

PRISONER TO PRINCESS

False ideas have held Tina Cook captive to her feelings for most of her life. She was trapped in deception but eventually found a way out to the truth. This is her story in her own words.

Looking back, I was saturated with the belief that there was something wrong or 'lacking' in me, that I was unworthy, unlovable, didn't measure up and never did anything right. This mindset chartered a path of destruction that took me very far from the truth of my real identity.

I began people-pleasing, performing, and approval seeking as a pre-teen. I later became an easy target for drugs, sex, and rebellion in any form. Unsurprisingly, by age 15 I was pregnant and before I turned 16 had undergone an abortion that left me unable to ever have children. Right after my 16th birthday, I tried to commit suicide and was committed to a psych ward.

Promiscuity, abortion, and my attempted suicide propelled me into a world of shame, regret, and guilt. Even worse, I developed a detrimental belief that God was punishing me for what I had done, by taking away my hope of ever becoming a mother.

All of these emotions further validated my belief that I was worthless. I was caught in a trap that I simply could not find my way out of. The more I tried to make the feelings of inadequacy go away... the further down the rabbit hole I

seemed to travel. I used anything and anyone: alcohol, drugs, material things, and sex with lots of men to try to escape from my reality.

Eventually, my life was unrecognizable to me in those cold moments of clarity that hit me like a ton of bricks! But, one more drink, one more line, one more hit, one more man...and I could make it go away again for a while.

I was estranged from my family, homeless, owned nothing, sold my body for money, then spent it all on drugs, as soon as I got it.

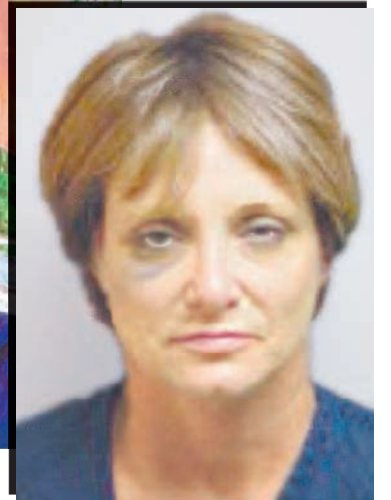
I had been voted 'Best Dressed' by classmates in High School; now, I was swapping dirty clothes with people so I would have something different on.

I had been in and out of jail since 1989 and it was now October of 2011. In fact, in the previous nine months I'd been to jail three times already, was currently bonded out by a man who I don't even remember meeting, and had just missed my court appearance, when I got arrested again smoking a hit of rock-cocaine. But, this time a series of events took place that sparked a change in me.

“ I am a new creation and the life I'm living is a do-over. ”



Tina Cook's mug shot from her past life (below) and Tina with an Instagram filter reflecting her royal status now.



was Joyce Meyer's *Battlefield of the Mind*. In it, she explains the importance of thinking about what you are thinking about. So, as I sat at the industrial sewing machine making inmate uniforms, I began to consider, "What are you thinking about right now, Tina?"

I was distressed that in spite of my sincere belief that I wanted to change... I was sitting there thinking about how to find my drug dealer and johns when I got out.

The book told me to replace this ungodly, against-my-will thinking with good thoughts.

First of all, I was convinced that I was going to die in the sorry state I was in, as my recent prison sentence wasn't the 'party' I had had during my other incarcerations. I kept to myself and was in deep thought about my life...how I was raised by a good Christian woman and where I had come from, how I was living now and where I had ended up. The realization of it all was heart-breaking!

It was at this point that I came to the end of myself and fell not only

into the arms of Jesus but began to fall head-over-heels in love with Him as well! This life-altering event freed me to take action by joining the jail's working pod so I could be productive and have a semblance of normalcy with a schedule to follow.

I started attending the Bible studies that were offered. I began asking for help, applying the steps from 12-Step programs that I had learned during my many recovery attempts, and reading things that edified me.

One of the first books I read

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The pressure that comes from within

BY DAN DELZELL, CHRISTIAN POST CONTRIBUTOR (ABRIDGED)

HEALTH issues, relationship tensions, and financial struggles place tremendous pressure upon people. But one particular source of pressure is rooted even deeper within us. I am referring to the ever-present problem of sin.

The Bible teaches that Adam and Eve were perfect when God created them. They made the tragic choice to sin against their Creator, and the spiritual disease of sin has been passed down from parents to children ever since. When writing to Christians in Ephesus, the Apostle Paul described their spiritual condition prior to conversion.

"You were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world..." (Ephesians 2:1-2).

My wife recently underwent surgery when

it became necessary to remove and replace a herniated disc in the lower part of her neck. The C5-C6 disc was putting pressure on the nerve roots next to her spinal cord. Tammy felt this painful pressure for about a year and often held her right arm in the air to relieve the numbness she was feeling. After initial remedies failed to relieve the pain, we were blessed with a terrific surgeon and a successful surgery. The neck pain and pressure are now completely gone.

Sin does something similar by placing spiritual pressure upon the "nerves" of our soul. This real pressure can make us numb to the Lord's will for our life. You see, we were not created to live for sin, but for the glory and honour of our Creator.

Sin means to "miss the mark" of God's holy

standard. We have all sinned in our thoughts, words and actions. And we have all felt the guilt and the pressure that sin produces within us.

"There is no peace," says the Lord, "for the wicked" (Isaiah 48:22).

This inner restlessness applies to believers as well whenever they choose to engage in sin. It interrupts God's peace in our souls and places considerable pressure upon our heart and mind. For example, David felt miserable after sinning against God by committing adultery and murder.

"When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer" (Psalm 32:3-4).

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BACK PAGE



FAITH ON THE FIELD
BUKAYO SAKA

I FOUND A NEW KIND OF FREEDOM

Rebelling from family expectations and comparisons, Jason found freedom in driving – and racing. When his dangerous driving offences began to pile up and he showed no sign of changing, he found himself in prison. Hopeless and angry, Jason had hit rock bottom. But looking back now, he describes it as his turning point and one of the best things to happen to him. Jason shares in an interview on Evangeline Marie Rossi's YouTube channel that he felt pressure from his parents and culture to perform well in school and have a successful career.



Jason now describes his time in prison as one of the best things to happen to him.

opposite.”

When Jason got his driver's licence and a car, he discovered a new kind of freedom.

“I didn't have to listen to anyone, I could just go anywhere I wanted,” he remembers. Feeling he was unable to win his parents' approval, he started living to please his friends.

“I was trying to make people like me because I felt like I didn't

really get too much of that at home. I started smoking weed and even selling weed for a little bit. My friends thought racing was cool so I started getting into that. Whatever my friends thought was cool, I would do... Slowly I just got myself into more and more trouble. I started drinking and driving and racing. At the beginning I just got tickets here and there, but then I got suspended from school. Things just got worse and worse. It was kind of like an addiction.”

This behaviour continued into Jason's college years. Jason was continually getting arrested and charged with drink driving and dangerous driving offences but nothing changed and he would return to the same behaviour.

“I thought I could always get away

with things. I had this mentality that when I got in trouble my parents would pay the legal fees ... It didn't matter how much trouble I got into, my parents always found a way to get me out of it.”

Eventually a judge recognised that Jason wasn't learning and sentenced him to six months in prison. Jason felt ashamed and mad at the world. He thought due to his prison time he would be unable to work ever again and his family would abandon him.

“I attempted to commit suicide because I was I felt like it was hopeless.”

Prison guards intervened and he was placed on suicide watch for two weeks.

Although Jason wasn't raised in a hope where spiritual matters were discussed, he had heard about God and decided to pray to Him to help him get out of the situation he was in. A couple of weeks later, a pastor from a prison ministry visited Jason's cell.

“He just wanted to pray for me and listen to me,” Jason recalls. “I would just complain about the whole world and how unfair it was that I was there with all these real criminals when I wasn't even real criminal... He gave me a Bible to read but I didn't really care too much about that – it was just good to have someone to talk to.”

When some inmates approached him and forced him to fight with another new prisoner, Jason lost and he sank deeper into depression. He saw the Bible in front of him and while he didn't want to read it, he decided to draw something he knew was in it – Jesus on the cross.

Other inmates saw the drawing and commented on his artistic talent.

“People started like coming to

me with different requests,” Jason remembers.

Suddenly he had many people wanting to talk to him. Some assumed he was a Christian and invited him to a Bible study. Over time, as he learned more about Jesus and His sacrifice in dying for our sins on the cross, Jason began to believe in and trust Jesus. He completed a Bible course, and when he finished, he was presented with a Bible with his name engraved on the front.

“After I got out of prison I became a different person,” Jason explains. “My attitude changed. I became more grateful for what I had and I

stopped complaining. I thought being in prison was the worst thing in my life, but God showed me otherwise.”

Jason now attributes his change and his conversion to Christianity to his time in prison. He says it was a turning point and one of the

best things to have happened to him. Since his release, his relationships with his family and friends have become stronger.

“God has a purpose for everyone's life,” he attests. “God guides my life. Whenever I have any struggles in my life, God is Who I go to. Knowing that God is always by my side, always in me and walking with me through every step of my life – that's where I get my security from. Because I know God is with me, it doesn't matter what happens to me. Even if it seems like the whole world is against me, God is always with me. Everything I have right now God gave that to me. I stopped comparing what I don't have and instead I started looking at what I had, what God gave me ... Being part of God's kingdom is where I get my joy from.”



Tina proudly displaying her Bachelor of Science in Addiction Studies.

Prisoner now a princess

● From page 1

That was when I began to practice thinking about what I was thinking about and replacing it with Bible verses, with memories of my life that were worthwhile and full of promise, and with mental snapshots of my family.

Not long after that, my father died. It was that terrible - not only could I not go to his funeral, but my family did not WANT me there! I made a vow to God, “I'm going to stop missing out on the important stuff in my life!” About a month later, I found out my mama had terminal cancer.

My mother had been the constant in my life, although my behavior had finally caused her to release me to God to protect herself from the pain my lifestyle caused her. So, I made another vow to God, “My mama may never talk to me again, but I'm going to live everyday so I'll be available just in case she wants to!” A year later, I was holding her hand when Jesus led her into eternity.

I celebrated eight years of sobriety on October 28, 2019. Emotional freedom has come at a great cost to me but the rewards of attaining it are priceless! I made a lot more vows to God (and kept them!) that I believe have been critical in my ability to remain on the path of recovery. The first one was that I would stop looking for a man and start living for THE Man (Jesus)!

The next vow was to leave behind those regrets...all that shame and guilt that held me in bondage, and live the life I wished I had lived.

I am a new creation and the life I'm living is a do-over. I'm getting a second chance to be a new and improved me.

That doesn't mean it's always easy! But God is good...and with His help I've learned how to find the purpose He created me for.

In October 2014, I graduated university Magna Cum Laude with a BS in Christian Addiction Studies and Urban Missions. In June 2016 I officially became the Executive Director of a local non-profit agency.

I am also an Alabama and Nationally Certified Addiction Counselor. It took commitment & determination on my part not to quit because I wanted to, many times, which is old behavior for me! I am convinced that freedom comes when we face the fact that we can't change ourselves and that no one else can change or fix us.

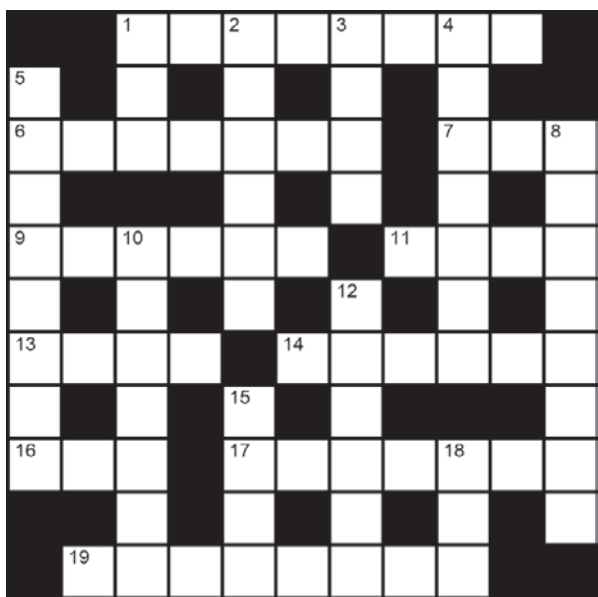
We can then embrace that there is only one who can set us free and that is THE ONE, Jesus who created each of us.

Today I am a free woman...today my life is God's story of triumph.

I am Princess Tina: beloved daughter of The King.

Coffee Break CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

- ACROSS**
- 1 Viewers, listeners
 - 6 Vast
 - 7 Bunk or berth
 - 9 Decay and disappear
 - 11 Like many old cellars
 - 13 Highway off-ramp
 - 14 Desert mammals
 - 16 Pull along
 - 17 Old as the hills
 - 19 Engine chamber
- DOWN**
- 1 Chair part
 - 2 Relating to Denmark
 - 3 Used for seeing
 - 4 A leaf vegetable
 - 5 Easiest to do
 - 8 Down-payments
 - 10 Network of trains



12 Waltzed, for example 15 Dry watercourse (North Africa)
18 Organ for hearing

SOLUTIONS PAGE 7



“Once I got my barking under control the neighbourhood fell in love with me.”

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The pressure that comes from within

● From page 1

It was only when David turned away from his sin and confessed it to the Lord that the pressure was lifted from his soul.

Edwin Louis Cole wrote: “Temptation can be tormenting, but remember: The torment of temptation to sin is nothing to compare with the torment of the consequences of sin.”

The Holy Spirit [invisible person of God] convicts us of our sin. Without this much-needed conviction, we would never confess our sins to God and turn away from them.

Jesus said, “When He (the Holy Spirit) comes, He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8).

Apart from the Holy Spirit's conviction, each one of us would remain lost in our sin. We would ultimately receive a sentence of eternal punishment for our sins. (Matthew 25:41,46; Mark 9:44-48)

“It is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). Thankfully, Jesus came to pay for our sins by His death on the cross and to deliver us from the guilt, power, and eternal penalty of sin.

“Christ died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again” (2 Corinthians 5:15).

“Jesus is the atoning sacrifice (paid the price) for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2).

What particular sins are placing pressure on your life today? God is willing to perform surgery on your soul and address those areas with His grace and power.

There is only one way to have your sins washed away. Turn to the Lord today in genuine sorrow and faith, as you pray: “Forgive me Lord for my sins. I turn away from them. Wash me, Jesus, with your precious blood. Empower me to live for you, and help me to stand strong and not open the door when temptation comes knocking. Amen.”

In the business of getting clean

BY EMILY ANDREWS

When 10-year-old Derrick Ervin came home early from family vacation, he knew something was going on. Then he learned the news that changed his life forever: His father had died unexpectedly.

Derrick says his father was his “Superman.” He remembers his dad as the man who woke up at two in the morning, worked all day as a truck driver, and came home by six in the evening to organize team sports for local children.

The youngest of six children, Derrick grew up in a predominantly Black, low-income neighborhood near Birmingham, Alabama. It was a close-knit community. His parents, both hard workers and people of faith, taught their children about Jesus and raised them to respect others.

“Everybody looked at my mother and my father as their mom and their dad, because they raised so many children in our neighborhood,” Derrick says. “Those are some of my fondest memories, when I speak of my family.”

The sudden loss of his father devastated Derrick. He remembers how the pain overcame him: “I’ll never forget going into my bedroom that particular day when I found out, and I just let out this loud cry. I remember saying to myself, ‘I’ll never hurt again. No one will ever hurt me again.’”

When he walked out of his bedroom that day, Derrick didn’t know how to bear the weight of his pain. His deep grief cast a darkness over his life, but for some time, nobody knew the depth of his struggle.

Derrick kept up appearances for a while. He earned good grades in school, excelled at sports, and received a football scholarship to attend North Carolina State University.

But even with a change of scenery, Derrick felt broken. He struggled to cope with the loss of his father. Then, when Derrick was 21, his mother died of a brain tumor.

Heartbroken and angry at God, Derrick realized his past wounds had never healed. After college, Derrick worked many jobs and married a woman named Shemelia. But soon he was hiding a double life, dealing drugs. He convinced himself he was providing for his family at all costs. Before long, he was staring down a long sentence for offenses related to dealing large amounts of cocaine.

When the judge spoke the words “life without parole,” Derrick heard a loud cry across the courtroom. It was his oldest son, who was 10, the same age Derrick was when his father died. He remembered being that 10-year-old boy crying out in his bedroom. Now, his own son was about to lose his father to the prison system.

Derrick says, “It broke me, because for the first time I realized that the choices I made not only affected me and impacted my life, but everything that was connected to me.”

Alabama’s St. Clair Correctional Facility felt like another hopeless stop on a long, dark road for Derrick. The loneliness and despair of incarceration weighed on him daily. But the hardest part was being separated from his family.

He was desperate for a way to cope with his sentence, especially when he had no release date.

Alone with his thoughts, Derrick remembered the faith of his parents and how they



brought him up to serve others. He longed for purpose and direction in his life. With nothing else to hold on to, he felt a nudge to take a “leap of faith” and pray.

“I had an encounter with the Lord that transformed my life miraculously,” Derrick recalls. “I never received the Lord to get out of prison, but I received Him because I knew that I needed a change. I knew that something in me had to be broken and put back together again. I felt [Christ] was my only hope. I tried everything else; it just didn’t work.”

Derrick began his new journey with a question: Who is this “Jesus” that his parents had believed in? He longed for a faith that was his own. He dove into the Bible, from the Old Testament to the New, where he encountered the living God—the One who could transform his life from the inside out.

Every day, Derrick spent hours poring over scripture. Soon, he also enrolled in Prison Fellowship Academy, a yearlong program that helps participants embrace biblically based values.

In the Academy, Derrick found a safe place to be transparent and to grow in community. After graduating the program, he made good on his promise to be a better man. He was no longer getting into trouble but setting an example. He coached others as they worked to obtain their GED. He served as a hospice worker and worked in the chapel, cleaning floors on his hands and knees with a toothbrush. Then, the miracle: In 2019, Derrick’s sentence was reduced. There was no explaining it apart from the work of God.

Derrick faced many challenges upon re-entry. He struggled to relate to his sons, who were 19 and 24 when he was released. He wanted to rebuild their relationships, but he knew it would take time and patience.

Derrick also had to learn to be a present, devoted husband. Shemelia had been surviving on her own for so long and even started a cleaning business while Derrick was locked up. When Derrick came home, he made it a point to support her and help the business continue to succeed. Through that commitment, they developed a vision to help other returning citizens receive a second chance. Their model involves providing well-paying jobs so people can support their families and feel stable. ●

The original of this story can be found at www.prison-fellowship.org and it is used with kind permission.

What does holiness really mean?

BY JODY BENNETT

HOLINESS is not really a concept bandied about much in our culture today. If the term is used, it would most likely be negatively, as in “Stop being so holier-than-thou!” Meaning, “stop being so self-righteous”, or “stop judging me for my bad behaviour”.

‘Holiness’, as far as our culture understands it, is something we think we ought to avoid in order to make others feel better about themselves. Even exercising a free choice, like not drinking alcohol, not swearing or not sleeping with someone can be construed as some sort of super-spiritual behaviour depending on the company, and elicit an accusation of being too ‘holy’.

In the Bible, however, the word ‘holy’ in the Hebrew language means ‘things belonging to God’. Things and people are ‘made holy’ by dedicating them for use by and for God.

When God shows up somewhere, like in the Jewish temple or at Moses’ burning bush, He transforms that space into a holy place. Even coal shovels and candlesticks can be holy, because they are set aside for use in God’s service. Other words that convey that special use for God’s purposes are ‘sanctified’

or ‘consecrated’. The New Testament calls Christians “a holy people”.

Looking around at those who follow Jesus that you know, you might disagree. But the point is that they are not holy because of what they do, they are holy because they belong to God and God is using them for His purposes.

Christians should indeed act in a manner that is upright and sin-free, but that comes out of the identity of holiness that God has already given them by forgiving their sin and accepting them as His children, not out of a striving on their part to become ‘good enough’ for God. The Christian God, Yahweh, is perfect, sinless and all good. God’s standards are high and holy. Apart from Jesus’ atoning [paying the debt] sacrifice on the cross there is no way humans could meet them.

However, with Jesus as both Saviour and Lord of their lives, Christians are empowered to live holy lives — not sanctimonious lives, but lives full of humility, love, kindness, patience and self-control. You too can be holy and live holy, no matter how you have lived up to this point.

You can change the script of your life by committing yourself to God by means of a simple prayer such as the one on page 7. ●

“When people encounter the true God, they experience a selfquake. That’s one way you can tell if you’ve met Israel’s God or simply a figment of your imagination. A made-up God will leave your world undisturbed, conveniently aligning with your priorities without displacing anything, because ultimately you are more glorious than it is. The real God, however, will land in the middle of your life like an elephant crashing through the ceiling, displacing your sin, changing all your priorities, and forcing you to reorient yourself around the weight of glory.”

— Andrew Wilson, from The God of All Things

World Hope Ministries Mzansi

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The World Hope Ministries Spiritual Care Programme consists of the following courses:

<p>BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP 1</p> <p><small>Biblical Discipleship</small></p> <p>The lessons in this course will help the student engage the scriptures. This course consists of 4 books: Relationship with God, Fellowship with God, Responsibility to God and Accountability to God. Upon completion of all 4 books, one is issued with a bible in a language of his/her choice, and a certificate.</p>	<p>THE JESUS FILM</p> <p><small>JESUS</small></p> <p>This film which is based on the biography of our Lord Jesus Christ, from birth to His ascension, is screened by a World Hope facilitator as part of our course.</p>
<p>BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP 2</p> <p><small>Biblical Discipleship</small></p> <p>This course builds on the foundation laid by Discipleship 1 and provides a deeper understanding of the word of God in the Christian walk. This course consists of two books A and B, each 13 lessons. A certificate is awarded upon completion of each of the books.</p>	<p>GODS ANSWER TO AIDS</p> <p><small>GODS ANSWER TO AIDS</small></p> <p>The purpose of this course is to enlighten and educate individuals of how to overcome the scourge of HIV/AIDS, based on what the Word of God says. This course consists of six lessons six weeks, engaging a DVD and a resource workbook. It is taught by a World Hope Ministries facilitator.</p>

ALL OUR COURSES ARE QUALITY ASSURED AND OUTCOMES BASED

HOPE MAKES ALIVE

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PRISON..... SECTION..... CELL.....

Post to: PO Box 96176, Brixton 2019

A VERY HAPPY EASTER FOR JORDAN

Jordan Wilson was a popular teenager who loved to throw parties with his friends. He loved the party lifestyle and everything that went with it from girls to alcohol, to marijuana and pain pills.

"I thought that I was Superman," he told CBN. "I thought that I was invincible." Before long, Jordan was addicted to drugs, spending a hundred dollars a day on pills. Without 20 pills a day, he suffered extreme withdrawal symptoms.

Jordan also became addicted to methamphetamines. To fund his addictions, Jordan and a friend started manufacturing and selling synthetic cannabinoids (Spice).

Eventually an informant tipped off the police about Jordan's dealing.

"When I was busted and the police

picked me up and threw me on the ground, I was so obliterated from the drugs that I really couldn't grasp just how hot the water was that I was in," Jordan says.

Over the next three years, Jordan was in jail 10 times and kicked out of rehab six times.

"I knew for sure that I was going to die a drug addict," Jordan admits. "I started shooting up. I shot up crystal meth. I was addicted to pills again. And I had no desire to continue living." Jordan's dad, Roger, was at a loss for what to do about his son. A committed Christian, he prayed for a miracle. Roger recalled his son's strong faith as a teenager, before he became consumed with girls and drugs, and walked away from God. He prayed for Jordan to find his faith again and for God to give him the

strength he needed to become sober for good.

With the support of his parents, Jordan tried to stop using and began detoxing.

On Easter Sunday in 2016, Roger asked Jordan to attend church with him.

"I said, 'No, Dad, I'm sick, I'm detoxing from drugs. I can't go,'" Jordan remembers. But it was also Roger's birthday, so he asked him again to go, as a birthday present to his father.

"I was 27 years old and I didn't have a birthday gift for my dad," Jordan explains. "I thought, this is the least

I can do. And so I agreed to go to church with my dad for his birthday on Easter Sunday."

During that service Jordan recalls feeling the first spark of hope he had felt in years. When the pastor invited people to dedicate their lives to Jesus, Jordan jumped out of his seat.

"As I was at that altar, I felt like God was sweeping me off my feet," Jordan shares. "I realized that this is Resurrection Sunday. Jesus Christ has risen."

Roger was over the moon. "It was absolutely, other than the day



Christ has taught me to love people. He has enabled me to care about people. And I realized that my life is bigger than me. I'm not the lead role in my story. He is. And realizing [that] gives me a life truly worth living."

Jordan is married with two children and has written a book called, *Jesus > Drugs: The Only War Won by Surrender*. He is also the development director of a rehab facility he was once kicked out of.

"If you surrender to Christ, He'll fight for you," Jordan says to those who are in the same place he once was.

"He'll do what you can't do. As someone who tried it without Jesus, there is a big difference. You may be able to get sober without Christ, but you'll never be free without Christ. And Christ is what sets people free."



Jordan's mug shots.

Special day for inmates



Inmates at Decatur County Detention await their turn to be baptized. Baptism is an outward expression of an inner change that has taken place for believers in Jesus Christ.



"DCDC Chaplain Dave Burnett along with Residents Encounter Christ (REC) members baptized nearly 40 men and women after a personal, public profession of Jesus Christ in their lives," Decatur County Sheriff wrote on its Facebook page.

Over the past four years, almost 300 people have given their life to Jesus Christ while incarcerated at the center.

Baptism is instructed in the Bible as the next step after repenting of your sins (wrong-doing against God) and coming to faith in Jesus Christ. Baptism symbolises Jesus' death and resurrection as you are submerged under water and rise up again.

It is a public declaration that you have died to your old life of unbelief, are washed clean of sin, and are now following Jesus. ●

THE Decatur County Sheriff was excited to announce that 40 inmates at the Decatur County Detention Center (DCDC) were baptized late last year.



I found a door to faith

"I was 16 years old and homeless living on the streets in Mackay, Queensland. I had no job, I was living off Centrelink, and I had a warrant out for my arrest."

Merv Raymond Stewart, who is now serving time in Townsville Prison, talks about the troubles and trials that riddled his youth. His problems seemed to start escalating as soon as he left home as a teen.

"I was in and out of homelessness, sleeping under park benches and in tents at beaches – all sorts of things," he says. "I remember waking up one cold morning around 3 a.m. and seeing the police talking to another homeless couple down the road." They were looking for Merv but did not find him that time.

It was a good thing they didn't as, the next morning, Merv had his first encounter with several chaplains who talked to him about God.

"I wasn't much of a Christian growing up," he recalls. "What I knew about God was from my Granny."

The chaplains gave Merv a Bible and told him to read John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Merv read further and came across 1 Peter 5:7: "Cast all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."

"For weeks I had these two verses stuck in my head," Merv says. "One day, the chaplains came back to see me." They encouraged him to take 1 Peter 5:7 literally, to pray to the Lord and cast his worries on Him.

Later that day, Merv looked up to the sky and said, "Dear Heavenly Father, please forgive me for my sins. Lord, I cast all my cares and worries onto you because you truly care. Lord, I pray that I can find help in these tough times – to find a home and a job to keep myself clothed and fed. I pray in your Name, Amen."

After this, Merv says he felt a big weight being lifted off his shoulders and it was only a few days later that God answered his prayer. He got a job and made enough money to rent a small van at a caravan park. Eager to learn more about the Person who answered his prayers, he started going to a local church but was hurt by the judgment he received from the people there. "I was judged before anyone really got to know me," Merv sighs. "I felt bullied. I stopped going to church and I closed the door on the Lord for some time." Merv had been put in prison for minor traffic offences and in 2015, during one of these incarcerations, he met another chaplain who encouraged him to try God and



STOCKPHOTO

church again. Once he was released, he started going to church but had the same experience as before.

"I felt bullied again because I smoked and I had been in prison, so again I shut that door," he says, shaking his head sadly.

Merv, who turns 32 later this year, is currently serving a seven-year sentence. He has been in prison four-and-a-half years and during this time, has genuinely come to know Jesus for himself. He says he diligently reads every issue of *Challenge Newspaper*.

"One chaplain in particular is very inspiring," he smiles. "He helped me reopen the door to my faith. He helped me see clearer that God is my Saviour who died for my sins. Every Sunday, he comes and shares the Word of the Lord with us. I want to thank him and the other chaplains who come into the prison to help us in dark times. Without them, I don't think I would be where I am today."

Merv now experiences joy and fullness where there was once an empty, dark void. His walk with Jesus is stronger than it has ever been and he approaches life with a positive attitude.

"I now look forward to a bright and happy future once released," he says. "I hope to join a local church in Townsville so I can continue my walk with the Lord." ●

Afrikaans translation

Gebedsvegter sien wonderwerke

In 2014 ontvang Sophie Machangara slegte nuus. Haar 50-jarige man was gediagnoseer met nierversaking, en hy het 'n onmiddellike noodoperasie in Indië nodig gehad om sy lewe te red. Sophie (wie op daardie stadium 44 jaar oud was), sê dat sonder hulle wete, hy al die tyd net met een werkende nier gelewe het. En nou het hierdie nier ook versak.

Maar die chirurgie en die vliegkaartjies was baie duur. "Ons finansies was baie min, definitief nie genoeg vir wat ons nodig gehad het nie," onthou sy.

Sophie was ontsteld, maar sy het nie paniekerig geraak nie. In plaas daarvan het sy gebid.

Die 52-jarige rekening klerk was vir 'n groot deel van haar lewe 'n Christen, al was haar wandel soms onstabiel. Sy vertel vir *Challenge News* dat sy ook op daardie stadium huweliksprobleme gehad het.

"Ek is in 'n Christelike gesin gebore," deel sy. "Maar ek het in my grootword jare probleme gehad. Ek het huweliksprobleme gehad. Ek het woede in my hart gehad, en dit was vir my moeilik om te vergewe."

In 1992, net na die geboorte van haar eerste kind, het sy 'n kerkdiens bygewoon, en sy sê die evangelieboodskap (die goeie nuus dat Jesus Christus aarde toe gekom het om vir die mensdom se sondes te sterf) het hard en duidelik deurgekom. Daardie dag het sy haar lewe aan Jesus toegewy.

So, toe Sophie se man sy ernstige diagnose ontvang het, het Sophie die groot kanonne uitgehaal.

"Wanneer dinge moeilik raak, raak ek sterk, en ek bid en vas. Ek beplan my gebede om middernag, 3vm en 6vm," sê sy.

"Die Heilige Gees lei my om in elke situasie wat ek ooit teëkom te bid – individueel, of vir my gesin – en God het my gebede vir my man geantwoord."

Binne 'n week het hulle die geld vir die operasie en die vliegkaartjies gehad. Haar man, wie skaars kon loop toe dit tyd geword het om na Indië te vertrek, het 'n suksesvolle operasie deurstaan en hy het volkome herstel.

"Van daardie tyd tot vandag is sy nier gesond. Geen komplikasies nie. Dit is nou agt jaar later. Hierdie is alles deur God se genade (onverdiende goedheid) en ek sê heelyd dankie aan Hom. Sy genade is genoeg vir my."

Sophie sê die grootste ding wat verander het vandat sy 'n Christen geword het, is haar gebedslewe. "Nou kan ek vir myself bid, ek kan vir elke situasie bid, en ek kan die lewe sonder angs in die gesig staar, want ek weet God is aan my kant."

Die moeilikste deel van Christen wees is die tekort aan finansies vir die werk van die kerk. God se werk het ook geld nodig om voort te gaan.

Maar sy staan hierdie struikelblok ook in die gesig, net soos al die ander – deur gebed. "Jesus is altyd goed. Vertel net vir Hom wat jy nodig het, want niks is onmoontlik vir Hom nie"

"Soms neem dit 'n ruk voordat Hy antwoord maar Jesus se tyd is altyd die beste tyd, want as God vir ons is, wie kan teen ons wees?" sê sy deur haar gunstelingvers, Romeine 8:31, aan te haal.



Sophie Machangara

Zulu translation

Ohlala emthandazweni ubona imihlola

Ngo 2014 u Sophie Machagara wathola indaba ezimbi. Umyeni wakhe ona50 kwatholakala ukuthi unesifo sezinsu futhi udinga ukuyohlizwa e-India ukuze asinde. U Sophie owayena 44 ngalesosikhathi, uthi babengazi, ukuthi ubephila ngenso eyodwa ngasosonke lesikhathi. Nayo seyivele yathula.

Kodwa loluhlinzo nendiza kwakumba eqolo. "Imali zethu zaziphansi, imali esasinayo yay-incane kunale esasiyidinga," ekhumbula.

U Sophie wayexakekile kodwa engangabazi. Empeleni, wathandaza.

Leli clerk elineminyaka ewu 52 selibe umKristu isikhathi eside, noma uhambo lwakhe belingagculisishela *I Challenge News* nomshado wawulukhuni.

"Ngazalelwa emndenini okholwayo," esithela. "Kodwa ngaba nezinsela ngisakhula. Ngaba nenkinga emshadweni. Nganginentukuthelo enhlizweni yami kunzima ukuthethelela."

Ngo 1992, eqeda ukubeletha ingane yokuqala, waya esontweni wezwa ivangeli (indaba ezimnandi zokuthi uJesu Kristu wehlela emhlabeni ukuzofela izono zabantu) lezwakala kahle. Ngalelolanga wanikela Impilo yakhe kuJesu.

Uma umyeni wakhe ethola indaba ezimbi, uSophie wazimisela. "Uma izinto ziba zimbi ngiyaqina ngithandaza ngizile. Ngithandaza phakathi kwamabili, ngo 3am nango 6am," ezisholo.

"UMoya Ongcwele ungiholela emthandazweni kuzo zonke izimo engibhekana nazo-ngedwa noma zomndeni-uNkulunkulu waphendula imikhuleko yami ngomyeni wami."

Kuleloviki, imali yohlinzo neyendiza yay ikhona. Umyeni wakhe, owayengakwazi nokuhamba uma sifika isikhathi sokuya eNdiya, wahlizwa waphola. "Kusuka ngalesosikhathi kuze kube namhlanje izinsu ziyaphila. Akunankinga. Sekuyiminyaka ewu8. Konke lokhu kungumusa kaNkulunkulu (akungifanele) ngimbonga ngaso sonke isikhathi. Umusa wakhe unganele."

USophie uthi impilo yakhe yokuthandaza yashintsha kakhulu uma eba ikholwa. "Manje sengiyazithandazela kuzo zonke izimo, ngibhekana nempilo ngingenakwesaba ngoba ngiyazi uNkulunkulu umi ngakimi."

Into enzima ngokuba ikholwa ukungabi nemali yomsebenzi webandla. "Umsebenzi kaNkulunkulu udinga imali ukuze uqhubeke."

Nalokhu ubhekana Nakhon ngomkhuleko. "UJesu muhle ngaso sonke isikhathi. Mtshele udinga ini akukho okumehlulayo Yena."

"Kwesinye isikhathi uyaphuza ukuphendula kodwa isikhathi sakhe sihlala sisihle njalo ngoba uNkulunkulu ungakithi, ubani ongamelana nathi?" Usho njalo, ecaphuna kubaRoma 8:31, ivesi alithandayo eBhayibhelini.

English translation

Prayer warrior sees miracles

In 2014 Sophie Machangara received dreadful news. Her 50-year-old husband was diagnosed with kidney failure and needed immediate surgery in India to save his life.

Sophie, who was 44 at the time, says unknown to them, he had been living with just one working kidney all this time. Now that kidney had packed up as well.

But the surgery and airfare were extremely expensive. "Our finances were very low, definitely less than what we needed," she remembers.

Sophie was distressed but she didn't panic. Instead, she prayed.

The 52-year-old accounts clerk has been a Christian for much of her life, even though her walk has been unsteady — she tells *Challenge News* there was also marriage difficulties.

"I was born into a Christian family," she shares. "But I had challenges growing up. I had problems in my marriage. I had anger in my heart and it was difficult for me to forgive."

In 1992, just after the birth of her first child, she attended a church service and says the gospel message (the good news that Jesus Christ came to Earth to die for humanity's sins) came through loud and clear. That day she committed her life to Jesus Christ.

So when her husband received his devastating diagnosis, Sophie pulled out the big guns.

"When things get tough I get tough and I pray and fast. I plan my prayers at midnight, 3am and 6am," she says.

"The Holy Spirit leads me to pray in every situation I have ever faced — individually or for my family — and God answered my prayers for my husband."

Within a week, they had the money for the operation as well as the airfare. Her husband, who could not even walk when it was time to leave for India, had a successful operation and recovered completely.

"From that time to today his kidney is good. No complications. It has been eight years. This is all by God's grace (undeserved kindness) and I thank Him all the time. His grace is sufficient for me."

Sophie says the biggest thing that has changed since becoming a Christian is her prayer life. "Now I can pray for myself, I can pray for every situation, and I can face my life without fear because I know God is on my side."

The hardest part about being a Christian is the lack of finances for church work. "God's work also needs money to progress."

But she faces this hurdle in the same way — through prayer. "Jesus is good all the time. Just tell Him what you need because nothing is impossible with Him."

"Sometimes it can take time for Him to answer but Jesus' time is always the best time because if God is for us, who can be against us?" she says, quoting her Romans 8: 31, her favourite Bible verse.

KILLER PET

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

— ROMANS 8:13 NIV

WORDS FOR THE HEART

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Welcome to this Bible Study. Read slowly what I have written. If you have a Bible, look up the reference verses given, and allow the Holy Spirit to minister to your soul through them. – ALAN BAILEY

John 19:12-34

INTRODUCTION

WE are have reached the point where the trial of Jesus ends with great injustice being done. Pilate knows He has done nothing to deserve death but hopes to avoid a backlash from the crowd. We can only imagine what this did to Pilate's conscience. He must have felt deep regret. But his troops did whatever they wished to do to Jesus. They were cruel and heartless, despite the fact that they knew nothing first-hand about the prisoner. Read on.

Verse 12 "From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jews kept shouting, 'If you let this man go you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar.'"

Pilate was troubled about what



to do with Jesus but he was also troubled about what he should do with the crowd and its leaders. He faced a dilemma. Now the Jews brought up loyalty to Caesar to sway Pilate.

Verses 13-16 "When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. 'Here is your king,' Pilate said to the Jews. But they shouted, 'Take Him away! Take Him away! Crucify Him!' 'Shall I crucify your king?' Pilate asked. 'We have no king but Caesar,' the chief priests answered. Finally, Pilate handed Him over to them to be crucified."

It is very clear to readers that this was really no trial at all. No weighing up of evidence, no proof of law-breaking, just loud condemnation. Notice how ironic all this is. The creature calls for the death of its creator. Guilty sinners condemn a sinless man. The perfect Son of

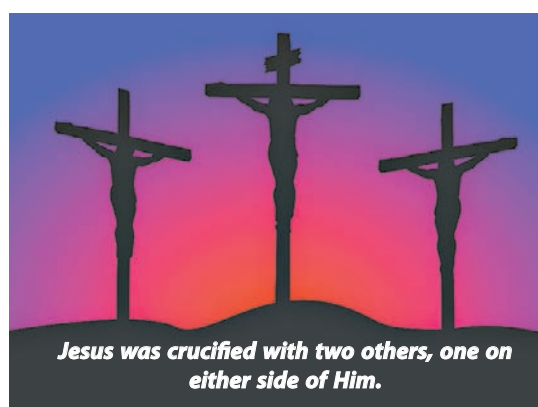
God is to be punished like a common criminal. Pilate goes away with his inner thoughts in turmoil, wondering what he has done. The fact is, that he has participated in the most significant event ever to occur on earth. Jesus is dying for reasons those who crucify Him have no idea about. It is for mankind's redemption.

Verses 17, 18 "So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying His own cross, He went out to the Place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). Here they crucified Him, and with Him two others – one on either side and Jesus in the middle."

Remember that earlier in this chapter we read how Jesus was whipped and mocked and spat upon by Pilate's soldiers. They crowned Him with thorns. Now they inflict on Him the most cruel and painful death imaginable, little knowing that ancient prophecies were being fulfilled to the letter.

Verse 19-22 "Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Many Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, 'Do not write 'The King of the Jews' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews.' Pilate answered, 'What I have written, I have written.'"

It is plain that Pilate's bad conscience was working on him. To give just a little reputation to Jesus he made an effort to honour Him. Perhaps he wanted to convey that he did not have anything against Jesus



sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw His mother there, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, 'Here is your son,' and to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' From that time on, this disciple took her into his home."

We see here a very human touch and observe the thoughtfulness and unselfishness of Jesus. It

seems that Joseph, Mary's husband, was no longer alive and Jesus trusted John the disciple to care for her. It is notable that several women were faithful in following Jesus as disciples, even when others had fled the scene.

Verses 28-30 "Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said 'I am thirsty.' A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus lips. When He had received the drink, Jesus said, 'It is finished.' With that, He bowed His head and gave up His life."

From the other Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, we learn that Jesus said seven things while on the cross. He felt abandoned, calling on His Father, He prayed for the forgiveness of those who crucified Him, he spoke to His mother and John, He declared His work finished and He committed His spirit into the Father's hands. What was finished?

The sacrifice acceptable to the Father was made. The debt of sinners was covered in full because of the shed blood of the Savior.

Verse 31 "Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down."

The significance of the broken legs is this. While crucified, the victim was able to give some support to their body by using their feet on a protrusion to take some weight and enable breathing.

In this way, criminals were known to survive several days before finally dying. But with the legs broken, the body slumps and causes death.

Verses 32-34 "The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear bringing a sudden flow of blood and water."

Another forecast from the Old Testament was fulfilled. No bone was broken. Jesus had laid His life down in a deliberate act. The blood and water revealed His death.

CONCLUSION

By no means is this the end of the Gospel story. The things that happen next are all part of the vital history.

But we must understand that the Bible teaches that we need to repent of our sin and trust in Jesus as our own Savior before forgiveness and eternal life are ours.

What a wonderful salvation was brought about by Almighty God. Don't neglect it.

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 fellow prisoner who is a Christian, or your Prison Chaplain.
2. Ask a friend or family member to bring you a Bible. Ask the Prison Chaplain to sign you up to a correspondence discipleship program.
3. Keep praying. Talk to God anywhere, about anything. He is always listening, and you don't need a formula.
4. Find out if your prison has church services and attend them regularly.

AS A NEXT STEP:

I have prayed this prayer.

Please send me:

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

* Please tick and write clearly *

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

Send to: World Hope Ministries, PO Box 96176, Brixton, 2019

Out of South Africa enquiries are referred onto someone in their own country

Roadblocks and opportunities

DO YOU ever run into roadblocks on your life journey? Do you ever get frustrated when things go wrong and your plans don't work out as anticipated? What seems like a detour can lead you straight to your destination.

Grace and Walter Lantz rented a rustic wooden cabin in the forest for their honeymoon. At the first dawn there, a woodpecker started its pounding on the roof. The newlyweds couldn't sleep for the noise. But by the time they returned from their honeymoon, they were inspired to create a cartoon character, "Woody Woodpecker." Walter drew the pictures. Gracie became Woody's voice. Years later, at their 50th wedding anniversary, Grace remembered the problem of the noisy woodpecker and said, "It was the best thing that ever happened to us."

In 1859, a New York chemist travelled to Pennsylvania, to watch the drilling for oil. He was Robert Chesebrough who watched as the oil drillers cursed a colorless oily residue that stuck to their drills. Though it was a problem that gummed up the works, the oil workers smeared this stuff on their cuts and burns. It helped to heal. Chesebrough took this oily residue back to New York. By 1870, he was manufacturing what he had developed from that oily problem. He called it Vaseline Petroleum Jelly. A violent storm posed a problem for the captain of a slave ship. He was John Newton, born in London on July 24, 1725. He transported slaves from Africa to America. On March 10, 1748, a storm frightened him so badly that he called out to God for mercy. The problem of the storm started a storm in his heart. He remembered his childhood faith. Finally, that inner storm gave him the opportunity to give up the slave trade. At age 39, he became a priest of the Church of England. He wrote a hymn called "Amazing Grace" to tell how God's love changed his life. 250 years later people are still singing it. That storm provided showers of blessing in his life and for many others in the years to come. In each of these instances, a setback turned into an opportunity. Try to change your perspective on whatever difficult situation or trial you are facing at the moment; view it creatively and turn it into an opportunity to learn and grow.



Bukayo Saka of Arsenal runs with the ball during the Premier League match between Arsenal FC and Crystal Palace at Emirates Stadium on March 19, 2023 in London, England. (Photo by Shaun Botterill/Getty Images)



FAITH ON THE FIELD

English soccer player Bukayo Saka is one of the new generation of English football stars, praised for their decency, work ethic and talent. A tee-total, straight-A student, more likely to be found horsing around in the pool than falling out of a bar, Bukayo — like teammates Marcus Rashford and Raheem Sterling — has a faith in God that seems to have a positive impact both on and off the pitch.

An attacker for Arsenal, Bukayo grew up in West London in a Christian family, attended a primary school with a strong Christian ethos and has continued that faith into his adult life. The 21-year-old still lives at home with his parents and brother, and says his family regularly pray for his success. His Instagram bio says: “God’s child” and a quick scroll through his feed finds none of the usual excesses often associated with young footballers. Instead, there’s plenty of thanks to God for the growing number of accolades he has



Bukayo Saka during a training session in March, 2023. (Photo by Stuart MacFarlane/Arsenal FC via Getty Images)

been amassing. Following the 2020–21 and 2021–22 seasons, he was named as Arsenal’s player of the season, and he was part of England’s squads at UEFA Euro 2020 and the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Bukayo is widely considered to be one of the best young football players in the world, according to Wikipedia. He told talkSPORT during Euro 2020: “I just have faith in God that wherever He takes me, He’s going to deliver, He’s going to provide and be there for me.”

In answer to the question ‘Do fame and Christian faith go together?’ he wrote: “I grew up in a Christian family who believe strongly in God. This always made me curious to get to know God more and I have done so by reading my Bible a lot and going to church a lot over the years. My faith is continually being exercised when I’m put in different situations or I play in big football matches such as my England debut.

“I hold onto God’s promises ... So before every

game I ask God to help me play well, help my team and try to score a goal or assist a goal and He answers my prayers, so this is why I point to the sky to thank Him.”

The Guardian noted a couple of years ago that: In football, a religious transformation of sorts has taken place, partly driven by an influx of devout players from overseas such as the Brazilian Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson Becker.

Signs of the cross on the pitch, and hands raised in prayer before games and after goals, are now commonplace.

Bukayo recently told GQ magazine that his Bible is one of 10 things he couldn’t live without.

He says on YouTube that his dad gave him his Bible and he reads it every night before bed: “I’ve learnt a lot from it. It’s important for me. Religion is a big part of my life. I would say I’m a strong believer in God. Reading this Bible all the time helps me learn more and more about God. I’ll normally memorise the messages and [learn] what it means, and try and take it into my life.

“We were taught by our parents to have faith in God, and when you’re younger you don’t fully understand. But throughout life, you keep exercising your faith, so when you get into different chal-

lenges, you decide, ‘This time I’m going to trust God,’ and God comes through for you. That’s how [faith] kept building and building for me, so I can be confident and go into places knowing that God has got me.”

“**[God’s] going to provide and be there for me.**”

Selina Stone, who lectures in political theology at St Mellitus College in London, told The Guardian: “For Saka, Rashford and Sterling, there is clearly a recognition that there is something of

God’s blessing on them for them to be where they are, along with a recognition that, having been so blessed, they have to take respon-

sibility for helping others.”

Raheem is helping young people to access education, and employment opportunities through his Raheem Sterling Foundation; Marcus Rashford received an MBE (member of the British Empire) for his services to UK children during the Covid-19 pandemic; and at the end of 2022 Bukayo paid for 120 children from Nigeria, his country of origin, to undergo life-changing surgeries through charity BigShoe.

“It makes me very happy, especially when I see the kids happy ... So yeah, I’m happy and I just want to do more and more and more to help as [many] children as I can,” the generous young man explained, following his Saviour’s instruction to “Do to others as you would like them to do to you.” (Luke 6:31) •

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