

Do You Think You Know Better Than God?

“I know better.”

It's a simple message backed up by simple behaviors and a better knowledge of life or pursuit. In many contexts, you wouldn't think twice about it.

A mom says it to a naïve child mesmerized by red-hot fire. Tiger Woods addresses you on how to get lift from a golf ball in a sand trap. B.B. King shows you a trick to get the guitar sound you want. Bill Gates says, “I have a new technology idea.”

The normal response in the face of greater knowledge and insight is to listen, learn and apply. Their knowledge transcends your own, and only a fool would deign to say, “Thanks, but no thanks. I got this one.”

In fact, that would be downright rude, would smack of narcissism and would showcase how arrogance begets stupidity. This is the most basic message of wisdom: Never “backseat drive” someone who clearly knows more than you and wants to help you.

Golf. Guitar. Gates. God?

Morality has always been His thing. He has been proven out over time. He's been around. He has both the *gravitas* and the goods.

The greatest documents and the freest societies are built with Him in mind. The Ten Commandments is on the wall in most court buildings in our country. The Sermon on the Mount has been “the way” to be, believe and behave for nearly 2,000 years.

The Bible (God's revealed mind) has survived the test of time,

withstood the stiffest criticisms and defeated all philosophical flavors for pure positive impact on the world.

And yet?

And yet the historically unproven, self-serving and foolish thinking of prevailing culture is sending a loud and audacious message to God right now: *We know better. Thanks, but no thanks. We'll take it from here.* We say this about:

- **Marriage**
- **Sexual Boundaries**
- **Relationships**
- **Family**
- **Parenting**
- **Masculinity**
- **Femininity**
- **Morality**

Moral toddlers without a real plan or foresight go with their feelings, impulses, rights, moods and self-serving agendas into a realm where they have no track record or “wins” to point to other than the fleeting rush of feeling like a god. The irony of self-serving morality is that, historically, this trend has triggered the demise of the greatest cultures and civilizations the world has known.

Ask the Romans. See how that went for the Greeks. Both cultures decided to redefine the conscious, abandon the transcendent and serve the lesser gods of impulse, self-styled philosophy and a mentality that eliminated all cosmic accountability. But morality without divine accountability is an oxymoron.

Key word? *Moron.*

Only morons would give God the Heisman and say, “Talk to the hand.” Only a moron would say to his Maker, “I’ll take it from here.” Only a moron would attempt to rewrite the conscience,

sear his morality on an overheated sense self-destiny, and trick himself out of the simple and divinely ordained mandates written onto the soul.

That's us. That's perilously and forebodingly us. The political and secular religion of our time is actually a spiritual temper tantrum that, in the end, will result in a massive time out. It will be weighed, measured and exposed too. And in the end, all will see the folly of pride and the stupidity of arrogance to tell God His business.

We do not know better. He knows better.

Kenny Luck is the founder of Every Man Ministries and the men's pastor at Saddleback Church. His 20th book, *Sleeping Giant: No Movement of God Without Men of God*, is the proven blueprint for men's ministries and was recently released through B&H Publishing. Watch and read more of Kenny's teaching at [. Follow Every Man Ministries now on Facebook, Twitter \(@everymm\) and YouTube.](#)

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

Why You Should Stay Away From Trans Fats Altogether

You know trans fats are bad for you.

High consumption of trans-fatty acids raises cholesterol levels and increases the risk of heart attack, especially among women. It is estimated that consumption of trans-fatty acids in the United States accounts for 30,000 premature

deaths per year.

“A 2 percent absolute increase in energy intake from trans fat has been associated with a 23 percent increase in cardiovascular risk,” note researchers from Kansas State University.

But did you know how these diabolical fats are manufactured to make them so dangerous?

Toxic Trans Fats

To understand the toxic potential of trans-fatty acids, you have to know how they affect the body's use of essential fatty-acids (EFAs).

EFAs have a chemical structure that is polyunsaturated. Technically, this means each molecule of an EFA has two or more double chemical bonds. The double-bonding twists the molecule, giving it a serpentine shape. When incorporated into a cell's membranes, the snakelike EFA molecules add fluidity and flexibility to the membrane.

But unfortunately, EFAs are rather unstable when exposed to air. The double bonds break down rapidly, producing a toxic form of fat that can be detected in food by its rancidity.

Preservatives may be added to food to prevent this breakdown from occurring, thereby increasing the shelf life of the food. A natural preservative for fatty acids is vitamin E (alpha-tocopherol), but the most commonly used preservatives are the synthetic antioxidants BHT and BHA.

Gain Shelf Life by Destroying EFAs

Industrial food processing has discovered a more efficient way to prolong the shelf life of products: hydrogenate the fatty acids, destroying the EFAs.

In hydrogenation, the double bonds are broken by hydrogen gas and the unsaturated fatty acids become saturated with

hydrogen.

This means that all sites for chemical bonding are filled. Naturally saturated fatty acids are commonly consumed in meat and dairy products. They are also manufactured in your liver and stored in your body's fat cells.

Saturated fatty acids are straight, not twisting, in shape, and impart stiffness and solidity to membranes. Human cell membranes usually have one saturated fatty acid lined up alongside one unsaturated fatty acid, producing just the right blend of stiffness and flexibility for responding properly to signals sent from other cells.

In food processing, the hydrogenation of vegetable oils is usually not complete. It is partial. Partially hydrogenated oils are easier to work with and produce a softer foodstuff than fully hydrogenated oils.

"Partially hydrogenated vegetable oils have been in the American diet since 1900," note University of Illinois researchers.

Chemically, partial hydrogenation converts EFAs into trans-fatty acids, which are unsaturated fatty acids that twist abnormally. Trans-fatty acids do not have the serpentine shape and fluidity of naturally unsaturated fatty acids. Trans-fatty acids are stiff and straight, like saturated fatty acids, but because they are unsaturated, they replace natural fatty acids in the cell membranes.

The result of trans-fatty acid consumption is stiff cell membranes, abnormal response to signals from other cells, and an increase in dietary requirements for EFAs.

Partially hydrogenated vegetable oils, which are prevalent in manufactured foods, are loaded with these anti-nutrients.

In my book *Superimmunity for Kids*, I warn parents about the

dangers of raising their children on margarine and other foods built from partially hydrogenated oils. My arguments derive from research on the chemical effects of trans-fatty acids and knowledge of how this chemistry could distort cell function. Clinical studies have vindicated the warning.

Nutrition researchers now sing together loud and clear: Eat zero trans fats! Read the ingredients on the label, and skip anything that says hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated.

Dr. Leo Galland is a board-certified internist who is internationally recognized as a leader in nutritional medicine. He has written several dozen scientific papers, textbook chapters, and three highly acclaimed popular books, The Fat Resistance Diet, Power Healing and Superimmunity for Kids.

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

How to Tackle Tough Topics With Your Teen

How do you tackle tough topics with your teen? Having gone through the teen years with five kids, I've found there are a lot of difficult topics that parents and teens have to navigate together.

Talking about alcohol, drugs, pornography, premarital sex and many other issues can be very uncomfortable, but very necessary. So, what should a parent do?

First, share with them right up front that you realize this is

difficult to talk about but that it's too important to ignore. Tell them this is just a private conversation between the two of you and that you won't share it with anyone else. Also, let them know that your parents didn't talk to you about these things and you wish they had. Or that they did talk to you and you want to make sure they, too, have this benefit.

Second, let them know that you love them no matter what. They need to know there is absolutely nothing they can do or say that will ever take away your love for them. Now, if they do share something with you at some point that is shocking or disturbing, remember your commitment to love them through it.

That doesn't mean you shouldn't express sadness or disappointment over it or discipline them; it just means that you shouldn't go ballistic with shouting or mean or angry words, or withhold your affections from them.

Third, tell them the reason you are talking to them about this—the reason you will or will not allow something—is that you want what's best for them, that you always have their best interests at heart. It's important for them to understand you will do anything if it will help them—that you'd even take a bullet and die for them, if necessary.

Fourth, let them know the decisions they make will ultimately be theirs but that those decisions will have consequences. Some will be natural consequences; others will be imposed consequences. Make sure you clearly lay out what those consequences will be. In some cases, it may even help to write out what they are in a written contract that your teen signs.

Fifth, let them know that you have always, and will always, speak the truth to them and that you expect them to always speak the truth to you, even if it hurts. Your relationship must be built on a foundation of truth.

Sixth, let them know that you are always there for them no

matter what they say or do.

If you've had to talk to your teenagers about tough topics, I'd love to hear your thoughts and ideas on what worked. Or what didn't. Please comment below.

For the original article, visit [here](#). Mark Merrill is the president of Family First.

Commitment vs. Surrender: Where Are You With Christ?

Word had spread throughout the hospital about Ken, the upbeat 80-year-old man in room 3330. His buoyant, cheerful attitude was infectious among the hospital staff. Ken was my best friend. We had lunch weekly for 32 years.

One morning, a doctor appeared at the door of his hospital room and read his chart. After looking it over, he said to Ken, "I wonder if I could talk to you for a minute?" He was not one of Ken's doctors.

"Sure, what's on your mind?" Ken replied.

He said, "Well, I've heard about you around the hospital, and I'd like to know how it is that you, at your age, with the difficulties you're having, can be so upbeat and cheerful?"

Ken answered, "I would be happy to tell you, but first, you tell me, how do you find your enjoyment?"

“To tell you the truth,” the doctor said, “I really don’t have much enjoyment. I had a plane, and I thought that would do it. But that didn’t work. Now we have a boat, but that doesn’t seem to work either. I’ve got a big income. That’s really brought me no lasting satisfaction.”

Ken said, “I know what you’re going through. In my lifetime, the only thing that I’ve ever found that has provided me any lasting peace and satisfaction is a relationship with Jesus Christ.”

About that time, Maria, a Hispanic maid about 50 years old entered the room. Ken had spoken with her on several previous occasions. She wrung out her mop and started working on the other side of the bed from where the doctor stood. Maria was the lowest person in the hospital. She would work for the next 20 years to earn as much as this doctor would make in the current year. ,

Ken said, “Maria, can you come here please?” She looked up, and her peaceful countenance radiated sunshine throughout the room. Then Ken said to the doctor, “I want you to look into Maria’s face,” for she had a beautiful face and lovely smile. “She has what I’m talking about. Do you see it?”

The three of them fell quiet. The doctor looked into Maria’s face. Ken and Maria alternated glances between each other and the doctor. Ken could peer into the doctor’s mind. Yes, this doctor saw what Maria had. It was transparent that what she had was the thing for which he had been searching. It was clear that he wanted what Maria and Ken had found. It was a poignant, spiritual moment.

“Maria,” Ken finally said, “do you have the Lord in your life?”

It seemed impossible, but Maria beamed even more broadly and said, “Oh, yes, I love my Jesus Christ.”

Ken thanked her, and she continued with her chores.

Over the span of 15 minutes, Ken told this restless doctor that many years before, he had felt the same way. "One Monday morning," he said, "I cried out to God to come into my life, forgive my sins and give my life meaning. Blinded by tears, I had to pull over to the side of the road. That morning, I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ.

"All I ever asked Him to give me was peace and joy. He answered my prayer, and that's why you're in here right now trying to find out what's going on. What I want to encourage you to do is go find a quiet place and cry out to Jesus Christ. Tell Him what's in your heart. Ask Him to forgive your sins and surrender your life to Him in faith. In five more minutes, you'll be gone from here, tomorrow I'll go home, and we'll never see each other again. But this is the one thing that can change your life and bring you peace."

Surrender vs. Commitment

Adrian Rogers, a famous 20th-century Baptist pastor, once went on a mission trip to Romania. Over the course of two weeks, he bonded with his interpreter but hadn't learned much about the man's thoughts. So toward the end of the trip, he asked the man, "Tell me, what do you think of American Christians?"

"I don't want to talk about it," came the strange reply. This, of course, only made Dr. Rogers more curious, so he began to press the man for an answer.

After several attempts, Dr. Rogers finally said, "Why won't you tell me? I really want to know."

Finally, the interpreter capitulated. "Well, OK then, but you're not going to like my answer. I don't think you Americans understand what Christianity is all about. Back in the 1960s, you started to use the word 'commitment' to describe your relationship with Christ. However, any time a

word comes into usage, another word goes into disuse.”

The man continued, “Until the 1960s, you Americans talked about ‘surrender’ to Christ. Surrender means giving up control, turning over all to the Master Jesus. By changing to the word ‘commitment,’ your relationship with Christ has become something you do, and therefore you are able to keep control. ‘Surrender’ means giving up all rights to one’s self. You Americans don’t like to do that, so, instead, you make a commitment.”

The Act of Surrender

Have you truly surrendered—not just committed—your life to Jesus Christ? Maybe you have “prayed a sinner’s prayer,” maybe not. Maybe you’ve surrendered in the past but have taken back control of your life. In any case, be sure to settle this issue before you stop reading this.

You can surrender, or re-surrender, your life by humbly telling God in your own words that you desire to yield control of your life to Him in repentance and faith. Or, if you wish, you can pray this prayer:

Lord Jesus, I need You in my life right now more than I ever have. I have very little joy, peace and passion in my life. I confess that I have been trying to have the best of both worlds, that I have been double-minded and that I have been seeking the God I have wanted and not the God who is. I am so sorry, and I repent. Please forgive me. Thank You for loving me so much that You would die for all of my sins so that I can have eternal life. By faith I receive (or renew) my salvation and surrender my life to You. Take control of my life. Make me into the kind of man that You want me to be. I pray this in Your name, Jesus, and for Your glory. Amen.

If you’ve just surrendered or re-surrendered your life, congratulations! The surrendered life is the foundation under everything. Let me add one suggestion. Because I am a rebel,

as most men are, I realized that I must each day come humbly to the foot of the cross in a spirit of repentance and faith and once again make a full, total, complete surrender of my life to the lordship of Jesus.

That's the deal. Let me encourage you to also practice daily surrender. If someone forwarded this article to you, let them know if you surrendered your life. In any case, be sure to get with some other surrendered men and figure out how they do it.

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5 Reasons You're an Awesome Dad

1. You set the tone for your family. Leadership is more about who you are than what you say, and you're the kind of leader who speaks volumes via the positive, can-do, optimistic way you approach every day. You may not know this, but you inspire your family. You inspire us.

2. You're part of a top-notch team. You love your wife, you respect her, and you're smart enough to work as partners in raising your family.

3. Your family knows you love them without you saying a word ... but you tell them anyway. Love is an action word, but you punctuate your actions with the exclamation point of telling your family how you feel. Both your wife and your children see you redefine the reach of love with every action. And it's a win-win, Dad, because they can't help but love you in return.

4. You put your family first, and it's becoming a reflex. Some days, putting family first has to be a conscious decision, carefully thought through because it's not a natural or expected response in this culture. But those occasions are getting few and far between, Dad, because "family first" is becoming a reflex in your repertoire of behavior. We'd like to commend you for that; it makes you awesome!

5. You constantly work to be a better dad. You are awesome, Dad, because it's obvious you're continually trying hard to be the best dad you can be. And believe us, effort really does count for something. Growing is key to satisfaction in life, and it's hugely important that we grow as dads and husbands. The kids can tell (and so can your wife) because they can see the hard work translates into action. It's one more way they know how deeply you care.

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**.

When Kosher Wars Become Culture Wars

I was at Ikea the other day with my wife. We have a couple of the Swedish superstores here in Israel.

We were in Netanya. Before we began our search for cheap towels, or as they say at IKEA, some Fräjens, we decided to get a bite to eat. After checking the first of the two cafes, we sought to venture to the other one, only to find a massive glass barrier that basically said, "You cannot pass." I was expecting a troll to jump out. Instead, we had to make a massive circle to get to the other café.

Why the inconvenience? Well, it wasn't just so we would have to pass up deals on Fyrkantigs or the Riktig Ölgas. We weren't even tempted by the Grökullas. No, this had nothing to do with weirdly named Swedish home accessories, but it had *everything* to do with the Jewish kitchen.

You see, Jewish law forbids the mixing of milk and meat. We will get to the *why* in a minute. That means we have three types of restaurants in Israel:

1. **Halevy** ☐☐☐☐—dairy. These restaurants serve everything but meat products. Fish is cool.
2. **Basari** ☐☐☐☐—meat. These restaurants serve everything but dairy products. That means powder in your coffee and no cheesecake for dessert.
3. **Non-Kosher**—Anything goes! These restaurants serve anything from shrimp to bacon to puppy dog stew (not really). They are not kosher and therefore have no rules.

However, in Ikea they had No. 1 and No. 2 and went to great lengths to separate them. But they also wanted to separate me and my wife. She got some soup at the Basari restaurant, while I wanted a salad from the Halevi restaurant. So Elana brought her soup over. When the Orthodox waitress protested, I said in Hebrew, "It's okay ... it is just soup."

In a panic, as if a lighting bolt from heaven would strike us down, she said, "BUT THE UTENSILS ARE BASARI (for meat)!"

You see, in an Orthodox Jewish home, you *must* have two sinks, two sets of silverware and dishware. Why? To make sure that the meat dishes and utensils never come in contact with the milk ones. (Sometimes I wonder if in the middle of the night, they sneak out of their cupboards to frolic amongst themselves like in the Disney classic *Beauty and the Beast*.)

Anyway.

I have never hit a woman, but when she panicked over the idea that a meat utensil had made its way into the dairy area, at the same level as if an act of adultery or rape had been perpetrated, I was tempted. (OK, I wasn't really tempted to hit her ... but I wanted to write that I was.)

In the words of Glenn Beck, my head was about to explode. It just seemed so ridiculous, that in her mind and the mind of tens of thousands of Orthodox Jews in Israel, they confuse devotion to God with separating silverware.

I do believe this is what Paul meant when he wrote, "Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge" (Rom. 10:1-2).

I try with all my heart to respect other peoples' beliefs and traditions, but these are the same people who teach their children that I, a Messianic Jew, am part of a cult! (My head

just actually exploded, but I am using duct tape to keep it together.)

One thing I have maintained for many years is that if you are able to convince me that Yeshua is not the Messiah, I would not go running to Orthodox Judaism instead. I admit, there are many beautiful traditions in Orthodox Judaism (lighting Sabbath candles, weekly reading of the Torah, blessings over the bread and wine), but there are also some real bizarre ones that, in my humble opinion, would confuse anyone seeking a reason for why they are observed.

Here is an imaginary conversation:

Hey, I am new to this Jewish stuff and really want to please God, so can you help me?

Sure. Let's talk about food, since you eat regularly. We never mix milk and meat. And you must wait six hours after eating meat or dairy, before you can eat the other.

Uh, what?

Oh, and if you find some meat in your teeth make sure to remove it ... but you don't have to wait six more hours. Be sure though to thoroughly rinse your mouth. And then, after eating, make sure to rinse your mouth again and wash your hands aggressively. Some spend as much as an hour washing their hands.

Huh?

Even if the smallest amount of food is swallowed, you must wait the full six hours. But if you don't swallow, you can just do a thorough rinse and you're good to go.

Where is this in the Bible?

Oh, it is very clear. There are three passages in the Torah that forbid cooking a baby goat in its mother's milk—Exodus

23:19, 34:26 and Deuteronomy 14:21.

What does cooking a kid in its mother's milk have to do with separating utensils or waiting six hours to eat meat after eating dairy? The two are not even remotely connected!

The reason God forbade the Israelites to cook a kid in its mother's milk had nothing to do with food but worship. There is some proof that cooking a kid in its mother's milk was a part of Canaanite pagan worship. Just like in other portions of the Torah, where God tells the children of Israel to abstain from certain pagan practices regarding worship (because it is pagan and has nothing to do with true devotion), He does so here as well.

While the Deuteronomy passage mentions this at the end of a passage that refers to the kosher laws, both Exodus passages are connected to blood sacrifice, which was part of worship.

Either way, it is a giant leap from not boiling a young goat in its mother's milk to:

1. Never eating dairy and meat together.
2. Establishing a six-hour waiting period between eating the two.
3. Having two sinks in your kitchen.
4. Having two set of utensils.
5. Yelling at my wife in IKEA for bringing a *meat* spoon into a *dairy* area.

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Jewish roots of the New Testament. He serves on the pastoral team of Tiferet Yeshua, a Hebrew-speaking congregation in Tel Aviv. His newest book, Identity Theft, was released April 16. Follow him at @RonSCantor on Twitter.

For the original article, visit .

Eating (Dining) With the King of Kings

One morning recently, I was reading my Bible and eating breakfast at the same time. I put a bite of egg in my mouth and chewed it. I had the fork raised to put another bite in my mouth when the Holy Spirit said quietly, “You haven’t finished the food in your mouth yet.”

Startled, I realized that in my distraction, I wasn’t even paying attention to the food I was eating. I wasn’t enjoying it. It was just a mindless ritual, a task to get out of the way until I moved on to the next thing.

I put the fork down. One of the principles of *Take Back Your Temple* is to “appreciate every bite.” Now, the reason for the principle started out based on biology. The brain has a built-in appetite regulator called the “Appostat” that kicks in about 20 minutes after you start eating. It tells you when you have had enough to eat. So if you are eating your meals in less time than that, it is possible that you are eating two or three times the amount that your body needs.

However, this time I saw this principle from a different perspective. You see, I teach Sunday School, and one of the upcoming lessons I’m teaching is called “Meaningless Worship.”

It is based on Isaiah 29:9-16, in which the prophet spoke to the people of Judah about going through the motions in their worship. They performed the rituals, but their hearts were far from God.

In other words, it was just another task to get out of the way until they moved on to the next thing. Sound familiar?

In the lesson commentary, it gave three reasons why worship had become meaningless to God's people. You'll see in a moment how it relates to eating:

1. Forgetting about the Life-Giver. The people were so caught up in their daily lives, pursuing their personal goals and dealing with life challenges that they did not acknowledge God's presence or thank Him for their provision.

2. Failing to consult God about their daily decisions. They relied on their own understanding or everyone else but God to decide what actions to take.

3. Failing to spend time with God. They didn't take time out of their day to seek the Lord about His plan and purpose for their lives, or for private prayer, praise and worship.

After thinking about this, I put my Bible aside. I decided to have breakfast with my King.

I put a bite of food into my mouth, thinking, "God, I am so grateful that You are with me and that You never leave me nor forsake me."

I finished that bite and went on to the next one, remembering the Scripture, "Fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you—yes, I will help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Is. 41:10).

After finishing that bite and in the middle of the next one, I thought, "God, thank You so much for providing this food to me."

Several moments passed, in which I ate quietly, finishing and appreciating one bite at a time before moving on to the next. Finally, with the last bite came the thought, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord."

It was one of the most enjoyable breakfasts I had had in a long time! Then I thought, "What if I could always think of my meals as an opportunity to dine with the King of kings?"

While it is true that I pray before I eat, it had become a ritual, another task to get out of the way before moving on to the next thing. It was sobering to realize this. I was convicted of taking my Lord for granted in this area.

So I repented and said this prayer:

"Dear Precious Lord—Thank You so much for having breakfast with me. Thank You for loving me enough to provide for all of my needs according to Your riches in glory by Christ Jesus. I am sorry for not truly appreciating the food that You have provided for me today. You have provided the clothes on my back and the roof over my head. I thank You for saving me, Lord. I thank You for giving me the opportunity to experience a real, daily relationship with you, not engage in meaningless rituals. You created me fearfully and wonderfully. With every meal, Lord, I want to dine with You. I don't want to just eat anymore. I want to upgrade my eating experience to dining. To me, dining means that I am eating with a friend. And what closer friend do I have than You? So dine with me, Lord. Each meal, tell me which foods we should have on the menu, and I will prepare them. I will set a quiet a place for us so that I can hear You speaking to me. Dine with me, Lord. Empty me of myself and fill me with Your presence. That will truly satisfy me—spirit, mind, and body. Amen."

I challenge you to dine with the King on your next meal. Not just eat—*dine*. After all, you are eating with a friend!

I hope, like me, you'll decide to upgrade your meals and never rush through them again. God bless you this day as you dine with your King!

Kimberly Taylor is the author of *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.

5 Daily Challenges for Men

I know what you're thinking, but it's not what you think. Most of us already feel like we have enough on our daily plate, so why would we want to be challenged even more?

The answer is simple. Among all of the chaos of work and family during each day, we must find a way to be challenged in our walk with Christ. Although Sunday service is a great experience and necessary in our Christian walk, we must pursue our walk with Christ the rest of the days of the week.

I have come to believe that this process of being challenged in Christ has to become a desire. It has to become something you almost crave each day, and if you miss any challenges, you feel like you have suffered a loss and not done your proper duties. If it is made a desire in your life, you will find the time.

Here are five of my personal challenges that I make myself face each day. Do I have to do these? No, but I do them because I want to be respected among my peers, disciplined in my walk with Christ and because I do not want to allow work

and chaos to control my life.

1. Discussion with God. This process can also be called prayer, but I like to refer to it as discussion. This could be turning off the radio show on the way to work and talking to Him. It could happen after a frustrating talk with a co-worker or any time you have a moment. The time does not have to be fancy, but it must be pursued and must be intentional.

2. Personal quote. This has become one of my favorite things to do throughout the day. For any of you who follow the Manturity Facebook or Twitter, you will see many of my personal quotes. These are simply born out of situations throughout the day, after discussions with God on subjects or whatever is on my heart. Keep a journal of your thoughts and quotes, or post them on your social media as well. This simple but effective process will make you think on a deeper level and test your knowledge.

3. Attitude of love and respect. The first two challenges can happen at any time, but this one really requires a man to take things to the next level. Don't allow yourself to get caught up in hurtful conversations. Don't encourage wrongdoings. And don't allow the negative influences around you bring you down. Your center, your core, should be built on Christ, and your daily attitude should reflect it whether you are at work or home.

4. Uplift someone. An unselfish man of God should be able to recognize when someone is in need. Take those opportunities to show the love of Christ, and give them some words of encouragement. Maybe you work with someone who does a great job, day in and day out. Make it a point to thank them for their diligence and service. You might be surprised what will happen after you take that initiative.

5. Take a quiet break. It's not hard to believe that in this busy world, one of the hardest things for a man to do is to

just take a break. The best ways I have found to do this is to take a walk by myself at lunch, find a bench, and relax, or find some alone time when you get home. Even if it's a half-hour or 15 minutes, this time can be very fruitful to a busy man.

Think about Jesus and all the times He would disappear from the disciples or the crowds and just pray. This was no mistake, and we should follow His example. Forget about work and the daily struggles and just relax.

This is by no means a complete list. Share some ways or some things that you like to challenge yourself with every day.

Manturity is a blog built on establishing spiritual maturity in today's man. The goal is to assist men in building better marriages, help men 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 .

Bennett: Two-State Solution 'Unrealistic'

Israel should discard the two-state solution when it comes to the conflict with the Palestinians and instead seek to "live with the problem," Economy and Trade Minister Naftali Bennett (Habayit Hayehudi) said on Monday in a conference sponsored by

the Yesha Council in Jerusalem.

The Yesha Council, an umbrella body of Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria, invited several government officials to speak at the conference, which focused on Israel's public advocacy efforts on the world stage.

Bennett reiterated his stance that Israel should annex—"as quickly as possible"—virtually all the areas that were not handed over the Palestinian Authority under the Oslo accords, including the Jewish communities and a handful of Palestinian towns. He further advocated that Israel devise "aggressive" new plans to drastically improve the economic well-being of both the Jewish and Arab inhabitants of Judea and Samaria.

Bennett said that Israel must continue its settlement activity in Judea and Samaria "in full force, because only facts on the ground would make everyone understand that it is an unrealistic proposition to have a Palestinian entity in the Land of Israel."

"The notion of having a two-state solution established in the Land of Israel is now at a dead end; never in Jewish history have so many people talked so much and expended so much energy in something so futile," Bennett told the audience, stressing that Israel could not be called an occupier because it was on its own historic homeland.

He stressed that the sheer number of Jewish residents in Judea and Samaria meant that the two-state solution was no longer viable. "More than 10 percent of all Israelis live beyond what was known as the Green Line [Israel's pre-1967 border with Jordan]; anyone walking in Judea and Samaria knows that what was negotiated in Annapolis and in Oslo was just divorced from reality," he said. He noted that the pursuit of peace in such conferences and negotiating sessions has ultimately resulted in many deaths. Sometimes, a Western-style peace accord is beyond reach, he noted, expressing fear that many more would

die before people abandon their “quest for a perfect solution.”

Deputy Foreign Minister Zeev Elkin (Likud) said most European diplomats he meets are wedded to the idea of a two-state solution. Reacting to Bennett’s comments, he said, “Not a single foreign minister in Europe would agree with what Bennett said, not even with 10 percent of what he said; dozens of European foreign ministers have met with me recently and all they talked about was the two-state solution.”

Last week, Deputy Defense Minister Danny Danon (Likud), considered a hawk on the Palestinian issue, said the government would never endorse a two-state solution. “If you will bring it to a vote in the government—nobody will bring it to a vote, it’s not smart to do it—but if you bring it to a vote, you will see the majority of Likud ministers, along with Habayit Hayehudi, will be against it,” Danon told *The Times of Israel*. Danon further said that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s support for a two-state solution is tactical because such a prospect had zero chance of materializing. Danon’s comments triggered a media firestorm and prompted Netanyahu to distance himself from Danon’s statements. Justice Ministry Tzipi Livni (Hatnuah) even called Danon’s view “Danonism.”

For the original article, visit israelhayom.com.

Man in the Mirror: A Son’s Guide to Father’s Day

Definitions

Mo · ther's Day (mutherz day) n. A day devoted to honoring moms.

Fath · er's Day (fätherz day) n. A day to beat up men for not doing a better job!

Guess what? Not this year. This year, let's bless our fathers!

"What?" you say. "You obviously don't know my father!" Don't have to. Heard it before. Been through it myself.

In 1926, when my dad was two years old, the youngest of four children, his father abandoned him. It is something from which our family lineage has still not fully recovered. The impact of a father, for better or for worse, is felt forward for many generations.

My grandfather, whom I never met nor ever even seen his picture, contacted my dad when I was in high school. My dad didn't want anything to do with him. I asked my dad, "Why didn't you let him come see you?"

My dad said, "I was only two when he left. I never knew the man. He didn't want anything to do with me then, so I don't want anything to do with him now." Back then, as a high schooler, I didn't know what to say. Today, I do, but it's too late. My dad has passed away.

Breaking the Cycle

My dad wanted to break the cycle and, in many ways, he did. He taught me integrity, the value of hard work, and how to respect a woman. I will always be grateful. But my dad also let me down in some key areas. He didn't want to, but he did. He was a good man, but he had a lot to overcome. He suffered for the sins of his own father. The Bible puts it this way:

The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet

he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation (Ex. 34:6-7).

My dad tried to break the cycle and became a leader in our church. But, regrettably, our church didn't put a strong emphasis on building godly men, husbands, and fathers. As a result, we dropped out of church when he was 40 and I was in the 10th grade, the oldest of four boys.

Our entire family lineage is still reeling from that decision: two high school dropouts (I was one of them), drug addiction, alcoholism, employment problems, and divorce. I even have a brother who died of a heroin overdose.

One reason I'm so passionate about helping men become Godly men, husbands, and fathers is because of what I've seen God do in my own family line. By God's grace, I became a follower of Jesus in my early 20s. Since then, everyone in our family, except one brother, has put their faith in Jesus.

Patsy and I have been married for 30 years. My children can never remember a day they didn't know and love Jesus Christ. So, "Dad, if you can hear me, thanks for all you did. We did break the cycle, and we did it because of your determination. I have been able to finish in my generation what you started in your generation."

Still, I can't help but wonder, how would our family have been different if our church had a strong program to disciple men? I will never know, but your church can.

Your Church On Father's Day: If you really want to do something significant, why not announce on Father's Day that your church is committed to build a strong disciple-making program to build godly men, husbands, fathers, and boys? Attend a leadership training course at Man in the Mirror's Leadership Training Center.

A Father's Day Sermon: Pastors might preach a message on Father's Day about the crucial role that fathers play in family life. Pick an uplifting title, like, "Thanks, Dad!" or "Why I Love my Dad" or "Why Being a Dad Is Cool." Raise the bar on what's at stake when men fail. Send me an email, put "Father's Day statistics" in the subject line, and I will send you some great stats for your sermon (patrickmorley@).

Encourage your men for trying. Cite specific examples of men in your church who are great dads. Give men permission to make fathering a top priority—even if it means they don't spend as much time on church business.

Reconciling Sons and Fathers

Ed can only remember his father touching him once. When he was seven, his dad put his hand on Ed's knee to comfort him. What's so amazing about this story is not the absence of physical affection, but that a single touch would still be so vivid seventy years later!

When Ed turned sixty he went to his father's house and rang the doorbell. When his dad opened the door, he reached out and hugged his father. He said, "It was like hugging a cement telephone pole, but I'm so glad I did it. It's the only hug I ever had from him."

A little boy who grows up without an involved, affectionate, affirming dad can carry a lot of hurt and bitterness. If you had an absent, preoccupied, passive, or mean dad, you are probably an angry man.

If you had a father who let you down, you have some choices to make (if you have not already done so): You can repeat the sins of your father, or you can break the cycle. You can carry around your pain and bitterness, or you can forgive and redeem your family line.

Have you let God set you free, or are you still bound to the

past by the sins of your father or father's father? This Father's Day, you can set your entire family lineage on a course of godliness and reconciliation for generations to come.

Practical Things to Set Your Family Free

Sons to Living Fathers: If your father is living, take him to lunch on Father's Day—maybe just the two of you. Prepare a list of things you appreciate and a summary of the ways you feel let down. Read the list of things you appreciate to him. Give examples. Then, tell him about the pain you have felt. Talk about it. He will probably express regret.

Regardless of his response tell him, "Dad, I thank you for being my dad. You mean so much to me. I forgive you for the past. I love you very much, and I want us to have a good relationship. Why don't we plan to spend more time together? Maybe we can have lunch or breakfast once every (week, month, two months, quarterly)."

Sons to Deceased Fathers: Write your father a letter. Spend a few days jotting down notes, then sit down on Father's Day and write it out. Tell him what you appreciate, the good things he passed along to you, all the things you miss, what you regret, the places where you think he let you down. Then, by God's grace, thank him where you can, and forgive him for everything else. If emotion comes, don't hold it back. A good cry can heal many hurts. Let it all go. When you are done, ceremoniously burn the letter as a symbol of putting the past behind you once and for all. If you can't let it go, consider a few sessions with a professional Christian counselor. You don't have to spend the rest of your life with a seed of bitterness eating away at you.

Sons to Fathers-In-Law: My father-in-law has been my encourager, mentor, and champion. Why not send a special letter of gratitude to your father-in-law for welcoming you

into his family, giving you the hand of his daughter, supporting you through the years, and whatever else you can say that expresses gratitude? If possible, consider going to lunch and presenting your letter in person.

Never Knew Your Dad? Write God a letter with all the questions you have about your father. Tell God how much you miss not knowing or not having a dad. Thank God for the men who have filled in gaps. Ask God to fill in everything else. Consider finding a younger man who doesn't have a dad in his life and get your families together on Father's Day.

A Final Thought

Any Christian counselor will tell you, "There is something about a man's relationship with his father that touches every aspect of his life." Indeed, ask a group of men on a retreat to discuss, "What was your relationship with your father like?" and you will soon have a room full of blubbers—many because their dads were so encouraging, and the rest because they don't feel like their dads loved them or were proud of them.

So, this is not a message about how to be a good dad on Father's Day, but a good son. Bless your father this year. If you can reconcile with your past, you won't be doomed to repeat the sins of your father or father's father. You will be a good dad to your own kids. You will have broken the cycle. You will be free.

Application

Share this article with other men and then talk about it. What ideas had the biggest impact on you? Why? What is a next step you feel compelled to take?

Pray about your relationships with your father (and father-in-law). How will you bless them this Father's Day?

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 non-profit organization to help men find meaning and purpose in life. Dr. Morley is the bestselling author of *The Man in the Mirror*, *No Man Left Behind*, *Dad in the Mirror*, and *A Man's Guide to the Spiritual Disciplines*.

For the original article, visit .