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Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men... Colossians 3:23

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## Editor's Note

One of our favourite past times is to listen to music together... without fail my husband will pick up on every nuance of the instruments and find joy in the sound. I tend to hear and be impacted by the lyrics first - same song, different effects.

I think a picture of true unity can be found in that experience. Because unity is most definitely not conformity - God surely did not make robotic clones when He created humans! I believe He deliberately created a symphony of differences and in that symphony we find impressions of His character and His love for the world.

I love that all our differences, when united, create a harmony where every part holds appeal and influence for someone listening in. So I challenge you this quarter - celebrate your uniqueness, it's essential for the wholeness of the Body of Christ and is the answer to all the woes and troubles of this sad world. Our united diversity creates a universal beauty that reflects Christ in glorious mirror image. His plan all along!



Tam Davy

### About The Christian Counselling Centre

We are a Registered Trust. Our team of counsellors, drawn from many denominations, are all trained to an Advanced Level in Biblical Counselling. Counselling is open to anyone (whatever their religion) who would like to talk confidentially to a counsellor. The counselling costs \$15 a session, payable in advance. To see a counsellor, please phone the numbers below. If you would like to attend any of our seminars, courses, etc. please register and make payment at the Centre.

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The views expressed in this publication don't necessarily reflect those of the Christian Counselling Centre.

# Only One Way?

By Ian Wilsher



### Street Preachers Convicted in Modern Day Heresy Trial.

Two street preachers have today been convicted of a public order offence, after a public prosecutor, Mr Jackson, claimed that publicly quoting parts of the King James Bible in modern Britain should "be considered to be abusive and is a criminal matter". Michael Overd and Michael Stockwell were found guilty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 at Bristol Magistrates' Court. During the four-day trial, Mr Jackson also argued: "To say to someone that Jesus is the only God is not a matter of truth. To the extent that they are saying that the only way to God is through Jesus, that cannot be a truth."

And it seems that if you believe it to be a truth and you proclaim it as truth, you may be found guilty under Section 31 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, for using "threatening or abusive words or behaviour or disorderly behaviour within the hearing or sight of a person likely to be caused harassment, alarm or distress".

Mention Jesus (the thorny, nailly one), and the offence becomes religiously aggravated. (Report from Bristol, UK: 28th February 2017 (Christian Concern))

Christians are often accused of being arrogant and intolerant and divisive. "How can you say you are right and others are wrong?" they might say.

Critics (and the British courts) would suggest that it's far more accurate and tolerant and humble to say that we are all climbing the same mountain towards the same God but just using different paths.

And yet Jesus said, "I am the way the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6)

And Paul when writing a letter to the Galatians says, "If we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preach to you, let him be eternally condemned!" (Galatians 1:8)

That doesn't sound very tolerant. Surely, this is arrogant and divisive? Surely it would be much more unifying to say, "All paths, all religions will lead us to God ultimately, as long as we are sincere. After all, every religion has a set of laws and rituals and practices which participants are required to fulfil," and, "Who can say one is better than the other?"

When I was at University we had a Dr. Krishna come and speak to us. He was a professor at the University of Westville in Durban. He had converted from being a devout Hindu to a Christian and often used to speak on comparative religions. I will never forget what he said, "In all religions (and he included nominal Christianity in this) man is trying to reach God. In Christianity, God is reaching down to man."

The truth of the matter is that we cannot reach God by our own efforts, whatever path we choose. Our problem is that we all fall short of God's standard no matter how hard we try. It is a bit like trying to jump across the Zambezi River. Some will jump further than others, but no-one will jump anywhere near far enough to get across the river. Our shortcoming or sin, for that is what it is, separates us from God. That is why God sent his Son. He sent His Son to die on the Cross to pay the price and the penalty for our wrongdoing. If we accept what God has done for us and believe in Him, He forgives us our sin and reconciles us to Himself. He removes that barrier. We have a choice: to accept His way or not. It's not a choice between different religions or different paths that attempt to reach

God. It is a choice between accepting what God has done for us or not.

When we say to God, "I am not going your way, I'm going the way I choose, it's a better way," this is actually the height of arrogance! It is saying that I know better than God Himself.

If there was another way, would God have allowed His Son to die on the Cross? When Jesus prayed in the garden of Gethsemane, He said, "Father, if it is possible, take this cup from Me. Yet not My will but Yours be done."

God the Father's response? Silence! Because there was no other way.

Jesus went through the ordeal of the Cross because there is no other way to be reconciled to God. That's why He said, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no man comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)

There is no other Gospel. There is only one way. Of course, this causes offense which is what the Bible tells us the Gospel will do, (Galatians 5:11), just as Jesus Himself caused offense.

Nothing we do, no good works, no keeping of any laws, no completing any rituals or ceremonies can reconcile us to God the Father. God reached down, through Jesus, to bring us into relationship with Him. Actually, it takes humility to accept that we cannot merit nor do anything to deserve God's favour or acceptance.

Our choice is to either accept His way or not. What choice are you going to make?

Ian Wilsher is a Director of The Christian Counselling Centre.



# The Fruits Of UNITY

By Tava Gwanzura

An encounter in the desert brought two estranged brothers together in a show of forgiveness and reconciliation. It was an unlikely script and an unlikely stage for unity to be played out, but then God is in the business of putting together seemingly impossible scenarios and making them work... The younger brother had brazenly cheated his older brother out of their father's blessing and the outraged older brother had sworn that if he ever got hold of his sibling, he would surely kill him. Many years later, when Jacob and Esau finally met, the dreaded confrontation, (for Jacob,) never happened. Instead, their reunion was warm and emotional and putting the past behind them, they were able to peacefully coexist (Genesis 27:33).

Unity, that coming together and holding together, standing together and working together as one, is something that can take

place on many different levels and in a diversity of situations. Expressions such as 'unity is strength' and 'united we stand, divided we fall' may be somewhat clichéd, but they underscore the importance of unity in human relationships. There can be no real peace, progress or stability where disunity and division reign supreme, be it between two individuals, within a family or in the nation as a whole. In fact, disunity and the strife it causes are more likely to lead to destruction. The Lord Jesus was very clear about this when he said, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined and every city or household divided against itself will not stand." (Matthew 12:25)

## Friendships

I remember once having a serious disagreement with a very close and very dear friend of mine. We had been friends for many years and had been there for each other in times of trouble and rejoicing. But in a moment of weakness, due probably to the stresses of the time, we allowed that particular disagreement to cloud our judgement and assume greater importance than the great friendship we had enjoyed for so long.

The words exchanged and the hurt and resentment we both felt, left our friendship in tatters. Restoration and reconciliation came only after we had set our pride aside, talked it over, apologised, forgiven and been forgiven. The bond of friendship that united us was too resilient to ignore and too precious to cast away.

## Unity in Marriage

Like friendship – even though the dynamics may be different – marriage is also about unity and God makes this abundantly clear from the outset when He says in Genesis 2:24, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh."

## National Unity

Unity at national level is, I believe, critical to the wellbeing of any nation. Sadly, examples abound of countries torn apart by civil wars, sectarian violence or secessionist struggles.

On 22 December, Zimbabwe celebrates Unity Day. This was the day, back in 1987, that the ruling Zanu-PF party and its erstwhile liberation war partner PF-Zapu, signed the Unity Accord. Until that time, post-independence Zimbabwe had witnessed internecine conflict between these two former allies. But apart from enjoying the public holiday, I don't think many Zimbabweans celebrate the event as a necessary and meaningful political act. Many argue that the horrors and atrocities which people of the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces experienced have never been officially, properly and fully acknowledged and no attempt has been made by the political leaders to offer an apology, address the issue and work on bringing about forgiveness and healing. However one may view the Unity Accord, and some see it as a mere semblance of unity, there is no denying that while it did not bring closure for those so deeply affected by the Gukurahundi onslaught, it did bring that sad chapter of violence and brutality to a close. The affected individuals, families and communities were able to pick up the pieces of their shattered lives as life around them regained some degree of normalcy.

## Unity in The Church

The importance of unity in the Body of Christ has been highlighted from the very beginning. As we see in the book of Acts, unity was certainly a prominent feature of the growth of the early church, "All the believers were together and had

everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." (Acts 2:44-47)

A little further on we read that, "All the believers were one in heart and mind." (Acts 4:32)

I am struck by the sense of togetherness and agreement conveyed by these passages. It made for a strong, vibrant, united, Spirit-filled church which grew in leaps and bounds. There was no room for greed, selfishness or any kind of power play. It was all about preaching Christ and salvation and ministering to the needs of the people. In unity there was indeed strength, focus and purpose. Earlier, the Lord Jesus Himself had prayed for complete unity among all believers so that the Gospel could go out (John 17:23).

Paul warns believers about those who cause divisions in the body, "I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites." (Romans 16:17)

While unity builds the church, quarrels and factions only serve to weaken it and hinder God's work.

Togetherness and a sense of belonging are a God-given human need. This is why there is marriage, family, community, nation and United Nations! We all want to belong, to be a part of something meaningful; there is a need in us to coalesce around something with which we can identify, where each one has their part to play and work together for the good of the whole and all its constituent parts.

We need to be praying and striving for this unity, not only in the Church, but also in our various institutions. It is edifying, mutually beneficial and pleasing to God. As the psalmist says, "How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity... For there the LORD bestows His blessing, even life forevermore." (Psalm 133:1, 3)

Tava is a Trustee and counsellor at The Christian Counselling Centre.

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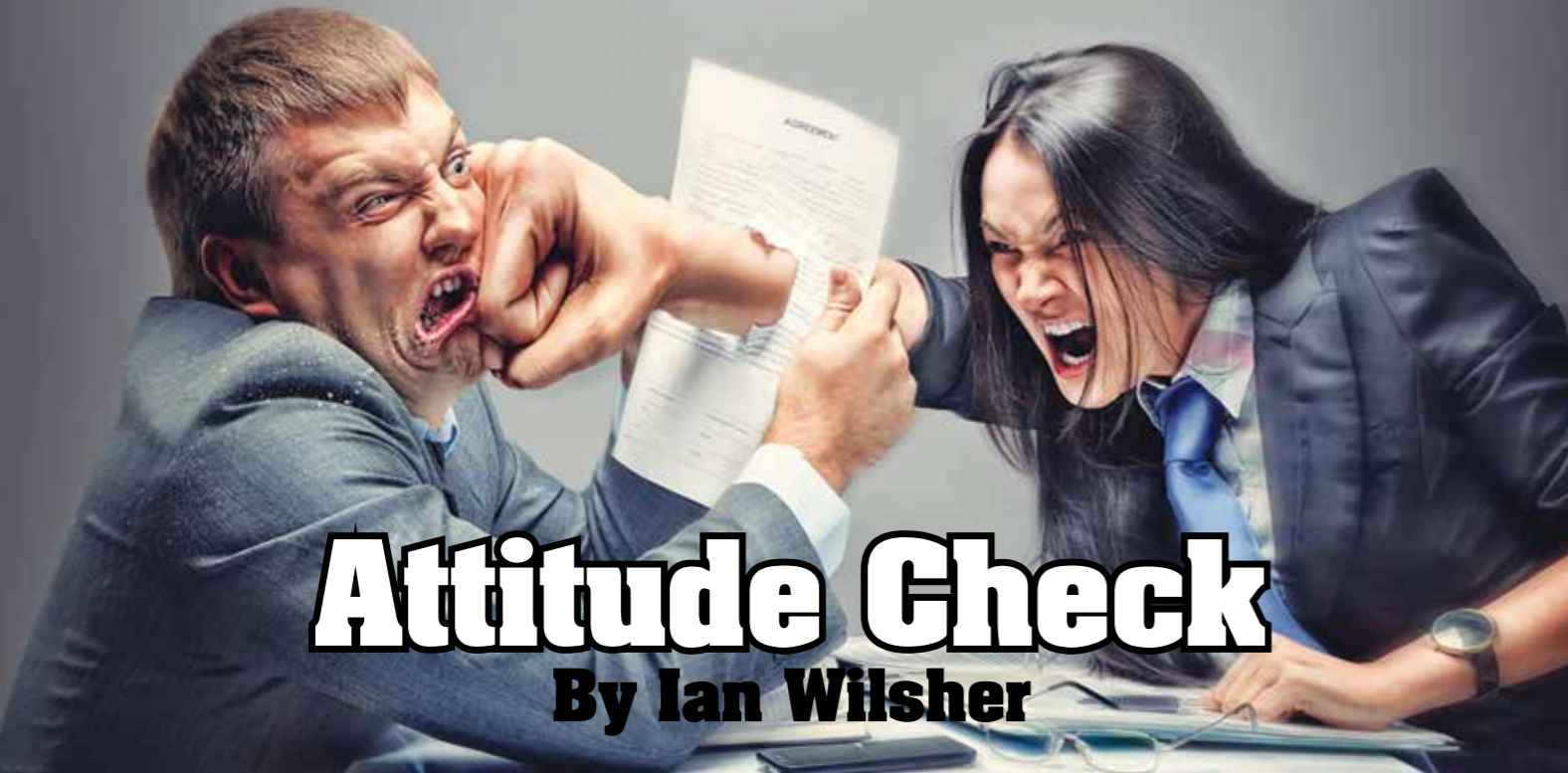
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# Attitude Check

By Ian Wilsher

I remember a business partnership falling apart after a sharp, angry conflict between the two partners. One accused the other of not honouring an agreement and with that, accusations began to fly from both sides. Old issues were revived, history was dug up, inflammatory emails were flung across cyberspace, all resulting in inevitable alienation and breakdown of the relationship and partnership. The practical matters of separating were thrashed out between lawyers and that was that. Or was it?

The two protagonists continued their businesses separately, swearing they never wanted to see each other again. There was one problem, however. They were both Christians.

Conflict and fallout happen wherever you have people. And the Church is not exempt. Brothers and sisters in the Lord belong to the same family. If they are serious about their faith, they will make every effort to reconcile. As Paul says to the Romans, "As far as it depends upon you, live at peace with everyone." (Romans 12:18)

It is important to note the first phrase, "as far as it depends on you," because

reconciliation takes two and will not be possible if one party refuses to be reconciled or refuses to admit fault.

The question I want to deal with here is, what attitudes are needed for reconciliation to take place?

## Necessary Attitudes

The Bible has a great deal to say about those attitudes which cause conflict:

- "Pride only breeds quarrels." (Proverbs 13:10)
- "For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder." (James 3:16)
- "What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? (selfishness) You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight." (James 4:1-3)

These Scriptures talk of two negative attitudes that cause strife – pride and selfishness. To resolve the conflict, the opposite attitudes of **humility** and **consideration** for the other have to be fostered.

## Spiritual

When dealing with divisions in the church Paul says, "Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual (as people who live by the Spirit) but as... worldly—mere infants in Christ... You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarrelling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men? For when one says, 'I follow Paul,' and another, 'I follow Apollos,' are you not mere men?" (1 Corinthians 3:1,3-4)

Another important attitude, then, is to be **spiritual**, which is to be submitted to the Lordship and leadership of the Spirit and not worldly (like anyone without Christ – self-centered and self-seeking).

Conflict invariably gives rise to anger and if we are going to get our attitude right then we need to work on **managing our anger**. As James tells us in his letter, "My dear brothers, take note of this, everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." (James 1:19)

The previously mentioned wrong attitudes (pride, selfishness, worldliness) will arouse our anger. And if we don't manage our anger it will cause further wrong attitudes.

In the case quoted above, the parties showed these negative attitudes. In their pride, they refused to acknowledge any wrong done, refused to apologise and they refused to forgive the hurt caused. Initially the dispute had arisen because each insisted on things being done his way, in a way that was of benefit to himself. And this of course, is how worldly people behave, those who are controlled and driven by their selfish nature (what the Bible calls 'the flesh'), which arouses anger when it doesn't get its way.

### The attitudes we need then are:

- **humility** – an attitude that is willing to honour others above themselves, an attitude that is willing to take responsibility for wrong done and hurtful things said, willing to apologise and make things right. An attitude that is willing to forgive and let go of anger.
- **consideration** – an attitude which is 'other-oriented' rather than selfish, an attitude which thinks and acts with the other's needs in mind. This is an attitude that will care about the other and be willing to listen and not just demand its own way.

- **spiritual** – this is an attitude that is focussed on pleasing the Lord, rather than ourselves (even when we have been wronged). This is an attitude that is led and controlled by the Holy Spirit, and empowered by Him as well. This attitude is a trusting attitude that relies on the Lord to provide personal needs.

These attitudes are essential and the starting point in keeping united and in resolving any conflict, whatever the model used. For this reason, there is value in making an appointment with the 'adversary,' (colleague, partner, spouse, child, sibling) especially when one or both are angry. The appointment commits us to dealing with the unresolved issue but it also gives both time to think about the issue and how best to express thoughts and feelings. In addition, there is time to ensure that attitudes are what they should be: spending time in prayer and asking the Holy Spirit to help reveal any pride or selfishness. Ask the Lord what He wants. Think about how the other person has been affected by this issue.

Quite often the issue that needs to be resolved has caused bad feeling between the two. Perhaps the arguments escalated into heated accusations. The first step involves climbing down from the attack, blame or 'I'm right, you are wrong' position. I talk to couples in conflict about getting out of 'fight' mode into 'win-win' mode. This is a determination to resolve the issue rather than win the argument or get our own way. It is moving onto the same side and attacking the problem rather than attacking each other. There may be a need to apologise for words spoken, tone of voice used, things done, or simply for fighting about the issue, rather than trying to resolve it.

Conflict is common. If we are to resolve the inevitable issues we have with each other and be united, the first step is to ensure our attitude is right. We cannot control the other's attitude but we do have a choice about our own.

### In conflict? Attitude check!

Ian Wilsher is a Director of The Christian Counselling Centre.

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# Unity Between Races

## Overcoming Racism

By Ian Wilsher

**Our society, 37 years after Independence, still has elements of separation and dis-unity. What are the factors that cause division?**

### Stereotyping

This is a common problem. We make the mistake of putting all people of a certain race or culture into the same box. When we see the sinful behaviour of some people from that group, we assume all people of that race are like that. We paint everyone of that race with the same brush. We make the error of labelling, categorising, putting in a box, of ascribing certain behaviour to a group of people.

### Fear/Threat

When our livelihood or prospects or security is threatened by another group, (or we perceive this to be the case) we are likely to become defensive and belligerent and can build barriers to protect ourselves.

### Ignorance

Ignorance of each other's customs and cultures creates misunderstandings.

### Response to Hurt

When we have been hurt by someone of another race or culture, the fear of being hurt again can cause us to build barriers

between ourselves and others of the same race. This especially when the hurt has been caused through prejudice and/or hatred. If we hold onto the hurt caused, we can become angry and bitter which can lead to outright hatred of a particular race or group.

### Guilt

Our own guilt can cause us to be defensive and react to actions and words of someone from another group.

### Greed

Greed can cause us to be selfish, only caring about what we personally want and uncaring of what another might need. This inevitably causes quarrels and fights.

### Superiority or Inferiority

When, in arrogance and pride, we think and behave as if we are superior to another group, we will cause damage and division. Equally, sometimes our feelings of inferiority and resultant insecurity can cause us to be reactive or defensive.

### What is the Answer?

What is the answer to these barriers that we have erected between different groups of people? The short answer: The glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ!

I'd like to look at a passage of Scripture which shows how these divisions are removed through Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, highlights the deep religious, cultural and racial divisions that existed between Jew and Gentile (Ephesians 2:11,12). These two groups did not have much to do with each other in Jesus' and Paul's day.

Paul says, "For He Himself (Jesus Christ) is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility... His purpose was to create in Himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility." (Ephesians 2:14-16)

Paul is saying that Jesus reconciled both Jew and Gentile to Himself, He joined or united them to Himself and in so doing He united them to each other. If we are Christians, then Jesus joined us to Himself and we are therefore joined to each other, He "has made the two one." And He "has put to death their hostility."

The hostility of prejudice, bitterness, hatred, pride, fear, stereotyping, all are put to death, they are nailed to the Cross – they died with Jesus.

As a result, says Paul, we are all, "fellow citizen's with God's people." We are more than Zimbabweans, we are fellow citizens of the Kingdom of God. (vs 19)

Even closer, more intimately connected, Paul says, we are "members of God's household."

When I was reconciled to God, I was adopted into the Lord's family and so were you. NOW you are my brother, my sister, we belong to each other. Just like you had no choice regarding members of your earthly family, likewise you don't get to choose your Christian family. It is a fact, we belong to each other – we are part of the same family. I may not look like you, I might have a different skin colour, I can't dance, can't sing harmony like many of you but I'm your brother.

So, here's the thing. It's not a case of trying to be united. It's a case of recognising that we are united. So, as Paul says in Ephesians 4:3, "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit." He is saying, maintain that unity,

live in that unity.

The implications of these Scriptures are:

**We are all sinners – Jews, Gentiles, Black, White, Coloured, Asian, all equally sinful and separated from God. What we see when we see racism is often a manifestation of that sinfulness. So, when we see arrogance and pride, we see the sinfulness of a certain person. When we see greed or prejudice, we see the sinful attitude of a certain person. We need to recognise that these behaviours describe sinners, not a group of people. And we all sin.**

**Equally all are reconciled, redeemed, forgiven, adopted through the blood of Jesus and not by anything of ourselves. We bring nothing but faith to the table. We have no merit in ourselves. Salvation is not to do with colour, ethnicity, intelligence, skill, wealth or power.**

So just as we are all sinners, so we all come to God our Father in exactly the same way – through faith in Jesus. It's a great leveler. We're all in the same

category. God treats us in exactly the same way; He is no respecter of people.

### SO:

#### 1. Be reconciled to God.

But remember you cannot be reconciled to God without being reconciled to each other. You cannot say you love God if you hate your brother.

#### 2. Admit and confess your own prejudice, stereotyping, labelling and judgements.

Ask God's forgiveness. Repent, which means to turn from these behaviours which disrupt our existing unity. When you hurt His Body, you hurt God.

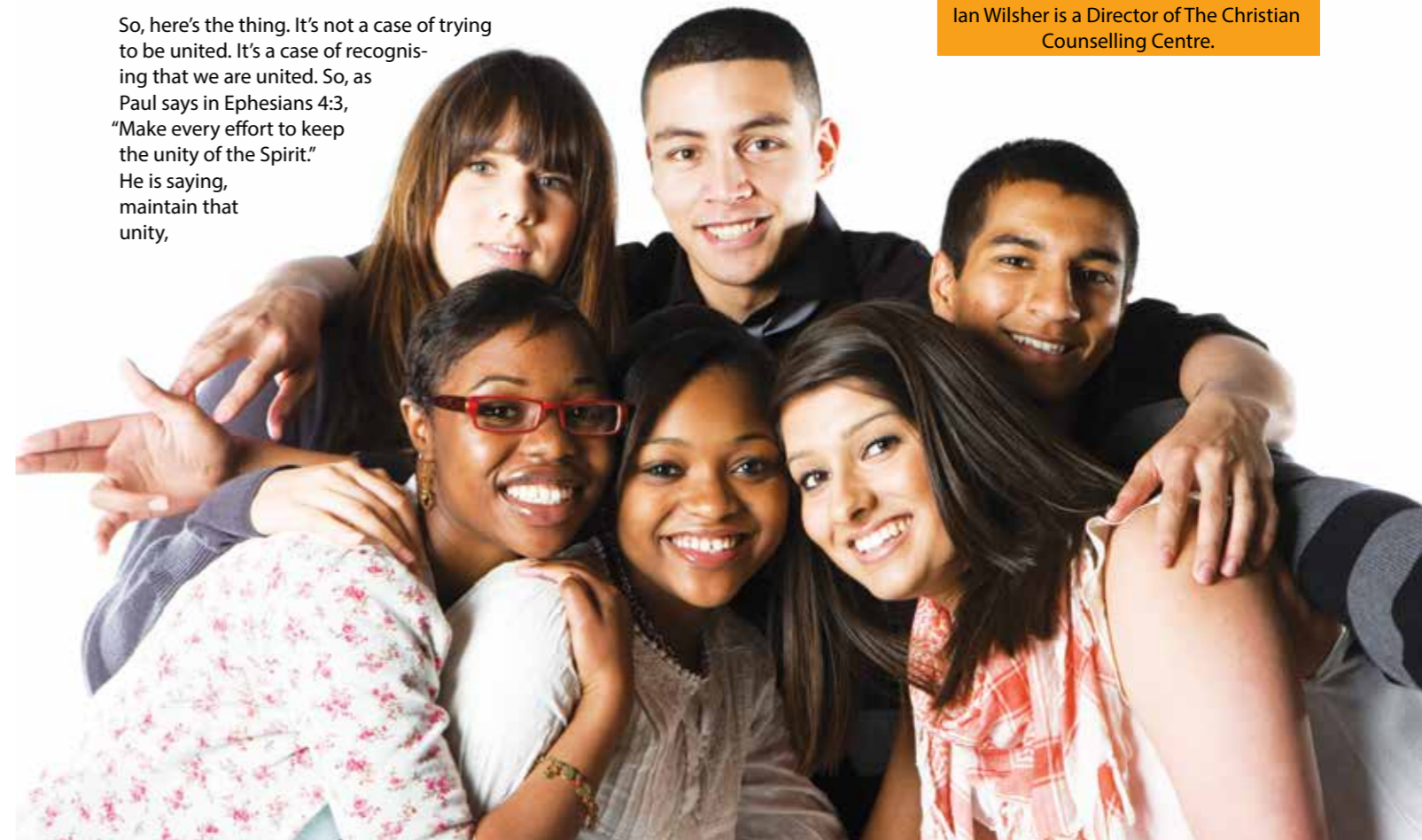
#### 3. Forgive each other.

Maybe things have happened where you have been victim of hatred and prejudice. Acknowledge the hurt and pain and anger, but then choose to let it go. See it for what it is – sinful behavior. It has been said, "The victim who is not healed becomes a victimizer."

#### 4. Change your Mindset.

Think about what it means to be family. Our new identity is not defined by an ethnic group, we are defined by our attachment to Him. We all belong to the Church, the new Israel, the new chosen people, those who are redeemed by God through Jesus.

Ian Wilsher is a Director of The Christian Counselling Centre.



# Freedom for Captives

By David Martins

The first time I saw drugs I used them. I was 13, in a boarding school, did not feel I fitted in and smoking marijuana changed all that. I broke the law that day, got away with it and found a sense of power. On and off for 23 years I did it again and again.

By the age of twenty I had a good job, a lot of friends, was using cocaine and ecstasy and was abusing pharmaceutical drugs. Drinking alcohol was a daily occurrence. When I was 22, I stopped taking drugs and went to college in Cape Town, but by my second year I was using drugs again, and would experiment with LSD, crack cocaine and meth. After graduation I moved to the UK, got married and focused on my career. The income was good and so were the parties but the marriage was not - we were living separate lives. I found out my partner was taking drugs and although it was short lived, I started using again.

In 2008 the world markets crashed and I was retrenched. We moved back home and I started my own company. I threw myself into work, hardly partied, did not take drugs and even my drinking slowed down. Then the week before Easter 2013, I found out my partner had started taking

drugs again. I was angry that it had been kept a secret but it gave me an excuse and within a week, I was using. It was only ecstasy but soon I was using cocaine again and eventually MDMA and much more.

Towards the end of 2013, I was abducted and because of anxiety I was prescribed a tranquilliser. Within three months, I was hooked and so began a complete downward spiral. My regular use of ecstasy and the quantities of drugs I used, meant I had started building a relationship with my dealer, who soon offered me the opportunity to start peddling. I took up the offer without a second thought.

Within a year my marriage was over, the business was bankrupt and shortly after attempting to kill myself I was in a treatment facility, weighing 54kgs. Two weeks after treatment I relapsed simply because I did not go there for myself and so was unable to step out of denial and surrender to the truth and facts. I managed to stay sober for eight months after that. However, the truth of those eight months is that they were the unhappiest I had ever been. I felt completely alone, absolutely isolated and totally alienated. The solution to my problems - drugs and alcohol - were out of my reach and because I was not willing to try another solution the inevitable happened.

Within six months of relapsing again I had accidentally overdosed three times, attempted suicide again and my body was shutting down. My use of alcohol and illicit and pharmaceutical drugs had become more than a daily occurrence - it was every day, all day and I was doing anything and everything it took to find, get and use more.

On the 7th of March 2016 I put down the bottle and stopped using drugs. I knew if I carried on I would die. The first two days were a nightmare and so, again, I planned to kill myself. I was the kind of active addict for whom just stepping out of denial would never have been enough. I was hopeless and desperate. I had a fear of the unknown. Although I knew I could not live with it all, I most certainly knew I did not know how to live without it. I had to

step out of denial and into God's grace. That day, a friend told me of his relationship with the Lord and I knew I wanted what he had. I invited Jesus into my heart, miracles started happening and my life changed from 'trying to stop' to being able to 'stay stopped.'

It has not been an easy road by any means but it has not been complicated either as I see God's promises come true when I let go and let God, and so my faith grows.

For a long time I believed I had lost everything. But I had not lost my life - I had only lost the knowledge of how to live it. By the grace of God, working a 12-step recovery program with my sponsor's guidance and with the support of family and friends, I am living again. Every day I work to improve my conscious contact with God, praying only for the knowledge of His will for my life and the power to carry it out. Why? Because I know that my will only led me to a constant obsession and compulsion to use drugs and alcohol even when dereliction, destitution and death would stare me in the face.

I did not become addicted because of what someone did to me, or what happened to me, hence I do not share much of that. But I made a bad decision one day and many more after that, which, at some point, saw me cross a line into complete dependency, bowed down to obsessions and compulsions, that would shroud my life in secrecy, including the secret of an eating disorder I now know as anorexia. The paradox of my new life - I am still bowed down, only it is in belief, obedience and worship to and of my Saviour. I live a life on the basis that just for today, I can be clean and sober. But I know that Jesus lives in my heart and because He does, I know I can face tomorrow.

In December 2016, in partnership with Highlands Presbyterian Church, David founded Kurarama Trust which helps individuals, families and communities in Zimbabwe affected by substance abuse and addiction.  
Tel: 0775147179  
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**KURARAMA**  
T R U S T

# The Promise

By "Larry Westbrooke"\*

I sat in the doctor's waiting-room as my wife was having a prescription renewed. My spouse came out with the doctor who looked for his next patient. He saw me and exclaimed, "You're the person I've been trying to get hold of!"

We had been away on holiday.

I knew my doctor had received the results of my Full Blood Count, and as I sat opposite him, I knew that something was not right. "You have the kidney function of an eighty year old," he said, and this was not flattering as I was in my early sixties, had always run marathons, competed in triathalons and was still fairly active.

Initially I was referred to a kidney-specialist, who, after a few weeks sent me to an haematologist, who, after several tests, confirmed I had Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia (CLL). White blood cells multiply uncontrollably and most of these cancerous cells are located in the blood-stream and bone-marrow.

At this stage, I decided not to tell my friends or even my children but only my wife. I felt it not right to burden others with my problem which might still take a few years to manifest itself. One can live for many years with no obvious symptoms.

Perhaps it is unusual that at diagnosis I did not feel completely overwhelmed with emotion. I have heard that some people diagnosed with cancer may feel unable to believe what is happening or express any emotion. Yes, I do wonder when I am going to die, and if there is pain, if it will be unbearable.

I believe that I have not experienced

denial, anger or tried to blame anyone and after a few months, I chose to tell my immediate family. Not wanting to be treated any differently, I have still not made my condition common knowledge, but this will happen no doubt, when I start treatment.

I may well have taken the news of my diagnosis extremely badly if I were not a Christian with the promise of eternal life. Imagine looking forward to another few years on earth with the likely possibility of great physical discomfort. Then proceeding to oblivion or if believing that God exists, but having refused His offer of salvation, designated to an eternity of misery. Neither of these two scenarios appealed to me.

**CHRISTIANS  
ARE NOT IMMUNE  
TO PAIN. BUT I HAVE A  
GUARANTEE FOR  
THE FUTURE.**

Christ offers everyone the gift of forgiveness, salvation and eternal life: "Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life." (Revelation 22: 17)

If you, the reader, have a similar condition and no doubt are enjoying support from family, friends, doctors and counsellors,

but have not accepted Christ as your Saviour, I suggest that you are unlikely to ever feel completely at peace, without knowing what will follow your life on the present earth.

I have had great support from my family and counsellors at the Harare Christian Counselling Centre and in all conversations, have felt no horror at the thought of leaving this world. Yes, I read that, after treatment, I will experience strong emotions, no doubt many negative, as I cope with the physical effects. I do not look forward to future physical discomfort, chemotherapy and the possibility of other unpleasant medical scenarios and one might argue that I might not bear up well with future treatment. Christians are not immune to pain. But I have a guarantee for the future.

We will all die and if you are a Christian or are interested in knowing what heaven may look like, I direct you to a book, given to me by my son and written by Randy Alcorn, simply entitled, "Heaven". The following is on the cover; "The next time you hear someone say, 'We can't begin to imagine what Heaven will be like.' you'll be able to tell them, 'I can.'"

There's one drawback. One of my sons, who is in his twenties, has decided to compile some kind of bucket list for me. Or so it seems and one of the requirements is that he takes me wake-boarding. This means being pulled at high speed on a shortish surfboard on water. His friend who does this with him whispered to me confidentially that when you fall off it's like hitting concrete.

\*Not his real name

# God's Grace and Fierce Love

By Mary Anne Passaportis



*Light gradually dissipated in and out of the darkness, as if someone was playing mindlessly with a dimmer switch. The darkness held a stench of hostility. Broken signals bounced mindlessly in slow motion around in my head as slurred speech permeated the heavy air.*

Wait ... was that me?

*The light finally settled in for good, but I could still see a dark form hovering over me forcing me to clamber from my prostrate posture on the bloodstained carpet, onto all fours.*

The hovering form behind me pressed in closer and appeared in focus as a pair of male feet only inches from my face. As quickly as they approached they disappeared and I was hoisted to a standing position. My hands were bound tightly and painfully together with wire behind my back in a rigid and cutting grip.

*I blinked in an effort to stabilize the whirling world around me and settle the untamed, lazy signals in my head. Finally, the broken signals reverberating in my head settled promptly on the prediction of danger. DANGER!*

My family was in danger! My gaze scanned the room to find my husband lying on his back. His head was immersed in blood that saturated the pillows and bed beneath him. Gurgled groans escaped from his flat, featureless face.

Hayley and Emma? Where were they? My five and three year old daughters were nowhere to be seen. "Please, I will do anything for you but please don't hurt my family."

My ears registered the words spilling from my mouth. Would he hear them?

Miraculously, despite the

acknowledgement of the danger we were in, the outcome was peace not danger. A surreal calmness draped heavily over me as if someone was covering me with a thick blanket. At that moment, evil was being dismantled as Heaven invaded earth with a multitude of heavenly-armed hosts.

That night, without me realizing, marked the day spiritual warfare became a reality in my life. I always heard the Scripture quoted from Ephesians 6:12, "For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places."

I had never understood the gravity to which this was true and how it impacts our lives on a daily basis. A veil had been lifted from my spiritual eyes, marking a drastic change in my understanding of God, who He was and what He had done for me.



The lifting of this veil didn't just make me aware of God's grace and majesty; it allowed me to see Satan through spiritual eyes and how he ferociously fights to destroy us all.

There is no denying that three years ago, Satan used a man to break into our house in the middle of the night to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10). He brutally beat my husband, Dave, on the head leaving him for dead. The scans later showed multiple breaks and shards of skull embedded in his brain, causing him to wake up paralyzed on the entire right side of his body. He lost a huge amount of blood that would have caused his death if we had not reached a hospital in time. While the intruder was savagely beating Dave, I was hit on the head and hand, which resulted in me losing consciousness for a portion of time. I woke to a hairline fracture across the front of my skull and a compound fractured finger.

Once I was awake, he marched me around the house demanding money. During this time, he pushed me backwards onto the couch and started pulling at my underwear. Fear spilled up and out of me, drenching me with terror. I kicked at him

madly and he started beating my legs with a knobkerrie. I screamed Jesus' name at him, immediately he became distracted and didn't follow through with his intention to rape me.

Only God could turn an evil and traumatic night into a victorious testimony. Only God could turn Dave's injuries into a miraculous healing. Only God could turn post-traumatic stress into post-triumph over the enemy. Genesis 50:20 reads, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good."

Romans 8:28, "And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them."

Dave is, literally, a walking miracle. I am a testimony of God's grace and fierce love for us. My two daughters, through this ordeal, will be willows on a riverbank offering shade and comfort for generations to come as spoken of in Isaiah 44:3-4.

A final thought to leave with you as you journey on this spiritual battle you call life: You are not a victim of circumstance, but a victim of GRACE.

Below is a snippet from a vision my sister-in-law had of Dave the night of our attack.

"I saw the LION OF JUDAH roaring over you. He was the most beautiful Lion I have ever seen, majestic, and strong. To me, He was telling the demonic realm to stay back and not dare go any further. Around day 5 after your operation, I saw the Lion again. This time He was warding off hyenas that were biting his heels. It was extremely disturbing. I rallied the troops to pray specifically for your life at this point. This intense time lasted about twenty eight hours, but the Lord is faithful, He is mighty, He does not abandon His children.

Two days later I saw the Lion resting in the shade, He was making quiet roars, as if He had eaten His full. The Lion was content. He had won the battle and there was no threat in sight. By this time, you had pulled out your ventilator and I knew your spirit man was fighting too – even if you didn't physically know it."

Marry Anne is married to Dave, they have two daughters. She is a Photographer.



# The Gift of Goodbye

Anonymous

"Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails." (Proverbs 19:21)

A couple of months ago, I firmly believed God wanted my life to go in a certain direction. I therefore thought I had to do whatever it took to get to that point. To be specific, I was utterly convinced that my destiny was tied to one person and that He just needed to see that I was his partner for life!

I'm sure you know that feeling of having planned your life in a particular way, to the point where you've convinced yourself that your plan is actually God's plan and His will for you?

In this instance, I was certain God had spoken and told me that the man I was with was the one He wanted me to marry. So, when the relationship did not quite work out that way, I was determined to try to make this man understand that he was God's will for me.

What I have come to realise in my spiritual journey, however, is that what is happening in my life right now, is God's will for me. Job 42:2 speaks of how God can do all things, and that no purpose of His is ever thwarted; this surely is a quiet reassurance that if it is God's will, it will come to pass. Nothing just happens.

Things don't just go wrong. Who has the right to define events as having gone wrong, anyway? The reality is that very often, it's our plans that have been derailed, not God's. If we are completely honest with ourselves, our idea of a perfect ending is what has really been destroyed, but there is no guarantee that our idea is in fact a perfect ending at all. With this truth came the realisation that God knew all along that I was going to face disappointment. This was hard to fathom. But I take comfort in the fact that God knows everything. He is aware of the people who are going to walk into my life, the people who are going to stay and the ones who are going to walk out. Not only does He know everything, but He is firmly in control. So, if someone decides to walk out of your life, let him walk. If your destiny was tied to them, God would not have let them go anywhere. This promise is guaranteed to us in Isaiah 14:27, "For the LORD Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart Him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back?"

Embracing the gift of goodbye is one of the most important life lessons I have had to learn in the last few months. With it came the understanding that I do not have to be hateful, bitter, resentful during the process but just need to rest in the fact that if God needed that person in my life, then that is exactly where he would be.

The fact that he has decided to walk away from me, is a clear indication that he is not part of my destiny.

Right now, in this very moment, if we are choosing to walk in obedience to Him, we are under the banner of His will; even in the midst of disappointment, betrayal, hurt, pain, suffering.

What are we called to do as Christians when faced with such circumstances? Trust God. It's that easy – and that hard. Remember the story of Ruth and Boaz. Ruth refused to walk away from Naomi, even though Naomi urged her to leave. But Ruth was meant to meet her Boaz in Naomi's homeland, her destiny was tied to Naomi. What He had planned, would come to pass in her life and the same is true for us.

So just trust and believe that God is working in your life and that He will work out all that is happening to fulfil His purpose. Embrace it. Live how He wants you to. Do not waste time begging and pleading with people to stay in your life. I have done that with two relationships and I can promise you, it is just a waste of time. You should never have to work so hard to convince someone to stay in your life if it's God's will.

Remember, nothing just happens!

# My Battle

By Derek Fulton

In 2012, my prostate was found to be enlarged. I underwent an operation and had a third of it removed. Two years later, it was enlarging again and the doctors felt that all the original problem had not been removed. I ignored the warning, but throughout 2015, it continued to enlarge. In July, I agreed to an ultrasound but the machine was out of order on several occasions and so it was only on 24th September that a result was delivered to my doctor. (Of interest was that the ultrasound operator asked why I had been sent for an examination as he could find nothing.) I heard nothing from the doctor and eventually phoned him on 8th October. He said he did not understand the result and questioned whether it was necessary for me to see him.

During this time, my son in South Africa became ill with the same disease, and he died on the 26th June 2015. This was an extremely stressful time. I not only had to cope with the grief of his illness and death but also all the unplanned-for expenses. The family decided to distribute his ashes at Milibizi, a place he loved. This involved arranging travel, transport and accommodation for a family of twelve to and from Milibizi.

On my return from Milibizi, the doctor contacted me to say that the blood test I had had earlier revealed a serious increase in the size of the prostate figure and he advised me to see a specialist for a second opinion, which I did. My wife was advised that they would phone back to confirm a follow-up appointment. They never did call back and I said to my wife that I believed this was the Lord's doing and that His delay had a purpose.

We had come across a new centre, Oncocare, which had recently opened for our specific type of treatment, but we thought we might be stepping out from under the Lord's direction. Until then, we had followed \*Dr Strydom's advice in her book, so we sought advice from the Counselling Centre. We were reassured that we had freedom of choice and made the decision to visit the new centre.

Oncocare was beyond our dreams and the resident Oncologist and staff were a dream come true. They gave us a welcome of love and reassurance and we felt we were in the right place. I was quite emphatic in not having any further operations and I was

informed that none would be necessary and that treatment would be a series of injections. Not all was plain sailing however, as during treatment, I had to be treated for a growth which appeared and an abscess, both of which were successfully removed.

The first blood test done showed a reduction of the PSA count from 1460 to 23.5 - due to the treatment at Oncocare and the prayers of family and faithful people abroad and locally. Later a further blood test result showed the prostate reading being reduced and the bone from 318 to 184. This was God's work on a very grand scale.

As I look back, I see the Lord's hand in the timing of events and His grace in keeping me quite well in that year of enormous stress. Also, we were greatly encouraged by the Lord's leading through a maze of uncertainty, of delays and mounting stress. God, our Father led us through the research of Dr Strydom and of course our own doctor and those at Oncocare. I found great encouragement and peace from sitting at the Lord's feet, reading His Word and listening.

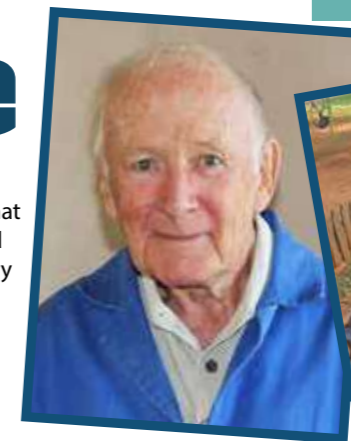
I would like to mention some of the things we have learnt:-

**Sugar and Salt:** should be avoided as much as possible in illnesses of this nature,

**Meat:** reduce your intake. It is not really a problem for me as I am not a big meat-eater. Red meat, especially, should be avoided in quantity.

**Dairy Products:** Reduce cow's milk which has been treated and sold in supermarkets. Use white cheeses instead of the processed yellow ones.

**Juicing:**\* Use raw green vegetables – this is very strong juice and may be difficult to adapt to. It is normally consumed over a period to detox the body's system. I found it difficult to hold in the stomach at first, but would not miss it now, as I know its efficacy. I sometimes add a raw beaten egg. It is taken first thing in the morning – don't



drink any water after that for about ½ to ¾ hour.

\* Raw carrot juice: take in the evening – no water as above.

I eat raw mixed vegetables for breakfast after the juice. Again, it is difficult to adapt to but I can assure you it becomes welcome.

**Exercise:** is essential – the determination to GET OFF YOUR BED is very important.

**Occupy your mind and body** with something to take your mind off your dilemma. I was fortunate as a house needed renovation and my garden needed a lot of physical work, which meant working all day, most days. This helped tremendously and I enjoyed doing it. I also undertake rigorous walks with my wife.

**Emotional Problems:** Deal with them – if you have been hurt by anyone and not forgiven them and have bitterness, resentment or are holding onto your anger, you are in danger of making your infirmity worse.

**Personally, I have made some other regimes a habit:**

- I have instituted coffee enemas twice a day
- I recommend a liver detox of lemon juice and a tablespoon of raw cold-pressed olive oil.
- Use the herb Moringa Oleifera, which has been traditionally used in Africa for eons as a booster of the immune system.

I am 77 years old - I feel good. My faith is strong and I believe, with the help of prayer and the grace of God and treatment from Oncocare, I have a good chance of recovery.

Keep Praying.

Derek is married to a wonderful woman called Frances and is gainfully employed with his fruit trees on his plot.

# Cultivating Humility

By Ian Rea

Don't you love it when you are queueing to turn right at a traffic light and someone zooms up on your left and cuts you off to get ahead when the light turns? What makes impatient drivers think that they deserve quicker passage than the rest in the queue? Come to think of it, what makes a public leader think he deserves the extravagant luxuries purchased with money intended for the basic necessities of others? Or what makes a "Prophet" think he deserves a Lamborghini when members of his church cannot afford to buy school shoes for their children?

It is a sense of entitlement. Entitlement says: "I deserve better than others - life owes me". Zimbabweans have a problem with entitlement, so it's not surprising we have a problem with unity. Entitlement destroys unity.

But how can one develop humility instead of entitlement? In Philippians 2:1-11 Paul says: "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness."

Set aside your own rights to meet another person's need. The words "nature" and "equality" tell us that Jesus was in essence the same as God and had the same rights as God, yet He set aside His rights and became a servant. The universe was Jesus' handiwork, yet He surrendered to a splintered Cross. Why? He did it because we desperately needed a sinless man to take our punishment. If Jesus had insisted on His rights and refused to set them aside for the sake of our need, we would be dead.

But there is more to humility. Set aside your own importance and look also to the interests of others.

Verses 5 to 11 describe the attitude that makes it possible to obey the instructions in verses 1 to 4. "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."

We all understand what selfish ambition is. To be conceited is to have an unrealistically high view of one's own importance, a typical characteristic of an entitled person. Paul says "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but..." The "but" introduces the opposite of selfish ambition and vain conceit, which is to be "in humility". We must have a humble attitude and consider others better than ourselves. How? The answer is in the next verse, "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others".

Does God not want my needs and interests to be met? No, He simply wants me to get them into perspective. My needs, interests and plans are not the most important in the cosmos. Other people also have them, and I should look to those of others, rather than my own.

Imagine a relationship or church where people look first to the interests of others. It would grow and be unified, not rot. So try to understand the interests and needs of others. Seek to understand more than you seek to be heard. Setting aside your own importance, look out for the interests of others.

**SET ASIDE YOUR OWN RIGHTS TO MEET ANOTHER PERSON'S NEED**

The third dimension of a humble attitude is obedience. Set aside independence and become dependent through obedience

Jesus expressed His humility through obedience (verse 8). Why does obedience require humility? Firstly, it implies that the person we obey has authority over us and knows better than us. How often do you treat God as of no consequence by doing your own thing without reference to Him? The essence of conceit is that in your heart you think you are more important than God. Talk about having an unrealistically high view of one's own importance! Secondly, it puts you in a place of dependence on God which is humbling. With His dying breath, Jesus said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit," totally depending on God to raise Him from the dead. Jesus had relinquished all control to His Dad. And we must do the same - every day.

If Jesus, the epitome of obedience, was the blueprint of the perfect human, that means that you too must be totally obedient to God if you want to enjoy the best of what it means to be human? Humans were created for obedience to God. To reject obedience is like a guide-dog refusing to lead its master. If it does that, it is no longer a guide-dog, it is just a dog.

Being born again, you are recreated as the human model God originally intended. According to verse 1 we have been united with Christ and are in relationship with the Holy Spirit. This is what makes it possible to grow in humility and obedience. What is the point of telling fallen human beings to be good? Fallen humans cannot be good on their own.

It requires sacrifice - sometimes your desires will end up dead on the altar. But there is a reward. Jesus' reward is described in verses 9-11. "Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Jesus obeyed God and left it to God to promote Him. And God did. What a promotion! When He calls you to sacrifice, He will do more than balance the ledger. Humble people do not promote themselves - they wait for God's promotion in His time and way. If you leave God to promote you, look who gets the glory (at the end of verse 11): God does. Isn't that a compelling reason to cultivate a humble attitude?

**So let your attitude be the same as that of Christ Jesus, who says:**

- **It is not all about your rights but the needs of others.**
- **It is not all about your importance but the interests of others.**
- **It is not all about your independence but obedience to God.**

Ian is a Pastor of Harvest Fellowship Church.

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Sometimes you have to see people as a Crayon. They may not be your favorite color, but you need them to complete the picture.



# The Essence of UNITY

By Tamryn Davy

***"In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity."* Rupertus Meldenius.**

So, quick history lesson on the above quote: the author is Rupertus Meldenius and NOT Wesley as popular belief upholds. He was a Lutheran theologian and educator who lived in the 1600s and coined this phrase in a paper written as an appeal to practise love and find unity in the Church.

Not a bad motto for the Church to adopt. I've pretty much lived my entire life in the church and its always amazed me how utterly human it is – small wonder, considering the church is not an organization, or a business, or a building as some would believe but actually a living, breathing, world-wide mass (or should I say mess?) of humanity.

I've seen so many people come and go through church doors. I've seen church leaders at fault, congregation members at fault, staff members at fault. And at the end of the day it all boils down to people... wanting their own way, in their own time without delay or compromise. It's always so easy to default blame to the usual suspects. But really, truly, each one of us, whether in the pew or the pulpit, are completely and wholly responsible for maintaining a body that is in sync, working to reach the harvest the Bible speaks so urgently about.

Unity in the church is not an abstract concept. It is merely a lifestyle requirement from God. If there is no unity in our marriage, in our home, in our workplace – there certainly will be little to no unity in our local church body or in the church at large! As with most Biblical principles, it's quite simple and without mysticism. The sole cause of disunity is selfishness, which happens without fail and without beauty in Christian circles the world over. We have all read, and cringed, at the opening verses of James 4, which candidly pinpoint the epicenter of all quarrelling and fighting as each person's selfish and evil desires.

That said, does this mean there should be no limits to our unity? Some would say that we shouldn't allow things like doctrine and dogma to separate us as we are all children of God. We all fall short

of God's standards and so loving each other means accepting each other whatever."

Is this true? Are there no limitations to our unity? Should we be drawing boundaries that separate?

The opening guide helps us answer this question.

## *"In Essentials, Unity"*

There are times when one should not back down from upholding Biblical standard and doctrine. We all know a church that chose a wayward path, leading to cultish practices, or a leader who committed adultery, cleaned out the church bank account and justified their sin, someway, somehow. As believers and church bodies, there are unalterable facets to living a Christian lifestyle and pursuing an intimate relationship with God that can never be sacrificed on the altar of compromise or people-pleasing. Equally, we must hold firm to certain fundamental, clearly revealed truths that define what it means to be a Christian. Compromising on these essential issues would be to deny God our Father and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, this excludes and divides!

What are these essentials?

*Doctrine – Our Core Beliefs*

### *- The Trinity*

There is no way around the fact that our Creator, the Eternal God is a Trinity. Three separate beings, God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, who maintain their individuality yet are one. Hard to comprehend, but impossible to dismiss.

### *- Creation.*

God created the world and everything in it, and He did it in 7 days. Details notwithstanding, that's a core tenet of our faith.

### *- Calvary*

Without Christ and His suffering on the Cross, we would not have a Gospel to preach or a hope to spread. Jesus came to earth as a man, suffered unspeakable trauma on our behalf and rose again as God, having conquered sin, sickness and satan on our behalf, once and for all.

### *- Judgment Day & Hell*

God is a God of justice as much as He is a God Who loves unendingly. There will be a day of accounting for everyone who has ever lived and we will all either go to Heaven or to hell. What we choose in this life determines our eternal destiny. There is only one way to God and that is salvation through Christ Who alone can forgive sins and heal diseases. We can only receive this gift of eternal life by faith alone.

## *"In Non-Essentials, Liberty"*

Inasmuch as there is an unescapable standard and doctrine by which God wishes us to live (for our own, very best well-being), there is the glorious freedom of being the individual He created each one to be – and the grace to extend that freedom to one another. We can sometimes draw the boundary lines too tight and become too dogmatic about things that are not essential.

One church may praise exuberantly, clapping and dancing down the aisles on Sunday and grocery stores Monday through to Saturday, whilst another may choose a worship that displays quiet reverence and worshipful observation. Neither is right nor wrong. All should be led by the Spirit and do every religious practice as thanksgiving to God.

Some churches may choose an evangelical focus whilst others feel it more important to disciple believers. Each should follow God's specific mandate for them and respect the personality of their neighbouring denominations. Then, together, they will fit seamlessly into God's great, wide plan for humankind. Individuals within churches are obligated to extend grace and freedom to fellow believers – and their leaders – as a grateful and graceful reflection of Christ's extreme measure of love toward us. Celebrate – and don't restrict - the God-created diversity within His Body.

## *"In All Things, Charity"*

Finally, whether people believe what we believe or not, whether they agree with our code of conduct or not, treat ALL with love and respect. "Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples." (John 13:34-35MSG)

In everything, overflow with love. Speak (and hold to) the truth but do it in love. As an individual believer and as a church body - forgetting self; show love to everyone no matter their beliefs or behaviour. Love should be the dominant colour of our every day, without falter or prejudice. In ALL things, charity.

Tamryn is the editor of The Centre magazine. She is married to Buck and has two children.

### Heart Dynamics



Ever wondered why you do some of the things you do?

Ever tried to change them unsuccessfully?

We live far more from our hearts than our intellect.

Solomon said "as a man thinks in his heart so is he"; and again he said we should "guard your heart with all diligence for out of it flow the issues of life."

Do you know how to deal with your heart? How to find what is in there and what to do about it?

Heart Dynamics is an intense Biblical Based weekend to help you find the things in your heart that are holding you back in your growth and help you deal with them.

For more information please call **Renewal Fellowship** on 309094



*When we work together in love & unity, we can expect heaven's help*  
- Linda K Burton

KENSIE|KATE



# Becoming One: The Backbone of Marriage

By Leonard Makoni

**When you both publicly and loudly proclaimed your love for each other, there was great jubilation as you gazed into each other's eyes and you moved from involvement to commitment. It was truly a dream come true.**

Yet for most couples, not too far into the marriage, a sense of loneliness and isolation begins to creep in. Two lovers begin to sleep side by side in the same bed, but spend the night in two different spaces of hurt and pain. Long hours of deep meaningful connection, even on sweet nothings, have been replaced by intermittent clichéd conversations about daily responsibilities. For many a couple, there is no memory of laughter with a spouse. If there are any pleasantries to be observed, it's to meet societal expectations or fulfill parental duties. The traits that convinced a couple that they belong to each other seem to have turned into irreconcilable differences that are nothing but an emotional wall.

If this characterises your marriage, it means you are not 'one' as God deigned for

marriage. God's Word says, "Let a man leave his father and mother and be united to his wife." (Genesis 2:24)

**A marriage without unity is like a person without a backbone.**

Unity in marriage is when two people commit to become one (body, soul and spirit) under God for life. To be one does not mean your individuality is done away with. Unity in marriage is not uniformity. In marriage unity in purpose, values and goals for life are buoyed by intrinsic differences in personality, character and stature that you each bring to the marriage.

When there is oneness in a marriage, each person makes necessary adjustments to enable effective 'coupling' which allows

the marriage to fulfill its purpose. Unity in marriage at times looks like a pair of scissors: it has two blades which seem different yet equal and interdependent. The differences of the blades allow for rhythmic movement for effective cutting.

The differences in personality, preferences (food, fashion, friends, leisure activities), dreams, backgrounds, methods of raising children and even when to sleep or wake up are just differences, not wrongs. They are in fact needed to create a team that is best suited for your marriage.

Understanding our differences seems to be God's way of calling us to depend on Him alone.

Just like an active athlete with a strong backbone, a couple with unquestionable



unity can face many burdens that life might throw at them. They sure will have strain, pain and dents but they will not be pulverized by challenges and trials of life.

**So how do we attain this unity?**

Firstly, it comes from a firm commitment to our spouse. "Be united to your wife" is talking primarily about the commitment side of marriage. The Hebrew definition of **be united to** is **cling to, glue to, or adhere to**. So, we could translate it, "For this reason a man shall... be glued to his wife."

This is an act of the will and is not conditional upon feelings but rather based upon a decision. We commit ourselves to being one and unity by this act of the will. It must be full and unwavering. The marriage is then a permanent and secure union.

This commitment is expressed in the traditional vows, "I take you to be my wife, to love and to cherish, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until we are parted by death."

This commitment is a commitment to love our spouse. That is, to act in a way that is in the best interests of our spouse, no matter

what we feel. It is a commitment to aim to meet his/her needs, to live and act with him/her in mind. This is to be 'other-orientated'.

This commitment has an element of permanence. No matter what, God wants

**JUST LIKE  
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us to try to keep our marriages intact. If there has been wrong done, great hurt and many wounds caused, we know that God can and does heal. He can bring life from death and restore what has broken down.

Because the back door of divorce is closed, any difficulties that arise are worked through. God's plan and purpose is that, in

the marriage relationship, we as individuals come to see what is in our hearts and experience His grace and power in changing us personally.

Being united is saying, "No matter what happens, nothing is going to separate us, we are going to make this thing work."

During the bad times in our marriage, when there are only negative feelings, it is this commitment that keeps us going. If we based everything on how we felt, how many of us would be married today?

Another important factor in being united in marriage is that God Himself glues us together, not a priest, not we ourselves. "What God has joined together let man not separate." (Matthew 18:6)

This commitment is both a decision and an ongoing process. It's not just something we did five, ten, fifteen or twenty years ago. It is a dynamic part of our marriage relationship. There needs to be ongoing commitment to work things out and the refusal to allow difficulties to drive a wedge between us. There are bound to be times when we disappoint and hurt each other - but it's the way we react when these things happen, that will determine whether the glue gets stronger or weaker.

It is in those very hard times that this commitment is so vital. This is the most important time to reaffirm this commitment. This is the time to tell your partner, "I am totally committed to you and our marriage and I will never leave you. We are, through God's grace and strength, going to make this thing work."

This provides the secure foundation on which this process of facing and working through the difficulties can be tackled.

Unity in marriage magnifies the mystery of marriage and the Mastery of God the Creator. It's not about how well we understand this unity, it's how much we allow God to make us ONE in Him for His purposes. Unity in marriage enables a couple to withstand the external forces that so easily destroy the beauty and joy of marriage. God is part of your marriage and He intends to keep you united. Unity in marriage under God will enable passion, companionship and intimacy to sustain a marriage in spite of the challenges of life. So strengthen your backbone!

Leonard is a counsellor at The Christian Counselling Centre and is a managing consultant with Transformation Team (Pvt) Ltd.

# The-Martha-Mummy Syndrome

By Nichola Stoole



One night, a couple of months ago, God woke me saying, "You need to write about the Martha-Mummy Syndrome. It's time to redeem motherhood."

I was taken aback because... well... I'm not a mother, so what right or qualifications do I possess to write about such an enormous and sensitive subject? I began to argue with God (never a wise move), telling Him He surely had the wrong person.

He responded by showing me a picture of many women helplessly caught in a fast-moving current that was carrying them rapidly downstream. Standing on the bank watching them flailing, He asked me, "Are you going to let them drown?"

So, I write this feeling very inadequate and well-aware that many may think I have no right to speak on the subject, but I also write humbly, in obedience to God, praying that somehow, someday God will use the words I pen to speak to you dear, exhausted mum who sometimes feels so trapped and alone as you negotiate the uncharted waters of mothering.

A Good Idea or a God-Idea?

"Have a child; it will be fun," they say. And indeed, it seems a very good idea. Images of oh-so-kissable, peacefully-sleeping babies fill our dreams as we add yet another baby name to the treasured piece of paper that we keep tucked away in anticipation.

Finally, the dream turns to reality and we marvel as a tiny human is placed in our arms. "How could such perfection come packaged in one so small?" we ask, the awe and wonder of this new life mellowed only slightly by the weightiness of realising this little one is our responsibility from this day forth.

The cards and flowers flood in. But then it's the middle of the night and the whole world is asleep but you... and your sweet offspring -who won't stop crying and you haven't a clue why. Weary and emotional, suddenly this mothering thing doesn't seem like such a good idea after all.

Was it ever meant to be a good idea? Or, was it meant to be a God-idea? Does it make any difference either way? I think so. You



see a good idea can turn into a bad idea in a flash, but a God-idea is always a God-idea.

And so, I write to you dear, sleep-deprived mum to tell you, "Your little child who is part-angel and part-terror is, and always will be, God's best idea and you, yes YOU, are God's very best choice of exactly the mum your little one needs. If God has called you to motherhood then His grace is most certainly sufficient for every moment of this high calling, yes even those 'I-could-throttle-this-child' moments." Motherhood for you, IS God's idea.

"Well, that's great," you say, "but why then, is it so (blankety-blank) hard? Help, the owner's manual wasn't included with the package."

It doesn't make sense. Every new product comes with a set of instructions, often with pictures to make it easier to follow and yet this "priceless package" came with nothing! No easy four-step manual with a trouble shooting section at the back was dropped off by the stork. There is nothing to refer to when, for no rhyme or reason, your sweet, pig-tailed two-year-old morphs into a howling, thrashing monster in the middle of the supermarket and you're left with a ridiculous conundrum of whether to abandon the shop and deal with a starving husband later or persist with the shopping whilst EVERY shopper glares at you, their silent stare screaming your inadequacy as a mother. "It's just not fair and it's not right. There should be an owner's manual!" you sob.

Perhaps though, even this seemingly obvious omission points to a loving God. You see dear, desperate mum, the Manufacturer who designed and created your unique child never intended that you should go at this mothering thing alone. You were never meant to just slap on some lipstick and then stride into the day as if you had all the solutions neatly filed alphabetically for easy reference. You were meant to walk hand in hand with the Manufacturer, leaning continually on His wisdom, pulling from His perfect understanding of this child made in His image.

Which brings me to this thought -grab a floor cushion and fling that apron over your head.

Yes, I mean that. And yes, I see that sceptical 'Yeah right! That's going to happen,' look cross your face as you consider what kind of person would suggest something so pie-in-the-sky. You wouldn't be the first to think the idea ludicrous.

Centuries ago a woman called Martha came complaining to Jesus about her heavy workload and the fact that her sister, Mary, was doing nothing to help and worse yet, was just sitting at Jesus' feet. Her hopes of commiseration were swiftly dashed when Jesus lovingly responded, "Martha, my beloved Martha. Why are you upset and troubled, pulled away by all these distractions? Are they really that important? Mary has discovered the one thing most important by choosing the most beautiful place of sitting at my feet. She is undistracted, and I won't take this privilege from her." (Luke 10:41-42 TPT)

It may seem totally counter-intuitive but dear, busy mum, sitting at Jesus' feet is exactly what you AND your children need you to do... REGULARLY.

Susanna Wesley, mother of John and Charles - and eight other children, valued her time with God so much so that, in the absence of any opportunity for solitude, she resorted to flinging her apron over her head. Her children learnt when their Mother had her apron over her head she was spending time with God and wasn't to be interrupted.

What do you, dear mum, need to do to build in time alone with God? Time that's non-negotiable, so that you cope AND your kids can see, know and learn the importance of time spent with Him? Your life and the wellbeing of your children depend on it.

Nichola oversees the children's ministry at Harvest Church. She is passionate about seeing the Church of God rise up and walk into the fullness of life that Jesus gives.

**HELP,  
THE OWNER'S MANUAL  
WASN'T INCLUDED  
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PACKAGE**

# Supportive or Pushy?

By Debbie Wetzlar

As a Coach, many of the problems I have had to deal with stem from the parents, but from the outset I want to emphasise that parental involvement in a child's sporting career is vital - parents have a significant influence on their child's sporting career. However much depends on how a parent chooses to be involved and to show support.



## 10 WAYS TO BE THE BEST SPORT PARENT YOU CAN

### 1. Emphasise improved skill ability rather than competitive ranking

Mastering a sport skill can be totally controlled by the athlete, whereas the number of wins and losses are mostly outside an athlete's control. I have noticed from years of coaching that if a child is only motivated by position or ranking they quickly become demoralized and give up the sport as soon as they are no longer winning or they don't make a team. If they are motivated by setting goals for self-improvement, those which are performance based and not outcome based, they are more prepared to persist and train hard.

### 2. Lower the pressure to win

Competitive sports create the pressure to win. Tying a child's self-esteem to winning or losing diminishes the essence of who they are. A child should not feel less valuable or less loved when they lose. From a survey done 30 years ago, most kids reported that they hated the ride home after a game, because this was the time in the car when parents would crit the game and all the enjoyment of play was lost. In the same survey though the kids said what they loved most was when their parents used just 6 words, "I love to watch you play."

### 3. Allow the playing field to be a place to learn life skills

Firstly, the probability of achieving lasting fame and glory via sport is low. Approximately one in a thousand high school athletes become professional. Therefore, the sports field should be a safe place which aids the transition into adulthood and character development enough that whether they achieve professional status or not, they mature into decent adults. Many life-skills like how to work in a team, how to come under leadership or authority of another, self-discipline and playing by rules are learned on the sports field. Mistakes, disappointments and failure are learning opportunities and create personal growth for children especially if they are supported and loved even when they fail. Parents, your response to these moments is very important!

Secondly, coaching involves 4 main areas that are all a very important part of a child's overall development. They are, technical skills, physical fitness, psychological outlook and social interaction. There is so much more to sport than anyone realizes and it is not actually in the end, all about winning the match on the day. It is sportsmanship, it is respect for the opposition, playing their best, working together, learning to lose. This is the reality of life.

### 4. Understanding the risks of failure is a huge support to your child in sport

Competition places the athlete on centre stage. Competing really is a willingness to chance failure. Failure is a reality, but not giving up is the key. Giving your best and being willing to fail is what athletics is all about.

### 5. Respect the differences between parental roles and coaching roles

A positive working relationship between coach and parent is first prize. I am a parent and a coach, so I understand both sides of the coin. My piece of advice to parents is trust the appointed coach, especially in front of your child and try not to

coach. A child will feel torn between the coach's or the parent's instructions and know that he will disappoint one or the other. A parent's positive support towards the coach encourages the child's confidence in the coach which builds a great trust relationship between coach and child. I think a child performs better knowing his parent is on the journey with them and the coach has his best interests at heart.

### 6. Negative emotions spring up; support by thinking positively

Few athletes wish to perform poorly and negative reactions to poor performance only add to an athlete's pressures. Athletes choke, even the best of them. This is the time for caring and understanding, not being judgmental or critical.

Extrinsic motivation (pressure from outside of the child) is negative, so is nagging and so is bribing. These behaviours remove the fun from sport and often result in stress and burn out and even giving up. The use of guilt is also an extrinsic motivator, with statements designed to manipulate the child to behave the way the parent desires. The best motivator is intrinsic or internal motivation. This child has ownership of what he wants to achieve, and this has nothing to do with what his parent wants.

### 7. Recognize and understand expressions of insecurity

Youngsters who express high anxiety, more often than not, have parents who are insensitive to their symptoms. Supportive parents realize that such expressions are normal and are a call for emotional support. Supportive parents remind them they have trained hard and are well prepared and they can't do better than their best and that is good enough.

### 8. Be empathetic

Empathy is an understanding of what the child is feeling and an awareness of the pressures and demands that sport places on the athlete. Empathy is not sympathy but, rather, a true understanding that the task ahead is difficult.

### 9. Be your child's biggest fan

Be positive and supportive; excited for your child's achievements as you will know what it has taken to achieve the results in terms of training and sacrifice, to achieve the result.

### 10. Get involved

Most sports in Zimbabwe are run by volunteers and there are so many options to get involved. Your expertise can make such a difference to the club or team and should be done with dignity and a genuine desire to help.

### PLEASE NOTE:

I have done research and have taken information from \*Dr Rob Bell, a sports psychologist and quoted some of \*Wayne Goldsmith's work, a swimming coach in Australia. I have also collated various bit of info and added my experience.



Debbie is married to Rafe, they have four adult children. She runs a swim school called Aquakidz and attends Harvest Christian Fellowship.



# You've Got Spirit? No, You Don't!

By Tim Middleton

"We've got spirit; yes, we do! We've got spirit; how about you?" We have all heard such challenges at inter-school events, teasing, taunting, goading, boasting. "We have got amazing school spirit", is the claim. The evidence put forward for such a claim is that we are singing such a ditty and it is further underlined if the other school does not respond. We claim school spirit based on the fact that we are all there, making a lot of noise; we are all standing, swaying, arm in arm; everyone laughing and happy. We've got spirit, yes, we do! And the more we say it, the louder we shout it, the more we will believe it!

But is that school spirit?

In the New Testament, the apostle John gives his readers a very strong warning, "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they are from God because many false prophets have gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1)

We would do well to test this spirit called school spirit.

A school cannot claim to have school spirit on the simple premise that the whole school is supporting the first team or screaming war cries at a Speech Night. That is simply like the froth on the top of a cup of cappuccino – blow on it and it is gone; the froth is not what you bought the cappuccino for.

Such spirit is froth, forced and false; it is compulsory for the pupils to attend the fixture and shout and they are punished if they don't. They are not watching the sport or listening to the words, but simply going along with the requirements for the sake of peace and quiet. Many of the pupils are often not aware of the score nor even really care about it. Furthermore, if a school has real school spirit, the whole school, including the First Team, would be out watching the Second Team, or the Under 15's or the Fillies or Colts, not just the First Team. School spirit should be spontaneous, natural and personal, not rehearsed and generated.

In truth, what is described as school spirit is actually often no more than a playful spirit. It is young people enjoying being together and messing around with friends, making a lot of noise

which they are not usually allowed to do; it just happens to be at school and they are wearing school uniform. They may jump up on stage and chant the war cry as it is a chance to show off and be the centre of attention, breaking free from rigid timetables and discipline. It is just people having a good time. It can also at times be plain downright rude, ill-disciplined and insensitive.

What happens when the froth of noisy demonstrations of support is blown away? Can we still claim that we have wonderful school spirit when pupils lie to get out of trouble (and therefore get others into trouble), keep a code of silence, even when they know wrong things are being done, bully other pupils, maintain a pecking order, damage the school's reputation by their behaviour, criticise teachers, laugh at the failings of others, or are rude to visitors? Is any of that school spirit?

When we talk of school spirit, we are generally speaking of a spirit of unity, of togetherness, of common purpose. A spirit of unity though is really only achieved through a unity of the Spirit, when we allow the Holy Spirit to work equally in each of us. Such spirit is not worked up but God-given, as Paul identifies in Romans: 15:5, "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ".

If we want school spirit, we need to follow Jesus Christ and glorify God. In other words, it will come through humility and gentleness, not arrogance and bravado. It will come through bearing each other's burdens and through not letting the right hand know the good that the left hand is doing. Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister in the 1980s, once said that, "Being powerful is like

being a lady; if you have to tell people you are, you are not." So, it follows that if we have to tell people we have school spirit, we do not have it.

In Ephesians 4:3 Paul urges us to, "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to one hope when you were called."

We all have a responsibility, firstly, to achieve unity and secondly, to keep it, not through lots of noise but through the bond of peace, where all pupils are at peace and are not pressurised into doing things they would not normally do. The real school spirit has perspective, not rose-tinted glasses; it has principles not slogans. It keeps going even in defeat and disappointment and it thrives without boasting or taunting. It exudes compassion more than conviction. It does not need affirmation or congratulation. It stands up to criticism and stays way after the end. It has as its hallmarks: dignity, integrity, humility. It focuses on integration, not initiation.

What we think is school spirit is often no more than a haughty or naughty spirit. What we need is unity, where all pupils delight to work together in all areas of school life, where staff and pupils are united in their vision and mission. We do not need to tell or show everyone we have spirit; we do not need to ask if others they have spirit. It is not school spirit that we need, but the school of the Holy Spirit. Yes, we do!

Tim Middleton is the CEO of The Association of Trust Schools.



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1 Church 2 Sites 5 Meetings

**River of Life Greystone Park**  
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9:30am (Eng) 12:00pm (Shona)  
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# The Effective Teacher for Africa Today

By Laura Mautsa

The world is changing fast and furiously! Changes in the global, national and local context have implications on education. Education is the key to the transformation of individuals, families, communities and nations. It is at the heart of the transmission of knowledge, values and skills to help this and the next generation to live meaningfully and purposefully. The goal of education - to prepare learners to live and contribute meaningfully in their society - remains the same even though times may change. The effective teacher then is one who understands the Past, the Present and the Future and is able to harness from each lessons that make one relevant in giving learners life skills. In addition, the effective teacher, anchored in a strong sense of identity, embraces his own strengths and developmental areas and has a passion driven by a vision beyond his own comfort and survival. Like the sons of Issachar in the Bible he must understand the times and stay relevant. This article looks at the significance of the past the present and the future for the effective teacher.

## He understands the Past and is not trapped in it

The past in education speaks of goals that are not necessarily the same today. The effective teacher celebrates the past in order to learn and grow from it. Some examples are:

- Industrialisation - focused on education for the manufacturing assembly lines;
- African Education systems - focused on preparing the person for community life;
- Colonialism - focused on workers to serve the colonial administrations;
- Modernity and post modernism largely emphasise self at the centre of a person's thinking.

## He is grounded in the present and making an impact

The effective teacher understands that change begins with himself and is committed to personal transformation and growth: spiritually, physically, mentally, and socially. These teachers are dedicated to research and trying out different things, always looking out for new sites to work with. They are competent and on the cutting edge in relation to their subject areas. They seek to remain relevant and ask the question: what are the changes that we see in education today and how can we position ourselves to contribute and be productive?

Such changes include:

1. Technology
2. Globalisation
3. Mobility
4. Diversity and increase in areas of specialisation
5. Education seen as a business

## The effective teacher is equipped to teach in the 21 Century

So what does it mean to teach in the 21 century? It used to be that teachers were held in high esteem as they provided content, facts and formulae for the student to learn. However, today, students can get all that information and more from the internet, Twitter, cell phones, YouTube, Bing, Facebook, Wikipedia at the push of a button. Students can find anything, anywhere and anytime! Teachers previously had the theories, the research and the stories. That is now a thing of the past. What does it take to be an effective teacher in this day and age of massive accessible knowledge, and a new calibre of student, free yet needing direction and skills?

It is important to ask the right questions. It is also important to understand the 21st Century learner. Even though students may have all the information, if they do not have the skills to validate, analyse, interpret, leverage, communicate and share information, then the effective teacher should have all these skills and be able to equip learners with them.

Apart from equipping learners with the above mentioned skills, the effective teacher guides the learners to have moral standards that help them to harness and integrate the information that they get. This enables them to choose whom they learn from and for what purposes. Are the learners aware of where and how they get their values? Are they aware of the values that they espouse? Do they like those values? Do they like who they are becoming? For example, how do they handle pirating, plagiarism, slander, copyright policies? What price tag do they put on confidentiality? Who teaches them professionalism?

These changes mean that for teaching to be effective, the teacher needs to rethink the tools used and the types of problems students are asked to solve. These may include facilitating discussion about reliable sources using Wikipedia, podcasts and

different search engines. It may also include helping students publish and evaluate work using applications like Scratch, Kodu game lab, Ning, and others. Students can collaborate and form working groups using Skype, Facebook, Twitter and SkyDrive to name a few. The effective teacher is both proficient in the content of his subject area, as well as in using tools that enhance the learning process. There is also value in learning from online classrooms.

## He is inspired for the future and has freedom to dream for self and for others

The effective teacher is continually learning, and is able to identify and learn a new skill to be more effective in the 21st century. There is an appreciation for working with others and a willingness to ask what others have found successful.

These teachers keep a future orientation by integrating innovation and creativity in their learning processes. They model and help their learners to keep high moral and professional values and standards.

**THE EFFECTIVE TEACHER HAS A CLEAR SENSE OF IDENTITY, WITH A STABLE SPIRITUAL, PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND SOCIAL SELFHOOD**

What are our intentional research and development initiatives, as nations, as schools? These initiatives may require risk taking that can lead to conflict. The effective teacher should be courageous enough to stand up and follow through on an issue they think may be critical to pursue in the educational process.

No matter what content, skills or values are taught, the objective is to produce people that are well adjusted, knowledgeable and skilled to constructively live and contribute to society. This is what will give teachers distinction, progress, and freedom to excel.

The effective teacher has a clear sense of identity, with a stable spiritual, physical, mental and social selfhood that is confident to equip and mentor learners to aim for their highest potential. The effective teacher understands the past and is not trapped by it, embraces the present and seeks to be relevant, and reaches out with a compelling vision for the future that inspires learners to aspire to great things for our nations of Africa. Change can be a big bang, but for most part it starts with the small things, done well. Lastly, the effective teacher collaborates and synergises with others at every step, and together they are stronger, better and most effective.

Laura and her husband, Lloyd, work with The Navigators and International Leaders Foundation. They have three children



# The Centre News

## Training Centre

At last! We are so grateful – the Training Centre (phase 1) has been completed. We now have a lovely facility we can use for those events with more than 30 participants (the capacity of our seminar room in the house). The Intermediate Counselling Course participants used it to write their exams and we held a Pastors' Breakfast at the end of July as well as a Basic Counselling Course in mid-August. We still have some finishing touches to do such as the kitchen fittings, audio equipment, projector, outside lights and of course, Adie is landscaping the garden. But we are so pleased as it is now operational.

As well as using it for our own events, we will be hiring the facility out to businesses and other organisations. We will be offering a package deal which includes lunches and teas. Please contact us on 04-744580 or 0773 547 544 if you are interested in using the facility.



## Seminars

We regularly run Marriage, Parenting and Personal Growth seminars. One of the topics on our last Marriage day was Building Trust. Leonard and Fiona Makoni (the facilitators) conducted some useful exercises with the couples to help them experience the vulnerability that a lack of trust brings.

We are now offering to run seminars for individual churches at our new Conference facility. Churches may want to combine with other local congregations within their denomination or other churches with which they relate. This way we can meet the needs that are apparent for each church.



## Basic and Intermediate Counselling Courses

One of the main aspects of the Counselling Centre's work is to train counsellors. We are privileged to serve the Lord as He "brings beauty from ashes, gladness from mourning, praise in the place of despair" and as He "builds and restores those who have come from devastated places." (Isaiah 61:3,4)

Our goal is to equip counsellors with the skills and knowledge to come alongside others to facilitate the Lord's restoring work in them. The Basic and Intermediate Course are part of this process. Last term, we ran two Basic Courses and an Intermediate Course. Those who have completed the Basic and Intermediate Courses can then apply to do the Advanced Counselling Course. Our counsellors are selected from successful graduates of the Advanced Course. However, we also train those who want to counsel in their churches, schools, work places etc. If you are interested in attending these courses please do contact the Centre.



## Ladies' Events

The Counselling Centre regularly holds breakfasts and teas specifically for ladies. It provides an opportunity for ladies to get together, have some fun and address and discuss issues that are relevant and so often not talked about! So, for example, most recently, the topic of fear and anxiety was addressed.





# Leadership in Business

By Tony Roberts

The business world is going through changes in its thinking of what it means to be a leader and what it means to be a manager. Traditionally, a manager has been viewed as the person who heads up an organisation with a kind of command and control approach, "I am in charge and everyone listens to me," or, "I issue instructions and they are to be followed."

This approach is very much the carrot and stick approach. "I will reward you for good behaviour and you will suffer in some way if you don't do as I say."

This is not leadership in the true sense. This is just about who is highest in the organisational chart. I remember Bill Hybels saying, "Leadership as is about moving people from A to B. It is about having a vision of where you want the organisation to go and inviting the people in the organisation to come on the journey with you. It's about inspiring them to follow you, not commanding them to do so."

In the movie, *Brave Heart*, there is a scene where the Scottish rag tag army faces an organised British army. William Wallace, their leader, rides up and down the ranks of men, who could see the British army on the other side of the battle field and were certainly starting to feel intimidated.

BUT as he rides up and down, he inspires them to follow him into battle. You watch them rush down this hill into battle with such passion, fuelled by his encouragement. He could have ordered them to charge but I doubt he would have had the same success on the battle field.

## Inspire with Vision

Leadership is about inspiring others to do more, **willingly**, than you would ever get them to do by ordering or instructing.

I listened to a podcast by Andy Stanley recently, (thoroughly recommended) where he interviewed Horst Schulze, the former President of Ritz Carlton Hotel group. He is an inspirational leader, who grew Ritz Carlton into a top rate hotel group. Horst Schulze talked so much about getting all staff, from cleaners and dish washers up to managers, to adopt and follow his vision for the organisation.

The vision has to be clear, of course and understood by all staff, at all levels. They need to understand this vision and what part they play, no matter how insignificant it might seem. As they see how their role contributes to the overall success of the vision, they are inspired to give of their best to the organisation.

## Display Empathy

Horst Schulze also talks about the fact that people are not the same as equipment. They should never be thought of as some sort of tool to get the job done but as a valued human being, sharing the same challenges that we all face in living our daily lives. This does not mean that Horst Schulze is a weak leader. He expects his staff to bring 100% commitment to work, every day and he has strict policies in terms of the standards and work performance. He respects the person whilst expecting a strong work ethic.

Liz Ryan wrote an article for Forbes magazine on 27 March 2016. (She writes for Forbes.com and LinkedIn and has also written a few books). One of her sentences jumped out at me, "Today we know that empathetic, trust-based human leadership is not only the most effective way to lead a team but also the most profitable way to run a company."

Recently I went to a leadership seminar, that was held by Leadstrong, a South African based leadership training company. The facilitators said that empathy was one of the leading traits that employers are looking for when hiring managers. Whilst degrees and technical expertise are often

necessary, companies that are looking for leaders of teams, realise that those degrees won't necessarily help them be effective leaders.

Being empathetic does not mean you are letting people do a poor job but rather that you are appreciative of their strengths and understanding of their weaknesses, treating them with dignity as fellow human beings. It's realising that we will all stand before the Lord one day. When we do stand there, our seniority in a company will make no difference! The world looks at the outward appearance but the Lord looks at the heart.

## Empower Your Subordinates

In another Andy Stanley podcast, he talked about leadership and empowerment. All of us have gifts or strengths but we also have weaknesses. Traditionally, leaders were encouraged to work hard on improving their weaknesses and were expected to be good at everything. Some leaders also tend to believe they should make all decisions as if ONLY they are capable. Truth be told, many subordinates can make better decisions in certain areas, where the leader may be weak. Andy Stanley said he realised how it was better for him, as a leader, to empower others to do the work he was not good at, so he could concentrate on those areas in which he was best suited. Leaders often feel threatened by thinking their junior is better at something than they are. However, for an organisation to grow, leaders need to be able to let go of the day-to-day work, so they can concentrate on providing the necessary inspirational leadership. I loved one particular statement Andy Stanley made, "The LESS he does as a leader, the MORE he accomplishes!"

When we work in our area of gifting and passion, we get much more done in a shorter period of time.

We have a great example of an inspirational, empathetic leader in Jesus. How he inspired that small group of men to take the Gospel to all nations! As we look into His life, we see a leader who was empathetic towards His disciples and who encouraged them to do greater things than they could have thought possible. He inspired them! Let us do likewise in any position of leadership we may have.

Tony is a Trustee of the Christian Counselling Centre.

**SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES**  
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 SECOND SERVICE: 9:15AM  
 THIRD SERVICE: 11:30AM

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# The Yellow Bus Project

By Vikki Drury

Almost a decade ago, or even longer, God planted a seed in my heart. Gradually it grew and developed and finally this year 2017, the Yellow Bus project was born.

Basically, this project hopes to have mobile units that go out into the rural schools carrying resources to help teachers stationed in faraway places. The vision is that the mobile units will be yellow buses. Why? I have no idea, but when I think about the project, that is what I see!

The project has had such a long gestation period because, until the end of the first term this year, I have been in full time employment. Last year I decided to resign and give all my attention to the Yellow Bus project. I approached The Ministry of Education and was given the steps I needed to take before they could deal with me on a professional level. I have had to form a Trust and provide a business proposal. All good conditions, because it meant that I have had to sit down and think through what it is that I hope to offer. It has been hard, and

sometimes discouraging, but steady progress has been made.

Right in the beginning, for once in my life, I laid my plans before the Lord and started keeping a prayer journal. God, just like the Bible says, has been amazingly faithful. The biggest breakthrough came when I was allowed to approach the District Officer in Chitungwiza and was allocated a pilot school, Marikopo Secondary School, which is about 20kms along the Seki Highway. It is considered to be peri-urban, and it is a Salvation Army school. The Headmaster and Deputy Head, Mr Madondo and Mr Motsi, have been very welcoming and helpful, which has made it easier to gather the information needed for the project and start implementing some of the ideas.

Towards the end of last term, my partner, Heidi Visagie, and an ex-student of mine,

Rebekah Cross and I set out for Marikopo. We were a little nervous because we did not know what to expect and how we would be received. We had to stop in at the District Office, where we met, quite unexpectedly, Mr Motsi. We gave him a lift to the school and were able to chat with him informally and sound out some of our ideas.

This good start was enhanced by the welcome we received from the staff. We gave out our questionnaire, were shown around the school and had a chat with the teachers and some of the pupils. We went away feeling a bit inadequate of the task ahead of us but also sure that we were on the right track.

Having reviewed the questionnaire, it was painfully obvious that the biggest problem facing the school was a lack of teaching materials. There are inadequate textbooks

and no library. The school did not always have an internet connection and teachers seemed unaware as to how to use the internet to their advantage. Although they had a fair amount of science equipment, the school had not been provided with chemicals so no experiments were being done. We now had something to work on.

Heidi and Rebekah came up with some experiments that can be done using every day substances, such as red cabbage! I, having mulled over the textbook problem, came up with the idea of creating a resource file. The **You** magazine has an education supplement and short, interesting and topical articles that I realised could be used to supplement the text books and provide both general knowledge and reading practice. So we all got to work and arranged to go out to Marikopo in the new term.

Heidi did an amazing series of experiments with a class of over 50 pupils. She demonstrated how the water from boiling a red cabbage can be used as an indicator and then demonstrated various reactions after adding household products like soap, vinegar, and baking powder. Heidi encouraged the pupils to come up to the

front of the class and help pour the liquids and generally participate. This technique then revealed some other areas of concern. The pupils' English fluency was poor, and they were not used to being asked to participate, a problem with large class sizes. As we were leaving a Maths teacher expressed a desire to include pupils in his lessons more, so we took up this challenge!

We realised that teacher training would be helpful, as teachers are not really trained to deal with the difficulties encountered in district schools. I was able to make contact with Rob Palmer, a volunteer teacher from England who was helping out at the Cross-Over school in Westgate. He was happy to come and share some ideas in the teaching of Maths, and Mrs McCullough also agreed to come and share fun number games that both teach and excite pupils about numbers. I brought along a nearly completed Resource File with lessons plans.

Once again, we felt that our visit had been appreciated and useful. Whilst at the school, we were asked to run a series of workshops for a cluster of schools in the area, and provide lunch for the 40 or so

participants. A tall order as we had no funding yet. However, I felt that this would be a good opportunity to spread the word about the Yellow Bus Trust, and garner some support from the District Office.

I handed the financial aspect of the lunch to the Lord, and got to planning. With the workshops scheduled for 4th August, I found a speaker. Amazingly, without soliciting funds, I was pledged sufficient monies to feed the participants. God is good!

The Yellow Bus Trust has been a huge leap of faith for me. I got out of the boat and am walking on water, metaphorically speaking. Occasionally, like Peter, I take my eyes off Jesus and sink a bit, but so far I have always rallied and have not drowned, or more importantly, got back into the boat!

If anyone has any old **You** magazines that they want to part with, they will be gladly received, as well as any resource that is relevant to the ZIMSEC syllabus. We move forward with God's grace and love.

Vikki is married to David and they have four adult children. Vikki enjoyed teaching teens for 27 years.

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# FIRST AID IN THE HOME

By Margi Grobbelaar

## Part 2



**LORD my God, I called to you for help, and you healed me.” (Psalm 30:2)**

## Choking

This is when the airway becomes blocked with an object and the patient is struggling or unable to breathe. If the patient cannot cough, cry or make a noise it is serious.

### Babies and Small Children:

Clear any objects from the mouth. Sit down and lay the baby face down on your thigh, with his head by your knee. Support his neck and head with one hand. Using the heel of the other hand, thump the patient five times between the shoulder blades. If this does not work, turn the baby over onto its back, still supporting the head and neck. Using two fingers press down sharply five times on the chest in the centre and in line with the arm pit. Repeat the two procedures if necessary until the blockage is cleared. After each procedure, check the mouth and clear of any object, or part thereof, that may be dislodged. If this fails, call an ambulance.

### Children and Adults:

Cough it out, slap it out, squeeze it out. Ask the patient to cough vigorously for a while. If this fails proceed to step two: stand behind the patient. Ask him or her to bend forward slightly. Whilst you support the upper body with one hand, with the heel of the other thump the back hard between the shoulder blades five times. If this fails, proceed to step three: this time use abdominal thrusts. Stand behind the patient. Put your arms around him to his front, make a fist with one hand and hold the fist with the other hand. Place the clenched fist in the middle of the body just below the ribcage and above the belly button. Now pull sharply upwards and inwards five times.

After each procedure check the mouth and remove any dislodged objects or parts thereof. If step three fails, repeat the steps until you are successful and if not, call an ambulance. Whilst waiting for the ambulance continue the first aid.

### If you are choking and alone with no one to assist you:

Stand in front of a wall and throw yourself back against it as hard as you can – in effect thumping yourself on the back. If you are outside where there is no wall, find some other object or fling yourself onto the ground, taking care not to cause yourself some other injury. Assume a position as if you are going to do a press-up: lie flat on your stomach on the floor with your hands beneath your shoulders. Straighten your arms so your upper body

is lifted up, resting on your toes (or knees if you are not strong enough.) From this position suddenly fling your arms up and out so that your chest hits the floor. Take care to lift your face so it doesn't hit the floor before your chest - your chest needs to take the impact. You are in effect recreating the abdominal thrusts. Text someone to call an ambulance.

## Poisoning

Poisons can be swallowed, inhaled, injected or absorbed through the skin. This includes alcohol poisoning, drug overdoses, food poisoning and carbon monoxide poisoning.

### There are five key symptoms:

- Nausea and vomiting (could be blood-stained)
- Cramping stomach pains
- A burning sensation in mouth and or stomach
- Partial loss of responsiveness
- Unconsciousness
- Seizures

## Swallowed Poison

Call an ambulance. Gather information - if the patient is conscious, ask what they have taken, how much and when. Look for evidence such as packaging or bottles. Check for breathing, pulse and level of response – position the patient in the recovery position so that the airways are open. NEVER induce vomiting. If the patient does vomit, collect a sample for the medical team for identifying the poison if necessary.

## Alcoholic Poisoning

### Symptoms:

- Strong smell of alcohol or evidence such as bottles or cans
- Confused or slurred speech
- Vomiting
- Reddened and moist face
- Deep noisy breathing
- Strong pounding pulse
- Unresponsiveness

If the person is unconscious he may have shallow breathing, a weak, rapid pulse and widened pupils that do not react to light

### To Treat:

- Keep warm
- Check for injuries, especially the head, and attend to if necessary
- Put in the recovery position
- Do not induce vomiting
- Get medical attention

## Food Poisoning

### Symptoms:

- Nausea and vomiting
- Stomach cramps
- Diarrhoea
- Headache
- Fever

### To Treat:

Dehydration is an issue, especially in children or the elderly, so administer as much fluid as possible. Oral rehydration salts are useful. A homemade recipe for them is 1 teaspoon salt, 6 teaspoons sugar, 1 litre (5 cups) of boiled, cooled water. If the patient does not improve or you suspect dehydration, seek medical attention.

## Drug Poisoning Overdose

### Symptoms:

- Stomach pain, nausea, vomiting
- Sleepiness and unresponsiveness
- Confused, delirious
- Excited, hyperactive
- Sweating
- Hands shaking
- Hallucinations – hearing voices or seeing things



- Unusually slow or fast pulse
- Unusually large or small pupils
- Needle marks or drug paraphernalia that indicate drug use

### To Treat:

Call an ambulance. Follow treatment for swallowed poison.

## Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

This most commonly occurs during a suicide attempt in a car or when there is a malfunctioning boiler or heater or a burning brazier in a confined space with no ventilation, such as a small room. There is no taste or smell to alert to the possibility of this poisoning.

### Symptoms:

- Headaches
- Confusion
- Feeling aggressive
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhoea

### Severe Poisoning:

- Skin is grey or blue in colour
- Breathing rapid and difficult
- Impaired level of responsiveness or unconscious

### To Treat:

Remove the patient from the source of fumes into fresh air. Encourage to breathe deeply. If necessary perform CPR. Call an ambulance.

Margi is a counsellor at The Christian Counselling Centre.





# Speech and Language Therapy

By Sihle Nyashanu

## Interview with Olwen Pate, who is a Speech and language Therapist with 30 years' experience.

**SN:** Olwen, what exactly is Speech and Language Therapy (SLT)?

**OP:** SLT comprises a range of approaches to assessment, diagnosis and intervention for those individuals who present with speech, language and communication delays and disorders as well as swallowing difficulties.

The aim of SLT is to address speech, language and communication disorders (SLCD) in order to reduce or resolve the impact of the SLCD on a child and to ensure that the child is able to communicate as well as possible within his/her ability.

Speech and language therapists are an integral part of the multi-disciplinary team that deals with eating and drinking difficulties which may arise, for example, as a result of a developmental disorder such as cerebral palsy. The aim of intervention is to support the child to achieve more typical swallowing patterns and/or to compensate for differences in this pattern.

**SN:** What do you mean by Speech, Language and Communication?

**OP:** It is important for SLTs to differentiate between each during assessment in order to identify the priorities for intervention. Typically, one is integral to the other, i.e. if a child's language development is delayed, it is likely that his/her speech production skills will be similarly affected and that the child will be less able to communicate effectively.

Speech production refers to the articulation of sounds, sounds in words and sentences – those with speech difficulties may not be able to accurately produce one or many sounds.

When SLTs speak about language, we refer in part to the ability to comprehend and use sentences of increasing length and complexity. Essentially, we want to know if, and ensure that, children can express themselves with meaning and understand the meaning of another.

**THE MANNER IN WHICH WE COMMUNICATE COMPRISES MANY ASPECTS AND INCLUDES BOTH VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL MEANS**

The manner in which we communicate, however, comprises many aspects and includes both verbal and non-verbal means. For example, in the event that a child experiences difficulty acquiring oral language, it may be that the only possible form of communication the child is able to engage in is that which is non-verbal, i.e. pointing to pictures to express themselves.

**SN:** I understand that you have collaborated with Safe Haven Zimbabwe in conducting parents' workshops countrywide and that within this you have educated on The Traffic Light System (TLS). What is this system?

**OP:** SLT is currently not provided within public services in Zimbabwe. In this context and in discussion with the psychiatrists at the child psychiatry clinic at Parienyatwa Hospital, the importance of reaching out to and providing support and training around SLCD to parents of children with disabilities was agreed.

I developed a course that trains others, to be involved in delivering parent workshops that facilitate parents to target the development of their child's speech, language and communication skills.

The TLS provides a means for professionals, who are not SLTs, and parents, to profile a child in terms of his/her play, interaction and communication, language comprehension and expressive language skills.

The TLS identifies behaviours in these areas that are atypical. Atypical, RED LIGHT behaviours are highly concerning to parents and professionals alike. AMBER LIGHT and GREEN LIGHT behaviours are also detailed on the TLS and represent more typical developments.

Once parents have identified where their child is on the TLS profile during the workshops, they are then more able to and are facilitated to plan what they can then do to support the development of their child's play, interaction and receptive and expressive language skills.

We have had some extraordinary moments in the workshops as parents have gained an insight into their child's development and consequently have committed to a daily goal of, for example, playing with their child in a specific way for 10 to 15 minutes, or dramatically increasing the language they use when interacting during daily activities.

**SN:** What practical tips can you give to parents or relatives of those who are affected?

**OP:** Ah, now we are talking! The TLS provides helpful tips as it profiles typical development to 5 years of age for normally developing children while allowing for the fact that not all children develop according to expectations for their age. The focus is given to meeting the child where they are currently and the TLS provides a way forward for parents for their children no matter what their ability or disorder.

There are many universal strategies that SLTs utilise during therapy and in guiding others who support the child to develop their speech, language and communication skills.

Play is highly significant in the development of children's language, cognitive and learning abilities and therefore is at the centre of numerous language enhancing approaches. Parents are usually astounded to learn that playing with their child daily has a marked positive effect on their child's language skills.

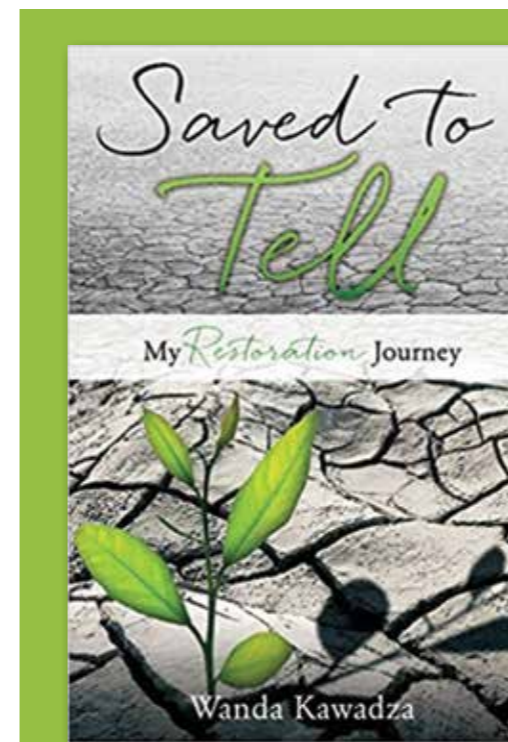
It is important to note that this language enhancing play is not about the parent leading the play or even framing the play as they would like it to be, but rather requires that the parent follows their child's lead by a process called (OWL) Observing, Waiting and Listening.

Once parents are able to follow their child's lead and interest, parents are likely to be more successful at providing an appropriate commentary on their child's actions and interests.

Another vital need for parents is the provision of an ongoing commentary about their child's life. Too often I find that parents and children sit in the same car or room and walk along the same street without a word spoken. It is essential that parents take on the role of their child's commentator and remember that if a word has not been said 100 times a day, it may not be acquired. This is particularly the case if your child is experiencing difficulties acquiring language and/or has a disability.

As a therapist, I have found that it can be difficult for parents to start where their child is at and move with their child, in healing, towards acceptance. When parents do come alongside their child with a disability, the journey is a lighter one and usually the outcome is far better for the child and the parents.

Sihle is married to Kuda and they have been blessed with two boys. She is studying for a Bachelor's in Special Education as she has a particular interest in disabilities



## Saved to Tell

Will God prove faithful in the tragedies and accidents of life?

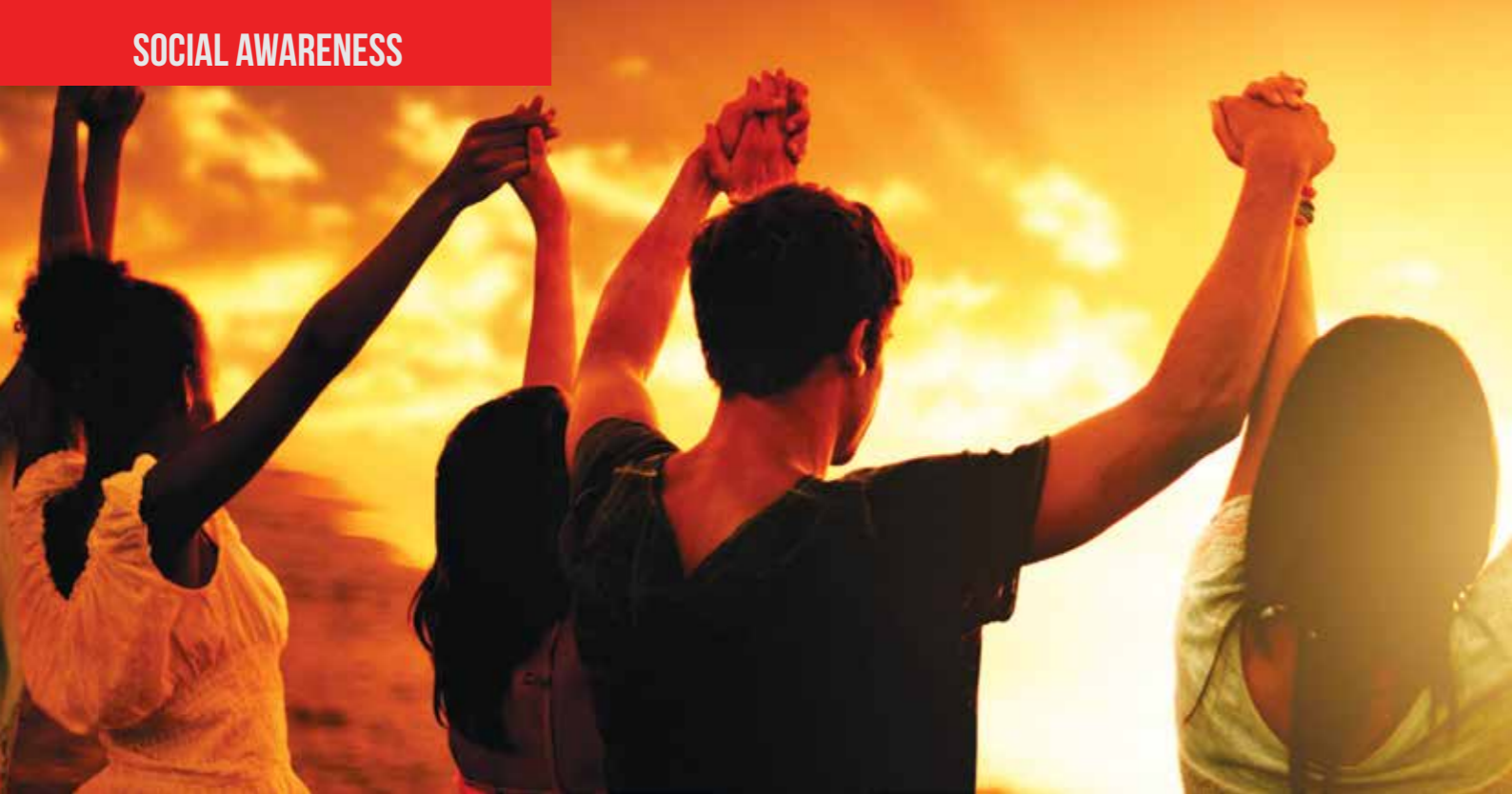
I am sure that you have asked yourself this question in the past. I know that I have. This world is not safe, and who knows what is waiting around the corner?

**Saved to Tell** is the personal testimony of Wanda Kawadza, and in it, she tells the story of her recovery from a terrible accident. It is a story - above all - about God's faithfulness to "work in all things for the good of those who love Him" (Rom. 8:28).

I was greatly encouraged by Wanda's story, for it is a story - articulately told - that places God in His rightful place as the Hero, giving Him the glory for a miraculous if long and difficult recovery. At every stage of Wanda's journey after the accident, God provided her with exactly what she needed to recover.

God truly is faithful to deliver us through the tragedies and accidents of life!

Book review by Ian Rea



# United We Stand in The Fight Against Sexual Abuse

By Hopolang Phoro

Every year, from 25 November to 10 December, the UN commemorates 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, an international campaign to challenge violence against women and girls. This presents a great opportunity for organisations and people to come together to rally around an important topic. This is one topic that needs to be discussed all the time as the more we talk about it, the more comfortable we become talking about it and thus find long lasting solutions. When it becomes a topic that we can discuss over lunch and dinner without being embarrassed about it, then real change will come about, as stated by Desmond Tutu . As it is, too many people are uncomfortable talking about gender-based violence, particularly rape, incest and sexual abuse because they are tough topics. Victims are not ready to share their experiences and are not encouraged to do so, lest they get labelled and singled out.

I pay tribute to organizations that are actively engaged, on a daily basis, every year, advocating and lobbying against gender-based violence. I particularly commend those that encourage victims of abuse to share their experiences and provide the necessary counselling and rehabilitation that victims need. Getting the victims to report that they have been abused is just one side of the coin and the other side is for them to be able to confidently share their experiences, understanding that they are victims and not the cause of the abuse. Much emphasis is on encouraging them to report but even with that,

**SEXUAL ABUSE IS THE LEAST SPOKEN ABOUT FORM OF ABUSE BUT ONE THAT IS RAMPANT IN OUR SCHOOLS, HOMES, AND COMMUNITIES**

still too many do not report, let alone share their stories. The painful part is that victims are not encouraged to talk in order to protect themselves and their families. Sadly, indirectly, the abuse gets justified as the norm and perpetrators are not brought to trial but are able to continue abusing other innocent people.

I would like to focus on sexual abuse, the least spoken about form of abuse but one that is rampant in our schools, homes, and communities. The full extent of it, I do not know, given that its occurrence is grossly underreported. According to the Zimbabwe National Baseline Survey on Life Experiences of Adolescents (NBSLEA, 2011), 2.2% of males and 13.9% of females aged 18-24 years have experienced physical and sexual violence. About 33% of females and 9% of males aged 18-24 indicated that they had experienced some form of sexual violence before reaching the age of 18. In the National Adolescent Fertility Study (2017), 54% of adolescent girls aged 10-14 years indicated that the main reason for their first sexual encounter was they were raped or forced. This reason ranked highest for this age cohort, unlike for the 15-17 and 18-19 cohort, where 24% cited, it just happened and 23%, indicated that they wanted to show love to their partner. These statistics and the anecdotal reports are worrying and highlight the need for continued action to fight against sexual violence targeted at our daughters.

Different strategies are in place ranging from policies and strategies - a National Gender Based Violence Strategy and a National Action Plan on Rape; an Inter-Ministerial Cabinet Committee on Rape and GBV is in place; shelters have been established; media campaigns are ongoing; counselling services are provided. And yet, victims continue not to report cases of abuse, particularly when violence is perpetrated by family members or intimate members (Government of Zimbabwe, 2017).

For this fight to succeed, requires several stakeholders and a multi-pronged approach. Government, civil society, private sector, schools, family members, victims and churches need to be coordinated and united, to reach a common goal of fighting against sexual abuse.

Much more is still required for the first part of the proverb, "united we stand, divided we fall" to hold. We have done well on addressing the easier aspects, what I call the hardware, but the softer aspects, the more difficult ones have not been addressed. Overcoming culture, traditions and societal practices, as well as to openly discuss taboo topics subjects amongst ourselves and with our daughters and sons is still not the norm, which makes sharing one's experience of abuse not easy. It needs courage, boldness and encouragement and the assurance that one will not be ostracized by parents, teachers, and family members. We need to encourage our children to talk about abuse, to speak out about it, teach them from an early age what is acceptable touching of their bodies and provide them with skills to fight abuse.

We all have a role to play and not just in December, but every day of our lives. Focused and targeted actions, such as:

- Encouraging discussions or conversations on sexual abuse.
- Learning about it and understanding the effects that it can have on our loved ones, especially if it is not spoken about.
- Supporting the shelters where abused women run to for refuge
- Creating safe spaces for our daughters
- Writing about the topic

These are just some of the suggestions to build a united stand against gender based violence.

The mantra and rhetoric must change, it cannot be business as usual. Daughters Destined for Destiny (DD4P), the charity that I have founded, is one such platform that aims to take action against sexual abuse (visit [www.DD4P.com](http://www.DD4P.com)).

Women's organizations must continue with the good work. In the churches, women and men must be given space to share testimonies. In the workplaces, issues of sexual harassment must be shared. In the schools, children must share their views on abuse through discussions. My appeal is: together, let's fight the scourge of sexual abuse that is silently damaging so many lives.

Hopolang is passionate about mentoring/coaching young women. She has founded a charity organization called Daughters Destined For Purpose (DD4P)

## One Pot Chicken Bake

### Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 800g chicken thigh fillets, trimmed, cut into 3cm pieces
- 2 spring onions, thickly sliced
- 4 middle bacon rashers, trimmed, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 3 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves
- 1 1/2 tablespoons plain flour
- 1 1/4 cups salt-reduced chicken stock
- 1/2 cup frozen peas
- 1/2 cup thickened cream
- 700g mashed potato
- 30g butter, melted

### Method

Heat oil in a 22cm round (base) flameproof frying pan over medium-high heat. Cook chicken, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes or until browned all over. Transfer to a bowl. Add white section of onion and bacon to same pan. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 4 minutes or until bacon is browned. Add garlic and thyme. Cook for 30 seconds or until fragrant. Sprinkle over flour. Stir to combine. Gradually add stock, stirring constantly, until mixture bubbles and thickens. Reduce heat to medium-low. Return chicken to pan. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Add peas and remaining onion. Cook for 2 minutes or until peas are just tender. Stir in cream. Preheat grill to high. Place mashed potato in a large piping bag fitted with a 1.8cm fluted nozzle. Pipe rosettes of potato onto chicken mixture. Gently brush potato with butter. Place under grill. Grill for 2 to 3 minutes or until potato is golden. Serve pie with salad leaves.





By Chrissie Edden

Nehemiah was a cupbearer for the King of Persia. He was Jewish and loved God. One day when he was serving the King, the King noticed that Nehemiah looked very sad. The King asked him why. Nehemiah told the King that he had just heard that Jerusalem was in ruins and that the walls around Jerusalem were broken down. The King let Nehemiah go to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls. He sent soldiers to protect Nehemiah and a letter giving him permission to get wood from the forest.



When Nehemiah saw Jerusalem he was heartbroken. So he called all the people and said "Let's build the wall together." The people



gladly went to work. While Nehemiah and his workers rebuilt the city, enemies came and made fun of them. The enemies wanted to kill the workers and knock down the wall. But Nehemiah encouraged the workers. "Don't be afraid, God will fight for us!" Half of the workers

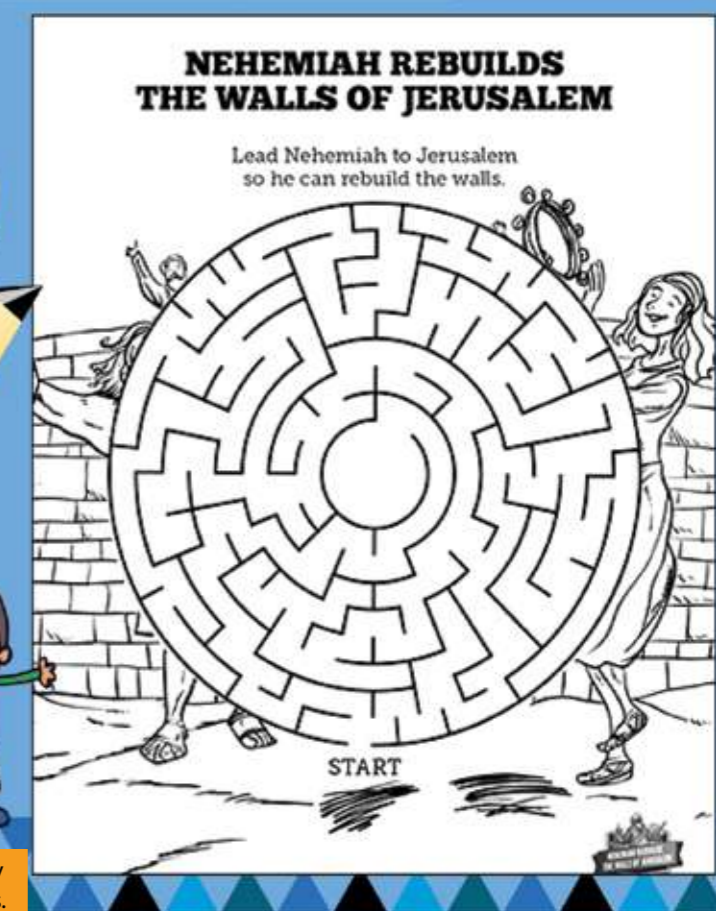
worked on the wall while the other half stood guard.

When the wall was finished the enemies gave up and went away. Everyone knew that God had helped the people rebuild the wall. Nehemiah gathered all the people together to celebrate and the Priest read the Word of God to them.

It is amazing what can be achieved when God's people work together in



Colour in the picture!



Chrissie is married to Dave and they have three children. They have moved to England to start the next chapter in their lives.



# Hannah's Story

By Sas Kirk

Hannah's story is a fine introduction to the life of Samuel, one of Israel's most dynamic prophets.

*The first two chapters of the book of Samuel tell of Hannah's pain of barrenness and her desperate plea to God in the temple at Shiloh. Then, the author relates Hannah's response to God's blessing of a son. She dedicates him from an early age to return to the Temple to serve the Lord. In essence, she gives up the joyful experience of raising her son and watching his childhood develop into youth because she recognizes his greater calling. Her song, which is found in chapter two, has been termed the Old Testament Magnificat and it certainly bears resemblance to Mary's offer of adoration to a holy God who treats us with undeserved compassion. The following is my fantasy of what the expression of that song cost Hannah.*

Elkanah watched as the caravan of travellers disappeared over the first dip of the road that wended its way South. He closed his eyes and breathed in deeply as if to gird himself for what lay ahead. Turning to the agonizingly tender tableau before him, he spoke, "It is time, Hannah. The others are heading home. We must leave."

In the soft shadows of the doorway to the entrance of the temple, the gentle murmuring of the woman stopped and the silence that descended over the family of three hung in dread suspense. Then Hannah shook herself and spoke briskly, "Come, young man. You must bid your

parents a proper farewell, like all strong warriors do. You must show us how fine and able you are."

Her mouth curved in a smile as she purposefully placed her son before her, but Elkanah knew the cost of the smile and saw the tightly held posture as she forced her brisk tone and brusque actions. Obediently, the 3 year old stood tall, hands ramrod by his side, as if to confirm that indeed, he was a warrior and capable of any great deed their mighty Jehovah might require of him. His eyes were solemn but dry as he looked up at his parents and it took every ounce of her strength for Hannah not to scoop him back into her arms and run down the road with him, back to their home in Ramah, back to the house and yard and neighbours that they knew, back to the joy that was their life since this, her one and only child, had burst into their world.

As he saw her hesitation, Elkanah reached out and gently touched her. His low murmur reached her ears only, "It's not too late. Our exalted God would understand. We could take him back, maybe bring him when he is older."

Hannah froze and paused, then shuddered once and took a deep breath. Turning to face her son fully, she placed her hands about his shoulders, stooped to kiss the

top of his head, then swung in a graceful and purposeful arch away from him, her stride long and determined. Elkanah embraced his son tightly. His murmured blessing caressed his small, earnest body. "You are my son. I am very pleased with you."

Then he too swung away and hurried after Hannah's receding figure. The little boy watched his parents walk swiftly away, then turned to the silent figure who had been present in the doorway of the temple. "I am ready, sir. What is it that our Mighty Jehovah requires of me?"

Eli smiled, shaking his head in wonder at the obedient readiness of one so young, and, taking his hand, he led Samuel, Israel's youngest prophet, through the doorway of his new home.

After two hours of relentless walking, without a word spoken between them, Elkanah was deeply concerned. Hannah's eyes had never left the horizon before them. She had not said a word, nor shed a tear. It was as if she had drawn into herself and wrapped her pain so tightly around herself that the constriction made her movements forced and jerky. Yet she drove herself on, heading for their empty home, away from the familiar warmth that was her son. They crested one of the rising slopes that girded their Ephraim hills. At its peak stood the familiar marker, whose arm pointed forward to the south

east, the final stretch of their return journey. Another arm pointed back the way they had come, and it was the sight of the etched name 'Shiloh' that finally pierced Hannah's rigid veneer.

With a cry she fell at the foot of the coarse wooden post and hugged its base desperately while sobs shook her. She pressed herself against its roughness as if willing the sharp splinters to pierce even to her heart. Elkanah dropped at her side and wrapped his arms around her. The two rocked together, shaken by the depth of their pain and loss. Hannah's voice came in hiccupped gasps. "I know this is the right thing. I know this is the will of Jehovah. But oh, the agony of it, Elkanah, the agony. Can a God as mighty as our Lord understand this pain? Can He know what it is like to give up a son?"

The two sat huddled at the foot of the sign post until the tempest of grief spiraled away from them. Finally, they were both spent. Hannah's question hung in their thoughts heavily. Does God know what it is like? Into the empty silence, Hannah's voice ventured. Hoarse and hesitant at first, then growing with strength and passion, a prayer was conceived, was formed and finally burst forth in beauty and adoration.

Snatches of its jubilation rang across the countryside, bouncing off rocks and swooping into gullies, then soaring up and around, into the heavens to explode in a shower of blessing on to the two who still sat against the wooden post. In its centre, was joy, birthed of the sacrifice of painful obedience as Hannah acknowledged the mystery that is God's care in the midst of His holiness. One line echoed round and round, "The Lord is a God who knows".

He knows.

Ahead, one of the travellers heard a snatch of the joyful prayer and he turned back to see why the couple had stopped. He peered down the road he had just travelled and in the distance, he saw them, a man and a woman kneeling at the foot of a sign post. Against the backdrop of the fading light of the horizon, the outline of the wooden beacon stood starkly. Its timbered arms stretched out above the couple as if in a broad gesture of open sacrifice. A simple tableau, a family, now two, bringing their anguish and their joy to the foot of a wooden cross.

Sas Kirk is a Counsellor at Chisipite Senior School.

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L	D	E	S	E	R	T	A	S	C	S	O	H	O
P	R	O	V	I	S	I	O	N	U	S	D	E	C
W	I	G	P	E	A	C	E	S	J	I	E	A	I
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- FAITHFULNESS
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1 Peter 2:4-5

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