

# Update: Big Rocks Cast Shadows

*¡Hola!* James and Carol along with their children; Sarah, Jacobo, and Mark are serving with [Avant Ministries](https://avantministries.org) (<https://avantministries.org>) guiding souls into abundant life in Malaga, Spain.

## Miscellaneous + Prayer and Praise

- Pray/Praise: My niece and nephew are staying with us this week, it's a blessing to have them, pray our tight space wouldn't overwhelm anyone.
- Pray: We have an important team meeting on Wednesday, pray God would lead hearts and minds.
- Carol and myself independently are working with people who need inner healing and freedom from the kingdom of shadows. Pray that we could hear the Holy Spirit clearly as we try and guide these individuals into the light.
- I have a sabbatical approved for starting January 1. Details to follow.
- I have been able to hand out 37 of the new Derija Bibles, 35 to workers and 2 directly to Moroccan Believers.
- I was appointed as a missionary by Avant January 2006 and have been an active member since. I arrived in Malaga April 2006. I never expected to be with Avant for 20 years.

## Faith is what you do.

James 2:17: *In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.* Faith is what you do.

But Ephesians 2:8 says: *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith.* It's not just grace that saves us. Everyone in Christ has a testimony of faith. If you don't, I doubt your salvation.

I understand I'm creating hot water and that there is more nuance to the issue. I don't overlook that out of arrogance. Security in

salvation is a forever issue that needs attention. We're going to circle back here.



After Sarah's birthday comes Marks. He thoroughly enjoyed his special day.



My boys love their uncles, but it was very special to see Uncle Josh for the first time in almost a year.

## Testimony

*I've shared with my prayer partners and with the LCCF church, but that is not all of you. Here in Malaga our regularly scheduled programming has been interrupted. On Easter weekend something happened and the police were involved. There was no physical or financial damage to persons or property. Regardless, if we aren't*

*stopped in our tracks, we're progressing like Israel in the desert. So instead of an MMC testimony I am going to share a testimony I heard from one of our Bible study small group members.*

This person grew up abused by their step-dad. They were practised in the occult. They had no religious background. They were married to a Muslim North African who snuck into Spain in the undercarriage of a semi-truck. They had two children. Imaginably, things weren't going well. There was a lot of fighting. There was a lot of discord. There was poverty in every area of life.

When covid lock-downs came, all this was exacerbated and this person found themselves calling out to God, "I want to know you!". They heard back "Read the Bible." So they went to Amazon and bought a Bible and at the suggestion of a formerly drug-dealing friend they started reading the gospels.

Upon knowing Jesus they met God. They understood their fallen state and knew that they needed God's grace and power in their life to be the person God called them to be. They put on the table their smoking habit and said "God, take this unclean thing from me". Immediately they experienced victory.

This person changed and for a brief while their Muslim spouse tried to deny it, but it quickly became undeniable; they saw a power to change that Allah did not possess AND THEY WANTED IT. They asked Jesus to show himself as real in their life, and there, on the back patio, the clouds in the sky formed into the image of an open-handed Jesus inviting them. But before there were witnesses the formation dissipated.

Our now formerly Muslim friend said the same thing as their spouse "take this unclean smoking habit from me." And there was victory. Now all their muslim friends are left with the question, do I want the power to change in my life? Because they cannot deny that it's real.

## Big Rocks Make Shadows

---

In the Bible shadows are a euphemism for the kingdom or work of our enemy. Big rocks are my euphemism for strongholds. No one has ever seen a shadow-less boulder. There is a certain big rock that I see in the brethren. I myself had two of them: One whose shadow had accompanied me since time immemorable. The other appeared almost 10 years ago but I couldn't discern the nature of it through the shadow it cast.

This particular rock is a foundational one and it has to be removed from onsite for God to start shining his light:

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father **will** also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father **will not** forgive your sins.

—Matthew 6:14-15 (*emphasis added*)

I hear people asking God to forgive them all the time, I catch myself saying it. But I am convinced forgiveness is not something you get to ask of God. He has established his forgiveness as an automatic, but conditional response to our heart attitude of forgiveness. I am equally convinced that forgiving those who have trespassed against you is one of the most supernaturally powerful experiences you can count on having.

I've felt it. When God finally showed me the shape of offence behind the shadows in my life, the experience of forgiving was palpable. Others asked me 'what happened?' And for me, this was the best part of the testimony from our Spanish friend above: That in Jesus, they could see past the abuse they had received to the hurt their abuser had suffered. Now, for the first time when seeing them, rather than feel offence, they felt pity. They could forgive. What power!

In Matthew 18 Jesus tells the parable of the unforgiving servant, I think you all know it. What I want to point out is that Jesus never

said that the debt owed the unforgiving servant was illegitimate. Offence is the lie of believing the legitimacy of the debt owed us is more important than the debt we owe God. That's what builds a stronghold. That's where the enemy takes up rule. The offences and slights we are asked overlook are real. The debt others owe you is real. But the debt owed Jesus was equally real and greater.

There are two realities I struggle to stomach, that I find appalling; what was done to Jesus and the place called hell described in the Bible. The end of the parable of the unforgiving *servant* (does Jesus ever associate the word servant with an unbeliever?) is as follows:

In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.  
“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

—Matthew 18:34-35

You can't pay the debt of offence you owe to God and if you can't forgive I doubt you understand the incredible offer God is making you. An offer you receive in faith. Faith is what you do.

My hot take; if you have forgiven every debt of offence against you, you need not doubt your salvation.

### Addendum: How to forgive

I feel it's necessary to point out Revelation 22:14-15, I've been meditating a lot on this last chapter of the Bible, it gives so much hope and clarity.

Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they

may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

Metaphorically, we are to wash our clothes, then we see a list of stains. I've washed stains, they need to be worked specifically and individually. If you really want to see the stains of offence disappear you need to work them out specifically and individually.

This is what I've done and what I tell people to do, it's not the only way, but it works.

- Make a list of people you need to forgive, coworkers, neighbours, leaders, family members, etc. If you haven't done this before it probably should be long.
- For each name on your list, pray out-loud:  
*Father, I forgive [name], I know that you love them. I Thank you for [name], they have been/done [thing] for me. I ask your blessing on their life. Amen.*

And if you struggle to pray this for someone, you probably need to.

### Extra Resources

- LakePointe - Live Free: [Are We WRONG About Hell? \(A Response to Kirk Cameron Controversy\).](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OjMW6Sb0HE) | Live Free with Josh Howerton (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OjMW6Sb0HE>)
- Living Waters Podcast “[If You Think Hell is Temporary, You Need to Hear This](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hwJfO65skE) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hwJfO65skE>)”.
- Tucker Carlson Podcast “[Jeremiah Johnston: Shroud of Turin, Dead Sea Scrolls, & Attempts to Hide Historical Proof of Jesus](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKMQY49py4w) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKMQY49py4w>)”

—Brother James (with Carol, Sarah, Jacobo, & Mark)

Avant Ministries Canada

2121 Henderson HWY R2G1P8 Winnipeg MB

**Give:** [avantministries.org/give](https://avantministries.org/give/) (<https://avantministries.org/give/>)

The logo for Avant, featuring the word "Avant" in a stylized, handwritten script font.