

# The Father's Heart for Israel and the Church in the Last Days

Nowhere is the relationship between G-d's family, as Jews and Gentile believers, more clearly seen in Scripture than in the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32). For a moment, let us reflect upon it, with G-d being the father and the two sons being Jew and Gentile, in order to help us see the changes that we need to make in these times.

Sometimes, when looking at this story, it is hard for us in the church to see ourselves as the older brother, because Israel is the one who came first. However, except for the apostles and many of the first Jewish believers who helped to establish the church in the first century, the rest of the Jewish people have still to come into the New Covenant. This is one of the reasons Jesus said, "So the last will be first, and the first will be last" (Matt. 20:16).

We must be clear here to hold onto G-d's Word, as salvation only comes through faith in Yeshua (Rom. 11:23). That means apart from the Jewish remnant, Israel is still to experience redemption through Messiah alone. As a result, what was once completely Jewish before the New Covenant was given has been handed over to Gentile believers, who now run and operate our Father's house. So when we read the story of the prodigal son, we can understand how the faithful brother feels. He thought he was being obedient, he did everything he was supposed to do, and part of him was probably happy because he knew he would end up in control. After all, it was his inheritance, and he had worked for it for years.

Now faced with his brother's return, he does not respond like his father, who is full of compassion and mercy, but rather

with anger, hostility and jealousy. *How dare he even think about returning here!* he thinks to himself. His brother, who went his own way, who squandered everything he had and then realized the error of his ways, being truly humbled by life, returned home in the hope he could become one of his father's servants.

On the other hand, the father's response is completely different from that of the elder brother. After all, he was a loving father who stood in the gap for his lost son. He was faithful to love him, despite his rejection. He was grieved and heartbroken that his son walked away from him in the first place, and he never stopped feeling the pain of this separation—he wept and he mourned. But he never lost hope while waiting patiently for his son to return, as he knew it was only a matter of time.



Time as we know it seems endless, but the father said, "I will never give up. I will never surrender until my lost son is properly restored." Then all of a sudden, an incredible thing happens and the fullness of joy sweeps over the father's heart and the love of G-d consumes his soul like a river flowing at springtime. Suddenly, from his rocking chair on his front porch, he can see his lost son at a distance down the path leading up to the front of the house. He immediately knows and understands what has happened, except now his heart is filled with compassion as tears of joy are running down his face as he cries, "My son! My son! My son!"

Full of overwhelming excitement, he runs down the path to greet his son. When they meet, he throws his arms around him and hugs him like a bear, kissing him all over his face. His son humbles himself and seeks his father's forgiveness, even asking to become like one of his servants. Yet none of that seemed to matter now, because today, his son who was lost, his son who was dead has been found and is alive again. His son,

whom he never stopped waiting for, whom he never stopped praying for, has returned. Immediately, and without question, the father restored him to his rightful place as an heir along with the obedient son.

The son's loving father is filled with compassion, his heart filled with mercy and grace. He lovingly embraces him and immediately restores him to his place in his family—something the older brother cannot even fathom or understand, as he asks, "How could you do this to me?"

Yet we know our Father in heaven is full of mercy and grace, and His gospel is the same. He is able to wash away all of our sins, even as He has already done, so we could come into the kingdom in the first place, all as a result of His great love for us. Didn't the veil of sin also blind us before His grace supernaturally lifted it from our souls?

### **Spoken Prophetically to Gentile Believers**

The Father says to the Gentile believers: "For I have promised to restore Israel. I have given My word, I have covenanted with him in the same way I have covenanted with you. And all I have already belongs to you. I am willing to forgive him, the same way I am willing to forgive you. For just as he was unfaithful to Me by rejecting Me, so you have been unfaithful to Me by rejecting them."

So who should we be like in the church? We should be like our Father in heaven. But in reality we are often not, instead having been like the elder brother in this story. It has been impossible for the church to love the Jews in our own humanity without the supernatural love of G-d. Yet they are elected as a result of the patriarchs (Rom. 11:28), which has been a dichotomy for the church.

But because our Father loves Israel and has chosen them, just like He has chosen His other children, He is able to look on them with compassion. Even in their disobedience and

resistance, and even in their blindness and deafness, He still loves them because they are His children. And His Word and covenants must be accomplished through them because of His own integrity as a holy and righteous G-d. Look how they have suffered as a result.

And remember, by the time he came home, the prodigal son had truly learned his lesson. It is only in the Father's love that we could even come close to moving in this. However, this is exactly what it will take to get this job done and nothing else short of it will work. So what are we to do? And how should we act to move in this direction, if we believe it to be G-d's Word and call for us?

### **Search Your Heart**

First, we need to be honest with our own hearts and to the Holy Spirit, as well as become honest with the prior actions of our families in past generations that may have affected us without our knowing. Have we felt like the brother in the prodigal story feels toward Israel and the Jews? Have we lacked G-d's mercy toward them? Have we been anti-Semitic toward them? Have we been indifferent or cold, or are we jealous of them? Does the thought of their restoration make us angry or even insecure?

You may be a lover and supporter of Israel, but you know that something is still not right. You may understand Israel in your mind because of the Word of G-d, but your heart still needs to be cleansed because of the past. We also need to come to terms with how the church has sinned against our Jewish brethren from the past. Ultimately, Israel needs to come to terms with its past as well. As already mentioned, cleansing is needed all around (both Jew and Gentile), but it must start with us first! Does not judgment begin in the house?

The moment we confess, the moment we renounce, the moment we repent, G-d is more than able to purify us so that we can

receive His heart. I truly believe that the Holy Spirit is waiting eagerly for us to get this right and allow His cleansing healing touch to wash away any past influences. This is so that His unconditional love can pour through us, that He would open our spirits as well as our minds to move into the fullness of His direction and plans in these last days. It would be to fulfill the unique role He has given to us as His other sheep in His spiritual family, to help breathe spiritual life back into them through prayer and intercession. And this is all in order that Israel may fulfill its own unique role in the earth to glorify G-d in fulfilling His Word so that the kingdom can come. For in our Father's end time sovereign plan we are intricately linked and must begin to see ourselves as such, so the end may actually come.

### **Receiving the Father's Heart**

As already discussed, it is simply not possible to fully love the Jewish people in our own strength in light of their continued rejection of Jesus. Without a doubt, G-d's supernatural love is needed to flow through us for this to happen. I call this the Father's heart, and our receiving it is one of the main reasons for me writing *The Ezekiel Generation*. I believe His heart for His spiritual family will truly change us and give us what we need to help Him achieve His plans through us in order to redeem Israel and restore His kingdom.

I also believe this calling of the end-time generations of the church have a unique and distinct role to play to assist G-d to rebirth Israel spiritually, which is why we must not be ignorant about this mystery. We have a major part to play in it, which, up to this point, we have not seen too clearly, with corrections needed in our theology, because the ancestral acts of our lineage, most of which has not even been repented of, have blinded us to G-d's end-time plan. In good conscience how could G-d give the church the fullness of His end-time plans theologically regarding Israel and the church, when our

ancestry who was called to love them despite their rejection, fell for some despicable plans of the enemy to help persecute and destroy them. Don't we need to fully break off the past first, so we can get it right?

And, as discussed in previous articles, while we may actually love Israel, the bloodline still needs to be cleaned to rid it of any current influence the enemy may still have over us. So breaking of Generational anti-Semitism and receiving G-d's heart are vital to our spiritual health and well being concerning Israel and the church and the last days, and it is time for us to address these areas and reconnect as a spiritual family as Jew and Gentile, to help be the catalyst in G-d end time mercy plan to redeem his first born son and our first born brother, so our L-rd can finally return and take dominion of the earth. That is what is at stake here! What an honor G-d is actually bestowing on His end-time church, to help give life back to Israel spiritually (Ezek. 37:9-11).

*For all of the prayers to receive the Father's heart to help you reconnect spiritually with Israel, please go to pages 146-154 in the Ezekiel Generation.*

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

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# 10 Ways to Boost Your Immune System

With the winter coming to its end and spring coming up, it is a whole new season ahead—that is, flu and cold season. The good news is that I have compiled a list of 10 immune-boosting tips to help you combat the flu bug away.

Try incorporating these 10 tips in your daily routine and you'll be sure to welcome the cold and flu season with a smile.

**1. Enjoy a good laugh.** A variety of studies have concluded that laughing activates the body's protective T cells and induces increased antibody production. So give in to the guilty pleasure of watching your favorite sitcom, watching some stand-up comedy or maybe reading a book that leaves you cracking with laughter.

The more you laugh, the more your immune system will thank you for it. Who knew that laughter is the best flu shot around? Bonus is the fact that laughter is contagious, so you are not only making your body stronger but helping others too.

**2. Give good bacteria a go.** What? Welcome some bacteria? Yes! Contrary to popular belief, not all types of bacteria are harmful. In fact, a group of bacteria that are commonly called probiotics strengthens the GI tract and is directly related to the strength of your immune system. Probiotics are typically found in fermented food like miso, yogurt, sauerkraut, kefir and sourdough bread.

**3. Load up on prebiotics.** So we have probiotics, but what are prebiotics? Prebiotics are soluble fibers that are found in

foods such as artichokes, leeks, onions and bananas. They help probiotics to do their function and thus help in strengthening the GI tract and the immune system too.

**4. Munch on greens.** Immune cells in your gut are ensured to be in their tip-top level of functioning when you munch on some green vegetables like kale, broccoli and bok choy, so load up on kale chips and have at least one glass of green smoothie a day to keep the doctor away.

**5. Time to relax.** Stress is the number one thing that weakens your immune system. When you are stressed, your body releases cortisol that then suppresses your immune cells. Any relaxing activities that calm you down and make you feel at peace and happy are a surefire way to a healthier immune system.

**6. Engage in human touch.** I have mentioned that cortisol weakens your immune system and relaxing strengthens it. What better way to relax than indulging in human touch? Be it getting a massage from your significant other, hugging your children or holding hands with someone special, all of these will effectively decrease your cortisol levels.

Research has shown that 45 minutes of massage increases your body's white blood cells, therefore strengthening your immune response and reducing inflammation-causing cytokines—but how? Touch makes your body release oxytocin, which causes the cortisol levels to go down. Experts even recommend an average of eight hugs per day for maximum benefits from oxytocin. So don't be shy—give out some hugs!

**7. Connect with people.** The American Psychological Association recently published research that says social isolation compromises the body's infection-fighting ability and weakens its immunity. Having and nourishing your social ties like marriage and friendship serves to strengthen your immune system. This gives a new meaning to the phrase “no man is an island” indeed.

**8. Get enough restful sleep.** Being deprived of sleep reduces your body's T-cell count that results in your body having a reduced ability to fight off disease-causing microorganisms. A solid session of eight hours of sleep is what your body needs for it to be able to tap into its self-healing powers, so ensure to invest some time in getting quality sleep.

**9. Sing your heart out.** Who knew that your shower concertos are an effective immune booster? Research has shown that people who sing are less likely to catch the flu and cold bug, so sing your heart out in the home—and especially in church!

**10. Meditate.** A healthy body starts with a healthy mind, physically, psychologically and spiritually. Meditating positively influences your immune response. One study has shown that people who have engaged in meditation for eight consecutive weeks have an increased response to a flu shot. Even just three minutes of meditation as a part of your daily morning routine is enough to produce results. It is in moments of being still that we are truly one with God. No wonder it reflects back as the gift of better health!

**Don Colbert, M.D.,** *is board certified in family practice and in antiaging medicine. He also has received extensive training in nutritional and preventive medicine, and he has helped millions of people discover the joy of living in divine health.*

*For the original article, visit .*

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# 50 Ways to Describe Your

# Gender

Do you remember the famous Paul Simon song “50 Ways to Leave Your Lover”? Well, Facebook is now giving you 50 ways to describe your gender.

Several years ago, Harvard University’s business school changed the gender choices on its online application from “Female, Male” to “Female, Male, Transgender.” But that was too limiting, so they changed it again to read “Female, Male, Undisclosed (specify below).”

And if this happened at Harvard, which was founded in 1636 to “train a literate clergy,” you can be sure it has been happening on lots of other campuses as well.

At Oberlin College, where Charles Finney once served as president, an ad for “Queer @ Oberlin,” posted online by Oberlin’s Multicultural Resource Center, listed 49 different expressions of sexual orientation or gender, including terms like *boidyke* and *fellagirly* and ending the list with “...” since 49 variants were not enough.

And more than 10 years ago, the Oberlin Student Cooperative Association (OSCA) decided that “all residence halls with three or more bathrooms would have bathrooms designated specifically for male, female, and non-gender specific. ... Also, all housing and dining co-ops with bathrooms must maintain at least one gender neutral bathroom at all times. OSCA will also be abandoning all references to biological sex and instead will use self-identified categories of gender in all internal and external paperwork.”

Did you catch that? For student housing, “all references to biological sex” were abandoned; instead, only “self-identified categories of gender” were used in all housing-related paperwork. Yet if there is any part of a college student’s paperwork where the question of biological sex is especially

important, it is in the matter of student housing.

A 2007 report cites Dr. Barb Burdge, a professor of social work at Manchester University, who argues, "The current view of gender—the social construct of dividing humans in to male and female—is oppressive and should be rejected altogether."

The report says, "She believes that transgendered individuals—which includes a whole range of individuals—should be affirmed and considered to be gender variant, not suffering from gender identity disorders. These individuals include 'bigenders, gender radicals, butch lesbians, cross-dressing married men, transvestites, intersex individuals, transsexuals, drag kings and queens, gender-blenders, queers, genderqueers, two spirits, or he-shes.'"

And on and on it goes.

Is it any surprise, then, that Facebook has now announced its new policy? And is it any surprise that GLAAD, a major gay activist organization that has attempted to censor those with opposing views, helped Facebook implement these changes? GLAAD noted, "While the set of [50!] options is not comprehensive, the company will continue to work with LGBT organizations to improve the set of options and respond to user need."

Facebook users will actually be able to list as many as 10 different descriptions of their gender (simultaneously), using the new "custom gender" option.

As reported widely online, "Facebook said the changes, shared with The Associated Press before the launch on Thursday, initially cover the company's 159 million monthly users in the U.S. and are aimed at giving people more choices in how they describe themselves, such as androgynous, bi-gender, intersex, gender fluid or transsexual."

As stated by Facebook software engineer Brielle Harrison, "who worked on the project and is herself undergoing gender

transformation, from male to female, 'There's going to be a lot of people for whom this is going to mean nothing, but for the few it does impact, it means the world.'"

Yes, for a small number of people this will mean the world, and as followers of Jesus we should do our best to understand the issues they face and meet them where they are with His compassion and grace.

And as bizarre as all this may sound to the vast majority of us, we cannot scorn the identity crises these people have struggled with, as if they just woke up one day and chose to be different. On the congregational level, we must be ready to help parents who are dealing with a child who is convinced that he or she has been born in the wrong body.

At the same, we must identify this for what it is: an emotional, psychological or even spiritual disorder (other than for those whose gender is biologically ambiguous), regardless of what professional health care workers choose to call it.

Otherwise, a person is whatever (or whoever) they perceive themselves to be—meaning that if I am absolutely convinced to the core of my being that I am a black female Viking and I have always felt that way about myself, then I am, in fact, a black female Viking, despite being a white male Jewish American.

Of course, just writing these words automatically puts me in the category of being a transphobic bigot, an insensitive hater who simply doesn't understand—but no one ever said that speaking the truth would be popular, nor does one have to agree in order to understand.

The stark reality is quite simple, and as I have stated many times, once we depart from the divine foundations of "male and female he created them" (Gen. 1:27), we open the door to anything, including 50 ways (why not 500 ways?) to describe

your gender.

(For extensive documentation of many of the points raised here, see my book *A Queer Thing Happened to America*.)

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## Vast Study Casts Doubt on Value of Mammograms

The value of yearly mammograms is under fire once again, with a long-running Canadian study contending that annual screening in women aged 40 to 59 does not lower breast cancer death rates.

For 25 years, the researchers followed nearly 90,000 women who were randomly assigned either to get screening mammograms or not.

“Mammography detected many more invasive breast cancers,” said lead researcher Dr. Cornelia Baines, professor emeriti at the University of Toronto’s Dalla Lana School of Public Health. “Survival time was longer in women getting mammography.”

“[However], the number of deaths from breast cancer was the same in both groups at 25 years,” she said.

“It is increasingly being recognized that there are significant harms from screening, and that screening can do

much less now than 40 years ago because of improved therapy," Baines added. "Twenty-two percent of the mammography group with screen-detected invasive breast cancer were over-diagnosed and unnecessarily inflicted with therapy."

Over-diagnosis is defined as the detection of harmless cancers that will not cause symptoms or problems during a patient's lifetime.

The study, which began in 1980 in 15 screening centers in six Canadian provinces, was published Feb. 11 in the online edition of the journal *BMJ*.

Women in the mammography group had a total of five mammograms—one a year for five years. Those aged 40 to 49 in the mammography group and all women aged 50 to 59 in both groups also had an annual physical exam. Women aged 40 to 49 in the no-mammography group had a single physical exam followed by typical care.

During the next 25 years, 3,250 women who got screening mammographies were diagnosed with breast cancer, compared with 3,133 in the no-mammography group, according to the study. While 500 women in the mammography group died during the follow up, 505 in the no-mammography group did.

In 2009, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force updated its recommendations on screening mammograms, suggesting them for women aged 50 to 74 every two years. Among women aged 40 to 49, the task force recommended only a discussion with a woman's doctor on the pros and cons of screening.

But other organizations, including the American Cancer Society, continue to recommend annual screening mammograms for women beginning at age 40.

The American College of Radiology, which also supports annual screening mammograms for women aged 40 and older, reacted strongly to the Canadian findings. In a statement issued Feb.

11, the college called the report “an incredibly misleading analysis based on the deeply flawed and widely discredited Canadian National Breast Screening Study.”

Among those flaws, according to the college: the quality of mammograms done in the study was poor and the skills of the imaging technologists were not adequate.

The new report isn't a surprise, said Dr. Carol Lee, chairwoman of the college's breast imaging communications committee. “When it was first reported 20 years ago, it didn't show a benefit,” she said.

The findings are at odds with many other reports that show a benefit for routine screening, Lee added.

“Screening mammography has been shown over and over again to decrease mortality from breast cancer,” she said.

Lee said she is “concerned [the new study] is going to discourage women from having mammograms.”

In an editorial accompanying the study, experts from the University of Oslo, the Harvard School of Public Health and other institutions agreed with the Canadian researchers that the rationale for screening needs to be reassessed by policy makers.

Baines said her research points to the value of offering screening mammograms only to those at higher risk of breast cancer.

“In time, the hope is to offer screening to a subset of the population [that has] been identified, probably by genetic markers, to be very likely to benefit from screening,” she said.

For the original article, visit .

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# Mike Bickle, Bill Johnson Join Spiritual Leaders in Honoring the Late Prophet Bob Jones

Bob Jones has gone home to be with the Lord after more than four decades of prophetic ministry. Spiritual leaders from various camps in the body of Christ are mourning his loss and praying for his family. Here are a few of the early reactions to Jones' passing:

"I am deeply indebted to **Bob Jones** for how the Lord used him in my early ministry. I loved him more than he ever knew and often told my friends stories about him," says **Mike Bickle**, director of **International House of Prayer** in Kansas City. "I am very sad for Bonnie and his son, Wayne, and for so many of us to hear of his departure, but I am so happy for him. I remember Bob as a man who loved people deeply and served them tirelessly for so many years. Bob was well-known for his remarkable love for Jesus and His Word—he devoured the Bible for 40 years."

"Bob passed away at 6:22 this morning, peacefully and smiling," says **Rick Joyner**, founder and executive director of **MorningStar Ministries**. "Bob was known around the world for his prophetic gift, but he was also the greatest lover of God and people that I ever knew. It seems fitting that he would pass on a day that celebrates love."

"Our wonderful friend and prophet Bob Jones went home to be with Jesus today, his first love, on Valentines a Day," tweeted **Bill Johnson**, founder of Bethel Church.

'Bob Jones said, 'I don't see anything prophetically after 94'. So either Jesus is returning then or I'm going home then.' Rest in Peace Bob," tweeted **Robby Dawkins** of Vineyard Church of Aurora, Ill.

"Just heard that the prophetic voice of Bob Jones is for heavens ears only. That man prophesied to me in my 20's that I would sing," tweeted singer **Rita Springer**.

"Just heard that Bob Jones passed into glory today. He was a grandfather prophet to me, the movement and many. He will be missed," said **Matt Lockett**, director of Bound4LIFE. □

[Click here](#) to read more about the life and legacy of Bob Jones.

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## **Facebook Welcomes 'Transgender,' 'Intersex,' and 'Fluid' Gender Designations**

For the first time, Facebook Inc is letting users of its online social network identify themselves as a gender other than male and female.

The basic user profile for members in the United States now includes a customizable category among the gender types that users must select, the world's No.1 Internet social network announced on Wednesday, the day the feature became available for U.S. members using the site's English-language version.

Those who select that option can select up to 10 gender

identifications, including “transgender,” “intersex” and “fluid.”

The company said it worked with a leading group of gay and transgender advocacy organizations to come up with the selection of identity options.

Until now, Facebook’s billion members could only select male or female for their genders, which Facebook requires users to state in their profiles. Users of rival Google Inc’s Google+ social network already had an “other” option for gender.

Facebook said users also can control the audience who can view a custom choice, noting the challenges that some people may face in publicly sharing their gender identity.

Users can also choose the personal pronoun to which they are referred publicly. A message on Facebook might now invite a user’s friend to write a birthday message on “their” wall, instead of “his” or “her” wall.

“We want you to feel comfortable being your true, authentic self,” Facebook said.

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*Reporting by Alexei Oreskovic; Editing by Amanda Kwan*

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## **Katy Perry and Why Pastors’ Kids Fall Away**

Katy Perry is currently the highest-profile pastor’s kid (PK)

that has walked away from her faith. In a recent interview, she said she is no longer a **Christian** and doesn't believe in **heaven, hell** or "an old man sitting on a throne."

Perry represents a host of PKs who have struggled with their faith. Recent stats from Barna Group research says that:

- 40 percent have gone through a period where they significantly questioned their faith
- 33 percent are no longer active in church
- 7 percent no longer consider themselves a Christian

What causes this? Pastors who were asked answered:

- Unrealistic expectations were placed on them (28 percent)
- Negative experiences in church (18 percent)
- Father or mother were too busy at church to spend time with them (17 percent)
- Faith not modeled at home (14 percent)
- Influence of friends or peers (9 percent)

When pastors were asked what they've done best in raising their kids, their responses included:

- Introduced their kids to Christ and maintained a Bible-focused home (37 percent)
- Spent time with them and supported them (21 percent)
- Loved them (12 percent)
- Taught them good values (10 percent)
- Allowed them to make their own choices and be themselves (9 percent)

Here's what pastors said they wish they had done better:

- Spent more time with their kids (42 percent)
- Been more understanding (8 percent)
- Given them more Bible teaching (5 percent)
- No regrets; wouldn't change anything (19 percent)

I have a special place in my heart for kids who are PKs because I am one. I grew up to serve the Lord and live for Him. Looking back here are a few reasons that happened for me:

**1. My parents practiced what they preached.** I could argue with what they believed, but I couldn't argue with how they lived what they believed.

**2. My dad and mom spent time with me.** My dad spent hours with me in the backyard, practicing pitching with me when I was in Little League. When I got into high school and played basketball, he was there in the stands cheering for me. My mom poured her life into me and was always there for me.

**3. I was able to see past the negative side of ministry.** Yes, there are negative sides to ministry. Sheep bite, and people are not perfect. At times there are politics. The church is made up of people—people who struggle and have weaknesses like we all do. But I was able to see past that and see the bigger picture.

**4. I made a personal choice to follow Christ, and my faith became my own.** I came to Christ when I was a young child. It was a very real experience that I can still remember to this day. When I was in high school, God began to speak to me about being a pastor.

My parents had never asked me about being a pastor. In fact, they had mentioned several times that I should consider being a schoolteacher, and I had personally told God I would never be a pastor. Yes, I would be faithful to church and serve Him, but not working for a church.

But when God calls, you have to make a choice. You can say yes or you can walk away from His will for your life. After struggling for months, I made the choice to say yes to God's plan for my life.

I say that to say this: At the end of the day, each person

must decide for themselves if they will follow Christ or not. Yes, godly parents do make a difference and help cultivate the soil, but they cannot make the decision for their child.

Do I blame Katy Perry's parents for the road she has chosen? No. She picked this path. I could have just as easily chosen to go down a path away from God.

If your pastor has kids in your children's ministry, I want to encourage you to do the following:

- **Love them.** They are just like the other kids in your ministry. They want to know you care about them, not because of who their father is, but because of who they are as an individual.
- **Let them be kids.** They are not perfect. They are going to misbehave at times and make mistakes. Don't say, "You should know better. You are the pastor's kid!" This places unrealistic expectations on them.
- **Don't mistreat their parents.** When you talk about the pastor or cause strife in the church, you not only bring hurt to him, but you hurt his kids as well. Even if they don't know the details (hopefully their parents are protecting them from the negative side of church), they sense when there is strife and division in the church.
- **Pour into their lives.** Just because their father is the pastor, that doesn't mean they don't need other people to teach them, mentor them and speak into their lives. Yes, my parents were my primary spiritual influence, but there were also lots of godly leaders who poured into my life over the years. They all had a part in my decision to follow Christ.
- **Don't place unrealistic expectations on their father that causes him to be gone from home all the time.** Help protect their father's time. They need a father at home just like other kids. Don't contribute to them resenting the church because it took their father away all the

time.

What are your thoughts about PKs? If you are a PK, share your experience growing up.

Are you a pastor or staff member in ministry who currently has kids at home? What are some other ways we can support and encourage PKs? What are some other reasons why you believe some PKs walk away from God?

Share your thoughts with us in the comment section below.

**Dale Hudson** has served in children and family ministry for over 24 years. He is the director of children's ministries at Christ Fellowship Church in Palm Beach, Fla. He was recently named one of the top 20 influencers in children's ministry. He is the co-author of four ministry books, including *Turbocharged: 100 Simple Secrets to Successful Children's Ministry*. Visit Dale at [.](#)

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

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## St. Valentine's Day: The Heart of God

It's a day that is filled with ancient mystique and inspiring legends, but at this point in our culture, I'm not sure that the history of Valentine's Day really matters. What does indeed matter is what we do with its legacy and what it means to every man and woman with a sense of modern tradition and a desire to matter long after the gifts have been forgotten.

By tradition, for women, it may mean flowers, chocolates and a fancy card with loving words. For men it may mean a functional

gift or perhaps a card with words of praise for past heroics. And for both, it certainly has the potential of making the heart skip a few beats—perhaps it’s the excitement for a woman who receives a tangible glimpse of love, and often enough for the man it’s the elation over having remembered at the very last moment, just before the gift store closes.

But in the highest sense, Valentine’s Day means that we all have the opportunity to exhibit our love in a particular way—one that says to the recipient, “I’m thinking of you and I’ve taken the time to show it.” It’s a moment when even the most unlikely veterans are provided a fresh start—one that doesn’t have to be driven by the pressures of advertising but instead can be acted upon with a genuine desire to affirm one’s love for another. Because the truth is, we all have a built in desire to matter, which ultimately means that we need intentional affirmation far more than last-minute trinkets.

Even for those Valentine’s cynics who’ve decided that commercialization has made it a shill, somehow it still matters, because even when the gifts are forsaken, the opportunity to love intentionally cannot be ignored without consequence. In other words, if not today, then when? If not now, then how will our intention ever really begin?

For the believer, our first and best source of affirmation comes directly from the Creator Himself—a giant Valentine’s gift, if you will, intended by Him to be received and, by example, meant to be given by us to those we love. Below is just one example of His intention to affirm His loved ones. If we can pause long enough to consider and be encouraged by its meaning, we will gain a deeper desire to offer the very same blessing to those we love:

“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God” (1 John 3:1).

This single verse offers us a peek into God’s personality and

reveals why He created us and why He placed within each of us a desire to be affirmed. It is so that He, in fact, can have the pleasure of loving and affirming His own family. If we are to imitate Him, then we must act in the way that He does, do what we see Him doing and love according to How He does it.

So now that Valentine's Day is upon us once again, perhaps we should add a new spin by taking the opportunity provided us by florists, confectioners and greeting-card companies to not only give those things but to live those things. In other words, let our spirits be as vibrant as any bouquet and as enjoyable to those we love as any sweet confection. We should let our words be as satisfying to them as the ones God gave us. It is the very best greeting card on earth.

Let this day be special in a new way—a way that transcends the expectations we've placed upon it—by making it the first day of many where we ambitiously live out God's legacy by sharing it. By all means, give to one another all these fun things too, but don't let go of the boxes, vases or envelopes without looking your loved one in the eyes and first giving the things that matter more—blessings, affirmations, honor and respect. By being truly intentional, you will set the benchmark and begin the passing on your God-given heritage—your very own royal legacy.

*Known as the Legacy Guy, **Guy Hatcher** has spent his lifetime helping families plan for the future. A certified financial planner, Hatcher has been a leader in the wealth management industry, which has allowed him to have more than 10,000 "kitchen-table conversations." His new book, *Your Future Reflection: How to Leave a Legacy Beyond Money*, is available on Amazon and through all eBook formats. Follow him on twitter @guyhatcher, and visit him at .*

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# Prophet Bob Jones Passes Away

Bob Jones, who operated in **prophetic ministry** for more than four decades, has gone home to be with the Lord.

“Bob passed away at 6:22 this morning, peacefully and smiling,” says Rick Joyner, founder and executive director of MorningStar Ministries. “Bob was known around the world for his prophetic gift, but he was also the greatest lover of God and people that I ever knew. It seems fitting that he would pass on a day that celebrates love.”

According to Jones’ website, when he was only 7 years old and walking on a dirt road in Arkansas, the archangel Gabriel appeared to him on a white horse and blew a double silver trumpet in his face.

“[Gabriel] then threw an old bull skin mantle at Bob’s feet. Although fearful at the time he ran, however, many years later he returned to pick up that old mantle which is that of a Seer Prophet. Bob Jones is known as a contemporary **prophet** with a great love for the Lord Jesus and His truth. His **prophecies** have spanned over four decades as the Lord has enabled him to foretell earthquakes, tidal waves, comets, and weather patterns. Like Daniel who functioned at an incredible level, Bob has often told leaders their dreams and experiences, as well as the interpretation,” his bio reads.

“After his death experience in 1975,” the bio continues, “God sent him back to minister to church leadership and reach the multitudes with His love, truth and equipping the saints with understanding of the **spiritual gifts**. God promised Bob that he would see the beginning of one billion souls coming into the kingdom in one great wave of the end time harvest. Bob moves

with a clear revelatory gifting, accompanied by gifts of healing and **miracles.**”

Jones is survived by his wife, Bonnie.

Click [here](#) to read tributes from Mike Bickle, Bill Johnson, Rick Joyner and others.

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## **How Can the Tired Mom Stay Connected With Hubby?**

Courtney asks, “Any advice on marriage in the trenches—when you have multiple little ones, money is tight, date nights are tough, sleep non-existent, etc.?”

Courtney, congrats on the “little ones.” They are a blessing. An exhausting blessing, but a blessing nonetheless.

Grace and I understand your season of life. We had five children in eight years. When the kids were little, we were also planting the church, which meant long hours for both of us. Toss in any combination of cold or flu running through the house, teething or travel, and things can feel overwhelming and exhausting.

Most of the time, money is tight in this season as well, as you are trying to live off of one income and dad is trying to get his career started. Admittedly, these were tough years for us. Looking back, Grace and I did not get this right all the time. But we would offer the following suggestions, as Grace thinks aloud and I type along:

### **1. Pray**

Get prayer time in the morning to start the day. Grace says even if you have to get up a few minutes early and pray while you are lying in bed, it's worth it. Spend time in prayer with your husband, and during the day use texting to stay connected and in prayer for one another.

## **2. Worship**

Keep your relationship with the Lord going. Listen to podcasts or the YouVersion audio Bible while you do your chores, pick a verse to meditate on, read Scripture to the kids—whatever works for you, you need to do. Try not to miss church.

Even if you have to get up a few minutes early and pray while you are lying in bed, it's worth it.

## **3. Sleep**

Don't feel guilty about taking a nap. Jesus took a nap in the Bible. Sometimes, you just have to sleep when the kids sleep. If you don't get enough sleep and you try to keep up with every task, things might not fall apart—but you will.

## **4. Prioritize**

Don't try to do it all, but discuss what the priorities are. Kids are unpredictable. They make a mess, get sick, get hurt, break something, need you to hold them and love them, etc. You will never check everything off your list, so give yourself some grace. You and your hubby need to figure out what the priorities are, do the most important things first, and get to the rest if and when you can.

Your car will be filled with action figures, crushed crayons and decaying snacks. Your laundry will at some point be stacked up to what Paul calls the "third heaven." At some point, your kids will likely be wearing a swimsuit and rubber boots with chocolate in their hair. Take a photo, make a joke, and let it go.

## **5. Date**

See if you can organize a date night co-op with people you trust who are family or church family. You cannot trust just anyone with your kids. But if there are godly people you do trust, maybe you could find, say, four couples, and each one can take turns watching the kids on date night. This way, you would at least get three weeks out of four without having to spend a ton on babysitting.

Also, godly college gals sometimes like to do this as a ministry. When we were dating in college, for example, we knew a godly family who could not afford childcare for date night. So Grace and I volunteered to do that for them a few times a month. We wanted to marry and have kids, and we figured we could learn a lot by being with their kids and serving them at the same time.

## **6. Get Creative**

Ask for date night gift cards for holidays and birthdays. Stacking up a few gift cards to restaurants and using them during a happy hour can stretch out a few nice date nights.

## **7. Have a Night In**

Learn to get time together at night at home. Whether this is soaking in the tub, sitting by the fire or just getting a favorite beverage to enjoy while visiting over a board game, at least it's some adult connecting time. This kind of time multiple nights a week goes a long way in the little years. Some couples just enjoy having the kids out of the house for a few hours so they can come home to have dinner and do whatever without interruptions for a few hours.

## **8. Be Silly**

If you are stressed, your kids will be stressed, so take time to do some silly and fun things with the kids. If you don't

have any fun until your husband gets home, you can be pretty frazzled by the end of the day. So try to find some ways to have fun even with the kids.

## **9. Pursue Hope and Joy**

What can happen when you are both busy, exhausted and depleted is that you start to feel overwhelmed and hopeless. Throw in some hormones or post-birth troubles, and your outlook can get dark fast. What you need is some hope.

Putting in place some plans and patterns can go a long way toward keeping you both hopeful, which helps you be joyful. Not to do yet another shameless book plug, but if you have *Real Marriage*, the appendix on “Reverse Engineering Your Life and Marriage” is a very practical tool that might help with some of these issues as you try to architect your life together.

You will never check everything off your list, so give yourself some grace.

Lastly, these years go way too fast. These are hard years but wonderful years. Once these years are gone, they are gone forever.

Our oldest just got her driver’s license. I can still remember when her main mode of transportation was a piggyback ride from me. Do all you can to not just endure but also enjoy these years.

Thank you for asking this question. You are not alone. A lot of people have this question. We are praying for you, your hubby and your blessings! We’ve been there. We get it. And we appreciate you inviting us to speak in to your marriage and family. Thank you!

**Pastor Mark Driscoll** is the founding pastor of Mars Hill Church—based in Seattle, Washington—and one of the most

*popular preachers in the world today. In 2010, Preaching magazine named him one of the 25 most influential pastors of the past 25 years. His sermon podcast regularly occupies the top spot in iTunes's Religion & Spirituality category, and his online audience accesses about 15 million of his sermons each year.*

*Driscoll is the author of over 15 books, including the #1 New York Times best-selling Real Marriage: The Truth About Sex, Friendship, and Life Together, coauthored with his wife, Grace. He has also written for CNN and The Washington Post and been featured as a columnist for The Seattle Times.*