

# WEEKLY SERMON

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## Jesus will show you the way ahead

When I was a boy I fell out my bedroom window.

You read that right.

Fell.

Out the window.

About 20 feet down.

I'd been playing with a friend who was visiting for the weekend and we were in my bedroom.

I placed my James Bond LP on my mono record player and sat on the window ledge as the strains of Monty Norman's classic Bond theme began.

Now, you may be expecting me to say that inspired by the music I leapt out the window in a moment of madness, convinced I would survive the plummet to earth. After all, James Bond would, wouldn't he?

Nothing so dramatic I'm afraid.

Having forgotten to shut the window properly earlier and, this being the days before safety catches on windows, I simply leaned back and fell out. Backwards!

Immediately below my window was a concrete patio which I would surely have landed on with a crunch; but I didn't.

Instead, my play slide was underneath the window and I landed on that first. The slide broke my fall and, while I still ended up on the patio, I did so at much less speed and broke precisely zero bones!

I was out cold for some time and spent three days in hospital getting checked out, but was soon home again.

It was an experience I remember very little about but one thing I do know is this; God had his hand on me and protected me that day.

I didn't even land on the main part of the slide, but on the edge (it was very bent to prove it)! Everything pointed to a certain terrible outcome and yet ... nothing terrible happened to me beyond scraped hands and legs and concussion.

Many years later I look back at this and other unfortunate scrapes I got into as a child and I realise that God is in control of what happens to us.

To be honest, after this particular incident I felt pretty invincible.

This was probably just as well, because a few weeks later my mum passed away from cancer. I was 10.

In the aftermath, and in those far off days before people thought to get children to speak to a counsellor to help with grief, I somehow found the strength to keep going in the knowledge that 'someone' was looking out for me.

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I was devastated and angry of course but somehow I knew there was a brighter future ahead and I developed a resilience that has served me well throughout life since.

Would I have felt the same without the window escapade?

Honestly, I'm not sure, but as time has gone on I feel that, somehow, it did make a difference. God knew even if I didn't know God at that time in the way I do now, having built a relationship with Jesus.

In the Bible in the Gospel of John, Jesus describes to the disciples how their grief for the impending loss of Jesus will turn to joy.

The chapter ends with Jesus saying: "I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

God has his hand on all of us and knows our future.

Take heart! Pray to him for guidance in everything and he will show you the way ahead.

**Ronnie Semley, Diocesan Communications Manager**