



# Faith Walker

*Actor Chuck Norris is best known as a world-class martial artist and action star (see Cordell “Cord” Walker on Walker, Texas Ranger). But Norris also has a passion for Christ and is an outspoken supporter of U.S. troops stationed overseas. Eric Tiansay recently spoke with Norris, 68, for Today’s Pentecostal Evangel, about faith, fitness and the “Chuck Norris Facts.”*

**tpe:** Tell us your story of accepting Christ as Savior.

**NORRIS:** I grew up in a Christian home. I accepted Christ as my Savior and was baptized when I was 12 years old. My mom is a devout Christian, and she made sure my brothers, Wieland, Aaron, and I went to church with her every Sunday. But when I got into the film world, I drifted from my faith and enjoyed the deceptive fruit

of fame and fortune. It destroyed my first marriage. Fifteen years later, I met my second wife, Gena, who has strong faith very much like my mom. Gena led me back to my faith in 1998. Thank You, God.

**tpe:** What difference has Christ made in your life?

**NORRIS:** Many people believe if they were rich or famous, it would make them happy. Take it from me, that is not the case. The harder I worked to be richer or more famous, the bigger the hole got in my heart. Not until the Lord said it was time to come home did that emptiness in my heart finally heal. Since that time, I seem to be known more worldwide than I had been during my *Walker* series. The Lord has been very gracious and forgiving to me.

**tpe:** What is your favorite Bible verse and its significance?

**NORRIS:** Proverbs 19:21: “Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.” Example: I always thought I would be teaching martial arts the rest of my life, but the Lord had bigger plans for me.

**tpe:** Tell us about your current workout routine.

**NORRIS:** My workout consists of 20 minutes on the Total Gym, stretching, bag work (heavy and speed bags), martial arts (chun kuk do and jujitsu). It takes about two hours total. Two days a week, I do all my kicks in the swimming pool.

**tpe:** How many kids have gone through KickStart, your school-based program that gives

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Chuck Norris has met with more than 37,000 troops in Iraq.

**at-risk children a focus point in life through the martial arts?**

**NORRIS:** To date, almost 60,000 children have graduated from KickStart, with many of them going on to college and becoming successful in their own right. Seven KickStart students have come back after graduating from college and are now teaching in the program. Next to my family, KickStart has been the most rewarding part of my life. If God had not blessed me with success in the martial arts world and the film world, I could not have started this program.

**tpe:** How challenging is it to be a Christian and work in the entertainment industry?

**NORRIS:** I personally did not find it difficult to be a Christian or conservative in the

entertainment industry. The bottom line: All that is important to them is if you can do the job and make them money.

**tpe:** What was a favorite memory from your military movies?

**NORRIS:** If I had to pick, it would be working with Lee Marvin, who was a decorated Marine in World War II.

**tpe:** If you were to make a military movie today, what would it be about?

**NORRIS:** I wouldn't. I've been there and done that.

**tpe:** Do you miss having a TV show?

**NORRIS:** I miss the cast and crew, but I don't miss the 16-hour days. Of course being a confessed workaholic, I'm busier now than ever. I am currently

writing a book called *Black Belt Patriotism*, which deals with restoring the American dream. I also write a weekly article for WorldNetDaily, which has just been syndicated through Creators Syndicate. And I started a new sport league. Between that and being a husband and father to our 6-year-old twins, my schedule is full.

**tpe:** Why do you think *Walker, Texas Ranger* was so popular?

**NORRIS:** *Walker, Texas Ranger* was successful because it was a series the whole family could sit down and watch. It had enough action so fathers would watch, but not so much that the kids couldn't watch. Plus, the relationships between Walker and Alex Cahill along with the humor of C.D. Parker appealed to women. CBS wanted me to

go two more years, which would have been a total of 10 years. But Gena was pregnant with our twins and I knew it was time to call it quits. Eight and half years and 204 episodes was enough.

**tpe:** Tell us about joining the U.S. Air Force as an air policeman in 1958.

**NORRIS:** I joined the Air Force right out of high school. I was sent to Osan Air Base, South Korea, where I got my first exposure to the martial arts. When I came back to the States, I was a black belt in tang soo do and a brown belt in judo.

**tpe:** How did you acquire the nickname "Chuck"?

**NORRIS:** I acquired the nickname in boot camp. A Hispanic friend said to me, "Do

you know the English name for Carlos [Norris' real first name]?" I said, "It's Charles." He said, "The nickname for Charles is Chuck, and that is what I'm going to call you." And it stuck. My family and close friends still call me Carlos.

**tpe:** How did you feel receiving the Veteran of the Year award from the U.S. Air Force in 2001?

**NORRIS:** It was a great honor to receive the award. The military turned my life around in a positive way. It helped me grow up and accept responsibility.

**tpe:** How many times have you visited Iraq, and has it changed your perspective on the war?

**NORRIS:** I've gone to Iraq twice with the Assistant

Commandant of the Marines, Gen. Bob Magnus. The first time was in October of 2006, visiting 11 camps and again in September of 2007, visiting 17 camps. I had the privilege of shaking hands and taking pictures with more than 37,000 troops. I saw a lot of positive progress on my last trip that I did not see on my first trip. It was something I will never forget. I am hoping to go to Afghanistan in the next year.

**tpe:** U.S. military public affairs officer Spc. Mark Braden recently said from Baghdad, Iraq, "Norris visited Iraq when violence was its worst and other celebrities were skittish. He's one of the guys." Your thoughts on his comments?



Walker, Texas Ranger remains popular with military audiences.

**NORRIS:** That is a great compliment, and I appreciate that they feel that way, but I am not the one putting myself in harm's way like they are. They are the true heroes, and they should be treated that way when they come home.

**tpe:** What was it like when you were made an honorary Marine on March 28, 2007?

**NORRIS:** Gen. James Conway, Commandant of the Marines, invited my wife and me to his home in Washington, D.C. It was an incredible surprise and honor when he presented me with the Honorary Marine Certification.

**tpe:** Staff Sgt. Amy Forsythe recently said from Fallujah, Iraq, that "the Marines love [Norris]." Why do you think Marines and military people relate to you so much?

**NORRIS:** I have no idea, but what greater compliment could anyone ask for!

**tpe:** What did you tell our troops in Iraq?

**NORRIS:** I talked to thousands of them, and I told them how proud we were of them and that we are constantly praying for their safety.

**tpe:** How do you feel having such a large pop culture following?

**NORRIS:** You must be talking about the "Chuck Norris Facts."



When this started a few years ago, I got some of these facts e-mailed to me. I read some of them and laughed. They were pretty funny. I thought this would only last a few weeks, but it caught on with the college crowd, then the high schoolers, the middle school kids, all over the world, and finally with the military. I saw "Chuck Norris Facts" all over Iraq. They were in the barracks, outdoor toilets and my name was even on the barrels of fighter tanks. I consider

it a great compliment to be reconnecting with the young people not only in America, but all over the world.

**tpe:** What do you want to be remembered for most?

**NORRIS:** As a man who gave back more than he received. A man who loved God, his family, friends and country and that KickStart will be my legacy. **tpe**

E-mail your comments to [tpe@ag.org](mailto:tpe@ag.org).



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