

# Reclaiming Culture One Community at a Time

Can a city or community be impacted for Christ? Can it be transformed?

The answer to those questions lies with the level of maturity of Christians in a community that is measured in love, unity and prayer.

Jesus spent three years with His disciples, and yet after three years, they thought the way to deal with people different from themselves or those who were adversarial was to call down fire from heaven:

“But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, ‘Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?’ But He turned and rebuked them, and said, ‘You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them.’ And they went to another village” (Luke 9:51-56).

The disciples modeled what the church does today. We condemn people who are different or hold different views, or we condemn them for acting like people who do not know God. The church has often tried to change culture by controlling it, instead of loving it. Instead, Jesus calls us to love people and build bridges into their lives. Yes, it even means, God forbid, gays, adulterers and even liberals—yes, anyone different from ourselves. Jesus loves them too, even in their sin. That is hard for us to model in the body of Christ. We all struggle to love those very different from ourselves.

In 2011, we had a conference at Harvard, and the speakers were protested on campus by radical gays. Instead of reacting to

them, God made a way for me and another leader to meet with them. First, we listened to what they had to say. Afterward, they let us share with them why their assessment of us was incorrect. Lastly, we upheld the relationship even though we had differing views. They left the meeting with a 180-degree different viewpoint than when they walked into our meeting.

Did they get saved? No. Did they have a different view of us than before they met us? Yes. Was there a bridge built? Yes. God can water that kind of relationship-building, and He has actually done so since then.

**“I catch them; the Lord cleans them.”**

That is what Larry Poland, president of MasterMedia, said at one of our conferences. He serves executives in Hollywood and New York. He said, “You know, it is amazing how scripts change once there is a heart change.” We are not the Holy Spirit in people’s lives. Our role is to love and share. That’s it. Then love some more.

### **Jesus and the Samaritan Woman**

Let’s discover how Jesus did it. Please read the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman:

“Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, ‘How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?’ For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, ‘If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, “Give Me a drink,” you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water’” (John 4:9-10, NKJV).

Jesus talked to the woman and spoke into her life. The disciples were shocked that Jesus spoke to a woman who was also a Samaritan. Both were off-limits during His day. But Jesus broke the social barrier. The result? The city was impacted:

“And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, ‘He told me all that I ever did.’ So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word. Then they said to the woman, ‘Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world’” (vv. 39-42).

### **Here is what Jesus did:**

- He listened and engaged in conversation.
- He spoke into her life.
- He gave her information and spoke prophetically.
- He did not give her the Four Laws.
- He did not condemn her.
- He spoke supernaturally into her life.
- He gave her an opportunity to believe.

### **The result was:**

- Her life was impacted by His speaking into her life.
- She shared her experience with others.
- The citizens of the city invited Jesus to stay for two days.
- Many believed in Jesus!

That is your formula for community impact.

“And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified” (v. 39).

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# Chaim Goldberg: Hungarian Group Would Have Made Hitler Proud

I've been to Holocaust memorial centers and museums around the world, from West Bloomfield, Mich., to Jerusalem. But by far the most powerful exhibit I ever saw at any of these important institutions was one on "propaganda" at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

As a Jew, I've been taught about the Holocaust my entire life. But it took my brain years to figure out how something like this could have happened. I just couldn't grasp what the chain of events was that led to 6 million of my family members being massacred. How did Hitler pull this off?

The exhibit on propaganda helped me so much in my understanding. One thing I never put together was that the Holocaust began just after the Great Depression—the worst economic collapse in world history. This was prime material for Hitler's propaganda machine.

Slowly and methodically, Hitler and Joseph Goebbels began linking the Jews and the Great Depression. "It was the Jews who caused this." "Those greedy Jews are to blame." "All your suffering is because of the Jews." "If you don't have a job or a home or food for your family ... be angry at those money-loving Jews!"

This was the foundation being laid by the Nazis. They had to soften up the ground, to begin planting the seeds of hatred against the Jews. As the economy worsened and the people of Europe looked for someone to blame, more and more joined this

Nazi chorus: "Blame the Jews." Thus the march toward the Holocaust was well underway.

Images from the propaganda exhibit came flooding in to my mind as I watched, in horror, a rally held in Hungary this past weekend. Hungary ... where hundreds of thousands of Jews were killed in the Holocaust.

The following news excerpts describe what took place:

*On the eve of Sunday's World Jewish Congress (WJC) meeting in Budapest, Hungary's capital, the country's far-right Jobbik party held an anti-Semitic demonstration, with one prominent member saying, "Hungary has been subjugated by Zionism."*

*Several hundred nationalists protested next to the Hungarian parliament building on Saturday, at which Jobbik leaders claimed that the World Jewish Congress had decided to meet in Hungary in an effort to "shame the Hungarian people." Jobbik is the third-largest party in Hungary, with 43 out of 386 parliamentary seats.*

*This is not the first time that members of Jobbik have expressed anti-Semitic sentiments. Jobbik leaders occasionally issue provocative statements about Jews, such as a call by Jobbik member of parliament Marton Gyongyosi last November to list all Jews in the government and parliament as potential national security risks. He later apologized but did not resign.*

*Some 80,000 to 100,000 Jews live among the 10 million people of Hungary, which was once a center of Jewish life in Europe and has seen a modest revival since communism ended in 1989.*

*"The Israeli occupiers, these invaders, need to look for a different country because Hungary is not for sale," Jobbik Chairman Gabor Vona told the rally. The charge, based on comments President Shimon Peres made in 2007 praising Israeli businesses abroad, has become a mantra in Jobbik's discourse*

*about threats it says Hungary faces from Roma (Gypsies), Jews, the European Union and the International Monetary Fund.*

*“This kind of conspiracy theory has a long history in Hungary,” said Peter Kreko, director of the Political Capital research and consulting company. Hungary’s wartime fascist leaders used xenophobic charges to win support, he noted.*

*The World Jewish Congress decided to hold its assembly in Budapest, rather than Jerusalem, to highlight the rise of anti-Semitism and of the extreme Right in Europe. More than half a million Hungarian Jews were killed in the Holocaust.*

*Conservative Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who is due to address the congress’ opening session Sunday evening, had ordered that the rally be banned. However, a court ruled Friday that police had overstepped their authority in trying to block it.*

*“Our country has become subjugated to Zionism. It has become a target of colonization, while we, the indigenous people, can play only the role of extras,” Gyongyosi told the crowd. The rally ended after almost two hours, and the protesters dispersed without incident.*

*WJC spokesman Michael Thaidigsmann said, “We find it a worrying sign that these people express their anti-Semitic and anti-Israeli ideology in such a public way.”*

*Yes, Hitler would be proud of this group. They even waved homemade signs with hand-drawn swastikas. They know their fascist history well: *Blame the Jews for our economic woes.**

*Sickening. Pathetic. Can anyone even believe this is happening in Eastern Europe, just 70 years after the Holocaust?*

*Wake up, Europe. You missed Hitler the first time, at this stage in the anti-Semitic game. Will you repeat your mistakes again?*

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## Israelis Celebrate 46th Jerusalem Day

Israel marked its 46th Jerusalem Day on Wednesday, commemorating the reunification of the city following the 1967 Six-Day War.

The holiday was marked by the traditional Jerusalem Day flag march around the Old City, as well as several ceremonies.

Some 2,500 disabled Israel Defense Forces veterans and their families participated in the march as well. Haim Bar, head of the Disabled IDF Veterans' Association, urged Finance Minister Yair Lapid to refrain from revising the agreements signed between the organization and the Finance Ministry under the last government saying, "I expect the leaders in Jerusalem to remember that without these soldiers, who gave life and limb for Jerusalem and Israel, we would not be celebrating Jerusalem Day."

Data released on Tuesday by the Central Bureau of Statistics ahead of the festivities, confirmed that the Israeli capital was experiencing a revival, after some 15 years of consecutive decline.

The Data indicated that Jerusalem is home to 804,400 residents, making it the largest city in Israel. In 2011, of

the city's population, 62 percent (499,400) were Jews, 35 percent (281,000) were Muslim and 2 percent (14,100) were Christian.

The report said that between 2009 and 2011, 30,000 new jobs were created in the capital, and some 3 million tourists visited the city. The sites most frequented by tourists were the Western Wall, the Jewish Quarter of the Old City, the Via Dolorosa and the Mount of Olives.

In an effort to further boost the city's upswing, the Prime Minister's Office, the Jerusalem Municipality and the Jerusalem Development Authority announced the appropriation of hundreds of millions of shekels for cultural projects in the city.

"The goal is to create an attractive cultural scene in Jerusalem, which will appeal to both the residents and tourists," said Moti Hazan, CEO of the Jerusalem Development Authority.

For the original article, visit .

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## **Lone Soldiers Earn Countrymen's Love and Respect**

It's long been said that Israel's greatest natural resource is its people. Even with the discovery of large natural gas and other mineral resources, this is very much the case in many ways.

One of the ways this is most realized is in our military. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) is a people's army. It's rare to

find an Israeli, particularly a Jewish Israeli, who hasn't served or have a relative (child, parent, etc.) who hasn't served. Military service is very personal for Israelis.

Shortly after moving to Israel, I went to the IDF induction center and presented myself ready to sign up. I was a few weeks past 40. The person before me was half my age. He looked perplexed, reviewed my papers and asked, "At your age?"

With the swift impression of a rubber stamp on the papers I brought, I was exempted from military service. I would make other efforts to serve, but because of my age, this reminded me of the Groucho Marx line that said, "I'd never want to be a member of a club [in this case, army] that would have me as a member."

When Israelis look at the young men and women on the front line of our defense, we look at people who could be our kids. As much as the young men and women of the IDF protect Israel, Israelis always are concerned with the protection and well-being of the soldiers.

Most synagogues add special prayers on Shabbat (Sabbath) for the well-being of the soldiers—not just because it's the right thing to do, but because it's very personal. Most Israelis were, are or will be soldiers in the IDF.

Serving in the army is far from summer camp, but underscoring the notion of a people's army, the IDF has "parents' day," where families go to visit their children on bases throughout Israel. It's just like visiting day at camp, sort of.

Recently, "N," the eldest son of close friends in the U.S., moved to Israel and enlisted with the IDF in a famed combat unit. Because he grew up overseas and immigrated on his own, he is considered a "lone soldier." He represents a growing trend of young men and women leaving behind the lands of their birth and planting themselves in Israel to build theirs and our future.

Lone soldiers are “adopted” by families so they can have a respite of short and well-deserved breaks from their service, spend a Shabbat unwinding and relaxing in a home, do laundry and have others to look out for their well being and needs, just as any native-born Israeli would have his or her family look out for their own kids. “N” has two adopted families—mine and other close mutual friends. He’s always taken care of, knowing he always has a place to call home.

Previously, we also adopted a young man from Hungary who left the growing anti-Semitism there to plant his destiny in Israel and be part of building a future for himself in his homeland. Though we only met him once, he became like family. He’s finished his service now, but he always knows he has a home with us.

In the summer of 2006, the Second Lebanon War placed my family’s summer vacation in the north of Israel at jeopardy. Hostilities ended the week before, and hotels and resorts, which had largely closed or were being used to house troops coming back from Lebanon for a respite, started to reopen.

My kids were nervous, but we went anyway, thinking it was important to show solidarity and spend some money in communities that had been hit hard. We had a great time.

One day, I loaded up the van with cases of soft drinks and packed the kids in for what my father called a “mystery ride.” Setting out from our Galilee hotel, I knew the direction we were headed but not where we’d end up.

As we headed north, the older kids got a sense that we were heading in the direction of the Lebanese border. Being well aware that this was real and not an amusement park, that military personnel and hardware were still visible at almost every turn, they protested. I continued to drive.

I drove as far as I could, passing signs pointing in the direction of the border, until two soldiers stationed on a

dirt road that must have been yards from the actual border fence stopped us. My kids were not happy.

“Are we there yet?” was replaced by “Can we leave now?” The soldiers had no idea who we were or what we wanted, but they told us we couldn’t continue. Opening the back of the van, I started pulling out case after case of drinks. It was blazing hot, and these two soldiers were dumbfounded.

I told them we had just come to find them and bring these drinks so they could stay cool and hydrated. They were jubilant. Their smiles alone were all the thanks that were needed, but they did more. They scraped together some spent bullet shells and gave them to my kids as souvenirs. Almost as quickly as we arrived and I unloaded the drinks, we left.

On the way back to our hotel, I was pleased to see that the kids got it. Though they had been nervous about going to the north to begin with—and to the border, when their crazy father told them they were going for a ride—now they understood. They felt good about what we did. I didn’t need to add much to the lesson, other than making it clear that when their siblings are in the army, and eventually their own kids, this is exactly what they are going to do. It was one of the best lessons in the civics of raising immigrant kids in Israel that I could have given them.

Native Israelis know what to do for their soldiers instinctively. New immigrants like us have to learn the system. Lone soldiers are caught in the middle. So, we adopt them as our children. We go to their “parents’ day” on base. We go to their induction ceremonies. We feed them and do their laundry. We give them a place to call home and to lie down and sleep when they get their well-deserved time off.

We do these things because, whether they are born into our families or not, they are our sons and daughters, and they are the protectors of Israel. The army provides the basics and we,

their families, help make it more comfortable, show them our appreciation, and pray for them as we realize that they literally are serving to defend us and our future.

There are many ways to help and support. Soldiers love to get letters of encouragement from people overseas. They often need personal supplies and creature comforts that make their service more pleasant. There are organizations that provide an array of services to help our boys and girls in uniform. If you'd like to help, please email me at *firstpersonisrael@*.

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**Jonathan Feldstein** *is the director of Heart to Heart, a unique virtual blood donation program to bless Israel and save lives in Israel. Born and educated in the U.S., Feldstein emigrated to Israel in 2004. He is married and the father of six. Throughout his life and career, he has been blessed by the calling to fellowship with Christian supporters of Israel and shares experiences of living as an Orthodox Jew in Israel.*

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## **10 Ways to Make Good Kids Great**

A Play of the Day subscriber wrote the following:

“I went to parent/teacher conferences and I was told what a nice, pleasant girl my daughter was. Once I got up to go, I was feeling pretty good, but by the time I got to the door, I had a new set of questions, so I turned back and sat back down.

“Lots of tension suddenly ... but I asked my questions: ‘How do

you challenge a pleasant kid? When your child is the likable, helpful, compliant person, are they being noticed?' My daughter told me that I wasn't allowed to go to any more conferences after that because all of her teachers suddenly were paying attention to her, giving her extra work, and making her work harder. Never felt bad about that."

If you have a "good" kid, that's wonderful. But there is always room for improvement. Nudge them from good to great. Here are 10 ways to make good kids better:

**1. Understand the difference between criticism and challenge.**

A challenge builds on confidence; criticism typically erodes confidence. Simply put, we want our children to move forward from a position of strength.

**2. Keep the conversation open.** When kids are familiar with an ongoing dialogue that is both encouraging and motivational, "upping the ante" or special challenges come with the territory.

**3. Develop a family ethos that values challenge and change.**

"Good to Great" will fail royally if it's a kids-only initiative. Make sure excellence defines your family like a strand of DNA.

**4. Write a weekly family game plan.** This might be a good time to initiate a weekly family meeting. Develop specific family goals and encourage mutual accountability. This could cover everything from cleaner rooms to planning the family vacation to a neighborhood food drive.

**5. Require an individual game plan (read: goals).** This builds on No. 4. It could look like, "I'm challenging myself to finish the garage. Mom has a project for her class. What's your plan for the week, Chris?"

**6. Introduce justice into the family conversation.** Fact: Children who develop a social conscience also achieve more

personally. This is one reason college applications now look at volunteer work. Take this a step further and encourage your kids to develop their own ideas and interventions.

**7. Model self-evaluation and self-improvement.** We've said this before, Dad, and the principle remains ever true: You are your kids' role model and hero. They watch everything you do. Remember what your high school English teacher said about that story you wrote? "Don't tell me, *show me.*" Hey, it's a great word for dads too.

**8. Volunteer.** We've already mentioned the power of social action to motivate. Well, incorporate the principle into the family plan. This isn't just about individual volunteering—we're talking about the whole family caring out loud, nudging one another from good to great.

**9. Avoid using tangible rewards for achievement.** But doesn't this sound counter-intuitive? Not at all. Our end game must be, "Excellence is its own reward." Paying for grades can cheapen achievement. Celebration is a different matter, but keep it within reason. We were created to live at capacity. When the kids get that, the idea becomes self-sustaining.

**10. Use encouragement rather than guilt.** This hearkens back to the difference between criticism and challenge. Guilt builds resentment and sows negativity where we should be planting positive motivation. The child pushed into achievement by guilt will never own the joy of achievement and never do his or her best.

**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 by-product, 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**.

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# Gratitude Carries Healing Powers for the Heart

Paul closed his first letter to the church in Thessalonica with a series of directives, including this verse:

“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thess. 5:18).

At the time Paul wrote this epistle, the church was experiencing intense persecution. Yet Paul admonished them to be thankful. He even elaborated on the “when” and “why”: we should be thankful “in everything.” The reason: because “this is the will of God.”

This verse is profound because it is so diametrically opposed to our natural inclinations. If left to the natural mind, the *time* to be thankful would be when great things happen to us, and the *reason* because great things take place. To the ordinary human mind gratitude is conditional. However, this ought not to be the case for Christ’s followers. Much like the attribute of love, thankfulness should be ingrained in our character.

Not only is gratitude God’s will for us, but it also provides the best defense against pessimism, which brings cynicism, distrust, and gloom. Thankfulness is like a light, able to drive out darkness and replace it with gladness, hopefulness, and confidence.

The Bible illustrates an example of the consequences of ingratitude in Exodus, when the Israelites found themselves in the wilderness after their miraculous delivery from Egypt.

Israel's exodus marked the end of a 400-year period of severe oppression and slavery in Egypt. Certainly the family of Joseph was not perfect when it relocated to Egypt. Still, it seems institutional slavery planted seeds of negativity in their descendants, which took root and bore fruit over 400 years. This is not surprising, especially since they were keenly aware of their status as God's chosen people.

Enslavement must have been all the more painful in light of God's promises to Abraham. Their covenant of hope didn't include slavery, and "hope deferred makes the heart sick" (Proverbs 13:12).

God called on Moses to deliver his pessimistic brethren, who displayed both types of pessimism—dispositional and explanatory.

First, they had a negative outlook and were chronic complainers—so much so that this constant grumbling made them irrational.

They were also explanatory pessimists, explaining life's events in a negative fashion.

Pessimists in every sense of the word, they reached this outlook by choice. Although years of slavery and oppression may have planted and nurtured this disposition, they had the capacity to change. All they had to do was choose an attitude of gratitude.

Except for Joshua and Caleb, all the Israelites above the age of 20 who came out of Egypt died in the wilderness and never saw the Promised Land. The fire of God's wrath consumed some (Numbers 11:1; 16:35); others were swallowed by the earth for their rebellion (Numbers 16:28–34).

☒ Some were executed for disobedience by their brother's sword (Exodus 32:25–28) and others bitten by fiery serpents for speaking against Moses and God (Numbers 21:4–6). What the Bible doesn't reveal is whether many suffered from cardiovascular disease. No doubt many would have died long before they had aged enough to develop significant atherosclerosis.

The point here is that had they chosen to be thankful in all things, their pessimistic outlook and tendency to rebel would have faded. This would have spared them from 40 years of aimless wandering. They could have avoided death from any of the causes I mentioned in the previous paragraph. Most importantly, they could have entered the Promised Land with happy hearts.

Learn the power of gratitude, and let thanksgiving preserve your heart.

The preceding is an excerpt from Dr. Kara Davis' book, *Spiritual Secrets to a Healthy Heart*. The book can be purchased at [Amazon](#), [Barnes & Noble](#), or [iBarnes](#).

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## America Should Embrace Added Security

I have lived in Israel for 10 years. I have endured news of numerous bus bombings and restaurant explosions and the kidnapping of several Israeli soldiers. And the worst: In 2006, on the eve of Passover, a Palestinian strolled into a Falafel restaurant—one that had already been bombed twice. He had food in his mouth, so when he spoke to the security guard, the guard was unable to detect his non-Israeli accent.

The *shomer* (security guard) asked to see what was in his backpack—a question I have been asked more times than I can remember. The man picked up his bag and detonated a bomb. Shrapnel went flying, and so did people. More than a dozen people were killed. One man lay on the ground with a broken leg and a few other cuts and bruises. In front of him, he looked at his son who had shielded him from the blast.

Daniel Cantor Wultz looked at his dad, not realizing the bomb had gone through his back and decimated his insides. They had a brief conversation, and then he told his father, “I love you.” They were his last words. Amazingly, my 16-year-old cousin survived for nearly three weeks, unconscious, before he succumbed to his wounds.

### **This Is Terror**

The goal of terror is to enslave you with fear. It is to make you afraid to ride a bus, eat at a restaurant or participate in a marathon. Terror is the ultimate weapon of the few over the many. Neither Saudi Arabia nor Afghanistan has fear of an Israeli or an American blowing himself up in order to commit mass murder on their soil. But it only takes a small terror cell of Islamic fanatics to cause mass hysteria.

In the late 1990s and the first few years after the turn of the century, it seemed there was a terror attack every week. Israelis stopped eating out and stopped going out. My friends Eddie and Jackie Santoro recall hearing more than one explosion from their balcony.

### **It Was Inevitable**

The miracle of America is that she went 12 years without a major attack. Do you understand how easy it would be for 12 terrorists to walk into 12 different locations (like a McDonald's at lunch) on any given day and cause mayhem? While the security forces and investigative forces in the U.S. are impressive, the actual security at events is scarily weak.

When events like the Boston Marathon are held in Israel, before you could get to the area surrounding the finish line—or any other area where there is a mass congregation of people—you would have to pass through security. Your bag would be briefly searched. We would have five or six lines, and people would pass through very quickly. Other security guards would be watching those in the line. *Yes, they would be profiling!* They would be looking for dark-skinned males (which make up about 25 percent of Israelis as well) who look out of place.

### **Profiling Works**

In America, it would be even easier to profile because, by and large, Americans don't look like they came from Saudi Arabia. Do you have a problem with this? Does it violate the civil liberties of certain citizens? Maybe, but friend, we've got to wake up. These people are murderous lunatics, and the only way to stop them is more security. My guess is that your objections to profiling would melt away if it were your 8-year-old son who was killed in Boston recently.

In Israel, we built a security fence. It was quite unpopular around the world. Left-wing activists from all over the world cried foul. I had more than one outraged tourist read me the riot act over my support of the fence. They tell me it is unfair to the Palestinians, and I quickly respond, "Then tell the Palestinian Authority to put an end to terror."

We didn't want to build a fence. We don't want to inconvenience Palestinians. We don't want checkpoints. Israelis don't inherently hate Arabs (as the majority of the Arab world hates us). But if you want to kill us, we will do whatever it takes to protect our people.

By the way, the world media outlets would have you believe the security fence is a massive, 24-foot cement wall. In truth, 97 percent of it is a mesh fence, and the few areas where it is a

wall, those were necessitated by the fact that Palestinians were shooting at Israeli drivers.

Since its construction, the decrease in terror attacks is dramatic. In fact, there have been more terror attacks in the U.S. this year (1) than in Israel (0).

The fact remains: If the U.S. is going to protect herself against Islamic terror, it will take a lot of patience and beefed-up security. Just the other day (I was in the United States while writing this), I walked into a mall with a backpack, and it took me by surprise that there was not someone to search my bag. *Oh yeah, I'm in America, I remembered.*

You might wonder, *Will heightened security really stop terror?* The answer is yes and no. We are at war, and sadly there will be defeats, as we saw recently in Boston. But here is what I can guarantee you: With every layer of security, no matter how insignificant it may seem, it will serve to deter terrorists at least on some level. Every level of security has some positive effect.

That is what I came to understand in Israel. Obviously, one could hide a bomb in their car when entering a parking garage that a security guard would not find, but again, every layer of security has some effect, and you must embrace it. Consider:

- A security guard at every entrance to a restaurant or mall
- Security guards checking trunks at every parking garage
- Every bag and backpack checked at every sporting event, concert or mass gathering.
- More cameras in public areas
- And, yes, training in the fine art of profiling

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

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## **Social Media: Opening and Closing the Gate**

Social media has given us the great advantage of connecting with people we would otherwise never be able to. Geographical limits are no longer an issue. Communities are no longer built around proximity but around "friendship."

This gateway of interacting with others has its advantages but also its share of challenges.

Few people understand protocol, yet it is one of the most powerful relational principles that can impact your life. Protocol is what allows access to you. No one has an inherent right to your life.

When you open the gate and allow someone into your life, you are inviting his or her influence, his or her possible request or demand, and perhaps his or her instruction. Every person you allow into your life will have an affect on it, but not

every relationship will be a positive one.

It is important to establish a standard of protocol for your personal community. The information you share is being broadcast throughout the community, so it is important that you are very careful what you share. It is also important that you monitor your community for those who qualify to stay in your community.

**Access is first a reward, then a continual test.** Remember, not everyone has a right to be in your life. If you determine someone no longer warrants access, close the gate.

**Access authorizes a person to assess your true value.** Access is a two-way street. While you should carefully monitor what you allow into your life, remember that others will be doing the same with the access they have granted to you.

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” (Eph. 4:29)

**Access is a gift, not a right.** You must monitor the line of respect and familiarity. If a person crosses that line, you must either push back or eliminate the gift of access.

I recently had someone boldly rebuke something that I had posted. My statement was not just an opinion but also a scriptural principle. This person's exclamation points and abrasive words were incredibly out of line. (His sloppy misspellings didn't help his case either.) After attempting to reason with him, I realized he was not looking for wisdom but for a fight. I simply unfriended him. No more access. Gate closed. Problem solved.

The restoration of access must follow protocol. If a person offends you, it is important that you honor the system of forgiveness; however, most people are flippant when extending forgiveness. They simply say, “Well, I must forgive.”

Forgiveness should also follow a process of protocol.

A former employee who had stolen from me called me out of the blue, apparently thinking a trivial phone call would gain my forgiveness of his trespass. When I answered the phone, he said, "Neil, I am in the hotel lobby, and I have a few things I need to say."

He was expecting me to drop my schedule and grant him immediate access. That wasn't going to happen.

I replied, "No, you do not have access to me. You need to practice protocol. Write me a formal letter expressing your request and I will read and reply in kind."

When this gentleman wrote the letter, I was able to reply with a complete release of his debt to me. Few people understand this level of protocol, but it is vital to operating in true forgiveness.

So, as you enlarge your community, realize that access is a gate that must be opened and closed. For a biblical example of allowing and restricting access, study John 10, where Jesus said, "I am the gate."

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

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# Who Has Time to Exercise?

You know the importance of being physically active for your waistline, your heart, and your overall health. But between shuttling the troops from school and social activities, where do you find time to keep your body strong and ready for the next round?

Based on your typical day, your options for physical activity fall into one or more of the following categories:

Spending time with:

1. Your children
2. Your spouse
3. Your friend
4. Your Lord

Which one gets most of your time? How can you incorporate physical activity with all that goes on in your day? Here are some ideas for each of the categories.

**1. Spending Time With Your Children.** Odds are you do this already, but I am talking about time that is physically involved and gets you some exercise. So try these on for size.

- If your teen is involved in athletics, help them practice, or actually play with them. They'll appreciate the effort and time even more if sports aren't your thing. Plus, you'll get in a great cardiovascular and muscular workout. You may wake up the next day feeling muscles you never knew you had.
- Attend your teen's events, sporting or otherwise. Instead of sitting in the car or the stands, get up and get moving. Walk around the field, parking lot, or bleachers. Bring a Walkman, CD player, or mp3 player and listen to some inspiring music or a message from church you've been meaning hear. Better yet, use this as quite

time to reflect and spend with the Lord (while moving, too!). We get so little of it in our fast-paced world, so this will quickly become treasured time where you can be built up and put life back into perspective.

- You may be thinking, “Well, that would work if I didn’t have to pick up the other kids and go get dinner and. ...” Most everyone with children has those lists and routines that are necessary. The key is to prioritize and recruit the help of your spouse or carpool with parents whose kids are on the same team or involved in the same event.

**2. Spending Time With Your Spouse.** This is a great way to spend more time together. It’s often difficult between the children and work schedules—all the more reason to exercise together and accomplish two very important things at once. You’ll have some quality time to bond and catch up, plus the physical activity helps calm the nerves, releases stress, and increases the production of endorphins—something all couples could benefit from. Use the above ideas if you can both attend your teen’s events and activities. Otherwise, make a point of spending 20-30 minutes, even if it’s just a walk around the block to start.

**3. Spending Time With a Friend.** If your spouse isn’t ready to get moving, or you just want to alternate days getting together, grab a good friend and start walking. It’s much easier to cancel on your spouse or decide to stay in together and watch television than it is to cancel on a friend when you know they’re waiting for you. The time of fellowship will be an encouragement. Plus, combined with physical activity, you’ll feel rejuvenated and rested so much more so than if you would have stayed on the couch.

**4. Spending Time Alone With the Lord.** It’s easy to overlook your time alone with the Lord, so it’s a perfect combination to get out and do both. This time in prayer, praise, and His presence, along with using the body He has blessed you with,

will have you returning refreshed, with the worries and stresses of the day put in their proper place in the light of His love.

Some other exercises can include hiking, swimming, bicycling, gardening, climbing stairs, dancing, or doing intervals of walking and running. Find something you enjoy, anything, as long as you are moving.

The idea is to find physical activity wherever you are. You'll eventually get better at identifying things you can do as time goes on. Keep this in mind: anything that has weight can be lifted. Examples could be the grocery bags you're bringing into the house, or your purse or briefcase as you stand in line or are at the office.

If you cannot find something to lift, there are always isometrics. These are exercises where you just contract and "squeeze" the muscle. All resistance training basically boils down to contraction of the muscle. If you're in the car, you can contract your abs, hold for 10 seconds, and release. If you are sitting at the office or in a waiting room, you can squeeze your buns, hold 10 seconds again, and relax. Any body part you can contract you can work out no matter where you are.

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*For the original article, visit .*

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# Mundane Loses Its Meaning When Serving Your Family

What can you learn about fathering from a trip to the supermarket?

One thing I know is that life is full of mundane events. And as fathers, one of our tasks is to make the best of them for our families.

One of my recent trips to the grocery store is a good example. That's about as mundane as it gets. But my experience that day brings up two lessons we can use with our families.

Why was I going to the store? Because my bride, Melanie, said we were out of creamer for our morning coffee. She sets the machine to have the coffee ready when she wakes up, and she likes having different creamer flavors to add to it. Well, that morning she woke up and we were all out. And it was clear that she wanted some.

At first, I was thinking, *Go to the store just for creamer? Can't we get by one day drinking it black, or having something else?* It really wasn't a necessity, and I knew that she knew that!

Then after a minute, I paused and caught myself. I grabbed keys and my teenage son, Chance, and we headed to the store. I figured with all she does for me, the least I could do was drive to the store for something she enjoys.

So, lesson number one, dad: Serve your family members—your bride if you're married, and your kids, for sure. Remind yourself how much they mean to you, and take advantage of

every opportunity to demonstrate that.

After we got to the store, I couldn't help noticing the expressionless looks on all the people's faces there. They were just going through the motions, not speaking, would rather be someplace else, stressed out or whatever. As Chance and I pushed the cart along, that really struck me.

So I reminded Chance about a game I used to play with him at the store. When he was small, I would put him up in the cart and give him a challenge: "Daddy will give you a dollar for every person you get to smile."

So he'd be hanging over the side and staring at people with a big grin on his face, and then he learned to do all kinds of wacky tricks to get people's attention. He got rich in the process.

I gave him the same offer that day and he earned a few bucks, but he's 16 now and more worried about being embarrassed, and a dollar doesn't make it quite as exciting as it used to. Still, I think Chance will agree that lesson No. 2 is worth remembering: Find ways to inject joy and laughter into your children's lives, even if you bribe them!

As you know, family life has a lot of mundane moments. But I'm convinced that how you carry yourself during those times can have a huge impact on your family. Keep making the most of every day.

### **Action Points for Dads on the Journey**

- Do a mundane task or errand for your wife and/or children simply because you appreciate the fact that they are in your life.
- Get in the habit of asking your wife—every day—"What can I do for you?"
- Challenge your child to do something silly that will bring a smile to someone's face. (Pay him for it if you

want to.)

- Let your child dare *you* to do something that will bring a smile to his face—even if you risk being embarrassed.
- Come up with something new and unusual that you and your child can do together regularly. Have him or her help you brainstorm. Ask, “What have you wanted to try that we’ve never done?”

I know dads are great at bringing laughter and silliness to everyday situations. How do you do this for your kids? Leave a comment below.

**Carey Casey** is the CEO of the National Center for Fathering (NCF), a nonprofit organization dedicated to changing the culture of fathering in America by enlisting 6.5 million fathers to make the Championship Fathering Commitment. NCF believes every child needs a dad they can count on, and it uses its resources to inspire and equip men to be the involved fathers, grandfathers and father-figures their children need. Subscribe to Casey’s weekly email tip by clicking here: [I want tips on how to be a great dad who loves, coaches, mentors and inspires my children.](#)

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