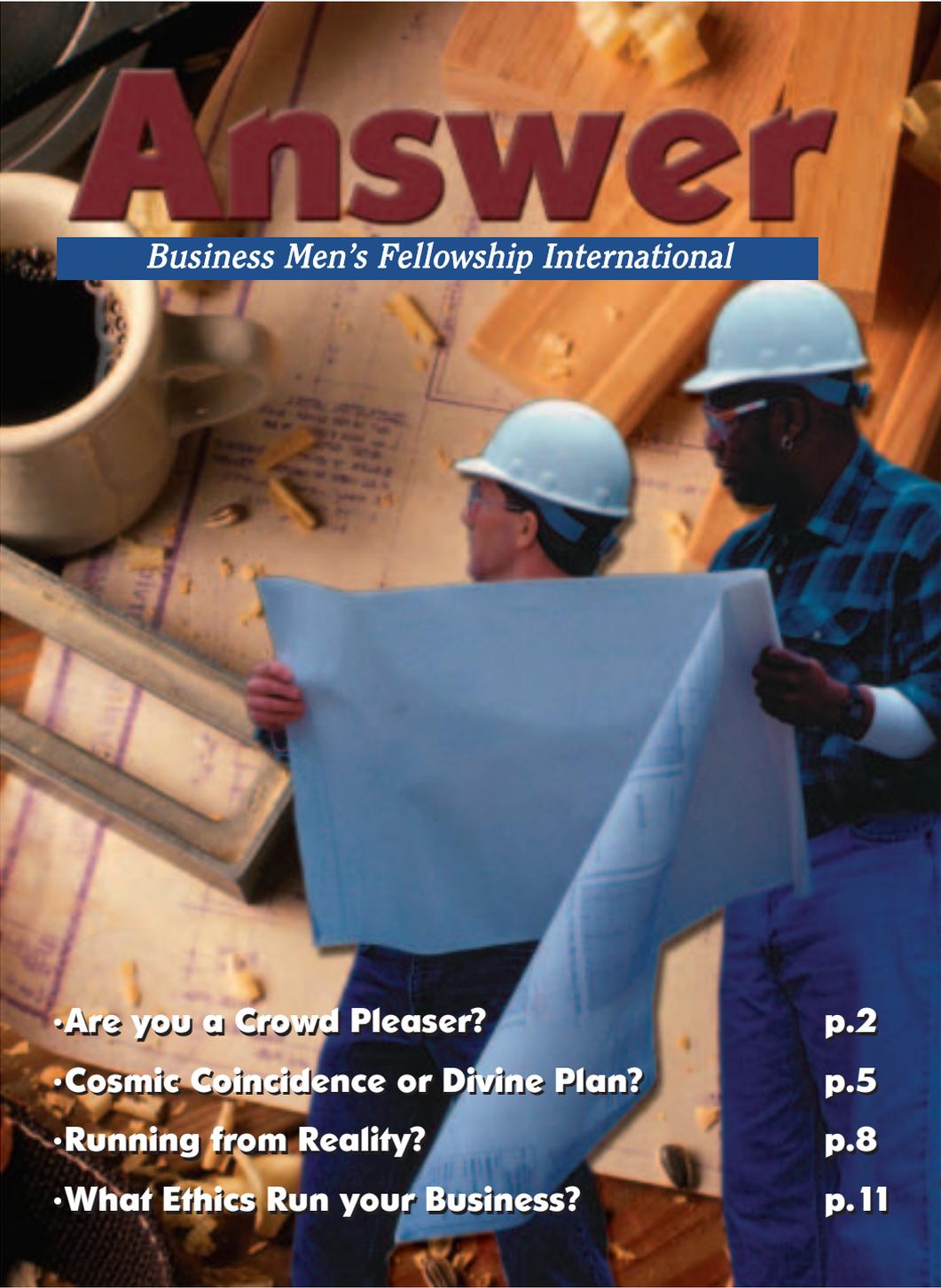
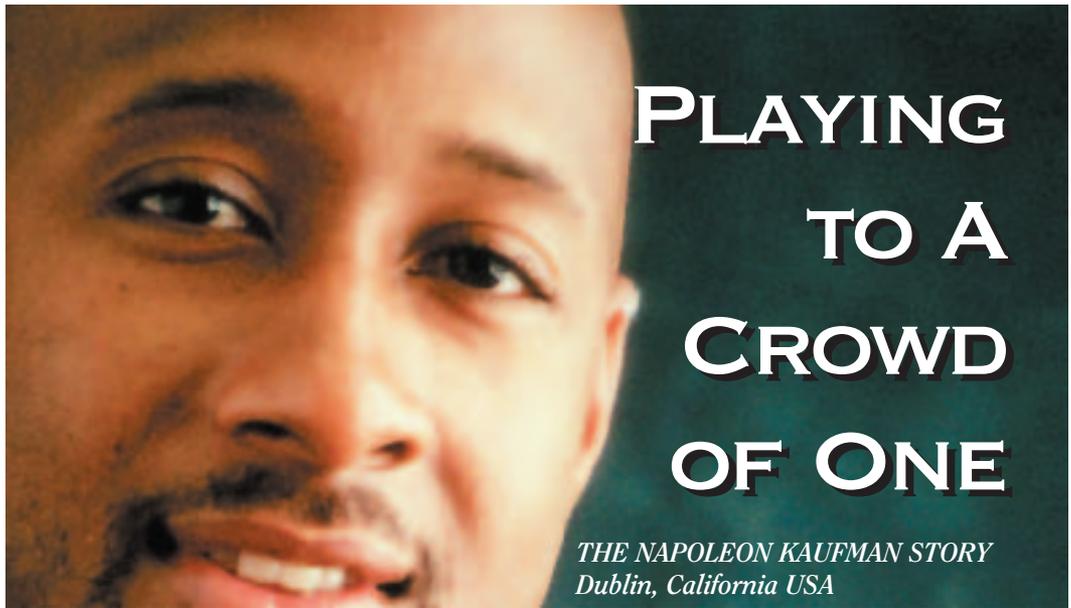


Answer

Business Men's Fellowship International

- 
- **Are you a Crowd Pleaser?** p.2
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PLAYING TO A CROWD OF ONE

THE NAPOLEON KAUFMAN STORY
Dublin, California USA

The commissioner of the National Football League strode to the podium. I held my breath, wondering if I would play for the team from my home state.

“With the 18th pick, the Raiders select...Napoleon Kaufman,” he said as the room erupted in cheers.

Me! Oakland’s first round pick! I could hardly believe it. I had come a long way since entering high school as a scrawny, 135-pound running back. And, before that, a troubled youngster from a single-parent home.

Lacking a father’s guidance, I wound up running with street gangs in southern California and got kicked out of school regularly.

Fortunately, I had some steady influences. One was my grandmother, who always offered a plate of food and a listening ear.

Then there was Uncle Tony, who

introduced me to football when I was 7. Tony paid my fees and signed me up for the Pop Warner League.

Another was my first coach, Ron Mau. When I wound up in reform school, he was my teacher and helped steer me down the right road.

So did my high school coach, Dick Barrett. After I bombed my first SAT college entrance exam, he sat me down and talked to me like a Dutch uncle.

“Napoleon, football is your ticket out of this little town,” he said. “You can be whatever you want to be, but you have to stop this foolishness and apply yourself.”

That summer, Barnett put me in an algebra course and another to prepare for the SAT. I retested that fall and scored 10 points above what I needed for athletic eligibility.

In my senior year I rushed for almost 2,000 yards, bringing a flood of scholarship offers. The next fall I headed for Seattle,

where I helped the University of Washington win the national championship.

Had I understood the significance of that talk with Coach Barnett, I might have trembled. I never dreamed his help would lead me to signing a contract for more money than I ever dreamed existed.

The sensation was overwhelming. In a matter of days, my life changed forever. However, when I went to Oakland the changes weren't what I expected.

Now, most people see all the beautiful women, adoring fans and riches. But pro football looks a lot different from the inside.

To this point, I played just because I loved the game. During my rookie year I discovered how much of a business it is; football turned into a pressure-packed job. It was tough to maintain my enthusiasm.

In addition, the parties and women turned out to be much less attractive than I expected.

Actually, this wasn't much different than what I had been doing in college. But with more money in everyone's pockets, it multiplied the diversions.

Finally, I stopped and looked around from this plateau of success. I owned a Mercedes, a Cadillac, a truck and a house on Lake Washington. So what?

"Yeah, I have money and all this stuff is pretty nice," I thought. "But I'm still not fulfilled."

During that first year in the NFL, I

found myself steadily drifting away from the parties. I knew something was up when they didn't seem to bring me any joy.

At the same time, a spiritual search that had started in college intensified.

One person sent me a booklet in the mail with Bible verses in it. Another talked to me about God. I started thinking about some of the things I had heard going to church occasionally as a youngster.

The situation peaked during training camp of my second season. One day I was cussing and talking trash with some teammates.

Another player, Jerone Davison, looked at me and said, "Hey, man, you don't even look like the kind of guy that should be

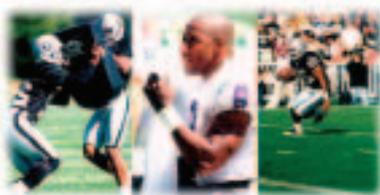
out here cussing and acting crazy like the rest of these brothers. Don't you know God can use your life?"

Now that wasn't the first time I had heard that statement. Back in Seattle, people had told me they were praying for me and that God could use me. But Davison's words challenged me to the core of my being.

All my life I had been living to please others, trying to appear a certain way because I thought they would like it. I knew it was a show. Until now, no one had ever called me on it.

Still, I shot back, "Man, I gotta be out here cussing and stuff. I've got to show these brothers I'm tough."

As I walked off the field, though, I felt anything but tough. In my heart I knew this



*Yeah, I have money...
but I'm still not fulfilled.*

act was a bunch of foolishness. I was tired of it.

When I got back to the hotel a small voice kept whispering: “Don’t you know God can use you? Don’t you know Jesus loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life? He is genuine and real and He wants you to be genuine and real too!”

That soft voice packed more force than a 300-pound linebacker. I knew this was my moment of truth.

Folding my hands, I said, “Lord Jesus, come into my life. I believe You are the Son of God. I want You to forgive me for the things I’ve done wrong.”

What a difference that simple statement made. Not just the words, but because I believed them with all my heart.

When I returned home from training camp, I told my fiancé (now my wife), “Nicole, I gave my life to Jesus.”

Although she had grown up in a church, Nicole thought I had gone off the deep end. But as she watched the positive developments in my life, she made the same decision.

Deciding to follow Christ changed everything: the way I acted, who I associated with, and how I played the game. By playing to please a crowd of one – God – I found a new peace and renewed joy in playing football.

Not that it didn’t bring challenges. Since I was so happy, I wanted to tell others what had happened. That caused trouble. Some people told lies about me. Others swore profusely in the locker room, trying to provoke me.

I didn’t back down, telling teammates and coaches if they wanted to act ungodly, I had as much right to talk about my life.

“If guys can come into the locker room and curse and talk about how many women they slept with, then what’s wrong with me coming in and talking about what God’s done?” I asked. “What’s wrong with saying how good God is and how He can change people’s lives?”

Some guys responded positively when I challenged them. Several told me, “Thanks, man, no one’s ever come and said anything to me before. I didn’t even know I was cussing.”

Using off-color language and acting like king of the hill doesn’t make you a man. Neither does having money, luxury cars, and all the other things people want. I learned how to be a real man when I began following Jesus, the greatest man who has ever lived.



Napoleon Kaufman finished his NFL career in 2000 with 4,792 yards rushing, an average of 4.9 yards per carry; 127 pass receptions for 1,107 yards and a total of 17 touchdowns. He and his wife, Nicole, have four children. After two years as a traveling speaker, Napoleon became the founding pastor of The Well, a church in suburban Oakland.

THE DAVID DUFFY STORY
Lindsay, Ontario, Canada

Guarded By God

As I drove my friend's tractor down the country road, I smiled. What a gorgeous July day! We had just finished barbecuing and then drove into town to retrieve Ben's tractor.

A couple miles and I would be back home, where we would use the tractor's auger to bore a hole to sink a pole into the ground that would hold a clothesline running from the house.

Driving like my grandfather had always taught me, I maneuvered with one set of wheels on the shoulder. But when I took my hands off the steering wheel to light a cigarette, disaster struck.

Because of loose gravel, the wheel turned, throwing the tractor into a vicious slide. I fought mightily to correct it, but in a wisp of time, I was lying face down in a ditch.

The tractor's back wheel had me pinned in six inches of mud and water. I don't actually remember this frightening

situation. Semi-conscious during this time, most of what I know comes from my wife, Sandy, and the accounts of those who rescued me.

That I survived is miraculous, since I was alone when it happened. Ben had driven on to our house. When I didn't appear, he and Sandy came looking for me.

However, by the time they arrived, four people had pulled me to safety. They were two couples who had a cottage at a lake, north of our home outside Little Britain, a village northeast of Toronto.

Vacationing together for years, they always followed a north-south route through town. But this day, they decided to turn west in Little Britain, on the road that took them past me.

When they pulled up, I was struggling to escape the muddy soup. One man said, "It's okay, boy, we're here."

Instantly, I relaxed. Then two skilled rescuers went to work. One was a fireman

who knew CPR. The other was an emergency room nurse.

They worked as a team, getting my heart pumping and using mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. At one point, my heart stopped for just over four minutes.

Clinging to the edge of life, at the hospital I lay in a coma for three days. Doctors prepared Sandy for the worst, telling her, "If he regains consciousness, at the very least he will have to learn to walk and talk again."

Thank goodness doctors don't have the final word. When I finally came to, it was like waking from a long rest.

Seeing my parents and wife standing at the end of my bed, I said, "Hi. What happened?"

Never were three people happier to hear someone talk!

After two weeks in the hospital and five more recuperating at home, I returned to my active, busy lifestyle. But the threat hadn't ended.

Although doctors did a battery of tests, they found no heart or brain damage. I hadn't broken any bones. But I did experience a shaking in my right leg, which they treated as a physical problem.

For a while, I took Valium as a muscle relaxant. Then they gave me medication used to treat Parkinson's disease, which made my movements stiff.

About four months after the accident, I

went to visit my parents and took their dog out for a walk. Suddenly at the side of the house I slipped on a patch of ice. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't get up.

I could see two men were standing on the sidewalk as I lost consciousness. Seeing me, they came over, lifted me up and took me to my parents' house.

Inside, they laid me on the couch and Dad went to get a compress. When he

returned, the men had vanished. We never saw them again!

When the ambulance arrived, Sandy jumped inside and rode to the hospital with me. It turned out I had had a grand mal seizure. The

tremors in my leg prior to that were small seizures.

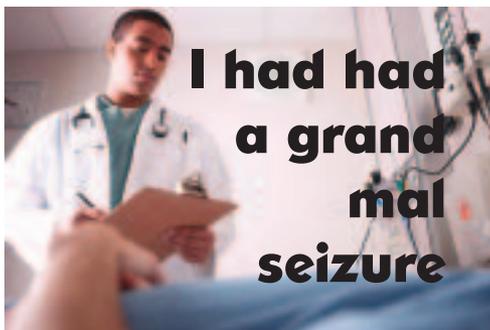
Waiting in the emergency room, we came face to face with our mortality. I was facing baffling physical problems. Our six-month-old son was struggling with bronchitis. Sandy felt drained, mentally and emotionally.

Now, we had grown up in church. But while we knew about God and as teenagers had pledged to follow Him, we knew nothing of a personal relationship with His Son, Jesus Christ.

"David, do you believe in God?" my wife asked, her voice trembling.

"I sure do, or I wouldn't have gotten this far."

"I do too, but it hasn't helped me," she



said. "From now on, I'm going to trust in Jesus."

"I am too," I replied.

Lying on that stretcher, holding my wife's hands, I realized that decision I had made years before had just moved from my head to my heart. A weight lifted from my shoulders, it felt as if I would float away.

That day, I experienced the new life the Bible talks about. I realized it wasn't trying to do the right things that make the difference. Because I believed that He was my Savior, Jesus accepted me. I didn't have to work to earn His love.

Immediately life changed. One noticeable difference came when I picked up my Bible. I had read it for years, but now it was if scales fell off my eyes. I saw things I had never seen before.

Previously, we had rationalized that we were too busy for church, but now, we made a concerted effort to find a place where we would worship God.

At the office, I began talking about my faith in Christ and what it meant to my life. I learned when I do that, I have to be ready for the consequences that may follow.

Once, my supervisor – under pressure from higher up – asked me to do something I considered unethical.

I replied, "If that's what this job is about, you'll have to find somebody else."

The supervisor backed down.

God has done so many things in our lives that it would take too long to list them all. But one of the most amazing involves us joining a new church.

Although Sandy and I were happy where we were, in 2001 we sensed the Holy Spirit directing us to another place. Puzzled, we obeyed.

A year later, a crotchety old man started attending our chapter meetings of Business Men's Fellowship in Lindsay. Despite his crusty exterior, underneath I saw a tenderness.

In the fall of 2002, our church offered a 12-week course designed to introduce people to basic Christian principles. At a BMF meeting, I invited anyone interested to attend a free dinner where they could learn more about this course.

This man responded and began attending classes. In December of 2002, I prayed with him as he vowed to follow Christ. A month later, he was dead.

"If for no other reason, if we are to know why God moved us from one church to another, this was it," I told Sandy after his funeral. "God would have done that for Al."

Just as God twice sent "angels" to rescue me from the jaws of death, now He had used me to introduce someone else to eternal life with Him.

David Duffy is a statistician analyst with General Motors of Canada Ltd., working in the International Product Center. Secretary of the Lindsay Chapter of BMF, he also serves as Treasurer for BMF Canada. He and his wife, Sandy, have three children and two grandchildren. They attend Bethel Evangelical Missionary Church.



THE KEN DOIRON STORY
Yuba City, California USA

Facing the Facts... Finding the Truth

When I saw the look in my wife's eyes, she didn't have to say a word. I knew an explosion was coming – and why. Another late night of my drinking and carousing had snapped her patience.

"I've had it!" she screamed. "I can't take it any more! When are you going to act like a husband instead of a little boy?"

Conflicting emotions surged inside.

The first was anger at her sharp words. Yet, disappointment and feelings of failure overwhelmed me. Why couldn't I resolve my problems? Why couldn't I control my impulses to find relief from life's pressures?

Because our two daughters were toddlers, we tried counseling for their sake. But that only lasted three months. My wife and I often got into arguments in the counselor's office.

Finally, I threw up my hands and said, "What's the use?"

Then, my running nature took over.

After our divorce, I gave her the car, the house and most of our possessions. I headed for a different part of the Oakland, California area.

Running was second nature, since I always stayed on the move. This habit partially originated with my father, who left our home in Buffalo, New York when I was an infant.

Left to make decisions without any guidance or discipline, I was a sitting duck for trouble. By the age of 12, I was involved with a tough street gang.

Inside, though, I felt nervous and alone. A lost little boy, I struggled to find my identity and place in society. This search lasted for decades.

Still, my mother sensed big trouble if she didn't get my sister and me out of Buffalo. With some relatives and a new job waiting in Southern California, we migrated west.

This was only the first of several

moves. Every time I made friends and was feeling good about fitting in, we headed for a new place.

Learning to make new friends was good, since it helped bring me out of my shell of uncertainty. But I never felt rooted or like I had a foundation in life.

By the time I graduated from high school, we were living in Sacramento. I tried college, but didn't have the perseverance to finish my degree. All my friends were in construction and I wanted to join their world.

Moving to Concord, I joined the union and started pounding nails. After a decade of experience, I felt ready to open a business. Not only did I want to oversee projects, after my divorce I needed to earn more to pay child support.

I also took a second job with a security company, working at an amphitheatre that hosted concerts and other events. Through this job I met Victoria, the love of my life; who would become my second wife.

I found many things attractive about her, including her values, which came from growing up in a close-knit, Italian family.

Still, our need for the excitement of bars and nightclubs; a place to "fit in" almost always left us empty and caused problems between us.

However, we were together when I expressed a desire to move. I had had my

fill of Concord. There were too many problems. Too many fractured relationships. I lost my contractor's license and my relationship with my daughters. Too many times, people had taken advantage of my good nature.

After losing my job, an opportunity arose for another in the Yuba-Sutter area. Everything we knew about the area was not very appealing, but we were here and yes, we had a feeling of peace about it.

What I didn't know was that God had plans for me here. They included Victoria, who found a job managing a restaurant. There she met the owner's son's wife, who invited her to church.

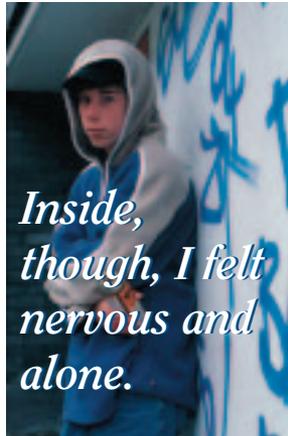
We visited a couple of times while also attending the denomination where Victoria grew up. One night, on the steps of that church, we both cried out to God. After an evening of drinking, we realized our lives were a mess.

"God, help us," we said.

"Come into our lives and show us direction."

That was the beginning of our final steps toward God. Yet, it took three more years before we learned the truth.

One key to discovering it was the church Victoria's co-worker attended. Once we started going there regularly, I saw the reality of knowing a loving God. The people there were good, honest, and hard-working, and truly loved the Lord and one another.



Many were like me: guys who worked construction or other blue-collar jobs. Unlike me, they were good family men and leaders. Their spouses were a delight to be around. Through them, I found the connections that had been missing all my life.

Not only did these people know God, they prayed to Him as if He were right there in the room.

Recognizing I had all kinds of unresolved problems from childhood, one night I asked if they could pray that I be set free from my past.

Wow! I never felt so good. Soon after that, during a church service, the pastor asked if anyone wanted to acknowledge Jesus as their Savior and Lord. I wanted to jump up and shout, "I do!"

Instead, I prayed quietly, "Jesus, come into my life. I believe that You are the Son of God. I'm sorry for all the mistakes I've made. I intend to live a different way and follow You the rest of my life."

I went down to the river to go through a ceremony known as water baptism, signifying my obedience to follow Christ. When I came up out of the water, I felt like a new man. Soon after, I received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

While life changed, it didn't become perfect. I still had personal struggles from the past to overcome.

However, instead of trying to cope by myself, I found help. If I had problems or questions, I could call other church members. They were willing to have coffee or breakfast so we could talk. I discovered I wasn't the only one with problems.

Something that helped me make a complete break with the past was getting

rid of its symbols and influences, and God also set me on a positive business path.

He reinstated my contractor's license and has directed me to new contracts, including a major job in Sacramento. I've found others that I sealed with a handshake, something that was never possible before.

Not only do I have more work than I can handle, I see myself as having a God-assigned task. I share with young carpenters and other subcontractors the reason I have peace and a smile on my face. God has also restored my relationship with my daughters.

Now, instead of running from God, I stand firm. I listen and trust in God. I have no fear. I let the Holy Spirit guide me for I know He will never let me down. God has great plans for me. I remain obedient and patient, enthusiastically awaiting His direction.



The President of Kenneth A. Doiron Home Construction, Ken Doiron oversees construction projects throughout central

California. He also serves as Vice President of the Yuba City Chapter of BMF. He and his wife, Victoria, live in Yuba City and attend the Church of Glad Tidings.

Truth in Business

THE DOMINIQUE FAESSLER STORY
Zurich, Switzerland

Millions of people imagine climbing to the top of the corporate ladder would be like entering heaven. I know better.

I say this from experience. At one time, I enjoyed all the perks: Cadillacs, country clubs, private schools for our children, hospitality suites at the stadium. And of course, corporate jets.

Such gleaming images flash across television screens worldwide. What they don't reveal is the whole truth. Although it appeared I had everything, I was plagued by stress, anxiety and an unhappy family.

How could my family be so miserable when I was providing them with such luxury? Because no amount of "goodies" compensates for your absence. I was on airplanes more than I was at home, leaving my wife to deal with our children by herself.

After a promotion to a major division in the United States, she had to face this struggle in a strange place.

For years, this didn't bother me. The son of a diplomat, I grew up pursuing success. Placed in boarding school in England at the age of 10, I later attended a Catholic school in Switzerland.

This background launched a distinguished academic career that concluded with law school. But after earning my law degree, I had no taste for courtrooms and legal briefs.

Instead, I chose a career in international business, where my knowledge of law came in handy. Joining a multi-national pharmaceutical firm, I started in the marketing division and worked my way to the top.

By the time I reached my mid-30s, my career had blossomed more than I originally imagined. By then I was managing director of a large subsidiary in Australia.

Next, the firm summoned me back to Switzerland to become executive assistant to the chairman and chief executive officer.

There I came in contact with corporate “hot shots,” since our chairman served on the board of five major, internationally-renowned companies.

Finally, in the early 1990s I moved to the New York area to head up a major U.S. division (the first non-American to hold such a position.)

However, at what should have been the peak of my career, disillusionment struck. I saw that wealth, privilege and power did not hold the key to life’s mysteries.

Not only did money and status fail to fulfill me, I experienced the seamy side of business. I saw large corporations using unethical behavior, including strong-arming competitors to get their own way.

Ironically, my employer’s tactics finally brought me crashing to the ground. One afternoon, returning to my office after a lunch meeting, I found the door to my office bolted.

“What the — ?” I mumbled before going to ask my secretary what was wrong. She nervously referred me to a director, who delivered the bad news.

“I’m sorry,” he said. “You’ve been relieved of your duties. You’ll have a month to pack up, sell your home, and return to Switzerland.”

Turns out my company’s practices had resulted in a nasty anti-trust investigation. Though I had nothing to do with it, as a key figure in the U.S., I became a convenient

scapegoat.

Despite my fall from grace, the company transferred me to another division. The transition back to Switzerland wasn’t easy. My kids didn’t speak German and I battled depression over what had happened. Only my wife held our home together.

Looking back I can see the hand of God on everything. To that point, I had given God little thought. Sure, I heard about Him as a boy in schools and churches, but that meant nothing.

However, after settling into my new job, I traveled to Israel on business. After wrapping up my duties, I took time to tour the Holy Land with my wife.

We spent four days visiting sites with a female guide. This Jewish woman told us

numerous stories about Jesus and the New Testament.

For the first time, I recognized that Jesus was a real person. Indeed, He had lived in this land 2,000 years ago and performed many amazing miracles during His life. This encounter sparked a curiosity to know more about Him.

Right after our trip, a friend invited us to a meeting sponsored by a group of Christian businessmen. At first, we wondered if they were some kind of strange club or sect.

However, we put aside our misgivings. At that meeting we heard Dr. Werner Gitt, a math professor from Germany, talk about his



relationship with Jesus. He explained Christ's life and death in a way that made perfect sense. And I couldn't argue with his academic credentials!

Afterwards, Dr. Gitt invited anyone who wanted to follow Jesus to walk forward and pray with him. We eagerly accepted.

"Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God," I said. "I believe You are the Savior of the world. I want You to be my Lord. I will follow You for the rest of my life."

That simple declaration turned my life upside down. That night my wife and I couldn't sleep. Something indescribable had taken place and we wanted to know more.

I thank God for the mature followers of Christ (many of them other businessmen) who explained so much about Jesus and the Bible. Thanks to their guidance, I realized that Jesus is alive in me.

I saw that my relationship with God doesn't come from a church or religious practices. I can go directly to the Father because I believe in the sacrifice His Son made for us by dying on the cross.

The guilt I had been carrying slowly faded away. God gave me the power to conquer many bad habits, too, such as lying, cheating, deceiving people, and watching pornographic videos.

Next, I detached myself from the things of the world that had entrapped me for so long. I stopped craving the cars, travel, fine food, and prestige that ultimately had become a prison.

"What's happened to Daddy?" our children asked my wife. Even at 11 (our oldest son) and 9 (twin daughters) they could see the difference. It didn't happen overnight, but I became a more patient, compassionate father.

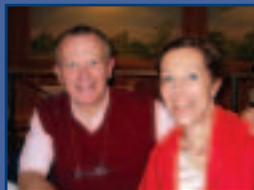
This change in me affected my conduct

in the office too. I started looking at employees and customers with Christ's eyes. They weren't human resources or tools to reach my goals. They were God's creations, worthy of understanding and respect.

God changed the way I did business, too. Before important decisions, I prayed and asked for wisdom. I asked Him to prevent me from being caught up in unethical situations.

He answered that prayer. Several years later, God also directed me to leave the company for other endeavors. Today, I still work with people in the business world, but I am free to spend more time telling them about Christ.

God has given me a burden for business and professional people who – like I used to – wander through life without knowing the truth. I want to let others know they, too, can find the truth in and through Jesus Christ.



After many years with a multinational corporation, Dominique Faessler worked for a while with a human rights organization based in Switzerland. He is now President of a businessmen's organization with groups in 28 nations. He and his wife, Françoise, have three children. They attend the English Church of Zurich.

This is how much God loved the world! He gave His Son, His one and only Son. And this is why: So that no one need be destroyed; by believing in Him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life.

John 3:16

The Message Bible

Reflect

Christ is the ANSWER...He makes life worth living.

As you have been reading the stories of the lives of different people in this issue of *Answer Magazine*, you may have been thinking, "Is it possible for me to really know God and have peace in my heart?"

The answer to this question is "YES!" It is experienced by believing in God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and being born-again by His Spirit.

God loves you and He showed that love in sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the Cross to pay the penalty for your sins. He wants to bless your life and make it full and complete.

He not only offers you abundant life here and now, but a life which is eternal. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

Do you want to be born-again and receive the free gift of eternal life? If you do, then follow these steps:

1. ADMIT to God that you are a sinner and are separated from Him, and that only the Lord Jesus can save you. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)
2. REPENT by turning away from sin and submitting to God. "I tell you... except you repent, you shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:5)
3. BELIEVE that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the Cross and shed His blood to pay the price for your sins, that He was buried

and rose again. "If you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9)

4. ASK God to save you. "For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:13)

If you would like to accept Jesus into your life, and receive the free gift of eternal life, then pray this simple prayer out loud:—

"Dear God, I come to You in the Name of Jesus. I now realize that I have a choice to make about my life. I believe that Jesus died for me, shed His blood to wash away my sins, and that He rose from the dead, making a way for me to have fellowship with You. I turn my back on the life I have lived without You, and I choose to follow Jesus from this moment on. I ask Jesus to be Lord of my life and to live in my heart. I thank You, Almighty God, that You love me, have forgiven me, and have accepted me as Your child, and that right now I am a new creation, born of God. Thank You Heavenly Father."

When you have made this very important decision, please complete the form below and return it to the nearest National Service Center (listed on the back cover).

We will then send you further helpful information.

I wish to inform you of my decision to follow Jesus Christ

(Please print clearly)

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