



practice 5

## Coaching Fathers To Serve Lord Jesus one practice at a time

***“For I have chosen Abraham, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what He has promised him”*** (Genesis 18:19).

**NEVER** forget that our God created everyone with seven needs to be met:

- A need for dignity
- A need for authority
- A need for blessing & provision
- A need for security
- A need for purpose & meaning
- A need for freedom & boundary
- A need for intimate love & companionship

One of your major roles as a grandparent is to be purposeful in helping your family and others you truly care about to have their God-given needs met in the way He intends. This is an ongoing responsibility, and helping those you love meet these needs as our Father would meet them must become a priority in the way you think about other people. Having the needs God has instilled in us met according to His ways and not our own sinful propensity wards off rebuilding strongholds and toxic memories. One of the best ways to demonstrate the love of Jesus to others is to prayerfully seek how to meet their needs—and then do your part.

I strongly encourage you to camp out on Chapter 5 of *Demolishing Strongholds*. DON'T OVERLOOK ANY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THIS CHAPTER! Getting free of spiritual darkness *and* remaining free must become *a way of life* in which your family and those you care for mutually support each other through daily encouragement (Hebrews 3:13). It also entails confronting each other whenever unChrist-like attitudes or behaviors surface. The more you help people replace strongholds and toxic memories with Holy Spirit responses and thoughts, the more difficult you're making it for demons to gain access to their soul again.

***“The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time”*** (Genesis 6:5).

***“Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me”*** (Psalms 51:5).

Besides the demonic forces that try to trip us humans up, there's also our own rebellious propensity to sin that we must resist. The two verses above reveal the core nature of all humans — we are **born with an inclination and desire to sin**. Parents, grandparents, and others in a position to correct children are commanded to train a child to resist temptation. That takes intentional, loving resolve and follow through from those in authority in a child's life!

***“He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him”*** (Proverbs 13:24).

***“Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him”*** (Proverbs 22:15).

***“Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die”*** (Proverbs 23:13).

***“The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother”*** (Proverbs 29:15).

Every child has an innate need to know the areas of *freedom and boundaries* for his/her life. And it's that realm of *boundaries* that our sin nature's tendency and Satan's schemes tempt us to violate.

Is it any wonder our heavenly Father instructs us to resist the tempter? *“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you”* (James 4:7; also Hebrews 12:4; 1Peter 5:8-10).

Consider this. If you find you’re *not* having to resist any sin, maybe you’ve *already given in* to temptation—and excused yourself!

If you’re going to be an instrument of our Father to guide children to resist temptation, you need to first consistently resist enticement yourself. Your way of life and the biblical choices you make need to role model the character of Jesus through His love at work in you by His indwelling Spirit. Children need to *see Jesus* in you rather than a sin-prone you. They need to see His LORDship in your life as His love and power and guidance come forth from you. Living this way evidences the *humility of a repentant heart* that privileges you to correct others.

### How We Know That Our Lord Loves Us

In a rebellious, humanist-mired society that’s bent on pursuing personal rights rather than personal responsibility, any physical punishment seems harsh. But God purposes that authentic love be shown through the person who’s willing to discipline. Our Lord Himself couples love with discipline and rebuke:

*“My son, do not despise the LORD’s discipline and do not resent His rebuke, because the LORD disciplines those He loves, as a father the son he delights in”* (Proverbs 3:11,12).

*“And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: ‘My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when He rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those He loves, and He punishes everyone He accepts as a son’* (Hebrews 12:5,6).

What is the particular reality our Lord recognizes which we have a difficult time facing? **He knows that we’re all born sinful from birth**. Throughout Scripture He reveals His love for those who are His own by *disciplining them*. And parents, grandparents and others in rightful authority are called to *display His love* through the use of appropriate discipline to help a child learn to resist sin.

Keep this in mind concerning this twofold purpose for discipline. Punishment isn’t just *a penalty* for the violation, but also *a deterrent* to repeating the offense.

**NO ONE CAN LOVINGLY RAISE A CHILD TO RESPONSIBLE ADULTHOOD WITHOUT USING APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINE TO DETER UNACCEPTABLE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS!**

*“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people”*  
(Proverbs 14:34).

Since the 1960s our nation has been in severe moral decline, and the descent is plunging! The sexual revolution that started in the ‘60s and ‘70s has escalated with immorality becoming an idol in this land. *One of every 4 teenage girls* now has a sexually transmitted infection. Obsession with sexuality has brought a *318% increase* in sexual assault. When a society becomes this degenerate, it’s because the majority of people make **self-indulgence** and **unrestrained hedonism** a major focus of their lives.

Since the ‘60s parents have resisted disciplining and correcting children to the extent that NO no longer means NO! Thanks to the influence of Dr. Spock and the impact of humanism in public institutions of higher education, resisting sinful drives has become passé. Selfishness, lust, covetousness, and other passions

that are part of our sin nature are unchecked. And without the reinforcement of biblical boundaries, the sin nature reigns. We can't emphasize enough that it's *parents and grandparents* who must instill resistance to temptation in each generation (see Deuteronomy 4:9).

History makes clear that the family or society in which children are *not* taught to control and restrain their passions is destined to morally disintegrate and ultimately collapse.

### **Dr. Spock: Satan's Proponent of Childhood Self-Indulgence**

Baby Boomers and their successors the Baby Busters (and their offspring) have grown up with far less mastery over their sin nature than previous generations. Why? Because in 1946, Dr. Benjamin Spock first published "**Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care.**"

In the first year, his book sold 750,000 copies, and within six years more than 4 million. It has since sold over 50 million and has been translated into more than 40 languages. It's had worldwide impact and is second in sales only to the Bible.

As Spock's unbiblical parenting ideas grew in popularity, other humanist "experts" joined him in promoting their own versions of indulgent child raising. Parenting approaches that foster narcissism and contempt for authority have become the accepted norm in higher education and subsequently in society. You can trace the rampant hedonism of our culture back to Spock's influence.

Rather than stressing the importance of teaching self-denial and respect for authority, Spock stresses that the parent's primary role is to accommodate a child's feelings and cater to his/her preferences. Correction and punishment of the child is strongly discouraged because these

"rob the child of self-esteem." As a result, those who should be teaching a child to resist their sin nature instead cater to *self-indulgence*:

- They give in to the child's wants, especially when the youngster manipulates them through guilt, whining, negotiation, or tears.
- They fail to correct the child(ren) according to God's Word. Instead, they get angry, yell, beg or threaten—to no avail, of course.
- They pander to the child's "self-esteem" so the child sees him/herself as the center of their world, expecting every desire to be met. (Incidentally, studies have shown that those with the highest level of self-esteem are in prisons on death row. The dignity of being made in God's image is far different than the self-esteem of being the center of attention.)

Generations of parents have found themselves pleading with and cajoling their child(ren) at every turn. That constant wheedling has trained the child to see him/herself on par with the parents and grandparents, so obedience has to be purchased. By not enforcing biblical boundaries, parents have shown themselves to be UNtrustworthy in the child's eyes. Instead of trusting them, the child has learned to manipulate them and wear them down. And tragically, that framework will become a source of far greater grief as childhood merges into adolescence and adulthood.

**Having learned to distrust their parents, these children will find it nearly impossible to trust their unseen heavenly Father. Only if He meets their perceived needs and desires will they offer even token allegiance.**

Many of you grandparents and your adult children have given way to the *self-centeredness* of Dr. Spock's humanist view of mankind: "**Children are born basically good. Society makes them evil.**" The

unrestrained pursuit of pleasure and sensual *self-indulgence* has become the norm. Through Spock's influence the US initially became a "**child-centered**" society, and then devolved into a "**child-controlled**" society. As parents focused on their children's "need for self-esteem" they abandoned biblical correction. The unavoidable by-product: children who are more defiant in their demand for immediate self-gratification. *Self-esteem* and *self-gratification* are now considered inalienable rights of both young and old.

Even within much of westernized Christendom, homes are hotbeds for *narcissism* (excessive interest in self and physical appearance) and *entitlement*.

If you're a grandparent or parent, you've been influenced by Dr. Spock whether you want to believe it or not! And if you're reluctant to correct or discipline your offspring, it's because you have hidden "pet" sins that you don't want anyone to confront *you* about. Through the influence of humanism and Dr. Spock you consider yourself a "basically good person," nullifying the biblical view of being born a sinner who needs a Savior. The real shame is that your own tolerated unrighteousness is keeping you from lovingly enforcing God's boundaries in your family!

The degree to which humanism influences how you view the Bible is the degree to which you devalue what Jesus accomplished on the cross on behalf of your sins. His role as Redeemer and Lord are minimized in your thinking, because *you*, not He, are the center of your motives, values and goals. You just need to look at the *worldly pursuits of your offspring* to recognize your own life goals and values and what you role modeled for them! Complaining about their selfishness and self-indulgence is only a cover-up for the *self-indulgent* way of life you chose.

### You Must *Intergenerationally* Discuss Disciplining Children!

When it comes to the *mutual responsibility* of parents, grandparents and others who are responsible for a child, coming to agreement requires fully sufficient discussion so that each knows •*under what conditions punishment is warranted* •*what form of punishment is needed*. Disciplining children is a whopping area of intergenerational tension within families today. And yet biblically these are among THE most necessary conversations grandparents and parents need to have together.

When there are no firmly agreed upon standards of *when* and *how* to discipline, children learn to control, manipulate and rebel. Yet because of their *God-given need for freedom and boundary*, they feel insecure, unprotected and often isolated because they've been allowed to consistently get their way with adults.

It's important that *all* the adults who are tasked with helping raise a child have the same criteria for distinguishing the difference between *rebellion to authority and/or the boundaries of acceptable attitudes and behaviors*, and *childish behavior that's appropriate for the child's age*. The first requires appropriate correction. The second, patience.

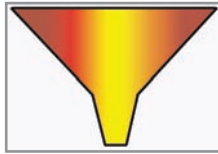
If you've already begun the journey of spiritually freeing those you love from demonic darkness so they can learn to love and serve Jesus, then next you need to focus on how to lead and train them to live righteously in our Father's grace. In other words, you are to both *role model* and *instill in them* a love for God's boundaries as a spiritual coach like our Lord Jesus. Deuteronomy 6:5-7 is timeless truth: *instructing and enacting* must be inseparably linked *in you* if your family is to experience victory! And, you must be willing to confront and correct when it's needed.



I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all that he holds dear, is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle — victorious.  
(Vince Lombardi)

***“Enter through the narrow gate... Small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it”***  
(Matthew 7:13,14).

We’ve used the concept of a *funnel* (used for guiding something into a small opening) many times in previous materials. The funnel represents the pilgrimage aspect of your life journey, from the moment you’re born again, through becoming more Christ-like by the indwelling Spirit on your way through the narrow gate to heaven. In this lesson we’ll expand our application of the funnel to help you better understand the issues at stake as you guide your family and others you love both *to* and *through* the narrow gate.



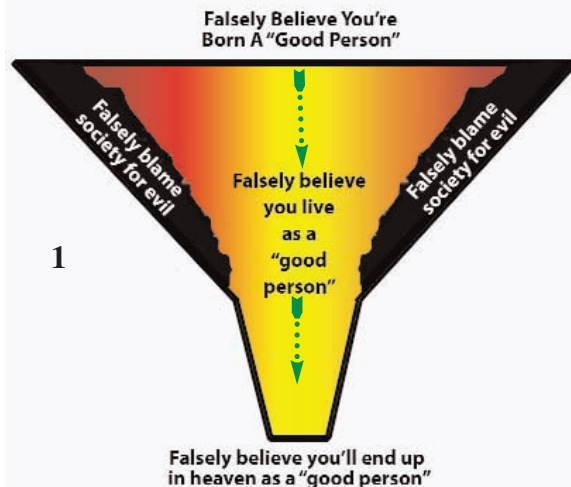
Being welcomed in heaven is a life-long journey that’s fraught with dangerous temptations even as you’re encompassed by Christ’s love and enabled by Father’s grace to uphold His stipulations for you to make it through the narrow gate. With the Dark Days of Chastisement soon coming on this nation, you and your family don’t want to respond with willful resistance like the Israelites did to His warning:

*“This is what the LORD says: ‘Look! I am preparing a disaster for you and devising a plan against you. So turn from your evil ways, each one of you, and reform your ways and your actions.’ But they will reply, ‘It’s no use. We will continue with our own plans; each of us will follow the stubbornness of his evil heart’”* (Jeremiah 18:11,12).



It’s important that as a man of influence in your family’s life and with others, you keep the theme of being a player/coach in your heart and mind. It will take all the love you have through prayer-based patience and Spirit-driven persistence for your family to be victorious.

### Humanism’s View Of Human Nature



Humanism views human nature as everyone being born good with no predisposition to sin. Throughout life the “good person” must be given the opportunity to pursue his/her pleasure without the hindrance of moral boundaries.

Within much of contemporary Christendom, humanism has insinuated what some call an **“all good dogs go to heaven”** theology. Because mankind is basically “good,” Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross was unnecessary. Mankind’s depravity and their need for repentance is disavowed and therefore not preached.

### God's View Of Human Nature

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Many within a compromised Christianity have embraced one of the Humanist-influenced false gospels. These people enter the funnel on the side, where the Lordship of Jesus is discounted, and remain basically unchanged during their Humanist-based “Christian” experience. And their religious leaders, needing to pay bills, say and do whatever is necessary to keep their clientele content and entertained.

It may sound harsh, but God shows no favor to those who embrace a lie: *“For this reason **God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie**”* (2Thessalonians 2:11). Throughout their lives ***they follow the stubbornness of their evil heart*** (see Jeremiah 3:17; 9:14; 11:8; 13:10; 16:12).

- Describe how you became a Christian.
- Does your description agree with the parameters established in God’s Word?
- Have you regularly lived on the side of the funnel, ignoring the Bible’s framework of being born into Christ’s Lordship?
- Do you habitually hold onto unconfessed sin, thinking you’re a basically good person?
- In your innermost being, do you believe you’re going to be accepted into heaven, or pass into oblivion (which is a devilish lie), or enter hell for eternity? Why?

### Our Father's Pilgrimage To Salvation

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The difference between grandparents who call themselves “Christian” and those who wholeheartedly belong to Jesus as their LORD is the latter’s quest to become more and more like Him on their journey to heaven. They intentionally instill into their progeny the need and desire to live for Jesus as Lord and be transformed into His likeness. And through lifestyle, instruction, and correction they lead their family *to*, and *through*, the narrow gate.

Being born again is just the beginning of a lifelong journey of living repentantly as you’re sanctified by the Holy Spirit and increasingly conformed by grace to the love and character of Jesus. You bear His heart burden that none be eternally condemned. To glorify your heavenly Father in your daily life is your finest evidence that you’re truly His child as you role model your childlike trust in Him for your offspring.

The lives of those who live in the funnel’s center are filled with **“divine encounters”** and **“divine interventions.”** They see their Lord at work in everyday occurrences and contacts, and frequently experience how the spiritual gifts that are entrusted to them are used by our Lord to extend His Kingdom. They have testimonies that boast of what their Lord has done in and through them: *“Let him who boasts boast in the Lord”* (2Corinthians 10:17). It’s the experience of a relationship in Christ of those in the center of the funnel that differentiates them from those who are “Christian” in name only and glued along the funnel sides.

## Confess, Repent, and Be Sanctified



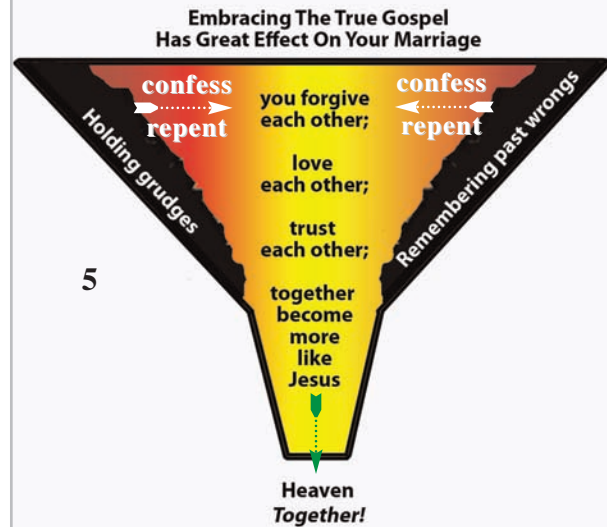
When you do sin, your Father will forgive you *if* you confess your sin and repent—seeking our Lord and His Word for how He would have you replace your sinful act or attitude with His way of life by His Spirit. “*Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon*” (Isaiah 55:7; see 1John 1:9).

Remember, authentic repentance takes full responsibility for the hurt you caused in a relationship: “*Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death*” (2Corinthians 7:10). Your sorrow gives the person you offended the hope that you mean it, and that you’ll do all within your power not to repeat the same offense.

On your lifelong pilgrimage to heaven make sure you avoid being enticed by the unrepentant who want to lure you into their ways. People who are dominated by unconfessed sin are like an adulteress trying to trap you: “*With persuasive words she led him astray; she seduced him with her smooth talk*” (Proverbs 7:21). Those who cling to the side of the funnel enjoy beguiling people who want to grow in holiness. And faith communities which avoid speaking about repentance can be bastions of spiritual compromise and tolerated sin.

For more on the need for ongoing repentance, see our series, *Repentance Leads to Christ-like Character*.

## Keep Your Marriage Covenant In The Middle Of The Funnel



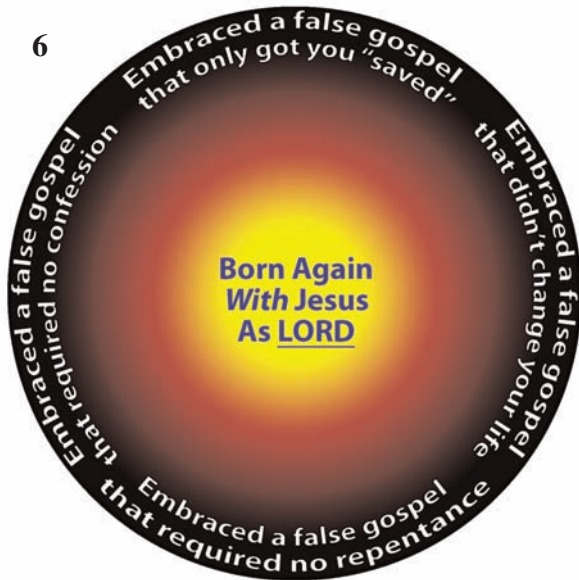
Each of our Father’s stipulations for embracing His Covenant in Christ encompasses the same foundations for your marriage covenant. The sanctifying work of the Spirit in your hearts as you purpose to *live together* in the center of the funnel causes His love to deepen and grow throughout your marriage. Not only you as individual followers of Jesus but more importantly your *marriage relationship* takes on the character qualities of your Lord (even through the ups and downs along the way). This is a sure sign that you’re both heading for the narrow gate!

But maybe you’ve lost your deep appreciation for what Jesus accomplished on your behalf on the cross. That will keep you from living with Him as LORD of your lives together. You’ll keep *yourself* on your own throne. And if you didn’t start off in the middle of the funnel when you got married, you’ll be far more susceptible to unforgiveness and emotional tensions in your marriage. Husbands won’t humbly cry out to Lord Jesus for His love for their wives. And wives won’t grasp what it means to respect their husbands. Repent and start anew from this point onward together!

For more on the need to embrace the true Gospel within your marriage, see *The Gospel of the Covenant is the Pilgrimage to Salvation*.

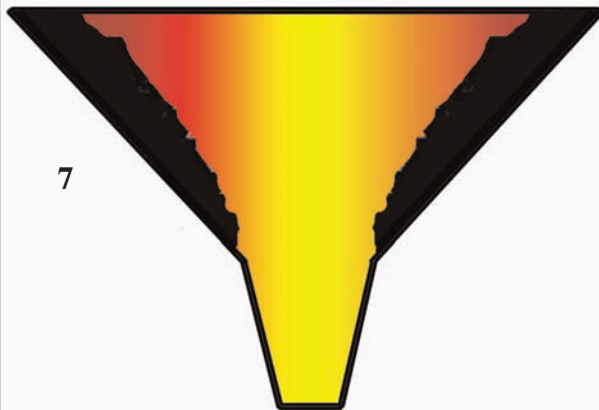
- Where would you and your spouse place your marriage on the diagram above?

**Did You Embrace The True Gospel?**  
(Funnel: Top View)



On the diagram above, place a dot to represent the *type of gospel* you embraced. If you put a dot in the center, what evidence do you have that Jesus has really been your LORD, guiding and empowering you? Can others confirm that you've lived with Jesus truly as Lord?

**Has Your Life Represented Jesus?**



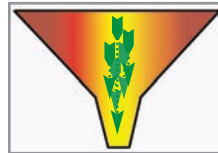
Place a dot on the diagram above that represents where on the funnel you find yourself today.

- Have you spent most of your Christian life inside or outside the center?
- Ask your family and others close to you how they've observed you over the years.

His mercy is great — it's not too late to begin living by His Spirit in the center !

*"But everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand"* (Matthew 7:26).

Our Lord expects obedient response to His commands from His precious family. A crumbling house that's built on sand can also represent a crumbling family with grandparents fiddling life away in retirement. In our Lord's sight *no one* retires from the responsibility of raising godly generations after them. This is what living in the funnel center is all about:



YOU remaining in the center in loving obedience and leading your family to do likewise.

Some final thoughts:

- Remember, you and your family will retain your sin nature until you die. Loving your Lord and your family enough to resist it yourself and helping them resist sin is the responsibility of each generation to the next.
- Either the Spirit of our Lord is leading you and your family, or you are slaves to your sin nature and/or influenced by demonic spirits.
- Be honest with yourself. What are you willing to sacrifice to be the precise instrument your heavenly Father needs to help ALL your family and those you love arrive in heaven?

**Spiritual fathers have influence over the lives of individuals. Patriarchs have influence over families. The devil has been able to destroy families because there is a lack of spiritual fathers and patriarchs.**

— Sherry K. White

**Further Reading:**

- *Discussing How to Restore the Early Church*, Lesson 42:
  1. Children: Success Without Successors is Failure
  2. Children: Born With A Sin Nature—Destined For Eternity
- Lifebyte 33. Do You See As God Sees?