

How Katy Perry's Mother Praises God Through the Pain

Mary Hudson is a minister's wife, a gifted preacher, an author and a mentor to many Christian women. But she's also the mother of one of the most famous entertainers in the world, pop singer Katy Perry. For that reason, many Christians turn a cold shoulder to Mary and her husband, Keith.

"I get a lot of negative vibes," Mary told me this week during an interview in Hawaii, where she was hosting a women's conference. "People ask us, 'How could you have a daughter like that?'"

Mary certainly never expected things would turn out this way. When she was pregnant with Katy, an evangelist prayed over her and declared, "This child will do something great for God." When Katy was 9 years old, a charismatic minister prophesied that she would stand before kings and presidents. Katy wrote worship songs as a young girl and began performing solos in church.

When Katy sang to Christian audiences as a girl, "the anointing for worship was incredible," Mary recalls. "People would just weep."

The Hudsons raised their children to serve God. Katy, along with her older sister and younger brother, attended Christian schools. Katy also tried to become a gospel singer, but the Christian album she released in 2001 didn't sell.

Then she moved to Hollywood at age 17 and eventually signed a deal with a secular record company. She became an overnight sensation in 2008 with the release of her racy hit single, "I Kissed a Girl."

Mary was devastated when she listened to that song and

realized her daughter was headed in the wrong direction. “I felt like I was flattened to the wall,” Mary says.

Katy’s powerful voice, creative songwriting ability and quirky artistic flair propelled her career. She became one of the best-selling musical artists of all time and is now worth \$125 million—at age 32. She is a household name around the world. She even did a private concert at the White House for President Obama, and her popularity soared into the ozone when she performed at halftime for the Super Bowl in 2015.

Her adoring fans love her versatility, her outrageous stage persona, her spunky femininity and her unbridled sensuality. They’ve watched Katy change her hair color from brunette to electric blue to pink to blond and back to brunette. They’ve laughed at her crazy costumes. And because Katy has more Twitter followers than anyone on the planet, most of her fan base knows she was raised in a Christian home by conservative parents.

Katy has sometimes taken swipes at her parents in media interviews. She has disavowed her Christian upbringing at times—even though the name “Jesus” is tattooed on the inside of her wrist. And in her newest album, *Witness*, which releases June 9, she displays a new level of over-the-top sexuality that would make most people blush. (The video for her newest hit single “Bon Appetit” could best be described as soft porn created especially for the Food Network.)

How does a Christian mother handle it when she sees her daughter drifting so far from the values she taught her? It hasn’t been easy.

“The devil definitely tries to steal my joy,” Mary told me. “I sometimes have to fight depression.” A few years ago, Mary anchored her soul to Psalm 113:9, which says, “He gives the barren woman a dwelling, making her the joyful mother of children. Praise the Lord!”

That verse inspired her to write her 2015 book, *Joyful Parent, Happy Home*. Mary believes if you want your children to live for God, “You have to get happy and stay in the ‘God zone.’ It’s just like when a plane takes off in a storm. The thunder and lightning may be raging, but once you reach 30,000 feet, the sun is always shining.”

Mary’s close friends also support her unconditionally. And she asks new friends to agree with her in prayer for a miracle turnaround for her daughter. Meanwhile Keith released a book on prayer in 2009 that examines how God hears our heart’s cries. It is called *The Cry: The Desperate Prayer That Opens the Heart of God*.

Mary believes parents of prodigals must focus on others rather than wallowing in their own pain. For the past 11 years she has poured her life into women who attend her Arise conferences.

“You have to take your mind off your own situation and focus on others if you are ever going to see the light of day,” Mary says. “Pouring myself into the Arise conferences has been a lifeline. Not only have thousands of women been helped, but with every meeting my faith gets cranked up a notch.”

The Hudsons also have chosen to love Katy no matter what. They stay in close contact with her, and Mary sometimes takes calls in the middle of the night from Katy because of her non-stop concert schedule. (Katy asked her mother for prayer last week after a terrorist attack killed 22 people at pop star Ariana Grande’s concert in Manchester, England.)

I asked Mary what counsel she has for parents who have children who have left their Christian faith behind. She believes unconditional love and support is essential—not judgment, anger or estrangement. “It’s only the love of God that will bring them back,” she says. “Don’t cut them off. You have to rise above your feelings. You must stay in

communication.”

The Christian community should also show unconditional love to ministers like Keith and Mary Hudson. Rather than judging them for raising a prodigal, we should show compassion.

I hope you will love Katy Perry instead of criticizing her choices and pray for her as if she were your own daughter.
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