

## **Mou Begins**

I recently learned a new game named "Mou." I'd love to teach it to you, but I can't. You see, that's basically the biggest rule, you're not supposed to teach people how to play. Rather, you lure them into playing and they have to figure it out as they go. As you can imagine, it is equal parts fun and frustration. The dealer deals, says, "Mou begins," and you are on your own to figure out what is going on. But beware; if you do something wrong, you'll be penalized by receiving an extra card and rebuked for breaking the rule. Maybe we can play together some time. I know Tessa will love to play with us.

Regrettably, many people think that is what life is like. You're just dropped into the world, someone slaps you on your backside, and says, "Life begins." Now you are on your own to figure out what is going on. But beware; if you mess up too much, you'll get penalized by receiving eternity in hell.

That isn't how it works. Certainly, there is a sense in which we have to figure things out. However, God has not left us on our own. Rather, He communicated His will to us in the Bible. In the Bible, God explains how we can have a positive relationship with Him, how we can serve Him His way, and how to make it in this life so we can have the best eternity. As **I Timothy 3:15** explains, the Scriptures have been given to us so we will know how to conduct ourselves as members of God's household.

It is true that He didn't spoon feed us. Some things are hard to understand (**II Peter 3:16**). But they are not impossible to understand. It simply takes time, effort, and work in the Bible to understand them. Yes, many people disagree, and we might toss our hands up thinking it is hopeless. But that comes from looking around at people, not looking in the Bible or to God. When we look to God, He enlightens the eyes of our hearts, giving us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in His knowledge (**Ephesians 1:17-18**).

The bigger question is whether or not we will let God guide us in our relationship with Him. It's funny; sometimes I tell my kids how things will go better for them. I explain that if they make a certain choice, my response will be to discipline and punish them, but if they make a different choice, my response will be to embrace and reward them. Sadly, sometimes they are so fired up trying to prove how right they are, they just argue with me and act the way they wanted. Guess what happens? I punish and discipline them exactly as I said.

Let's not do that with God. He's given us His Word. He has explained how He wants us to behave. He has pointed out when He will punish us. Let's not be like little children so wrapped up in proving our way that we forget God is holding the cards. He establishes the guidelines for our relationship. His way works.

We aren't in a big gigantic game of Mou. We are in God's hands and, therefore, we need to get into God's Word.

--**Edwin L. Crozier**