

TOPIC 1.5**KNOWING THE TRUTH GIVES
YOU A GREAT LIFE ADVANTAGE.
FACT OR FICTION?****Conversation Points**

- ★ If a pill was invented that could extend your life to one hundred and ninety years I would not take it. **AGREE or DISAGREE?**
- ★ The majority are often right. **AGREE or DISAGREE?**
- ★ That a person believes is more important than *what* they believe. **AGREE or DISAGREE?**

Reflection

Alisa Girard was born in 1975 and grew up in the shadow of her famous dad, Chuck. Her dad had been in several rock bands and became heavily involved in the whole *rock-n-roll* lifestyle leading to, in Chuck's own words, "*A battle with alcohol addiction.*" But then *he* met Jesus and his life was radically transformed. He and three others formed a Christian band, *Love Song*, who became extremely popular in the United States. Alisa grew up in a world where her dad had become the pioneer of modern Christian rock'n'roll through a period known as *the Jesus Movement*. Despite her increasing abilities musically, her parents were careful not to push her in the same direction as her dad and encouraged her to take up other hobbies - particularly gymnastics - especially since, "*One day, confined to the indoors, I decided to jump off the couch, flip over it, and land on my bottom. Terrified, my parents decided that if I was going to jump and flip off of things, then they should help me learn how to do it right, so into gymnastics I went. I had found my purpose in life.*" Alisa was enrolled in gymnastic classes involving a lot of training and competing. Who knew? Maybe she was even destined for the Olympics some day?

“For almost six years, my life was consumed with flipping, tumbling, vaulting, balancing, stretching and saluting, and I loved it!” Yet, despite her dreams of Olympic gold, as she got older she struggled to keep up with the other girls and began to lose interest in gymnastics. She was afraid, however, to tell her parents who had invested so much of their time and money in her potential gymnastics career and were surely hoping she would become an Olympic gymnast.

With much trepidation, when she eventually approached her parents and sheepishly announced, *“Mom and dad, I don’t want to do gymnastics anymore!”* Their response caught her off guard. *“Oh, that’s wonderful!”* they said. And went on to reassure Alisa that they weren’t upset at all about not having to continue paying for all her expensive lessons, going training classes, and early morning drives to various parts of California for competitions. It was then that Alisa announced, *“I want to be a singer!”* *“When I was eleven, my parents prayed that God would show me His will for my life. Within two weeks, I decided, on my own, to quit gymnastics and pursue music. It was simple, supernatural and my heart was filled with a desire for music. I sat down at the piano and wrote my first song and I remember feeling the Spirit of God come upon me. I felt his anointing on me and I knew that music was my calling.”*

In Alisa’s book, *Live Your Truth and Other Lies* she describes how she wanted to sing for Jesus so that thousands could come to know Jesus as well. At the age of 21 she moved from California to New York to work in a youth centre where she also led worship and was a Youth group leader in that church for a season. When she returned to California, a family friend who was a music producer presented Alisa with idea of forming an all-girl Christian pop-rock band, *ZoeGirl*. Two other members of the band were recruited and in 1999 they were signed to the record label *Sparrow*. They went on to sell over a million albums and gained worldwide fame.



But the fame that came with their success did not present Alisa with the opportunities to share Jesus with ‘thousands of others’ that she had hoped for. In 2005, Alisa married ZoeGirl’s drummer, Mike Childers. In 2006 the group disbanded and Mike and Alisa moved to Nashville where they joined a church. The pastor of the church invited Alisa to join a “special Bible study group” he was running in his home. *“It would be like doing Bible College degree program”* he told her. She was excited about the prospect of getting a ‘College’ education, something she had not been able to do while touring with ZoeGirl.

Increasingly, Alisa became confused and disturbed by what her pastor was saying in these Bible studies. Initially it seemed he was just raising questions. *How do we know that the Bible is inspired? Was Jesus really virgin-born? Is Christianity the only way to God? Would it matter if the miracles described in the Bible were actually just myths? Would a loving God really send people to hell for eternity?*

One night she came home from this Bible study and told Mike what the pastor had said. *“Maybe you misheard him, or misunderstood him? Next time, ask directly, ‘Do you believe the Bible is the divinely inspired inerrant Word of God?’”* So she did. And the pastor assured her that this was indeed what he believed. *But* then through that night’s Bible study he reiterated statements about the Bible containing errors, hell being a pagan invention, Jesus not really being who the Gospels said He was. When she came home that night Mike asked, *“How did you go?”* Alisa recounted what the pastor said in response to her questions and then what he said after that. Mike said, *“We’re not walking away from this church... We’re running!”* Alisa came to realise that what that pastor at that time was teaching was called ‘Progressive’ Christianity. Her story of how she came out of this false teaching is described in her book, *Another Gospel: A Lifelong Christian Seeks Truth in Response to Progressive Christianity*.

The Relationship of Accepting The Truth and Enjoying Bliss

The saying goes, *“Ignorance is bliss.”* But is it? When the woman who finds a lump in her breast and refuses to see a doctor about it in case the doctor might tell her it’s cancer, is that *bliss*? When governments become dependent upon the taxation revenue (or political donations) from an industry that ruins lives, and its parliamentarians refuse to even consider the evidence for that ruin, is that *bliss*? When someone is raised with a false belief system and is confronted with the reasons and evidence for it being false, but they refuse to hear anymore such reasons and evidence because it will injure their standing in and with their community, is that *bliss*?

Someone who has been raised in a family and close-knit community with a belief-system that is *false* faces many obstacles to accepting the truth. **What kind of obstacles/challenges might this include? Discuss.**

36. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
 4 March 2023 at 7:47:36 pm
 Acts 9:1 ¶ But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest Acts 9:2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

37. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
 4 March 2023 at 7:57:26 pm
 Saul would have certainly thought that his Jewish faith was the exclusively true religion.

38. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
 4 March 2023 at 8:06:13 pm
 Saul would have believed that he worshiped the One true God and therefore all other gods, such as the Roman gods, were false gods.

39. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
 4 March 2023 at 8:10:55 pm
 Saul would have considered all other religions apart from Judaism to be wrong and false - including Christianity.

40. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
 4 March 2023 at 8:19:30 pm
 Not very easy at all. He was raised a Jew, Trained by Jewish religious leaders, and embedded in an exclusive Jewish community.

41. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
 4 March 2023 at 8:26:23 pm
 Acts 26:9 ¶ "I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Acts 26:10 And I did so in Jerusalem. I not only locked up many of the saints in prison after receiving authority from the chief priests, but when they were put to death I cast my vote against them. Acts 26:11 And I punished them often in all the synagogues and tried to make them blaspheme, and in raging fury against them I persecuted them even to foreign cities.

Acts 26:12 ¶ "In this connection I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests.

Acts 26:13 At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, that shone around me and those who journeyed with me.

Acts 26:14 And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

Acts 26:15 And I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I

FACT OR FICTION

Section 1: Certain things are objectively true. **Fact or fiction?**

From the Bible

- 36 1. Consider the person described in **Acts 9:1-2** and list some of the things that he would have believed about religion, God, and other religions:

37 Religion

38 God

39 Other religions

2. How easy would it have been for the man described in Acts 9:1-2 to change his views about religion, God, and other religions? Discuss.

40 _____

- 41 3. Read **Acts 26:9-23**. What had now changed in this man - how did change his views about religion, God and ?

42 Religion

43 God

44 Other religions

4. It seems that three factors are often involved in someone abandoning false ideas and embracing the truth: (i) **E** _____ e that reveals that a view is t ___ e which often means other views could be f _____ e ; (ii) An a _____ c adherent (committed believer); (iii) **P** _____ r . In the case of our subject also referred to Acts 8 and 9, discuss how these three factors culminated in his conversion:

45 (i) _____

46 47 (ii) _____

48 49 (iii) _____

5. What advantage is there to knowing the truth? Discuss.

53 _____

Additional References

Childers, Alisa. 2022. *Live Your Truth and Other Lies. Exposing popular deceptions that make us anxious, exhausted, and self-obsessed.* Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

Samples, Kenneth R. 2007. *A World of Difference. Putting Christian truth-claims to the worldview test.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

am Jesus whom you are persecuting.

Acts 26:16 But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you,

Acts 26:17 delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you

Acts 26:18 to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

Acts 26:19 ¶ “Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

Acts 26:20 but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.

Acts 26:21 For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me.

Acts 26:22 To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass:

Acts 26:23 that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.”

42. Dr. Andrew Corbett

4 March 2023 at 9:26:33 pm

Saul, and now become Paul. He had radically changed his views about the religion he grew up with, and now had good reasons for believing that Jesus Christ alone offered the way of salvation.

43. Dr. Andrew Corbett

4 March 2023 at 9:32:34 pm

Paul had grown up with a narrow understanding of monotheism - but now he had come to realise that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was the eternal Father of the eternal Son who had sent the eternal Holy Spirit spoken of by the prophets into the world.

44. Dr. Andrew Corbett

4 March 2023 at 9:37:09 pm

While other religions were still false they often had a snippet of truth that Paul could use to point people to Christ.

45. Dr. Andrew Corbett

4 March 2023 at 9:43:27 pm

evidence

46. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
4 March 2023 at 9:43:58 pm
true
47. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
4 March 2023 at 9:45:48 pm
false
48. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
4 March 2023 at 9:48:42 pm
authentic
49. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
4 March 2023 at 9:54:08 pm
prayer
50. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
4 March 2023 at 9:56:17 pm
Saul had heard the preaching of Stephen, and a direct encounter with Jesus Christ.
51. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
4 March 2023 at 9:57:30 pm
Paul encountered an authentic believer in Stephen and the expression in Acts 26:14 about 'being hard to kick against the goads' reveals that he deeply moved by Stephen's faithful witness.
52. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
4 March 2023 at 9:59:06 pm
Jesus had commanded His followers to pray for those who persecuted them and it is reasonable to think that this is exactly what the early believers did for Saul
53. **Dr. Andrew Corbett**
4 March 2023 at 10:01:59 pm
Knowing the truth means that you can see and understand the world the way it really is. It means that you can avoid the deadly dangers of falsehood. It means that you can be realistic about your future and plan your life more wisely.