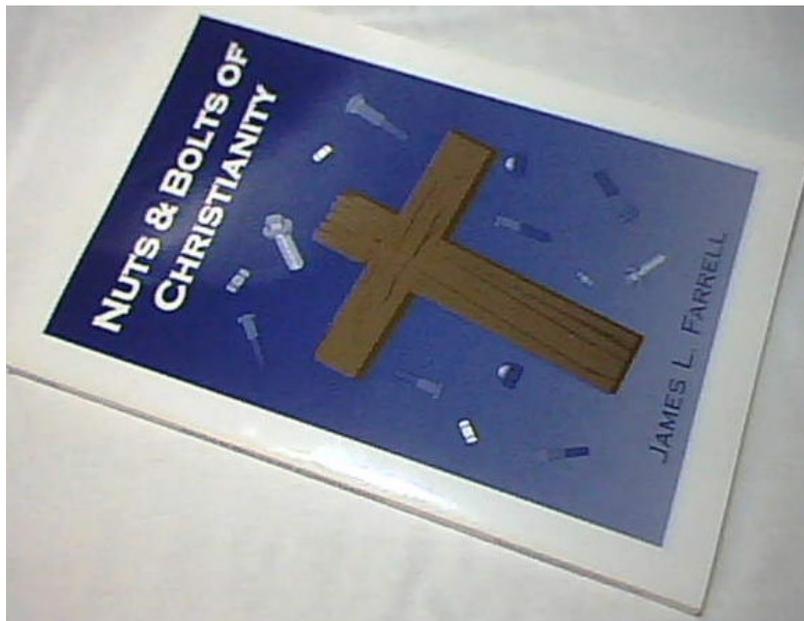


Some background for a practical book *Nuts & Bolts of Christianity* that I self-distributed in 2005: Immediately let me emphasize that it is *not* authoritative, *not* lofty, *not* fire-&-brimstone, etc. – frankly my impression is that most people dismiss almost all religious literature as too "blue-sky" or too judgmental (often angry/threatening). Many who might "tune out" conventional books on this topic could relate more easily to a practical interpretation – I'm an engineer who wants to know how it works and what the benefits are (fortunately there's a ton of those).

As noted in the dedication, this little book was originally donated to the Salvation Army. I kept about two hundred copies (for distribution to friends), and had several hundred shipped to them. They bulk-sold to Amazon plus other Internet sources (it appeared at many Internet sites, though most are now sold out); but as a result the Salvation Army didn't earn nearly as much as I had intended.



During a vulnerable time for me, an idealistic way of thinking – transmitted among Christian groups – helped to influence my thoughts. Significance of that is derived from some fundamental facts {e.g., (1) thoughts drive decisions and (2) at a crossroads, right decisions about seemingly minor issues can produce surprisingly major benefits}. As a result I was reasonably prepared when some clouds cleared. That doesn't mean I'm at all qualified to "teach the teachers" about Christianity (I'm not) – but this book can clarify some fundamentals.

The book is aimed at practical-minded people because

- there are so many of us, and
- practical minds will gain the most from what I've learned about Christianity.

Insights can help in struggles of the type mentioned in the book. If benefits occur, I wouldn't claim credit; the real giants are those who consistently put others' needs far ahead of their own. Still, while most of us aren't like those few who did much (Mother Teresa or Drs. Tom Dooley and Paul Carlson), we can be among the many who each did some lesser amount. To those who, like myself, can't be among the world-changers, I'm saying: keep on truckin' – efforts pay dividends you often don't see..

Reasons for all the real-world emphasis were driven by my perceptions (there's a shortage of that) and, anyway, a ton of authoritative lofty principle-oriented literature was already available (from authors with qualifications I lack; no need for me to parrot it)..

A final observation: This book probably seems out of character to those who know me, seeing me act like a demented imbecile half of the time (anything for a laugh). As noted in the book, it isn't about the writer, it's about the message. There's enormous value in the message.