

DESPERATE YOUNG MAN FINDS MORE THAN JUST A JOB

Scaver Mwakio had his life nicely mapped out. The university student looked forward to a full-time job and a comfortable salary upon graduation.

“In those years that’s what happened in South Africa,” he says in a video for the GBS TV channel on YouTube. “During those years it was automatic for every person who completed college to get a job posting from the government.

“But the year I graduated the government put a freeze on postings and I couldn’t get a job.”

He says that’s when his problems began. He went to Nairobi to look for work but could only get sporadic employment — and even more sporadic pay.

“I would work for three months and at the end of it, I wouldn’t receive a single coin. All my friends were employed but I really struggled.”

He moved in with his cousin and some friends. With five grown men in one room, it was not comfortable. Scaver became desperately unhappy.

“Something was wrong with my life; it was so difficult and there was no way out. I could try this, I could try that but it was not working.

“That’s when my desire to seek for God began to arise in my heart and I began attending gospel crusades.”

Scaver had been brought up in a Catholic family and attended Catholic schools where church attendance once a week was mandatory.

But the young rascal often skipped services even though he knew his friends would spill the beans to his teachers the next day and he would be punished. In secondary school, he had a teacher who tried to guide his students in religious studies but Scaver ignored all his advice as well.

In 2002, after moving to Nairobi to look for work, it was a different story. Jobless and feeling more hopeless with each passing day, Scaver turned to God for help.

“Because of the struggles in my life I went to a church and got baptised there,” he continues.

“I thought I could become a pastor and I even began preaching to my friends.”



Scaver Mwakio

MISERY GONE

Charmain’s abortion took a life but has been the catalyst for her to save many others.

My name is Charmain Swart. Thirty-three years ago I was a student studying education at the teachers’ college in Bloemfontein. In my second year I fell pregnant and I didn’t know what to do.

I got the courage to tell my mom and she told my dad. My dad didn’t approve of the relationship at all and that made everything worse. My dad said I could choose between adoption and abortion, but in my heart I knew he wanted me to abort the baby.

I was hoping that the abortion would take away all the disappointment and heartache I had caused, and I chose the abortion. In fact it made everything worse.

My dad took me to London because abortion wasn’t legal in South Africa in 1990. My dad also believed the doctor, who said, “An abortion is like a tonsil operation, you are going in and out and it is over.”

I didn’t really know what an abortion was and what the after effects would be — I just knew I wouldn’t be pregnant after that. I also believed that my father wouldn’t allow me to go through something that would harm me.

When I woke up after the abortion I was crying and pleading for forgiveness. My whole being knew it was a mistake, but it was too late.

For 14 years after the abortion I lived in denial until I read Francine Rivers’ book *The Atonement Child*. It changed my life. I wanted to talk to Jesus and trust Him like the girl in the story did. I asked Him to help me and He did.

I had known Jesus from a young age, our parents took us to Sunday school most Sundays. When I was 10 years old I was walking home from Sunday school one morning when I committed my life to Jesus, telling Him that I wanted to live

for Him only, because I felt His presence around me that morning.

Wrong choices changed this commitment, but by the grace (undeserved love) of God I heard His voice when He was calling me back to have a relationship with Him after I had my two daughters.

The stronger my relationship with Christ grew the more I realised how judgemental I can be, and how I assume

that I am right. I am saved only by grace.

I went through a healing journey and in 2011 I started a Pregnancy Crisis Centre in Bloemfontein where we help, support and care for girls who are faced with unexpected pregnancies.

Last year we celebrated our 10th anniversary and we praise God for His provision every day, and all the lives that had been saved by His grace, mercy and love. •



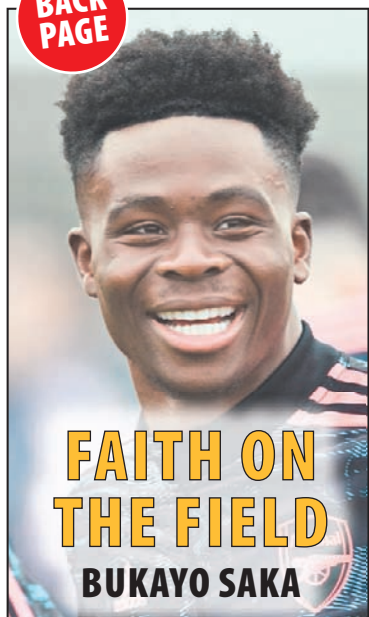
Charmain Swart

Fun for Kids

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BUKAYO SAKA

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DESPERATE YOUNG MAN FINDS MORE THAN JUST A JOB

From page 1

A missionary student at the church began asking Scaver some pointed questions about his newfound vocation.

"This student began challenging my 'faith'. I say 'faith' in inverted commas because I did not have true faith at that time," Scaver admits.

"He asked me 'are you born again?' I said yes. He asked me 'do you have sins?' I said 'yes of course, who doesn't have sins?'"

"Then he asked me if I was righteous and I said no. I told him I asked for forgiveness every time I sinned. I didn't know that Jesus Christ had died once and for all for our sins and made us righteous by the shedding of His blood."

This friend began teaching Scaver about salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. "He would invite me for fellowship and I always said yes because we always had a meal together. At this time I was starving so I happily agreed to meet him.

"He preached the gospel to me step by step. He taught me from the Old Testament and the New Testament.

"Two verses in particular caught my eye - Zechariah 3:9 'I will remove the sin of this land in a single day' and Hebrews 10: 17 where God says 'Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.'

"I was so shocked when I realised that God remembers my sin no more. And that He has made me so many promises in His Word. My life turned around when I realised all this and committed my life to Jesus Christ - on June 22, 2002."

Another verse that has come to mean the world to Scaver is Acts 16: 31 - "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved - you and your household."

"My father, mother and all my three sisters are saved. God gave me this promise and He has fulfilled it. I am truly thankful.

"I am so grateful to Him. He has given me everything through the church. His promises are true." •

When beliefs become action

Fourteen-year-old Quenré de Nysschen was taught good morals and Biblical values from the time he was tiny, however he didn't know God personally or read his Bible, and avoided people who were spiritual. Here is how his life has changed, as described in his own words to *Challenge News*, translated from the original Afrikaans.

"I pursued worldly things and desires. I wanted to be the best at what I did and held winning in high regard. I succumbed to peer pressure at school and began to swear and bully others in order to fit in with my friends.

"When I saw how my brother's and sister's lives were being changed by God, I wanted what they had. I tried to improve my behaviour in my own strength but couldn't succeed.

"One evening service at church I understood for the first time how a person's spiritual life is like a tree that God must plant and grow. I realised my spiritual life had not even been planted yet and I needed to get things right with God. I prayed together with someone to ask God to forgive my sin and give me His new life and immediately I received an assurance that I was born again and had eternal life. Now I knew my spiritual tree could grow in Christ!"



Quenré de Nysschen

"My life was radically changed. I no longer desired to sin or swear. I had a new love for those who didn't know God and needed to hear the gospel [good news about Jesus]. I lost my friends but the Lord has provided me with new friends, who follow Him and support my faith journey. What the world thinks of me no longer matters, only what God thinks.

"The Lord continues to help me daily to let go of worldly desires and deal with temptations through prayer." •

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A LIGHTHOUSE?

BY ILSE BEUKES



A LIGHTHOUSE is designed to warn the ships of dangerous rocks or shallows and show them the way they need to go. They deter ships from running aground, preventing the ship's destruction and that of their cargo, and the lives of their crew.

Now, if a lighthouse and a ship are on a collision course, who has to move?

Of course it is the ship that needs to move, otherwise it will be destroyed. The lighthouse will always be at the same spot. It is not designed to move, but to be constantly showing the way. It will always be there to protect.

As long as those rocks or shallows are there, they pose a danger; in the same way, as long as sin is present it will destroy people (i.e. always). God's Word and principles will be a lighthouse warning us of the peril we face if we do not change our course.

His lighthouse of truth shows us the way to conduct our lives and to make the best decisions. It protects us from shipwreck and keeps us safe. If we follow God's guidelines and commands we will always receive God's best for our lives.

His lighthouse is there to keep us from destruction, not spoil our fun.

Proverbs 6:23 reads: *Sound advice is a beacon, good teaching is a light, moral discipline is a life path.*

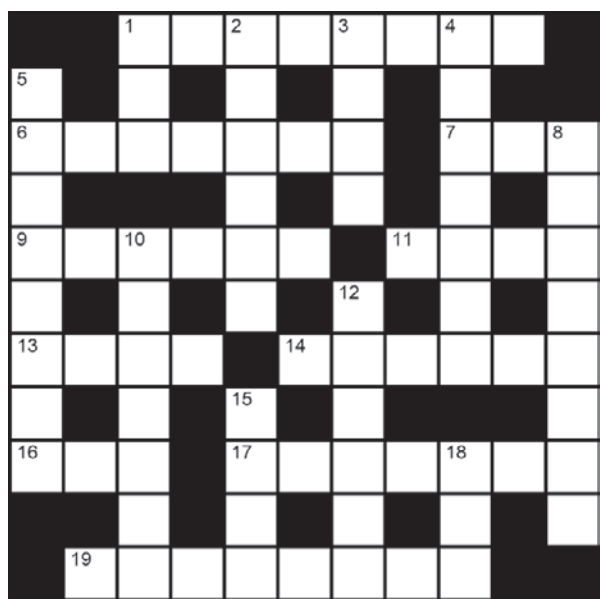
And Proverbs 2: 6-8 says: *For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding; He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly; He guards the paths of justice, and preserves the way of His saints.*

Don't you think the safest course is to let God's Word and principles guide your life?

You can start by praying to invite Him into your life, and asking Him to empower you to live as He directs. Then read His instruction manual (the Bible) and be guided by its light." •

Coffee Break CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

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



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

In God's eyes, the greatest heroes of faith are not those who achieve prosperity, success, and power in this life, but those who treat life as a temporary assignment and serve faithfully, expecting their promised reward in eternity. - Rick Warren

Secrets of a survivor

Angela Mashingaidze was a survivor long before she caught Covid-19.

The 53-year-old high school teacher from Zimbabwe lost her parents and then her husband.

It was when she lost her mother that she found the best way to cope with her grief was to turn to God.

Angela's parents were Christians and she had grown up in church. Sunday School classes, Bible studies and prayer meetings were woven into her life from the time she was a child.

She tells *Challenge News* she was about five years old when she began to understand and could relate to the sermons and lessons at church. But it wasn't until she lost her mother when she was very young that she took her faith to the next level.

"It was then that I prayed and asked God into my life, to be my protector and asked Him to meet me at my point of need," she shares. "The Word of God that was preached made me realise that God was my hope.

"Through my faith I have been able to overcome many of the challenges that I faced as an orphan and

later as a widow."

She admits she has had to overcome certain habits such as petty theft, anger, pride, lying and unforgiveness. "It took some powerful preaching for me to get over those sins. But as my faith became more mature I prayed and asked God to help me overcome them.

It's an ongoing process."

She says very honestly that "it's very hard to practice what is required of me as a Christian and I do stumble at times. But I keep praying. What I love about being a Christian is being able to share the Word with others.

"I like to tell them that Jesus is love. When you live in God and He lives in you it's easier to understand and handle life's tough situations."

One of those difficult times was when she was hospitalised with Covid-19.

"My church friends and family stood with me and prayed for me. I received overwhelming support, both financial and spiritual. It was God and only God who made all of that possible, including my recovery."

Angela's favourite Bible verse is Isaiah 41:10: "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." •

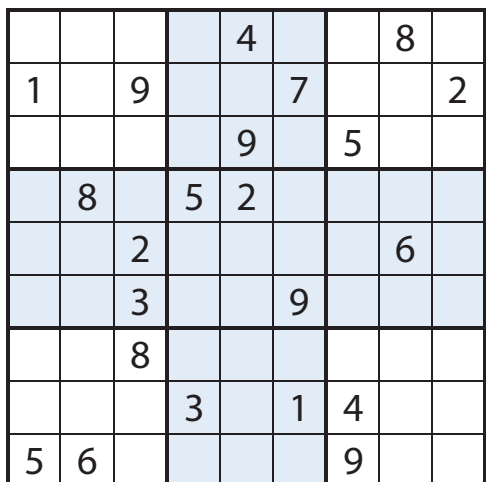


Angela Mashingaidze

SOLUTIONS PAGE 7



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



Ex-cop molded by 'difficult' childhood

As a young boy, two main things had a big impact on the course of Adriaan Fourie's life.

The first was in 1975, when he was 10, and his father committed suicide. This led to his mother remarrying the following year, giving Adriaan a step-father and relocating his home from lush Durban to the dry Karoo town of Prince Albert.

The second life-changer for the boy was his mother's strong faith and prayers on his behalf, which led to him making a personal commitment to Jesus as a child on a Christian Students Association camp at Tulbach one holiday.

Despite a childhood Adriaan describes as "difficult", he became a Christian leader during his high school years and was often involved in mission trips to tell others about the love and truth of God.

"As the time went on, I grew to love Jesus and our Heavenly Father, although I was not the role model that I would have liked to be, as I was struggling to understand God's abounding grace and His all-surpassing peace."

This was particularly in regard to his family's ongoing financial stress.

"In view of our financial struggle on the farm, where we cultivated Karakul sheep as well as apricot and peach orchards for the dried fruit market, and a lucerne crop in draught times, I one day in anger said to my mother: 'I am going to become a "reverend or pastor" as these clergy get a car, a house and groceries while working, and it would change our conditions.'"

He didn't realise the words were an accurate prediction for his life, and he would indeed end up in full-time Christian ministry.

After school, Adriaan joined the police force and became a forensic investigator and later a fraud detective over the course of 14 years.

In 1988, he met a girl through work and got sexually involved with her, causing him much guilt because he knew sexual immorality was a sin. Adriaan remembered the words of his late father that a man should

not sleep with a woman if he was not prepared to make a commitment to her before God. Out of that guilt, and despite their very different value systems, Adriaan asked this woman to marry him. They later had a son together but the marriage didn't last.

Sadly, that boy later died in a motorbike accident at the age of 21.

In 1991, Adriaan met his second wife, Marina, at his new posting in Tzaneen.

"We were 'soul mates' from day one," he remembers. "Although at that stage we did not realize what a total commitment to Christ entailed or what lay ahead. I struggled personally with the battle to be holy as God is holy, in spite of the fact that I knew that Jesus had already paid the price for my salvation."

From Romans 3:21-31, Adriaan began to understand "that we were not saved and justified by following the law of works but by grace (undeserved love of God) acting in faith. Our keeping of God's law

reaffirms that we are His children by faith in Christ our Saviour."

Being a task orientated, driven person, God's grace was difficult for him to grasp. He measured himself by his performance, and struggled with

the understanding of being saved by grace, and that works (keeping God's law and statutes) are proof of salvation, not a basis for it. Then God directed Adriaan to the verse 1 John 5:13. "He made it very clear to me in terms of assurance of salvation: 'I write this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you [already] have life, yes, eternal life.'"

Over the next five years God prepared the couple through good teaching and conferences, and profound encounters with God, and in 1997 Adriaan and Marina became the missionary co-ordinators for their church.

Over the many years since, they have led and been involved in projects in several countries, like Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya, helping the less fortunate and preaching the gospel. They



Adriaan Fourie had to learn that God's grace is not earned but received.

have seen many instances of God's miraculous provision and answer to prayer.

Their two sons (now aged 27 and 32) are also following the Lord and have accompanied them on many of their trips.

Since 2020, Adriaan has been the CEO of Southern Africa Truckers Ministry (SATM), which reaches out with spiritual support to cross-border truckers, who face criminal

attack, sexual temptation and loneliness on their long-haul journeys.

"To date SATM has served 1038 truck drivers (from almost 1000 transport companies) with the Gospel, encouragement, prayer and a Bible Pack. Praise be to God!" says Adriaan.

He encourages others to take God's Word seriously, seek for His will and be obedient when He calls.

"I was struggling to understand God's abounding grace."

Hindu changed by Bible in school desk

BY CHRISTIAN DEVANTIER

When Jaya Jeevan's brother caught her reading the Bible, he flew into a rage, broke things, tore the Bible and threw it out of the house.

Coming from a non-practicing Hindu home, Jaya had no idea why he was upset but was hurt by his violent rejection, she said on a 100 Huntley Street video.

Afterwards, Jaya, who lived in the Karon District of India, felt like she had to read the Bible and pray secretly. She had discovered the Bible in a school desk at her Christian missionary school.

At age 21, Jaya met and married a Bangalore Hindu who was supportive of her Christian practices, though his family was not.

Without a Christian community and support system, Jaya started to drift away. She decided that while others would worship idols, she would talk only to Jesus. But slowly she wandered in her heart from Jesus.

"I left Him," she says. "But He never left me."

The couple moved to Houston, Texas in 2014 and applied for a work visa. Jaya worked in IT. Jaya had a beautiful daughter, supportive husband, and a great life, but she fell into depression.

"Why is there is no happiness in me?" she asked herself. She flashed back to her childhood.

"I remembered when I was with Jesus Christ, I never had these kinds of [worries] in my life. Why did I forget Jesus Christ? Maybe my life is like this because I totally pushed Him out. I looked up to the sky and I said, 'Lord, I don't know why I have gone away from you. I need you. Can you please take me back Lord, because I'm lost.'"

Jaya had to travel to India to arrange issues related to her visa. She spent her days there weeping.

Then somebody invited her to a local church. Deep Srinivas was teaching and the words brought tears to Jaya's eyes and repentance to her heart.

"I heard God talking to me, telling me how my life was shattered and how He wanted to repair me," Jaya says. "It changed my life."

"Every day since then, I've started seeing blessings," Jaya says. "If God can choose a person like me who is worthless and can bless me so much, He can do this for anyone. The love that I am tasting today, God is wanting to give to everyone."



Muslim dreams of Man with bleeding feet

BY MARK ELLIS

A young refugee woman from Syria recently awakened from an unsettling dream.

In the dream, Hala*, a Muslim, saw a Man in White. She also noticed her feet bleeding and feared the bleeding feet might point towards an illness or some other trouble.

"When I woke up, I was afraid," she told Christian Aid Mission (CAM). "Was something bad going to happen to me?"

Hala had visited a church several times at the invitation of a local missionary, so she recognized the Man in White in her dream as Jesus of Nazareth. In the dream, people were rushing to join a crowd of people at the top of a hill, she said.



"I too wanted to go, but I couldn't find my shoes," Hala told CAM. "I heard a voice saying, 'Leave your shoes and come.' So I came running and found that everyone was listening to a man wearing bright white clothes standing in the middle of the crowd."

"Someone screamed and told me that my feet were bleeding. When the man dressed in white heard this sound, he looked at me. Right at that moment, I looked at my feet, and they had stopped bleeding – all the blood was gone."

Then something remarkable happened. "I looked at the man dressed in white and I saw that his feet had started bleeding."

After she woke up, Hala retrieved a book the missionary gave her and read, "He has taken on Himself our sicknesses."

Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.

But He was wounded for our transgressions,

He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,

And by His stripes we are healed." (Isaiah 53:4-5)

"That night, I understood that actually the blood that was coming from my feet was my sin, and Jesus took my sin," she said. "My feet should have been bleeding, but it went to Jesus' feet."

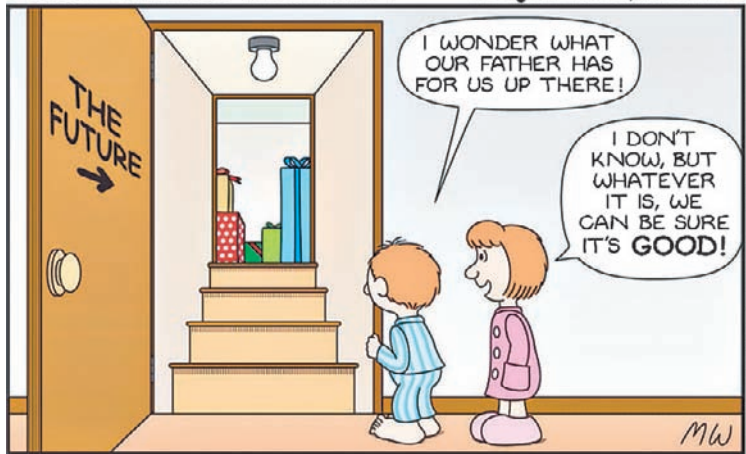
The next morning she immediately called the missionary, who was also from Syria. She told him that she wanted to put her faith in Jesus Christ as her Lord and Saviour, as she had seen others do.

She announced her decision at the church on the following Sunday.

*Name changed for security reasons. This story first appeared on Godreports.com and is used with kind permission.

GOOD THINGS IN STORE

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



How abundant are the good things that you have stored up for those who fear you, that you bestow in the sight of all, on those who take refuge in you.

– PSALM 31:19 NIV

Afrikaans translation

Gebedsvegter sien wonderwerke

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Sophie Machangara

English translation

Prayer warrior sees miracles

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Zulu translation

Ohlala emthandazweni ubona imihlola

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

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

U Sophie wayexakekile kodwa engangabazi. Empeleni, wathandaza.

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

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

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

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

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

Kuleloviki, imali yohlinzo neyendiza yay ikhona.

Umyeni wakhe, owayengakwazi nokuhamba uma sifika isikhathi sokuya eNdiya, wahlazwa waphola.

"Kusuka ngalesosikhathi kuze kube namhlanje izinsu ziyaphila. Akunankinga. Sekuyiminyaka ewu8. Konke lokhu kungumusa kaNkulunkulu (akungifanele) ngimbonga ngaso sonke isikhathi. Umusa wakhe unganele."

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

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

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

Yena."

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

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

FAITH ON THE FIELD

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

sibility for helping others.”

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

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

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