



John and Bev Cooper
Field Ministry Leaders
for
Northern California/Nevada

A Calling We Carry Into the Next Generation

What We Gained at the Legacy Grandparenting Summit



Does **Stonebriar Community Church** sound familiar? If you've listened to Chuck Swindoll on *Insight for Living*, you've heard him preach from there countless times. In late March, Bev and I found ourselves sitting in that very church as we attended Legacy Coalition Grandparenting Summit. My two brothers and their wives were there as well. And because my older brother Dave and his wife Terry serve as Legacy Coalition Ambassadors, it was especially meaningful to learn alongside them."

While the Summit featured a number of keynote speakers, several resonated with us in a particular way. Beth Guckenberger spoke on generational faith and reminded us that legacy is something we cultivate through everyday faithfulness. Dave and Ann Wilson encouraged us to live out our faith authentically in front of our kids and grandkids—not perfectly, but honestly. And David Eaton, founder of Axis, helped us understand how today's teens and young adults think and communicate, giving us insight into how to bridge generational gaps with grace. Together, their messages underscored the unique and powerful role grandparents play in shaping the spiritual direction of their families.

With our hearts stirred by those big-picture messages, the breakout sessions helped us think about what this looks like

in everyday life. One session on Long-Distance Grandparenting offered creative ways to stay connected even when miles separate you. Another, focused on blended and step-families, helped us understand the unique challenges children face when moving between two households. These sessions not only encouraged us personally but also equipped us with insights we can share with pastors and leaders across our region.

We left the Summit with a renewed sense of purpose. If you're in the grandparenting season, I encourage you to explore the free resources Legacy Coalition offers. Their weekly Grand Monday Nights webcast is a practical way to grow as an intentional grandparent.

<https://legacycoalition.com/>

We also came home with ideas we can use as we work with churches—especially those with older congregations eager to invest in the next generation. And sharing the experience with my brothers and their wives made the time even richer. I'm grateful to walk this journey with family who share a passion for leaving a godly legacy.



Ministry Begins at Home

For fifty years, God has been writing a story through FamilyLife — a story rooted in the simple belief that His work begins at home. Before there were conferences or resources or national influence, there was a small team who chose to let God shape their own marriages first. That decision became the foundation for everything that followed.

That early conviction — that God's work begins in the lives of His people — shaped the very first steps the team took.

Once the burden became clear, the team didn't rush out to build a national ministry or launch a public campaign. They started with themselves. The first gatherings weren't conferences or large events — they were small, private, and focused entirely on staff couples. These were honest spaces where leaders could admit their struggles without fear of judgment, learn biblical principles many had never been taught, and begin rebuilding oneness in their own homes. It was a humble beginning, but it was the right one. They knew they couldn't offer help to others until they had allowed God to do His work in their own marriages.

Those early days were marked by a kind of quiet courage. It takes humility to look inward before looking outward, and that's exactly what the team chose to do. They opened their Bibles, opened their lives, and let God reshape the way they viewed marriage and ministry. They discovered firsthand that oneness doesn't happen by accident — it takes intentionality, forgiveness, and a willingness to learn. And as they experienced healing and growth, they began to see how deeply marriage impacts every other part of life and ministry.

That season set the tone for everything FamilyLife would become. The ministry wasn't built on polished presentations or expert credentials. It was built on repentance, honesty, and the belief that God restores what feels broken. The team learned early that when a marriage is strengthened, everything else becomes healthier — leadership, influence, and the ability to serve others. That conviction became the foundation of the ministry. **Before we can reach the world, we must let God do His work in us.**

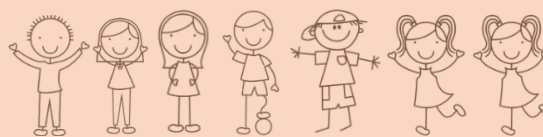
Looking back, it's clear that those quiet beginnings were anything but small. By choosing humility over hurry, the team laid a foundation that would guide FamilyLife for decades to come. Their willingness to let God transform their own marriages first became a living testimony of the message they would one day share with the world. And that simple, courageous choice continues to shape the ministry's heartbeat fifty years later.

*Rejoicing in the
resurrection Christ with you*
John & Bev



Easter has a way of slowing us down. In the middle of full calendars and full hearts, the resurrection reminds us that hope isn't something we manufacture — it's something we receive. The empty tomb tells us that renewal is possible, that God is still making all things new, and that nothing in our lives or homes is beyond His reach.

As we celebrate this season, Bev and I are especially grateful for the quiet ways God brings life where we least expect it. Sometimes it's in a conversation, sometimes in a moment of forgiveness, sometimes in a fresh reminder that we're not carrying our burdens alone. Easter assures us that because Jesus lives, we can face tomorrow with confidence and peace.



FAMILY UPDATE & PRAYER

- Please pray for our upcoming plans for our Spanish *One Day to Remember* in the fall. We are still trying to land a host church that works with our speakers' schedule.
- Please pray with us for those who want to be part of the ministry but are unable to serve directly, that God would lead them to come alongside us through their financial support.
- Please pray for the Lake Tahoe *Weekend to Remember* on the 17th—that God would meet the couples right where they are and strengthen their marriages in ways only He can.