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A fight to forgive

Rebecca Lottering struggled to forgive her mother for abandoning her and her brother. Their mother had left the family and kept moving around to various places near Cape Town. The deep hurt and rejection was made worse by the fact that another sibling was chosen to go with her.

However, good came of the situation, because while Rebecca was staying with relatives when she was 10, she was taken to church for the first time.

It was there that she first heard about God.

“God opened my eyes through His Spirit to understand that He loved me first, and I felt complete in His presence. There was an altar call at this church and the Holy Spirit told me that I cannot operate my life without God, I need Him,” Rebecca explains, so she prayed to invite Jesus to be Lord of her life.

“When I came to Jesus I knew I had to forgive my mother.”

Wanting to be baptised (immersed in water as an outward display of her new life in Christ), Rebecca didn’t know how her mother would respond. She prayed and fasted and then she asked her mother if she could be baptised. Her mother gave her blessing.

It has been 30 years since Rebecca became a Christian and she looks back at the changes that have taken place in her life.

“I have the joy of God in my life. God fights my battles so I can trust Him in all my challenges. My talk has changed [as well as] my thoughts about myself, because I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me. I can pray over my family with authority concerning generational curses. I don’t look at challenges in my life the same way, because I trust God in every process.”

Rebecca recalls a time about five years ago when her 20-year-old daughter was asleep when burglars broke into the house.

“The dog did not bark, otherwise she would have woken up while they were still in the house. They took the big flat screen television and they took both my daughters’ cell phones. God closed their eyes not to see her sleeping and God closed the mouth of the dog not to bark while they broke in. They belong to a gang, so we can imagine what they could have done to my daughter.”

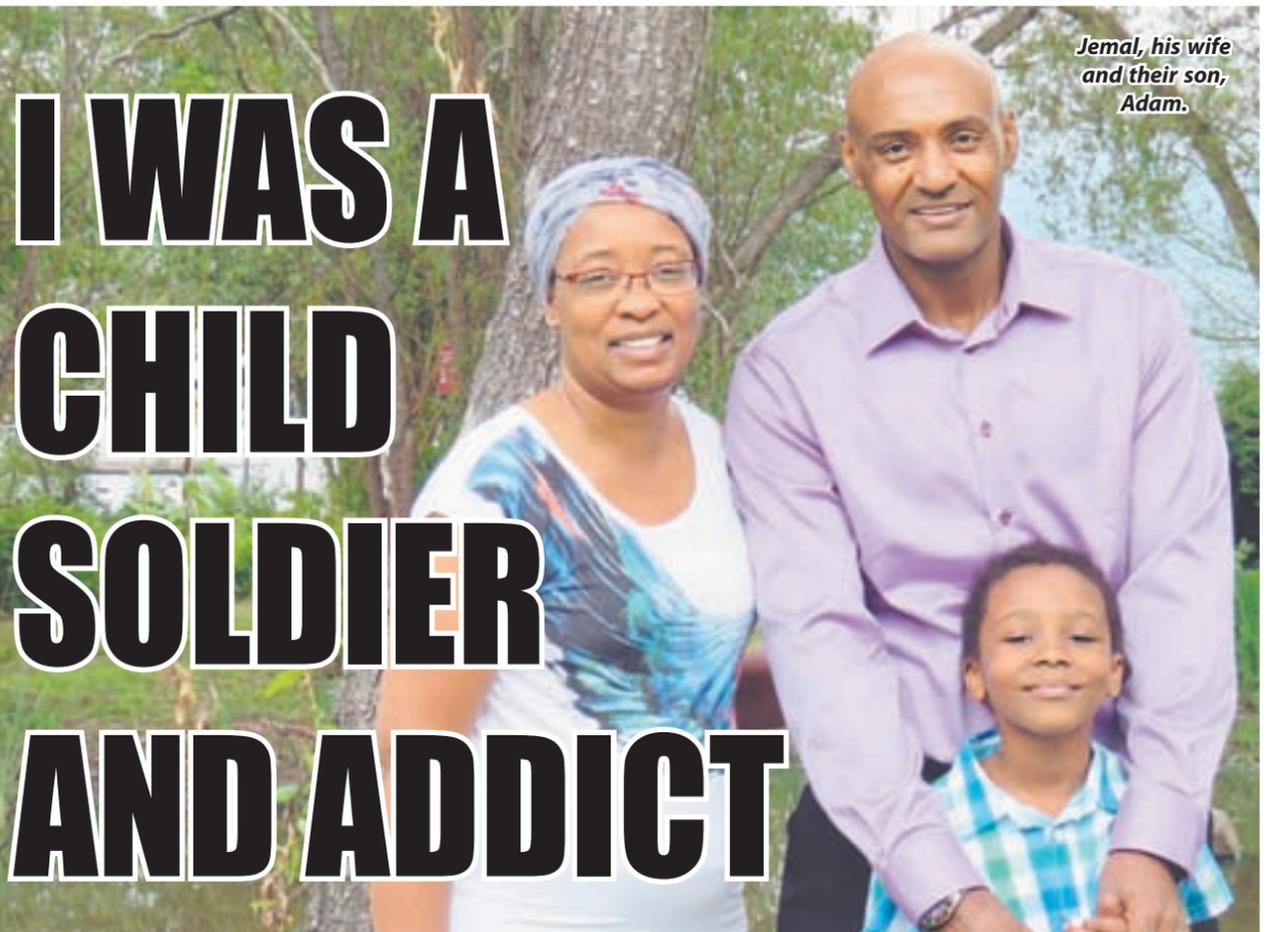
Rebecca’s favourite Bible verse is Jeremiah 29:11: “*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*”

“It is worthwhile serving God,” Rebecca attests. “You have someone in your life that you can run to and trust, no matter what comes your way. You can have a life in the abundance of God, when you have Him in your life. You have eternal life because you believe.”



Rebecca Lottering

I WAS A CHILD SOLDIER AND ADDICT



Jemal, his wife and their son, Adam.

As a child, Jemal Damtawe dreamed of becoming a professional soccer player or a movie star, but when soldiers in a military van kidnapped him as he was walking to school one day, those hopes and dreams vanished.

Instead, he faced a new reality as a 15-year-old child soldier in the Ethiopian Civil War.

“My life changed into something that is hard to imagine, a world where there was no peace or joy. Seeing the violence and death would affect my life for years to come,” Jemal shares on his website, jemald.com.

In an interview with 100 Huntley Street, Jemal says he had three months of training about how to shoot a gun and how to survive. He was then sent to the front of the battle, with a gun pointed at his back reminding him that he either had to kill or be killed.

“We were told if you don’t shoot your gun at the enemy we will kill you,” Jemal writes in his book, *Forced Paths, Ordered Steps*.

Jemal and a friend managed to escape after two years. They exchanged their guns for a camel ride to Djibouti. Then they stowed away on a ship, but he and four others were discovered and thrown overboard.

“Two of us survived,” Jemal shares.

Jemal stowed away for a second time and eventually arrived in Montreal, Canada, where he married, had a daughter, and opened a restaurant.

Nightmares of his horrific past plagued him and he turned to drugs and alcohol in order to numb the pain and to be able to sleep at night.

But when his daughter was three,

Jemal left her and his wife, as well as their restaurant. He left a note explaining that he couldn’t be a good father or husband and he moved to America.

He describes his 10 years in Portland, Oregon as a nightmare. He got involved with gangs and dealing drugs and spent time in jail. He was shot twice and lost friends to drug overdoses.

In an attempt to escape the gang life, Jemal returned to Canada – this time in Vancouver.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING WAS LEARNING HOW TO FORGIVE.



“I don’t have anybody, I don’t know anyone... I start sleeping under the bridge for almost a year,” Jemal remembers.

Then Jemal discovered Union Gospel Mission, where he could receive a hot meal and was offered a support program to help him beat his drug and alcohol addictions.

“My body was skinny, my brain depleted, and deep depression gave way to thoughts of suicide. My mind told me I was not going to make it in their program, but it also whispered that I needed to enter it just to rest and take a break from my life on the streets.”

Jemal initially just visited UGM for meals. Before they ate, a pastor would share a message about Jesus and pray over the food. Jemal, who came from a Muslim family and was the son of an Imam, disregarded the pastor’s words at first.

Then a woman he was partying with died of a drug overdose. He ran to UGM but this time he would stay and, on Christmas Day, he finally surrendered to Jesus.

“I was crying to God,” he shares. “I said, ‘God, I’ve heard enough – I need

Jesus.”

Jemal participated in the drug and alcohol program and was able to beat his addiction.

“Only when I learned how to read scriptures, pray and seek help ... only then did I begin to understand and have some relief and some peace in my mind,” Jemal says.

“I knew that when I came to Christ, He gave me freedom, a new life, new hope, and a way to let my troubles go. The most important thing was learning how to forgive. Not just say in my mind, ‘I forgive you,’ but make a deliberate decision to release feelings of resentment or vengeance towards all who harmed me, regardless of whether they deserve my forgiveness.”

ZULU, AFRIKAANS ENGLISH story PAGE 6



BACK PAGE

SEASON OF SUCCESS

SYDNEY McLAUGHLIN

What's more satisfying than **KFC**?

BY MEL JOHNSON

It's no secret we have Colonel Sanders to thank for finger-lickin' good chicken. But few know the actual facts behind the Kentucky Fried Chicken founder's hard fought rise to culinary fame. It took a lifetime of self-discovery before Harlan Sanders perfected the fried chicken recipe, making him the legend he is today.

However, it wasn't until the KFC founder accepted Jesus Christ into his heart that he finally felt true fulfilment. The Colonel's testimony just proves it's never too late to let God in!

An Early Introduction To Cooking

Before he was given his honorary Colonel title, presumably from the Kentucky governor, Harland Sanders was born into a poor family in 1890. His father died while the Colonel was still young, and the boy helped his mother by feeding his siblings.

"I did the cooking, and Mom did sewing for the neighbours," he recalled. "When I was seven I baked my first bread. I cared for the two youngest while mother worked."

Harland's time spent in the kitchen would serve him well later in life. It would just take a while before he'd realise it!

A Life Spent Drifting

Some know right off the bat what they're meant to do in life. Harland was not one of those people.

He dropped out of school in the sixth grade. At 16, he lied about

his age and joined the army. He served in Cuba for roughly six months before he was honourably discharged.

At 18, Harland Sanders married Josephine King of Jasper, Alabama. By 19, they had a baby girl, Margaret. The couple had two more children together, but the Colonel's lack of direction took its toll on the marriage.

Most of Harland's life was spent meandering between different jobs. He tried his hand at living life as a farmer, streetcar conductor, soldier, railroad fireman, lawyer, insurance salesman, steamboat operator, secretary, lighting manufacturer, a hotel owner and restaurateur, among other things.

Some jobs he lost, but most he simply tired of. He was searching for something ... he just didn't know what.

Settling On Fried Chicken

At one point, Josephine took the kids and moved back in with her parents. Harland was distraught, and went to find her. He hid in the woods near the home, planning to kidnap the children when they came out to play. However, Josephine's father came out instead. He and Harland wound up having a deep conversation, which led to the couple reconciling for a time.

Harland continued to bounce from job to job, and eventually his marriage with Josephine came to an end. While running a Shell service station, Harland started cooking again — running a cafe out of the station.



At 65, he sold his first restaurant and dedicated his attention to developing the Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise. He'd finally found his true calling! By 73, Colonel Sanders sold the KFC Corporation for \$2 million dollars, and was at last financially secure.

But all that searching was not quite finished yet.

Finding Jesus

Now that Colonel Sanders was a successful business man, you'd think he'd be satisfied. But something inside him still yearned for more.

Harland started attending church, and befriended a pastor by the name of Waymon Rodgers. At one service, Waymon knelt down next to Harland, asking if he'd like to be born again.

"I really would. Do you think that Jesus could save me to the point where he would take away my cussing?" the Colonel tearfully replied.

"Colonel, God is going to save you tonight and you'll never cuss again," Pastor Waymon told him.

And in that moment, Colonel Sanders accepted Jesus into his

heart. He'd finally found the fulfilment he'd been seeking his whole life.

A few days later, he told the pastor how everything had changed.

"Since I prayed the sinner's prayer, things have completely changed in my life," he said. "I have not cussed even one time since then. It has really made a difference with me."

Storing Up Eternal Treasures

From that point forward, Harland allowed God to change him in many ways. He was baptized at 77 in the River Jordan, and even experienced a divine healing.

He spent all of his life working to make his fortune. But after Harland accepted Jesus, he spent his latter years giving it all away.

"I always figured there is no use being the richest man in the cemetery. You cannot operate from there," Colonel Sanders said at 90 years old. "People don't know that I gave most of my money away. Most of it goes to churches."

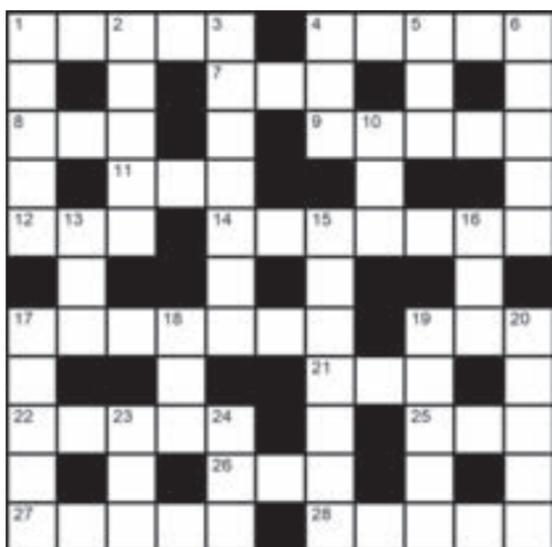
It just goes to show that no matter what, it's never too late to turn your life over to God!

This article is adapted from the

Coffee Break CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

ACROSS

- 1 Nail's cousin!
- 4 ___ and puffs
- 7 Christ the Redeemer site
- 8 Be achy and weak
- 9 Perpendicular, vertical
- 11 Australian bird
- 12 Get it wrong
- 14 Sea in Israel
- 17 Thick pureed drink
- 19 Long ___ (in the past)
- 21 Cereal grain
- 22 Tower of London birds
- 25 A month (abb)
- 26 A lyric poem
- 27 French painter
- 28 Ancient souvenir



DOWN

- 1 Plant support
- 2 King or queen
- 3 Metal beaten into shape
- 4 A jump on one foot
- 5 Winter bug
- 6 Curved cavalry weapon
- 10 Floral necklace
- 13 Canyon feature
- 15 Short stop in a journey
- 16 Bird-to-be
- 17 Play guitar strings
- 18 Metal in rocks
- 19 Coral-ring island
- 20 Eye-linked
- 23 Delivery vehicle
- 24 Ropy sounding negative!

SOLUTIONS PAGE 7



"They squared the wagons. Are they allowed to do that?"

8				7				
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1			9	5	2	4		
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				8			3	
				1				6

Faith seemed too confusing

Born in England to Ugandan parents, Leila Nassali was raised as a Muslim, but in university she began to question the religion she had grown up in.

"As a young person you're just trying to figure yourself out and everything's quite confusing in the world," she shares in a video on her YouTube channel.

The question that plagued her the most was: Why are there so many religions in the world? She wondered why the world's religions had different interpretations of who God was. Was God Allah? Was God Jesus? Or someone else?

"I thought, this looks like a confusing puzzle that I'll never be able to solve," she says. "So I decided to take a step back from it and just live life my own way."

At her university work experience, Leila noticed the people around her didn't believe in God and seemed to be happy and content with their lives.

"I thought, if they can just not believe in anything then maybe I can too and I won't have to think about the stress of whether God was Allah or Jesus. I could just be at peace with myself with no confusion in my head."

But the peace did not come and the confusion did not leave. One day she felt overwhelmed with anxiety and depression. Questions about death, and what would happen if she died, tormented her.

"I couldn't fathom the fact that I didn't actually have a purpose," she remembers. "That's when I realised, no I can't live without God... There is a god somewhere and I need to find Him."

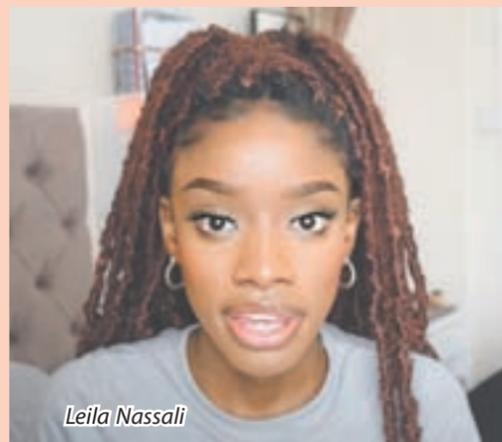
Leila cried out to God in the midst of her anxiety, "Please tell me who You are!"

Following her prayer, Leila had some encounters she knew she couldn't write off as coincidence.

One night she was trying to book a taxi to get to a work event but the booking kept getting cancelled until she eventually got one - driven by a Christian pastor.

"He asked me about my faith and I talked about my journey of trying to seek God," Leila explains. "(I told him) I came from a Muslim background and I was really open to anything at this point."

After the work event finished and Leila was walking to the train station, she was approached by two girls



Leila Nassali

who asked her about her beliefs in God. They ended up talking for two hours.

Another time she was scrolling through Instagram and images of crosses kept popping up.

She was reminded of a time when she was about eight and she woke up in the middle of the night to see the shadow of a cross on her bedroom wall.

"I believe God was trying to show me who He was even before I asked Him," Leila attests.

Leila contacted a friend who attended church and asked if she could go with her. She listened as the choir sang and was moved as she watched people worship God.

"Then I started crying uncontrollably," she says. "I didn't know where it came from because I didn't feel like crying, I didn't want to cry, but I just kept crying and crying... then I felt the Spirit of God in the room. I could not disregard it, I could not remove myself from it. (I realised) Jesus is my Lord. God showed me and revealed who He was to me and it was Jesus Christ."

Leila also asked God to forgive her for living life her own way.

"I repented (turned away) for every sin that I'd ever committed," she explains. "I remember writing it down on my laptop and asking the Holy Spirit to remind me of the things that I should ask God's forgiveness for. I prayed and asked for His forgiveness and I felt this release of everything coming off me and I became new in Him."

Leila also forgave the people in her life who had sinned against her. She refers to Romans 6:8-11: "Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, He cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over Him. The death He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life He lives, He lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus."

"Now that I am saved I am alive in Christ," Leila attests. "I am dead to all of my sins and knowing that gave me so much peace. Christ filled the void in my life and replaced it with Himself."

Serving the last and least

BY MARK ELLIS
(ABRIDGED)

Don Foster once owned the largest appraisal company in Las Vegas. In 2000, he felt God's leading to sell everything, give away his worldly goods to the poor, and follow Him.

As a teenager, Don was addicted to drugs and alcohol and found himself on the verge of committing suicide. On his knees, he made a promise: If he saw someone step in front of a bus, he would push that person out of the way and take their place. That's when he heard a voice say, "You don't have to die for anyone. I died for everyone." It was Don's first encounter with Jesus, and it completely transformed his life.

Soon after, Don felt that God was calling him to missions, though it would be 15 years before he would obey. By then a successful businessman, he was listening one Sunday morning to a sermon on television. It was Dr. Charles Stanley who explained that many get



Don and Jenya Foster.
Left: The Fosters with members of the Mbuti Pygmy tribe they serve in the DRC.

called to the mission field, but they marry, have kids, take on a mortgage, and never go. Don wrestled with this but finally began the painful process of surrender.

Over the next seven years, he sold everything he owned, including his business. The last thing he gave up was his memory foam mattress.

Three years later, in 2007, he found himself serving in Mozambique. While doing significant work to reach out to some of the poorest

people in the world, the Lord challenged Don to "go lower still".

That led him to the Pygmies of the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, a war zone in 2011, at the time he moved there.

"Jesus said, 'Whatever you have done to the least of these My brethren you have done to Me.' The Greek word for 'least' is literally 'shortest,'" Don explains on Facebook.

Pygmies are the shortest people on earth, with Mbuti Pygmies averaging four and a half feet tall. Their average annual income is approximately \$90; their average life expectancy is 24 years old; and their median IQ is 54. Their literacy rate is only 5%.

"The short and difficult lives of Pygmies are more often ended by health complications due to malnutrition/anaemia, parasites, malaria, respiratory infections, typhoid and other diseases easily preventable with clean water, food, sanitation and simple medicines," Don explains.

They have often faced discrimination from neighbouring tribal groups. "Some of the Bantu consider the pygmies are animals. They killed and ate pygmies and sold their meat in the marketplaces."

Don met his Russian wife, Jenya, in Mozambique in 2010 and they married in 2013. Together, they care directly for 34 Mbuti Pygmy children and indirectly for many more.

They also pay school fees for almost 1000 Pygmy children in remote villages, preach in the prisons and feed prisoners, and share the Gospel [good news of Jesus] using solar-powered audio Bibles.

They are directors of a ministry called Love Your Neighbour, Africa. The couple ministers in Beni, located in north eastern DR Congo, on the edge of the Ituri Forest.

The Mbuti Pygmies lived in the rainforest for

at least a thousand years, but are among those displaced by rebels, logging/deforestation, agriculture, and development.

As their traditional food sources disappeared, they were relegated to eat rats, frogs and small fish found in the mud.

In 2014 and 2016 over 500 people died in a series of attacks on Beni and its surrounding area that have been attributed to Ugandan Islamist rebels.

The area has also suffered over 200 cases of Ebola and is not far from the epicentre of the 2018-19 Kivu Ebola outbreak.

"Many Mbuti Pygmies have never been to school and their children also have little hope of even a few years of education. Many more thousands would attend school if only they had a uniform and school fees (\$30 per year)," Don says.

The traditional Mbuti Pygmy hut has a dirt floor, and is constructed in a day or two by the women with banana leaves and palm fronds over thin sticks, rising to about five feet tall. "These huts do not protect from rain and cold, much less insects (e.g. mosquitoes) and animals carrying disease (e.g. malaria)."

"A big part of our ministry is to take care of sick pygmies," Don says. "They can't stand to stay in a hospital, because of discrimination. Most can't count from one to 10, so they can't take pills correctly."

About a year after Don and Jenya married, rebels attacked a neighbouring village and killed 20 people. However, the couple still believe the safest place to be is at the centre of God's will.

"I wouldn't want to be anywhere else just because it's safe," Don says. "I think that would be dying."

"I want the spiritual DNA of Jesus Christ," Don declares, and serving the poorest of the poor is definitely a reflection of His Lord's self-sacrificing attitude.

This article first appeared on Godreports.com and is used with kind permission.

Gideon Bible changes schoolgirl's future plans

Taryn Lourens grew up in a secular family that did not attend church. This is how she came to entrust her life and future to Jesus Christ.

"By God's grace [undeserved kindness], I did have many Christians influencing my life as a child. These all gave me a positive view of God and church. In grade 7, a lady from Scripture Union came to school during break time [recess] once a week. She played a game with the children and then shared a short Bible lesson. The principal was a Christian and he read devotions during assembly and we sang hymns and choruses.

"The Gideons [Bible organization] gave out pocket New Testaments to all the grade eights at my high school in Pietermaritzburg. One night, I was sitting in my room and I read the Bible verses such as Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23 listed at the back of those Bibles. I understood at a very basic level that I was going to hell if I did not ask Jesus to forgive my sin. The Holy Spirit convicted me of very specific sins such as lying and disrespecting my parents.

I prayed the 'Sinner's Prayer' given there, repenting of my sin and trusting in the Lord Jesus. I shut the Bible, wondering if anything would happen. I did not know what else to do!

"Some months later, I asked a friend if I could go to a youth group with her. I did, and also went forward at the altar call that first night. The youth leader at the time preached simple, convicting and evangelistic sermons. I kept going to that youth group and later also started attending Sunday Services. I received some good discipleship at the small group meetings. The leader went out of her way to befriend me and disciple me.

"I now have the privilege of being involved in missions. I praise God that He saved me from a young age, and for all the people He has used in my life.

"I am eternally grateful to the Gideons and their faithful distribution of Bibles."

Taryn says God has helped her to overcome her natural shyness and tendency to be anxious. She and her husband are training to go to Mozambique to live among people where there is no church and teach them the Bible in their own language.

If you want to know more about the Gideons just download the Gideons Bible App.



Taryn Lourens and her family.



Don with an adult pygmy and two children between two of the traditional banana leaf homes of the pygmies.

Afrikaans translation

Relatief regop, maar steeds verlore

Eduard de Nysschen se geloof is baie volwasse vir 'n jong seun van 17 jaar oud. Sy storie oor hoe hy God gevind het volg in sy eie woorde.

“Van jongs af is ek blootgestel aan die natuurlewe en die wonder daarvan. Ek het gou besef hoe spesiaal dit is, en dat God veel groter en magtiger is as wat ek besef het. Ek het week na week kerk en Sondagskool bygewoon, maar het nooit 'n begeerte gehad om meer van die Skepper te leer nie.”

“Ek het altyd gedink my saak met die Here is reg omdat ek 'n redelike goeie lewe geleef het, nie van die ergste sondes gedoen het nie.”

“Aan die begin van graad 5 het ek na 'n nuwe skool toe gegaan wat veel groter was as die plaasskool waarin ek voorheen was. Verkeerde vriende het my dieper in die wêreld begin intrek, en toe ek my oë uitvee was ek 'n slaaf van sonde.”

“Soos die gewoonte was het ek kerk toe gegaan en die katekisasie Oom stel 'n vraag aan ons: Het jy die sekerheid dat jou siel gered

is? Ek kon nie met sekerheid “Ja” antwoord nie en ek besef dat ek 'n sondaar is oppad na die verdoeminis. Alhoewel ek geweet het ek is verlore kon ek nie my sondige lewe prysgee nie. Om my gewete te stimuleer het ek gereeld Bybel gelees omdat ek geweet het daar kom 'n dag waar die Here my in geregtigheid gaan oordeel.”

“Die Here het aan my hartsdeur kom klop en ek het ware sonde berou gehad, en die deur oopgemaak sodat ek 'n feesmaal saam met Hom kan hou. Ek het saam met iemand gebid na die diens en die Here het my verlos van my sondige lewe. Ek het daarna die vrede van GOD wat alle verstand te bowe gaan ervaar, en ek het geweet dat as ek sterf ek in die Hemel sal wees.”

“My lewe het drasties verander en ek het geen begeerte gehad om meer te sondig nie, of om soos die wêreld te leef nie, maar eerder om meer gelykvormig aan die beeld van God te word. My vrees vir die dood het verdwyn vanaf die oomblik wat ek tot bekering gekom het. Ek het 'n



Eduard de Nysschen

liefde vir die woord van God gekry. My toekoms en ideale is nie meer net om myself gesentreer nie maar eerder om die evangelie uit te brei en God te verheerlik.”

“Die Here het my van my slegte gewoontes verlos en om so te leef dat ander mense Jesus in my sal sien.

“Ek het versoekings oorkom deur Hom wat my krag gee. En die natuur het vir my 'n nuwe betekenis gekry. Die Here sorg vir elke plant en dier op sy perfekte tyd, en so het die Here ook al voorsien in al my tekortkominge en my gehelp om standvastig te wees in die geloof.”

English translation

Relatively upright but still lost

Eduard de Nysschen has got a very mature faith for his young age of 17. Here is his story of how he found God, in his own words, translated from Afrikaans.

“From a very young age I was exposed to the wonder and beauty of nature and I quickly realised how special it is and that God is much bigger and mightier than I had guessed. Every week I went to church and Sunday school but never had a desire to learn more about the Creator.

“I always thought things were all right between me and God because I lived a relatively upright life and didn't commit any of the 'worst' sins.

“At the beginning of grade 5 I went to a new school – a much bigger one than the farm school I had been at. Bad influences began to drag me into worldly things and before I realised it, I was enslaved to sin.

“In Catechism class one day the teacher asked: ‘Have you got an assurance in your soul that you are saved?’ I realised then that I couldn't answer ‘yes’ and that I was a sinner on the path to destruction. Although I understood my lost condition I didn't want to give up my wayward lifestyle. To try to prick my conscience, I regularly read my Bible because I knew a day was coming when God would judge me in righteousness.

“Eventually I came to a place of experiencing real remorse for my sins and prayed with someone after church one Sunday. The Lord set me free of my sins and since then I have had a peace that passes all understanding, and an assurance that when I die I will go to be with Him in heaven.

“My life changed dramatically. I no longer had any desire to sin or live like the world, because I now wanted to become more and more like Jesus. My fear of death vanished the moment I chose to follow God. I suddenly had a deep love for the Bible. My future plans and ideals are no longer centred on myself but focused on sharing the gospel and glorifying God.

“The Lord has helped me to overcome my bad habits and live so that others can see Christ in me. He has given me power to overcome temptations, provided for all my needs, and helped me to stand strong in the faith.”

Ibhungu elikhulile ekukholweni

Zulu translation

UEduard de Nysschen ukhulile ekukholweni noma elibhungu elina 17. Nayi indaba yakho yokuthi wahlangana kanjani noNkulunkulu, ezibekela ngamazwi akhe, ngolwimi lwesibhunu.

“Ngisakhula nganginokuhehwa ubuhle nobugagu bemvelo ngaphaphama masinya ekutheni imvelo ibalulekile nokuthi uNkulunkulu mkhulu futhi unamandla kunalendlela engangicabanga ngayo. Njalo ngesonto ngangiya esontweni naku Sunday school kodwa ngingenalo ugqozi lokufunda ngoMdali.

“Ngangicabanga ukuthi izinto zilungile phakathi kwami ngoba ngangiphila impilo elungile ngingenzi izono ‘ezithusayo’.

“Mangiqala u-grade5 ngaya kwesinye iskole esasisikhulu kunalesi engiphuma kuso. Abangani ababi bangidonsela ezweni, ngathi ngiphaphama ngangiqilazwe isono.

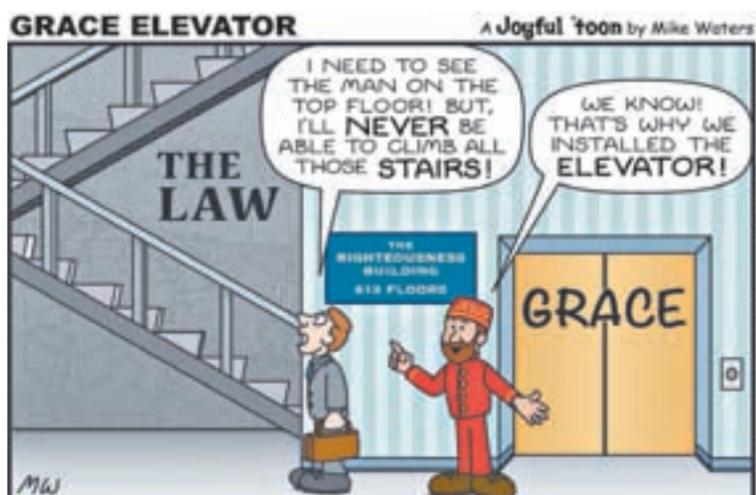
“Eklasini lekhathekizimi uthisha wabuza: ‘Engabe unaso yini isiqiniseko emphefumulweni wakho sokuthi usindisiwe?’ Angikwazanga ukuphendula ngithi ‘yebo’ ngangiyisoni esiya ekubhujisweni. Noma ngasiqonda isimo sami sokulahleka ngangingafuni ukuyekela indlela zami. Ukuzama ukuthulisa unembeza wami, ngangilifunda njalo ibhayibheli lami ngoba ngangazi ukuthi liyeza ilanga la uNkulunkulu azongahlulela khona ngokulunga.

“Kwafika isikhathi lapho ngazisola ngokwe-

qiniso ngenxa yezono zami ngase ngithandaza nomuntu makuphuma isonto. INkosi yangikhulula ezonweni zami kusuka ngalelo langa ngaba nokuthula okudlula ukuqonda, nesiqiniseko sokuthi uma ngila ngizoya Kuye ezulwini.

“Impilo yami yashintsha kakhulu. Nganginantshisekelo yokona neyokuphila njengezwe, nganginesifiso sokufana noJesu. Nokwesaba kwami ukufa kwanyamalala mangikhetha ukulandela uNkulunkulu. Ngase ngiba nothando lwe bhayibheli. Inhlelo zekusasa lami aziphathelene nami kodwa ekukhulumeni ivangeli nokukhazimulisa uNkulunkulu.

“INkosi yangisiza ngingqobe ukuziphatha kabi nokuphila ngendlela yokuthi abantu babone u Kristu kimina. Ungiphile amandla okunqoba izilingo, wahlangabezana nezidingo zami, wangi-siza nokuma ngiqine ekukholweni.”



For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

— JOHN 1:17 NIV

nudge

WITH KARL FAASE

Sip-Testing Jesus

IN the early 1980's Pepsi was doing sip research and showing ads to demonstrate that Pepsi tasted better than Coke. Coke did their own sip-test research and discovered that 57% of people preferred the taste of Pepsi. So they changed the taste of Coke to get the edge on Pepsi.

But rather than people liking this, there was an outcry. People hated the taste of the new Coke and they had to change the flavour back to what it was. Why did this happen? Hadn't the sip-test proven they needed to change?

There was also another test, the “take-home test”. The take-home test gave a different result. The results were more favourable to Coke when people made the assessment based on drinking the whole can and in fact several cans. So it wasn't the sip that counted but the whole can.

Plenty of people have sip-tested Jesus. Just tried a little and found it way too hard. However, like the tests on Coke, it's not until you complete the “take-home test” that you discover what faith in Jesus is all about.



BUILDING BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

WHEN OUR FEAR TURNS TO ANGER

BY ROB FURLONG

"Be angry, yet do not sin..." So wrote Paul the Apostle as he gave great practical advice on living out our relationships with one another.

Many years ago, a friend read this out to a group of us while also making an honest admission that he found this piece of advice "incredibly difficult to live out!" He was simply echoing what we all felt – it's so easy to quote this statement, but extremely hard to follow!

Difficult or not, we all know from our own personal experience that anger can lead us to do and say things which are harmful and destructive.

What is it then that drives our anger, causing us to lash out at

others?

Psychologists and counselors will tell you it's fear.

One author describes the relationship between fear and anger in this way:

"Fear of the unknown is akin to the fear of loss. When we don't understand something, we fear that it will in some way rob us of things we hold important. For example, suppose that a strange man calls up wanting to talk to your wife and he refuses to explain why or identify himself. This unknown typically generates fear in your mind. You'll think of the worst possible scenario that is based on the possible loss of your wife or her affections to a strange man.

This will lead to anger.

The reaction of this husband's anger is based on his fear of loss. Because he fears the loss of his wife in some capacity – physically, emotionally, or even that of not being

good enough for her – he will react in anger."

The same author goes on to say:

"Few people know how to deal with fear. Our internal defenses are not well equipped to deal with fear. It can paralyse you. It can rob you of the ability to think. It can create fear upon fear. For most people, the only effective means of combating fear is with anger.

"Anger provides us with a weapon to use against the source of our fears. We hope to destroy, in some way, the basis of our fears and therefore be freed from our fears. In effect, we combat a strong, negative emotion with another strong and

often negative emotion – anger. This is a very dangerous combination.

"I've learned that angry people have many fears. They feel, in some way, vulnerable to others. Their defense is to lash out in anger. This does succeed in keeping people at arm's length, true, but it destroys nearly every meaningful relationship as well."

Reflecting on the above, I think of Darth Vader!

As young Anakin Skywalker, he is presented to the wise old Jedi, Yoda, who detects "much fear" simmering away in the young man's heart and he warns him against this. But it goes unheeded; Anakin succumbs to his fear, venting it through his anger, and the monstrous Darth Vader is born, leaving behind him a wake of pain, hurt, cruelty and the murder of innocents.

As Yoda says, "Fear leads to anger. Anger leads to hate. Hate leads to suffering."

Although fictional, it is a powerful



illustration of how fear fuels anger, which then leads to destructive behaviour – sin.

Are you caught in a cycle of anger that expresses itself in such things as hurtful comments, unforgiveness and revenge?

Then it is time for you to confront your fears.

Ask yourself, "What am I afraid of?"

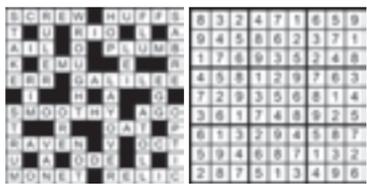
Is it losing your spouse, being overlooked for a promotion, being rejected by others, having your carefully hidden flaws exposed or having your point of view challenged?

All of these, and countless others, have the capacity to lead us into angry, sinful, behaviour.

Take the time now, to think about your fears, and where required, seek out a good counselor who can help you process them.

"Be angry, yet do not sin..."

ANGER LEADS TO HATE. HATE LEADS TO SUFFERING. — YODA



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 10:8b-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?

1. Tell someone - either a Christian that you know or email us at info@challengenews.org
2. Use the resources in the green box on this page to find a Bible to read and more information regarding Christianity.
3. Keep praying. Talk to God anywhere, about anything. He is always listening, and you don't need a formula.
4. 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: Honeydew Ridge Residential Estate, 12 Mississippi, Mozart Road, Honeydew, Roodepoort, South Africa

All overseas enquiries are referred onto someone in their own country

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	

Satan hates you

BY JODY BENNETT

IN a world where almost every week I think things are getting more and more bizarre, The Satanic Temple of Idaho has posted on Facebook (at the end of a longer message) "Just know that Satan loves you for you!"

This strikes me as an utterly mind-blowing statement. I understand that many people in the world don't believe in God, and even some of those that do, don't believe in the antithesis of God – the devil. But I would have thought that surely those of us who believed in Satan were at least all agreed as to his character! And I would have assumed that people turned to Satanism out of a desire for power, certainly not out of a desire for love and acceptance!

If someone was out looking for a god to love them, why on earth would they choose Satan?! Where do they get their information about Satan from? The Christian Bible is the only source I know.

On the one hand you have Jesus, who demonstrated His love by walking among us, healing and doing kind deeds, and then dying on the cross to pay our sin-debt to God; on the other you have Satan who ... what? What loving act of Satan do Satanists use to prove his great love for humanity?

The truth is Satan absolutely hates us. He is the enemy of God the Father and all He stands for, Satan CAN'T love because God IS love. The Bible calls him the old serpent and the father of lies. Satan is bent on humanity's destruction. He is trying to deceive as many people as possible to spend eternity in damnation with him in the place that God created specifically to punish him and his evil angels. He hates that God loves us and offers us forgiveness for our sin. He hates playing second fiddle to God and wants to be worshipped as god.

That statement on the post might have had a slightly different meaning in its context, which was as part of a post about a gay pride march. Maybe it was meant to mean that Satan loves what you are doing and never expects you to change your sexual behaviour or sinful inclinations. However, that is a lie too. Satan loves sin because it destroys us. He encourages people to sin and to get deeper and deeper into sin until they are enslaved and destroyed by their sin. Whatever your sexual appetites are, he will warp and change and pervert them, to become more animal lust and less emotional fulfilment. If Satan approves of some behaviour, you can know it is because it leads to death.

Don't believe the lie that Satan will leave you as you are. God will accept you as you are and then raise you up to be holy and pure and clean, as He is. Satan will accept you as you are and then drag you down into the depths of depravity with him. Sin will always take you further and cost you more than you imagined. God's path will make you the best human being and 'a little lower than the angels'; Satan's will make you little better than a beast.

Don't be fooled, Satan does not love you, he hates your guts. He is the enemy of God and all His good creation – which includes you.



Inset: Sydney McLaughlin of the United States smiles with the gold medal after the Women's 400m Hurdles Final at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games in Japan, on August 4, 2021. (Photo by Li Yibo/Xinhua via Getty Images)

Sydney McLaughlin of the United States in action in the Women's 400m Hurdles Semi Final two during the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympic Games on August 2nd, 2021 in Tokyo, Japan. (Photo by Tim Clayton/Corbis via Getty Images)

SEASON OF SUCCESS

US track star Sydney McLaughlin (now 22) is an American hurdler and sprinter who won gold in the 400-metre hurdles and in the 4x400-metre relay at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games (held in 2021).

She also holds the current world record, (which she shaved a further .8 seconds off at the recent World Athletics Championships) and Olympic record for the 400-meter hurdles.

Although Sydney tries to limit her social media use because she finds it a distraction from her goals, in August 2021 she wrote a lengthy Instagram post glorifying God.

“Let me start off by saying, what an honour it is to be able to represent not only my country, but also the kingdom of God,” she wrote. “What I have in Christ is far greater than what I have or don’t have in life. I pray my journey may be a clear depiction of submission and obedience to God. Even when it doesn’t make sense, even when it doesn’t seem possible. He will make a way out of no way. Not for my own gratification, but for His glory.

“I have never seen God fail in my life. In anyone’s life for that matter. Just because I may not win every race, or receive every one of my heart’s desires, does not mean God had failed. His will is PERFECT. And He has prepared me for a moment such as this. That I may use the gifts He has given me to point all the attention back to Him.

“2x Olympian, Olympic Champion, World Record Holder.

“Thank. You. God.”

2020-21 was a very big year for the athlete, along with her medals, she won herself a diamond ring too, when she got engaged to NFL player Andre Levrone Jr. and – even more important and life-changing than those events – Sydney also got baptised (immersed in water) as a declaration of her decision to commit her life to following Jesus Christ.

In November 2020, she posted a video of herself getting baptised in the ocean at a beach in LA, and said, “For 21 years I was running from the greatest gift I could ever receive. And by His grace, I have been saved. I no longer live, but Christ in me. My past has been made clean because of my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.”

Sydney explains to Movieguide what brought her to this decision: “I grew up in a Christian household. I went to church every Sunday. My parents raised us on biblical principles, and for a long time I always knew that God existed and I knew that He definitely played a big role in my life, but there was no relationship.

“Honestly, I didn’t even understand the importance or the purpose of Jesus and how all that played out. So it was a lot more of religious right and wrong, [rather than] true relationship and connection and intimacy,” she explains.

“But I didn’t think there was any freedom in [surrendering to Jesus]. And I was afraid that in doing that I would be handing over my individuality and my identity. So I kind of put that off and just walked in the

world and lived a very secular life and it never fulfilled me. It never sustained me and I could vividly hear God in a couple of instances ask, ‘Are you done? Are you ready to give your life over to me? Are you ready to let me have control?’ And I would literally tell Him ‘no’.

“God can’t force you to love Him. So I kept walking that road. I got to a point where I was just very depressed and desperately searching for some sort of purpose because a lot of it was wrapped up in relationships, and none of those things ever worked out or sustained me.”

However, once COVID hit, Sydney was forced to spend more time by herself and she started to listen to sermons and read her Bible “... things I didn’t normally do on a daily basis,” she admits.

“I had people from my church ... do Bible studies with me and even Andre inviting me to the NFL Bible study, and I got into community with people who I truly saw living in that freedom and in that joy that Jesus brings. Over time, I was able to build my own relationship with Jesus.

“Andre is like one of the best things that ever happened to me,” she says. “Beyond being such an amazing friend, he’s such a great man of God. He’s helped me in my walk and has always constantly encouraged me in that. And it’s been such an amazing thing just to have him as an example of what it means to live a life like Jesus. And truly, that’s what attracts me to him

the most.”

Sydney says that Colossians chapter three in the Bible stood out to her and opened her eyes to how to live for God. The chapter begins: “*Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.*”

“Being able to live a life that’s led by God, and understanding His love for me that sustains me more than anything secular in this world, has given me a new perspective on everything. And I know that it’s a constant journey, but definitely one of the best decisions I’ve ever made in my life,” Sydney affirms.

“God’s love for you will never

change regardless of how you perform or don’t perform,” she adds. “At the end of the day, as long as I’m giving 100% of what I have to Him, the rest doesn’t matter. I thought I was a track athlete. I thought I was a social media influencer ... but now I’ve understood that first and foremost, I’m a child of God. Track is not who I am, it’s just what I do. It’s the opportunity He’s given me to bring all of the glory back to Him.

“Christ has cleansed me and washed me and made me clean. There’s just so much beauty in that and the grace, the immeasurable amount of grace that He showed me that I do not deserve.

“It’s just been amazing to just sit in the simplicity of God’s love. It’s been very enjoyable just to feel that and then, as an overflow of the love that I’ve received, be able to share that with others around me.”

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