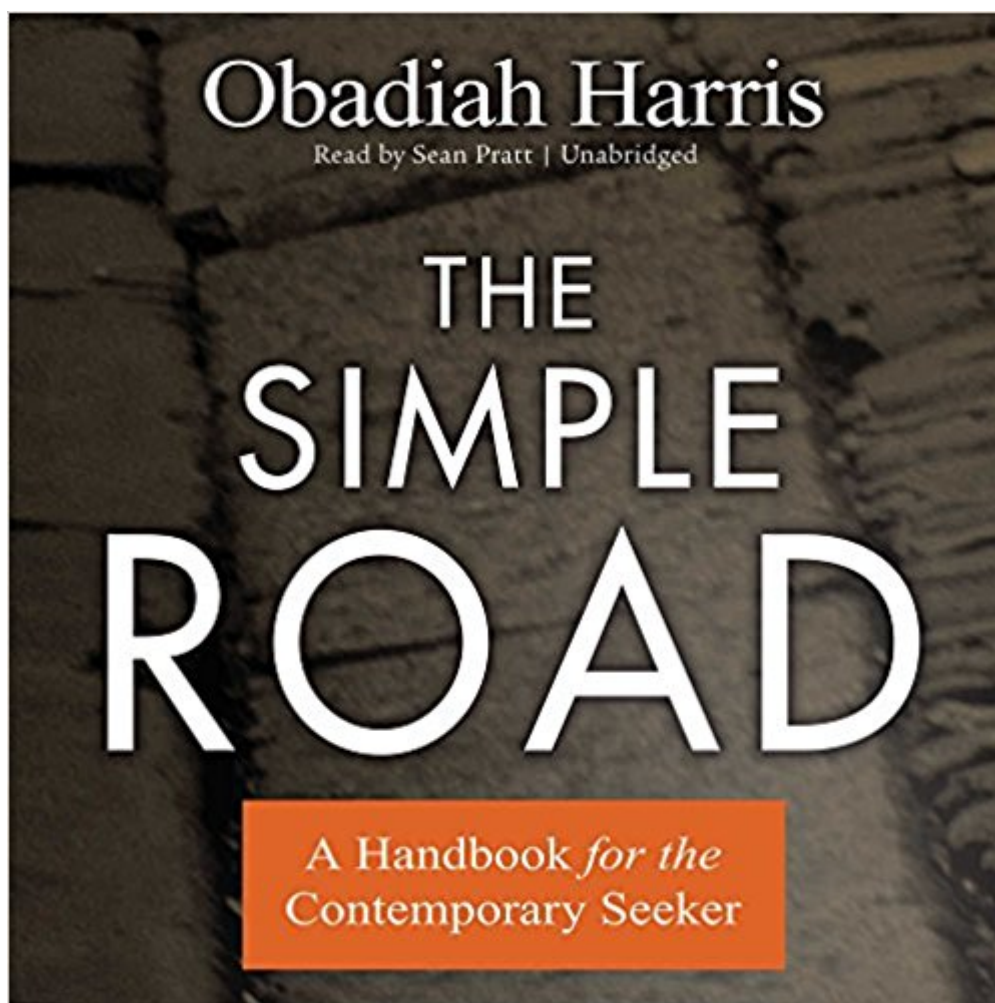


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# The Simple Road: A Handbook For The Contemporary Seeker



## Synopsis

[Read by Sean Pratt] This elegant, concise guide by the founder of the University of Philosophical Research distills a lifetime of spiritual seeking into one beautiful, unforgettable blueprint for inner growth. For more than half a century, Obadiah Harris has studied the spiritual path, holding ministerial pulpits in traditions ranging from Pentecostalism to New Thought, and directing programs in continuing education, community outreach, and distance learning at major universities. He has worked with the ideas and legacies of spiritual icons ranging from Manly P. Hall, author of the landmark *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*, to Ernest Holmes, founder of the Science of Mind movement, America's most successful and intellectually rigorous New Thought congregation. As a scholar and seeker, Harris has traversed and helped shape broad swaths of our modern spiritual landscape. Now, he distills the insights he has found -- all of them potent, powerful, and above all, useful -- in *The Simple Road*. This concise statement is a spiritual GPS that guides the earnest seeker past dead-ends and switchbacks to locate the path that most intimately and directly connects us with the source of all life. The methods and ideas in this book can help rescue you from a crisis and provide a daily source of practice. This brave work addresses head-on topics that are often shunned or ignored in works of "proper" theology, including the question of physical healing by spiritual means -- a topic treated with the deepest seriousness -- and with the existence of hostile forces that test us on the spiritual path. A balm for parched souls, *The Simple Road* helps you locate the thread of universality that runs through all faiths, and leads you to practices, prayers, methods, and parables that lift your daily journey to a higher, better place. This brief, powerful audiobook can bring you literally life-saving solace when facing life's entanglements.

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## Customer Reviews

Obadiah Harris is the founder and president of the University of Philosophical Research. He holds a PhD in education administration from the University of Michigan and a MA in education from Arizona State University, where he was an associate professor of education and director of community education. Harris has held numerous ministerial pulpits and collaborated with figures of major influence in contemporary spirituality. Born in northeastern Oklahoma, he lives in Los Angeles.

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XIX Egoistic Free Will Chapter XX Psychic Free Will SACRIFICE Chapter XXI The Self-Conscious Being of Man Chapter XXII The Transformative Sacrifice of Inner Purification Chapter XXIII Rejection of the Ego & Prioritization of the Soul LIBERATION FROM GUILT Chapter XXIV What Is Guilt? Chapter XXV The Immorality of Theological Guilt Chapter XXVI Removing Theological Guilt Chapter XXVII Removing Personal Guilt: From Ignorance to Knowledge FORGIVENESS Chapter XXVIII Understanding Forgiveness Chapter XXIX Forgiveness from the Heart Chapter XXX The Dangers of Ignorance Chapter XXXI Becoming a Vessel for Divine Truth Chapter XXXII The Strong Forgiver Is Thus Purified LOVE Chapter XXXIII The Perfect & the Imperfect Chapter XXXIV Psychic Love

Notes Bibliography Index About the Author Introduction THE ROAD BEFORE YOU by Mitch Horowitz

The book you are about to read could save your life. That is not some maudlin claim. I know it as fact – because it helped save mine. Its author, Obadiah Harris, a university administrator, scholar of religion, and lifelong seeker, says little about himself. He makes hardly a personal reference throughout this book. So, before getting into what you will discover in this work – and defending the claim I make above – I will say something about the man behind it. Understanding the author and his background will illuminate how he reached his conclusions, and what they may hold for you.

Obadiah Harris was born on January 6, 1930, to an ardently Bible-reading family in Wynona, Oklahoma, a small town in the northeastern part of the state. His father was the pastor of a local Pentecostal church and his mother taught him to read using Scripture. They completed the entire Bible before Obadiah’s first day of public school. The Pentecostal faith was at the foundation of his household. Americans have long misunderstood Pentecostalism, with its emphasis on speaking in tongues and spiritual healing. The denomination is often viewed as belonging to the lower rungs of emotional religious life among the Southern poor; or, worse yet, critics see Pentecostals as a congregation of sheep who are exploited by slick televangelists and tent-revival faith healers. In actuality, the Pentecostalism that animated Obadiah’s childhood arose from a hunger among American Protestants to move beyond the formality and cold professionalism that had settled over much of mainline Christianity by the early twentieth century. Pentecostalism was not a call to flee the modern age but rather to revive a form of religion that intimately mattered in the life of the individual; a religion in which miracles, struggles against evil, and the peace brought by redemption were palpable forces. This was the faith in which Obadiah grew up: one of wonder, mystery, and commitment. Biblical figures were as real to his childhood as sports heroes and presidents.

When Obadiah was eight, a young Oral Roberts – then a freshly minted, twenty-year-old Pentecostal minister decades away from fame as a televangelist – conducted his first revival service at the elder Harris’s

church in Oil Center, Oklahoma. In person, Roberts was humble and gentle—but in the pulpit he burned with the conviction that religious healings and the ecstasies of the Holy Spirit had to be part of Christian faith if it was to remain relevant to modern people. Roberts's passions outstripped his experience: when he ran short of sermons, Obadiah's father gave him outlines for new ones. As a teen, Obadiah followed his father on a circuit trail of churches, singing and accompanying himself on guitar. He became ordained as a Pentecostal minister, but yearned for greater freedom and opportunities. In particular, he wanted to broaden his religious perspective. The Judeo-Christian Bible was not, to his mind, the sole repository of religious truth. The notion that other, non-Christian faiths possessed Divine truth was intolerable within most Pentecostal circles—and the young minister was determined to move beyond them. He began studying some of the new metaphysics that had gained popularity in America in the first half of the twentieth century, particularly the idea that the mind can serve as a channel of Divine creativity, and that thoughts possess causative properties. This outlook, generally called New Thought, went under the congregational banner of movements such as Science of Mind, Divine Science, and Unity. The philosophy's most articulate purveyors included Ernest Holmes, Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, and Neville Goddard—all of whom held, in their own way and with their own distinct emphases, that mental experience and spiritual experience were part of the same continuum, and that our feeling states and thoughts, and our capacity to direct these expressions along productive, generative lines, could manifest reality. One day in early 1958, Obadiah was delivering a talk as a guest speaker at the Apostolic Christian Temple, a liberal evangelical congregation in Phoenix, Arizona. A slight bustle arose at the rear of the congregation when he walked a group of well-dressed, urbane-looking visitors. At the center of the group was a cheery-eyed, roundish man around whom the others gravitated—he was clearly their leader. Obadiah continued with his sermon, which dealt with the inner meaning of Christ's parables. The minister said that the parables were not intended as moral doctrine but as portraits of human archetypes, exposing our foibles and possibilities. At the end of the sermon the man at the center of the visitors walked up to Obadiah with a handshake and told him: "I enjoyed your talk. It was pure Science of Mind." This was Ernest Holmes, a figure Obadiah only dimly recognized from his studies, but who had assembled the most intellectually vibrant of the nation's New Thought congregations. Holmes invited Obadiah to come to his Los Angeles seminary to study with him. "Don't try," Holmes said in a gentle but pressing manner, "just do it." Obadiah did go—and forged a close student-teacher bond with the metaphysical philosopher. By the late 1950s, Holmes had weathered bruising factional fights within his church

and, with his health unsteady, he was searching for successors. He apparently found one in Obadiah, who was soon appointed senior minister at the First Church of Religious Science in Phoenix, one of the largest Science of Mind congregations at the time. He also spoke at Science of Mind churches up and down the West Coast. In the late winter of 1960 Holmes was in markedly deteriorated health. Before his death on April seventh, the leader asked Obadiah to take over leadership of the Science of Mind movement. Obadiah declined. He had watched the movement and its factional politics consume too much of his mentor's life and energies. He knew that he once more had to leave a religious movement that he loved. "I have to find my own way," Obadiah told his teacher, kneeling by his sickbed. Holmes smiled and replied: "I wish I could go with you." Obadiah did find his own way. He served until 1964 at the Phoenix church before pursuing a career in higher education. In 1973 he earned his doctor of philosophy in education at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. That year he became an associate professor of educational management and director of community education at New Mexico State University. Two years later he filled the same position at Arizona State University, where he remained for almost two decades, designing programs in community outreach, and in adult and continuing education. Obadiah's experience in diverse pulpits had given him the ability to communicate with wage-earning people who wanted to return to school; with retail, manufacturing, and railroad magnates who could fund new university programs; and with community members whom he wanted to bring into campus life for more than homecoming parades and football games. In the early 1990s Obadiah's life path once again intertwined with an icon of American metaphysics, as it previously had with Ernest Holmes. This time it was with the legacy of a man who had died in 1990 and whom Obadiah had never personally met but knew by reputation: the esoteric scholar Manly P. Hall. Although invisible to the mainstream, Hall had become the informal dean of the nation's alternative spiritual culture when at age twenty-seven in 1928 he independently published a massive codex to the mythical, symbolic, and occultic religious traditions of antiquity, *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*. The comprehensive encyclopedia arcana brought Hall sufficient resources from contributors to construct a "mystery school" in the Griffith Park neighborhood of Los Angeles, which he called the Philosophical Research Society. Hall's Egyptian-Mayano-Art Deco styled campus grew to feature a world-class library of spiritual texts; a vault with ancient manuscripts and artifacts; a small complex of classrooms; book-production and warehousing facilities; and an auditorium. For seekers of esoteric wisdom, it was the closest thing to Valhalla. --This text refers to the MP3 CD edition.

This book left me uninspired and disappointed. It is a standard bearer of orthodox Christian teachings--rife with "literal" interpretation of Scripture. I was anticipating a fresh, broad lens of spiritual insight and instruction. I do not disparage Dr. Harris' distinguished reputation in the religious community or his life long works. I strongly believe in the value of prayer and meditation; however, I just don't find credibility in the evangelical 'esque' position of a God sitting somewhere in the Heavens (outside of us) that we must call upon and pray to--the "Kingdom of God" (i.e. the spiritual transformation the book alludes to put us in touch with) can only be found/realized "within"... as the mythical Jesus instructed. There are spiritual paths/practices leading to that elevated state of consciousness, it just wasn't represented to me in the pages of this book.

Guy is an administrator who lacks spiritual enlightenment He turned Manly Hal's legacy foundation into an online diploma mill. Sad.

Lovely, inspiring book written by a lovely, inspiring human being. I recently took a class with Dr. Harris and he is the real deal.

Great book by a great man.

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