

AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE

***House:** Home As God Intended*

***Marriage:** It's the Little Foxes That
Spoil the Vineyard*

***Health:** Spring Cleaning (Your
Mental Health)*

***Finances:** Taxes—we Love to
Hate Them*

***Parenting:** Parent or
Partner*

***Community:** The ART
Studio and Creative Needs
That Bring Us Together*





Hello! I have the privilege of editing the *As for Me and My House* magazine every month.

Spring is upon us and with it comes a colorful collection of informative and inspiring articles from your fellow Legacy Leaders. One of the sentences that continued to ring in my head long after I'd read it is from Sally's article on *Parenting*: "You will always be a parent because you have children, and they will always be your little eggs, right? But you are not always to be parenting. There is a time when you are supposed to stop the active parenting role in favor of an advisory or consultant role." Like the changing seasons we see around us, so the seasons of our lives change as we move from one stage to another; our roles change, maybe our purpose and our goals, too. This can be a scary thing. Of one thing we can be sure, however: "The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."

Enjoy, and have a wonderful month!

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MARTY: AS FOR ME & MY HOUSE



Marty Mitchell is a Catholic Christian author, speaker, and illuminator who has a passion for helping Christians understand and play their unique part in the body of Christ so they can be filled with the love, joy, happiness, and peace of God that comes from living their Best Blessed Life™.

He illuminates the uniqueness and great potential of all of God's children by shining a light on their God-given gifts and talents and on all their goodness.

Marty lives in Maryland and enjoys his faith, spending time with family and friends, golfing, boating, fishing, and creating laughter.

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CAROLYN: AS FOR ME & MARRIAGE



Carolyn Jean Davis, a speaker, author, and coach, is the founder and CEO of Excited Free Living. This organization serves people who seek to become unchained from the bondage of pain and walk closer to God. She knows firsthand what it's like to be captive to pain. She was often rejected and unloved by some who were supposed to love her while growing up. To gain their love and approval, she became a classic people-pleaser. Unfortunately, this approach to life never worked to give her the acceptance that she thought she needed. Instead, it seemed to deepen the pain and perceived need. Now she can say that she is finally free, thanks to God's loving deliverance. He taught her how to turn pleasing others toward a life that's free and exciting in Him. Mrs. Davis now helps people break their chains of pain one link at a time. She lives with her husband of 38 years, Keith. They have two adult sons.

16**AMANDA: AS FOR ME & MY HEALTH**

Amanda Nelson is a professor and technical writer with a heart for deliverance ministry. She and her husband Jim have been married for 23 years, and they reside in NE Ohio.

They are madly in love with Jesus and love to see the Holy Spirit heal people and set them free from all manners of bondage. Christ came to set them free, and now they share the Good News with others!

They are also tolerated by the world's funniest feline, their roommate, Pickles.

**21****JAN: AS FOR ME & MY FINANCES**

Jan is an author, coach, and speaker, and has a passion for seeing people whole - financially, spiritually, and emotionally. She and her husband, Bruce, have four children and six grandchildren.

She has a deep passion for people and watching them grow, both in their personal finances and in their spiritual life and feels blessed to have followed her passion for over 25 years. Trained by Dave Ramsey, Dick Townsend and many others, Jan offers a wealth of knowledge and experience to her clients. She is thrilled to now provide life coaching as a certified Living Legacy Coach and financial planning through Dave Ramsey's program, embracing the opportunity to reach small and large audiences in seminars, workshops, and private speaking engagements.

26**SALLY: AS FOR ME & MY PARENTING**

Sally was born in Miami, Florida as Sally Snow White. Though the name is legitimate (named after 2 grandmothers) she is fond of the fairy tale. She began her career as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and a church ministry leader for almost 30 years and has worked with many people caught in the trap of believing they have to live out of what they were given or have experienced. She loves counseling, speaking, teaching, and helping people move to a place of freedom that only comes by accepting God's Truth about who they are and where they can go in life.

Sally works to move people from where they are to where they want to be with grace and purpose.

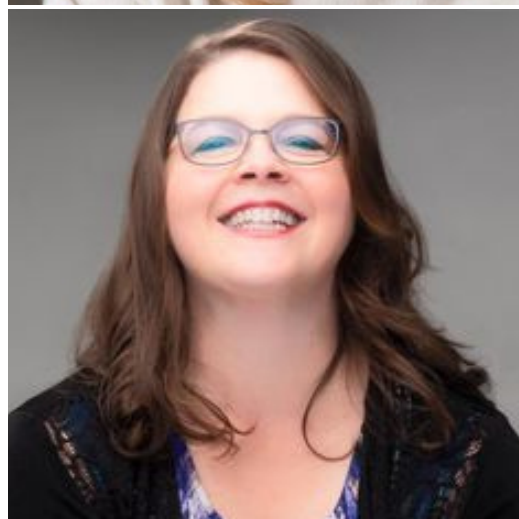
Sally and her husband, Scott—a retired Fire Captain—are from Miami, FL and have 3 amazing adult children and 2 grandsons.

**30****MELISSA: AS FOR ME & MY COMMUNITY**

Melissa Ray is an author, speaker, and belief coach. She helps transform words and actions so that we may live a more confident life through Christ.

To learn more about her, her books or coaching programs, go to MelissaLRay.com. There is a free gift waiting for you!

Melissa is the author of the international children's books, *The Fence Post* and *True Friends*, where she helps young people understand what they *Believe, Say, Do* and *Think* and why it all matters.



WORDS FROM NICCIE

NICCIE KLIEGL, FULFILL YOUR LEGACY

Spring cannot come fast enough for me this year. I have been in such a season of building and it seems God has me coming to some rest.

Perfect, I think because there is so much I want to do. Yes, I know that sounds a bit contradictory to what I said God seems to be doing to me, but the truth is the labor is winding down and the joy (fruit) is now coming.

As many of you know God put four books into me: THE LIVING LEGACY (all about partnering your life with GOD - LIFE PURPOSE); then THE LOVING LEGACY, which takes that God-partnered living out further and into your family. Next in line is THE LEARNING LEGACY, where we learn from Jesus and share faith a bit further out into our community; and the last book, THE LEADING LEGACY, will be taking God into the nations with the power of the Holy Spirit.

It's so awesome and exciting. But, don't let that mislead you. It's been painful . . . painfully wonderful. God has pruned and grown me with everything I wrote in book one and beyond as He helped me share my faith with my children and spouse (like I should have been doing from the beginning).

This magazine is broken down into six areas of your God-partnered life: HOME | MARRIAGE | HEALTH | PARENTING | FINANCES | COMMUNITY and is based on my second book, THE LOVING LEGACY - AS FOR ME & MY HOUSE.

I love faith-based life coaching and have actually proceeded into business coaching kicking and screaming, but God kept opening doors and equipping me. Why? Well because He is just that good.

Book two, THE LOVING LEGACY, As For Me & My House, has been out for nearly 3 years . . . and where is book three? You see, God has been downloading these books into me when I'm ready and it seems I've taken my sweet time with my home and family so am only now getting things in order to move out into the community.

This Thursday, March 2nd, I'll be stepping out into our community in a big way. God has opened up a sweet door and I will be sharing more about it soon. But for now, let this issue inspire in you A NEW THING. Whether we are aware of it or not, IF WE REMAIN IN HIM HE WILL BRING ABOUT NEW THINGS FOR US.

Go LIVE | LOVE | LEARN | LEAD according to the call!

Niccie Kliegl



MARTY MITCHELL

AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE

<https://martymitchell.me>

Home as God Intended

Home is where the heart is. Some trace the origin of this phrase, or at least sentiments related to it, to Pliny the Elder (an early Roman author, philosopher, and military commander) as far back as the First Century. In modern times, the poetic phrase gained steam in the Western world in the 1800s.

As a divorced Catholic Christian man who lives alone, this idiom resonates. I love the comforts of my house and personal space, for sure. My quiet house provides the silence and solitude to live in the presence of our Lord and grow in my relationship with Him. It functions nicely as a private office for

my writing, speaking, and faith-based life-coaching business. But home for me extends beyond the walls of the physical structure because where my heart is my home will always be.

When I visit with my son and other members of my family, I am peacefully at home regardless of the distance traveled from my house. When I go to my church to sit quietly in prayer or to attend Mass, I am in the Lord's house, and I am peacefully at home. When I spend time with friends, no matter the level of noise and laughter, I am peacefully at home. And



when I am loving and helping my neighbor, I am peacefully at home—even on the dirty city sidewalks or while shopping in the grocery store.

I believe every home needs love and hospitality.

“ABOVE ALL HOLD UNFAILING YOUR LOVE FOR ONE
ANOTHER, SINCE LOVE COVERS A MULTITUDE OF
SINS. PRACTICE HOSPITALITY UNGRUDGINGLY TO ONE
ANOTHER.”

1 PETER 4:8–9 (RSVCE)

There are a few differently worded definitions of the word “hospitality” online. The one I like is from Dictionary.com: “the quality or disposition of receiving guests or strangers in a warm, friendly, generous way.” God’s children are called to be hospitable to guests, strangers, visitors, those in need, friends, family, and even those with whom we may not get along.

We see examples of and references to hospitality throughout the Bible. God, who is all love, started it with His creation and soon after by accommodating Adam and Eve with the Garden of Eden and all they needed. His creation has sustained people from Adam and Eve to the time of Jesus, and in the 2000 years since He lived on this earth. God is divinely and eternally hospitable.

During the life of Jesus, the innkeeper offered hospitality to Mary and Joseph by letting them use the stable for His birth. During the public ministry of Jesus, He was always invited in for a place to stay and food to eat as He traversed the land from Galilee to Judea. Many of His parables taught hospitality among many other lessons; the miracle at the wedding feast at Cana exhibited hospitality, and Jesus often refers to banquets and extends invitations to join them.

The root of hospitality is love, for Jesus commanded us to “*love one another as I love you*” (John 15:12), to “*love your neighbor as yourself*” (Matt. 22:39), and to feed the hungry, give the thirsty a drink, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and visit those in prison (Matt. 25:35–36). Jesus also taught that whatever you do for the least of His brothers, you do for Him (Matt. 25:40).



Jesus suggests hospitality should extend beyond the house and the church into the community. Like all virtues, having a hospitable heart is intangible. Hospitality and love only become tangible when put into action. What are a few ways we can be hospitable? Welcome the stranger . . . visit the elderly in a nursing home . . . receive your guests selflessly . . . talk with the wallflower . . . offer your coat on a winter night . . . ask if anyone needs anything . . . invite the outcast . . . let a stranger walk under your umbrella . . . introduce strangers . . .

This is the essence of holiness. When we help others in this way, our hearts swell, allowing more space for God to fill with His love and more room for the Holy Trinity to make their home in us. By loving in this way, we share God’s love and love Him in return, only to be filled with more and more of His love to share with others.

Excerpts are taken from Marty’s new book, *The Capillaries of Christ*. All Bible verses are the NABRE translation, unless otherwise noted.



“
Do not neglect
hospitality, for
through it some have
unknowingly
entertained angels.

”

HEBREWS 13:2 (NABRE)

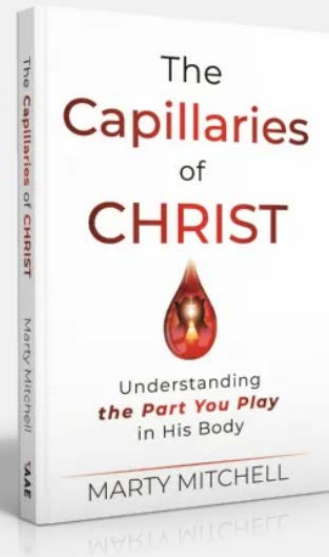


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CAROLYN DAVIS

AS FOR ME AND MARRIAGE

carolynjeandavis.com

IT'S THE LITTLE FOXES THAT SPOIL THE VINEYARD

My name is Carolyn Davis. I am a speaker, author, and coach who help people become unchained from the bondage of pain and walk closer to God. This article focuses on guarding your marital relationship and love for one another despite life's painful squeezes. As the Outline Bible notes, "guard the vineyard of your love" (Song of Solomon 2:15).[1] I like how this verse reads in the following Bible versions.

"CATCH ALL THE FOXES, THOSE LITTLE FOXES,
BEFORE THEY RUIN THE VINEYARD OF LOVE,
FOR THE GRAPEVINES ARE BLOSSOMING!"

(NLT) [2]

"CATCH THE FOXES FOR US, THE LITTLE FOXES
THAT SPOIL AND RUIN THE VINEYARDS [OF
LOVE], WHILE OUR VINEYARDS ARE IN
BLOSSOM." (AMP) [3]

It is this verse that inspired the focus of this article. It got me thinking about ways I have failed to guard my marriage and love for my husband. But, before I share how God has helped me here, I will talk briefly about this verse from the Bible's Old Testament book, Song of Solomon, a love song by King Solomon.[4]

There are many different interpretations of Song of Solomon 2:15.[5] For example, there is no

consensus on whether the foxes mentioned in 2:15 is talking about love in marriage, false prophets, false doctrine, and the like. One point most agree on is (whether you see Song of Solomon as fictional, symbolic, or historical) that all the chapters in this book depict the love of a married couple.[6]

In terms of marriage, one takeaway from Song of Solomon 2:15 is not to let the little foxes ruin (destroy[7], damage[8], and work havoc on[9]) the vineyard of love. Although we can't determine what the foxes refer to, they were noted for their destructive tendencies in crop fields.[10] The speaker here (most likely the bride) probably metaphorically suggests that the foxes might be referencing some problems in their relationship.[11]

The remainder of this article focuses on some potentially harmful problems to my marital relationship.

I have been married for 39 years. There is no way you can be married that many years and not encounter some potentially destructive problems. If I had not yielded to God working in me to heal my pain, who knows what my marriage would be like now? I thank God for His healing power. It could have been a different picture, but God.



My relationship with my husband is one of love, joy, peace, respect, caring, serving, and the like toward one another. It has not always been this way, though.

Like little foxes were ruining the vineyard, my sinful responses to my unresolved pain were ruining the vineyard of my marriage. Deal with your little foxes. "There is a need to round up the "foxes"—all potential threats to the relationship must be removed.[12]

Unrepented sin due to unresolved pain can ruin the

vineyard of your marital relationship. I can see firsthand how sin can be destructive to your relationships.

For example, my sinful focus on pleasing people and gaining their acceptance affected my marital relationship. Instead of paying more attention to my husband, I was more focused on what would get me approval and love or numb my pain from feelings of rejection. As a result, I neglected to build and maintain my relationship with him.

Your sins will also impact your relationship with your spouse if you are married. Many areas in the marital relationship can be affected by unrepented sin. Communication, ministry/work, and finances are the main areas (little foxes) that affected my marriage. I will briefly highlight them here.



THE LITTLE FOX OF LACK OF COMMUNICATION

Unrepented sin due to unresolved pain can ruin the vineyard of your communication. I experienced that in my marital relationship. My husband is a great communicator and has no problem saying what he thinks or feels. That was not the case for me. I was a classic people-pleaser. As such, I feared rejection, so I didn't always say what I meant, didn't speak up for myself, and shaped or changed my responses based on how my husband/others would react.

Communication for people-pleasers is shallow and based on what they think others want to hear. I also was good at putting off uncomfortable and difficult conversations with my husband. I would manipulate the situation (e.g., by crying) so he would let up on the conversation I needed to hear regarding my wrong actions. As God worked in my heart (lined up my words, thoughts, and deeds with His Word, way, and will) and helped me deal with my painful past His way, I became better at being open and honest in my talks with my husband/others and verbalizing what I was thinking and feeling to the glory of God.

Learn to communicate your thoughts and feelings in your marital/other relationships despite life squeezes. Address your people-pleasing tendencies/other wrong/sinful actions so you can have Godly, deep, and meaningful conversations with your spouse/others.



THE LITTLE FOX OF WORKAHOLIC TENDENCIES

Unrepented sin due to unresolved pain can ruin the vineyard of your family time. That is what happened to me. I spent too much time at church when I should have been at home. I had used ministry work to gain approval or numb my rejection pain rather than investing in building relationships at home. I would also immerse myself in job-related activities to take my mind off my pain. I even spent time with people rather than my family so I could say yes to all their demands and they would be pleased with me, like and love me. Those things were my priority. However, my husband should have been my priority. I robbed him/my family of time they will never get back.

Choose to make time with your husband/family your focus. Instead of spending your energy, effort, and time engaging in what takes you away from the relationships that matter the most, use your energy, effort, and time on building and strengthening your marital/family relationships. Deal with your pain God's way and not at the expense of your husband/family.

What are you doing with your time? Don't waste your valuable time. We don't have the time we think we have. All we have is now. Spend time with your family now while you can.



THE LITTLE FOX OF FINANCIAL INSTABILITY

Unrepented sin due to unresolved pain can ruin the vineyard of your finances. I experienced this, too. I spent my money on people to gain their love and approval. As a result, my financial health took a hit. There was no reason for me to be in debt; my husband provided for our needs. I did not have to



“

Catch all the
foxes, those little
foxes, before
they ruin the
vineyard of love,
for the
grapevines are
blossoming!

”

SONG OF SOLOMON 2:15 (NLT)

contribute to our household. I did what I wanted with my earnings. Unlike the personification of the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31, who spent her earnings on her family, home, and the needs of others, I spent my earnings on things that would gain me favor from others. When I ran out of money, I turned to credit. As a result, I became a slave to credit card debt (Proverbs 22:7b). I was so out of control with my spending that my family would have been in financial ruin if not for my wise husband who knows how to manage money. He guarded our finances against my foolish choices. "The wise store up choice food and olive oil, but fools gulp theirs down" (Proverbs 21:20 NIV).

As I grew in Christ, I came to see my spending as sinful and a matter of my heart and eventually learned to be a better steward of my finances. Don't be like me. Stop using money to cope with the pains of life. Instead, cope with your life God's way. Learn to be a faithful steward. Stop putting a strain on your marital/other relationships with your wrong/sinful spending habits.

My marriage suffered because I constantly focused on myself and my pain. Get a handle on your pain so you can get a handle on the little foxes ruining your marital relationship's vineyard (i.e., lack of communication, workaholic tendencies, and financial instability). If you don't, you will throw away God's blessings for your marriage, leaving it destitute.

I am grateful to God for a husband who is an outstanding man of God, a husband, and father who has stood by me through it all. I thank my husband for showing the love of God to me despite me. God has worked in my heart and helped me to make my husband/marriage my number one earthly priority. When you live to please God and work on that (vertical) relationship, you will position yourself to be/live right in your (horizontal) marital and other relationships.



[1] Willmington, H. L. (1999). *The Outline Bible* (So 2:15). Tyndale House Publishers.

[2] Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (So 2:15). Tyndale House Publishers.

[3] *The Amplified Bible* (So 2:15). (1987). The Lockman Foundation.

[4] *Talk thru the Bible: A Quick Guide to Help You Get More Out of the Bible* by Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa

[5] *The New American Commentary: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* by Duane A. Garrett

[6] *Talk thru the Bible: A Quick Guide to Help You Get More Out of the Bible* by Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa

[7] Thompson, J. (2015). *Bible Sense Lexicon: Dataset Documentation*. Faithlife.

[8] Thompson, J. (2015). *Bible Sense Lexicon: Dataset Documentation*. Faithlife.

[9] Swanson, J. (1997). In *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew (Old Testament)* (electronic ed.). Logos Research Systems, Inc.

[10] Deere, J. S. (1985). *Song of Songs*. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 1015). Victor Books.

[11] Deere, J. S. (1985). *Song of Songs*. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 1015). Victor Books.

[12] <https://www.gotquestions.org/foxes-Song-Solomon.html>



S.R.U.T.A.L

6 S T E P S T O F R E E D O M

Breaking Free from Bondage Using S.R.U.T.A.L., a Unique, Proven Process



S.R.U.T.A.L., the process outlined in the Squeezed to Please Journey Coaching Program, is a personal journey to breaking free from the chains of people-pleasing one link at a time. It is a unique and proven process with six steps. Each step is a link in a chain that you have to break to experience freedom. One must work through each step for this process to work.

S.R.U.T.A.L. stands for Shift, Remove, Uncover, Transform, Align, and Live. It is the first letter of the first word for each of the six steps outlined in my book "Squeezed to Please."

This six-step process leads to inside to outside permanent change and freedom from bondage. One can apply these steps to any captivity; however, the focus here is specifically on breaking free from the bondage of the need to please people when squeezed.



Carolyn Jean Davis
Excited Free Living

CAROLYN'S STRENGTHS IN COUNSELING/TEACHING



Join her Chain Breakers Community on Facebook and receive practical, helpful, and relevant information about people-pleasing and how to break free.

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and . . .

New Book Coming Out in the Spring of 2023!

"Squeezed to Please: 6 Steps to Quit People-Pleasing and Find Freedom in Christ" by Carolyn Jean Davis

Publisher: Author Academy Elite

2023-05-31 New Book Coming Out!



[Click here to sign up for your copy now!](#)



AMANDA NELSON

AS FOR ME AND MY HEALTH

SPRING CLEANING (YOUR MENTAL HEALTH)

March is my favorite month of the year. Nothing says new beginnings like the first day of spring, just-hatched chicks, early daffodils, and green sprigs of tender grass shoots. You can practically smell the newness of life in the air and feel the excitement of the upcoming Easter resurrection celebration.

Since the rest of the world is waking up all around you, why not take some time to do a little spring cleaning . . . of your health? Before you get anxious about having to make yet another checklist of things to do, hear me out. These are FUN things that you actually like, but maybe never gave yourself permission to do!

We know now, more than ever, that people are stressed. The anxiety of living in such a volatile world, with wars and rumors of wars in the daily news, mounting pollution challenges, world health crises, and on and on . . . well, it may be helpful to your health if you could unplug a little bit and get back to some basics. Trust me, your body, soul, and spirit will thank you.

“THE SECOND IS THIS: ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’

THERE IS NO OTHER COMMANDMENT GREATER THAN THESE.”

MARK 12:31 (ESV)

Here are 5 easy tips for spring cleaning your mental health:

1 Listen to your body (soul, and spirit, too).

The human body was created for work, yes, but also, for rest. If you've formed the habit of going, going, going all day, every day, week after week . . . well, that's a recipe for a health disaster. Be sure to take a full day off to rest, every week. Give yourself permission to be your best by taking a day every week to regroup. The rest of your week will be more productive.

2 Do one enjoyable activity every day.

Something that's just for you. Whether you like coloring books or collecting stamps, set aside a few minutes at your favorite time of day to recharge your batteries and be in the moment. It turns out that this type of "mindfulness" lowers stress and makes you happier overall.

3 Move a little each day.

Maybe it's deep stretching and breathing exercises, or a brisk 20-minute walk. Even if you're not much for physical activity, start somewhere. Walk for 5 minutes the first day and add one minute each day. By the end of the month, you'll be walking 30 minutes a day, which is the recommended daily movement goal for optimal health.

4 Add in one "good for you" habit each day.

It might be as easy as drinking a cup of green tea after dinner or sending a hand-written thank you note to a friend. Changing up your "good habit" every day will give you a sense of accomplishment and will also keep your days interesting. (Pro Tip: eating a piece of dark chocolate can count as a good habit! The flavonoids, caffeine, and theobromine in chocolate are thought to work together to improve alertness and mental skills.)



5 Pray often.

Talking to God all day, every day, isn't only good for your spiritual health. Looking toward the heavens often increases our feelings of connectedness and gratitude. This also releases natural "feel good" hormones like serotonin and dopamine. The Bible was ahead of its time when the Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Thess. 5:16-17, *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."* And what is more satisfying than knowing you're living within the will of the Lord?!

If you miss a day of getting into your new springtime good habits, don't beat yourself up! Receive the same grace and forgiveness that you offer others (after all...you're human, too) and get back on track tomorrow. You can do it. When summer comes, you can look back and think, "I'm glad I started early!"

Cheers to good health,

Amanda



“

The steadfast love
of the LORD never
ceases; his mercies
never come to an
end; they are new
every morning;
great is your
faithfulness.

”

LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23 (ESV)



TAX TIME



AS FOR ME AND MY FINANCES

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JAN HENRYSON

TAXES—WE LOVE TO HATE THEM

It's tax season again. The time of year many of us do not look forward to. It is never fun to fill out seemingly endless forms and gather pertinent information, but they do have a place in our lives.

If we take a look at Jesus, when asked the question about taxes, He said, "Show me the coin used for paying the tax." He was brought the coin. He then asked, "Whose image is this? And whose inscription?" The answer was, "Caesar's." To which Jesus responded, "So give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's" (Matthew 22:19-21 NIV).

This is quite a definitive response. We are responsible for paying taxes, but Jesus also stated that we are responsible for giving to our Heavenly Father also. This giving includes not only our money but also our time and talents. We can never outgive what we have received—the gift of eternal life through Jesus' death and resurrection.

Taxes are essential. What would our country be without funds to keep our government running—although we may sometimes disagree with how funds are being distributed? Without tax funding, what would happen to our military and our police

who provide us with protection? How about our schools, hospitals, fire departments, and so many other necessary services we receive? Also, Social Security Retirement benefits are part of this funding as well. Most of us do not like paying taxes but let's look at the benefits we receive and give thanks that we are able to enjoy our freedom because of them.

Taxes can be a hassle! It is important that throughout the year we keep all documents we receive that will be needed for filing a tax return in a specific place so that we don't need to search for them at the last minute. Whether we prepare our own returns or have someone else prepare them for us, this helps to keep stress in this situation to a minimum.

The documents should include things like:



The previous year's tax return



W-2 forms from work or forms for self-employment



Statements from banks and other financial institutions showing interest and dividends received



Mortgage interest statements



Property taxes paid including car registrations



Daycare or childcare expenses



Charitable giving



State income tax paid or refunded, for Federal taxes as well



Forms from investments, which are usually on a combined document from the investment company



These are the most common documents but there may be others depending upon your particular situation.

Also, it is important to know if you live in a State in which you are required to file State income taxes. Some States such as South Dakota do not require State income taxes, but if you earned income from that State it needs to be reported on your tax filings.

A few notable changes for 2022 include:



The contribution limit for employees who participate in 401(k), 403(b) and most 457 plans has been increased to \$20,500. The limits on contributions to traditional and Roth IRAs remain unchanged at \$6000.



The phase-out ranges for Traditional IRAs and Roth IRAs are also increased.



It is important to not overlook eligibility for EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) in situations such as non-traditional homes (an example would be a grandparent raising a grandchild):

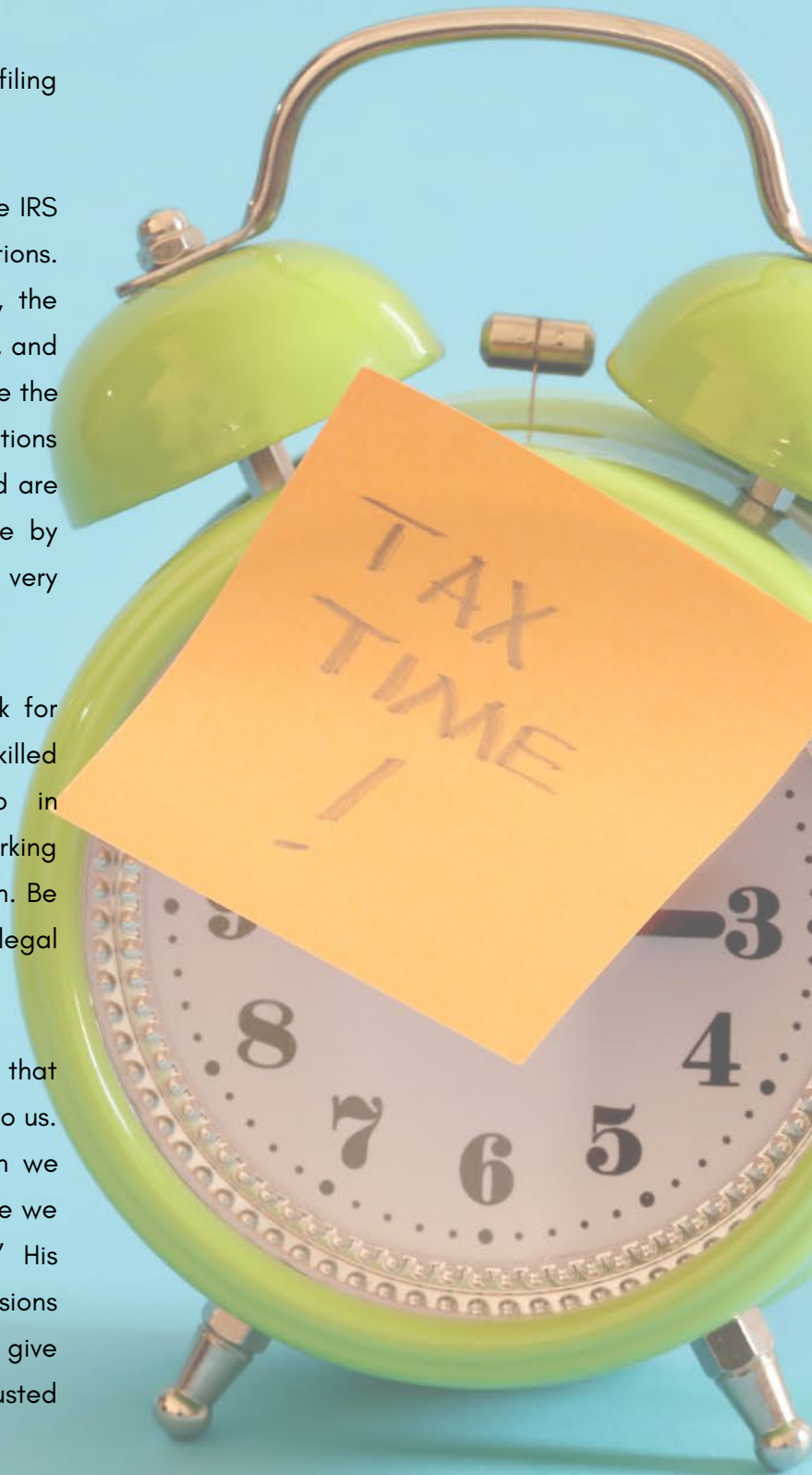
- Veterans
- Those with limited English skills
- Native Americans
- Those with incomes below the filing requirement

If you choose to prepare your own taxes, go to the IRS Website, and look over the choices for filing options. Each choice describes the income requirements, the States that may be eligible to file with this choice, and any other information they deem important. Choose the IRS company carefully. Follow the directions completely. Be sure that the sign-on and password are not something that would be easily recognizable by someone else and keep that information in a very secure location.

If you choose to use an accountant or CPA, ask for references so you know you are choosing a skilled professional. Some companies set up shop in conspicuous places but the person actually working with you may have little training in tax preparation. Be diligent in your research. Your taxes are a legal obligation, and you want them done correctly.

Most importantly, I believe, is to remember that everything we say we have does not really belong to us. Everything belongs to our Heavenly Father. When we begin to really understand that, we begin to realize we have been given the task to simply “manage” His resources. This helps us to not only hold our possessions more loosely, but also to share with others and give more freely. We then handle what has been entrusted to us with more responsibility and freedom.

This is what God truly wants for each one of us.





GIVE BACK
TO CAESAR
WHAT IS
CAESAR'S,
AND TO
GOD WHAT
IS GOD'S.



MATTHEW 22:21 (NIV)



SALLY LIVINGSTON

AS FOR ME AND MY PARENTING

WWW.SALLYLIVINGSTON.COM

Parent or Partner?

Are you a parent-partner? Or are you a partner-parent? Perhaps you are wondering what the difference is between the questions. At face value, they are interchangeable, but the delineation of the two lies in word placement. The word that comes first in each question indicates the focus. So now one question remains: which comes first, parent or partner?

A study on marital satisfaction following the transition to parenting shows that the highest level of marital satisfaction for the couple is on the day of the wedding, followed by a slow but steady decline. And statistically, if you have children, that satisfaction decreases twice as fast as if you do not.

More pointedly, research indicates that the lowest point of marital satisfaction is after the first child's birth. Clearly, there is a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and having children. Additional layers of stress are added with the birth of each subsequent child.

This would explain some book and article titles that are currently out on the topic. Here is a sample of what a search pulls up:

"Here Comes Baby, There Goes the Marriage."

"How Not to Hate Your Husband after Kids."

"Why Having Children Is Bad for Your Marriage (But It's Usually Worth It)"

More than ever, our culture sends the message to parents that they need to do everything and be everything so their kids can have everything. Additionally, they are to have it all at once and now, without trying, without struggling, without experiencing any pain or any problem along the way. Comparison is a common trap because of those perfectly curated Instagram posts depicting other parents producing the perfect offspring with ease. Though we can know this is not reality, the illusion is strong when scrolling through the feed.

Stressed-out parents look for coping strategies to handle the demands of parenting while trying to keep the marriage alive and well. Divide and conquer seems to be a natural response—or ships passing in the night. Another common strategy is to put the marriage on hold until the kids are grown. No wonder marriages are divided, couples feel passed over, and relationships are on hold. Unfortunately, what you may be sacrificing “for the kids” is your marriage.

As to the question at hand, Parent or Partner, is there a Biblical answer? Though it is not specifically answered, we can infer the answer from what is shown. This takes me back to the question, “Which comes first?”

Have you ever tangled with the chicken or egg riddle, and which comes first? In Genesis, where we read about the creation story, there is a definitive answer. In this case, it is definitely the chicken that came first. In fact, there were no eggs, only chickens—and it was one chicken at a time.

First, God created Adam and then Eve from Adam’s rib. The very first act in the Bible with the first two people, Adam and Eve, was marriage. Why was this the first thing? God was showing us the importance He places on marriage. First things first. He married them as a model for us, a symbol of His covenant to us, His presence with us, and the marriage of Christ and His church. That is how important marriage is, it was first—it is first. Here we see God’s answer to the question; there is no contest!



We can look to a couple of additional verses in the Bible to see what God says about marriage and parenting. Hebrews 13:4 says it pretty directly:

“MARRIAGE SHOULD BE HONORED BY ALL.”

That is a strong admonition. To honor is to give something *high respect and great esteem*. Proverbs 22:6 (MSG) says,

“TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO, AND WHEN HE IS OLD, HE WILL NOT GET LOST.”

A key concept in this verse is one of the smallest words, *go*. Your children are going to go. They are *supposed* to go, if you help them go, instead of holding them back, everyone will be much happier and healthier.

Let's circle back to the chicken and egg question. The ancient riddle asks which comes first. Regarding parent or partner, the better question may be which comes last. Or even better, which one lasts? Yes. You will always be a parent because you have children, and they will always be your little eggs, right? But you are not always to be parenting. There is a time when you are supposed to stop the active parenting role in favor of an advisory or consultant role. If enough influence is built through healthy relationships, they will want to come back to you for your input—they will know you offer credible and valuable information.

There is no holding pattern for marriage—it is fluid. It is always moving in one direction or another, either toward friendship and intimacy or away from it. Focusing on your marriage first may seem counterintuitive or even wrong. It is, however, the optimal way to give your kids everything they need.

Whatever happens between you as a couple is what rains down on the children. What do you want to rain down on them? Trust God's plan and keep the first thing first. Be a partner who parents and not the other way around. You will have healthy kids and a vibrant marriage as a reward.



Excerpted from the upcoming book
*Parent or Partner: A Practical Guide to Overcoming Overparenting in
Favor of Vibrant Marriages and Healthy Kids*



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on the book
release date and
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go
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WHAT IF YOU COULD END THE PARENT-PARTNER PULL TODAY?

Are you struggling to balance the demands of marriage and parenting? Do you feel overwhelmed and like you cannot succeed in either role? Do you desire to stop the tug-of-war within yourself?

Parent or Partner addresses the genuine struggle of this balancing act in a culture that says you need to *be* everything and *do* everything so your children can *have* everything.

Author Sally Livingston uses her years of experience strengthening marriages and educating parents to bring practical solutions to this tension.

Prepare to learn

- How to assess your current role focus.
- What causes the imbalance of roles.
- How to move from a V to a T marriage.
- How to parent with the "end in mind."

You *can* balance your marriage and family; put the roles in order and end the tension beginning today!



Sally Livingston has been a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Parent Educator for 30 years. She is a gifted speaker and consultant for ministry and business teams. Sally helps people move from where they are to where they want to be with grace and purpose.

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A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO
OVERCOMING OVERPARENTING...

PARENT OR PARTNER

IN FAVOR OF
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“

Train up a child in
the way he should
go, and when he is
old, he will not get
lost.

”

PROVERBS 22:6 (MSG)



MELISSA

RAY

AS FOR ME AND MY COMMUNITY

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WWW.THEARTSTUDIOGA.COM



THE ART STUDIO AND CREATIVE NEEDS THAT BRING US TOGETHER

I have been working remotely from my home since Spring of 2020, and although it has been great to have that flexibility, there has been an element missing from my life. Aside from going to the grocery store and church, I was missing Community.

In July of this past year, an opportunity found me. I was asked if I would like to purchase a paint party studio that had been open one month. I immediately thought,

“Nah,” but then God tapped me on the shoulder and said, “Remember you told me that you would say ‘Yes’ to more opportunities?” I did do that. So, I told the owner that I would like to buy the studio business from him. I walked in total blind faith for something I have never done before. I have no art degree. I have no teaching painting experience, either. What was God up to?

He knew I needed community. He knew the community needed Him. My question after a few months, was “How will I show them You, Lord?”

The day I uttered the question in my prayers, the answer came in the evening. One of my painters, whom I had never met before spoke a word that was my secret handshake with God. That word was OBEDIENCE. That was my word of the year. You know, the New Year's resolution type word of the year? Obedience was my word!

She said, "All of this is happening because you have walked in obedience." You could have knocked me over with a feather. It was at that moment I began to realize His plan in this business. The ART Studio GA was given a fresh breath and direction. Go boldly in those dreams, desires, and callings folks. He knows what He is up to!

I then began offering Faith Art parties that allowed me to share my testimony about how good God is, what we can lay down before Him, and how sweet His love, mercy, and forgiveness truly are. He began to send the community to me. Sure, we painted fun pictures together, but some He allowed me to witness to.

So, whether it is the hair appointment, the grocery run, or a meal at a sit-down restaurant, ask God, "How will you use me today for your kingdom work?" Be ready to obey when He answers.

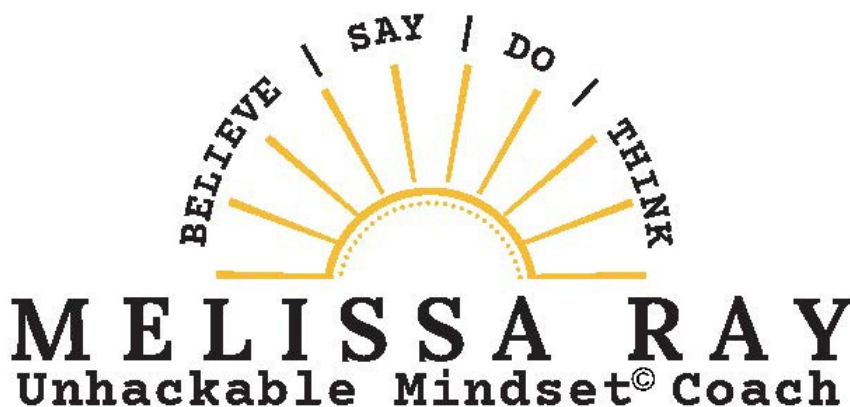
"FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU," SAYS THE LORD. THEY ARE PLANS FOR GOOD AND NOT FOR DISASTER, TO GIVE YOU A FUTURE AND A HOPE."

JEREMIAH 29:11 (NLT)



I realize that verse has been overused in the mainstream, but when you need to know who has your back while walking away from security, turn to it for the most blessed assurance.

He wants us in Community. This Art Studio has been an opportunity to be in community through creation. The Father of ALL Creation wants us to create. By the way, He has improved my ability to paint, too! That is just like God, isn't it? He equips the called. There was Abraham, Noah, Moses, David, Jesus, and countless others who had to lean on Him to take them into the Community by answering the call He had on their lives. I hope you will begin to do the same. Say, "Yes, Lord. Here am I. Send me." Let Him show you the way into a community that glorifies and points back to Him.





“But seek ye first
the kingdom of
God and His
righteousness,
and all these
things shall be
added unto you.”

Matthew 6:33 (KJV)



BUILT ON THE PROCESS OF **BELIEVE** | **SAY** | **DO** | **THINK**

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MELISSA RAY
Unhackable Mindset® Coach



What Happens In The LEGACY LEADER Community?



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SCRIPTURE TEACHING
WEEKLY OPTIONAL FIND AND SHARE OF TOPIC RELATED SCRIPTURE TO FIND DIRECTION & INCREASE WISDOM



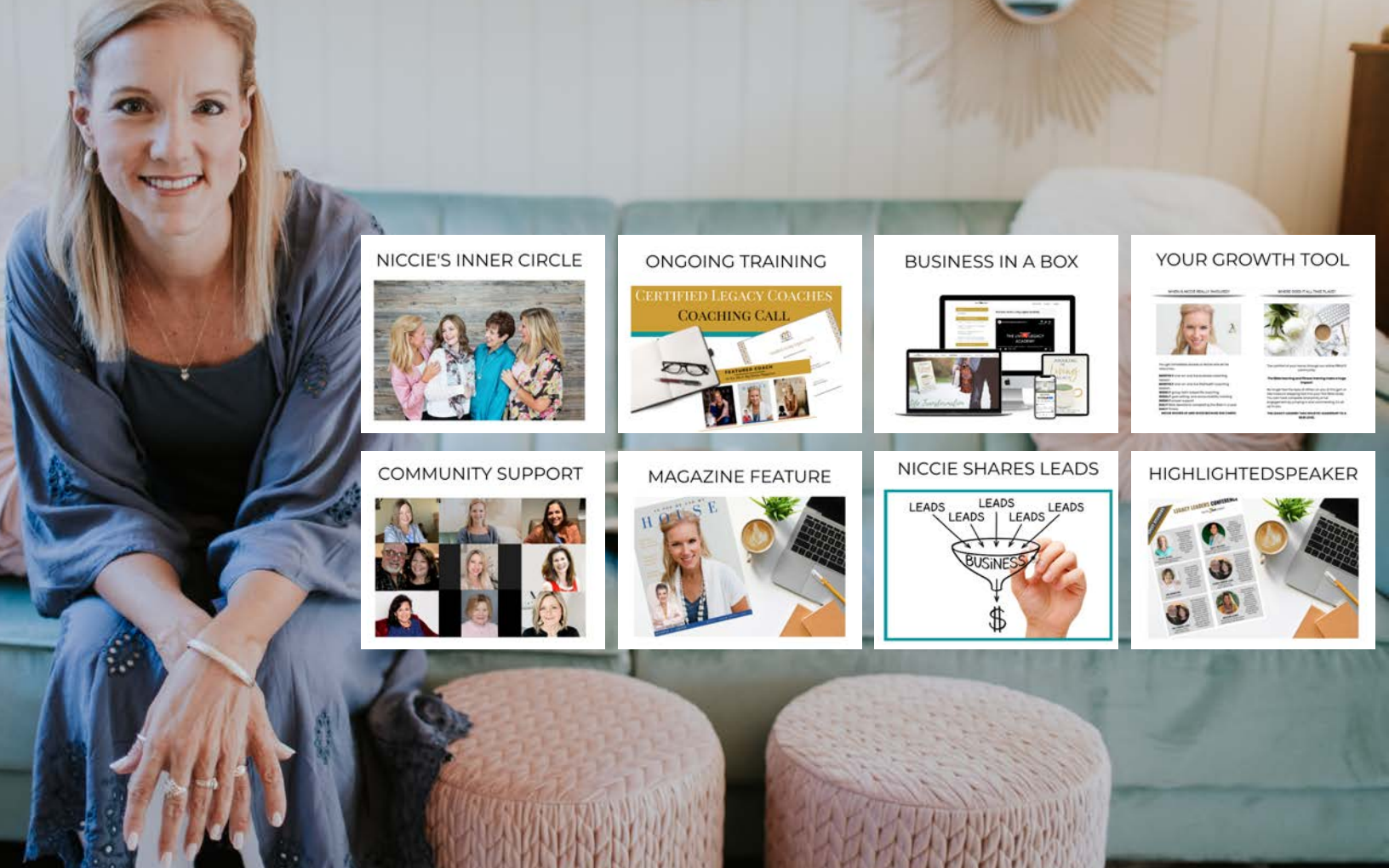

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WHY I WANT **YOU** TO JOIN OUR TEAM



Right from the start, I could see the power of this training. It was transforming lives, marriages, health, and so much more right before my eyes.

As my company grows I am finding I have less time to get folks God-partnered and to get that transformation happening. Then Karen and Joe (you can find them highlighted below) went through my program and opened up the idea of taking this message and way of life further. They wanted to share what they learned and what changed their life...with others.

And so it goes...

The Legacy Coaching Certification Began!