

Becoming a Keeper of Promises

This current series of posts about some foundational aspects that helped me develop this God Buddy concept started with my favorite Bible verse (Proverbs 27:17): “As I Iron sharpens iron, so one man shall sharpen another”. I also wrote about recognizing the need to increase my reading and studying to learn about becoming a better man, husband, and father and thus more godly man.

Another important step in my growth as a godly man was attending a Christian men’s conference called PromiseKeepers.

In the fall of 2002, a group of men from our church drove to St. Louis for one of the PK stadium events. PromiseKeepers is an organization dedicated to introducing men to Jesus Christ to help them grow as Christians based on Seven Promises that I will outline later in this post.



But first, let me provide some background on the PromiseKeepers movement so you understand its impact.

History of Promise Keepers

According to the PromiseKeepers website and other sources, the PromiseKeepers movement was started as a conversation between Bill McCartney, University of Colorado head football coach and a friend, Dave Wardell.



During a three-hour car ride to a Fellowship of Christian Athletes meeting, they discussed the idea of filling a stadium with Christian men. Their conversation centered on the concept of “Christian Discipleship” and how to help men come together and grow spiritually. They envisioned thousands of men gathering in sports stadiums across the United States to worship, pray, and learn together. This vision was seen as “training in godliness and integrity.”

In July 1990, 72 men met to organize what would be Promise Keepers’ first event at the University of Colorado’s Event

Center. In July 1991, 4,200 men gathered for a PromiseKeepers conference at the University of Colorado basketball arena. In 1994, PromiseKeepers began holding a half-dozen two-day stadium events across the nation and by 1996, twenty-two conferences were held drawing an estimated 1.1 million men. Promise Keepers' included regional and local leadership seminars, pastor's conferences, and various lay group meetings.

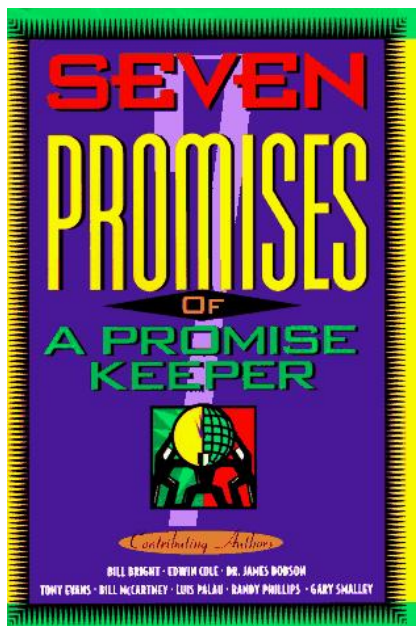
Since then, more than 3.2 million men have attended PK stadium and arena events including a massive gathering of hundreds of thousands of men called Stand in the Gap at the National Mall in Washington, D.C on Saturday, October 4, 1997.

Unfortunately, financial problems from over-extension outside the U.S. with Promise Keepers International and high admission fees for the regional events led to lower attendance. McCartney then resigned as president in 2003 after a personal leave of absence to take care of his ailing wife.

In 2008, McCartney came out of five years retirement to become PromiseKeepers CEO/Chairman but the current movement is now under the leadership of Ken Harrison, former CEO of Colorado Springs-based WaterStone, a Christian foundation that pioneered tax-deductible donor-advised funds. The ministry is reigniting around the 2020 "The PK Experience" to be held at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas (home of the Dallas Cowboys) which will be simulcast nationwide and followed-up with loads of digital content.

The 7 Promises

The core beliefs of the Promise Keepers, outlined in the *Seven Promises*, consist of the following:



1. A Promise Keeper is committed to honoring Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, and obedience to God's Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. A Promise Keeper is committed to pursuing vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that he needs brothers to help him keep his promises.
3. A Promise Keeper is committed to practicing spiritual, moral, ethical and sexual purity.
4. A Promise Keeper is committed to building strong marriages and families through love, protection, and Biblical values.
5. A Promise Keeper is committed to supporting the mission of his church by honoring and praying for his pastor and by actively giving his time and resources.
6. A Promise Keeper is committed to reaching beyond any racial and denominational barriers to demonstrate the power of Biblical unity.
7. A Promise Keeper is committed to influencing his world, being obedient to the Great Commandment (Mark 12:30-31)

and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

Are You a Promise Maker or a Promise Keeper?

These Seven Promises of PromiseKeepers are easy ways to remember to continually grow to become more like Jesus.

Now for every article, you may find on the benefits of the PromiseKeeper movement, you will find someone stating the organization is about advancing right-wing conservative politics, misuse of funds, or that it demeans gays and women.

Promise Keepers preaches that Jesus was a “man’s man,” a carpenter who lived at a time, according to PK advocate Rev. J. Alfred Smith Sr., “when they didn’t have power saws.”

Steve Farrar, founder, and chairman of Men’s Leadership Ministries and author of the best-selling book *Point Man: How a Man Can Lead His Family* says that true manhood can be gleaned from the example of Jesus. “[He] could be tender and gentle, but Jesus could also walk in and clear out a corrupted temple,” Farrar asserts. Jesus’s leadership was also based upon humbling himself, washing the feet of the Apostles.

One theme within PromiseKeepers is about establishing leadership in the home through servanthood to our spouse and family. Now, how can that be bad?

God Buddies Keep Their Promises



God Buddies spur each other on as men, husbands, and fathers. They also promise to be there for each other through thick and thin.

Personally, I was inspired to make and keep better promises after attending my first PromiseKeepers event. I attended one or two other PK events (Milwaukee and Chicago) with other men (including some who became official GBs). I also purchased and have read the book, *Seven Promises of a PromiseKeeper* a few times now.

One business writer I found stated, *“Intention without action is a promise made – intention WITH action is a promise kept!”*

Is it your intention as a godly man to live with promises kept or will you go on living with promises broken?

Have you ever attended a PK event? What was your reaction? Did it enact change in your life? Put your comments below, please.