



We caught up with Jeff Lucas - inspirational speaker and author leader - for our exclusive interview. Find out why he thinks it is important for people to laugh in church and how his devotional guide *Lucas on Life* helps us live every day.

Why Jeff Lucas is serious about learning by laughing

Jeff Lucas is late. Not just a few minutes, but a rock star-like couple of hours. It's not his fault that the traffic snarled up so badly he's arrived with minutes to spare. But when you're trying to get to the church on time, one would understand it if he was just a little bit stressed.

He's not. He strides into the room, appearing an oasis of calm. Although Jeff later admits he is really 51, he looks every inch the 27-year-old he jokes is his actual age. And instead of venting his frustrations on the traffic that caused his late arrival, he's used the time to catch up with his daughter in a 40-minute phone call.

'I realised that with the schedule I keep and the pressures I have, I make deliberate time and make myself available [for my family],' he says. And Jeff's schedule is demanding: an international preacher with a tendency to laugh at himself, member of the Spring Harvest leadership team and author of numerous books, DVDs and daily Bible reading notes. As if that's not enough, his day job is one of the pastors of Timberline Church, Colorado, which has an attendance approaching 10,000.

To cope with the demands of his ministry, Jeff tries to play as hard as he works. This summer saw him take his first proper holiday in a couple of years, but he does have friends with whom he says he can 'celebrate moments'.

'I do think it's possible to have a vacation in two hours, if you're with the right people,' he adds. 'Laughter and fun and enjoying a great meal together can have a rejuvenating effect.'

With Jeff's ministry taking him to all corners of the globe, you would imagine that there would be moments when he'd long for the quiet life of a more normal pastorate. He admits that there are, as a small group of people can be supportive: 'When you are their leader they love you, they appreciate you, they pray for you, they encourage you,' he says. But, he acknowledges, it has its downsides too: 'As all leaders know, that ownership can create criticism and conflict.'

Jeff does have a supportive congregation, thanks to the thousands of people who have read one of his books or follow his Bible notes *Lucas on Life Every Day*: 'When I'm in need of encouragement or having a rough day, someone pops up with an e-mail, a phone call or a letter - I feel like I have a congregation walking with me.'

Life Every Day started a couple of years ago and is published by CWR, who also produced Selwyn Hughes' devotional *Every Day With Jesus*. It's typical Lucas: straight-talking, practical and, at times, laugh-out-loud funny. 'I'm not into precious thoughts or devotional moments, I want to help people live their lives for God,' he says. 'I always want it to connect with Monday morning and not just Sunday morning.'

If you like the notes you would really love to hear Jeff preach. At times, it's like watching a stand-up comedian. 'I believe that laughter is one way in which we can take faith incredibly

seriously because when you laugh at something it's because you've got the punch line, it's the learning mechanism,' he reveals. 'Also it's good for you and its fun. I'm passionately committed to fun before death.'

And that's Jeff in a nutshell: passionate about serving the Lord seriously, but ensuring that he enjoys himself along the way.

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Lucas on Life Every Day is written bimonthly by Jeff Lucas, to help you apply the Bible to your everyday life. Through laughter and tears, and his customary wit and wisdom, Jeff will help you to gain daily insight, understanding and practical application from God's Word. Expect to be challenged, encouraged and entertained!



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