



Mathew Kratiuk is no longer "the king of rehab"

HUG MELTED MAN OF STEEL

Former angry meth addict on new mission to spread love

Once a drug addict ingloriously rejected from an outlaw bikie gang, it is hard to imagine that a heartfelt hug could be the catalyst for Mathew Kratiuk's dramatic life transformation.

"I was scared, angry, hurt, fearful, and broken-hearted," Mat shares openly.

"I've had this massive ego; all around the world I was known as

'Killa'. Suddenly I'm just a drug addict in a small shack in the middle of nowhere [at a rural NSW rehab centre] with nothing. I was on the verge of suicide."

His addiction to ice started 16 years earlier, after his parents' divorce and being kicked out of high school. He began living a flamboyant lifestyle on the Gold Coast financed by drug dealing and debt collecting but knew he needed to reform.

Mat tried rehab but missing out on a WA mining job was the final straw that led him to join a bikie gang in Perth, which he now says was a misplaced search for family and acceptance.

His life and identity were undone by an uncontrollable meth addiction that was triggered by guilt and anger after the death of his estranged father in Sydney.

"I hit the drugs so hard that I was beaten up and kicked out of the Perth bikie club," Mat explains.

He put a gun to his head but decided to give rehab another go at a Christian rehab program in Dooralong.

Six weeks into it he was considering suicide again and what hell might be like.

However, everything changed when the wife of the rehab director walked out of the rehab chapel and simply asked Mat if he would like a hug.

Mat retorted, "What do you want to hug me for?"

"Because I love you, mate," she calmly replied.

"I didn't even know what a hug looked like," Mat recalls. "I said 'OK'

and she just pulled me close and she started to pray for me. I broke down crying. For 33 years the world had put me in the 'too-hard basket', labelled me unlovable. In one action this lady said to me: 'My God says to love him and to love him well.'

"I realised these people genuinely loved me and then I began the process of getting well... The answer was love - that broke the wall down."

While rehab had not helped in the past, after that hug a Narcotics Anonymous sign that read "If nothing changes, nothing changes" flicked another switch in his mind.

"This is when I started to pray," he recalls. "God revealed to me, 'You're 33 and you're the king of rehab. You're worried about being the coolest, toughest guy in rehab. Come on, mate. If nothing changes, nothing changes.'"

● Turn to page 2

How far would you go for a meatball?



If you were a homeless dog named Arthur, the answer is almost 700km!

IT WAS the 2014 Adventure Racing World Series in Ecuador and the captain of the four-person Swedish team (Mikael Lindnord pictured above) tossed a meatball to a shaggy, malnourished, stray dog.

From that moment, every gruelling task the team faced in the 10-day race, Arthur was there. He trekked through mud and hiked mountains, and when the team launched their kayaks into the Amazon River, Arthur swam out alongside them. Even though the organisers had advised against it, the team made a decision and Arthur sat aboard Mikael's kayak for the next 14 hours.

Finally, the now team-of-five crossed the finish line together. A sore and battered Arthur soon found himself being cared for and on a plane to Sweden. Mikael said, "This dog has been through enough in his life, now begins the fun part for him."

As part of Mikael's family, a healthy, happy Arthur now romps with the kids, joins in charity marathons

and snuggles on the couch.

It's a sweet story but it has interesting parallels. Arthur was given a meatball, we have been given an opportunity to accept God's free gift of eternal life.

Arthur wanted a relationship with the generous stranger who met him in his time of need, how much more does Jesus deserve? As the Bible says, "God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Jesus Christ died for us" (see Romans 5:8).

This life may be gruelling at times but its true reward lies in faithful endurance to the end, for: "The troubles we suffer now for a short time are making us ready for the great things God is going to give us forever" (see 2 Corinthians 4:17).

So, what would you be willing to do to gain eternal life? If a meatball is worth a 700km hike to a dog, perhaps we should consider what Jesus' sacrifice is worth to us.

Exotic dancer healed of hurts

Page 3

Mining for hope: Antonio

Page 9

DRIVER FINDS RIGHT FORMULA

BACK PAGE

WHY SO MUCH ANGER?

BY ALAN BAILEY

Anger can lead to tragedy. The case of an alleged murder before a Brisbane court is a sad example.

A father-of-three from New Zealand, who was due to marry in a week's time, had an altercation with an older man who was aggressively following him on a Queensland highway on December 1.

The accused allegedly pushed the man who fell into the path of an oncoming garbage truck.

The man, a father of four, was killed.

Apparently, the accused had no past record and lived a normal life. In court it was revealed that the victim was a former professional driver and had an alleged history of road rage incidents. The case will be re-heard in April.

A cool head would have saved all of this.

Why are so many angry these days?

One reason that stands out to me is the impatient desire of people to have their own way.

So often this means obtaining their next pleasure. So much can be gained and so much experienced in our modern life-style and we hate people interrupting us or standing in the way of our pursuits. In other words, we are selfish.

IS IT ALWAYS WRONG?

There is such a thing as righteous anger. It's hard not to be angry at injustice, or cruelty, or exploitation of the weak.

Jesus was angry at hypocrisy (Mark 3:5). But selfish anger is bound to hurt someone. Think of anger within families, against neighbours - as well as road rage.

Perhaps we all need to relax more and stop pushing our own agendas at all costs. Then we ought to consider the needs of others around us.

THE ANGER THAT SHOULD CONCERN US MOST

In more than one place, the Bible shows that God is angry about our sin.

I know this idea offends some who feel this contradicts His love. But think of the parent who loves a child but is angry at wilful disobedience? The two things, love and anger, can exist together.

The anger of God was seen at the cross. When Jesus died He felt the wrath of the Father against sin. Though He of course was sinless, yet He was standing in our place, thus opening the way for our forgiveness and freedom.

The love and the grace of God are the most amazing and precious concepts. When we come to know Him personally, we will show more of the same.



BY MIKE WOODARD

YEARS AGO, I was living in a foreign land where I had run into trouble with the law. The laws seem unfair, confusing and harsh. I was sentenced to death for my crimes. I wish I could say I was not guilty but according to the laws of the land I was guilty as charged. The situation was hopeless.

The prison was a horrible place. As I waited in my prison cell, I learned about a seldom used law that could give me either a glimmer of hope or a greater despair. The law stated if a person could be found who was guilty of no crimes and was willing to take my place I could be set free from prison. Now I have to ask you, what is the chance that this would ever happen?! Someone else to take my place? After all, I was guilty and deserved to die according to the laws of the land!

Then one day the prison guards came to me with amazing news. A man visiting from another country had offered to take my place! Was this a sick joke? But it was true. I did not know him. I had never met him. All I had to do was accept the offer. On the day I was to be executed, he died. I was set free and immediately offered a home in a new land, with the promise of a new start in life. The arrangements were all made. I was met by someone at the prison with a ticket as well as directions to a new future. I had so many questions but she said I just had to accept the

offer and my many questions would be answered in time.

I so wanted the freedom and a new start but I had so many doubts and questions. Who was this person who took my place? How could this actually be happening to me, in prison with a death penalty on my head one moment, and walking out of the prison door the next? Was this for real? Why me? Who was behind all this?

I was sent to a new land, a place I had never been. The freedom was overwhelming. I felt so relieved! I was officially declared not guilty. I could start a new life. But I still pondered, "Why would anyone die for me?" When I arrived I was taken to a palace! I thought that there must be a mistake. I was a convicted criminal and was being treated as if I were an important person.

How could this be? Somehow I thought this must not be good. Maybe I would again be put in jail, once my sordid past was revealed. I was lead into a beautiful and grand room. A distinguished man dressed in fine clothes smiled and called me by name. He came to me and embraced me! All I could say was, "Sir, I am so confused. How do you know me and why am I here?" He offered me a chair and began to explain. "I have followed your story for a long time. In fact from the moment of your birth I have watched the circumstances of your life. I know all the details. I know what you got for your 5th birthday.

I know about your father's death. I know you find this hard to believe but I love you. You see, my son is the one who took your place. He took your guilt and death sentence. He was the innocent one who died for you."

I began to weep out of amazement, wonder and gratitude. I deserved none of this. As if he read my thoughts, he said, "I knew you had no hope. I had to do something. It was the only way. The law was clear that without the death of an innocent person there could be no freedom, and my son was willing to take your place."

The man turned and called for an aide. "Please show my son to his room."

"Sir," I asked in amazement, "you called me son?" "Yes," he replied with a look in his eyes I will never forget, "You are now my son. This is your new life. I have adopted you. You are now in my family, my son and heir. We will live together from now on."

Every year I celebrate the day an innocent man died to give me freedom. It's called Good Friday.

God rescued us from dead-end alleys and dark dungeons. He's set us up in the kingdom of the Son He loves so much, the Son who got us out of the pit we were in, got rid of the sins we were doomed to keep repeating (see Colossians 1:13-14).

Yes, God loves you and rescued you too! Do you want to experience this wonderful freedom? You can - right now.

Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Genetic stuff (3)
 - 3 Nordic inlet (5)
 - 8 Plain in Tanzania (9)
 - 9 False move (5)
 - 10 Place for insubordinate sailors (4)
 - 14 Hatchling's home (4)
 - 15 Twilled fabric (5)
 - 18 Walking papers (9)
 - 20 Internet messages (1-4)
 - 21 Scuffle (4)
- DOWN**
- 1 Plunge into a pool (4)
 - 2 Infected sore (7)
 - 4 Calendar month (4)
 - 5 Caviar (3)
 - 6 Elephant snout (5)
 - 7 Feudal superior (5)
 - 11 Usual, even (7)
 - 12 Battery part (5)
 - 13 Not relaxed (5)
 - 16 Fuzzy fruit (4)
 - 17 Kind of tennis court (4)
 - 19 Total (3)



SOLUTION PAGE 11

HUG MELTED MAN OF STEEL

● From page 1

At the next chapel service Mat moved away from the 'tough' guys and sat at the front alone.

Each week that followed more of the 'tough' guys joined him, until a whole row were there, absorbing God's Word and the sacrificial love and forgiveness that the Lord Jesus Christ was offering them.

Four weeks later, Mat says, "I surrendered and gave my heart to Jesus. I declared that He is my Lord and my Saviour, and that I no longer live in my own strength but in His supernatural strength."

From there Mat adds, "Jesus completely restored me and freed me from addiction, fear, anger, anxiety and violence, and replaced them with unconditional love, compassion, understanding and complete forgiveness! I



Mathew Kratuik with Longriders bikers

am truly at peace for the first time in my life."

However he cautions that the daily journey has not been easy.

"Like everyone, I have days when I am tested and have made mistakes ... but the divine difference is that I don't just believe in Jesus - I surrender myself to Jesus every day.

"I have Jesus to help me through everything, so no matter what the trial or temptation, I come out of them stronger and wiser and closer to Jesus."

Mat graduated from rehab in January 2015 and accompanied former drug addict and travelling evangelist Owen Pomana on a three-month trip to tell people about Jesus throughout South East Asia.

In November Mat won an Industry Excellence Award for Business, out of 60,000 in the Hunter TAFE region and now works as a full-time Christian pastor.

"I feel challenged by God that He wants my testimony to be heard. The amount of times I should be dead or in jail is phenomenal. Looking back on my life I see that it was all part of God's plan to do His work."

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

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MUSICIAN FINDS PAIN GONE

Singer for indie electro-pop band *Monarch* Brennan Strawn shares his journey from depression to new life

You wouldn't know it on the outside; but I spent the last 20 years of my life as an addict, liar, cheat, and a fraud.

Nothing fixed me – not religion, therapy, marriage, women, success, friends, alcohol, drugs, books, church ... you name it, I tried it and failed.

After finally coming to my senses, I saw how my behaviour had affected the people around me, especially a year after my divorce.

That's when I realised I was unable to change, and I had absolutely no integrity left in me.

The depression was so intense that breathing became a chore. Every breath felt like one more exhausting moment that was forcing me to continue existing.

So in August I tried hanging myself. When the weight of my body broke the rope, I collapsed to the floor in tears in the realisation that my life had come to this.

After my failed attempt, I wandered around Hollywood Boulevard reflecting on my life.

I began looking back on all the things I had done and cared so much

about and couldn't stop crying. The shame and guilt were overwhelming.

All the while something in the back of my mind was telling me that I wasn't alone, that even in the moment when I was hanging from my door of my apartment someone was holding up my feet ... someone wanted that rope to break.

I used to sing in churches and had been uninterested in religion and the church for quite some time for reasons now I'm not sure of but I felt something telling me to go to Mosaic [church] that night.

It's a non-denominational church I often walked by on the way to the gym and thought was super pretentious and not my scene at all.

That night I went for some reason. I sat down with my arms crossed hating every moment but slowly started sensing my guard coming down; and I was letting in this beautiful message of love and forgiveness into my heart.

After it was over, a woman saw me crying and asked to pray for me.

After she prayed for me something filled my body with an intensity that can only be described as a rushing energy which started at my feet and reached the top of my head.

I was standing there speechless. In that moment I saw my heart the way God sees my heart.

I saw how much He was grieving for me, that He wasn't disappointed

in me but instead was running to me and longing to just be with me and take all of the depression, shame and guilt away.

I felt loved and forgiven for the first time in 20 years.

He took it all away. All of the pain, all of the things that I had done and the people I had hurt, He took it all.

Now I am filled with joy and love that I never knew existed.

Where I once only thought about myself and what was gonna make me happy, now God has completely shifted my way of thinking.

I'm no longer a liar and an addict. I'm no longer consumed by fame and sex. I have been delivered from 20 years of addiction in one instant.

Looking back now months later it still shocks me that I was living my own way for so long and was so incredibly lost.

Running around in circles chasing money, fame, success, and women. All the while so incredibly unhappy and depressed.

It's very popular in Los Angeles to go your own path and find your inner peace. I can say now that I lived



Brennan at his baptism publicly declaring his faith and commitment to God

PHOTO CREDIT - AARON PEREZ

"I felt loved and forgiven for the first time in 20 years"

He's thinking of you, He's crying over what you're crying over.

God cares about the things you care and worry about. He wants you desperately to hold you, bless you, love you, and bring you joy that is not comparable to anything that comes from this world.

I'm so happy many of you get to know the real me now and not just the memory of another victim of suicide.

nudge WITH KARL FAASE

The enlightened Dr. Holly Ordway


As an uncompromising atheist Dr. Holly Ordway recalls her early life in her autobiography, saying: "In college, I absorbed the idea that Christianity was historical curiosity, or a blemish on modern civilization, or perhaps both. My college science classes presented Christians as illiterate anti-intellectuals. My history classes omitted or downplayed references to historical figures' faith."

By the age of 31, she was "an atheist college professor—and I delighted in thinking of myself that way. I got a kick out of being an unbeliever; it was fun to consider myself superior to the unenlightened."

Later in life she came to a place of personal faith in Jesus and when she reflected on the new light in her life she wrote: "When your eyes are used to artificial light, the bright sunlight is almost blinding."

A stunning and challenging reflection from someone who has come to experience the real difference Jesus can make.

Read more of Holly's story at challengenews.org/holly-ordway



Exotic dancer healed of hurts

My name is Sarah Lenhard. People in the strip clubs used to know me as Cassandra. I am the founder of *Dream Again Ministries* and a former exotic dancer that has made my way out of the strip club and has succeeded in today's society.

I want you to hear my story about what my life used to be like living in the sex trade industry and the amazing transformation that took place in my life after leaving.

On stage and around my family and friends I felt like I had to put on a smile, pretending I was happy, and enjoying my life as an exotic dancer.

However, in my private moments I couldn't stand to be alone. When I was with my boyfriend I was miserable and became a so-called victim of domestic violence.

I didn't want to stop dancing and partying because when I was doing it, it was fun; but the aftermath was killing me.

All the drugs, alcohol, and sex were tearing me apart inside and I no longer knew who I was anymore.

Even after leaving the strip club scene, I was still trying to turn tricks with men to get what I wanted; I just couldn't seem to get my life together.

I knew God could help, but He seemed to be so far away and I didn't know how to reach Him.

I didn't even know where to begin to pick up the pieces of my life in order to mend them back together.

It wasn't until God blessed me with a baby girl, that I realised I could not continue living my life the way it was. I did not want my daughter to experience the

same things I was experiencing.

I knew that in order to provide a better life for the both of us I was going to have to invite Jesus Christ into my life to help me change.

I knew of salvation and transformation in Jesus Christ because I had attended a Christian school until the age of 14, where Bible study and chapel services were a daily and weekly devotion for the students there.

I committed my life to Jesus in the summer of 2005 by acknowledging that the way I was living my life was wrong in the sight of God. I wanted to be close to God and I wanted to accept the plan that He had for me and my daughter's life which I knew to be greater than the plan I had for my own life. It was not a change that took place over night, and it was not easy. As a matter of fact, I still struggle with issues that the sex trade industry has imprinted on my life.

However, slowly God has opened my eyes to His truth found in the Bible, cleansed me of my sins, and healed me of the hurt that was in my life due to my experiences.

God created a way for me and my daughter when there seemed to be no way. He is making a way for you as well if you believe and receive His Son, Jesus Christ

God has something great in mind for your life, just as He has for me.



Sarah Lenhard

More about Sarah's work at dreamagainministries.com

Starving for acceptance

Bulimia sufferer rejoices in broken addiction

BY ELISHA HAMMOND

Bulimia and a skewed body image haunted Marie Notcheva for 17 years due to her family's perception that thin is the only type of beautiful.

"I was an ugly duckling who was just not good enough to be accepted," she recalls.

"As early as age seven, I remember praying to God that He would make me thinner, so that my mother would love me more."

Throughout her school life, Marie became obsessed with obtaining the perfect body.

"In Year 10, I went on a lettuce and diet coke regimen for a while; then became bulimic," she admits.

Soon, food was not just a barrier in the way of a better figure – it was the enemy – leading her to graduate high school at a mere 40kg.

Then, at university she curiously decided to join a Christian campus group.

From a young age Marie had a loose understanding of Jesus and His love but when she heard the life stories of other followers of Christ she decided to become a Christian.

"I accepted Christ as my Lord and Saviour, but it was more an intellectual acceptance of Him in my life than a total giving of my life to Him – a true surrender of my will.

"Deep down, I was frightened that I would never be able to completely submit this ugly secret that controlled my life to His authority."

As a result, when she graduated university and moved to Bulgaria, Marie also adopted a drinking addiction in an attempt to deal with the pain and emptiness caused by bingeing and purging.

She married in 1995 but hid her bulimic habits from her husband, even when they moved back home to start a family.

"I could not even stop purging during



Marie Notcheva has been free from eating disorders for 13 years

my first three pregnancies, although thankfully the babies were all healthy and normal weight," she admits.

At this point Marie was painfully aware that her hunger was not physical.

In fact it was a "spiritual hunger" that left her searching for a permanent source of contentment.

"Bulimia is a spiritual disease masquerading as a physical one. I had this insight, but it didn't stop me from bingeing when the uncontrollable urge kicked in," she says.

The answer to her cry for help came when she noticed a small newspaper ad about the prayer ministry of a local church.

"I walked in timidly, almost in tears; not knowing what

to expect. Three compassionate Christian women prayed earnestly that God would break this bondage in my life and that I would know His forgiveness and healing."

As a result of this encounter, Marie surrendered her eating disorder to God and committed to trusting in Him, which she says is still a daily process of repentance (turning away from wrong thoughts and sins) and staying connected to God through prayer and reading the Bible.

"After my first visit, I stopped drinking completely. I went several days without bingeing or purging. Over the course of the next few months, I would regularly go about six days on average without an episode. Prior to this I had been purging two or three times, on average, per day."

Then she began studying what the Bible had to say about idols and overcoming sin and Ephesians chapter 4 spoke to her about "putting off" old habits and "put on" new, God-honouring ones.

"God didn't just instantly fix my addiction," she adds, "It was by ongoing reading of the Bible, prayer and renewing my mind that the Holy Spirit gave me power over the temptation."

Since then God has continually helped transform her lifestyle and she has been completely healed from bulimia for 13 years without a single relapse.

Today Marie works as certified biblical counsellor with a passion to help other young women in their struggle with eating disorders and body image.

She has also written two books, one titled *Redeemed from the Pit: Biblical Repentance and Restoration from the Bondage of Eating Disorders*, available for purchase on Amazon.com. •

For more about Marie visit her blog at marienotcheva.wordpress.com

Marie now helps others with eating disorders

THE MOVIE HOLLYWOOD TRIED TO HIDE

BY ANDREW HALLOWAY

THERE couldn't be a much more appropriate film to hit the cinema screens at Easter.

Risen stars Joseph Fiennes and is directed by Kevin Reynolds – whose past blockbusters include *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* and *Waterworld*.

It imagines what happened when rumours of Jesus of Nazareth's return to life after being crucified spread like wildfire in Jerusalem. Fiennes plays Roman soldier Clavius, assigned by Pontius Pilate to quell the rumours and avoid an uprising by disproving the resurrection.

"*Risen* is a gripping story of a top Roman official ordered to prove Jesus' resurrection was a hoax by finding the body and crushing his few but passionate followers," says Rich Peluso, AFFIRM Films senior vice president.

Clavius has a vested interest in debunking the resurrection, as he was in charge of the crucifixion and the sealing of Jesus' tomb – so his neck is on the line. He begins his task as a sceptic, but starts to worry that Jesus really is alive.

Clavius is assisted by Lucius, portrayed by Tom Felton – known to Harry Potter fans for his role as Draco Malfoy.

"This is pure cinema," says *Shakespeare In Love* star Fiennes. "I am foremost a lover of stories. The Bible is the most extraordinarily rich source of narratives, featuring the most beautiful stories ever written or handed down."



Joseph Fiennes searches for the truth about the empty tomb

It has been rumoured that Hollywood has tried to sweep *Risen* under the carpet because it is a "faithful scriptural treatment of the story." Sticking to the Bible's script doesn't go down well in movieland, where producers want a 'new angle' or 'modern take' – as in Russell Crowe's *Noah*.

One source even claims that a film studio tried to purchase the rights just to ensure it was never released. After ten years, it was finally picked up by AFFIRM – an arm of Sony Pictures.

Risen was released on 18 February in Australia. •



BY RICK LEWERS

WHAT would anyone know about my pain?

That's a question almost anyone could ask but for someone who is suffering and anguished, it is a question often delivered with anger, wanting answers and seeking hope beyond the darkness.

For someone not suffering it can be a question of avoidance or ignorance.

I want to offer, some thoughts for those who think the death of Jesus Christ is ridiculous or irrelevant to their suffering.

A KISS

Before he was arrested and crucified Jesus was betrayed with a kiss, according to Luke chapter 22. This is not what kisses are for.

Many women have been betrayed by kisses and lost not only their virginity but also their sense of worth and capacity to trust.

Children have been crushed with disappointment by the kiss of a parent who promised so much and delivered so little.

ABANDONMENT

After Judas' betraying kiss Jesus was abandoned by friends.

The testimony of his friend, Peter, after three years of intimate friendship was, "I do not know him."

That is not what friends do. From birth to death our personal histories can reflect something of Christ's suffering.

Some of you may never have known your birth parents, left at the hospital to be adopted by strangers and living with a strange sense of disconnect.

Some know abandonment by mates in times of greatest need and the deep sense of loneliness that follows.

BULLIED AND BEATEN

Then Jesus the innocent healer, the teacher and forgiver was mocked, beaten and bullied to death.

"Bully" is a carelessly used accusation in these days of litigation but ugly when its truth is exhibited in playgrounds, homes and work places. God help those who make such false accusations. Like Jesus many of us will know what it is to be the unsolicited target of other people's evil.

In a court of law Jesus was falsely accused by religious leaders. The governors of the day found no charge against him, nothing deserving of death, but they signed off on his execution anyway to please the populace.

Many have felt the false accusations of others, either as the result of misunderstanding or worse by vexatious claim – helpless in defence and cheated.

INJUSTICE

Jesus replaced a guilty criminal in being crucified.

One of the big questions of those who suffer abuse is, "How come the guilty escape while I live with the outcome of their evil?"

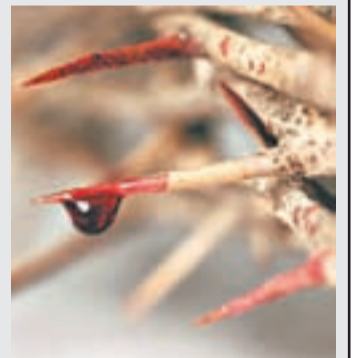
There is no easy answer to this but the question resonates for us all and it is a question at the heart of Easter.

Why does the innocent Jesus suffer while the guilty Barabbas goes free? Why does the great Jesus Christ allow himself to be crucified if He is so great?

For Jesus the answer was clear: The righteous one must suffer in the place of the unrighteous, so that the unrighteous might be saved.

I am personally thankful for his short but very clear prayer in Luke 23:34, "Father, forgive them they know not what they do."

I have often heard people say, "What would God know about my situation?" I always want to say, "More than you give Him credit for."



FAMILIAR WITH SUFFERING

He is familiar with the betrayer's kiss, peer abandonment, bullying, innocent suffering and abuse.

In fact that makes Him familiar with all of us who have betrayed our Creator, abandoned His will for our lives, bullied Him out of our communities and abused the privileges given us as we abuse the relationships around us.

The astounding meaning of what Jesus did on this earth is that it shows God does know our situation and He understand and love you and me.

And as the righteous dies on the cross for the unrighteous he holds out forgiveness to the undeserving lot of us.

God harbours no bitterness, seeking instead to love and keep His arms open to those who do not seek Him, or may not want to, or who just think the whole idea is irrelevant.

Do you really want to think that when Jesus Christ suffered so much for you? •



Being the popular “life of the party” takes you places, but maybe not where you expected, writes Aaron Thomson

I would come home from parties having lied to girls so I could hook up with them and I'd go to my bed and I'd cry because I didn't understand why I was doing these things.

I guess what mattered most to me was being somebody that everybody would want to be friends with.

I invested all of my time in being a cool person, doing the kinds of things that cool people had to do, smoke whatever I had to smoke, drink whatever I had to drink, smash whatever I had to smash, so that people would say, “Aaron, you are the man”.

Well I was riding along this high paced trail of popularity when the wheels fell off the lie I was riding upon.

I realised that although I had all these friends and all this popularity, it wasn't real. I was pouring all my energies into this life on the outside, into how I looked and who I thought I saw when I looked in the mirror. I discovered it was the inner man on the inside where I had a lot of questions with no answers!

Despite all of the laughs and being the “life of the party”, on the inside I was sad.

Soon after I arrived at University,

my life was in a mess, I started going down the same track that I had come from. I started finding popularity with a new group of people.

In the midst of all this I went to a talk and somebody explained to me what it meant to know Jesus and perhaps for the first time I sat down and listened.

I probably would have told people that I knew all kinds of things about Jesus, but the truth was I didn't know much at all.

I think the biggest question we need to answer is: “Who is this guy, Jesus, and what if He is the real deal?”

I think the biggest shame is trying to live a life devoid of trying to think about that or answer that question, to go on to discover that He was real and that this mattered a lot.

If He really gave His life for us, that we might find life, I think that's worth some of our time.

My challenge to you is to look into it. Don't throw away something that you don't understand.

Having lived this life with Christ in it, I can say that it's totally different.

It's a life in full colour. There are a lot of challenges, but I can sincerely say that my faith in Christ is real and He is transforming me every day. ●

“On the inside I was sad”

FINDING CONTENTMENT IN VANUATU

Poverty showed Elisha Hammond what having plenty means

Once, I thought all there was to life was a mundane routine. All my struggles, chaos and problems on repeat every day.

Nothing was interesting and nothing had real purpose.

My grades began to drop because I saw no point in trying to do well in subjects I didn't like.

I began to hurt others because I was jealous of what they had and acted out in my envy.

I wasn't willing to face the ugly truth: I didn't know where I was headed, and to be perfectly honest, I didn't really care.

Even though I had committed myself to Jesus when I was young, I wasn't reading my Bible or praying for His help.

Once a year, I would go to a youth camp that we often termed a ‘recharger’ because it was like making a fresh start. But after a month I would start to slip back into my old habits.

Something had to change, or I'd always be this way and I'd go crazy!

At a time where I was at my lowest, I was given the opportunity to go on a trip to Vanuatu to share about the

salvation Jesus offers to us.

On our first day in the jungle it became apparent that I needed to depend on God for strength.

During those 20 days I faced some of my worst fears (I have a deadly phobia of spiders!), met some of my best friends and learnt some of my most important lessons.

Whenever we went to a new village to sing songs and talk to people about Jesus, they would put on a great feast. This often meant that the villagers would kill their precious chickens to feed us.

I remember thinking about what a privilege it was to have our luxurious meals back home and how generous these people

were. How could they give so much to complete strangers?

Even more surprising was how happy the people were in their giving. They did everything with such enthusiasm and joy – even their cleaning was done with gusto!

It was so different to the miserable life I lead at home. They were so joyful to have a hut to clean, vegetables to cook, a family to serve, that they were content in their work. God had provided, so they had nothing more to want after.

“They did everything with such enthusiasm and joy”



NEW FOCUS: Elisha Hammond

Considering the fact that I had a lot more yet still felt miserable, really taught me to be thankful and content in what I had.

I was a child of God, and that was all I would ever need. Seeing how people were content with nothing because they were made clean before God forced me to focus once more on Him.

I began to devote my time to helping others rather than myself. My wise old Dad once told me, “To become content, you must take your eyes off yourself and let God direct them to where He wants you to go.”

I'm still learning, but each day it gets a little easier. God took away the mundane and boring and gave me contentment! ●

TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF

As autumn leaves start to turn warm oranges and reds before falling to the ground, it might be time for us to change too

BY CAITLIN CHODAKOWSKY

A FRENCH poet once wrote: “All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy; for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter another.”

Perhaps you are at a point in life where things are changing. Whether you're moving out of home, getting married, welcoming your first child into the world, starting a new job or finding yourself in an empty nest – life changes and so do we.

Perhaps you know deep down that there are things in your life that still need to change, whether it be finally overcoming that addiction, ending a bad habit or working on a character trait.

Motivational speaker Jim Rohn made an interesting point when he said: “You must take personal responsibility. You cannot change (your) circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself. That is something you have charge of.”

The thing is, changing oneself is



easier said than done. Countless New Year resolutions fail because we lack the resolve, wisdom or motivation to follow through.

As a volunteer in the prison system, I often see people return to prison shortly after being released because they go back to their old friends, bad influences and harmful way of life.

While it may seem all too hard to change, there is one decision in life that is guaranteed to transform everything. I have seen it time and again.

It is the decision to allow Jesus Christ into your life to guide and direct you as Saviour and Lord.

FINDING POWER TO CHANGE

The Bible explains that “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away;

behold, the new has come” (see 2 Corinthians 5:17).

Thousands of people around the world testify to the power Jesus has to change lives for the better, and Challenge newspaper publishes

many examples of these.

Like a leaf that dies to make room for new growth, the Bible explains that the Christian life starts when we “die to ourselves” (see Romans 6:12-13), meaning we do not let our selfish desires, thoughts and actions, which offend God, control the way we live.

When we do this we “turn over a new leaf” so to speak, and allow the Spirit of God to work in us to help us live in a way that pleases Him.

If you put your trust and faith in Jesus, the Bible encourages us not to lose heart in life because, “Our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever” (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

If you really want to start afresh it is your responsibility to take charge and look into what Jesus has to offer. Life with Him will continue long after we witness our last autumn here on earth. ●



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'THE 33' FILM FAITHFULLY RECOUNTS CHILE MINERS' MIRACLE RESCUE

Movie mines rich seam of hope

BY ANDREW HALLOWAY

A NEW MOVIE released five years after the Chilean miners' rescue keeps to the spirit of the dramatic true story.

Antonio Banderas, star of films such as *The Mask of Zorro*, *Evita* and *Spy Kids*, plays a charismatic miner trapped 2,300 feet underground with 32 others in the 2010 disaster.

The 33, released in Australia in February, is based on the true story of their 69 days trapped in the 121-year-old San Jose mine after an explosion blocked all exits, and the miraculous rescue that followed.

For the first 17 days, no one above ground knew if there were survivors, and the miners themselves didn't know if they'd been abandoned.

With only three days' worth of food and drink to survive on, both the miners and rescuers turned to God and prayed.

Celebration erupted when the men were discovered to be still alive, and the frantic rescue effort became a glo-

bal media event watched by over 1 billion people.

The movie, also starring Juliette Binoche, Lou Diamond Phillips, Gabriel Byrne and James Brolin, doesn't shy away from what kept hope alive.

Antonio Banderas says faith was vital: "The faith of all of those women, the politician who became a human, and those miners ... How many people have died that we don't know because people didn't have this push? I'm pretty sure more people than we know because they didn't have faith."

After their rescue, the group recalled how God had performed various miracles to keep them alive.

Jose Henriquez, a committed Christian among the miners, became the group's unofficial 'pastor' during their ordeal, saying: "God is the only way out of this."

Together the miners prayed daily



Antonio Banderas plays charismatic miner Mario Sepúlveda



for forgiveness, help, rescue and unity. The drillers above held hands as they prayed to Jesus for success.

Jose told fellow miners of the biblical Jonah, who was swallowed by a large fish in the sea after running away from God, but was spewed back up onto land after he turned to God in prayer. Jonah recalled: "I sank down to the very roots of the mountains. I was imprisoned in the earth, whose gates lock shut forever. But you, O Lord my God, snatched me from the jaws of death!"

The miners saw the analogy with their situation, and took hope from it. Jose encouraged them to look to Christ for their salvation – both spiritual and physical.

Finally, on Day 18, a small drill broke through, and the miners sent up notes. One read "We are well in the Refuge. The 33."

Cheers and sobbing erupted as drillers, families, the nation and the world rejoiced.

The challenge was then how to get the men out, and a huge effort began that ended with the moving rescue.

As the men emerged from the tiny capsule that brought them up to the surface, many dropped to their knees to give God thanks.

All 33 came up wearing shirts that said, "Thank you Lord" on the front. The back read "To Him be the glory and honour" and Psalm 95:4, which says: "In His hands are the depths of the earth."

Mario, a miner played by Banderas, said: "I was with God and I was with the devil. But God won. I held on to God's hand. At no point in time did I doubt that God would get me out of there."

Omar Reygadas, a 56-year-old

mechanic, emerged holding a Bible and wearing a helmet with "God lives" written on it. Jimmy Sanchez said: "There are actually 34 of us because God has never left us down here."

Those working on the rescue also witnessed divine intervention during the efforts. Topographer Macarena Valdes told *The Wall Street Journal*: "It was 75 percent engineering and 25 percent a miracle."

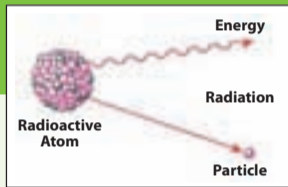
In the years since, many have struggled to find work due to post-traumatic stress and have lived on a small monthly pension. A portion of the movie profits is split evenly between the 33 miners, as they did with the food and water down the mine. But they have no doubt that their rescue was a miracle – an answer to prayer.

Sources: ASSIST News; Christian Post

Believe it or not

BY CREATION MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Millions of years wrong



"The accepted ages for the oldest rocks are wrong," so claimed a report in *New Scientist* on problems with radioactive dating methods. That's because the estimated time for half of radioactive samarium-146 to decay (its half-life) was found to be 33% in error. Samarium-146 is used to calculate the 'ages' of events in the early solar system.

Previously taken as 103 million years, plus or minus 5 million, Michael Paul of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, along with his colleagues, recently published a half-life figure of 68 million years. Their method is more reliable, they say. So much for the precision earlier claimed of plus-or-minus 5 million years.

All the 'dates' previously calculated using the incorrect half-life for events in the early solar system are thus wrong, some by as much as 80 million years. If numbers that can actually be measured in the present turn out to be so askew, what are we to think about numbers that are impossible to measure, such as the original amount of samarium-146 in the sample when it formed in the past?

Actually, the maximum possible age for the nominated 'oldest' rocks is only about 6,000 years. That date has been obtained by the only method that can yield reliable dates—the historical method. That is how we know the date for the Gettysburg Address and the Battle of Trafalgar, for example—i.e. the dates are based on eyewitness records of what happened and when. The Bible is an eyewitness record of what really happened in the past—from the very beginning of time. The 'millions of years' have never been observed, but are only imagined in the minds of those who believe in them.

For more see creation.com/radiometric-dating-questions-and-answers

• Ages of oldest rocks are off by millions of years, *New Scientist* 214(2859):9, 7 April 2012.

Does reincarnation cure our evil?

RECENT surveys indicate that up to a quarter of Australians and Americans subscribe to the possibility of reincarnation, the belief that people "come again in the flesh".

According to the undiluted Eastern version of reincarnation, the soul's original state-of-being was in divine union with the "Absolute". It then inexplicably "forgot" its true nature and erroneously sought to establish its own identity apart from the un-individualistic god-consciousness.

This "alienated" soul subsequently enters a cyclic wheel of repeated reincarnations, until it realises that all things are merely illusionary extensions of the one Absolute.

In other words, the soul really does not exist, it is in a 'fallen' state because it thinks that it is, and must suffer repeated rebirths (human or animal in Eastern thought) until it is once again absorbed back into a 'blissful' non-existence known as nirvana.

Though its leading proponents would profess otherwise, reincarnation does not, and indeed cannot, solve the problem of evil.

For example, according to the cause-and-effect 'Law of Karma' the soul of a man who habitually beats his wife will accumulate negative karma relative to his crime. To alleviate this debt, he must be reborn as a wife who is beaten by her husband, who then must in turn be likewise reborn as the beaten wife, and so forth ad-infinitum.

Where is there a reasonable resolution to the sin of wife-beating in this endless cycle? Although this example is hypothetical, the same inherent concept would apply to any human fallibility.

Furthermore, when karmic law is followed out to its logical conclusion, it inevitably produces apathy, not compassion on those who suffer. Since poverty, sickness, or misfortune are to be accepted as an individual's punishment for previous sins, the attempt of another to alleviate such suffering, as did the "Good Samaritan" in Luke chapter 10, is therefore discouraged,

and even viewed as a sin itself.

The end result of Karma is perhaps best exemplified by the adverse living conditions found in most of India, in which the care and feeding of the destitute rests squarely upon the shoulders of Christian missionaries and those that they have directly influenced. Jesus taught that "Whatever [kindness] you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it for Me" (see Matthew 25:31-46).

In the end the Law of Karma falls hopelessly short of God's solution.

As the Bible says, "If we [humbly] confess our sins, He (Jesus) is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). This offers the hope and comfort that no sin is too great to be forgiven the offender, while the Law of Karma demands an uncompromisingly rigid payment for each and every ill thought or deed.

The Bible tells us that no matter how many consecutive attempts are made, human beings can never reach a point of self-righteousness, for we are by our

very nature, unholy sinners separated from an infinitely holy God (Isaiah 59:2).

This is the reason that it was necessary for God to incarnate Himself into human flesh: Jesus had to bear the condemnation that our sins have incurred. Acceptance of the cleansing power of Christ's sacrifice in our lives is the only way that we can receive the free gift of salvation (John 1:12).

The Bible says in Hebrews 9:27; "It is appointed to each man once to die and then comes judgment." The consequence for rejecting Jesus' salvation is everlasting judgement and separation from God, not future opportunities through cyclic rebirth.

As we approach Easter it is worth considering if reincarnation really does hold the answers to life's purpose and whether the decisions we make in this life will ultimately determine our place in eternity.

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Car company founder Henry Ford famously supported reincarnation

No longer lost and lonely

In a family overshadowed by poverty and alcoholism, Ian Hopkins traded jealousy and empty pursuits for a fulfilling inner peace.

"We were really poor," Ian recalls. "My father was an alcoholic and my mother worked hard to keep the family together."

As a child he was influenced to believe religion was a joke and believed it could not resolve his family's problems.

Despite this, he remembers fun times on Boy Scout camps in Western Australia's wilderness, and on these camps he was also exposed to Christian church services on Sundays.

"One Sunday church service in Glen Forrest I had a feeling that there was something else out there, but I didn't take it any further," he recalls.

Ian wanted success and the admiration of others but it always seemed others had a better home life, more

money, intelligence and sporting talent than himself.

His jealousy caused him to drink alcohol excessively and pursue sexual relationships, thinking he was having "a good time".

But when he was honest with himself, he says, "I was lost and lonely."

Since he was dating a girl who attended church, Ian admits he went to church and was baptised just to impress her.

Sisters Sandy and Jilly then invited Ian to a church where he recalls the gentle words from Pastor Peter Moyle impressed him.

Shown verses in the Bible about God's offer of forgiveness and his own selfishness in God's sight, Ian recalls; "In my early 30's, during a visit from Peter, I decided to become a Christian and I felt a complete and overwhelming inner peace."

Through receiving God's gift of forgiveness by faith in Jesus, Ian says, "I felt happiness that I never had before because I knew I had a relationship with God in heaven."

This peace with God was not merely kept to himself, though, as Ian explains how God removed his jealousy, envy and anger towards others, as well as his desire for alcohol or sexual immorality.

"I forgave my father for not being there when I was growing up. Since his passing just over 10 years ago I still miss him. He is the only member



Ian Hopkins traded alcohol and envy for a lasting relationship

of my family who ever had a positive attitude about my Christian beliefs."

While he reflects sadly on the breakup of his marriage some years ago, the 52-year-old adds, "I have found at different stages of my life that God shows me relevant Bible

passages to help me."

To those curious about knowing God, Ian says, "Open your eyes and heart and let the Lord Jesus in. He will always be there for you. He is the rock, the cornerstone of the world. He will always protect you." •

LOOKING DOWN

BY J
HUT

A young fellow wanting to make an impression took his girl-friend for a helicopter ride. From the air she looked down and saw a message made from hay bales – a message which would dramatically change her life.

It simply said, 'Will you marry me?'

What could she say but 'yes?'

You see all kinds of things from the air. If you were to fly over South West England you are likely spot one or more of the large chalk stone figures of horses.

South Australia has its mysterious Marree Man – the second largest geoglyph in the world featuring an aboriginal man hunting with a boomerang.



In the Adelaide hills, air travellers can see a message formed by trees. It has taken decades for the trees to be large enough to be clearly visible from over head.

The tree line message of only two words is for Christians, the most important two words in the world - 'Jesus Lives.'

It is the time of year when we celebrate a very dramatic event – the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. A message of salvation.

The Bible teaches, and Christians believe, that Jesus rose bodily from the dead and that He lives today.

The resurrection of Christ from the dead authenticated all that he said and did. He said he would be put to death and, on the third day, rise again.

Many have tried to disprove the resurrection of Jesus. One being Frank Morrison, a distinguished skeptical lawyer, who examined the evidence from a negative point of view but, was so convinced by it he became a committed Christian. Morrison wrote a book called, *Who Moved the Stone*.

There was a skeptic among the twelve disciples of Jesus who refused to believe he had risen from death unless he could see, for himself, the nail prints of the crucifixion in his hands and feet.

On meeting the risen Christ and being invited to actually touch the wounds he exclaimed, 'My Lord! and My God!'

TODAY

It's almost two thousand years since the stone was rolled away from the tomb and Jesus was reunited with his friends and followers. What does it mean for us today?

Christians believe that in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ God has done something very special for mankind. The Bible says Christ's death on the cross was on our behalf. He gave himself for us. He died for our sins.

Through His resurrection He proved His claims to be God and He lives today.

Because He lives we can know Him as a Saviour and friend and anticipate spending eternity in His glorious presence.

Because He lives we can expect Him to return, as He promised.

More than the life impact the words 'Will you marry me' written in hay bales will have, is the message that 'Jesus lives' to bring us everlasting life through belief in Him. How wonderful to know that Jesus lives! •



Lasting joy for former felon

Dara Wren was once proud of being a "seven time convicted felon" until she discovered the everlasting joy she did not know was possible.

"I would fight at the drop of a hat and I enjoyed it," Dara shares sadly about her former life.

She used drugs from age 12 and was an I.V. addict by age 15.

Despite a first six month stay in prison, she continued her drug use undeterred.

"I used any kind of drug and I used every day," she says.

Dara's addiction took over her life in her early 20s and resulted in her last and longest prison sentence.

Before her arrest, Dara admits, "I abandoned my two children, became homeless and began to sell my body as a means to support my habit."

As she was locked up for four years Dara recalls that a mixture of anger and tiredness fed a new desire to turn from her selfish lifestyle.

"I had been living so hard and so fast for about 10 years and I really just wanted to forgive people and myself and move on," she explains.

Dara believes that this was

"God giving me a desire for forgiveness".

This desire led her to a program called PLUS, led by a faith group.

"I watched a Louie Giglio video," she recalls, "which led me to my (prison) chaplain, who explained the grace of God and, for those who trust in Jesus, the Biblical foundation of who they are in Jesus Christ."

She made a decision that day to submit her life to Jesus Christ. She believes this occurred because God supernaturally opened her eyes to see His love, kindness and forgiveness.

"I was spiritually dead in my sins," Dara explains. "God called me out of darkness and the Holy Spirit regenerated my heart and made me alive in Jesus Christ."

Old desires and thoughts changed she says, due to the Holy Spirit's work in her heart.

Now she is a child of God and explains, "When I get sinful desires the Holy Spirit convicts me and guides me. Life is not easy, but life in Jesus has given me assurance that this world is not satisfying or eternal. Only Jesus is satisfying and He is eternal."



Dara Wren says life now has deep meaning

She describes her life as "drastically improved" and it has "deep meaning" she never knew before.

"I have joy because of the salvation that Christ has given me. I have a new family and I experience Christ-centred love through them. God has restored my relationship with my children."

Not only does she reject temptations when they come, she says that God has shown her how to defeat the underlying lies that previously led to her following them.

"God has taught me through His living Word, the Bible, that my addictions came from a desire to please myself and to feel good. I had an idol of self and that I was serving myself.

Instead of worshipping selfish desires, Dara concludes, "I now worship and serve God and He gives me joy. God's correction is loving and lasting." •

Building Better Marriages

MARRIAGE IS LIKE DANCING TOGETHER

BY ROB FURLONG

WATCHING PEOPLE DANCE can be a fascinating exercise at times.

Some are out on the dance floor, busting a move and they look great – but they dance alone.

Others dance with a partner, moving in beautiful symmetry together as they look into each other's eyes.

Occasionally you see a couple where one partner is fully engaged while the other stares blankly over their shoulder, plainly bored and disinterested.

In case you haven't noticed, marriage is a lot like dancing!

Great dancing requires great communication and understanding between the couple – and when they get it right, magic happens out there on the floor!

Likewise, a great marriage requires two people who are committed to each other and who are also prepared to grow and change in ways that



produce a deeper understanding and care for each other.

When one, or both, partners are disengaged in the relationship, indifference sets in and the very real likelihood that you will end up dancing alone.

When it comes to dancing, I have two left feet while Karen is the dancer in my life. Through her loving encouragement, I have mustered up

the courage to get out on the dance floor with her and not make a complete fool of myself!

Yet in the dance of our marriage, neither of us can claim any expertise.

Over the years, we have had to discover and apply many valuable principles that have enabled us to dance well together in our marriage.

One principle has been a commitment to be truly present with each other when we are talking.

It can be very easy to “zone out” or become distracted by something

else when your partner is talking to you.

Our simple discipline to help us break that habit is that when we are aware it is happening we admit it and apologise for doing so. It is humbling to confess that you were not paying attention, but it is also an effective circuit breaker that produces real change.

The principle of apologising when you are wrong in other areas has also enabled us to dance well together in our marriage.

We keep it pretty simple. We admit our mistake, apologise sincerely for it and ask for forgiveness – there is

something humbling in that as well!

Most importantly, with the apology comes a genuine commitment to change our behaviour. People who only apologise but never change are extremely “unsafe” people.

Thinking of the marriage relationship as a dance also reminds me of the great dance of life that God invites us to be a part of.

One of the beautiful images that we have of God is that of the dance of relationship that exists between the Father, Son and the Spirit. They communicate, act and love in complete harmony – it is the great dance of God!

On the night He was to leave His disciples, Jesus prayed that they would all “be one”. His prayer was grounded in the unity that exists between Himself and His Father and Jesus' desire was that His followers would experience that same unity and oneness; that they might dance in unity and love in their relationship with God and with each other.

Interestingly, the oneness Jesus prays would be between us and God the Father is also the same concept at the heart of oneness in marriage – unity, love and openness.

It was for this oneness – with God, others and our partners – that Jesus died and rose on that first Easter centuries ago.

He invites us all to the great dance of life with Him and each other, not indifferently but as fully engaged participants!



WITH CAITLIN CHODAKOWSKY

Nini's famous shortbread



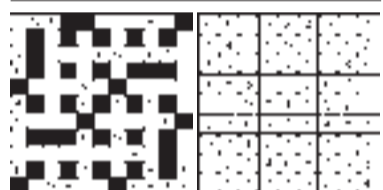
This is my grandmother's most popular recipe, one everybody asked for after they tasted one of her fresh batches. I have many fond memories of stealing some of the dough out the bowl when I had a chance and smelling that delicious scent as it baked. Be warned, even with these instructions it may take a few attempts to get it just right – not too moist, not too dry. It's a recipe that goes a long way so it's perfect for a big gathering, parties, bake sales and wrapping up as gifts for people who need a bit of encouragement.

INGREDIENTS

- 500g plain flour
- 500g soft butter
- 250g cornflour (check to ensure it's actually made from corn)
- 250g castor sugar
- Pinch of salt

METHOD:

1. Preheat oven to 150 °C
2. Sift flour, sugar and salt into a big mixing bowl.
3. Knead in butter until mixture comes together in one ball.
4. Grease oven tray and press dough into it, spreading with a rolling pin to cover tray evenly (should be about 3cm deep).
5. Prick dough thoroughly with a fork before putting in oven for 1 to 1½ hours.
6. Remove from oven and slice into pieces while still hot. Sprinkle castor sugar over the top and place back in switched-off oven to cool. If your shortbread still does not dry out thoroughly then place back in oven for a while longer.



How can I become a Christian?

Anyone can gain the eternal life offered through Jesus Christ

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

OUR PROBLEM:	Separation from God <i>"Everyone has sinned. Nobody is good enough because God's standards are perfect" (Romans 3:23)</i>	ADMIT
GOD'S REMEDY / SOLUTION:	Jesus died on the cross <i>"God demonstrates His own love for us in this; while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8)</i>	BELIEVE
OUR RESPONSE:	Trust Jesus by receiving Him <i>"To all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12)</i>	COMMIT

Here is an example of how you can pray.

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

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

AS A NEXT STEP:

<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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Computers & Technology

New features in Office 2016

Competing with Google's web-based document and collaboration tools, Microsoft Office 2016 is adding many features that were already present in the Office Web Apps. As Office 365 is 'software-as-a-service', Microsoft promise to add small improvements at shorter intervals, as web app providers do. Here is what is new:

- Real-time co-authoring: This Web apps feature is now on the desktop, noting document changes in real time within native Office apps.
- Skype for Business: Office now comes with Skype built-in. You can IM, share screens very easily, talk or video chat. You can easily begin a real-time co-authoring session from an existing conversation or meeting.
- Office 365 Groups: Also available as a standalone iOS app, Office 365 Groups enables you to create public or private teams to enable shared collaboration via a shared inbox, calendar, cloud storage for group files, and OneNote notebook.
- New 'Smart Inbox': Faster search as lower priority emails are hidden. You can also find attachments to all people in the 'To' field from within Microsoft OneDrive.
- 'Tell Me' & 'Smart Lookup': These Office online features are now in the native Office apps. 'Tell Me' is a help menu on steroids, while Smart Lookup fetches insights

from the Web to paste into your document.

More features coming soon:

Cortana digital assistant support, Officer 365 Planner (a visual task & event organiser), GigJam (task collaboration across devices, apps and people), and OneDrive for business (adding better IT control and syncing across devices).



PACKAGING A SUCCESS

A birthday party surprise LESSON IN INTEGRITY



Inside a large attractive box with beautiful red ribbon a birthday girl found a new 'American Girl' doll which turned out to be the most loved present of all.

What makes a company successful in selling expensive dolls?

Apart from how well-made the doll is, it was accompanied by a miniature bear and a book explaining 'the story behind the doll'.

The paper box was a lesson in excellence. It was much heavier stock than usual packaging so that the contents would never arrive damaged. The box lining was a specific colour scheme to match the 'American Girl' theme.

An old proverb says "Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men."

Is your work worth presenting to a king? If you have doubts, why not do the following?

- 1) Survey your end-of-line customers for recommendations
- 2) Write a proposal of what excellence would be in your business
- 3) Make an action plan with a timetable
- 4) Action the plan
- 5) Return to step one



DRIVER FINDS RIGHT FORMULA

As the Australian Grand Prix revs up, this Brazilian driver shares about the greatest prize that he found through former F1 racers Fittipaldi and Riberio

After years of experience and tutoring competitive drivers in everything from saloons and GTs to Sports Racing Prototypes, as well as involvement with Palmer Motorsport, Jaguar, Land Rover, McLaren, VW and the *Top Gear Live Show*, Adriano Medeiros finally got his own time to shine on the winner's podium.

Yet, just before taking out the top spot in the United Kingdom's 2013 National Classic Formula Ford Championship, Brazilian-born Adriano shared his real motivation for competitive racing.

"God is more important than anything, if I win the title or not, the biggest achievement here is just to tell these people that Jesus saves," Adriano said confidently before the big race.

In fact it is not hard to spot what he stands for, brandishing his team's

name 'Jesus Saves Racing' on his helmet, overalls and red racing car whenever possible.

This over-arching passion for telling people about Jesus has not, however, always been his primary goal.

"Success and money mean everything in Brazil and you are nothing and have little respect if you don't have these things, so I pursued them," he explains.

This course was significantly altered after coming face to face with his Brazilian heroes in Formula One World Championship racing, Alex Dias Ribeiro and Emerson Fittipaldi.

"I was chasing my dream to become a champion racing driver when a friend suggested that I

should go and talk to Alex and Emerson at the track," he recalls.

His curiosity and admiration got the better of him and Adriano agreed to listen to them talk at the Brazilian Christians in Sport meeting that occurred at the Interlagos Racing Circuit every Wednesday evening.

"When I heard these two former F1 drivers talking about Jesus, my ears opened and for the first time I gave credibility to the subject of faith," he shares.

"There had been so many people who had tried to introduce me to Jesus before this but I refused to listen to them

because the majority were not people that I particularly respected."

Adriano went with mixed motives to the meeting, wanting to gain some help and tips in racing from these seasoned professionals, but was impacted in a different way than expected.

"I already believed that God existed but I soon realised from what they said that I did not have a relationship with Him and therefore was not saved by Him," he says.

"Afterwards, Alex said to me that he couldn't help me to race but he could help me meet Jesus Christ so I started going to the meetings and took more interest in them because I wanted to be like them."

During the meetings people often shared their experiences and Adriano was particularly challenged when one of his colleagues share her distress about her father having died without accepting Jesus as his personal Lord and Saviour.

"At that time my mother had died a year before and my grandmother

was in hospital after a heart attack. I realised there had to be more to life and I understood that I had not adequately planned or thought about the only thing that is certain to happen in this life: death," he says.

"A lot of my questions were answered at that Wednesday Bible study, and I felt so much love in God's Word (the Bible)."

Through studying the Bible, Adriano realised that it was not enough to just believe in God "for even the demons believe this and tremble", as it explains in James chapter 2 verse 19, but that Jesus alone is the one who saves.

At the meeting he prayed with others, asking Jesus for forgiveness and for God's Holy Spirit to come into his life to direct him and save him from his sin.

"God helped me understand that He is the Creator and He knows what is good for me and what is not good. My sins, attitudes and addictions cause problems mainly for myself. I struggled with pornography, sexual immorality and jealousy but, by allowing Jesus to come into my life,

Adriano drove one of only six new Jaguar lightweight E-type cars worth \$2.4m (£1.2m) at a media event in 2015

He directs me to make the right decisions," Adriano says.

"You see, God loves me so much that He is willing to have a relationship with me and give me the best if I trust in Him."

Six months later, God directed Adriano to move to Europe.

"Since then I have been growing in my faith and I have been blessed with my dream to race. I do not have much money but I have enjoyed racing and working in the motorsport industry here for more than 10 years," Adriano says with a smile.

Adriano is married to Ana and a father of Daniel who is 20 months old.

"Without God I wouldn't have half of the things I have now," he says.

"In the race of life I am sure I have already won since the day I accepted Jesus into my life." ●

"In the race of life I am sure I have already won"



Adriano joined three drivers in a TCR class SEAT Leon Cup Racer in the 24H Dubai race on January 16, 2016

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