

Growing Up as Bill McCartney's Son

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Marc has a passion to connect his generation to God's heart for the nations. Through his ministry at The Rightnow Campaign (website at www.rightnow.org), Marc has launched two unique events that help his generation put their faith in action. Leadnow is designed specifically to reach young pastors and leaders teaching them to mobilize their generation. The Fusion Experience encourages thousands of young adults to take their passions, skills, and desires and connect them to actual opportunities of service. In May of 2002 he began working at the Rightnow Campaign where he is the Director of Events. Marc and his wife, Robin, have two beautiful girls: Macy Elizabeth and Mallory Grace.

Some call him Coach Mac. Others know him as the spark of the modern Christian men's movement. My daughters call him Grandpa Mac and his mother called him Billy. I call him Dad. Yes, Bill McCartney, the coach of the NCAA national champion Colorado Buffaloes and founder of Promise Keepers is my Dad. All my life people have asked me the question, "What is it like for you to be Bill McCartney's son?"

I've always thought that was kind of a strange question. I mean, he's always been my Dad—so how can I really distinguish my life from what others would perceive as normal. He's just Dad to me. To me, our lives were normal. Well, normal except for one thing...

Most people think that it would be strange to grow up in the public eye. I remember one time when I was a junior at Baylor University and my parents came to visit me during an off week in the football season. We were in my living room watching ESPN with a dozen or so of my fraternity brothers. They cut to an interview of my Dad and my frat brothers couldn't believe that the guy they were watching on TV was sitting five feet from them. That was normal to me though. As normal as sideline passes, free Gatorade, meeting famous athletes and standing on stage in front of 55,000 men. So in that tiny apartment with my folks and my friends it kind of struck me that maybe I did grow up a little different than some people. But maybe that difference isn't what you would expect.

Prayer, parents, and son

I can't remember a day in my life that my Mom and Dad didn't pray for me. My Dad really modeled prayer for my whole family while my Mom was faithfully on her knees before the Lord. As I talk about my Dad here, please don't misunderstand. He is an ordinary man with an extraordinary God. He has plenty of flaws just like anyone else. And if you want to know the truth, my Mom is actually the hero of our family. She is the one that always held everything together for us. But for some reason, perhaps by God's design, there is an amazing power that a father has on his children. And God used my Dad in profound ways in my life.

The scene was the same every day in the McCartney household. I would wake up and go down our stairs and see my Dad in our living room on his hands and knees, where he had been for an hour or two. He was pouring through the scriptures, crying out to the Lord, and journaling about his relationship with Jesus. Every time I entered or left my home my Dad would pray for me. Often getting on his hands and knees, bowing before our Holy God asking for God's protection and my devotion to Jesus. I couldn't help but be shaped by growing up in the home that I did. I never had to earn any love or approval from my parents. I had total security in knowing that loving Jesus was more than enough for them. I truly believe that.

Even though my Dad was a football coach—he was way more concerned with my spiritual hunger than my athletic ability. He wanted me to be a man of God way more than a man acclaimed for my prowess on the ball field. I love my Mom and Dad for that because they chose to lead our family from their knees. Growing up as Bill McCartney's son was different. Not for the reasons one might think; it was different because my Dad was sold out to Christ.

This generation and prayer

I can't help but think about my generation in regards to prayer and wonder how many people have missed out on the abundance that prayer gives because they

SCRIPTURE:
Isaiah 38:19

were simply never taught. I have countless friends who have little to no relationship with their father. The wound haunts them to this day. It shapes them. In fact, I can't think of very many friends who actually had both parents together while they were growing up.

The Bible says that a father shall make known the truth to his children (Is. 38:19). If most of my friends didn't have an actual father in the home, how many more didn't have a spiritual father? I think it is unfair to underestimate the affect a father has on his children. This fuels me today as a Dad and ought to fuel Christendom as a whole. There is literally a generation of 20 and 30 something's that have missed out on being fathered. I plead that every man of God in their 40's and beyond should consider reaching out to my generation and teaching us how to pray.

Not having a father

I think about my generation and the pain that not having a father has played, and I see so many of my peers turning to culture to fill their void. I'm reminded of a song by The Killers called, *Why Do I Keep Counting*. I was talking to a 24 year old girl recently who said that she thought this song was an anthem of sorts for our generation. This girl is a sold out follower of Christ who resonates with the lyrics of this song. The song is basically about a guy who is trying to figure out his life. He has had some ups and downs, but can't quite understand what to do. He knows there has to be something out there, but he needs some help. Read the chorus:

*Help me get down,
I can make it,
Help me get down
If I only knew the answer
I wouldn't be bothering you.
Father, help me get down,
I can make it,
Help me get down.*

The singer is crying for help and where does he turn? To his father. He knows that he needs help getting to where he belongs, but he doesn't know how to do it. Will someone help him please? Where is his father? I can see why my friend called this an anthem for my generation because we have missed out on something dear, and it is affecting us greatly.

Teach us

My hope and prayer is that the men of God would turn and answer the cry of my generation. Please help us. Teach us to pray. Teach us faith. Teach us perseverance. And for my generation, I thank God that He is bigger than our situations. I thank God for the countless friends that I know who didn't have a father, but God provided anyway. It's time for us to step up as well. It's time for us to be the type of men and women of God who would die to ourselves by fully submitting to Christ through a lifestyle of prayer.

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