

Turning The Hearts Of The Fathers To The Children

Becoming a player/coach in the Kingdom of God, one practice at a time



practice 1

“See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse”

(Malachi 4:5,6).

Grandfathers: God’s Player/Coaches

From a biblical perspective a grandfather is a **player/coach**. He role models and mentors a *way of life* for His family that is pleasing to God (see Psalms 103:17). When you reflect on the various commands—the *responsibilities*—which God has set for grandfathers and fathers regarding their families, you can break them down into three categories:

1. To direct them to live according to the way of the Lord (Genesis 18:19).
2. To role model for them how to serve as our Lord’s ambassadors (2Corinthians 5:18-20).
3. To lead them to heaven (Revelation 20:12,15).

As you’ll see in this first “practice” and in upcoming ones in this series, *Turning The Hearts Of The Fathers To The Children*, grandfatherhood is a heart issue that longs to lovingly fulfill every responsibility God requires of a man toward his family. It’s as if each generation of grandfathers purposes to make their family’s generations a “winning season” in our Lord’s sight. Yet for so many reasons we grandfathers have endured one *losing season*—each generation of children—after another.



I’m using the Kingdom-related **player/coach** understanding of you as a grandfather to help you fulfill the three criteria I listed above: to direct, role model, and lead. In the Kingdom of our Lord you’re both a *player* on the team even while at the same time you’re *coaching* the team—your family.

Victory for you and for the generations

to follow comes from: •obeying your heavenly Coach; •excelling in practicing the skill sets He teaches us from His holy Playbook; •and playing with no regard for yourself, but always looking to the interests of others.

“If we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment”
(1Corinthians 11:31).

1970	2013	1960	2012
40%	19%	5%	41%
Households comprising a married couple with their children.		Births to unmarried women	

It’s time for us grandfathers to be honest with ourselves and face the fact that it’s *we* who produced the losing seasons (generations) that are rampant in this nation. It’s *we* who allowed and proliferated the sensually oriented, fornicating and adulterous mindset that has made inroads in just about every family. *We grandfathers* allowed marriage to lose its sacredness. Today virginity has become a subject of mockery because *we* failed to treasure and protect our daughters.

Generations of grandfathers have brought a curse on this nation by failing to lead the way in ensuring that the three God-given criteria we cited earlier are the distinguishing characteristics of their family life. As a result, wickedness has proliferated, and as Jesus prophesied, the *love* of most people has grown cold

You’ll see throughout these practices quotes by well-known coaches and athletes. Although not always *biblically-based*, the wisdom of the statements make them *biblically-related*.

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(Matthew 24:12). We are a nation of the emotionally self-protective, hiding in digital-technogadget caves. The issue for us grandfathers is this:

If the hearts of fathers are turned to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, would our God remove the curse? (Malachi 4:5,6). Shouldn't we at least humble ourselves and try for the sake of our children and their progeny?



“God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong”
(1Corinthians 1:27).



This year (2015) Sue and I have been married for 45 years. But we almost divorced after 24 years of marriage, just before our Lord revealed the Hebraic foundations to us. We adopted our son, Mike, in 1975 when he was 2 years old. I certainly wasn't the greatest Dad. In fact, I'd give myself an F+ as a father. I committed myself too fully to my naval career, and then later to ministry.

Career and ministry far outweighed my family life. So you're not being "coached" by a man who claims prowess as a father. The man you're hearing from is 69 years old, someone who learned the Hebraic foundations when he was 47. By then our son had already left home. We had "churched" him diligently but missed modeling the *love and servant heart of Christ* for him. So it's no surprise that he's wanted nothing to do with what our Lord is restoring to His people through the Hebraic foundations.

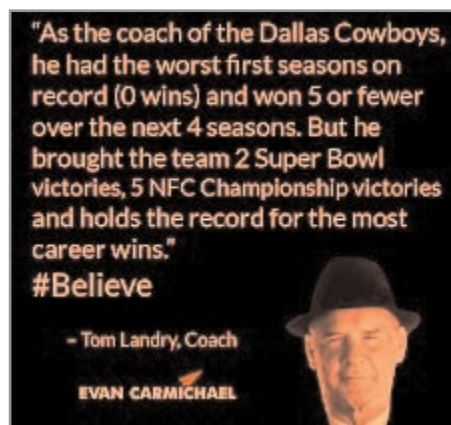
That my heavenly Father chose Sue

and me to share the Hebraic foundations isn't because we'd done it right in our lives. All His Spirit told me was, *"If you remain repentant, I'll continue to use you."* Even my Mom once told me, "You're the dumbest of all my children, and that's why you need the Lord more." Her words inspired my faith walk!

Just a thought for you to consider before we go further. If you're like many Christian men, you *hold other people's past sins and mistakes against them*. It makes you feel better about yourself and/or allows you to discount anything they have to say. I mention this because I'll be sharing my own shortcomings in these practice sessions. Just know that when the Holy Spirit has convicted me of my sins, I've repented. So I want to warn you that it's dangerous to hold a repentant man's past against him, especially when He's learned the Lord's ways as a result of it.

Maybe you're a man who *lives with regret* over your own past moral or personal failures as a father. This isn't the way of our Lord, nor is it any advantage to you to harbor regret. Regret says to our Lord Jesus that He isn't big enough to grow roses out of your crap. He was addressing this very point of not looking back with regret when He warned us: *"No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God"* (Luke 9:62).

In Christ, when you fail to execute a play in His Kingdom, you repent and move forward!



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Coaching fathers of any age to willingly fulfill EVERY responsibility our Lord requires of them
www.restorationministries.org

I've given you these points now because as you go through these practices, you may think there's no way I can help you with your own family mess. I'll tell you this right now: King David was an adulterer and a murderer, but *he repented*. And God could say about him, "*I have found David son of Jesse a man after My own heart; he will do everything I want him to do*" (Acts 13:22). A repentant man is always a man after God's own heart!

As a grandfather you may, like me, have screwed up royally in raising your kids. And as they've gotten older and become adults themselves, you feel trapped by your past failures as you observe their selfish lifestyles and their minimal or non-existent respect for you. Part of the curse of our "losing seasons" (generations) in this nation is that a *pandemic pursuit of individual rights* has replaced any sense of duty and personal responsibility. We grandfathers need to face that we've spawned generations of *ingrates* (spiritual bench-sitters).

Do you remember the old movie, *The Red Badge of Courage*? It takes place during the American Civil War and chronicles a young private of the Union Army, Henry Fleming, who flees the field of battle. Overcome with shame, he longs for a wound, a "red badge of courage," to counter his cowardice. When his regiment once again faces the enemy, Henry acts as standard-bearer and turns the tide of the battle. [A grandfather who has snafued his family *but repents* can become such a hero in the Kingdom!]

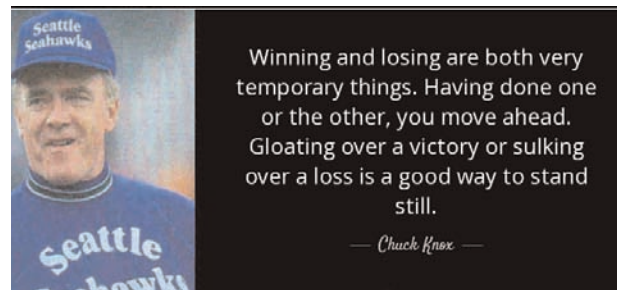


If you've messed up like I have, you too need to seek the Lord's "red badge of courage" and turn the tide of your hell-bound family and relatives. Don't you think that the God who made all the universe and knew you before you were born

is big enough to make good out of your sins and mistakes IF you repent? Both through gaining wisdom in Christ and acquiring wisdom from mistakes you've made, blunders aren't defeats—unless you let them plague you with regret.

[We wrote our series *Repentance Leads to Christ-like Character* (free at our website) based on this biblical principle of what our Lord can do *if you repent* rather than live in regret.]

One Way of Obtaining Wisdom: *Learn From Your Wrong Decisions*



Did you know that many of the top-notch CEOs in this country fell flat on their faces several times before they learned the skillsets that would enable them to be successful? In our Lord's sight, your failures and even your past sins can be important learning lessons, especially if you feel the pain of your failures and repent. (And I don't mean self-pity.) His power and grace can change everything you screwed up if you don't imprison yourself with regret.

Regret gets you nowhere with our Lord or with those you've failed. Regret tells our Lord that He isn't big enough to correct your past mistakes. And regret tells those you've failed not to have any hope that you'll ever change, and that you'll just hurt them again.

Japan Airlines Flight 2 was piloted by Captain Kohei Asoh on November 22, 1968. The plane was a new Douglas DC-8 flying

from Tokyo International Airport to San Francisco International Airport. Due to heavy fog and other factors, Asoh mistakenly landed the plane in the shallow waters of San Francisco Bay, two and a half miles short of the runway. None of the 96 passengers or 11 crew were injured in the landing.



"I've learned that something constructive comes from every defeat."

Tom Landry

When asked by the NTSB about the landing, Asoh reportedly replied, "As you Americans say, I f***ed up." He offered no excuses. Demoted to First Officer, he went through further ground schooling, and continued to fly for JAL until his retirement. Even the plane was repaired and returned to service.

The lesson for us older men with families: EVERYTHING with our Lord Jesus is redemptive. This requires you to *take full responsibility*, taking to heart that you screwed up and sinned: (1) Confess your sins/negligence so our Lord knows that *you* know you did wrong. (2) And repent, resolutely seeking His way and by His grace making right according to the commands in His Word (see Acts 26:20).

"At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was Your good pleasure" (Luke 10:21).

I know that many books and videos have been produced by so-called 'hero' pastors who seem like they've done everything right. But does anyone ever hear from their wives or children to see how the man is as a husband or father?

My question is: If clergy have been at, or near the top of occupations plagued by divorce for decades now, why are they writing about what *others* should do when they don't acknowledge their own failure? I'd rather hear from them ***after they repent*** and can reveal the wonder of what our Lord has done to grow roses out of their marriage manure.

Please take notice of this important point. Many of the clergy-written materials on family life might have been helpful on the *front end* of your marriage when you were young and just about to become a father. But if you missed out on these writings as I did, the purpose our Lord Jesus has me writing these practices and biblical skillsets is for men who've fallen flat before our Lord and their family. If you'll allow my input and are willing to *put into practice* what our Lord Jesus requires of you, HE can make something good out of your family mess.

I'd like to offer a little more about the "foolish" man our Lord recruited to share the Hebraic foundations. Sue and I became followers of Jesus during our 7th year of marriage when I was 30 years old. Like everyone we knew in the faith, we leaned on our local congregation leaders to spiritually train us and our son. We didn't see our home or our family life as the central place for spiritual development.

Also, I benefited during my years of schooling (1950-1968) as I found that my teachers supported the same moral values my parents had. But there was nothing in my education that was *Christ-centered*, nor was I raised to live with Jesus as Lord of my life. (In fact I didn't know *anyone* who lived that way.)

I was 29 when I began to read the Bible for the first time. I read it through twice and then gave myself to Jesus as Lord to rule my life no matter what it cost me. My earlier experi-

ences during 3 deployments to Vietnam helped me see that Jesus has great regard for those who trust Him as Lord—something very different than people who *know about* Him through studying the Bible and are content with that. He uses people who are *dead to themselves* and alive to Him (1Peter 2:24). You can't just add His life to your life. It just doesn't work! I realized that you die to *your* life and take on all of *His* life and purpose. War requires the same selfless conviction!

“Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time”
(Daniel 11:35).

After we'd been following our Lord for six years, I became administrator/teacher at a retreat center/farm where we remained for almost 11 years. We led retreats and ran the farm while I counseled church leaders and Sue taught conversational English to wives of international students. Our lives were like *two parallel railroad tracks* running in the same direction but with very little energy or love left in our marriage.



Then our Lord “tricked” us into going to Israel. We arrived there in December 1993, broken and planning on getting a divorce. Years of individual ministries living like parallel railroad tracks had left us empty toward each other. Coincidentally we received prophecies of our Lord's further use of our marriage: we would return to the U.S. with a *prophetic message for the Church*. It seemed weird to us.

A month later in Israel we attended a prayer conference and met 40 other men whom God had brought to Jerusalem after they too had stumbled in ministry.

As we 40 men talked with each other, we found we all had one particular past sin in common: **we had all become wise in our own eyes** (see Isaiah 5:21). In the beginning of our various ministries we trusted our Lord completely. Then we began to depend on ourselves. Our Lord was kind enough to rip each of us from our respective ministries and bring us to Jerusalem to refine and purify us.

Within 3 months after we arrived in Israel, the Lord had not only healed our marriage but also given us the Hebraic foundations to share in the U.S. Even though He had called us to make these known, I really didn't feel prepared to do that when we returned stateside.

The revelations about the earliest Church which our Lord gave us in Israel and which He wanted restored was overwhelming for Sue and me. Everything we'd been taught in churches and in seminary had *nothing in common* with what He showed us. We were so distraught over having believed so many lies that I'd often say we could have floated Israel on the tears we'd shed there. All the truths He revealed that He wanted restored to His called-out ones contradicted all we'd ever been taught. And the more we understood the faith practices and relational priorities our Lord gave the earliest Church, the heavier our hearts became.

When we arrived back in the States, we spent two weeks organizing our notes at my cousin's house in Miami before returning to Connecticut. I continued to be haunted by the feeling of failure for not having known these truths earlier. I kept thinking of the 5,000 people who'd come through our retreat center those 11 years, and how I felt I'd let them down by not knowing these key truths earlier.

On our last night at my cousin's house, I had a really intense dream. In it I was brought to Mount Horeb, the Mountain of Desolation. As I stood on the mountain top I

heard the Father say, "Mike, I've desolated you for several years, removing that which was not like My Son. Listen! I never wanted you to know these truths before this time. Now, GO and FREE the captives!"

He then told me to wake up Sue and tell her about my dream. As I woke her up, she was having a dream too! "I was on a mountain top that was a flat plateau. Behind me was darkness and steep, jagged rocks that represented my past. But ahead of me, light was growing brighter and brighter like the dawn! I heard a voice saying, 'Press on into the light. You can look side to side to see who's going with you, but you can't go back.'"

We both knew that God had given us these dreams to encourage us to press on and share what He is restoring. On our way back to Connecticut we stopped for a day at the home of one of my former seminary professors. We spent hours discussing what our Father had revealed to us. Then he slipped out of his chair to his knees and said with regret, "We've been teaching students nothing but lies for years."

The Hebraic truths of the first century Church are foundational to living in *relational intimacy* and *spiritual power*. I believe that as you follow along in the practice lessons to come, you too will be convinced that our Father is restoring a Kingdom-serving community of those He has called out of the world's system and ways. Through putting His truths *into practice* we may be able to undo the curse on this nation. But it has to begin with a father turning his heart to a child. Keep our Lord's words to us as your guide:

"Press on into the light. You can look side to side to see who's going with you, but you can't go back."

Please keep in mind that I'm *not* trying to help you improve your family life, but rather to coach you to be the **play-**

er/coach who helps them by grace to get to heaven as they live in service as our Lord's ambassadors. You may be a grandfather who's comfortable in retirement. You may feel like you've turned the final leg in your life and there's nothing more you can do to change your family. BUT, will you *and* your progeny even be welcomed into heaven? And if you think they will receive that welcome, what do you base that on? Are *your* reasons for why they'll be welcomed the same criteria on which our Lord will base *His* acceptance of your family?

I've met only a handful of grandfathers who are leading their family to heaven. Most are instead satisfied that their offspring are doing well by the world's standards and goals.

In the coaching lessons to follow I hope to help you be a man who lives determined to see *all* your progeny with Jesus as *Lord of their lives*, the only type of "Christian" who is acceptable to Him. When you live this way, your lives are a testimony to *His power to change you* and the power to *be His blessing to others*.

"The reason I brought you to Israel is that the children of divorce in the United States are breaking My heart."

Near the end of our time in Jerusalem I was sitting on the wall in front of *Dominus Flevit*, the church which commemorates where Jesus wept, located halfway down the Mount of Olives. In the greatest depth of sorrow I'd ever experienced I heard my heavenly Father impress those words above into my heart.

Soon after our return to the States we read a longterm study on the effects of divorce on children. Tragically, the most prevalent and relationally destructive effect on kids is this:

“They can never let themselves fully belong to other people.”

In other words, children of divorce erect around themselves an *emotional safeguard* to keep from being hurt again. In this nation are an overabundance of devastated children of divorce who *need fathers* to turn their hearts toward them.

It’s important to recognize from the last verses of the Older Testament that fathers must respond to God by *turning their hearts* to children, and vice versa—the ongoing struggle of multiple generations. Yet our Lord requires this very necessary relational responsibility of each generation:

“...turn the *heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers...*” (Malachi 4:6).

Keep in mind that the correct translation is “to *the children*,” not “to *their children*.” You need to extend your *grandfather’s heart* to whatever children there are in your life who need your loving concern and involvement. We’ll talk about this more in upcoming practices.

“I will show you what he is like who comes to Me and hears My words and puts them into practice” (Luke 6:47).

The Bible is the “**Coach’s Playbook**” written by the Great Coach Who expects you to *put into practice* every skillset He requires of you. He has graced you by His Spirit to do that! You can’t be on His team and just ride the bench.



He’s called you to play with particular focus: to achieve spiritual victory for both yourself, your children, and their progeny.

In the next practice, I want to discuss the nature of your opponent. Succeeding

practices will reveal to you to the specific *biblical skillsets* you’ll need to practice yourself as a player/coach. You’ll especially need to focus on *why* you must acquire a specific biblical skill. The *reason why* is what will make you and your progeny value and carry out that skill.

When you know the *reason why* and can instill the *reason why* into your children and their children,

“They call it coaching but it is teaching. You do not just tell them... you show them the reason.” *Vince Lombardi*



you will have developed the foundation that makes everything else you put into practice worth the effort. The *reason why* is the bedrock of what you value in life. And what you value in life sums up to reveal your life goals. You first have to answer the *reason why* before you get into the ‘whats’ you need to learn.

Many years ago evangelist Ray Comfort related a story similar to this one:

A man who was about to get on a plane was told he’d have to wear a parachute . No further explanation was offered. Well into the flight, the discomfort of the parachute got too much for him so he took it off.

Another man about to board was told that he’d have to wear a parachute because at any moment there may be trouble with the engine and he’d have to jump from 25,000 feet. He hugged that chute the entire flight!

You as a player/coach better know the *reason why* before you try to help others. The *reason why* changes everything in the Kingdom of God.

**“Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—
put it into practice.**

And the God of peace will be with you” (the apostle Paul in Philippians 4:9).

You can most effectively use these practice lessons by discussing them with others close to you who want to intentionally and purposefully make God's commands their *way of life*.

Find at least one older man (perhaps a relative or fellow congregant). Deliberately involve your wife and offspring. Your *discussion* can lead to **70% retention** by each of you. And your resultant actions—*those skillsets you put into practice*—will result in **90% retention**. Through your purposeful discussions the Spirit of our Lord can equip each of you in your mutual endeavor to *do your Father's will* (Matthew 18:18-20):



1. To live according to the way of the Lord (Genesis 18:19).
2. To serve as our Lord's ambassadors (2Corinthians 5:18-20).
3. To be ultimately welcomed into heaven (Revelation 20:12,15).

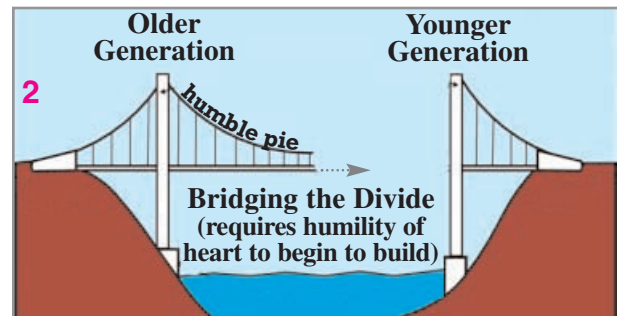
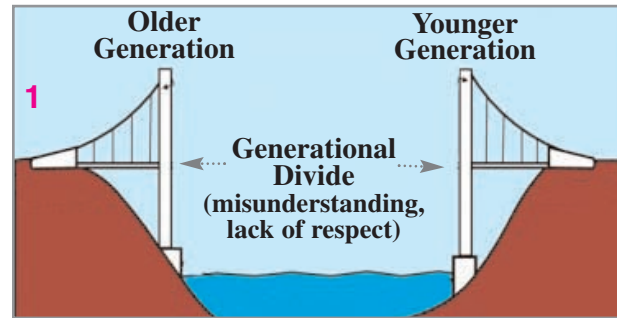
As for your past neglect to live with Jesus as your Lord and to coach your family to live likewise, you need to *ask forgiveness* from Him and them. Then you need to *put into practice* a way of life that both reveals His Lordship and ultimately leads to eternity in heaven for everyone. Any goal less than these will lead to sorrow both now and for eternity.

As a grandfather you'll need to *persistently pray* for the love of Jesus to be the force behind all your motives and actions. The Lordship of Jesus and eternity with Him in heaven are powerful weaponry to erase worldliness and the self-gratification which dominate your progeny. Ultimately, the end will be heaven or hell for each and every one.

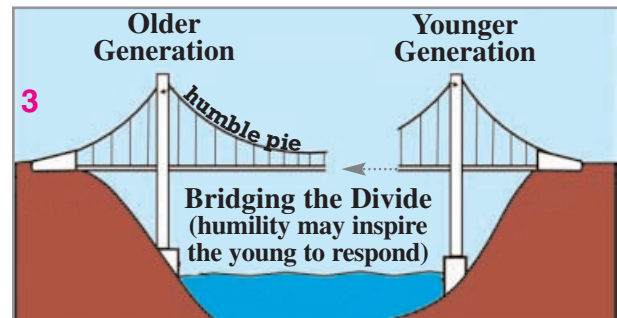


Be a Repairer of the Broken Bridges

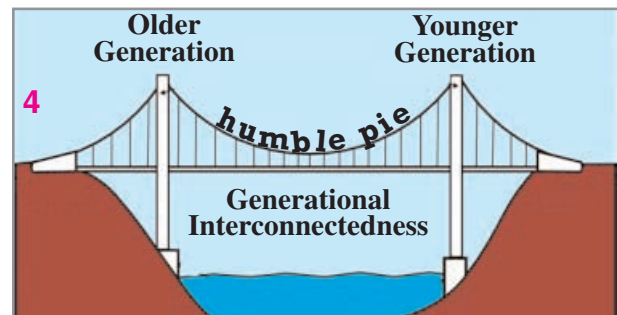
Be a grandfather who turns his heart to the children and helps the children turn to him.



To eat *humble pie* is to ask forgiveness for your failures and/or offenses.



"All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.' Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time" (1Peter 5:5,6).



Several excellent older movies depict the focus and loving determination you'll need to turn a difficult family situation around:



12 O'clock High



The Sands of Iwo Jima



Away All Boats

We encourage you to view and discuss these movies with your family and other men who are purposing by Father's grace to do everything He requires of you. These movies have many mature biblical principles in them even if they aren't overtly "Christian" in presentation. They also reveal some *unbiblical* choices made by a few of the characters, and the severe consequences of their unwise actions. (We accessed these films through our library and through Youtube. You may have other avenues we aren't familiar with.)

Use these movies as training tools, putting yourself into the various characters. Pause the movie when you need to so you can discuss the implications of the characters' choices for your own life. The Hebraic method of discipleship (coaching) is based on *direct experience*, the way Jesus role modeled and taught His disciples, and the way Paul trained his. *If*, for some reason, direct experience is impossible, then you can effectively use *simulation*. A movie that's used for discussion and application is a simulation. Direct experience and/or simulation are the best means you have to experience what living with Jesus as your Lord looks and feels like.

Again, when you aren't able to learn through direct experience, simulation is the next best coaching/training tool. Be sure that as the player/coach, you *put yourself* into the simulation and don't just lecture others about what *they* should do. Prayerfully persist until the skillsets are practiced and become a God-glorifying way of life for each and all of you!

"Push yourself again and again. Don't give an inch until the final buzzer sounds." *Larry Byrd*



Fathers, **grandfathers** included,
are responsible to the Lord
to ensure that their
children are trained (coached)
to live with Jesus as their Lord.
Til the day he dies, fathers and
grandfathers are responsible
to both the Lord
and to their progeny.
Nothing less is acceptable to Him!