

## Praise for *Go Outside* . . .

This book is a wonderful exercise in showing that gospel-centrality and practical advice are not at odds with one another. Jared and Becky Wilson have brought together biblical wisdom, theological reflection, and practical experience to deliver the reader wise and sound council on variegated topics—ranging from friendships, money, marriage, the local church, and more. This book reminds readers that who God is and what He is doing in the world impacts every facet of our life, and the Wilsons are the right couple to draw our attention to this cosmic reality.

### RONNI KURTZ

Assistant Professor of Theology at Cedarville University and author of *Fruitful Theology: How the Life of the Mind Leads to the Life of the Soul*

*Go Outside* is a treasure trove of wisdom for all present, future, and even former twentysomethings. It is filled with wit, written from a loving heart, and has the markers of battle-tested wisdom from years of serving this age group. The Wilsons also excel at blending practical advice with sound theology. Some chapters address the complex relational nuances of early adulthood (finding a mentor, being the only young person in a church, wanting to be married) while others plumb the depths of crucial doctrines and apply them to the Christian life.

### TONY MERIDA

Pastor, Imago Dei Church, Raleigh, NC

Hope this works—I remember my twenties and desperately wondering where I could find a manual on “How to Live Life,” and Jared and Becky have managed to write something that’s pretty close to a true guide. This book is full of gospel-fueled truths, practical advice, humor, and real-life applications for not just young adults but anyone who has the pleasure of reading it. Hand this out to your kids, your graduates, your grandkids, your friends, and maybe spend some time in it yourself for a good dose of wisdom for life.

**ANDREA BURKE**

Director of Women’s Ministry at Grace Road Church

Jared and Becky have given us a blueprint for the well-lived life that manages not to read like a religious rulebook but a hopeful, Jesus-centered vision for how to get the most joy out of the life God has given. It’s clear, honest, taut, and to the point. I can’t wait to share it with folks!

**JIMMY NEEDHAM**

Singer-songwriter, speaker, and pastor

Jared and Becky draw from years of life and ministry to offer sage wisdom for the emerging generation. Humorous and instructive, but full of gospel-driven encouragement, *Go Outside* should be dropped into the hands of teens, students, and young adults who desire godly, but never preachy, insights for the soul.

**RONNIE MARTIN**

Lead Pastor of Substance Church in Ashland, OH, and coauthor of *Pastoring Small Towns*

As one who considers myself to be very indoorsy, the title of Jared and Becky Wilson's new book felt like a personal attack. In all seriousness, I have always considered Jared to be the gospel-centered Yoda, and with the wit and wisdom of Becky as the coauthor, I am grateful the gospel-centered convictions are being applied to very practical life to help a generation of young adults live a life that brings glory to God and flourish. "While you have the energy, use it to serve and to love," the Wilsons tell us in the book, and we need a generation of Christians to take this call seriously. This book is fun, honest, practical, serious about the gospel, and directed toward a demographic often overlooked in Christian conversation. I'm excited to have our twenty- and thirtysomethings in our church read it together in small groups.

**DEAN INSERRA**

Pastor, City Church Tallahassee; author of *The Unsaved Christian*, *Getting Over Yourself*, and *Pure*

Jared and Becky have poured valuable wisdom into these pages with authenticity, transparency, and biblical accuracy. The next generation needs to look to their example because they show us how to look to Christ in practical and relatable ways. I can only wish that this book was written when I was in my twenties, but find great joy that countless lives will have this godly insight for one of the most foundational seasons of life.

**COSTI HINN**

Teaching Pastor, Shepherd's House Bible Church; founder and president, For the Gospel

As the parent of two teenagers, I've learned that if someone besides me tells them the same thing once that I have told them one hundred times, they actually listen to the other person. So thank God for those other people! In *Go Outside*, Jared and Becky are those other voices who share clear, blunt, biblical, practical wisdom for young people in the vein of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. They point young people to Jesus with actionable, encouraging steps. I am eager for my daughters to read this book and to get it in the hands of young adults at our church to help them live faithfully for Jesus.

**BARNABAS PIPER**

Pastor and author



**GO OUTSIDE**

**& 19 OTHER KEYS  
TO THRIVING  
IN YOUR 20s**

**JARED C. WILSON & BECKY WILSON**

MOODY PUBLISHERS  
CHICAGO

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For our daughters, Macy and Grace





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# Introduction

(Jared)

**My favorite movie** when I was ten years old was *Back to the Future*. It remained my favorite movie for a long time, all through my high school years. Even if you haven't seen it, you're likely familiar with the basic plot: Marty McFly finds himself in Doc Brown's DeLorean time machine going back to the 1950s and, after some inadvertent mishaps, must make sure his teenaged parents fall in love in order to save himself and his family. The main idea of the movie, it seems to me, is that the hero must preserve the past to preserve the present. But as Marty discovers in the end, changing the past doesn't just preserve the present, it improves his future.

## GO OUTSIDE

This book is our DeLorean. Of course, it's a lot cheaper. And it's not as cool. (You aren't as likely to impress your friends toting this thing around as you would cruising around in that sweet ride.) But we're looking at this project a bit like that DeLorean. It is a time machine thought experiment of sorts, imagining how we might change the past to improve the future.

Becky and I have been married now for twenty-seven years, and we've learned an awful lot about relationships, largely through making plenty of mistakes along the way. We have two college-aged daughters, and we've learned a lot about parenting in all our years of raising our girls, largely through making plenty of mistakes along the way. We have served in ministry for thirty years now, and we've learned a lot about grace and spiritual growth by—you guessed it—making a lot of mistakes!

I once heard a preacher say he found the land mines in his church by stepping on them. That really resonates with me!

So we imagine: If we could go back and intervene in our past, if we could talk to our younger selves, what would we say? What advice would we give ourselves?

We got a chance to think intently about this when the student leadership staff at Midwestern Seminary and Spurgeon College in Kansas City, Missouri, asked us to come give a talk to students on what we wish we'd known when we were their age. Becky

and I each made a list of three things, and we took turns talking through each item. That project blossomed into this book.

We enjoy a great life today, and we work hard in the present at making sure our future is oriented around the things of God, the things that matter most and matter eternally. But that doesn't mean if we could go back we wouldn't help ourselves avoid some of those land mines. That's what we want to do for you.

So we want you to get in this poor excuse for a DeLorean and go for a ride with us. Along the way, we'll offer some hard-won advice from the trenches of real life. And we'll listen to some of the biblical writers who had a chance to counsel younger people they were discipling and mentoring, including at least one speaking to his younger self.

*Back to the Future* is just a movie, of course, and a fantasy movie at that. None of us can change our pasts. But we can help you preserve your present and even improve your future.

Now, I've often thought about what my past self would do if my present self could go back and talk to him. I would really want my past self to listen to the me from the future. But if I'm honest, despite the desperate need I would have to avoid so much I'd be warning myself about, I'm a little worried that I wouldn't really listen.

How about you? Are you listening?

