

# 5 Characteristics of Brothers in Arms

Michael Durant sat in the seat of his crashed "Super Six-Four" Black Hawk helicopter. He had a broken femur and crushed some vertebrae in his spine. He was the only conscious crewmember of the aircraft that was now surrounded by Somali militia.

Enemy fire began to hit all around him. Unable to move, he picked up his weapon and began firing from his seat in the cockpit. Durant stood alone as the surrounding mob descended upon him.

In the safety of their own helicopter were Delta Force snipers, Randy Shughart and Gary Gordon. Realizing the only chance for the downed crew's survival was ground support, they quickly volunteered. After three persistent requests, they were given the green light. They hit the deck 100 meters from the crash site and fought their way there.

Just as Michael Durant began firing for the first time, Shughart and Gordon arrived. They pulled Durant from the aircraft and laid him in a safe place. Then they went to the front and entered into tenacious fighting.

Gordon fell, mortally wounded. Shughart grabbed Gordon's rifle and brought it to Durant. Then he went to the front of the aircraft, never to be seen again. Gordon and Shughart were posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Durant credits them for saving his life.

Michael Durant described the events this way: "When it got ugly ... when you get into a situation like that ... I'm fighting for the guy next to me. I'm fighting for my comrades."

As we celebrate Memorial Day, let's pause and remember these heroes and glean characteristics of true friendship. What

would it look like if we had friendships like this in our everyday lives? What difference would it make in our marriages?

Marriage is not war, but it has its difficulties. Having brothers in arms can make all the difference. Here are five characteristics brothers in arms share:

**1. Love.** This goes beyond warm feelings and a bond. Love is a choice. It is about putting someone else before oneself. It's about giving someone else honor. All of the characteristics below are born out of love. We were created to love and to be loved. It is the deepest human need. Is there a friend you have loved without looking for anything in return?

**2. Sacrifice.** This is about being at someone's side regardless of the cost. It's the willingness to give up things of significant worth for the benefit of another. Sacrifice can be shown in big ways, like traveling a considerable distance to be with a friend in need. It can be shown in smaller ways, like losing some sleep by taking a late-night phone call. In what ways have you sacrificed for a friend lately?

**3. Faithfulness.** This is about being dependable through good times and bad, someone your friends can truly count on. You endure and are consistently reliable. When things were at their worst, Shughart and Gordon were by Durant's side. They shared his burden when they didn't have to. How can you share in a friend's burden?

**4. Honesty.** Someone who is honest is someone who's willing to be truthful even when it is hard. "As iron sharpens iron, so does one man to another." We sharpen one another by holding one another accountable when we get out of line. It takes courage to say the difficult thing when we see a friend going down a destructive path. We have to be willing to be vulnerable with our weaknesses first in many circumstances. Is there a friend you can be completely real with?

**5. Trust.** Faithfulness and honesty build trust. You have won your friend's full confidence. This is earned. As you do this over time, the bond will grow deeper. More will be shared and the part you will play in your friend's life will increase. How much trust have you earned with your friends?

These characteristics feed one another. As you live this out, your friendships will become richer.

Huddle up with your kids and ask them what it means to be a good friend.

**All Pro Dad** is Family First's innovative and unique program for every father. Their aim is to interlock the hearts of the fathers with their children and, as a byproduct, the hearts of the children with their dads. At , dads in any stage of fatherhood can find helpful resources to aid in their parenting. Resources include daily emails, blogs, Top 10 lists, articles, printable tools, videos and eBooks. From , fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on **Facebook**, **Twitter**, **YouTube** and **Instagram**.

For the original article, visit .

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## Is There Really a Link Between Heart Disease and Saturated Fat?

The very common advice to people suffering from heart disease has always been to avoid the overconsumption of saturated fat. Such saturated fats can be found in red meat, butter and cheese.

Saturated fats have the ability to deposit in arteries and clog them; this is why numerous health-conscious people in the U.S. prefer healthier fats, such as canola oil as opposed to butter.

However, the results of this study are not shocking for people who are conscious of modern nutrition. It is important to know that there is no solid evidence to attest to the fact that saturated fat can directly cause heart disease. People usually believe this theory because nutritional strategies over the last decade have been directly affected by bias, wrong information, ambition and politics.

### **'Saturated Fat Causes Heart Disease'—Who Came Up With This Idea?**

In 1950, a scientist at the University of Minnesota, Ancel Benjamin Keys, rose to instant fame and was also featured on the cover of *Time* magazine after declaring his idea that the consumption of saturated fat increases cholesterol, which in turn results in heart attacks. Since Keys was the director of the largest nutritional body, he could easily flaunt his idea among people. He performed the study named as "Seven Countries" on more than 13,000 men from the U.S., Europe and Japan. Keys concluded that instead of aging, poor nutrition is the major cause of heart disease in people.

### **What Did Critics Say?**

Critics found that Keys desecrated various scientific rules during the study to draw this conclusion. For instance, he chose countries like Italy, Finland and Yugoslavia, where people could easily be convinced. However, countries such as West Germany, France, Switzerland and Sweden, where people consume lots of fat but still remain healthier, were not included in the study.

The study was conducted on islanders and peasants from Crete who tilled their fields and consumed less cheese and meat.

Also, Keys visited Crete after World War II and examined the diet of islanders during Lent, when they stopped consuming cheese and meat. Therefore, Keys could not correctly analyze their consumption of saturated fat.

Because of the difficulties with the surveys, he took into account only the data obtained from a few dozen people. This figure was much lower than the 655 he had initially selected to study. These flaws in his study were exposed later, in the year 2002, when a scientist examined the work conducted on Crete. However, until then, it was too late and his misinterpretation was already adopted internationally.

There were many others studies that followed later on. There were more than six large trials that pitted a diet rich in soybean and corn against one with more animal fats. However, those trials had issues with their methodology.

In many studies, there was no restriction on smoking, while in others the participants were permitted to move in and out of the research group during the study. Thus, the results obtained were not trustworthy. Well, nothing could be done until then, since a lot of money was spent to prove Key's assumptions. People were so much in favor of Keys' idea that they started to think it was true.

In 1977, a nutrition professor at Harvard, Mark Hegsted, convinced the U.S. Senate to recommend the Keys diet; he claimed Americans should change to Keys' diet because of the advantages it contained. He further stated that the Keys diet is safe to consume and there are no identified risks. However, there were many scientists who warned regarding the unintentional result of the Keys diet; today we are facing with a few of these.

### **What Are the Consequences of Consuming a Low-Fat Diet?**

It has been found that reducing the amount of fat results in the consumption of more carbohydrates, and therefore the

consumption of carbohydrates has increased by 25 percent since 1970. However, according to the latest government data, consumption of saturated fat has been reduced by 11 percent.

In spite of consuming cheese, meat and eggs, we are consuming more fruit, grains, pasta and starchy potatoes. By reducing the amount of fat in our diet, we are filling our body with carbohydrate-based foods.

**Don Colbert, M.D.**, is board certified in family practice and in antiaging medicine. He also has received extensive training in nutritional and preventive medicine, and he has helped millions of people discover the joy of living in divine health.

For the original article, visit [.](#)

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He will also be correcting a historical injustice during his visit when he lays a wreath at the tomb of Theodor Herzl. This signifies a change in the Holy See's relationship with Israel, some 110 years after Herzl visited the Vatican to ask for help

in establishing a Jewish state and was turned down by Pope Pius X. Pope Francis' trip to Israel is causing a great deal of excitement among the Christian communities. This is not the first papal visit to Israel. Pope Benedict XVI visited in 2009; Pope John Paul II visited in 2000, and Pope Paul VI visited in 1964. But the previous visits do not detract from the expectations or, for some, the fears aroused by Pope Francis' upcoming visit.

Not many people know that during the visit, a summit—the first of its kind in 50 years—will take place between the heads of the most important churches in the Christian world. Two respected figures will accompany the pope on his arrival: the head of the Eastern Orthodox Church, Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople, who will be arriving from Istanbul, and Patriarch Cardinal Mar Bechara Boutros a-Rai, the Maronite patriarch of Antioch, who will be coming from Lebanon. Patriarch a-Rai's decision to join the pope's visit to Israel aroused harsh criticism in Lebanon, and he was put under heavy pressure.

High-ranking Hezbollah officials tried to dissuade him from participating in the visit, even summoning him for a meeting in which they claimed that his visit to Israel would have "far-reaching political consequences."

### **Waiting for the Holy Trinity**

Pope Francis' visit to the region is described as a journey whose purpose is to convey a message of peace and brotherhood among Christians, Muslims and Jews. In addition to the two patriarchs, non-Christian religious leaders will also be accompanying him: Rabbi Abraham Skorka and Mufti Omar Abboud.

But for the Christian community, the historic summit will be the high point of the entire visit.

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“Besides the spiritual message that Pope Francis seeks to convey, this visit is also a significant statement regarding internal relations among all the various Christian denominations. The pope wishes to bring the monotheistic faiths closer together, and just as important, he also wishes to bring the various Christian denominations closer. That is why the Maronite Patriarch did not give in to the pressure applied to him in Lebanon, and announced that his decision to accompany the journey was final and not subject to change.”

A-Rai is expected to visit Jaffa, Haifa, Acre and Nazareth. During his visit he will meet with families displaced from the villages of Biram and Ikrit in the Galilee. These families are members of the Christian faith who served in the South Lebanon Army and escaped from Lebanon after the Israeli army withdrew in 2000. He will also lead a prayer service for thousands of Maronite Christians.

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From Abunassar's statements, one may gather that from Christianity's perspective, all the stops on the visit are part of the same spiritual package deal.

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Christianity views the region where Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the Kingdom of Jordan are located as the Holy Land. That is because the Latin Catholic Patriarchate in Jerusalem is also responsible for the holy sites in these regions.”

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“You must understand that the popes, past and present, were not eager to leave their dwelling place in Rome for political visits. The custom in which the pope leaves the Vatican on official visits to countries throughout the world began only in the 20th century.”

Abunassar says that Pope Francis’ decision to make this trip stemmed from the special status that the Holy Land has in his faith.

“The Holy Land is the cradle of Christianity,” he says. “It has its own significance in the Christian world, and no other land is the ‘Terra Sancta.’ Pope Francis is a very humble and modest man, so he does not travel abroad much. Such trips cost a great deal of money—hence the great importance and excitement of his trip to our region.”

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**‘We are Trying Not to Disappoint’**

Without a doubt, the believers have a hard time suppressing their feelings. Abunassar says, "Thousands of people are planning to come on Saturday to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, where Mass will be held on Sunday, to get a place. Everybody wants to see him and be near him. I have been getting an enormous number of requests, and we are trying not to disappoint anybody." Apparently, that will be hard to do, since "unlike previous papal visits, this time the visit will be brief and crowded. The pope will not be visiting all the sites that are sacred to Christianity. Instead, he will concentrate on Jerusalem and Bethlehem."

But it is impossible to talk about the trip's plans without speaking of the cloud of fears that looms over it. Not at a time when the media continually reports about hate crimes and "price tag" incidents, including against Christians. Even so, Latin Catholic Church officials say that the fact that the visit is taking place at such a tense time is not expected to have any effect.

"The church's position is that the Israeli government could be doing a great deal more against the price-tag incidents and the hate crimes," people are saying, "but the pope has no intention of speaking about the matter directly because there is no desire to make dealing with this topic into the main issue of the visit, though some members of the papal entourage will definitely mention the matter indirectly. The trip is defined as a spiritual one, for the purpose of conveying a message of peace and brotherhood, and that is how we want to keep it. We also hope very much that during the visit, there will be no incidents similar to the price-tag incidents that took place recently."

Let us return to the gap between the ideal and the real. In the nature of things, some are displeased with the character of the pope's visit and his itinerary. A high-ranking official of the Latin Catholic community told Israel Hayom that of the tens of thousands of believers who live in the Galilee and the

north of Israel, some were upset that the visit would not be including a trip to the Christian holy sites in that part of Israel.

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## **Fear of Extremists**

Along with the frustration, the official says that everyone has fears of serious and unexpected incidents.

“Unlike previous popes, Pope Francis does not want armored vehicles and reinforced security. That could be a big problem,” he says. “We fear that extremists may try to harm him or create an incident that will cloud the visit. We all hope that this visit, which carries with it a message of brotherhood and peace, will take place quietly, with no irregular incidents. We hope that the message that Pope Francis brings with him, together with those accompanying his entourage, will help calm the charged atmosphere that has developed in the region.”

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## **Teaming Up With Angels to Overcome Darkness**

As the church, our job is just to believe God. We are to pray, to worship God, to declare His Word, and to unleash a torrent of angelic activity because He is ready in these last days to do everything He’s ever done through history.

He is ready to do it in one compact generation. So much of what He’s ready to do is going to be done with angelic partnerships, with their help, support and activity.

We are at a time in history when the angels are with us. Even when we feel most vulnerable or weak, God is going to help us. He is going to help us come into alignment with how things really are.

Remember when Elisha’s servant said to him, “What are we going to do? The enemy has come for us.” And Elisha prayed, “Lord, open his eyes.” Elisha said to his servant, “Son, there are more with us than against us.”

Then the same servant, who only moments before had only seen

the natural problem, discovered his eyes had been opened and he saw hovering over the Syrian army an angelic host of warriors. That took away all his fear. (See 2 Kings 6:15-17).

The same is true for us. Sometimes our fear is based on a lack of revelation of how things *really* are. How things really are goes like this: *God wins!*

God is great. He has released an angelic army, and the angels outnumber the demons. Angels are stronger than demons. Angels are here to help us. We are on the winning team and in the winning time.

In these last days God is going to bring such an escalation of angelic activities. It already is increasing exponentially because of the time of history we are in. It is a tremendous time for us to really be aware there are more with us than against us.

Whatever city you live in, whatever part of the world you live in, there are millions—countless numbers—of angels there. They are helping you, and they are helping God's purposes. They are bringing God's kingdom on earth and fulfilling God's business.

Don't be afraid. There are more with us than against us.

✘ Adapted from *Angel Stories* by Jonathan Nixon, copyright 2014, published by Charisma House. If you have ever wondered if angels really exist, have a purpose, interact with us and are assigned to protect and do God's bidding on our behalf, this book is for you. It will answer questions and bring clarity to your understanding. To order your copy click on this link.

### **Prayer Power for the Week of 5/26/2014**

This week thank the Lord for His angelic protection on your behalf, and commit yourself again to exercise your faith in total trust that His plans for you are good ones, and that He

will work all things out for your good. Thank the Lord for those who have given their lives to preserve the freedoms this nation enjoys, and pray for the families and loved ones who have suffered their loss. As we honor them this Memorial Day continue to pray that our nation would also honor God and turn back to His righteous ways. Pray for those persecuted for their faith in Christ, for worldwide revival, the peace of Jerusalem, and the soon return of our Lord. (2 Kings 6:15-17)

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## **Everything You Need to Know About Angels**

Though we shouldn't worship angels, most Christians go to the opposite extreme and give them no thought whatsoever. Watch John Paul Jackson explain the importance of these heavenly helpers in an episode from his *Dreams and Mysteries* series.

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## **Brazilian Christians See 'Prophetic Destiny' With Israel**

The Bible says many nations will come up to the city of Jerusalem to worship the Lord.

That very thing took place recently when a group of Brazilians

came to the Tower of David in Jerusalem's Old City to worship.

From late afternoon and throughout the evening, Brazilians gathered to celebrate the God of Israel.

Ana Paula Bessa led the worship. In her home country, she's led concerts with as many as a million people attending. She believes Brazil has a special destiny with Israel.

"I believe the Brazilian nation is arising to pray for the peace of Jerusalem," Bessa told CBN News.

Her husband, Gustaf, said many of their countrymen are coming to Israel for that very purpose.

"Many Brazilians from all over Brazil, they are coming to Israel in order to pray—to pray for Israel and pray for Brazil in this place, in this nation," he said.

Today, the Holy Spirit is raising up prayer warriors.

"We have a big role in this because Brazil is in revival," Ana said. "And the Holy Spirit is raising up intercession on behalf of the end times."

She believes revival is changing her nation.

"Today we have almost 40 percent of the population declaring they are born again Christians, and the churches are full," she said. "The people are open to receive Jesus even on the streets."

Brazilians bring exuberance to their worship.

"The redemptive gift of Brazil, this joy, this celebration for Jesus—and that's why we bring it to Israel because it's our redemptive gift," Gustaf said.

"We believe we have a destiny, a prophetic destiny to bless and bring the Second Coming of the Lord," Ana said.

For the original article, visit [.](#)

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## **Should You Only Lay Hands on Someone for Healing When You're Led by the Spirit?**

You want to see everyone you pray for healed, but should you only pray for those whom the Holy Spirit leads you to? Watch healing evangelist Randy Clark answer that question in this video.

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## **The Secret to Weight Loss Is No Secret**

The secret to weight loss is that there is no secret. Most of us simply have to eat less and exercise more.

You have to face this reality and quit looking for a pill or potion to solve your weight-loss need. So let's talk about the issue of managing your habits. Again the Bible comes to the rescue.

The main verse that has helped me here is 1 Thessalonians 4:4: "Each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor."

In the beginning, I didn't know how to "possess" my own body—I

didn't know how to manage it. I had to learn. We can all do better about the way we eat. We can all improve. But how? How do we make choices that are healthy? How do we learn what is best for us?

Proverbs 4:20-22 is helpful: "My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart; for they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh."

The place to start with lifestyle changes is the Bible—the Word of God. There are two basic things that the Word of God teaches with regard to losing weight and having a healthy lifestyle:

**1. Eat in moderation.** "And put a knife to your throat if you are a man given to appetite" (Prov. 23:2). For me, and for many of us who are overweight, that means eating less. For all of us it means making healthier eating choices. For someone who is anorexic, it will mean eating sensibly—the right things in the right portions to keep the body healthy.

**2. Get the right amount of exercise.** "Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it" (Gen. 2:15). Overweight people don't want to hear that. We blame low metabolism as the reason they can't lose weight, and it is probably true for many of us. But some of you are skinny and you have terrible eating habits.

You are sneaking by because you have high metabolism. While many overweight people envy you, you too may be a glutton. (Tough talk, huh?) I'm not a scientist or a nutritionist, but I know we can't use slow metabolism as an excuse to be overweight. We have to get our body moving. We have to exercise to get our metabolism going. If you do enough exercise and eat less, you will very likely lose weight.

How then shall you eat? The answer to what shall we eat is

simple: *better* and *less*. Eat less, and eat foods that are as close to the way God made them as possible—straight from the ground, straight from the trees.

Eat food for health and not because you think it will make you happy.

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## **Is Grace a License to Sin?**

Have you ever gotten a continual message from God over and over and over again, in as many different ways as you can imagine?

Lately that has been my experience with the gospel. Every book I pick up, every sermon I hear, every quote I find and every verse I read points me to the gospel—or at least it seems that way.

And although I've heard the concept of preaching the gospel to myself daily and understood it to some degree, I haven't got it as profoundly as I'd like.

I'm praying for understanding, for application and for ability to live out the gospel daily.

I just read these verses and again what struck me was the gospel!

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen” (Gal. 1:3-6, ESV).

God truly has been reminding me over and over again about His relentless, passionate and unconditional love for me—for all of us.

The first word, *grace* (love that word, BTW), is defined as “an undeserved act of kindness.” It represents all that we have received as a result of Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross.

And then that other lovely word, *peace*, is a result of the grace we have received because of Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross.

That sounds a little bit repetitive, but I’m trying to get that gospel message into my head and heart more deeply than ever—that the grace and peace that God gives us is because of Jesus, not us.

Isn’t that freeing?

It was God’s will for Jesus to die for our sins so that we wouldn’t have to, so that we could have a relationship with Him, so that we would know that He loves us more than we could ever imagine.

I don’t know about you, but I need to know that—I mean, really and truly know that.

I have recognized lately that I really struggle with thinking I’m worthy of anything. I wonder if everything happened because I really am a complete mess—because a lot of times I really feel like one.

Sometimes I feel like I’m such a failure. I wonder if I’ll

ever get things right with parenting, home management and my career (whatever that may be). I wonder if anyone would truly be able to deal with my life—really. I wonder if I could ever truly be a blessing of a wife to someone; my first time around didn't end so well.

The funny thing about my fears and my feelings is that now they are bogus. They don't reflect who I am in Christ. And I know who I am, so why do I struggle so?

Why is it so difficult to see my value as a child of the King? Why am I so impacted by my successes or failures in this sin-ridden world?

I think the key word is *sin-ridden*. Stuff is just gonna be a struggle here.

Fear is gonna assail us, but it doesn't have to defeat us.

Doubts are gonna rain down on us, but they don't have to drown us.

Failure is gonna happen, but it doesn't have to define us.

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to

separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:31-35, 37-39).

More than conquerors! Seriously, how can we be *more than* conquerors? That’s crazy!

Crazy good, though.

God didn’t send Jesus to live and die for me so that I could live a life of defeat. He’s not even content with me living a life of mediocrity. I’m free from the power of sin and death. I’ll struggle, to be sure, but God has already given me all I need to live a life of freedom and victory.

“For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery” (Gal. 5:1).

I’m free to live without fear of condemnation. Free to live without fear of failure. Free to live without fear, period.

I’m not a slave to sin, to fear, to anxiety, to past mistakes, to expectations, to failures, to successes, to anything.

I don’t have to fear because God loves me perfectly.

“There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear” (1 John 4:18).

But that love—that perfect love—that is God. That is the gospel. That is what Paul is talking about—the source of our grace and peace.

I want grace to impact me daily, to speak to the way I think about myself, others and life. But how do I make grace not just something I know about, but something I live for and by and with constantly?

Is it as simple as waking up and reminding myself of who I am and who He is? Is that it? I guess that’s a definitely step in the right direction!

Time in the Word—as always, that’s part of the answer. It just is! When I look for it, I see the gospel everywhere in Scripture. God’s relentless and loving pursuit of His people is all throughout the Bible.

Prayer—yup, prayer. Who would have thought of this?

I’m asking God to show me how the gospel of grace should impact me and my children. And God is showing me in little ways—in my parenting adventures, in my interaction with friends, in my attitude about things, in how I do what He’s called me to do, in everything.

I’m getting it, slowly. I don’t get things easily. I gotta work for it. But God is working with me!

I believe that God is showing me the huge amount of grace I need so that I can be a grace-filled person toward others.

My prayer is that grace would spill out of me all over everyone around me.

As God shows me how to live this grace-filled life, this gospel-centered life, I will share and we can grow together in our walk with the Lord!

**Sue Birdseye** *is an author and single mom of five kids that range from 4-years-old to 17-years-old. Her book, When Happily Ever After Shatters is in bookstores. This article is adapted from her blog, .*