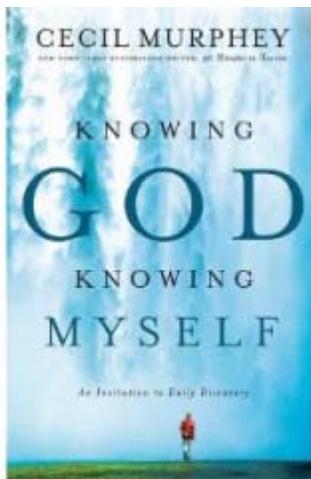




Cec has had a busy schedule lately. He's happy that he can now enjoy a period of relaxation.



Regal will release Cec's newest book later this month. If you enjoy the stories in Cec's monthly newsletter, you'll appreciate *Knowing God, Knowing Myself*.

## Unconditional Love?

*Unconditional love* has become an almost-meaningless phrase. If we talk about God's absolute love, that's different because nothing we can say or do diminishes the divine love toward us.

But what about human relationships? Is our love truly without restrictions? I doubt that most of us offer unconditional love because we tack *should* behavior on others and expect them to behave in a particular way.

Unmitigated love doesn't mean being unaware of others' weaknesses or failures. It doesn't mean we harass them until they change. Unreserved love means we're committed to care for them and desire them to become perfect, and we also accept the reality that they'll never make it.

For example, Shirley and I have three children and we love them. We could dissect their individual personalities and behavior traits. No matter how they behave or treat us, that won't change our commitment. We hurt when they make mistakes. When they were growing up, they sometimes did things that brought sadness to us. But their actions didn't diminish our love.

When our oldest, Wanda, was perhaps five years old, I refused to let her have something she wanted badly. She put her hands on her hips and screamed, "I hate you!"

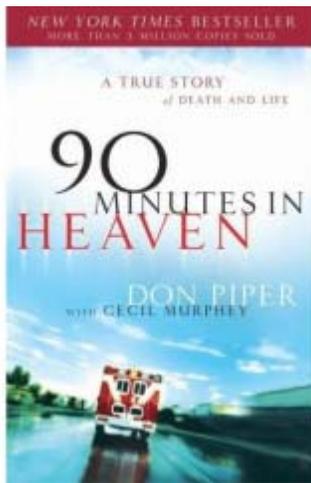
I knelt and put my arms around her and said, "I love you."

Seconds later she cried and said, "I don't hate you."

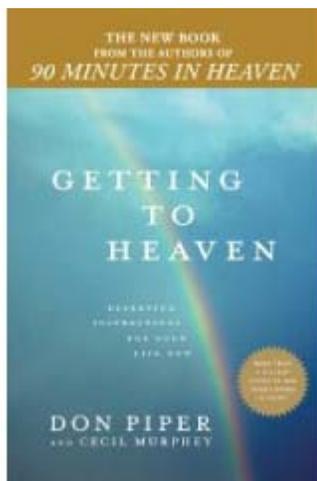
I told her I knew that.

That memory remains vivid because it was the first time I realized how it felt to have no conditions or restrictions in my feelings toward my child. I was able to say, "I love you" even when she seemed to reject me.

I think of a powerful statement in the Bible. "Long ago, the Lord said to Israel: 'I have loved you, my people, with an everlasting love' " (Jere. 31:3). The prophet



*90 Minutes in Heaven* is in its 5th year on the *NY Times*' bestseller list, and a feature film is in the works. Learn more about Don Piper's story when he joins us December 7 on the *Cec and Me* show.



The long-awaited fourth book by Don Piper and Cec will finally be available March 1.

wrote those words to let them know that although God had sent them into exile for seventy years, he had not

stopped caring for them.

Maybe we see so little unconditional love because we expect positive responses from others, especially when we open ourselves to them.

We may never get those positive words or actions. To continue to love without seeing results may be the real test of whether we stipulate or insist that another please us.

When God says he loves us, he never adds the word *but*.

I want to follow that example.

## Personal News

—By the time you read this I'll have appeared as a guest on *Time for Hope* TV program in Spartanburg, SC.

—This month, Regal publishes my new book, [\*Knowing God, Knowing Myself\*](#). This is a book of 70 of my best original sayings. Here's one example: *My attitude toward others is an excellent measure of my own self-acceptance.*

— [\*90 Minutes in Heaven\*](#), in its 5<sup>th</sup> year on the *New York Times*' best-seller list is now #21. The producers are almost ready to start filming. They have the money and someone is finishing the script.

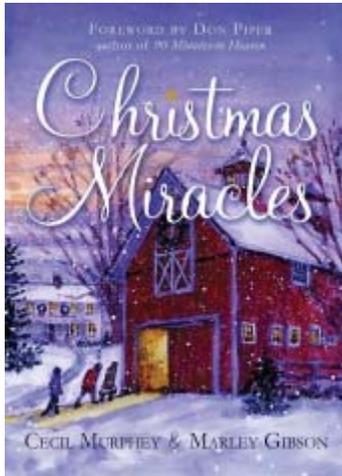
—The fourth book from Don Piper and me, [\*Getting to Heaven: Departing Instructions for Your Life Now\*](#), comes out in March. Crossings Book Club will make it a featured selection; three other book clubs will make it an alternate selection.

—Hallmark has published an abridged edition of [\*Christmas Miracles\*](#) that Marley Gibson and I did for St. Martin's Press.

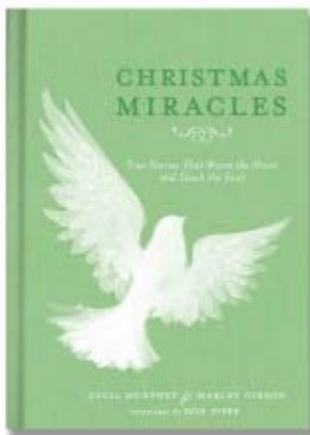
—I'm home reading and refocusing until February. I'm reading two to three books a week. I'd forgotten how much I could enjoy being home with no pressure.

## The Twila Zone—Words from My Assistant, Twila Belk

Instead of sugarplums dancing in your head, are your Christmas visions filled with warm, sunny days on a luxury ship cruising to places such as Puerto Vallarta,



This book is now available in electronic format for \$2.99. Christmas miracles will be our topic for the December 14 *Cec and Me* show. Do you have a Christmas miracle you'd like to share?



Hallmark has published an abridged version of the original *Christmas Miracles* book. It's available in many Hallmark stores nationwide.

Mazatlan, and Cabo San Lucas? Are you a writer or aspiring writer who wants guidance? Have you wanted to spend one-on-one time with Cec Murphey and other

writing mentors? There's still time to put the

[Sailing Toward Success Christian Writers Cruise](#) on your Christmas list. The sign-up deadline is Friday, December 10.

We've had many fascinating guests on the [Cec and Me radio show](#) since we began in October. Our past programs are available on podcast through the [Cec and Me website](#) or by downloading from iTunes. We're especially excited about our upcoming December shows. On December 7, Don Piper will join us. It's a rare treat to have Don and Cec together at the same time. We'll discuss how Don connected with Cec to write what became the bestselling book (and soon-to-be feature film) [90 Minutes in Heaven](#). If you've wanted an opportunity to tell Don and Cec how their books have impacted you, or if you have questions for them, now's your chance. We encourage you to call in with questions and comments.

On the December 14 show, we'll talk about Christmas miracles. Have you or a loved one of yours experienced a Christmas miracle? Call in and share your story.

The [Cec and Me show](#) is streamed live on Tuesday nights, 7 CT/8 ET, at Toginet. The call-in number is 877-864-4869.

To get you in the Christmas miracle mode, here are a couple of stories from Cec's book [Christmas Miracles](#).

[My First Christmas](#)

[Poinsettias from God](#)

Later this month, Regal Publishing will release Cec's newest book, [Knowing God, Knowing Myself](#). I read the manuscript and was impressed by Cec's wisdom and transparency. I think it's my favorite Cec book yet. If you enjoy Cec's inspirational stories in his monthly newsletters, you'll really appreciate [Knowing God, Knowing Myself](#).

**[Links that might interest you:](#)**

[Cec's blog for writers](#)

[Cec's blog for male survivors of sexual abuse](#)

[Cec's website](#)

[The Cec and Me radio show website](#)

[The Cec and Me Facebook page](#)