

# CONTACT

WONDER-  
FULLY  
MADE?

SUMMER 2018

# WONDERFULLY MADE?



People are amazing. What we're able to think, say, make and do is astonishing. From the simplest tasks to the most complicated projects, from the everyday to the one-offs, we are capable of wonderful things.

How did we become like this? The Bible tells us it was designed into us; that we do wonderful things because we have been "*wonderfully made*" by God. He, the creator of everything that exists, shaped us to have these extraordinary abilities. He wanted men and women not simply to be alive, but to taste of the richness of life he had always enjoyed. The Bible describes it is this way:

**"GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE, IN THE IMAGE OF GOD HE CREATED HIM; MALE AND FEMALE HE CREATED THEM."**

How is this seen in us?

It's seen in our creativity. The Bible opens with God creating the universe. That means not only giving it existence - building the particles - but giving it shape and form. Moulding, styling, colouring it. Adding texture, smell and movement. The universe could have been very bland but God wanted it full of variety. And he gave to us the abilities to appreciate that beauty and the desire to add to it with our own creative skills.

It's also seen in our delight and pleasure. The Bible describes God as looking at the universe and saying "very good". God never makes anything with indifference, like a robot producing a car which it has no appreciation of. What God makes reflects glory onto him and brings him joy. It is creativity with delight. And he gave to us the capacity to feel the same. Our activities can fill us with sense of achievement and pleasure.

It's also seen in our love. The Bible says that God is love; that he lives in relationship with others. So when God created us, he gave to us a life which could also have love in it; he created us for relationships that go to the very heart of who we are. We were designed not to live solitary but shared lives, to create together, to enjoy together.

Much more could be said. But truly we have been wonderfully made. Yet, we find it difficult to say that whole-heartedly. Why? Because of the darkness we're all aware of. The good three traits just described can also be used for horrible purposes.

Our creativity can be used in harmful or ugly ways. To slander, deceive or exploit. To design weapons which hurt or kill. To create films or books which contain what is nasty or shameful. To ... the list goes on and on. Every good skill we have can be turned to produce something nasty.

Our delight can become addictive; our pleasure harmful. It may morph into envy where we hate others for their joy, or pride where we despise others because of our success. It may also drop into selfishness, where our choices have no concern for others.

Our love can become obsessive and controlling, manipulating others for its own fulfilment, using others without a worry. Love can switch to hatred once someone hasn't given to us what we wanted. Love can become jealousy, striking out at anyone who is judged to be a threat.

Maybe, then, we're not quite so wonderfully made after all. Human beings of every type and place are always capable of taking any sweet or good feature of life and corrupting it into something foul or hurtful.

Of course, we often notice this in others. People out there who aren't as good or as nice or as generous as we think we are. The bad ones who spoil it for the rest. The people we like to compare ourselves with so that we can feel good. But if we stop to do some honest self-evaluation, then we discover it's in our lives too. In all our hearts are thoughts and feelings which should never be there. At times they burst out in our words and behaviour. All our lives have times within them which we are ashamed to remember.

The Bible calls what we do wrong our 'sins' and it says they spoil the beauty of how God originally made us:

**"ALL HAVE SINNED AND FALL SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD"**

Wonderfully made yet maybe not so wonderful after all. Do you feel that tension? If so then you're in a good place. In the Bible Jesus regularly speaks to get people to see the reality of their life. To look honestly at themselves, rather than hiding behind an image. Not to live with false dreams but see what we have become. Why? Because then he has real hope to offer us. Speaking of those who trusted him, he said:

**"I HAVE COME THAT  
THEY MAY HAVE LIFE,  
AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL."**

What does the mean? There's not the space to say everything. But two big ideas sit behind his words. As the Son of God, he offers (1) forgiveness from God for all we've done wrong; and (2) healing from God for all the wrong done to us. Through those he invites us into a new life that we all need but which can't be found anywhere else. A life which even beats death.

So what do you think about all this? Let me leave you with three questions to ponder and a couple of invitations.

#### Question 1

*Do you think that human beings have been made in a special way?*

#### Question 2

*Why do we misuse the amazing abilities which have been given to us and mess up life?*

#### Question 3

*Can we sort the damage out ourselves or is Jesus right to say that only God can save us?*

And then the invitations.

Firstly, every Sunday we meet to listen to the Bible and learn from Jesus about life. Whatever your way of thinking, you're welcome to come along and hear more.

Secondly, we have a special talk coming up. Dr Hugh Thomson is a surgeon who became a pastor. He's seen the agony of human suffering far more than many. But that didn't drive him away from God, but towards him through Jesus. Hugh is going to talk about that and you're welcome to come and listen, question and discuss. Details are on the right.

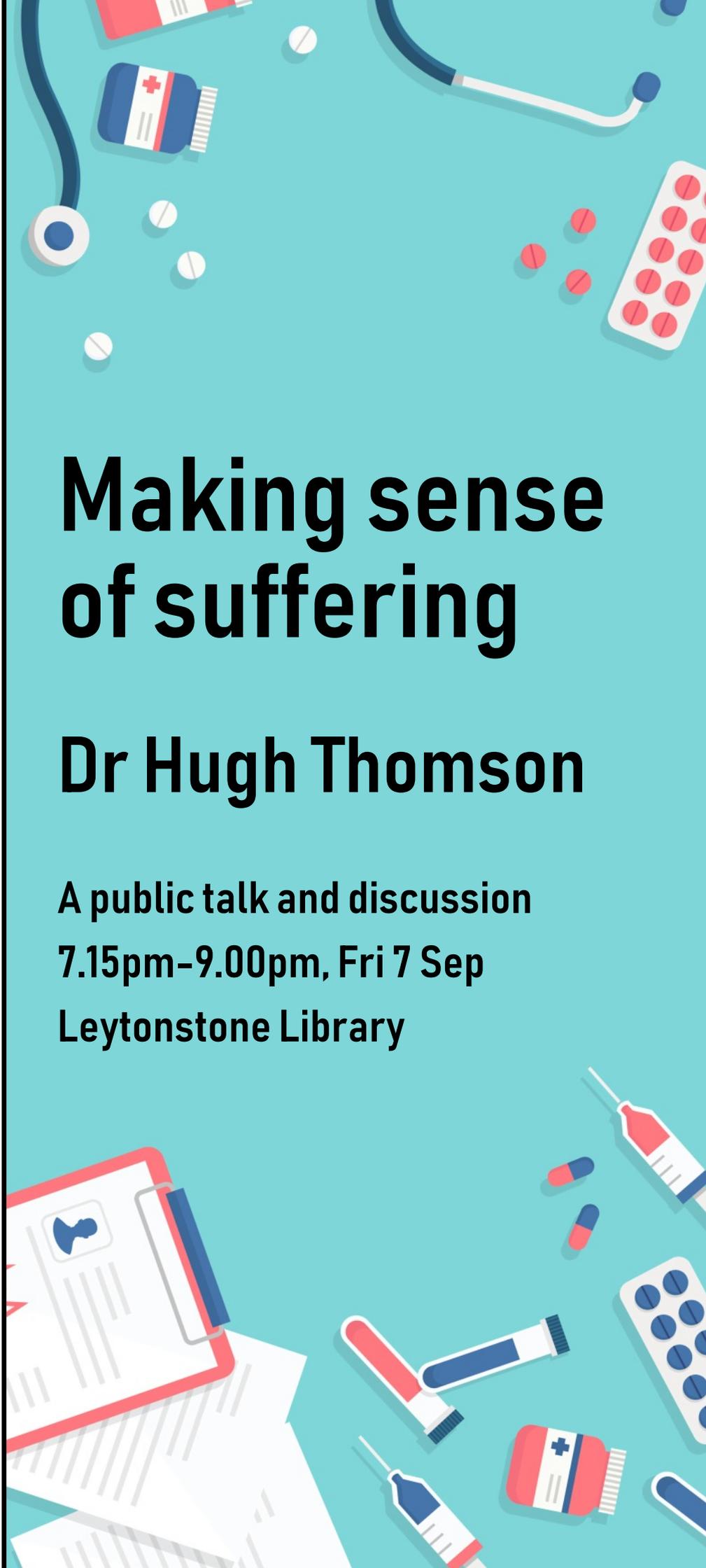
# Making sense of suffering

## Dr Hugh Thomson

### A public talk and discussion

### 7.15pm-9.00pm, Fri 7 Sep

### Leytonstone Library





# Forest Baptist Church

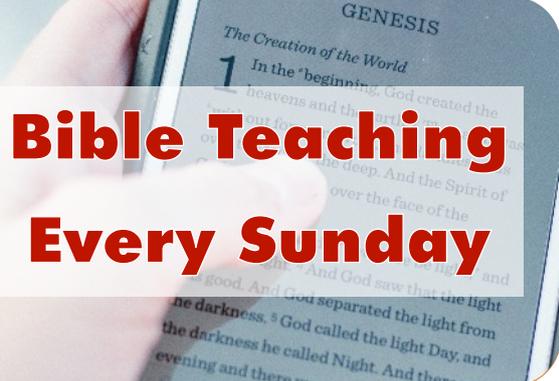
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Leytonstone, E11 1HR  
☎ 020 0222 6801  
📱 07986 115735 (text/whatsapp only)  
✉ contact@forestbaptist.org.uk  
🌐 forestbaptist.org.uk

To contact our pastor, David Last, just use the details above.



## Sunday Services

**Morning : 10.30am**  
**Evening : 5.00pm**



**Bible Teaching**  
**Every Sunday**

## Friday Club

**\* 3.30-5.00pm \* Term Time \***  
**\* For ages 5-11 \* FREE \***  
**Get in touch with Pauline on**  
**07895 112 915**

## Justtalk

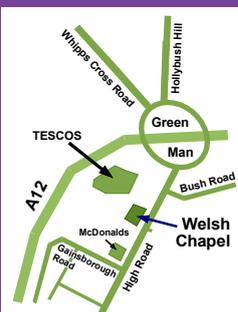
An informal group which gets together in Leytonstone every fortnight. Come and meet others, discuss an issue, seek advice or, even, simply practise your English. To find out more, visit:

[forestbaptist.org.uk/justtalk](http://forestbaptist.org.uk/justtalk)

## FREE ENGLISH CLASSES



Contact Ferris on 07727 082 449  
or [ferrislindsay@gmail.com](mailto:ferrislindsay@gmail.com)



Forest Baptist uses the Welsh Chapel on the High Road in Leytonstone, halfway between McDonald's and the Green Man Roundabout. Buses 66, 145, 257, W13, W14 and W19 all stop outside. The Tube station is just over half a kilometre away. A few car parking spaces are available on the site. Some of our activities occur in other locations. Please get in touch to find out times and places.