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## *Author Biography*

Currently, I am an attorney in California, and have been one for twenty-five years. In school, I studied Classical Greek and Latin at an East Coast preparatory school. I received special recognition there as a Classic Language Scholar. I can speak Spanish and Italian.

I have been an evangelical Christian since age 15. It began thirty-three years ago while on a vacation to Florida. I became a Christian on a camp out sponsored by a Baptist Faith Bible Church. I then attended a Baptist church in New York City where I was soon water-baptized. Once in California, I joined Westwood Hills Christian Church in about 1983. Beginning in approximately 1987, I joined a conservative-reformed Calvinist Presbyterian church in Calabasas, California. There for several years, I led the high school class in Bible studies after church as well as frequently taught adult Sunday School classes. In 1998, my wife and I moved to Costa Rica to do missionary work for five years. Our ministry was at Las Tablas. It was one of the poorest *precarios* of San Jose. We worked with another couple in sponsoring weekly Bible lessons. Over several years, approximately 350 children visited the Las Tablas' make-shift soup kitchen and board-and-cement church. God led many of these children and their parents to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

It was during my time abroad as a missionary *without portfolio* (self-funded) that I took time to study some doctrines of the Presbyterian church. In particular, I was troubled by Calvin's teaching about God's role in evil. This led me to question Calvinist predestination doctrine, perseverance of the saints and finally eternal security (its Baptist counterpart).

I endeavored to find the origin of these teachings. It always came back to Paul. Yet, Jesus' words always appeared to differ. I became irritated at what appeared to be an incessant marginalization of Jesus in preference for Paul. This book is the result of asking the question: why not Jesus' words alone?

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I did not start this investigation with any revolutionary agenda. For over twenty-five years of my Christian walk, I have been at home among evangelicals and Calvinists. I never had any reason to doubt standard doctrines.

However, one day my Calvinist pastor taught me what the “reformed” believe about God’s role in evil.<sup>1</sup> What he taught forced me to stop in my tracks. I began to doubt for the first time the trustworthiness of the doctrine held by the church I attended. As to this doctrine of evil, I then realized the pastor and elders had been using a euphemism all along which obscured their doctrine which a more stark term might have revealed. They hid their doctrine under the innocuous label of the ‘sovereignty-of-God-doctrine.’ I later learned this doctrine was first clearly formulated by Calvin. With further digging, I found Paul was always regarded as the most important source for these teachings.<sup>2</sup> However, I felt no pressure on earth could make me accept God as the deliberate author of evil, both of the evil thought and the evil outcome. Then and there, for the first time, I resolved not to compromise my loyalty for Jesus Christ in favor of any tradition of the church.

Then it struck me: ‘What other doctrines could be wrong?’ I soon turned my attention upon my most cherished belief in eternal security. I saw Paul was both friend and an enemy to Jesus’ words in Mark 9:42-47. Paul was a friend to Jesus’ words in Galatians 5:19 but an enemy to them in Romans 8:1. Why this contradictory message from a single mouth? Frustrated, one day it dawned on me: why are we dealing with Paul? Since God came down to earth, who can compare anyway. Wouldn’t the best way to honor and love Jesus be to simply follow His words alone? And thus was born this book, whose sole aim is for you to trust and obey solely the words of the Lord Jesus, unfettered by anyone else’s doctrine. There is only one Teacher. And one Way.

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1. See page 433 *et seq.*

2. See Footnote 60, page 512.