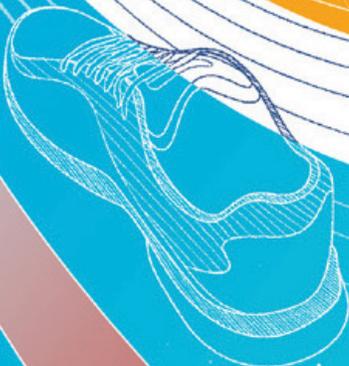
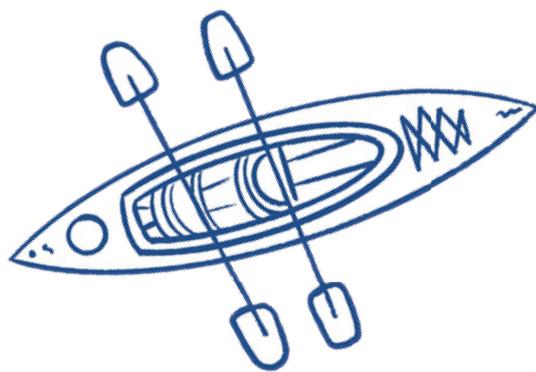


# DISCOVER

HOW YOU CAN KNOW GOD





Our heart longs for a connection that makes sense of life, a place where we are loved and forgiven and have meaning and direction.

When we do not have a strong life purpose that provides these things, this creates the deepest longing of our life, a heart longing.

Sometimes our heart longing is awakened by the awe and wonder we feel when we see the glaciers of Alaska breaking off into the ocean, or a gorgeous multi-colored sunrise lighting up the beach, or when holding a newborn baby.

When a heart longing is awakened in us, what is that longing expressing? British author C. S. Lewis explained a heart longing this way:

*It is sometimes felt as a longing for a far off country, but not a particular earthly land which we can identify.... It may seem as a longing for a someone or even a something. But the majority of the people who experience it are not conscious of what or who the longed for objective may be. Indeed, the longing is of such profundity and intensity that the subject may immediately be only aware of the emotion itself and not cognizant that there is a something longed for.*

[ BY LEWIS, C.S. (1935). *The Pilgrims' Regress*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. ]

How would you describe your heart longing? Do you picture anything in your mind? Does any particular place or person enter your thoughts?

Many people choose God to be their life purpose and meet their heart longing.

*When I think of the value of knowing God it is this: that we can understand life, we can proceed with clarity, we can avoid pitfalls, we can be led by God, know truth, be given strength/hope/peace, and enjoy the most important relationship, the one who will be faithful to us and constantly love us. God, who created us, provides this as nothing else could.*

*To go through this life with success and confidence, we must be connected to him, relying on him. Until we come to know him, we will always be searching, always be testing other possibilities, and find them lacking. But when we respond to God's offer to be in relationship with him, we are satisfied, complete. We now are equipped to live this life with a plan and with Someone who can lead us in it.*

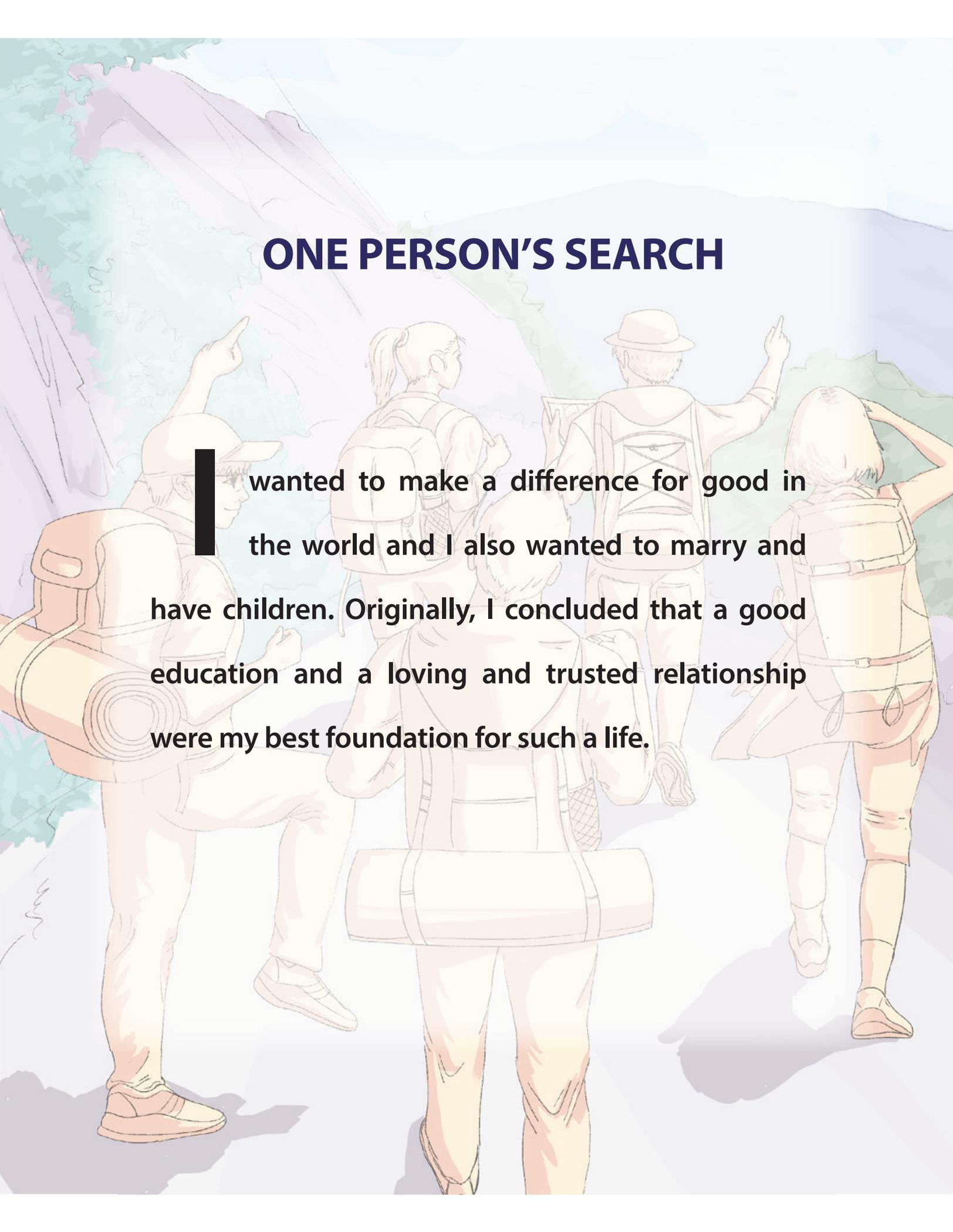
(From "How an Atheist Found God," [www.everystudent.com/wires/atheist](http://www.everystudent.com/wires/atheist))

The famous French physicist Blaise Pascal said there is one solution that will meet a person's heart longing. Only one thing matches, facet for facet, everything we need to meet our heart longing and be our life purpose. Pascal explained:

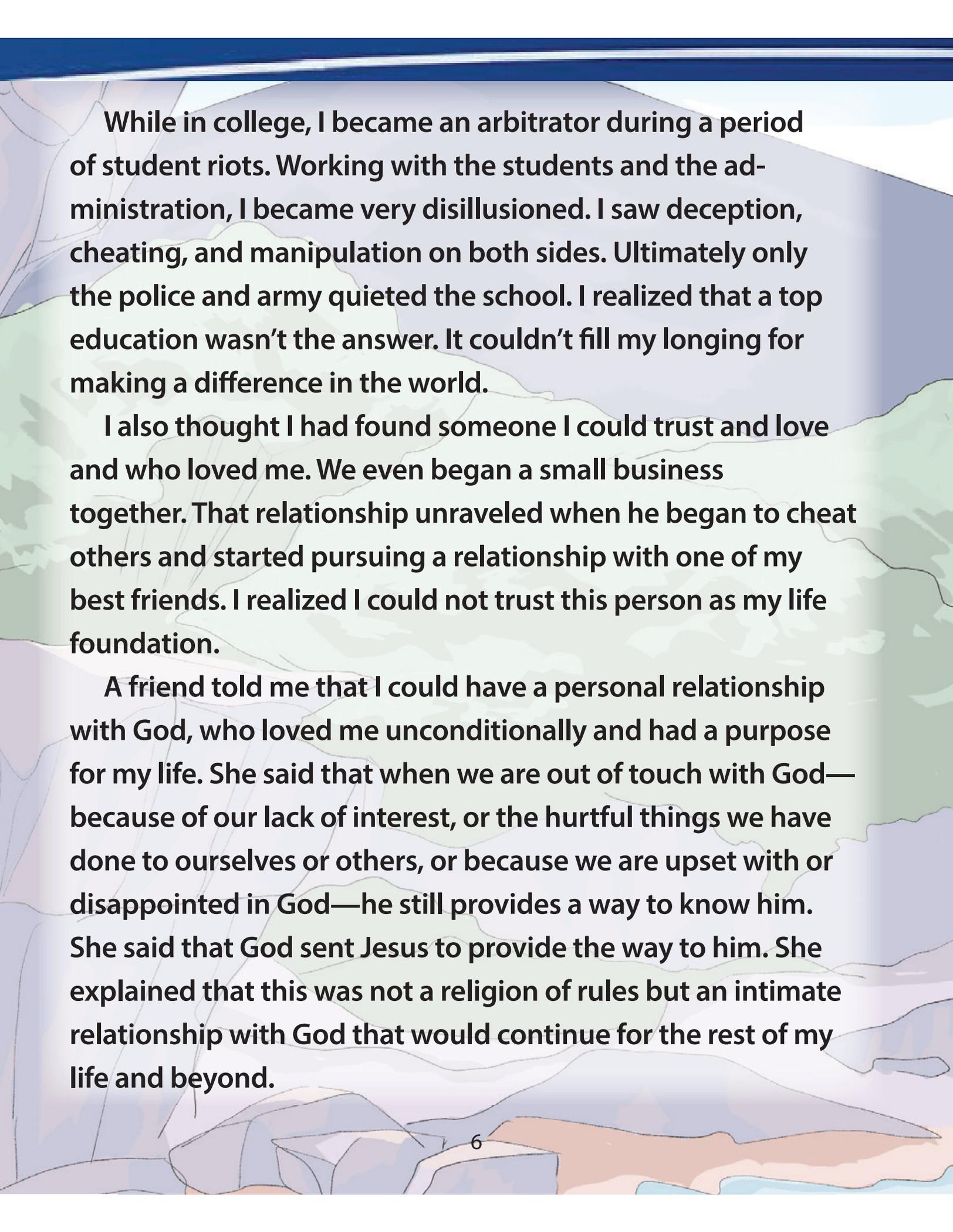
*There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every person that can't be filled by any created thing, but only by God the Creator made known through Jesus Christ.*

•(Bright, W.R....)

## ONE PERSON'S SEARCH

An illustration of five hikers on a trail. The hikers are shown from behind, walking away from the viewer. They are wearing backpacks and outdoor gear. The background shows a mountain range under a blue sky. The style is a soft, painterly illustration with a color palette of blues, greens, and earthy tones.

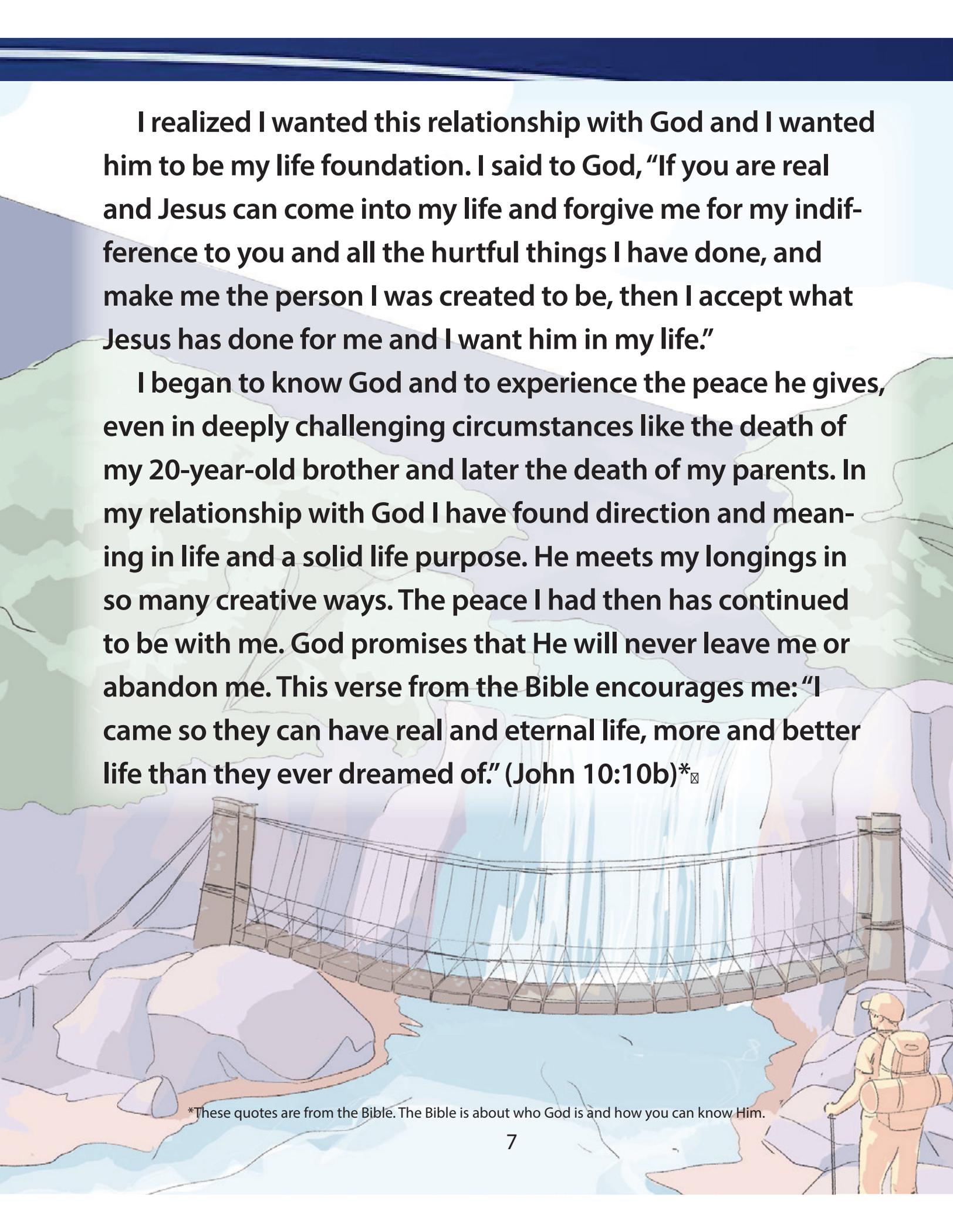
I wanted to make a difference for good in the world and I also wanted to marry and have children. Originally, I concluded that a good education and a loving and trusted relationship were my best foundation for such a life.



While in college, I became an arbitrator during a period of student riots. Working with the students and the administration, I became very disillusioned. I saw deception, cheating, and manipulation on both sides. Ultimately only the police and army quieted the school. I realized that a top education wasn't the answer. It couldn't fill my longing for making a difference in the world.

I also thought I had found someone I could trust and love and who loved me. We even began a small business together. That relationship unraveled when he began to cheat others and started pursuing a relationship with one of my best friends. I realized I could not trust this person as my life foundation.

A friend told me that I could have a personal relationship with God, who loved me unconditionally and had a purpose for my life. She said that when we are out of touch with God—because of our lack of interest, or the hurtful things we have done to ourselves or others, or because we are upset with or disappointed in God—he still provides a way to know him. She said that God sent Jesus to provide the way to him. She explained that this was not a religion of rules but an intimate relationship with God that would continue for the rest of my life and beyond.



**I realized I wanted this relationship with God and I wanted him to be my life foundation. I said to God, "If you are real and Jesus can come into my life and forgive me for my indifference to you and all the hurtful things I have done, and make me the person I was created to be, then I accept what Jesus has done for me and I want him in my life."**

**I began to know God and to experience the peace he gives, even in deeply challenging circumstances like the death of my 20-year-old brother and later the death of my parents. In my relationship with God I have found direction and meaning in life and a solid life purpose. He meets my longings in so many creative ways. The peace I had then has continued to be with me. God promises that He will never leave me or abandon me. This verse from the Bible encourages me: "I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of." (John 10:10b)\***

\*These quotes are from the Bible. The Bible is about who God is and how you can know Him.



**G**od desires to meet your heart longing, to provide forgiveness, unconditional love and purpose.

He desires to be your life purpose through a personal relationship. Knowing God is the strongest life foundation possible.

One of the barriers that prevents us from knowing God personally is our lack of knowledge of who God is and what He has done for us.

The following four points summarize what you read in the previous story. These points will help you discover more about who God is and what He has done for you. You will also learn how you can experience the forgiveness, peace and reality of knowing God personally as your life foundation and having him meet your heart longing.



## GOD LOVES ME

God loves you unconditionally and created you to know Him personally. He wants to meet your heart longing and be your life purpose.

### God's Love

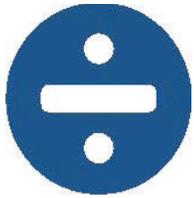
*"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."* (John 3:16)

### God's Plan

*"And this is eternal life; that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."*  
(John 17:3)

*"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."*  
(John 10:10)

*What prevents us from knowing God personally?*



## I LIVE APART FROM GOD

When people are indifferent to God and separated from Him, they cannot know Him personally and experience His love.

### **People's Indifference To God Is An Evidence Of Sin**

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..."*

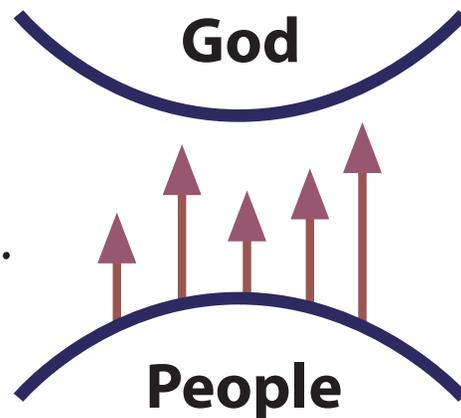
(Romans 3:23)

We were created to experience God's love and have Him meet our heart longing but, because of our stubborn self-will, we chose to go our own independent way and fellowship with God was broken. This self-will, characterized by a heart attitude of active rebellion or passive indifference, is an evidence of what the Bible calls sin. The specific actions we often think of as sin, such as lying, stealing or murder, are an evidence of this heart attitude.

## People Are Separated

*"For the wages of sin is death...  
[separation from God]."*

(Romans 6:23)



This diagram illustrates there is a great separation between us and God because we are imperfect and God is holy and perfect.

The arrows illustrate that when we try to reach God to meet our heart longing by our own efforts, we inevitably fail.

*The third point explains the  
only way to bridge the separation  
between us and God...*

