

Not everything's so "black or white"!

MANY
SHADES
of
GRAY

AND OTHER WRITINGS

**Life in an increasingly
polarized world!**

Compiled from the writings of

Gary Britton

Many Shades of Gray

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of
GRAY

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polarized world!**

Gary Britton



A Sponsors of Hope Publication

Published by Sponsors of Hope
www.sponsorsofhope.org
“For a kinder world.”

First edition 2023
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ISBN: 9798386705961
This book is available at www.amazon.com



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*“If any man thinks he knows anything,
he knows nothing as he should.”*

(1 Corinthians 8:2)

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Introduction

“Many Shades of Gray” is a compilation of over thirty writings addressing the increasingly polarized world we are living in.

None of us really see the entire picture of any of the problems and situations we face today, and by focusing on any one element we get a distorted view of a situation.

Our world has grown so complex and life so complicated, that in almost all of our interactions with each other we should keep in mind that not everything is black or white.

We do well to take into account the “many shades of gray”.

SHADES OF GRAY

People nowadays are getting more and more extreme. Not everything in life is so right or wrong, all good or all bad. And focusing on our differences is only dividing us.

Some things in life are not so clear cut, not so black or white, but more often than not one of many shades of gray. Many things are relative, and sometimes it is only if we look at things from different perspectives that we can truly see the entire picture. We each have our opinion. We all have our story. We all have our individual point of view.

Let's be more accepting, more loving in our dealings with people. Lord help us to put ourselves in the other guy's shoes and try to relate to him.

And realize there is often more to things than meets the eye!

“Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.” (John 7:24)



OUR MESSED UP WORLD

Sometimes, it seems like everywhere you look people are in disagreement.

They seem increasingly divided over politics. You look at television, at the news shows, and they can get so worked up!

The same with sports. Fans have been known to go on rampages after a game, destroying property, attacking people. They go crazy!

Not to mention religion! We all have seen way too many examples of religious fanaticism, with each one thinking theirs is the only true way of seeing things.

Yes, people certainly are divided nowadays.

People are becoming increasingly separated economically also, as the truly wealthy have more and more, and the majority have less and less. The sad part is that people actually even continue the veneration of the super rich as some kind of role models, as if their excess and greed were praiseworthy.

People will kill and have been known to even

start wars over pride alone, all the time justifying their actions as some so-called “righteous cause”. Many of them believe the other guy is evil, or bad. They feel they are right, or better, or more enlightened. They are the “good ones” and the other one is “bad”.

I have travelled a lot. I have been to many foreign countries and have found that the heart of man is pretty much the same the world over. The longing for love, freedom, peace and fairness is universal. But all of this division, all of this discord and tension and strife is killing us!

The overwhelming tendency to find fault, dwell on our differences, and be at odds with one another is destroying us all.

We are ALL in this together. And we are ALL to blame. And we ALL have it in our power to change.

We have so much more in common, as far as our real needs, hopes and dreams. More in

common than we realize.

Dwelling on the positive isn't about being blind to the world. It puts us in a position where we can EFFECTIVELY do something about it though.

Looking for the good in someone else, looking at the positive, looking for things we have in common, instead of focusing on our differences, creates not only good will, but puts us in a position where we BOTH stand to benefit and grow... a "win-win" situation, instead of one where there is a winner and a loser. No one likes to be a loser.

God's Word says to dwell on the positive.

"What you see depends on what you are looking for."

Let's look for the good in others, and help them be all they CAN be, with HIS love!



MORE FLEXIBLE

Not everything in life is so “black and white”. So many things are varying shades of gray.

On the news you see people doing all kinds of dumb things. They do violent things. They do useless and senseless things. They have their sense of priorities wrong.

And so many of these things are because they think they have to take a stand, a black or white stand, when they would be wiser to realize that the majority of the time any one of us can only see a limited version of a situation at best.

We really need to be open, more flexible and slower to judge and react.



HOW WE TREAT OTHERS

Some people today are becoming way too critical. Everything offends them.

It's easy to criticize. Anyone can do that. But it takes an effort to see the good and possibilities in others.

We must remember that not everyone has it easy. Almost everyone has to bear some kind of personal tragedy. Everyone has had some bad breaks in life and has suffered at least a few hard knocks. Life has been discourteous to all of us at one time or another.

Let's help others carry their burdens instead of loading more on them. Let's be more tender, more forgiving and more understanding.

May we truly learn to "do unto others" and treat each other with love and compassion.



LIVE AND LET LIVE!

We live in a world where people can get bent out of shape talking about religion or politics.

Why do people try to force their way of thinking on others?

After all of these years of world history man doesn't seem to have come very far. He praises himself for his inventions but he is woefully lacking in basic human skills and just getting along with his fellow man.

I don't think any of us have an acceptable explanation as to why these things are. But then again, we don't need to know why.

All we need to know is, if we want peace with our mate, peace in our home and peace with our neighbor, all we have to do is: Be more accepting. Be more tolerant and...

Live and let live!

“As much as possible, live peaceably with all men.” (Ro. 12:18)



EXCESSES

People are going to such extremes today.

Everywhere you look you see excesses:

Excesses of greed. Excesses of power. Excesses of eating. Excesses of drinking.

People are excessive in their reactions and demands. Man gets “drunk” on excesses of his revelry, violence and war.

And you wonder why everything is so screwed up?



A PRISON FOR ALL

You can't make people "be good". Under threat and coercion some people make a child behave. They do the same in today's prisons. But this doesn't work in real life in a civilized and educated society.

Yet this is exactly what many are doing. People are increasingly afraid to say or do anything lest they be misinterpreted and crucified. They are being forced to "be good" through fear of reprisal.

The trouble is, this "being good" is flawed, because everyone has their own concept of what it is to "be good". So we all end up as losers. We are turning the world into a prison... for ALL of us!

We all need to take time to look into each other's hearts. We need to discern people's intentions, see where they are coming from... and start treating others with the same consideration we want to be treated with ourselves!

"Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one for another, and love as brethren." (1 Peter 3:8)



FOCUS ADJUSTMENT

We need our government.

We need *someone* to run our infrastructures, provide healthcare, security, and other essential services. Yet so many people these days criticize their government and everything it does.

People are so divisive.

We don't need more divisions. We need to work together in cooperation if we are to have any realistic hopes of improving this world we live in.

We need to focus less on things that divide us and dwell more on things that unite us.



FIXATED

We lose sight of the entirety of something when we get fixated on any one small part. People can become so embroiled in proving *their truth*, convinced that they are right and the others wrong.

This is a major problem we have today. It is pervasive in every sphere of religion, science and human endeavor. As long as either side thinks they *see* and the other one is ignorant, blind or naive, they won't see clearly.



WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER

As long as we continue to have a “them or us” attitude we will never be happy.

We need to emphasize more the things that we have in common because we are all in this together!



GOD DOESN'T BLESS HATRED

People are getting hateful!

You read about them all the time in the news. They get worked up and in a rage over the smallest things. They get up in arms and at each other's throats. It's crazy!

Our world is growing increasingly divided. People are getting more and more aggressive. There is more and more violence.

All of this hatred will be our downfall.

God doesn't bless hatred. God can't bless pride and arrogance.

God blesses people working together and showing a large measure of love.



DEMANDING

Parents are at odds with their children. Spouses are at odds with each other. Entire nations are at odds with other nations.

Sad world isn't it?

People are looking for answers.

People are looking for peace.

People are looking for substance.

But *people* are the very cause of their troubles.

We all need to settle down, calm down, and stop trying to change things that we will never be able to change.

We need to learn to be less demanding!



STAND UP?

“Stand up for your rights.” You hear that a lot these days. People protest. They riot. They demand to be treated better. And they can get ugly!

But this doesn't seem to be solving anything. All of this contention is creating only more division, more disunity, more conflict.

Man has gone so far without God that today he is “lost in space”. We will never be able to solve our problems on our own, or without divine intervention of some kind.

So remember, until that happens, Jesus never told us to stand up and protest for our rights. Jesus told us to be kind and loving to one another.



KINDA SIMPLE

Many are living for this world and the values of this transitory life. Others are living for eternal values and things of lasting worth. Most of us are probably living for a combination of the two.

None of us should be walking around judging each other, yet that's what so many are doing today. It is this increasingly polarized world that is making everyone unhappy.

We should rather all be trying to help our neighbor, cooperate with each other, and strive for things to benefit us all.

We would all be better off if we just took things more in stride and didn't take ourselves so seriously. We need to be more grateful for what we have, help each other, and enjoy life more.

Kinda simple!



UNDESERVING

Some people today walk around with an attitude of entitlement. They think they deserve so much, without ever really doing anything of worth to deserve it.

We all came into this world naked. Naked will we leave it. And the only things we will be able to take with us are those we do in love for others.

We all have our shortcomings. We take so many things for granted. If we counted all of our mistakes no one would stand. How undeserving and unworthy we are to think of ourselves more highly than we ought.

We should walk more humbly, help each other more, and be grateful for the many, many blessings we have.

“He is proud, whereof comes envy and strife. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out of it.”
(1 Timothy 6:4,6,7)



WONDER WHY?

Do you wonder why the world is so screwed up? We build walls. We think we must do this for our family, for our children's sake. We believe that we must protect ourselves from our neighbor. We must do it because the other guy is bad. He is evil. We are better. So we must defend ourselves from his theoretical threats.

We use the very best of our knowledge to make war. We try to outdo each other by building bigger, better, and faster computers, tanks, bombs, rockets, and planes. It never ends.

There has scarcely been a time in history when there was not a war going on some place. Such is the fruit of man's inhumanity towards his fellow man.

This is the world we are living in. The complete opposite of God's command to, "Love thy neighbor."

THAT explains why we are so screwed up!



WE ARE ONLY HUMAN

Why is it that nowadays when someone makes a mistake people jump all over him? You see this happen especially with leaders, politicians, and people in power.

Every little thing they do is criticized and beaten down as either bad, or wrong, or stupid, crazy, or dumb. No one can be ALL wrong, ALL the time!

People are becoming more and more intolerant, critical and unforgiving of those around them. The press is largely to blame for all of this negativity.

We need to remember that we are all human, and not everything everyone does is driven by ulterior motives.

We need to be kinder, more forgiving and treat others more like we would like to be treated ourselves.

“Be kind, tender hearted and forgiving of one another.”
(Ephesians 4:32)



DIFFERENT PATHS

Many of our problems in life come from trying to control people. Many of our heartbreaks come from expecting things of them.

We try to control things. We place expectations on people. Family members do it, sometimes even those we love the most.

It just seems to be human nature to want to take charge and be in control. But often that only leads to stress and frustration for all.

We must remember that each one is here on their own personal mission, and God doesn't force anyone to do anything.

Each of us has a life to live. Each of us walks our own unique path in life. We should support each other along those paths.

And let God have HIS perfect way in people's lives.

“The Lord will perfect that which concerns each one.”
(Psalms 138:8)



DIVISIONS

We don't believe in conspiracy theories. We don't believe that a specific group of people are doing *evil* things to propagate their evil agendas. We just don't believe things are that simplistic.

We believe that greed and a lack of love are responsible for most, if not all of man's ills. We believe that DIVISIONS are causing so many of the world's problems.



JESUS' ONLY MESSAGE

When it comes to God, many people are really misguided.

There are tons of religious fanatics, extremists, weirdos, and loonies out there!

So many of them are convinced that they are the only right ones. They think that they alone see the whole truth, and that God is with them more than anyone else.

Some promote their political beliefs and bigotry, racism, hatred, war, and violence in the name of religion.

They have lost sight of Jesus' main message...

Jesus' ONLY message:

LOVE.



HAPPIER

There IS a way we all could be *happier!*

We could be happier, we *would* be happier, if we all just showed a little respect, cooperated more, and enjoyed each other's differences!

We could learn all kinds of things together, if we all had more of an attitude of helping each other through this life.



THE INTENTS OF THE HEART

People today get so offended by something someone else says. They are quick to find fault.

But often, maybe very often, what they said wasn't said with bad intentions. Maybe the "offended" person saw *evil* where there wasn't any, so to speak.

We need to take into account people's intentions. We need to look at their hearts.

Most of all we need to remember that... we do the *same* things!



SERIOUSLY NOW!

Life can get serious at times. It can get downright scary! But worrying about it really doesn't get us anywhere.

They say that laughter is the best medicine. That may be true. And the world would probably be a better place if we all laughed more!

God has given us a sense of humor. He wants us to be happy, trust Him for our lives, laugh more...

And not take ourselves so SERIOUSLY!



THINGS ARE NOT AS THEY SEEM

It's so easy to think we know more than others, to think we could do things better. We are often critical and harshly judge people for the job they are doing. Why is that? I guess it is just human nature.

They say that ninety percent of an iceberg is under water. We see only a fraction of it.

So it is with most things in life. We often think we see the whole picture when we only see a small part. We are tempted to think we know so much about some things when we can't begin to appreciate the sacrifice, the labor, the blood, sweat, and tears that have gone into them!

We all need to be forgiven for so many things. Each one of us really needs to remember a few of the mistakes we ourselves have made, and not be so demanding.

Lord help us to be more loving, more understanding, and more accepting of others!

“If any man thinks he knows anything, he knows nothing as he should.” (1 Corinthians 8:2)



THE REAL ENEMY

The world is getting to be a scary place: so many problems, so much evil. But you can't get rid of darkness by trying to beat it out.

The only way to get rid of darkness is by letting the light in.

The real enemy in this world is ignorance, and the challenge is to enlighten men's hearts and minds. That's our battle.

And that battle will only be won with LOVE.



THE ROAD

There are people that are happy. They strive to be happy. They find happiness, give happiness, and live a life of happiness.

And then there are people who live miserable lives. They blame others. They blame their circumstances for their lack of happiness.

Happiness is within easy reach of all of us. Each soul is ultimately responsible for their own happiness.

Letting go of our own stubborn wills and thinking that “our truth is the only truth” gets us well on the road to this happiness!



STOP IT

We all have so much more in common than the things that people think separate us.

By focusing on the negative, we are only becoming even more divided, frustrated, and unhappy.

We need to stop dwelling on our perceived (and exaggerated!) differences. We need to be more grateful for our many blessings.

Most of all...

We need to stop complaining!



FOR ONLY ONE WEEK!

Let's put religion on hold, for a week. Let's put politics on hold. Let's put war and wanting more riches and power and fame on hold, for only one week.

For only one week let's all stop and laugh. Let's take a pause, unwind, forget all our big righteous causes, and take a break.

Let's remember we are all human. Let's remember we are all in this together. And let's remind ourselves that TOGETHER we can all have a happier world, and a happier life.

Let's start by doing it for only ONE WEEK!



THE PATH TO PEACE

We see a lot of division in the world: opposing political beliefs, different religious views, gaps between generations, peoples, and nationalities.

Tension, strife, and disunity are tearing families, neighborhoods, and countries apart. All this fussing, fighting, and arguing is not solving anything. It's only making us sadder and sadder!

We all basically want the same things, and we have so much more in common than the things that we are letting divide us.

The solution is to start focusing on those things and be grateful for our many blessings. Only then will we see things in their proper perspective and be empowered to solve our problems and bring about change.

God blesses unity, people working together, living in harmony and peace with each other. Nothing else will ever truly solve man's problems!

Spread the WORD!

“God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.”
(1 Corinthians 14:33)



WE NEED TO LIGHTEN UP

There seems to be so much anger these days and I say it's time for us to lighten up. Getting all bent out of shape is getting us nowhere and is killing us.

We will never be able to right all the world's wrongs. We will never be able to make people do what we think they should do or behave how we think they should behave.

We find ourselves in an ever growing vicious cycle of placing too much importance on trifles, creating too many tempests in teacups, and it's just killing us! We are becoming our own worst enemies.

This collective discontent between couples, within families, and in entire nations is not bearing good fruit. We cannot justify it by saying the end justifies the means, because this isn't true. Just look at the results this ever increasingly ingrained habit of complaining is producing: only more

discontent and more unhappiness.

We will always have problems. But getting angry is counter productive and fixes nothing. It only creates more problems!

When we realize that the Lord is in control, and we place our trust in Him then we can become free from the bondage of anger.

I think we need to find a balance between what we realistically can do, and trust Him for the rest.

And learn to lighten up!



FINDING A BALANCE

Our sense of right and wrong in some cases is perceptual and individual. And we all sometimes have a tendency to go to extremes.

The solution to many problems in life is to find a balance. Finding that balance is a place of peace and rest.

It's the secret of health and happiness too.



IN THIS TOGETHER

We don't need more division: We need more love.

We need to realize that at the core we are all the same. We need to realize that the things we have in common are so much greater than the things that we tell ourselves make us different.

The world is being torn apart by strife, competition, and greed.

But it is only together in a spirit of mutual respect and kindness that we can ever hope to achieve the things we really want.

We are all here on this earth together.

And only by working TOGETHER with love, can we break down the walls!

“Let us follow after things which make for peace.”
(Romans 14:19)



POLARIZED

We choose to relate to someone and see the things we have in common, or to focus on perceived or imagined differences, find fault and criticize them.

The press, of course, only fans the flames, and we are seeing our world become a place where people increasingly dissect and find flaws in everything people say and do.

Our world is becoming increasingly polarized but, as usual, the truth (and happiness!), lie somewhere in the middle.



A SIMPLE PRAYER

Lord, open my mind, open
my heart and open my eyes that
I may see the bigger picture, Your
greater plan, and how I fit into it.

In Jesus' name, amen.

WHAT CAN
YOU DO
TO HELP?

We all need to be kinder to each other. Let's spread that message however we can!

You can copy and paste and share portions of the PDF version of this book with family and friends.

See what miracles love can do!

Download the PDF version here:
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Also by Gary Britton:

- - -

THE BIG QUESTION

What does God really want from us?

OUT OF CONTROL

Man's greed and waste are taking a toll on all of us!

PRAYER LIKE PIZZA

How to receive answers to your prayers!

WE ARE ALL FAMILY

United in kindness is the path to change!

DEATH: SHOULD WE BE AFRAID?

Love awaits us all at the end of the tunnel!

BE BOLD. BE KIND!

We need to start being nicer to each other.

GIVERS AND TAKERS

The way to get more... is by giving more!

BE BOLD. BE HAPPY!

True happiness comes from making others happy!

LET THERE BE SEX!

God or sex? Why do we even have to choose?

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People are becoming such extremists!

Most of us really see only part of the puzzle.

Let's break down the walls that separate us.

***Not everything in life always has to
be so clear cut!***

We need to stop fighting each other and start working together if we want to have any realistic hope of improving

**WE ARE ALL
IN THIS
TOGETHER!**

Too many people today have tunnel vision and think that their "truth" is the only one.

Let's all be more open, more flexible and slower to judge, criticize and react negatively!

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Looking for the good in people and dwelling on the positive things we all have in common, creates good will and puts us in a position where we all stand to benefit and grow.

US \$4.95 / \$5.95 CAD

ISBN 9798386705961



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