

This Spirit-Birthered Attitude Can Help You Bring Your Prodigal Child Home

Everybody has a “them”—that person who makes you feel out of place, uncomfortable. That person whose life seems far away from the gospel or the love of Christ. And in the case of this longtime pastor, one of his “thems” was his own son.

“It’s the person who doesn’t walk like you, talk like you,” Pastor Wilfredo “Choco” De Jesús, former pastor of Chicago’s New Life Covenant Church and now general treasurer of the Assemblies of God, tells Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of the *Greenelines* podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network. His new book, *Love Them Anyway*, tells the stories of how we can reach those “thems” with the love and grace of Jesus Christ—and bring the prodigals home.

“There was a time in his life when he was smoking weed and drinking,” De Jesús says. “And this is not something we taught him. He was raised in a Christian family. He’s a pastor’s child, and I want to tell every member that is listening: There is no pastor’s kid who’s born with a halo. They’re like your child and in my child.

“So there was my son smoking weed and so forth, going through that teenage crisis, and the Holy Spirit woke me up one day and said, ‘Check out his car,’” De Jesús recalls. “And I went to his car, and I looked at it and found the stuff and took it up to his room around 11 o’clock, 11:30 at night.”

At first, De Jesús’ son tried to deny what he had done. “And I essentially said, ‘Hey, the Holy Spirit told me, so you’re pretty much dead in the water,’” De Jesús, says. “And he confessed to it and praise the Lord, I said to my son, ‘Nothing you do can make me love you more or less. But you are

in control of how pleased I am with you.'

"He was our 'them,'" de Jesus says. "My wife and I, we prayed for him, put oil over the doorframe of the door of his bedroom."

And De Jesús has some powerful words of advice for others in this situation. "You may have a son who's a knucklehead, or a daughter who's a knucklehead, but that's your 'them.' And you've got to love them through this. You've got to be there. My son now is 27—has a wife, has a daughter. Praise the Lord, He loves Jesus today. But there was a season where he was our 'them.'"

✖ For much more from Pastor Choco De Jesús on how to "love them anyway" and reach your prodigal child (and others) with the truth of the gospel, listen to the entire episode of *Greenelines* at this link, and subscribe to *Greenelines* for more inspiring stories like this one. Find De Jesús' book, *Love Them Anyway*, wherever fine books are sold. {eoa}

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