

FREE March - May 2015

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Because I said so:
a selection of my mother's sayings

The Perfect You by Dr Caroline Leaf

An Adventure of Faith with Nick Hawkes

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THE PERFECT YOU

Dr Caroline Leaf has discovered that “ThePerfectYou” is reflected in the unique structuring and functioning of our brains. In other words we are wired differently according to our unique way of thinking.

“Does anyone out there understand me?”

God says: “I do; do you?.....”

God tells us we are made in His image¹ with a sound mind that operates in love and power². Science proves we are **wired for love**, for the **positive**. This is called the **optimism bias**. Therefore both science and scripture demonstrate we are wired for healthy thinking, choices, emotions and health.

Once you know how you are made, you can know your purpose and fulfil your destiny. You are on your way to ‘**Becoming the Perfect You**’.

You are *uniquely you* and adding to your uniqueness is the expression of your uniqueness through your maleness and your femaleness.

God created you for uniqueness and for perfection. In fact the scriptures instruct us to become perfect as He is perfect³. *Becoming the Perfect You* is a lifelong walk - but - *it begins with recognizing what it means to be made perfect*: “I made them perfect BUT they choose to go down their own pathway”⁴.

The way in which you think and choose is the road to becoming ThePerfectYou

We are thinking beings made in the image of a thinking God, Who is perfect and Who is Love. But we have to *think and choose* to follow God and His way of thinking. This is **free will**. Einstein so accurately once said: “I want to know God’s thoughts, the rest are details.”

God gave each of us the ability to think and choose as well as a unique way in which to do this. The way that we use our unique ability to think and choose determines how we stay on the road of “ThePerfectYou”. Stepping out of our perfect thinking happens when we don’t listen to God; when we do our own thing. This is a bump in the road, and by admitting, quitting and beating, we can get back on the road again.

Each of us is a set-apart designer babe! There is something you can do that no one else can do - and - if you don’t do it: the whole world suffers because we are entangled in each other’s lives. This is called the Law of Entanglement in Quantum Physics and can be seen in Ephesians 4:16, as well as many other scriptures.

What do you have inside of you that no one else has?

Maybe no one ever told you that you are unique.

You have a divinely **pre-wired Perfect You** - a unique way of thinking and seeing the world that God has placed within you - a divine sense of purpose, a piece of eternity!⁵ (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

What is your piece of the puzzle?

Dr. Caroline Leaf is a cognitive neuroscientist with a PhD in Communication Pathology specializing in Neuropsychology. For nearly 30 years she has researched the science of thought. During her years in clinical practice as a Communication Pathologist she developed tools and processes that help people develop and change their thinking and subsequent behaviour. Her scientific Science of Thought techniques have transformed the lives of patients with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), learning disabilities, emotional traumas and released the potential of thousands of young students and adults.

Dr Leaf has developed the The Gift Profile- a 210-question journey that will help you gain a better understanding of who you really are, ThePerfectYou. ThePerfectYou profile is featured in her successful book, ‘The Gift In You’. The book has an accompanying study guide and 4-part DVD series. Find out more at drleaf.com.

¹ Genesis 1:26 ⁴ Ecclesiastes 7:29 ² 2 Timothy 1:7 ⁵ Ecclesiastes 3:11 ³ Matthew 5:48

THE PERFECT YOU: WIRED FOR HEALTH

The fact that you are **wired for love** is reflected in all the bodily systems. When you don’t think and choose well, when you step out of your **ThePerfectYou**, it affects the whole body. 75 to 98% of all mental and physical illness is a result of the thought life. If you are functioning according to **ThePerfectYou**, you remain in good health and your body heals a lot faster. You are **wired for health**.

NERVOUS SYSTEM- Healthy thoughts literally causes the brain to grow, making you more intelligent. Since the brain is connected via the rest of the nervous system to all the rest of the body, total health increases.

ENDOCRINE SYSTEM- Healthy thoughts positively affect the hormonal balance, which in turn positively affects all the rest of the bodily systems. Even fertility can be affected by the thought life.

IMMUNE SYSTEM- Thoughts affect the functioning of the defenders of the body- the white blood cells. Healthy thoughts

lead to robust white blood cells which can fight off infections and even devour cancer cells.

INTESTINAL SYSTEM- The gut has a brain of its own. A ‘gut feeling’ is real. Healthy thoughts enable proper food digestion and therefore lead to good general health.

INTEGUMENTARY SYSTEM- This system includes the skin, the largest organ in the body. Healthy thoughts lead to better skin- the first line of defence for the rest of the body.

MUSCULAR SYSTEM- When your thought life is healthy you are motivated to exercise. Exercised muscles in turn released substances that increase brain health. This is an example of an upward spiral.

CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM- Healthy thoughts are involved in proper communication between the heart mini-brain and the skull brain, leading to the promotion of well-being by the heart’s orchestration of the whole body’s electromagnetic rhythm and harmony. Good thoughts also enhance the vascular system, thus preventing hypertension.



PIECE OF THE PUZZLE

Someone told me about a 'God Shaped Hole'
That mysterious missing piece in a person's life
Only a god-shaped deity can fill
A round peg for a round hole
A square peg for a square hole
A god shape for your heart
Like a piece missing from a jigsaw puzzle
Only complete
When that last piece is in its place.

Someone told me about a man who spent 7 years
Carefully, painstakingly
Building a huge jigsaw puzzle
Thousands of days and thousands of pieces
But at the end a space, an empty place
One piece was lost
Nothing else in the world would fit
Nothing else would do, so what did they do?
A special piece, one of a kind, was created
He held it in the palm of his hand
Lingering, savouring, caressing, delighting
Then gently, reverently, positioning it
In the centre of his world, his jigsaw puzzle
In the place it had been especially designed for
A special shape, a special size for a special place
Designed for, purposed for, longed for
It completed the picture
That 'til then was incomplete

If there is a 'God-Shaped Hole'
There is also a 'Me Shaped Hole'
There is a world, a life, a purpose that precedes
me
That is much larger than my imagination
Designed for me
I have learned that if I go my own way
Try to fit an alternate life
Squeeze into a space not designed for me
I am lost
I have learned that if I allow myself to be taken up
Placed in the palm of God's hand
Held in God's heart
If I run to him as a child runs to her Father
He will embrace me and carefully place me
In the space designed for me
The full picture is then complete
I am complete
One whole life restored.

Wendy Rush

(First published as One Whole Jigsaw in 'One Whole Life: Words for the Journey' August 2010).

The story of the man who worked for 7 years to complete a jigsaw puzzle is true. His story was published around the world in May 2010. The manufacturer had long since stopped making the puzzle, but agreed to make one special piece to fit. The jigsaw was 5 ft wide and had 5,000 pieces. It was a picture of James Tissot's painting, The Return of the Prodigal Son.

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My mother had a lot of sayings, many of which are common to other mothers as well. When I took the time to consider them I realised how strange some of them actually sounded, but how many had become shorthand for whole conversations about life, identity and behaviour. Here are a few that I remember (not a complete list by any means!) In a way these sayings capture so much about my childhood and how I learnt to understand the world. And as an adult I also appreciate how they are signposts to my mother's own life experiences and the generation that she represents.

Be sure your sins will find you out: as a child these words hung over me like a thunder cloud ready to break should I step out of line. I only recently realised they come from the book of Numbers. It was as if Mum was really saying 'be careful because one way or another I will find out what you are up to'. There are one or two 'sins' that I committed long ago that I hope won't actually find me out, but I am left with the feeling that Mum probably knew about them anyway.

God loves you and so do I: this was something that a self-centred, uncommunicative teenager having a temper tantrum didn't want to hear. But I heard it often. And as the years unfolded I came to believe it was true. These words always remind me of Mum's persistent love for me even when my behaviour was at its very worst.

Because I said so: we were not encouraged to ask questions or to be curious, least of all when it came to being told what to do or what not to do. Unfortunately this resulted in me developing a tendency not to query anything I was told by any kind of authority figure until I was well into adulthood. And then I think I overdid it for a time when I began challenging everything people said to me. Sort of over compensating – a bit like when you're in the shower and the water's too cold so you turn the hot tap up, and then the water becomes too hot. Apologies to my dear husband who put up with a bit of this early in our marriage. It was a saying that galvanised me into making sure I explained things as fully as possible to my children, and answered their questions as best I could, relevant to their understanding. "This is why you are not staying up on a school night, can't wear (brand name) shoes, will not be going to see such and such a band, can't eat M and Ms for dinner."

Close the door, you don't live in a tent: tents didn't have doors, they had flaps. And I couldn't work out why, if you lived in a tent, you would leave the flap open. Wouldn't the flies get in there as well?

I shut the door anyway, and didn't answer back.

You'll survive: we didn't get a whole lot of sympathy or 'molly coddling' when I was young. You fell down, you got up. You scraped your knee, it would heal. Your best friend moved away, you would eventually get over it. There was no crying and feeling sorry for ourselves. The message was, life goes on and things will be okay in the end. Although the approach sounds a bit harsh, we did learn to pick ourselves up, brush ourselves off and move on.

What you do on your birthday you do all the year round: I never worked out whether this was a good or a bad thing. Did it mean that birthdays are really just ordinary, mundane days where you go to school, do the dishes, make your bed? Or did it mean that if you did fun, exciting things on your birthday like eat cake, ride your new tricycle or play with your best friend you could expect every other day to be just as much fun? I prefer to think the latter, but I suspect she meant the former.

He who expects nothing will not be disappointed: here's another ambiguous saying. Does it mean that it's better not to expect anything then you will never experience disappointment? Or was she trying to tell me that it's okay to expect good things – even great things – but be prepared that occasionally you might be disappointed? Again, I choose the latter explanation. I can't imagine a life where all you do is try and avoid disappointment. How boring!

Don't talk with your mouth half full, fill it: as a 6 or 7 year old I got a good telling off at the tea table for actually using this one. Mum was widowed when I was 3 years old and she had the occasional gentleman friend come to call. One such caller came over for dinner. He took a mouthful of food then began talking. What else was I to say except 'don't talk with your mouth half full, fill it'? Embarrassing for Mum no doubt. And me too in the end. I don't think I ever said that out loud again.

How do you know if you haven't tried it?: this is a very common Mum saying. One I used on my kids many times over. Makes sense to a mother, but doesn't always make sense to a child. Somehow, as children, we just KNOW things.

As long as you live under my roof, you'll follow my rules: yep, used this one a lot too. Particularly when we had teenagers in the house. It's terribly unreasonable unless you are a parent then it makes perfect sense. I strongly support



parents using this, otherwise watch out. There would be nothing worse than living under a roof where kids made the rules, unless of course you were a kid.

Have you got a clean hanky?: I guess there was some sense of parental shame attached to your child pulling out an already dirty hanky to blow their nose in public. Even if it started out clean, by the time you got home it would likely be dirty so what's the difference?

When you grow up and have kids I hope they're like you then you will know what I had to put up with: I still smile at this one. It was actually targeted towards my big sister who apparently was not averse to voicing her criticism of our Mum and her parenting skills. I learned to keep my opinions on this subject to myself.

Little pitchers have big ears: I always thought this was a weird one. Pitchers are jugs right? They have handles right? No ears? Although I did understand, even at a young age, that it meant adults would not discuss certain things in my presence because I would be listening and I just might let the cat out of the bag. Who, me?



Do you remember your Mum or Grandma saying any of these? Or did they have other unique sayings? Are there things you say that you really hope your children will remember? Share them on facebook.com/risemagazine.

‘Because I said so’: a selection of my Mother’s sayings

by Wendy Rush

When the wind changes your face will stay like that: for years I was never sure whether this was actually true or not. I was cautious just the same.

What did your last slave die of?: this one quickly circumvented any expectation you might have of Mum doing for you, fetching for you or picking up after you. Another effective strategy for ensuring we got off our backsides and did things for ourselves. I do recall my big sister being very quick to employ this saying as well.

If God wanted you to have holes in your ears he would have put them there: even now I chuckled at this one. Mum said this when I got my ears pierced four times (once in one ear, three times in the other) and when I paid for my sister to have her ears pierced for her birthday. Lo and behold, God must have given Mum special dispensation because I turned up to her house one day and there she sat, proudly displaying her freshly pierced ears!

You made your bed, now lie in it: a little saying that taught us about consequences. Don’t complain if you find yourself in circumstances of your own

making. We learned to think a bit more about the type of bed we wanted to lie in before we actually went ahead and made it.

If the shoe fits: you would assume, with the reference to Cinderella, that this would have been used in a positive sense. Not so. If you complained that someone had called you a name or criticised you in some way I would interpret this saying (rightly or wrongly) as confirming that whatever someone else had said was likely to be true. My response could have been ‘the shoe does not fit and I will not wear it’, when in fact mostly it was more along the lines of, ‘okay, I will squeeze the shoe onto my foot because other people say that it fits’.

I have since turned this saying around: ‘if the shoe doesn’t fit it means it is meant for someone else’s foot’. In other words, don’t try and squeeze yourself into something that is not for you or you will experience all sorts of pain and you will miss slipping into the readymade shoe which is designed especially for you.

I’m proud of you: I don’t remember hearing this until I was well into adulthood. Perhaps Mum said it in more subtle ways

that I never picked up on. Or perhaps she just didn’t want us to grow up thinking too much of ourselves. All I can say is that, when I did eventually hear it, it had a massive impact on me. Knowing my mother was proud of me made me walk that little bit taller.

There are many more sayings. But what I will certainly remember is that she was always there for me – through teenage temper tantrums, sneaking in at dawn when I should have been home at midnight, marriage, divorce, re-marriage, children and all the things that go along with it.

My kids tell me that I am starting to sound like Grandma, although some of my sayings are a little more original. Like ‘stay safe and have fun’ or ‘life is not fair, so you’ll have to learn to live with it, ‘teachers are people too, and they might just be having a bad day’.

I hope they will remember me saying ‘I love you’, ‘I am proud of you/admire you/am inspired by you’ (because I am) and ‘call me if you need me – anytime, day or night. No matter what’. Increasingly I am also saying ‘Because that’s what family is all about’.

Because it is.



*"All our dreams can
come true, if we have the
courage to pursue them."*

- Walt Disney



A Mother's Love Letter

As our children grow, often the opportunity to share with them about some of the most important things in life slips by. This is one mother's letter to her children – on love, marriage, parenthood and relationships.

My dear Child

There are only four questions of value in life...

What is sacred?

Of what is the spirit made?

What is worth living for?

And what is worth dying for?

The answer to each is the same...

Only love.

Don Juan DeMarco (Johnny Depp)

As you navigate through life you will experience love in its many forms. There is no greater love than that between a man and a woman who have determined to spend the rest of their lives together. I have watched you fall in love and heard you talk about marriage and babies and building a home together. I want to share with you some of the things I have learnt over the years which I hope will encourage you on your journey.

Love and Romance

Right now you are probably enjoying the romantic stage of your relationship. But romance is not the butterflies in the stomach and the racing heartbeat of the courting

couple. This is merely infatuation, which will pass as surely as night follows day. Romance is the art of showing someone you love them in a way that is meaningful to the other person. There are therefore a myriad of ways to keep romance alive.

You also need to know that love is not a feeling - it is a decision. When you marry you don't promise to stay together until your feelings change for one another. You promise to stay together through those times when the romantic love is suppressed by arguments, fatigue, bad habits and monotony. The greatest mystery of love is that loving actions, even when you feel loveless, actually generate loving feelings. So the quickest way to restore the love is to act like you love.



Making sure you have a strong partnership that exhibits sharing, co-operation and compromise will ensure that love and romance remains alive.

Everyone needs a relationship where they are confident they are loved unconditionally. No strings attached, no pre-requisites. Unconditional love is the only environment where a person can truly grow to become the person they were meant to be.

When you marry you will no doubt commit to the relationship "For richer, for poorer; in sickness and in health". Hardship, financial trouble and ill-health will magnify the character of your relationship. They will break down and even break up a relationship that has not been built on a firm foundation. They will, however, make an already stable and loving relationship stronger - magnifying the love that already exists. Work on building a foundation to prepare you for the storms ahead.

What does love look like? It does not look like getting your own way, thinking you know best or making sure the other person always accommodates your desires or your behaviour. It doesn't keep score, it is patient, trusts God, and always look for the best. It never looks back and keeps going to the end. (1 Corinthians 13)

Accept and Celebrate Each Other

When it comes to loving each other, don't try and mold yourself into some artificial rendition of the perfect wife or husband. No such person exists. Just be yourself. Ralph Waldo Emerson said "to be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment". Your relationship should help you both to be yourselves, not inhibiting, not restricting, not stunting your spiritual or emotional growth.

Observing and listening are the keys to understanding what makes your partner happy. Trust is paramount. Trust that you will tell each other the truth. Trust that you won't do anything to harm the relationship. Trust that each of you will always have the well-being of each other and of your family at heart.

You will both grow up and you will both grow old. The challenge that lies ahead is making sure you grow together, not apart. Exercise tolerance and patience and recognize that as you grow you will no doubt change. Embrace and celebrate each other's growth.

Remember that love without conversation is impossible.

The Wonder of Children

I was once told there is no convenient time to have children. Yes, you can plan to a certain degree but cannot totally control conception, pregnancy and labour. Regardless of how inconvenient a baby's arrival may be, they enter the world at exactly the right moment for them - and enter our lives at exactly the right moment for us.

Author and educator Elizabeth Stone said that when you decide to have a child, you make a decision for your heart to walk around outside your body for the rest of your life. Like me, you will find this to be true.

Unconditional love is the only environment where a person can truly grow to become the person they were meant to be.

Each stage of a child's development has its challenges - whether it's sleepless nights when they're teething or sleepless nights when they're out partying. But each stage has its joys - from their first word to the last grown-up conversation you had with them.

It's important to position yourself appropriately in the eyes of your child. You are first and foremost a parent: protector, nurturer, healer, teacher, provider, safe haven. Then, and only then, can you be their friend.

The hardest word you will ever say to your child is "no". The most loving word you can ever say to your child is "no". The hardest thing will be to gently love them when they display their displeasure at not hearing the word "yes".

The issue of discipline is a controversial one but as far as possible, use positive reinforcement. Highlight the right behaviour, while directing them away from wrong behaviour. I found quite early on that this was the best approach. 'Spare the rod, spoil the child' is a saying that grew out of a Proverb. A rod was a stick used by shepherds to guide their sheep to go in the desired direction. Shepherds did not use it to beat their sheep. The proper translation of the saying is 'Give your child guidance, or they will go astray.'

Have regular conversations with your child about day to day things so when you need to discuss serious issues they will be receptive. If you only speak to them about things they

should or shouldn't do, they will quickly turn off and turn away from you and you will have little or no influence from that point on.

'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it' (Proverb). This doesn't mean he (or she) will always walk the straight and narrow. But it does mean that there is a very good chance your child will eventually come back to the rules for living that you taught them when they were young.

No matter what happens, always make sure they know that you love them. Psychiatrist Harold S Hulbert reminds us that "Children need love, especially when they do not deserve it."

And remember that your child will need to know that his parents love each other unconditionally too. Your grandfather often said that the best thing a man can do for his children is to love their mother.

Brian (Head) Welch (formerly of the band Korn) says that, most of all, children need communication and love. "I never got too many hugs when I was growing up", he says. A hug can express so much when there are just no words to say what you feel. A hug can calm a child's fear, make them feel safe, sooth the hurt, share the joy, show appreciation - but most of all a hug is the exclamation mark after "I love you".

And as your child grows, go with them into the world - show them the things that you enjoyed as a child and discover new things together. Talk with them, read with them and help them understand the world they inhabit. Encourage them to be curious, to ask questions and to explore for themselves. Rachel Carson, writer, scientist and founder of the environmental movement, said "If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in."

Be Alert for Threats

The two major threats to marriage are debt and adultery.

The burden of debt crushes even the most well intentioned hearts. Resolve to borrow only what you can easily repay and learn to be content. Contentment is about being happy with what you have. If you truly believe that what you have now is enough, you will always be happy. And everything else will be a bonus.

“In marriage do thou be wise: prefer the person before money, virtue before beauty, the mind before the body; then thou hast a wife, a friend, a companion, a second self”. (William Penn, English real estate entrepreneur, born in 1644)

As for adultery – it takes many, insidious, forms and is not just sexual impropriety. It starts when a physical, emotional, mental or spiritual attachment displaces your spouse from their rightful position in your life. Cherish your partner and if you feel there is less physical contact, less conversation or more time apart than there used to be, it’s an early warning sign that you need to re-connect.

Plans and Dreams

Create shared dreams and nurture them - however distant they may be and however impossible they may seem. Sharing a dream gives it substance and brings it to life. It joins your hearts together and moves you forward as one. The saddest relationship is one that cannot see past tomorrow. There’s a good chance that if you can’t picture yourselves together in 5 years, 10 years or 25 years time, then you are heading in different directions. Take the time to build plans and dream dreams that take you both forward together.

“When we are dreaming alone it is only a dream. When we are dreaming with others, it is the beginning of reality.” (Former Catholic Archbishop of Brazil, Dom Helder Camara)

And Walt Disney, who built an industry around dreams, said “All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.”

Commitment and Compromise

There is no such thing as the perfect couple. No-one is ever 100% right for each other. The difference between relationships that work and those that don’t is that those who are serious about commitment will overlook some of the imperfections while the others will spend their lives searching for something that doesn’t exist.

It’s not necessary to agree on everything but it is important to try and see things from your partner’s point of view. Why is it they have the opinion they do, why are they afraid of certain things, why do they act the way they do, or love the things they do? Don’t worry if you just don’t get where they are coming from. You are different people, wired differently. But the fact that you take some effort to understand is worth a whole lot.

Remember that love without conversation is impossible.

Don’t expect to like all the same things and don’t give up activities your partner doesn’t like just because they won’t do them with you. Be supportive of anything that gives each other joy and seek a balanced independence. Both of you will have compromised at least something in your decision to pursue each other, but the ultimate goal is to build a relationship that benefits both of you - where you both feel safe, where your needs are being met and where you have the surety that whatever you’ve had to compromise on is absolutely worth it.

When you commit to each other you commit to compromise and negotiation every day. It can be hard work, but the result is enormously rewarding. You don’t join a gym and expect to get fit without working out. And you shouldn’t get married expecting your relationship to grow and flourish without being prepared to put in the hard yards.

Marriage is all about dependability. Trust, loyalty and love grow out of the knowledge that your partner is one who can be relied on through every circumstance, even when you feel you may not be deserving of it. Dependability keeps the furnace of romantic love smouldering, making it easy to fan into flames of passion.

Always treat each other as partners. When you don’t include the other person in decision making, you exclude half of the ability and gifts that God has given to your marriage. Women are not better suited to some tasks while men are better suited to others. Share in the chores that need to be done. Don’t be afraid to put your hand up for the jobs you prefer to do, and negotiate fairly for the ones that neither of you care for.

Respect the contribution that each makes to the relationship and the family and remember to show appreciation often. “Thank you” can mean so much to someone who has just washed the floor, put the rubbish out, washed your car or ironed

your shirts. Never take for granted the servant heart that works to make your home comfortable and your family cared for.

God’s Thoughts on Marriage and Intimacy

‘It’s good for a man to have a wife, and for a woman to have a husband. Sexual drives are strong, but marriage is strong enough to contain them and provide for a balanced and fulfilling sexual life in a world of sexual disorder. The marriage bed must be a place of mutuality-the husband seeking to satisfy his wife, the wife seeking to satisfy her husband. Marriage is not a place to “stand up for your rights.” Marriage is a decision to serve the other, whether in bed or out.’ (1 Corinthians)

God holds marriage in such high regard that he likens it to the relationship that Christ has with the body of believers, the church.

‘Husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church - a love marked by giving, not getting. Christ’s love makes the church whole. His words evoke her beauty. Everything he does and says is designed to bring the best out of her... And that is how husbands ought to love their wives. They are really doing themselves a favor-since they are already “one” in marriage.’ (Ephesians)

Enjoy Life Together

Finally, and importantly, enjoy your life together. Entering into a committed, long term relationship doesn’t mean that all of a sudden you need to be sensible all the time. Sure - be responsible. But sometimes being sensible will deprive you of life’s greatest moments.

Cultivate a spirit of happiness in your home. Put some energy into coming up with ways of leaving work behind and injecting some fun into every day. Life is short, the years pass all too quickly. Have fun together and do whatever it takes to keep your relationship interesting. Enjoy your life and your partner will always be glad they chose you. Laugh often and laugh loudly. Be your partner’s most enthusiastic supporter. Clap and cheer the loudest for each other - each and every day.

As you plan your life with your partner, and as you travel your chosen path together, I wish you a safe journey but, above all, I wish you Love.

Mum
xox

An Adventure of Faith

with Dr Nick Hawkes



Nick Hawkes talks to Rise about how he came to write a summary of the 'Greatest Book Ever Written', and how it came to be translated into Hindi.

Grant Franke knew he was in trouble when he overheard one of his teachers insisting that Adam was one of Jesus' twelve disciples. At the time, Grant was Headmaster of Reidos Reis, a Christian school of 1,500 students in Mozambique. Nick Hawkes met Grant in Sydney when he was exhausted and in much need of a rest. "My heart went out to him so I asked him what would really help him in his ministry. He replied, 'What I really need is a good summary of the Bible that is accessible to those with limited education. God's word transforms people. It speaks truth and gives hope. However, there are all sorts of influences waiting to sabotage authentic Christianity in Africa. African theology can be a million kilometres wide and one millimetre deep. I need you to write a super-clear, comprehensive summary of the Bible.'

"I could have wished for a simpler mandate! Writing a summary of the Bible's 800,000 words – with theologians squabbling over every second verse – is not a task to undertake lightly."

Before setting out on this massive project, Nick thought he should check with a higher authority.

"I thought I'd test if God really wanted me to do it. I'd ask my friend, Jossy Chacko, if he'd be interested in the project. Jossy heads up Empart, a wonderful organisation that trains indigenous Christians to be church planters in India. Jossy said that he would want such a book. Most of his church planters only

have rudimentary village education. He said that he'd have it translated into Hindi and anticipated a first print run of 50,000 copies!"

(Nick's note to self: Don't test things out with God unless you're prepared to act on the result.)

And so, Nick began to write a summary of the Bible that would be given to reputable mission agencies free, without copyright.

Then Nick's daughter got married. "The relevance of this was that our house was full of wonderful young Christians, some from overseas, who had come for the wedding. They heard of the project and many admitted to being so time poor that they had never actually read through the Bible. Could I please make it available to them also?"

"This meant I needed a publisher who would print it for the West. Fortunately, *Rhiza Press* came to the party."

When faced with such a momentous task, where do you start?

"The next two years were extraordinarily exciting. I experienced God's supernatural help and knew just before I wrote each book exactly how to do it. It was just as well. The books of the Bible can be very different. I mean: How on earth do you summarise Proverbs where every verse has two wisdom sayings? How do you summarise the Psalms? How do you help people through the Jewish liturgical proscriptions in Leviticus, or help them through the violence of Judges – let alone the controversy over Genesis and Revelation?"

"It was amazing to feel God go before me and prepare the way.

"I started at Genesis and ended at Revelation – all very standard. The fact that I'd spent twenty years writing Bible studies and sermon series on different books of the Bible was, of course, a huge help. There was a sense that God had been training me for decades for this project."

Nick admits that, when it comes to summarising the Bible, you can't be sure

that you haven't left anything important out. "You can't know. What is important for one person may be different for another. However, there obviously has to be some sort of broad agreement. That's why we asked a lot of people to look at it. In fact, I took twice as long editing it (with my friend, Greg Denholm) as I did writing it.

"Empart also spent a number of months testing it in their training centres across India before releasing the Hindi version.

"Rather wonderfully: the book has been endorsed by some of the world's leading figures in biblical literature and mission."

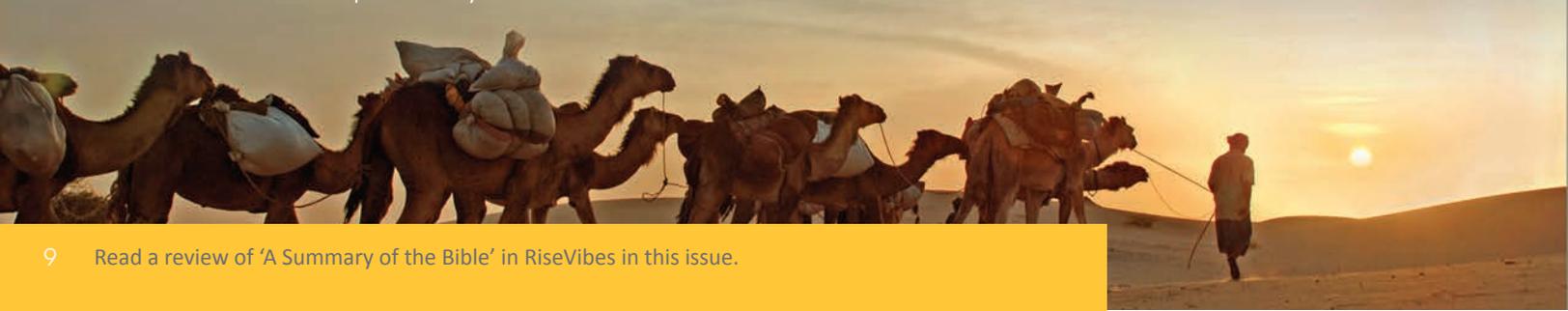
These endorsements have come from people such as Mike Hey, Area Director, East Asia and Pacific, for Operation Mobilisation; Scott Bolinder, President, Global Publishing, Biblica (Publishers of the 'New International Version' of the Bible); and Jossy Chacko, Founder and International President of Empart.

Many people want to say they have read the Bible but are intimidated by its size and complexity. According to Nick this book unlocks the Bible to busy and non-theologically trained people. At one-sixth the size of a full Bible, it is the size of a large novel. In fact, many read it as a novel, although each book of the Bible has been summarized in such a way that it can also be studied on its own.

A particular feature of the book is its clarity. Questions, helpful background information, maps and diagrams are provided to help people understand it. Another feature is the inclusion of "memory verses" that can be learned by heart.

Nick assures us that readers of *A Summary of the Bible* can be confident they have read the essence of the Bible. "It does not leave sections out without comment. All key texts are written in full. The power of Scripture is therefore retained.

"The book will appeal to anyone curious about what the Bible contains. And it will be a valuable tool for pastors, leaders, students... and crucially, for every day Christians" says Nick.



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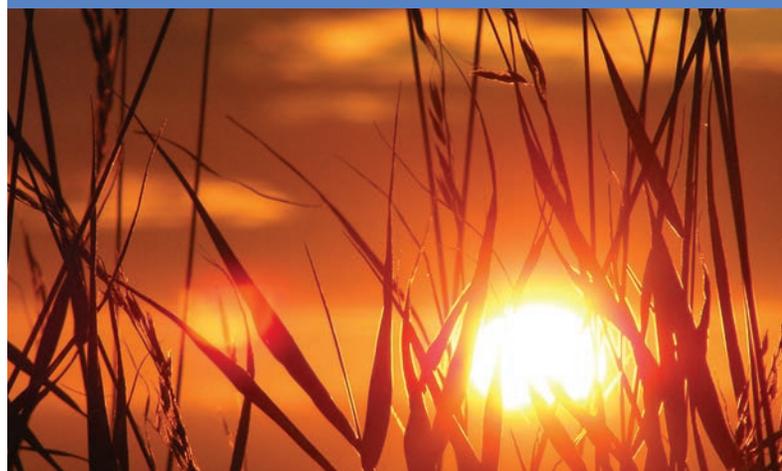
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RISEWISE

By Dr Nick Hawkes



The Human Brain

Graeme Clark was awarded Australia's highest civil honour, the Companion of the Order of Australia, for services to medicine. Throughout the 70s, he had led a research team in Melbourne which developed the bionic ear. This remarkable scientist was invited to deliver the first Boyer Lecture in 2007. In the first of these lectures, he said:¹

Could the physical universe, which physicists now show had only the remotest chance of producing carbon-based life, have evolved into human consciousness by mindless chance? I think not. The human brain is so sophisticated a mechanism that scientists have still not been able to design engineering systems that can match its crucial functions. For me, that means a supernatural entity, ...God was responsible.

Graeme Clark goes on to confess his bewilderment with atheism. (An atheist, by the way, is someone who is sure that there is no God). Graeme Clark says that: a human being would have to know everything to actually know there is no God.

In saying this, he joins a long list of scientists who refuse to believe that a life form as sophisticated as the human brain could have assembled itself by mindless chance. There has to be a reason behind the extraordinary sophistication of life.

Sadly, many people are too lazy or indifferent to investigate the meaning behind the miracle of existence. Please don't be one of them. Life, with all its imperfections, is an opportunity to accept the loving friendship of the Creator, a Creator who wants to continue to enjoy your love in eternity.

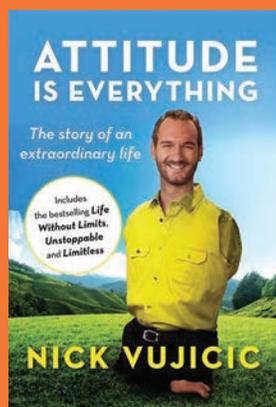
¹ Reported in the *Weekend Australian*, 10-11 Nov, 2007. The Boyer Lectures are a series of lectures given by prominent Australians at the invitation of the board of the ABC

For more see: 'The Bible on the Key Issues of Life', by Dr Nick Hawkes, available from bookshops. Nick has degrees in science and theology. He is a pastor, writer and broadcaster.

nickhawkes.net

Attitude is Everything: the story of an extraordinary life

By Nick Vujicic



This book is actually three in one and includes Nick's bestselling titles: *Life Without Limits* (2011), *Unstoppable* (2012) and *Limitless* (2013). I heard about Nick, who was born without arms and legs, some years ago and have long been curious about how he negotiates his way around a world that is designed for people with a complete set of limbs. When I saw this 700-odd page book I admit I did hesitate, but not for long. I am glad I read the books in order of publication as each one

progresses Nick's story and you can see the development of his faith, his life and his ministry throughout.

After reading about Nick you will be convinced that attitude really is everything and that any limitations you think you may have can be overcome by looking at what you can achieve rather than what you can't and, in particular, by looking to your Creator to understand your purpose. Nick has a strong Christian faith and an outrageous sense of humour. The book takes you through the grief his parents experienced at giving birth to a child without limbs when there was no prior indication that anything was wrong, and the despair that Nick himself felt as a boy when he believed his life could not amount to much because he didn't have all the body parts that his friends had. His parents Boris and Dushka dedicated themselves to ensuring their son was treated no differently to any other child his age, which instilled in him a desire for independence and the courage to face, and subsequently overcome, significant obstacles including a school yard bully! His parents' faith was a great example to him and it was his own faith that led him to accept his uniqueness and to look to God to find his purpose. He is now thankful he was born without limbs and says he lives a 'ridiculously good life.'

Nick wrote *Life Without Limits* when he was 27 years old, which makes him still only in his early 30's and I was amazed at the experiences he has had and the lives he has touched at such a young age. From speaking at the World Economic Forum to sharing the gospel with prostitutes in the slums of India, he has a wonderful gift of relating to people in so many different circumstances. The message he brings is one of hope and it is not just his life that speaks to us, Nick also shares about the people he meets that inspire him, for example a legally blind award winning photographer, a paralysed yachting instructor and a little boy called Daniel who was also born without limbs.

The first book concludes with a personal action plan which encourages you to delve deeper and relate your circumstances back to Nick's message of hope. The second book reveals his growing global ministry, business ventures and his ever deepening faith. Now married with a child, it is also a love story about how he and his wife Kanae came to be together. The third book contains 50 Christian devotionals and draws on material from the previous two. There are some wonderful photographs of Nick, the people he has

met and places he has visited – including of him surfing and scuba diving. (He also skateboards and plays the drums!)

Born in Australia and now living in the US, Nick Vujicic is the most inspiring person I have come across and what he has to say is relevant to everyone. Whatever your circumstances, God is always present. Whatever trials you face you were created for a unique and specific purpose. Wherever you find yourself, and whatever others say about you, your life has value.

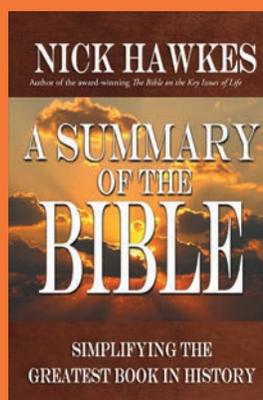
It is a book (or books) that I will refer back to for inspiration time and again.

'Attitude is Everything' is published by Allen and Unwin and can be purchased at Koorong (online and instore).

Reviewer: Wendy Rush

A Summary of the Bible: simplifying the greatest book in history

By Nick Hawkes



The first striking thing about Nick Hawkes' *A Summary of the Bible: Simplifying the greatest book in history* is that it is about the same size as the Bible at over 450 pages thick. However, it is actually a much easier read and it does summarise and simplify the Bible, not to mention that the writing is quite sparse on the pages (the word count means it is about one-sixth the size of a full Bible). I expect that most people may not read this book from cover to cover, just like the Bible, but instead zip around and use

it as a helpful overview to better understand scripture as they delve into the different books.

The beginning of each book starts with asking four or five key questions: Who wrote this book? When was it written? What type of writing is it (the question of genre being one of the most frequently misunderstood issues by modern Christians)? What does it contain or what were the main reasons it was written? When it is pertinent he also answers the question: What was happening when it was written? This is a particularly important question of historical context for books like Deuteronomy and Revelations. The book then goes on to summarise what is going on for that book of the Bible with chapters often grouped together to focus on the main flow of the narrative.

Nick Hawkes is clearly a lover of scripture and seeks to bring the reader a greater clarity in understanding what God is teaching us through his word. His summaries of chapters read like a birds-eye view, stripping away superfluous detail and focussing on the keys to it all. Often commentaries hone in on small details or disappear off on tangents but *A Summary of the Bible* really does keep the Bible front and centre. This book rarely takes scripture and tries to put a modern spin on what it means for us now, the focus remains on

helping the reader understand what was happening in the passage.

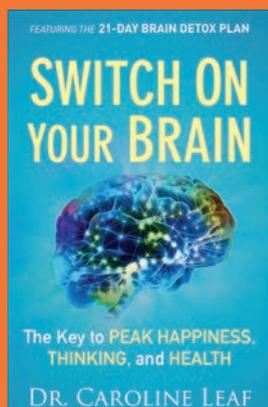
A Summary of the Bible is a helpful resource for ordinary people who would like to understand the Bible better. In many ways it is different from NIV (New International Version) study notes and commentaries. Rather than trying to provide extra knowledge on small details found in a passage it provides a broader understanding on the flow of what is going on and why that matters. Well over half of this book is about the Old Testament, so if you need something to help simplify and clarify what is going on in the Bible that Jesus read – this may be the reference tool you need. Dr Nick Hawkes may be a theologian but *A Summary of the Bible* is an easy-to-read overview to help everyday Christians better understand the timeless word of God. Also useful for anyone else who is interested in knowing more about the greatest book ever written.

'A Summary of the Bible: simplifying the greatest book in history' is published by Rhiza Press and can be purchased at Koorong (online and instore).

Reviewer: Scott Berry

Switch on Your Brain: the key to peak happiness, thinking, and health

By Dr Caroline Leaf



I knew I was reading the right book when I stood in the aisle of the plane waiting to disembark and the gentleman behind me indicated that I was about to walk off and leave it in the seat pocket. Every day we have to filter, interpret and make choices on a massive amount of information, while at the same time our attention spans are decreasing. Self help books, programs, and television talk shows promote the benefits of 'positive thinking'. Pastors preach about 'taking captive every thought'¹ and thinking on

those things that are 'true, and honorable, right, pure, lovely, and admirable'². More of us are experiencing depression and anxiety. And most of us accept the general principle that how we think has an impact on our health. So what does all this mean?

Dr Caroline Leaf connects the dots, as it were, and explains in fairly simple terms exactly what happens in our brain when we think certain ways. As a scientist who has worked in the area of cognitive neuro science since 1985, she shows us that changes in thinking actually change physical aspects of the brain. Our mind controls our brain, and our brain controls our physical state. So it makes sense that how we think makes a difference to how we feel and behave.

The other key aspect of this book is that it reveals the science behind scripture and why Bible verses such as 'be still and know that I am God' and 'be transformed by the renewing of your mind' are so important to our mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing.

Dr Leaf shows us that we have a lot more power over our circumstances than we think we do. And that negative thoughts and feelings acquired over many years can, with a bit of effort, be turned around. The negative can be switched off and the positive switched on.

The book includes a 21 day detox plan which I have yet to launch into. But I am now more aware about the way I think and what it might mean for my health, behaviour and even intellectual capacity. I have learned that I should focus more (not attempt too many things at once, or to think about other tasks while carrying out my current task); that I should make more time to be still and enter into deeper thought (not be distracted or think I need to keep 'doing' all the time); that when a thought enters my head that I know to be negative, destructive or harmful I can choose to take it 'captive' and change it into something more positive or helpful. I am learning to focus on and enjoy the moment.

I was encouraged to learn that we are in control of our own brains and, if we work at it, we can actually grow more brain cells and become as intelligent as we want to be. That we often receive information from the outside world that is untrue, but we process it as if it is true. This results in wrong attitudes, a low sense of self worth and sometimes depression and anxiety. Believing the lies will process them into physical realities. But the good news is we can intercept these lies and resist their destructive influence by choosing not to let them infiltrate our brains.

"The hardest part about achieving peak happiness, thinking, and health is remembering that we can choose them. Achieving them is not accomplished by putting on a brave or happy face, nor are they obtained by adopting an ostrich mentality and pretending that problems don't exist...the way to find this state is by harnessing the neuroplasticity God has designed in our brains and choosing to re-wire – or renew – our mind."

If you are interested in how the brain works, are looking to improve your state of happiness and health, or you have an interest in the relationship between science and faith, then this book is a must read. Described as the owner's manual for the brain, it's a book we should all read and re-read if we want our brains to achieve peak performance.

Reviewer: Wendy Rush

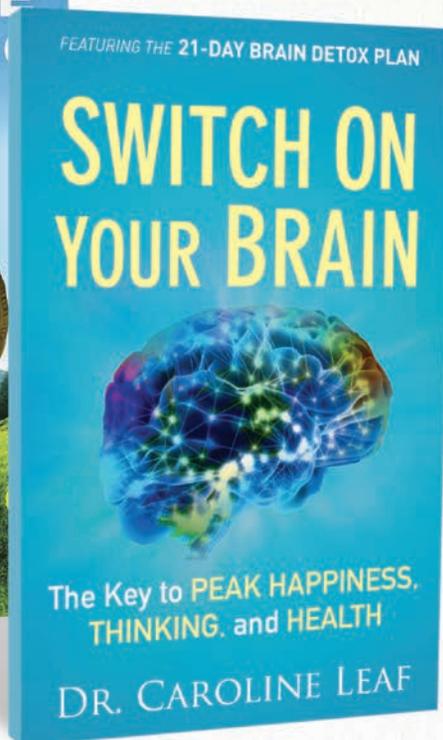
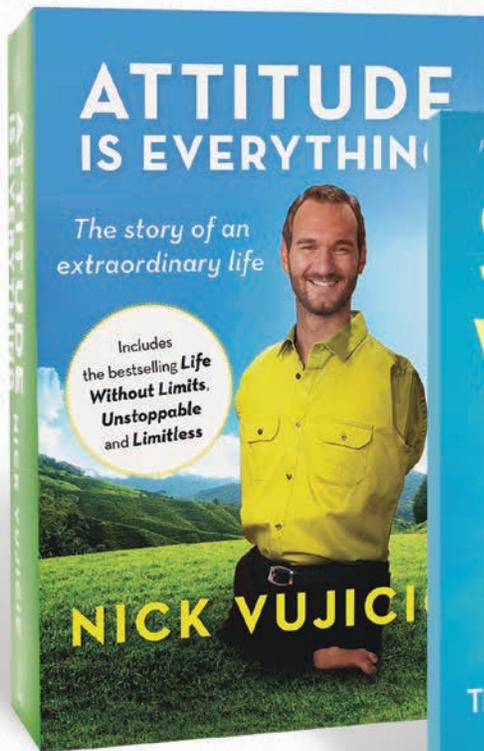
'Switch on Your Brain: the key to peak happiness, thinking, and health' is published by Baker Books and can be purchased at Koorong (online and instore).

¹ 2 Corinthians 10:5

² Philippians 4:8

Fancy yourself as a reviewer? We welcome expressions of interest from people who would like to write reviews for Rise Magazine.

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