

How Howard and Harvey Katz came to Christ

Two



Jewish Brothers

by Herman Goodden

Harvey Katz's book, *Becoming a God Magnet*, is an engaging and at times very funny account of how he received Christ as a young Jewish teenager and the lessons he has learned over the years about what works and what doesn't work in sharing one's faith. His follow-up study and discussion guide offers to church and home groups a program to guide participants in methods of effective personal evangelism.

Howard Katz, quite independently, came to Christ a few months after Harvey, at the age of 20. His book, *Seven Essential Relationships*, examines the seven stages of development in a believer's relationship with God, as seen in the seven essential steps a potter would take to fashion a clay vessel. The book includes the testimony of his coming to faith in Christ and many candid illustrations from his own life.

For readers of both books, there is a particular fascination in seeing how these Jewish brothers came to accept Jesus and how they dealt with their father's shocked disapproval to this radical change in their lives.

Here are some of the Katz brothers' responses to my questions about their life and faith:

HOWARD: When my brother finally brought himself to tell my father that he had received Christ, Dad felt it was just a foolish phase and that I, as his older brother, could quickly straighten him out. Little did he know that by this time, I had also

received the Lord. One day while I was in the bathroom brushing my teeth, Dad came to me and said, "We've got a problem with Harvey. He's under Christian influence." I almost swallowed my toothbrush! I didn't want to deny Christ but I wasn't yet ready to confess Him. I just kept the toothbrush in my mouth. My dad kept

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talking and I kept brushing until finally he tired of the one way conversation and left the bathroom. And that was how I learned about Harvey's faith in Christ.

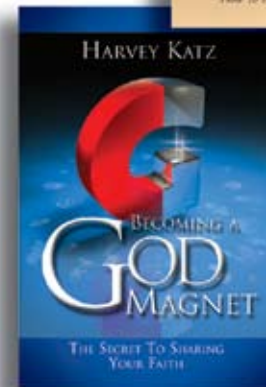
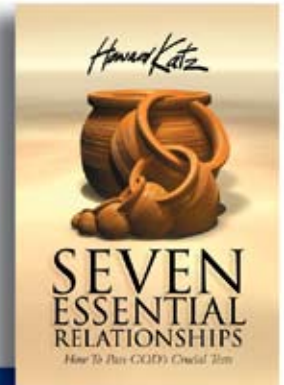
HARVEY: What brought me to Christ was the law. My Bar Mitzvah at age 13 had caused me to try hard to be a good Jew and to keep God's laws, but the more I tried, the more I seemed to fail. I was seeking righteousness, but I felt I was never going to be good enough. I thought Christians had the same requirement—only they substituted Jesus for God and also had to be "good enough" to make it into heaven. When I came to faith in Jesus, there was such a relief for me to know that He actually redeemed me from all my sins. But I was afraid to tell anybody what I had done, especially Dad. When I finally told

him, he was absolutely devastated. That was heartbreaking for us. We loved our dad. This wasn't an act of rebellion.

HOWARD: Dad was hoping I'd be the key to winning Harvey back but eventually I told him, "I believe it too." It was very painful. We were both in tears. There was a lot of anger there and disappointment but our dad loved us so much that he didn't reject us as his sons. One day I said to him, "Dad, if what I believe is not true, my life will bear that out. And if what I believe is true, then the good in my life will bear that out also." He nodded at me in agreement. He eventually became more accepting of our new faith and, late in his life, he too accepted Jesus as his Savior and Messiah.

Books by the Katz brothers:

Howard's "Seven Essential Relationships" tells us how to pass God's crucial tests.



Harvey's "Becoming A God Magnet" is a powerful guide to effectively sharing Christ with others.

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Howard Katz is the pastor of Open Door Christian Fellowship and Harvey Katz is a popular speaker and Bible teacher. Both are sons of a Holocaust survivor. Visit their website at KatzBrothers.org, or find their books on BelieveBooks.com and at bookstores everywhere.