

# Turning The Hearts Of The Fathers To The Children



practice 2

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

*“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).

**“If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.”**

Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

(a high-ranking military general, strategist and tactician)

Each sports game is like a mini-war—someone’s going to lose and someone’s going to win. Each team has its own plays and training regimen to enhance their chance of being the winner. Training develops and perfects skillsets along with the necessary mental stamina so the team not only plays well together, but WINS!



During my high school years I played both soccer and doubles tennis. Soccer expanded my awareness of being part of a *cooperative endeavor* with other people—10 other teammates on the field. The sport required a lot of headwork so that *you positioned yourself to be of best advantage to the rest of your team* as the ball moved around the field. As a freshman I played defense for several games and found I didn’t like it; I’d rather be on offense. The coach gave me a chance to play offense, and that’s where I played for 4 years, loving every moment of taking it to the opponent.

Doubles tennis was an incredibly different experience. As a freshman I was paired with a junior named Glenn. An avid student of the game of doubles tennis, Glenn was always reading about different tactics and strategies. He was my **player/coach**—a per-

fectionist both during practice and during the match. For example, when I served the ball he would give me signals behind his back indicating exactly where in the service box he wanted me to put the serve. If I failed more than his standards allowed, he’d make me practice over the weekend until I could hit a one square foot target on the court over 90% of the time.

Glenn had another asset as my **player/coach** that my soccer coach didn’t. During a match he’d have both of us *analyzing the play* of our opponents, constantly looking for weaknesses we could exploit. For instance, we might find early in the match that one of our opponents had a weak backhand, so we would play more to that. Or, one or both opponents had anger and frustration issues, so Glenn would make the most of their self-destructive attitudes.

When Glenn graduated, I became **player-coach** to a freshman named Rich. Because of the mentoring that prepared me to mentor, all four years I was part of the #2 high school doubles teams in Connecticut. Through doubles tennis I learned a lot about myself, but equally as much I learned to observe people in greater depth, whether friend or opponent. [The team that beat us all four years had an indoor court to practice on. I wonder how we’d have done if we’d had one too!]

***“For your struggle is not against other people, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the demonic powers of evil in the heavenly realms”***

(paraphrase of Ephesians 6:12).

From the day the Lord Jesus sent His first followers out to take on the demons (Matthew 10:5-8; Luke 10:1,17), followers of Jesus have been engaged in an intense battle of demonic proportions. Yet the awareness within Christendom that there's even an invisible demonic war taking place against Christians has diminished over the centuries, one of the devilish schemes Paul speaks about in Ephesians 6:11. The apostle was so aware of this very real battle that he prayed for the people who had become blind and corrupt *“that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will”* (2Timothy 2:26).

The idea of “church” as so many Christians in this nation understand it is a safe place for them to go and enjoy a positive religious experience. But our Lord sees things from a vastly different perspective. And understanding *His* view is as far apart as eternity in heaven is from eternity in hell.

**To our Lord Jesus, His Church (Greek *ekklesia*) are all the called-out ones His Spirit has recruited out of the world system to be reborn into His Lordship and empowered to extend His Kingdom on earth. These are the beloved slave/servants of their Lord and Master, and for Him they are *sold out, poured out, and therefore often left out by unbelieving relatives and neighbors. These brothers and sisters of our Lord have counted the cost and chosen to serve Jesus as Lord of their lives and to lay themselves down for others. Eternity in heaven with their Lord is their more than sufficient reward!***

- Based on this description, do you consider yourself a “called-out one” of Christ?
- If not, why not? How is your faith walk different than being sold out, poured out, and even left out because of your obedient trust in Him?

- Has it occurred to you that you and/or members of your family may already be taken captive by the devil (2Timothy 2:26)?

If you consider yourself as belonging to Jesus, then you *are* automatically engaged in a struggle against principalities and powers—demons of various rank. You didn't ask to be opposed by Satan and his minions! *They* asked to agitate and torment you! Both Peter and James offer these heads-ups about Satan, commanding us to first *be submitted to our Father* and then by faith to *keep resisting* the enemy in his painful attacks on you:



*“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, Who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast”* (1Peter 5:8-10).

*“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you”* (James 4:7).

If you belong to Jesus *as Lord of your life*, have no doubt that you're facing an evil opponent who will do everything within his power to thwart you and your family on your pilgrimage toward your salvation—eternity in heaven! Satan and his hoards don't care *how* they stop you. They'll try non-stop to keep you distracted, doubting, depressed, and defeated.

Because he fully recognized that you *could* be overcome by Satan and his schemes (see Revelation 13:7), Paul issues this unyielding, ongoing directive to you:

*“• Be on your guard; • stand firm in your trust; • be men of courage; • be strong”* (1Corinthians 16:13).

- Does being *courageous and strong* describe you and the other older men close to you in the faith?
- Do those who know you consider you a man of courage?
- Do they see you understanding the nature of your demonic opponent and knowing how to resist him and gain victory over him?
- Do you train others to do likewise? If not, why not?

**“Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers”**  
(James 1:16).

Our sin nature is always lurking quietly within us, trying to get us to give in to the enemy’s temptations. Therefore it’s appalling that for centuries clergy have minimized or totally refrained from spiritually arming their flocks against their opponent in the eternal battle for their souls. Too many clergy cajole, **“Don’t pay attention to Satan, just focus on Jesus!”** But the reality of the devil and demons shows up well over a hundred times in the Bible. And our Lord Who is so concerned for our eternal destiny made sure we understand that heaven isn’t the automatic shoo-in that many within Christendom who’ve been deceived by Satan erroneously believe.

You are on a pilgrimage to heaven from the moment you’re born again. It’s a journey through the demonic territory of the world’s system which opposes our God (see James 4:4). Satan’s fiends are at work struggling against your spiritual progress and are always looking for your weaknesses and for vulnerable areas in your family.

It’s wonderful to know that our Lord *wants* you to gain entry into heaven through your ongoing, loving trust in Him and what He has done to justify you before our Father! And how amazing that

by His grace He has given you the means to fight and have victory over the demons, for both you and your progeny! That’s why it’s so needful for you to know the deceitful nature of your demonic opposition which is determined to keep you from your goal to be with Jesus forever.

Keep in mind that your enemy is constantly seeking to defeat you by getting you and/or your family members to abandon your pilgrimage to your salvation. By *not* knowing enough about their strategies, you may find that both your defense and offense are ineffectual.

“Ineffectual” is a wretched understatement. But this describes much of Christendom since Emperor Constantine (AD 272-337) seduced the called-out ones of Christ into a political/religious system of rulership. Up until Constantine, followers of Jesus were on the frontlines of a spiritual war for the souls of mankind—and winning! Constantine turned the Lord’s Kingdom into a state-sponsored religion, consequently changing the players into passive bench (pew) warmers.



Over the centuries and even more so today, very few older men know how to fight the demonic opposition that’s arrayed against them and their families. As you listen to the news each day you hear how the demonic power of Islam is battling and conquering Christians throughout the world. Where is the power that Jesus promised His own? The answer is sadly simple:

**Constantine changed the course of Christendom from being Spirit-led empowered Kingdom-extendors, into docile pewsitters in a man-made religious system which emulated the organizational struc-**

ture of Rome's government. Religious leaders were determined that "Christians" be kept in the dark about the Holy Spirit's power because the authorities exerted institutional power over them. So common churchgoers were unaware that through the Spirit they could effectively war against their demonic opponents by faith.

For centuries the team that was supposed to win through our heavenly Coach failed to achieve victory over the demonic opposition. Instead they've allowed the demons to tell them how to play: "**Stay on the (pew) bench.**" You've encountered this. If you speak to any of these bench warmers, they'll tell you what team (congregation) bench they sit on. But they *have no testimony* pointing to their struggle and victory for the Kingdom on behalf of their heavenly Coach.

**Bench warmers hide out in "church" buildings while the true warriors of our Lord are on the frontlines everyday to engage the demons and free people who are held captive by them.**

*"You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the One Who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world" 1John 4:4).*

If you're willing to fight for your family, you have the opportunity for victory because the Spirit of our Lord Jesus is within you. His Spirit in you and your knowledge of how you in Christ can defeat the enemy and free those your opponent holds captive will prevail *if you* have the will to fight. Only *your love* for our Lord and for the souls of those you care about can cause you to be a man after our Lord's own heart.

**If you fail to understand the opposition and refuse to engage in the struggle for the**

**souls of those you care for, you and they will become spoils of satanic victory. If you give way over and over to the "one who is in the world," you'll fall away from our Lord and become an eternal trophy in hell (see 2Peter 3:17.)**

I fully realize that many of you retired older men can't wrap yourself around the reality of eternal life and death. All I ask you to do is humbly get on your knees and ask our Lord Jesus to enable you to see this life and death battle through His redemptive eyes—and then *do what He requires of you* as His soldier and servant.

The demons have been on offense since they were thrown out of heaven (Revelation 12:9,17). And since Christianity became an organization instead of the living body of our Lord Jesus, they've had to do very little defense in their struggle against Christians. In fact, their evil work is made even easier as shown by a recent study that *65% of Christians* don't believe that demons or the devil even exist. So why would anyone in Christendom struggle against an opposition they don't even believe is real?

My heart breaks over their disbelief in light of what the **Coach's Playbook** reveals. Christians, especially older men, are living like eternal losers with their heads up their backsides!

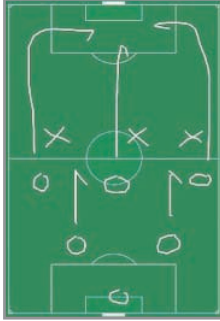


***"To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne"***

(Revelation 3:21).

Like a coach before a game reviews with his team the opponent they are up against, in this Practice and several to follow I'd like to review various types of

demonic opposition that you've been up against in raising your family. You may be oblivious to some of the demonic opposition's strategies. Nonetheless, demonic principalities for some time have been doing all they can both *within* and *outside* Christendom to undermine the importance of **player/ coach** fathers. And most older men were so preoccupied with their own life pursuits in this world that they were blindsided about the strategies being used against them and now their offspring.



**Coach's Insight #1:**

***"Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light"*** (2Corinthians 11:14).

If you're a man who's convinced from God's Word that demonic forces really are arrayed against you and your family, I'd like to clarify a key misperception for you. Satan's most effective means of gaining victory is through *subterfuge*. In sports terms it would be like an opposing coach

sneaking some of his players onto your team. Seems impossible? In spiritual terms we've seen the master deceiver send those he has control over into worship services to influence the people there. Here are a few horror tales which may help you identify some of our opponent's deceitful strategies:

- During our 10+years teaching at a retreat center in Connecticut, when we had the opportunity we'd visit local congregations that used our facility. One faith fellowship in particular we really enjoyed taking part in and we visited when we could. One weekend following a men's retreat at our center, there was a time for sharing. So many men stood up and recounted wonderful testimonies about our Father's faithfulness!

Two months later we visited that congregation again. NOT ONE MAN stood up with a testimony. I bowed my head and prayed, "Lord, what's going on here? Why is there no testimony from the men?" I heard the Holy Spirit respond, **"Two women with the spirit of Jezebel have come here to inspire fear in the men. Look to your left and you'll see them."**

As I looked, about five people away I saw these two women sitting together. "Lord, do I have the power to bind their influence here?" He answered, "Yes, you do." As I prayed in my spirit, binding their influence in the name and authority of Jesus, I turned toward the two women. They were grimacing at me and gnashing their teeth!

After the service I went to the elders of the congregation and told them what had happened. One elder told me that the women had begun attending about three weeks earlier. He then admitted that that was when the testimonies from the men ceased.

- As part of our retreat ministry I counseled church leaders. On one occasion a man (call him Tom) came for advice. He was bat-

Red: The Demons	Blue: The Saints
<p>(1). Christians like to believe they're on one side—the good side—while the demons are on the other side.</p>	
<p>(2). The reality is that demons <i>are mixed in</i> with us. They're in our <u>homes, schools, workplaces, congregations</u> and even in our <u>souls</u> if we don't demolish them.</p>	

ting sexual temptation as he counseled a woman who'd recently begun attending his congregation. We talked for awhile and he left.

Several weeks later our family happened to attend worship at this congregation. At the end of the service there was a time of prayer ministry. The elders took up positions in the front. Because so many desired prayer, they asked me to help. As I stood next to Tom, a woman came up for prayer. She walked toward me and the Holy Spirit spoke to me, "This is the woman Tom mentioned to you. She was sent here by Satan to seduce him. Pray for what she asks but do nothing more." When she walked away I turned to Tom and said, "That's the woman you mentioned to me a few weeks ago." Amazed, he asked, "How did you know?" I told him what the Spirit had briefed me regarding her satanic mission of seduction. Her cover blown, she was never seen at that church again.

- I remember an incident in which the influence of a demonic spirit was revealed in a certain large congregation. In 1983 a local news channel reported that 2,000 satanists were moving into wealthy Connecticut to take it for Satan. In one congregation the pastor's wife, who had a gift of discerning spirits (1Corinthians 12:10), had a check in her spirit about a woman who'd been attending. Within a year this woman had become head of the Sunday School program.

The pastor's wife kept praying with uneasiness about this. During a time of congregational worship one Sunday, she saw a grotesque demon sitting on that woman's shoulder. Horrified, she went to her husband and the elders and insisted they look into this. When they met with the woman, she admitted that she'd been sent into the congregation by the satanists to water down the Sunday school curriculum.

- Another example of *potential* demonic incursion into a congregation came while I

was an elder. One Sunday morning I went before the service began to the greeters at the doorways. I asked them to start every Sunday praying the blood of Jesus over the doorways so that no spirit except the Spirit of Christ would be welcomed.

After several Sundays I asked the greeters to report to the other elders what they'd observed. "Some people would get out of their vehicle, walk right up to the door and then turn around and drive off!" I'd been trying to persuade the elders that more *gate-keeping* needed to be done to keep our gatherings from being infiltrated by demons. They were now convinced.

Demons gain access to many homes through what are called "**household idols**"—images, paintings, carvings and the like that carry with them a curse on the people living there. Even malevolent, violent or sensual TV shows, movies, and other media like the internet that defy God's commands in the Bible provide entry for demonic agitation. An example:

- We had friends whose teenage daughter was in five head-on crashes in one year but sustained only minor injuries in each. Her distraught parents came to us because they were questioning God why this kept happening. We told them about the possibility of household idols in their home. They immediately went through their house and found numerous things which they then burned. (For instance, a friend had given them a souvenir voodoo doll from Haiti.) Thereafter neither they nor their daughter experienced a car accident.

***"A man who remains stiff-necked after many rebukes will suddenly be destroyed—without remedy"*** (Proverbs 29:1).

- One Sunday morning during a time of testimony and prayer, a man went forward with his family standing next to him. He relat-

ed how they'd been in a major car accident together. While their vehicle was a total loss no one was seriously injured.

As he asked for prayer I bowed to seek the Lord for His wisdom and perspective on the situation. I heard His Spirit speak within me, "*I did this to him because of the detestable things he does in his own home.*" After the service I went to the elders and told them what the Spirit had said.

That afternoon they went to this man's house. Later one of the elders called me, saying it wasn't only what the man did in his home, it was also the vile things he had in his home. But the man refused to repent. Two weeks later we visited the congregation again, and the same man and his family went forward. This time he tearfully reported that fire had destroyed his entire home. (Out of love our Father sometimes allows His "severe mercy" to bring people to repentance.)

- On another occasion I visited a man whose family wanted to be part of our home fellowship family. When I entered his house he was on the phone. Sensing deep spiritual darkness in the home, I went into the bathroom to bind the influence of the demons in the house. As I prayed, a demon began to choke me saying, "You have no right to bind us; *the man* has invited us here." I told the demon that while I was in that home I had authority in the Name of Jesus and ordered it to not interfere. The demon released my throat.

Later as I talked with the man, I recounted what had happened in the bathroom. He bowed his head in sorrow and admitted how he'd let his family listen to raunchy music, watch indecent TV programs, and use other ungodly materials in the home even though he knew they were wrong. With a sincere heart he repented. And later so did his whole family when he told them what happened. A lot of stuff went out the door that day!

When I came back to visit two weeks later, the home was filled with spiritual light—and joy encompassed the family.

I could recount much more of how satanists also took control over major businesses in the state. In each case Christians could have prevailed, but *creedal and denominational divisions* among the employees who were believers prevented them from cooperating together in prayer to stop the demonic takeover.

Let me relate one more anecdote:

- In the years following the arrival of the satanists in Connecticut, satanism at all levels of society grew in the state. In 1986 I was invited to a gathering of school principals, chiefs of police, and other government agency representatives to deal with the rise of satanism in their various spheres. Probably five hundred people filled the auditorium. The moderator was a Jewish woman, a psychologist for the state police department.

Initially most of the people there considered satanism some kind of fad. Then as if God put His finger on me, the moderator (whom I'd never met) pointed at me toward the back of the hall. She asked if I'd address the topic of satanism from a Christian perspective.

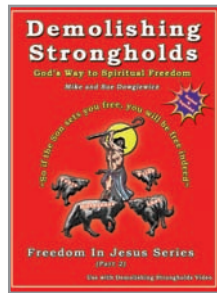
I stood up and addressed the chiefs of police: "You have situations your officers are dealing with in which five or six of them can't subdue a person." They ALL nodded in agreement. They knew what I was talking about. Then I told them, "These offenders have powerful demons in them, and only in the Name of Jesus will these demons submit. Tell your officers to use the Name of Jesus to subdue these people."

Immediately the psychologist proclaimed to the audience, "This man is right! These demons will submit ONLY to the Name of Jesus!" There was an immediate change in

the discussion in the audience afterward. The psychologist went on to report something that had been hidden from the public: “Most of the violent crime in the State of Connecticut was satanic-related.”

Demons also hide in strongholds within the mind, will, and emotions of people who have not demolished them in the Name of Jesus. The predisposition to give way to specific strongholds is often passed along for generations within a family. Their sole purpose is to *destroy relationships* and to keep you and your family *in captivity* so that you won't love, trust and serve Jesus as your Lord.

[It was for the purpose of freeing people from demonic captivity that we wrote our workbook, *Demolishing Strongholds* (free at our website) so that people could free themselves in the Name of Jesus from demonic imprisonment, and then experience His love and purpose for their lives. As long as even one demon has a foothold in the soul of anyone in your family, you're not free. No one is truly free unless you're *all* free!]



These anecdotes I've shared are just a few of many encounters we've had with demons as we've served our Lord Jesus for the past 38 years. Satan has made two attempts on my life; one of which the Spirit warned me in advance would happen and by whom. I ended up injured in a hospital, but I'm still here—thanks and praise to my LORD!

Because of my love for my Lord Jesus I'd rather show up at the Judgment Throne assured that by His grace I kept the faith and didn't become a coward in the demonic struggle around me. Consider for yourself what the Judgment

will be like:

*“He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be My son. **But the cowardly...**their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death” (Revelation 21:7,8).*

As I mentioned earlier, I'm convinced that demons are *mixed in* around you in people you know. They agitate and influence people in your home, school, workplace, congregation, and even in your soul if you don't demolish them. According to Satan's intent as the one who John says leads the whole world astray (Revelation 12:9), these fallen angels are going to try to thwart your pilgrimage to your salvation, and that of your family as well, if you let them. To win, *keep them out of your lives!*

If you don't believe that demons are real, ask Lord Jesus to convince you so that you will render account to Him in your struggle against them. He's the Captain of the *Hosts*—God's armies—Who leads and aids you in your struggle. The Captain of the Hosts commands through His servant Paul,

*“[You] take up every piece of war equipment God provides; so that when the evil day comes, you will be **able to resist**; and **when the battle is won**, you will still be standing.”*

(Ephesians 6:13; CJB)

In our next practice I'll shed more light on the nature and tactics of the opposition. Don't get too frustrated if I'm not showing you all the steps to victory yet. You need to be convinced about the struggle, who you're up against, and how they've got an advantage over you already. Then it's going to take your courage by our Father's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit to press on to



spiritual victory. You won't completely win the war, but you can prevail in the battles. Until you reach heaven's gates you are always at war against demonic enemies (Revelation 12:17). But out of our Lord's mercy you're not always in the midst of battle. He knows you need respite, but probably not as often or as long as *you* think.

*Battle fatigue* is a term which has been highlighted these past years because of the ongoing military conflicts which US troops have been engaged in. *Combat stress reaction* is another way of describing this condition, an acute response to the stress of battle which commonly involves fatigue, slowed reaction time, indecision, and other symptoms. Followers of Christ who frequently engage in demonic struggle because of their loving service to Him can suffer the same symptoms from time to time.

Just as one soldier bolsters another, we need to heed the Spirit's command to come alongside one another each day, whether in prayer or in person, as a way to forestall demonic intrusion: "*Encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness*" (Hebrews 3:13). Satan's deceit tempts the called-out followers of Jesus who struggle against him to think that their effort is worthless. Don't believe it!!



Again, I encourage you to view and discuss the three movies listed below with your family and with 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.



### *12 O'clock High*



### *The Sands of Iwo Jima*



### *Away All Boats*

We also want to recommend you begin watching our 11-part video series, *Certain Of What We Do Not See*. In this video series you'll explore a biblical subject that's often overlooked or misunderstood: the whole realm of the unseen world around you! Why is this topic important for followers of Jesus to understand? Because all spiritual victory and defeat in our lives is accomplished in the dimension we can't see.

<<http://www.restorationministries.org/html/CertainOfVideo.html>>