

Eilat Thrust Into the Crosshairs of Terror

The precedent in Eilat on Tuesday—the first Iron Dome interception of a rocket fired at the city—retrained public focus, if only for a moment, on what the defense establishment has known for quite some time: Sinai-based terrorists have made it their mission to make the lives of Eilat's residents miserable and drive tourists away.

The successful rocket interception allowed the city's residents and their guests to quickly put the incident behind them and resume their summer routine, leaving room for optimism: The Israeli public is no longer spooked easily. The fact that we did not see tourists fleeing the city will undoubtedly reinforce the sense of civilian resilience, spelling a victory over terror, which seeks nothing more than to disrupt our daily lives.

This won't be the case should Eilat find itself under a prolonged attack—like the one endured by Sderot over the past decade or by the communities adjacent to the northern border in the 1980s and 1990s. Nor will it be the case should any attack result in casualties. That's the power of the Iron Dome.

Israelis and foreigners alike prefer to spend their vacations in peace, and they will not travel south if danger is truly lurking there. The fact that Turkey and Bulgaria are equally, if not more, dangerous will do little to reassure people if rocket attacks become the order of the day.

This is what Israel must prevent. The defensive premise is tried and true—an Iron Dome battery has been deployed to protect Eilat, and it is not going anywhere for the foreseeable future. It is the offensive premise that poses a

problem. Given the peace treaty with Egypt, Israel has very little leeway in Sinai, so it can do little to counter the growing threat.

Cairo may have been willing to tolerate the airstrike in Sinai over the weekend, which was attributed to Israel, but it is hard to believe that Egypt—even in the post-Mohammed Morsi era—would be sympathetic to regular Israeli military operations on its soil.

The solution lies with credible intelligence and quiet collaboration between Israel and Egypt. The Egyptians seem to be making an honest effort to fight the terrorists based in Sinai, but they have limited resources, intelligence and influence on the ground. This gap allows terror groups like Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis—the jihadi group that claimed responsibility for the rocket fire—leeway to plan and execute terror attacks that may result in a dangerous security escalation.

The chaos in the peninsula and the subsequent flocking of radical terror groups there, the amounts of weapons they have, and the lack of any real Egyptian authority on the ground make it hard to be optimistic about the future. The defense establishment also believes attacks on Eilat will continue in different forms and that some of them are bound to succeed. After we lost the paradise that once was Sinai, we have to focus our efforts on keeping the paradise that is Eilat safe.

For the original article, visit .

Is There a Megalodon in Your Marriage?

Without warning, you begin to get the eerie feeling something is not right. A dark shadow looms far beneath the surface of the still waters, lurking in the deepest depths of the sea.

It's a creature from your worst nightmares, with jaws that bite through the skull of a prehistoric whale as easily as you bite through a blueberry. Seventy feet and 50 tons of sheer terror stalk the space just below the calm surface before suddenly breaking through and wreaking havoc on everything in sight. This is the megalodon.

Unfortunately, there are times when this prehistoric megalodon swims out of the ocean and into my marriage. A megalodon in marriage is a recurring issue that develops into a relational predator. When it comes to my marriage, the creature that attacks me all too often is the megalodon of discontentment.

When Susan does something nice for me, I want her to do it more. When Susan does something I ask her to do, I ask her to do something else. Sometimes I'm just not satisfied with what I've got. But I should be grateful. So I'm working hard to keep this vicious predator at bay.

Here are four steps to address the megalodon in your marriage:

- 1. Identify it.** Everyone's got megalodons in marriage. Start by identifying exactly what yours is. For example, as I mentioned, one of the megalodons in my life is discontentment.
- 2. Understand it.** Once you've identified the problem, take time to study the issue and understand where it comes from. In my case, I know that megalodon is born from my selfishness.
- 3. Track it.** Now it's time to track the megalodon's patterns.

Be on the lookout for recurring warning signs so you will more easily see your megalodon approaching. Over the years, I've found that I sometimes project how I'm generally feeling upon Susan. For example, if things are going well at work, then I'm content with Susan. But if times are tough, that discontentment will show its teeth in our marriage.

4. Avoid it. So you may not be able to destroy this beast, but you certainly can take actions to avoid it. Avoiding the megalodon in my marriage requires discipline on my part. Once I see it approaching, I need to remember not to project my feelings upon Susan and make her feel like it's her job to bring me joy and contentment in life. I also need to find joy in the daily grind by developing an attitude of gratitude, being content with what I have and being God-dependent in everything.

What is a megalodon in your marriage, and what are you doing about it?

9 Reasons Some Candy Is Good for You

If you're a candy lover who winces with guilt each time you indulge in your favorite treat, take heart: Candy may actually be good for you. Although dark chocolate candy has the most proven health benefits, other favorites, such as peppermint, have real advantages as well.

So, enjoy your treat—in moderation, of course—and check out the ways candy can improve your health.

1. Heart disease. Rich, dark chocolate is packed with powerful

heart-healthy antioxidant flavonoids. A study reported in the *British Medical Journal* found that regularly eating chocolate decreases the risk of heart attack and stroke by 39 percent. Another study found that those who ate a chocolate bar weekly reduced their chances of dying from a stroke by 46 percent.

2. Depression. Chocolate contains both serotonin, a neurotransmitter that acts as an antidepressant, as well as a chemical called phenylethylamine (PEA) that enhances mood.

3. Longevity. A study from the Harvard School of Public Health found that people who ate candy several times a month lived almost a year longer than those who ate no candy at all. Researchers believed the antioxidant phenol, which is also found in red wine, may be responsible for the increased longevity of candy lovers. They also speculated that cacao, from which chocolate is made, can reduce oxidation of low-density lipoprotein cholesterol and can enhance immune function.

4. Diabetes. A 2011 animal study found that a flavonoid in licorice called glabridin reversed learning and memory problems caused by Type 2 diabetes and also improved the memory of non-diabetic animals. In addition, a study conducted at the U.K.'s University of Hull found that dark chocolate increased levels of HDL, or "good" cholesterol, in Type 2 diabetics.

"Chocolate with a high cocoa content should be included in the diet of individuals with Type 2 diabetes as part of a sensible, balanced approach to diet and lifestyle," says researcher Steve Atkin, professor of diabetes and endocrinology. "This study demonstrates that it can offer a potential reduction in cardiovascular risk without detrimental risks on weight, insulin resistance or glycemic control."

5. Stress. Chewing gum can be a sweet way to reduce stress. Studies indicate that the repetitive action of chewing gum

stimulates areas of the mind that increase attention and self-control while lowering areas related to stress. Chewing gum also increases serotonin levels.

6. Concentration. Studies at the University of Cincinnati found that peppermint helps people concentrate better when taking tests, and some educators are even encouraging their students to eat a piece of peppermint during tests. Additionally, a study at Wheeling Jesuit University found that peppermint made drivers more alert.

7. Digestion. Peppermint candy made with real peppermint extract can ease gas and bloating and an upset stomach. A chemical in ginger aids upset stomachs by relaxing the intestinal tract. Carrying a few pieces of ginger candy in your pocket may help with nausea, gas and other minor stomach upsets, including motion sickness.

8. Cancer. Researchers at an affiliate of Georgetown University Medical Center found that a compound in cocoa beans slows the growth of cancers and speeds their destruction. The chemical, known as GECGC, was the most effective against fast-growing cancers. It showed positive results against colon, cervical and one line of leukemia cells and was found to be effective at the concentrations similar to those a person might eat.

9. Coughs. A British study found that two ounces of chocolate was more effective at suppressing chronic coughs than codeine. Chocolate contains theobromine, which calms the vagus nerve, the section of the brain that triggers coughs.

For the original article, visit .

8 Christian Meditations to Conquer Anxiety

If you are struggling with anxiety right now, then I recommend praying the following Scripture:

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer” (Ps. 19:14).

Why is the meditation of your heart so important? Jesus taught in Matthew 15:19-20, “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man.”

You can't help fleeting thoughts, but you can choose whether to permit them to live with you. When thoughts contrary to God's Word visit your mind like an unwanted houseguest, what do you do?

- Do you remind them of truth from God's Word and evict them?
- Or do you permit them to move in, allowing them to influence your emotions, intellect and morals?

When the Bible refers to the heart of man, it means more than just your feelings. It means the center of your inner life—your emotions, intellect and morals together.

Think of it this way. A house has two main parts, the outside (which is what people see) and the inside. It is the inside that is most important. Why? Because it is where you spend most of your time. Proper management of it helps ensure that everything else operates efficiently. What good does it do to have a good-looking outside but an inside that is a hot mess? When the inside of a home is peaceful and well-ordered, it

improves the quality of your whole life.

What is acceptable Christian meditation according to the Lord? Philippians 4:8 gives you guidance: “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.”

Everything related to Jesus fits this description. These are eight simple meditations the Lord gave me that bring peace to my mind:

- **True.** Jesus is the living Word, and His Word is true.
- **Noble.** Jesus sacrificed Himself on the cross for my sins.
- **Just.** Jesus paid for my sin debt, so I am no longer condemned under the law.
- **Pure.** Jesus lived a sinless life, and He is my ultimate role model on how to live right.
- **Lovely.** I love Jesus because He first loved me.
- **Good report.** Hallelujah, I have overcome the world through Jesus!
- **Virtue.** I am being transformed into Jesus' virtuous image, from glory to glory.
- **Praiseworthy.** I am seated in heavenly places in Christ, and He lives in me now and forever.

Meditating on Jesus is the surefire way to ensure your meditation is acceptable in God's sight. When you do this, the peace of God will guard your heart and mind—through Christ Jesus!

Note: This content was excerpted from Kimberly Taylor's new book, The Anxiety Relief Scriptures. Learn more at .

Kimberly Taylor is the author of The Anxiety Relief Scriptures, The Weight Loss Scriptures and many other books.

Once 240 pounds and a size 22, she can testify to God's goodness and healing power. Visit and receive more free health and weight-loss tips.

3 Things You Must Activate in Your Life

Ever wonder what's most important to God when it comes to your character? The following are very critical to your character development.

1. Your Thoughts

"As a man thinks in his heart, so is he." –Solomon

The battlefield is in your mind. Your thoughts are powerful. In fact, God can do nothing in you beyond your belief system. Everything is possible for the man who believes.

We often establish fences that keep us out of areas of the unknown. For example, science in the past said that man was incapable of breaking the 4-minute mile. That was until May 6, 1954, when Roger Bannister ran a mile in 3 minutes, 59.4 seconds. Today, thousands run under the 4-minute barrier. One man broke the barrier of a universally held belief system.

Two very important questions that you should consider:

- What are you doing today that you once thought was impossible?
- What are you not doing today because you think it is impossible?

2. Your Words

“From the fruit of his lips a man enjoys good things.”

–Solomon

Men love to talk about the things they are passionate about. Yet very few men understand the gravity of their words. Your words have power. Your words reveal your secrets. If you don't understand this powerful truth, consider the impact of the words that you speak to your wife and children. Your words literally mold them into what you say over them.

Two very important questions that you should consider:

- What words do I exclude from my vocabulary?
- What words will I include in my vocabulary?

3. Your Relationships

“The man who walks with wise men becomes wise himself.”

–Solomon

Relationships are about proximity. You should know who is in your “success zone.” What books are you currently reading? What television shows are you entertained by? What conversations are you involved in? What jokes do you listen to?

I'm a private person, yet I have very transparent conversations. Those with whom I dialogue know that I am very open to discuss matters but that I am also very selective in what I will say. I've learned that proximity governs most of my life.

I was speaking with a man concerning the unfaithfulness of a mutual friend. I said, “I don't understand how a man allows the proximity of a woman to enter his life for him to cross the line for adultery.” Somehow, the man opened his life for the relationship.

Two very important questions that you should consider:

- Who is currently in my life that I should avoid?
- Who is not in my life that I should invite?

FivestarMan was founded in 2008 by **Neil Kennedy**. Kennedy has passionately promoted God's Word for 25-plus years of ministry. He is known for practically applying biblical principles that elevate people to a new level of living. As a business, church, ministry and life consultant, Kennedy has helped others strategize the necessary steps to reach their full potential.

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

How Every Man Sets His Own Standards

Are you in control of your choices each day, or is somebody else?

Over the years, I have run into many men who quote something like the following: "I don't believe in Christianity because my father never believed," or "I don't believe in that kind of stuff because of what 'they' say."

Who are "they," and why are they saying these things, I ask? I tend to get frustrated when I hear these types of responses, because quite frankly, they are not responses; they are excuses. This is a man who is not in control of his beliefs, and he has allowed the influence of others who may have not known the truth to set the standard for his life.

How long will a man choose to live according to these lies or excuses before he decides to take matters into his own hands?

How much longer until he matures and decides to search out the real truth himself?

Before the days of Maturity, I lived my life according to the standards of others. I chose to base my beliefs off things I had simply heard and grew up learning. I used the excuses I mentioned above every time someone who actually knew the truth and was essentially trying to help approached me.

I found a strange comfort in this lie I was living when I was in the moment, but I also felt empty afterward. I didn't know what to do until my life started to fall apart, piece by piece.

I was quick to anger, I was quick to use sarcasm as a means of protection, and I was quick to defend my "standards" even though I knew I had none at all. I was irritable in my marriage; I was unloving to my wife and went down a destructive personal path that almost destroyed our marriage.

A good Christian friend of mine finally got ahold of me and challenged my standards. He could see through my false protection measures and told me to step up and find out the truth myself. It was time.

Even a man without standards should be smart enough to recognize a man that has standards and a life that is living proof of it. As shallow as it sounds, this played a major role in my choosing to stop living according to the standards of "them" or "they" and find out the truth for myself.

Note that this should be an example to all men that the way we act and are seen by others can be enough to cause another man to change his life. This was more than two years ago, and I am still learning, growing and striving to be the best man of God I can possibly be each and every day. Let's choose to let Jesus be our standard!

So, who is setting the standards in your life? Are you living

to please others, or are you living to please God? Share some of your personal experiences in the comments below.

Manturity is a blog built on establishing spiritual maturity in today's man. The goal is to assist men in building better marriages and help them in grow in maturity and explore different aspects of manhood. features new weekly blog posts, daily social media updates and a powerful resources page. Stay up to date with the Manturity blog communities on Facebook and Twitter.

For the original article, visit .

What You're Skipping at the Gym, and Shouldn't Be

Going to the gym to meet with a personal trainer, take a class or pump iron on your own often takes a great deal of self-motivation. Thinking about engaging in five to 15 minutes of warming up and cooling down before and after your main routine takes even more!

But both are *extremely* important, and it's my aim in this post to make you a little more excited about them.

I'll be completely honest with you: Warm-ups and cool-downs are definitely not my favorite parts of fitness. I mean, when I walk into a gym or CrossFit box, I don't want to waste a second; I want to start lifting weights, jumping on boxes, swinging kettlebells and pulling myself up on bars immediately! Jogs, lunges, sit-ups and skips as well as myriad other drills that compose a temperature-raising, muscle-pumping "dynamic warm-up" are dusty, dry Old English poems in

comparison to high-intensity workouts and sports activities, which are more like riveting Stephen King page-turners ... or the latest Marvel superhero movie, if reading's not your thing.

But alas, poetry-dodgers, warm-ups are ever so necessary and in fact offer several likable features, such as:

- Elevated body temperature
- Increased blood flow in the muscles
- Improved efficient cooling
- Improved range of motion
- Reduced incidence and likelihood of musculoskeletal injuries
- Supplied adequate blood flow to heart
- Provided rehearsal of movements present in the workout
- Help to prepare mentally for the main workout

And cool-downs, comprising various static stretches and mobility exercises, are equally as important as their pre-workout counterpart. A few benefits include:

- Bringing your breathing, heart rate, and body temperature slowly back to normal
- Aiding in the dissipation of waste products, like lactic acid
- Helping to reduce soreness in the following days
- Reducing the chances of dizziness brought on by blood pooling at the extremities

Can't wait to get started? Good—I was hoping you'd say that!

Now I'd like to share with you my favorite warm-up and cool-down routines for preparing for and recovering from a full-body, weight-training workout (there are specific, specialized exercises for long-distance runners, sprinters, discus-throwers, etc.).

Warm-Up, Part 1:

Note: I recommend completing the following portion of the warm-up before every weight-training workout because it effectively improves range of motion, activates muscles fibers and increases blood flow. The next section will vary depending on the specific muscle groups you'll be training on a particular day.

Perform this series five times:

- 10 walking lunges
- 15 jumping jacks
- 5 push-ups (either the modification on your knees or the standard version on your toes in a plank position)
- 10 squats
- 5 sit-ups

Warm-Up, Part 2

Now move to your free weights and/or machines you'll be using for your individual workout. Before jumping into your routine, perform 6 to 8 repetitions of your first planned exercise with 50 percent of what you can do for a single repetition. Rest about 30 seconds, and then grab a heavier weight (about 70 percent of what you can do for a single repetition), and perform 4 to 6 repetitions. Using lighter weights before the main event (the "gun show," if it's biceps day!) wakes up your muscles and informs them of their task ahead.

Repeat this pattern for every new muscles group that will be targeted in your workout.

That's it! Not so bad, was it? Your body will thank you for preparing it so thoroughly, I promise.

Now on to the cool-down ...

Cool-Down, Part 1

Note: There's a reason we didn't do any yoga-type stretches in the warm-up—your muscles weren't warm! Now that you're nice

and warm from your tough workout and preceding warm-up, your muscles are elastic and pliable, ready for static stretches. Yay! The following section contains stretches that I love to do after just about every workout.

Perform the following sequence of stretches, holding each for 10 to 20 seconds:

Hip/Glute

- Lie on your back and cross your left foot over your right knee.
- Grasp hands behind right thigh and gently pull thigh towards you, keeping the body relaxed.
- Hold, then switch sides.

Hamstrings

- Sit on the floor and extend one leg out straight.
- Bend the other leg at the knee and position the sole of that foot against your opposite inner thigh.
- Extend your arms and reach forward over the straight leg by bending at the waist as far as possible.
- Hold, then switch legs.

Inner Thigh

- Sit on the floor with feet pressed together.
- Keep abs pulled in as you lean forward.
- Keep leaning until you feel a nice stretch in your inner thighs.

Chest and shoulders

- Standing, interlock fingers behind your back, arms straight.
- Keeping hands together, lift them as high as you comfortably can.

Upper back

- Clasp your hands together in front of your chest, arms straight.
- Round your back towards the floor, pressing your arms away from your body to feel a stretch in your upper back.

Triceps

- Standing, bend your right elbow behind your head and use your left hand to gently pull the right elbow in further until you feel a stretch in the back of your arm (tricep).
- Hold, then switch sides.

Spine twist

- Lie on the floor and place your right foot on left knee.
- Using your left hand, gently pull your right knee towards the floor, twisting your spine, keeping hips and shoulders on the floor, left arm straight out.

Well, that's a wrap! I hope you all have a new appreciation for the unpopular, often overlooked facets of fitness. I'm confident that after a week of warming up and cooling down consistently, you'll find yourself having more productive workouts and better recovery periods afterward.

If you'd like full workout routines, check out my book *Fit for Faith: A Christian Woman's Guide to Total Fitness*.

"I can't wait to get to the gym and warm up! Ooh! And then that cool-down. ... That's icing on the cake!"—said no one, ever.

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

Understanding the Roles of Israel and the Church: Part 1

It is of the utmost importance and significance to the kingdom of G-d that at this time the church fully comprehends the unique roles that both Israel and the church are still to play out before Messiah returns. This would also be inclusive of Jewish believers from within the church who are called to be a light back to their own people.

As the apostle Paul has instructed, we are not to be ignorant to this mystery (Rom. 11:25). Yet there seems to be a great deal of misunderstanding in this regard—not simply toward Jewish believers, in how they should reflect their faith in Yeshua, but also in our reconnection as a spiritual family, as up to this point we are so very separate.

In fact, a good amount of what we hear and read from within the church continues to fuel this separation, either through the doctrine of replacement theology that teaches the church has replaced Israel, or through teachings that promote a continued separation right until the end with G-d dealing with Israel on His own apart from the church. However, with all of my heart as a Jewish believer who has come to love his Gentile family as his very own, I believe both of these teachings and positions to be incorrect.

For one moment, let's look at G-d's family between Jew and Gentile as a circle. The Jews were brought in first into their half and then removed through their unbelief, while the Gentiles came into their half after Christ through a remnant of Israel that started the church. So, from G-d's perspective, His spiritual family between Jew and Gentile has never really

co-existed. And yet we hear the cry of Jesus from deep within His heart in John 17 that His family would be one. And it does not take much to read between these lines that Jesus was not just referring to all believers being united here in these Scriptures, but also that His Jewish and Gentile family would be one.

Read it carefully and you will see that first He prays for His Jewish apostles and then, in verse 20, He switches to pray for those who will believe in their message, who up to this point are mainly believers from the nations (Gentiles), that we would be one. But the devil has ravaged the relationship between the two groups (Jew and Gentile), because he knows what is at stake when we truly reconnect as a spiritual family, which I will explain in more depth in part 2 of this message.

In light of the end times in which we are living, we must stop looking at Israel and the Jewish people as they are currently and start to see them by faith through the word of G-d, which tells us that the veil over their souls is only temporary and that it will be lifted (Rom 11:25-27). Indeed, Israel is a covenant people who must be spiritually restored before the L-rd returns in accordance to His promises to them through His word. We must begin to see them as part of the family of G-d who is yet to be restored to the circle and love them with the Father's heart, a Father who longs for His firstborn children to come home. Nothing less will do. We (the rest of G-d's children in His family) must also begin to see Israel's spiritual awakening as tantamount to G-d's end-time glory plan and begin to take it on as our very own. For isn't that what family is supposed to do for each other? Have we been missing something here?

In fact, I believe that G-d has designed His end-time plan so that neither group can come into its fullness without the other and that we are intricately linked together in His final end time mercy plan to take full dominion over heaven and

earth—for Israel to receive salvation and for the church to be G-d's salvific agent to help bring it to pass. If this is truly the case, then we will need to take a good, hard look at what we currently believe, especially if it is keeping us apart from our divine destiny to help the L-rd return to the earth. Church, this is serious stuff!



I know these are challenging words to many of us, but they are written and bathed in the love of Christ so that, at this time, the body of Messiah through Jew and Gentile would truly unite and understand the depths of their callings to help usher in the final chapter of the book and see Jesus reign upon the earth. For when the church accepts the reality of these circumstances, we will also begin to discover the significance of our own end-time role, which is to help release life back to our firstborn brethren, Israel, and see the family of G-d finally restored. Oh, my G-d, what an honor He is actually bestowing on His end-time church, which is why our generation and the ones that tarry in the church to the L-rd's coming need to make adjustments toward Israel. Now is the time of their restoration and salvation. As Jesus told us, the first would be last and the last first!

One, With Distinct Roles

To still believe the church has replaced Israel when all of the Scriptures regarding Israel's restoration to the land have already been fulfilled is silly. Both Moses and the prophets clearly pointed out that Israel would be brought back first and then spiritually cleansed. You must read these Scriptures, for the Word of G-d does not lie (Deut. 30:4-6; ; Ez. 36:22-28)!

If you honestly believe this or are teaching it to the church, you truly need to repent and allow the L-rd to correct your heart as well as your theology and support of His spiritual family, for there is no condemnation in Christ. I would also really encourage you to read my new book, *The Ezekiel Generation*, which launches in October and addresses this subject in detail where you can find healing and restoration in this regard.

However, there are also many willing believers in the church thinking that the "one new man" in Christ has eliminated any differences between Jews and Gentiles. This also is incorrect. The apostle Paul never meant to eliminate the distinctions between Jewish and Gentile believers, but rather emphasized that in the Spirit of G-d, we now have complete equality and are co-heirs of the promises of Israel's covenants, both Jew and Gentile alike. This was actually challenging for first-century Gentile believers to process in light of Israel's rich heritage, which is why the apostle Paul worked so hard to communicate this essential principle to them.

If Paul meant to eliminate the distinctions between Jew and Gentile, then why did he adapt himself when he went back to Jerusalem, so he could effectively reach his own Jewish brethren with the gospel (Acts 21:17-26)? If he truly taught that the distinctions between Jew and Gentile were eliminated in Christ, why did he act in this fashion? No, he was a Jew to the Jews and a Gentile to the Gentiles, because he fully understood those he was ministering to in the hope that he could reach them for G-d (1 Cor. 9:20-23).

The apostle Paul's emphasis in the Galatian epistle does not eliminate Jew or Gentile but rather focuses us on our position in the Spirit through Christ: "You are all Sons of G-d through faith in Jesus Christ, for all of you were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ. If you belong to Christ, then you are heirs

according to the promise" (Gal. 3:26-29).

This is why these different references were good for this analogy, as we know that while as men and women, for example, we are now equal in the Spirit through Christ, it does not eliminate the differences between us as men or women or even husband and wives. But in Christ, we are one!

Nor did it necessarily change a slave's rights at that time. But it did in the Spirit, and so it is with Jew and Gentile. There is no longer any difference between us as His children, for we are one and are now co-heirs.

We can also see this unity and distinction within the Trinity itself. While the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all one, they each play out unique and different roles from within the unity of G-d. And this is also true of G-d's family in the Spirit between Jew and Gentile, which we must now learn to accept and bless to encourage Israel's spiritual awakening, which has to come to pass so that the end may come.

As a result, our roles remain—and thank G-d that they do—which up to this point we have not understood too well. Instead, when a Jewish person has come to faith in the church, we have expected them to conform to Gentile customs. But may this never be, because they have been called and chosen to become lights back to their own people, and so instead we should be supporting and blessing them into this calling to help win the Jewish people to faith.

I am not suggesting that Jews go back to the law for any dependency for salvation, but rather are free to live as Jews in their own heritage in however the Spirit leads them to reach their own. Nor am I criticizing Gentile customs, many of which I now enjoy myself.

But as a believer and follower of Jesus, have I not been set free from the law that I may have liberty in the Spirit? Is it not liberty to move with my Gentile-believing family and

liberty to move as a Jew along with my customs and heritage? It is not liberty to celebrate the feasts of the L-rd, most of which focus on Yeshua Himself and the Holy Spirit? In fact, as a Gentile believer, do you not have liberty to celebrate the feasts also? There are appointed feasts and times in the Spirit that I honestly feel we have been robbed of through the church's disconnection from its Jewish apostolic roots and heritage.

In order for this to happen in G-d's body at this time, there must be a spiritual reconnection between us as His children, which is vital for Israel and the church. It is vital for Jews to come into the salvation of the L-rd and for Gentiles to fulfill their destiny in arousing Israel to envy and releasing the mercy of G-d back to them. Just as G-d used Israel to give birth to the church, now in turn to fulfill His family circle, we would give birth back to them. It makes so much sense when you think of it in this light.

In part 2, we will address the incredible significance of the church's end-time role to bring glory to G-d. We will also address some of the barriers the enemy has placed in our way from the church's past to prevent us from coming into this destiny, some of which are of a sensitive and delicate matter that we will need to face in order to come into this time.

Hold on. It's going to get really good.

Grant Berry is a Jewish believer in Yeshua/Jesus and author of *The New Covenant Prophecy and The Ezekiel Generation*. He has founded *Reconnecting Ministries* with the specific focus to help the church reconnect spiritually to Israel and considers it vital to the kingdom of G-d in the last days. His message focuses on the unity, love and healing that the Father wants to bring between Jew and Gentile yet clearly points out the differences and misunderstandings between the two groups. Now is the time to look more carefully into this mystery to make way for healing and reconnection in the Spirit. For more

information, please visit .

How to Help Your Kids Prepare for the School Year

Getting ready to go back to school impacts the entire family.

For kids, a new school year means new teachers, new classrooms and new responsibilities. Sometimes it means new friends. The first days at a new school—or first days in middle school or high school—can be very intimidating.

Dad, I'm sure you realize all of this, but I hope you'll embrace your role during this time.

If your summer was pretty unstructured, like it is in many homes, your kids will benefit from being gently reminded that the routine is about to change pretty drastically. But it isn't just a reality check for them; it's also a recommitment for you. It's your chance to make a big investment of encouragement in your kids.

What I recommend is simply sitting down to talk about it—maybe at bedtime or during a meal. Talk about past school years, like: “What memory do you have from kindergarten?” “What experience at school embarrassed you the most?” “When did you feel most proud of something you accomplished?”

Make sure you dig into your memory, too, and tell them your own back-to-school stories, good and not-so-good. That will help your kids open up. Then ask about what friends they'll be reconnecting with soon or what teacher they're looking forward to having.

Through it all, Dad, listen closely. Take mental notes. You may uncover a deeper worry your child has, and you can keep that on your radar screen.

Also, the first time you bring up the school year, don't jump right in and start setting expectations about grades and homework deadlines. Keep it positive for now.

At the next conversation, you can begin asking about goals and schedules. Then let that transition to a new promise by you to partner with them and help them stay on target.

If they start to groan about all the work that's ahead, you can change the mood by saying something like, "You know, kiddo, even if you failed every class and got kicked out of school for setting a thousand frogs loose in the cafeteria, I would still love you."

After the laughter dies down, remind them of their gifts and talents and their past success. Send them off to school with a new hope and a heartfelt blessing. Then do all you can to keep it going the entire year.

Additionally, I challenge you to give your children a larger vision for what the school year can be. As you know, life is about a lot more than academics, and the school year provides plenty of opportunities for your children to grow in other important character qualities.

What other characteristics do you hope your children develop? Leadership? Generosity? Perseverance? Empathy for those in need? Talk about that with them too. Encourage them to look for chances to grow in those areas, and keep reinforcing those qualities over the coming weeks and months.

Last thing—don't forget it's also an adjustment for your kids' mom, and maybe a welcome one. With the kids at school on weekdays, maybe start scheduling a regular lunch date for the two of you.

Dad, what back-to-school exercises or routines have worked well in your family? Please contribute to the discussion and help other dads.

Action Points for Dads on the Journey

- One of the best ways to be involved in your child's education is to volunteer at his or her school as part of our WATCH . (Dads Of Great Students) program. Start looking at days you can volunteer, or bring the program to your local school. Find out more.
- As you talk with your kids, be sure to include at least a comment or two about potential dangers and pitfalls (bullies, alcohol, drugs, etc.).
- Do you typically do back-to-school clothes shopping? Don't go overboard, but if it's in the budget, consider letting your kids get one or two new things to make those first days back a little more special.
- Update the family calendar with all the upcoming school-related events—and make sure you make them a high priority on your calendar also. Plan to attend as many as you can.
- Do you live apart from your children? Do all you can to stay updated on their assignments, projects and school activities. For example, get a copy of the book your child is reading in school and read it at the same time so you can talk about it.

Carey Casey is the CEO of the National Center for Fathering, a nonprofit organization dedicated to changing the culture of fathering in America by enlisting 6.5 million fathers who to make the Championship Fathering Commitment.

For the original article, visit .

Why Reaching Men Is Becoming Critical

My father-in-law and I have lunch once a week. Last Monday our waitress, Stephanie (not her real name), seemed a little down so I struck up a conversation.

She told us the parking lot in front of the restaurant had flooded during a torrential Florida storm the day before and now her car wouldn't start. She had tears in her eyes, so I knew there had to be more to the story.

I guessed she was so overwhelmed by what for most of us would be a small inconvenience because she didn't have much money. I told her how sorry we were and that we would say a prayer for her when we prayed over lunch.

Then I asked her a few more questions. She is 26 years old, a single mom with 6- and 8-year-old boys, and has no family in Orlando. The father of her children isn't in the picture—he's a bad actor. So she's left to raise two sons without a father figure by working for tips.

Her mother died when she was 14 and her younger brother was 8 years old. Their father did not step up. Perhaps he didn't know how, but he failed them. She made some bad choices, but now she's trying to do the right thing by her two sons. Yet she worries they have no male influence.

When she brought our food, she started walking away. On impulse, I called her back and invited her to join us as we prayed; she did, and I sensed that God encouraged her heart.

Then she went on to say she was deeply worried about her younger brother, now 20, who, without a positive father figure, is on the cusp of becoming a bad actor too. So I told her about the work we do with men and gave her a copy of *The*

Man in the Mirror for him.

I don't know if I will ever see Stephanie again. I hope so. But if not, Dad and I did what we could that day. I trust God is already sovereignly orchestrating others to make appearances in her life. And I will continue to pray for her as the Lord brings her to mind.

It's an all too familiar pattern, isn't it? Stephanie has five men in her life. Her father? A bad actor. The father of her children? A bad actor. Her brother? Which way will he go? Her two sons? What will become of them?

What a perfect example of why God wants us to disciple men. Experiences like this are why we can never, and will never, tire or lose our passion to help evangelize and disciple men. The mission of men's discipleship is for all of the broken people, like Stephanie and her sons, left in the wake of misguided men. Those men have no idea of the destructive forces they are setting in motion that will devastate multiple generations.

That's why we must urgently help every church disciple every man.

Patrick Morley is founder and CEO of *Man in the Mirror*. After building one of Florida's 100 largest privately held companies, in 1991, he founded *Man in the Mirror*, a nonprofit organization to help men find meaning and purpose in life. Dr. Morley is the best-selling author of *The Man in the Mirror*, *No Man Left Behind*, *Dad in the Mirror*, and *A Man's Guide to the Spiritual Disciplines*.