

Noongar man's foundation
Page 2



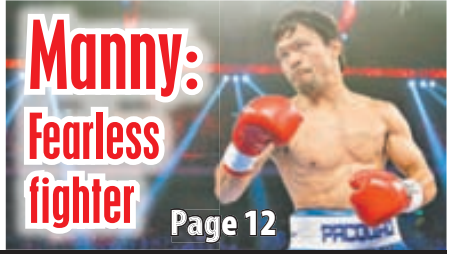
Hollywood star Bailee Madison
Page 3



DNA not a 'dumb machine'
Page 9



Netflix vs other online TV choices
Page 11



FREED FROM ABUSE

A neighbour's abuse ushered in Tim Ross' world of secrecy

Tim Ross was only eight years old when his neighbour began to molest him in his garage. "I didn't know what he was doing but I knew it wasn't right," Tim explains in an online video for

I Am Second.
"I came home and my mum asked me 'how was your day?' That was the day I became a professional liar, and I got real good at it."
Tim was called back to this neighbour's garage multiple times and

says he did not know how to process or deal with what was happening to him.

"All I did know was that, if my dad found out, he would kill him so I had to keep it a secret," he says.

As he hid the effects of this abuse and his growing addiction to porn, Tim began to despise himself.

"I created this guy that at school everybody loved and I went home and didn't like myself because I could not stop looking at pornography. The effect of holding a secret that long is that you never have the freedom to be you. It torments your soul, it bothers your conscience."

Tim was 19 when his mum discovered his hidden bedroom habit.

"I was embarrassed, I felt like a pervert. I felt completely disgusted with myself," he admits.

"Because she's a praying woman she went back to her room and started praying for me. It's probably the best prayer I think my mother has ever prayed."

It was at that moment Tim was faced with a choice: pretend it never happened or confront his mum about the real situation.

"I didn't hear it but that prayer came and got me. I got up, cleaned myself off and walked down the hallway," he recalls of the moment before he confessed everything back to the abuse he suffered.

"My mum cried, I cried, and then she went and got my younger brother. He said he got molested by the same guy."

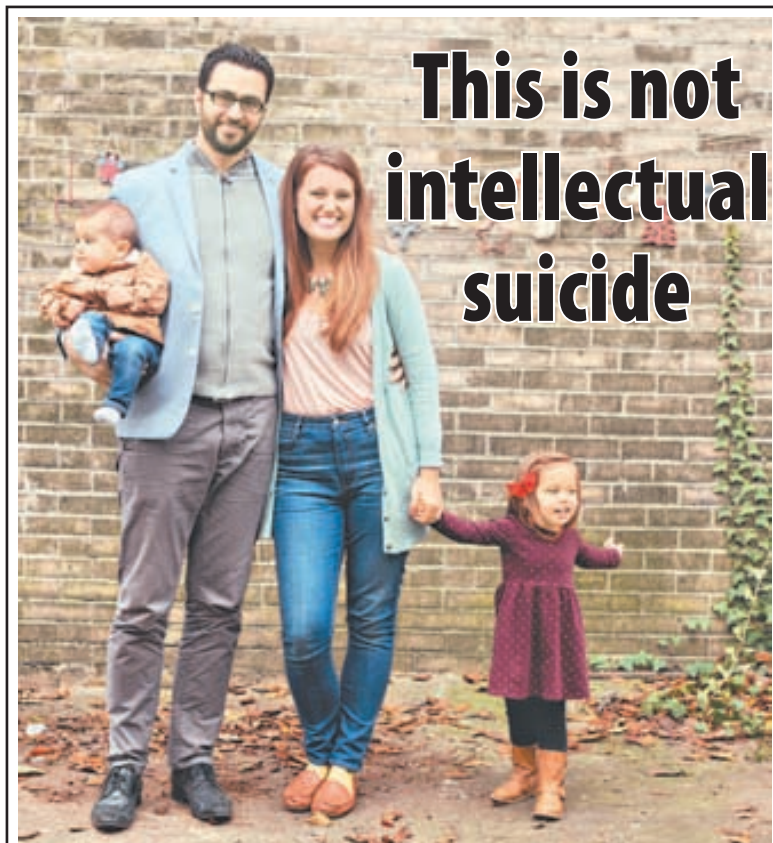
When Tim's dad returned they shared with him what had happened.

"Then my mum says she got sexually abused when she was six and my dad says he got molested when he was five. So in one night my exposure caused everyone to come clean and confess their pain."

"That night I can't articulate to you the freedom I felt to be able to tell the truth to someone and not be judged. And to have the truth come



Tim Ross no longer carries secrets about his past



Guillaume and Katherine Bignon with their two children

This is not intellectual suicide

My girlfriend cannot believe nonsense, Guillaume told himself

Belief in God was such nonsense to atheist Guillaume Bignon that he threw himself into a scientific, self-examining and open-minded investigation, in the hope that he would dissuade his American girlfriend of "antiquated" religious notions.

Guillaume grew up in France, near Paris, a country dominated by atheists and where people attend church more out of tradition than genuine faith in God.

"As soon as I was old enough to tell my parents I didn't believe any of it, I stopped going," Guillaume explains. He turned instead to music, volleyball and female conquests for happiness and fulfilment.

He enjoyed success as a computer scientist for an investment bank and lived according to his own rules in his private life, burying the guilt from his occasionally unethical actions deep inside.

While vacationing in the Caribbean with his brother, his values were challenged during a hitchhike home with two attractive young American women who needed directions.

● Turn to page 4

out and be surrounded by nothing but love."

Tim explains that his parents' authentic relationship with God through Jesus Christ was something that stood out to him in that moment. Following Jesus' example, his parents were grieved by sin, but steadfastly loved their children.

He says, "[They] loved me and didn't judge me. We didn't grow up in the atmosphere of hypocrisy. They were the same at home and church."

Six months after confessing his secret, Tim put his trust in Jesus Christ with a thankful heart, knowing he had finally been forgiven and cleansed of his sin.

"I would love to tell you that as soon as I accepted Christ into my life I put porn down and never picked it up again," he says.

"But the fact that the Lord would be patient enough for me, knowing that it didn't take me five minutes to get into it and it probably wouldn't take five minutes to get out, but if I just started walking with Him, He would just start shedding layers of bondage and abuse, molestation, low self-esteem, people pleasing... as we began to walk (with Jesus) this stuff began falling off of me."

God brought people into Tim's life who were able to help him deal with the issues that had built up over the years and show him God's unconditional love.

Today Tim is happily married with two sons and works as a pastor and international speaker, hoping to share and encourage others who carry their own secrets.

"It's been a great walk [with God], 14 years still walking...I don't carry secrets anymore."

See more about Tim Ross see timross.org



A DAY TO SAY SORRY

Sorry can be a hard word to say but it holds power for healing and restoration

SIGNING "SORRY BOOKS" is an interesting way many Australian's demonstrate

their commitment towards reconciliation with Indigenous families on National Sorry Day each year.

May 26 is regarded as a day to remember the Stolen Generation which saw many Indigenous Australians forcibly removed from their families and communities and assimilated into white society during the 1950s and 1960s.

While this is a significant day for Australians to show their support for Indigenous families affected by this, perhaps it is also a day to seek reconciliation all round.

After all, the Bible explains that we have all grieved our Creator God by going our own way and refusing to trust in Him and obey His perfect commands.

Yet despite the separation that came from rebelling against God, such incredible, unconditional love was shown when He sent His own Son Jesus Christ to take the punishment we deserved on the cross.

A key principle of the Bible is that confession of wrongs against another and honest prayer to God brings about healing of fractured relationships, whether with people or with God.

In the book of James, the Bible urges believers in Jesus who have wronged another to "confess your sins to one another" and as they have obeyed Jesus in being united in love, it then encourages believers to "pray [to God] for one another so that you may be healed..."

Admitting our mistakes and wrong doing according to God's laws can be hard, especially when we feel we are in the right, but there is more than healing and restoration which comes with this – there is eternal life.

Whatever wrongs that you are sorry for, turn it over to God who cares. And, if we entrust our lives to our Saviour Jesus, He is more than willing to forgive us and transform our selfishness into unconditional love.

Foundation unshakable

Nothing else gives me this freedom, says Eric

Indigenous pastor Eric Wynne wants others to have his secure foundation for life that has given him peace through happy and sad times, including the tragic loss of two siblings.

Eric often thinks back to his younger years growing up in Collie, Western Australia, as part of the Wilman Noongar tribe.

"Mum was always a churchgoer and we kids would go along with her," Eric shares.

"Yet Dad lived a separate life and died when I was still very young."

Lacking a father-figure was hard but from primary school age Eric remembers being taught to fear and respect God, understanding that death was something that could happen at any time and God's judgement would follow.

"In high school this fear of God became even more real. I didn't want to cross Him and end up going to hell," he explains.

Yet it was during these teen years that Eric began to realise that he did not need to have any fear of death or hell because of what Jesus had done for him on the cross.

"At church I heard the pastor read from the Bible saying, 'For God so loved the world that He gave His One and only Son Jesus, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but will have eternal life,'" Eric quotes

from John chapter 3, verse 16.

"I realised Jesus came to save everyone, not destroy them, and that He has a great plan for each life if we trust Him with it.

"Jesus said 'I am the way, the truth and the life' (John 14:6), meaning that He is the only one through which we can be saved from punishment."

Eric says something happened to him internally when he realised that he had found something "nothing else in this world can offer".

"It is like we are all in prison spiritually," he explains. "We've gotta do something internally, we've gotta make Jesus the cornerstone and foundation of our lives to be freed from the power of sin and death."

When Eric's brother died in a car accident and his sister died a few years later, he says it was his relationship with Jesus that got him through the pain.

"Both my brother and sister were Christians so I believe they have gone to be with the Lord in heaven," he says.

"In growing up in the Lord I've been through many issues but I have come to trust God despite my



Noongar pastor Eric Wynne

circumstances. Faith is a big thing, it's believing the unseen."

It is this simple faith in God and His promises that Eric finds comfort and the passion for telling others about the free gift of salvation Jesus offers.

"God has brought me on a journey and I know He has a good purpose for my life," he shares gladly.

Today Eric works as the pastor of an indigenous community church and hopes to bring many more people into a community of believers serving God.

FAMILY LIFE—PAIN OR PLEASURE?

BY ALAN BAILEY

TELEVISION commercials portray smiling faces around the family table, enjoying each other's company and the best breakfast cereal. Turn to the family soaps and you can easily get a serve of unfaithfulness, intrigue, neglect, violence, and more, with the consequent jangle of human emotions and physical pain.

Why?

If the family is society's basic unit and is as old as the human race, why is it such a mixed blessing? Why have we not mastered the art of living together, of relating well? If only one generation could get it right, it could teach the next, sharing all the vital clues. Is the family just another



sooner or later. Quite apart from the injuries we can sustain by the hurtful behaviour already mentioned, life and death will see to it that we will feel pain. The pain of parting, of sickness, of eventual bereavement.

Some people recognise this problem about love and so determine never to lose their hearts to anyone. But this will not help in the long run. We were meant to love and be loved. Life is harder without love than it is with it.

The family that lasts

Having loving relationships in your life that last forever seems like an impossible dream. But it is not. There is a family that fulfils the dream of all families. It is the family of God. He is Father; all His children are brothers and sisters who will enjoy untainted, unending love together for eternity. He has planned it that way. Our families on earth are just a pale picture of what He has in mind. Some are already enjoying their eternity. Others here in this life experience what it is like to be in the family of God.

Who are they? A particular denomination? People of unusual goodness? No. People who have put their trust in Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. They exist in every continent on earth. They have different coloured skins and different languages. There are hundreds of millions of them. And God knows every one of them. As the Bible says "The Lord knows those who are His" (2 Timothy chapter 2, verse 19). The way into the family is through faith in Christ. "To all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave right to become children of God" (John 1:12).

instance of something that is hard to live with and yet hard to live without? **The struggle**

Probably the main cause of all our relationship problems is our own nature – our hearts. All of us struggle against selfishness, against wanting all sorts of things, against anger and undisciplined use of our tongues. Some people obviously do worse in the struggle, giving in to the nasty bias inside them. Of course, we will all claim that we were provoked, that circumstances or other people caused us to do what we did. Whatever the reason for our lapse into aggressive and hurtful behaviour, the result is the same.

The down side of love

Love is attractive and desirable. We all know that. Loving and being loved is what successful marriage and family life is about. But loving is dangerous. There is a side to it which cannot be avoided. When we love somebody deeply we are bound to get hurt,

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Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Rugged peaks (5)
- 4 Western group (5)
- 7 "Silent" performer (7)
- 8 Free (of) (3)
- 9 60's hairdo (4)
- 11 Drive zigzag course (5)
- 14 Salk's study (5)
- 15 Arm bone (4)
- 18 Flyspeck (3)
- 19 Loud and rowdy (7)
- 21 Weird and scary (5)
- 22 Cocoon contents (5)

DOWN

- 1 Piece of a drum kit (6)
- 2 Make public (3)
- 3 Leak slowly (4)
- 4 Wrinkly fruit snack (6)
- 5 Wither (7)
- 6 Countercurrent (4)
- 10 Rural alarm clock (7)
- 12 Run through (6)
- 13 Sickly feeling (6)
- 16 Loafing (4)
- 17 Dartboard centre (4)
- 20 Paddle (3)

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: Merium

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

SOLUTION PAGE 11

MISS MEEK: ACTRESS DREAMS FULFILLED

Bridge to Terabithia star Bailee Madison shares why she strives to always have a humble attitude

BY JOANNA DELALANDE

Bailee Madison was only six when she began living every girl's dream to be a Hollywood actress.

Beginning her career with *Lonely Hearts* and *Bridge to Terabithia*, Bailee's filmography featuring thriller flick *Don't Be Afraid of the Dark*, romantic comedy *Just Go With It* and war drama *Brothers* showcases the talent of the young actress.

Now age 15, Bailee has won three Young Artist Awards for *Best Performance in a Feature Film* and was nominated for prizes in eight additional films.

Yet for a rising teenage star she seems remarkably humble. "This is a wonderful dream, but it could all stop tomorrow," she says of her acting career, as she knows from where her opportunities for success truly lie. "It's not about me, it's about God," she shares, "God chose for me to do this and He could choose for me to stop right now."

Born in a Christian home, Bailee made a decision to follow God and to surrender her life to Him as her Lord and Saviour when she was just five years old.

It was her mother who helped her to

remain humble when her success first became apparent, encouraging her to thank the Lord in everything she achieved.

"From the moment I started," Bailee recalls, "my entire family reminded me that it's not about the red carpet, it's not about the interviews; it's about giving back and spreading the Lord's love and light the best we can."

Refusing to be negatively influenced by the fame-crazed world around her, Bailee decided instead to be a positive influence to her fans and fellow young

actors.

"I'm able to use my faith in everyday life to read different scripts and say: Would God be proud if I did this? Am I staying true to my morals in doing this or that script? Is this the right event to go to? Is it what I believe in?"

"In my career and in my life, I want to do things that show my faith and connection to God and only do positive things that He would want me to do. I try my best to do that."

She explains she wants to make nice films of the kind children can "watch over and over again".

Bailee has not found it difficult to stick to her values while remaining in the acting world.

"This is a wonderful dream, but it could all stop tomorrow"

"It's about sticking to your morals and saying the word 'no,' which is so hard to say. But it's the easiest word to say when you know that it's the right decision for your faith and for God," she says.

As a young girl still finding her way, Bailee thinks of her relationship with God very much as a father-daughter relationship.

"Even though you have an earthly father, [God] is your Heavenly Father who you can look up to," she describes. "You can say to Him, 'I'm not feeling too well today' or 'I feel homesick, I need you Lord; I need to feel happiness in my heart,'" she adds, a prayer she herself has said many times while filming away from her family.

Bailee knows there will be struggles and challenges in her life, but she feels peaceful and ready for whatever comes her way knowing she is not alone.

"You have God up there who is looking down on you and is answering your prayers. If you give yourself to God and you say you are ready to

commit yourself to Him, you will have no worries. You will have struggles, but you will know that God is with you. "It's a hard thing for us but it's nice for God, and He will look at you and say, 'I'm very, very happy with what you just did.'" •

Bailee Madison at premiere of *Legends Of Oz Dorothy's Return*

★ A LITTLE NUDGE ★

CELEB BUZZ



Is it right that celebs like Justin Bieber have become role models?

BY KARL FAASE

Entertainment news is overly featured according to 74% of Australian journalists surveyed by Roy Morgan way back in 2004 and 78% agreed this was done to boost circulation/ratings.

Some who publish 'celeb buzz' say this gives us something to talk about other than the weather, and give us opportunity to discuss social issues like divorce, drug use and parenthood.

Critics counter that this focus on the appearance and lifestyles of celebrities is damaging everything from body image to the general 'dumbing down' of the community.

The danger is that celebrities (and their on-screen roles) can become our highest role models. We obtain our entertainment and values from their lives and behaviour. We can be fooled into thinking that a revolving door of relationships, endless partying and self-obsessed living is justified.

We need a model of what we were created to be – someone who gives us positive values and life enhancing behaviour. Two thousand years ago Jesus, God the Son, came to be born as a man, to show us who God is and what His design is for our lives. Why not take some time to read the New Testament and find out how Jesus demonstrated God's design for us? •

LEAVING DARK DAYS BEHIND

Rob Varicak says he lived selfishly "like a parasite on society" until a radical transformation saw him dedicate his life to serving refugees and others. "Drugs, alcohol, crime and having a good time were all I knew," Rob recalls.

"Then, one day, I picked up a Bible and read it for the first time. It spoke of wars and warriors, people being killed and whole tribes being annihilated. This appealed to me at the time."

This strange fascination with the Old Testament motivated Rob to read it more regularly until he finally made his way to the second part – the New Testament.

While the Old Testament served as a historical record of God's chosen people – the Jewish nation – Rob was even more amazed to discover the character and deeds of Jesus Christ in the New Testament Gospels.

"Jesus stood up for those who were oppressed, marginalised and segregated," Rob explains.

"He met the neglected where they were and without judgement, meeting their immediate needs while telling them about the saving grace that comes from God through believing in Him. He listened to, encouraged, served and helped people overcome their oppression through a new hope in Him."

As he discovered in John chapter 3 verse 17, "For God did not send His Son (Jesus) into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him."

"While reading one night, the Bible started coming alive and a thought came into my head telling me I was a child of God," Rob recalls.

"Then, it was like a voice told me, 'You need to get off the drugs and take off.'"

Rob knew he needed to break away from the bad influences around him, so he sold all that he



Rob Varicak has a passion for social justice

could, told his parents he was leaving Geelong and travelled aimlessly for four weeks until he ended up in Darwin.

"Feeling empty and that something was missing in my life, I decided to join a hunting club to meet people," he says.

"As I flicked through a business directory, it stopped on the 'Churches' page (this comes before 'Clubs'). I knew I had to go to church."

After speaking with a pastor, Rob remembers that he could not stop the tears from pouring down his face.

"The pastor told me to come to church as he knew that God was speaking to me, so I did."

Two months later Rob shares that he surrendered control of his life to God and was baptised in water as a public declaration of his faith in July 2001.

However a few years later old temptations crept back into his life when he moved back to Geelong. "I hooked up with my old mates again and

started living a worldly life once more," he admits.

"It took a major motorbike accident to help me realise that I cared more about my so-called 'material blessings' than living a life of obedience to God."

After rehab, Rob once again sold all he had and six weeks later moved to Mackay, Queensland, where he volunteered with The Salvation Army for 12 months.

"This was the most rewarding thing I had done in my life," he shares.

In this work Rob began to understand the blessings that come from living a life pleasing to God and in loving service to others instead of the selfishness that had only left him feeling empty.

After serving people in Malawi, Africa on a short term mission, the "start of the greatest adventure of my life", Rob began helping refugees in Geelong, which led to further work in South Sudan.

"For the past eight years, God has been preparing me through theological training, mission focused studies and practical ministry experience," he shares.

"During this time I also explored Jesus more deeply – I saw that He not only came to pay the ransom and reconcile us to God but He also came to implement social justice.

"My journey with Jesus has been full of trials, tribulations and temptations, some of which I overcame easily and some that brought me to the brink of giving up, but all of which have strengthened my faith, sharpened my focus and helped me grow spiritually, mentally and emotionally," he concludes.

"My journey so far can be summed up by Colossians chapter one, verse 10, '...live a life worthy of the Lord...please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.'" •

HEADING HOME

BY SAM MANCHESTER

My grandfather died a few months ago.

I'm still coming to terms with what that means. He died. For some reason I can say that he died, but I don't feel comfortable saying "he's dead".

It was quite sudden, and although we got to spend time with him, in another sense we didn't get to say goodbye. My Grandad was a great man. He had decorated involvement in the Australian military showing leadership and skill.

But he was also just a great Grandad. He loved his kids; he was patient and generous with all his extended family. He gave hours of each day to praying for us and all sorts of other people he cared about. I guess you'll just have to take my word for it, he was a great man; you would have really liked him.

I remember feeling the terrifying inescapable nature of death. Grandad was dying and none of us could intervene. We couldn't go with him, we couldn't hold onto him – it felt like trying to grab at a beam of light. Utter helplessness. And at the same time, after seeing him 'go', it was like I turned around to realise that we are all 'trapped' in this life.

After we are born, it's as if we have entered a room and let the door close behind us. From that moment onwards there is only one way out, and it isn't back the way we came. The room is filling with water and the only way any of us will get out is where Grandad was now going.

There is no corner of the world that you can go to hide from death; there is no amount of money you can pay to bargain with it, there is no protective vest, no steel cage of security, no dark cave you can retreat to. Once we are here in this life there is only one way we are going to leave.

And on the one hand it is a fairly pedestrian fact that people have always died. But when Grandad died it felt like the first occurrence. It brought those facts right up to my face and filled me with a harrowing realism.

In the face of death, the truth about Jesus became all the more real and meaningful. Instead of an intellectual ideology, trusting in Jesus' victory over death became intensely real and practical; the only thing of any value. Beside Grandad's hospital bed, trusting Jesus' promise of a resurrection and confidence regarding God's final judgment was the only thing of any comfort.



...the light reflected on the waves in a beautiful haze

During this tumultuous time, I was at the beach one day as the afternoon sun lowered in the sky. Looking towards the beach while standing in the water, I noticed how the light reflected on the waves in a beautiful haze. It made the whole scene a cinematic, golden, calm. As I went under the waves and came back up for air I thought about Grandad, going under 'waves' and coming up again. Passing through the water of some reality we have never seen and coming up on the other side to breathe deep of real life.

And as I looked back on the beach from the water I thought how one day we will be in a new creation that will feel as real as that moment did right then. One day I'll physically stand in some equivalent of the beautiful afternoon light, in the clear waters of the ocean, surrounded by happy families and friends.

I reflected that the fact of the matter is that Grandad had gone to be with his Saviour Jesus, who is preparing a new home for those who have trusted in Him. A city saturated in His presence, a land that will fill our lungs with the air of new life.

And if Grandad's life had communicated anything at all to me, it was that this hope in Jesus was true and real. Even in his death, Grandad was prompting me to remember to cling tightly to Jesus and to set my compass to that new country. As the Bible describes Moses, so too Grandad had "persevered as one who sees Him who is [for now] invisible".

And out in the cool water of the ocean, with heavy eyes from days of tears, and a new sense of death's horrible reach, I was comforted to remember it's *this* world that is the sunbeam, passing through our fingers, fading with the onset of evening, and making way for the new day. The final book of the Bible says that the present universe will one day be replaced by a new universe and new earth. And that even though he died, Grandad isn't dead, he's home.

The question is do you have the same hope? •

Born for something bigger

Being a mother opened Joanne's eyes to the wisdom she had rejected

The experience of shock and anger after her mother's loss to heart disease shot Joanne Ellis into a spiral of bad choices.

As they were "totally unaware" of her mother's condition, Joanne says the shock and pain "destroyed our family and our lives were never the same again."

"I left home at 14 and have had an on and off relationships with my family ever since."

For years Joanne struggled with wrong choices and bad situations, but instead of owning up to her mistakes, she says that in her anger, "I blamed others for them, especially God."

"I always knew we had a God (who made us), however I turned to Him with anger and never understood the life He gave me until I became a mother myself."

In caring for her child, Joanne discovered her old selfish habits had to change.

"Being a mum has been one of the biggest challenges of my life," she says.

"I now had to think of someone else and put that person first. This was tough for me as I tried to break old habits and was searching for Mr Right in all the wrong places."

"I never understood the life [I had] until I became a mother"

Joanne began looking for help when her marriage unravelled into divorce and her four children lived with her ex-husband.

"I reached out to local churches to find a new spiritual home, but nothing felt right."

Just as she had a new baby and was homeless and desperate, Joanne met Scott and Leah Ellery at a church in Merriwa, WA.

After managing to get her four children back in her care, Joanne says, "I found my way back to the church where they offered me a food hamper and plenty of support."

Joanne and her kids became involved in church's Mainly Music program for children, and soon they were all regularly involved in the church.

"During the year I completed a Christian introductory course which explained Christian beliefs and I now have full faith in Jesus," she happily reports.

Joanne says that her children love going to church and the activities there, and that pursuing God has greatly strengthened her family.

"My relationship with my family is better and is growing stronger each year,"



Joanne Ellis now runs community projects

she says.

"My kids are constantly encouraging me to live a life with Christ and I truly believe He is doing amazing things in my home and with my family."

She now wants to help others through her own church-based ministry called Seeds of Hope, which links up locals in community projects to help those in need.

"I still don't have a plan in life, but I do know that God has a plan for me and I completely trust Him to guide me on this journey." •

Courtesy Salvation Army Warcry magazine

This is not intellectual suicide

• From page 1

"We started flirting," Guillaume recalls, "The one I was interested in happened to mention she believed in God – by my standards this was 'intellectual suicide'. She also said she believed that sex belongs in marriage – an even more problematic belief than theism, if that were possible."

Strange as it seems, these beliefs helped start a "problematic long distance relationship" between New York and Paris.

"So we could be together without her misconceptions standing in the way... I started thinking: What good reason was there to think God exists, and what good reason was there to think atheism was true instead?"

"My unbelief was comfortably resting on the fact that (smart) people around me didn't believe in God either, but it was more a reasonable life assumption than the conclusion of a solid argument."

Seeking to "objectively assess" the claims he wanted to disprove, he started reading the New Testament gospel books in the Bible.

He also conducted a "praying experiment", asking God to reveal Himself, yet convinced he would hear no response.

A few weeks later an inexplicable shoulder injury forced him off his volleyball team for a while, rendering his Sunday mornings free to visit church.

"I drove to an evangelical congregation in Paris, visiting it as I would a zoo: to see exotic animals that I had read about in books, but had never seen in real life," he says.

As soon as the service ended Guillaume made his escape, rushing towards the exit door to avoid conversation, but something stopped him at the threshold.

"I literally had one foot out the door and I sensed a strong wave of chills in



Guillaume sought to disprove God

my chest going all the way to my throat. I was frozen on the doorstep.

"I put my foot back in, closed the door, and went straight to the pastor."

Over the next few weeks Guillaume met with the pastor regularly, bombarding him with questions about his beliefs.

As he believed that smart people did not believe in God, Guillaume found himself perplexed at the intelligence, the logic and the clarity with which the pastor explained his worldview.

"His answers were internally coherent, and that was impressive in its own right," Guillaume remembers.

"Here is a man who is clearly educated. He knows what he is talking about. He is smart, careful, meticulous, and he believes that God exists and that Jesus was raised from the dead. I just couldn't fathom it."

After much study he remained unsure about why Jesus had to die, and his unbelieving prayers started to shift.

He said, "God, this is starting to make sense to me now but if you are real, You need to make it clear so I can jump in and not make a fool of myself." •

God made things clear, though not in the way Guillaume had expected. His conscience was reactivated and he was overcome with guilt and shame over what he describes as a "sinister misdeed" he had done.

"I was struck with an intense guilt, crippled with chest pain, and disgusted at the thought of what I had done and the lies I had covered it with."

In that moment Guillaume came to understand Jesus' sacrifice on a very personal level.

"That is why Jesus had to die: me," he realised.

"He who knew no sin became sin on my behalf, so that in Him I might become the righteousness of God", he quotes from 2 Corinthians chapter 5 verse 21.

"He died so that I may live. I placed my trust in Jesus, and asked Him to forgive me in the way Scripture promised He would.

"My heart was instantly set free," Guillaume describes, "every trace of guilt just flew away."

Guillaume found a computer science job in New York so he could be with his girlfriend, only to realise they were "not meant for each other".

He then enrolled in a Christian seminary, and now has a Masters in Biblical Literature and PhD in Philosophical Theology. The married father-of-two lives in Manhattan and is still a computer scientist, plus a part-time theologian.

Guillaume's experience is proof of how God can truly touch anyone, even those who are set on staying away from Him.

"I was not looking for God," he says, "I neither sought Him nor wanted Him. He reached out, loved me while I was still a sinner, broke my defences, and decided to pour out His undeserved grace." •

Article by Joanna Delalande

Contact Guillaume at his blog theologui.blogspot.fr

Adventure never ends

Hiking, kayaking and surfing along with mission trips to Myanmar, Thailand and India and a year spent working in Fiji are among the many adventures Rochelle Booth has enjoyed in her lifetime but it is all part of a bigger picture she has for her life.

“Being a Christian to me doesn’t mean missing out on the truly fun experiences in life,” Rochelle explains about the real reason she lives life to the full.

“In fact, on the journey God has led me on, I’ve been on some incredible adventures that I never could have imagined.”

Rochelle was a quiet, shy little girl growing up in a Christian family but what her parents instilled in her as

a child was something that brought greater meaning and boldness as she reached adulthood.

She understood at a young age that Jesus had died for her so she could live life to the fullest, free from the consequences of sin, but says it was more out of fear for the consequences that stopped her getting up to mischief.

“While I didn’t get into any trouble when I was younger I did have a hidden terrible attitude,” she admits.

“When I look back over diary entries in my teen years I am horrified by my negative attitude, the terrible language I used and disgusting remarks I made about people. I think back then I was just ‘going through the motions’ – attending church because it was habit and youth group

because it was fun and I had lots of friends there.”

Yet things began to change one night at a youth group camp at the age of 18.

“We were all in a big hall, having a worship service and the most amazing feeling of the presence of God’s Holy Spirit swept over everyone there,” she recalls.

“I remember kneeling on the floor singing and crying out to God.”

In that moment she realised that even though she was a Christian, God was calling her to turn away from her bad attitude towards Him and instead trust in His perfect goodness.

“That experience completely changed my life, not in a drastic and hugely obvious way to others but from that night on, I was a committed follower of Christ and I haven’t looked back.”

This change started with an attitude adjustment as Rochelle started to develop a love for people and a desire to help those in need, just as Jesus did, instead of following her own selfish priorities as a teenager.

“When I look back over my journey since that night, there are three key themes I have noticed in my walk with God through the years: an understanding that God cares and His peace is a feeling like no other, God always provides and God is always there for me,” she shares.

“There have been times when I’ve needed money or work and it’s always come through. From the time when



Rochelle wants to live life to the full

I was on a very low trainee wage and I needed thousands of dollars to be involved in a mission ministry and one day the money just appeared in my bank account! God blessed me so much, that I was even able to help others pay for their fees.

“Another time I was looking for work for a very specific period during my university holidays. An opportunity came up and it turned out to be for the exact period of time I was available. Coincidence? I don’t believe so.”

Rochelle adds that human nature means even close family and friends will sometimes let you down but God is constant and always has our best interest in mind.

“I take comfort in the fact that God is always there. Being a Christian also doesn’t mean that life is easy. But what a comfort it is to know that whatever challenges come my way,

my God is walking alongside me, and I will be okay. Being a Christian doesn’t mean following a strict, legalistic set of rules. For me, being a Christian is about working out from the Lord how He wants me to live.

“It’s about striving to become more like Jesus. It’s communicating with Him daily; praying for guidance, for others and about the things that trouble me. It’s committing to a local church and serving in that church to help more people come to know Him. It’s following the passions that God has given me and fighting for a just and compassionate society where all people, regardless of race, status, gender or religion are treated with respect and dignity.

“I can’t imagine doing life without God. I shudder to think of where I’d be. I praise and thank my God for His goodness, kindness, compassion and everlasting love.”

Let little children come

Religious education in schools has recently come to the foreground of contentious topics discussed among the Australian public, particularly in regards to Christian beliefs.

Whatever opinions people have about Jesus, few disagree with His morals and values, but some reject His straightforward claim that He is God.

Perhaps the overarching question parents in general have is ‘what does this Jesus have to do with my children?’

Well, the answer is that just as parents agree that children are a great blessing and want nothing but the best for them, Jesus wants the best for your children too.

On one occasion as Jesus walked on earth parents brought their babies and little children to Him for prayer and for Him to bless them (see Matthew chapter 19 verse 13 and 14).

Jesus was already a well-known, influential teacher at this time and his disciples were trying to chase these little ones away, thinking Jesus had much more important things to do and say. However, Jesus’ response to them was surprising...

“Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’”

Although you may not personally hold to the Christian faith, will you let your little children come to Jesus for blessing?

Jesus said Heaven belongs to the little ones and He later sacrificed His life to give them a future with hope in this life and the next.

Whether through Christian education, Sunday school classes, teen youth groups or other programs, trust your children and allow them to be blessed by the knowledge that there is a loving God who cares deeply for them. •

A CLEAN SWEEP

BY COLIN LANE

When I was 16, my parents decided they could finally trust me and my brothers enough to leave us home while they went away for a weekend. My grandparents lived just down the street, so we could eat and sleep there if we wanted to.

I saw this as a great opportunity to invite all my mates and some girls over for a Saturday night party – drink some alcohol, listen to some music and have a great time.

I did not have permission, of course, but I figured I would get everything cleaned up well before my parents arrived home the following night. They would never know.

The trouble was, word about our gathering got around and, come party time, people seemed to appear from everywhere. They arrived in cars, on motorbikes and by foot. There was beer by the slab and teenagers in their hundreds. Things were broken and stolen, kids were passing out and there was rubbish everywhere. It was completely out of control.

I was in a panic. I tried everything I could to get people to leave, but nothing worked.

My nana, meanwhile, had become concerned by the number of young people hanging about in the street, and walked down to check on the house. What a sight greeted her! But this tough little lady marched into the house and ordered everybody out. And they left – within minutes she had driven them all out and the place was quiet. She and I got to work, cleaning the house to restore it to its original state. Then, much relieved, I went back to her place to sleep for what was left of the night.

Not another word was ever said about the party.

As I reflect now, it is a great parallel to the Christian story. We allow things into the ‘house’ – our lives – that do not belong, that cause us trouble, that mess it up. Some of these things are invited in, others are uninvited, but our lives end up broken, dirty or cracked. Through greed, selfishness or pride, because of addictions or unhealthy habits or because of violent word and behav-

ours, we become polluted. Christians call it sin.

Although we may often try to rid ourselves of the stuff we know is not good for us, it can be difficult to budge. But when we allow the Holy Spirit of God into our lives, restoration takes place. It is like a wonderful house-cleaning job happens within our hearts and souls. Things are restored to their original condition. We are clean. And not another word is said. Because of Jesus, and his death on the cross, there is no punishment from God, and all is forgiven. Is this your life out of control? Does the house of your life need a clean-out? Open the door to Jesus. He will put things right. •

(Courtesy Warcy magazine)



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DNA enzyme far from 'dumb machine'

Dr Santoso helped uncover a unique process in the DNA-replicating enzyme

With the discovery of a hidden computational component of the DNA-copying nano-machine, Dr Yusdi Santoso's experience in computer engineering and physics have proved useful in opening new biological pathways to solving genetic disorders.

During his Ph.D. study at Oxford University Yusdi studied DNA polymerase, an enzyme best understood as a 'protein machine' that makes copies of DNA molecules for every new living cell.

In 2008 Yusdi and another lead researcher found that there is in fact an additional 'conformational transition' process that screens DNA bases (letters) for mistakes before the enzyme proof-reads and copies them.

Along with his studies at Oxford, Yusdi was surprised to discover a deep-seated emphasis on evolu-

tion and atheism at the core of the university's ethos.

This contrasted greatly with the views of his religious parents and the Islamic beliefs that surrounded him in his home country Indonesia. Here he had been taught Darwin's theory of evolution at school, but only as one view of origins, rather than as scientific fact.

"I didn't really think about evolution very much until going to Oxford," Yusdi explains.

He had specialised in bioinformatics in his computer engineering studies at Nanyang Technological University (NTU), but it was his deep interest in biophysics that earned him a scholarship from NTU for his Oxford Ph.D.

While at NTU, it was Yusdi's wife-to-be Jessica who brought a clearer understanding of life when she invited him to her Bible-believing church.

As he listened to the teachings

of the Bible and Jessica's explanations of Christianity, he realised "I was religious, but going to church was [only] a cultural expectation. I came to see the Bible as God's revelation of Himself, which transcended any teaching of men. By reading it, I began to understand what God wants from us, and with this, God's peace came into my life."

With this understanding Yusdi remembers making the decision to surrender his life in obedience to Jesus Christ.

He later attended a church while at Oxford that affirmed the six days of Biblical creation, and curiously read the Biblical perspectives of 50 Ph.D. scientists in a book entitled *In Six Days* by John Ashton.

"I particularly appreciated the scientific depth of the arguments presented [in this book]," Yusdi says.

In Yusdi's view, the greatest difficulty with the theory of evolution is its improbability.

"The strength of evolution," he says, "is in the narration – it's a good story. However, when you look at the details it seems most unlikely."

As molecular biologist Francis Crick, one of the discoverers of the structure of DNA, admitted in his 1981 book *Life Itself*, "An honest man, armed with all the knowledge available to us now, could only state that in some sense, the origin of life appears at the moment to be almost a miracle, so many are the conditions which would have had to have been satisfied to get it going."

Regarding the assumed evolutionary pathway of DNA polymerase, Yusdi comments, "None of my colleagues at Oxford can explain how a machine like this could have arisen through an evolutionary process."

The popular view among his colleagues, he explains, is that life began by RNA molecules forming self-reproducing systems – the 'RNA world hypothesis'.

However, he said, "nobody can



Dr Yusdi Santoso with his son

show, in a way that's at all convincing, how a DNA polymerase machine made up of proteins could have evolved from RNA – and this would seem impossible to me.

"The intermediate forms would not function as well as the original forms, so they would be out-

competed. The evolutionary explanations are just too simplistic and they ignore the details. To evolve a bicycle into a motor-

bike by adding an engine is a very big step, because engines are complex and need to be carefully designed. Similarly the differences between the different types of DNA polymerase would require much detailed design work at each stage."

Despite his interest in science, Yusdi has decided to pursue a career in business and software consulting because of rampant discrimination against Bible-affirming scientists.

He explained, "In many parts of the world, the scientific community discriminates against those who do not toe the party line on evolution. For example, it would have been very difficult for me to obtain funding for my work."

However, he is still glad he studied science because it enables him to "do something worthwhile."

"My discoveries were a step towards a greater understanding of DNA replication which could lead to the curing of some genetic disorders," he explains.

He says his research into DNA polymerase also showed him "just how complex life is".

"The Bible tells us that we are 'fearfully and wonderfully made' (Psalm 134: 19) and I saw this very clearly in much of my scientific work. All this speaks of an awesome Creator," he concludes.

Courtesy creation.com



Believe it or not

BY CREATION MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Foxes migrated on ice bridges

Researchers, led by scientists at Durham University, UK, say arctic foxes migrated to Iceland across bridges of sea ice during the Little Ice Age.

That was in fairly recent historical times between 200 and 500 years ago. Temperatures dropped across much of Europe and North America during the Little Ice Age. Rivers like the Thames through London often froze in winter and were popular for ice skating.

Foxes had also crossed on sea ice in the distant past during the previous (post-Flood) ice age many thousands of years ago. Warming temperatures and melting ice bridges isolated the foxes until new sea ice joined the island during the Little Ice Age, when a new population of animals migrated.

This can help us understand how some animal populations could have dispersed from Noah's Ark in the Middle East. The formation of ice bridges during the post-Flood Ice Age about 4,000 years ago provides another plausible mechanism.



FIND OUT MORE AT CREATION.COM

1. Little Ice Age led to migration of island hopping arctic foxes, sciencedaily.com, 12 September 2012.
2. The impact of past climate change on genetic variation and population connectivity in the Icelandic arctic fox, *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 279(1747):4568-73, 2012.

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QUOTABLE QUOTES

"A **wise** man fears, and departs from evil: but the **fool** rages, and is confident."

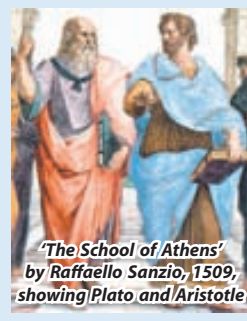
- Proverbs chapter 14, verse 16 (WEB)

"A **fool** vents all his feelings, but a **wise** man holds them back."

- Proverbs chapter 29, verse 11 (NKJV)

"**Wise** men speak because they have something to say, **fools** because they have to say something."

- Greek philosopher Plato (428-348BC)



'The School of Athens' by Raffaello Sanzio, 1509, showing Plato and Aristotle

Family Finance

Hints for buying a used car

For those who do not have a mechanically-minded friend to shop around with, here are some useful tips:

History: Ask the owner for the service logbook and about past owners and accidents. Check that all major services were fully completed. If comparing a car that is close to or overdue for a major service with one that just had one, the latter is better value.

Kilometres: A car that does much less than the average of 20,000 km per year will be less worn and thus worth more. Ask whether it was used more on the highway or around the city (which wears on gears, brakes, engine).

Exterior: Get the car in a well-lit, unshaded place to look closely for scratches, dents and colour inconsistencies. Check all panels line up, and door trims and bumpers are fully attached. You might be able to live with a few dints, but unmatched panels and colour tints are evidence of a major crash. A different tinted panel that still has signs of damage shows the work was not done by an insurer-approved repairer. Check around a towbar for corrosion and rust that saltwater may have caused.

Interior: Look for frayed fibres, tears, holes and burns in the seat belts, carpet, door trims, and under seat covers. Has the ash tray been used? Check the operation of the seat belt pull-tension, belt buckles, seat reclining and movement, and the child door locks. Wind windows up and down, checking for noisy motors. Try the interior and exterior lights and the wiper blades.

On the test drive: Turn off distractions to listen for banging or knocking, especially while accelerating, turning or braking.

After checking the park brake, check for the following in the foot brake:

- 1) Persistent high-pitched screeching (when brake rotors are dry, non-rusted) means pads need replacing;
- 2) If braking feels under-responsive, fades or pedal 'sinks' there may be a fluid leak or air bubble in the brake line;
- 3) If wheel pulls to the side under braking there is uneven wearing of the brake lining or containment in brake fluid.
- 4) Loud metallic grinding or growling means brake-pads are worn away and brake rotors will need re-skimming.
- 5) Vibration or pulsating (when not under heavy anti-lock braking) indicates warped brake rotors or tyres out of alignment.

Look for exhaust smoke under acceleration while parked or pulling away from traffic lights. Front wheel drive cars may have torn CV boots, thus exposing the drive shafts to damaging grit. These shafts are damaged if you hear knocking or clunking when slightly accelerating in a tight circle in a carpark.

Roadworthiness: You can arrange for a pre-purchase vehicle inspection through your state's royal automotive club, a private inspection company, or even your local mechanic.

If you want to inspect it yourself, be prepared for some work. Pop the front hood to check the engine bay for oil leaks and for correct power steering and brake fluid levels (this is marked on the side of the container). If the brake fluid appears murky, it needs replacing.

Next, check the brake pads and shoes, and the tires for bubbles, cuts and proper tread depth. Illegal depth is below 1.5 mm anywhere in contact with road. Note that the manufacturer's wear bar (often marked "TWI") is for optimal performance and may be above 1.5mm. Also, look closely for cracks in the suspension bushes, as well as oil leaking from shockers.

Finally, check the exhaust pipe for holes and cracks (i.e. a black carbon stain), and while you're underneath look for oil leaking from the engine, steering rack and transmission.

Breakthrough amid family heartache

Married at age 17 with five children by 26, Taliba Falaq-Lockhart had a few good years before her first husband was shot and killed. From there things slowly began to unravel.

She married her second husband months later and clung to her perfectionism, fearing that loss of control would cause her family to fall apart.

"I began to feel empty on the inside and dissatisfied with life; after I got off work at night I would stop by the nightclub seeking relief and satisfaction, but there was none," Taliba confesses.

Already in debt, when Taliba and her husband both lost their jobs, her car was repossessed and they were threatened with house foreclosure.

More painful and dark times quickly followed for her family after her oldest granddaughter ran away from home.

Added to her pain was her oldest son's addiction to drugs and booze and the news that her husband had been in an adulterous relationship.

The final straw was the unexpected death of her nine-month old grandson.

"Grief, sadness and darkness were all around me. I longed for peace and understanding; nevertheless, all the hurt, pain, disappointments and confusion at last overwhelmed me. I had suddenly come to the end of myself," she says.

Taliba finally broke down crying and pleading to God for help, knowing something in her life had to change.

"I did not know if God was truly real or not, but I hoped He was. I only knew my soul was desperate and my heart sincere."

A few months after her grandson's funeral God answered her prayers

while on a visit to her sick mother.

"On that cold Friday afternoon in January 1995, my life changed forever," Taliba recalls.

"The experience was as though God came and pulled the veil from my eyes and said, 'Wake up my child, it's time to know the truth and be set free'."

Taliba distinctly remembers her encounter with the real and living God as she returned to the kitchen after bringing her mother something to eat.

The heaviness left her as she felt uplifted and saw a visible presence in the room.

"He was just so real and alive; more real than anything I have ever known. I knew right away that it was God," she says.

She poured out her tears but felt engulfed by comfort and peace as God brought clarity to her mind and a deep understanding of who He was.

"I knew and understood at that moment that God was in full control, as my mind was totally at peace. It felt as if God literally reached down from heaven and wrapped me in Himself; took my heart in His powerful hand and transformed it," she explains.

"I could feel His deep overflowing unconditional love flow through me, in spite of all I had done. I also knew God loved my lying adulterous husband, my sons with their wayward and destructive behaviours as well as every other soul in the world."

Suddenly Taliba understood the weight of what Jesus had done on the cross for her, as she had learnt about at Sunday school as a child.

Having dealt with sin through his death and resurrection, Jesus was able to offer the free gift of forgiveness to all those who accept it.

"In that moment I felt His perfect peace and His unlimited forgiveness,



Taliba Falaq-Lockhart

Rebellious children, her husband's affair, and death in the family broke Taliba's heart before a miraculous experience changed her perspective on life

His deep compassion, His great and tender mercy, His amazing kindness and His immense grace. I felt like I was finally at home where I belong for the first time in my life!"

"That day I bowed and confessed my sins to Jesus Christ repeatedly, saying, 'God, You are real! Your Word is true!'"

With confusion gone and a determination to turn away from her old ways and follow Jesus Christ, her yearning soul was satisfied by God, Taliba says.

Although her husband eventually left her for the other woman, she explains that God has "healed my broken heart and helped me to forgive those who hurt me."

"He has put the pieces of my life back together and He has given me rest for my soul."

"Today I have a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ

and I know He is living on the inside of me in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Today, my life is meaningful and full of purpose."

Emboldened by God's transformation of her life, Taliba now wants

to encourage other people, saying, "Jesus Christ is a friend you do not want to live and die without, for you will surely stand before Him one day. Don't wait until it is too late." •

MYTHS ABOUT HEAVEN

BY MARTIN DUFFIELD

The 'good' go to heaven?

How good do you have to be to go to Heaven? According to Jesus, Heaven is a place of perfection and purity. God, in whom there is not the slightest trace of evil, and the (loyal) angels, are absolutely perfect and pure.

Worse still for us is the fact that God is so absolutely pure that He cannot tolerate any evil in His presence. This is why He told humans that they could not look upon His "face" and live! God "dwells in unapproachable light"² and He "is a consuming fire."³ So how can we, who are not perfectly good, go to a perfect Heaven, even if God wanted us to?

Well, access to Heaven is a bit like access to another country. We cannot go to another country without a document (a visa) declaring that we are a suitable person to visit or live there. If we have a criminal record or we are in some other way offensive to that people or culture, they will not accept us.

Similarly, we are considered undesirable or unsuitable for Heaven because we have broken God's eternal laws. Just as a criminal on earth has a criminal "record" that would bar them from another country. So it is with Earth and Heaven. God has ten laws or commandments and humans break many, if not most, in some way, every day in thought, word and action.

The biblical word for these breaches of God's Law is "sin." Though people tend to think of "sins" these days as "naughty" things you do and then laugh about, however, in God's sight they are serious offenses against Him. The Bible says the consequences of sin is everlasting exclusion from God's perfect presence and punishment for our crimes in Hell. Thus, none of us are good enough! Thankfully God has provided a way for us.

God, like governments, can exercise mercy and make access possible – through a pardon. He did this by meeting the demands of our punishment for breaking His laws. Jesus, God the Son, came from Heaven, and was born as a man to pay the penalty for our "crimes" against Him on the Cross on the first Good Friday – just as people now pay the fines of others to free them from the consequences of their crimes.

So, if you (a) accept that you have broken God's laws, (b) trust Christ to have paid for those "crimes" for you and (c) genuinely desire to turn away (i.e. repent) from a life of disobedience, to love and obey God (with His promised help), then you receive a pardon and access to Heaven. God will forgive all your violations of His law – no matter how serious – and clear your "criminal record." You will be accepted as good enough because through Christ your offences are removed. God will see you, through Jesus, as righteous. You will not only get your "visa" to Heaven, but you will be able to say, "But (my) citizenship is in Heaven. And (I) eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ..."⁴

(1) Exodus 33, verse 20. (2) 1 Timothy 6, verse 16. (3) Hebrews 12:29. (4) Philippians 3:20

Finding rest in times of pain

BY KANDIMA AWENDILA

No one is immune to suffering in this world. We will all go through some form of pain or suffering at any point in our lives. A life cut short because of a deadly disease, motoring accidents or when a natural disaster strikes, depression, unemployment, broken relationships and the list could go on. It is a well-known fact that pain is a part of life.

The way people respond in such difficult circumstances differs from one person to another. Some people's response is to question the existence of God and use the difficult circumstance as "proof" to conclude that God doesn't exist - if God truly exists, then why would He allow us to suffer?

Some respond with anger towards God and distance themselves from him, while others may even draw closer to God. As we battle through our emotions, the question we most often want answered is - why?

One of the most painful experiences anyone could ever go through is the loss of a loved one. I lost my parents some years ago. No words could ever express the pain my family and I went through. It was a tough time and I miss them dearly.

I still find myself questioning why



God allowed this to happen. Was it something that I did or did not do? Could I have prevented this from happening? Will I ever come to understand the reasoning?

I recently read a booklet published by RBC ministries that talks about a man in the bible called Job, who feared God and shunned evil.

Job faced a great trial when he lost his family, his property and even his health (see Job chapters 1- 3). Job suffered immensely and he had many questions for God. What I find admirable about Job is that he still affirmed and had faith in God. He drew closer to God and even praised Him through his suffering (Job 1 verse 21).

I like what Bill Crowder goes on to state in this booklet. He writes: "Without explaining the mystery or reconciling the pain, God (as Creator of the Universe) reminded Job that His power and wisdom were infinitely beyond Job's. The solution to suffering and the doubts it raises is not found in argument. It is found in learning to rest in God's undeserved love and to trust in His power - even when the suffering is mysterious and overwhelming."

Will I ever get answers to my questions?

I may not fully understand the reasons for whatever struggles I go through, but I now find it comforting to know that God has a much bigger picture of my life and a better understanding of who I am. I should let God be God. He has profound wisdom. He is present even during those times when it may appear like he isn't and he understands the pain I may be going through.

He can use my sufferings to teach me, mould me into a better person and in turn to bless others. What I need to do is learn to trust Him and I will find rest in His abounding love, mercy and grace. •

Original source: <http://christiantoday.com.au/article/finding-rest-in-times-of-pain/17840.htm>

GARDENING

BY ANNE DAVIES

Weatherproof your garden

As each day is gradually getting colder it is time to get stuck into the tasks that all gardens need in autumn and early winter:



1 The first is some **serious pruning**. This means cutting back shrubs that have finished flowering, removing dead or diseased growth (don't forget to sterilise tools afterwards), and pruning back long, spindly growth. Sharp secateurs, loppers, or a hedge trimmers (for larger jobs) will suit most plants.



2 Fertilise your garden with a slow-release organic fertiliser, such as pelletised chicken manure. This means that come spring when the plant is putting on new growth, it has plenty of nutrients available. Spreading a thin layer of compost (home-made or bought) and well-rotted animal manure will improve your soil structure. Good soil structure means healthy root growth, good drainage and readily available nutrients.

3 Layer on the mulch about 100 mm deep, being sure to keep it away from plant stems. I like to use hay or straw, but any organic mulch will suppress weeds and maintain a warmer soil temperature. Organic mulch will slowly decompose into the soil with your compost, giving your plants a wonderful growing environment. The plants you grow for winter colour won't need pruning, but will still benefit from fertilising and mulching.



4 Stake any young plants that may need support from gusty winds. Plants should always be staked so that some canopy movement is possible to build up the support roots. Remember to check the ties in spring, though, to make sure they are not ringbarking the tree.

5 Consider areas that need developing or revamping. Perhaps you could add some colour, plant more native habitat or put in a veggie patch. So, get out your gardening books, browse the internet or visit your local nursery and think outside the box.

Article courtesy Salvation Army Warray magazine.

Anne Davies is a nursery supervisor and horticultural trainer at the Salvation Army's Tom Quinn Community Centre in Bundaberg (Qld).

Building Better Marriages

THE UNBREAKABLE BOND OF A MOTHER AND CHILD

BY ROB FURLONG

The 24th June 2013 was a day that forever changed the lives of Selina Bello and Peggy Alexander-Kew.

Selina was five months pregnant and working with her Mum, Angela Ferullo at their hair dressing salon in Como, Perth, Western Australia and Peggy had been a loyal customer of theirs for the previous four years.

Suddenly, around 10.30am a man charged into the salon brandishing two hunting knives and demanding to know where Angela was. The man was Angela's ex-husband and also the father of Selina.

In this tragic encounter all three women were stabbed by the man with Peggy bravely staring him down and telling him to leave – she had even managed to hit him over the head with a salon chair!

Although Selina (and her unborn child) survived the encounter her

mother tragically did not.

Angela died as a result of the wounds inflicted upon her when she threw herself between the attacker and her pregnant daughter.

Reflecting back on that day and what she witnessed, Peggy has no doubt that Selina would have been killed had her mother not sacrificed her own life to protect her. It is little surprise, given the ordeal that these women endured, that Peggy and Selina today share a special bond.

Angela's sacrifice and bravery – in literally laying down her life for her family – blows me away when I think about it and it poignantly illustrates the depth of the loving bond that a mother has for her children.

Experts tell us that this bond develops between a mother and child while the child is in the womb and I believe that it is an unbreakable bond. I have seen it in the eyes of my own wife Karen for our children and also in the way she has loved, cared and nurtured them over the course of their lives. And it is a love and nurture that continues to this day despite the fact that they are now grown adults, some with children of their own! I truly believe that she would also lay down her life for them.

It is interesting to note that the



12 May 2013: Angela Ferullo and Selina Bello

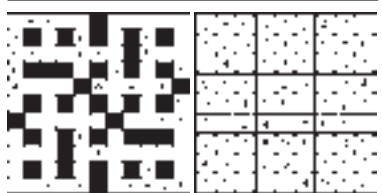
Bible also acknowledges the intensity of the love that a mother has for her children. Hosea 13:8 uses the imagery of a female bear who has had her cubs stolen from her – such is her love for her lost cubs that she is both fearsome and ferocious in her efforts to retrieve them. It may be going a bit far to suggest that human mothers would go to the same lengths to protect their own children but in the case of Angela Ferullo giving up her life for her daughter and grandchild, is that not a love that is both fearsome and ferocious?

I am deliberately trying to *not* overstate my case but I also want to point out that the love of a mother for her child is a beautiful gift from God intended to provide children with an environment in which they are raised in safety and security. What a loss

it is for the child who does not know the sweetness, tenderness and nurture that a mother's love provides. A mother's love is *truly* one of God's greatest blessings.

I am also amazed at the bravery of all three of these women – Peggy, Angela and Selina – both during and in the aftermath of this awful tragedy. Bravery that confronted and stared down evil in the face; bravery that produced incalculable sacrifice and bravery that has enabled the two survivors to rebuild their lives. We often speak of the brave exploits of men and rightly so. But there are also thousands upon thousands of women, both past and present, known and unknown, who have shown tremendous bravery in the face of the worst of circumstances. Among them are women I have met in Africa who have witnessed unspeakable atrocities committed against their families and yet somehow they find the courage to serve God, love people and live.

This Mother's Day pause and offer a prayer of thanks to God for the provision of a mother's love and the security that it brings to all human relationships. And thank Him also for the courageous women in our world and in *your* life – what a wonderful gift they are!



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)

<p>OUR PROBLEM:</p>	<p>SEPARATION from God "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23)</p>	<p>ADMIT</p>
<p>GOD'S REMEDY / SOLUTION:</p>	<p>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)</p>	<p>BELIEVE</p>
<p>OUR RESPONSE:</p>	<p>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)</p>	<p>COMMIT</p>

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 :

If you prayed the above prayer, tick this box

I have prayed this prayer.

Please send me:

Bible

Some 'starting off' literature

Information on a helpful church

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

I would like to think about this.

Please send me:

More information as I am inquiring about being a Christian.

I have a problem (see attached letter)

* Please tick and write clearly *

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Age and occupation (it helps) _____

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

Video-on-demand: spoiled for choice

BY DARRYL BUDGE

Australians now have four low-cost streaming services to satisfy their appetite for on-demand TV and movies. Most offer free 30-day trials (15 days for Quickflix) but all are priced well under the minimum \$25 per month for Foxtel pay TV.

Streaming VOD Australian service	Monthly Price (no contracts)	Top Content (as of early April 2015)	Required net speed (megabits/sec) & quota
Netflix.com ~1500 titles vs. 6000 on Netflix USA. Best interface. To watch 60hrs UHD content requires 4K TV or player with 'HEVC'	\$9 = 1 SD stream \$12 = 2 HD streams \$15 = Four 4K UHD streams Streams = no. of devices allowed.	Show exclusives: <i>House of Cards, Marco Polo, Sense8</i> (which are all UHD titles). <i>Orange is the New Black, Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt</i> Movies: Roadshow Entertainment, Beyond Distribution, ABC and Disney	Requires min. 0.5Mb/sec 3 Mb/s = SD (1GB/hr) 5 Mb/s = HD (3GB/hr) 16 Mb/s = UHD (7GB/hr) UHD needs 4K TV/player with HEVC decoder. Unmetered on Internode, iiNet, Westnet, Adam, Optus
Stan.com.au Partnership of Fairfax & Nine Entertainment. Has Ch. 9 TV + movies, and a PIN-lockable large selection of titles for kids.	\$10/month Max. 6 devices & 3 streams at once.	Shows: <i>Breaking Bad, Better Call Saul, Community S6, Transparent, Mozart in the Jungle, Dig, Lost Girl S4 & 5</i> Movies: <i>James Bond flicks, Lego Movie, LOTR-based flicks</i> . Studios: MGM, Sony, Roadshow + Nine, SBS, ABC	Auto quality adoption: 2.5 Mb/s (1 GB/hr) for SD (480p). Min. 3.5 Mb/s (1.5GB/hr) for HD (720p). Min. 6.5 Mb/s (3GB/hr) for HD (1080p) All ISPs count net quota
Presto.com.au Partnership of Foxtel & Seven. SD only but the most movies of all the services.	TV \$10/mth Movies \$10/mth Both \$15/mth Max. 4 devices and 2 streams at once	Is similar to Foxtel Play. Covers most movie studios, plus Foxtel and Seven content, but not hits like <i>Game of Thrones, Veep</i> , nor Foxtel's new release movies	Needs min. 3Mbps Only SD offered = 1.3 GB/hr Unmetered quota on Bigpond or Foxtel Broadband ISPs.
Quickflix.com.au Streaming package + pay-per-play (or season) for under 1-year-old titles. (Also has DVD post-back service from \$13 p/month, with no late fees)	\$10/month Max. 6 devices & 3 streams at once. "Premium" new release movies are \$6 each. "Premium" TV is \$3 per episode.	"Premium" Shows include: <i>The Walking Dead, Orange is the New Black, Game of Thrones, Scandal, Mad Men, Veep, Orphan Black</i> . "Premium" Movies: <i>Before I Go to Sleep, Fury, Guardians of the Galaxy, The November Man, Maleficent</i>	Needs min. 3 Mbps 1.5 GB/hr for SD 2.5 GB/hr HD (5Mbps) All ISPs count net quota

HOW TO WATCH: (1) A computer browser (tip: connect PC to TV via HDMI cable); (2) Download service's app on your smartphone or tablet via its app store; (3) Google Chromecast (plugs in TV HDMI port, controlled via Android or iOS app); (4) Some services support Apple TV, some smart TVs or set-top boxes or Blu-ray players, Fetch TV box, Telstra T-Box, and Xbox and PlayStation game consoles.

See each website's 'help' section, and compare the offered TV shows, movies and the supported devices via this website: compareozstreaming.com. TIP: On Netflix, control quality and view stats with keyboard shortcuts Control+Alt+Shift+S, or +L.

SUMMARY: For movies, try Presto, while Stan and Netflix offer more TV content.

NEXT ISSUE: What does 4K Ultra-High-Definition and the HEVC codec offer?

PACMAN FEARLESS FIGHTER

As a world-renowned Filipino boxer, congressman, singer, actor, philanthropist and basketball coach, Manny Pacquiao shares the reason for his fearless life

Manny, better known as Pacman in the ring, is the current WBO welterweight titleholder and first boxer in history to win ten world titles in eight different weight divisions – a worthy contender for the match of the year against controversial American boxer Floyd Mayweather.

As two of the world's greatest pound-for-pound fighters with ten world titles to each name, the rivalry between Manny and Floyd was fuelled back in 2009 when their match to battle it out for top spot was cancelled.

The six year wait until their May 2 fight at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas means it has smashed combat sports revenue records, with more than \$400 million split 60-40 between the contracted parties of Floyd and Manny.

Manny has never been worried about facing the undefeated American champ who is statistically the most accurate boxer of all time.

When asked if he gets worried about losing a match, Manny told *The Telegraph* back in 2009, "I have no fear in my life, I don't fear losing. Why feel fear in your heart when you believe in God?"

The same can be said of Manny today, with his roots built up from a humble beginning and personal relationship with God, reminding him that win or lose, there are more important things in life.

Manny left his broken home at the age of 14 as his mother could no longer afford to support him and his five siblings. He lived on the streets of Manila before meeting the owner of a gym, Ben Delgado, who took a special interest in Manny and agreed

to train him.

"He always had a big heart, in and out of the ring, and even back then, he wanted to be champion of the world," Ben says.

Manny was boxing professionally at 17 and earning \$2 a fight, which he sent home to his mother.

As his success grew, Manny admits he strayed from God for many years, but never forgot the way his mother brought him up to understand the importance of faith in God.

He recently admitted on the Filipino TV show *Tapatan ni Tunying* that in 2010 his marriage to Jinkee was in trouble and it was trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ personally that saved his life and his marriage.

Manny recalls, "I was strongly drinking and gambling. I'm a womaniser. Always swearing." Their fighting was so serious that Jinkee once threatened him with a knife while he pulled out a gun.

That all changed when he trusted in Jesus as Lord and Saviour later that year. After that decision Manny says they rarely fight now.

"I'm happy because I found the right way to salvation," Manny told *The Guardian* in 2014.

"We are required to be born-again [of the spirit], all of us. Christ said unless we are born-again we cannot enter the kingdom of God. So it's very important to me. Jesus Christ said: 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father [God] except through me.' There is no other way. The only way is through Jesus."

Manny writes a daily devotional on his website, pacman.craveonline.com, and quotes Isaiah chapter 45 verse 5 which says, "I am the Lord, and there is no other; apart from me



NOVEMBER 23, 2014: Manny Pacquiao of the Philippines fights Chris Algieri of the US (not pictured) during their World Boxing Organization welterweight title bout in Macau. Pacquiao dominated and scored six knockdowns in a lopsided victory via unanimous decision. Photo Xaume OlleroS/AFP/Getty Images)

there is no other God."

"While we thank the Lord for all His temporal gifts, we are not to depend on them, even slightly. Jesus Christ is our only need in life."

Although he is continually on the road for fights, training and publicity appearances, Manny is still faithful in attending church regularly.

He often wears a cross around his neck and is known to kneel and pray in his ringside corner before each fight and gives thanks to God when it is finished.

"Win or lose, I will pray at the corner to thank God for all his blessings," he says.

At a gathering he asked the crowd: "What about you, did you count your blessings? Remember to thank God for all that He has done. He will give you your needs."

Always remembering that his physical ability and wealth comes from God, he never turns the poor away when they come begging for money and food at his house.

"God has given me a gift and it is my duty to share the fruits of this gift with my people," he says.

Compassion for the people of the Philippines has led him on a new venture into politics and in 2010 he was elected into the House of Representatives.

Some might say that he earned his way to the top and deserves all the credit but Manny knows that his accomplishments were not from his strength alone and it is with that thought that he prepares to take on

Floyd Mayweather in the ring.

"Before, my ultimate dream was just to be champion in the Philippines. But look at me now. This is because I lifted it all up to the Lord [in prayer]," he says.

"I don't want to say I'm the best boxer in the world. I would say I'm a boxer who can fight a good fight against any fighter in the world. All my talent comes from God." ●



JANUARY 20, 2015: Philippine boxing champion Manny Pacquiao arrives with his wife Jinkee for the Los Angeles Premiere of the film about his life 'Manny' in Hollywood. Photo Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images

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