

Why HGTV Power Couple Chip and Joanna Gaines Are Stepping Away From the Spotlight

Fixer Upper is a television phenomenon. The home-renovation show premiered to 1.3 million viewers on May 23, 2013. It has attracted as many as 25 million viewers.

Chip and Joanna Gaines were a little-known contractor and decorator flipping houses in Waco before their show made them overnight celebrities. They now employ more than 400 people and own and operate Magnolia Market. They have their own line of paint colors, wallpaper designs, and furniture.

Their vacation rental booked for the year within hours of opening online. They launched a magazine and a housing development called Magnolia Villas. They are renovating the old Elite Café, a landmark in Waco.

Now they've announced that season 5 will be their last. They assure us that nothing is wrong—"Our family is healthy and our marriage has honestly never been stronger." As they explain, "This is just us recognizing that we need to catch our breath for a moment. Our plan is to take this time to shore up and strengthen the spots that are weak, rest the places that are tired and give lots of love and attention to both our family and our businesses."

Ending *Fixer Upper* at the height of its popularity is a surprising decision. But Chip and Joanna Gaines are led by Christ, not by the culture. As they have told the world, they follow Jesus. He is Lord of their lives, their marriage, their family and their future.

In contrast to their uplifting show, today's news is frightening. UCLA is offering depression screenings to all incoming students. More Americans are infected with sexually transmitted diseases than ever before. The governor of Puerto Rico warns that his island is on the brink of a "humanitarian crisis."

An 8-year-old boy died protecting his seven-year-old sister from a child molester. And North Korea has threatened to shoot down American warplanes even if they are not in the country's airspace. (For more, see my latest website article, "North Korea: What Christians Need to Know.")

In the midst of fearful days, let's learn a lesson from *Fixer Upper*: God is in the restoration business.

He restored Moses, turning the fugitive shepherd into one of the greatest leaders the world has ever known. He restored Saul of Tarsus, turning the persecutor of Christians into the greatest missionary in history.

After his horrific sins, David knew he could ask God to "restore to me the joy of your salvation" (Ps. 51:12). One day our Lord will restore sinners so fully that we will be with him in paradise (Luke 23:43).

Now your Father invites you to put him in charge of your soul-restoration project. If Jesus is your Lord, his Spirit has already made your life his home (1 Cor. 3:16). Now let him knock down sin-infested walls and rebuild broken dreams. Ask him to renovate your spiritual house in a way that glorifies your Lord.

And join him in restoring your fallen world with his love. In announcing the end of their TV show, Chip and Joanna Gaines noted, "We aren't done working toward restoration in all things or helping out those who could use a hand. In fact, in all of these things, we are just getting started."

Let's join them. {eoa}

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