

He went one day to see the vicar of a local church. He felt deeply that he didn't deserve any help and suspected

HE WANTED TO KNOW IF GOD EXISTED, AND IF HE'D BE WILLING TO HELP

that God wouldn't be interested in him, but he didn't know what else to do. There were tears in his eyes as the vicar opened the door and, surprised, asked him in.

As they talked, Jason was relieved to hear that God already knew he wasn't good enough. He started to cry as he realised God wanted to save him, not because he deserved it, but because God loved him and wanted to welcome him into his family. Jason understood that all the mess in his life, all the pain he'd caused, had come about because of his rejection of God. Above all, he came to understand that God's son Jesus had willingly taken all the punishment Jason deserved, before rising again to live with God forever.

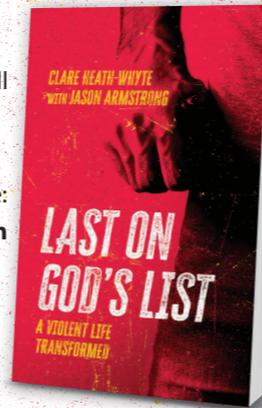
This meant that if Jason trusted in Jesus' death on his behalf, he could be forgiven and start a new life with God. This transformed Jason from his very core, and he spent a lot of time saying sorry to God and asking for forgiveness.

Over the next few weeks and months, it was clear to those around him that his heart had been changed. Jason still struggled and his life wasn't perfect, but as he continued to walk with and trust in Jesus, he became less angry, more eager to forgive and love others. He knew his own weakness but he was perfectly secure in God's extraordinary power and love, and in time he stopped seeing the dark figures and no longer felt the need to take drugs. His family was able to heal and started meeting regularly with a supportive church family that loved and welcomed them.

Jason had thought that even if God existed, he wouldn't be interested in someone who'd done such terrible

things. He thought he was beyond repair, that he would be last on God's list. But he found that there is no one that God's not interested in, and no one who's beyond repair. God knows all about each one of us, so we don't need to hide anything from him, no matter how shameful. God longs for a relationship with us, and all we have to do is cry out to him, asking him to help us trust and follow Jesus, like Jason did.

If you'd like to read Jason's full story, find *Last on God's List* on our website: **10ofthose.com**



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LAST ON GOD'S LIST

A VIOLENT LIFE TRANSFORMED



BORN INTO A FAMILY OF CRIMINALS AND ABUSED BY ALL THE PEOPLE HE WAS MEANT TO TRUST, JASON ARMSTRONG STARTED TO REPEAT THE BEHAVIOUR HE'D EXPERIENCED.

WITH AN EXPLOSIVE TEMPER AND DISREGARD FOR THE LAW, HE RAPIDLY SPIRALLED INTO A DESTRUCTIVE CYCLE OF DRUG ADDICTION, VIOLENCE, AND CRIME.

Jason's Dad was often out of the house, planning armed robberies or drinking until he was unconscious. But this was far better than when he was at home, lashing out violently at any family member who dared to cross his path. Jason ended up in women's refuges periodically with his mum and brothers and spent one year in a children's home, where the staff were abusive and treated him as less than human.

By his early teens, he had stopped going to school and, despite managing to get a job, spent all his free time stealing, drinking and fighting. He had decided he wasn't going to let anyone hurt him anymore.

The one good thing that happened to him during this time was meeting his girlfriend, Lorna. She wasn't part of his usual crowd. She didn't use drugs and although she was often disgusted by his excessive violence, she stuck with him. He wanted to change and be better for her.

Things never went to plan, though. He couldn't stay out of trouble and spent time in jail for GBH. When he got out, he started a fight that resulted in him losing the use of his arm. After a serious operation and months of physiotherapy, he started to see that he needed to turn things around. He and Lorna got married, but his good intentions weren't enough to change the habits of a lifetime.

Dependent on cocaine and drink, Jason would be out several nights every week despite having a young family. He kept trying to be better but found that every effort failed. He still felt bitter and angry from everything he'd been through and after his mum and brother died in close succession, his drug-taking spiralled out of control. He started to feel very low and spent most of his time alone. He was hard to be around, and things were not good between him and Lorna.

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He desperately started trying to contact his mum through Ouija board apps on his phone. Nothing seemed to happen at first, but a few months in, he started to feel a strange presence. Not the calming presence of his mum that he was hoping for, but something darker. He began to see figures and hear strange noises and for a while he thought it was the result of

years of drug-taking, until Lorna started to experience the same terrifying things. Jason was horrified at the thought that he had brought his family into danger. Usually he could fight off anything that threatened him, but how could he fight this? He had finally found something he couldn't protect himself and his family from. He was in a desperate, dark place and didn't know how to get out.

He had heard a few things about God in the marriage preparation classes that Lorna had made him go to. He hadn't paid any attention back then, but now he remembered God and cried out to Him in despair, knowing that he couldn't fix this situation by himself. He said, "God, if there is a God, please help me. Just help me."

The frightening experiences continued, but he had felt a change since he'd prayed. He wanted to know if God existed, and if He'd be willing to help.