



"Life is a grindstone. But whether it grinds us down or polishes us up depends on us."

—L. Thomas Holdcroft

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We Are NOT Alone!

Fans of *The X-Files* know that the 1990s television drama popularized the phrase, "We are not alone." Within the show's universe, it refers to the ongoing question of whether extraterrestrial life exists. For Christians, the phrase takes on a somewhat different meaning, but it is absolutely true—and reassuring! As Mulder would say, "The truth is out there."

A Christian's primary source of truth is [God](#) Himself, as revealed in the pages of the Bible. From it, we glean the knowledge of what God is doing, what part we have in it, and where it is all headed. We combine this with facts and observations from our lives, the natural world and history, and the sum of this information forms our beliefs. These, in turn, determine our conduct.

Maybe the most fundamental belief that we produce by this process is the conviction that God is. We come to believe that He not only lives but is also active in His creation and particularly in our lives as called-out Christians. Without this conviction, nothing else matters! To a Christian, if there is no God, the past is a lie, the present is futile, and the future is hopeless!

Most of us rarely ponder how others approach life, certainly not those who have rejected God. Yet they face life believing they came from nothing and are charging toward similar nothingness. This nihilism produces existential behavior, that is, living for the moment because they exist now, having no hope or guarantee of existence in the future. In addition, such people feel accountable to no one but themselves or possibly the state—but certainly not to any Divine Judge who will render to them according to their deeds ([Psalm 28:4](#); [Isaiah 59:18](#); [Revelation 20:12](#)).

What happens, though, when their lives begin to unravel? To whom do they turn when relationships sour or employment vanishes or disaster strikes? Some may recant their atheism and "find religion," but many are so jaded against spirituality of any sort that a god of any kind is abhorrent to them. Do they lean, then, on psychiatry? Science? Medicine? Law? Government? In reality, each of these human pursuits is as insubstantial as a hologram. In the end, the atheist stands alone.

Both Paul and Peter tell us bluntly that our trials and tests are things "common to man" ([I Corinthians 10:13](#); [I Peter 4:12](#)). We struggle against the same forces that others do. A poor economy, a war, a natural disaster, an oppressive government, a crime wave, etc., hits us just as it hits others, more or less. The similarity ends there, however. A Christian's approach to his problems—in terms of their purpose, solutions and products—is far different than an atheists, or anyone else in [the world](#), for that matter. True Christians see every circumstance as preparation for God's Kingdom and thus worthy of a Christlike course of action.

Paul says God does not give us tests beyond our abilities to solve, and in addition, He opens a "way of escape" for them ([I Corinthians 10:13](#)). These are wonderful assurances in themselves, but we can be confident of something even better: God's presence with us—indeed, in us!—as we face our trials. We are not alone! God is there to provide "mercy and . . . grace to help in time of need" ([Hebrews 4:16](#)). Later, Paul writes, "For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you'" ([Hebrews 13:5](#)). Thus, Peter advises, "[Cast] all your care upon Him, for He cares for you" ([I Peter 5:7](#)).

[Jesus](#) tells His disciples, including us, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" ([Matthew 28:20](#)). Through Isaiah, He comforts us: "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand" ([Isaiah 41:10](#)). Trials, temptations, tests—what are they next to the willing power of God?

Remember, we are never alone! God is there ([Psalm 23:4](#))! Call upon Him while He is near ([Isaiah 55:6](#))!

- Richard T. Ritenbaugh

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[The Christian and the World \(Part Five\)](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

The prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2) is responsible for influencing the Zeitgeist (dominant spirit or mindset of the time), pulling us away from God and His commandments. Our heart at the time of conversion is incurably sick (Jeremiah 17:9) incapable of being repaired, but only replaced. God deliberately places His called-out ones in a position of choosing the temporal allurements of the world or eternal life (Matthew 6:24). Guarding our heart (Proverbs 4:23) and setting it upon spiritual treasures (Matthew 6:19-23) will enhance our spiritual security.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[The Sovereignty of God: Part Three](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

In the third part of this series, John Ritenbaugh uses the Beast power of Revelation 13 to compare with God's sovereignty. Who will we yield to in the coming years?

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