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# AWB RACIST REPENTS

BY MICHAEL COOK (ABRIDGED)

**M**aarten Labuschagne was a neo-Nazi racist who despised anyone who was not 'white' like him.

Raised during South Africa's apartheid era, his father instilled in him a strong sense of pride for his Afrikaner identity, a pride that was fanned into fanaticism during his compulsory military training after high school.

While he was in the army his distrust and hatred of other races, particularly black Africans, deepened. He thought of their criminal element as "sub-human animals".

Eight years after leaving the army, Maarten became an active, uniformed member of the Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB), a neo-Nazi, white supremacist group which did not shy away from using violence to achieve its political ends.

Yet under his tough-guy exterior, Maarten was desperately insecure and suffered from a severe anger problem along with a number of other issues.

He shares: "I tried to change as I saw and realised I was hurting others. Strangely, I didn't always like acting the way I did."

"I saw a hypnotist about 15 times and a psychiatrist, out of desperation. Nothing worked — my life felt as if it was doomed."

His despair reached its peak in September 1998, when in utter desperation he cried out: "God, you have to change me!"



"My cry was mingled with doubt over whether God was real or would respond," he shares. "But it was utterly genuine, a recognition that I could not save myself."

"I didn't then understand the assurances His Word gives for the repentant (genuinely sorrowful for sin) heart, but I certainly knew that

hell was real, and I didn't want to go there."

Almost instantly, he says, he was profoundly converted, and felt a dramatic release from the stress, anger and hatred that had bound up his life.

Maarten's family was not especially devout or religious although

they did attend church occasionally. His father had in fact taught Maarten that Christians were weak and hypocritical, the polar opposite of the strong and fearless man he aspired to become.

"So for many years, I lived in complete rebellion against God," continues Maarten, who is now a

pastor in New Zealand. "I despised Christians and hated people who were anything but 'white'".

Maarten embraced the freedom and release that his radical conversion brought him.

"The Bible assured me I was a new creation; I got rid of my personal weapons and other AWB paraphernalia from the old life and cut off all ties with the group."

However, learning to genuinely love and appreciate people of other ethnicities took more time.

One significant milestone in that process was at a service in a large, multicultural church in Durban. Maarten was asked to give a brief testimony from the pulpit. Nervously, he addressed the crowd, many of whom were indigenous Africans or of Indian extraction.

He confessed he had been in the AWB and had passionately hated them. Expecting a disastrous, vengeful response, he was instead brought to tears by the many black African believers who expressed forgiveness and love. It was then that he fully understood that they were his brothers and sisters in Christ, not any sort of enemy.

As his Christian faith grew, he was baptised and went to Bible college. He was also a pastoral counsellor at one of the biggest drug rehabilitation centres in SA.

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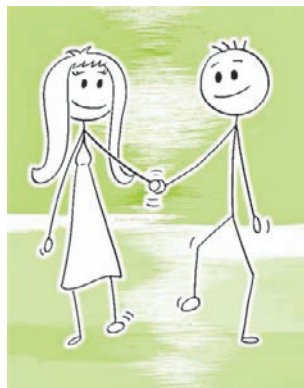
## If God came to a flat paper world

**IMAGINE** there are two people on a flat piece of paper. These people are two-dimensional, having height and width but no depth; the paper is the extent of their world. Can they see you? No. They can see only what's on the paper (in their world). They have no depth perception. Now pretend you use your finger to touch the paper. Now can they see you? They cannot see all of you, but they can see the tip of your finger, the part that has entered their world.

That is an analogy to our situation with God. God exists outside our dimensions. He can exist outside of time and space as we know it. Therefore, it is difficult to "see" Him. We are like the flat people on the two-dimensional paper. We can't see what's in a third dimension. But in this case, we exist in four dimensions (height, width, depth, time), and God exists beyond that.

So how are we to know such a Being? Just as the "flat people" on the paper could not know about you unless you touched the paper, we cannot detect God unless He reveals Himself. He must "touch the paper" of our world. God has to step down in dimensions.

As we study human history, especially religious history, do we find any instances where God "touched the paper" of our world? Consider that God's



"finger" has touched our world in a person known as Jesus Christ. Jesus claimed to be God (John 8:58, 17:3), said that to see Him was to see God (John 12:45, 14:9), said that He was the only person who had come directly from God to our world (John 3:13), and forgave people of their sins, which only God can do (Mark 2:5). Many other passages of the New Testament affirm Jesus' deity. He was God who "became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14). He is the "image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15).

If we are the "flat people" it makes sense that the multi-dimensional Creator God entered our four-dimensional world by becoming a human being. He revealed himself to us. But why would God do that?

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

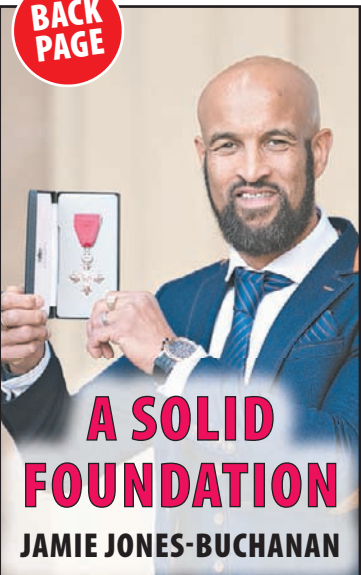
He entered our world to live as an example and die as an atonement (payment) for our sin, in order that one day, if we commit to Him, we can come and live with Him in His multi-dimensional, perfect, timeless world for all eternity.

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**A SOLID  
FOUNDATION**

JAMIE JONES-BUCHANAN



# RACIST REPENTS

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In 2010 Maarten married Nicky, who shares his passion for helping the broken and marginalised. Both worked for a season at an addiction centre in North Island New Zealand.

Some of the patients he shared the gospel with were openly hostile towards Christianity but Maarten never returned the hostility. Instead he would ask gently: "So, how has life worked out for you then?"

The couple also foster children, motivated by James 1:27: 'Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world'.

This in itself shows how much God has changed Maarten. "In the past, there was no way I would ever change the nappy of any child other

than my own. Now it's just another way I can express to someone else what God did for me, a formerly messed-up child of His!"

Maarten is a passionate his faith. His website, called Jesus Rules Ministries, features his testimony, videos of his sermons and resources to point people to Christ.

He also walks the streets carrying a large cross and thought-provoking signs that say things like: "If you tried the thug life or the drug life and it hasn't worked, try Jesus!"

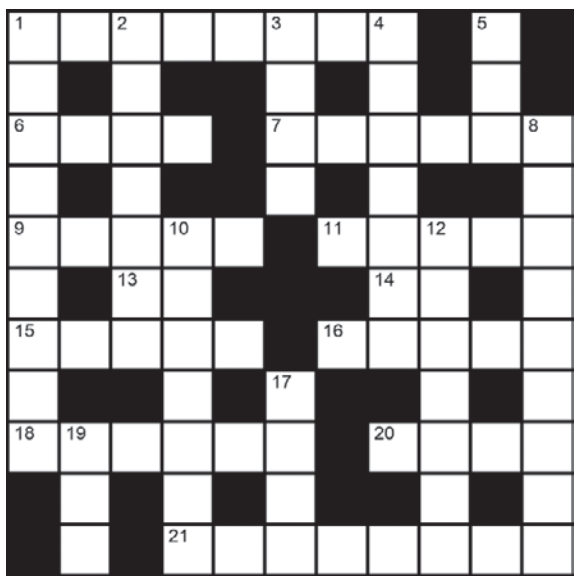
Not surprisingly, he is often subjected to ridicule and abuse. He recently had his main sign hijacked and dragged down the road behind a car!

Maarten is undeterred though, because his work has seen many a desperate person transformed after an encounter with Jesus - just as his own was.



## Coffee Break CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

- ACROSS**
- 1 Subordinate set
  - 6 Shaved part of the neck, perhaps
  - 7 Albania's capital
  - 9 Open-mouthed
  - 11 Type in data
  - 13 Mexico's continent: abbr.
  - 14 "Catch Me \_\_\_ You Can"
  - 15 Follows an order
  - 16 Asparagus stalk
  - 18 Inter, as a pharaoh
  - 20 Plank imperfection
  - 21 US casino capital (3,5)

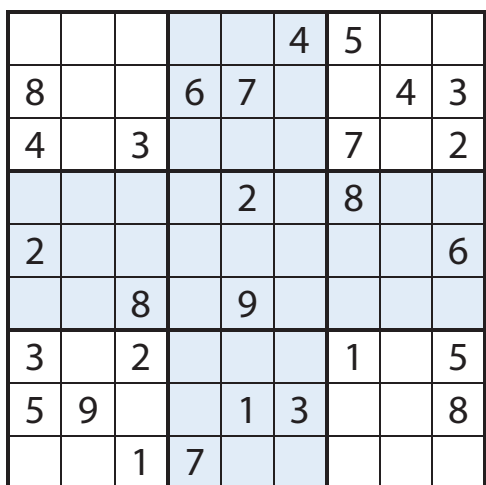


- DOWN**
- 1 Island nation in SE Asia
  - 2 Double-winged aircraft
  - 3 Horse feed
  - 4 Vegetable that looks like a white carrot
  - 5 Money in Japan
  - 8 Joint inflammation
  - 10 Employees' due hieroglyphics
  - 12 Old German monetary unit
  - 17 Bird seen in hieroglyphics
  - 19 Granny, to a Brit.

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"Do you two have a history?"



# Conquering depression and regret

Janine Bester



When Janine Bester was 16 years old she started feeling extremely depressed. "I'd carry every failure, every mistake, every insecurity on my own shoulders," she recalls.

Four years on, Janine now realises that she was placing an impossible expectation on others to give her joy. Looking for fulfilment in the wrong places led to disappointment, bitterness, and jealousy towards those who seemed to have it all.

"I got exhausted from always trying to hide the depressed version of me," she explains, "and that led to me drinking too much. I'd have a few really good days, but I still had a reason to cry every night. I lost a lot of weight from feeling insecure, which caused me to have a lot of health problems, and the medication I had to depend on made me feel even more depressed. I constantly isolated myself, making up excuses not to go out with friends. I was in desperate for a standard of joy that the world couldn't offer me."

Janine grew up in a loving family, attended a great school and had supportive friends. Despite this, she wasn't happy.

"I was never content with who I was. I always wanted to be better and I developed a mindset of not being good enough and comparing myself unfavourably to others."

But everything changed for Janine in 2019 when a friend invited her to a big worship event at her church. Janine had been raised in a Christian family and attended church since she was a child but she didn't have

a relationship with Jesus.

"I always knew there was a God," she says. "I just thought He lived in the church building and we visited Him on Sundays."

But during this worship event, she had an encounter with God's Holy Spirit (His invisible presence).

"I physically felt God for the first time," Janine shares.

"[There was] an incredible moment where they asked everyone to stand if they wanted to have a life with God and I remember feeling scared to stand up, but I'm glad I did. Some people came to rub my forehead with oil. [Note: Anointing the sick with oil is taught in the Bible in James 5:14]

When I stepped out of the doors of the building I could literally feel everything that I carried on my shoulders (my insecurities, failures, and disappointments) being taken off ... I realised that God gave me that standard of joy that no one and nothing else could give me."

After giving her life to God, Janine noticed immediate changes.

"My dreams started coming true at age 18. My depression disappeared. I was physically healed and no one could explain how," she attests. "My reason to cry at night (even on good days) was replaced with a reason to smile and be grateful (even on my worst days). I realised that I could do things that I never could before because I learned that (Jesus') resur-

rection power runs in my veins too.

"Massive opportunities came my way when I let God plan my direction. I felt relieved because I had Someone I could give my heavy baggage to. My past regrets never appeared in my life again after I gave them to God. I saw God heal my family and friends.

"And now I experience more love from God daily than I would in a year from any human being."

Janine says she has learnt to hear her Lord's voice.

"I now have the ability to communicate with the One who created the entire universe ... The best thing about being a Christian is knowing that there's Someone that will love me no matter how many times I fail. It's awesome to see Him at work, seeing miracles every day."

However, she admits there has also been a cost to following Christ. "I have been in situations where I have had to choose to say no to certain things because of the values I live by, and that has led others to judge and mock me for that."

However, she assures others, "Christianity is worth it. The moment you realise God is on your side every step of the way, there's no reason to want to turn back. There really isn't a love as big as this."

Janine's favourite Bible verse is Romans 12:2, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

“My dreams started coming true”

## FINDING ANSWERS FOR LIFE

Nelia Mtangadura was looking for answers for how best to live her life. She found it in her memories of school.

The 44-year-old, who works as an administrator in Zimbabwe, tells *Challenge News* that pastors visited her school regularly to give talks to the students.

It was from them and from Sunday School classes that she learned about Jesus Christ and the gospel (the good news that Jesus came to earth and died for mankind's sins).

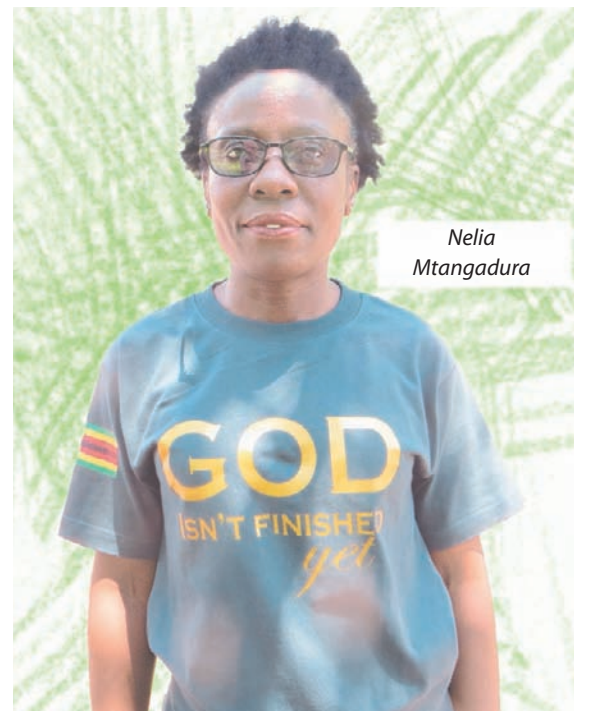
Those memories never left her, and when she was 28 Nelia committed her life to Christ. "I realised it was a better option to be a Christian than not and I am grateful that God chose me," she says.

"I have struggled with jealousy and sometimes I am too judgemental, but He has transformed me in the most beautiful way."

Although she candidly admits she does struggle with obedience, Nelia says the best part about being a Christian is knowing that God guides her in everything she does.

"I became a Christian through hearing the word of God, hearing that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life," she shares, quoting John 14:6, her favourite Bible verse.

"Once you have Jesus, you have a different perspective on life. Without Him we are nothing."



Nelia Mtangadura



# Party boy to pastor

BY MICHAEL ASHCRAFT

When half his friends went off to college on sports scholarships, Deon Howard was stuck with the “knuckleheads,” who hung out at his father’s house taking drugs, breaking things, punching holes in the wall, and otherwise “disrespecting” his divorced father’s house.

As an only child of a military family in Augusta, Georgia, “I was spoiled,” Deon says. “I was always on the receiving end of giving, giving. Because of that, I really struggled with being a giver.”

For instance, when he was 12, he got 84 gifts for Christmas!

While his friends were bound for the NBA and NFL, Deon was bound to get into trouble. He was ineligible to play sports because of poor grades and bad behaviour. He got kicked out of the 11th grade.

When Deon was 21, his parents got divorced. Always self-absorbed, Deon assumed his mother would come back and by the time he figured out she was never coming back, he was too lost in drugs, drinking and partying to worry anymore.

“It was a mess. Things got really crazy,” Deon says. “My house, if you didn’t know any better, you would’ve thought my house was a club. My dad wanted me to have some respect for his house, which I didn’t. Hangout spot was an understatement.”

From age 20 to 24, that was Deon’s routine. At the clubs, he loved to dance. He neither sold nor bought drugs; his friends just offered them for free.

The lifestyle began to wear on Deon. When he turned 24, a friend offered him a job in a Navy’s Shipyard. The friend said he would “rig” a resume for him, enrol him in a sheet metal class, and he would be making \$24 per hour – good money at the time.

Deon got the job – at which he lasted 15 minutes before getting fired.

Deon wanted nothing more than to smoke marijuana and return to Georgia, but his friend encouraged him to stay. So did his dad, who pointed out that Deon was 24 – plenty old enough to grow up and take responsibility.

Deon got a job at Danny’s Deli making \$6/hour.

His roommates moved out, and Deon didn’t have enough money to pay the electricity bill.

One day when he came home exhausted from work, sitting in the dark, he saw a friend’s Bible sitting on the table. The friend read it randomly from time to time, usually while smoking marijuana.

That day Deon was discouraged as he contemplated the Bible and remembered his grandmother who honoured and cherished it.

Out of the blue, God spoke “as clear as day”: *Son, look, no matter what you try to accomplish, no matter what you do, no matter what the situation is, you will always feel empty until you surrender your life to me.*

Deon was thunderstruck. He had never heard God before. His parents didn’t teach him about God – just his grandmother back in the day.



Pastor Deon and Ta're Howard with their children.

“I’m about to read this whole entire Bible,” he vowed.

It was 2004. He devoured the Bible in four months. He didn’t go to church. But the plain Word of God was changing him. As soon as he got off work, he read – by the light from the hallway outside the apartment.

“I’m reading 30 chapters a day... God was doing something in me.”

He stopped drinking, smoking, cursing and sleeping around. He called his friends and told them he was saved. The power of God caused Deon to surrender to Jesus as his Lord and Savior and his spirit was

born again.

His friends moved back in, and Deon was the “oddball.” They smoked and he didn’t.

One day his friend came home drunk from the club at 4 a.m. and, cooking up chicken fingers in a pot of grease, he fell asleep. The pot caught fire – as did the vodka he left next to it. All the roommates escaped, but the house sustained terrible damage.

Homeless, Deon returned to Georgia but there he fell back into all the old sins. He felt miserable.

After a year, he again felt God impress on his heart: You thought

you went to Virginia to get that job. But that’s not why you went to Virginia. That’s where I saved you. That’s where destiny is at. You need to get back to Virginia.

Two weeks later, his friend called him again and helped him get a job at the shipyard, one he was qualified for.

God helped Deon to find a church, through a guy giving out fliers.

Deon then called up a friend, Ta’re, and witnessed to her. Today they’re married with six kids, and he’s an assistant pastor in his church.

## Rituals don’t change your heart

Harry Chinniah grew up strictly following the religious prayers and rituals of his family’s traditional religion.

“I fasted twice a week and prayed in the morning and evening,” he recalls. “I chanted and read my religious book very faithfully. I even communicated with the spirits when my mother was under their influence.”

Harry remembers Christians visiting his home in Durban and hearing about Jesus for the first time.

“I argued with them regarding the government, who claimed to be Christian yet practiced apartheid,” he says. “I also pointed out to them ‘mistakes’ in the Bible.”

But when Harry attended a memorial service at a house when he was about 19, he heard something that stopped him in his tracks.

At the service, a Christian pastor preached about Jesus Christ and that there is nothing we can do to achieve salvation – Jesus has done it all!

“I was trying on my own efforts to have a better life when I died,” Harry explains. “When the pastor preached about Jesus doing it all, I felt that he was talking to me personally. The pastor did not know me personally but it was the Holy Spirit speaking to me personally and convicted me that I had to open the door of my heart to Jesus. When asked if anyone wanted to give their life to Jesus, I responded and invited Jesus to come into my life. I decided to become a Christian because Jesus did it all for me.”

Big changes then took place in Harry’s life.

“I gave up my religious rituals and started attending church, reading the Bible and praying,” he shares. “My friends noticed the difference in my life – now I was not getting angry easily.”

But not everyone was happy with the changes in Harry’s life.

“Initially the hardest part was the negative attitudes of family and friends when they realised that I had converted.” But for Harry, it was worth it. His favourite Bible verse is Philippians 4:13: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

He began getting involved in his church and before long, he was serving in the Sunday School.

“I also became the assistant Sunday School Superintendent and the assistant Youth Leader of the church. Eventually I also became the secretary on the Church board.”

“[Later] I studied to achieve my pastoral qualification and started a Bible College where I trained many people for the ministry,” Harry shares. “After 32 years as a teacher for the Department of Education I took early retirement to go full time into the ministry.”

Harry is married and is the pastor of a church in Chatsworth.

“You don’t have to do anything to have eternal life, just believe on the Lord Jesus,” he explains. “Our religiosity or even our good works will not take us to heaven. We are saved by grace (undeserved love of God) not by works.”



Harry Chinniah



Gladys Rambakupetwa has found great blessing by turning her life over to God.

## Healing for a broken body and sad life

The closest companion in Gladys Rambakupetwa’s life was pain.

A sickly child from birth, she tells *Challenge News* she suffered from headaches, aching joints and bad knees.

“My life was miserable because of my various illnesses,” explains the 57-year-old Zimbabwean teacher.

The first glimmer of hope she had that her life could change for the better came when she was about 30. “I heard the good news about Jesus Christ at the school I was working at.”

Soon after that she had a dream. “In my dream I saw people wearing white garments praising God, but I had no group to follow.

“When I woke up I decided I wanted to be part of the group too, to be one of God’s followers and so I decided to give my life to Jesus.

“By the grace (undeserved love) of God I feel much better now. Even though I still feel some pain, I am much better.”

She also credits God for giving her “a lovely husband and three kids”.

Gladys, who had failed her school leaving exams, returned to school as a mature age student and this time passed with flying colours. She then became a teacher.

“The best part of being a Christian is that although sometimes there are problems, I live a happy life because I know God will help me through my troubles.

“I want to tell others that Jesus died for our sins and He heals us of our diseases.

“God is love. He gave us His only Son to save us by His death and resurrection. The devil wants to steal and kill and destroy us, but Jesus came to give us abundant life.

“I really praise God and I try to obey Him – though I find it hard sometimes!”



## Zulutranslation

UKHOLO  
ENKINGENI  
YOMKHAYA

**N**go 2012 umhlengikazi wamazinyo waseZimbabwe uFaith Mkwena wabhekana nenkinga yomndeni.

Ngendlela engaqondakali umtwana wakhe wavele wehlehlewa imiphumela esikoleni etshela I *Challenge News*.

“Sasididekile” kusho u Faith oneminyaka ewu 50. “Wayengumfundi ohlabanayo kodwa amamaki akhe ehla ngalendlela yokuthi wayengaxoshwa.”

UFaith wayedinga usizo oluvela phezulu, ebusheni bakhe wayezobheka emasikweni esizwe sakubo, kodwa eminyakeni eyishumi waba umKristu, waphendukela kuJesu.

“Ngazila ukudla ngathandaza ngamcela uNkulunkulu usizo Waphendula imikhuleko yami. Indodakazi yami yaphasa ngamalengiso, yaze yazuza nomklomelo wokuba umfundi ohlabeneyo!”

Lokho kwamqinisekisa ukuthi wenza isinqumo esihle sokushiya indlela zakudala.

Inkoleloze akhula ngazo azimenelisi uFaith. Lentokazi yayidinga into ebambekayo ukukholwa kuyo. Ekufuneni kwayo yaholeleka kumacrusade amakholwa ayebanjwa ngakubo.

Utshela i Challenge, “ngangingaqondi amasiko akithi, okwangiholela ekufuneni uNkulunkulu wangempela.”

Wamthola kuma crusade, lapho athola khona ivangeli(indaba ezimnandi zokuthi uJesu Kristu wenza emhlabeni ezofela izono zabantu) zishumayelwa okokuqala.

“Ngakhetha ukuba umKristu ngoba ngangifuna ukulandela uJesu. Ngangazi ukuthi ngidinga ubudlelwano naye, ukuze angisize ngihlule ukwenza kwami okubi, njengokukhuluma amanga, ukungabongi nokuziphatha kabi.”

“Umehluko omkhulu owenzeka kimina emveni kokuba umKristu ukuthi ngaba nokuthula emqondweni. Ngiyazama ngakho konke ukuphilisana ngokuthula nabanye abantu.”

Ivesi alithandayo kwabaseRoma 8:28 *Siyazi ukuthi kukho konke uNkulunkulu usebenzela ebuhleni kwalabo abamthandayo, ababizwe ukuya ngenjongo Yakhe.*

Emveni kokuthi abone ukuthi uNkulunkulu umsizwe kangakanani, uFaith uthi isiluleko esikhulu angasinikezela abanye, “Zinikeleni kuJesu, unguMsizi, noMhlangi.”



Faith Mkwena

## Afrikaantranslation

## Geloof in 'n gesinskrisis

**I**n 2012 het die Zimbabwe tandeelkundige verpleegster Faith Mkwena 'n gesinskrisis in die gesig gestaar.

Sy vertel aan *Challenge News* dat haar dogter se punte by die skool geheimsinnig begin daal het.

“Ons kon dit nie verstaan nie,” sê die 50-jarige Faith. “Sy was 'n goeie student, maar toe het haar prestasie dramaties gedaal en sy was op die punt om geskors te word.”

Geloof het goddelike hulp nodig. In haar jonger dae het sy dit dalk uit die tradisies en seremonies van haar kultuur gesoek, maar sedert sy dekades gelede 'n Christen geword het, het sy haar eerder na Jesus Christus gewend.

“Ek het gevas en gebid en God om hulp gevra en Hy het my gebede verhoor. My dogter het haar eksamens met vlieënde vaandels geslaag en selfs die Beste Student-toekenning gewen!”

Dit was net nog 'n bevestiging dat Faith baie jare gelede die regte besluit geneem het om die ou maniere agter te laat.

Die oortuigings waarmee sy grootgeword het, het Faith nooit bevredig nie. Die jong vrou het iets meer tasbaar nodig gehad om in te glo. Haar soektog het daartoe gelei dat sy Christelike kruistogte bygewoon het wat

vroeër in haar tuisdorp gehou is.

Sy vertel aan *Challenge*, “Ek kon sommige van my kultuur en tradisies nie verstaan nie, so ek het na die ware God gesoek.”

Sy het Hom by die kruistogte gevind, waar sy die evangelie (die goeie nuus dat Jesus Christus aarde toe gekom het om vir die mensdom se sondes te sterf) vir die eerste keer gehoor het.

“Ek het besluit om 'n Christen te word omdat ek Jesus wou volg. Ek het geweet ek moes 'n verhouding met Hom hê; Ek het Sy hulp nodig gehad om my slegte gewoontes soos leuens, ondankbaarheid en 'n slegte gesindheid te oorkom.

“Die grootste en beste verandering wat met my gebeur het nadat ek in Jesus Christus begin glo het, was dat ek nou gemoedsrus het. Ek doen ook nou my bes om vreedsaam met ander te leef.”

Haar gunstelingvers is Romeine 8:28 “*En ons weet dat God in alles ten goede meewerk vir dié wat Hom liefhet, wat volgens sy voorneme geroep is.*”

Nadat sy ervaar het hoeveel God haar gehelp het, sê Faith die beste raad wat sy aan ander kan gee, is “om hul lewens aan Jesus oor te gee. Hy is ons Helper, ons Verlosser.”

## English translation

## Faith in the face of a family crisis

**I**n 2012, Zimbabwean dental nurse Faith Mkwena faced a family crisis.

She tells *Challenge News* her daughter's grades at school mysteriously began dropping.

“We couldn't understand,” says the 50-year-old Faith. “She was a good student but then her performance dropped dramatically and she was on the verge of being expelled.”

Faith needed divine help. In her younger days she may have sought it from the traditions and ceremonies of her culture, but since becoming a Christian decades ago, she turned to Jesus Christ instead.

“I fasted and prayed and asked God for help and He answered my prayers. My daughter passed her exams with flying colours and even won the Best Student award!”

It was just another confirmation that she made the right decision many years ago to leave the old ways behind.

The beliefs that she had grown up with never satisfied Faith. The young woman needed something more tangible to believe in. Her search led her to attend Christian crusades that used to be held in her hometown.

She tells *Challenge*, “I couldn't understand some of my culture and traditions, so I searched for the real God.”

She found Him at the crusades, where she heard the gospel (the good news that Jesus Christ came to Earth to die for humanity's sins) preached for the first time.

“I decided to become a Christian because I wanted to follow Jesus. I knew I had to have a relationship with Him; I needed His help to overcome my bad habits like lying, ungratefulness and a bad attitude.

“The biggest and best change that happened to me after believing in Jesus Christ has been that I now have peace of mind. I also now do my best to live peacefully with others.”

Her favourite verse is Romans 8: 28 “*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.*”

Having experienced how much God has helped her, Faith says the best advice she can give to others is “to surrender their lives to Jesus. He is our Helper, our Redeemer.”

## ‘Bewitched’ man set free from lust

**P**astor Chikumba was involved in an outreach in Zomba, Malawi when he met a man named Michael who seemed to be in distress.

The pastor struck up a conversation with Michael and discovered the source of his distress, according to a report by African

Enterprise.

Michael was married but had been having an affair with a woman who was causing him great psychological and financial distress.

His mistress was demanding more money from him, but he was broke. He knew his duplicity was hurting his family. He wanted to end the affair but felt powerless to do so.

Michael's conclusion was that his mistress had bewitched him with a love potion, making him unable to quit even when he wanted to.

“Do you know a witch doctor who could break the spell that is controlling me?” Michael asked.

Grateful for the opportunity, Pastor Chikumba shared the Gospel (the good news story of the Bible) with Michael and introduced him to the Lord Jesus Christ — the One who has the power to break every bondage.

Michael accepted Christ as his personal Lord and Saviour and prayed for deliverance from

his sins.

Praise be to God! Michael was delivered from his lustful desires for the other woman.

Michael's wife is grateful for the miracle God performed.

“I had no hope for our marriage,” she recounted. “He would stay out late at night until eventually he stopped coming home altogether. He stopped supporting the family and cut contact with us. I had to sustain my family by farming and doing small businesses.

“I moved from church to church in a search for solutions but my husband was nowhere to be seen. After a while, he would occasionally come back home but was very impolite to the point that we used to fight a lot. All his clothes were at the mistress' place.

“Since he gave his life to Christ and we began



A sangoma making potions.

praying and being counselled together, I have seen tremendous change in his behaviour. His eating habits have improved, he sleeps better, we pray together and he is providing for his family again. I thank God for leading the Pastor to meet and share the gospel with him. We have now committed to be members of Pastor Chikumba's church so that as a family we may be rooted and grow in Christ.”

By African Enterprise, from godreports.org

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# Inside my heart

BY PETER MIKULA

I HAD the most amazing experience back in 2020. I saw inside my own heart! I had experienced some irregular heartbeats, so I went for a procedure to identify the problem.

The surgeon put three catheter wires inside my heart to measure how the electrics of the heart operated. He located a minor short-circuit, and worked out that it could not cause me any real problem and was best left alone. He also "took my heart for a spin" to try to reproduce the symptoms I had, but without success.

I was awake during the procedure, watching large monitor displays, and the surgeon explained it to me. When the heart beats, an electrical signal first causes the right atrium chamber to beat. The signal then reaches the AV node, where it is delayed a short time before it travels on to cause the ventricles to beat. The timing delay is just right to ensure efficient pumping of blood. The AV node does other critical things also.

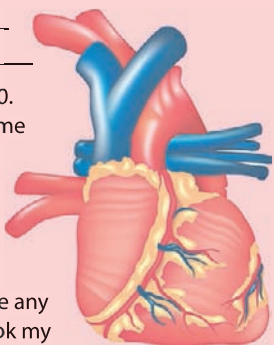
Some questions: Would a heart without an AV node work? Not at all. Would an AV node work without a heart? Again, no. Would a heart without a valve work? Would a heart without chambers and connecting arteries and veins and blood work? No — all the parts of the heart needed to be there from the beginning.

There is more: How does the AV node know what to do, to be useful for the external purpose of keeping me alive? Who told it?

There are such amazing designs and components in the heart, it is clearly mistaken to imagine the heart evolved from slime by blind random accident (which is evolution). The parts, working together, have the ability to do something that is external to what each part can do. That is how we know it is an intelligent design. The designer is God and God only, and the Bible tells us how He did it.

I hope these words help you, in your journey to surely trust the Creator. •

Peter Mikula is a mining engineer in Kalgoorlie who loves stargazing and talking with others about Jesus.



# Darwin was wrong

BY RICHARD GUNTHER

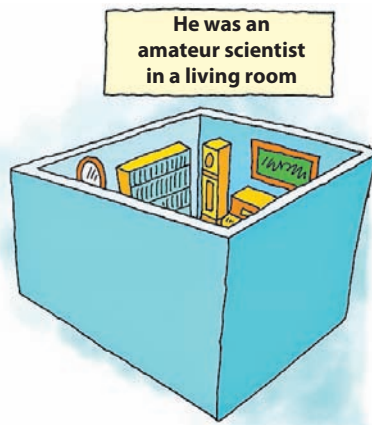
DARWIN was a scientist in a small way but a philosopher in a big way. He spent more time on philosophy than he ever spent with science.

He liked imagining things, but never tested them. Here's where he made one of his biggest mistakes: he saw change and imagined it would keep going with no limit.

He liked breeding pigeons and was intrigued at the many shapes and sizes and colours he saw, but in the end all he saw were pigeons. No evolution in sight.

In his books there is NO maths, NO experiments, NO evidence, NO numbers, NO statistics, NO records of having tested his beliefs. His books are all imagination, extrapolation, inference, assumption and speculation.

The odd thing is, Darwin is today considered to have contributed some



great science to the world, despite the fact that his theory is almost completely devoid of it!

What is science?

It is the study of things we can see, smell, hear, touch, taste, weigh, and measure in other ways.

What is evolution?

It is an imaginary history of the past.

## Dar and Winny by Richard Gunther

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## Want to explore more?

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

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

# That's an egg-cellent question!

BY LUCIEN TUINSTRA (CMI)

HOW does the mother hen know to sit on her freshly laid eggs?

There is no apparent indication that the egg contains her offspring in need of care. It seems to be a created instinct, since many modern commercial breeds have had this instinct 'bred out' of them.

The eggshell's design itself shows the Designer's care for the chick inside. It's features include:

- A porous shell that allows exchange of gases while conserving moisture.
- A mechanism to dissolve it from the inside, providing calcium for the embryo's bones.
- Sufficient strength for protection, but still breakable when hatching time arrives.
- A coating called 'bloom' preventing pathogens from entering.

Various internal features of chicken eggs are equally vital; for instance, its membrane compartments (yolk sac, amnion, and allantois). Could such a marvellous package, with so many 'eggsacting' requirements, possibly have originated by evolutionary 'chance and necessity'?

Some of these features are essential for survival of the chick; if they weren't implemented together from the beginning it would mean the end of the chick (likewise for all other species of birds).

I marvel at how chickens laying such sizeable nutritious eggs, sometimes numerous days in a row, but for their Creator, God, nothing is too complicated. •



## Could all the animals have fitted on the ark?

AT an average size of a sheep, Noah could have fitted all the animals into 156 railway stock cars. The Ark had the capacity, according to the dimensions given in the Bible to hold 522 stock cars.

So, yes, all the animals and the provisions for them would have easily fitted on the Ark. •

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

**Email to:**

[christabritz@challnews.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:christabritz@challnews.onmicrosoft.com)

**OR** [icfriis@gmail.com](mailto:icfriis@gmail.com)

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





Jamie Jones-Buchanan of Leeds Rhinos tackled by Rémi Casty of Catalans Dragons during Betfred Super League regular season match. (Photo by Tim Clayton/Corbis via Getty Images)



# A SOLID FOUNDATION

**W**ith a string of accomplishments under his belt — and the physical and mental scars that go with it — rugby union player Jamie Jones-Buchanan is every bit the tough go-getter you would imagine.

The imposing 41-year-old, who was born in Leeds, has won seven Super League Grand Finals, three World Cup Challenges and has played at international level for England and Great Britain.

In 2022 he was awarded a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for services to rugby league football and the community in Leeds.

Not bad for the lad who dreamt of becoming a professional rugby player while growing up in

working-class Leeds.

Yet there is much more to him than meets the eye.

He may hold aloft his cups and trophies with undisguised glee, but just as quickly he points to them and says “these things are perishable; they don’t last. Don’t build your life on these.”

So what then does Jamie build his life on?

It turns out he builds his life on the gospel of Jesus Christ.

He spends much of his down time at his local church and various speaking engagements for organisations such as the Full Gospel Businessmen’s Association.

“I always believed in something when I was younger, but I didn’t really know what it was,” he shares.

“How could I really? I’m just a lad from Bramley who wanted to make it and realise his dreams as a rugby player.”

His involvement with church was only at funerals and weddings — and a short stint trying to make head or tail of the book of Revelation in the New Testament section of the Bible when he was about 10.

“As you can imagine, I didn’t get very far! Yet

sometimes when I was younger I would go numb with fear at the thought of dying, wondering ‘is this all there is?’”

Then in 2004, his club signed on Samoan Ali Lauiti’iti. Jamie describes him as someone who had a “different feel about him.”

“He was this burly bloke who carried the ball like a peanut — but he was different away from the game.”

Ali was a committed Christian so Jamie asked him about death.

Ali invited him to a service and Jamie jumped at the chance — even though at that time he thought people who attended church were like Ned Flanders, the flaky Christian character in the Simpsons cartoons.

But he found out “nothing is further from the truth. Churches are made up of people all just trying to love Jesus and live like Him as best they can.

“I didn’t know at the time, but it was a life-changing opportunity when Ali offered to take me to church for the first time.

“I always had Christianity close to me; my nana would say her prayers on a night and I’d do school Nativities and things like that, but theologically speaking, I had no idea what the Bible stood for until that day.

“Ali took me under his wing and we started to go through the

gospels. Before long I had accepted Christ. The day I got baptised in 2009 was the most emotional day of my life.”

It is not an easy life though, being a professional rugby player.

The sheer physicality of the game as well as the mental strain of having to be at peak fitness puts a tremendous pressure on Jamie. He has also struggled with injuries.

However, he says “when I go through adverse periods, that trust and belief in Christ is truly what keeps me believing and gets me ready to go again.

“You can draw meaningful links to biblical figures who have endured hardships and times of toughness.”

At a talk Jamie gave to a meeting in Ireland, he held up one of his many trophies then said: “I’ve won countless trophies and achieved a lot, but it counts for nothing really,

does it? Nothing lasts forever, everything is finite, and that directly relates to sport. Whatever I achieve in sport is limited and I refer often to building treasure in heaven. Only that lasts eternally.”

Sharing his life story is high on Jamie’s list of pursuits for the church.

“I’ve done testimonies everywhere,” he says, “even on a barge in Canary Wharf once.”

His singular message in all his addresses is this: “All the accolades in the world aren’t enough to fill that God-shaped space at the centre of our hearts and minds.

“We can chase things in life and even when you achieve them, it’s meaningless without God at the centre of it. That’s what I want to try and really impress upon people I speak to. God has to be at the centre of everything.”



Jamie Jones-Buchanan poses with his MBE, awarded by the Princess Royal during an investiture ceremony at Buckingham Palace on October 12, 2022. (Photo by Kirsty O’Connor-Pool/Getty Images)

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