

Bringing the Gospel to a Post-Christian Culture

Andy Bannister



www.solas-cpc.org

Dover Beach

Matthew Arnold

The Sea of Faith

Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore

Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled;

But now I only hear

Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar.

UK 2021 Census

22,162,062 people (37%) ticked
“No Religion”, but of that, only ...

- Agnostic (32,000)
- Atheist (14,000)
- Humanist (10,000)

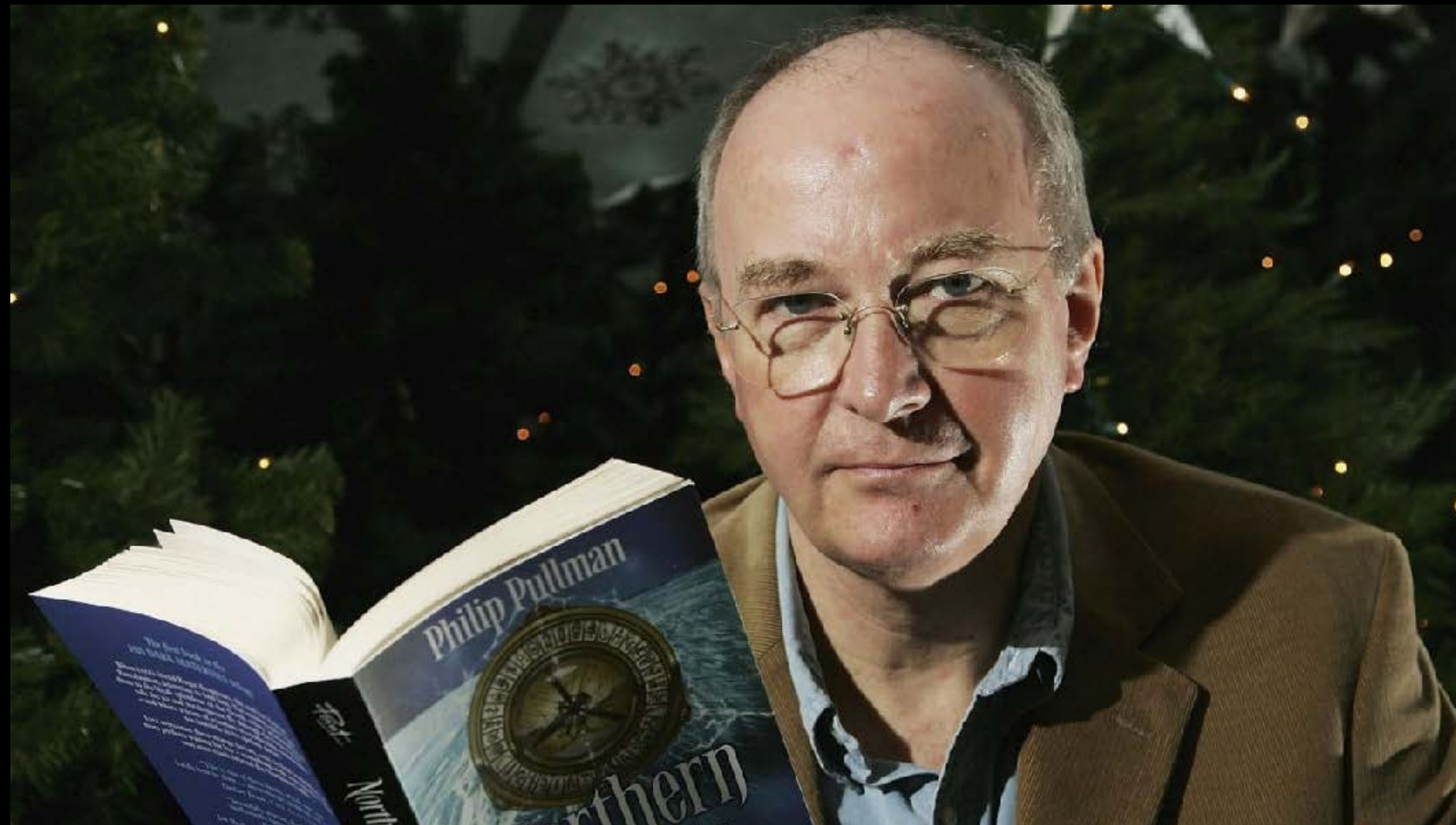
“spiritual but
not religious”



Douglas Murray
Journalist

“I consider myself a Christian atheist”

I consider myself a Christian atheist



Philip Pullman

Novelist

“I am a Church of England atheist”



Jordan Peterson

Psychologist and author

“I am conditioned in every cell as a consequence of the Judeo-Christian worldview”



Louise Perry

Journalist and author

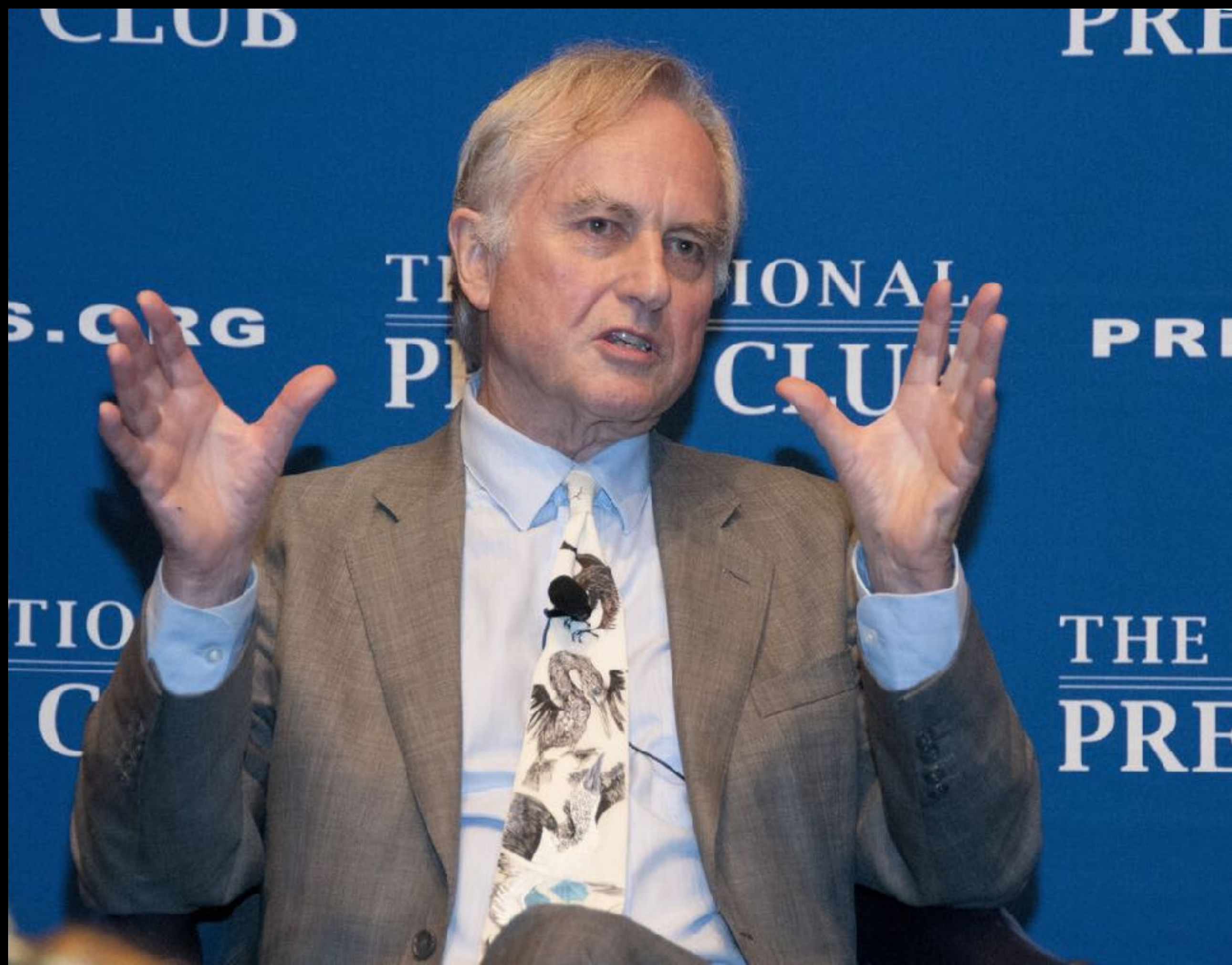
“The Christian era was a clearing in a forest but with no one left to tend the garden, the forest is reclaiming its ground.”



Elon Musk

Businessman and entrepreneur

“While I’m not a particularly religious person, I do believe that the teachings of Jesus are good and wise – I would say I’m probably a cultural Christian.”



Richard Dawkins

Author and science communicator

I love hymns and Christmas carols and I sort of feel at home in the Christian ethos ... Statistically, the number of people who actually believe in Christianity is going down and I'm happy with that ... but I would not be happy if we lost all our cathedrals and our beautiful parish churches. So I count myself a cultural Christian.



Richard Dawkins

'Richard Dawkins: I'm a Cultural Christian', LBC, 1 April 2024

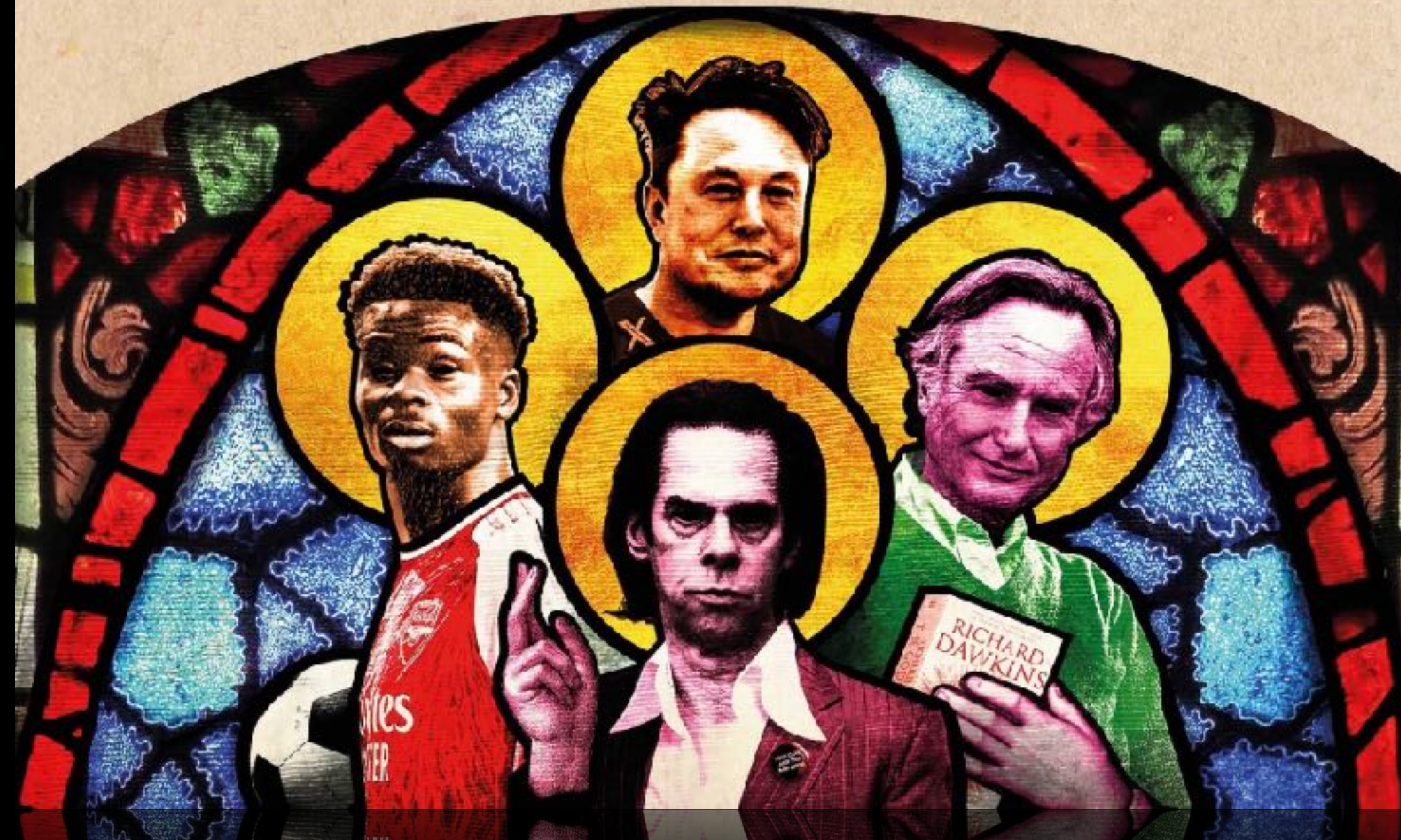
Victoria Newton: My part in Huw Edwards's downfall • Sadiq Khan on reversing Brexit
Can Kamala Harris learn from Hillary Clinton's failure? • William Boyd on Hitler's inner circle

THE NEW STATESMAN

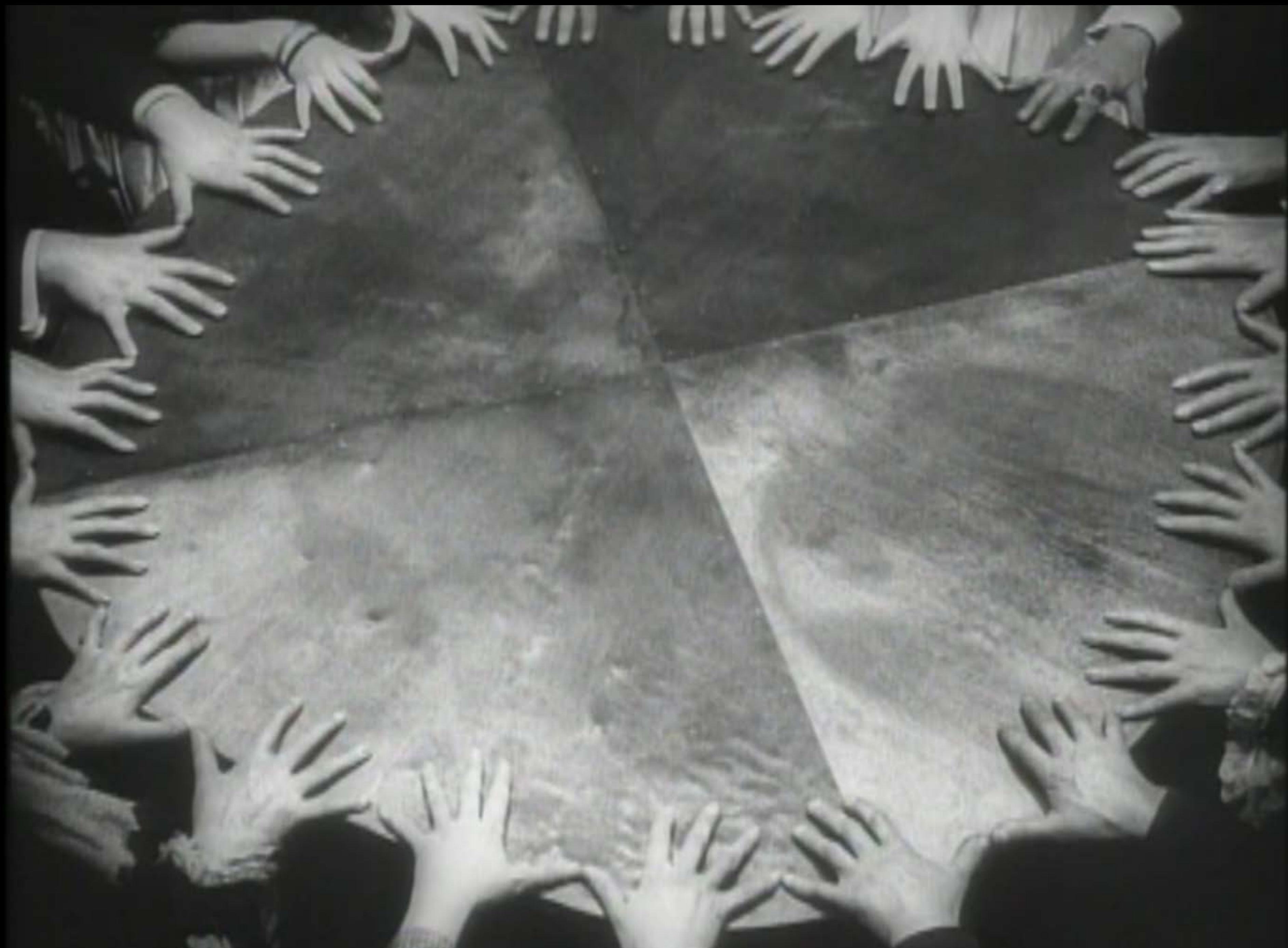
New Times New Thinking | 23-29 August 2024 | newstatesman.com

The Christian Comeback

The rise of cultural Christianity. By Madeleine Davies







SUNDAY TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
KIRSTY GALLAGHER

THE GODDESS PATH

13 Steps to
Becoming Your Most
Intuitive, Authentic
and Powerful Self

THE 7 PILLARS OF MANIFESTATION



107 Techniques & Clues
to Create the Life You Want with the Power of Your Mind. Manifest Happiness,
Money, Success, and Love by Raising Your Vibration and Energy

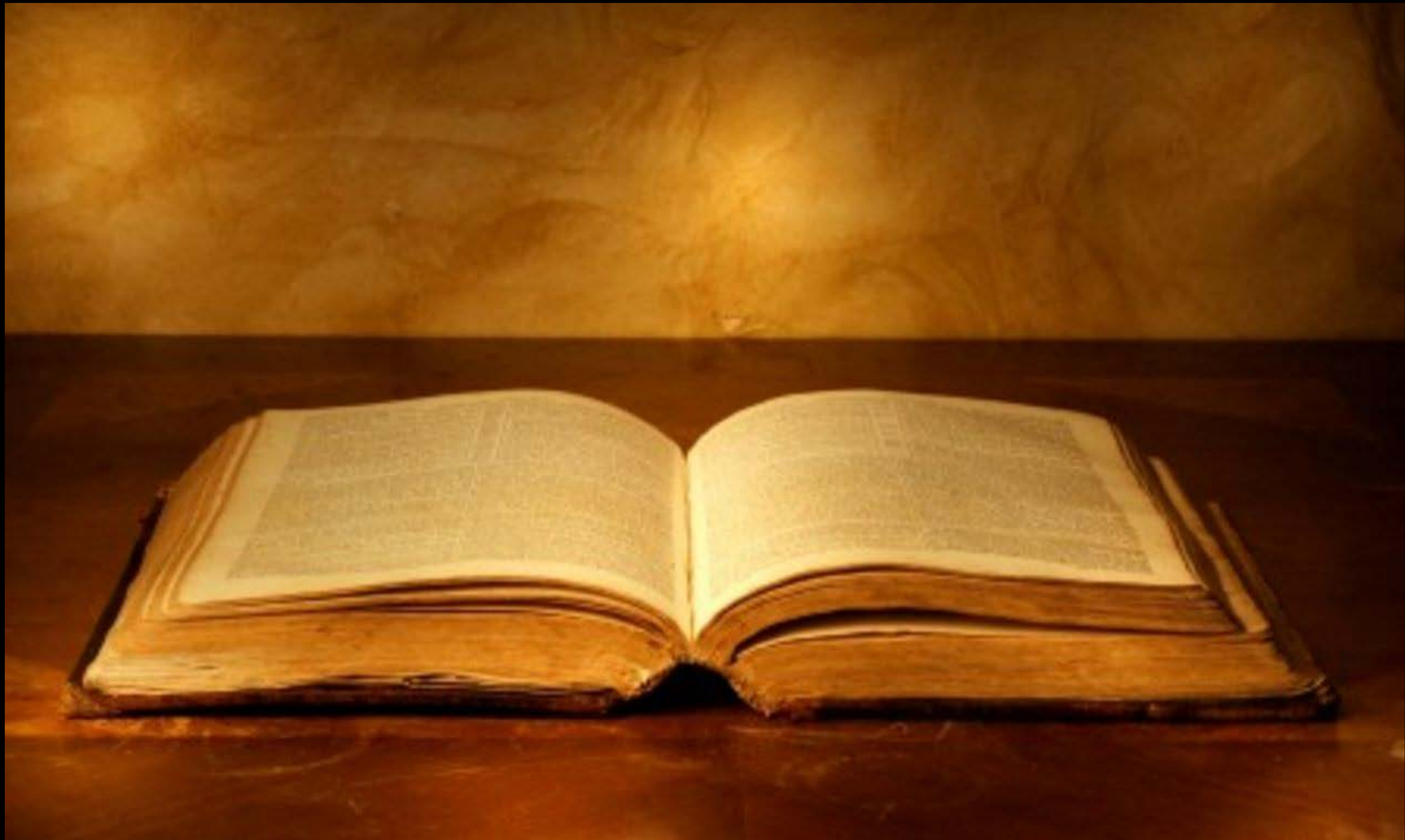
INGRID CLARKE

THINK LIKE A MONK

TRAIN YOUR MIND for PEACE and PURPOSE EVERY DAY



JAY SHETTY



Acts 17:16-34

Acts 17:16-34

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the market-place day by day with those who happened to be there. A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, 'What is this babbler trying to say?' Others remarked, 'He seems to be advocating foreign gods.' They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, 'May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean.' (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.) Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: 'People of Athens! I see that in

every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship – and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

‘The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. “For in him we live and move and have our being.” As some of your own

poets have said, “We are his offspring.”

‘Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone – an image made by human design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.’

When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, ‘We want to hear you again on this subject.’

At that, Paul left the Council. Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.



Paul begins by taking the time to understand what his audience already believed

“Have you ever
wondered?”



Examples of “Wondering” Questions

What is love?

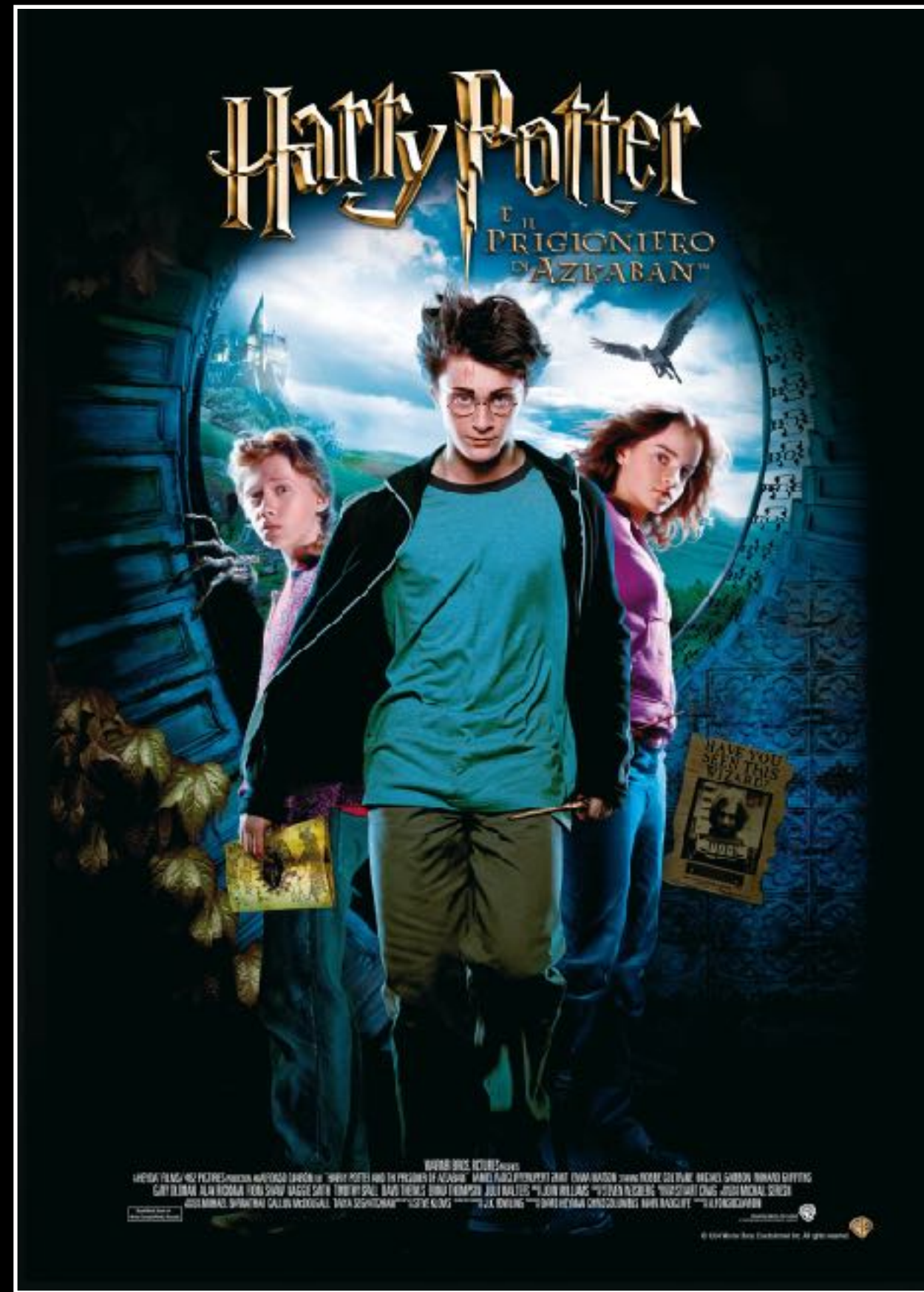
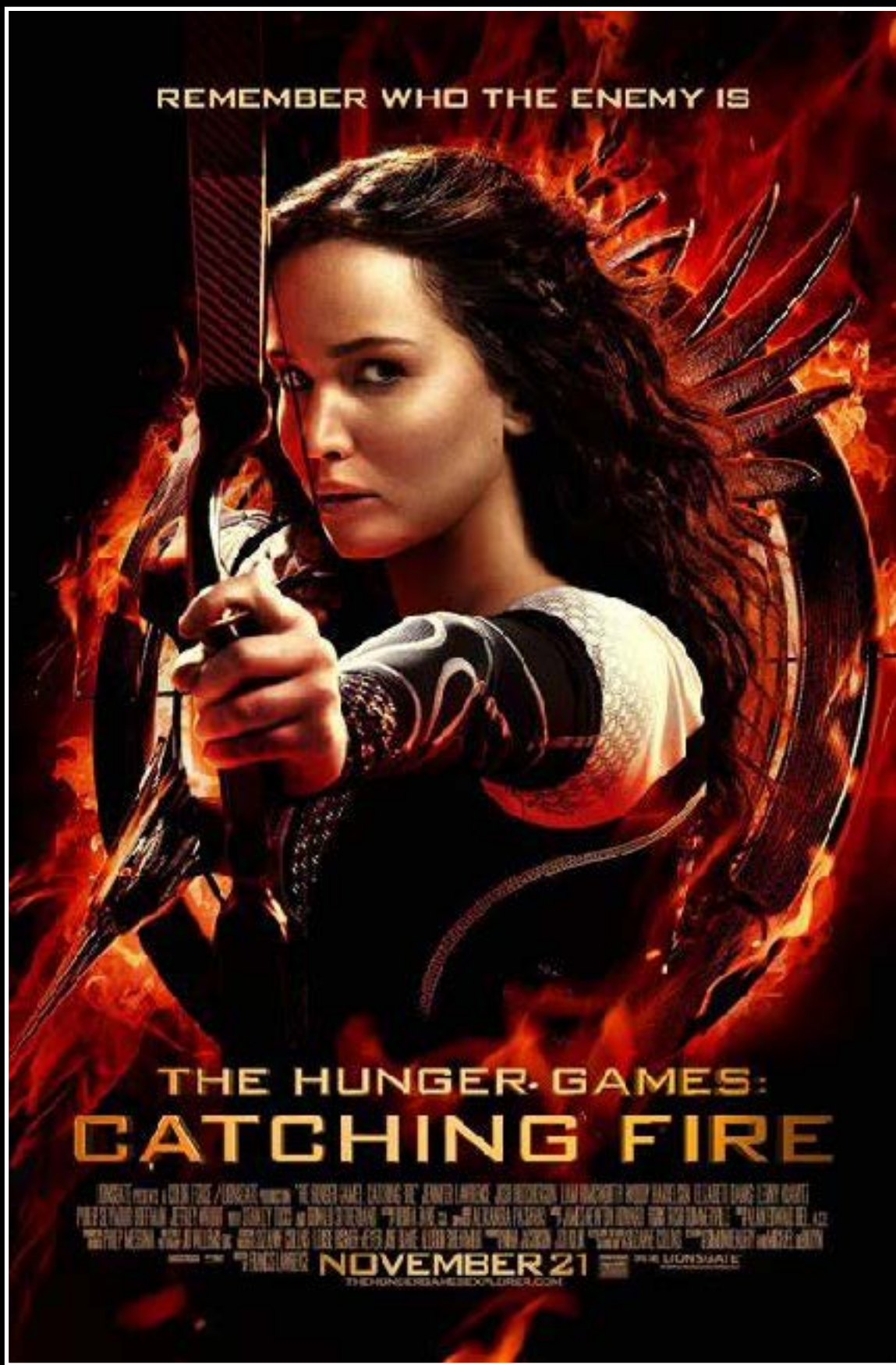


Examples of “Wondering” Questions

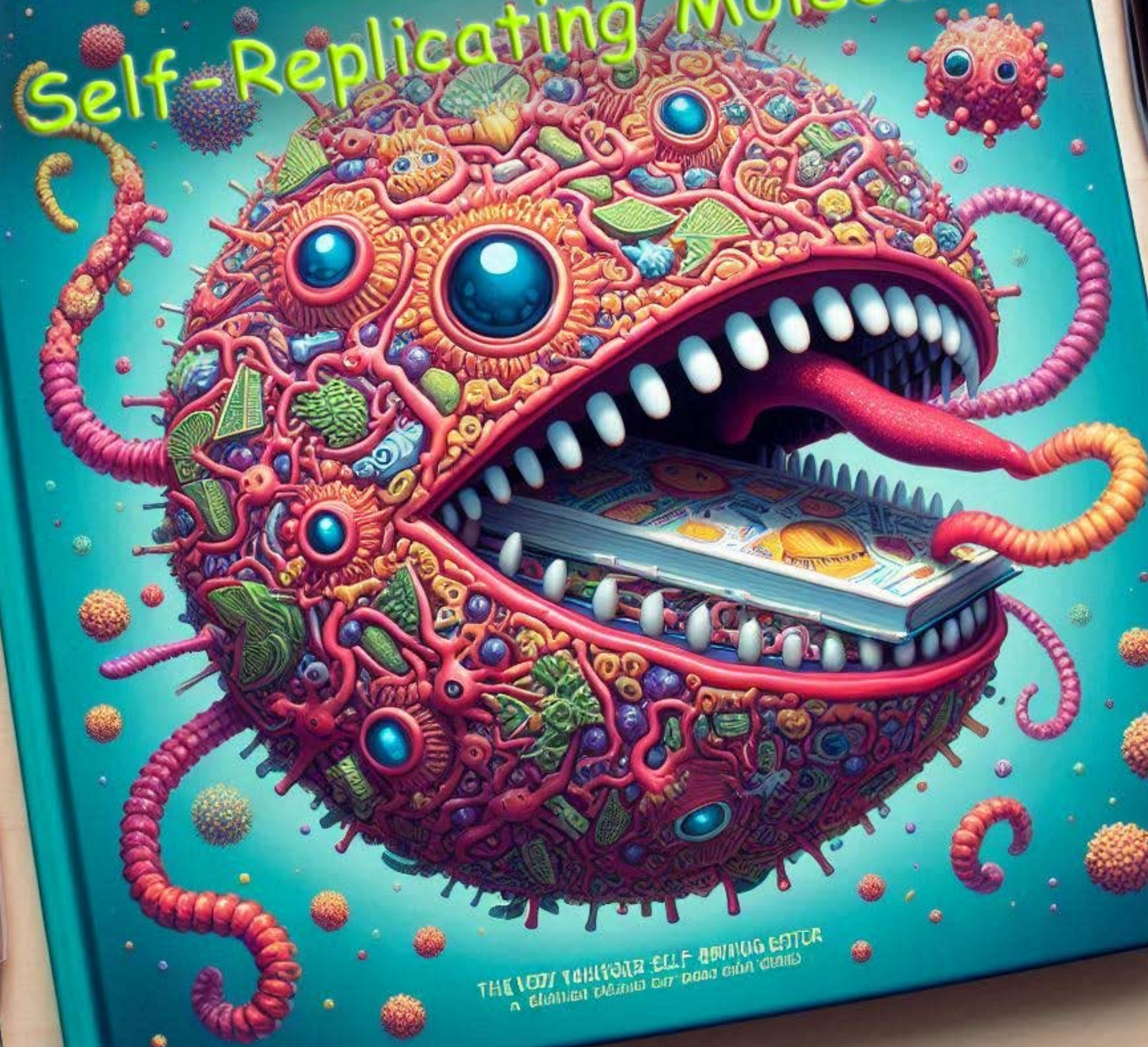
Stories

30
Once Upon A Time...

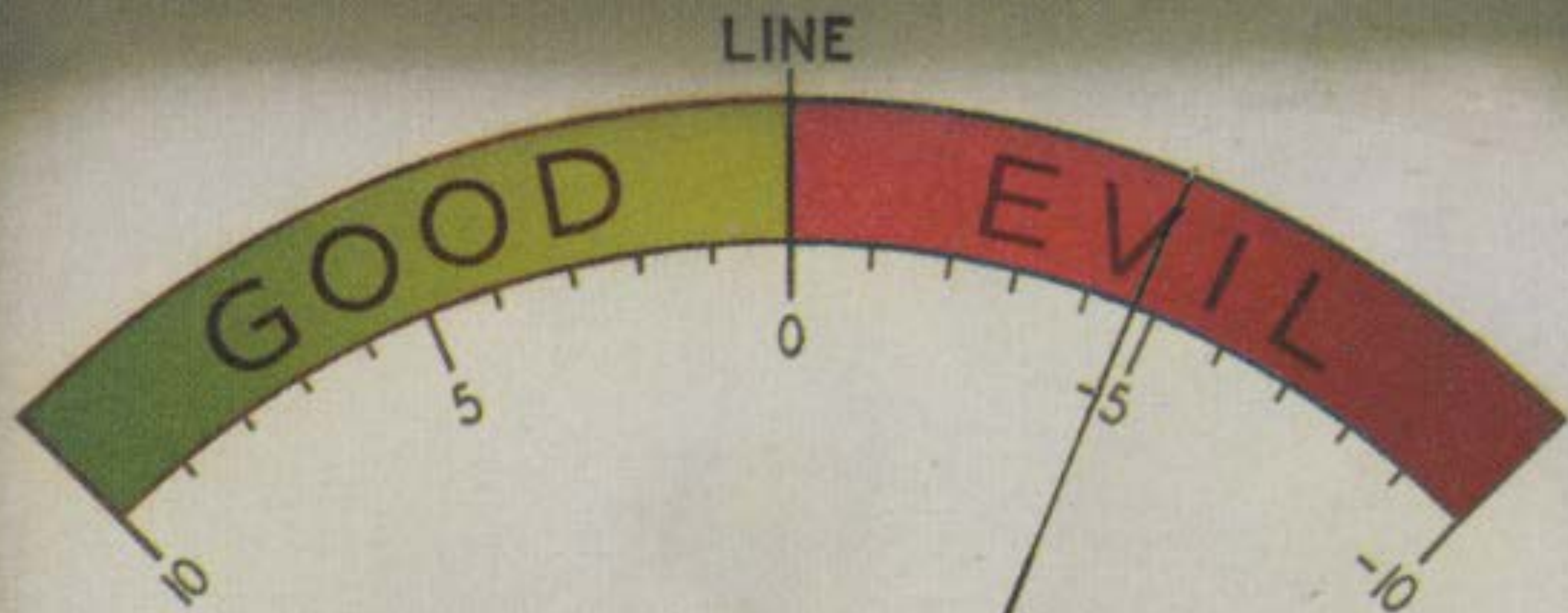




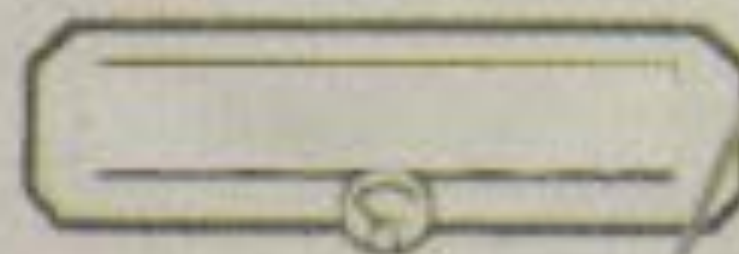
The Very Hungry Self-Replicating Molecule



THE VERY HUNGRY SELF-REPLICATING MOLECULE
A SCIENTIFIC STORY FOR CHILDREN

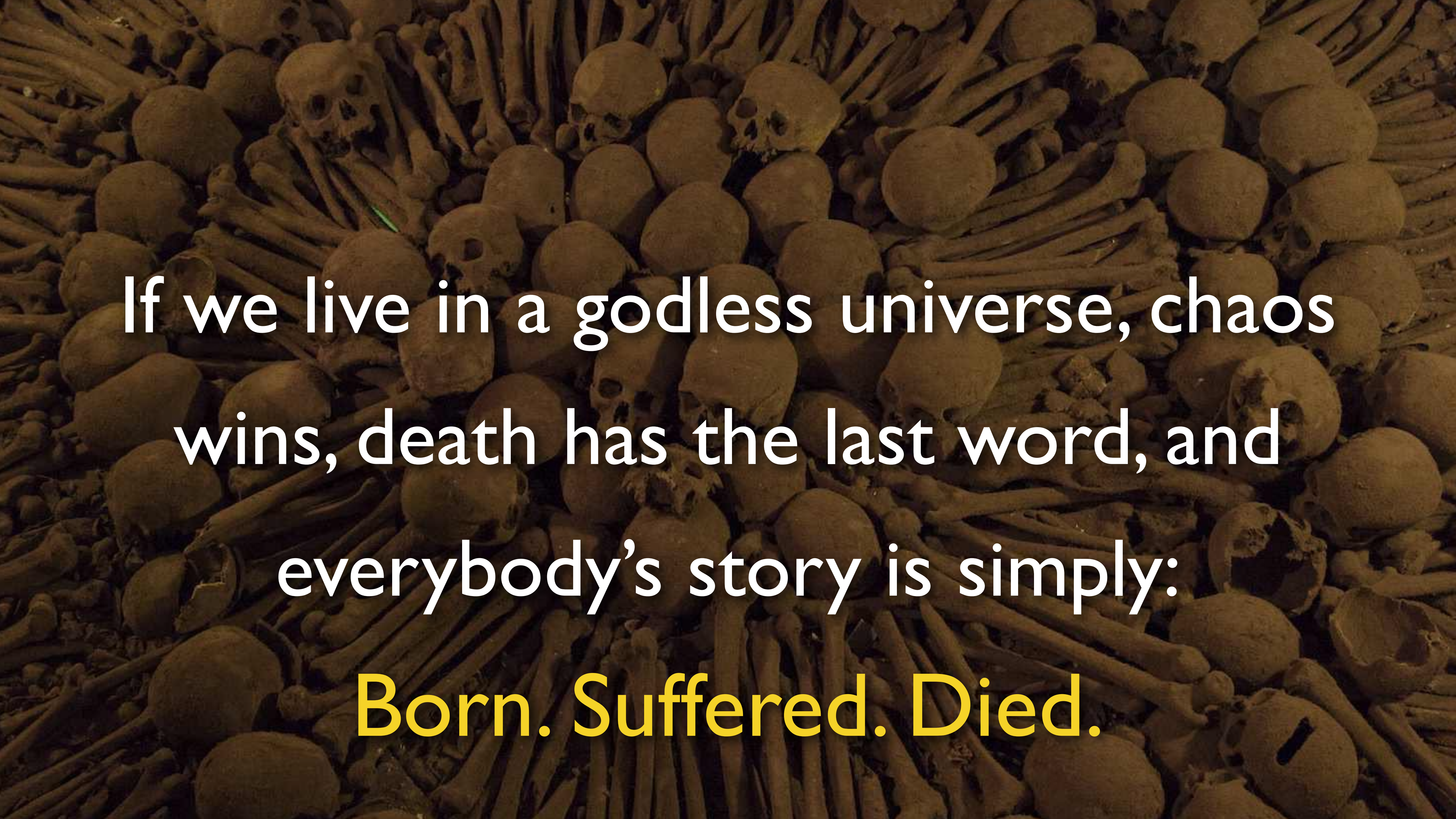


EVIL METER



MODEL NO. 648

ELECTRICAL INSTRUMENT COMPANY,
MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA U.S.A.



If we live in a godless universe, chaos
wins, death has the last word, and
everybody's story is simply:

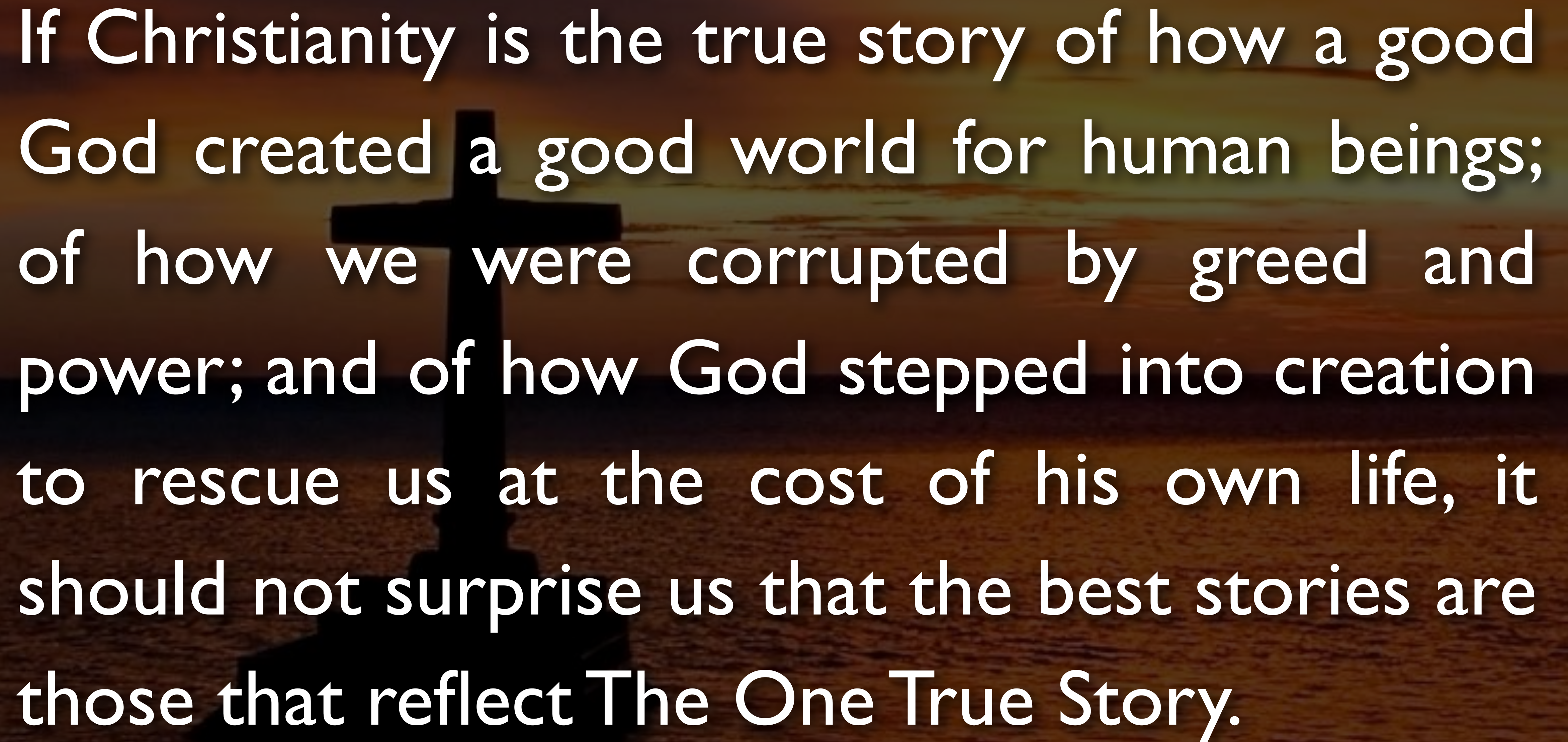
Born. Suffered. Died.



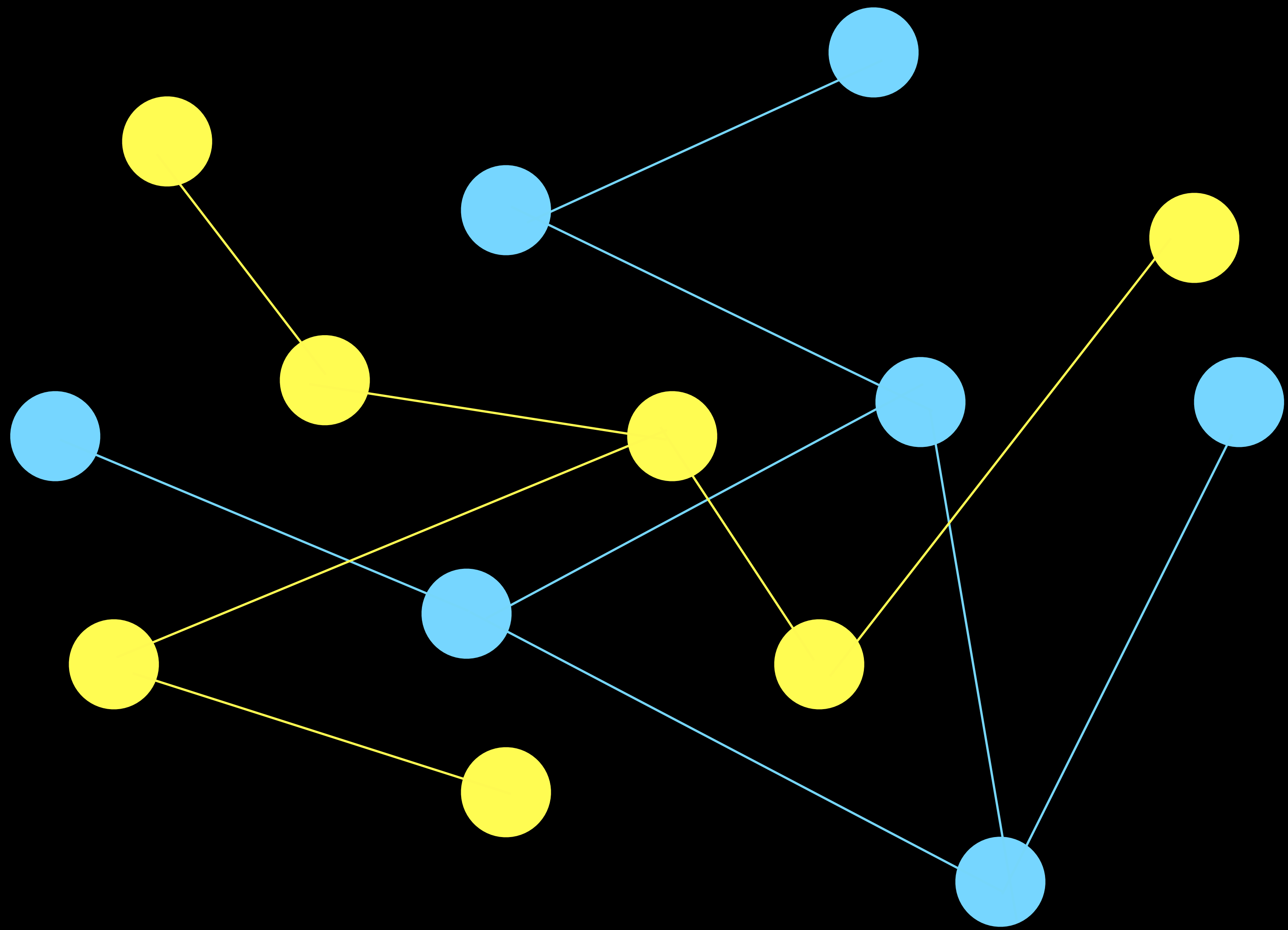
“*The Lord of the Rings* is of course a fundamentally religious and Catholic work; unconsciously so at first, but consciously in the revision.”

J. R. R. Tolkien



A silhouette of a cross is centered in the background against a sunset sky with a horizon line. The text is overlaid on this image.

If Christianity is the true story of how a good God created a good world for human beings; of how we were corrupted by greed and power; and of how God stepped into creation to rescue us at the cost of his own life, it should not surprise us that the best stories are those that reflect The One True Story.



Joining the Dots in Evangelism

Connecting the *Little Story* to the *Big Story*

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE COMEDY AGENCY



THREE WEEKS MAGAZINE



SORTED MAGAZINE

ANDY KIND

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

5 CLUES THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED IN THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

'One of the best Gospel communicators I know, and certainly the funniest'

DR ANDY BANNISTER
HEAD OF SOLAS, CENTRE FOR
PUBLIC CHRISTIANITY

'Tosses out comic gems in an almost profligate manner'

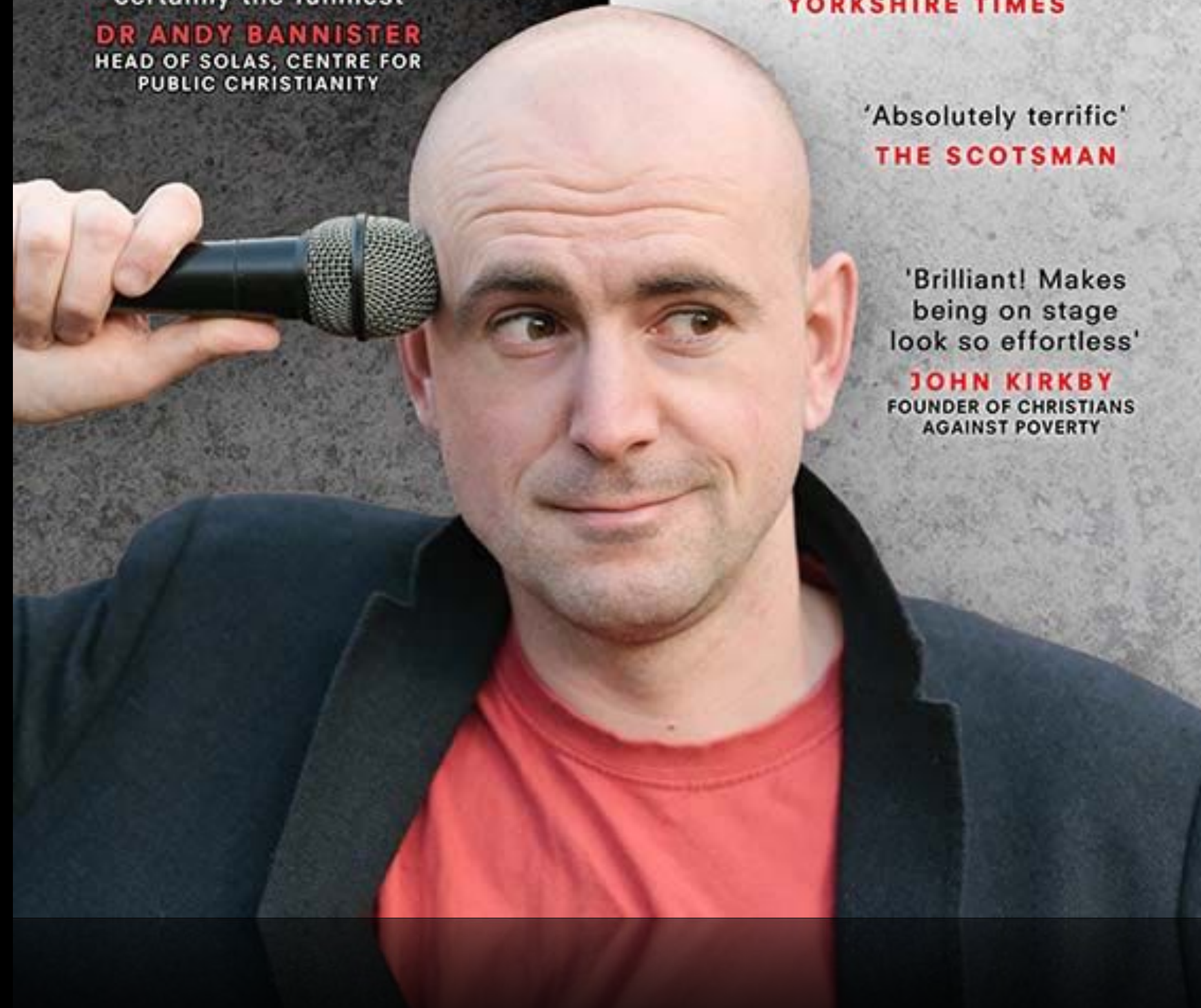
YORKSHIRE TIMES

'Absolutely terrific'

THE SCOTSMAN

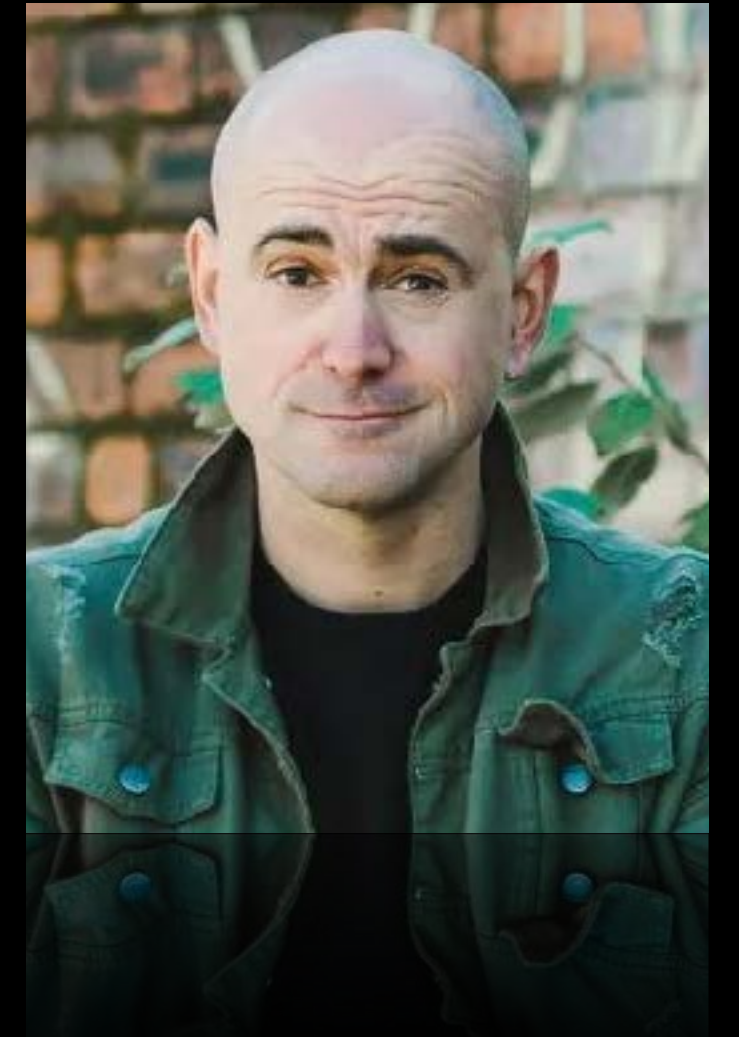
'Brilliant! Makes being on stage look so effortless'

JOHN KIRKBY
FOUNDER OF CHRISTIANS
AGAINST POVERTY



“In my early twenties I didn’t really know what I thought of the Big Story that the universe is telling ... There seemed to be an infinite number of religions, philosophies and conspiracy theories which sought to account for how and why the universe is as it is, and I wasn’t sure which of those Big Stories out there was the real deal. But I did know something about my ‘Little Story’. I knew that I believed in Love. Not just love, but unconditional Love. I wanted to be loved without fear of rejection; loved for who I was and not based on what I did ... I believed in Justice ... I believed in Purpose ... I believed in Freedom ... I believed in Beauty ... I believed that death felt unnatural to observe, no matter how many times I observed it.”

Andy Kind



Four Steps ...

Find out what your friend is passionate about

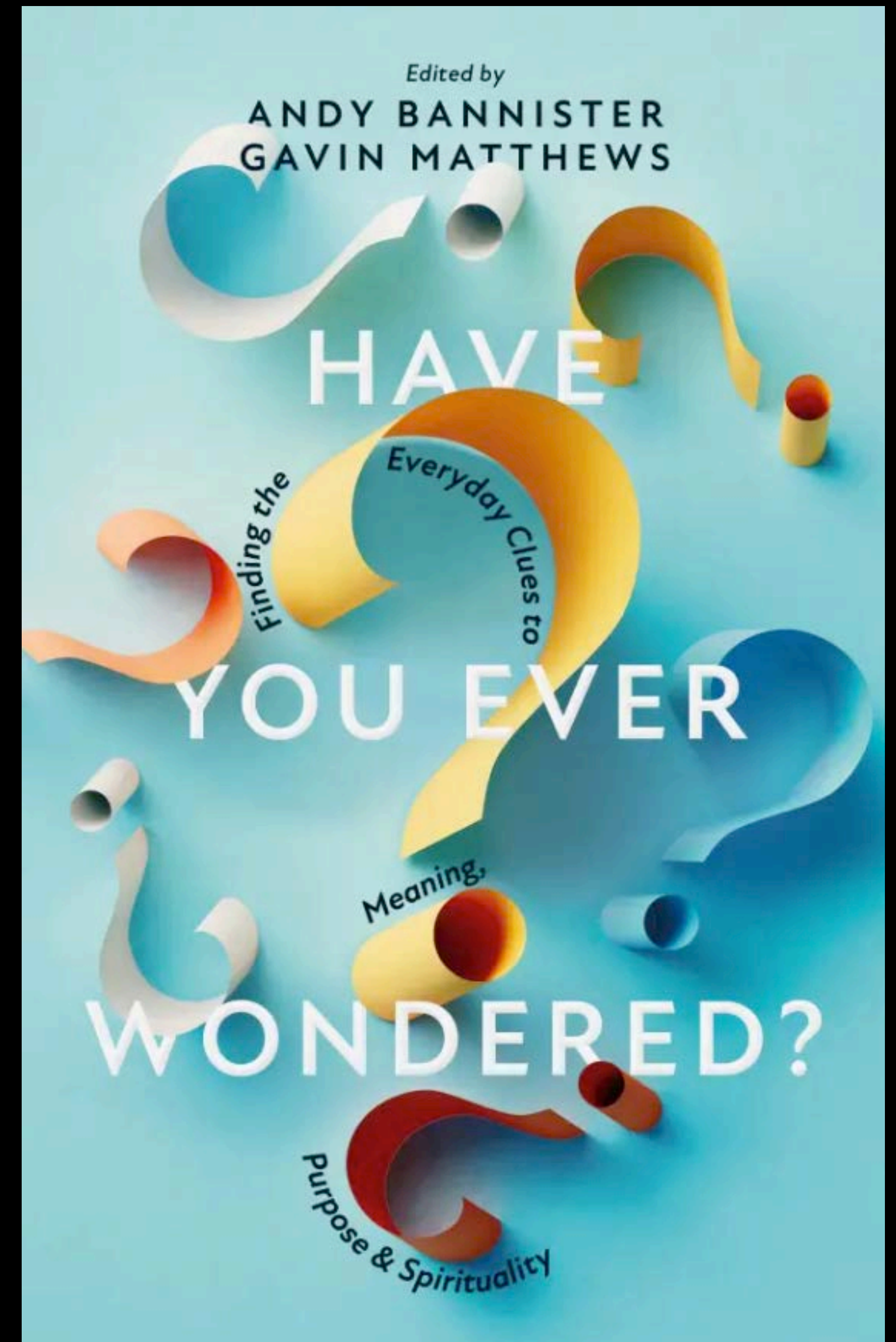
Take an interest in it

Use a “wondering question” to show how
it doesn't fit in a godless world

Show how Christianity makes best sense of it

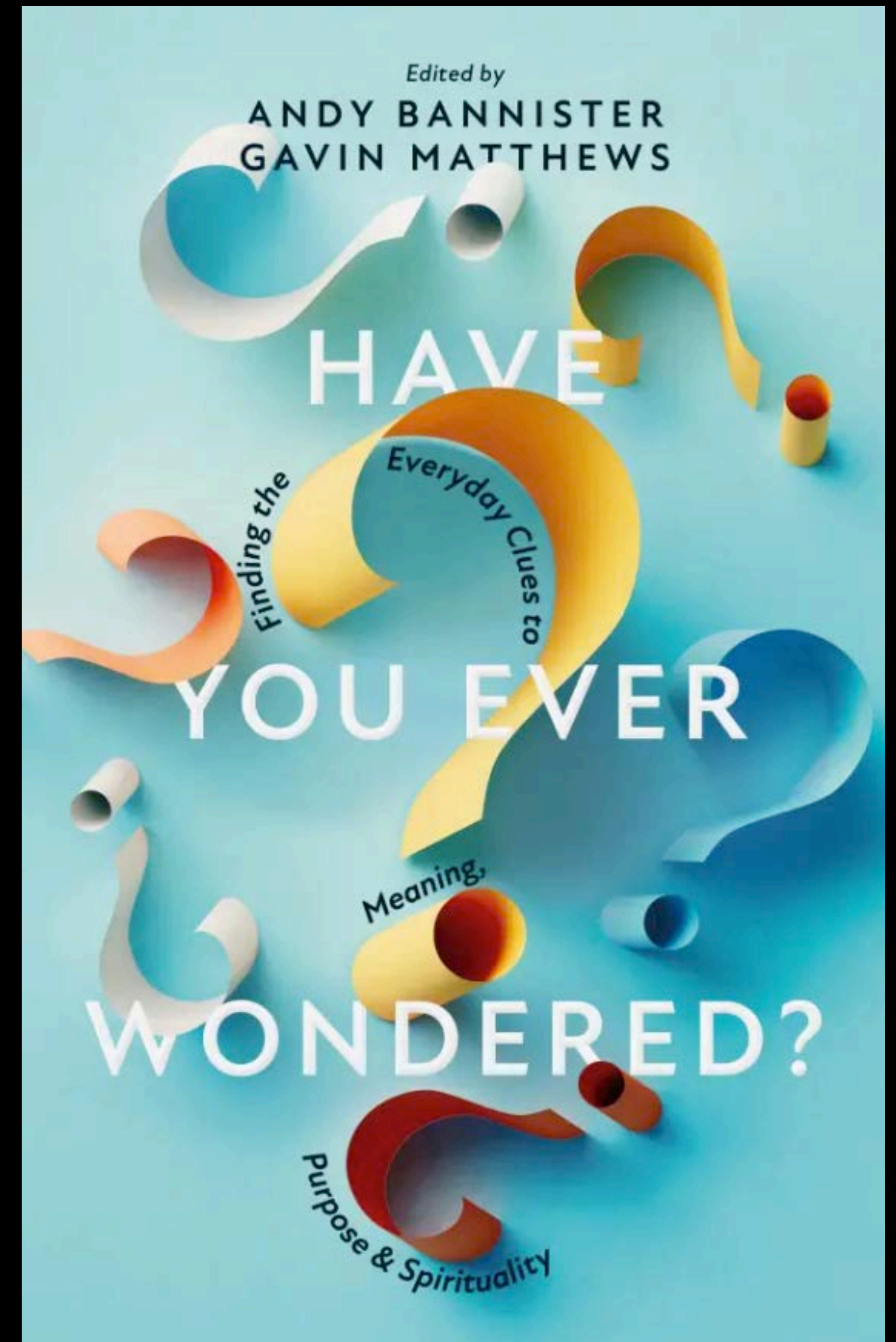
But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

1 Peter 3:14-16



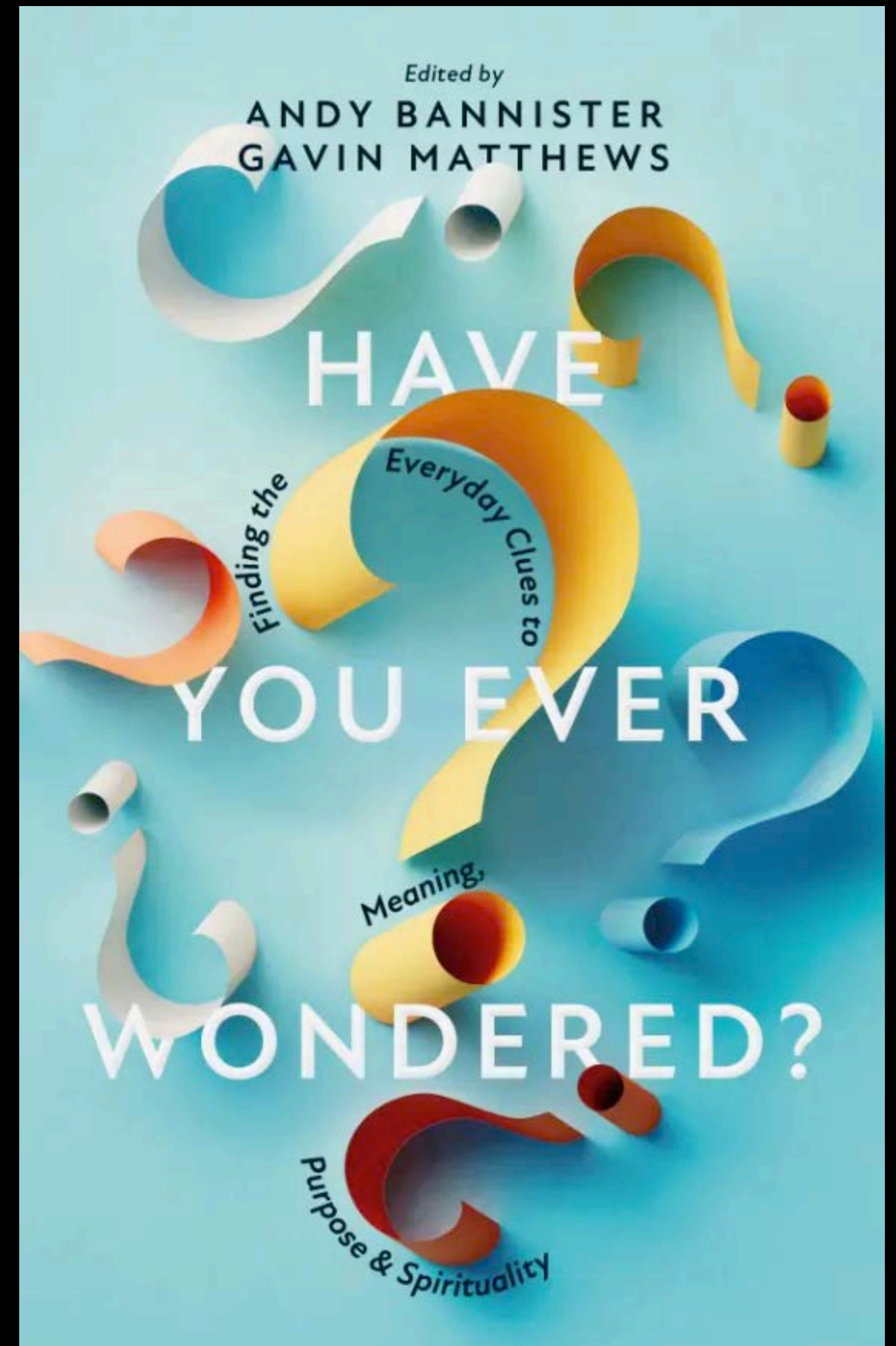
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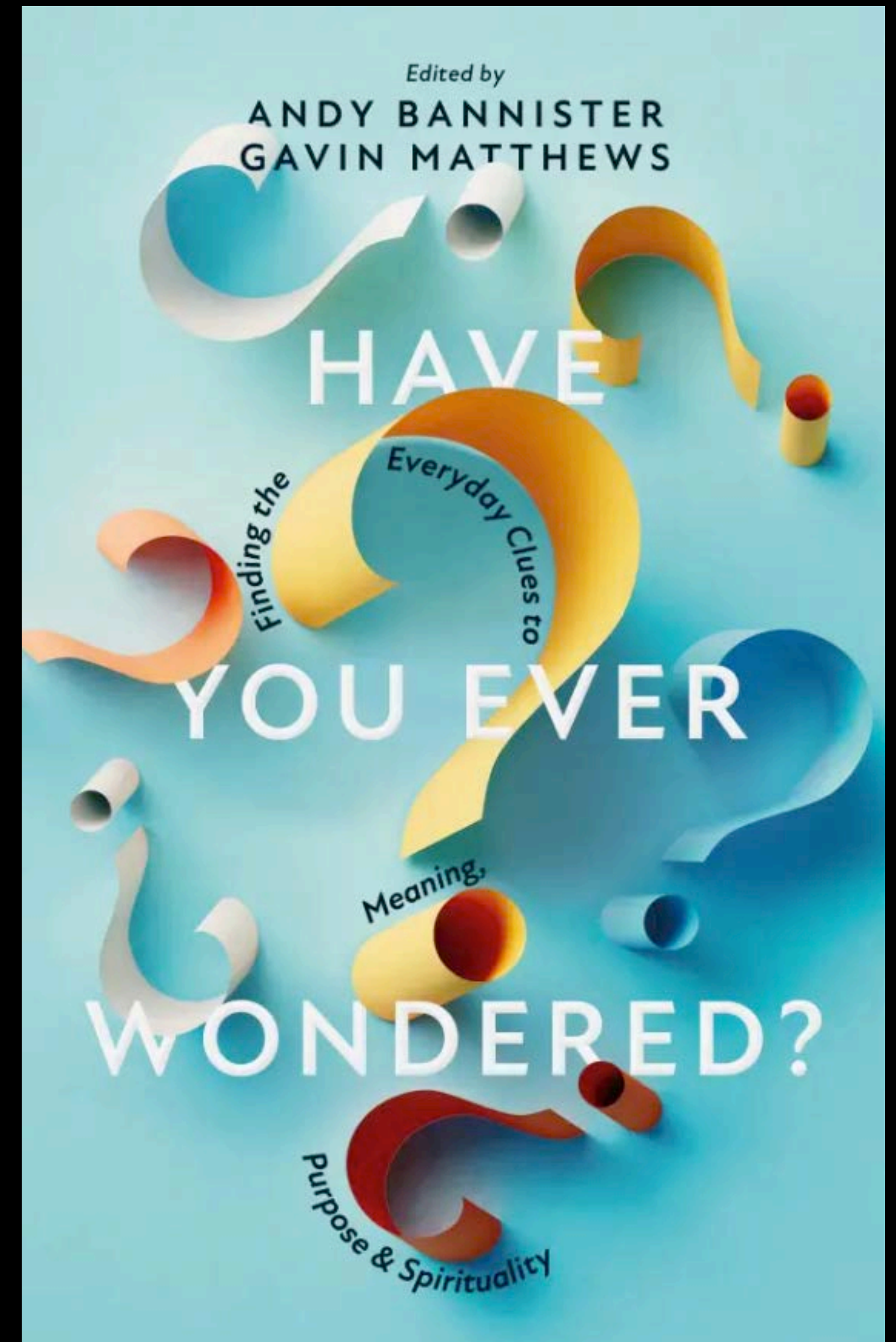
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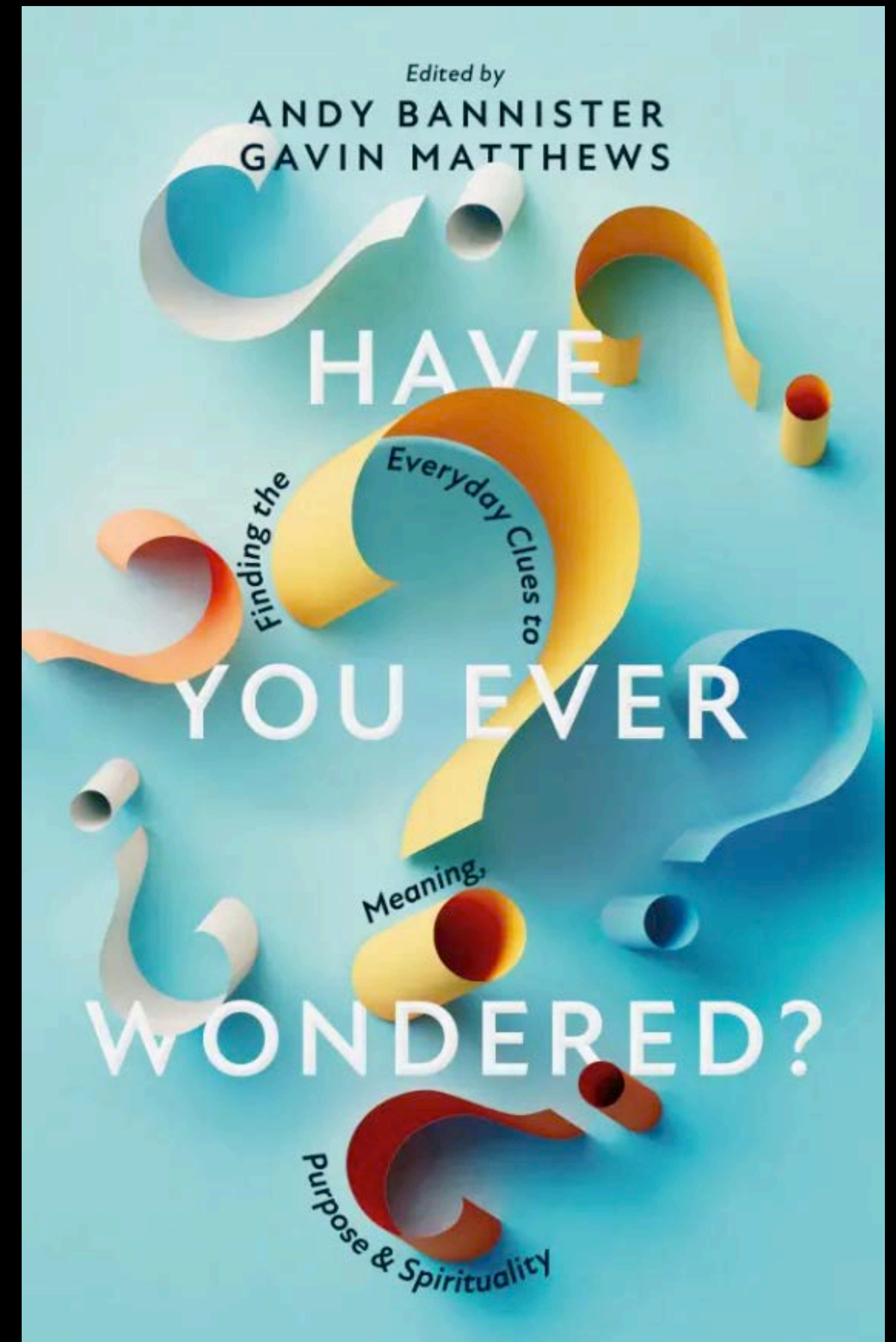
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1 Peter 3:14-16



Group Discussion

1. Who are the main non-Christians you meet regularly in your life? How could you pray for them more and talk with them more about Jesus?
2. What are the questions, issues, struggles, or challenges that your non-Christian friends are wrestling with? How can you help show how the gospel makes sense of those questions?
3. What's the number #1 thing that holds you back from talking to people more about Jesus?
4. What can you do differently next week as a result of what you've heard this weekend?
5. How could you help your church develop more of a culture of evangelism?