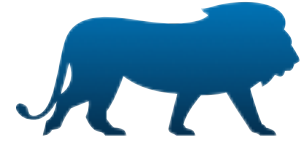


## TOPIC 3.3

CHRIST TAUGHT THAT ALL  
PEOPLE MUST CHOOSE A  
RELIGION. FACT OR FICTION?

## Conversation Points

- ★ People with strong opinions should keep those opinions to themselves!  
**AGREE or DISAGREE?**
- ★ People who have a lot should learn how to be generous and share it with others. **AGREE or DISAGREE?**
- ★ Because there is so much uncertainty in the world there is no point to saving our money. **AGREE or DISAGREE?**

## Reflection

In 1940 a newborn baby, who would later be given the name, *David*, was abandoned in the hospital in which he had just been born. He was placed into an orphanage then later into the care of *Sedgley Boys Home*, Upper Hutt, New Zealand. Even though Sedgley would later be identified “as a site of child abuse” and closed, David Bussau would later tell a journalist that the only abuse he ever experienced was the normal occasional bullying that younger boys were always subject to by the older boys.



Sedgley Boys Home, Upper Hutt, NZ

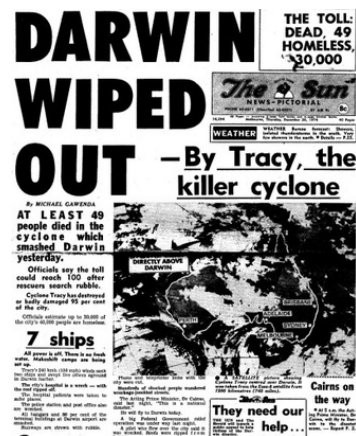
As part of the Boys Home, David was required to attend Sunday School each Sunday where, he says, “[He] always believed that God was a father who loved him.” Sedgley was a working farm where the boys chipped in to help so that the Home was able to pay its bills. This early exposure to the reality of work,

business, and having to pay bills, had a curious impact on David. “At the age of 15, he rented a hot-dog stand, then rented hot-dog stands out to others. He always found it easy to make money and to organise others to work for him” (Piggin 2020, 439). Even as a teenager, David Bussau had a strong sense that God had created and called him to be an entrepreneur.

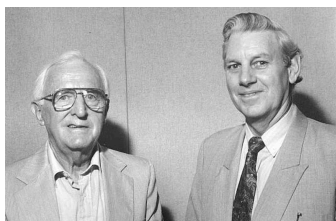


By early his early thirties he was married, a millionaire, and now living in Australia where he ran five businesses in the construction trade. Life was comfortable and life was great. In 1974 at the age of 35, he was deeply moved by what had happened to the city and people of Darwin after the devastation of cyclone Tracy.

He organised for a team of tradesmen to go to Darwin to help with its reconstructions efforts. David and his family also then chose to move to Darwin to help where they could. Shortly after this Bali was hit by an earthquake and David then mobilised some of his workforce to help the Indonesians to reconstruct many of their devastated villages. David and his family then moved to Bali so he could be closer to what needed to be done there.



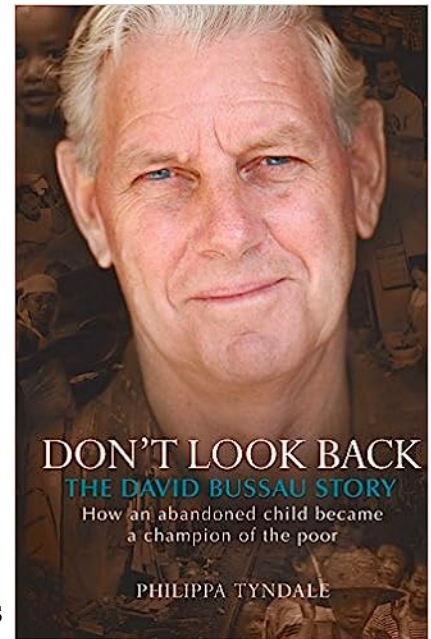
But his move to Bali, and his experience of seeing the abject poverty of these Indonesian villagers was a turning point for him. “He realised that for most, poverty was a matter of debt.” Many of these villagers were forced to “mortgage their own children to their money lenders” while they tried to pay off their mortgages. Bussau had seen how government foreign aid money had largely made matters worse for the poor. He reasoned that he could use his God-given gifts as an entrepreneur to help the poor. In 1979, David discussed with another businessman, a American friend, Al Whittaker, who was also an entrepreneur, how they could work together to help the poor of the world - not just in Indonesia. In 1980, they launched a microfinancing charity called, *Opportunity International*. By the year 2000 they had raised five million people out of poverty using microfinancing as a Christian mission.



Bussau became a big supporter of Christian missionaries

in various parts of the world and sponsored the formation of the *Oxford Centre for Missions Studies*. In 2003-04 he was even able to help North Korea address some of their most impoverished through the micro-loans initiatives program that had successfully been used in other parts of the world. In 2008 Bussau was made Senior Australian of the Year after he had already been awarded the title of Australian Entrepreneur of the Year and International Social Entrepreneur of the Year (Piggin, 440).

Bussau got to witness firsthand the role that certain religious beliefs played in keeping people poor. He had concluded that his own Christian faith was grounded in the belief that God can help people to change not just their lives but their circumstances as well. This, he discovered, was quite different to the predominant religious beliefs of those regions of the world where they believed that people's station in life was predetermined and unalterably fixed. He had also seen how even the godless worldviews of such countries as North Korea resulted in starkly different economic outcomes compared with their largely Christian neighbours to their south.



David Bussau came to see firsthand the difference between the worldviews of various religions (including atheistic North Korea). **What do you think the relationship between a society's religious views and its treatment of the poor is?**

*A foundational test for the truth of a worldview evaluates its coherence of logical consistency. Truth will always be wholly consistent within itself, displaying internal logical harmony. The coherence test stresses the crucial unity and relatedness of all truth. Therefore any logical inconsistency in the basic elements of a worldview is a mark of essential error.*

KENNETH SAMPLES

A World of Difference, p33.

## From the Bible

1. The Jewish opponents who disputed with Jesus were very religious and zealous. Based on John 8:44 what was level of respect that Jesus showed for their religious convictions?  

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2. Note the description of those gathered in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost Acts 2:5. When the Apostle Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost many of these very religious people accepted what he said. What did Peter tell them to do now (Acts 2:38)? Based on Acts 2:41 did Peter thought that Jesus had come simply to encourage people to accept a religion of their choice -  

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3. Read the account in Acts 4:1-14 where Peter and John appear before the Annas (the High Priest Emeritus) and Caiaphas (the son-in-law of Annas and the current High Priest). If Peter had thought that Jesus had come to simply encourage people to be religious, in what way then does Acts 4:12 show that this was *not* how Peter had understood Jesus?  

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4. What religious options did the Apostle Paul say existed for someone wanting to choose a religion based on First Timothy 2:5?  

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## 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.