

## SAY SOMETHING INTELLIGENT AND COMPLETE

How many of you were dismayed when you read the title to Chapter 6 – “Disowning God”?

When considering this title I found myself aware of Barbara Taylor’s comment as she moved from classroom to the podium as a guest speaker and so I paraphrase that you, my friends, “rightfully expect me to say something both intelligent and complete.” (Taylor – pp 102).

With emphasis on “intelligent” my remarks will, understandably, be brief.

To **disown someone** is to reject them. If you **disown** a person, you refuse to have anything to **do** with that person: not only **do** you not speak or have contact, but it's as if he's no longer related to you. When one person disowns another, it's because of some terrible argument or deep-rooted conflict.

I cannot accept this meaning of disown in the context of my relationship with God; rather, I believe there may be at least two interpretations – there is the message of sharing God with those of other faiths – perhaps the message that God owns ALL of us no matter the faith we profess is the more important.

This latter message is, in my opinion, a positive message of hope for all humanity.

Last week we visited the mosque, Baitan Nur of the Ahimadiyya Muslim Community.

I asked the Imam “Do you think the God you worship and the God I worship is the same God?” to which he replied “YES”.

Think of the First Pillar of Islam -- The **first Pillar of Islam** is for the believer to testify, in Arabic, that "There is no god but God and that Muhammad is His messenger."

This phrase, known as the shahada, (sha-HEH-da) or Profession of Faith, is central to **Islam**, for it affirms both God's oneness and the central role of the Prophet.

Thinking of Christianity, is it not true that we express God as the “Father” and as we read the testaments does it not become clear that Jesus Christ – his only Son is also his messenger? The Apostles Creed and The Nicene Creed both reaffirm this with the words “I believe in God the Father almighty .....and in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord.”

As I continued my reading “the oneness of God” overtook my thoughts, giving way to the joy of being one individual that is cared for by God as I stand beside God’s multitude which comprises all humanity.

Chapter 7 -- “The Shadow Bearers” presents the many obstacles that we create in forging meaningful relationships with people we deem to be different from us.

Ms. Taylor warns of the danger of reliance on opinions expressed out of anger or misinformation. She cautions us to not let expressions and actions of a few uninformed capture our understanding.

We should try to look at the “Goodness” in peoples rather than the “Badness” bearing in mind the “Evil Doers” are in the minority of people.

Tonight we will close with a poem written by Edgar Guest in an anthology entitled Friendship, a book previously owned by Carlie Jean’s mother — I suggest that you exchange the word “fellow” for the word “faith.”

### WHEN YOU GET TO KNOW A FELLOW

By Edgar A. Guest

When you get to know a fellow, know his joys and his cares,  
When you’ve come to understand him and the burdens that he bears,  
When you’ve learned the fight he’s making and the troubles in his way,  
Then you find that he is different than you thought him yesterday.

You find his faults are trivial and there’s not so much to blame  
In the brother that you jeered at when you only knew his name.  
You are quick to see the blemish in the distant neighbour’s style,  
You can point to all his errors and may sneer at him the while.

And your prejudices fatten and your hates more violent grow  
As you talk about the failures of the man you do not know,  
But when drawn a little closer, and your hands and shoulders touch.

You find the traits you hated really don't amount to much.

When you get to know a fellow, know his every mood and whim,  
You begin to find the texture of the splendid side of him;  
You begin to understand him and you cease to scoff and sneer,  
For with understanding always prejudices disappear.

You begin to find his virtues and his faults you cease to tell,  
For you seldom hate a fellow when you know him very well.  
When next you start in sneering and your phrases turn to blame.  
Know more, before you censure, of his business and his name.

For it's likely that acquaintance would your prejudice dispel,  
And you'd really come to like him if you knew him very well.  
When you get to know a fellow and you understand his ways,  
Then his faults won't really matter, for you'll find a lot to praise.

