here. I am all around you. I am in you. I am.”

“You am? You are who?”

“I Am.”

“I am? As in God?”

“I am.”

“I do not believe in God.”

“Well, God believes in you.”

“God does not exist.”

“God does exist, and so do you.”

“What is going on? There is no such thing as God. If you really are God, show yourself to me.”

“Oh ye of little faith.”

“Faith? You do not exist. If you do exist, let me see you.”

“Do you think you are having a conversation with someone or something that does not exist?”

“This is not happening. It is all in my head.”

“This is happening. It is not in your head; *it is in you.*”

“Am I dead?”

“You are in the process of dying.”

“The process of dying? So then this is not final?”

“It is final for the body. What is done is done.”

“If I am dead, then why am I here?”

“The process of dying is over for the body. Now it is time for the soul.”

“Time for the soul? I do not believe in any of this. There is no soul. There is only a body and once we are dead, we are dead.”

“Be that as it may, this is real. I believe in you. I created you, both body and soul.”

“So then, what is next? I mean for my soul? Is this like judgement or something?”

“There is a time for everything. There is a time when all beings will be judged. That time for you is now.”

“Whoa, wait a second. If I recall, is not Jesus supposed to be the judge? I think I remember hearing something about Jesus, not you, doing the judging. Where is he?”

“Where I am He is. Where He is I am. Where We are the Spirit is. Where the Spirit is We are.

“Well, since I do not believe in you, and I do not believe in any of this, none of this applies to me. There is nothing after death.”

“Whether you believe it or not, it does apply to you. It applies to everyone. There will be a day of reckoning for both believers and non-believers. That time for you is now.”

A montage of Matthew's life began to reveal itself. Was it in the air around him, or was in it his mind's eye? He could not begin to tell. It began to occur to him that if his body was dead and this was truly his soul, then there was no distinction between what was around him and what was in him, simply because there was no physical him. He was, he was, he was but a spirit.

“But if I do not believe you exist, then what difference does it make? You cannot judge me; you do not exist.”

“Ah, but my child. I am very real and I most certainly *do* exist. Whether you believe in me or not has no bearing on my existence. Believing in Unicorns does not make them exist, no more than believing the earth is flat will make it be so. A penny falling from the top of the Empire State building will not kill a person it strikes below standing on the ground, and gum does not take seven years to digest.” There was something familiar about what he was hearing, like he had heard it before. Perhaps from Alex? “No matter how much you chose not to believe those facts, your lack of belief will make them no less true. Whether or not you believe in me will in no way alter my existence. Thusly, you can and you shall be judged. As it is written in Hebrews 9:27, ‘And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment.’”

“God quoting scripture? Using someone else’s work? Is that not kind of like plagiarism? Well, I guess you did at least cite it. But still.”

“At least you have accepted I am I Am. As for scripture, I did not write it, but it certainly was divinely inspired. I inspired it.”

“Yeah, well, I never much read scripture. As for this judging thing. I am being judged on what? On all the bad things I did? I am no worse than anyone else.”

## RANDOMIZATION

“Yes, there are people worse than you, just as there are people better than you. This is not about comparing them to you or you to them. There are two parts; accounting and judgement. Accounting is as much about the things you did do as it is about the things you did not do. It is reckoning. It is being held accountable. Final judgement is based on you, who you really are, your essence, your relationship with me, your acceptance of me, your belief in me.”

“Yeah, I remember some of that nonsense. Something about clothing the naked and feeding the hungry. Well, no one ever bought me clothes or fed me. What about the times I had nothing? Where was anyone to help me? Where were you? You just stood by and watched it happen. Heck, you probably entertained yourself by making it happen. Or was it all just some kind of a test?”

“I was there. I did not cause those things to happen to you. It does not work like that. Life is like a Venn diagram, where lives are represented by circles, and those circles sometimes overlap. People make choices; every choice has consequences and impacts. Lives intersect. Things happen. That is no test, that is life, a life of free choices. However, there is indeed a test. The test is not the events themselves; sometimes you have control over those events and other times you do not. The real test is how you choose to respond to those events.”

“So, this still is about what I did or did not do?”

“Consider this. How many times did you blame me for your struggles? How many times did you take my name in vain in anger? How many times did you take my name in vain against me?”

“Um, I do not really know.”

“There it is right there in front of you, being revealed for you. There are so many times that you lost count of them.”

Matthew just stood and stared, transfixed by the montage appearing like a hologram right before his very eyes, except it was not a hologram. He somehow felt that if he reached out and touched it, he would touch actual people, he would actually touch himself. But that was crazy; it could not possibly be real.

“Matthew, my child. How many times did you cry out to me for help?”

“I honestly do not know. A few I guess.”

“My child, you have cried out to me many times, oh so many times. I heard every one of your cries for help.”

“So, all that proves is that you were never there for me.”

“I was there for you in ways you cannot comprehend. I did not leave you. I gave you the strength to endure, the strength to carry on. I did not cause those events, I helped you overcome those events. Remember those times when you cried out to me in despair and desperation? Do you not remember the tranquility you felt afterward? That was me. Do you not remember those times you acted in anger, yelling and taking my name in vain, only to

feel remorse later and apologize to me? Do you not remember the peace you felt after that? That was me. Each time was a fresh start for you, but each time you chose to forget about me shortly after that and to revert to your previous ways.”

“That was not you. That was just venting. Just getting anger out of me. That is why I felt better, I just let the pent-up anger out is all.”

Was this actually happening? Was all of this in his head? Was he merely imagining all of this? God spoke again.

“You are pretty good at blaming me when things go wrong, and you are pretty good at crying out to me when you need help. That shows you do believe in me.”

“Yeah, a lot of good any of that did.”

Unfazed by the interruption, God continued. “You are pretty good at crying out to me when you need help, and blaming me when things do not go your way. But how many times have you bothered to thank me when things went well, when things turned out better than you expected?” There was no montage, there was no recollection; there was just silence.

“Well, I am waiting. Show me that too.”

Still there was no montage, nothing flashing before Matthew.

“I am showing you.”

“Your, your, your projector or whatever it is must be broken. I cannot see anything.”

“You are seeing nothing because there is nothing to see. There is nothing broken, except you.”

“Did you, the great I Am, just say I am broken?”

“You curse me in your anger and you blame me when things do not go your way. Yet, you have never thanked me during the good times. You believe in me, yet you refuse to acknowledge me. Fear not, for I am a compassionate God. Broken can be repaired. All you have to do is believe in me and show remorse for your sins, for your actions and for your lack of actions.”

“But I do not believe in you. As for my actions, hey, I did what I needed to do to survive.”

“Still you deny me?”

“You do not exist.”

“Matthew, my child. How many times did you take my name in vain? How many times did you cry out for me to damn someone?”

“That means nothing. It was only words, only an expression. Even atheists yell out goddamn. It is only an expression for Christ’s sake.”

“And that you reference both God and Christ in your expressions shows no acknowledgement of either God or Christ?”

“They are just words, just expressions. If you truly exist, prove it to me. Do something. Convince me you are real.”

“Faith is believing even when you have not seen. Faith is believing in me. Faith is trusting me.”

## RANDOMIZATION

“Then put me down in your little judgement book, or whatever it is, as having no faith. I do not believe in you, and I certainly am not going to trust something I do not believe in. And, I do not believe any of this is happening. I will wake up soon and this will all be over.”

“My child, do you not understand? You are not merely sleeping. This is not a dream. You will not be waking up. You are dying. This is your last chance.”

“Okay, then judge away and let’s get this over with. What’s the big deal anyway if I am already dead?”

“You are not quite dead yet, but you are dying. You still have time to choose me. Once your dying has completed, once your life has ended, there is no more choice. The fate of your soul is to be determined. It will spend eternity in either heaven or hell. You still have time to determine the outcome, to decide on eternal heaven or eternal hell. We are alone, Matthew. You, your essence and I. Free of earthly distractions and free of the voices in your head, no outside influences. You have time to accept me. You have time to show remorse.”

“Big deal. I do not believe any of this. Heaven and hell do not exist. That is some made up nonsense.”

“Matthew, my child, there is heaven and there is hell.”

“Oh yeah, I know the fairy tales, about heaven with streets of gold and hell with a pit of fire. But you know, if hell was really like a fiery furnace, souls would burn up and it would all be over with pretty quickly.”

“Hear me. I am love and love is me. I am pure perfect love.”

“So?”

“Hell is the absence of me. Hell is the absence of love. Choosing to not accept me means choosing to reject love and, in doing so, banishment to hell means never knowing love again.”

“Love never did anything for me anyway. I can live without it. I told you, I did what I had to do to survive. I have no remorse. You should know that if you are God. You are God, are you not?”

“I am.”

“You said that before, I am. You said, I am I Am.”

“I am I Am.”

“What does that even mean. I am? I am what?”

“I am everything. I am the beginning and the end. I am the Alpha and the Omega. I am infinite. I am truth. I am light. I am things you cannot comprehend. I am I Am.”

“I don’t quite get it. You are everything, and you are nothing?”

“I am Love. I am pure perfect love. Everything else revolves around that.”

“I can do without love.”

On the pavement in front of the dump truck, almost imperceptibly, the forefinger on the motorcyclist’s left hand twitched slightly a single time. He was dead.

He noticed he was drifting down the left fork of the dirt road. In doing so, he heard God one last time.

## RANDOMIZATION

“Matthew, your time on earth has ended. You have denied me for the final time. You have chosen to not accept me. You have chosen not to know me, to not know love. So let it be done. You shall spend eternity in a place without love.”

His pace began to pick up and, within a blink of an eye, he was at the edge of the cliff. “Wait!” But there was only silence. That is, until he fell over the edge of the cliff, and fell from God’s grace.

Just to tidy things up a bit, the following page from Chapter 11 is presented to provide context to what you have just read. Matthew had a conversation with his sister Alex some 250 pages prior to Matthew's conversation with God. That page (103) is a foretelling of sorts.

## RANDOMIZATION

“Matthew, you are going to be in for one heck of a surprise when you die and stand before God in judgment.”

“Well then, your God is going to be in for one heck of a surprise when I do not show up.”

“Matthew, Matthew, you have no choice. It is going to happen. Just because you do not believe something exists does not make it so, no more than believing in something that does not exist will make it exist. Some kids believe in Unicorns, but no matter how much they believe that, Unicorns do not exist. Old lore asserts that it takes seven years to digest gum, which of course is not true. And, there is a supposed fact that if you drop a penny from the top of the Empire State building it will kill a person on the ground if it hits them. No matter how many times people repeat it and no matter how many people believe it, it simply does not make it true. Just because you do not believe in God, do not believe in Heaven and Hell and final judgement, just because you do not believe these things does not make them not exist.”

“And, no matter how many of you people believe in God, a God you can neither see, touch, nor feel, will make Him exist.”

“It is a matter of faith.”

“I have no faith.”

“May God have mercy on your soul when you die. I will pray for you, Matt.”