



A Kidney Specialist Explains Her Faith

Dr. Céline Granolleras is a medical doctor in France who specializes in kidney disease. More than 20 years after becoming a doctor, she came to the conclusion that there is a Creator who cares for us. *Awake!* asked her about her work and her faith.

Tell us about your childhood.

My family moved to France from Spain when I was nine. My parents were Catholic, but I stopped believing in God when I was 16. For me, religion had no bearing on reality. If anyone asked me how life began if there is no God, I replied, “For now, scientists cannot explain it, but one day they will.”

What made you study kidney disease?

I studied at a medical school in Montpellier, France. A professor there spoke to me about working in nephrology, a branch of medicine involving the kidneys. The work combined research with the care of patients. That was just what I wanted. In 1990, I began taking part in research on the clinical

use of recombinant erythropoietin (EPO) to control the production of red blood cells in our bones. At that time, it was considered a relatively new field of research.

What made you start thinking about God?

Back in 1979, my husband, Floréal, started studying the Bible with Jehovah’s Witnesses. But I was not interested. As a child, I had had enough of religion. Nevertheless, my husband and children became Witnesses, and soon nearly all our friends were Witnesses. One of them, Patricia, suggested that I try praying. “If there is

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nobody in heaven, you don't risk anything," she said. "But if there is, you will see what happens." Years later, I started to wonder about the meaning of life, and I remembered Patricia's words. I began to pray for understanding.

What made you wonder about the meaning of life?

The terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York made me wonder why there is so much evil in society. I thought: 'Religious extremism endangers our future. Yet here I am surrounded by Jehovah's Witnesses who are peaceful. They are not extremists. They follow the Bible. Perhaps I should look into what it says.' So I began reading the Bible for myself.

As a doctor, did you find it difficult to believe in a Creator?

No. I had a deep respect for our body's sophisticated design. For example, the way our kidneys control the amount of red cells in our blood is awe-inspiring.

Why do you say that?

As you may know, red blood cells transport oxygen. If you lose a lot of blood or if you go to a high altitude, your body will lack oxygen. Our kidneys have oxygen sensors. When they detect an oxygen shortage in the blood, they activate the production of EPO, and the level of EPO in the blood may rise as much as a thousandfold. The EPO stimulates the bone marrow to produce more red cells, which in turn transport more oxygen. It's wonderful! Strangely, I studied this process for ten years before it struck me that only God could design such an elegant system.

What was your impression of the Bible?

I had read lots of history books and famous novels, but I immediately recognized that the Bible was different. Its advice is so practical that it must come from a source higher than man. Jesus' character

fascinated me. I saw that he was a real person. He had feelings, and he had friends. Since I didn't want to use the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses, I did research in encyclopedias and other reference works when questions arose.

What did you research?

Among other things, I was intrigued by the way the Bible foretold the year of Jesus' baptism. It shows exactly how much time would elapse between the 20th year of the reign of the Persian ruler Artaxerxes and the year Jesus would present himself as the Messiah.* I am accustomed to doing research—it is part of my job. So I researched history books to confirm the dates of Artaxerxes' rule and the dates of Jesus' ministry. Finally, I concluded that this Bible prophecy had come true on time and that it must have been inspired by God. ■

* See the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah's Witnesses, pages 197-199.

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