

APRIL - MAY 2019

THE CHRISTIAN Writer



BOOK REVIEW

Enduring the Dream
BY GARRY WILLS

SEE INSIDE FOR

Competitions
New Members
& Latest News

Rightly explaining the word of truth – 2 Timothy 2:15

(New Revised Standard Version of the Bible)



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The editor reserves the right to condense and/or edit any contributions for reason of space. Ideas and opinions will not be edited but editing of a technical nature may occur to maintain the highest quality of writing possible.

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The views and opinions of authors expressed in this magazine do not necessarily state or reflect those of the editor.

Website:

Our vibrant, user-friendly website is full of interesting information, such as details of seminars and copies of past magazines. It also gives each individual member an online presence. So please encourage other Christian writers you know to join us via our website:

www.nzchristianwriters.org

President's Report

We are excited to be featuring Garry Wills' book *Enduring the Dream* as our featured book for this edition of The Christian Writer. The cover artwork of this remarkable book was designed by our graphic designer Paul Smith at Blue Sky Creative. This book was also featured in a previous NZCW seminar where Paul shared with us 'A Novel Look at Book Design' and 'Making Story Visual: Creative Case Studies'. Through this book you'll see how Garry's passion is to see people coming to know Jesus, see them grow and develop their skills for the Kingdom.

Since February 2019, our Board (previously our Committee) for NZ Christian Writers has been preparing a variety of documents to help future-proof our organisation and provide clarity to the nature of the Roles and Responsibilities on the Board. These include the various functional roles at Board level, plus guidelines for our Competition Judges, Local Group Leaders, and include frameworks for our Board Meetings and Election Process. Our primary goal here is to help prepare the way forward for NZ Christian Writers to grow for the future. I am also extremely grateful for the content preparation and support in proofreading from Ruth Linton and Janette Busch. They have each exhibited incredible diligence in preparing these essential documents for NZ Christian Writers.

On a personal note, I am so looking forward to our Retreat 2019 with several members, keynote speakers and special guests joining us at the Flaxmill Retreat Centre towards late April 2019. This retreat time will be refreshing and relaxing for all involved. It may even be the birthplace of new and inspiring publication projects. With this in mind, I'll finish this report with a scripture of thankfulness and prayer from Philippians 1:3-6 (NKJV):

'I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that he who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.'



Blessings,
Justin St Vincent

Inspiration Before Perspiration

Submitted by Julia Martin

In a recent newspaper article, three well-known New Zealand writers who are currently finalists for book awards share their views on the source of their inspiration. Here are some excerpts from their comments.

Lloyd Jones (*The Cage, Mister Pip, A History of Silence, Hand Me Down World*)

Writers are often asked where they get their inspiration. From reading is the quick answer—and from being engaged in the world in a particular way. Inspiration is mostly the result of hard work, then more hard work, and then, if you are lucky, sparks fly.

The elements of story—characters, event—meet in language. This is where a story derives its persuasiveness from; it is not just the sound of someone speaking and thinking. It is the sound our deepest selves make. A kind of whispering intended only for ourselves to hear, though the reader is invited to eavesdrop. Where do characters come from? ‘Character’ is a joint endeavour. The writer offers up a few scraps; the reader does the rest, joining the dots. A reader will read their own experience into a story. For every reason, every character lives in a different way for each reader.

Fiona Kidman (*This Mortal Boy, The Book of Secrets, The Captive Wife*)

How does one begin to write a novel? Usually with some difficulty, I have to admit. For me, it is like a rustling in the undergrowth, something stirs and says, ‘Pay attention, this is important.’ And usually, this is a character speaking to me.

There is resistance, an urge to ignore the sure and certain voices in my ear. At first there will be research. Then comes the job of putting together all these fragments on which I will build the story. The time comes when I must shut the external world out and enter into the era which I have chosen to write about. I have to listen to the ‘voices’ of the characters, letting them take me over, informing my imagination of what and who they are, to leave research behind and simply commit to the story.

Kate Duignan (*The New Ships*)

It’s not so much about finding inspiration as inducing a mood. I have to get clear of all mental clutter of my day to let the novel come down like a mist over my head. What’s tricky now, with a fairly busy set of household responsibilities, is to let myself be that irresponsible, purposeless, dreamy, forgetful person. To let go of shopping lists, the swimming lessons, the kindy pick up time and whatever else. Let that drift away. So it’s a relaxing back, not a straining forward. I use triggers to induce the mood. Having induced a mood, you have to transmute it into words. That’s where—and this took me a long time to learn—you have to be a gentle, firm and very determined coach to your wayward self. You have to sit inside the daydream and make your fingers move over the keyboard simultaneously, and the fingers move the dream, and the dream moves the fingers.

And you have to eat protein. Omelettes and Snickers bars got me through that novel.

Literary Terms Matching Puzzle

Submitted by Ruth Linton

Match the terms below with their correct meaning

(Solution on Page 13)

A	SIMILE	1	Set of three dots indicating the omission of words or interruption of a thought.
B	METAPHOR	2	Part of a sentence containing a finite verb but not usually containing the full thought of the sentence.
C	COMMA	3	Imaginative comparison of two objects where one thing is called another because of similarities.
D	ELLIPSIS	4	Words that work together with nouns or pronouns to form a phrase and often linking parts of a sentence.
E	PARENTHESIS	5	Comparison of one thing with another using the words 'like' or 'as'.
F	TENSE	6	Group of words forming a conceptual unit but not a sentence.
G	HYPERBOLE	7	Form of a verb indicating time (also the continuance or completeness) of the action.
H	ALLITERATION	8	Part of a sentence containing the main complete verb (that relates to the main noun).
J	CLAUSE	9	Explanatory or qualifying word, clause or sentence inserted into a sentence and usually marked off by brackets, dashes or commas
K	PHRASE	10	Punctuation mark indicating a pause or break between parts of a sentence.
L	PREDICATE	11	Repetition of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words.
M	PREPOSITION	12	Exaggeration, especially for effect.

Slogans, Mottos, Jingles and Mission Statements

By Ruth Linton

Waste not; want not. The Warehouse, the Warehouse, where everyone gets a bargain. Early to bed, early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise. Slip, slop, slap. Mottos, slogans, jingles and mission statements are everywhere. The shorter, the better it seems. Last year our church came up with a new mission statement—just four words: *Real people; real life.*

As part of my scripture memorisation programme I have recently come to Romans 12. The last half of the chapter contains a number of pithy statements and goals of faith and I love them:

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good... not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer... and so on. (Verses 9, 11-12) We could take one phrase a week, meditate on it, practise doing it and we'd soon renew our minds as we are exhorted to do in verse two of the same chapter which says:

'...present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable (well thought out and considered) service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.'

It is easy to think that, unless we are doing some outstanding act of service for the Lord, we are not doing his will for our life. Not so. We tend to overlook the 'cup of cold water' ministry Jesus spoke of in Matthew 25:31-46 (the parable of the sheep and the goats) and also in Matthew 10:40-42.

As I was considering this year and my goals as a writer, I was particularly challenged by the words of Romans 12: 9 and 11:

- *'...not lagging in diligence...'* Or will it be the last-minute rush?
- *'...fervent in spirit...'* or will it be slap-dash, 'that will do' effort?
- *'...serving the Lord...'* or will I be saving face or boosting my self-importance?
- *'...rejoicing in hope...'* Yes, one day I will be successful.
- *'...patient in tribulation...'* Oh dear. Another rejection but the Lord's time will come.
- *'...continuing steadfastly in prayer...'* Yes, I will trust you Lord. I will seek your favour and guidance. I will fulfil the desires and goals you have for me, both in the writing arena and in all areas of my life. Lord, I trust you and receive your strength today. Thank you Lord. Amen.

Davy Jones Coffee Lounge

by Janet Fleming

Author's Note: I wrote this poem in 1989 after the dinner at Davy Jones Coffee Lounge in Whangarei when Sherwood Wirt of America was the speaker. It was at this point that I became involved with Christian Writers.

Davy Jones Coffee Lounge,
That's the place to go,
Learn to be a writer
What I've wanted so.
Sherwood Wirt is speaking,
Here's a tip or two
Folk to make contact with
Things that I must do.

Points made listened to,
Written down as well,
Editors, media,
Hints my work to sell.
Needed motivation,
Must have contacts too,
Add to that discipline
Plus a tool or two.

Start with motivation,
Think I got that right,
Hard to read my Bible
Late to bed last night.
Long to serve my Saviour
With a heart that's keen,
But it's hard to do it
If my diet's lean.

Number '2' was contacts,
Dining editors,
But I had a struggle
Knocking at his door.
All along the roadway
Leading to his gate
Stood a queue of writers
Guess I'd come too late!

How about the next point,
Not my strongest trait,
Discipline's a sore point
When you're always late.
Try to write a minute
Kids don't understand;
Pigs are in my garden,
Neighbours need a hand.

Will I make a writer?
With God's help I'll try.
Not a CS Lewis,
Shakespeare? No, not !!
But if I can help it,
This one thing I'll do,
I will write so others
Find my Saviour too.

Just before I've finished
Let me sign my name,
As the speaker said to
In this writing game.
Card states 'Freelance Writer'
As I'd like to be,
Signed by Janet Fleming,
Whom you'll guess is me.



WRITING BRIEFS

Inspiring Christian Writing of
today and yesteryear-

Series by Frederick Swallow



John Newton's Compass for Bible Reading

The Bible is the fountain from whence every stream that deserves our notice is drawn. I know of no better rule in reading Scripture than to read it from end to end. When finished once begin again. We shall meet with many passages which we cannot make any improvement on but not so many in the second reading as in the first and fewer in the third than in the second: provided we pray to him who has the keys to open our understandings. The course of reading today will prepare some light for what we read tomorrow and throw further light on what we read yesterday. Experience only can prove the advantage of this method if steadily persevered in.

Illustration and extracts from 1,000 page
Life Works of John Newton of 1854

NZCW Spam Emails

Be Extra Vigilant

NZCW Board members have picked up some very suspicious looking spam emails recently. They 'look like' they are from our NZCW President, Justin St Vincent, yet are most certainly not. Please note these are fraudulent emails with nefarious intent.

You'll notice they often include words like 'urgent wire transfer' or 'immediate money transfer' or 'balance of the accounts'.

Their goal in the email interaction is to extract useful user/name and passwords for internet banking accounts to withdraw funds.

The only email addresses used by Justin are his home and office ones:

editor@xtrememusic.org and

Justin.StVincent@rhemamedia.co.nz

We advise you all to be extra vigilant regarding any emails referencing money/wire transfers. DO NOT reply to these emails as they are 'phishing' scams/spams.

Please also be aware that any subtle variation on the above email addresses is a false email address.

Examples of a false address include
justin@XtremeMusic.org

Literary Devices

Flashback

Merriam Webster defines the word flashback as ‘an interruption of the chronological sequence (as of a film or literary work) of an event of earlier occurrence’. Flashbacks are interruptions that writers do to insert past events, in order to provide background or context to the current events of a narrative. By using flashbacks, writers allow their readers to gain insight into a character’s motivations and provide a background to a current conflict. Dream sequences and memories are methods used to present flashbacks.

When I went out of the drawing room, the first thing that came into view in the open corridor was the picture of my brother. [I just got the point why my mother used to see that portrait hours after he was killed in WWII, and she left only when she saw any one of us coming to her.] I just heard steps, and when I looked back, there was nothing that I could see. It was just a feeling of the past.

The sentence enclosed in brackets is a flashback. It has interrupted the current event in the form of a sudden thought, giving us an insight into the past of the narrator.

Examples of Flashback in Literature

Example #1: The Holy Bible (By Various Contributors)

The Bible is a good source of flashback examples. In the Book of Genesis, we see a flashback has been used when Joseph, governor of Egypt, sees his brothers after several years. Joseph ‘remembered his dreams’ about his brothers and how they sold him into slavery in the past.

Example #2: Death of a Salesman (By Arthur Miller)

Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman* uses flashback to narrate Willy Loman’s memories of the past. At one moment, Willy talks with his dead brother while playing cards with Charley. He relives a past conversation in the present. This demonstrates a character that is physically living in the present, but mentally living in the memories and events of the past.

Example #3: The Cruel Mother (Anonymous)

Another example of flashback is the ballad of The Cruel Mother, in which a mother remembers her murdered child. While going to church, she remembers her child’s birth, growing up and death. Later, she thinks back further to a distant time in her past to remember how her own mother was ruthless to her.

Example #4: Wuthering Heights (By Emily Bronte)

Emily Bronte's famous novel *Wuthering Heights* starts off with Cathy's (one of the main characters) death. Mr Lockwood sees Cathy's name written all over the windowsill, and then has a vexing dream about her. When he talks about the dream to Heathcliff, Heathcliff becomes distressed and Mr Lockwood wants to know why the mention of Cathy upsets him.

The flashbacks are a means to bring Cathy back to life, so Mr Lockwood has a better perception of why Heathcliff was so upset. The flashbacks show the development of the love that Heathcliff and Cathy had for each other, and how their poor decisions separated them. It would not have the same effect if Ellen had only told Mr Lockwood that Cathy was a person that Heathcliff loved and that she died.

Example #5: Birches (By Robert Frost)

Robert Frost, in his poem *Birches*, employs flashback. In this poem, a character sees swaying birch trees and says:

'So was I once myself a swinger of birches. And so I dream of going back to be.'

He goes back to the days of his childhood, and then returns to the present and says:

'I'd like to get away from earth awhile, and then come back to it and begin over.'

The narrator remembers and desires for the freedom and joy he experienced as a child swinging on birch trees and wishes to return to that moment of his childhood.

Function of Flashback

The use of a flashback is to convey to the readers information regarding the character's background and give them an idea of the character's motives for doing certain things later in the story. Therefore, a flashback in the story deepens inner conflict. It provides stimulus for the conflict, deepens the touching effects and allows the reader to sympathise even with the villain.

Another function of flashbacks in a narrative is to increase tension. A mere mention of a past event makes readers wish to know the secrets. So, he reads on to find out what the secret is, and how terrible it is that it provides the motivation for the conflict in the story.

Often, the function of flashback in poetry is to convey an idea of the happiness that the poet enjoyed in the past, but presently does not enjoy those pleasures. Poets use flashback to contrast a character's unhappy circumstances in the present to the happy days of his past.

With acknowledgements to <https://literarydevices.net>

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Fred Barrett

of Tirau

Sarah Bedwell

of Whangarei

Phillip Donnell

of Welcome Bay, BOP

Barbara Harry

of Auckland West

Joanna Jordan

of Auckland

Karen McMillan

of Auckland

Pete North

of Tamihere

Richard Morris

of Whangaparaoa

David Silver

of Israel

Chontae Taingahue

of Gisborne

REMEMBER

to email your photo and mini bio to Justin St Vincent (editor@xtrememusic.org) for uploading to our website

Self-Discipline for Writers

By Kathryn Drinkwater

I'm often telling the children in my care (I'm a foster caregiver) they can be good at anything they choose if they practise, practise and practise some more. The same can be said of writers with the desire to get published. A person might have some natural talent for writing—maybe one person has ten percent and another fifteen. Who can measure it? Who really cares? The main thing is you take what you have and practise it over and over.

Of course—like an athlete or a horse-trainer—there's no point in repeating mistakes over and over. We must learn how to improve. We must be open to correction; receiving coaching and constructive criticism. Then we can take what we've learned and practise some more. It's quality we're after but often there must be quantity before we reach quality. Don't care too much about getting it right the first time. Accept that you won't. Just write and rewrite!

How do we achieve regular writing? It's best to have a designated environment for it and a regular appointment with the pen (or keyboard as the case may be). Set yourself small goals, bigger goals and personal deadlines. Let 'DO IT NOW' become your self-instruction and then obey. Tomorrow is sometimes your friend but often not. Procrastination is not. If something else must take priority over your writing appointment, ensure it's something you're determined is worth it. For me, the essential needs of children have come before my writing, (a given, I know), but I look for those moments in my day which I can turn into regular writing opportunities. I've also learned to pay attention to which environments stimulate my desire to create.

When you are successfully achieving self-discipline by writing regularly the rewards naturally follow. Then just like a basketballer practising shooting goals in a hoop at home, at some point you must join the team and go public. Other variables will affect the outcome of the game, but you'll know you did your part well. Remember to be kind to yourself and celebrate every effort you've made, no matter how small. Every writing effort makes you a winner!

Solution to Literary Terms Matching Puzzle on Page 6:

A-5, B-3, C-10, D-1, E-9, F-7, G-12, H-11, J-2, K-6, L-8, M-4

Featured Book Review



Enduring the Dream

By Garry Wills

Review by Julia Martin

Garry started out on a Waikato farm as a typical young Kiwi bloke involved in rugby, fast cars and drinking. At seventeen, he committed his life to Jesus Christ and that decision set him on a new pathway. With farming in his DNA, he and his wife Margie felt called by God to set up a farming ministry to help the poor. What followed was a journey lasting forty years which involved numerous job changes, family fallouts and painful emotional setbacks.

As Garry reflects: '...We have a choice—we can wallow in our losses or go forward with energy and celebrate future wins.' The couple kept their faith and their focus, and in 2015 their 'enduring dream' was finally coming to fruition.

Garry claims he's written his autobiography to encourage those people who seem to be doing things right but find life full of disappointments and setbacks; and for those who feel God has called them into a ministry but it has not yet eventuated. In a helpful epilogue called 'Willsy's Wisdom' he outlines lessons learned from his life experiences.

This book has wide appeal and I recommend it especially to Christians who need encouragement in their struggles.

Published by Castle Publishing

Second Book Review



Radical Lives Volume 2

By Janet Balcombe

Review by Julia Martin

Janet Balcombe recently released her second volume of *Radical Lives*—a compilation of 20 inspirational, true-life testimonies of people in New Zealand, many of whom have been rescued from addiction, abuse, violence and spiritual darkness by the transforming love and saving grace of Jesus Christ.

These courageous men and women have gone on to live productive lives and their testimonies are a powerful means of reaching others who seem far away from God and without hope.

Published by Wild Side Publishing 2018

Book Review Reminder

If you are a member of NZCW and have recently published a book you would like reviewed in our magazine, now is the time to send a copy of it to Julia Martin for consideration. Her address is:

286 Karapiro Road
RD4, Cambridge 3496

Please remember to include a self-addressed, postage paid envelope if you would like your book returned to you.

Competition Results

Level One

Judge: Debbie McDermott

Requirement: Imagine you are taken back in time to be an observer of the events surrounding the Easter story as portrayed in the Bible. Describe what you see and how you feel in witnessing the Passion of Christ. Interaction with the characters in your story is allowed. 400 words.

General Comments

I received three well-written entries to this competition, one of which was from new NZCW member, Sarah Bedwell, to whom I extend a warm welcome.

When entering a writing competition, it is very important to accurately interpret and meet the competition requirements in full. While not immediately apparent, there were three key requirements for this competition:

- 1. To be taken back in time;*
- 2. To observe the events surrounding the Easter story;*
- 3. To describe what you saw and felt as you witnessed the Passion of Christ.*

All three contestants did an excellent job of meeting requirements two and three but only Kathryn met the first requirement of being taken back in time. While not meeting requirement one only resulted in the loss of a couple of marks for Ally and Sarah, this could have affected their placing had there been more entrants to the competition.

Apart from this observation, all three entrants are to be highly commended for their efforts and I am sure you will enjoy their stories as much as I have.

First Place



Kathryn
Drinkwater
of Hokianga

In Time For Love



I walked Sunshine through the shrubbery. Suddenly I slipped and fell dragging the dog into a large, dark hole. We slid down a tunnel and landed on leaves.

Sunshine pressed against me as I stood and peered around. My eyes widened, could it be a buried spaceship? I looked closely at the walls. There were pictures but they weren't alien. Instead I saw each portrayed a different Bible story.

Fascinated, I reached out and lovingly touched a picture of Jesus hanging on the cross. At my touch the picture began to glow and the ship made some strange sounds.

Frightened, Sunshine shot back up the tunnel and before I could follow, a hatch closed it shut. Gasping I desperately looked for a button or lever to open it. I lost my sense of direction as if I was in a rolling ball. Motion sickness overwhelmed and I fell.

Slowly my stomach returned to normal. The hatch opened and I rushed back outside. I burst out on a new landscape. At first I thought it was a movie set as I saw I was in the picture I'd touched. Soldiers were everywhere. I was dimly aware of a crowd of onlookers shrinking back at the sight of my foreign modern clothing, but all I could do was stare at my beloved Saviour.

He was unrecognisable as a human, flesh torn and bleeding, bones exposed. I could see his crown of thorns and hear his laboured breathing and I knew deep down it was really Him. I ran to the foot of the cross and threw myself down. My sin caused this. Shame and regret for my part in His suffering engulfed my heart.

I could hear Him speaking another language. His voice was hoarse but firm. Then for a moment He looked straight at me and said in my language, "I wanted to. Now forgiven. It is finished. Together, forever."

Love flowed through me as He spoke. Soldiers grabbed me by the arms and threw me backwards and I was sliding down the tunnel once more. Shocked I fainted on the floor of the time-ship.

When I came to, the hatch was open and Sunshine had come back to find me. She was licking my face. I wrapped my arms around her, still in awe. As we left the tunnel and walked away, above all, I knew I was loved.

Judge's Comments

Kathryn has met all the requirements of this competition very well. Her story is creative, extremely well-written and engages the reader from start to finish.

Falling into a timeship and bursting out into the picture she'd touched adds a thrilling aspect that I think would be particularly effective in drawing the younger reader into what happens next—which, of course, is the crux of the story.

Her description of Jesus on the cross and what she felt at seeing him there is heart-wrenchingly honest and moving. But most important is her clear takeaway message to the reader of the love and forgiveness of Jesus.

As already mentioned, Kathryn's standard of writing is excellent. The only areas for correction are as follows:

- *Para 1—sentence 2: I recommend inserting a comma after 'fell'.*
- *Para 2—sentence 2: Replace the comma after 'widened' with a full stop and make 'Could it be a buried spaceship' a stand-alone sentence.*

- *Para 4—sentence 4: insert ‘me’ after ‘overwhelmed’.*
- *Paras 5, 6, 7—I recommend starting all the divine pronouns (‘Him’ and ‘His’) with a small h, which is now the norm in modern literature.*
- *Para 8—sentence 3: ‘timeship’ does not need to be hyphenated.*
- *Para 9—sentence 4: remove the unnecessary comma after ‘above all’.*

Well done for an excellent entry Kathryn. Keep up the good work.

Second Place



Ally
Wilson
of Gisborne

The Divine Exchange



The fragrant spring air was alive with the promise of rebirth. It was as if nature itself recognized that it was the great Life Giver who stumbled in its midst. Yet the barren scene that lay ahead of us at Golgotha was a cruel affront to reality. Everything about this day was bittersweet.

Rivers of blood streamed profusely down Jesus' body. I cringed at the sight of the crown of thorns that had so crudely punctured his beautiful face. Crashing to his knees, Jesus had finally collapsed under the weight of the cross that he'd carried. Mere ribbons of flesh was all that was left of his once untarnished back. A man named Simon, upon seeing the damage inflicted from the severe lashings, stepped in to carry the cross the rest of the way.

Upon arrival at the hill, the energy of the jeering crowd was contagious. It was like a plague that spurred others on to curse and spit at Jesus. My eyes burned with tears as he was hoisted into position ready to be nailed down. He deserved to be worshipped – not this!

Oh the hypocrisy! Were these not the same people who jubilantly welcomed him days earlier waving their palm branches?

Ugly accusations towards Jesus poured out in a flurry as swings of the mallet rained down on the nails. Even one of the thieves nailed on the cross beside him mockingly called out, “If you are the Christ, save yourself and us.”

As much as I despised these people, I was convicted that I was no better than them. How many times had I thought, *Lord where are you? Do you even care? How could you let this happen?* He was sacrificing himself by taking the punishment that I knew we deserved ourselves. I hung my head and wept.

But Jesus, with his extravagant love, came to turn the wisdom of the world on its head. So as the crowd gave Jesus an offering of hate; in return, he spoke, “Father, forgive them ...” As the religious Pharisees condemned themselves by their blindness to their Saviour; Jesus instead promised paradise to the thief who now believed the truth.

Whilst bound to the cross, Jesus soon gave his last breath. Oh such a heart-wrenching sacrifice. But what a divine exchange! His death severed our bondage to sin. He will soon blaze the path back to life.

Judge's Comments

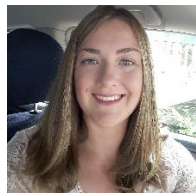
While Ally has not met the one requirement of 'being taken back in time' (i.e. unexpectedly finding herself in a different period of history), her passionate story about Jesus' crucifixion and what his sacrifice means to her meets all other criteria. Her story flows well and she has 'painted' a clear picture of the suffering of Jesus, the attitude of the crowds towards him and how the whole spectacle made her feel. Her honest admission in the sixth paragraph is an excellent lead into paragraph seven and her takeaway message in paragraph eight on how Jesus' death has severed our bondage to sin is also strong and clear.

Apart from a couple of minor issues, Ally's grammar is very good. Areas for correction are:

- *Para 2—sentences 2 and 3: The words 'had' need to be deleted and 'he'd' changed to 'he' because the scenes in this paragraph are currently happening.*
- *Para 2—sentence 3: Delete 'Crashing to his knees' because 'collapsed' essentially means the same thing. This will also make the sentence more punchy.*
- *Para 2—sentence 4: 'was' should be 'were'. Change 'untarnished' (which means to be unoxidised) to 'unblemished' (which means pure and unflawed).*
- *Para 7—sentence 2: there should be a comma after 'So'. Replace the semicolon after 'hate' with a comma. The comma after 'return' is unnecessary. I also recommend changing 'spoke' to 'said'.*
- *Para 7—sentence 3: replace the semicolon after 'Saviour' with a comma.*

Thanks for an excellent story, Ally. I look forward to receiving more entries from you.

Third Place



Sarah
Bedwell
of Whangarei

Garden of Hope



I was alone in the olive garden that night, or so I thought. I huddled under my favourite tree enjoying the expansiveness of the star-speckled sky. Wired and restless in my bed, questions about life had churned relentlessly in my mind. So I'd snuck out,

carefully tip toeing towards the garden. Stargazing gave me some reprieve from the nagging sense of meaninglessness that plagued my soul. I lay low, it was dangerous for a woman to venture out at night, but Gethsemane was my safe place.

It was then that I heard the tortured whispers. My hair stood on end so suddenly that it hurt! I froze for what seemed like forever, but as curiosity got the better of me, I slowly inched toward the dark figure. As I caught sight of a group of men asleep, I crouched obscured behind a rock. The bedraggled man was on his knees, his voice shook violently as he uttered "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will but yours be done". His voice was exhausted with sorrow as he prayed with deep groans that came from the depths of his soul. His forehead was pushed into the dusty ground below him, fists clenched and torso shuddering.

Gradually, his hands opened as one surrendered. He lifted his gaze toward the sky and wearily stumbled to his feet. As the moonlight touched his face, I saw that his skin was speckled with blood. I recognized this man! It was the teacher, Yeshua!

Deeply disturbed at his plight, I began to back away into the darkness. "Hadassah", his voice pierced the stillness. Facing heavenward, he spoke my name with the warm familiarity of a father. "Yes, teacher" I whimpered as I stepped out from behind the rock. "You have struggles and questions, but trust in me. Next time you marvel at the stars above, consider that the Father calls each one by name. How much more then does he care for you? You are one of the beloved lost sheep that I came to save. Hurry home now, for my time has come".

As I returned and slipped under my blanket, my heart was sure I'd seen the face of the Messiah. Questions and confusion came flooding back as I heard the devastating news of his crucifixion. But as I remembered his invitation to trust, I felt hope arise in my heart like the dawn of a new day. I now slept peacefully knowing that the one who named the stars also knew my name.

Judge's Comments

As a first-time entrant, Sarah has done very well in this competition. Her passionate story about Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane is well-written and captures and holds the attention of the reader from start to finish. There is also a consistently good flow to the narrative and the way in which she tells the reader how much Jesus' wonderful affirmation of love means to her elicits a strong response.

One of the keys to good storytelling is to use words to paint a graphic picture of the scene for the reader. Sarah has done this very well. Her takeaway message on being able to trust Jesus because he cares for us and knows us by name is also well done.

Apart from minor problems with punctuation, Sarah's grammar is generally very good. Areas for correction are as follows:

- *Para 1—sentence 3: ‘Wired’ should be ‘Tired’.*
- *Para 1—sentence 4: ‘tiptoeing’ should be one word, not two.*
- *Para 1: sentence 6: replace the comma after ‘low’ with a full stop and rewrite ‘It was dangerous...’ as a stand-alone sentence.*
- *Para 2—sentence 3: delete ‘obsured’. Crouching behind a rock already alludes to being partially hidden.*
- *Para 2—sentence 4: replace the comma after ‘knees’ with a full stop and rewrite ‘His voice shook...’ as a stand-alone sentence.*
- *Paras 2 and 4—There should be a comma after ‘uttered’ and the full stop and comma should be inside the closing speech marks.*
- *Para 2—sentence 6 is a bit clumsy. I suggest rewriting it as ‘He pressed his forehead into the dirt, fists clenched...’*
- *Para 3—sentence 3: delete the unnecessary ‘that’.*
- *Para 4—sentence 4: insert a comma after ‘teacher’.*

Well done for a great entry Sarah. I look forward to receiving more from you.

Level Two

Judge: Janice Gillgren

Requirement: “What is it about Easter that stirs you?” Imagine you are having a conversation with a friend you haven’t seen for a while and your companion asks you this question. How would you answer it? Write the dialogue between you and your companion in a relaxed conversational style.

General Comments

Alex gained first place in this competition by a narrow margin, as his and Sue’s stories were both very good. They both fulfilled the requirements of the competition well, though Sue’s story was a bit too long and I felt it had a few more problems in it.

Although it is acceptable to write the names of the people talking (as Ruth does), and this is particularly seen in instructions for writing plays, it is important for the characters to quickly be individual enough so a reader can tell them apart even if not named. If you don’t say the people’s names on every line however, it is important to include them occasionally in the story so readers or listeners can have a bit of help remembering who is who.

I asked for a ‘relaxed conversational style. Both Alex and Sue achieved that well.

There are some differences between written and oral language. Achieving interest through careful focus and sufficient disagreement are two of them. If the characters wander off into many different topics, or are totally agreeable on all the subjects raised, the story often loses some appeal. The characters in each of the entries were in agreement but the addition of some light teasing in Alex’s story gave it an edge.

First Place



Alex
Treat
of Hamilton

What is it about Easter that stirs you?

For a moment, neither of us spoke. I looked out over the lake and watched the birds sweep and dive through the evening light. The silence wasn't awkward; it was refreshing. Out of the corner of my eye I saw Jonathan lean on the railing beside me. I couldn't pull my eyes from the glorious sunset.

"What is it about Easter that stirs you?," he asked.

I looked over to him and raised an eyebrow "Easter? Why Easter?"

He kept an arm on the railing and turned to face me. "Dunno. Easter's coming up. Guess it was just on my mind." He shrugged and looked back out over the water "But, for me, there's always something about Easter that...I don't know, just stirs me." He glanced my way. "Like, you know, that feeling we would get the day before Christmas? Something like that. Do you get that?"

I grinned "Well, if you ask me, the prospect of getting a bucket full of lollies is enough to *stir* just about anyone."

Jonathan snorted and shook his head. "You know what I mean."

I let my smile fade and thought a moment. "Yeah, I guess I get that. Like a sort of awe you feel..."

Jonathan smiled. "Exactly!...but what causes it?"

I shrugged "I guess it's just knowing what Easter means. We don't think about it much, but...God dying for us!" I shook my head "That's crazy..."

Jonathan grinned "I think a better word might be awesome."

I scowled at him "You know I hate it when you're right."

He chuckled "But I always am..."

I scoffed. "Humble, too."

And with that the last glorious rays faded and the sun dipped below the water.

Judge's Comments

Hi Alex. I've given you first place for this story. Your first paragraph does a lot of work—effectively introducing the emotion, the setting for the conversation, and Jonathan's character too. You introduce the central question quickly and later answer it briefly but

effectively as well as bringing in some light humour amidst the serious comments. The conversational style is authentic and the word count is great. However, a title that is unique to your story would be best, rather than borrowing my competition requirement.

Your characterisation is effective, and it is easy to tell who's who throughout. The two speakers are in basic agreement, which isn't ideal in a story, but Jonathan's bit of teasing helps to cover this.

I wonder why you, as the central character, are not named. The best place to introduce your name would be at the start or end of Jonathan's first speech. Even when using the 'first person' approach, all the characters are usually named somewhere as this helps readers identify more with them.

In the first paragraph, I think you mean 'through' rather than 'thought', though just 'in' would be sufficient. Also, you've spelled 'corner' wrong in the 4th sentence of that first paragraph, and 'I grinned' (5th para) needs a full stop after it.

Second Place



Sue
Thatcher
of Whangaparaoa

So Much Chocolate!

"Hi Jacqui. I haven't seen you for ages! How have you been?"

"Sue! Wow, yeah, a good three years ago. I'm great thanks."

"And your family?"

"Uh huh. We're all good. Hanging out for the Easter break though. It's been a busy term. You?"

"Same, all fine. Keen for Easter too. Both the break and the annual chocolate sculpting evening."

"Ah, so is that what all that chocolate is for? Confession—I wondered! Tell me more."

"Well, we all got sick of the Easter egg hype. Most of them celebrate the latest movie release or chickens or bunnies rather than the true events around Easter anyway—kind of seemed pointless.

"So true."

"So our son suggested this instead and we all jumped at it. We get to be creative, share family time, eat chocolate and remind each other about what Jesus did on

the cross. I think this is our fifth year and with seven of us sculpting, we've never repeated any part of the events. There really is a lot of detail to cover."

"That sounds like great fun! So, what about Easter is stirring you this year?"

"Well, I studied Revelation in our Bible Study group this year. The description of God's 'cup of wrath' that Jesus drank from on the cross grabbed me. You know, the one Jesus sweated blood over. The fact he still drank from it. I'm stunned by that level of obedience and commitment—all for me. Just blows my mind! Think I'll sculpt that cup this year."

"Mmmm. Wow, that's great. You're right—it would be good to freshen up our approach to Easter too. Mind if we copy you?"

"Not at all. Enjoy! Let me know how it goes!"

"Will do. Take care!"

"Bye."

"See you—hopefully in less than three years!"

Judge's Comments

Hi Sue. I have awarded you second place for your story. It has a catchy title and carries the storyline well. The ending suits the beginning and the conversational style is authentic.

The story is a bit too long. Although a 10% margin (either too short or too long) is usually acceptable to editors, it is still a good idea to get as close as you can. If your word count is too long, this gives you the opportunity to edit and prune it a little more.

I prefer to keep out of theological discussions as these critiques are intended to be for writing skills. However, I did find your references to the 'cup of wrath' in the book of Revelation, and then the cup Jesus sweated blood over, to both be puzzling. Perhaps you were pulling concepts or events together. It may be less confusing to simply call it 'The symbolic cup that Jesus drank from while he was on the cross...' since sculpting a cup out of chocolate is the main point of your story.

'Well' is not a good starting word for a sentence, though it may be allowed here to continue your conversational style. However, you use it twice in this short story, so it would be better to find another word for at least one of the times you use it.

'Confession—' (6th line) is unnecessary.

Be careful to remind readers of the characters that are speaking by including a name or some other characteristic occasionally, so that the reader doesn't have to carefully work out who is saying what through the story. For example, 'That sounds like great fun, Sue!' (10th para).

I would also suggest you create more difference between your two characters. Instead of them being so agreeable, one of them could seem uncertain or even disagree, but be persuaded by the other character's views by the end if you wish. It's not that people don't agree in real life, but some difference of opinion makes written stories more interesting.

Third Place



Ruth
Jamieson
of Kawerau

All Stirred Up

Janet—Wow...Sally...is that really you?

Sally—Janet! It's so good to see you... still the same bubbly girl from our teens.

Janet—With a few extra kilos and wrinkles.

Sally—Yes, life has its challenges.

Janet—Look at that! Easter eggs in the shops already.

Sally—It seems like Christmas was just last month.

Janet—Remember that Easter play we did in youth group...

Sally—Where I had to be Mary crying at the tomb of Jesus.

Janet—You were perfect—I would have struggled with that.

Sally—Instead you were running around wildly, telling everyone that Jesus was alive.

Janet—Yes, I did get a bit stirred up.

Sally—A bit! So what is it about Easter that stirs you now?

Janet—Um...seeing those chocolate Easter eggs... Easter bunnies...Easter chicks...It's like at Christmas—Jesus is left out...no longer mentioned...unless you're in Church—yet He's the reason we have Easter. It seems like nothing is sacred anymore.

Sally—Like Easter Sunday...more shops are allowed to trade now.

Janet—You know, it reminds me of the time Jesus went to the Temple and got angry with the traders—turning over tables, scattering their money and driving them out.

Sally—I guess we can't go around doing that!

Janet—No, but we need to stand up against our degrading values—Biblical values our country was founded on. About the only thing we have kept is the National Anthem.

Sally—Yes, God defend New Zealand—and we sure need His help.

Janet—Sal, now that you have got me all stirred up, maybe we should do something.

Sally–Like...?

Janet–Write a letter to the Editor...visit our Council who decide on Sunday trading...

Sally–Or we could put on an Easter play!

Janet–Um...

Judge's Comments

Hi Ruth. I have awarded you third place. Your word count is great, you have an appropriate title, and you have met the criteria of the competition. Your conversation, particularly in the first half, sounds authentic. However, a large chunk of your wordcount is used up in the introduction to your main point, which is unnecessary and could be edited to allow more words to expand your main point.

Try to vary the length of your sentences throughout your story. You presently have many short sentences at the start and end, which makes them seem staccato in contrast to the few longer ones.

The latter part of your story wanders across six subjects: Easter trading (and visiting the council about it), Jesus getting angry at the temple, standing up for our values, the National Anthem, writing a letter to the editor, and putting on an Easter play. This is far too much for a short story. I realise that real conversations can hop from one subject to another quite rapidly at times, but when writing short pieces like this, don't give in to the temptation to do the same thing. This is one example of where written work differs from real life. When writing, keep focused on an appropriate number of points for the length of your writing. Just a few of those ideas would probably have been enough. .

Although it is acceptable to name each character separately as you have, try to make each character unique enough so that you can tell them apart even if their names are not there. Using the full names clutters up the writing, as well as using up some of your word count. Finally, ending your story on an 'um' is like an anti-climax. Better to just finish on Sally's idea.

Level Three

Judge: Julia Martin

Requirement: You've just completed the manuscript of your book. Outline your strategy for getting your book into the readers' hands. Be specific about all the steps, especially editing, publishing and marketing. (400 words)

General Comments

Having never produced a book, I have the utmost respect and admiration for anyone who has endured the arduous process of transforming their idea or story into printed form. I understand it's seldom a straightforward process and even the most able writers encounter rejections and discouraging setbacks. Fortunately today, there are more options available with self-publishing and online versions so that manuscripts don't have to

gather dust in a bottom drawer. Without a clear plan or strategy however, this is likely to happen. Writers must have a more hands-on approach than previously in both the publishing and marketing of their work.

Basically there are two main approaches for getting a book published (though there are variations in both).

Traditional publishing

This involves presenting your manuscript to a publisher who will accept or reject it. Finding a suitable publisher requires careful research into the kinds of books they publish and whether your book fits into their publishing plans. It's wise to request their writers' guidelines if available and possibly send them a query letter outlining briefly what your manuscript is about. While you can send query letters to more than one publisher at a time, it's advisable to send your manuscript to only one publisher at a time, although this can slow down the process of getting your book published.

You may save yourself a lot of time and effort if you do this before completing your entire manuscript. With this form of publishing you will lose a certain amount of control over your work, but the publisher takes the risk and is responsible largely for the editing, design, printing and marketing, and you receive a contract and payment.

Self-publishing

This seems to be the way to go nowadays, giving the writer much more control over the content, design, quantity printed, marketing and ownership. It's not easy, however, and can be time consuming, so a strategy needs to be put in place. There's a wealth of information and advice available online and others who have self-published will be a good source of knowledge. Even with a limited budget, it's crucial to work with professional editors, proofreaders, designers and marketing experts if your book is going to be successful. By bearing most of the costs, the self-publishing author gets to enjoy most of the profits—assuming the books sell.

I was pleased to receive two entries for this competition. With a limited word count, it was not possible to go into a lot of detail, so publishing plans had to be clear and concise. I did not award a first place, but gave Jean second place and Pat third place, and thank them for their efforts.

Second Place



Jean
Shewan
of Christchurch

The Life of a Book

My manuscript is complete. I have asked a friend who is prominent in writing circles to write the foreword, which she has done.

To prepare for editing:

- I have taken care to read it through several times – at least once out loud, to check punctuation, spelling and other basics.
- I have run the computer spell check over it.
- I have asked two friends to read it. One is another writer and the other a retired English teacher, who has some experience in proof reading and editing.
- I have made amendments and corrections where necessary.

Publishing:

- Search lists of publishers to find two who have already published work in this genre.
- Send a synopsis, the first two chapters and the last one to one of them. If rejected, try the other.
- Be prepared to contribute to costs, including editing and proof reading.

If my work is accepted by one of these it will make the next step somewhat easier. If not I will have to try other publishers.

Self -Publishing: If you choose to go this way, then it is important to establish your market so that you are not left with hundreds of unsold books. Taking orders may be useful, and for this, sample copies should be available.

I am reluctant to self-publish, because I'm not a natural salesperson and I'm not confident enough about the steps involved. My only experience of publishing is a twice- yearly church magazine, so I would require help with design and layout.

Marketing;

- Organise a book launch. Make it as friendly and inviting as possible and provide refreshments.
- Advertise it well and issue individual invitations as well as a general one.
- Contact libraries and book shops to see if they will take one or two copies on a sale or return basis
- Set up a stall at the local church fairs, community gatherings etc.

This poses a few challenges because my circle of friends and relations is relatively small. I'm reasonably well -known in local and diocesan Anglican Church communities, and my small writing group, South Island Writers Association, my fellow croquet players and NZ Christian Writers are other possible outlets.

I have sufficient funds available to pay the costs associated with this venture, and the support of my family, as well as plenty of energy and patience to achieve a good result.

Judge's Comments

Jean has covered most aspects of the process for getting her manuscript published and into the hands of readers. She outlines her steps for editing her book and they are basically correct depending on the type of book she has written. It is profitable to let acquaintances read the book to get feedback, but serious editing is best done by professionals and this will cost the author, but is money usually well spent.

As I explained in my general comments, finding a publisher today who is willing to take on an unknown author with their first book is a difficult undertaking. Your strategy is generally correct, but you may not get an answer from publishers unless your book is particularly special or just what they are looking for.

Jean touches on self-publishing but dismisses the method because she feels inadequate for all it entails. She closes with her strategy for marketing her book with a book launch and some local initiatives. These might result in a few sales, but a wider market and more effort will be required to sell a quantity of books.

I like Jean's final statement. Authors certainly need 'plenty of energy and patience to achieve a good result'. I'm sure other writers will agree!

Suggested Corrections

- Your layout is unprofessional. Try to keep your writing in tidy columns.
- Under Self-publishing, you have changed the subject from 'I' to 'you'. Keep it the same for a smooth flow.

A good attempt Jean and if you are in the process of publishing a book, I wish you well.

Third Place



Pat
Kerr
of Roxburgh

Birthing My 'Book Baby'

At last my manuscript, my book baby, is complete. Now I must hand it over to the professionals, the editors, agents, publishers, printers and booksellers. Too hard I thought so I was pleased to read in the Writers' Forum magazine of a consultancy firm Lighthouse Children's Literacy Consultancy who have specialised since 2010 in advising authors on the process of publishing children's and Young Adults books. Hallelujah! Just what I need.

Sarah Stewart, the president, has been a journalist, editor, children's books author, has won awards for writing these books, and has a MLitt in Creative Writing. She and friend Cat Clarke, who is also a bestselling author, spotted a gap in the market, consultancy

for the children's and YA market, took up the challenge successfully, and now have repeat customers, writers whose work has sold well.

To access their expertise I need to email a submission package: a query letter (addressing them by name, not Dear Sirs, or Sir/Madam); a synopsis (plot overview) of my book, and the first three chapters.

Because they are busy professionals receiving many submissions, I need to be concise with my query letter: who I am; information about my manuscript that stands out (rather than trite, boring facts), and written warmly (but not overly familiar).

If this letter appeals they will investigate further.

They will read my synopsis, which should outline my plot concisely with its special point of interest that appeals to their market.

They will then read my first three chapters which will confirm or disappoint their initial response.

Then they will link me with one of their agents who will edit, publish and market my book.

'We promise to be diplomatic and kind in our correspondence,' states Sarah.

'We have a narrow focus, but we know the market well. Everyone who edits for us is an experienced editor and published writer.'

As an author based in New Zealand I realise that the local market is limited. The focus and experience of this Lighthouse Children's Literacy Consultancy is just what I need. A bonus is that they offer a 10% discount on their fee if I quote 'Writers' Forum' in my initial email. What am I waiting for?

My submission package is ready.

My initial email is prepared: director@lighthouseliterary.co.uk

Now I need to push 'Send'.

My book baby's birthing begins...

Judge's Comments

Pat has taken a narrow approach to getting her manuscript published by concentrating on one possibility only. This may be successful but could also be naïve as consultancies such as this one will probably have many manuscripts to consider. Even JK Rowling's first Harry Potter book was rejected by at least twelve publishers before it was accepted.

Pat does not mention how she will get her edited manuscript published and there is no strategy outlined for the marketing of her book. This is vital, otherwise she risks ending up with boxes of unsold copies and that is money down the drain.

Although Pat is expecting this firm to do her editing and proofreading, she doesn't say anything about prior editing which is crucial if these professionals are going to be interested in her manuscript. First impressions are important and poor spelling, punctuation and careless mistakes will not impress and probably lead to rejection. Hopefully, Pat has checked out the costs of this firm's services as I'm sure they will not be cheap (even with the 10% discount mentioned).

Pat's title is an interesting one and I'm sure other writers will appreciate the similarity between producing a book and producing a baby! However, to avoid confusion, your opening sentence should simply state: 'At last my manuscript is complete.'

Suggested Corrections:

- *Para 1: The third sentence is too long. Aim for shorter sentences.
No need for capitals for 'Young Adults'.
The word 'Hallelujah' doesn't seem appropriate in this context.*
- *Para 2: Change 'YA' to 'young adults'.*
- *Para 3: No need to mention their titles (as in brackets) as this is not important and wastes your word count.*
- *Para 4: Check punctuation in the second sentence.*

The font used should be Arial as laid out in our requirements.

I like your self-confidence at the end and your final paragraph adds momentum. That's great as writers need plenty of both. I wish you well with your endeavours Pat.

Competition Survey

The task of the NZCW Board is to continually be looking for ways in which to improve and add value to the service we provide members. To do that we need feedback from you and have decided to begin with our competitions. We would appreciate it if you could take the time to complete the following short survey:

- Do you find the topics/subject matter of the competitions interesting?
- Are the comments of the judges helpful in improving your writing skills?
- Do you see an improvement in the writing skills of those who enter the competitions?
- Do you think the competitions add value to the magazine?
- Have you any suggestions to make and would you enter the competitions more if these changes were made?

Please forward your answers to Debbie McDermott—sddp@xtra.co.nz

Competitions for June 2019

Due by May 10th

EMAIL ENTRY AS AN ATTACHMENT, COMPLETE WITH WORD COUNT AND YOUR NAME.

Font: Arial, 10 pt **Heading:** Bold, 18 pt **Line spacing:** Multiple 1.2

Spacing between Paragraphs: 6 pt **Paragraph Indentation:** None

Alignment: Justified. **Send a photo** of yourself for publishing purposes.

NB: If you are not sure which level you're on, email the editor at sddp@xtra.co.nz

Level One—for members 16 years old and over

Requirement: Write a modern chorus or hymn and set it to a familiar tune or piece of music. A repeated refrain or bridge will be counted as one verse. Include details of the music you have chosen for your chorus/hymn with your entry. 4 verses maximum, comprising 4 - 6 lines each.



Debbie

Email entry to Debbie McDermott at sddp@xtra.co.nz

Level Two—for members 20 years old and over

Requirement: Rewrite an eventful portion of the life of a missionary (recent or not) into a newspaper article of 300 - 350 words. Research newspaper article styles if you are unsure of how to do them.



Janice

Email entry to Janice Gillgren at jangill1359@gmail.com

Level Three—for members 20 years old and over

Requirement: From the Bible, choose a bad character and write their profile explaining why they were bad and how they influenced other people. (250 words)



Julia

Email entry to Julia Martin at pemburyestate@slingshot.co.nz



NZ CHRISTIAN writers



GARRY WILLS was born in Matamata, New Zealand in 1956 and grew up on his parent's stud sheep and cattle farm at Walton near Matamata. Even though brought up in a Christian home, he made his own decision to become a Christian at age 17. Eleven months later he sensed

God calling him to dedicate his farming career to ministry. Along with preparing for this ministry Garry served in various leadership positions: youth group leader in his own church and interdenominationally, worship leader and leader of prison ministry teams. He has served on the church board as a finance and property deacon as well as preaching from time to time.

Garry is married to Margie and together they have led children's church, home groups, young adults groups and Sunday night church services. They have two adult children, Rachel and Amanda, and they live at Te Pahu on the outskirts of Hamilton. Garry's passion is to see people coming to know Jesus, to see them grow and develop skills, to see them able to put food on the table and to see them effective in their calling in God.

garrywills@xtra.co.nz