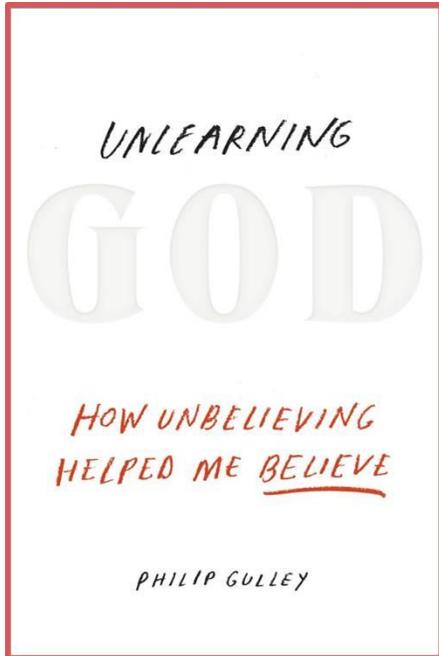


# UNLEARNING GOD: HOW UNBELIEVING HELPED ME BELIEVE

By Philip Gulley

**An illuminating spiritual memoir from America's favorite Quaker storyteller shows how beliefs learned early must often be *unlearned* so that more helpful and enduring understandings can thrive.**



With his trademark humor and gentle wisdom, Philip Gulley is a spiritual director any wayward pilgrim could warm to. In **UNLEARNING GOD: HOW UNBELIEVING HELPED ME BELIEVE (Convergent; OSD: 9/25/2018)**, he invites readers into his own sometimes irreverent, sometimes daunting, but always refreshing journey of soul-deep reconstruction. In addition to lovers of Gulley's works, this is a book for readers whose faith has been challenged by the world around them. Gulley teaches the reader to let go, or *unlearn* these burdensome obstacles in their faith so that they can forge a more authentic relationship with God.

Raised in small-town Indiana by a Catholic mother and a Baptist father, and proselytized by Jehovah's Witness neighbors, young Gulley struggles with the absurdity of all three camps being utterly convinced the other two are

doomed. To nearly everyone's consternation, Philip grows up to become a Quaker pastor. "Someone else's faith," he writes, "is a poor substitute for having our own." Yet even his own tradition, he discovers, serves best as a way point in the serious, lifelong process of letting go of inherited certainties in order to flourish.

Driven by Gulley's trademark storytelling and chapters bookmarked by small sections titled "Why this Matters," Gulley identifies a number of tenants, dogma, and conventions in his religious journey that he has chosen to "unlearn" on his quest for an all-encompassing faith, including:

- **THE CANCER OF CERTAINTY:** The danger of dogma and religious certainty as it begets "othering" and divisiveness
- **WE REVERED WOMEN TOO MUCH TOO LET THEM LEAD:** The lack, or total absence of female representation in faith leadership positions
- **REGARDING SEX:** The deprivation of sex education and the condemnation of intimacy in the Church
- **GOD IS EVERYWHERE, BUT MOSTLY IN AMERICA:** The unhealthy marriage of faith and nationalism in America and on the global stage

Writing in the tradition of Barbara Brown Taylor, Rob Bell and Rachel Held Evans, Gulley showcases his well-loved gift as a narrator of the American religious experience and his acute sensibilities as public theologian in conversations that will charm, provoke, encourage and inspire.

**Philip Gulley** is a Quaker pastor and popular author and speaker. He has written twenty-two books, including the Harmony fiction series, the Porch Talk series of inspirational essays, *If Grace Is True: Why God Will Save Every Person* (coauthored with James Mulholland), and *The Evolution of Faith: How God Is Creating a Better Christianity*. Gulley holds a master of divinity degree from Christian Theological Seminary. He is co-pastor of Fairfield Friends Meeting in Camby, Indiana.

**For more information, please visit:** <https://www.philipgulley.com>