

I'm not sure about God—an excerpt



I don't believe Jesus could turn water into wine. Or that he could raise people from the dead. Or that he could heal people just by touching them.

As far as the miracles are concerned, I like to read between the lines on those as you'll see later in this book when I talk about *The Five Loaves and Two Fishes*.

Although not miracle performing, I do believe that Jesus had a special gift. Or rather, he gave them.

He gave the gift of kindness.

And compassion.

And generosity of spirit.

He looked out for the downtrodden. He felt the rich could do more for the poor.

He preached gratitude. Being thankful for the things we have instead of wishing for things that we don't.

He taught us humility. How not to overrate our own importance.

He taught love—a gift we could *all* give if we wanted to.

These are perennial lessons, don't you think?

And look at the gift of all those great expressions he gave us that we still use today: *He thinks he can walk on bloody water!*

If he really told them as documented, I think his parables were brilliant insights. They also show how little the world has changed.

In the parable of *The Hidden Treasure*, Jesus explains how little *real* happiness there is in worldly possessions. Try telling that to a world where we have to have everything and have it instantly. *Priority shipping only!*

Here's the thing about the miracles and what you can take away by reading between the lines—by not taking everything in the Bible literally.

Let's talk about the Resurrection for a moment. So what if Jesus didn't

actually rise up on Easter morning?

His resurrection is real nonetheless. He came back from the dead in a sense, didn't he?

Look, two thousand plus years later, we're still talking about him. He's as alive today in people's minds (and hopefully, hearts and actions) as he was back then.

Just like my mum is alive in my heart and mind and the hearts and minds of all my brothers and sisters.

And it's not just life after death. It's love after death.

Especially if you live like Jesus did. Putting others before yourself. Trying to see the good in people. Not rushing to judgement because someone is different from you.

Yes, I know, we've heard all that stuff before. And naturally we say, YES! That's how I live.

But do we?

I took a Methodist Lay Speaker course in 2011. I got my certificate. And I preached for about a year. Taking the pulpit when the minister was on vacation or simply taking a break. I went to other churches to help out when there was a need for a preacher to step in. The story of how all that came about comes later in this book.

I stopped preaching mainly because the church I was assigned to seemed to care more about filling the pews than fulfilling the needs of the neighborhood.

There were lots of people within a few blocks of the church that could have used daily comfort. Some company. Errands run. A warm meal.

One day, I found loads of tins and packages of food that had been donated during a food drive. They had sat in a little used room in the church hall long after their expiration date because no one had bothered to distribute them.

The tins and packages of food had been forgotten about. Just like the people who could have used them most.