



## Who Wrote It? Pastor Keith Mannes on "Becoming More Holy"

### Introduction

Have you ever finished reading your daily *Today* devotion and wondered what inspired the author's thoughts and reflections? If so, our "Who Wrote It" feature is just for you. Listen to this podcast interview and follow along with the transcript below to learn more about this month's author and what he hopes you might take away from this series.

### Listen to the Interview

[>Introducing Pastor Keith Mannes on "Becoming More Holy"](#)

### Interview Transcript

**Josh DeGroot** – Welcome to todaydevotional.com's *Who Wrote It*, where we get to know our Today authors better and understand the inspiration behind their writing. Joining me on the line from Michigan is Pastor Keith Mannes, who has written September's Today devotional. Keith, thanks so much for coming on.

**Keith Mannes** – Thank you for having me. Appreciate it very much.

**Josh DeGroot** – Now admittedly, this was one of my favorite months of writing because I felt like I really grew to know Ron as a person. I mean, it is a nice, continuous story of his life. Ron is a troubled man, you could even say a wild man, who needed a knock on his door and a friend to guide him back to the Lord. This month is about your friend Ron's story and his sanctification. What inspired you to write about Ron's journey?

**Keith Mannes** – In our little core group of a church, as I refer to it, we had a lot of steady Christians, people like Angie and Tim, and there was a young girl named Cindy, and they really had a fairly steady walk with the Lord already. But when Ron came into my life, and then with him, Dick and Andy, they were just very different. I myself actually have lived a very sheltered life in the faith, and so when Ron came into my life, and the other guys, too, they were just very different. You know, they just really expanded my world – they just really lit my world up, actually. When Ron came into the core group of our church, of probably anybody in our core group, he always seemed to me – seems to me now – to be the one who came back into his faith from the farthest distance away. So, he was just a little more out there; he was such a wild rebel with his life, really, and he seemed to have such epic wrestlings with God, and he had so many philosophical questions. That is what I think makes this story so interesting.

**Josh DeGroot** – People are going to begin to know Ron when they read this month's devotions or listen to the podcast, but what about Ron's story, in your opinion, will make us think about our own story? I mean, what do you want us to learn about sanctification in our own lives through September's Today?

**Keith Mannes** – I am glad you asked that because I was a little worried when people would read about it. I mean, first of all, it is different. Most Today's are just one day at a time – one devotional. But what happened is—when I wrote, I wrote one about Ron, and then I said: Oh, that reminds me; and then I wrote another one about Ron; and then all of a sudden I thought: Wait a minute; what if we just wrote one complete story through the month. And I thought, well okay, let's do the subject of sanctification; but when you read through the whole month, Ron reminds us that it is possible to sincerely believe in Jesus and yet wildly struggle with how to live that and how to believe that in the world. It is a very messy thing. Sometimes as Christians we have these great impulses when we think about God or Jesus or church. We think we are going to run around and clean everything up and then we will do a couple things and then we will be really sanctified...

**Josh DeGroot** – Right.

**Keith Mannes** – But I think that Ron is a very clear reminder that it is possible to have Jesus in your heart and yet be very unclean and appear sometimes very unrighteous; and I think that is an important lesson for us as Christians to remember.

**Josh DeGroot** – Yes, he is a very real person. That is how I feel; Ron is a real person with real problems. Did you feel as Ron’s pastor that you had more of a responsibility to preach to Ron and to teach to Ron? Or did you think: You know what, Ron just needs a friend, and if we got into deep biblical discussions like we have, then so be it; but Ron just needs a friend.

**Keith Mannes** – That is really an interesting question. I think at the time I felt the need to teach Ron; like I thought that was my job, to teach Ron, and thankfully we had a big enough relationship and a deep enough relationship that I was his friend also; but I think even as I look back I would probably dial it down and let more of just the friendship and acceptance be first. I mean, that was always there, but I think I always thought I had to angle the conversation somehow to a teaching moment....

**Josh DeGroot** – Right.

**Keith Mannes** – But I think that now I would really just—I don’t know—put it in a different zone if I could a little more.

**Josh DeGroot** – Off the top of your head, one of your favorite moments with Ron.

**Keith Mannes** – It would have to be just at his house grilling out with him. He had this great big, huge grill. I mean, he was just a carnivore to the max; and he was a chef like crazy. And so we would just have fun. He would just invite me over and he would be happy and he would be loose. Those were the moments when I thought: You know, this is good – this is how it is meant to be. We are just two believers in Jesus together enjoying the blessings of God together; and he was just in his zone. He was happy and I was always glad for that.

**Josh DeGroot** – Awesome. Well, I think this month is terrific because it is one continuous story; it is thirty devotions, but it is one story of your connection with Ron and your friendship with Ron, and I think our Today audience is really going to appreciate it. So, thanks so much for writing, and thanks so much for joining me.

**Keith Mannes** – Well, thank you.

**Josh DeGroot** – He is Pastor Keith Mannes; I am Josh DeGroot; together let’s get inspired and refresh, refocus, renew at [todaydevotional.com](http://todaydevotional.com).

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*Printed on October 27, 2020*