

# Breathing Program May Help Save Newborns' Lives

Training midwives and other birth attendants to help babies start breathing immediately after birth may prevent stillbirths and newborn deaths in the developing world, two new studies suggest.

So-called birth asphyxia—when babies are born not breathing—is one of the major causes of newborn death in regions with limited resources, researchers said.

The Helping Babies Breathe program, launched by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), trains birth attendants to immediately dry and warm babies—and to start breathing for babies with a bag and mask if they don't breathe on their own within one minute.

Reducing infant mortality in the developing world is one of the [United Nations](#) Millennium Development Goals—but progress has been slow, according to Dr. Jeffrey Perlman from Weill Cornell Medical College in New York, who helped implement Helping Babies Breathe in Tanzania.

“The majority of deliveries in resource-limited areas are done by the midwife, and the midwife wasn't really taught how to deal with a baby once they were born,” Perlman told Reuters Health. Instead, he said, midwives tend to focus on the mother immediately after the birth.

“If you can just teach them, when the baby's born, to immediately dry the baby off... that drying and a little bit of stimulating will probably get 90 to 93 percent of babies breathing that weren't breathing before,” said Perlman, one of the authors of a study published Monday in Pediatrics.

“That's the most exciting part, that something very simple can

save many, many lives.”

Perlman and his colleagues compared about 8,000 babies born at eight hospitals before birth assistants were trained in the breathing program to almost ten times as many babies born afterward.

Program leaders initially taught the breathing techniques to 40 “master trainers” from the eight hospitals over two days. Some master trainers then went to other hospitals and health centers in the area to teach midwives and other health care providers, in what the research team called “a cascade model approach.”

The researchers found newborn deaths dropped from 13 per 1,000 babies to seven per 1,000 once Helping Babies Breathe was implemented. The rate of stillbirth fell from 19 per 1,000 babies before to just over 14 per 1,000 after.

In a second study from Southern India, another set of researchers saw no change in newborn deaths after the same program was taught to almost 600 birth attendants in rural health centers.

However, stillbirth rates fell from 30 per 1,000 babies to 23 per 1,000 after the training, Dr. Shivaprasad Goudar from Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College in Belgaum, Karnataka and colleagues found.

“We really need to focus on the early steps of resuscitation for the developing world, because that’s where most of the mortality is occurring – in other words, just getting babies to breathe,” said Dr. John Kattwinkel from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, who wrote a commentary published with the new studies.

“In many countries, well over half of the deliveries occur out in the clinics and in the homes. That’s what this program is designed for,” he told Reuters Health. “It would be a terrific

strategy to implement widely.”

Perlman estimated that expanding the program to all of Tanzania over the next couple of years would cost about \$5 million.

According to United Nations data, 32 babies die in India for every 1,000 live births and 26 per 1,000 die in Tanzania. In the United States overall, four babies die for every 1,000 live births – but the figures are much higher in certain poorer parts of the country.

The Helping Babies Breathe program is supported in part by the Laerdal Foundation for Acute Medicine. Laerdal Medical manufactures breathing simulators and other products related to the program’s work.

According to Kattwinkel, the evidence provided by these two studies should help conjure up support for Helping Babies Breathe and allow it to spread to other limited-resource areas.

Perlman agreed, saying the program is now being pursued in about 70 countries worldwide. The most important component, he added, is that it must have government support locally, as has been the case in Tanzania.

“There are very few things that you can do simply that you can save, even in the worst case, three-quarters of a million (babies),” Perlman said.

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## **7 Points to Get the Love**

# Chapter Right

Possibly the most oft quoted passage in the Bible, definitely at weddings, is 1 Corinthians 13—the *Love* chapter. Don't get me wrong—this passage does have a place in marriage. Indeed my wedding ring has inscribed on it in Hebrew:

אמת אהבה לא נכזבת (1 Cor. 13:8)

However, in context, this powerful chapter is not speaking of marriage, but congregational unity and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

1. Paul starts off in Chapter 12 by telling the Corinthians that there are nine gifts of the Holy Spirit (Prophecy, Miracles, Healings, etc.). He encourages them to seek these gifts. (v. 31). He emphasizes that the body of Messiah needs these gifts.

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.” (v.7)

When the gifts of the Spirit are not in operation the body suffers. When they are in operation and publicly encouraged (and governed by leadership) the whole body is blessed. How different would our services be if we *really* encouraged people to seek that God would use them.

2. He then makes it clear that God wants to use all of us *but not always in the same way*. Everyone of us can move in the gifts, but not necessarily all the gifts, all the time. Paul says over and over again when explaining the gifts that *they are given to each one of us*.

*To one is given..., to another..., to another..., etc, (v. 7-10)*

He compares the congregation to a body. The foot needs the eye, the hand needs the foot, etc. This is where love comes in. He is saying, while you go after God and seek the gifts,

don't be jealous of others. Rejoice when your brother is used by God. Praise God when your sister prophecies.

3. As he shares on these supernatural manifestations of the Spirit, which every congregation should have, he says, *However, if you are not being motivated loves, it is all a waste!*

*"If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing."* (1 Cor. 13:1-3)

4. The love chapter is about loving one another in our congregation; about preferring one another and seeking the good of others. It is about unity. Only in such an atmosphere can the gifts of the Spirit bear much fruit. If God pours out his Spirit on a congregation full of jealous, gossiping egomaniacs. ... the gifts will be exciting, but in the end they will not bear kingdom fruit, but division.

Many years ago after going to a meeting where the presence of God was manifest and the gifts were in operation, an international Messianic leader suddenly realized that he and his colleagues had been wrongfully holding a grudge against other brothers. In the presence of God he understood how petty this was and it led to a monstrous breakthrough, with much repenting and deep restoration.

That is the goal of the move of God; to promote love and unity, not to impress people with our gifts of healing or miracles.

5. When Yeshua did miracles it was often prefaced by the phrase: He was moved with compassion. This is why, in the midst of his most detailed teaching on the supernatural (1 Cor. 12 & 14) Paul drops in this word of encouragement: It's

all about love.

6. His whole point is that we need the power of God and the gifts of the Spirit so the body (the people of God) is built up, but the goal is that a) everyone is used according to his or her gift, b) it leads to unity and c) is rooted in love.

7. As we can read in the earlier chapters (1:10-17), this was a congregation struggling with division, as different ones were loyal to Peter, Apollos or Paul. Chapter 13 comes as a godly plea that the leaders and congregants would not allow petty rivalries keep them from a powerful visitation from heaven.

We too must examine our own hearts:

- Are we jealous of others?
- Are we holding grudges against other believers?
- Are we coveting positions that belong to others?
- Do we rejoice when God moves through others?
- Are we allowing the Holy Spirit to move in our congregations?
- Are we allowing and training our congregation to move in the Holy Spirit?
- And lastly, are we desperate for a love-filled visitation from heaven?

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# Think Honor When Disciplining Your Children

Have you tried just about everything to get your kids to behave? Then maybe you need the honor approach.

This is what discipline without honor looks like: A teacher told a fidgety student to sit down. When he refused she stood over him and demanded it. Well, he sat down all right but said this, "I'm sitting on the outside, but I'm standing on the inside."

You see, obedience without honor only looks like it works in the short run. and it definitely doesn't work in the long run. Teaching honor shapes a child's heart and his motivations.

The book, *Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining, and Bad Attitudes in you and your kids!* by Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, says the key to good behavior is not in controlling your children, but in instilling honor into your family life.

## What is Honor?

But first, what is honor? Basically, it's three things: treating people as special doing more than what's expected and having a good attitude. You see, when you instill honor into your family's life, you get to the heart of obedience.

And when I say heart, I mean your child's thoughts, intentions and motivations. Once a child understands and learns honor they'll be motivated on their own to behave. Here are some of the guidelines Turansky and Miller use in teaching honor.

1. **Teach children to treat people as special.** To help your children begin to see how honor works, occasionally say

something like this—with a smile, “I made some cookies for a snack. I wanted to honor you.” Children learn how to treat people as special when they watch how their parents treat each other and those outside the family.

When your child shows dishonor to another, use it as an opportunity to teach him how to treat others as special. For example, if you hear your child make a mean comment say, “Son, that wasn’t kind. I’d like you to take a break for a few minutes and come back to me when you’re ready to talk about this.” When your child returns, help him learn honor. You can say, “From now on, when you do something mean, I’m going to have you think of one kind thing to do.”

Violations of honor need to be addressed by building new habits of kindness.

**2. Teach children to do more than what’s expected.** When teaching children to do more than what’s expected, parents can include honor in the instruction. You might say, “I’d like you to set the table, then I want you to think of something extra to surprise me. That’s showing honor.” Remember: If you tell them to fold the napkins in a special way, that’s obedience. If they choose to add that extra touch, it’s honor.

**3. Deal with a bad attitude.** Discuss the importance and benefits of a good attitude. Coach your children to have a better response. The next time your child demonstrates a bad attitude, don’t just point out the negative but teach how to respond rightly.

A bad attitude is a sign of an angry spirit, and the groaning, rolled eyes, sarcasm, stomping feet or disgusted looks are all attempts to communicate dissatisfaction. Gently point out these bad responses and help your children to practice better responses.

**The Wise Appeal**

One way to do this is through the wise appeal. Let's look at a typical example. Cal, 15, comes home from school and says to himself, "Whew! I'm tired. I just want to listen to my CDs and rest."

Just then, his mom comes in to greet him. "Cal, I'm glad you're home from school. I'd like you to go out and mow the lawn."

Here's one way this scene could play out. Cal looks up at his mom and irritated say, "Mom! Mow the lawn? Not now. I'm tired."

Then, mom feels like she has to get more intense. Instead, Cal can use the wise appeal and say, "Mom, I understand you want me to mow the grass. But I have a problem with that because I am tired right now and had a tough day at school. Could I rest and mow the lawn in two hours?"

See the difference? The wise appeal formula goes like this:

- I understand you want me to because
- I have a problem with that because
- Could I please

You can even teach preschoolers the wise appeal. So remember, honor is the foundation for good behavior that goes beyond mere obedience.

**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 [AllProDad.com](http://AllProDad.com), 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 [AllProDad.com](http://AllProDad.com) fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com), [Twitter](https://www.twitter.com), [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com).

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# 'Functional Fitness Makes it Easier

No one has ever lost weight and kept it off if they didn't enjoy it. That's why so many diets fail to work. If you've been tortured by low-carb meals and unmotivated to use your gym membership it is time to openly ask the question you've been secretly wondering... Where's the FUN factor?

If you had no obligations, an unlimited budget, and total freedom to do whatever you wanted, what would you do? Most of us would do something that gives us some level of personal enjoyment. It would be fun—maybe REALLY fun.

The reality is that we have many responsibilities, limited resources, and quite a few restrictions on our time, attention and energy. That often translates into personal fitness being a scheduled activity that is a low priority. The natural progression is to reschedule, cancel, and finally forget about it altogether. The cycle of inactivity, gaining weight, and declining health continues.

In an effort to prevent that from happening we often resort to drastic and dramatic measures. The diets are painful and the exercise is uninspired. You hate it but you do it. If you're tired of a self-defeating lifestyle then draw on a Christian outlook to make fitness functional for you.

The Bible instructs us to rejoice, give thanks, and praise God. To honestly do that, you have to truly be thankful. Pursue joy, goodness, and peace. Find hope and promise each day.

Fill your days with active fun. If you are a parent get

physically involved with your children regardless of their age. If they are young you may chase them around the house or wrestle on the floor with them. If they are older the possibilities are unlimited. Whatever you do remember that you don't have to be the best at it. In fact you don't have to do it well at all. Just have fun.

If you're single, join others in doing something physical. You can join others that are already doing something or find someone that is doing nothing and start an activity together. What is important is that you choose something that you want to do. Resist the fear of what others think. Make your pursuit of fun your personal pursuit of Christ.

Food can be fun too. In fact it has to be fun. God designed our sense of taste to bring pleasure. He made us to experience satisfaction through a full stomach. His Word calls us to use wisdom and exercise self-control. To really find the fun factor in food discipline how often you fill your stomach and what you use to fill it. A nutritionist or dietician can give you many ideas for balanced eating.

"Are you having fun yet?" Keep asking yourself that question. After all we're created for God's pleasure.

For more, read the latest issue of [Faith & Fitness Magazine](#).

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# Brett Clemmer: The Myth of Adolescence

Recently, I wrote about some insights from the Christian Service Brigade 75th Anniversary celebration. One of the key speakers was Chuck Stecker of [A Chosen Generation](#). Chuck shared some comments that I would like to pass on about the whole idea of “adolescence.”

Chuck writes:

*“The word adolescent(s) was invented in the U.S. in about 1904 and it defines this alleged period of time where the young person is no longer a child but not yet an adult. G. Stanley Hall, the inventor of the word, defined it as a time of turbulence and confusion like a ship being tossed on a stormy sea. He was a “Darwin Disciple” and believed in evolution and as such believed and taught that during this time nothing could be done to alter this period.*

*Key here is that when we use the word Adolescent we take away responsibility for the person’s actions.”*

Chuck’s point resonates. I see young men all around me who may be victims of this mindset. They’re 25, in a dead-end job, living at home, playing video games and, alarmingly, relatively content. Of course, this is a generalization, but the ramifications of this thinking are starting to manifest. Chuck continues:

*“We must also realize that to do away with adolescence is to attack a multi-million dollar industry. To the point that many of the same proponents of adolescence having been working hard to have a new season of life written into the medical books called ‘Emerging Adulthood.’ This season would go until about*

29 years of age. And at 30 a person could be a real adult.”

A “real adult” at 30? That’s just foolish. So what are we to do? What if the church rejected the whole idea of adolescence? There is no time of lack of responsibility. You don’t go from boy to adolescent to emerging adult to man. You go from boy to young man, to a man with a career and perhaps a wife and children, and beyond. What would this look like?

Chuck is a champion for “inter-generational” ministry. This means ministry that includes all ages of men—from 12 to 112—when possible and appropriate. Let’s stop treating teen-aged young men like they have no responsibilities. Let’s stop trying to entertain them. Let’s bring them into our manhood activities as a training ground for them as they mature.

Imagine what your church would look like if every teen-aged young man had a personal relationship with godly older men in their 20s, 30s, 40s and beyond. Not as a “volunteer youth staff,” but as a friend, mentor and older brother in the faith.

Becky Hunter and her husband, Pastor Joel Hunter, raised three godly and successful sons. She said something when my son was very young that became one of my fathering tenets. “I’m not trying to raise boys, I’m trying to raise men.” Amen.

I encourage you to check out A Chosen Generation’s [website](#) and explore with the men in your church the idea of bringing the younger men into intentional fellowship and discipleship.

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maintains the One Man, Under God blog at [brettclemmer.tumblr.com](http://brettclemmer.tumblr.com).

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## **Museum Launches World's First King Herod Legacy Exhibit**

The Israel Museum in Jerusalem is set to premiere the world's first exhibition on the life and legacy of Herod the Great, one of the most influential—and controversial—figures in ancient Roman and Jewish history.

On view from February through October 2013, the landmark exhibition “Herod the Great: The King’s Final Journey” will present approximately 250 archaeological finds from the king’s recently discovered tomb at Herodium, as well as from Jericho and other related sites, to shed new light on the political, architectural, and aesthetic impact of Herod’s reign from 37 to 4 B.C.E.

Among the objects on view – all of which have undergone extensive restoration at the Israel Museum for exhibition display purposes – will be three sarcophagi from Herod’s tomb and restored frescoes from Herodium; his private bath from the palace at Cypros; never-before-seen carved stone elements from the Temple Mount; and an imperial marble basin thought to be a gift from Augustus.

Lionized as “the greatest builder of human history,” King Herod was also demonized for his uncertain ethnic and religious pedigree; controversial political alliances; the execution of his wife and three of his children; as well as an erroneous association with the New Testament narrative of the “Massacre of the Innocents” in Bethlehem.

“Herod the Great: The King’s Final Journey” seeks to provide a better understanding of this ancient figure through the monumental architecture he created and the art and objects with which he surrounded himself. The exhibition will examine Herod’s remarkable building projects, complex diplomatic relations with the Roman emperors and nobility, and dramatic funeral procession from Jericho to the mausoleum he constructed for himself in Herodium. A striking reconstruction of the burial chamber of the mausoleum will be the centerpiece of the exhibition.

In 2007, after a 40-year search, renowned archaeologist Professor Ehud Netzer of Hebrew University in Jerusalem discovered the ruler’s tomb at Herodium, on the edge of the Judean Desert. The site included a fortress, palace and a leisure complex with gardens, large pools, decorated bathhouses, and a theatre with a royal box.

In his final years, Herod reconfigured the architecture of the complex to prepare the setting for his burial procession and site, and constructed a magnificent mausoleum facing Jerusalem. The Museum’s exhibition is dedicated to the memory of Professor Netzer, who died in 2010 at the site of his seminal discovery.

“Professor Ehud Netzer capped his decades-long excavation of Herodium with his discovery of King Herod’s tomb in 2007, and over the past five years, archaeologists excavating the site have made remarkable discoveries that have deepened our appreciation of Professor Netzer’s remarkable achievement and enriched our understanding of Herod, his reign, and his role in the history of the region,” said James S. Snyder, the Anne and Jerome Fisher Director of the Israel Museum.

“We are proud of the extensive restoration work that our conservation staff has been able to complete and thrilled to present these important finds to the public, for the first time, in an exhibition that will illuminate a pivotal period

in the history of the Land of Israel," he added.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a comprehensive 250-page catalog issued by the Israel Museum, featuring the first publication of the tomb complex and other discoveries from Herodium. The catalog will also include scholarly articles on Herod's life and the legacy of Herodian architecture, written by Professor Netzer before his death in 2010, and by other leading experts in the field.

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## **Joyce Meyer: Feeling Your Emotional Best**

We all know health isn't just a physical thing. God created us as holistic beings with a spirit, body and soul. But how many of us truly connect the dots on a daily basis and realize the direct impact our emotions have on our physical health? When we aren't feeling well, often our instinct is to relate the problem to a physical illness, what we've been eating and drinking, or whether we've been exercising and getting enough rest. But sometimes the deeper part of the problem—the root of it all—stems from negative emotions that we permit into our life.

So while you're reading this article, I'm going to ask you to be honest with yourself about the kinds of thoughts and feelings you permit into your life. God wants you to feel strong and healthy. He also wants you around for the long haul. And for many of us, taking better care of ourselves emotionally needs to be just as important as how we care for our physical needs.

**Seeing the Symptoms But Not the Problem**

Years ago I became really sick. I was dealing with shortness of breath and just felt horrible. I couldn't relax. Every muscle in my body felt like it was tied in knots, so I went through various rounds of medical tests. Eventually, the doctors found a tumor on one of my adrenal glands and I thought, *Aha! That's it!* But then they said, "Actually, Joyce, this has probably been there all your life, and it's not really doing you any harm."

Even though it was good news, I was disappointed to find out there wasn't anything physically wrong with me that I could blame for how badly I felt. It all came down to one thing: I was a workaholic, living as if I had no limitations.

We like to think we can handle everything. And sure, we can quote Philippians 4:13 all we want: *We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.* But God won't strengthen us to do something that's not His will for us to do.

When I learned how my emotions were affecting my overall health, I was forced to take an honest look at the problem. I knew if I didn't learn to control my emotions, they'd continue to control me. And I couldn't go on living that way.

### **Where to Start With Managing Your Emotions**

The Bible is filled with Scriptures that warn us to guard our hearts against emotions such as fear, worry, anxiety, anger, unforgiveness, jealousy, grief and guilt. Yet most of us could name at least one or two that we're struggling with right now. Maybe you've even been holding on to one of these for a long time. Well, *now* is the time to do something about it!

In John 8:31-32, Jesus says: "If you abide in My word ... you are truly My disciples. And you will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free" (AMP).

It's easy to face the truth for or about someone else. For example, it's easy for me to spot my husband Dave's problems

or my children's problems. It's more difficult for me to see my own problems, which means I have to seek the truth about me. And with the help of the Holy Spirit, each of us can face the truth, obey God's Word and make positive changes for our own emotional well-being.

Some people pay big money for professional help but never find the answers they want to hear. I'm convinced this is because many of these people don't really want to be helped; instead, they want someone to excuse them from the problem: "It's not you. It's other people in your life who are causing you problems and making you upset."

I'm not saying that people don't do things to us they shouldn't do. People hurt us and it's not right. But the bottom line is this: You cannot control what everybody else does, but you can control your reaction to it.

It's time to stop letting someone else's bad behavior steal your joy.

### **It's Hard to Admit That It's Us!**

I remember when my kids were young. I could spend the whole day at home, listening to music and singing praise and worship songs. But as soon as my kids came home from school, somebody would drop their books and somebody else would want something to eat, and then maybe they'd get in the refrigerator and spill something—and I became a totally different person.

I will never forget the time I was under the dining room table cleaning up spilled milk when the Holy Spirit spoke to me and said, "You know, Joyce, no matter how big of a fit you have, this milk is not going to run back up the table legs and into the glass, so you might as well learn how to go with the flow."

At that moment I realized how my emotions and behavior were playing right into the devil's hands. I decided it would stop

right there.

Since then, I've spent years studying the topic of emotions in depth, and I can share with you some good, sound advice to help you overcome negative emotions. Let's take a look at three of the biggest: anger, guilt and grief.

### **Anger: Is It Ever OK to Be Angry?**

When people mistreat you, it's not wrong for you to *feel* anger. What's wrong is to not manage the anger. In fact, the Bible tells us to do this quickly. Ephesians 4:26 says, "When angry, do not sin; do not ever let your wrath (your exasperation, your fury or indignation) last until the sun goes down."

The longer you hold on to anger, the more it eats away at you. You can try to pretend everything is OK for a while, but if you're really not letting go, anger will slowly destroy you.

When you're upset with someone else, I encourage you to ask God to show you how much mercy He gives you every day. At times, you'll need to do that over and over again, because even when you've prayed all the right prayers and said all the right things, you can still feel as if there's something missing: *What's wrong with me? I'm trying to forgive and I can't!*

We need to understand that forgiveness is not a feeling, it's a decision.

When you make the decision to forgive, pray for your enemies and treat them with kindness because that's what God's Word tells us to do. Eventually, God will cause your feelings to catch up with your decision to forgive.

### **Guilt: Getting Back Up After It Gets You Down**

Isaiah 53:4-6 says that Jesus not only bore our sins, He also

washed away our guilt. It's vital for us to understand this, because over time unresolved guilt will affect our mental health.

Not long ago I went to a mental institution in St. Louis to minister to the patients. I saw a woman there whom I'll never forget. She was shuffling along down the hall with a big cross around her neck, and she kept muttering under her breath, "It's all my fault. It's all my fault."

Jesus washed away our guilt because we were not created to carry that kind of burden. Romans 8:1 says, "Therefore, [there is] now no condemnation (no adjudging guilty of wrong) for those who are in Christ Jesus."

If you're truly sorry in your heart, there is no reason for you to shuffle your way through life feeling guilty or ashamed. Jesus made a way for you to live free from condemnation. So if you are struggling in this area and frequently battle feelings of guilt, I encourage you to let this Scripture sink in until you receive true revelation about who you are in Christ.

### **Grief: What Keeps You From Getting on With Life**

Grief is another powerful emotion that God wants us to learn to release. To be clear, there isn't anything inherently wrong with grieving something or someone. The problem becomes when we cling to this emotion and allow it to control us and prevent us from moving into what God has planned for us. The key to victory is understanding the difference between a normal, balanced grieving process and a *spirit of grief* that will try to attach itself to us. One helps us get better with the passing of time; the other causes us to sink deeper and deeper into the pit of despair.

In Deuteronomy 34, when Moses died, the people were allowed to mourn his death for 30 days. Then the instruction came for them to move on. God does give us a period of time to work

through our mourning, but if something or someone is gone and you can't get them back, then you have to go on with your life. We need to give God a chance to mend our hearts.

Revelation 21:4 says, "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more, neither shall there be anguish (sorrow and mourning) nor grief nor pain any more, for the old conditions and the former order of things have passed away." This Scripture may be referring to our time in heaven, but I believe it also applies to today—because as we walk in the Spirit, we can experience heaven here on earth. That includes allowing the Holy Spirit to comfort us in our time of grief, and then heal us so we can move on.

### **Your Emotions and Your Health**

One of the most frequently quoted verses in the Bible instructs us to "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your way acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Prov. 3:5-6, NKJV). What many people overlook, however, are the following verses connected to this passages: "Be not wise in your own eyes; reverently fear and worship the Lord and turn [entirely] away from evil. *It shall be health to your nerves and sinews, and marrow and moistening to your bones*" (7-8, AMP, emphasis mine).

God connects our physical health to how we trust, acknowledge, revere and worship Him. Think about it: Each of those things is intrinsically tied to our emotional well-being, and by deciding to do each of them—regardless of if we *feel* like it—we supply God-given health to our physical bodies.

The reverse is true, then: When we allow emotions such as anger, guilt and grief to dominate our lives, our physical bodies are affected. With God's help, however, you can learn to manage these and every other negative emotion that comes your way. This will take a measure of self-control on your

part to succeed, because I can assure you there will always be things that try your emotions. But in Christ Jesus, you have the power to change your response.

You can rise above your emotions. After all, you are not what you feel.

And remember that in good times and in bad, it is God's will for you to be emotionally healthy and constantly at peace.

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## **Change Your Prayer Habit From 'Have To' to 'Want To'**

I guess we all develop weird habits over the years, some of which are completely oblivious to us until pointed out by another party.

Some are avid gum chewers and incessantly blow and pop small bubbles with it. Others use certain words repeatedly in conversation without realizing it or have a tendency to reiterate the last phrase of a sentence ... of a sentence.

One of my idiosyncrasies was exposed to me during my college

years. Before then, I had no idea that I tended to eat one thing at a time on my plate. One day, at a restaurant, just after receiving our food, my friend said something like, "Enjoy your fries." I looked at him, wondering if he was suddenly turning into a waiter. "Thanks. I plan to," I responded. "No," he replied, "I mean, you're going to eat your fries first, then eat your burger. You do it every time."

Until that moment, I didn't realize how systematic and predictable I was.

I have no idea what to attribute it to, but as I look back at childhood, it probably had something to do with my abhorrence for anything green on my plate (unless it was icing, of course). I know it was nutritionally necessary, but having to eat something only made it that much worse. From peas to green beans to broccoli to eventually asparagus (the most dreaded vegetable of all), I tried to delay the "taste" of it as long as possible.

Besides, why should I confuse my palate throughout the meal by continually introducing foreign matter into it? Better to enjoy most of the experience and throw all the bad taste together. Through the entire meal, "it" would remain on the plate as I gulped down the mashed potatoes. I could still see it lying there as I consumed the entrée.

All the while, the vegetation would almost mock me, knowing I couldn't ignore it forever, knowing my mother wouldn't allow me to dispose of it untouched. I would pray for the rapture, or at least a natural disaster, to come and save me from having to eat the backyard, but no! The green always wins. Eventually I would have to man up and throw it down my gullet.

Somewhere along the trail of life, I got to a point where the "have to" food wasn't so objectionable. I have no trouble

eating that stuff anymore (except the asparagus—vile weed). However, I can't recall a time when I looked forward to the vegetable more than anything else on the plate.

Maybe it's because they're not sugarcoated, or maybe it's just the "have to" label I put on it early in life. No matter how accommodating I am, I can still remember it feeling more like punishment than enjoyment.

Maybe I've done the same with prayer. Throughout our Christian experience, we are told we "have to" pray, and that's true. We know it's "good for us" and necessary to our spiritual health.

However, I can't help but wonder if prayer doesn't become equated with leafy vegetation in our minds for the same reasons. We don't recognize the incredible privilege and beauty of personal interaction with the King of Kings. We're not told soon enough that we are having a conversation with the One who put Saturn on its axis.

When we give Him the chance, He will listen and speak to us; not in broad generalizations like a head of government speaking to his constituents. No, He will be specific to our hearts when we give Him room. The Spirit will speak specifically to us and our situation, giving us incredible life.

Our Father desperately wants prayer to move from "have to" to "want to," or from asparagus to chocolate cake, if you'll pardon the metaphor. He wants us to see it's not a laborious task like cleaning the tub or reconciling our bank statement. We are interacting in love with our Savior. He's repairing, comforting, challenging, healing, forgiving, and restoring us. It's not a recitation of requests and a mere laundry list of "bless this person" or "help that guy".

We are receiving life and affection from the God of Wonders. David had the right perspective when he said, "As the

*deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?"* (Psalm 42:1-2)

I would pose the same question to all of us. When can we go and meet with God? That's prayer: meeting with God.

And each time we do it wholeheartedly, we are changed. Forget past notions or previous misconceptions. Meeting with Him is the dessert bar of our experience. Ask the Lord to turn it from a "have to" to a "want to".

Anticipate the absolute best, and you'll receive it. Try to bless Him as much as He blesses you, and we'll get a hint of what David was talking about. Ask Him to give you a genuine hunger and thirst for righteousness. You will be filled, whether you take it in collectively or one item at a time.

Just bring your fork.

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## **Drowning in the Black (Letter) Sea**

Looking down at my notes, *entirely in Hebrew for the first time*, was as helpful as looking at Morse code ... I knew I had made a mistake ... *but God is good*, and He really blessed us on Shabbat. Let me explain ...

First, thank you so much, to everyone who prayed for me regarding teaching this weekend in Hebrew. My Hebrew messages are never perfect pictures of *dik-duk* (grammar) and I made a small mistake in that I typed out my entire message in Hebrew. You might think—*wow, you wrote it in Hebrew, amazing*—(if you

are thinking that...*I love you!*) but it threw me off a bit... well, more than a bit.

Having looked at Latin letters most of my life, my brain goes into *spastic mode* when it encounters a page full of black Hebrew letters without vowels! (No vowels in Modern Hebrew!) For instance, here is just the title of my message:

□□□□□□□ □□□□□

Now, imagine looking at nine pages of that! And what made things even worse was that when I reprinted my message at the congregation, *it printed without my carefully created, color-coordinated outline that I painstakingly prepared...* Come to think of it, Morse code would have been easier!

Normally my notes are in English and I only write out in Hebrew unfamiliar words that are in my message. I think that is the way most Messianic immigrants teach. That way, I don't end up *reading* a message in Hebrew, causing me to over-concentrate and look at paper, instead of people—*the Lord's precious Israelis that have returned to Him!*

Even still...by God's grace, He seemed to touch many people, as about half the congregation came forward at the end to *L'hitchazek b'Elohim!* ([see the very end of 1 Samuel 30:6 to figure that out...or just CLICK HERE](#)). There was a wonderful presence of the Lord hovering over us, as Ari'el, one of our anointed worship leaders, led us in song.

### **Salvation and other Great Testimonies**

Like most of us, it feels good when someone encourages you, especially after you do something in which you are insecure. A young lady that I had not seen before came up to me after the message and said...and I'll paraphrase:

"I have had a friend for five years, but did not have the courage to tell them that I was a believer. Finally I knew I

had to, and brought them this morning to the congregation. I was so happy that they were able to hear a relevant message in Hebrew! They really enjoyed it!”

I was so happy (and slightly stunned) that an unbeliever felt my message in Hebrew was relevant!

She said some other encouraging things, but that was all I needed to leave the congregation super-blessed. Let’s pray for her friend, whom I was able to briefly meet afterward, to come to the Messiah!

Even more exciting, at the conclusion of the meeting, the grandmother of one of our faithful congregants, made a confession of faith in Yeshua! I told her, “*Yesh misibah bashamayim bizchutech!* There is a party in heaven because of you!” ([Luke 15:7](#))

Another young adult told me that he was feeling very down Friday night. Certain things happened to him to make him feel that he had no friends who loved him or cared for him. The message centered on the fact that God loves us, all the time. He gave me a big hug and thanked me.

### **Humble Pie Can’t Hurt**

Of course, lest I think too highly of myself, a friend shared, as I was literally out the door of the congregation... “*You normally flow better than today...it was, ‘eh.’*” Israelis use an Arabic word, *dugri*, to describe when someone simply get’s the point, without any sugarcoating. She was right ... *those difficult Hebrew letters!* No time to give up though!

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## 5 Ways to Keep Cool With Your Family Stress

One of the most mythical figures in Super Bowl history is Joe Montana. According to ESPN.com, he possessed a mystic calmness in the midst of chaos, especially with the game on the line. While others saw turmoil and danger after the snap, Montana saw order and opportunity. He was Joe Cool, the unflappable king of the comeback.

Montana was neither exceptionally fast nor tall, nor did he have a bazooka for an arm, but *Sports Illustrated* headlined a story on Montana as, “The Ultimate Winner.” Montana won four Super Bowls in four appearances and became the only player to earn MVP three times.

While you may not ever be called to march your team down the field to score the winning Super Bowl touchdown, you can possess the same calmness of Joe Coolness in the everyday craziness of your household. Here are 5 ways to keep cool with your family stress:

**Pray.** It’s not all about you. Simply acknowledging God can take the edge off of debilitating anxiety.

**Exercise.** Research indicates that blood pressure can be reduced by regular exercise. At the same time, clarity of

thought is increased due to a better flow of oxygen to the brain. Additionally, exercise shifts our focus away from tension. Exercise also helps us to feel better, and when we feel better, we tend to be less overwhelmed when we have to deal with stress. Think of exercise as basic “equipment maintenance.” When we’re in better shape, we’re better equipped to stay calm and make a positive impact.

**Humor (seriously).** The simple act of smiling makes a positive impact, and laughter is proven to be downright medicinal. You don’t have to crack jokes all the time, but we are recommending a smile. Humor not only cracks the tension, it takes the focus away from our tendency to react negatively. It’s a natural coolant in times of chaos.

**Find a quiet space.** Sometimes we have to find a way to turn off the noise. Try soothing music in place of angry talk radio on your way to work. Experiment with a “No TV hour” before dinner when the house is just too crazy. Maybe you can step away for a quiet 15-minute walk. In the middle of chaos you can’t escape, try a simple breathing exercise. Just two-minutes of absolute silence can take the heat off a troubled spirit. The point here is to be deliberate and take some measure of control.

**Keep things in perspective.** The big picture is never as overwhelming as the moment. When you’re upset with your children, be thankful they’re healthy. If you’re mad at your wife, remember why you married. When you’re running late for work, spare a thought for the unemployed. When your home seems to be one continuous soap opera, give yourself a time out and offer a prayer of gratitude for your wife and kids.

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