

# TRAINING FOR GUYS

# 42

November  
23rd 2013

## LIFE, THE UNIVERSE, AND EVERYTHING

Over the previous editions of *Training for Guys* I think we've pretty much covered questions from every aspect of life. The aim has always been to see how a Christian man should live, how he should approach making decisions on difficult topics, and so forth.

To be honest, the questions have more or less stopped coming in, so this seems to me to be a good time to call a halt to my aim at a weekly output. If there are more questions, we'll tackle them as and when.

Still being honest, I had hoped there would be more stimulus from each other as to bringing forward answers, debate and discussion. That hasn't happened but I trust and hope that my own contributions have at least helped your thinking over the past year or so.

There's a full index to all 42 editions in the pages that follow, an intriguing look into the way number 42 turns up in the Bible and nature, and the usual joke or two.

I'm planning to continue the weekly podcasts at least for now - working through some of the Psalms at the moment ([tfgministries.org.uk/podcasts](http://tfgministries.org.uk/podcasts)). There's teaching on many books of scripture on that podcast stream going back for more than 10 years.

## There are so many hard-to-believe bits in the Bible. Do I have to believe them?

I take it by this you mean the miracles, and some of the claims the Bible makes such as those to do with Creation, angels and demons and so forth.

The reason they are hard-to-believe for many of us is that they are not things we experience. Nor are they things we hear about in our secular lives. It's only when you open the Bible or go to church that you hear of a God who parted the Red Sea or walked on water.

But your question is intriguing too, because it sounds as though you feel it is a chore to *have to* believe. Can I not just be a Christian and cut out all the miracles and God-in-the-sky stuff?

But that is the God we come to. God is Spirit, He is not constrained by the physical universe as we are. And it is our spirit which first encounters Him, it is a

spiritual understanding and relationship that He wants with us.

Our brains want logic, touch/feel/provable and seeable. In order to be able to approach God we need to deal with our brains and make them subject to our spirits. They need to be 'converted' into spiritual receptors and not just physical ones.

That doesn't mean you have to believe the whole shebang *before* you approach God. But you should be open to Him changing you.

God presents Himself to us as The Word, Jesus. He uses the medium of the written Word, the Bible, to do this. To say "I do not believe it" is to call Him a liar. Or to ultimately say you do not believe God, you do not believe in Him. So when it comes to the hard bits, the bits that don't fit into a 21st Century

Western secular viewpoint, we need to be honest with Him and tell Him that but also to ask for His help to believe. Pray something like “Lord, I can’t believe this at the moment. But I want to know You more, and I know that this is something You are telling me is the Truth. Though I find it hard to accept, I choose to believe it. Help me to come to a revelation of this as Truth, to that it affects my world view and brings me closer to You”.

The Bible is Truth, my prayer is that each of us will get a deeper revelation of that Truth as we live our lives. That way we will not only be personally blessed, but we will sharpen each other and be able to bring God’s Truth to the needy people around us.

Issue Number	Topic
1	Ethos of Training for Guys
2	Neil Armstrong
2	Strengths and Weaknesses
2	Tattoos
2	Weaknesses and Strengths
3	Barack Obama
3	Evolution
4	Guidance (jobs)
4	Patience
5	Dealing with difficult people
5	Guidance (testimony)
6	Non-Christian girlfriends
6	Sex - controlling self
7	Our Father in Heaven
7	Right girl to marry
7	Role models
8	Hallowed Be Your Name
8	Marriage - keeping it fresh
8	Politicians
9	Swearing
9	Your Kingdom Come
10	Prayer answers
10	Your Will be done
11	Guy Fawkes
11	How can a loving God send people to hell?
11	On earth as it is in heaven
12	Give us today our daily bread
12	Prayer - making it effective
13	Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us
13	Masturbation
14	David and Jonathan - male intimacy
14	Lead us not into temptation
14	Male intimacy - David and Jonathan
15	Deliver us from evil
15	Intimacy with God
16	Father Christmas - good or bad?
16	For the Kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours, now and forever. Amen!
16	Is God a meglomaniac to demand worship?
17	Role Models
18	Speaking wisely
19	Bible - how much do you read it?
19	Sex - overcoming temptation
20	Bible - better than life itself?
20	Protestant / Catholic difference
21	Films - what to watch
21	Movies- what to watch
22	Girlfriend - how far can I go with her?
22	Lent - giving things up or not?
22	Sex - how far can I go with my girlfriend
23	Tithing and money - principles
24	Tithing and money - where to give
25	Easter - meaning
25	Mary Magdalene and Jesus - not married
26	Politics - listening to both sides
27	Jesus in Genesis: sacrificial of Isaac
28	Celebrities as gods
28	Jesus in Genesis: sacrifice in Eden
29	Jesus in Genesis: the Ark
29	Money, relationship not rules
30	Women in Leadership
31	Swearing
31	Weeds: keeping spiritual paths clear
32	Holy Spirit ministry, why does nothing happen for me?
32	Weeds: Did God really say? Believing the Bible
33	Homosexuality, all bible verses on the subject
33	Homosexuality, Archbishop's call to repent
33	Repent about homosexuality
34	Bible reading as Jesus did it
34	Leviticus overview
35	Homosexuality, New Testament teaching
36	Homosexuality, Bible teaching overview
37	David and Jonathan - male intimacy
37	Male intimacy - David and Jonathan
38	Gay Marriage
39	Bible reading, ways to do it
40	God is absent, When
40	Where is God?
41	Praying for England to win

# Index

## Issues 1-41

Issue Number	Topic
3	Barack Obama
20	Bible - better than life itself?
19	Bible - how much do you read it?
34	Bible reading as Jesus did it
39	Bible reading, ways to do it
28	Celebrities as gods
14	David and Jonathan - male intimacy
37	David and Jonathan - male intimacy
5	Dealing with difficult people
15	Deliver us from evil
25	Easter - meaning
1	Ethos of Training for Guys
3	Evolution
16	Father Christmas - good or bad?
21	Films - what to watch
16	For the Kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours, now and forever. Amen!
13	Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us
38	Gay Marriage
22	Girlfriend - how far can I go with her?
12	Give us today our daily bread
40	God is absent, When
4	Guidance (jobs)
5	Guidance (testimony)
11	Guy Fawkes
8	Hallowed Be Your Name
32	Holy Spirit ministry, why does nothing happen for me?
33	Homosexuality, all bible verses on the subject
33	Homosexuality, Archbishop's call to repent
36	Homosexuality, Bible teaching overview
35	Homosexuality, New Testament teaching
11	How can a loving God send people to hell?
15	Intimacy with God
16	Is God a meglomaniac to demand worship?
27	Jesus in Genesis: sacrificial of Isaac
28	Jesus in Genesis: sacrifice in Eden
29	Jesus in Genesis: the Ark
14	Lead us not into temptation
22	Lent - giving things up or not?
34	Leviticus overview
14	Male intimacy - David and Jonathan
37	Male intimacy - David and Jonathan
8	Marriage - keeping it fresh
25	Mary Magdalene and Jesus - not married
13	Masturbation
29	Money, relationship not rules
21	Movies- what to watch
2	Neil Armstrong
6	Non-Christian girlfriends
11	On earth as it is in heaven
7	Our Father in Heaven
4	Patience
8	Politicians
26	Politics - listening to both sides
12	Prayer - making it effective
10	Prayer answers
41	Praying for England to win
20	Protestant / Catholic difference
33	Repent about homosexuality
7	Right girl to marry
7	Role models
17	Role Models
6	Sex - controlling self
22	Sex - how far can I go with my girlfriend
19	Sex - overcoming temptation
18	Speaking wisely
2	Strengths and Weaknesses
9	Swearing
31	Swearing
2	Tattoos
23	Tithing and money - principles
24	Tithing and money - where to give
2	Weaknesses and Strengths
32	Weeds: Did God really say? Believing the Bible
31	Weeds: keeping spiritual paths clear
40	Where is God?
30	Women in Leadership
9	Your Kingdom Come
10	Your Will be done

# 42

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson lectured in mathematics at Oxford: hence the frequent references in the *Alice* books to measurement – see *An Anthology*. This curious number 42 also appears in his long nonsense poem *The Hunting of the Snark*: “The helmsman used to stand by with tears in his eyes – he knew it was all wrong, but alas! Rule 42 of the [Naval] Code, ‘No one shall speak to the Man at the Helm’” And again: “He had forty-two boxes, all carefully packed...”

You may recall, too, that Douglas Adams (who died in 2001) wrote in *The Hitch Hiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*: “The Answer to the Great Question of... Life, the Universe and Everything... [is] Forty-two.”

Evidently, the product of  $6 \times 7$  possesses some compelling, mystical meaning. The Old Testament uses it continually. *Revelation xiii*, 5: ‘and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.’ *Judges xii*, 6: ‘Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan; and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand.’ *II Kings ii*, 24: ‘And there came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them.’ *II Kings x*, 14: ‘And they took them alive, and slew them at the pit of the shearing house, even two and forty men; neither left he any of them.’

Yet again, *II Chronicles xxii*, 2: ‘Forty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign...’ And *Matthew*, like *Luke*, begins the story of Jesus (i, 2-16) with a genealogy tracing his family back to Abraham through 42 generations. *Why forever 42?*

Bear in mind, too, that the circumference of the Earth =  $42 \times 6,000 = 252,000$  ancient Greek stadia; the length of 1 meridian degree =  $42 \times 5,000 = 210,000$  cubits...and 42 was the

“The Mystery of 42” from Vivian Linacre’s book “The General Rule”. Published by the Squeeze Press ISBN 978-1906-06901-8

Queen Victoria’s husband Prince Albert died aged 42; they had 42 grandchildren and their great-grandson, Edward VIII, abdicated at the age of 42.

Elvis Presley died at the age of 42.

BBC Radio 4’s Desert Island Discs was created in 1942. There are 42 guests per year.

Toy Story character Buzz Lightyear’s spaceship is named 42.



**SO LONG,  
AND THANKS FOR ALL THE FISH**

qualifying age for the Roman Imperial rank of Consul...but this can become obsessive!

Three trifling instances, however: in Scotland, the home of curling, the traditional length of an ‘end’ (or a ‘rink’) was 42 yards and the weight of the stones 42 lb; and in the grocery trade it is common to sell cans, bottles, fruit, etc. in 42s (packing 6x7) – but that exposes the awkwardness of decimal pricing, so the goods are often offered at a price for 40 *plus extra 2 free!*

By the way, England possesses 42 Anglican cathedrals. And an Honorary Member, Christopher Martin-Jenkins, points out that the most important Law of Cricket, dealing with fair and unfair play, is Law No. 42.

Finally, to revert to Lewis Carroll, for his amazing story of the gravity train, in chapter 7 of *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*.

Imagine a railway line running in a straight line from London to Edinburgh or, indeed, from any place on the Earth’s surface to any other. Because the Earth’s surface is curved, the line cuts into the Earth and so, to an observer at either end, appears to run downhill. But in fact only the first half of the route is downhill. So, if the train is released at one end and runs solely by the force of gravity, it will roll downhill, accelerating until it got half-way when it would start going uphill and consequently slow down. In the absence of resisting forces, it would come to rest at the other terminus. How long does the journey take? Remarkably, this duration is fixed, regardless of the distance between the termini or the weight of the train or the size of the Earth (just as the time of a pendulum’s arc is fixed), because the only determinants are *gravity* and the Earth’s *density*.

To make the problem mathematically amenable, we assume that the Earth is a uniform non-rotating solid sphere. (Of course, it’s not uniform – the heavier bits tend to be in the middle – and it does rotate and it’s not quite spherical, but these are marginal considerations.)

Now the equation for the journey time is:  $4Gdt^2 = 3\pi t^3$  where ‘d’ is the Earth’s density, ‘G’ is the universal constant of gravitation and ‘t’ is the required answer. This equation (like every equation in physics) is valid whatever coherent system of units is used. Here, ‘coherent’ means that if we are using the foot-pound-second system, then speed must be measured in feet per second rather than miles per hour. The value of ‘G’ is expressed by a formula (too complex to elaborate here) which, applied to the simple term of  $347\frac{1}{4}$  lb/cu.ft to represent the Earth’s density, yields a figure of 2,520 for ‘t’. So that’s the journey time in seconds: just 42 minutes – always!

[Most authorities give the Earth’s density as 344.4 lb/cu.ft, so the journey time would actually be a few seconds more than 42 minutes, but why spoil it!]

*The question is: did Douglas Adams know all this?*

The Doctor Who episode entitled “42” lasts for 42 minutes.

A single Big Mac contains 42 per cent of the recommended daily intake of salt

In Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, Friar Laurence gives Juliet a potion that allows for her to be in a death-like coma for “two and forty hours”