

Desiring Gravity

Fuzzy Polaroids of Adolescent Spirituality

by Jonathan Sargeant

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Jenny – (spoken absently while watching *Anchor of Hope* on TV) I guess it's since my parents split up. No maybe before that. Anyway, I've started to wonder. You know, to wonder about why and to really want it all to fit together, and to make sense. I sit at school and go along with the flow. I see my friends around me and sometimes, just sometimes, I feel like I'm looking at it all through a long telescope, like I'm a thousand kilometres away from my friends sitting right next to me. They talk about this boy and that, stuff I normally want to talk about and it seems so small, so trivial, like, isn't there more than this? Shouldn't my life be about more than this? I sit and their voices fade away and they seem to move in slow motion, while all I can feel is this big black hole inside of me that needs to be filled with...what?

A: (Young male, enthusiastically, while clicking past pop up ad for *Soul Eaters of Hades 3 Playstation2* game at www.gamespot.com) No, I go to church every week. I love it. My friends go too.

1: (Adult Interviewer) So why did you first decide to go?

A: Cos of my friends. (thinking) Someone asked me...ummm...I can't remember who, but they said it'd be fun and anyway, Angie was going to be there so...I kinda wanted to go.

1: And what do you like about it?

A: Well I get to be with my friends. The music is great; I play with the band when they need me. There is just a really good feeling there. And the priest is sort of cool, in an old-person kind of way. Like, she lives in another world to me, but you can tell she cares about you. She's real friendly. And she's knows all about God and Buddha and Jesus and stuff. I've got a lot to learn. I'm just getting the hang of when to stand up and when you can sit down. Anyway...

Daniela - Well here's the thing. My mum is a good person. She's looked after me for sixteen years now and for twelve of those she's been on her own, you know without my dad. She works very hard. Last week her car got broken into. They stole the stereo and even her sad, sad *Bob Dylan* tapes. Anyway, she loved those. And yesterday she lost her job. She's worked there for 12 years! That's nearly as old as me! So here's my question. If your God is really a god who loves us all, loves me, loves my mum, then why did he let these things happen to her? Especially when my dad, who is a real loser, gets all those promotions? Things always go right for him. So why is that, if this God is in control, the whole world in his hands, like you say?

Rebecca – (while flicking past *Wonder Spirituality*® ad in *Pavement* magazine) Did you see *Anchor of Hope* last night? On Channel 4? Omigod it was so beautiful; when Jodie died but you knew it was just so right; she would have wanted it that way. All those flowers at her funeral. Wasn't Brad soooooo sad? He so loved her. When he was crying and Jodie's ghost or spirit or whatever touched his shoulder and it was just like he totally saw her! Or felt her, or something. He really shivered! But I reckon that is so true. When my Nana died I knew it happened even though she was in Sydney. I just felt it! When I die I want to come back and touch the people I love, just to, you know, let them know I really cared for them. No, I'm really going to!

Are your abs getting flabby? Has your butt gone kaput? Do you look in the mirror and get a shiver? Don't waste time on expensive exercise equipment that you'll use once and leave in the cupboard with all the rest. You need, no I mean really need, *Faith-in-a-Bag™*! It's lo-fat, lo-stress, lo-maintenance, lo-brow! Never think again! It's all black and white with *Faith-in-a-Bag™*! Its oven ready and totally microwavable! Look at this home demonstration...

Julie: (monotone and in bad lighting with ill-fitting clothing) My life was dull and empty before *Faith-in-a-Bag®*. I struggled with perpetual ambiguity and a world of complex issues demanding constant thought. Julie: (transformed, sprightly and in bright daylight with latest fashion clothes) Now I have that added zip and get up and go. When ethical or moral problems come my way, *Faith-in-a-Bag™* has all the answers. And now I'm regular again!

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(sung) If believing in God feels a little bit odd, you need new *Faith-in-a-Bag™!*
If deciding right and wrong takes you too long, you need new *Faith-in-a-Bag™!*

Marty – (listening to *Eminem* CD) Of course wearing these shoes with this particular logo doesn't make me a good person. I know that. I know it's all a marketing scam. But have you seen the ad? Where the Indian guru guy levitates? And then he dies and comes back as *Tiger Woods*? And declares a Jihad on the other brand name shoes? Cooooo!

Top Five Reasons Young People Don't Want To Go To Church

5. "It is totally out of touch with my life right here today. It's sooo my grandparents"
4. "Why would you go? Hasn't science disproved all that stuff anyway?"
3. "The music is totally, like, wrong!"
2. "I can work it out for myself. Why do I need a bunch of old people telling me how to live my life?"
1. "I went once for a wedding and it was just so dull."

Young girl 1- Hey look, there's Tony...oooooh he's so cute.

Young girl 2- Yeah, he's soooo nice. What's he got? Oh no, *Bob Dylan tapes!*?? This is the 21st Century! Take your seat please!!

Young girl 1- Oh he's with Aden. That guy is so strange. He's weird.

Young girl 2- No, he's nice too. He's really...spiritual!

Young girl 1- Spiritual? What do you mean?

Young girl 2- Well he's seen all the Star Wars movies. And *The Matrix*. And he's always saying wise things like "The path of violence leads only to sorrow" when he sees my *Eminem* Cd's, and stuff like that in our Modern History class.

Young girl 1- Yeah I guess you're right. He's always talking about deep stuff like death and suffering.

Young girl 2- I think he's Buddhist.

Young girl 1- Yeah, this week!

Young girl 2- Well whatever works for you.

Young girl 1- Yeah right!

Keith – (playing *Soul Eaters of Hades 3* Playstation2 game) My friends are so up and down. One week they're into the environment and its all green, green, green. Next week, Toby's scored some good dope and its all green again, but not quite in the same way. Then the dope runs out and they all want to become vegans. I know what I believe and it doesn't change from week to week. It gives me, like, a compass. I always wanted to know why I'm even on this planet and what I believe gives me an idea of that. Well, I guess it does change a bit...I'm always learning new stuff. Jenny reckons I'm totally mad; she says all this God stuff is just an ignorant hope I've created to help me through bad stuff, bad times. I don't think I'm

ignorant. It just feels right, and not just in bad times. Not just on the surface, either, it feels right inside. In my, ahh, centre of gravity. It makes sense to me too; it's not just about feelings. And it's not like that *Faith-in-a-Bag*[™] crap you see advertised on TV either. I mean, just imagine the world if it did things like Jesus said. People looking after each other. People speaking out when the system is wrong. People not scared to stand up for what is right. People living their lives like...umm...people really matter, not just things. Well, that's what I believe. And at least it means I have a reason to get out of bed in the morning. I just think we can make things better.

Tranh – (watching the clouds) I think we just have to wait for the old church to die. Maybe something new will spring up. I mean, the old church won't change for me, so why should I change for it?