

# challenge

THE GOOD NEWS PAPER

No. 392

# BEAR GRYLLS' BACKBONE

**TV survival skills expert and former British soldier Bear Grylls reveals his ultimate source of strength**

The Island With Bear Grylls is back as of late March for a third season, featuring 13 men and women abandoned on a remote, uninhabited Pacific island for a month, prompting *The Telegraph's* Gerard O'Donovan to rightly ask: "Why would anyone put themselves through this hell?"

Bear Grylls tweeted excitedly just hours after the season premiere: "Thanks for watching everyone – highest ratings ever for @TheIsland @channel4 – and it only gets better! This series is explosive."

The former Special Air Services soldier has been through his fair share of hell himself; he climbed Everest, broke his back in a parachute accident, led the first team to circumnavigate the UK on jet skis, made the first unassisted crossing of the Arctic Ocean in an inflatable, and created a world record for the highest open-air dinner under a hot-air balloon at 7,600m.

Why would anyone put themselves through that? His answer, quite simply: he loves it.

"It's what I've always wanted," he told *Relevant* magazine. "I never wanted to be very smart or very rich, I just wanted to follow my dreams and have loads of fun. And I am really lucky that I have a job that involves climbing trees and getting covered in mud."

And his "backbone", the underlying strength to perform these things,

Bear has systematically credited to his faith.

"My Christian faith has helped me through so many difficult and lonely times," he says.

"Some say that Christianity is a crutch. I say it may be so, but it is also my backbone."

What has made Bear endearing to his fans is not just his courage but his humility and willingness to admit his need of God's love.

In his autobiography, *Mud, Sweat And Tears*, Bear revealed how he first encountered God. He says his faith "has provided me with a real anchor to my life and has been the secret strength to so many great adventures since.

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Bear Grylls enjoys having a job where he can climb trees and get covered in mud!

## Shadow of a legend

**Iconic musician Ray Charles' daughter forgave her father behind prison bars**

**M**ost know blind musical genius Ray Charles as the father of soul music, but to Sheila he was the absent father of 12 kids who left her searching for identity in the grip of illicit addictions.

Even after meeting her father for the first time in her teen years, Sheila sadly recalls her personal confusion remained.

"I went through a lot of pain trying to figure out who I was. The world knew Ray Charles and I was always introduced as his daughter, never just Sheila," she shared in an interview on CBN.

"In order to find my identity I created people and made up things in my life that I would pretend that I was."

Abuse as a child, an alcoholic mother and the disheartening blow of "having to make an appointment" for her first meeting with her father, combined to lead Sheila down a path from which she thought there was no return.

Although she dreamt of following in her father's footsteps through a career in the music industry, Ray was opposed to the idea.

His fears were realised as Sheila entered the world of drugs and a 20-year crack cocaine addiction. Three stints in federal prison followed and she hit rock bottom with the guilt of losing custody of her five children.

"It was the third time in prison that I was able to come back to my true self which was in Christ," she recalls.

Sheila read the Bible while incarcerated and, in the early hours one morning, remembers falling off her prison bunk and breaking down in uncontrollable tears.

"It was such a cry of pain and suffering that had culminated. I knew that my life as it was could never exist anymore, death was more [favourable] than continuing in the lifestyle I was living," she explains.

"I looked up at the ceiling and cried out and said 'God... they tell me you are the Author of life and death and if you have that much

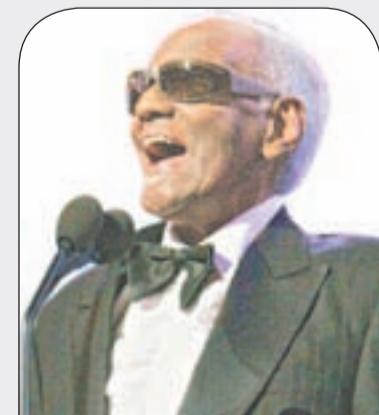


Sheila Raye Charles

control then take me from this planet right now because... I can't do this!"

God did something supernatural in that moment: instead of death, Sheila found everlasting life.

"I am here at the lowest point humbly beseeching you, God," she cried out. "Fill my heart with your love, fill my mind with your wisdom and with your Spirit and with your grace."



Ray Charles

BACK PAGE



Elka's contentment

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## LIFE: A PRICELESS TREASURE



BY ALAN BAILEY

**THE WAY** some people treat life these days you wouldn't think it was worth much.

In a number of countries around the world the individual doesn't count—it's the ideology of the regime that seems to be all-important. So executions are common, thousands are slain in war and an alarming number of people are ending their lives by their own hands.

Sadly there are countries that believe they are 'progressive' and have left a cruel and uncivilised past behind them, but nevertheless think it is fine to kill unborn children and old people who are not well.

### HOW DEPRESSING IS THAT?

Constantly we hear of people battling with depression. They have anti-life feelings, feelings of despair and doubt about whether it is worth being alive. Is it possible that these feelings have come about because a lax attitude toward the value of life is rubbing off on people everywhere?

If lives are easily snuffed out, if children can be captured and used as slaves, if HIV/AIDS kills countless victims who receive no help, then, what is life worth? There is a strong temptation to think a human life is no better than that of a fly or a frog.

### ANY ANSWERS? ANY HOPE?

We are quite wrong to think one human life does not have much value. On good authority we can say that every single one of us, young or old, is a treasure beyond price. Here are some reasons.

**1** The Son of God, Jesus, said: "Are not five sparrows sold for two coins? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are numbered. Don't be afraid, you are worth more than many sparrows" (Luke 12:6, 7). The whole mission of Jesus declares to us that we are each worth a great deal in His sight. We should never under-value anyone, no matter who they are or what their background.

**2** God made us. We are not the products of blind chance. We are meant to be here. God gave us consciousness, moral awareness and personality, all of which sets us apart.

**3** God bought us. Jesus would never have come to give His life on the cross in our place if we were worthless clay only to be swept out of sight. Christ asked while He was here: What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? Compared to the whole world or anything we may possess, our life is of much greater value.

### HOLD ON TO IT

Don't let anyone take this truth away. Turn in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ who makes life worth living. What is treasured up in heaven for believers is something much more marvellous than we can imagine. Don't neglect the way there. Find it and take it.

## BEAR GRYLLS' BACKBONE

### From page 1

"But it came to me very simply one day at school, aged only 16.

"As a young kid, I had always found that a faith in God was so natural. It was a simple comfort to me: unquestioning and personal. But once I went to school and was forced to sit through somewhere in the region of 900 dry, Latin-liturgical chapel services, listening to stereotypical churchy people droning on, I just thought that I had got the whole faith deal wrong.

"Maybe God wasn't intimate and personal but was much more like chapel was...tedious, judgmental, boring and irrelevant.

"The irony was that if the chapel was all of those things, a real faith is the opposite. But somehow, and without much thought, I had thrown the beautiful out with the boring.

"The precious, natural, instinctive faith I had known when I was younger was tossed out with this newly-found delusion that because I was growing up, it was time to 'believe' like a grown-up.

"It took a low point at school, when my godfather, Stephen, died, to shake me into searching a bit harder to re-find this faith I had once known...



Bear Grylls

Stephen was like a second father to me...He died very suddenly, of a heart attack...I was devastated.

"I remember sitting up a tree one night at school on my own, and praying the simplest, most heartfelt prayer of my life: 'Please God, comfort me.'

"Blow me down...He did.

"My journey ever since has been trying to make sure I don't over-complicate that simple faith I had

found. And the more of the Christian faith I discover, the more I realize that, at heart, it is simple. (What a relief it has been in later life to find that there are some great church communities out there, with honest, loving friendships that help me with all of this stuff).

"To me, my Christian faith is all about being held, comforted, forgiven, strengthened and loved... The irony is that I have never met anyone who doesn't want to be loved or held or forgiven.

"Yet I meet a lot of folk who hate religion. And I so sympathize. But so did Jesus. In fact...he went much further. It seems more like Jesus came to destroy religion and to bring life.

"This really is the heart of what I found as a young teenager: Christ comes to make us free, to bring us life in all its fullness. He is there to forgive us where we have messed up (and who hasn't), and to be the backbone in our being.

"Faith in Christ has been the great empowering presence in my life, helping me to walk strong when so often I feel weak...I had stumbled on something remarkable that night up that tree. I had found a calling for my life."

## Shadow of a legend

### From page 1

Looking back on that moment, Sheila now confidently says: "There is no depth of hell that God can't reach down and pull you out of and I'm telling you that He reached down to a real deep one in my circumstances."

She quickly came to understand that God's "grace (undeserved love) was sufficient," and that He was telling her, "If you'll give me all that pain, suffering, hurt, abandonment issues...I will take you out of this [spiritual] captivity."

"God is so amazing, that He sent His Son [Jesus] for people just like me," Sheila told Timesfreepress.com.

Understanding that God had forgiven her of all her past mistakes and sins helped Sheila forgive herself and her father as well.

"My father didn't have any parenting skills," she explains in retrospect.

"He was raised in an institution for the blind, then was out on the road [on tour]."

She adds that one of her father's songs, "You Don't Know Me" reminds her of their relationship saying: "When I first heard him sing it, I cried and cried."

Ray passed away in June 2004 and Sheila chooses to remember him fondly as the incredibly talented "genius of soul".

"I love him with all of my heart. He left (his kids) an awesome legacy. I know he loved us truly in his own way."

Today, Sheila is often called upon to provide renditions of her father's best-known songs, from "Hit The Road Jack" to "Georgia", and takes every opportunity to tell her story of transformation.

"God revealed to me that it wasn't just a story for me, but a story to change people's lives – to take them out of darkness and into life," she told Herald Times.

Sheila now visits prisons, churches and recovery groups with her husband to perform and to share her



Sheila Raye Charles

message of hope.

Her memoir Behind the Shades is also available on Amazon.com, sharing through her experiences that "God is still in the business of doing modern-day miracles".

### Challenge The Good News Paper

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### Lifestyle articles • Sports

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## Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

Puzzle Level: Medium

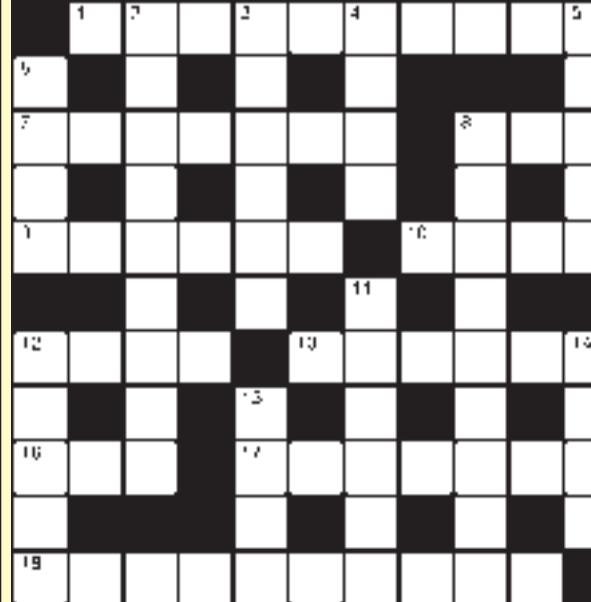
6 3 8  
4 2 9  
7 5 1

SOLUTION PAGE 11

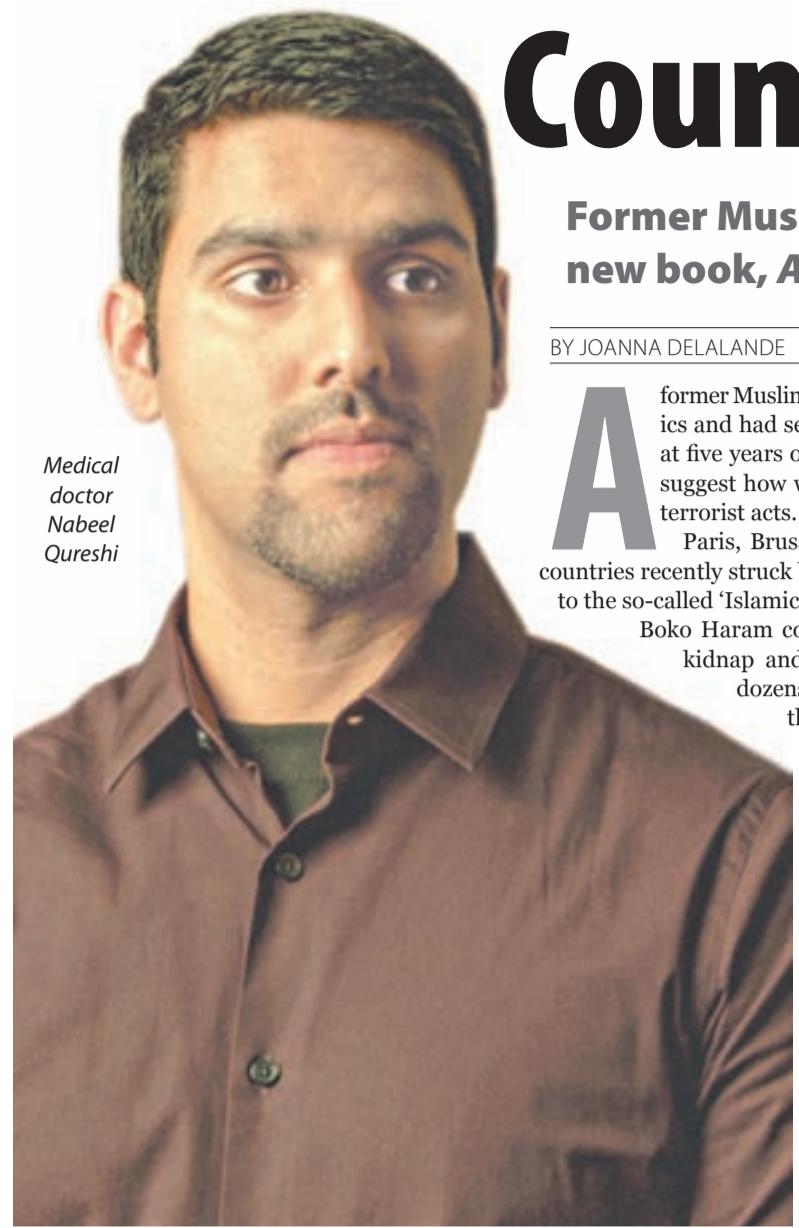
## Crossword

### ACROSS

- 9 Try
- 10 Summon
- 11 Book club
- 12 Sing alone
- 13 Up-to-the-minute
- 14 Flip
- 15 Duet + one



SOLUTION  
PAGE 11



Medical doctor  
Nabeel  
Qureshi

# Counter terror with love

**Former Muslim Nabeel Qureshi tackles our response to terrorism in his new book, *Answering Jihad: A Better Way Forward***

BY JOANNA DELALANDE

**A** former Muslim who grew up studying Islamic apologetics and had seven chapters of the Qur'an memorized at five years old, Dr Nabeel Qureshi is well placed to suggest how we might deal with the threat posed by terrorist acts.

Paris, Brussels, and Turkey are only a few of the countries recently struck by those who call themselves adherents to the so-called 'Islamic State'.

Boko Haram continues to kill Nigerian villagers, and kidnap and massacre school children. This year

dozens of Christians died in a bomb blast as they celebrated Easter in Lahore. A football stadium in Iraq was targeted. And two sites in Turkey were recently bombed.

In the midst of pain and death caused by terrorist acts, people are responding with sadness, anger, and fear.

In his new book, *Answering Jihad: A Better Way Forward* Nabeel explores jihad and ISIS, and proposes that love is the only way to break the cycle of violence perpetuated by fear and fighting.

Raised a devout Muslim, Nabeel gave up everything and betrayed his family when he turned his back on Islam to pursue Christianity.

Jihad, the religious duty of Muslims to maintain the religion, was not the only reason for the change, though it was a factor.

Over a period of several years and after much study of Christianity and Islam, along with both the Bible and the Qur'an, Nabeel became confident the Bible could be trusted and Jesus died on the cross, rose from the dead, and claimed to be God.

Delving into the book he had been reading every day since he was a boy, he also decided that given the violence and sensuality found in his earliest biographies, Muhammad could not be said to be the "holiest man in history", as his religion would have him believe.

"It became abundantly clear why people could be so violent in their practice of Islam, because there were some very, very violent teachings found in the original teachings of Muhammad," Nabeel says.

"The canonical texts of Islam, the Quran, and the Hadith start off

peacefully but culminate in unlimited violence. As such, they not only enable those who are predisposed to violence, but they actually spur on into radicalization those who are seeking its teachings and the approval of Allah," he tells Challenge.

In his book, Nabeel explains that even though Muslims are often raised with the teaching that Islam is a religion of peace, when they study the texts for themselves they are faced with the reality of Muhammad and the Qur'an's call for jihad.

"They will stand at the crossroads for only so long before they choose what path they will take—apostasy, apathy, or radicalization," he writes.

Nabeel's book goes much further than explaining why and how Islamic teachings may lead to the justification of violent acts.

He explores how we should answer jihad, and the most appropriate response we should make to terrorist acts.

This is what he writes: "Fear and fighting, both fuel the radical fires. We need something that breaks the cycle, and I think that can only be love."

Ultimately, as he wrestled between Islam (the religion that had accompanied him since birth) and Christianity (the religion that increasingly seemed to tick all the boxes), that was what made him turn away from the teachings of Muhammad and betray his family.

At a time in his life when he was suffering and needed comfort, he turned to the Qur'an for answers. "And it was a rude awakening that there isn't a single verse in the Qur'an designed to comfort a hurting man," he says. "Not one."

"I put it away, turned to the Bible and went to Matthew. It didn't take long for me to get to Matthew chapter 5. Here's what it says: 'Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted.'"

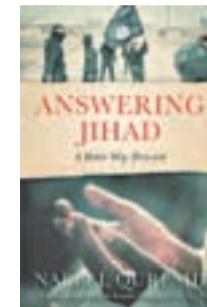
He says: "I just fell in love with the Bible at that moment. It was as if God had written those words specifically for me. He knew 2000 years ago that I was going to need comfort in this moment and He knew that I would go to Matthew. He put that verse in Matthew for me."

"And I said, 'Okay. This, this is real. This is the Word of God. This faith is where the truth is found.' And, that's when I ultimately, by reading the Bible, accepted Christ."

What was missing from the Qur'an was love. Nabeel says we should respond to terrorism with love.

"I think it is through love that we will protect our society without condemning the innocent, and even proactively befriend many of those Muslims who would otherwise be radicalized," he tells us.

He writes in *Answering Jihad*: "The final marching order of Islam is jihad. The final marching orders of Christians are grace and love." •



Nabeel's book

Answering Jihad: A Better Way Forward



Lawyer Sharma Taylor overcame self-doubt

decided not to proceed with my plan. I never saw that girl again."

Sharma had believed from age 16 that it was unfair for all humanity to be aware of imminent death but have no control over the end of their lives.

She questioned, "What about the millions of people suffering and in need of love?"

In light of what a Christian Sunday school had told her about God, she recalls, "It felt instinctively right that a Creator existed, but I did not know what that meant for my life."

During her initial law studies in Barbados she continued to investigate God. Then at age 19, she decided at a Christian concert that she could not live apart from God.

"I wanted the peace, joy, love and acceptance of a heavenly Father," she explains, "and I knew that academic achievements or a good job would not plug the hole inside. I knew God was personally calling me."

"I asked Jesus to change my life. I accepted that He was the Son of God, who came into the world to reunite us to God, after we severed that relationship due to our disobedience. I believed that through Jesus I would have a relationship with God and everlasting life with Him."

After this she says, "God gave my life meaning. I have more joy on the inside and am secure knowing that God is for me, as He speaks to me every day when I am going through problems."

A recent example of hearing from God was as a result of an interpersonal conflict she was encountering.

"Communication with this person was a problem. I needed guidance and I didn't know how to handle this difficult situation", she said.

Later that the same evening without knowing there had been an issue, two friends sent her a song and message and the following day she heard a programme on a religious radio station that all told her the same thing: "I should not run in fear from the problem; that God was for me; that He is

intentional and working everything for my good."

"I am amazed how God confirms His Word and speaks so clearly," she says.

In addition to a miraculous healing of long-term stomach pains, Sharma knows God is powerful because He strengthened her on mission trips to Nepal, Mozambique, Malawi and Guyana.

"I have done things that have scared me while on the mission field, in sharing the love of God with others. God has given me the confidence because I know He is ahead of me."

Sharma now works in a high stress position in the financial services industry. She is glad that God has given her patience and a heart to forgive rather than be angry.

"God helps me every day, as I have to rely on Him for guidance, strength and wisdom. I tell you that choosing God is the best life decision you could ever make. He will take you to places you never thought possible; places of adventure and purpose; starting with acceptance of yourself."

## GLASS CEILING BROKEN

t took Barbados-based corporate attorney Dr. Sharma Taylor years to come to a place of self-acceptance; a place found far beyond achieving all her academic goals.

Among her outstanding credentials is a law doctorate from Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand funded by a Commonwealth scholarship, a law degree with first class honours at the University of West Indies (UWI), and a master's degree on a scholarship, also at UWI.

The Jamaican-born 34-year-old encourages those who struggle academically that simple adjustments to inner convictions can change your life direction.

Although inspired by the love of her hardworking mother, a school teacher, and the support of her economist father living overseas, Sharma initially struggled with self-doubt as she felt socially excluded from other high-achievers in her prestigious high school.

She felt rejected because, "I wasn't rich enough, I came from a different social background, and I didn't party, or crave the attention of boys or do other things teen girls usually bond over."

As a result, she admits, "I suffered from depression, low self-esteem and at one stage anorexia, even after I made the track team."

No matter how she changed her appearance or what she achieved, even in national debating and math competitions, she explains that "none of this was deeply fulfilling".

"I had a lot of anger, and my mother and brother bore the brunt of this," Sharma says honestly.

One afternoon walking home from school, Sharma thought about harming herself, as she wanted "to feel something on the inside, and for the emptiness to go away".

Then the amazing smile of an unfamiliar little girl changed her mind.

"She looked at my sour face and gave me the smile of an angel," Sharma remembers. "I knew God was using her to show His gigantic love so I

**"I wasn't rich enough, [had] a different background... I didn't party"**

# I punched someone and I liked it

BY JEREMY SUISTED

To this day I am ashamed that I sucker-punched one of my best friends when I was age nine and made him cry.

Yet, for a fleeting moment, I enjoyed the power of the punch. I loved the shocked look in his eye, the recognition that I had won and defended my throne.

I've felt this same feeling when I blocked the shot of a basketball opponent. As their attempt was swatted away, I had a glorious feeling of power.

There is always a glance at the failed shooter, communicating that I have won: I am superior.

I have had a sweet addiction to all of these experiences of power.

In Philip Yancey's excellent exploration of Jesus he observes, 'Power, no matter how well intentioned, tends to cause suffering.'

In its very nature, power lets one individual decide for others.

The powerful get to say 'Yes' and 'No'. It assumes I know best. It assumes I have more agency, more autonomy, and more right than the powerless. Even when I choose to act benevolently, I carry these assumptions into each situation.

These memories bring to mind a story told by Ernest Gordon, former dean of Princeton chapel, of his first-hand experience with some captured Scottish soldiers in a Japanese camp, during World War 2.

Upon returning from a hard day's labour, the Japanese officer counted up the shovels the prisoners had to return at the end of the day. The final count was one short. One prisoner must have hid a shovel—planning an escape!

The officer was furious, and demanded that the group tell him where the missing shovel was. Silence. He pulled out his pistol, and threatened the entire group with execution, unless the offender stepped forward.

Suddenly, one of the soldiers stepped forward and confessed. The officer promptly holstered his pistol, picked up a shovel, and beat the man to death. Wiping the blood off the shovel, he recounted the tools—and discovered there'd been a mistake. There was never one shovel short, he had simply miscounted. And this soldier had stepped forward to take the blame for a crime that was never committed, simply to save his brothers.

Ernest, himself a Scottish soldier held prisoner in the camp, reflected that, the incident had a profound effect.

The men began to treat each other like brothers. When the victorious Allies swept in, the survivors, human skeletons, lined up in front of their captors ... and instead of attacking their captors insisted: 'No more hatred. No more killing. Now what we need is forgiveness.'

This brave soldier's actions make no sense. To respond with love, instead of power, appears naive and pointless. Yet power simply reinforces the status quo. It continues the dominant story, reflecting the same-old-world back to our weary eyes.

Love opens up new possibilities. The possibility that captured strangers could become brothers. The possibility that violence could be met with forgiveness. The possibility that a poke in the back could be met with laughter and playfulness.

Philip Yancey's quote continues, 'Power, no matter how well-intentioned, tends to cause suffering. Love, being vulnerable, absorbs it. In a point of convergence on a hill called Calvary, God renounced the one for the sake of the other.'

As tempting as it is to embrace the story of power that the world propagates, if we want to see transformation in our lives, communities and world, a new story and a new response is needed. We need less impulsive punches and more second-nature hugs. Less mindless taking and more mindful, painful giving. Less lording over, and more serving with.

And then our eyes are opened to a new possibility, of a powerful love. A love that flips the world on its head, and truly recreates and calls out new life in all that it encounters.



# Drug smuggler 'sees the light'

BY MIKE WILTSIRE

**C**onvicted drug smuggler and addict Clint Holmes had a radical encounter in prison that transformed his life. He literally 'saw the light' in a supernatural vision – no drugs involved!

After becoming hooked on drugs, Clint was forced by an armed gang to help import a 10-ton consignment of cannabis. "We know where your family live," they warned him.

But armed police and customs officers were tipped off about the plan and Clint found himself pinned to the floor in handcuffs, as a police helicopter hovered over the warehouse and police dogs growled at the four suspects.

In a remarkable turnaround, Clint – who was sentenced to five-and-a-half years in prison – is a free man, a convinced Christian, and co-leader of a new church in Norwich, England.

Now happily married to Lois, Clint has a passion to help people who are struggling with addictions and relationships, just as he did partly because of his troubled childhood home.

As a teenager he longed for a career in football until his

dream was dashed by a knee injury.

Like many boys on his estate he began drinking at 13, and by 16 was caught up in gangs of angry hooligans. His alcohol tolerance climbed so high that he switched to cannabis and other drugs to get a bigger 'high' and a rush of confidence.

He managed to hold down several jobs, and assisted in a night shelter where he met a Chinese man linked to the Triad criminal network. Clint was offered cannabis and pure cocaine – and then told, under threat, that he must assist the gang "which was run on fear and paranoia".

The plan was to import a huge quantity of cannabis in a shipping container which supposedly contained only candles.

After the failed crime, Clint spent 13 months on remand and saw "terrible violence" in prison. He was put on suicide watch. One inmate tried to speak to Clint about God but Clint just swore at him.

Then he saw a man "beaten to a pulp" as guards turned away, so Clint asked to be put in solitary confinement for his safety.

"I hated myself," Clint recalls. "I just sat there in total dark-



Former prisoner Clint Holmes is now a church leader

ness and – with a razor blade – planned to end it all. I just prayed, 'Oh God...' and though my eyes were shut, I suddenly felt the cell fill with intense light. I felt pure love all over me. I knew straight away it was Jesus... I knew it was Him."

A few days later, Clint began talking with the chaplain who visited the cells to hold services with them.

In his new love for Jesus Christ, Clint avidly read the Bible, writing down verses so he could remember them. Prison staff noticed the big change in his life and Clint was soon helping in chapel services, which grew rapidly as more men attended. Clint was so overjoyed with his new-found faith that he was breathalysed to see if

he had been drinking the communion wine!

He was shocked, however, when a religious worker who rejected the authority of the Bible asked: "You don't actually believe this stuff, do you?"

This only toughened Clint's resolve to follow Christ, and he wasn't bothered when other prisoners shouted, "Here comes the God squad!" as he walked by. Clint became an unofficial prison chaplain – "even the governor knew it."

Since leaving prison Clint has become a church leader and has seen God provide for his needs in answer to prayer. His desire to serve Jesus has taken him as far afield as India, and he has worked as a Street Pastor. •

With thanks to Network Norwich and Norfolk

# HOPE DESPITE ILLNESS

## Why do bad things happen to people seemingly without explanation?

**A** defective heart and an ongoing battle with cancer prompted Beth Smith to question why God allows such suffering but nothing can take away her hope.

Thinking back to her younger years, Beth has been no stranger to suffering.

"As a child I struggled for breath if I walked fast and would turn blue in the face. I could never take part in school sports or any activities," she explains.

For years Beth felt miserable as her peers mocked her over her heart weakness and nicknamed her "ghost".

Throughout this trying time, Beth says, "I had loving God-fearing parents who gave me a firm foundation of God's unconditional love which was a great blessing to me. As a child I received the Lord Jesus as my Saviour."

Finding comfort and a personal relationship with Jesus helped her bear her childhood trials and continues to be her strength



"I can rest in God's love, faithfulness and care," says Beth Smith

as she battles cancer.

"Through all these trials Jesus became my Rock of strength. Without Him, I would never have survived physically or spiritually," she says.

Despite an operation in 2002, the cancer returned in 2004 and 33 radiation treat-

ments were not completely successful.

After more operations in 2010 Beth was forced to live without important organs.

"By God's help and the support of my family I resumed normal life as far as possible," she says.

Naturally she wondered how God had permitted this cancer to happen after everything she had already faced in life.

However Beth goes on to bravely explain saying, "I do not doubt God's will or His goodness."

"According to Romans 8, verse 28, I have been called according to His purpose and 'in all things God works for the good of those who love Him,'" she explains.

"Whatever lies ahead in the future, God will hold onto me and give me His peace. As Jesus promised, 'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled and do not be afraid'" (John 14:27).

She also holds to Jesus' promise that He is preparing a place for her in Heaven and that the suffering she is experiencing now is not worth comparing to the eternal glory that awaits her (see 2 Corinthians 4:17).

"Whatever the doctors decide upon and how cancer affects my future, I trust God with all my heart. Without any doubt He will be there for me no matter what. I can rest in His love, faithfulness and care." •

# Turning CAN'T into CAN

**Academic struggles did not stop Jeremy from making a big difference**

BY JOANNA DELALANDE

In his senior year, Jeremy Cowart conducted an aptitude test to figure out why he struggled so much in school.

The results were as follows: he scored 15 per cent in inductive reasoning, five per cent in analytical reasoning, 15 per cent in structural visualization, 15 per cent in observation, and five per cent in English vocabulary.

"Perfect," he thought, "It's now been confirmed that I'm a complete and total moron." Today, Jeremy Cowart is changing the world.

In 2009 he started a global movement where photographers all over the world give away portraits to people in need. This is called *Help-Portrait* and has so far seen 370,825 portraits given in 67 different countries.

When the devastating earthquake struck Haiti in 2010, Jeremy travelled there to "give the people a microphone... A microphone in the form of a photograph." The UN got behind the project and as a result 10 billion dollars were raised to rebuild Haiti.

Next, in a project called *Voice of Reconciliation*, he photographed pictures of the 1994 Rwandan genocide survivors standing with the people that killed their families and whom they'd now forgiven.

A couple of years later Jeremy went to Uganda and photographed former child soldiers who had been abducted

by Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army. He got the children to draw their stories and later mounted the drawings and portraits digitally. Prints of the finished pieces are being sold to raise money for the children's continued art therapy.

He started SEEUNIVERSITY, where he documents everything he has learned and puts it out there on the Internet for his children and anyone else to access.

And now, his next project is the *Purpose Hotel*, a global hotel chain where everything from the keys to the design will be contributing to a particular cause so people who stay there can literally change the world in their sleep.

So how did a shy, insecure, 5th percentile boy from Tennessee manage to make such an overwhelming difference in this world all before his 39th birthday?

His story proves the thing standing in the way of us reaching our potential is not lack of talent or ability. It is a lack of vision and confidence. Someone else will do it, we tell ourselves. Someone else can do it better.

Or, quite simply, I can't do it.

In his early years, struggling to focus at school and feeling like the whole world was out of his reach, Jeremy rejected those words "I can't" and believed "I can".

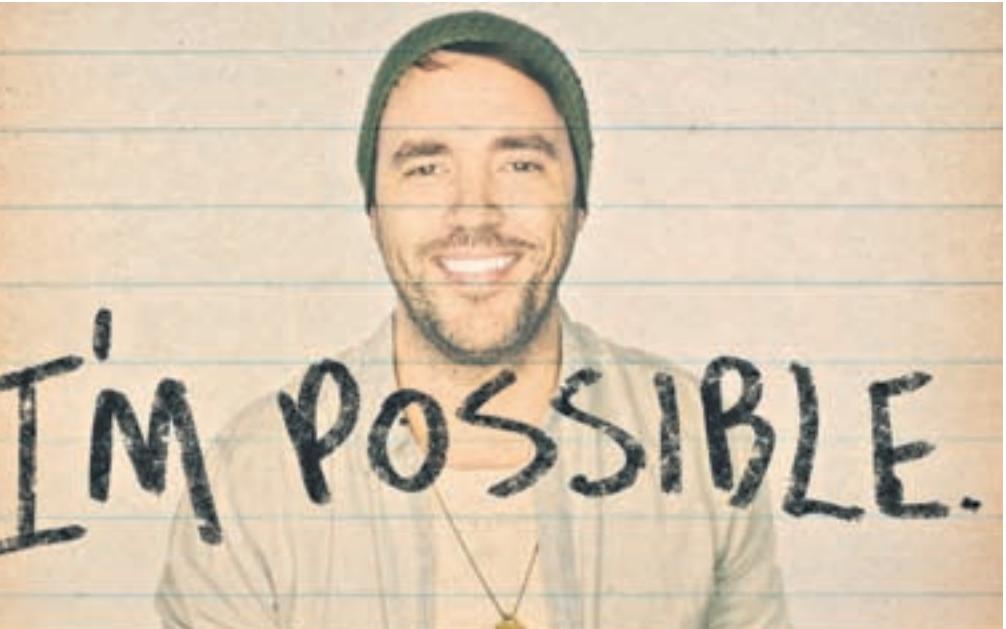
If he had not changed his mind none of these things—*Help-Portrait*, *Voice of*

*Reconciliation*, SEEUNIVERSITY or his smartphone app OKDOTHIS—would ever have seen the light of day.

Luckily, he stopped trusting those untrue words "I can't" and instead believed this fundamental truth: I can do all things.

"I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

This verse, found in the Bible in Philippians Chapter 4 verse 13, gave him the assurance to start designing



Jeremy Cowart rejected the words "I can't" and believed "I can".

in Photoshop.

"Computers are for smart people. I'm not smart, therefore I can't." Wrong. He could.

It's what gave him the confidence to plunge into photography. "Cameras are for smart people. I can't do this." Wrong. In 2014, *Huffington Post* named Jeremy the most influential photographer on the Internet.

He started believing he could, and once he did,

nothing and no one could stop him.

But that verse isn't only true for Jeremy. God has gifted us all uniquely.

Stop thinking you can't, or you're not good enough, or someone else can do it better. You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you.

Not only that, there is a great purpose placed on your life. In Jeremiah Chapter 29, verse 11, God tells you He knows the plans He has for

you, and they are plans to prosper you, to give you hope and a future.

You can do anything, and also you have been specifically chosen by God to do something unbelievable. Something that will change the world.

So stop making excuses. Stop saying you can't.

You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. The key question is: have you surrendered your life to Jesus Christ? •

## SWEET BUT DEADLY

BY JODY BENNETT

### Are you a savoury or sweet person?

Whether it be hot chips, chocolate, ice cream, pizza or something else, most of us have an unhealthy "food weakness" that delivers a twinge of guilt when we overindulge on it.

More than just guilt, it is scary to think obesity is now the fifth leading risk for global deaths, with at least 2.8 million adult deaths each year as a result of being overweight or obese.

While it is important to manage our diets to reduce the risk of heart disease, diabetes and other deadly illnesses, healthy eating often reminds me of a deeper spiritual issue in life.

Sin, such as lying or losing our temper, is like sweet things; it is not something we have to be taught to like. It is our natural inclination.

Whether it be a little white lie here and there, gossip, jealousy, angry outbursts, illegally downloading and stealing a movie off the Internet or something more sinister, we feel that a little "sugar" won't do any harm.

Some of us feel that cutting these "little sins" or unhealthy food out of our lives, would be cutting out all the fun.

Sometimes I think we actually have no idea that what we eat is contributing to a poor quality of life, or we do not yet see the effects of our choices on our bodies and feel there is no need to change our habits.

Some of us have a major health crisis forcing us to re-evaluate what we eat or we may simply know what we are eating is not good for us and would like to change but don't know where to start.

In the same way the outward effects of sin in our lives are not always so obvious and it may take a crisis to draw us to God.

So conversion, becoming a Christian, would be like the moment that one decides to make changes and to commit



perfection is possible in this life and we each achieve our goals to varying degrees.

We will continue to make mistakes and sin, just as we will continue to slip in the odd dessert or block of chocolate.

And like food temptation, we each may have those particular sins that are hardest for us to resist.

Like some Christians, healthy eating fanatics can be rather annoying, boasting about their fitness goals and making everyone else feel guilty about having only salad for lunch.

Do's and don'ts about anything are neither attractive nor motivating. But by the same token, some people you can see are glowing with health and energy even though they do not wear their lycra and spandex to the supermarket or comment on your every mouthful!

In the same way genuine Christian's lives should declare the kindness and goodness of God before they even open their mouths.

As with any analogy, however, this one must not be taken too far.

Two major differences between the Christian walk and healthy living are that, while the Holy Spirit may be like our personal trainer in some respects, He is not just sometimes outside us urging us on and explaining our nutrition guide.

Instead the Holy Spirit comes to reside within us when we accept Jesus into our lives, empowering us to do what God commands.

Also, the Bible is not just a fallible nutrition guide, of which there are hundreds of contradictory examples, but the inspired Word of God on which we can totally rely for the truth.

And there is no analogy for God's grace, His undeserved kindness and favour, which took pity on us in our sin and brokenness and made a way through the death and resurrection of Jesus on the cross, for us to be put into a right relationship with God. •

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# Vision changes porn actress

**A** former porn star ended a money-spinning 14-year career due to an extraordinary vision that shook her to her core.

Teresa Carey started in portrait modelling, drifted into nude photos and ended up in lesbian porn films, as well as major porn magazines.

She and her husband, Scott, say they came to know Jesus is God when they both had a face-to-face vision of him in 1999.

Usually such ‘epiphanies’ are individual experiences: two people sharing it at the same time is both unusual and harder for critics to explain.

Before their vision, Scott and Teresa were looking into various world religions and were lastly reading the book of John in the Bible.

She explained to *The Sun* that as they were listening to music, the vision “was like being in a dream, but being awake at the same time”.

“I could see green hills... [and] a man dressed in white talking to people. He invited us in, and we came face-to-face with Jesus.

“Jesus had fire in His eyes that burned straight through my soul, with authenticity that I had never felt before. It was a fire of burning love, not condemnation or anger,” she elaborated in a Nottingham University talk published on YouTube.

“As my eyes were fixed on His I had an unspoken download of information, ‘I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I am forever, and I will always be, and you will always be with me.’

“Everything negative and bad, any doubts and fears were lifted in an instant. The message

was, ‘I love you — you’re OK and you can come with me whenever you’re ready.’”

When it was over, the stunned couple “looked over at each other and we couldn’t get any words out, we were just weeping. It shook me to the core.”

From that moment Teresa wanted to follow Jesus but it took her three years to stop acting in porn videos.

For 10 years she felt uncomfortable working as a glamour model, but did not leave because she doubted that God would provide another job.

“It was really about faith for me. I realised, ‘Hang on, I’ve seen Jesus. If I say ‘Help me’, He can lead me out of this.’”

She explained to *Nottingham Post*, “I was battling in my mind for so long.”

After deleting every industry contact in 2009 she says, “I felt instant joy... I didn’t ever want to go back.”

“I now realise that being a porn star was not what God wanted me to be doing, but He didn’t condemn me for it [see John 3:17].

“I thought, ‘I’m going to have to cut this out and have faith that God is going to lead me into something better.’”

Since receiving Jesus’ forgiveness by giving her life to Him, Teresa has become a regular speaker at university clubs, schools and churches, to share her story and help others know freedom through Jesus.

She has also written two Christian devotional books available on Amazon and released a Christian music album, *Teresa Carey: Born Again*.



“If He didn’t condemn me... then He’s not going to condemn you,” says Teresa, pictured here with her daughter

“I tell people that if Jesus could come to me, a woman who was working in the porn industry, which most people around me would think was a pretty low thing to be doing, then He can come to anybody,” she says.

“If He didn’t condemn me for what I was doing, then He’s not going to condemn you.”

When she finally left the industry, she says it took a year to get to the place of forgiving herself for the things she had done.

“You know it’s like a dirty feeling. Seeing people naked might sound exciting but [porn] strips things away: that sacredness that should be reserved for between two people who love each other. It is a union, but it had become something dirty for me.”

“It took a year after leaving the industry to find this sacredness once again with my husband. It is a really dangerous thing.”

Since her new life began in 2009, Teresa’s style of dress has changed from flagrantly revealing to modest.

“I still love being feminine and sexy,” she says, “but I will do it only for my husband.”

Her outlook on life has changed, she says, “from being worried and afraid of the unknown to feeling content and excited.”

“Now I just want to help other women in the industry find themselves through God... I hope that by sharing my story I can help other people find love through Jesus.”

Watch Teresa share her story at <[youtu.be/oBPz6L9oHU](https://youtu.be/oBPz6L9oHU)>. Follow her on Twitter @christiantess

**If Jesus could come to me, a woman in the porn industry, then He can come to anybody”**

## nudge

### Spatial disorientation

The term “spatial disorientation” refers to the effect on pilots when they can’t see the horizon. In aviation the term means the inability to correctly interpret the aircraft’s altitude or airspeed. Without training to fly by their instruments, pilots, without the help of a clear horizon due to darkness or fog, quickly lose spatial orientation and tragically fly their planes into the ground.

This also occurs quickly. Research shows that 19 out of 20 untrained pilots went into a death turn in a simulator, and this occurs in less than 3 minutes.

All of us need exactly what pilots require - a fixed point of reference. When we don’t see a fixed point of reference, when we trust our feelings about what seems right, we quickly lose perspective and sometimes crash out of life. The Bible gives us that fixed point of reference.

## WORK IS A REWARDING GIFT

BY JOANNA DELALANDE

**THE WORD** “work” is sometimes just four letters standing in the way of being able to do what we really want to.

Rolling out of bed in the morning, the only thing that often gets us through the working day is the thought of leisure time, play, relaxation, a hot shower or good conversations, a captivating book or rejuvenating sleep to come after.

Sometimes we feel like our jobs are a chore or obligation.

It can be difficult to perceive it instead as a privilege, a blessing; a source of joy and satisfaction—and not just because of the money it brings in.

Human beings are built for work; it is beneficial and even necessary to our wellbeing. The Bible in Genesis chapter 2 verse 15 says: “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it”. From the moment God made Adam and Eve, men and women have worked.

We were so made for productivity that nearly half of today’s retirees say they have either worked or plan to work during their retirement years, according to a 2014 report by Merrill Lynch and Age Wave. For some the reasons remain financial, but for others it is a realisation of the value of work.

New York social worker Judy



**NOT YOUR NORMAL WORK MIX:**  
Left: Cutting the grass. Right: Verona, Italy - May 7, 2014: Young man works at the sewing machine in gift shop.

Uman told *The Fiscal Times* she continues to work at age 77 because the rewards of her job and the ability to help people who need it are too important for her to give up.

“It would be foolish for me to retire because there aren’t many people who do the kind of work that I do,” she said. “I have a special mission, and it’s an honour to do this work.”

A former educator named Blanche Lozar, now working with a pet food manufacturer, said this: “I wouldn’t like staying home. There’s nothing on television, and there’s only so much yard work you can do. I feel like I know more about the world being in it than being at home.”

As for me, having spent over three months of my university holiday doing virtually no work apart from a couple of waitress shifts a week, I can testify that when you stay unproductive for too long you become restless, lazy and unmotivated.

It is difficult to attach any kind of meaning to your life when you are not doing anything meaningful.

Work keeps us occupied, engaged, and gives us a sense of usefulness we so badly need.

We were never meant to live a life solely of leisure, but one of creativity and productivity.

Maybe our attitude towards work needs to change—it is not just for survival, it is what we were born to do.

But here is the other danger—while we should recognise the importance of work in our lives, we should not let it be the sole measure of our success and happiness. Work is like everything else in life such as relationships, hobbies and whatever else we might find pleasure in, is fragile.

Our success in our work, and the opportunities we are given with regards to our work, are dependent on a lot of things, many of which we have no control over. We cannot rely on something so unstable as our primary source of happiness.

What, then, should we rely on? In my experience, everything that has ever brought me some measure of happiness has also brought me either pain, because it failed or ended or otherwise fell through; or emptiness, because even though it was everything I thought I wanted it still didn’t turn out to be enough.

The only exception, of all the things I have tried to place my value and happiness in, is Jesus Christ. Eve and Adam needed more than work to feel fulfilled in the Garden of Eden. They needed relationship—with each other and with God. God is the thing that filled the void in my life no amount of productivity and achievement was ever able to. He has never failed or ended or otherwise fallen through.



# Building Better Marriages

## FORGIVING OTHERS REMOVES EMOTIONAL BAGGAGE

BY ROB FURLONG

SOME of the emotional baggage that we carry with us into our relationships is found in a sack labelled un-forgiveness.

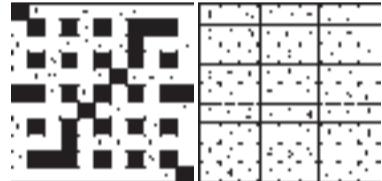
The idea that someone has wronged us and that they should pay has been likened to a debt – the person owes us for what they have done.

But when we carry this kind of baggage around with us we also end up carrying what author David Seamands calls the “Fearsome Four of guilt, resentment, striving and anxiety.”

That is a lot of baggage to lug around!

More importantly, if our practice in life has been to not forgive, then we can be sure that this will also be our habit in marriage.

Forgiveness is a complicated subject because there are so many intricate avenues and nuances associated with it.



*I was the victim of verbal and emotional abuse for twenty years in my marriage – how can I be expected to forgive that?*

*My father suffered inhumane treatment at the hands of a brutal regime. Surely you don't mean he needs to forgive them?*

I want to assure you that I understand these statements. While I have not experienced treatment like that or other horrors inflicted on people, I can appreciate how difficult a thing like forgiveness can be in these situations.

But I am also challenged by this statement:

*The world is made for forgiveness; it is made for grace; it is made for love in all of life. The need for these has been built into the structure of our bodies, in every interpersonal relationship. We are made for grace and love and acceptance.*

Every one of us hungers for grace. Every one of us longs to be accepted. We all want to be loved.

And if this is true, then there lies within all of us the capacity to demonstrate that same grace, acceptance and love to others.

The problem is that some of us feel we have a right to hang on to our hurts and to withhold forgiveness to



those who have mistreated us.

This kind of thinking leads to destruction. We slowly torture the other person by our refusal to forgive, forever keeping them imprisoned by their misdeed and our lack of grace toward them.

But we also keep ourselves imprisoned. While ever we refuse to forgive the other person, we give them power over us to keep us locked up in our bitterness, pain and rejection.

Yet at the heart of the word forgiveness are two incredible concepts.

The first is that to forgive is “to let go”. When we forgive someone we make a deliberate choice to let go of the offence as well as letting go of our perceived right to make them pay or to exact revenge.

The second is that “to release”. When we release a person through the act of forgiveness we make a

choice to not keep them enslaved to our bitterness or held prisoner forever for their act of wrongdoing.

And we also release ourselves!

While ever we hold on to our grudge or some so called “right” to feel the way we do, we inadvertently give the other person power over us because we are forever held captive by them and what they did to us.

Little wonder then, that people who do not forgive fall prey to the “Fearsome Foursome!”

At the height of the US Civil War, a commander told President Lincoln that he “had an enemy and (you) must slay him!”

To which Lincoln wisely replied, “If I make my enemy my friend, have I not slain my enemy?”

You were made for forgiveness, grace, love and acceptance.

And so are the people in your life that need your forgiveness... •

## Fa f

## TWO BECOMING ONE IN FINANCE

BY DARRYL BUDGE

MANY financial advisors recommend couples keep separate bank accounts, and have a joint account for paying shared expenses.

For some, financial independence, autonomy and “never be dependent on somebody else” sounds like helpful advice.

But does this build a healthy, growing relationship that survives tough and good times?

Among those who have long and successful marriages, the more profitable adage is “As independence decreases, interdependence naturally increases”.



## How can I become a Christian?

Anyone can gain the eternal life offered through Jesus Christ

We read in God's word: "God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16)

### OUR PROBLEM: Separation from God

"Everyone has sinned. Nobody is good enough because God's standards are perfect" (Romans 3:23)

**ADMIT**

### GOD'S REMEDY / SOLUTION: Jesus died on the cross

"God demonstrates His own love for us in this; while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8)

**BELIEVE**

### OUR RESPONSE: Trust Jesus by receiving Him

"To all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12)

**COMMIT**

Here is an example of how you can pray.

"Lord Jesus, I need You now. Please forgive me for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Saviour and Lord. Thankyou for loving me so much that You died on the cross for me. Take control of my life. Make me the person You created me to be. Amen"

The Lord Jesus says: "I tell you the truth. Everyone who believes in me has eternal life." (John 6:47). He gives life of a wonderful quality that continues forever.

### AS A NEXT STEP :

If you prayed the above prayer, tick this box

I have prayed this prayer.

Please send me:

- Bible
- Some 'starting off' literature
- Information on a helpful church

If you have NOT prayed the prayer at this stage, tick this box

I would like to think about this.

Please send me:

- More information as I am inquiring about being a Christian.
- I have a problem (see attached letter)

\* Please tick and write clearly \*

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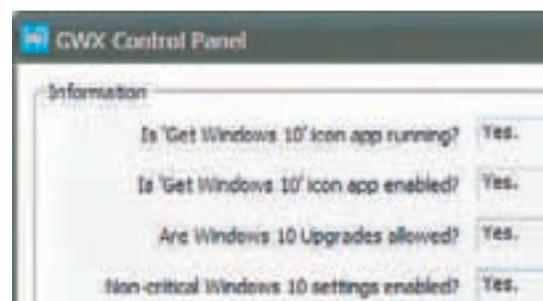
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## Computers & Technology

### DISABLE WINDOWS 10 UPGRADE PROMPTS WITH 'GWX CONTROL PANEL'

BY DARRYL BUDGE



Eject the 'Get Windows 10 app' with GWX Control Panel

DID YOU KNOW that Microsoft has deceptively changed the Windows 10 upgrade notice?

Microsoft has made Windows 10 a "recommended update", so even if you dismiss the upgrade prompt to update, your OS will still "schedule" the update.

The only way to opt out of the upgrade is following the link in the upgrade prompt: **Click here to change upgrade schedule or cancel scheduled upgrade.**

There is an enduring method to disable the Windows 10 upgrade notice and any future intrusion in seconds: download the free GWX Control Panel, which has just been updated for even more reliable and long-lasting results.

You can toggle whether the "Get Windows 10" icon app is running and/or enabled, whether automatic Windows 10 upgrades are allowed, and it will tell you whether you have a hidden Windows 10 Download folder with installer files.

Microsoft has released patches which restore these settings, associated programs and their scheduled tasks, but GWX Control Panel includes a "Delete Windows 10 Programs" option to prevent this from happening.

If you still find the "Get Windows 10" icon returns, an optional "Monitor Mode" tracks any related Windows 10 upgrade settings, and raises an alert if something changes.

GWX Control Panel is a free tool for Windows 7 and 8. The developer has written a comprehensive User Guide on his website [Ultimateoutsider.com](http://Ultimateoutsider.com).

If you like Windows 10 but are annoyed by the Start menu "suggested apps", you can disable them in Settings > Personalization. Or use the VMware OS optimization tool: <https://labs.vmware.com/flings/vmware-os-optimization-tool>

Wedding celebrants often talk about marriage as a union of man and woman becoming 'one flesh'.

This oneness, produced through mutual respect and trust, will naturally be expressed in the sharing of all finances.

If a couple is unwilling to join all assets and bank accounts after marriage, this may be a signal that unresolved trust issues are lingering or developing in the relationship.

And, even if one partner may feel more secure with a separate account, this only treats the symptom when the core issue is unresolved distrust.

You may then ask: Wouldn't keeping the finances separate decrease money fights and make a divorce less likely?

Not exactly. A separation of 'his money' and 'her money' frequently leads to a him-versus-her mentality. Worse still, separate accounts may easily become secret accounts.

Your approach to money is symbolic of your values and priorities, therefore separating accounts only delays or excludes essential discussions on shared values and priorities.

An old proverb says, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

### SPEND AND SAVE TOGETHER

For some couples, you may agree upon all budgeted purchases and an agreed weekly amount for spontaneous purchases.

Another suggestion is to set a threshold dollar amount where the purchase must be mutually agreed upon.

Becoming 'one' in financial values and priorities will improve your shared compassion, personal discipline and 'oneness of mind', and bless your marriage for a lifetime. •

# 'FELT LIKE HOME'



MELBOURNE - DECEMBER 7, 2002:  
Elka after winning the 400m freestyle  
at the Telstra World Cup Shortcourse.  
(Photo Adam Pretty/Getty Images)

## Top Australian Olympic swimmer Elka Whalan found the missing piece

**M**edia personality and former Olympian Elka Whalan felt "there was something missing" despite being one of the world's best freestyle swimmers.

Elka held the 200m freestyle world record from 2001-2004 and had medalled in almost every meet that she ever competed in but says she distinctly felt "there needed to be something bigger than the pool".

"I was at the top of my game, but I just didn't have contentment," Elka expresses.

She grew up in Manly, NSW, with a Jewish mother and Christian father who sent her to swimming training and Sunday school from age four.

Elka was fixated on self-achievement for most of her swimming career but says she often prayed to God when she needed help.

"Before my best and most nervous races I would kneel down and say, 'Oh God, please be with me,' because I thought, 'I'm either going to throw up or I'm going to dive in and absolutely freeze,'" she explains.

Elka had a chance meeting with a past school classmate named Will in 2005, who was rumoured to have developed a drug addiction.

**"I was at the top of my game, but I just didn't have contentment"**

"Will looked like a different man," Elka recalls.

"When he was around 22 his life was threatened [in a violent robbery] and at that moment he asked himself, 'Would God be happy with the way I lived my life?'

"God spared his life, but he spent a long time in hospital. From that moment he turned his life around, and is now working in the community helping people."

Elka says Will's change "really resonated" with her.

"I felt the yearning to go back to the one who gave me life, Jesus," she explains.

Then aged 23 and still enjoying a thriving career, she began attending a Christian church and praying to God regularly again.

This church proclaimed the good news of Jesus and Elka says, "I noticed there was something really amazing, there was something that felt like home."

She initially felt uneasy seeing how happy and peaceful Christians appeared but understood how Jesus gives people lasting inner peace after she says she "asked Jesus to enter my life and I gave up all of me and trusted Him".

"It's deeper than a feeling when the touch of God comes upon you," she explains. "I want to lift up my hands and sing, because I love God."

She had achieved an Olympic silver medal, a five-year Australian 400m freestyle short-course record, and world championship gold medals, and could have competed for years more, but just a year after becoming a Christian she retired in 2006.

"I was a lady about statistics," Elka explains. "I knew that... 0.8 percent (of a nation) end up on a dais (podium). I wanted to be in that percentage. But then I came to God and all of that changed."

After that, she says, "the only statistic that mattered" was that she had God's forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus, and everyone else needed this too.

"I loved what I did and I still do," she explains, "but the difference was I had God in my life."

Ten years on, she is a successful media personality, mother of three children with husband Thomas, and her daily relationship with Jesus is still going strong.

"I am content every day of my life — never anxious or worried — [because] God has filled me with an abundance of His love," Elka says.

"No matter who disappoints me I know Jesus won't disappoint me. And when you make God your number one, He will never disappoint you."

"Although I enjoyed swimming, I can't do life without Christ. It means the world to me. I am who I am now because of Him."

**DISTRIBUTED BY:**



SYDNEY, - OCTOBER 28, 2015:  
Elka Whalan alongside her children Nevada and Edison during the QVB Swarovski Christmas tree VIP preview.  
(Photo Don Arnold/WireImage)