

From top: Greece, Jesus, dolphins, a male-voice choir, curry spices, a glass of red wine and Gregory Peck in *To Kill A Mockingbird*

The prized possession you value above all others... There are a lot of things I like but nothing I couldn't live without.

The unqualified regret you wish you could amend... Not going to university. I'd love to know whether I would have got a brilliant degree or been slung out after the first year. Probably the latter.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions...

I'd spend the morning at my house in Greece, swimming in the warm waters of the bay, then be magically transported to west Wales where I'm renovating a ruin of a farmhouse. Because this is a fantasy day it would be perfectly restored. I would walk along the coast, with the skylarks and dolphins for company, and then come back to a log fire, a glass of wine and a good book. Bliss.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Crisps – I'm a sucker for them. I used to eat two bags of crisps a day, but I've cut back to one a week. It's the ultimate sacrifice.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... *To Kill A Mockingbird* confronts you with evil, but leaves you with immense hope. I've just finished reading it with my son Owen, who is 11. He loved it. All children should read it before they are 13.

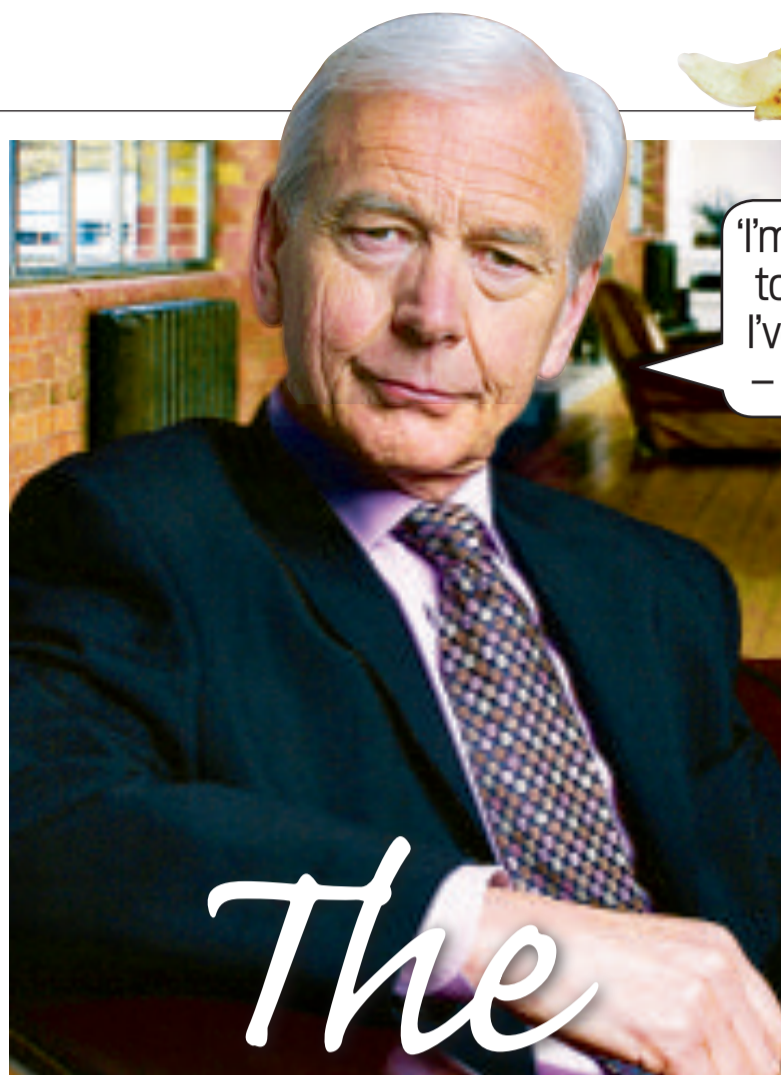
The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I would lurk inside Number 10 and eavesdrop on all David Cameron's important meetings, so I would know for sure what he really thinks. And then, when he next sits opposite me in the Today studio...

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... I hate waste, especially of food. I was brought up in post-war Britain when there was real austerity and children went hungry. Waste is morally wrong.

The film you can watch time and time again... I enjoy the cinema but I would prefer to read a book. That said, I have seen *To Kill A Mockingbird* with Gregory Peck many times and it is superb.

The person who has influenced you most... Nobody. I've always known what I wanted to do with my life, so I've never really sought anyone's advice.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... It has to be Jesus. The big unanswered question is: Does God exist? Clearly, the best time to meet him would be *after* his Crucifixion. I don't believe in God, but no one can be sure. Except, of course, Richard Dawkins.



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The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase...

That I'm in some way a brutal, aggressive Rottweiler of an interviewer. I'm not. I'm sweet, gentle, kind and understanding!

The event that altered the course of your life and character... A life is influenced by millions of events and they all in some way shape your character.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... Well, obviously I wouldn't tell you because I wouldn't get away with it, would I?

The song that means most to you... A beautiful Welsh song called *Myfanwy*. It has a powerful resonance and reminds me of my younger days. But it *must* be sung by a male-voice choir.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... Nothing compares to the birth of a child. I wasn't allowed in the theatre when my first two children arrived by Caesarean section, but I was there for Owen's birth. It was a wonderful moment.

The saddest time that shook your world... My brother Rob died three years ago from lung cancer when he was only 56. I miss him intensely, but I can't say it shook my world. Death is inevitable.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... After that brilliant interview I have yet to conduct, the politician puts his hands up and says, 'It's a fair cop. You've got me bang to rights. I'll go quietly.'

The philosophy that underpins your life... There's still time to get it right.

The order of service at your funeral... There will be no funeral. Just bury me in a cardboard box near my home in Wales. If my children want readings or music, that's entirely up to them.

The way you want to be remembered... Privately. The BBC likes having memorial services when old hands shuffle off this mortal coil, but I recoil with horror at the thought of that. No thanks.

The Plug... I'd like to thank Daily Mail readers for helping me launch *The Kitchen Table* Charities Trust in 2006. It continues to support thousands of the poorest people in sub-Saharan Africa. www.kitchentablecharities.org. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

The

DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's Today host John Humphrys

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Learn from your mistakes and try not to repeat them.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... I enjoy cooking curries. I make all my sauces from scratch and I cook at least two a week.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... My innocence. It would be wonderful to see the world again through new eyes, like those of a child.

The unending quest that drives you on... I'd like to finish a Today programme knowing I had got the big interview exactly right – that I had asked all the right questions and reacted correctly. It hasn't happened in the past 25 years, which is endlessly frustrating.

The poem that touches your soul... Wilfred Owen was the greatest of war poets and *Dulce Et Decorum Est* is his greatest. It nails the lie that it's great and glorious to die for your country.

PS...

Jennifer Aniston chases that elusive box-office hit with new comedy

Wanderlust – in cinemas now. Theatrical sensation One Man

Two Guvnors moves into London's Theatre Royal Haymarket.

*And Bruce Springsteen's new album *Wrecking Ball* is out Monday*



NEXT WEEK

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