

A KISS BROUGHT BACK A SON

Joe Bayly, a Christian author and minister, had a son named Tim who was not following the Lord. This caused great tension in the home until one day Joe told his son he had to move out. Taking Tim aside, he said, "Tim, you're not living for God and you need to leave our home." Tim left, but his spiritual rebellion broke Joe's heart.

Tim moved to Wheaton, Illinois, where he rented a house with a group of musicians and artists. Late one night, Joe got a phone call. "This is the police," the voice said. "Your son has been arrested on drug charges, and we have him here in jail." Joe got out of bed and drove a half hour to the jail where the man on the phone had told him his son was being held. But no one there had ever heard of his son. Joe thought he had driven to the wrong jail, so he drove to several other jails trying to find Tim. Nothing.

Finally, around 2:00 a.m., Joe decided to go to Tim's house and see if he was there. The front door wasn't locked, so Joe entered and began to go from bedroom to bedroom looking for his son. He found Tim upstairs, fast asleep. Joe walked over and knelt by Tim's bed. Shaking him awake, Joe asked, "Tim, are you all right?"

Tim awoke and, seeing his Dad frantic with concern, answered, "Yes Dad—I'm all right. Why? What's wrong?"

Joe told Tim how someone had called in the middle of the night saying he was in jail. Then Joe and Tim kissed each other goodnight, and Joe drove home.

Years later, Tim had returned to Christian faith, and in a conversation with his Dad, Tim explained how God had used that night as a key part of bringing him back to faith. "Remember that night when you got a call that I was in jail?" he told his father. "Dad, I'll never forget you kneeling next to my bed, kissing me, and telling me you loved me."

Joe's love, both in discipline (making his son leave the home) and tenderness (going out that night to find him, kissing him, and telling him of his love), were used by God to teach Tim of the love of his Heavenly Father for sinners like himself.

Joe died over twenty years ago, but in the years between Tim's return to the Lord and his Dad's death, they shared wonderful Christian fellowship together, even working together in ministry. Today, Tim is a pastor in Indiana.