

Daughter forgives killer dad



Jasmeen Smith has been able to forgive her mother's killer.

As a child, Jasmeen Smith grew up oblivious to the fact that she was both motherless and the daughter of an alcoholic, drug-addicted murderer. But when she suddenly learnt the truth, she spiralled into a dark place of "anger, rage and bitterness".

"I never knew my father growing up. I was raised by my grandmother, thinking she was my mother because I didn't know any different," Jasmeen explains in a Youtube interview.

Then one day, while Jasmeen was playing with her cousin at a park, they got into an argument. In spite, her cousin yelled out: "At least I have a mother!" Jasmeen ran home, questioned her grandmother and found out the truth.

"My father was a drug addict and violent. Then, one night, in a drunken rage, he came home, jealous, and beat up my mother. One blow to the head proved fatal."

Jasmeen was shocked and infuriated by the life-changing news. "I hated him. I wanted him dead," she says. "What kind of man would do that? What saddened me the most was that he left my mother's body there for three days."

After learning the truth about her parents, Jasmeen "started looking for love because I did not have it from either a biological mother or father. I started getting into the party scene and going out clubbing every night."

The teen did not want her grandmother to know the kind of life she was leading "because I looked up to her and I did not want her to know that I was this other person. It was

like I was leading a double life.

"I would go out partying and drinking and yet, when I was at home, I would be in my books, studying," she remembers.

Then, one night, Jasmeen overheard a woman talking about the amazing choir at a particular church. Her interest was piqued and the following Sunday she attended a service there.

"It blew me away," she recalls. The music and songs from the choir touched Jasmeen and caused her to want to learn more about God and Christianity. "Right there, I could feel God speaking to my heart. I knew something was happening."

Jasmeen kept on going to church and her "life started to change. It was a process, day by day. God was doing a work in me."

But even after she gave her life to Jesus, she admits that "there was [still] anger and rage and bitterness towards my father."

"God slowly started to reveal to me that I had to get rid of this," she tells. "He led me to contact my father in prison. This was the man that I hadn't spoken to or had any type of contact with in 23 years."

Jasmeen wrote her father a letter. He wrote back, telling her how wonderful and kind and sweet she was to have written him.

"I had to write back and tell him that it wasn't me, it was nothing I could do, and that it was all because of God," she says. "It was God's love. He loved me so much that He would, in turn, allow me to love him. I expressed that to my father."

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I KNOW IT WAS NOTHING I COULD DO ... I WANTED HIM DEAD!



Mad Hatter faith

BY JODY BENNETT

ONE of the most convincing arguments for Christianity for me is how bizarrely counter-intuitive it is. It is a crazy *Alice in Wonderland* religion that turns "normal" ideas on their head!

What person would have been able to invent a religion where paradox is paramount? Where the more you give, the more you gain? Where the rich are poor and the poor are rich? Where dying [to yourself] is living and living [to yourself] is dying? Where you have to give everything up to gain the whole world? Where you treat your enemies like your friends, instead of exacting revenge on them? Where you love those who hate you and hate those who love you? [The last in the context of loving Christ Jesus so much that you are willing to disregard or abandon those you love to follow His will.]

Who would invent a religion where you pile up invisible treasures in heaven, by giving away your very tangible treasures on Earth? And in fact are required to HATE money? A religion where you are always putting yourself last behind the needs of others. A religion that requires you to serve others like slaves, even if you are in a position to lord it over them! A religion that promises you nothing now except God's invisible peace and joy, and expects you to wait to see all your hopes fulfilled in the great by-and-

by?

What madness!

But such an expectation-upsetting religion was indeed started by an expectation-upsetting Messiah. A Savior who didn't come to defeat the Romans, but to die a shameful death to defeat sin; Who didn't hang out with the rich and influential, but with the poor and leprous; Who walked on water and commanded the wind; Who didn't go to His sick friend's bedside because He planned to call him out of his tomb! A King obeyed by demons, yet Who knelt to wash the feet of fishermen; Who said He commanded angels yet paid taxes to Caesar; Who planned to impact the world by training only twelve rather unreliable men over just three years.

And such is the topsy-turvy nature of His enterprise that the more governments tried to stamp Christianity out, the more it grew. As Jesus said in the famous set of paradoxes called the beatitudes: "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Matt 5:11-12)

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Adeeb, Eliya and Yazid make music in Nazareth. Picture courtesy maozisrael.org

Talented brothers change their tune

BY CHARLES GARDNER

The talented Sakhnini family come from Nazareth in Galilee, an entirely Arab community. Although they are part of the town's minority Christian population, there was a time when being 'Christian' merely described their culture – it just meant that, unlike most of the Arab world, they were not Muslims.

That is until 2007 when Bishara, a barber and head of the family, was betrayed by a close friend. Then he received news that his sister-in-law was dying of cancer, with only a month to live and, in the midst of it all, his wife Sarah was found to be expecting their fourth child.

A pastor from Haifa befriended Bishara at this time of crisis in his life and began to share what the Bible teaches, especially about forgiveness. As a result, Bishara forgave his friend and accepted God's forgiveness for his own sins.

Not only that, but his whole family, including his three preteen sons, agreed to fast for three days as they prayed for their sick relative, who

subsequently walked out of hospital completely healed! And Sarah gave birth to a healthy baby despite an initial scare.

Having witnessed such miracles, including the power of fasting and forgiveness, the family underwent a religious transformation that sent shockwaves through the community. Unfortunately, they were scorned by their Arab neighbours, just as Jesus was by the Jewish religious leaders in his day.

The family's worldview was further upended when some Jewish believers in Jesus came to visit. The Sakhnini's hadn't even realised Jesus was Jewish, let alone that an increasing number of Jews believed in Him as their Messiah. Now the Arab and Jewish Christians worship together on a regular basis.

"Seeing us sing and dance together as we worship the same God," writes Shani Ferguson in Maoz Israel's* January report, "is mesmerizing to outsiders and always elicits questions."

She adds that "there is no greater proof to unbelieving Jews that Yeshua (Jesus in Hebrew) has power

over all than when Arabs embrace Jews as the people of their Saviour."

It's a little known fact that Arabs and Jews are meeting together at an increasing number of fellowships all over Israel, demonstrating the truth of the Good News that true peace and reconciliation can only be found through what Jesus did on the cross – paying for the brokenness and sin of all people by taking our punishment on Himself.

The Apostle Paul wrote: "For He Himself (Christ) is our peace, who has made the two groups (Jew and Gentile) one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility..." (Ephesians 2.14)

The Sakhnini brothers – Adeeb, Eliya and Yazid – are particularly skilled musicians and are now engaged on a project to reach the Arab world with a blend of Arab and Jewish sounds as part of the Israel Worship Initiative.

They are currently working on a unique album – including some original songs and old Arab hymns. •

*Maoz Israel Ministries is a non-profit organisation dedicated to reaching Israel with the good news of Jesus as well as providing humanitarian and other aid.



Hippie Jew made new

ANNE LIM (AND JODY BENNETT)

One might think from the term Judeo-Christian beliefs that Jews and Christians believe the same thing. However, while the two religions share many of the same ideas about God (because they have the Old Testament or Tanakh in common), Christians believe that the promised Jewish Saviour has already come in the person of Jesus Christ.

For Christians many of the things predicted in the Old Testament have been fulfilled by Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Hence, Christians have a New Testament setting out a new covenant (or agreement) between God and His people.

American-born Bob Mendelsohn (67), who has led Jews for Jesus in Sydney's Bondi Junction for 13 years, first understood this difference and realised Jesus was the promised Jewish Messiah in 1971 when he was a hippy and university drop-out.

"I was looking for love in all the wrong places, dropped out of university, hitchhiked around the country, and encountered any number of weird groups and cults. And then here were these Jesus people and the encounter was real," he recalls.

"God was kind, so kind, to get me on board at the right time, in the right place. It was in Kansas City, May of '71, when I met two young people – I was 19 and they, 18 and 19 years old, a boy and a girl, later husband-wife.

"They said, 'You know, the Lord is with you,' and I stopped, sat down and said, 'I'm Jewish, go ahead.'

I knew they wanted to convert me to their blond-haired, blue-eyed Jesus.

"During that conversation the girl said to me, 'When you accept Christ, the blue sky will be bluer and the green grass will be greener.' Now where's that in the Bible – it's not, is it? But it spoke to my heart and those words were pearls. It made me think – who are these people?"

"So I went back where I was staying and there was a gal there who had just come to believe a week earlier ... and she said 'Well, let's read.' So we started reading the Bible, the New Testament. I knew the Old – I was Orthodox. The [start of the] Gospel

according to St Matthew: Abraham begat Isaac – 'these are my people' – Isaac begat Jacob ... [Jacob fathered Judah] and his brothers – 'wait a minute!'

"So I'm reading along and I think, 'How did Christians understand this? – these are all Jews.' And then the birth of Jesus is like this – and by Chapter 5 I'm convinced this thing is something with which I've got to deal. 'But wait a minute, I'm Jewish, and Jews don't believe in Jesus!'"

For the 19-year-old Bob, confronting Jesus was a battle for identity.

"It was all emotion – drugs, sex and rock'n'roll – so I had a lot of things splashing up against me. It was turbulent; I was in a rip."

But he was captivated and after he had read the Gospel of Matthew and the Book of Revelation, he went to the house of a Christian friend.

"I said, 'I want this Jesus stuff, but I don't want your Jesus.' She said, 'You don't get this Jesus stuff – love, joy, meaning, relevance – unless you take Jesus as your saviour.'

"May of '71, I said 'yes,' prayed, sang *Amazing Grace* and went home and told Mum and Dad that Jesus was the Messiah.

"They threw me out of the house and it was tough."

Bob eventually reconciled with his parents and they became Christians too.

He recalls that the name "Jews for Jesus" was coined by a San Francisco State University paper in the early '70s.

"We thought it was cool. There were people for Save the Whales in '73 and there were people for anything and we were Jews for Jesus – that's us."

In October 1992, the founder of Jews for Jesus, Moishe Rosen, asked for a volunteer to go over to Australia. It took Bob a few years to commit to coming here, after a few people pulled out.

Bob reckons that in the 13 years since he opened the Jews for Jesus bookshop in Bondi Junction, he has spoken about Jesus to eight to 12 Jewish people each week who don't yet acknowledge Him as Messiah. He has a stack of Bibles that he gives away to anyone who will take one.

"I give them away left, right and centre. We give Bibles to anyone who comes in."



Bob Mendelsohn and his wife Patty.

THESE [BIBLE CHARACTERS] ARE ALL JEWS





A medieval sin-eater at work. Although not a difficult job, it carried with it a terrible stigma that made these people the outcasts of their communities.

What can eat away my sins?

IN season three of Netflix's *The Blacklist* FBI agent Elizabeth Keen remembers something horrific she did in her past and finally understands why the mysterious Raymond Reddington (Red) was trying to keep it from her.

"I was trying to be your sin-eater," he tells her.

The concept of a sin-eater comes from an actual medieval job description – it was a person who was called upon before a funeral to eat a ritual meal and say a prayer at the graveside in order to magically take away the sins (bad actions and thoughts) of a person or household.

Of course, such people had no real power to take upon themselves other people's wrongdoings or absolve their sin. Similarly, although Red has Elizabeth's memory erased and covers up her crime in order to try to keep her from the consequences and guilt of her actions, 'the truth will out' as the saying goes.

Jesus Christ also claimed to be a sin-eater – one who could do away permanently with a person's sins.

However, His claims were backed with demonstrable power.

In the story found in the Bible in Matthew chapter 9, a group of friends bring Jesus a paralysed man lying on a pallet. The house where Jesus is teaching is so crowded that they can't get in, so, in desperation they climb up onto the flat roof, remove part of the thatch and lower their mate down on his bed right to Jesus' feet.

The first thing Jesus says to the man is "Be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven". The religious leaders get irate and mutter: "Who does this guy think he is? Only God can forgive sins."

This is true. Only God can forgive sins. So, to prove that He in fact is God, Jesus asks them: "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic 'your sins are forgiven you' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?"

Of course it is easier to say 'I forgive your sins' because nobody can see if that really has taken place, but to show them that He did have the power to wipe out this man's wrongdoings, Jesus turned to the man and said 'Get up, pick up your bed, and walk'. And he did!

This paper is filled with stories of people who have turned to Christ to have their sin 'eaten' and have found freedom from guilt and deep peace as a result. The effectiveness of that 'sin-eating' has also been proven by the way their lives have then radically changed; they have been able to 'get up and walk' out of some very bad situations.

Although in this life sinners might still have to live with the consequences of some of their actions, they know beyond doubt that in the eyes of God those sins are gone.

Isaiah 1:18 in the Bible says "Come now, and let us reason together," says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

And Psalm 103:12 says "As far as the east is from the west, so far has [God] removed our transgressions from us."

Christians call this being 'justified' – being made 'just as if I'd never sinned'. The sin is 'eaten'; it is gone. •

Addicted to porn for 20 years - now free!

BY CHRIS EYTE

Pornography addiction wrecks the lives of addicts tangled in a secret web of lust and deception – and it harms relationships.

Grant Robbins knows that fact better than most – he was addicted for 20 years. The month of December (2018) was a special anniversary for the 50-year-old from Redhill in Surrey. It marked six years since he found true freedom from porn.

Grant grew up in Pietermaritzburg in South Africa in a 'loving Christian family' and went to church as part of normal life, "it was just something we did".

The financial assistant went to a church youth event when he was 16 and made an important decision.

Grant said: "I realized that having Christian parents and attending church did not make me a Christian. I needed to make a personal commitment to follow Jesus, and that is what I did."

"I wish I could say my life from that moment on was plain sailing but sadly that was not to be."

Grant became a fitness fanatic when he left home at the age of 18 to study civil engineering.

Sports such as running, swimming and mountain biking became the most important part of his life for a period of 13 years. He competed at weekend events all over South Africa.

"My relationship with God became non-existent. I lost touch with Christian friends and began to feel lonely and isolated. I found myself trapped in an addiction to pornography that would last for over 20 years."

Grant married in January 2000 and moved to the UK with his wife Shaleen. He thought that his porn addiction would no longer be a problem.

"That was wishful thinking," he added. "Some 13 years into our marriage and I was still watching, reading and thinking things I shouldn't."

"My wife had her suspicions over the years but was never able to prove anything as I became better and better at lying and convincing her that she was just imagining things."

"Feelings of guilt and shame had overwhelmed me. I despised myself. My marriage was at breaking point. After yet another argument with my wife after her confronting me about her suspicions, I decided I had nothing left to lose."

"I finally plucked up the courage and told a close friend, church pastor and my wife about what I had been doing for so many years."

Grant confessed everything to God and asked Him to forgive him and help him turn his life around.

"That was six years ago and it feels wonderful to celebrate my sixth year of serving God and



Grant Robbins has been enjoying freedom from porn for more than six years - 'in Christ's eyes I am redeemed from my past sin, I am forgiven.'

seeing all the change He has brought about in my life.

"The desire for porn did go away almost straight away but it still involved a process of dealing with what I had done in the past."

"As with any addiction, the addict is always a 'recovering addict' and the moment an addict thinks they have it sorted, they can very easily slip back. Complacency is the biggest danger."

THE MOMENT AN ADDICT THINKS THEY HAVE IT SORTED, THEY CAN VERY EASILY SLIP BACK.



"The longer the time of abstaining goes the easier it gets but it will always be a weakness."

"I still have accountability software on my electronic devices even though I probably don't need them. Just as an alcoholic has to avoid alcohol and take whatever preventative measures necessary, so do I with porn."

Unfortunately a consequence of Grant's porn addiction is that he and Shaleen have been unable to adopt children.

"My wife and I have never been able to have children of our own and we have tried the route of adoption."

"However, when we were honest about my past addiction during the adoption process, the door shut very quickly even though my addiction was not related to children in any way."

"We would be fantastic parents; we know that, our family knows that and our friends know that but unfortunately there is a stigma associated with addiction, especially when it comes to pornography addiction and I know that is something I have to live with for the rest of my life."

"But in Christ's eyes I am redeemed from my past sin, I am forgiven and even though in the world's eyes that may not mean much, in my eyes and in God's it

Studies have found :

1. Porn is more addictive than cocaine or heroin.
2. According to a survey published in the *Journal of the American Psychological Association*, 86% of men are likely to click on Internet sex sites if given the opportunity.
3. 34% of female readers of *Today's Christian Woman's* online newsletter admitted to intentionally accessing Internet porn.
4. According to the *Journal of Adolescent Health*, prolonged exposure to pornography leads to:
 - An exaggerated perception of sexual activity in society
 - Diminished trust between intimate couples
 - The abandonment of the hope of sexual monogamy
 - Belief that promiscuity is the natural state
 - Belief that abstinence and sexual inactivity are unhealthy
 - Cynicism about love or the need for affection between sexual partners
 - Belief that marriage is sexually confining
 - Lack of attraction to family and child-raising

means absolutely everything."

Grant said confessing his porn issue was both the hardest and best thing he has ever done. He finds praying and reading the Bible each day helps, asking God to be with him. He also meets up with a good friend for prayer and to be challenged and encouraged spiritually.

"It is really important to be open and honest with others about what is going on in our lives."

Grant is also involved in a national men's ministry and facilitates 'Click-toKick' an online course helping people struggling with porn. •

Grant's tips for beating a porn habit :

1. Don't leave the problem and hope that it will just go away because it won't.
2. Tell someone you trust that you have a problem. Telling someone is the first step as it takes away the secrecy which is what causes the guilt and shame.
3. Be prepared to be radical and take whatever steps necessary to help you deal with the problem.
4. Get an accountability partner.
5. Put accountability software on all devices.
6. Remove other temptations like adult TV channels (delete or get someone to password protect so you can't access them).
7. Seek counselling or do a porn recovery course like ClicktoKick (clicktokick.com)

Teen druggie gangster does complete U-turn

Ralph Mendez was a violent gang member (gangbanger) and a drug addict, living on the streets and spending over half of his life in and out of prison.

His home life was very unstable as he “lived in a family where my dad, who was a drunk, beat up my mum. My mum would always call me and I would try and get in between [them] but I was only a small child”.

At the age of thirteen, Ralph became a gangbanger who “got into a lot of trouble, dealt drugs and did everything you are not supposed to do”.

At 15, Ralph began to take drugs and, when he was 18, he was arrested for assault and possession of firearms. This was the start of a long, slide downhill.

According to Ralph, prison “was my lifestyle [for years]. I could adapt to prison, I could adapt to the thug life, I could adapt to everything”.

When he was in prison, though, Ralph learned about



Ralph Mendez pulled his life together after a phonecall from his son.

God for the first time and gave his life to Him. “But when I got out, the lack of a relationship with Him caused me to go back to drugs and alcohol. Eventually, I ended up back in prison.”

However, years later in 2007, when he was 58 and living on the streets, he received a phone call from his son, Thomas. “Dad, I love you,” he told him. “I do not want you to die out there.”

“This broke me,” Ralph admitted tearfully. “It took me a year [to get myself together], but that’s what broke me.”

Finally, he had had enough. “God, I give up!” he said. “What do You want me to do?”

Ralph called his son, who came and picked him up and took him to a Christian residential organisation for recov-

ering addicts called *U-Turn for Christ*.

In the beginning, when he first came to the mission, he wanted to make his own little prison click, “but God was like, ‘No, you’re not, you’re going to follow me’. And that’s what I did.”

Past crimes caught up to Ralph, however, and he was taken to court. He was accompanied by a pastor from the mission who told him, “God knows your heart, Ralph, do not worry about it.”

“All the charges were dropped,” Ralph said. “I got down on my knees and started crying. I told the Lord, ‘You know what? From this day on, I will serve You’.”

He said that *U-Turn* had done a lot for him in his fight against drugs. “If it wasn’t [for them], I would not be in this place right now. I had five brothers and one sister. They’re all dead from using drugs. They said I would be the first one to die, but you know what? I made a different choice.”

Ralph became an ordained pastor and, for the next nine years, he shared the love of Jesus wherever he went, telling other addicts and gangbangers of the hope they could find in Christ.

“I tell these guys that when

you go to prison, you lose it, it’s a waste of your life,” he said. “Did I want to become a gangbanger? No, but I made that choice. No one wants to become nothing, but I made the choice to gangbang because [the gang] were my family, they were the ones I loved. I found out the hard way that those people did not love me back, they just used me.”

“Some say that they are a soldier for Satan, but I say, no, you are not a soldier, you are a puppet. You are a soldier for Christ. And I promised Christ that I would always be a soldier and that I would always give encouragement to the guys.”

Ralph, who was diagnosed with liver cancer and diabetes as a result of his previous drug use, “suffered from the consequences of his sin”.

“But I am not going to put my focus on that!” he exclaimed. “I am going to put my focus on the Creator and not on the created. A lot of guys put their focus on the created instead of what God can do for them. Either way, they know where they’re going and I know where I’m going.”

In September 2017, Ralph, at the age of 68, died and went home to heaven to be with his Lord.

Free to do whatever we want?

BY AKOS BALOUGH AND JODY BENNETT

THE band Soup Dragons sang in their song ‘I’m Free’:

I’m free to do what I want any old time

According to this view of freedom, being a healthy authentic human being means being free to tread your own path, and follow your own desires. All without any interference from other people. Modern freedom is defined as the freedom from all constraints. You are free when you can do ‘whatever you want, any old time’.

But it doesn’t take much reflection to realise there are serious problems with this view.

For starters, there is no such thing as a life without any constraints. Sure we can be free from some constraints – we can enjoy certain freedoms. But a life without any constraints is an impossibility, and therefore unworkable.

Take for example an Olympic swimmer. They have the amazing freedom of competing against the world’s best in competitions around the world (not least the Olympic games). That is a freedom afforded to a minute number of people in human history.

And yet, if they want to maintain that freedom, they need to give up other types of freedom. They need to constrain other parts of their life – often quite severely: from where they live, to what they eat; from their daily routine to what they do on holidays.

Olympic athletes are free in many ways, but they are not free to do what they want any old time.

It’s the same with each one of us. We can be free to be healthy (by constraining our junk food intake), or we can be free to eat whatever our taste buds desire. But we can’t be free in both ways at the same time. We can be free to get a good education and go to tech or uni, or we can be free to spend our days playing computer games, we aren’t free to do both. There is no such thing as a life without constraints.

Secondly, today the common argument is that everyone should be free to do as they please, as long as they don’t harm anyone else. However this assumes we agree as to what harm is. But our society is increasingly divided on the issue of harm.

Is smacking your kids causing harm? Is abortion harmful to another? Does your assisted suicide cause another harm? Does stating your religious beliefs about hell cause harm? Does teaching children that men can become women cause harm? Does owning a gun cause harm? Does eating meat?

And should we be allowed to harm ourselves intentionally? What about taking drugs? Taking dangerous Instagram pics? Smoking or binge drinking?

You would find people who disagree on each of these issues.

Thirdly, the modern view of freedom assumes that we are self-sufficient beings with no responsibility to others, the environment or future generations.

Take the case of a husband with three kids. He asserts his freedom to follow his own feelings, to be happy, and so have an affair with a co-worker. He asserts his freedom to choose his own path, and to do whatever he wants any old time.

But in pursuing this modern view of freedom, he wreaks havoc in the lives of others, especially his family. Modern freedom can quickly lead to unjust behaviour.

Or, for instance, the Amazonian farmer who feels he should be free to cut down as many trees as he likes in order to make a living. Or the modern manufacturer who feels she should be able to pay the lowest wage possible in order to make the most profit from her products. Or shoppers who feel they should be free to use as many plastic packets as is convenient.

Each of these “freedoms” is curbed for good reason.

In a world of such confusing and contradictory claims to freedom, the Bible takes a totally different approach: “Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them,” (from Luke 6:31 commonly called the Golden Rule), similarly Philippians 2:4 “Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”

Instead of each of us selfishly pursuing our own freedoms, the Bible encourages us to be focussed on upholding the freedoms of others and living considerate and considered lives. “Do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God” advocates Micah 6:8 and as we do, we will find that we are freer and more fulfilled than we could ever imagine.



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“GOD’S primary goal is not changing our situations or relationships so that we can be happy, but changing us through our situations and relationships so that we will be holy.” - Paul David Tripp in *Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands: People in Need of Change Helping People in Need of Change*

CONTENTMENT is incredibly powerful. When your happiness and your hope and your purpose are not hanging on anything but Christ [Jesus], then you are completely free to enjoy whatever situation you find yourself in. - *Who You? Why you matter and how to deal with it* by Rachel Jankovic



Drug addict searches for Father's love

Sylvia Glover was “a little girl – just lost, hurting, and wanting to be accepted.” She would walk the back streets of Washington to party, hang out with her friends and take drugs and alcohol. She dated drug dealers, so marijuana and cocaine, plus much more, were readily available to her.

“I thought life was wonderful,” she says.

One day, Sylvia was at a train station near Washington Square Park. She had just taken some marijuana mixed with crack cocaine. “I was so high,” she recalls. “Things started spinning and I [panicked].” She cried out to a God she did not know and said, “If You get me off this high, I will serve You.”

God did get her off that high but “I did not serve Him,” she confesses.

Sylvia shares that as a child “everything I did – there was always something wrong with it. Nothing I ever did was good enough. I continued to seek approval but I never got it.

“As a little girl, I wanted to know if my Dad loved me but I never felt that. I think the major things that a father is supposed to provide, are identity, security and provision; these were never given to me.

“I did not know who I was,” she continues. “I felt that nobody could love me. If my own father does not love me, why would anybody else love me? That was the main reason I ran to the streets. I was looking for that love and acceptance.”

Sylvia admits that, because of this, she was “very insecure. Without alcohol and drugs, I could not function. But, when I did have stimulants, a metamorphous took place. I became the life of the party - telling jokes and dancing all night. I became something I wasn't.”

Then, Sylvia made friends with a girl who “was so at peace, you cannot really describe it. She was always so happy and I was always so negative

and depressed and down.”

Sylvia wondered why the girl was so full of joy, thinking that it was impossible for anyone to be that happy. She asked, “What kind of drug are you on?”

“That’s when she started to tell me about Jesus,” she states, “And that He was not a drug and that she had a personal relationship with Him. I didn’t want to hear it, though.”

When her friend invited her to church, Sylvia refused “because God was so holy and, with all the things that I had done, I would never be accepted [there].”

Later, Sylvia’s boyfriend, who had been in jail, was released. He started seeing someone else and left her “devastated.”

Finally, she agreed to go with her friend to her church. But, “before I even got there, I felt that this was the thing I had been searching for my whole life. I had finally found it – the love, the acceptance. It was like God was saying to me, ‘I know that you are here. I know all of the things [you have done] but I love you.’”

“The love of God was what I needed to hear. It seemed like it was arrows pointing into my heart. All of those things, the identity, the provision and the security that I sought from my Dad – it was like God was telling me, ‘I’m going to be your Dad and I’m going to give you that and so much more.’”

Sylvia answered the call during the church service to respond to what she had heard and, as she turned away from her past life, “it was like everything had lifted. I knew that I had had an encounter with Jesus and that I was saved.”

Now, Sylvia knows “that there is a purpose for my life. I’m not just living aimlessly, struggling through life. God has a plan for me and He saved me for a reason. I don’t have to have the acceptance of my father. I have a Heavenly Father who loves me and accepts me.”

From tabloid hack to truth teller

BY EUGENIE HARRIS

Dan Wooding was a successful journalist for British tabloid newspapers but his life was transformed when he allowed his faith to dictate his writing.

In his autobiography, *From tabloid to truth*, which reads like a classic adventure story, he tells of mixing with celebrities, gangsters and politicians but struggling to find meaning among the smut.

Dan grew up with Christian missionary parents who had returned from Africa to lead a mission in Birmingham, England. By his late teens he couldn’t wait to flee the family.

“I’ve had enough of you all and of God. I’m going to see what the rest of the world is like. It can’t be any worse than here,” he spat at his distraught mother.

Dan felt like his parents’ life motto was, “You name it, we’re against it!” Whereas, across the ocean, Canada beckoned with promises of freedom, glamour and excitement.

He ran away from what he felt was his parents’ suffocating religion and from a dead-end job, but most of all he ran from God. Life as a Christian had seemed to him incredibly boring and irrelevant.

The welcome in North America wasn’t what Dan had hoped for. The weather was terrible, he was consumed with intense loneliness, got booted out by flat mates and insulted by workmates.

Eventually he decided to return to England when his father was diagnosed with cancer and not expected to live. Despite his terrible illness, Dan saw that his dad’s faith in God was still strong. Dan was overcome with sorrow and regret.

He sank to his knees and prayed: “Lord, I believe in you. Forgive me for my rotten, selfish past—my temper, my anger, my pride and rebellion. Please, please take over my life.”

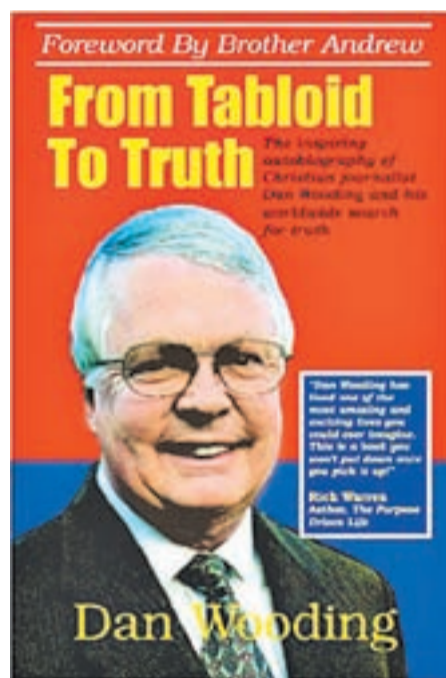
All at once he wanted to laugh and cry and to shout aloud. “I realised how little joy there had been in my life over the past year,” he says.

Dan and his new wife, Norma, began living life following Jesus Christ. He worked as a reporter, first for a Christian newspaper, then for community newspapers and popular Fleet Street tabloids. To live out his



faith, Dan took leave to do some private overseas reporting assignments.

His aim was to shine a light into dark places in Russia, Africa and Asia with a spotlight on injustice and persecution. His exploits landed not only his stories, but also himself, on the front page.



strayed so far from his good intentions as a Christian, God was dealing with other problems in his heart: Dan was using alcohol to blunt the pain of work, harboured grudges against many people and put work and career above relationship with his wife and children.

Thankfully his friend gave him wise advice: “The most important thing is your relationship with Jesus Christ. God will judge those who do wrong in His own time, but He will also judge you. Are you ready for that?”

Dan prayed and asked God to forgive the fact he had strayed so far from his original calling as a journalist. He also begged his wife’s forgiveness and the couple prayed together: “Help us to be one again and begin to serve you as we have been called to.”

The very next day in 1979, a phone call came asking Dan to brave a dangerous trip to Uganda, Africa, to document the brutality of Idi Amin’s holocaust. From then on, Dan and Norma devoted their time to persecuted Christians, working with not-for-profit organisation Open Doors and then setting up ASSIST News Service, now one of biggest Internet-based news services in the world.

At 77 years of age, Dan is fighting lung cancer but is far from retired, still finding time to bring stories of persecuted Christians to the world’s attention.

Check out www.assistnews.net for more information.

WHAT IS GOD’S WILL?

YOU may have heard that God has a “perfect” will for our lives (Romans 12:2), “plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope” (Jeremiah 29:11).

But what if you feel you’ve missed it and fallen too far away from such a perfect plan?

God’s will is not a tightrope we fall from and can never climb back up on.

God’s will is more like the GPS on our phone. It knows the best way to our destination, but if we veer off the route, it will still find us where we are and lead us home.

Our “recalculating” back to God’s path for us may cost us time, consequences and heartache, but the GPS will not abandon us.

– Janet Denison

Psychologist affirms Creation science is right thinking

BY LISA COSNER

Although Australian psychologist Nathan Marinau grew up in a Christian family and remembers giving his life to God at an early age; in his later teens, he became quite disillusioned with the church and what he understood of the Christian faith.

“I began asking questions like, ‘How do you know that God exists?’ ‘If God is good, why is there so much suffering in the world?’ The answers I received did not satisfy me at the time, and to be honest, I don’t think I was ready to receive them anyway. In hindsight, I wanted to suppress my conscience and justify continuing to live a life that was not in accordance with God’s will.”

Even though Nathan went to church and attended a Christian school, he says he was “very ignorant of what the Bible had to teach on the sorts of challenges common in our present age.” So, he says, “When I was exposed to evolutionary concepts through friends, social media, and then later on at university, seeds of unbelief were planted and began to take root, leaving me unable to reconcile my faith in God with intelligent thought.”

A CHANGE OF MIND

All this changed for Nathan when, in his early twenties, one of his best friends became a Christian.

“I was very interested in his conversion as we had grown up together and I could see a noticeable change in him for the better. He had peace, joy, and a sense of purpose for his life that I dismally lacked. I wanted what he had. We often spoke about his faith, and I began seeking answers to my questions again.”

He was also struck by the arrogance of some of his university lecturers. In particular, one who, in a condescending manner, shut down a student asking a question about intelligent design.

“That not only disappointed me, it got me interested in better understanding intelligent design! This study reignited my hope that maybe there was a God after all who had created everything.”

As is often the case, coming across reliable information about creation was a major turning point for Nathan. After about two years of research into creation/science issues, he came across Creation Ministries International website creation.com.

“This was such a godsend to me! I felt such relief as I scrolled through the research articles and realized that there were very well-reasoned answers to many of my questions. I was never the same after that night. I really opened my heart to the Bible again for the first time since I was about 12 years old. It was such a turning point in my life and began me on my journey back to restoring my relationship with Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour.”

PSYCHOLOGY AND CHRISTIANITY

Although many psychologists hold anti-Christian views, which influence the way in which they use the tools of their profession, Nathan



Nathan Marinau and his wife Jessica and son, Elijah, on holiday in the UK in 2018.

doesn’t see psychology as inherently anti-Christian.

“Psychology is just like any other scientific study or enquiry, in this case, trying to understand the mind and human behaviour. People can become confused when they think that psychology can answer the deeper philosophical issues of the meaning of life and such; it cannot and should not even attempt to do so.

“In my practice as a psychologist, I respect the limits of my profession. I realize that psychology cannot truly transform someone’s heart; only Jesus can do that. However, I also appreciate the way in which I can help people through my profession and I am always conscious of representing Jesus to people who would never set foot in a church.

“God’s heart for people helps me to never give up on someone and to believe that they can change, despite how hopeless the situation may appear from a human standpoint.”

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES HELP PEOPLE

“In fact, when psychology works, it’s often because it’s drawing from principles that are biblical.

“For example, James tells us to confess our faults to one another and pray for one another that we may be healed. This, in a nutshell, is how I see counselling. There is power in confession and this is because God has created us as relational beings,

in His image.

“I have witnessed how basic biblical principles help people, even when they do not know that the advice is straight from the Bible.

“For example, when someone comes to see me with an issue relating to resentment toward another person, where appropriate, I encourage them to go and speak with that person. This is what Jesus instructs us to do in the Gospels if we have an issue with a fellow believer (Matthew 18:15 ff.).

“Another example is when people become aware of an unhelpful way of thinking: they can change that way of thinking with more helpful thoughts. This is comparable to Romans 12:2 in action—being transformed by the renewing of the mind.

“In John 1:14 we see that Jesus came full of grace and truth.

“I believe that showing people grace first, through genuine care and listening to them, enables their hearts to be open and receptive to the truth that will set them free. This is not always the case, but I find it to be true more often than not in my practice. Too often, Christians jump straight to telling someone the truth without taking the time to show them grace first, and this will often lead to greater polarization.”

Nathan is well aware that though people can be helped in some ways through psychology, this does not address or replace their core need

for the Gospel.

“For example, an alcoholic may be able to apply psychological counsel to stop drinking, but then continue to hold onto all the reasons why they started drinking in the first place. The Gospel will help someone at this point of truly healing their heart and helping them in ways that psychology cannot,” says Nathan.

PSYCHOLOGY IN EVOLUTION

Nathan believes that the practice of psychology only makes sense if we view people as created in God’s image.

“I believe the fact that we can even understand the mind and human behaviour is reason for believing in a Creator. Also, the reason why psychology can help people in the first place is because of the way we were created to respond.

“If we were the products of evolution, on the other hand, a lot of human behavior would be illogical, for instance altruistic actions such as saving someone’s life at the expense of one’s own.”

Nathan concludes: “I would encourage readers not to exalt any science, including psychology, above God’s Word. If Scripture tells us that something is not good for us, then regardless of what we think or feel, it is not good for us.”

NATHAN Marinau (B.App. Sc., Grad. Dip. Psych, M.Psych., AHPRA member) is an Australian psychologist who has worked in hospitals, schools, private practice and at present in rehabilitation.

Following university, he attended Bible College, where he met his wife Jessica. They currently live in Melbourne and make themselves available for counselling people from all walks of life. Their joint passion is helping people navigate through life’s issues with the truths of the Bible.

Believe it or not

BY CREATION MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Gold is a problem for evolution

LONG-AGE evolutionary ideas about Earth’s origins posit that the planet was initially molten, therefore gold (and other heavy metals) should have sunk into the core at the time (note: molten gold is 60% denser than molten lead).



But, as every gold miner knows, the earth’s crust and mantle do contain gold.

Some evolutionary geologists have suggested that the gold was supplied by gold-containing meteorites raining down upon the earth once the planet had solidified, about “four billion” years ago.

They recently pointed to a rock formation of unusual isotopic composition in Greenland as evidence of that meteor bombardment.*

However, their colleagues have pointed out that if such a meteor storm happened, then sedimentary rocks laid down at that time should similarly contain plenty of those metals, but they don’t.

Evolutionary notions about gold’s origins simply don’t work. In contrast, golden evidence fits with the biblical account. See, for example: creation.com/rapid-gold-deposit and creation.com/flood-gold.

*When gold rained down on Earth, New Scientist 211 (2829):10, 10 September 2011.

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. Philippians 4:8

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BUILDING BETTER RELATIONSHIPS



LOSS IS PART OF BEING HUMAN

BY ROB FURLONG

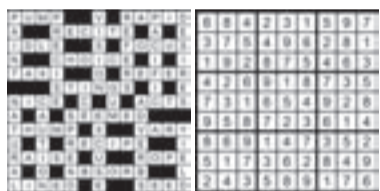
WHAT is it that makes us human?

The human body consists of 206 bones (babies are born with anywhere between 270-350!) and 600 muscles.

Your heart will beat 3000 trillion times in an average lifetime, and pump 36,400 litres of blood per day 19,200 kilometres around your body!

Your entire body contains 100 trillion cells, the central nervous system is composed of more than 100 billion neurons and every hair on your body is equipped with a tiny muscle that can make it stand upright.

And consider the retina of your eye. It has what are called "rods" and "cones" which send signals to the brain where they are processed into



what we see. 120 million rods deal with dim light compared to a mere 6 million cones for bright light.

Little wonder King David eloquently said that, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

But is this what makes us human?

If you have ever seen the film Bicentennial Man, you will know that the makers of the movie have set out to answer this question.

The central character, Andrew, begins life as a robot but through a quirk of fate, is given the ability to think for himself. The movie then recounts his journey over two hundred years of becoming more and more "human".

Technology enables him to be given skin, artificial organs, a nervous system and ultimately blood.

Andrew's quest becomes one where he seeks for society to recognize him for what he believes he is – truly human.

Each time I have watched this film, I have been left with the same reaction – the film blurs the lines of what true humanity is.

Andrew owes his ability to think for himself – a distinctly human characteristic - to a quirk of fate.

His reasoning powers were never a part of his designers' original purpose for him.

Ultimately, Andrew becomes a human who is simply made in the image of other humans.

What then, makes us human?

Genesis 1:26 & 27 tells us that we have been made in the image of God.

This is a much debated and discussed concept, and one aspect of the meaning of this phrase is to understand that we have been given the capacity to think and to relate to God and other people.

What is abundantly clear is that our humanity is no accident or quirk of fate.

We are this way because our Maker intended it so.

Over the past few months we have focused on the processing of loss in our lives – whether we have experienced the grief of the death of a person we love, a relationship or some other significant loss.

A key part of the processing of loss, as we have seen, is to appreciate how intimately bound up our losses are with relationships.

We may be grieving the loss of a



Andrew (Robin Williams) from the movie The Bicentennial Man.

person, or at an even deeper level, a sense of loss in our relationship with God.

Read the book of Job carefully and you will soon discover how deeply he expressed his sense of loss of relationship with God, even to the point where he felt betrayed by Him!

Despite the pain and hurt that is associated with loss, we can actually be thankful for it.

To feel the grief, anger and confusion of loss is to also acknowledge that you are human and the loss of the relationship shows the

person truly meant something to you.

How utterly tragic is the person who never grieves over the loss of anyone or anything.

God made us with an enormous capacity for relationship with Him and with people and we experience the exhilaration of loving and being loved as well as the pain that is often associated with that.

For it is in our pain that we are driven into the loving arms of the One Who made us with purpose for our lives!

Lessons from a sausage dog (Part 19)

BY JODY BENNETT

THE vet tells me my little dog, Carrie, is dying.

You wouldn't know it from looking at her though. She has a glossy coat, she runs around and barks the same as always, she is eating and pooping and scratching and sleeping and curling up on my lap, same as ever. She doesn't seem to be in any pain or have any swellings.

However, in the course of an investigation for a symptom that has since cleared up, it was discovered that her liver enzymes are through the roof, and getting worse. Her liver is dying and we don't know why.

We could ignore the vet, the tests and the numbers, trust what we see with our eyes and just continue as before. However, we know that would be foolhardy and eventually Carrie would start to sicken, experience pain and die.

Alternatively, we can take the vet's advice and start treatment.



God says we are all in a similar situation. Something we cannot see (sin) is killing us slowly from the inside. (In fact, the Bible says we are already DEAD spiritually!) We may still function as usual and seem none the worse for wear but the Great Physician is adamant our disease is terminal, and over time it will affect our quality of life more and more.

We can see sin's effects more clearly the longer we live – the poor choices we make, the people we hurt and the scars we bear.

In Carrie's case, we can't afford the surgery to find out exactly what is causing her problems but we are doing all we are able to save her life – two different antibiotics, liver tonic and special food.

However, God diagnoses in the Bible exactly what has caused humanity's fatal problem – pride, and the resultant rebellion against Him and His ways. He also gives us a prescription for the sure-fire cure: radical surgery (He will take out our heart of stone and give us a heart of flesh)*, a daily dose of humility and a regular regime of walking with Him.

Unlike my dog's expensive treatment, Jesus has paid the full price for our cure and treatment is free to all who accept His diagnosis and seek help.

The outcome for my poor pooch is still uncertain, but God guarantees eternal life and spiritual health to those who accept His expert advice by faith and undergo the radical surgery of salvation.

*Ezekiel 36:26

How can I become a Christian?

Anyone can gain the eternal life offered though 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.

Dear Father in Heaven. I come to you now because I want to be saved. Please, forgive me of my sins. I believe that you sent your Son Jesus Christ to die for me and that you have raised him from the dead. I now ask Jesus Christ to come into my life as my Saviour and Lord. Take control of my life. Please make me the person You created me to be. In Jesus Christ's name. 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 *

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Age and occupation (it helps) _____

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Ask Y: Peter Meadows answers your questions about God

QUESTION: I've made up my mind there's no God – what do you say to that?



YOU don't believe there's a God and want my reaction? Well first off it is one of respect.

There is no shortage of highly intelligent people who have the same conviction. Just as there's no shortage of the same kind of people who have come to the opposite conclusion.

I'm assuming you've looked at the evidence that suggests there could be a God? Like the perfection of design of all that exists. Like the in-built sense that we are not the rulers of our own universe. Like the understanding of right and wrong that is distinctive to humans.

Like the fact that in virtually every community throughout time people have believed there was a God. Like the encounters with God through history, as recorded in the Bible. Like the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, which historians regard to have been well documented.

However, if your mind is closed to the possibility of there being a creator, please allow me a question. Out of all the vast knowledge existing in the universe, how much of it do you personally possess? What do you reckon - five percent, one percent, perhaps only 0.001 percent? Or even less?

One thing seems sure. However much you know, it can only be the merest fraction of all there is to be known. Which leads me to other question. Is it remotely possible for God to exist somewhere in that vast area of knowledge that is not yet yours?

Think of it this way. Does a goldfish swimming round in a tank have the full picture of life, the universe and all that? In which case, how can we be sure we are any better informed? After all, the sum of what we don't know is vastly bigger than what we do know – so isn't it just possible that God could be there too?

If so, I'd suggest you'd be more honest to say you are not actually an atheist but an agnostic – a word that simply means 'not knowing'. And it's a highly respectable name for anyone to have.

However, there are two kinds of agnostic. There's the ornery agnostic who says, 'No one could possibly ever know'. And there's the ordinary agnostic who says 'I don't know – but I'm open to knowing, should the right information come my way.'

I hope you are the latter and will find this column a way for the 'right information' to keep coming your way.



Quarterback Landry Jones #3 of the Pittsburgh Steelers throws a pass during a game against the Cleveland Browns at Heinz Field in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in January 2017. Photo: Nick Cammett/Diamond Images/Getty Images

MAN OF STEELY RESOLVE

Good looking, talented and popular, US footballer Landry Jones was living every teen's dream until, when he went to college, the emptiness underneath his "success" was revealed and he spiralled into depression.

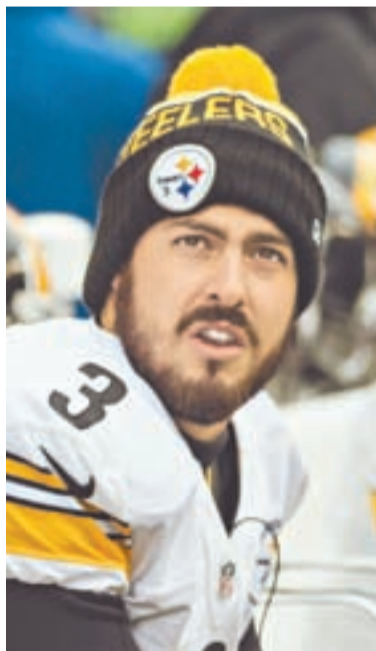
Landry, who until recently played quarterback for the Pittsburgh Steelers, tells the I am Second website about his journey to true joy and purpose in 2010:

When I was younger, everybody wanted me on their team. By world standards I was a successful person as a high school student and a college student – I had all the friends, all the girls – everyone liked me. I had nothing I needed. I had everything, so I didn't think I needed God.

When I was younger, I was one of the athletic kids. Sport came easy to me. All the praise used to drive me. "Look at Landry!" It made me want to be the best at everything. "He's so good at basketball, he's so good at football." You want to keep getting more and more of it – it's like a drug.

After winning a football game you are on this high. I had the world at my finger tips and I was reaching out and grabbing everything I could and stuffing it in my pockets. Filling my life with earthly things not heavenly things.

I grew up in a Christian home. I



knew all the [Bible] stories, everything about Jesus but it seemed like more of a fairy tale to me than actual real life.

MY LIFE HAS BEEN DRASTICALLY DIFFERENT.



thinking this was going to be exactly like high school. I was pretty naïve, thinking I was going to come in and take the top spot. Obviously, that wasn't going to happen.

So, when I get on campus the first day my identity was stripped away from me. Everything that I put my faith, my hopes and dreams in, was stripped from me. I started believing the lies that satan had spoken into me at high school, that without football, without sports, I was worthless and everyone hated me. "Why am I even here on this earth if I can't play football?", a voice in my head would say.

I believed those lies so much that I became sad and lonely and went through a stage of depression. For that first year of college, when I walked into practice I would just have a bad attitude. No one wanted to hang out with me or anything like that. When others were having a good day, I would try to drag them down so that I would feel better about myself. I was drowning and it was like satan was pushing me deeper and deeper under the water.

So, I kept feeding my sinful nature. I kept feeding it all this trash. I starting really getting into drinking and trying to get all the girls. I was sick all the time, my stomach was in knots.

I got done with that first year of college not knowing whether I want to continue at OU. I didn't know whether I wanted to quit. I wanted to just crawl into a hole and just be left there alone, all by myself. I didn't know if I wanted to keep living. How could I go through another miserable year like that? I just wanted to die.

This is when God comes in and drastically changes my life. And it was literally, God showing up in the room saying "Here I am Landry, you've been doing all these things, you've been chasing after worldly dreams." And He freed me from all the sadness I had and all the loneliness I had been through. It was one of the greatest moments of my life.

I remember feeling so much love pouring into me and God saying that He didn't care where I was or what I'd done, all He wanted was me. Instead of being Landry Jones the athlete, I was Landry Jones the son of God. That is all my identity is in now.

My life has been drastically different. I have never felt happier in my entire life. It is the internal joy that God speaks into you. At the end of

time it is not going to matter if I am a Hall of Fame quarterback or a great college quarterback or anything like that, it is going to matter what I did on this earth and how I used my gifts for God.

In 2012 Landry married former basketballer Whitney Hand-Jones and they now have a son, Ezekiel.

Landry was released from the Steelers last year, and after a brief stint with the Jacksonville Jaguars, he is unlikely to catch on with another team this season, but by no means is his career over.

The nearly 30-year-old is expected to be on an NFL roster next season, and in the meantime, according to his Twitter account, he will be following the maxim, "In everything you do, work as if you are working for the Lord."

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