

# DITCHING THE DRUGS

BY JANICE TEO

It's 3 o'clock in the morning. The baby is screaming for a feed and a change. You stumble out of bed, trip over the toys you should have picked up the night before and fall. You swear. So far your night is like any other night in a house with a newborn.

Except you're not just sleep deprived. You're a junkie, badly hungover and psychotic from your bender with meth the night before. You start to cry because the baby won't stop shrieking, you can't find the bottles or the milk and you're terrified your partner in the next room is going to wake up and start yelling at you too.

This was Phil Wynn's life four years ago when he was 37. Hooked on hard drugs from the time he was 17, he wasn't just at rock bottom; he was 10 floors further down.

"I just curled up in a ball and wept," says Phil, who today is light years away from that awful time in his life. His eyes shine with health as he speaks to *Challenge News*.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think my life would get so

desperately, horribly wrong," he adds. "I was completely lost, a drug addict, a meth head. I had two children from a broken marriage and another son from a relationship with a woman I'd met online who was also a junkie.

"We were two broken people lurching from one drug-ridden, alcoholic haze to another. It was toxic. The house was trashed and filthy. We couldn't take care of ourselves let alone a child."

Phil had actually done well in life up until the property market downturn in 2014. His property development company had been booming but the subprime crisis that started in America changed all of that and he was soon almost bankrupt.

Already a heavy drug user, his financial woes propelled him further into addiction and destroyed his marriage. This sent him completely off the rails and led him finally to that wretched night.

Somehow he managed to feed his baby and put him back to bed. Then he collapsed — and started praying to nobody in particular: "You've got to help me, please you've got to do something. Please help me."

Then through the fog he heard a little voice saying "There is nobody else. It has to be you who does something."



Phil Wynn is now on staff at Shalom House. INSET: Phil's well-worn Bible.

The voice was quiet at first but grew more and more insistent until it got Phil's attention.

"All of a sudden I stopped crying and thought: 'Oh. It's me. I'm the

one that has to do something,'" Phil recalls. "It was suddenly so crystal clear. I started looking for a rehab centre the very next day."

Less than two weeks later — 12

days to be exact — he was enrolled in Shalom House, a Christian residential rehabilitation facility in Perth; turning up with almost nothing but the clothes on his back on December 11, 2017. "I showed up there looking like a yellow lollipop because by then my liver had started to break down," he chuckles remembering.

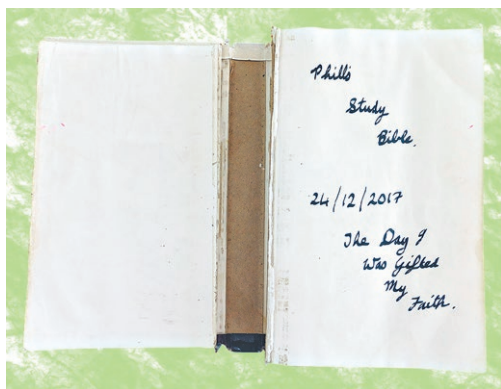
Immediately he began experiencing spiritual attacks. Having participated in tarot card readings and other occult practices, Phil was no stranger to mysticism. He often had grisly dreams and visions and felt oppressive heaviness on his chest.

Within his first week at Shalom House, Phil said he had a dream in which a being came at him speaking in a demonic language — coarse, violent. "This thing that came into my head was fearsome; it was full of rage," he shuddered. "I knew it wasn't a dream. I could feel it trying to break through into me like some scene from a horror movie."

He jerked awake and immediately got on his knees and prayed as he had been taught to do during the daily devotional sessions. "Immediately I felt a warmth all around me," he said. "The oppressiveness lifted; the fear vanished. It was incredible."

Phil committed his life to God at a church service on Christmas Eve, two weeks after going to Shalom House. His faith has grown exponentially. He is now on staff there as personal assistant to founder Peter Lyndon-James and also speaks at seminars at schools and organisations such as the Rotary Club.

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## The challenge of forgiveness

BY BISHOP RICK LEWERS

WHAT'S the hardest thing you have ever had to do?

My guess is that the answers could include things like caring for a sick loved one, or the burden of burying someone precious to you, or keeping the farm through the worst of droughts.

These are hard things that you do because of love or because you care, which makes the hard things, good things.

But what if the hardest thing you ever had to do was something you had no love or energy for?

Forgiveness can be like that, and there is a lot in this world for which we can think hatred is an easier option — hatred of others and sometimes even hatred of self.

One only needs to think of the abuser, the domestically violent, the marriage cheat, a stolen inheritance, bullying parents, or drunken carnage to realise how great the challenges of forgiveness can be.

Interestingly, it takes a lot less energy to build resentment, bitterness and hatred, than it does to exercise forgiveness. Broken promises, cruel words and gossip can be enough to hatch plans for vengeance. And what of those things we can't forgive ourselves for?

You can experiment with things that make shame an unhelpful travelling companion. You can pursue choices that scar you for life, for which there seem to be no way to deal with the guilt.

Our world offers us sufficient evidence that sin destroys community and that resentments,

bitterness and hatred keep it destroyed.

Thus the necessity of reintroducing the real Jesus Christ into our lives and communities.

If you are looking for Jesus Christ to top up your bank account, ensure you get the best job, find your perfect match and give you a problem-free existence, you will be sadly disappointed.

However, if you are looking for Jesus Christ to relieve the burden of your own sin and foolishness, to set you on a better path, to help you to make wiser choices, to offer you strength to forgive others, and to heal the community, then you have come to the right Person.

What is the hardest thing God has ever had to do? He had to pay for our sin to restore us into right relationship with Himself.

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Fun for Kids

Pages 5,6,7



BACK PAGE



FAST FEAT  
JANINE BECKIE



# Now she has something to smile about

The sexual abuse began when Belinda Campbell was four and went on for years. “All the while he told me I was the most disgusting thing that ever lived,” Belinda, 46, tells *Challenge News*. “Of course I believed him.”

Belinda, who says she has suffered from paranoid schizophrenia with complex PTSD for most of her life, was also bullied at school.

After high school she got involved with a man who drugged and prostituted her.

She left when she realised what was happening, got a job and found accommodation elsewhere, but when the house-mate terminated her lease without notice she joined an escort agency to supplement her income.

“I did have a cleaning and nanny job,

but I needed extra money for rental bonds. My previous partner had asked me to join an escort agency so I immediately thought of that for the necessary funds.”

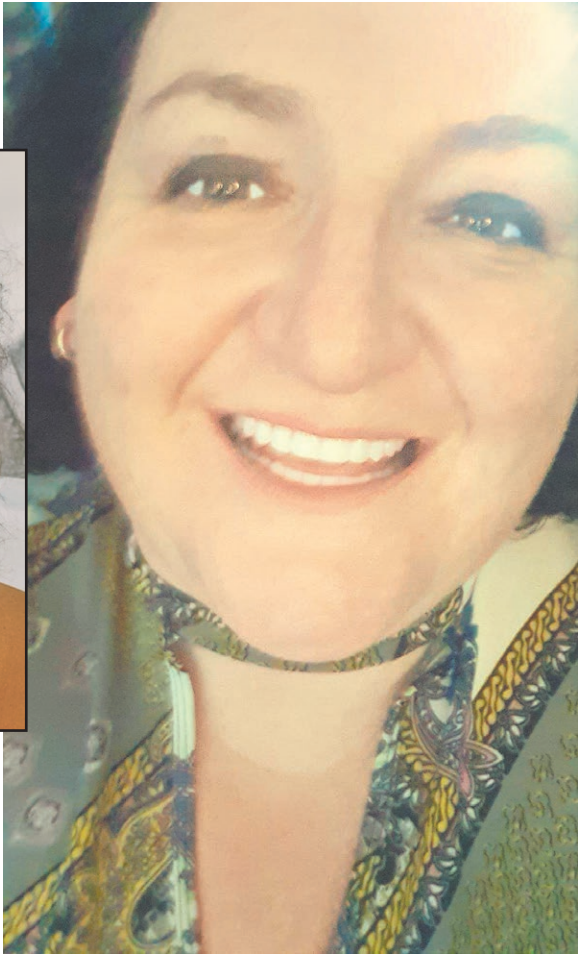
Belinda tried hard to get back on her feet. Work as an escort — and as the agency’s receptionist — paid well and she went back to school to study literature and art.

But Belinda’s mental issues, coupled with a drug addiction by the time she was in her 20s, worked against her. Jobless at 23, she turned this time to prostitution to survive.

The following years were a blur of violence. Belinda was stabbed three times, held at gunpoint twice, and sexually abused several times.

“But still I tried...in between working as a prostitute, homelessness and drug use I tried to hold down work as a cook, but my schizophrenia prevented me.”

Belinda was also suicidal — and had been for most of her life. There were several attempts, including once when she jumped from the top floor of a Perth motel. “I should have died, or become a vegetable at least,” she remarks, “but the wind carried me to a roof over the garbage bin. I rolled off and walked



Belinda Campbell, after her dental treatment.  
**Inset:** Before her teeth were fixed.

away without a scratch.”

Convinced by her miraculous survival that there was a reason for her to be alive, Belinda finally gave up on trying to kill herself.

Convinced there was “a higher power” that could help her, she tried to find it through witchcraft. “I practised what I thought was ‘white magic’; I thought the spells were harmless but there is no such thing in witchcraft,” she sighs. “Ultimately there is always a negative result. Till today I suffer from night terrors.”

In 2016 Belinda found herself in an abusive relationship which gave her shelter but not protection. Hearing about a church that gave free bread to the needy, she popped in one day — only to be told by program coordinator Jean Hall they no longer did that.

Bursting into tears, Belinda asked where she could get food. Jean brought her to the kitchen, filled two big bags with canned goodies, handed them to a stunned Belinda and said: “So I guess I’ll see you in church on Sunday.”

Sunday came around and Belinda did indeed attend service. Something drew her back a second time and then a third. Slowly it dawned on her that that ‘something’ was hope. Before long, she committed her life to Jesus Christ.

With the help and generosity of church members, Belinda began extricating herself from the rubble of her life.

Initially it was tough. “My behaviour was very extreme,” she admits. “I was full of pain and fear. My schizophrenia is terrifying.

“My church has been so supportive. I’ve never known a community like this. They’ve helped me — not just financially, which would already have been plenty — but also taught me about budgeting and just generally how to manage my life.”

In the five years since becoming a Christian, Belinda says her life has changed immensely for the better. One of the highlights was being approved for public housing, finally giving her a permanent home.

It wasn’t just in the practical details of life that her church stepped up. Belinda had only eight teeth — “all rotten” — when she joined. A member, who is a dentist, donated a full set of dentures.

Belinda is also off drugs. “I’m still tempted, and there are people from my past who pop up now and then, but now I have Jesus to run to. I never had that before. God is my safe place and He’s helping me resist more and more.

“The difference God has made just cannot be measured. Thanks to Him and my church I am finding peace.

“Today I know God as my confidante, my companion. He’s the one I worship. He’s the reason I have my own garden and beautiful flowers to look at. Call me crazy but in times when I really need someone to hold me I can feel Jesus put His arms around me.

“I’ve been called crazy before but when it comes to Jesus I don’t mind!”

# DITCHING THE DRUGS

● From page 1

He is so grateful for how God has turned his life around. Not only is he free from drugs, he has mended fences with his ex-wife and sees their two sons regularly. He has also reconciled with his parents and his sisters.

“I have never before felt the love and peace I feel now,” he smiled. “I am living proof that God is real. I’m the kind of guy who needs irrefutable proof before I believe anything and God mercifully did that for me. If He can turn me around He can turn anyone around. You just need to be willing and fix your eyes on Jesus.”



His Bible is so well used it has already lifted from its spine but Phil refuses to get a new one.

Inside, he has written: “Phil’s study Bible. Dec 24, 2017: The day I was gifted my faith.”

“That day when I accepted the Lord was truly the greatest gift of my life,” he says with great conviction. “My Bible is my lifeline. Anything you need for life, it’s all in His word. Power, faith, love, peace and freedom.”

## The challenge of forgiveness

● From page 1

He created us and we ignored Him. He handed us His wisdom and we rejected it.

He revealed Himself to us in Jesus Christ and we scoffed at Him. He sent His only Son to save us and we crucified Him. He offered us His kindness and we ridiculed Him.

He promised us life to the full and we chose an empty life because of our sins, struggling to receive or offer forgiveness, finding our resentments, bitterness and hatreds more valuable than love.

Now there’s a catalogue for the production of hate if ever I heard one, but to God it is the catalogue of human need.

Forgiveness required of God that He cross lines of hostility, redirect His anger, satisfy His justice through His only Son who paid the price in full for us all, and suffer in the offer of a forgiveness we did not deserve.

That forgiveness understood and received has been the catalyst for people to hold together in community.

The striking thing about God’s forgiveness is that nothing is unforgiveable other than the rejection of that forgiveness.

Would you like to receive that forgiveness? See what to do and how to pray on page 11.

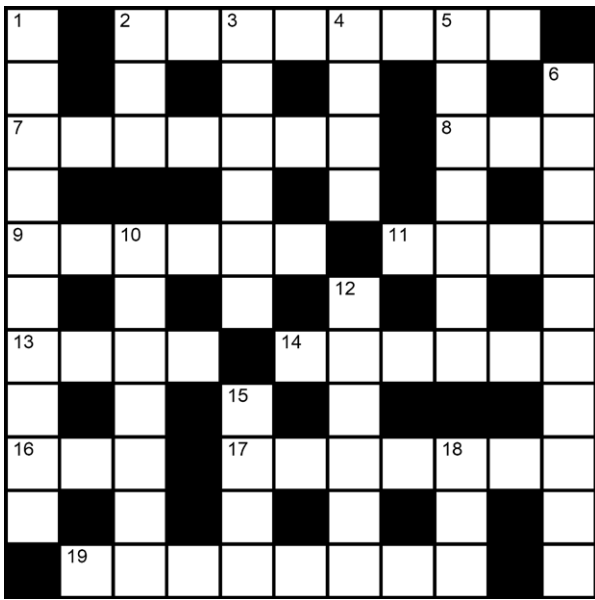
## Coffee Break CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

### ACROSS

- 2 Energetic type
- 7 Failure, fiasco
- 8 Take to the slopes
- 9 Chicago gangster
- 11 President after Reagan
- 13 A wild mountain goat
- 14 Flower patch
- 16 Signifying maiden name
- 17 Ocean direction
- 19 Five-armed sea creature

### DOWN

- 1 Habit formers
- 2 Scientist’s work place
- 3 Not lived in
- 4 Gardener’s annoyance

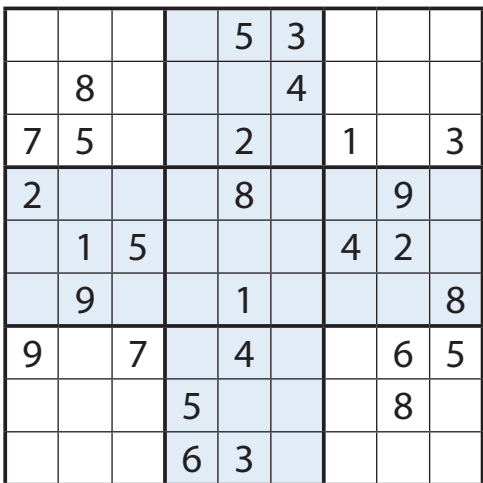


- 5 Redeemed, saved
- 6 Stranded, helpless (4,3,3)
- 10 Stop happening
- 12 A kind of sausage
- 15 One that uses
- 18 Volcanic fallout

SOLUTIONS PAGE 11



“But I promised the guys I wouldn’t shave!”



## CORRECTION

In edition 452, December 2021, Challenge used the above photo with the incorrect caption. The girl pictured in the photo with Dennis and Rosemary Appleton is not in fact their daughter Kylie, who died at age 16, but their foster daughter Cody Lee, whom they fostered for several years and is now 30 years old. Challenge apologises for the mistake and any distress this might have caused.



# Counting the cost of belief

Unimaginable torture, brainwashing, solitary confinement, beatings and extreme hunger were all part of daily life for Richard Wurmbrand when he was imprisoned for 14 years for his bold faith under communist rule. Despite this, he chose to love and forgive his abusers and, on his release, devoted his life to serving others facing the same persecution he did.

Richard was raised in Romania during the time of World War I. Although he was Jewish by birth, by the time he was 14, Richard concluded he was an atheist. He was involved in politics and worked as a stockbroker. In 1936 he married Sabina Oster, who was also Jewish.

When Richard contracted tuberculosis, his doctor advised him to move to a mountain village to recuperate. While there, he and Sabina met a Christian man, who gave them a New Testament Bible.

“I could barely read it,” Richard wrote in his book about his experiences, *Tortured for Christ*. “I could only weep over it, comparing my bad life with the life of Jesus; my impurity with His righteousness; my hatred with His love – and He accepted me as one of His own.”

Richard and Sabina put their faith in Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, and Richard was later ordained as a minister.

During World War II they took the many opportunities to share their newfound faith, preaching in bomb shelters and rescuing Jewish children from ghettos. As a result, they were repeatedly arrested, beaten and nearly executed. Sabina’s family died in Nazi concentration camps.

Before the war was over, Romanian Communists seized power and a million Russian troops arrived as the country became part of the communist Eastern Bloc.

Under this new regime, the Wurmbrands and other Christians were forced to worship in secret. But Richard continued to boldly share his faith in Jesus with his countrymen, as well as Russian soldiers.

In 1945 the new government gathered Christian leaders, including the Wurmbrands, for a “Congress of Cults”, where they were expected to show their support for communism. The Wurmbrands watched as leader after leader swore loyalty to the regime in speeches that were broadcast to the whole nation.

When it came Richard’s turn to speak, Sabina encouraged him to “wipe the shame from the face of Jesus.” Richard told Sabina, “If I do so, you lose your husband.” Sabina replied, “I don’t wish to have a

coward for a husband.” Richard then declared to the delegates that their duty was to glorify God and Christ alone before being removed from the podium. The government watched him for three years as he continued his ministry. During this time he distributed 1 million Gospels [individual copies of the Bible books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John] to Russian troops and helped smuggle Bibles into Russia.

Then in 1948, he was kidnapped by secret police and thrown into prison. Sabina continued their underground church but was imprisoned two years later, and their nine-year-old-son was left alone and homeless. Christian friends looked after him until Sabina was released three years later.

Richard was incarcerated for 14 years and endured torture and brain-washing. During this time he became so ill he was taken to the “dying room”, a place for prisoners who were not expected to live more than a few days. He survived for two years in the dying room, where he shared his faith with other dying prisoners.

“It was strictly forbidden to preach to other prisoners,” Richard wrote. “It was understood that whoever was caught doing this received a severe beating. A number of us decided to pay the price for the privilege of preaching, so we accepted their terms. It was a deal: we preached and they beat us.”

Despite this, Richard said he loved his persecutors: “I hate the Communist system but I love the men. I hate the sin but I love the sinner. I love the Communists with all of my heart. Communists can kill Christians, but they can’t kill their love toward even those who killed them. I have not the slightest bitterness of resentment against the Communists or my torturers.”

He wrote, “I have seen Christians in Communist prisons with 50 pounds of chains on their feet, tortured with red-hot iron pokers, in whose throats spoonfuls of salt had been forced, being kept afterward without water, starving, whipped, suffering from cold – and praying with fervour for the Communists. This is humanly inexplicable! It is the love of Christ, which was poured out in our hearts.”

In 1965, a group of Norwegian Christians paid a ransom to allow the Wurmbrands to leave Romania. At that time, prisoners were being sold to the West for about \$2,000. Richard’s ransom was \$10,000.

The family travelled to Norway before

moving to England, and later America, where Richard appeared before a US Senate subcommittee, at one point stripping to the waist to reveal 18 deep torture wounds.

The Wurmbrands founded a ministry to serve persecuted Christians called Jesus to the Communist World, which spread worldwide and was later renamed Voice of the Martyrs. It currently works in more than 60 countries where Christians experience persecution.

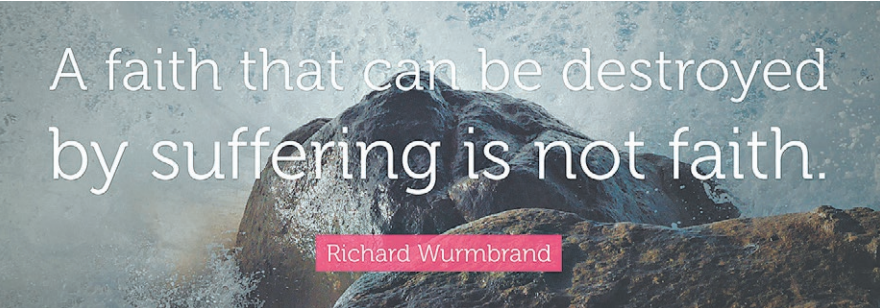
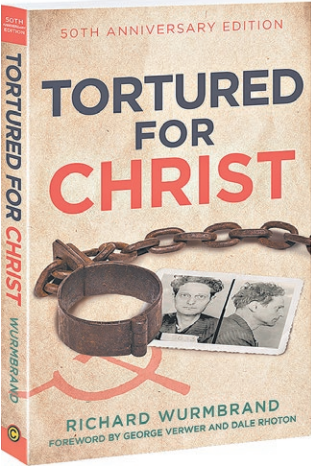
Richard wrote 24 books, which have been translated into 38 languages. Richard and Sabina died within six months of each other in 2000 and 2001.

Christianity is currently the most persecuted religion in the world and more Christians are facing persecution today than at any time in human history. Millions of Christians around the world are suffering

persecution for their faith – but following Jesus is more important to them than their freedom and even their lives – as it says in the Bible in Philippians 1:21, “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” •



Richard and Sabina Wurmbrand.



Richard Wurmbrand

Barbara “Barbie” Lenoy

## Alcoholic finds water of life

When Barbara “Barbie” Lenoy was 47, she had been an alcoholic for 30 years. But one night, while she was searching for alcohol, she heard a message that changed her life forever.

Barbie grew up in Woorabinda Aboriginal Community, but now lives on Great Palm Island, an Indigenous community located on the Great Barrier Reef, North Queensland.

On that night in 1999, she and her partner, Peter, had been in a park drinking but Peter was tired and wanted to sleep.

“I wanted to go up to the mission to look around for more drink,” she shares in a 40 Stories video. “I asked for a smoke and I sat down and had a smoke and I can hear this pastor preaching in the church. When I went in, I didn’t go sit on the chairs. I went over in the corner, dark, where I can just sit there and nobody can see me because, see, I was still drunk and I was dirty. So I sat there listening.”

Barbie asked a woman in the church if she could go to the pastor for prayer and she encouraged her to go forward.

“I said, ‘I just want prayers, please. I’m an alcoholic. I want to stop drinking.’ And when (the

pastor) prayed, I don’t know why, I cried. I was crying. He had to give me a towel.”

That night, Barbie stayed with a friend, who brought her to church again the next day.

“She gave me clean clothes for church and I went to church and the church was packed.”

Someone she had met in the church the night before said, “It’s lovely to see you this morning, Barbie.”

“And I felt shame because he said my name in front of everybody and I thought, ‘Oo-ah, you remembered my name from all the people last night.’ And he said, ‘You’re looking nice this morning,’ because I was clean, see, because the night before I was drunk and I was dirty.”

Barbie shares that all her life she had been searching for security and when she put her faith and trust in Jesus Christ for her salvation she knew she had finally found it.

“Lord Jesus, He was my security that I was searching for and I thank Him for my life today because He brought me from nowhere. He saved my life. He

saved my life. If He didn’t find me, I’d be either still out there in the world, drunk. If not, I would be dead. If I died then, at that time, I’d go to hell from what I learn from reading the Bible. I’d

go to hell because I didn’t know the Lord Jesus, I didn’t know about Him.”

Barbie shared what had happened with Peter.

“I said, ‘I can’t live with you no more,’ meaning: ‘I can’t sleep with you no more, it’s wrong.’ He said to me, ‘We’ll get married.’”

And so they did.

“One day, (Peter) said to me, ‘Barbie, mate, I want to come to church with you.’ I thank the Lord for Peter’s life because he gave his heart to the Lord before he died... I love John chapter 14, verse 6. Because Jesus said, ‘I am the way, the truth and the life,’ because He showed me the truth and because He is the truth. And He showed me the way and the way is to Him. I just live for Him daily. My salvation is with the Lord today – not yesterday, it’s finished. Not tomorrow. We don’t know what tomorrow’s going to bring. Make your life right today.” •

I WAS DRUNK AND I WAS DIRTY





# ‘Religion is for losers’



Once an aggressive atheist, Alister McGrath (above) is now a staunch believer in God.

When Alister McGrath began studying science at Oxford University, he was an atheist who believed religion was for losers. But by the time he graduated, it was a different story. Sharing his story on the Unbelievable? YouTube channel, Alister said growing up in Northern Ireland in the 1960s, he witnessed the religious tension between the Protestants and Catholics.

He also had an interest in natural science at school, leading him to study science at university.

“I came to the conclusion [that] science says there is no God, end of discussion. And look at all this religious violence,” he says. “No religion – no religious violence.”

So Alister embraced his identity as an atheist.

“I was actually really quite an aggressive atheist – someone who thought that religion was for losers,” he admits.

Alister studied science at Oxford University and it was there that he discovered that there are many things that scientists believe that couldn’t be proven to be true.

“That gave me permission to begin to think thoughts that I had thought were illicit; like there might be a God, there might be a deep meaning to life, that the way the world is might reflect a deeper meaning beyond it,” he explains.

As Alister began to explore a different way of thinking, he realised that the case for atheism wasn’t as good as he had thought.

“Also, Christianity wasn’t what I thought it was and it turned out to be rather more exciting and interesting than I’d thought,” Alister recalls. “And so, in my first term at university I said, this is for me, I want to be a Christian.”

In his book *Mere Theology: Christian Faith and the Discipleship of the Mind*, Alister writes, “I turned my back on one faith and embraced another.”

He described his initial conversion to Christianity as an intellectual conversion – his mind realising the truth.

“As I’ve grown older I’ve discovered there’s a lot more to Christianity than simply being right, but actually that was what captivated me in those days,” Alister explains.

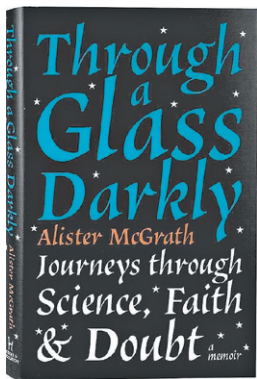
But doubts crept in during his early days as a Christian.

“If we get worried about doubts, very often it’s because we haven’t actually explored our faith properly,” he says. “There are profoundly good reasons for faith. We need to know what those are, because it’s good for us to know what the foundations of faith are, what its ramifications are.”

As a former atheist, Alister understands why people choose not to believe in God.

“Atheism makes rational sense if you think that we are limited to what human reasoning can prove to be true,” he explains.

“Christian faith is about being liberated from the prison house of rational thought. It says there is more to life than what reason can discover. It’s not irrational – it goes beyond reason, it’s like leaping over a wall and discovering on the other side there is a beautiful landscape, which you can’t see from inside the prison house.”



One of Alister’s theological heroes is author C.S. Lewis, who, like Alister was from Northern Ireland, an Oxford intellectual, and started out as an atheist.

He often refers to Lewis’ famous quote, “I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.”

“He’s saying, faith makes sense in itself but it makes sense of everything else as well,” Alister explains.

Alister is now the Andreas Idreos Professor of Science and Religion at the University of Oxford.

He is also the senior research fellow at Harris Manchester College, Oxford, president of the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics and is the associate priest in a group of Church of England village parishes.

Alister has written more than 50 books including *The Dawkins Delusion* in response to Richard Dawkins’ *The God Delusion*. •



Julie Mellor talks to a radio station holding the Bible that changed her life.

## Book opened after 7 years

BY STEPHEN LAHOOD

For seven years, schoolteacher Julie Mellor left the red New Testament on the top shelf untouched. When the Gideon Bibles were dropped off in her classroom, Julie had been hostile.

“I was an atheist; I didn’t have any time or need for God,” she says on a Jesus Peeps video. “I thought the Gideons were taking up my class time and I thought spreading fairy tales amongst the kids.”

“But I must have been touched somewhere in my soul,” she says. “I took one of their red New Testaments and I put it on my shelf, and it stayed there for 6-7 years untouched.”

Julie, a native of Melbourne, Australia, was a highly educated schoolteacher. She got her Master’s degree from Cambridge University in England.

While she didn’t believe in God, she did explore the New Age Movement.

But then trouble came into her life.

“I went through a traumatic period in my life, and I thought my life was ruined and beyond repair,” she says. “I was actually considering suicide.” She went on a journey searching for healing through the New Age. Her search was fruitless, expensive and frustrating. However, being continually challenged by the idea that there was a ‘God’, she prayed, “God I’m going to believe and pray to You for a month, and You got to show me the goods.”

She remembered the neglected Gideon’s New Testament and began thumbing through the verses that can be found at the back of the New Testament. The New Testament is the second part of the Bible, which tells the story of Jesus and His first followers. Every single verse ministered to Julie.

“The list just jumped out to my heart,” she says.

Intrigued, she dived into the Gospel of Matthew.

“These were exactly the words I needed someone to say to me, so reassuring,” she says. “I instantly understood that Jesus was what everybody is searching for.

“Here I was, I found Him. I mocked Him my entire adult life and yet He yanked me out of this dark place!”

Today, Julie is married to Australian international evangelist John Mellor, who helped bring about a great revival among the Indigenous Australians in the Northern Territory in the 1990s.

The couple have written books and are now based in Buderim, Queensland. •

# Miracle well saves thousands of lives

A FEW years ago Jerry Wiles, President Emeritus of Living Water International, an NGO that builds wells in poor countries, visited a region in Kenya where there had been several years of severe drought. According to the story on godreports.com, most of the water wells in the region were dry. Living Water International had drilled a deep well in the area about eight years earlier, and it was one of the few productive wells in the entire region. People were traveling long distances to get water for their basic needs and their livestock.

Jerry was told that more than 30,000 people were getting water from that one well they called, “The Miracle Well.” A missionary serving in that region told him that



thousands of people would be dead if it was not for that well.

On that same trip, at a reception in Nairobi of government officials, business and ministry leaders, a man approached Jerry and said, “I am alive today because of you.”

“When I asked what he meant,” Jerry relates, “He told me a story of how we had drilled a well in his village when he was a little boy. He shared how the well had transformed the entire community. Access to clean water was used to improve the health, educational opportunities, economic development, as well as the spiritual and social life in the community.”

In the developed world we take our on-tap water for granted and think nothing of wasting or polluting it, but in rural places where water is scarce, they know what it is to be really thirsty and how precious a resource water is.

In the Bible, Jesus calls Himself the Living Water and invites us to come to Him to quench our deep thirst for meaning and love.

Like our abundance of drinking water, the West has such an abundance of information about Jesus and so many benefits from our long history with Christianity that we don’t really know what it is to long for the truth and thirst for access to the love of God.

In countries with dominant religions that have harsh deities and punitive practices that demand constant sacrifices, or offer no certainty or grace, they know what it is to be without the sweet water of the gospel and to long for the mercy of a loving God.

As essential as water is to our physical life, so essential is belief in Jesus to our spiritual life. Are you feeling parched for hope and dry with formal religion or self-help philosophy? Come to the well of living water and drink deep for God’s grace (God’s undeserved love). Jesus told the Samaritan woman in the Bible in John chapter 4: “... whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” •



# YOUTH TRUTH

## Ask Y: Peter Meadows answers your questions about God

QUESTION: WHAT IF I FEEL I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO GO TO CHURCH?



Strange isn't it that from some sincere people you hear: *'The church is full of hypocrites so I'm not going.'* And from those equally sincere you hear, *'I'm not good enough to go to church'* – and they don't mean they are not good enough at being a hypocrite!

To be honest, I have a lot of sympathy with the 'I don't feel good enough' feeling. I experienced something similar years ago when visiting a friend in America who invited me to his health club. I feared not matching up. My flab and breathlessness would surely be fit for ridicule among all the other fine specimens of health and fitness.

However, the first thing I saw was an amazingly obese man on a weighing machine, trying to gather his rolls of fat in his hands so he could get a reading.

And, believe it or not, churches are not much different. Just as a health club would never advertise 'Only fit people welcome' neither does the church want to give out the same kind of message. And I'm sorry if that's how it comes over. Because, far from a church being a club for the good, it is more like a hospital for those in recovery.

You can get the idea from the first people Jesus called to follow him. One was a conspirator with the occupying forces at the time. Two argued with pride about who should have the best seat in heaven. Another used bad language to deny he had ever known Jesus – and attacked those coming to arrest Jesus with a sword. And a man who had stood and watched someone stoned to death became one of Jesus' greatest followers who wrote great chunks of the New Testament.

In fact, it is those who say the church is full of hypocrites who are closer to the truth. To 'hypocrites' add those who are selfish, dishonest, self-centred, proud – and worse. Because that's what it's like to be human. But what better place for them to be than in the company of others like them who are experiencing forgiveness and the strength to live right?

Which is why I believe, if you put your fears behind you and went to church, you'd find yourself in the company of those who don't regard themselves as any better than anyone else. Far from it. Rather Christians – including me – just see themselves as enjoying and celebrating God's forgiveness. And not because they have earned it. But because, through His death on the cross, Jesus made forgiveness available as a free gift, which they have grabbed with both hands. •

### Contact Challenge!

Do you have a story to tell, a tricky question to ask or want to let us know how *Challenge* has impacted you?  
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# AM I REALLY A GOOD PERSON?



Isaac Mogilevsky prided himself on his goodness, until he realised it wasn't enough. Photo: YouTube/DailyDisciple

**D**o you think you are a good person? When he was 11 years old, Isaac Mogilevsky thought he knew the answer straight away – "Yes!"

He prided himself on getting his schoolwork done on time, helping his parents and staying out of trouble. But he began to question: was his goodness good enough?

Now 22, Isaac shared his story on his popular YouTube channel, Daily Disciple. He grew up in Winnipeg Manitoba, Canada. His parents home-schooled him and his seven brothers and sisters.

Isaac was raised in a Christian family and faith was a part of every aspect of his life.

"We'd have a daily routine of sitting around and reading the Bible and talking about it and praying, and that was incorporated right into our schooling," he recalls.

When he was about six or seven, Isaac listened to children's audio drama called *Patch the Pirate*.

"It was about this crew of kids and this mentor figure, Patch the Pirate, and they would go on adventures," he explains.

He remembers an episode

in which one of the children wants to become a Christian and Patch the Pirate leads them in a prayer.

"I don't remember much from that prayer but I do remember him saying: 'God, I want You to reign in my heart, Jesus reign in my heart,' and as a six or seven-year-old kid I went to the back of one of our chairs in our living room because I thought that was a good place to pray and I said: 'God, can You reign in my heart' and that was it."

Then one night, when Isaac was about 11, his brother asked him that simple question: "Do you think you are a good person?"

Isaac said, "Yes." He considered his "goodness" to be one of his greatest qualities.

"I tried to do my schoolwork, I tried not to get in fights, I tried to do my chores, I tried to take initiative and do everything that needed to be done because I wanted to be a good guy," he explains.

"I wanted to be moral, I wanted to be obedient. I thought that's what God wanted for me – to be obedient, to be moral, and to do everything I was supposed

## I WANTED TO BE A GOOD GUY



## Why being good isn't good enough

BY GREG LAURIE

THIS may come as a surprise to some, but there will be people in hell whom others would define as good people.

On the other hand, there will be people in heaven who lived bad lives, but they repented of their sin.

You can be a good person, relatively speaking, but you're not good enough. You may think you will get to heaven on your own good works, but of course you won't. That's how you might end up in hell. Being good doesn't get you to heaven. The Bible tells us, *"For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard"* (Romans 3:23 NLT). But it also says, *"There is one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity — the man Christ Jesus. He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone"* (1 Timothy 2:5–6 NLT).

Jesus Himself said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6 NLT).

There's only one way to heaven, and that is being forgiven by God. Heaven is not for good people; it's for forgiven people.

So, the real question is this: Are you forgiven?

Have you said to God, "I know I'm a sinner. I know I don't deserve to go to heaven, but you've offered me this wonderful promise that I can go there some day. I want to. So, I want to believe in You"?

That's really what it comes down to. You have to admit your sin and believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sin. Turn from that sin. Ask God to forgive you of that sin and begin to follow Christ. When you do, you can know with certainty that you'll go to heaven.

Have you done this? He is just a prayer away. •

to do so that God could love me — or at least that's what I thought."

Isaac's brother showed him a video from Living Waters Ministries' *The Way of the Master*. In this program, host Ray Comfort asks strangers the same question Isaac's brother asked him.

"In one of the episodes they talked about the 10 commandments (God's law) and highlighted the verse Romans 3:23: *'For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.'* I'd heard this verse before many times but now I actually understood God's law... they explained that none of us can meet God's standard of perfection of goodness — all of us have lied, have coveted, have not loved God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. We've all fallen short — I've fallen short — because we all fall short of God's perfect standard. Because we've broken God's law, He has to be a good judge and punish us and that punishment is hell. But that's where Jesus comes in — He came to this earth fully God and fully man, without sin, and He lived a perfect life — a life that we couldn't live, that I couldn't live.

"He died on the cross — a death that I deserved to die — but He didn't stay dead.

"He rose again and defeated death. He took our punishment on Himself and we are saved by grace through faith, not of works, not of being a good person, not of trying harder, not trying to do better — that's not what's going to save us because at the end of the day we can never make it up to that standard. It is Jesus alone who can save us."

Isaac now understood what

it meant to repent — to turn from his sin [rebellion against God] and turn to God.

"It was during this period of life where I can look back and say that was when I truly came to repentance and faith. Some might say I rededicated my life to Christ — all I know is God saved me. Exactly when that happened, I'll leave that to Him."

This was a turning point for Isaac and his life changed after this.

"From then on I wanted to truly know God — no more going through the motions, no more pretending, no more kind of putting on a good face to seem like a good person — no, this was about being real and passionate about following Jesus," he attests.

Isaac's obedience now stems from a place of love, rather than trying to earn God's approval and forgiveness.

"I wanted to obey God because I was already loved by God — not to earn His love. I wanted to serve God because I was so thankful to Him for saving me and now I wanted to serve Him and I was eager to expand his kingdom.

"That's my passion to this day — to see His kingdom expanded, to be a witness for Him, to disciple, to continue to follow Him passionately."

Isaac is the director of Daily Disciple Ministry and daily-disciple.ca.

He has more than 60,000 subscribers on YouTube and 345,000 followers on TikTok, where he aims to help people become authentic, inspired, and passionate disciples of Jesus. He has also written a book called *A Letter to My Father: What Your Son Wants to Tell You But Doesn't*. •

**"You cannot be too bad, too broken or too boring for God's unconditional love, only too proud to acknowledge how desperately you need it."**

Pete Greig (from the book *How to Pray: A Simple Guide for Normal People*)



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# YOUTH TRUTH

# Hollywood 'bad girl' finds peace



*Singer Jeannie Ortega says peace was a foreign concept to her as a child. Although her life now is not perfect, she says her faith is her life support.  
(Photo by Jim Spellman/WireImage.)*

Growing up in a tumultuous family home and in a religion steeped in mysticism and witchcraft, Jeannie Ortega began experiencing suicidal thoughts from as young as seven years old.

Sharing her story on her website [jeannieo.com](http://jeannieo.com), she says peace was a foreign concept to her as a child and she sought an escape, which she found in music.

“At a very tender age, I decided I wanted to be a singer, since I realised music had the power to help people feel better,” Jeannie says.

At the age of 11, she entered the music industry. It wasn't long before she was faced with con-artists who tried to take advantage of her age and lack of knowledge of the new world she had found herself in. As a teenager she would attend school during the day and work in the studio at night.

“Unfortunately, during that time, I was also exposed to sex, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll, and was constantly sexually harassed, but even then I was protected,” Jeannie remembers.

"Looking back at it now, I realise it could have all been so much worse."

At 16 she was signed to a recording label and started recording and touring. She soon started to see the fruits of her labour. Her 2006 single *Crowded* became a top Billboard hit and went on to be certified Gold on radio air-play. Her first record *No Place Like BKLYN* also debuted that

year at No. 1 on Billboard's Heatseekers chart. Around this time she chose to reject her family's mysticism and instead started attending a Christian church. She also performed as the opening act for Rihanna.

Although she was learning about God, Jeannie had not accepted Jesus as her Lord and Saviour and says she was still very much the “bad girl”.

Jeannie's success continued and she appeared in a few movies and television programs such as *Step Up* (2006) and *One Life to Live* (2013).

"Regardless of all the success, however, I was still the same broken little girl that ran away from my childhood pain, hoping that success would fulfil me," Jeannie explains. "Thoughts of suicide continued to linger and anger

gripped greater than ever."

She realised money and fame could not fill the void she felt inside.

"I continued my faith journey and eventually fell head over heels in love with this Jesus who began to heal me from the inside out," Jeannie says. "The more I learned of Him, the more I talked about Him everywhere I went."

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She said her image of the “bad girl” of Hollywood started to change and she was dropped from her record deal.

"In addition, my family was falling apart and my illustrious entourage disappeared and I found myself alone and abandoned but it was that, which caused me to finally look up to God for guidance," she recalls.

“The empire I built collapsed, and it really put things in perspective for me. So I finally fully surrendered my life to Jesus because by then I really knew He was the only One in my life that had always been faithful.”

Jeannie has dedicated her life to sharing the transforming love of Jesus wherever she goes. She is now married to a pastor. She continues to make music (like her 2016 album *Love Changed Me*), but Jeannie says it is stirring and inspiring, instead of self-seeking. She has also just released an autobiography called *What is Happening To Me: Discern and Defeat Your Unseen Enemy* (2021).

"Of course, we've had our fair share of challenges, including losing three of our children to miscarriage but we take comfort knowing that they are in Heaven and none of our pain is in vain," Jeannie says.

"God is still good in the trials, we really do get to see that He is the only one that can really mend the broken heart... Faith in Him is my life support and I know that what God has started in my life, He will finish!" •



*Susie Harris with former athletes David Binqgeli and David Simmons.*

# My secret weapon helps me cope

**S**usie Harris was only 17 when she was selected to play for Australia's national hockey team — the Hockeyroos — in the 2004 World Cup. It was a dream debut for the teenager, who slammed a goal into the net in their match against mighty China.

The euphoria of that moment, when she was swamped by her ecstatic teammates, has stayed with the 36-year-old until today.

An unknown at the time, it was no wonder *The Age* newspaper called her Australia's "hidden talent".

“It was one of those perfect moments,” she told *Eternity News*. “A moment of pure joy – the culmination of years of training, when everything goes right in an almost perfect way.”

Susie went on to play for her country more than 50 times. Hockey at that level opened many doors to the teenager — she travelled all over the world and enjoyed experiences not many 17-year-olds are afforded. How did she cope with the highs and lows of elite sport? Susie had a secret weapon too — as a Christian, she drew her strength and her stability from God and said it was her faith that helped her navigate her intense life, which included training away from her home in Blaxland, New South Wales. Her faith was bolstered by encouraging notes from her family — notes she says are “more precious to her than any trophy”.

Susie grew up in a Christian home and says she was blessed to have parents “who intentionally and prayerfully raised all their daughters to follow Christ.” She said she was about 14 when she sealed her faith for herself.

“When you’re at that age you start making decisions for yourself and that was the point for me when I took it on for myself and thought about what it meant to be a Christian,” she shared. “A few years later that really cemented as I was thrust into a world with a lot of older people.”

Speaking about how she kept her faith not only alive but thriving, she said: “I was blessed that I had Christian friends and family who could support me, but as much as it’s important to be part of a Christian community, the most important thing is our relationship with the Lord. “For me that was modelled through Bible reading and prayer. That was a priority wherever and whatever we did. By God’s grace I kept close to Him and grew.”

There were times when she was lonely and isolated, she recalled, but “even those were strengthening times in my faith. I had no-one else to fall back on but God, and He was always with me. I fell back on the Lord as my best friend. I can remember on one occasion feeling quite alone and craving some Christian community during an international tour. We were in Athens at the time and I happened to have some time off on a Sunday, and I stumbled upon a small and very old Greek chapel.

“Whilst it wasn’t the usual church atmosphere I’d experience back home, it was comforting to be in a place where I hoped God was honoured and worshipped. But most tour schedules were too tight for these sorts of experiences.” What gave her much comfort and support were the notes that her family wrote to her. They would leave them in her bag or give them to her as she flew off to another tournament.

Filled with words of encouragement, prayer and Scripture verses, they are still much cherished by Susie. "Those notes and letters really grounded me and are more precious to me than any medals," she said.

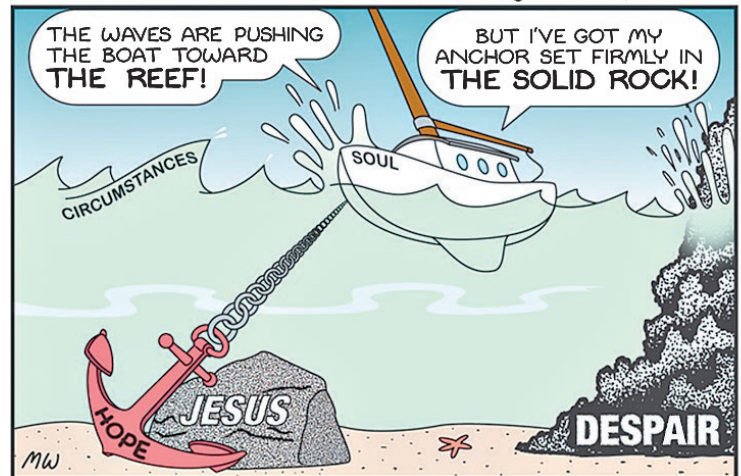
Her parents also gave her a travelling Bible — “it was my most precious travelling companion,” she says with a grin.

She counts the Scottish missionary Eric Liddell, whose story was told in the film *Chariots of Fire*, as one of her greatest inspirations.

“He’s an inspiration not just because he was so committed but because he stood up to the tests that were thrown at him. He loved the way the Lord had blessed him with particular skills and he wanted to serve Him with them, give glory to Him with them. Sport wasn’t Eric’s whole world; there were other things he wanted to do, like being a missionary to China. He was passionate about that. He just wanted to honour God wherever he was.” And that is what Susie wants to do too. ●

## ANCHOR

**A Joyful 'toon** by Mike Waters



We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.



# Big bang has big problems

Physicist Christopher Ting has been fascinated by the natural world ever since he was a university student in Japan.

The Singaporean, now a professor at the School of Informatics and Data Science at Hiroshima University, told Creation Ministries International he became committed to finding out about how nature works.

He is also a Christian and is in an ideal position to comment on the creation vs evolution debate.

Christopher heard the gospel preached at a Billy Graham crusade when he was a teenager but didn't make a commitment immediately. "I felt it was a big decision and not to be made hastily," he explains.

"Nevertheless I began to read the Bible and attended church regularly. Through reading the Word of God, I was convicted of my sin and I repented [turned away from it]."

A verse that had a particular impact on Christopher during his A level exams at the time was Isaiah 41:10:

*"Fear not, for I am with you;  
Be not dismayed, for I am your God.*

*I will strengthen you,  
Yes, I will help you,  
I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."*

In his line of work, Christopher inevitably encounters evolution — biological evolution (Darwin's theory of species evolution through natural selection), chemical evolution (the origin of life from non-life), and cosmological evolution (the Big Bang theory).

He rejects them all as contrary to Scripture. "I find no reason or need to 'harmonise' secular models of origins with what the Bible clearly says about God's creation when we read the 66 books plainly and straightforwardly.

"Also, the 66th book of the Bible [Revelation] tells us about the brand-new heaven and earth without the sun. I don't think it will take billions of years for the new creation to form through natural processes," he declares.

Christopher is also critical of 'progressive creationists' such as Dr Hugh Ross, who twist the Bible to fit the Big Bang.

"Choosing to interpret the Bible in a way that accommodates secular versions of origins is a form of scientism (an almost religious belief in naturalistic science). It disgraces the divine authority of the Bible."

The Bible not only presents a radically different time frame, but even a very different order of events. For example, the Bible says that God created the earth on Day 1, but the sun and stars on Day 4. The Big Bang claims that the sun and stars formed before the earth.

Many people are intimidated by claims that the Big Bang and evolution are 'science'. But Christopher explains the important contrast between two different types of research bundled under the term 'science'.

"Real science is based on repeatable, independently reproducible



Physicist Dr Christopher Ting (extreme right) with his wife Reiko (middle) and their three children Eri, Ai and Yoshia.

observations or experiments at the present time," he says. "We need to make a distinction between science that can be verified or falsified today, versus 'science' that is historical in nature such as the Big Bang and macroevolution. They are worldview filters through which secular scientists interpret the observable data."

The claims of evolution and the Big Bang are based on a false history of the world — that matter is all there is. Christopher points out that defending these views results in "using the unknown (e.g. dark matter) to explain the unknown", while real science seeks to explain the unknown in terms of the known.

Take the question of the origin of our moon. A major theory is the 'giant impact' theory, which states: "A Mars-sized body striking the Earth, making a debris ring that eventually collected into a single natural satellite, the moon."

But, asks Christopher: "Where did that Mars-sized body come from? This is one of many examples of using

the unknown (a hypothetical Mars-sized body) to explain the known (the moon), through random disorderly events such as a giant impact.

"For the scattered debris to form our moon at the right size and in the stable orbit we see today is unbelievable. The stupendous giant impact would also knock the earth out of its current optimal orbit.

"Put the other way round, the giant impact was as if it was so precisely 'designed' as to knock the 'primordial' earth into the current 24-hour spinning planet in a tilted orbit for four seasons, at the optimal distance to the sun for life to thrive on it. What are the odds for this to happen by one catastrophic impact?"

Asked if his own research surfaced anything that challenged evolutionary theory, Christopher explained that his master's thesis examined how muscles work at the molecular level.

"It is a curiosity that muscle proteins in a live rabbit do not decay, but when they are contained in a test-tube, their molecular structure will easily get distorted.

"The decay of proteins outside of a living cell is the inevitable outcome of the laws of thermodynamics. Things naturally become disordered. To get a bunch of amino acids to turn into

Dr Christopher Ting Hian-Ann has a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and master's degree in experimental physics from the University of Tokyo. He earned a Ph.D. in theoretical physics from the National University of Singapore in 1994. He has had many papers published in several different fields: physics, biophysics, computer science, and quantitative finance; as well as a textbook on the last.

a functioning protein, as evolution would have it, goes against these laws.

"Anyone who has done experiments to synthesize proteins from raw materials in the laboratory will tell you how hard it is to yield the end products. For 'nature' to produce proteins of sufficient yield out there in the open field by chance requires uncountable coincidences."

Rather than seeing the Bible and science as contradictory, Christopher believes that through science "we can truly appreciate that God is our awesome Creator, and the natural world He made speaks volumes of His infinite wisdom."

This article is based on one by Dr. Jonathan Sarfati that appeared in *Creation Magazine*. For the original article, which includes many other more technical arguments and details. Please see *Creation Magazine*, Volume 44, Issue 1, January 2022. Related web articles can also be found at [creation.com](http://creation.com).

**Believe it or not**

BY CREATION  
MINISTRIES  
INTERNATIONAL

## A stinging rebuke

**THE** oldest known species of scorpion, '*Parioscorpio venator*', was found among the Waukesha Biota from a rock layer in Wisconsin, USA. Described as an "exceptionally well preserved fossil" it is claimed to be around 437 million years old.

The research team said: "Elements of the circulatory, respiratory and digestive systems are preserved, and they are essentially indistinguishable from those of present-day scorpions"—which exclusively breathe air.

This is not good news for evolutionists, who believe that scorpions were amongst the first animals to adapt to life from the sea to life on land.



"Prior to this, all of animal life is in the ocean," Andrew Wendruff, one of the paper's authors, said. "This is the beginning point of animals leaving the seas to utilise land!"

This was the point when they would have expected to see physiological changes associated with a marine-to-terrestrial transition.

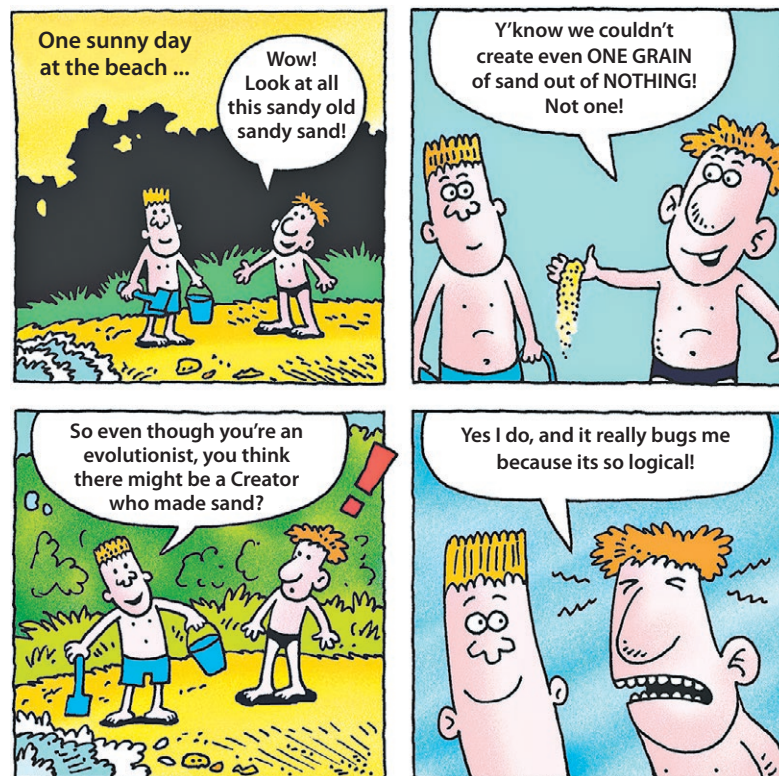
There was no sign of this. Rather, it demonstrated evolutionary stasis (non-evolution) for an alleged 437 million years. In all that (alleged) time there has been no change to the circulatory or respiratory systems.

Scorpions have always been scorpions, and these latest findings are another sting in the evolutionary tale.

Wendruff, A.J. and 4 others. *Science Reports*, 1014, 16 Jan 2020.

Pullano, N., *inverse.com*, 16 Jan 2020.

## Dar and Winny



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# BUILDING BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

## ANGER CAN TORCH YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

BY ROB FURLONG

**ANGRY** people can do a lot of damage.

If you haven't discovered this yet, listen to the advice of The Incredible Hulk's alter-ego, Bruce Banner, who politely warns all those who would provoke him, "Don't make me angry – you wouldn't like me when I'm angry!"

His message is clear: "Get me angry and you will unleash the beast, and it won't end well for anyone..."

Unresolved, uncontrolled, and inappropriately expressed anger leaves a destructive wake in relationships, both for those on the receiving end, and the angry person.

Part of growing into an emotionally

mature person is recognising where and how you express anger may be negatively impacting your life and relationships, and developing new, healthier habits.

One of the first growth steps for me in this journey was to learn how to identify the type of anger I struggled with. Essentially, there are two types of anger:

### Fiery anger

Fiery anger is the kind that flares up quickly and then "vomits" all over people. It doesn't require much to set it off: fiery anger bubbles up inside the offended person, resulting in a tirade against the offender but significantly, as soon as it is expressed, it settles down. Having "gotten things off their chest", the once angry person now feels great ... but everyone else is left to clean up the mess.

You do not have to be a genius to figure out this type of anger produces enormous frustration, hurt and fear in relationships.

Frustration and hurt because those on the receiving end have things said



Marvel Studio's Incredible Hulk

and done to them which leave deep emotional (and sometimes physical) scars, and fear, because they walk on eggshells, doing their best to not set the angry person off again.

### Volcanic anger

Volcanic anger is quite different. Like a seemingly dormant volcano, this person's anger simmers away beneath the surface, rising ever so slowly until it finally erupts.

Just like a volcano, the eruption can go on for a long time, is usually far more destructive than fiery anger and can often lead to the angry person holding deep-seated grudges against others.

Fiery anger may well damage relationships, but volcanic anger will destroy them.

Volcanic anger is not pleasant – I should know, because it is the type of anger I struggle with.

Having come to the point in my life where I needed to face the fact I did not deal with my anger well, it was an amazing revelation to discover the type of angry person I was.

"Fiery anger people" usually do not hold it in – they are angry, and it is there on display for everyone to see.

"Volcanic anger people" appear

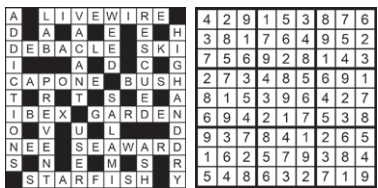
calm but inside they are all the time quietly pushing their rising anger down.

We call this "stuffing", and I was a classic "stuffer" when it came to anger. Following a hurt or perceived slight, I would just push it down, telling myself to not get angry. This could go on for days, sometimes weeks, but inevitably there would be the "straw that broke the camel's back" and my anger would erupt!

Learning this was liberating because I became more aware of myself, and how I processed my anger and from there, I was able to develop healthier ways to both process and express it. This was not an overnight process – no positive change is ever easy – but over time, significant and lasting change took place.

Over the next several months I want you to come on a journey with me as we explore this difficult emotion of anger, along with exercises designed to enable us to express our anger healthily – it will change your relationships for the better!

Exercise for March: Read over the section on the two types of anger again and decide which is most like you.



## HOW DO I BECOME A CHRISTIAN?

**What?** Salvation is an eternal relationship with God – now on Earth and, after we die, in Heaven.

*The Lord Jesus says: "I tell you the truth. Everyone who believes in Me has eternal life."* John 6:47

*"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* John 16:33

**Who?** Anyone can gain the eternal life offered through Jesus Christ, regardless of how you have previously lived or what you have previously believed.

*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

**Why?** Because sin separates us from a holy God. Sin is all the wrong things we do, say and think, as well as our desire to be our own boss.

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.* Romans 3:23

**How?** The Bible says you become a Christian by confessing with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believing in your heart that God raised Him from the dead.

*If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.* Romans 10:8b-10

**Ready to change your life forever?** Here is a prayer you can pray, but you can also use your own words. The words are not as important as the heart attitude – which only God can see.

Almighty God, Creator of Heaven and Earth,  
I acknowledge that I am a sinner. Please forgive me for all the ways I have disobeyed and defied You.  
Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus Christ, to earth to live the perfect life I couldn't, and die on the cross for my sins. Thank You that His blood was sufficient to pay my debt to You, and His resurrection proves that there is life beyond death. I accept that His sacrifice is all I need to get right with You – I bring nothing I have done but I give you everything I am. Help me to live for You. Please be my Saviour and my Master. Amen.

### What now?

1. Tell someone - either a Christian that you know or email us at [info@challengenews.org](mailto:info@challengenews.org)
2. Use the resources in the green box on this page to find a Bible to read and more information regarding Christianity.
3. Keep praying. Talk to God anywhere, about anything. He is always listening, and you don't need a formula.
4. Find a Bible-teaching church to attend.

**AS A NEXT STEP :**

I have prayed this prayer.

☐

Please send me:

☐ Bible

☐ Some 'starting off' literature

☐ Information on a helpful church

*\* Please tick and write clearly \**

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All overseas enquiries are referred onto someone in their own country

## Want to explore more?

Here are some **free**, helpful, Christian online resources:

Online Bible - <b>Olive Tree app</b> (we recommend that you start with an easy-to-read version like the ESV)	
Audio Bible - <b>Bible.is app</b> , or <b>Youversion Bible app</b>	
Christian radio station - <b>CBN radio app</b> (different channels for all genres of music)	
Christian podcasts and sermons - <b>Edifi app</b>	
Christian movies - <b>New Faith Network app</b> (7-day free trial)	
Daily thoughts and inspiration - <b>Our Daily Bread app</b>	
Advice on specific issues, Bible reading plans and studies for new believers - <b>Youversion Bible app</b> .	
The Bible explained with visual aides - <b>the Bible Project on YouTube</b> .	
<b>Alpha Film Series on Youtube</b> - an online introduction to Christianity.	
For kids - <b>Superbook Kids Bible, videos and games app</b>	
Comic book Bible online- <b>goodandevilbook.com</b>	
More inspiring faith stories - <b>back issues of Challenge News at <a href="http://challengenews.online">challengenews.online</a></b>	

## Lesson from a sausage dog - part 21

BY JODY BENNETT

**CARRIE** my sausage dog is, of course, very short-legged. This has some advantages for me, as she is unable to jump on my bed, reach food on the kitchen counter or pull things off the couch. However, the flip-side of that is that she needs my help a lot – every time she gets on or off anything.

She knows she needs my help with these manoeuvres and many other things, so she will scratch doors for me to open, jump against the bed for me to pick her up, whine to get down, stare at me meaningfully if her bowl is empty.

The other night she had the challenging task of trying to get me to understand that her doggy door wasn't opening and she couldn't get outside. She was dashing about like a nutcase going from one door to the other until I finally realised her problem.



Other times she shakes her head at night to wake me up with her ear-flapping, so that I can cover her up because she is cold. Spoilt? A little!

The point is though that Carrie knows she can't sort out these things herself. She is aware of her own limitations. On the occasions when she has tried to jump off the bed, she has smooched her nose, banged her head and risked more serious injury.

It is absolutely no advantage to Carrie to try to do these things herself or to refuse my help out of 'pride', and it occurred to me that we should be more like my dachshund in realising our 'smallness' in the face of our problems. We should stop thinking we are doing God some sort of favour by 'not bothering Him' and tackling issues on our own; and admit we need help. He already knows anyway.

Although I am quite in tune with my dog's needs, God knows our needs even before we do. We are only kidding ourselves by not involving Him in our problems and trying to get through our days in our own strength.

Carrie knows that I will help her because I love her. And because I am consistently loving towards her, she trusts me. Maybe the first thing we should admit we need God's help with, is trusting in His goodness and love towards us.

As the old hymn based on Lamentations 3 in the Bible assures us: *"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. His mercies never come to an end, they are new every morning. Great is thy faithfulness, O Lord."*





*Janine Beekie of Manchester City Women battles for possession against Esmee de Graaf of Leicester City Women during the FA Women's Continental Tyres League Cup match between Leicester City and Manchester City at Pirelli Stadium on January 12, 2022 in Burton-upon-Trent, England. (Photo by Naomi Baker/Getty Images)*

# COMPETITIVE BUT KIND

**T**wenty seconds — that's all it took for soccer player Janine Beekie to cement her place in Olympic history at just 22 years old.

In that time, probably less than what it took for most spectators to find a parking space, Janine scored the first goal for Canada against Australia at the 2016 Rio Olympics. It still stands today as the fastest goal in women's Olympic history.

Janine now lives in Manchester, because in 2018 the talented forward was signed by English women's Super League club Manchester City.

But it hasn't been all plain sailing and medals. In 2015 Janine was acutely disappointed to be excluded from Canada's World Cup team.

It is at times like that that she draws strength from the words tattooed on the inside of her left wrist — *"They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."*

Those words are from the Bible verse Isaiah 40:31. Janine, who is a committed Christian, says her faith has moulded her life and her career ever since her childhood in Colorado.

"It's a really, really important part of my life," says the 27-year-old, who was part of the Canadian team that won the Olympic gold in Japan in 2020. "I was raised as a Christian and it's about how I operate, how I treat other people and even how I feel about myself. It's something

incredibly important to me and influences everything I do, how I react to things. I'm learning from it, all the time."

Indeed, it isn't just through the bad times that Janine leans on her faith. It is equally important to her in the good times as well. Her overriding goal is simple — to be like Jesus.

"I was raised by parents who taught me and my siblings to be humble athletes,"

she wrote for SportGoMag.com. "I believe a big role of every Christ-follower is to [behave] as much like Jesus as we can."

Janine says it was her Catholic upbringing "that instilled a foundation of faith in me, and it was while I was at a Christian high school that I started to learn more about Jesus and make my faith my own".

Janine accepted Jesus into her life when she was about 15 and said she felt "that was the moment my life completely changed, but I didn't realise at the time that there would be so many highs and lows".

But as she wrestled with disappointments, she came to realise that her anchor in life should be Christ, not her career.

On her eponymous YouTube channel, she says that football is a passion for her but that when it comes to life "what motivates me is knowing that there's something bigger...something more than just myself and for me, that's my faith."

"It drives what I'm doing every day; how I treat my friends, the attitude that I go into training with, because when you strip it all away I have my faith there and that's the constant for me."

"When people click on my profile the first thing that they should see is that I'm a Jesus follower."

Being so open about her faith has led to getting what Janine calls "banter" from her friends and team-

mates. "I'm still working out the best way to deal with that, but I've had cool experiences where people have asked me big questions about God."

"I also have a teammate who has come to church with me a few times and when certain things have happened I've been able to tell her, 'You know that's God, right?' It makes all those hard moments so worth it."

Looking forward, Janine says her professional dream is to win the World Cup and be the best player in the world at some point.

"But I also want to take my platform and use it to grow God's kingdom and I have a lot of ideas about how to go about that...I want to start a non-profit that helps families who

have been affected by cancer to get their kids involved in sport."

"There's a lot that I'm still learning about bringing faith into the locker room. Some people are curious, some people really don't care, some people really don't want to hear it."

"So it's understanding that, and realising that I don't really have to say anything to share my faith. It's all about how I act and how I treat them. I want others to remember me as being kind, compassionate and a great teammate, while also being hard-working and relentless on the field," she said.

"I used to think those two things couldn't coexist but I know that God gave me a competitive spirit for a reason."



*Janine Beekie's ad for her podcast.*

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