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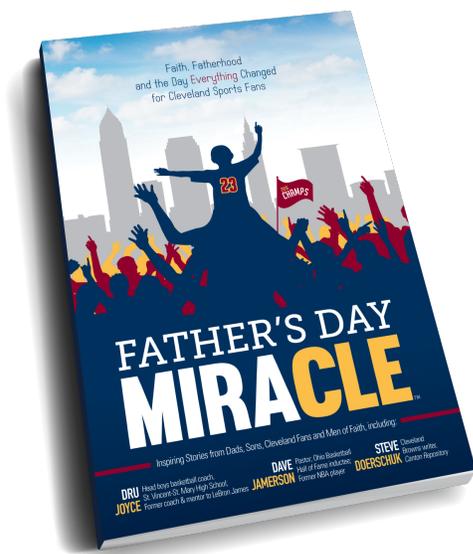
“If victory has a thousand fathers, then no wonder LeBron and his Father’s Day Miracle have a million of them, literally. After reading through this series of stories, I knew I had to own this book, read this book, and share this book. Your story is also hidden within these pages. CLEVELAND, this is for you!”

Ray Jeske, Host, “The Ray Jeske Show,” ESPN 990

Father’s Day Miracle

Faith, Fatherhood, and the Day Everything Changed for Cleveland Sports Fans

Featuring Dave Jamerson, Dru Joyce II and others



Fathers have been passing sports legacies down to their children for generations, with team allegiances representing cherished family heirlooms that endure regardless of what the standings say or whose names are on the backs of the jerseys. Loyalty to a team is just that: sticking with an organization no matter the circumstances, no matter the results, no matter the history, no matter what.

For many families, this sports heritage runs deep as they continue cheering for their hometown teams, generation after generation, through winning and losing seasons alike, simply because “Dad did.”

But in Cleveland, all “Dad did” was root for teams that seemed to compete with one another in search of the most devastating ways to disappoint their

loyal fans. Those crushing moments would come to define what it meant to be a modern Cleveland sports fan as northeast Ohio became synonymous not just with losing, but losing in historic fashion. “OIC,” the fans would mutter in the wake of each disappointment: Only in Cleveland.

While the collection of unfathomable losses only made the joke that much funnier to outsiders, the Browns, Indians and Cavs started losing younger generations of fans who never watched Brian Sipe or Bernie Kosar sling the ball around Municipal Stadium; who never saw Joe Carter or Jim Thome smash a home run deep into the outfield bleachers; who never heard of Mark Price or the Miracle of Richfield and whose most vivid memory of LeBron James was when he left for Miami. Fathers tried to pass down the love for Cleveland sports that they had inherited, but all their kids saw was the heartache and frustration that came with it, convincing many to find other teams to follow or to ignore sports altogether.

And yet, Dad kept cheering. Despite the losses, despite the national punch lines, long-suffering Cleveland fans endured, sustained by an unshakeable faith that the narrative would eventually change and the decades of futility would make that first title taste even sweeter. “One day,” Dad believed. “One day.”

Could “one day” actually be Father’s Day 2016?

The question kept rolling around in our heads that Friday afternoon. A Cavaliers win on Father’s Day wouldn’t just be a great story; it would be history, for the NBA, for the Cavaliers franchise, for the city of Cleveland and for its title-starved fans.

It would, in short, be a miracle.

The name was born, and, though we didn’t know it at the time, so was this book: “Father’s Day Miracle.”

After much prayer and discussion, what we ultimately landed on is what you’re holding in your hands right now: a collection of stories formed on that historic day at the intersection of our calling as fathers, our passion as Cleveland sports fans and, above all, our identity as followers of Christ. These writers all have very different stories to tell, but each of those stories thoughtfully and honestly explores the themes of faith, fatherhood and fandom. The result is a book that celebrates fathers while acknowledging that none are perfect; that commemorates one of the most joyous moments in Cleveland history while examining why sports matter so much to so many people.

To learn more, please visit www.FathersDayMiracle.com

Contributors to *The Father's Day Miracle*

DRU JOYCE II

As the head boys basketball coach of St. Vincent-St. Mary in Akron, OH, Coach Dru, as he is affectionately known, has been motivator and mentor to countless young men, many of whom have played in the NBA, including LeBron James and Kosta Koufos (Sacramento Kings). Previously named USA Today's Coach of the Year, Coach Dru is one of the nation's most influential high school basketball coaches, having led the Fighting Irish to three state championships and a national title. Author of "Beyond Championships: A Playbook for Winning at Life," director of the Northeast Ohio Basketball Association and a 2016 inductee into the Summit County Hall of Fame, Coach Dru knows how to connect people to their potential and position themselves to win. He and his wife, Carolyn, are the proud parents of four (daughters, Ursula and India, and sons, Dru III and Cameron) and grandparents of five (Davien, Alexander, Alivia, Kanin and KJ).

DAVE JAMERSON

Dave, a 2015 inductee into the Ohio Basketball Hall of Fame, played with the Houston Rockets, Utah Jazz and New Jersey Nets in the NBA after a record-breaking collegiate career. He then served as the President and International Director of Champions for Christ, was the founder and President of Champions Academy – a world-class basketball training academy that uses sports to reach and influence the next generation of basketball leaders – and served on the National Association of Basketball Coaches ministry team in charge of all outreach activities at the NCAA Final Four and Convention. Throughout his career, Dave has helped to plant churches and lead ministry in more than 30 countries. Today, Dave is the Lead Pastor of Renovate Church in Austin, Texas, and resides with his wife of 25 years, April, and their four children in Leander, Texas.

JAMEY CODDING

After Jamey spent 35 years with both feet firmly planted in the world, the experience of having God completely turn his life upside down has been both thrilling and terrifying. He is honored to play a small part in the incredible work being done by CCHO and its family of ministries, but even more grateful for the people he gets to come home to each night. He enjoys good food, good music, good TV and good coffee, and he is always in search of more time to read, write and take pictures. Most of all, he loves running with Emma, playing ping pong with Andrew, shooting hoops with Eliot and watching his teams with his family, but his favorite pastime has to be holding his wife's hand.

RON RODAK

Follower of Christ, Husband 4Life #truelove, Father of Three #4Ever, and a GrandPops #4EverMore! Building Christ followers for eternity and a NE Ohio sports family fan base for generations to come, one at a time!

STEVE DOERSCHUK

My mom made me join the school newspaper in 1970. A lot has happened since then. Long story short, I'm blessed in family and friends, and hopefully have developed an ear for what He wants out of me.

KEVIN HEWITT

Kevin is blessed to be the husband of Lori and father of Blaine, Hailey and Brandon (son-in-law), to lead the family of ministries at Christian Children's Home of Ohio, and most importantly, to continue learning how to bask in the grace of Jesus while accurately reflecting His grace to the world. In his spare time, Kevin enjoys trying to hit a little white ball where he is aiming, reading anything that inspires, and passionately following the Cleveland and OSU sports teams.

RYAN HECKERT

Ryan is a Jesus follower, a wife lover and a kid wrangler. During the day (and some nights and weekends), he gets to lead an organization that serves and supports adults with disabilities. When not engaged in the aforementioned, he golfs, plays basketball, takes pictures and thinks about survival skills.

JOE FRANZ

My life purpose is to glorify God by bringing His ideas to fruition. I've held leadership roles in the business community, my local church and now at Christian Children's Home of Ohio – a nonprofit. I'm passionate about: my faith, my family and making an impact in our community. Oh, and sports, good coffee and all things marketing/communications. I like to hit the links once in a while and enjoy a good book. If you look, you'll find me on social media too.

WILL VAN NOSTRAN

Born and raised in Canton, 1989 graduate of GlenOak HS and Kent State graduate. Husband to Sue Van Nostran and father to Lily and Drake. Enjoys outside activities and spending time with friends and family.

GARY PORTER

I have been blessed to have ministered to children for 43 years (33 of those with CCHO) and to still be involved with a ministry to children in Ukraine that we helped start 18 years ago. *"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven."* (Matt. 5:16) I pray my life has reflected this passage from Matthew. I wrote to share my story with the hope that other Christian men might find another lonely boy to help along the way, just as Grant did for me.

Some Sobering Stats on Fatherhood

All information taken from NFI's "Father Facts 7" publication. To learn more about the National Fatherhood Initiative, visit fatherhood.org.

In America, 23.6% of children (17.4 million) lived in father-absent homes in 2014. (US Census Bureau)

In Ohio, 26.4% of homes with children under 18 are single-mother homes. In Cleveland, that number is 58.1%.

Cohabitation, divorce and non-marital childbearing are the three primary drivers of father absence. (NFI)

About 41% of children born in the U.S. in 2012 were born to never-married parents. The percentage of births to unmarried women is more than double the percentage in 1980 (18.4%). (National Center for Health Statistics.)

In 1970, 85% of children under age 18 lived in two-parent families, 11% in single-mother families, 1% in single-father families, and 3% lived with neither parent. In 2004, by contrast, only 61% of children lived with married biological parents, 9% lived with two parents who were either unmarried or only one of whom was the child's biological parent, 23% lived with single mothers, three (3) percent with single fathers, and four (4) percent resided with neither parent—usually with grandparents or other relatives. (US Census Bureau)

In 2011, children living in female-headed homes with no spouse present had a poverty rate of 47.6%. This is over four times the rate for children living in married couple families. (US Dept. of Health and Human Services)

Individuals from father absent homes were found to be 279% more likely to carry guns and deal drugs than peers living with their fathers. (Crime & Delinquency)

Father absence makes underage boys more likely to drink alcohol; father absence makes girls more likely to have early intercourse. (Various Studies)

A study of 263 13- to 18-year-old adolescent women seeking psychological services found that the adolescents from father-absent homes were 3.5 times more likely to experience pregnancy than were adolescents from father-present homes. Moreover, the rate of pregnancy among adolescents from father-absent homes was 17.4% compared to a four (4) percent rate in the general adolescent population. (Journal of Urban Health)

Ninety (90) percent of resident fathers shared a meal and spoke with their children about their children's day almost daily, 63% helped their children with homework, and 54% took their children to or from activities throughout a given week. In comparison, 31% of non-resident fathers spoke with their children about their children's day several times a week, 16% have shared a meal with their children several times a week, 10% helped with homework, and 11% took a child to or from activities. (Pew Research Center)

Adolescent boys who had dinner with their family every day were less likely to have had sex before age 16, compared with those who report they eat dinner with their family less than five nights a week. Thirty-one (31) percent of teen boys who reported having dinner with their family every day were estimated to have had sex before age 16, compared with 37% of teen boys who reported that they had dinner with their family fewer than five days a week. (Child Trends)

In 2014, more than 3.1 million children lived with cohabiting parents, which is nearly triple the 1.2 million that lived in such families in 1996. (NFI)

In 2002, about 50% of American children born to cohabiting parents experienced separation or divorce by age 9, compared to about 20% of children born to married parents. (Demographic Research)

19% of youth in stepfamilies and 16% with single parents were exposed to some form of maltreatment in 2013. Only 7% of those living with both biological parents were exposed. (Social Science and Medicine)

In a national survey of 1,533 American mothers aged 18 and older, ninety-three (93) percent agreed that there is a father absence crisis in the United States today, with 67% "strongly agreeing." (NFI)

In a separate survey of 701 American fathers aged 18 and older, ninety-one (91) percent of fathers agreed there is a father-absence crisis in the country (NFI)

7 out of 10 people surveyed believe physical absence of fathers is the most significant family or social problem currently facing America. (NFI)

By age five, nearly two-fifths of children with nonresident parents had no regular contact with their fathers for the past two years. (The Future of Children)

What Others Are Saying About *The Father's Day Miracle*

The book had me at "Cleveland sports fans." Any book that combines fatherhood with the love of sports will be a great read, but what sets "Father's Day Miracle" apart is its ability to help me be a better father, to go far beyond sports to what really matters: impacting the lives of my children.

~Greg Nettle, President of Stadia; Co-Author of "Small Matters: How Churches and Parents Can Raise Up World-Changing Children"

"Nothing is given. Everything is earned." Those words from LeBron James became Cleveland's official mantra, but the stories in "Father's Day Miracle" draw an obvious parallel to fatherhood. Mistakes in life are inevitable, but whether you're overcoming them on the court for your hometown, or doing so in your home for the betterment of your family, it's all a victory in the end.

~David Regimbal, Lead Ohio State Football Writer, Bleacher Report (8/2012 – 2/2017)

The miracle of fatherhood is the only thing that tops the "Father's Day Miracle." These intimate accounts of the challenges and rewards of being a father are guaranteed to stir up a fresh sense of commitment to raising spiritually and emotionally healthy children.

~Pastor Jerry Birch, Team Chaplain, Cleveland Cavaliers

If you're a coach, pastor, dad or Cleveland sports fan, this book is for you. You hold a position of great influence and what you do with that influence has the power to impact generations to come. The stories in "Father's Day Miracle" are powerful and convicting – enjoy!

~Hannah Calhoun, Area Director, NE Ohio Fellowship of Christian Athletes

Fathers have the power to impact their children in profound ways. These stories vividly illustrate the ways kids thrive when their fathers are present and engaged in their lives and, sadly, the ways they struggle without that male influence to provide guidance and direction. We have been delivering programs to assist fathers in meeting both the financial and emotional needs of their children for the past 12 years and have seen the significant difference it makes when children have a productive relationship with their fathers. "Father's Day Miracle" will inspire all dads to invest in their kids and commit themselves to a better future for their families.

~Al Grimes, Director, Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiative

This book highlights the importance of perseverance and patience in the sports arena. The same is true in fatherhood. We must persevere as dads to love our children the way God loves us. And we must be patient with them through those tough years, just as our Heavenly Father is patient with us. I love how this comes through in the stories in this book!

~Kent Evans, Executive Director, Manhood Journey

June 19, 2016 – Father's Day – will forever be remembered by Cleveland sports fans as the night our team won the big game and became champions. The stories in “Father's Day Miracle” highlight that amazing night but, more importantly, encourage dads to be champions in the lives of their children.

~Steve Sanders, Cleveland Metro Director, Fellowship of Christian Athletes; Chaplain, Cleveland Cavaliers; former Cleveland Browns WR (2006-08)

Many of us had great fathers who challenged us to live our lives as influencers for Jesus, but others didn't have a father to teach what it means to be a man. “Father's Day Miracle” offers fascinating examples of both. I would venture to say that disengaged fathers have contributed to many of the problems we see in today's world. If men are the problem, then men have to be the solution as well. I hope you are inspired to use this book to help the men under your influence live out their lives as agents for good in the world.

~Todd McIntyre, Gateway Men's Pastor, Southlake, Texas