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SAVED FROM LIFE OF CONFLICT

Walking on eggshells was the only way South African Danelia Hoffman knew how to live. It was either that or be beaten. Her father was an alcoholic whose word was law and whose hand was harsh.

Her husband, whom she married at 19, was the same – a drinker who beat his wife and children for the slightest infraction.

"My husband showed no mercy," Danelia tells *Challenge News*. "He beat us mostly to get rid of his anger."

Both Danelia and her mother, who was a Christian, tolerated their husbands' abuse in the mistaken belief that that was what was expected of them.

"One of the worst kinds of abuse is spiritual abuse and to misuse Scriptures," says a wiser Danelia, now 50.

"Every time we would speak out

against my husband's bad behaviour he would open up the Bible and point out passages saying we needed to guard our tongues, or that the children must obey their parents and the wife must submit.

"He would religiously read the Bible, pray and let us sing hymns – unless he was drinking. Then he would get drunk and become very aggressive. We were not allowed to speak out against his behaviour and needed to be the perfect family all the time."

Danelia, the third of five children, remembers her home as being full of arguments.

She was, however, close to her grandfather. He was a Godly man

who for her 12th birthday gave her a note with Psalm 1: 1-3 written on it. "It has been with me all my life," Danelia smiles. "I'm sure he prayed for me."

Danelia attended Sunday School and church from the time she was a child and found comfort in many of the teachings, but because of the home situation, was insecure and conflicted.

"I still didn't know God well enough to trust Him with every-

thing. I would cry out to God 'Did you not see this?'

One way she dealt with her anxiety was to excel at school. "That was my escape from the real world," she explains. "Performing better academically made me proud."

In Year 12, she attended a Christian camp and there was impressed by a verse from the Bible – *"I have called you by name, you are mine"* – Isaiah 43:1.

Not long after that camp, she says there was an incident in which she felt unfairly treated. "Suddenly I heard a loud voice in my head saying: 'That is how unfairly I was treated on the cross.'

"I will never forget that; my sense of injustice disappeared."

These events touched Danelia deeply, and in 2008 she says she "finally took the step of inviting God into my life, making Him my Lord and Saviour."

The insecurity vanished. "I always wondered if I would go to heaven or hell; I was never sure. But when I actually made a firm commitment, I became sure."

In 2008, at her husband's insistence, the family moved to Perth, where Danelia, a midwife,



Danelia Hoffman

still lives today.

Moving to a new country did nothing to stop the abuse and in 2013 Danelia left her husband after he beat her in front of their one-year-old son – only to reconcile briefly a short time later.

"I kept on believing God could change him – and I know God is able to do that – but my husband needed to choose to change, and he wasn't willing to do that."

"Instead, God opened my eyes and showed me the institution of

marriage had become an idol to me. I was proud that I was the only one of my siblings who hadn't gotten a divorce.

"But my marriage was not honouring God and was a bad example for my children."

In 2016, Danelia finalised the divorce, ending 25 years of marriage.

"I don't see it as a failed marriage as I gained four beautiful children," she remarks. "It didn't have a fairy tale ending, but God will take care of the rest."

She says her children are working through the challenges they have endured "with God's grace and mercy".

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ENGLISH story PAGE 6

BY JODY BENNETT

"ONE of the greatest tricks the devil ever pulled was making people believe he didn't exist," says Kevin Spacey's character, Kaiser Soszay, in the movie *The Usual Suspects*.

Of course, today it seems ridiculous to believe in a devil in red tights with horns and a trident. But that was just an image Middle Age artists developed to try to convey evil in a way that spoke to their audience; what if we use an image for evil that speaks to us today? What if I said Satan is like a computer hacker?

Imagine him as a spiritual hacker – looking for weaknesses in your life to exploit, and using your personal information against you.

Every day thousands of computers are hacked and huge amounts of data are compromised, but people never think it will happen to them. In the same way, Satan invades and ruins millions of lives every day, and many of those people are unaware, unconcerned or foolishly ill-prepared.

The Bible says in 1 Peter 5:8: *Be sober, be vigilant;*

Life hacker

because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Like a hacker, Satan disguises himself as something appealing – an online date or a Nigerian banker who wants to give you millions. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 11:14: *For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.*

Like a hacker who can look through your search history and work out what scheme is most likely to catch you, Satan's minions (demons) have been watching you your whole life, and he has been studying humanity for centuries – he knows what temptations will lure you most effectively. He kicks you when you're down, when you're tired or sick or emotionally vulnerable. Just like a hacker

looking for weak spots in your firewall.

We leave our lives open to Satan's hacks when we sin. Sinning is like going onto dodgy websites – we know we shouldn't but it seems interesting or harmless at the time; until we find ourselves compromised, and that there are consequences we could not have imagined.

If your computer is hacked, at first you may be unaware and the effect on your performance may be minimal. When first you play with sin, allowing Satan to hack into your life, you may not notice any harmful side effects – it may seem quite fun and innocent.

But soon your performance will be inhibited, you will experience glitches, and eventually your life could completely crash.

But regardless how many viruses your life has or how hacked it's been, Jesus can fix it. Isaiah 1:18 says, "*Come now, and let us reason together,*" says the Lord, "*Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*"

Why not let Jesus reboot your life today? •



BACK PAGE



GOOD GUY
BUBBA WATSON

Bullet ended rebel's self-reliance

Seventeen-year-old Tyrone Flowers had been offered basketball scholarships from three colleges. But when he was shot in the spine and became paralyzed, his dreams were shattered. Getting revenge on his shooter became his focus. He wanted to either kill or put his shooter in a wheelchair.

Tyrone had been defensive from a young age. Growing up in a Kansas City ghetto, he said he was taught all his life to defend himself and not let anyone walk over him.

In an interview with CBN.com, Tyrone said, "My mother made it very clear that she didn't want to be a parent, and my grandmother stepped in and took custody of me and raised me with her 12 other children."

Those children – Tyrone's aunts and uncles – cared for Tyrone while his grandmother was working two jobs to make ends meet.

"Basically my parenting came from teenagers so at an early age I was exposed to drugs, sex, and alcohol," Tyrone explains. "I can remember getting high at the age of six. Everything that they exposed me to I wanted to be, because I thought that was success. I thought that was positive."

When Tyrone was seven, child protective services removed him from his grandmother's custody when she became too sick to care for him. He started living in foster homes, where he faced physical, mental and emotional abuse.

He recalled being punished by



Tyrone Flowers has learned to find contentment in his wheelchair.



being locked in a basement, surrounded by cobwebs and concrete.

He ended up living in group homes but was constantly getting shifted because he fought with residents and staff. Tyrone was angry.

"I didn't understand why I was not living with one of my relatives and my family members," he says.

His anger affected his school life as well. He said he had an authority problem and refused to listen to anyone.

"I was constantly getting kicked out of school," Tyrone admits. "I was very defensive. I was taught all

my life, 'Defend yourself. Don't let anybody talk bad to you. Don't let anybody walk over you.' I thought it was me against the world."

Despite this, there was an area where Tyrone was flourishing – basketball. When he was 17 he was offered basketball scholarships from three colleges.

a two-year process of trying to

figure out how to get him back and not go to jail."

Before he had worked out his revenge, Tyrone started attending church and spent time around men he could finally look up to. But there was a barrier to him becoming a Christian.

"Part of salvation is forgiveness, and I wasn't ready to forgive the guy who shot me so that I could be forgiven by God," Tyrone explains. "And If I wanted to have that relationship that I longed for as a kid and fill that empty void, I had to go to God on His terms."

Tyrone said he wanted an authentic relationship with God, and not be a hypocrite.

"So I decided right then and there, I prayed, gave my life to Christ and

I forgave the guy that shot me," Tyrone says. And then the next day I called him up on the phone and told him, I said, 'On my end, I'm letting it go.'

But he did more than just let it go, Tyrone became friends with the man who shot him.

"Living a life of revenge, anger and frustration does you no good," he explains. "All it does is eat you up on the inside. You'll never become whole by getting someone back. You become whole by accepting Jesus Christ into your life."

With revenge no longer in his sights, Tyrone started looking for his purpose in life.

"Because I realized I couldn't use my body to be successful, I had to use my mind, because I wanted to get out of poverty," Tyrone explains. He went on to earn a law degree and started an organization called Higher Impact, which helps children at risk in Kansas City.

"Now when the kids I work with say, 'I want to be a doctor or a lawyer', I am that living testimony that they can do it," Tyrone says. "And I always tell people, 'The only time you're disabled in life is when you're working outside God's purpose, because whatever God calls you to do He will enable you to do it.' So I'm perfectly able to do what God's called me to do."

Coffee Break

CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

ACROSS

- 1 Hiker's path
- 3 Extinct ground birds
- 6 Military address
- 8 Bunch or clump
- 9 Sales booth
- 10 A great lake
- 13 Omelette ingredients
- 14 Intelligence crew
- 17 Coup organiser
- 18 Roofing material
- 19 Flip over
- 20 Wood shop tool

DOWN

- 1 Ivory source
- 2 Plague insect
- 3 Instrument; barrel
- 4 Cleaning liquid
- 5 Road
- 7 Precipitation measurer (4,5)
- 11 South Indian language
- 12 Corkscrew shape
- 15 Potatoes
- 16 Midleg

How do you live with suffering?

Jake Berry, brought up in the suburbs of Sydney, had what he calls a normal and happy middle-class childhood. But even as a teenager he was perplexed by the suffering in the world.

"I'd always wondered how to live with suffering in my life. To me it was either you try your best to escape it by embracing selfishness, or you seek an explanation for it."

The 30-year-old says he remembers feeling lost and hopeless and that he searched for meaning in life.

The school he attended offered scripture lessons, and it was there that Jake first heard about God. He went on to join a youth group at church. Slowly, as he read the Bible and learned more about the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, things began to fall in place.

"Jesus' words resonated with me," says Jake, who is a youth worker in Sydney.

"His teaching answered the questions I had about suffering. Jesus explains that suffering comes from humans. We are the problem. But in essence, it's a lack of right relationship with God that causes us to suffer and be unsatisfied. Even when life is good, it's never quite enough. We're always searching for more."

"God, as creator, is the answer to understanding ourselves, as He defines our meaning and highest satisfaction in worship of Himself. I was excited to follow Jesus as I slowly understood the amazing news that He had made a way for me to have a right relationship with him."

"One night as I read the Bible I became convinced that Jesus was God and that I wanted a relationship with Him. I knew from that moment that I wanted to be a Christian."

Since turning his life over to God, Jake says the biggest change has been discovering his life has purpose and value.

"I'm made joyful by the fact that God loves me and



Jake Berry

has a plan for my life," he says. That's not to say that he doesn't struggle with certain aspects of his faith.

"Trusting in God can be hard to do practically," he admits. "Sometimes you have to wait on God and have no control."

"When Jesus says 'Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?' in Matthew 8:26, I remember that I too am like the disciples as I worry about my provision. When I sacrifice and suffer for Christ and expect His help, my worry is always disproven by His power."

"I do find it hard to trust Him as much in a way that drives away all fear and I pray for enough faith that I never will worry."

Having finished his Master of Divinity degree, Jake now

works for a church. He wants people to share the hope he has in God.

"People often reject Jesus because they want to be their own leader, or because they trust false promises of immediate satisfaction, or because they're afraid of what it means to follow Him," he muses.

"But God offers something so much greater than any plan you could make for your own life. Nothing else can truly satisfy."

"A Christian thinker once said that the problem is not that we want too much but that we settle with far too little. Riches, family, comfort or worldly importance can't compare to the eternal promises and blessing God wants to give you."

Jake's favorite verses are Colossians 2:13-15: *When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; He has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.*

"I love those verses because they explain the gospel so clearly," he smiles.



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Whatever happened to the napalm girl?

Those old enough to remember the picture will never forget it. The image was one of the most defining of the Vietnam War.

It showed a nine-year-old girl running naked and screaming down a road. It was June 8, 1972. The girl was nine, her name was Kim Phuc Phan Thi and her back was on fire from the napalm bomb that had just vaporised her entire village.

The sticky substance adhered to Kim's skin and burned her flesh. The pain was excruciating.

"I was on fire, badly in need of help," she recounts, in her book *Fire Road*. "Years later I would learn that this was no ordinary fire."

"Too hot, too hot!" she screamed as she ran down the dirt road. A BBC reporter tried to put the fire out using water from his canteen but because napalm feeds off anything containing oxygen, she caught fire all over again.

Her horrific injuries caused her years of debilitating pain, dreadful scars and left her with skin like leather. She would need 16 operations and numerous other treatments even decades later.

But equally tortuous were the mental wounds. "I went through so much of a nightmare," Kim said in an interview with PRI, an American public radio organisation.

"I was so scared. And I thought with this scar on my body, 'When I'm grown up, I'll never have a boyfriend'. I never thought anybody would marry me."

"That was in my thoughts all day and it was not easy. In the beginning, I was so disabled. My neck, my arm, my hands. It was so ugly."

"I had so many questions: 'Why me? Why am I still alive? What is the purpose for my life?' My life was so dark. No hope, no joy, no future."

"Those bombs have brought me immeasurable pain. The emotional and spiritual pain was even harder to endure."

She turned to her childhood religion of Cao Dai (pronounced 'cow-die') hoping for peace and answers. "But as one prayer after another went unanswered, it became clear that either those gods were nonexistent or they did not care to lend a hand," she said.

She was in anguish of the soul. It was around this time she met a cousin. His name was Anh and he was a pastor. She riddled him with questions, finally asking him the one that broke his heart:

"Anh, what about the napalm attack? Where was your 'God' when I was left for dead? Why did He not spare me from years of pain?"

He looked at the tears in her eyes. "I think you must go to church," he said.

One Saturday night, in pain both in body and in soul, she sobbed and cried out: "God! Where are you? If you will give me a friend, just one person who knows You and who can help me know You, then I will agree not to take my life."

She gave God 24 hours to answer her.

The next morning she went to church and saw a woman sitting alone. Kim approached her. "Good morning," the woman said. "I am Thuy. Have you come to worship today?"

The two women became close friends and studied the Bible together. Then Kim attended a Christmas Eve service in 1982. The pastor's sermon was like honey to Kim.

"This Christmas is not about the gifts we carefully wrap and give to each other as much as it is about one Gift in particular, who was wrapped in human flesh and given from God to us," he said. "The Gift is Jesus."

At the pastor's invitation to accept Jesus as her



Above: Dr Kim Phuc Pan Thi at a concert in her honour in Philadelphia, PA, on December 7, 2019.

Left: The book Kim has written about her life.

Lord and Saviour, Kim eagerly responded and woke up on Christmas morning a newly minted Christian.

Today Kim lives in Canada with her husband and two children. She established the Kim Foundation International and dedicates herself to helping children who are victims of war or underprivileged.

In *Fire Road*, Kim tells the emotional story of meeting the American officer who coordinated the napalm attack. Plummer, who had since become a pastor, asked for her forgiveness.

"The moment I met Rev. Plummer, I saw him cry," Kim says. "He was sorry. He meant it. We became best friends. God has healed the scars in my heart... how dark and bitter and angry and hateful I was. Now Jesus fills my heart with love and compassion."

"After accepting Jesus as my Saviour, I experienced the kind of healing that can only come from God. I was finally at peace."

"Nearly half a century has passed since I ran down that road in Vietnam. I will never forget the horrors of that day. But I realise there is nothing greater or more powerful than the love of our blessed Saviour."

"My faith in Jesus has enabled me to forgive those who have hurt and scarred me. It has enabled me to pray for my enemies rather than curse them. And it has enabled me not just to tolerate them but truly to love them."

"Looking back at the past five decades, I realise those bombs that brought so much suffering also brought great healing."

"Those bombs led me to Christ."

Grief is a tunnel, not a cave. As surely as there was a beginning, there is an end. You will emerge in a new place, but you will always know it is the place God brought you.

— Janet Denison

Have courage for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones. And when you have finished your daily task, go to sleep in peace. God is awake.

— Victor Hugo

If I could understand God, either I would be God or He wouldn't.

Set free from addiction

BY MARK ELLIS

As a youngster, South African Declan Wood wanted his father's love and approval, but the abuse he suffered at his hands led to lifelong scars.

"When I did something wrong, made mistakes, my dad beat me with a baseball bat," Declan says on a video recorded by Joshua Generation Church.

During one of the beatings, his father hit a light fixture and knocked it off the ceiling. "Glass was going everywhere and he kept beating me. The way he looked at me when he was beating me, I thought 'this man hates me'."

Declan's mother and sisters also feared his dad. "Who do I turn to? Declan wondered.

At 10 years old, he turned to drugs, mostly marijuana. Later, he and his friends ground up a sedative he referred to as mandrakes (Quaaludes) and mixed it with the marijuana.

"I mixed it with weed to give me a rush, but it was destroying my social life. I never fitted in with the regular kids at school. I never felt a part of everyone else."

By the time Declan was 15 he had been kicked out of eight public schools and three boarding schools. "My life was smoking, doing drugs, stealing cars, going on joy rides, and bringing them back at five in the morning," he recounts.

Following two years of service in the army, he got into hardcore drugs and began breaking into homes to support his drug habit. Eventually he was caught and sentenced to seven months in prison. "I was 20 years old and had my 21st birthday in prison."

After his release, he got into trouble again, was arrested, and sentenced to nine years in prison. In prison, he joined a gang and sold drugs.

After his release, he moved to Cape Town and discovered crack cocaine. "I had a hit and it messed me up. It made me so high I was addicted straight away."

While working as a labourer, Declan met a young woman and she moved in. "A month after I met her, she got pregnant. Nine months later I had this beautiful little girl."

"I thought having this little baby would get me on my feet and I would stop using drugs. But I couldn't. [The addiction] was just too strong for me."

"One morning after smoking crack all night, I was lying in this bed wanting to cry, but no tears came out. I thought to myself, 'what a terrible father. My girl's going to grow up with a father that can't support her'. I felt like such a terrible loser. I was looking back on my life, just being naughty, doing wrong, having bad intentions."

In desperation Declan cried out, "God, if you're real, please help me!"

The next day a fellow drug addict came to him

and told him about a rehab facility down the road. During rehab, Declan began to read the Bible for the first time.

"It was amazing the power of these words. This was something else. Every now and again a verse would really do something to me. It would do something in my soul. I knew then God was real and He was with me. In that home I got to know Jesus, and I fell in love with Him and His word."

He witnessed the lives of drug addicts transformed and changed.

After rehab, Declan found a job. "I was 36 years old. I started doing handyman work, electrical, painting. I never had confidence before, but the Lord gave me confidence."

However, in 2008, he backslid and went back on crack cocaine. A friend of his sister invited him to church. "I went in there one day and I saw the love of Jesus in these people. I had learned about the power of God, sharing the good news, the Holy Spirit, but I didn't know enough about God's love."

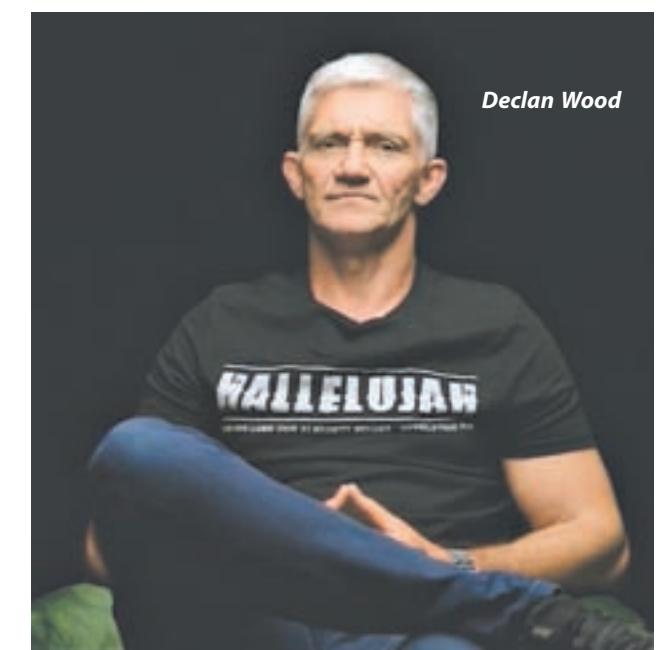
"I was coming to church on Sunday but during the week I was using drugs. It was a terrible time. When you have tasted that God is good, and you're on drugs and can't get off, it's terrible."

In an accountability group at the church, he confessed his sins. "Sometimes they would rebuke me. One important thing I learned was the importance of living in the light. No matter how many times I slipped up in those five years, I knew I had to live in the light."

Then one day in 2013, unexpectedly, the Lord delivered him from his addiction as he stood in his mother's garage. "I felt the addiction taken right out of me in my mother's garage. From that day, never ever again did I use drugs. Never again was I tempted like I was all those years. The Lord took it out of me in an instant."

"Jesus Christ, himself, came to that garage that day and saved me, he delivered me. He took that drug addiction right out of me."

Declan has since become a leader in the church. He is thankful for God's transformational power. "The Lord had been good to me. My relationship with my daughter has been restored. I've been able to provide. The Lord has helped me in my business and there is still a lot more to come."



Declan Wood

Zulutranslation

Ekhathazwa imimoya emibi, wathola inkululeko

UCharles Moosamy uvela ekhaya lam a Hindu , wakhula elandela usiko nenqubo yawo.

Abazali bakheen-daweni eyayibizwa nge Cato Manor (Mayville), wayelandela inqubo yabo yezenkolo njengomfana. Kodwa noma ayekwenza konke okwakufanele, wayezwa ukuthi kukhona okushodayo.

Ngaso lesosikhathi, ngangihlukunyezwa imimoya yobumnyama,” uCharles etshela I Challenge News. “Ngangicabanga ukuthi isigwebo sami sokungahlabeli onkulunkulu, ngazama ukwenza okuningi ukubajabulisa, kodwa lutho. KwaJula.

“Ebusuku ngangilani ngizwa, umsindo ngijuluka futhi. (U Nkosikazi wami, wayelala kahle eduze kwami, mangizama ukumkhulumisa, umlomo wale ukuvuleka)”

“Ngase ngimenyelwa esontweni eliseplazini, elibizwa nge ELIM Temple, umshumayeli owayevakashilewabizela phambili ababefuna ukuthandazelwa. Angipholisanga maseko ngaya phambili. Umfundisi wangithandazelwa, ngakhululeka. Kusuka ngalobobusuku, ngilala njen-gosana angisakwazi ukuhlifhwa.

Ngaqala ukufunda ibhayibheli ngyi naseklasini le bhayibheli. Nga-lokho kufunda kwami ngazi ukuthi



uJesu unguNkulunkulu ophilayo. Ngaqala ukushumayela ebandleni lakithi , wayesengivulela iminyango yokuya emabandleni amanye ngishumayele izwi lakhe. Kodwa ngase ngidlula ekhathini ezinzima zokulingwa, ngagulelwab abantwana kwezinye izinto, ngaqhubeka nokumethemba u Jesu , enhlizweni yami ngazi ukuthi uzongidlulisa kukho konke, wakwenza.

“Amantombazane ami angamatwins, azalwa isikhathi singakafiki, enye indodakazi yami yahlizwa inhliziyo, kodwa mina nenkosikazi yami sasazi ukuthi u Jesu uzobaphilisa, wakwenza, siyambonga kakhulu.”

U Charles unentshisakalo ephuthumayo ngokubaluleka kwevangeli kuwo wonke umuntu. Echaza. “Njengoba umuntu edinga I passport ukuvakashela amanye amazwe, ngayo leyondlela, udinga I passport (UJESU) ukungena ezulwini. U Jesu waphula amandla okufa, nethuna kanye neson. Ibhayibheli lithi ngokuba uNkulunkulu walithanda izwe kangaka waze wanikela ngeNdodana yakhe ezelwe yodwa ukuba yilowo nalowo okholwa iYona angabhubhi kodwa abe nokuphila okuphakade, (johane 3:16)

“M h l o b o w a m i l e n a a k u y o n a i n g a n e k w a n e , i q i n i s o . N g i n g a b u z a , u m a u n g a f a n a m h l a n j e , u z o y a e z u l w i n i ? N o m a u n g a f a n a m u h l a b e s e u m a p h a b i k u k a N k u l u n k u l u a k u b u z e u k u t h i k u n g a n i k u f a n e l e n g i k u v u m e l e u n g e n e e z u l w i n i ? U z o t h i n i ? u k w e n z a o k u h l e a k u q i n i s e k i u k u n g e n a e z u l w i n i . U k w a m u k e l a u J e s u n j e n g e N k o s i n o M s i n d i s o k u z o s i n e n g i s a . M a m u k e l a n a m u h l a , k u s a s a k u n g a h l e k u b e k u d e . I n g u n a p h a k a d e i s i k h a t h i e s i d e e s i n g a p h e l i . U y o b e u k u p h i ? •

Englishtranslation

Troubled by evil spirits, he found freedom

Charles Moosamy came from a Hindu background, following its culture and rituals.

Born to parents in what was then Cato Manor (Mayville), he followed the religious rituals as a young boy. But in spite of doing all that was required, he still felt there was something missing.

“During that time, I was severely possessed by the spirits of evil,” Charles tells Challenge News. “Thinking that this was my punishment for not appeasing the gods, I did more to try to please those gods, but to no avail. It became worse.

“At night, I hardly slept, hearing strange noises and perspiring a lot. (My wife, sleeping next to me, slept well, and when I tried to speak to her, my mouth locked and I could not talk.)

“I then was invited to a remote church on a farm, named Elim Temple, where a visiting pastor called people to come to the platform to be prayed for. I didn’t wait another second, I went forward. The pastor prayed for me, and I was delivered and set free. From that night, I slept like a baby and up to now I have never been tormented again.

“I then began to read the Bible and attend Bible classes. Through the Bible I realised that Jesus is the living God. Later I began to preach in my church and God opened doors for me to visit other churches to preach His Word. But

then I went through some testing times, when my children were very ill, among other things. But I continued to trust the Lord Jesus, knowing in my heart that He will see me through, and He did.

“My eldest girls, who are twins, were born prematurely, and my other daughter had a heart surgery, but my wife and I knew Jesus would heal them, and He did, which we are thankful for.”

Charles is urgent in his desire to share about the importance of salvation for everyone. He explains: “Just as a person needs a passport to visit other countries, in the same way, one needs a passport (that’s Jesus) to enter Heaven. Jesus destroyed the power of death, and the grave and sin. The Bible says *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son [Jesus] that whoever believes in Him, will not perish but have everlasting life.* (John 3:16)

“My friends this is not fiction or a fairy tale, but a reality. Can I ask you, if you die today, will you be in Heaven? Or suppose you die tonight, and stand before God, and God asks you, ‘Why must I allow you into heaven?’ What would you reply to Him? Because doing good does not guarantee you entry into Heaven. Only accepting Jesus as Saviour and Lord of your life does. Do it now, tomorrow may be too late. Eternity is a long time - never ending. Where will you spend it?” •

Afrikaans translation

Gekwel deur bose geeste, het hy vryheid gevind

Charles Moosamy kom van ‘n Hindu agtergrond, en het die kultuur en rituele gevolg.

Gebore in Cato Ridge (Mayville), het hy as ‘n jong seun die godsdienstige rituele gevolg. Maar ten spyte daarvan dat hy alles gedoen het wat nodig was, het hy gevoel iets kort.

“Gedurende daardie tyd was ek deur bose geeste ernstig besete,” het Charles vir Challenge Nuus vertel. “Ek het gedink dit was my straf want ek het nie die gode gepaai nie, en ek het meer gedoen om daardie gode te behaag, maar tevergeefs. Dit het al hoe erger geraak.”

“Snags het ek skaars geslaap want ek het vreemde geluide gehoor en ek het baie gesweet. (My vrou wat langs my geslaap het, het goed geslaap, enanneer ek met haar probeer gesels het, het my mond toegeslaan en ek kon nie praat nie.)”

“Ek was toe genooi na ‘n afgeleë kerk op ‘n plaas met die naam van ‘Elim Temple’, waar ‘n besoekende pastoor mense genooi het om na die

verhoog te kom om vir hulle te bid. Ek het nie ‘n sekonde gewag nie, en het na vore gegaan. Die pastoor het vir my gebid en ek was bevry en losgelaat. Van daardie nag af het ek soos ‘n baba geslaap, en tot nou toe was ek nooit weer geteister nie.”

“Ek het toe die Bybel begin lees en Bybel klasse begin bywoon. Deur die Bybel het ek agtergekom dat Jesus die lewende God is. Later het ek in my kerk begin preek en God het deure vir my oopgemaak om ook ander kerke te besoek om Sy Woord te verkondig. Gedurende hierdie tyd het ek deur moeilike tye gegaan, want tussen ander dinge, het my kinders baie siek geword. Maar ek het aangehou om die Here te vertrou, wetende dat Hy my sal deursien, en Hy het.”

“My oudste twee dogters is ‘n tweeling, en hulle was vroeggebore. My ander dogter het ‘n hart operasie ondergaan, maar my vrou en ek het geweet dat Jesus hulle sal genees, en Hy het, en ons is dankbaar.” Charles is ywerig in sy begeerte om te deel oor die belangrikheid van

verlossing vir almal. Hy verduidelik: “Net soos iemand ‘n paspoort benodig om ‘n ander land te besoek, so het almal ‘n paspoort nodig (dis Jesus) om die Hemel binne te gaan. Jesus het die mag van die dood oorwin en ook die graf en sonde. Die Bybel sê “God het die wêreld so liefgehad dat Hy sy enigste Seun gegee het, sodat dié wat in Hom glo, nie verlore sal gaan nie maar die ewige lewe sal hê. (Johannes 3:16)”

“My vriende hierdie is nie fiksie of ‘n feeverhaal nie, maar ‘n werklikheid. Kan ek jou vra, as jy vandag sal doodgaan, sal jy in die Hemel wees? Of veronderstel jy gaan vanaand dood, en jy staan voor God en God vra ‘Hoekom moet Ek jou tot die Hemel toelaat?’ Wat sal jy antwoord? Want om goeie dade te doen sal nie waarborg dat jy toegeelaat gaan word nie. Net as jy Jesus as Saligmaker en Heer van jou lewe aanvaar. Doe dit nou, mōre sal dalk te laat wees. Die ewigheid is ‘n lang tyd – oneindig. Waar sal jy dit deurbring?” •

Saved from a life of conflict

• From page 1

Danelia is proud that her children are “kind and supportive” and have committed themselves to breaking the cycle of abuse by becoming mental health advocates.

“Yes I had a difficult life, but looking back I can see God’s hand in everything. His plans are always better than my own,” she smiles.

“I learned that Heaven is a free gift that you can’t earn or work for, that only God can save you by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

“I don’t feel I have to struggle every day to please God and other people or ask God for forgiveness all the time.

“His rules are like safety rails for our life; they protect us. I have had to let go whatever was driven by selfish ambition, pride and greed, including good deeds and religious activities.”

Today the eggshells are gone. In their place, Danelia says, is a peace that is “beyond understanding.”

“I now know what and who I am is because of Jesus and I don’t need other people’s approval.” •

“I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.” – C.S. Lewis

It doesn’t matter what you’ve said or done; what you’ve thought about saying or doing; where you’ve been or who you’ve been there with – there is more grace in God than sin in you.

BUILDING BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

HOW TO EXPRESS ANGER APPROPRIATELY

BY ROB FURLONG

"THE anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God."

So wrote James the Just, a prominent leader of the first century church. It's an astute observation. Think of the times you have expressed your anger inappropriately and it has led to damaging accusations, criticism, and silence.

Thankfully, James was a practical man and prior to making this statement, he provides three steps to encourage us to express our anger in an appropriate way.

Step One: Be quick to hear.

Are you familiar with the old quip, "God gave us two ears and one mouth – which one do you think He wants you to use the most?"

When we feel threatened or under attack, our predisposition as human

beings is to jump in quickly and defend ourselves, rather than listening to the other person. This inevitably leads us to making assumptions about what the person is saying or is going to say, resulting in frustration for both parties: one is left feeling unfairly misunderstood and the other, personally criticised again.

All of this can be diffused quite easily by simply taking the time to *listen, really listen*, to what the other person is trying to communicate.

Step Two: Be slow to speak.

This follows on naturally from the first piece of advice. There comes a time when you will need to speak, but even then, James says, "Don't jump in too quickly!"

James is encouraging us to be *thoughtful and reflective* about our responses to what the other person is saying.

Have you ever said something



which you later regretted?

I remember many years ago, early in our marriage when Karen and I were having an argument. At one point, Karen said something that really got under my skin – I cannot remember what it was – but I do remember it was quite close to her birthday and I blurted out angrily at her, "You don't deserve a birthday!"

I regretted it instantly, especially when I saw the wounded look on her face. Chuck Swindoll once said, "I have never regretted a word I did not say, but there are many I regret having spoken!"

Learning to take time with your answers – being slow to speak – is a great discipline to cultivate and an excellent tool in helping you to keep a lid on your anger.

Step Three: Be slow to anger.

I know you are most likely thinking that this is easier said than done, but honestly, if you begin to apply the first two principles consistently,

the third follows quite naturally.

The book of Proverbs puts it this way: "A hot tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger pacifies contention."

Ever noticed how angry outbursts usually produce the same response in others? You often see this at protest marches. Two sides oppose each other, there is a lot of angry yelling back and forth, with no

one listening to each other and all too often it descends into physical violence.

But when someone takes the time to restrain their anger, even in the face of extreme provocation, it is like oil being poured over troubled waters. The situation begins to calm down and order is restored.

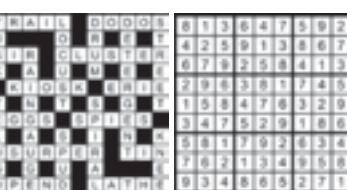
We see these three principles played out in the life of Jesus when He was betrayed and crucified.

When He is falsely accused by lying witnesses that He would destroy the Temple and rebuild it three days late, *He remains silent*.

When it does come time to answer His accusers, He replies wisely and thoughtfully: "*I have spoken openly to the world.*"

Finally, in the face of mocking abuse as He dies, He declares, "*Father, forgive them.*"

God's righteousness – the gift of salvation for the whole world – is achieved while a world rages against Him. Quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger *will* achieve right relationships – with God and others. •



HOW DO I BECOME A CHRISTIAN?

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

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

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

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

God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

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

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

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

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

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

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

What now?

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

AS A NEXT STEP :

I have prayed this prayer.

Please send me:

- A Bible portion
- Some 'starting off' literature
- Information on a helpful church

* Please tick and write clearly *

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Email address _____

Send to: cobusbritz@challengeto.org

WhatsApp Cobus at +27 78 887 7030

All overseas enquiries are referred onto someone in their own country

Lesson from a sausage dog - part 22

BY JODY BENNETT

YOU have probably heard the expression "puppy dog eyes". My sausage dog Carrie is an expert at that expression! It is a look that combines love and need in equal parts. My dachshund will sit and stare at me beseechingly while I am eating something or when she feels I have been at the computer too long.



She doesn't have to make a sound or move, just those eyes staring at me adoringly are so hard to resist. She is, at once, peaceful and expectant. I know what she wants without her making a sound – dog eyebrows can be incredibly expressive!

And invariably I give in and share my food, or put aside my work and take her for a walk.

I thought of that today when I read Psalm 123:2 : "Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, until He has mercy on us."

Just as my dog stares adoringly at me, knowing that every good thing she gets comes from my hand – like pats, food, treats, walks and scratches – so, when we invite God to be our Master and Saviour, we realise everything good in life is from Him, and we can look to Him to meet our every need.

Keeping our gaze fixed on Him is not an act of nagging – although it very well may be in the case of Carrie! – but it is an act of trust and adoration.

You might ask, how do I keep my eyes fixed on an invisible God? Well, I'm talking about the eyes of our heart, so we do it spiritually – by reading the Bible, God's Word, and praying (talking to Him). By constantly reminding ourselves that we are dependent on God, that He is our loving Dad and that He is the Giver of all good gifts. That helps us to remain content as we petition God to meet our needs, and yet hopeful and expectant of the answers.

Our Master knows what we want (and whether it is good for us) – much more so even than I am able to guess my dog's needs – and the Bible promises that He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6)

Want to explore more?

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

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



Bubba Watson plays his shot from the third tee during the first round of the QBE Shootout at Tiburon Golf Club on December 10, 2021 in Naples, Florida. (Photo by Cliff Hawkins/Getty Images)

GOOD GUY NOW GOD'S GUY

Little Gerry Watson, whose Dad called him Bubba, dreamed of being a champion golfer while growing up, and the now 43-year-old has more than fulfilled that dream with 12 wins on the PGA Tour, including two Masters. The left-hander has also represented the US at the Ryder Cup, the Presidents Cup and the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Successful, happily married and raising two children; Bubba owns a mansion that once belonged to Tiger Woods and several local businesses. However, life has been far from plain sailing for the well-known US player.

He and his wife were unable to have biological children and their first attempt at adoption fell through. Eventually they adopted a son, Caleb, in 2012, and a daughter, Dakota, in 2014, having delayed due to various family issues, including the illness and death of Bubba's dad in 2010 from throat cancer.

Bubba grew up in Bagdad, Florida, as one of the good guys: "Didn't cuss, didn't cheat, didn't steal, didn't lie, didn't drink, didn't do drugs," he told *Baptist Press* in 2012. "I was doing the right things but I didn't know what that meant."

In his senior year in high school, twin girls, from the house directly behind his, invited Bubba to their youth group. He went, and found a place where he belonged.

"The girls asked me to go to church," he said. "And after a few times going I realized this is what I wanted to do. This is truth here. And I gave myself to the Lord."

But it wasn't until 2004 that Bubba became serious about his commitment to Christ at the University of Georgia. He began dating Canadian Angie Ball (a basketball player) and the two began serving God as a couple.

"We wanted to be Christ followers," Bubba said. "We wanted to do the right thing. We started turning to the Lord for our decisions."

The couple married in September 2004 and were each baptised [immersed in water as a sign of dying to their old lives] the day after Christmas: "I would say 2004 was my true time of becoming a Christian and shaping me into the man I am today," Bubba told *Baptist*

Press.

Outspoken in his proclamation of faith on Twitter, Bubba received complaints about his 140-character witnessing tactics, but his response was simple: Feel free to unfollow, but the talk about God isn't going away.

Some 100 people quit following him and other Christian haters bombarded him with "bad stuff" but Bubba responded with kindness.

Included in his Tweets are things like: "God made everything & saved us from our sins & gives us hope and

gives us eternal life! #Godisgood"; Bible verses, and comments like "Most important things in my life – 1. God 2. Wife 3. Family 4. Helping others 5. Golf"

But the "years and years of buildup" of various stresses and seeing all those hurtful and negative comments about himself on social media slowly chipped away at Bubba's mental health and in 2017 he hit rock bottom, nearly giving up his career and losing hope for life.

"I was letting my job dictate how I feel. And I was losing weight. So I went to the doctor.

I was having stomach pains, all these ailments were going on. But the doctor said, 'There's nothing wrong with you,'" Bubba details.

The unexplained 15kg weight loss was especially alarming. "When I looked in the mirror, when I saw 74kg on the scale, I envisioned my dad and envisioned me dying like my dad," Bubba admits.

"I fell to my knees in 2017, and I said, 'Lord, take me,'" he recounts. "It wasn't that I wanted to end my life. It was that I didn't want my family to go through what my mum went through – what I went through – with my dad."

He remembers fearing he wasn't good enough and wasn't well liked. He described his feelings to CNN's Patrick Snell as being the "darkest of the dark at that moment".

Bubba says his faith and his wife helped him return to a better place psychologically. He realised that instead of expressing his troubles he had been internalising them, which was leading to the stomach pains and weight loss.

"Being able to speak to [Angie]

and tell her my deepest, darkest secrets and let her know what I was going through and let her know that I was scared ... that was a hard thing to do," Bubba remembers.

Since then, he has learned to prioritise communication. He battled the stigma that men shouldn't talk about their emotions and feelings, learning that it was okay to speak

to his family, friends and colleagues about the good and bad moments in life.

That, Bubba explains, ultimately led to his writing a book – *Up & Down: Victories and struggles in the course of*

life. He'd been approached for years to write about his successes on the PGA Tour, but didn't feel like he could achieve anything in sharing his story. It was after that "dark time", that he realised he was ready to introduce his fans to "Bubba, the person".

"I know from experience that by talking about it and discussing it, [the book] helps me, but hopefully

in return, it helps other people," he told *PEOPLE* magazine.

Besides despair and fear, Bubba has also dealt with anger during his time in professional golf.

He used to be so worried about his performance that it would become all consuming.

"I was so wrapped up in 'Why am I not winning?' It created frustrations in my head and in my life."

Things got so heated on the golf course at one point that caddie Ted Scott finally gave him an ultimatum. "You're going to have to change, or I'm going to quit," he told Bubba.

Now the golfer plays what has been called "Bubba Golf," which puts a heavy focus on just having fun on the course.

The lanky athlete credits his caddie, his trainer Adam Fisher ("Fish") and Angie, who are all strong Christians, as those who helped him most in changing his attitude.

"I want it to be defined as a good man that tried harder every day," he said. "Not just in golf, but off the golf course, [I want] to be a light for Jesus."



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