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God.online - Faith Connections and Internet Metaphors

By Lisa M. Hendey

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An Author Interview with James Wetherbe, PhD
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In his book *god.online: Seeking God in the 21st Century* (Mead Publishing, October 2003, paperback, 137 pages), author and Information Technology professor James Wetherbe, PhD gives skeptics practical metaphors to assist them in the quest for spiritual truth. Wetherbe's book abounds with technological references, giving documentation to his own exploration of life's most important questions. The book looks at some of the most challenging questions about life and death, the existence of God, and faith topics.

The book begins with four pivotal questions and attempts to aid the reader, not only in answering the questions, but also in deepening his own "God online" connection. Wetherbe reflects in the book's conclusion that "Seeking is a magnificent lifetime journey." For the many who find themselves at any point along the expedition towards an active and rich faith life, *god.online* would be an excellent map and reference manual with which to enjoy the trip. In the following interview, Wetherbe discusses *god.online* and the importance of making your own connection.

Q: A special thank you to James Wetherbe, PhD, author of *god.online*, for your participation in this Book Spotlight interview. Dr. Wetherbe, please share with our readers your background as an author and educator.

A: I have served on the faculty at the University of Houston, University of Minnesota, University of Memphis and Texas Tech University. Industry experience includes Computing and Software Inc., NCR, Tenneco, and CSC.

Q: For our readers who have not yet read *god.online*, would you please briefly summarize the book.

A: The book is written for the strong willed, spiritually challenged skeptic who struggles with the true existence of God. The title is based upon an Internet metaphor. A personal computer has a great deal of ability but by connecting to the Internet its ability is exponentially enhanced. This connection can be wireless, so there is no physical evidence of being connected other than the access to information and processing previously not available. Similarly, we as human have a great deal of ability, but when we connect to God, wirelessly, we have access to wisdom and guidance that was previously not available to us.

The book provides evidence of and guidance for getting online with God. The book uses a faith/logic approach to seeking God that is based upon what the

reader has/can experience and reason for themselves. The book illustrated how faith is both logical and rewarding.

Q: Coming from the world of academia and technology, it seems odd that you would take on the subject of proving God's existence. What prompted you to write this book and who is your intended audience?

A: Because the most important questions of life center on God and His existence. These were issues that troubled and challenged me most of my life, especially after my best friend suddenly died at age 18.

The field of computer technology taught me to be disciplined and logical in my thinking. Being a professor taught me to be scientific and skeptical in my thinking (which is why so many academics are atheists). I needed to resolve my faith issues in the rigorous way I had learned to think. I would pray to God, I want to believe but my brain works against me. Through time and patience, God helped me resolve my faith issues. The book is documentation of what I learned.

Q: As a lifelong believer, I've always assumed that faith in God was ultimately a giant "leap", not something that could actually empirically be proven but my husband, a physician, is much more into the logical reasoning behind believing. Can we really actually ever "prove" one of life's greatest mysteries?

A: In my experience men are more skeptical of God. Women seem to have a greater intuitive sense of faith. I wish I weren't so stubborn. I believe you can empirically arrive at faith in God. Empirical means experiential or based upon experience. Once you experience a sense of God — seeing your child being born — you can truly work towards an online connection. Once you respond to His guidance, which is usually contrary to your own will, God reveals more of Himself to you. That is part of the experience that is convincing.

Q: I love the technological analogies you use in your book! Why do you feel that the computer paradigm works so well when describing building and nurturing a personal relationship with God?

A: First Christ was a great user of metaphor for teaching. He used the wind to illustrate the Holy Spirit. You can't physically see it, but you can see the effect of it.

For many, the concept of an omnipresent, invisible God that can be reached worldwide by everyone is a real intellectual stretch. If I had told people of the Internet 30 years ago that would not likely believe me. But here is this man-made marvel. That people were talking about "wireless" connection to God through prayer thousands of years ago seems incredibly reasonably and insightful in that context.

Q: What message do you hope to spread with god.online?

A: I just want to help those who struggle with faith with an approach that is based upon logic and reasoning. Both seem important to many in their faith search today. A consequence of the high tech 21st century is people think differently. That is why the Internet metaphor seems to fit the times.

Q: Dr. Wetherbe, author of god.online, thank you again for your time and participation in this interview. Are there any last thoughts you'd like to share with our readers?

A: God.online relies heavily on the promise made throughout the Bible — seek and you will find. It has to be heartfelt seeking, but God keeps his promise. Perhaps this book can help you or those you care about in seeking. If not, don't stop seeking, just find another bridge to help you make the most important connection of life.

For more information on god.online: Seeking God in the 21st Century visit <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1883096030/digitalcropper-20>

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Speak Your Faith

By Daniel N. Brown

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God wants you to live an abundant and prosperous life. But, please don't think the devil is going to just stand by and watch while God outrageously prospers you. The devil's whole purpose is to kill, steal, and destroy. (John 10:10)

Well, if that's the case, what are we to do? Ephesians 6:11 says, "Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." Truth, righteousness, preparation to share the gospel, faith, salvation, and the Word of God is the armor. Verse 16 says, "Above all, take the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the enemy."

Faith is a shield. When the devil's lies come at you, you must know what God's Word says concerning your circumstances in order to quench the devil's lies.

Unfortunately, too many Christians are ignorant of God's Word, so they operate in a spirit of fear, which is the opposite of faith. We cannot operate in a spirit of faith and a spirit of fear at the same time. We will flow in one or the other. We must oppose the spirit of fear and close the door on the devil so we may move forward with God's plan for our lives.

As Faith is our shield (our defense), God's Word is our Sword (our offense).

Now, we must not only believe God's Word, but we must speak it. Our words are containers of power. When all hell is coming against us, we need to hold fast to the confession of our faith and say what the Word says in light of our situation instead of what the circumstances look like or how they make us feel.

Not speaking the positive report of God's Word is the reason why so many believers fall short of receiving God's best. 2 Corinthians 4:13 says, "I believed, and therefore have I spoken."

By speaking negative words we are in agreement with the devil. The door then becomes open for him to produce the very conditions you are speaking. Instead, speak the promises of God, get into

agreement with Him, and you will eventually see God's promises fulfilled in your life.

Daniel N. Brown is the publisher of the "Living the Abundant and Prosperous Christian Life" Newsletter. A free weekly publication that teaches how to live the abundant and prosperous Christian life. Receive a free copy of Dan's 14 page report entitled, "5 Biblical Keys to Outrageous Prosperity," when you sign up. www.secretplaceonline.com/newsletter



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