



## FRANCE AND GOD

### CHAPTER ONE

*Because God is "The LORD I Am", God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, He knows from the beginning the reasons for our misfortunes, this is why where our sin abounds, his Grace overflows!*

### Was I worse than others?

Just like that of yesterday, the today world tries to construct itself an universe in which happiness is in the image from its good, therefore in the image of the "god" that has been built in him. Whether it is called God, money, sexuality or anything else, it is the first place which this "god" occupies in the heart of the man who will condition this latter.

In the religions as in the policy, nothing escapes at this and the world tears one another to assert sometimes the opinions of a few, at the risk that million undergo serious maltreatments and often die of it.

During time that we will spend together, we will try to understand why so many people on the earth claim to act in the name of God and they wage so often the war. Many are indeed the unknown verbal wars of all, in smallest of our societies that is the couple. We don't necessarily call them wars, but most often conflicts.

It is curious to note to which point these conflicts are always condemned by the majority among us, whereas they are the very basis of the individual psychological construction to which we so easily give reason. It is indeed from conflict which arises the subconscious which fixes our understanding and our limits since our earliest childhood. Will we say then the wars are good and necessary, that the tyranny of some is just because indispensable to the progression and the humility of others?

God did not give us in Christ Jesus an example of a tyrant, but on the contrary that of a humble King, attached to the happiness of each one. He never succumbed in front of the adversity and the temptation to behave to the picture of a mere human conditioned by His desires and His passions. It is therefore surprising to note how many men and nations with the passing of the centuries behaved, and still behave to the contrary to the model that He let us, while claiming to act in His name. What was it of it then? What was it then? What is it about today? What will it be tomorrow?

The human race being led today, by a logic whose base from animal nature is more designed to be trained than educated, can she really find peace without God? The Soviet Union have been the perfect demonstration of the possibilities of a people led by a human doctrine having entirely rejected God, whose experience unfortunately only brought physical and moral depravation, like I was a witness of it. We are all links of a chain that writes the history of humanity. How long will

it be tomorrow? Will she continue? Will it stop? Will this chain, guided by a logic designed to manage minor conflicts which are lost from the depths of the mists of time, continue to govern indefinitely this modern world where technologies are no longer human-sized?

Many among us are not worried of it, because more anxious by their immediate future than by the human's destiny. Wouldn't we however be to the eve of an indispensable upheaval of our guide to behavior, without which the worst would be to fear?

We thus will try together, to establish the psychological and spiritual link of our conduct motors; in order to better understand us ourselves, and better understand the will of God for humanity and the politics that leads it. We will do for this a fast historical synthesis of what still channels our collective memory today, which we often confuse with the will of God. Among all these politicians on the right or the left, is there one better than the other? Are they worse than others? For my part: Was I actually worse than others? Or was I just a man?

These questions are not formulated for the purpose of comparison with others, namely whether I am better or worse than some, but so that no one can make a real introspection in that sense and condemns itself. In these interrogations there is a postulate that I had some difficulties to perceive for a long time, as it is fundamental not to condemn any person it may be, but its actions. Whatever we have done, "we are all descended from the same nature," a human nature made in the image of God. If we judge and condemn the man and not his acts, we judge his nature, and that is why we pass judgment on ourselves. Thus we can go so far as to give consciously death to someone who has possibly given it by unconscious motives, under the pretext that the law gives us reason. I think in that respect, that any law prescribing the death penalty would be right, if the text of it ended with "but this chastisement will not be applied, because even if we can have hatred of the acts committed by him or she deserving it, we know too well his nature to take life away from him or her, so this sentence will be commuted to ... " We find again this conclusion in the fulfillment of the divine Law in Jesus Christ. God didn't communicate to us His perfect Law in order to give us the right to eliminate this one who was in the error and harmed to others. On the contrary, He has transmitted it to us to bring to each person the key to the difficulties he reproduces without understanding them, and to put at his disposal the means of remedying them. He is in a way the great universal psychotherapist, by whom everyone can access the best. This better, we have at one's disposal through the repentance of our imperfect acts, because driven by unclean motives, which incite us to perpetually reproduce the same mistakes in many areas, by assimilation to a known context.

As far as I am concerned, my actions would not have all condemned me to the death penalty before the Law of God, but others would have deserved it a hundred times. I am not worse than another! I was born in a Catholic family a little divided between the faith and some wounds of the past, but I however received this teaching from my youth. About nine, ten, or eleven years, I had two or three times, my heart carry away to God, but after the renewal of my solemn communion, I moved away however very quickly from the faith. The first of the causes, quite ordinary in itself, was the behavior of a man of God "no worse than another", but probably clumsy. The wound produced, probably accentuated by my pride and my own mistakes, was going begin to create in me this turning away from God.

At seventeen, I already counted more on myself in all circumstances than in God, to whom I believed less and less. I was divided between my passions for the cycling races, and the work at the post office in which I had entered by chance. At the age of twenty, I still had many weekends in the competition, but I had my own car since two years, and my fervor was evolving towards other sports. A few months before my twenty-one years, the majority of this time, I was also about to do auto racing in Formula Three. Did I really dream about it? Was I simply dazzled by the notoriety that this sport could bring? I cannot say it today. One thing is certain, for lack of parental permission, I never made formula three.

Over the years, God disappeared more and more from my thoughts, and if it still remained in me a few insignificant part of creed, my pride was too large so that I let appear the slightest appearance of it. In the crazy hope of a glorious sporting career, I moreover had imprudently abandoned my work to the profit of my illusions, and having at this time only one banal level of eighth grade learnt by correspondence, the trap had closed again on me. My future, hitherto very well traced at the Post office, had stopped with my intrepidity. I made myself useful in all

that I could accomplish, but despite the help of my family, who did not abandon me, I went through several very painful weeks of moral disenchantment.

My twenty-one years were however not yet over, that already my purpose was drawn. It was then only the very beginning of the ANPE (National Agency for the Employment) and the FPA (Vocational Training for Adults), but the first having led me to the second, I had then immediately noticed the possibility of a path that was going to lead me to a level of draftsman designer in general mechanics, if I persevered enough. I knew got enough abilities in the matter, my conviction was thus great: "I will multiply my efforts and pay me myself what luck had not granted me! I will be a designer draughtsman to have the means to become: Pilot! "

I then lived this ideal as a personal enterprise, a target that I set myself, but I also know that there was in it a faith that God gave me. My journey was certainly not as straight as I could have imagined in the first place, but for my twenty-six years, and despite some inconsistencies, I obtained a diploma equivalent at two years higher education. Three years were going to pass before I made my beginnings of "pilot". The amateur formula was very derisory in relation to my expectations, but for ten years I was going to practice a discipline of motorsport called Auto-cross, to the despair of my wife.

I indeed did not manage to get over single the milestone of my twenty two years. I had then married before the mayor, and in the most perfect hypocrisy: Before the priest. Since then, we had two tremendous little boys, to whom I was never going truly to master the art to do them know. I had learned to fight, and because I assimilated them a little too much to myself, I was for them what I was too often for myself. I was excessive in everything!

In an overflowing life of activity, my assumptions of the existence of God had scarcely subsisted a time, before disappearing. God allowed me to understand since several years that the bit common sense that I had preserved from my childhood had totally faded from then on my first adultery. The equilibrium that I will have received by the wisdom He gives to the one who asks for it, did not risk being granted me and my presumptions were great. God had become for me a human heresy, and the mere mention of the word "God" made anger growing in me. He was, according to my explanations, only an unhealthy imagination of weak who had fears of death, a worse machination still of those who want to enforce their rules and only theirs, but have no respect for others in front of the human suffering, to whom they impose their rules devoid of love and sensuality ". I would have personally liked to help, for example, all those who lack water in the desert, rather than make from these tasks a problem of money.

My passions were however such, that they led me to excesses sometimes very puerile, to see dishonorable, without that it allowed me to make a connection between the bad behavior which I denounced in the others and my own ingratitude towards others. At the same time, I was of course becoming increasingly rebellious to any form of human or divine authority, which I often challenged with sarcasm.

My goals of diploma achieved, the chance of the job market led me gradually to a job designer draughtsman, then that of technician in agro-food and pharmaceutical equipment. This very banal function in itself was going to bring me human experiences, including one in Russia of the old regime, which proves to be today the triggering phenomenon of our reflection, and the subject of our next chapter.

I was gradually climbing towards a social position that was more than enviable for many, and I considered myself a father, if not perfect, but well above average. I brought, it seemed to me, a maximum of distractions and well-being to my family: We had the motor-home, the summer holidays, the winter sports, the weekends with the auto-cross, gifts ... As for my presence, naturally do not talk about it.

I was striving after social success, as many do, without taking aware that the key to happiness is not there. However, I often approached the subject, but the deep meaning escaped me. I was looking for "happiness" for myself and for mine as it seemed good to bring it, but having confused love with what I call today, good ideas "sixty eight hard" <sup>1</sup> to allude to my wedding in June 1968, every time I almost thought to hold it, everything collapsed.

1) French ideology born of the student revolt of May / June 1968, tending to the anti-establishment.

I had been very presumptuous and foolish to consider that goodwill and human sacrifice could replace love. I had thus let myself be bent on marrying a charming girl whom I did not love. It was confounding in reality materialism and happiness, which was going to lead us to tear each other during seventeen years. Seventeen years during which we were not going to agree to hurt our children through a divorce, while at each discord this word was pronounced.

What heresy! They were already dying, and we did not want to hurt them. The apostle Paul in the epistle to the Romans, tells us about it: "for to will is there with me, but to do right [I find] not. For I do not practice the good that I will; but the evil I do not will, that I do." We will not always quote it, but this writing will be the basis of many of our reflections. I was indeed a reflection of this text, because I would have wanted to do good for my children and my wife, but the sin that led me was by far the strongest.

In a very difficult economic conjuncture, my social progression continued to evolve. Conditioned by various circumstances, a brief experience was going besides to be very beneficial to me. From the employee that I had always been, I was going to create my own engineering designer company in agro-food installations, with some industrial friends as partners. I was accustomed to excesses of all kinds, but professionally I was going in addition to work twice as hard. So it was almost constrained and forced that one evening in February, with various friends, I let myself be dragged to a masked ball.

From this one was going born my new life, she was called "Marie-Claude". I will of course pass many the details, but two weeks later, having finally realized at her contact the unsuspected motivation that led me to the various sporting and amorous misdemeanor, things were going quickly evolve. Without really being aware of it, I sought the reciprocity of a woman's love, without accepting to hurt either the one with whom I was married at the time, nor my children.

The idyll between "Marie-Claude" and me had lasted a short week, but for a weekend in the snow, we separated us, both resolved not to maintain an ambiguous relationship of lovers. At the first following grain of sand, the conflict however swept away a "marriage", which had never been in me only a "sacrifice". I agreed to leave the ship, which perhaps had never been at sea during the seventeen years, so much it had been stormy. From that moment, even if a long way remained to be travelled, to formalize the desire of my heart, my wife was going to be called only Marie-Claude.

A page was turning for me, but also for those I had unfortunately hurt. That's why I want to remain moderate, in the enthusiasm of my new life, so much I understand but can not measure it, the torment that this inflicted on my ex-wife and my own children. I would have for nothing in the world wanted to make them suffer, but my limits were only human, and like any human, even of good will, I was only human. Was not this the least bad solution, rather than, driven by too much excess of "good will," I am one day entailed by inhuman attitudes such as can be experienced by some unhappy unbalanced?

Because they know only violence in response to their misunderstanding and misfortune, they are brought to the irreparable, and exceed the human's limits, to give themselves death afterwards.

In contrast to these catastrophes, Marie-Claude and I lived the unexpected. What we both sought in the spouse, we found in the other. We had got to remake the world every night according to us. A world in which people would be considerate and kind towards others, a world in which the inhabitants of the desert would not be thirsty because we would have gone to install pumps to them, a world in which even in the most remote countries, the children would have neither thirst, nor hunger, nor cold, no more diseases, since we would have gone to help them.

Everything was too wonderful, because very quickly things were going to go bad concerning my business. The economic climate was then very gloomy and despite some good technical achievements, less than two years later, the commercial court declared me in cessation of activity.

At the following day of this judgment, whereas the heartbroken I began to definitely file all my documents, a phone call brought me the order that would have saved the company the day before. With the logistical support of industrial partners, however, I treated this market as a

coordinator. Completely financially destitute, I began to accommodate myself to very paradoxical situations. In the daytime, I continued to hold my rank in a suit and tie and business meetings, while at night I was traveling in hitch-hiked at the mercy of the truck drivers, feeding me of few corn apples picked from the fields. I always considered that life was to be active, to see overactive, but I no longer said as I had so often repeated, "I have nothing to do to die at forty, because I will have done a lot more than many to eighty." In the heat of the moment, I had passed them.

In spite of all these tribulations, it remained to our new couple the life, the love, the hope. This hope was going then to be called "Venezuela". The supervision of the installation of a factory had led me to Colombia a few years before, and I was come back entirely won over by Latin America; we had a Venezuelan friend who was considering a collaboration with Marie-Claude in the hospital environment; I had an industrial partner who had a subsidiary company there whose he wanted to diversify production; so we left on a preliminary journey and were came back very hopeful. In the months that followed, however, nothing settled down in this sense.

When I told you, there are some lines, how many affinities we discovered each other Marie-Claude and I, I had deliberately failed to specify a "detail". In the evocation of our ideologies, we certainly spoke spirituality, because having read some books on this subject; I thought I was judiciously inspired. The principal had however never been approached between us: God! Jesus! It would have been enough besides for this theme to be mentioned during our encounter, so that I would immediately and forever flee this retrograde heretic. And yet, God, as for Him, had already almost caught up us. I should say, "had caught up me" rather than "had us", because there was a thing I ignored fortunately, since her childhood Marie-Claude had always prayed to Jesus in the way that her grandmother had taught her.

Mine, my grandmother, or more precisely one of the two, through the suffering the loss of a child and many confusions, had gradually slipped into a form of occultism, which led me to believe in evil. The "evil", the true, the spiritual, which leads to evil in all its dimensions and of which we will speak again in the chapter "The flesh, the war". In the multitude of my presumptions related to our "evolution", I thought of course able to resist it by my own strength, my own will. The good, coming from God in Jesus Christ, being only heresy and lies...

Marie-Claude thus prayed, and only prayed to Jesus Christ, but was not very convinced that He could hear us and especially answer us. She was certainly convinced of the existence of evil as such, but anything that could place it at the spiritual level represented for her only mystical delirium, as she had been taught at the nursing school. Needless to say, that between us the gulf was therefore very big, but as wide as it was, it was probably not too deep. Our survival difficulties had certainly already filled most of it.

To professional and financial miseries, the disease had been grafted on, like a venomous impediment the nascent conjugal happiness. Over the weeks and months, however, the whole was going create between us a common denominator, which was going bring us closer to each other, but especially of God.

I remained always more convinced than ever that God did not exist, but I was no more sarcastic about Him only through few words that I continued to particularly like nevertheless. I particularly liked doing it with Nathalie, a friend we met frequently at that time, and who was recently coming into a sincere Christian conversion. I gladly spent some hours teasing her on this subject, even if from catechism that I had yet studiously learned, I had only little left. One of the few biblical texts that survived in my memory was the wedding of Cana, where Jesus changed the water into wine.

Food liquids, I did not got caught, it was my domain! I was enjoying putting my experiences forward, which left many speechless. Each time, I repeated my perpetual rantings that my interlocutors listened to, until their faith often wavered: "Jesus was an extraterrestrial who had came before his time! On the day of the wedding, before the wine was lacking, he had put magical snake powder in the bottom of the jars, and when the servants had come to report the problem, he had said to them like a great lord: Put water in and the water had turned into wine! These poor shabby of the time had not smell the rat. "And so! All my science was developed!

She annoyed me a little bit this young girl, with her twenty-two twenty-three years, and her simpering airs of another age, but as otherwise I also often managed to silence her, moved by a malignant pleasure, I continued to fight the childishness in which she had been trapped.

If I'm honest they yet began well to shake somewhat my theories these so-called childishness, because in a few moments of solitude, facing my problems that I was assimilating willingly to the result of some occult practices towards us, I see me again recite some "Our Father" and "Hail Mary". It must be said that Mary, the mother of Jesus, by assimilation to her son the extraterrestrial, was in my opinion also "Martian". It was not a question of mere words of contestation or teasing, but rather of an almost unshakable conviction, stemming from my "very spiritual" readings and not from my basic teaching.

One day, however, several weeks after our return from Venezuela, while my hopes for a Franco-Venezuelan structure faded, I **knew; yes I "knew" that three weeks later, this precise day, something would happen that would "upset my life". Do not ask me how I had known? I knew it!**

A few days passed, perhaps a week, when little Nathalie invited Marie-Claude and me to a meeting of the "Full Gospel Business Men". It was as coincidental, the same day that I "knew"??? "Oh, that's weird," I say to myself? And I went no further in my reflections!

The thing had strongly astonished to me, but I carried on at my own pace, in the eventual meeting of some patron of the arts.

On the eve of this famous day, Nathalie visited us in the evening, and as frequently she stayed for dinner. The meal ended, we sat chatting in the living room and our conversation naturally returned to the same subject: God!

I still was not easily taken in! Midnight, one o'clock, two o'clock in the morning, time passed quickly, when Nathalie testified us a miracle she had been witness or that others had reported to her, I don't remember. In the surge of our conversation, I willingly conceded it just as easily as we give a joke, a big "Ah, Ah, Ah, a God like that, I want it well". We did not stop, however, on this "minuscule detail", although unconsciously it had likely questioned me.

Three o'clock approached, when suddenly, apart from any talk due to the conversation, surprised at having never previously realized such evidence, I discovered in myself with astonishment a dimension that I had never suspected in my buffoon interpretation of the wedding of Cana: **"If Jesus was an alien two thousand years ago, He was there was two thousand years, The One I was not yet myself. And by direct deduction, how much more I had to believe Him then, since He already knew at that time, what was still unknown to me that day."**

I think for the majority the same goes for you. For me, nothing has changed; I am still not an astronaut, going to meet extraterrestrial civilizations. True and spontaneous as I had always been, but in a purely intellectual dimension, as we all discovered one day that, one plus one makes two, in the greatest astonishment I then exclaimed: **" But yes ! You're right... No matter who Jesus may have been, whether He was a man or an alien, the important thing is to follow His precepts! "**

It was three o'clock in the morning, and although we were probably somewhat tired, there was nothing exceptional in these words that allowed me to expect any personal reaction, if not perhaps, a good laugh from each one. I was going, however, be carried away from astonishment in astonishment! I had not even finished my sentence, when a shower of happiness flooded me to the point where I was laughing and crying at once. I was in complete misunderstanding of what was happening to me, completely dumbfounded, I wanted to kiss everyone. It was not a dream either, because my immense joy was very real, but it was what I could not premeditate, not knowing it, and I think having never heard of it previously...

This is what some people call "being touched by the Grace of God," and others say a little more biblically: to receive the "baptism of the Holy Spirit," or "to be born again." If my loved ones had not known what I had drunk, they could have believed that I was filled with sweet wine, as was the case with some witnesses of the same manifestation that occurred on the apostles and their entourage, on the day of Pentecost (see Acts 2-13). Everything had suddenly changed for me.

I do not tell you that a few hours later, and after a very little sleep, I saw things really differently during this meeting "of the Full Gospel Businessmen" to which Nathalie had invited us. Nothing

was realized it of all what I had may imagine through this "boof, maybe I'll meet some patron of the arts." What was going to upset my life and that I could have received in this meeting, I had just received Him a few hours earlier, at three o'clock in the morning sitting on my couch, but actually on the same day that I "knew".

This is not a new doctrine, because all the basic Christian religions know the conversation that Jesus held at Nicodemus and whose the apostle John tells us in (John 3-1/10) *There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

*Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?*

*Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*

*Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?*

*Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?//*

No, Nicodemus could not know that, because no religion possesses Him in itself. We can certainly see the fact, and in that to say to know Him, but to make Him live personally, only God can and wants to give Him to humanity. It is up to humanity to say yes to the promises of Jesus, but also to us to accept to come into His works, in the same attitude of heart that He tells us about the wind: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Was I thus worse than others? Did I became better? Did our couple became more holy, since Marie-Claude lived a similar situation a month later? Did our family became better, since other members have lived this too?

I had and we had a lot of good intentions previously, just as we still have today. Have they been all carried out? Not all of them necessarily, because the "wind blows where it wants". This is the difficulty of being carried away daily by the "Wind of God", confident that it will lead us safely.

When Christopher Columbus put out to sea aboard his sailboats, he was in almost the same situation as we were then, and are still today, **because receiving Baptism in the Holy Spirit, is not an end in to believe that you have arrived, but it is: "To know that you have finally left".**