

A Spirit-Led Dad's 15 Tips for Successful Parenting

Kathy and I have raised four children in our 40 years of marriage. We have had our share of tough seasons. We know what it's like to pace the floor at night in dread, crying out to God for a fever to break in our tiny baby. We understand the grief of disappointment, and the heartbreak of teenagers who fail. We have experienced the joy of first dates and the anguish of first rejections.

Raising children is exhilarating and challenging, clarifying and confusing, frustrating and freeing, but I wouldn't trade the experience for anything. Although I don't think there is any magic formula to raising kids, I do believe there are principles that really help a lot. Here are 15 keys I hope will assist you in parenting:

1. **Be consistent.** Parenting shouldn't depend on your mood. Make sure your kids can count on the same outcomes no matter how you feel. For instance, if your kid is screaming for candy in the store, and one day you are tired, so you give it to them, you just taught your child that if they throw a fit, they will eventually get their way.
2. **Don't yell.** If your voice has to escalate before you finally act, you are teaching your kids that you don't mean what you say until the volume of your voice reaches a certain pitch. Your delayed response also sends a message that they should listen to you because you are angry, not because you have their best in mind.
3. **Teach your kids how to think by giving them choices.** For example, if they are making noise in the living room and you want them out of your way, say something like, "Do you want to play in your room, or would you rather play

in the backyard?”

4. **Correct attitudes before they become an action.** All behavior begins with a thought, which manifests in an attitude, that finally becomes an action. Therefore, bad actions begin with wrong thoughts. When you correct an attitude, you are teaching your kids how to manage their inner-world so that they don't make a mess of their outer world.
5. **Have an understanding for the ways their minds are developing.** The frontal cortex of the brain is our “cause and effect thinking center,” but the frontal cortex doesn't fully develop until we are 18-20 years old. Therefore, kids are actually incapable of thinking through the ramifications of their actions. For instance, have you ever asked your son, “Why did you jump off the dresser?” To which he responds, “I don't know.” The truth is, he really doesn't know, because the cause and effect center of his brain isn't developed yet. Trying to punish him into cause and effect thinking is a waste of time. It will only frustrate the heck out of your kids and result in them feeling like failures.
6. **Be the first one to inform your kids about any important subject.** The principle of first mention says that the first time we hear something about any subject, we receive it as the truth. Everything else we receive on that same subject (after our first exposure) will be weighed against our first experience, and embraced or rejected accordingly. For example, if you wait until your kids are 15 years old to tell them about sex, and therefore, their friends tell them first, they will compare what you taught them to what their friends have told them. If what you shared was opposite of their friends' counsel, they are likely to reject your input and embrace theirs. On the other hand, if you tell them first, they are most likely to view their friend's

counsel as wrong.

7. **Don't be a helicopter mom or dad.** Let children learn from their own experiences whenever possible. When you see them doing something wrong, and it doesn't have severe consequences, let them experiment. They learn more from their mistakes than they do from their successes.
8. **Don't compare your children to one another.** If you do, you will teach them to live a competitive life, constantly measuring themselves against each other. The goal is for each of our children to be fully actualized. In other words, we want each one of them to be who God created them to be. We don't want them to become an imitation of someone else.
9. **Speak positively into your children's lives.** When you say, "You are so smart, gifted, honest, talented and so on," it actually releases those qualities into your kids. Don't call your kids names, or curse them with titles. You are the most powerful person in their lives. What you think of them and what you say to them, they will become. Remember, they are not their behavior. Saying things like, "Johnny, you are a bad boy," teaches Johnny that he does bad things because he is bad. Never connect your children's bad behavior to their identity.
10. **Never stop believing in your children.** Let them know that they can become anything they want in life. Be their biggest fan, their cheerleader and their catalyst to greatness.
11. **Teach your kids how to solve conflicts by allowing them to watch you solve yours.** Don't shelter them from watching you and your spouse work through your issues (unless of course, you guys don't behave honorably). You have to use wisdom on this one, but your kids need to understand that every healthy relationship has it

struggles. They need great tools to solve conflicts, not avoid them.

12. **Let your home be full of affection for them and for your spouse.** Be affectionate with your spouse in front of them so that they learn what love looks like. Hug and kiss them often, even in their teen years.
13. **Teach your children how to honor others, especially authority.** Don't talk negatively about teachers, pastors, bosses, police officers, politicians, elders and so on. The fact is, your kids will not be able to live successfully in society without a healthy respect for authority. How will they keep their job if they can't do what is asked of them?
14. **Let your children "catch you" loving on Jesus.** Walking in on their father or mother kneeling at their bed praying is 10 times more powerful than telling your kids to pray. Reading your Bible every day on the couch in the living room sends a powerful visual statement to your kids that you value spiritual things. Remember, people are changed through observation, not by argument.
15. **Teach your kids how to handle money.** They should learn how to be generous, how to trust God with their money, how to steward finances and how to create wealth. Giving should be a family secret, not a secret from the family. Teach your children that they have two choices: They can serve God, or they can serve money. One of them will be their master.

What are some parenting keys you have used with your children? Let me know in the comments below. {eoa}

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HBO Hit Show Openly Praises Christianity—While Bashing It

While Sunday's episode of HBO's *Crashing*, "The Baptism," had its fair share of Christian-bashing, it also offered some positive Christian messages.

When Christian Pete Holmes and his non-religious friend Artie attend the baptism of one of Pete's friends, Artie immediately likens the group of Christians to members of a cult. Predictably, the show portrays the Church members as goofy squares, to which Artie remarks, "Dude, I'm freaking out. When do they bring out the Nikes and Kool-Aid? After the service or before?"

However, Artie meets a woman, Stephanie, who responds to his lack of faith by asking, "Look around. Who made all this? You think that just happened?" The two spend the rest of the episode in silly yet sincere conversation about the existence of God.

Additionally, during the baptism, the pastor performing the

service announces, "We all need forgiveness. We all need redemption. We all need to come home, right? That's what this is about. All of us stray from the path sometimes." The message clearly resonates with some of the characters, including Pete's adulterous ex-wife, Jess.

After hearing the pastor talk about God's forgiveness, she runs to the water and demands to be baptized so she can "come home." The man she cheated on Pete with, Leif, chases after her, telling her that she doesn't need God. Although Leif mocks the pastor and service, the scene at least pokes some fun at the crazy hippy language that is not too far off from some of the beliefs people hold today.

Leif: Baby, you don't need God. You just need me.

Pastor: Sir. What are you doing? This is very inappropriate. You need to get out of the pool.

Leif: I can't. Sweetheart, I love you so much. I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry! I get this, though. This is a cool ceremony. Congratulations. Jess! I love you, I need you, and I want us to just go home. That's what I want. I want to go home. You don't need God. You're God, and I'm God. God is love, and together, we make God. Let's go home and make some God. We can do it as God.

Pastor: Okay, none of that is true, and most of it didn't make any sense.

Leif: How do you know, Officer?

Pastor: Officer? I'm a pastor.

Leif: So am I.

Pastor: Really? Of what?

Leif: Pastor of life.

Despite the silliness, while Pete and Leif both beg her to take them back, Jess finally decides, “I choose Jesus.” Later, while Pete bemoans his lack of job, money or place to live, Jess tells him, “God will provide a way, Peter. He always does.”

This isn't the first time that *Crashing* promoted a Christian message. In the premiere episode, Pete tells Artie after they were almost robbed that he knew God would protect them.

While not the best portrayal of Christianity, this show is better than the usual hateful Christian-bashing that comes from liberal networks like HBO. {eoa}

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Full Strength: Associate Justice Neil Gorsuch Takes His Ceremonial Oath of Office in the Rose Garden

In a ceremony held Monday morning in the Rose Garden at the White House, Associate Justice Neil Gorsuch was sworn in as the 113th member of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Prior to the ceremony, at which the rest of the Supreme Court's members were assembled, President Donald Trump made the following statement:

Friends and distinguished guests, welcome to the White House. We are gathered here today for a truly momentous occasion in our democracy—the swearing-in of a United States

Supreme Court justice. In particular, I'm greatly honored to welcome to these grounds every sitting justice of the United States Supreme Court. Welcome!

Mr. Chief Justice, and fellow justices, it's a privilege to have you here, to join in this historic moment on this very beautiful spring day in the Rose Garden. Spring is really the perfect backdrop for this joyful gathering of friends, because, together, we are in a process of reviewing and renewing, and also rebuilding, our country. A new optimism is sweeping across our land, and a new faith in America is filling our hearts and lifting our sights ...

We are here to celebrate history—the taking of the judicial oath by the newest member of the United States Supreme Court, Neil Gorsuch. Justice Gorsuch, I just want to congratulate you and your entire family. It's something so special. In fact, I've always heard that the most important thing that a president of the United States does is appoint people—hopefully great people like this appointment—to the United States Supreme Court. And I can say this is a great honor. And I got it done in the first 100 days—that's even nice. You think that's easy?

This ceremony has special meaning as Justice Gorsuch is filling the seat of one of the greatest Supreme Court judges in American history, and that's Antonin Scalia, who is a terrific—was a terrific judge and a terrific person. Justice Scalia was a patriot who revered our Constitution. He was beloved by many, very many, who are here today, and he is deeply missed by all of us.

I want to at this time recognize his incredible wife, Maureen, who I got to know very well over the last short period of time. And, Maureen, please stand up. Thank you very much. Thank you and your family. Thank you. Thank you, Maureen.

Americans are blessed to have in Neil Gorsuch a man who will, likewise, be a devoted servant of the law. Over the past two months, the American people have gotten to know, respect and truly admire our newest member of the United States Supreme Court. In Justice Gorsuch, they see a man of great and unquestioned integrity. They see a man of unmatched qualifications. And most of all, and most importantly, they see a man who is deeply faithful to the Constitution of the United States. He will decide cases based not on his personal preferences, but based on a fair and objective reading of the law.

Today, we have all three branches of government represented at this event. It is a very special thing—and a very special happening. And it's worth taking just a minute to remember what it all means.

In our founders' incredible wisdom, they gave each branch of government a different role in our great republic. We have a Congress to write the laws on behalf of the people. We have a president to enforce those laws and defend our nation. And we have a Supreme Court to apply and interpret the law, in a fair and impartial manner, when disagreements arise. The founders separated power because they knew it was the best way to protect our citizens and keep our Constitution secure.

Justice Gorsuch, you are now entrusted with the sacred duty of defending our Constitution. Our country is counting on you to be wise, impartial and fair—to serve under our laws, not over them and to safeguard the right of the people to govern their own affairs. I have no doubt you will rise to the occasion and that the decisions you will make will not only protect our Constitution today, but for many generations of Americans to come.

In just a moment, Justice Gorsuch will be sworn in by Justice Kennedy, a great man of outstanding accomplishment.

Throughout his nearly 30 years on the Supreme Court, Justice Kennedy has been praised by all for his dedicated and dignified service. We owe him an enormous debt of gratitude, and I am honored that he is with us today.

This is a very, very special moment, because many years ago a young Neil Gorsuch started his legal career as a law clerk to Justice Kennedy. You remember that, right? It is a fitting testament to Justice Kennedy's impact that, upon giving the oath to Justice Gorsuch, he will become the first ever Supreme Court justice to serve with one of his former law clerks. It's sort of a big deal, isn't it? Sort of like that. That's sort of good. It has never happened before. That's pretty good. Also shows you have a lot of respect for this man. Very good.

We're thrilled to share this historic moment with Justice Kennedy, with all of you here today, and with all Americans watching us at home.

Justice Gorsuch, I again congratulate you and your entire family, and I wish God's blessings on your amazing journey ahead. I have no doubt you will go down as one of the truly great justices in the history of the United States Supreme Court.

Kennedy spoke briefly prior to administering the oath of office to his former law clerk about the two different oaths a justice must take. The first is the constitutional oath that is administered to officials of all three branches of government, while the second—the judicial oath—applies only to federal judges.

"Both of the oaths date from the founding of the republic; the judicial oath dates from 1789," he said. "And both of these oaths remind us that we as a people are bound together, we as a people find our self-definition, our respect, our heritage, and our destiny in the Constitution."

Gorsuch took the first oath earlier in the morning in the Supreme Court chamber. He immediately took the second upon the completion of Kennedy's comments, and afterward, he shared his own thoughts about the historic moment:

I see before me so many to whom I owe so much. I know I would not be here today without your friendship and support. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart.

I want to thank the president for nominating me and for the great confidence and trust he's reposed in me. I want to thank the vice president for his constant encouragement and friendship throughout this process.

It's not possible to mention here everyone I should mention, but I'd be remiss if I didn't thank the president's counsel, Don McGahn, and Mark Paoletta, the Vice President's counsel, and every single person in the White House Counsel's Office for their tremendous and tireless support.

I want thank Kelly Ayotte and my day-to-day team for their humor, for their sage advice, for their faith, as we spent months and so many miles trooping together through the Senate complex. I want to thank every single person—and there are so many—in the White House and the Department of Justice who worked through so many late nights and long weeks on my behalf.

I want to thank, too, Senator McConnell and Senator Grassley and their excellent teams for their support and leadership. And I must thank my former law clerks and my dear friends who gave so much of themselves so selflessly through these last three months. You are dear to me. This is truly your doing, and this is your day.

I wish I could mention each of you by name, but you know who you are and you know your names are etched in my heart forever.

This process has reminded me just how outrageously blessed I am in my law clerks, and my family and my friends. And I hope that I may continue to rely on each of you as I face this new challenge.

To my former colleagues and the wonderful staff of the 10th Circuit, I thank you for your faithful service and your friendship over so many years. To my new, the very warm welcome. I look forward to many happy years together.

And I cannot tell you how honored I am to have here today my mentor, Justice Kennedy, administer the judicial oath, a beautiful oath, as he did for me 11 years ago when I became a circuit judge.

To the Scalia family, I won't ever forget that the seat I inherit today is that of a very, very great man. To my wife, Louise, and my daughters, Emma and Bindi, thank you for your perseverance and your patience, your courage and your love. I simply could not have attempted this without you.

And to the American people, I am humbled by the trust placed in me today. I will never forget that to whom much is given, much will be expected. And I promise you that I will do all my powers permit to be a faithful servant of the Constitution and laws of this great nation.

See the entire ceremony in the video above.

A number of conservative and Christian legal groups are celebrating Justice Gorsuch's arrival on the Supreme Court. Here is a summary of some of those reactions:

- **Heritage Foundation President Jim DeMint**—"Justice Gorsuch embodies what a good judge should be: He's impartial, applies the law fairly and is an ardent supporter of the written Constitution. This isn't just a monumental win for the conservative movement, this is a monumental win for the American people."

- **Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton**—“Justice Gorsuch’s confirmation is a great victory for constitutional government. We expect that Justice Gorsuch will continue Justice Scalia’s legacy and become a leading voice against politicized decision-making on the Supreme Court. It is shameful that the left blew up the confirmation process in the U.S. Senate in order to protect their efforts to legislate through the courts. The good news is that it may be easier to confirm Supreme Court justices who will apply the U.S. Constitution as written and intended by our Founding Fathers.”
- **ACLJ Chief Counsel Jay Sekulow**—“Justice Gorsuch exemplifies everything a good judge should be, realizing it’s his job not to be a legislator, but to take the cases and controversies as he finds them and apply the Constitution and the law to them. Today the Constitution won. The rule of law won. And the American people won. As we have numerous cases before the Supreme Court on issues of life and liberty, we look forward to appearing before Justice Gorsuch.”
- **First Liberty Institute President and CEO Kelly Shackelford**—“President Trump promised to appoint pro-religious freedom judges to the Supreme Court, and today, he delivered. Our legal team analyzed many of Justice Gorsuch’s opinions and found him to be a champion of judicial independence, fairness and strong adherence to the rule of law. That is exactly the kind of justice we should all desire to have on our Supreme Court. America needs Supreme Court justices who will uphold the Constitution and defend our freedoms, especially religious freedom. Justice Gorsuch is just such a man. I congratulate him on his confirmation and look forward to seeing him continue to safeguard our freedoms for years to come.”

Hans A. von Spakovsky has written about the immediate impact

Gorsuch's arrival at the high court will usher in. Writing for FOX News and the Heritage Foundation, he stated, in part:

Once he is sworn in, Justice Gorsuch will arrive at the court just in time to hear the April 19 oral arguments in *Trinity Lutheran Church v. Pauley*. It is a case of stark, blatant religious discrimination by the government ...

Gorsuch may also make a difference in the court's decisions about which of the pending petitions it will accept for appeal. Each term, the court accepts only a little over 70 of the roughly 7,000 petitions it receives. It will be helpful, therefore, to have another justice who understands the importance of constitutional issues and will vote to accept the most important cases for review ...

Justice Gorsuch may also make a difference on petitions to come—such as the emergency appeals of the numerous injunctions issued against President Donald Trump's executive order temporarily suspending travel from terrorist safe-havens.

As five dissenting judges from the Ninth Circuit pointed out, those decisions confound Supreme Court precedent and the constitutional and federal statutory provisions that authorize the president's actions.

Neil Gorsuch should be the fifth vote needed to quash this judicial activism that interferes with the president's authority as commander-in-chief to protect the nation.

[Click here to read the entire article.](#) {eoa}

This Might Be Why Your Healing Hasn't Come Yet

Fr. Anthony Messeh, the priest at St. Timothy & St. Athanasius Coptic Orthodox Church, said, "We don't usually change because we see the light, but rather because we feel the heat." The heat you may feel might be because you aren't hearing God or asking the right questions regarding what God is attempting to say to you. God doesn't make us sick, but acknowledging the need to change may be part of your healing. This was true for me concerning a severe sleep crisis I recently experienced. Nothing I tried worked until I asked the right spiritual questions—until I repented and made the changes I'd been putting off.

Is there anything God may be asking you to do or not do? God asked Jacob what his name was, though He knew the answer. Jacob's name meant deceiver. He was a dishonest man who used deceit and trickery to get what he wanted even with his brother and his own aging, nearly blind father (Genesis 27). Jacob encountered God and wrestled all night with him. When morning came, he was ready to change. It was time for Jacob to acknowledge who he was—a deceiver—and receive a name change, which meant a change of heart and a change of ways.

Is there a name you need to change—willful, prideful, disobedient, stubborn, fearful, worrisome, lustful, bitter, unforgiving, procrastinator? Could God be in the tough situations of your life trying to get your attention, asking you what is your name? Could He want to give you a new name as He did Jacob?

Kenneth Hagin told the story of a man who came for healing prayer for painful stomach ulcers. There was demonic influence in his body from which the man needed deliverance. But there was also something God was asking him to do that he hadn't

done, which was to tithe. He repented and said he would start tithing. The man was healed.

Maybe God is asking you to change your diet, to stop eating or drinking certain things that are making you sick. Or perhaps he wants you to include more foods that are healing. But maybe it's something else. For me, it was something else. I included all the right foods, juices and supplements. I was doing everything I knew to do, but I was getting worse by the day. For me, it was another key that I needed to unlock the door to healing. It was obedience to what God had been asking me to do and I wasn't doing. My sister-in-law, who recently had foot surgery, got a get-well card that said, "As they say in (doggie) obedience school ... heal." First Samuel 15:22 says, "Obedience is better than sacrifice, a listening ear than the fat of rams."

As I knelt in prayer after I finally heard God, I knew He was saying He's not a doting grandfather who thinks misbehavior is cute. He is God of the universe. He is our Father who loves us. Hebrews 12:6 says, "for whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and scourges every son whom He receives."

When the moment of awakening finally came for me, I was stunned to see how long it had taken me to come to the truth, and the key that would unlock the door to my healing. Isaiah 30:18 says, "Therefore, the Lord longs to be gracious to you, and therefore, He waits on high to have mercy on you; for the Lord is a God of justice; how blessed are all who long for Him."

What I teach is still true. With any ailment, we must do our part in the healing process, even when it's something like insomnia where we might think there's no relationship with diet. But there may be another key that's even more important to unlock the door to healing. It may start with a question: What am I doing that God has asked me not to do? Or, what am I not doing that God wants me to do? {eoa}

Cherie Calbom, M.S., holds a master of science degree in whole foods nutrition from Bastyr University. Known as "The Juice Lady" for her work with juicing and health, she is the author of 32 books, including her latest book The Juice Lady's Guide to Fasting. She and her husband offer juice cleanse retreats throughout the year, 30-Day Detox online and Garden's Best Juice Powder. "What You Can Do When Your Healing Doesn't Come" is one point from her teaching "7 Keys to Your Supernatural Healing." You can connect with Cherie at .

South Carolina Church Shooter Dylann Roof to Plead Guilty

The white supremacist sentenced to death in federal court for the 2015 shooting massacre at a historic black church in South Carolina is expected to plead guilty to separate state murder charges on Monday.

Dylann Roof, 23, is charged in state court with murdering nine African American parishioners as they closed their eyes in prayer at a Bible study session.

Roof agreed to plead guilty in state court under a deal with prosecutors after being convicted of 33 federal crimes, including hate crimes and obstruction of religion resulting in death. In January, a jury found that he deserved the death penalty.

Pleading guilty to the state charges will allow for Roof's transfer to death row and spare survivors and relatives of the victims a second round of courtroom testimony detailing his rampage on June 17, 2015, at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston.

He will be sentenced to life in prison on the state charges, which include attempted murder of three survivors of the shooting, solicitor Scarlett Wilson said last month. State prosecutors abandoned efforts to seek a second death penalty.

Roof was ordered into the custody of U.S. Marshals last week. He has been held at the Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center in Charleston County awaiting his state trial.

He is expected to be transferred to the federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana, that holds male death row prisoners, according to the Death Penalty Information Center, a nonprofit group that monitors U.S. capital punishment.

Since 1988, when the federal death penalty was reinstated, 76 defendants in the United States have been sentenced to death and three prisoners have been executed, according to the center's website.

Roof would become the 62nd current federal death row inmate, and appeals in such cases can take a decade or more, the center's executive director, Robert Dunham, said in a telephone interview. {eoa}

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This Year's Passover Exposes the Enemy's Agenda Against God's People

Growing up in Canada in the 1970s and 1980s, my most profound memories are of Jewish collective identity. The Holocaust remembrance events and rallies on behalf of Soviet Jewry that

my brothers and I attended with my parents and community instilled in us the most basic axiom of our identity as Jews when facing anti-Semitism. An attack on one Jew is an attack on all Jews. As I write this statement I am struck by how trite it seems. That the discriminatory targeting of any individual based on religious or ethnic group is an attack on the entire group is obvious. Negative as it may be, there is scarcely a better indication of identification with a group than feeling the sting when another member is attacked.

The logic behind this sentiment is simple. When any Jew is attacked for being Jewish every one of us knows full well that "If I was there it could have been—would have been—me." It would have been me because the victim was attacked not as an individual but as a representative of all Jews. The Jewish people were attacked.

Of course, this is not unique to Jews. Whenever someone else who shares my identity or beliefs is attacked and I can honestly say that had I been there it would have been me, I am the victim as well. This is the litmus test of collective victim-hood.

Which brings us to the horrific events of this past year. A few weeks ago, it was widely reported that, as per the Center for the Study of Global Christianity, 2016 was the bloodiest year for Christians on record. An estimated 90,000 Christians worldwide were murdered this past year because of their faith. In fact, recent history shows that while the numbers were somewhat higher than in the past, 2016 was not a significant outlier. The CSGC report approximates the same number of deaths for each year of the past decade. As Pope Francis has noted, in terms of numbers of martyrs, Christians are by far the most persecuted religious group in the world.

While most of the deaths occurred in the war zones of Africa and the Middle East, Christian martyrdom is not confined to those regions. The recent ISIS terrorist attack

in Istanbul intended to target Christians celebrating “their pagan feast,” the slitting of the throat of an elderly French priest and the Easter bombing in Pakistan are only a few examples of attacks on Christians going global.

While the scope of Christian martyrdom is shocking, the overall suffering of Christians worldwide is not confined to the mounting number of deaths. Discriminatory anti-Christian policies as well as outright or unofficial yet sanctioned persecution are commonplace in too many countries to name.

And this is a Jewish problem.

If the measure of collective victimhood in the face of attack is, “Had I been there, it would have been me,” then the conclusion is inescapable. In today’s world, an attack on Christians is an attack on Jews. Is there any doubt that those who have murdered Christians for their faith in Iraq, France or Pakistan would kill any Jew they could get their hands on? In the 21st century, are there any enemies of Christianity who are not at least as passionately enemies of the Jews?

I do not mean merely that we as Jews who know the meaning of suffering and discrimination must stand up for others who are under attack. While this is correct regarding the issue of persecution of Christians, it does not go far enough. According to the collective victimhood test, attacks on Christians are—quite literally—attacks on Jews. This may be difficult for many Jews to accept considering the history of Christian treatment of our people.

We dare not allow the dark past of the Church’s treatment of Jews to cloud our vision in the present. Christians no longer persecute Jews anywhere in the world. Christian doctrines regarding the Jews and Judaism have been inching—and in some cases charging—forward toward greater acceptance and reconciliation in most denominations of Christianity. Closer to home, our greatest hope for peaceful coexistence with any

non-Jewish population in Israel is to be found in the Christian community. Israel has rapidly become the only country in the Middle East in which Christians have no reason to fear for being Christian. History, it turns out, makes strange bedfellows.

The Tanakh—the Jewish Bible—is sacred Scripture for both Christians and Jews. The basic values contained therein—the biblical definitions of good and evil, of sacred and profane, of life and death—are the shared underlying principles on which our worlds are built.

It must be clearly stated: Neither these Scriptures nor the values contained in them are sacred to those who attack and persecute Christians. If those who murder Christians would kill Jews too, it is because they hate all that we share; all that Jews and Christians together represent.

We are currently in the Passover season, when Jews the world over will engage in the millennia-old rituals of remembrance and identification with the slavery and Exodus from Egypt. As they were about to enter the Promised Land over 3,000 years ago, the people of Israel were commanded to “love the foreigner, for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt.” (Deut. 10:19). In our times, as well, the people of Israel are once again a free and strong nation that has returned to its homeland. And once again the historical memory of Jewish suffering is meant to instill within us the emphatic concern for those who are not of our own nation—the others among us who are in need of support and rescue from oppression. This is the lesson of the suffering of Egypt in biblical times, and it is the message of modern anti-Semitism—and anti-Judeo-Christianism—in our times as well.

So yes, in the 21st century, an attack on one Christian is an attack on all Jews. {eo}

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for Jewish-Christian Understanding and Cooperation (CJCUC) and the co-founder for Blessing Bethlehem, a nonprofit organization that provides humanitarian aid to the beleaguered Christian Arab community in Bethlehem.

Department of State Official's Comments About U.S. Pre-Holocaust Actions Were Disturbing

Holocaust scholars are taking issue with a State Department historian's comments defending 1940s consular officials who rejected visa applications from Jewish refugees.

Melissa Jane Taylor, from the State Department's Office of the Historian, recently claimed in the journal *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* that U.S. officials in Vichy France from 1940-1941, such as William Peck, were "sympathetic" to refugees.

Dr. Rafael Medoff, director of the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies; and immigration scholar Prof. Bat-Ami Zucker, of Bar-Ilan University, pointed out in an analysis of Taylor's article that she failed to mention a memo by Peck in which he wrote that he favored immigration only by "old people [who] will not reproduce and can do our country no harm; the young ones may be suffering, but the history of their race shows that suffering does not kill many of them."

Medoff and Zucker also criticized Taylor for trying to minimize the accomplishments of Hiram Bingham IV, a dissident

consular official who helped Jews escape France and was punished by the State Department. {eoa}

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People May Soon Pick ‘X’ as Their Gender on Passports

British citizens may soon be able to use “X” to indicate their identity, if a liberal organization has anything to say about it.

Stonewall, an LGBT organization, petitioned the British government to allow transgender people to identify as “X.”

“Some trans people find it very validating of their identity to have that gender-designator,” Tara Stone, a member of the Stonewall Trans Advisory Group, told BBC. “And additionally, in terms of getting access to other things in daily life, having a piece of identification that marks out your gender is actually really useful.”

Australia already offers the “X” designation.

The United States does not offer a third gender option, but does allow passport holders to change gender based on doctor verification. {eoa}

Meet the Mighty Women of God Who Mentored Paul

No one has been more misunderstood than Paul in regard to his view and attitude toward women. Secularists accuse him of being a misogynist and male chauvinist. Many Christians, while respecting Paul, insist that he confined women to subordinate roles toward men in all areas of life. Both are wrong.

Paul was, in fact, a friend of women and a champion of their equality in Christ. In my latest book, *Paul, Women and Church*, I show the many positive relationships he had with women as friends, coworkers, fellow ministers and even a spiritual mother.

For example, in his letter to the church in Philippi, a church that Paul had founded with a group of praying women, he mentions two women by name and then says, "Help those women who labored with me in the gospel ..." (Phil. 4:3b).

Professor Gerald F. Hawthorne says that the Greek phrase translated "labored with" is a metaphor that means "to fight together side by side with." This clearly indicates that Paul sees these women, not as peons under him, but as highly esteemed members of his team who have labored at his side in the cause of Christ (Hyatt, *Paul, Women and Church*, 38).

There are several such women coworkers mentioned respectfully by Paul, but I will confine this essay to two women who seemed to function, at one time or another, in a nurturing, mentoring role toward Paul. One is a coworker named Phoebe, and the other is an unnamed spiritual mother.

Phoebe: A Woman Highly Respected by Paul

Phoebe was a woman for whom Paul had great respect. as is borne out in the language he used to describe her. The power

of his words is lost in our English translations, but is obvious in the Greek (Rom. 16:1-2).

In Romans 16:1, Paul refers to Phoebe as “a servant of the church at Cenchrea.” The word “servant” in this passage is misleading. It is from the Greek word *diakonos* and should be translated as “minister.” Indeed, *diakonos* is translated as “minister” in 23 places where it is used of men, including Paul, Barnabas and Apollos (Hyatt, *Paul, Women and Church*, 26).

Diakonos does literally means “servant” but became a word for Christian leaders as a result of Jesus using it in response to the request by James and John for special seats of power in His kingdom.

Jesus replied that whoever wanted to be great must become a *diakonos*, or “servant.” From that declaration of Jesus, *diakonos* became a common designation for Christian ministers, highlighting the servant character of Christian leadership. The well-known evangelical theologian, E. Earle Ellis, wrote,

Diakonos is used frequently in the Pauline letters for those who exercise ministries of teaching and preaching. The title is given to Paul and to a number of his associates who are active on a continuing basis as traveling missionaries or as coworkers in local congregations. In terms of modern function, it best corresponds to the modern designation “minister” (Hyatt, Paul, Women and Church, 27).

Designating Phoebe as a *diakonos* shows that she was a “minister” from the church in Cenchrea who had been sent by that church to Rome on a special assignment. Paul recognizes her as such by using the same word for her that he uses for himself, for Barnabas and for Apollos.

Paul also said that Phoebe had been a *prostatis* to many, ““and

of myself as well." The KJV and NKJV translate the word as "helper," but *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon* says that *prostatis* refers to "a woman set over others" and that it describes Phoebe as a "guardian, protector and benefactor." *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* says that *prostatis* is a word of "dignity" and indicates the high esteem with which she was regarded.

These definitions are correct for *prostatis* is made up of the prefix *pro*, meaning "before," and "*istemi*," meaning "to stand." It, therefore, literally means "to stand before" and identifies Phoebe as a leader with the qualities one would expect in a modern-day pastor.

Some will argue that Phoebe was merely a patroness to Paul who supplied financial support for his ministry. However, the overall sense of the passage, including Paul's designation of her as a "minister," militates against such an interpretation. She was one who had "stood before" others, including Paul himself.

An argument could be made from this passage that Phoebe had, at some time, functioned in a pastoral type role toward Paul. She had "stood before" him. She is obviously held in very high esteem by him for he exhorts the Roman believers, both men and women, to receive her and respect her *in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints*, and to assist her *in whatever business she has need of you* (Romans 16:2).

Paul's "Spiritual Mother"

In Romans 16:13 Paul sends greetings to Rufus, "and his mother, who is like a mother to me." This is obviously not Paul's biological mother, but is a woman who has been a spiritual mother to him. We know little about this woman, but at some point, in Paul's spiritual journey, she had offered encouragement and counsel to Paul and been like a mother to him.

The identity of this woman can perhaps be identified by comparing Paul's words in this passage to Mark's Gospel, which also mentions an individual named Rufus. Since Paul's letter and Mark's gospel were both written to the same Christian community in Rome, and within a few years of each other, it is likely that the Rufus mentioned by Paul and the Rufus mentioned by Mark are the same person.

In his Gospel, which was originally written to the church in Rome, Mark tells of Simon of Cyrene being compelled to carry the cross of Jesus (Mark 15:21). He mentions that Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus and the way he presents these two names indicates that Alexander and Rufus were well known to the Christians in Rome.

Mark obviously expects his audience to make the connection when they read that Simon of Cyrene is the father of these two individuals who are part of their community. The Rufus of Paul, therefore, is most likely the Rufus of Mark, the son of Simon of Cyrene who carried the cross of Jesus.

Paul never mentions a spiritual father in his writings, but he does make a point to send greetings to his spiritual mother. His spiritual mother was likely an African woman from Cyrene (Cyrene is located on the north coast of Africa), the mother of Rufus and the wife of Simon of Cyrene who carried the cross of Jesus.

Concluding Thought

No, Paul was not a misogynist, nor did he confine women to subordinate roles. He treated women with dignity and respect. This is obvious in Luke's account of the beginning of Gospel in Philippi.

Luke tells how they found a place where certain women met for prayer each Sabbath. Luke says, "And we sat down and spoke to the women who had assembled" (Acts 16:13b). Note how personable is Paul. He does not preach to the women, nor does

he hand out his card or brochure and move on.

Paul sits down, looks them in the eye, and has a one-on one conversation with them. This was the beginning of Christianity in Europe. No wonder the famed British scholar, F.F. Bruce, wrote, "The mainstream churches of Christendom, as they inch along towards a worthier recognition of the ministry of women, have some ways to go yet before they come abreast of Paul" (Hyatt, *Paul, Women and Church*, 21, 31). {eoa}

This article was derived from Eddie Hyatt's latest book, *Paul, Women and Church*, available from Amazon and from his website at .

Dr. Eddie L. Hyatt is a Bible teacher, author, historian and ordained minister. His books are available from Amazon and from his website where you can also read of his vision for another Great Awakening in America and around the world. Go to .

Is the Latest ISIS Attack Another Sign of Revelation 12?

Islamic terrorists launched rockets from Sinai, on the eve of Passover, two of which landed in southern Israel. ISIS has claimed responsibility.

A greenhouse was damaged, but there were no injuries when ISIS rockets slammed into southern Israel on Passover eve.

Authorities are prohibiting citizens from entering the Sinai Peninsula.

In wake of Monday's rocket-launching, Israeli authorities closed the Taba Crossing into Sinai, urging all citizens to return home.

"Given the validity of the National Security Council Counter-Terrorism Bureau (NSCCTB), in light of the increased severity and immediacy of the threat, and in accordance with the approval of the political leadership, Transportation and Road Safety, and Intelligence, Minister Yisrael Katz—pursuant to his legal authority and in consultation with Defense Minister Avigdor Liberman and the relevant agencies—has decided not to allow the passage of Israeli nationals through the Menachem Begin Border Terminal (aka Taba Crossing) in the direction of Sinai, effective immediately until after Passover (April 18), and subject to assessments of the situation. It should be noted that the entry of Israeli citizens from Sinai back to Israel will be permitted," the Prime Minister's Office stated.

"Increased activity by the [Islamic State-affiliated] 'Sinai Province' in recent months has also found expression against Israel in its desire to commit terrorist attacks against tourists in Sinai, including Israelis, in the immediate term.

"The National Security Council Counter-Terrorism Bureau (NSCCTB) recommends that Israelis in Sinai leave the area forthwith and return to Israel. The families of Israelis in Sinai are requested to contact their loved ones and update them regarding the acute threat. It must be emphasized that, for their own protection, Israelis planning to go to the area will not be allowed to cross into Sinai; therefore, they are requested not to go to the crossing and to listen to instructions."

The NSCCTB recently released an urgent warning to Israeli citizens vacationing in the Sinai Peninsula, urging them to leave the region "immediately," due to the threat from ISIS.
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