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The man was weary and skeptical. It had been hours since he had stepped outside. Sitting in a chair slouched forward he began rubbing his eyes under his glasses with his palms. Another paranormal investigation wandering deep into the wee hours of the morning. Right before him was the camera placed at the bottom of the stairs in the perfect spot. If anything should happen, the inferred would pick it up. The problem was, nothing was ever picked up. Well, not on his watch. The clock chimed 2 am, and it pricked the hairs on the back of his neck. Gees, he should have shut that thing off. Setting his glasses down he put his head into his arm on the table. I might as well get something out of this: sleep.

The clock strikes 3 but the man never stirs. His head is still comfortably nestled into the crook of his arm. Silently, you can see the shadow of a door opening in the hallway at the top of the stairs. Light brilliantly begins to appear dispelling the doorway shadow. This light catches the attention of the camera below. Its motor whirrs into motion as something draws its eye up towards the light. The lens comes into focus and begins to record. The man wakes up suddenly. “what was that” he says groggily as he fumbles to put his glasses on. So, it begins.

There is something heavy in this place all of a sudden. It’s like all the air had been sucked out and replaced by tremendous pressure. The air was thick. Still half asleep, he peered upstairs. Squinting his eyes and guarding them with his arm he began to witness streams of light protruding from the top of the stairs. This light curved its way down the steps like tentacles. Was it heaven or hell descending down the stairs? Within these streams are silent figures faintly glowing. They came down the steps in an orderly fashion. There is no noise, no fuss, and nothings to distinguish them.

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Suddenly above him near the ceiling there is a flash of light and swirling of mist. The thick air is added to with electricity and fear. What on earth is happening? The swirling mist intensifies with flashes of something bursting from the ceiling. Watches and jewelry plunged to the floor and scattered all over the room. The man leaps backwards and falls over his chair. He crawled backwards like a crab just trying to get out of the way. Suddenly, the camera lens droops to the floor, and as quick as it all began, the room falls nearly silent except the ticking of the clock on the wall. The door upstairs effortlessly closes as the light fades.

A trickle of sweat rolls down the paranormal witness's face as he seems frozen in time. Faintly, the man hears only one other sound: his heartbeat pounding. A coin is rolling towards him. He shrinks back in horror as if being attacked. The coin rolls in a circle several times and then falls over dead right before his feet. The room felt dead. The air seemed dead. The man wishes he was dead.

This paranormal witness sat there in shock and amazement. His friends come running in the room from other parts of the house. They frantically rewind the tape. Snapping on the TV, the screen goes from static to clear. There it was in living HD. Their first real encounter with the paranormal. The man drove away the sweat from his brow and realized his glasses were on upside down. Before him on the screen were living souls coming down the stairs. Well, I suppose they are the dead, but he saw them live and personal, passing before him for the first time in his life.

These lucid orbs were obviously people passing by the camera lens. You can clearly see that now. They look listless and lost. Oblivious to their watchers. Caught in between the here and there. They were the souls of the dead. These paranormal witnesses rejoiced to see the dead.

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They rejoiced to see a ghost: the things unexplained. What they forgot was that they had just witnesses the essence of who we are. Even in death we still exist. it's the souls of people.

This was a scene from the movie *Poltergeist*. That film scared me to death as a teenager. Why I mention it is because of that scene with the souls. They were people. Well, they were at one time. Yet, the movie reminded me that most of us believe our soul is more than flesh and blood. There is something deep within each of us. Something that makes my brother different than me. It makes my wife act different, think different, and be different than me. I meet these souls every day. They are at Tim Hortons, at work, and anywhere else I go. They are people.

It comes down to this for me. Everything that has happened to me after I was 33 years old has changed my soul. Before then, I lived in the in between. I was not dead, but my life before then felt dead. I existed, wandering around lifeless. I was indeed listless and lost. Who was I? I certainly was alive, but I acted as if I was the walking dead. Yet, I needed to be there. I needed to feel dead. Why? To appreciate that every soul is a person. You see, inside I wanted to live, thrive, and feel alive. What I've come to see is that we all want that. Every person I meet is a soul just wanting to thrive. I can see that now.

That movie *Poltergeist* has taught me plenty. There are lost souls and angry souls. Some are frustrated while others just play tricks because they were bored. Within all the mayhem was the inability to find their way home. Doesn't that perfectly describe the people we meet in life. We are all different. Some are funny while others seem hard. We are souls interacting in our daily lives. In the movie, they were lost and deceived. I have read that in some instances a person might not know they have died. It seems so real to me now. No matter if you're a ghost or physically alive, we tend to wander through time searching for meaning.

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Who knows what happens when we die. Some say we go straight to heaven while others think there is a time of wandering in purgatory. It's the place between life and death. I'd like to believe we fall asleep in death. Who knows really. There are good arguments either way. This soul thing seems so real. I have met angry souls that seem to lash out. I have encountered silent souls and laughing souls. There are so many people that think and act in vastly different ways. What happens to all these people when they die? Do they just disappear or does a soul remain?

In the Movie, *The Raiders of the Lost Ark*, they were all trying to find the resting place of the Ark. It was said to be called the *Well of the Souls*. In reality, this "well of the souls" is amazingly under the Islamic *Dome of the Rock* in Jerusalem. Islamic tradition says this dwelling place for souls is in a hidden chamber under the Dome. Jewish tradition has this same chamber to be the Holy of Holies: *The Chamber of God* in the old temple. Either way this is a sacred and spiritual place. I can't imagine the ruckus that would be caused if Jewish leaders decided to rebuild Gods temple there. They would have to tear down the Dome. In any circumstance, the fate of souls is bigtime personal. We don't take the soul lightly.

There are even more interesting traditions of the soul. The Jewish religion says that all souls come from the *Tree of Souls* in the garden of Eden. They are later put in the *Treasury of Souls* that could also be called *The Guf*. The Movie *the Seventh Sign* is based on the notion of the last soul. Is the soul a thing that can be produced or grown? Is the soul a person? Is God connected to souls? Is Satan the stealer of souls? Why does he want them? So much talk about the soul.

In Greek philosophy, the soul is the most popular topic. They like to debate the essence of the soul. What is it? In many terms, the soul is deemed a spirit. Just like in the poltergeist

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movie. Do we all have a soul? I have met some that I wonder if they do. Does the soul remain after we're dead? There is an interesting argument over its existence. Consider this scenario. One man dies in an accident and loses his head. Another man is killed the same day and his body is destroyed but the head remains intact. Doctors found they could put the remaining head and body together to save a man. The question arises: which man's soul survived?

Right from the beginning of this book I wanted to talk about feeling dirty. Yet, I wanted to let people know that they certainly are not dirty. It's just that, at times, we feel that way in the company of others. Am I crazy, or does my inner being feel something in the presence of others? We get a sense of something around people. I believe that it is our souls interacting. It sounds creepy or weird but hear me out. It's the sixth sense or déjà vu. It's just a feeling. How often have you just felt something towards another? It might have been a connection from the first time you met. First impressions are far more than just eye tests. Maybe it has to do with the soul? I think that interaction is why I feel dirty in the presence of others at times.

There were some commercials years ago, about Dove antiperspirant. The Slogan was *Are you under the Dome?* The lid looked like a dome, but it was depicted as a covering. People were walking around with orbs or domes over their body. I have always thought of that when I smell a nice perfume. Do we come into contact with a person's spirit? Are we walking orbs that we cannot see? I did not want to get mystical, but we interact with people all the time. Some of it is physical and other times it's spiritual. What happens when souls touch each other's space?

I have always thought that I feel dirty in the company of others for various reasons. Maybe I carry a bad spirit about myself. I have met people who seem depressed. Are they? I have had someone ask if I needed a hug even without me asking for one. What do they feel about

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me that inspires them to hug me? Other times I get weird feelings about certain individuals. The other day I finally met a fellow who I had viewed from a stage but have never talked to in person. In a closed room, next to him, I got bad vibes. What was up with that? Why did I feel he didn't really care about me? I don't feel that way with others I have met.

To some degree, I think it's the passing of two souls. Some people think our spirit (or soul) can be measured like electricity. I don't know. Yet, my wife gets feelings about people pretty quick. Is she feeling or experiencing the souls of another? Each person in the Christian life is given at-least one, what they call, a spiritual gift. To best describe it is to say that we are given a talent to work for God. To some, that might be public speaking. For others that could be writing, compassion or the gift of hospitality. This gift is usually used to promote God by serving others. For my wife and I, we have the gift called *The Burden bearer*.

This happens to be a particularly nasty gift. Why on earth would God give someone a nasty gift? Ok, nasty is a harsh word, but this kind of gift is hard on you. The burden bearer feels the pain of others. Not only that, but we usually feel crummy and don't know why. Basically, we come across your sad troubled spirit and react to it. A seasoned burden bearer will recognize this experience and pray to God about it. Many times, we pray about the feeling without even knowing who is in pain. Sometimes we find out days or weeks later who it was.

That is why I believe the souls of people interact. I have felt too much pain. I have prayed over weird feelings too many times. I have heard too many stories of unexplained healing through prayer. Many people don't even know that God had me touch your soul and pray for you. It's a tough gift to have. Yet, it has softened my soul towards troubled people. I have begun to see

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people as hurting and wanting. It's not for me to do something for them. I have no great wisdom.

I just pray for the hearts and souls of those I come into contact with.

I suppose I have gained compassion because of your and my soul. I don't really see people as angry or troubled anymore. Now I see souls that need a lift. I feel souls that want peace. Recently I have tried to take more time to lift up souls rather than condemn them. In poltergeist it's almost too late. These souls are dead. Yet, someone must lead them to the light. Maybe God wants me to lighten the day of the living souls. It sends shivers up my spine just thinking of all the souls I met each day. There are so many and so little time.

At times, though, souls do mess with us in the wrong way. I call it negative energy. Some days I have been angry at humanity. I agree with my wife that far too many people are mean. I have met lazy, careless, and stupid people. It's not for me to judge, but gee some people suck. On the highway, you have seen it all. There is the dude in the slow lane going far below a safe speed. Then there is the other guy. He is weaving in and out of traffic as if he had to pee really bad. Then there are the ones like me. I'm in the middle lane just observing the speed limit. For me it's all about traveling barely under the limit. It's like we're all just souls racing through life at different speeds. I'm not a road rage type of guy, but some people drive me crazy.

There are people at work that pull my chain the wrong way. I really need to let work go sometimes. Management can ruin my day. I like my job done a certain way. I have a routine. It's frightening to think of retiring. What would be my routine without work? Yet, this has been training ground. I meet souls every day. I feel their burdens some times. I notice troubled souls. It's been hard, but I want to look at people differently. They are more than road rage, lazy

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workers, or even the unsaved. In my heart, God has tried to show me that there is no distance between the saved and unsaved. Were all souls in the same sphere. We need each other.

When I became, a Christian I was led to believe that our souls could be changed. If you believe in Jesus, then your attitude and outlook on life would be altered forever. I certainly can attest to that. I am radically different now. Yet, what changed the most is my perception of people. I was told that in time I would become cleaner and cleaner. In other terms, more holy like God. What I have found is what Paul did in Romans 7:19 **“For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do--this I keep on doing.”** That is coming from a man that God decided was worthy to be in the Bible. He must have been clean and holy? No, Paul feels dirty in the mist of holiness. Why did he believe he was dirty?

It seems there is a struggle going on in our soul. We think were good and then say something stupid. We make a mistake and someone praises us. It seems our actions are related to the condition of our soul. I have wondered if were all that bad, or just maybe, there is more to it. Is it possible we attempt to be most than we are when we wear masks? Are we hiding our soul? I know way too many good people who have done bad things. Sometimes I come across the nicest people who could care less about God, yet they have a good soul. The *Well of the Soul* seems so fitting. There is a ton of good and bad residing deep within the well of our soul.

I get Paul. People are people. No matter how good they claim to be, they will continue to lie, cheat, swindle, and do anything to look better than they are. This is not an indictment on humanity. I find all people to be interesting. Why I feel that way is interesting too. I have tried to live a clean life, but find that I fall more often than I want to. I knew a very Godly man who smoked. He always said before he died “I know it’s not Christian, but...” That was the beginning

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of a journey for me. I not only realized that I was imperfect, but I can see that everyone is a little off. I also realized that all souls seem a bit troubled.

One of the worst parts of religion is the degree of separation. Have you ever noticed people and religion? No matter what you believe, there will automatically be separation. Time after time people change into the religion they chose. Then they only hang out with Jewish, Muslim, or Christian types. This segregation blew my mind. I thought God was all about love and community? Yes, as long as you love what they love. In reading the Bible I realized that Jesus tried to hang out with them all. I try to do that too. It's caused me a heap of trouble too. Lucky for me, God has imprinted on me to love all the souls he made: all of them. No matter what others say, I know Jesus thinks it's the right thing to do.

To accept yourself is tough. To except others is equally as hard, if not harder. People can piss you off. There are individuals that make me scratch my head a lot. God asks us to love our enemies. I have often wondered why I fall from grace at times. Why do I do what I don't want to do? I guess were all human. That's what they say. However, I hear the people gripe and grind against their fellow humans. Then it hit me. We are all people. We are all souls wandering this earth. Each of us have reacted to the world around us. Underneath all this anger and happiness are souls.

In life, it would be easy to be angry, disillusioned, and unhappy with humankind. We are not as nice as we think we are. When a person does not get what they want, it usually goes badly. As Children, we have been affected by events around us. Over time those events have shaped us. People are not born with angry souls. I could never accept that a baby is born to murder. Yet, we grow up and our soul becomes good and bad. I knew a man who was really bad in my eyes. I

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was stunned he was divorced. That would mean he was married once. Who would marry that guy? He was horrible. Yet, along the way he was the soul of a child gone wrong.

That is why my heart breaks for people. Yes, I am Christian, but God has put me through hell to see people in a good light. This was not just some epiphany. I hurt. I feel dirty in the presence of some. I was shy. I had a disjointed childhood. It could have been easy for me to hate. Yet, through it all I have gained compassion for souls. My enemy was a child once. My ex-wife, bad manager, and horrible Prime Minister were children. They were good souls. Somewhere along the way people are changed. My soul bleeds for their soul.

This book is dear to me because I bleed for others. Yes, I get angry about people. I'm still human. However, I want to understand you. I want to learn about you. It's not about compromise even though that is a good thing at times. It's more about understanding the souls I meet. The question I have for those I cross paths with is this. How can I make it easier for your soul to find what it's looking for? It's like the movie poltergeist. The Psychic lady is called in to help lead the souls to the proper home. She had to fight to keep them from going the wrong way. That's my desire too.

I am not a medium or psychic. I am just someone who feels for others. Why? Because I have been abused and worn down in life. I desperately don't want that for anyone. The troubling part is the soul. At times, I feel things in my soul and want to speak out. That is not always the best answer. Sometimes it's all about being quiet and praying. One time I made the mistake of mentioning a feeling to the wrong person. It was the right feeling but this individual took it the wrong way. That mistake cost me a friend. That incident changed me and the way I treat people.

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I made a pact with myself to do two things differently. One is check my feelings at the door. Just because I have an opinion does not give me the right to share it. The second is *be a friend first*.

In our lives, we meet all kinds of souls. Some we accept and others we reject. I spent countless hours wanting to know why my ex-wife rejected me. Not so much to get her back, but so that I do not make the same mistake again. Over and over I rolled this around in my brain and heart. Why do we love and then hate? Why do we accept and then reject? I think it comes down to agenda and expectations. Is it possible to like or love someone just because they are who they are, or must there be expectations? Can I accept all the souls I touch unconditionally?

That's when it hit me again. It's not just that people are people. It's not just that each of them are souls. No, it's more than that. They are people. We are all on this planet together. Once again it was the church that changed my view. I have met so many people who belong to an organization like a church. We call ourselves one of them in the group we belong to. What happens when someone in the group is different? Usually people distance themselves. It's not just church, but I have seen it there far more often than in other places. Being different is not acceptable in most groups.

It's the churches mandate to ask people to believe in Jesus. In many Christian circles, they say to surround yourself with Christians. I bet that is the same in the Muslim world. I get it because likeminded people are safer. The problem is friendship. I know certain Christians that give you three chances to come their way or the friendship stops. I spent three months getting to know a fellow Christian in a ministry endeavor. One day he realized we thought different on several topics. He ended the friendship. What it means is twofold. One, there was never any

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friendship to begin with. Secondly, friends is not the primary goal. Instead it's about being, thinking, and living a certain way. A lemming's community. That is not friendship.

My goodness people: we are all souls looking for happiness. The reason so many wear masks is because we are told to hide our souls. When a person bares their soul, it seems that all hell breaks loose. We should be celebrating freedom of the soul, not condemning it. I think the reason people feel dirty is because they want to bare their souls, but they feel shamed in doing so. I want people to know the real me. That seems to irritate some. I used to believe that some people just rub others the wrong way. They were never meant to be friends. Yet, there is something sad in all that. Friendship should be the gathering of souls, not the judging of them.

I firmly believe that judging souls is a crime. We should get along with others. The problem is the permission. Do you give yourself permission to bare your soul? Do you think that it is childish, stupid, or embarrassing? Yet, you get stuck being a stone, stick in the mud, and anal. Why is being a child so liberating? It's because they have permission to be themselves. They are encouraged to discover themselves. Yet, as adults, we clam up, shut up, and close up. Our souls become lost and angry. It's no wonder that when people die they float around lost in-between. When you have rejected your soul all your life then what happens when it's all you have left? You're left in limbo not knowing you or where you're supposed to be.

It all begins with friendship of souls. It's not just about finding a soul mate. I think it's about liberating your soul to breathe. We need to be free of expectations, judgments, and conditions of friendship. We need to rewire what a friend is. As a kid, we had tons of friends based on very little expectations. The older we get the more restrictions there are. Those walls

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and restrictions need to go. Most of what makes me notice I feel dirty around others is their inability to accept me unconditionally. That is the shame of it all.

So how do we do that? How do we free our soul? It begins with building friendships. It begins with understanding that all souls are precious. It begins with dismantling preexisting conditions for liking someone. Maybe it comes down to putting away our masks. Either way it has to be done to free your soul. Some well-meaning Christian would say it starts with Jesus. Oh, I hoped they would say that. I now have them right where I want them. I am looking squarely at you Mr. Christian. Jesus loved people because he loved souls. Each person was different. He did not care if they were Roman or Samaritan. He put no stock on Jew or gentile. He cared less if they were female or male, adult or child. Jesus loved them all. He wanted to know them all. The Christian ministry was founded on Jesus wanting a relationship with you? The problem was that you thought it was to save you. You are dead wrong.

Even if you're not Christian this is great stuff. Friendship is not based on conditions. If you are considered Christian, then maybe it's time to take a page out of the life of Jesus. You see, Jesus did not put conditions on friendship. He met and accepted people before they believed. He met a tax collector, fishermen, centurion, and Pharisee. Each of these people did not know who God really was. Jesus mentioned several times that "if they only knew who they were talking too." None of these people believed in Jesus before they met him. Yet, Jesus came to their house and spent time in their lives.

If you read the Bible and studied it, you might discover that Jesus never once asked anyone to believe. He said 'if' you believe then you would gain eternal life. Who did Jesus outright offer the gospel to, kneel down with, and prayed a saving prayer? Oh, right it was none.

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Why were the Disciples and religious rulers astounded by Jesus half the time? It was because he was hanging out with the least. I call them the dirty. Jesus was always everywhere you least expected to find him. I believe he made friends first and salvation second. That's why I say friendship first is paramount to saving souls.

Our soul exists. For centuries, they believed it. Just because you can't see it does not mean the soul is not there. I know you have felt your soul. You have felt pain, fear, rejection, and many other pangs deep inside you. It's a rattled soul you felt. They say the term soulmate because when two souls collide we know it. I think the soul knows what a real friend is. It knows what real love is. A soul becomes haunted when there is the absence of love. The soul is not something to be taken lightly.

Let's begin to work on the feeling of being dirty. These last 8 chapters paint a picture of a weird feeling deep inside. Is it others we feel? Is it within ourselves? I have wondered why we wear masks and call others crazy. Who is normal and who is dirty? Why is a hard heart such a sad thing? Church has a role of blame in all this. They were supposed to be a light for souls. They were supposed to be the curators of love.

The friendship of two souls is a beautiful thing. This next chapter is plainly called "Love" Friendships are true if we love unconditionally. We should care about the person in the mirror if we unconditionally love that person. Our feelings about people can change with love. Understanding of one's soul helps. Who are they? Really, who are you? I feel that deep love comes from knowing a person deeply. I like the word deeply because we can fall deeply in love. This seems like such a corny and common Phrase *All you need is love*. is love that simple? Let's dissect that.