

BETTER FUTURE FOR HOT HEAD



Successful rapper Kevin Burgess is inspired to be a better father and role model for the next generation



Ioan Gruffudd as Dr Henry Morgan

A resurrection of evidence

Imagine you are a forensic detective like the above character Dr Henry Morgan from the new TV crime show *Forever*. As a true sceptic, not just a cynic, you are interested in evidence. Sceptics do not go into an investigation closed to the possibility that a phenomenon might be real or that a claim might be true.

Thus, with an open mind consider the evidence for the central claim of the world's largest religion.

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A top 4 debut on the Billboard rap album chart in 2014 capped off an amazing decade for Kevin Burgess of Reach Records, better known as KB, who admits he was once "struggling with living".

Fatherless and surrounded by the influences of drugs, violence and troublemakers, Kevin was not immune to the effects of his neighbourhood growing up but says he is determined to become a role model to those from a similar background.

His dad was a military man and taught Kevin the ways of a soldier but when he abandoned the family when Kevin was 17, things fell into disarray.

"I lived on an Air Force base for half of my life and then my parents divorced and I found myself smack bang in the middle of the hood and that was a big shift for me going from guarded gates to hearing people blowing off guns every night," Kevin remembers.

On his 2012 Billboard Top Gospel Album 'Weight and Glory', Kevin raps on *Go Off*, "I was a hot head, bad attitude, woulda, shoulda, coulda been shot dead / Always running my mouth, I'd rather die than be soft man / I'd been slammed on my back just to prove that I'm not scared."

The divorce and fearful environment, Kevin recalls "was just very identity shattering for me and I sunk into depression and trying different things... drugs and exploiting women – things of that nature to find myself and I never did."

Although he was academically gifted, entering a university level program at age 15, Kevin says, "I wasn't able to do very well in school because I was struggling with living – I mean literally there were thoughts of 'it would be easier if I could just end my life'."

At this lowest point in his life, Kevin recalls, "I was given a CD with eight tracks on it, and I loved every one of them. I couldn't believe it was Christian music, because the dude on the cover looked just like me."

The eighth song was an explanation of the gift of forgiveness and new life purchased by Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, which would have a profound effect on Kevin.

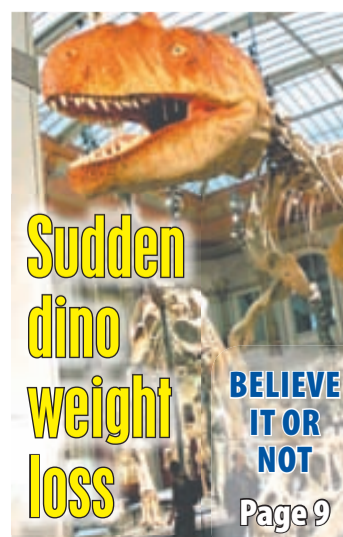
Kevin says, "That day I believed [in Jesus Christ]. It's been a pursuit after the things of God ever since."

While gaining a theology degree, Kevin formed hip hop group HGA (His Glory Alone) with other Christian rappers.

"We were making music and putting it on [social networks] and people were asking us to come out to their church," he recalls.

Internet videos of HGA caught Grammy-award winning rapper Lecrae's attention, leading to Kevin being signed to Reach Records in 2010. His debut mixtape, released for free, garnered 30,000 downloads within a year.

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What's the point?



BY ALAN BAILEY

ALL OF US are working and playing our way through life. But after all the perspiration and the parties, the question emerges, "What's the point?"

It isn't talked about much, but in quiet moments we can be engulfed by a feeling of emptiness. The big event we looked forward to has come and gone and a mess has to be cleaned up. Even achieving an important goal can leave a feeling of anti-climax. Simply pushing on without obvious meaning and purpose seems to be all we can do.

A sad song from the 1970s said: *But love will last and last for just a day; Youth will bloom and then be blown away; Worlds will come and worlds will go; So what's the point of this passing show?*

Are there any answers?

On a bench in a Berlin park, a man sat deep in thought. It was the German philosopher, Schopenhauer. A nearby attendant, wondering if he was planning something sinister, asked him who he was. "I wish to God I knew" was the reply. If we ask 'what's the point?' we need to ask three other questions: Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going?

There are those who deny the validity of these questions. They say that we are simply animals that came about by accident. No one intended us; all is mindless. So, meaning and purpose are impossible. You may answer the three questions any way you wish. But you will not avoid emptiness.

We are not alone

If God is there and has spoken, some big problems can be solved. The great way He has spoken is through Jesus Christ, God the Son. He cannot be explained away as just another human being, making His own guesses, because the miracles He did verified who He was.

Jesus is unique in every way and His answers to the questions are a God-send. His answer to question one is we are designed by God and thus have significance. Two: our purpose here is to find God through creation and His Word and to live for His honour and glory. Three: we are all going into eternity, some to joy, some to pain. Our choices are significant, our responsibility is huge. Our opportunity to respond to God is now.

"Turn to the Lord and pray to Him now that He is near," says the Bible in Isaiah chapter 55, verses 6 and 7. "Let the wicked leave their way of life and change their way of thinking. Let them turn to the Lord our God; He is merciful and quick to forgive."

NOTHING COMES FROM NOTHING

ANTHONY FLEW, one of the twentieth century's most outspoken atheists, once argued that God is imaginary using the following story:

Two explorers came upon a clearing in the jungle. In the clearing were growing many flowers and many weeds. One explorer says, "Some gardener must tend this plot." The other disagrees, "There is no gardener." So they pitch their tents and set a watch. No gardener is ever seen. . . . Yet still the believer is not convinced. "But there is a gardener, invisible, intangible, insensible to electric shocks, who comes secretly to look after the garden he loves." At last the Sceptic despairs. "But what remains of the original assertion? Just how does what you call an invisible, intangible, eternally elusive gardener differ from an imaginary gardener or even from no gardener at all?"

Many others will agree that God is nothing more than an imaginary gardener, a superstition, a myth.

To counter this argument against God, all one needs to do is ask this logical, rational, and reasonable question: 'Why do we have something rather than nothing at all?'

Many atheists concentrate on issues with a gardener they believe to be imaginary and ignore the question of why a garden exists in the first place.

Complexity is explained to arise from either Nature itself or a Creator. Atheists propose the idea of spontaneous generation, or self-creation, but this is a statement that shows itself to be false by definition. A fundamental law of science is *ex nihilo nihil fit* – out of nothing, nothing comes. And as Aristotle said, "Nothing is what rocks dream about."

Some people deride Christians for believing in magic, yet embrace greater magic than anything found in the Bible – life forms appearing from non-living objects, arising out of nothing with no cause.

Next, their argument often ignores the basic laws of causality – an effect must resemble its cause. How can an impersonal, meaningless, purposeless, amoral universe accidentally create beings who are full of personality and obsessed with meaning, purpose, and morality? As



philosopher J. S. Mill, no friend to Christianity, said: "It is self-evident that only mind can create mind."

Further, intelligence does not arise from non-intelligence, which is why even Richard Dawkins (noted atheist) and Francis Crick (co-discoverer of DNA) admit that intelligence had to engineer DNA and life on earth. They just say it was a superior alien race who seeded the earth, which of course, begs the question of who engineered that superior alien race.

But what of evolution? Doesn't evolution explain life and intelligence? Not at all. Evolution is a biological theory that attempts to describe change in already existing life forms – it has no way to answer the

question of existence. This one piece of evidence alone began to turn Anthony Flew away from atheism.

These facts being evident, it then becomes quite easy to offer a simple, reasonable, logical proof for God in the following way:

1. Something exists
2. You don't get something from nothing
3. Therefore, something necessary and eternal exists (since an infinite regress of causes is illogical)
4. The only two options are an eternal universe or an eternal Creator

Why is there something rather than nothing?

5. Science has disproved the concept of an eternal universe

6. Therefore, an eternal Creator exists
The only premise that can be attacked is premise five, but the fact is every drop of evidence in the possession of science points to the fact that the universe is not eternal and had a beginning. And everything that has a beginning has a cause; therefore, the universe had a cause and is not eternal.

Any fanciful assertions of collapsing universes, imaginary time, and the like are just that – fanciful – and require more faith than to believe in God. The two choices are simple: matter before mind or mind before matter.

"But who created God?" many ask. Why not ask, "Where is the bachelor's wife?" or "What does the colour blue taste like?" It's a category mistake – you don't make the unmade. Is it more reasonable to embrace a cause that contains none of the characteristics of its effect (personality, love, meaning, purpose, etc.) or a cause that embodies them all (a personal God)?

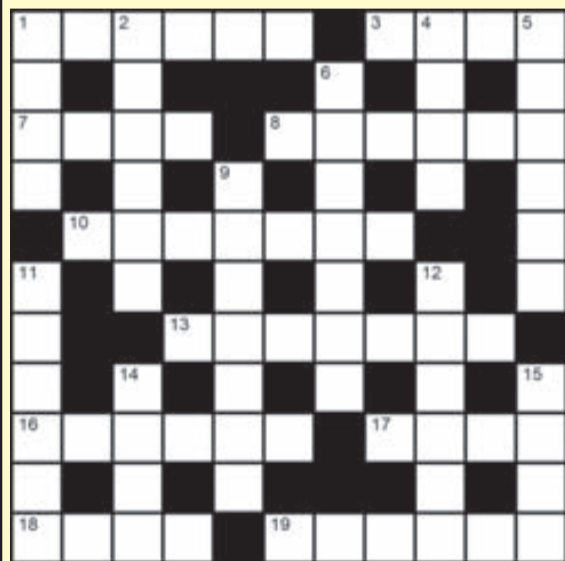
The conclusion is that a personal Creator exists. Moreover, this Being who created everything mirrors the God described in the Bible well, as evidenced by what one can infer just from the fact of creation alone.

In stark contrast to the article he had written many years earlier, Anthony Flew wrote a very different kind of book in 2007 entitled *There Is a God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind*. In it, he recounted his atheism and relayed how, due to evidence and reason, he came to believe that a creator God exists. The one who initially posited an "imaginary gardener" wrote, "I think the origins of the laws of nature and of life and the Universe point clearly to an intelligent Source. The burden of proof is on those who argue to the contrary." Mr Flew died in 2010.

Adapted from www.gotquestions.org/is-God-imaginary.html. See also www.gotquestions.org/argument-existence-God

Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Gone bad (6)
 - 3 Study hard for test (4)
 - 7 Enlist in (4)
 - 8 Board ship (6)
 - 10 In poor condition (7)
 - 13 Second-generation show (4-3)
 - 16 Devastated (6)
 - 17 Stagger (4)
 - 18 Ore deposit (4)
 - 19 Opposite of folly (6)



- DOWN**
- 1 Indian royal (4)
 - 2 Three in one (6)
 - 4 Lack physical energy (4)
 - 5 "Any ___?" (6)
 - 6 Distinguished (7)
 - 9 Involved (7)
 - 11 Tusks Arctic animal (6)
 - 12 Outrage (6)
 - 14 Opera star (4)
 - 15 Urban renewal target (4)

SOLUTION PAGE 11

Sudoku

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

Puzzle Level: Medium

6 3 8
4 2 9
7 5 1

SOLUTION PAGE 11

4	3		9			2		
	5					1		4
8						9	5	
						8		
		8		3			4	
5					9	6	1	
		1					7	
					3		9	5
			2	7				

A resurrection of evidence

From page 1

The claim of Jesus' resurrection from the dead is vital to Christianity. Plus, if Jesus did rise, than the words of Jesus have the greatest authority possible.

As theologian R. C. Sproul said: "If Christ has been raised from the dead by God, then He has the credentials and certification that no other religious leader possesses. Buddha is dead. Mohammad is dead. Moses is dead. Confucius is dead. But, according to...Christianity, Christ is alive."

Keeping this in mind, let us consider five popular theories against Jesus' resurrection and what can be uncovered from historians, medicine, logic, and eyewitness testimony.

THEORY 1: Jesus didn't really die on the cross

Some propose that Jesus was revived by the cool, damp air in the tomb, but an article published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in 1986 explains why this so-called "swoon theory" is untenable: "Clearly, the weight of historical and medical evidence indicated that Jesus was dead. ... The spear, thrust between his right ribs, probably perforated not only the right lung, but also the pericardium and heart and thereby ensured His death."

This fact can be verified by reports of non-Christian historians from around the time when Jesus lived. Three of these historians confirmed the death of Jesus: Lucian (c.120–after 180 A.D.) Josephus (c.37–c.100 A.D.) and Tacitus (c. 56–c.120 A.D.). Even those who deny the resurrection like noted sceptics James Tabor and John Dominic Crossan, co-founder of Jesus Seminar, agree that Jesus clearly lived and died.

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Garden tomb in Jerusalem

When the bullets stopped bouncing

‘Where to now?’ wondered police detective Suzanne Spence as criminal depravity overwhelmed her ability to press on

BY MARTIN JOHNSON

Following a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder, Suzanne Spence thought her dream job in the police force was over before her experience led her into a new mission against sexual slavery.

The retired undercover detective has turned her trauma into a passion for training International Justice Mission workers in investigative skills to fight human trafficking and oppression in developing countries.

Soon after she entered the NSW Police Force at age 19, Suzanne decided to take advantage of her non-typical small stature through an undercover and surveillance role at the National Crime Authority.

“It was around this time that the things I had seen made me ask some of the life’s basic questions. You see so much depravity and I thought there has to be more to life than this,” Suzanne remembers.

While she was brought up in traditional religion, she had not investigated Christianity until she became friends with a fellow police officer during a routine prisoner transfer who happened to be a Christian.

“Soon after that I hit a bad patch in my life – a long-term relationship had broken down and I just needed

someone to talk to,” she says.

They planned to meet for coffee and she accepted an invitation to join him at a Bible study group beforehand.

“The one thing I remember was that everyone was so nice. I’d never really experienced that before,” she says.

Suzanne went back to the group a few more times and then started a *Christianity Explained* course run by a local church pastor.

“At the end of the course I had to make a decision – I thought my previous relationship was going to be my future, but that hadn’t happened and so I made a decision to accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour of my life. I started going to church... it was a whole new world for me,” Suzanne recalls.

After being promoted to the rank of detective, Suzanne soon found herself investigating many sexual assaults that had happened when the victims were children and the intimate details started to affect her personally.

“It changes you and I wished my faith was stronger. Here I was – a Christian – and yet I started to

hate the world and people because of what I had seen and heard as a police officer. Listening to victim’s stories and investigating these sort of cases made me ask God, ‘Lord when are you coming, I’m over this’,” she admits.

“I got to a point where I felt I was just treading water – I was putting on a front to protect myself but eventually I felt that the ‘bullets’ just stopped bouncing off and they were embedding inside me.”

With no de-brief for officers and a culture that says ‘you’re weak’ if you ask for help, Suzanne says she did not recognise that she needed help.

“Deep down I knew there was a God but I was relying on my own strength, telling myself I just needed to get it together and ‘fix things’,” she explains.

Finally it got to the point where she was constantly crying and could not eat, sleep or talk to anyone.

After a year of stress leave, she realised she had to end her 24-year career in the force, feeling ashamed and devastated that she had somehow reached her ‘expiry date’.

“I prayed that I would find something meaningful to do that was far removed from police work, even if that was just running a florist shop,” she says.

The first hint of God’s plan came after a women’s event run by Melinda Tankard Reist, an Australian author and speaker who is known for her work on the mistreatment of women and sexualisation of girls.

She was invited by Melinda to give procedural guidance to a sexual assault victim, and soon met more professional women helping combat violence against girls.

“I remember praying to God asking Him what was I doing there amongst such women – I had nothing to offer,” Suzanne recalls.

At a screening of the human rights documentary *Miss Representation*, Suzanne felt a spark of passion when someone told her she would be “great out in the field” in the worldwide work of International Justice Mission (IJM), a non-profit human rights organisation that rescues victims of individual human rights abuse.

Suzanne took up the offer and is now a volunteer investigative associate and trains staff in surveillance and undercover work to identify women and children who have been trafficked and those who run the trafficking.

“Two years ago I thought my working life was over. Now I can see that God was able to take me in my weakness and use the skills and experience I learned in the police force to help fight the scourge of people traffick-

“I [hated] the world and people because of what I had seen and heard”



WORK NOT OVER: Suzanne Spence now helps fight sexual slavery overseas

ing,” Suzanne explains.

“There’s a sense of passion that I thrive on and it gives me so much joy.”

Thinking of that “rock bottom” time of her life, Suzanne says, “I

would go through it all again as God was able to use what I went through to equip me for this work and brought my faith to a whole new level.”

For more about International Justice Mission visit www.ijm.org

A LITTLE NUDGE

‘Saints’ and ‘swine’ at Auschwitz: survivor

BY KARL FAASE

January 2015 marked the 70th Anniversary of the liberation of the infamous Nazi concentration camp complex Auschwitz-Birkenau situated near Kraków, Poland. An estimated 1.3 million people were deported to Auschwitz between 1940 and 1945; and at least 1.1 million were murdered.

Auschwitz survivor Victor Frankl, a psychiatrist, wrote about his experiences to try make sense of his trauma. Reflecting on humanity’s capability, Frankl commented, “Man was the being that invented the gas chambers of Auschwitz, however he is also the being who entered those gas chambers upright, with the Lord’s prayer on his lips.”

Frank tells how some at Auschwitz, “acted like swine while others acted like saints.” It was not the conditions that caused this, but individual choices.

Auschwitz reminds us of the evil that exists in every human being and our need to turn to God for forgiveness for the times we have behaved badly. It also reminds us to find the strength to make the right choices, no matter what the circumstances.

Let us also pray for our world, for an end to such atrocities.



27 JAN 2015: Seventy years after the liberation of Auschwitz, survivors and dignitaries honoured victims at the camp’s entrance

Better life for hot head



● From page 1

It is clear that material success and fame are far from Kevin’s musical motivation, as he says, “I made it when Jesus Christ died for my sin, and gave me faith”.

Instead he wants to be a positive influence through music as he believes music is “a spokesperson of a culture and it serves as sort of a reporter.”

When rappers “talk about selling cocaine”, Kevin told *TheBlaze.com*, “it’s all contingent on a lie, that there’s this free, fast life that you can live dangerous above the law ... when really there’s another side of it ... that it’s a very hard hell-like life to sort of live for the moment.”

Kevin says that people rap about what they love, but rarely address their human struggles, and he notes that the rich and famous have more struggles with suicide than people realise.

“We’re thirsty for something greater than we’ve been feeding ourselves for [the past] 50 to 60 years,” Kevin says. “I think that the light of the gospel (the good news about Jesus) is bursting forth as a legitimate alternative.”

Residing in Florida with his wife, Kevin continues to head up HGA, preach regularly at his church and he feels a sense of responsibility in what God has gifted to him.

“I want to be someone people can look up to and trust as a deliverer of truth. If I can accomplish that, then I will have been successful,” he says.

While he still has not spoken to his father for 17 years, Kevin says he would still love to have a relationship with him, love him and has forgiven him for abandoning the family.

“[We] can respond to that with hatred... or we can respond with forgiveness and love and redeem ourselves. If the Burgess last name has been muddied ... I can actually redeem it by being there for my family, and also making sure my music is responsible and is consistent with my love for my kids.”

ABDUCTED YET HOPE ENDURED

Enslaved in Joseph Kony's rebel army in 2002 for 10 months, Jackline's hope outlasted her suffering and torment

Forced to carry a heavy load barefoot over long distances, Jackline Eyokia Surundu prayed for rescue from Kony's army as her toenails dropped off and her body ached from untreated wounds and malnourishment.

Weak from drinking stagnant, insect-infested water and the ritual of being raped daily, strength came from catching glimpses of what she describes as her angels on both sides, guarding her from death.

Jackline recalls feeling abandoned by her husband Godfrey who left her to serve in the Ugandan People's Defence Force, then her in-laws had beaten and chased her out of home.

Harbouring deep hatred towards all of them, she fled to her aunt's place near the Uganda-South Sudan border and insisted on staying despite the risk of rebel attack.

"After just one night, the rebels invaded the village and killed people in large numbers including my aunt, her husband and their children," Jackline recalls sadly.

She was abducted along with other young people and marched to the

rebel camp, Kony village.

It was while at this camp that Jackline knew she could not face what was to come alone and needed to put her trust and hope in a higher power.

"I gave my life whole heartedly to God through His Son Jesus Christ," she explains.

"I asked Jesus to hold my hand and take me to be with Him at the Father's right hand. I forgave my father, my husband and my in-laws from the bottom of my heart. My relationship with God became like a relationship between a child and a mother.

"Since I was with Jesus, I feared no death. I knew even if I died I was sure to enter heaven."

When they left camp the next day, Jackline felt the presence of angels on either side of her, helping her to endure.

She was forced to partake in military training where many soldiers lost their lives and body parts from the dangerous techniques used.

"The instructors shot live bullets to control the straight lines of the parade," she recalls. "It was so terrible, I will never forget the horrible



FORGAVE ALL WHO LEFT HER: Sergeant Jackline Eyokia Surundu and her husband Godfrey hold their cherished Bibles

experiences, pictures and actions that have been imprinted in my brain."

Amidst it all she praised God for His protection, having only lost a tooth in the harsh training.

"I used to tell people that this gap was the narrow gate through which the redeemed shall enter heaven," she says.

Jackline and others with any prior education were then sent to a camp where nurses were needed to attend to the wounded and sick.

In answer to her many prayers, the Ugandan People's Defence Force finally arrived and defeated the rebels in the camp.

"Many dead bodies fell on my sides but no bullet touched me because the Most High God hid and protected me," she says.

She was captured, but made a bad decision to sneak away with some friends. When her friends deserted her, Jackline was left wondering lost in the dense forest with no food, water or shelter.

"My feet were rotting and I slept in the trees with the birds," she recalls.

With little hope left after two weeks like this, Jackline thought of killing herself.

"I talked to the Lord like a God-fearing daughter talking to her father, thanking Him for what He had done to keep me safe, telling Him about the situation I was in, asking Him to forgive me and take away my life because I could no longer move anymore."

Soon she fell into a deep sleep and heard a voice telling her to go home

and promising safety along the way.

Though frail, she found strength to make her way out of the forest and was rescued by a sympathetic couple who took her in. She later shared her story with many others in the village who decided to trust in Jesus when they heard how God had saved her.

Returning home, Jackline's forgiveness was demonstrated when she faithfully reunited with her husband despite having been separated for six years.

Hard times followed when she realised he had become heavily involved in satanic witchcraft. God was again faithful to her in bringing him and her children to eventually trust in Jesus as their personal Lord and Saviour. All the witchcraft material ended up burned to ashes.

She was later recruited as a medic at the general military hospital and is now an international speaker who shares her story to bring others to Christ and help those who have been through similar experiences.

Her message is this: "The Lord is faithful even in the difficult situations you may find yourself in. He is the Lord who guards, protects, leads, provides for you and moves you. Hallelujah!"

The ultimate finish line



What is 'Ironman' toughness worth?

THE IRONMAN TRIATHLON MANTRA is that 'anything is possible'. For most, this means that all who finish the gruelling one-day event have proved their mental and physical commitment, at least, for as long as they remember the personal sacrifice it took.

At the annual World Championships in Hawaii this May, regional top-50 tri-athletes will once more push their bodies to the extreme to complete a 4km swim, 180km bike ride and a 42km run without a break in under 17 hours.

Three-time World Champion and current Hawaii record holder, Australian Craig Alexander acknowledges his family's constant support and sacrifice as key reasons for his success.

"A lot of people have sacrificed so that I can be out there and race and I want to honour their sacrifice," he told Gear Patrol in 2014.

The 41-year-old Ironman champ lives and breathes fitness but admits that as his body has gotten older, he cannot do the amount of training he used to do.

A lifetime of commitment, training, sacrifice and perseverance and yet his body's strength and agility will

inevitably waste away like everyone else's. His legacy may live on, or it may fade when someone breaks his record.

We can choose a life of strict discipline, push through pain and hard circumstances and perhaps even become world-renowned for something but at the end of the day what is it worth?

Rich Froning Jr* is a fellow professional athlete who asked himself this exact question.

Currently holding the title "Fittest Man on Earth" after winning the World CrossFit Games four years in a row, Rich explained to TheBlaze.com that he competes for more than just his fitness goals and success.

"If you are in a workout and something [bad] happens... it's not the end of the world because Jesus died for us and this life is temporary," he shares confidently.

"When I walk away from competing in CrossFit, I won't have it anymore, [but] Christ will always be there."

The Bible explains the difference between these two prestigious athletes clearly in 1 Corinthians chapter 9 where

it says, "Everyone who competes in the race goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever."

Though a healthy lifestyle may afford us a few extra years on earth, we will all come face-to-face with God to give an account of our life when it ends.

Suddenly those things we achieved on earth will fade away and, as explained in the Bible, the only thing that will count is whether or not we have a personal relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ.

A life devoted to becoming one of the world's greatest athletes may leave a legacy on earth but motivation that comes from living a God-honouring life will outlast any title or medal the world can offer.

Pushed to his physical limits, Rich describes how this has motivated him during competition: "When I was getting tired or feeling weak, I would look down and think 'what I'm going through is nothing compared to what [Jesus] went through for us.'"

*You can read Rich Froning's story in Challenge edition no. 362 at Challengenews.org.

A resurrection of evidence

● From page 2

THEORY 2: Grave robbing conspiracy

If Jesus' body was stolen, how does one account for all the reported appearances of a resurrected Jesus? Something extraordinary must have happened for the followers of Jesus to cease mourning, cease hiding, and begin fearlessly proclaiming that they had seen Jesus alive.

According to the eyewitness accounts, all the disciples saw Jesus on more than ten separate occasions. They wrote that He showed them His hands and feet and told them to touch Him. And He reportedly ate with them and later appeared alive to more than 500 followers on one occasion.

Legal scholar John Warwick Montgomery stated, "In 56 A.D. [the Apostle Paul wrote that over 500 people had seen the risen Jesus and that most of them were still alive (1 Corinthians 15:6ff.). It passes the bounds of credibility that the early Christians could have manufactured such a tale and then preached it among those who might easily have refuted it simply by producing the body of Jesus."



A movie depiction of Jesus' tomb

Joy mends tragic loss

Ilse no longer feels guilty about regaining joy after family tragedy



SMILE RESTORED: Ilse Friis congratulates her cousin Amelia on her marriage

osing her parents, the two closest friends of her life, crushed Ilse Friis to the point that she no longer wanted to live.

Ilse remembers that as a 22-year-old leader at a children's camp she was woken to hear the tragic news that her parents had died in a car accident.

"When I awoke the next morning the pain was overwhelming because I saw no way of ever being happy again without them," Ilse says.

She acknowledges her relationship with Jesus Christ, her three loving brothers and circle of friends enabled her to escape what she

felt was a "bottomless pit", yet the joy of her life failed to return.

"Every day was filled with boring routine. I felt guilty, like I was betray-

ing my parents when something made me happy. As I focused on my loss and hurt, I became self-focused, which damaged all my relationships."

After two years, Ilse says she finally allowed God to speak to her and soon found promises in God's Word that she could hold onto.

"I read that King David had said that '[God] drew me out of many waters' (2 Samuel 22:17) and in Job's tragic loss of his children and health,

"The Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind"

One evening, she recalls praying: "Lord, I am so tired, I can't hang on and try to remain standing any longer."

"God answered me, 'You don't have to hold on or keep trying, I will bind you to Me with cords of love that cannot be broken'."

She still misses her parents, but now says that this feeling no longer steals her joy.

"When I gave God the opportunity to heal my broken life, I began discovering deeper dimensions of Him, His love for me, and His plan for my life."

As a child, Ilse often asked herself, "Why am I alive?" and for many years she recalls, "My life felt empty and purposeless."

Searching for meaning, she recalls: "I made many mistakes and hurt many people. The harder I tried to be a 'good person', the less I was the person I wanted to be."

This conflict was resolved when she read the work of theologian Francois de Toit, who writes: "Religion majors on guilt and willpower driven sentiment which engage man in futile efforts to save and improve himself... the law proves all men guilty and confirms that their best intentions... could not improve their condition before God. The purpose of [God's] law is to show people how condemned they are, and that they need a Saviour. The Gospel (the good news of Jesus) shows how loved people are, and that only through Christ's saving power we can be freed from our sin and shame."

As she studied the Bible, Ilse realised for herself that sin takes people "away from [God's] love, and from the fullness of what He wants for our lives" but that Jesus paid the ultimate price so her relationship with God could be restored.

"As the Bible says, 'By one perfect sacrifice [Jesus] has perfectly [purified] sinful man forever', Ilse quotes from Hebrews chapter 10 verse 14.

"I deeply believed that Jesus is the only God, that I am saved only through His sacrifice on the cross for my sins, and that His Holy Spirit empowers me. I realised it was all God's work in me, and none of my own efforts."

Ilse takes comfort in knowing that her parents had this same faith in Jesus and that one day she will be reunited with them in heaven.

In the meantime, she says a purposeful, fulfilled and joyful life comes from experiencing "God's power, mercy and grace" every day through the good times and bad.

"I saw no way of ever being happy again"

Quotable quotes

• "Worrying does not empty tomorrow of its troubles, it empties today of its strength."

- Corrie ten Boom (1892-1983; pictured) who helped hundreds of Jews escape the Nazi Holocaust




tenboom.org

• "If I had six hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend the first four hours sharpening the axe."

- US president Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)

• "Reputation is what men and women think of us; character is what God and angels know of us."

- Philosopher and political theorist Thomas Paine (1736-1809)



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BETTER THAN ANY HERO



BY JIMMY YOUNG

Jesus is the most controversial, stereotyped and divisive man to have ever lived. Some call him a man – others a heretic – more call him inspirational – some even call him a Saviour.

Here are a couple of things I am glad someone told me about Jesus.

1. Jesus is not meek and mild – He's a hero

One of the most wide-spread images of Jesus is sitting with lambs. Gentle Jesus, meek and mild.

I don't know that Jesus; this is the Jesus I know. He rumbled with death and came out taunting it. He stood up to the 'hypocritical elite' and called them a brood of vipers to their face. He turned over tables in the temple, as He expressed righteous anger. He came into messiness, depression and devastation and spoke life-giving truth. He didn't care about social convention as He dined with the least, the lost and the losers of the world (people like me).

He gave up the riches of heaven to set his people free, and He literally laid down his life for his people. That Jesus is my hero. Meek and Mild? Not the Jesus I know. Filled with love, grace and mercy – Yes please, but never mild.

2. Jesus knows our suffering

One of the things that I hate is when people talk about God as if He is distant. There is a belief that since the beginning of time – God has just kind of sat back.

That kind of God would be distant; He would not really care about you – he is removed himself from us. Yet Jesus, the God-man came out of heaven specifically so that He could know our struggles and set us free. Can you believe that?

That God came from outside the world – into the world – to meet every temptation and know what we deal with so He could set us free by suffering on a cruel cross. How amazing is Jesus?

3. Jesus is in the restoration business

I got married recently and in our wedding speeches we told our closest family and friends what we really thought of Jesus. Both my wife and I have gone through some really hard times in our life. So it was clear at our wedding as we spoke, that Sarah and I are broken people, who have discovered the difference that Jesus can make in a life surrendered to Him. Here is what we said:

1. Jesus makes beautiful things out of broken people.
2. The only reason that we love is because He first loved us – without that, we would always be broken.
3. Sin has broken us – it shows us as ugly and broken and in need of saving.
4. The trademark of Jesus is that He takes broken people and restores them to God.
5. Without Jesus I am just a broken man doing broken things living a broken life. Only Jesus could have ever promised restoration – and He delivered.

4. Jesus extends the greatest invite to everyone

At a national youth convention, I saw a man who would impact me for a very long time. The guest speaker Tony Campolo spoke on young people changing the world, and said, "Christianity is made for heroism, not for pleasure".

That lit something in my brain. Jesus has the greatest invitation to the world. Lots of people say; "Do what you want to do... make yourself happy."

Jesus says; "If you want to be my disciple – drop everything – pick up your cross – follow me".

That is a pretty crazy invite.

My lecturer at university once told me that the greatest question anyone has asked him – and could ever ask is this: "Who do you say that Jesus is?"

The rest of your life could change depending on your answer to that question. Some will call Him Saviour, some will call Him a heretic and some will call Him just a man.

So who do you say that Jesus is?

A resurrection of evidence

• From page 4

THEORY 3: Jesus' followers were hallucinating

Since hallucinations are by nature individual occurrences not group experiences, a mass hallucination is not even a remote possibility. According to psychologist Thomas J. Thorburn. "It is absolutely inconceivable that ... 500 persons, of average soundness of mind ... should experience all kinds of sensuous impressions—visual, auditory, tactual—and that all these ... experiences should rest entirely upon ... hallucination."

Furthermore, in the psychology of hallucinations, the person would need to be in a frame of mind where they so wished to see that person that their mind contrives it. Two major leaders of the early church, James and Paul, both encountered a resurrected Jesus, neither expecting, or hoping for the pleasure. The Apostle Paul in fact led the earliest persecutions of Christians, and his conversion remains inexplicable except for his own testimony that Jesus appeared to him, resurrected.



- continues page 9

Helping people DROVE AUSSIE DOCTOR IN MIDDLE EAST

Dr Brandstater shares how science, faith and compassion work together

Call it kind-heartedness or just good old-fashioned love. But medical pioneer Bernard Brandstater says it was a simple desire to help needy people that motivated him in devising new solutions to medical practice in the Middle East.

Studying medicine at Adelaide University from age 16, retired doctor Bernard Brandstater became a pioneer in anaesthesia practice for surgery in the Middle East, and he was the first to introduce epidural anaesthesia for obstetric deliveries in that part of the world.

Encouraged by his parent's motto that "he can who thinks he can", Ber-

nard was appointed as the youngest chairman and associate professor at the American University of Beirut at age 28, just a year after he, his wife and two infant daughters arrived in Lebanon in 1956.

As he taught and cared for patients in surgery for the next 13 years in Beirut, Bernard introduced several novel technologies, including a multi-orifice epidural catheter, and also a method of prolonged intubation needed by critically ill babies. These innovations were rapidly implemented worldwide. Using prolonged intubation, he managed the care of the first survivors of newborn tetanus recorded anywhere.

Due to his position and his reputation Bernard became an emergency medical consultant to King Saud of Saudi Arabia and other VIPs.

Yet despite these successes and the honours that came to him, Bernard says that his abilities and his attitude to helping people came as a blessing from God. As the son of a church pastor, Bernard says he learned about God from a young age, and read the Bible through while a schoolboy. He made a mature decision to "love Jesus as Lord" when in his teens.

He credits Jesus' example of sympathy for the sick and his relationship with God as what gave him his reason and mindset of compassion for people while working as a doctor.

In the midst of a busy hospital, with tight schedules, Bernard admits it is not always easy to maintain a "warm Christian kind-heartedness in the face of time pressures and the need for efficiency".

A student of history will recall that hospitals all over the world were founded on Christian love for others. One of Europe's earliest hospitals still survives in Lubeck, called the Heilige Geist (Holy Ghost) Hospital. In London in the 1860's, famous Florence Nightingale founded a great hospital, named after Jesus' disciple St. Thomas.

Yet in his early years as a medical student, the contrast between the Bible's historical account and evolution's counter-history was inescapable and brought many details of science into question.

Standing firm on his faith, Bernard maintains and defends his position that Creation as recorded in Genesis is foundational to an accurate knowledge of God.

Bernard notes that unlike hundreds of ancient tribal traditions the Bible story of Earth's beginning does not start with strange monsters or squabbles amongst pagan gods, or with solid matter of any kind. It tells us that God's first creative act was to create not matter but energy: "Let there be light". And that is exactly what today's physics is telling us: vast energy throughout space is fundamental in the cosmos.

The Bible says, "God saw everything that He had made, and it was very good" (Genesis 1: 31).

Bernard believes this means that "the original earth was splendid beyond our imagining, with its variety, its balance, its coherence as a living system".

"With its precise physical laws holding it together, from the immensity of space to the smallest Planck particle, it delighted its Creator. So creation shows us God's character: He is a personal God, worthy of our love and trust and worship."

Bernard says God's character is displayed in His creation of a perfect Garden of Eden, God's original plan for mankind before Adam and Eve chose to disobey.

"The picture we have of the future New Earth tells us how it was in the beginning: "There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed

away' (Revelation 21:4). So Eden had not sorrow, pain or misery, and no predatory animals. God gave our first parents a vast potential for a rich unfolding future, as they exercised their dominion over planet Earth (Genesis 1:28)."

Bernard believes that the popular "billions of years" assumption distorts our view of God's universe and of God.

"Considering the Creator's goodness, it is hard to consider that He planned millions of years of savage, competitive evolutionary existence, with death as an ugly reality, supposedly needed to weed out the unfit. God's mode of creating tells us about his mind, his heart.

"In the Bible there is no hint of a long incubation. 'He spoke and it was done', says Psalm 33:9, (NASB).

"That sounds like a finished work, like completion, not an ongoing process. And it was said to be "very good" when the job was finished (Genesis 1:31)."

Although evolution relies on death and the evil of suffering from the beginning, Bernard relies on the



A PIONEERING CAREER: Dr Bernard Brandstater

Bible's description that they were not part of God's original creation.

"[Death and evil] were the tragic result of the Fall, when our first parents chose their way instead of God's way (Genesis 3, Romans 8).

"The process of creation should fit the character and purposes of a God who does all things well; who is generous and merciful, and who delights in beauty.

"This is the God we can trust, seek to know, and even love."

And it is this love for God and his fellowmen that has driven Bernard to live an extraordinary life, following in obedience to Jesus Christ.

Courtesy Creation Ministries International, creation.com

Believe it or not

BY CREATION MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Sudden dinosaur weight loss

Dinosaurs may have weighed around a quarter of what was once believed. Researchers from the University of Manchester have developed a new way to estimate more accurately the weight of an animal from its fossil bones.¹

Earlier techniques involved artists' reconstructions to estimate the body volume, then using the weight of an equivalent volume of water.

Using a laser scanner and highspeed computing, the British team first created a 3D image of the skeletons of known animals with known weights. They then calculated the minimum amount of skin necessary to cover the skeletons, and used estimates of the average density of modern-day tissues to work out the minimum weight of just the skin and bones.

It turned out that when this calculation was done on modern animals such as reindeer, elephants, polar bears and giraffes, in each case increasing this 'estimated skin and bone' weight by 21% almost exactly equalled their actual measured weight.

They then scanned the reconstructed almost complete skeleton of a large dino now classified as Giraffititan brancai (formerly Brachiosaurus brancai) from the brachiosaurid created kind.² They estimated that if the same formula applied, it would have weighed about 23 tonnes in life. Previously, it had been believed to weigh up to 80 tonnes.



The conventionally accepted 50-tonne weight of this Giraffititan was more likely to have been around 15 tonnes

FIND OUT MORE AT CREATION.COM

1. Dinosaurs 'much lighter than previously thought', telegraph.co.uk, 6 June 2012.

2. Minimum convex hull mass estimations of complete mounted skeletons, Biology Letters 8(5):842-5, 2012.

A resurrection of evidence

● From page 8

THEORY 4: The empty tomb was a hoax

English journalist Dr. Frank Morison initially thought the resurrection was either a myth or a hoax, and he began research to write a book refuting it.

If Jesus' body was anywhere to be found, his enemies would have quickly exposed the resurrection as a fraud. But what is known historically of Jesus' enemies is that they accused Jesus' disciples of stealing the body, an accusation clearly predicated on a shared belief that the tomb was empty.



Another problem with their accusation was that the Romans had assigned a 24-hour watch at the tomb with a Roman guard unit (from 4 to 12 of highly trained soldiers). It would have been impossible for anyone to have slipped by the Roman guards and to have moved a two-ton stone.

Tom Anderson, former president of the California Trial Lawyers Association, summarises the strength of this argument: "With an event so well publicised, don't you think that it's reasonable that one historian, one eye witness, one antagonist would record for all time that he had seen Christ's body? ... The silence of history is deafening when it comes to the testimony against the resurrection."

It is also untenable that the disciples maintained a known lie. Former "hatchet man" of the Nixon administration, Chuck Colson, implicated in the Watergate scandal, pointed out the difficulty of several people maintaining a lie for an extended period of time.

"I know the resurrection is a fact, and Watergate proved it to me. How? Because 12 men testified they had seen Jesus raised from the dead, and then they proclaimed that truth for 40 years, never once denying it. Everyone was beaten, tortured, stoned and put in prison. They would not have endured that if it weren't true. Watergate embroiled 12 of the most powerful men in the world—and they couldn't keep a lie for three weeks. You're telling me 12 apostles could keep a lie for 40 years? Absolutely impossible."

- continues page 10

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MYTHS ABOUT HEAVEN

BY MARTIN DUFFIELD, ST JOHN'S ANNERLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Myth #2 – Married forever in heaven?

Many find comfort in the thought of holding the one they love romantically forever, but is it true?

Jesus was once asked a tricky question about marriage in heaven by a group of religious intellectuals called "Sadducees".

In a vain attempt to make a fool out of Jesus, they asked, "Teacher, a married man died having no children. Under our ancient (Jewish) custom the widow married his brother so that through him the dead brother's name might be preserved. However, after they married, the brother also died leaving no children. Eventually she married all seven brothers who left no heir. In the life-after-death, whose wife will she be since she was married to all seven brothers?"

Jesus replied: "You don't know the answer to this question because of your ignorance of what God has said, nor do you understand God's power. In the afterlife there is no continuing marriage nor are there any new marriages. Every one there will be like the angels" (i.e. single).

The plain teaching of Jesus Christ is that marriages end at death. It's a part of our traditional vows in the words "till death do us part."

So will former spouses know each other in heaven?

Firstly, when people enter Heaven (or Hell) they don't cease to be who they are. Jesus affirmed that after death people are alive and conscious. Jesus answered a question these "sceptics" had not asked, namely, "Are people alive and conscious somewhere after death?" He said, "Haven't you read in the incident of the burning bush out of which God spoke to Moses saying, 'I am the God of your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.' God is the God of the living, not the dead."

In this Jesus affirmed that these three men were still alive and obviously conscious for God to still be their God. Secondly, they retained their identity, name and appearance. So, married couples will know each other as individuals in Heaven, but they do not share the same special relationship as they did on earth during their married life together.

Although earthly marriages end, there is a spiritual "marriage" that does not – the one between Jesus Christ and His Church. You can enter that everlasting relationship with Jesus Christ, if you are brought back into a right relationship with God.

You need to be reconciled because, like all humans, you are estranged from God by not carrying out His will for your life. His will for you was to love Him and all humanity. That love is defined in the Ten Commandments (laws). This is the problem.

Reconciliation (right relationship with God) is now made possible because Jesus Christ suffered the full penalty for those violations of His Commandments. If you sincerely accept that He did this for you personally, you can receive forgiveness. You can be reconciled to God and made part of His Church – "The Bride of Christ." Then you will be able to say, "Nothing can separate me from the love of God in Jesus Christ." •



Delivered from nine cancers

A victory over multiple cancers reminds Gwen of who looks after her through every trial

Some have life easy but Gwen Brownley was never one of them.

From birth, Gwen's father despised her because she was born out of wedlock and developed epilepsy from a young age.

"My father made it clear that he never wanted me. He rejected me because I was the result of an affair he'd had," Gwen explains sadly.

"He literally told me, 'I hate you so don't even think about coming to my funeral'."

For a young girl, to be scorned by the man who is supposed to love her most, Gwen knew she had to find someone out there who would look after her in times of need.

As an early teen she attended a youth group at a local church searching for a place to belong and to be loved.

"One Friday night at the youth group a speaker shared about Jesus Christ and a Heavenly Father who loves me," Gwen recalls.

"He shared that we will all face battles in life but we can find assurance of eternal life with God in heaven if we accept Jesus as our personal Lord and Saviour."

Hearing that there was a Heavenly Father who cared deeply enough to send Jesus, God the Son, to die in her place resonated deep inside Gwen.

"That night I surrendered control of my life over to God, trusting that He would not only forgive me for my sins but would help me through the hard times I was experiencing," she says.

After that things did not get easier. In fact Gwen suffered through nine bouts of cancer amidst other physical and emotional issues.

"In late 1994, after previous cancers, I was found to have cancer in both breasts," she recalls.

A further examination by doctors revealed that Gwen also had advanced cancer in the cervix and uterus. She was not expected to live beyond the New Year.

"I was alone in Australia with no family, so the news just tore me apart. I broke down many times crying out to God," she says.

Despite her grief, Gwen decided to thank God for the strength she had and knew He would help her through, just as He had always done.

"The thought of death crossed my mind," she recalls, "but when I got over the initial shock of the news, my heart was not troubled. I knew I was prepared to die if it was in God's timing. I was blessed to have amazing support from the local shopping centre staff and my church family but knowing God loved me and was there for me was my greatest comfort." •

With her eyes and her thoughts centred on Jesus Christ and the suf-

fering He had been through on the cross, Gwen knew she was prepared to meet her Saviour in heaven.

"If it wasn't for my faith in Jesus, it would have been impossible to get through this crisis alone," she says.

Of all the treatments available, Gwen chose surgery alone, and explained to those who asked why, "If I'm to die then I'm prepared for it."

Gwen says she had an inner conviction that God would come through for her just as He had always done in past circumstances.

"After praying for hours while awaiting surgery I simply said to God, 'I don't know what you want Lord but I surrender'. That moment I felt a great weight lift off my shoulders," she recalls.

"When I woke up from the major operation the doctor was surprised at how well things had gone, saying 'I don't know how but you've come out in flying colours even though you had one foot in the grave. We didn't expect you to leave theatre!'"

Yet over two decades later, Gwen smiles as she says, "After a hysterectomy and operations to remove the cancer in the cervix and uterus,



Gwen does not fear death

I was informed that my breasts had been miraculously healed at the same time!"

While there are many who may not survive the vicious attack of cancer, Gwen says, as a Christian, there is no fear in life or death with God on your side.

"As the Bible puts it: 'For me to live is Christ and to die is gain!'" she concludes with reference to Philippians chapter one verse 21. •

Family Finance

SEARCHING FOR A NEW JOB

The best way to convince potential employers that you are the person they are looking for is to know what gifts, talents, and abilities are your greatest and most marketable assets. Write out the answers to these questions:

- 1 What are my accomplishments? Include business, career, personal, family, community, cultural, and societal accomplishments.
- 2 What skills were needed to accomplish them? Separate the skills into primary, secondary, and limited categories.
- 3 What are my values, principles, personal standards, and ethics? Eliminate from your job search any company where it is immediately obvious that you would have to compromise these values and standards.
- 4 What are my interests, abilities, skills, talents, desires, and gifts? Separate them into primary, secondary, and limited categories.
- 5 What is the ideal company for which you would like to work (work activities, organisation, environment, processes, mission and values)? Make a list of at least five companies that meet your specifications for an ideal company for which to work, and at least five companies for which you would not work.

Concentrate job search efforts on your areas of greatest strength. If you need a job immediately this should not be a time to learn new skills unless you have plenty of savings. Find several companies you would like to work for and the job position or responsibilities that match your strengths.

Contact managers of departments where you would want to work in the different companies and ask for an interview. If a manager is open to your suggestion, send your résumé, and always follow through. •

Based on www.crown.org/Articles/tabid/107/entryid/2/searching-for-a-new-job.aspx and www.crown.org/Articles/tabid/107/entryid/5/job-loss.aspx



A resurrection of evidence

• From page 9

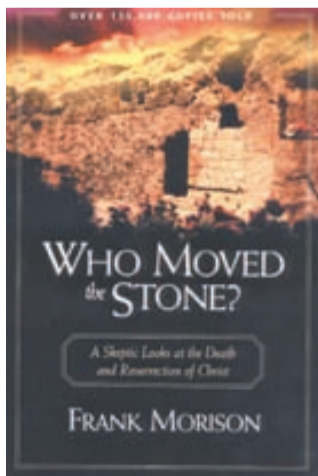
THEORY 5: The empty tomb was a legend?

Some unconvinced sceptics propose it is just a legend; that an untrue tale of seeing Jesus alive was embellished over time. But there are three major problems with the legend theory:

1. Legends rarely develop while multiple eyewitnesses are alive to refute them. One historian of ancient Rome and Greece, A. N. Sherwin-White, argued that the resurrection news spread too soon and too quickly for it to have been a legend.
2. Legends develop by oral tradition and don't come with contemporary historical documents that can be verified. Yet the Gospels were written within three decades of the resurrection.
3. The legend theory doesn't adequately explain either the fact of the empty tomb or the historically verified conviction of the apostles that Jesus was alive.

Looking at such evidence, Morison became convinced that his preconceived bias against Jesus Christ's resurrection had been wrong. He began writing a different book—entitled *Who Moved the Stone?*—to detail his new conclusions.

The question is, as an open-minded sceptic weighing up the facts, are you open to doing the same? •



Based on an article by JesusOnlineMinistries.org

GARDENING

BY MICHAEL MCCOY

LET IT GO TO POTS!



A FEW WELL-PLACED CONTAINERS OF PLANTS CAN MAKE A BLOOMING DIFFERENCE!

In order to get the most out of limited resources – whether that is space, cash, water, enthusiasm or physical ability – why not consider gardening entirely in pots? It's an obvious, though underrated, solution if you're short on space, short on water or in temporary accommodation. It is even a great way to deal with a normal suburban garden in those seasons that are short on flowers. In any of the above circumstances, a few pots containing plants in full bloom can make a huge impact in the garden. Their power is far greater than the same number of plants planted directly into the garden, as the plants are raised higher than their surrounds, and 'framed' in a way only pots can do – they are quite literally put on a pedestal. The effect can be truly incredible, making an otherwise green, flowerless garden begin to sing.

We have never really grasped hold of this form of gardening in Australia. Many gardens in the UK, for instance, feature huge pots overflowing with a great variety of plants throughout summer.

A single large pot might contain upright shrubs, tall annuals or even climbers growing up a teepee of stakes for height, fuchsias or other flowering shrubs or smaller annuals for the mid-range, as well as prostrate plants hanging down the sides, all jostling in a giant flower arrangement. Hanging baskets around the city of Victoria on Vancouver Island contain a similar diversity of plants. They are hung out overhead after the last frost, with all contents young and fresh, and by the end of summer can be trailing on the ground, the growth is so dramatic.

Elsewhere in Canada, they will use a single species of plant in pots and hanging baskets to achieve impact. Not as interesting, perhaps, as the mixed option, but powerful! You'll see the same sort of effect in Italy and throughout Switzerland with potted red geraniums everywhere.

It is not hard to achieve, but it depends on using a good quality potting mix to start with and then very regular feeding with a liquid plant food (every ten days is not too much). But the most important ingredient for success is regular watering, daily, if possible.

This will still use less water than watering the whole garden, and you can recycle water from the sink or shower. Just remember: a few well-placed pots in extravagant bloom can light up a whole-even drought-stricken-garden.

Courtesy *Warcry* magazine of the Salvation Army

Building Better Marriages

LOVING OUR FAMILY CHANGES US WITHIN

BY ROB FURLONG

FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS the family unit has been understood as the foundation stone of society, a place where children are raised to take their place in society as mature, responsible adults and where healthy relationships with others are nurtured and encouraged. Often described as the "nuclear family" it was generally regarded as consisting of Dad, Mum and the children. Author Dale Kuehne describes this model for the family as inhabiting what he calls "tWorld" and it was essentially built around relationships of obligation.

In *tWorld* an individual was born with several obligations: first to family, then to one's neighbourhood and finally, to the nation. These relationships of obligation gave an individual both security and fulfilment. An individual's identity and happiness in

life was found through the successful carrying out of your responsibilities to those around you. For example, you cared for, respected and loved your parents and other relatives because they were a part of the family you were born into. You took your place as a responsible, contributing member of society because that was what good citizens did. In return, you enjoyed the benefits of love, acceptance and security that came from being a part of a cohesive family unit and community. Individuals found their personal fulfilment through the successful carrying out of their obligations in these relationships. In contrast to *iWorld*, the idea that an individual found happiness through the free exercise of their own personal choice was totally foreign! In fact, as Kuehne points out, the only area that the inhabitants of *tWorld* could exercise personal choice was in the area of friendships – there



was freedom to find happiness in the choice of who your friends in life would be. The old saying, "You can choose your friends but you cannot choose your relatives" comes to

mind! This does not mean that *tWorld* was perfect. Far too many people found themselves in relationships of obligation that were suppressive and extremely harmful to their development. Because of the stigma associated with divorce that has prevailed in society many people remained in marriages that were loveless, ultimately doing enormous damage to themselves, their wider family and especially their children. In particularly tragic circumstance many women remained in physically and emotionally abusive situations because of a sense of "obligation."

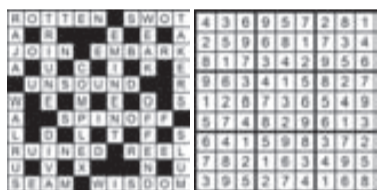
But *tWorld* is a good description of the world that we once inhabited because it describes the traditional view of the family unit that has been so prevalent and which we are very familiar with. If you want a picture to illustrate this type of family then think of the Brady Bunch: Mum, Dad and the kids all working together as a cohesive unit, the parents dispensing their wise advice when required and

everyone seemingly able to work out their relationship differences with humour and grace. Of course, given the darker side of *tWorld* previously described above, many of us would feel that a picture of the Addams Family would be a more accurate depiction of the family unit!

It is clear to most of us however that we no longer inhabit *tWorld* but *iWorld*, a world where the rights and choices of the individual have trumped obligation and the number one goal in life is to achieve personal happiness through the free exercise of those rights and choices.

When I reflect on *tWorld* what captures my attention is the way in which the Apostle Paul addressed that situation. Writing to a *tWorld* audience in Colosse, Paul told the followers of Jesus there that they were to live out their faith in their family units by exemplifying sacrificial love, mutual respect and fairness toward each other. (Colossians 3:18-4:1). This was a radical idea because the *tWorld* that Paul and his readers lived in was one where the man had total power and women and children were regarded as second class citizens.

To such a world Paul says to followers of Jesus; 'Live differently! Let your faith show up in that most testing of environments, the family unit and show the world the difference that Jesus makes to all of our relationships.' It was a call to the people of *tWorld* to live contrary to their culture a call that is equally valid to the members of today's *iWorld*. The question is, "How can we do that?" Let's explore that next month!



COULD GOD LOVE SOMEONE LIKE ME?

Yes, He LOVES you and has a plan for your life

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 "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23)	ADMIT
GOD'S REMEDY / SOLUTION:	JESUS died on the cross "God demonstrates His own love for us in this; while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8)	BELIEVE
OUR RESPONSE:	TRUST Jesus by receiving Him "To all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12)	COMMIT

Here is an example of how you can pray.

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

The Lord Jesus says: "He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." (John 7:38)

AS A NEXT STEP :

<p>If you prayed the above prayer, tick this box </p> <p>I have prayed this prayer. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Please send me:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bible</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Some 'starting off' literature</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Information on a helpful church</p>	<p>If you have NOT prayed the prayer at this stage, tick this box </p> <p>I would like to think about this. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Please send me:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> More information as I am inquiring about being a Christian.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I have a problem (see attached letter)</p>
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* Please tick and write clearly *

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Age and occupation (it helps) _____

All overseas enquiries are referred onto someone in their own country

Challenge Literature Fellowship / Fax (08) 9453 3006 or email info@challengenews.org
PO Box 978, Cloverdale WA 6985

Computers & Technology

Sell or recycle unwanted electronics easily

BY DARRYL BUDGE

An electronic device like a phone or tablet that is less than four years old is relatively easy to sell online via Ebay or Australian-based Gumtree, but for older, bulky or faulty devices here are some alternatives.

If you want a guaranteed sale of your unwanted mobile, MazumaMobile.com.au will offer you an online price quote on working or faulty (but still functional) mobile phones and send you packaging to mail them your device. For devices worth nothing, they also have a free-postage recycling initiative, detailed at MazumaMobile.com.au/support/selling-your-mobile.

Mazuma accepts over 1300 models, some worth \$1, others worth \$150, which the company then sells in developing countries. In January 2015, Mazuma offered to buy a good-condition working iPhone 5S 16GB device for \$100; an iPhone 4S for \$70; an iPad Mini for \$120; and a Samsung Galaxy S3 for \$75.

TOO OLD TO SELL? RECYCLE INSTEAD!

All the below initiatives recycle over 90 per cent of raw materials in electronic goods.

Drop off your unwanted mobile at a Mobile Muster public collection point, usually located in or nearby mobile phone stores. This Australian non-profit company is paid recycling levies in advance by most big-brand manufacturers. In 2014, Mobile Muster's 4000 public collection points diverted 80 tonnes of e-waste from landfill. See mobilemuster.com.au for more information.

Mobile Muster is also involved in a general e-waste recycling program with Storage King, whose NSW locations provide a \$3.50 recycling box for you to fill and drop off to them. Accepted items include mobile phones, notebooks, printers, fax machines, scanners, hard drives, VCR players, projectors, electronic games, DVD players, stereo equipment and video cameras. More information at Ecoactiv.com.au/ewastebbox.

To recycle your TV and computer equipment, check out TechCollect.com.au, a national initiative funded through government-mandated recycling levies on electronics stores. TechCollect states "all televisions, PC's, laptops, tablets and computer accessories will be accepted regardless of brand or age". See Techcollect.com.au/what-we-take for all accepted items and to locate your nearest collection point.

For information on all recyclable items, check out RecyclingNearYou.com.au, an initiative of PlanetArk.org.

'SPEED IS A GIFT' SAYS COMMONWEALTH CHAMPION

LEADING THE PACK: Matthew Glaetzer leading into the final corner of the 2014 Commonwealth Games men's keirin in Glasgow, Scotland (Photo: Clive Rose/Getty Images)

BY JOANNA DELALANDE

Relief and pride flood over Matthew Glaetzer as he watches the front wheel of his bike cross the finish line first on the slow motion replay.

It is July 27, 2014 and Matthew has just won the gold medal in the keirin at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games.

"This is the biggest win for me," he says, "and it's just an amazing experience."

His biggest win, maybe, but not his first.

Matthew initially took to vaulting until an injury pushed him towards cycling in his early teens. "He took to track racing like a duck to water," says Graeme Zucher, the vice

president of Matthew's club Central Districts.

Since then his success has been unquestionable – the young cyclist has even been compared to Scottish track cycling icon Chris Hoy by his coach Gary West.

Winning two world junior titles in the sprint and the keirin in 2010 earned him a full-time scholarship at the national program training with Olympians such as Anna Meares and Shane Perkins.

In 2011, his first year as a senior, he was selected for his first senior World Championship and the following year became world champion in the team sprint. "That's when I

became one of the future contenders of the sport," he says.

The 22-year-old cyclist hopes to bring a medal home from Rio in 2016, though he takes credit for none of his achievements. "I've been a Christian all my life and [God] is the one who enables me to do this. I don't take any credit for what I can do physically because it's been given to me as a gift."

Born and raised in a Christian family, Matthew had given his life to Christ at a very young age. After having drifted from God after injuries during his teenage years, he rededicated his life to the Lord at a camp run by his local church.

He was singing songs of praise to Jesus when he encountered God's peace. "I had my eyes opened again to who He was and how much He loved me," he says.

It was that peace that Matthew sought at the 2010 Junior World Titles when the pressure became too much for him.

"I was so caught up with the race that I put too much pressure on myself, and I became obsessed with winning," Matthew describes.

"You wouldn't have recognised me because my personality was so different. I couldn't make decisions.

"I had an intense prayer session, calling out to God because I couldn't do it myself," he remembers. "And in the following two days I became a two-time junior world champion.

"I had to wholeheartedly rely on God's strength to pull me through." Matthew felt relieved from the pressure he felt to have to win all the time. "Jesus to me is the reason

"I don't take any credit for what I can do"

I can have peace," he says. "He has taken the burden of all my sin and through Him I can have eternal life in Heaven. It makes a huge difference in how you live because you know you've won the victory already."

Now, when out on the tracks, Matthew strives to do his best and enjoy it.

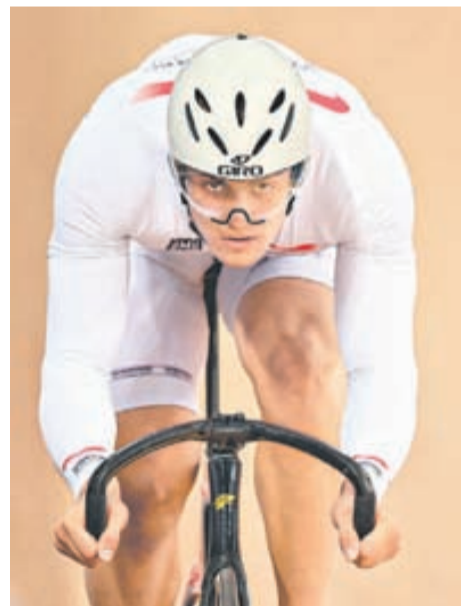
"It's a fantastic opportunity to show that you don't have to rely on the world to survive and that there is something greater," he says. He hopes to make others realise where their value truly lies.

"People value their life based on what they do and how successful they are," he explains. "That was the case in my cycling team and it can have really harmful effects because if you don't perform well you feel rubbish about yourself."

"God loves you for who you are," he says, "not what

you do or where you come from."

"You do not have to be a gold medal-winning cyclist to be successful. God has already put a price on your life: you are invaluable." •



DEC 7, 2014: Matthew competing in the Sprint finals at the London UCI Track Cycling World Cup (Photo: Bryn Lennon/Getty Images)



JULY 27, 2014: Australia's Matthew Glaetzer celebrates winning the gold medal in the men's keirin track cycling event during the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games (Photo: Adrian Dennis/AFP/Getty Images)

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