

Calvin C. Ellerby

It's Grampa's Time

**A Blueprint for the Family Patriarch -
Changing the World Through the Next
Generation.**



**It's Grampa's Time - A Blueprint for the Family Patriarch to Change the World
Through the Next Generation**

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Forward

On a beautiful evening in July 1980, I had a front row seat to watch as God powerfully orchestrated the transformation of a young man's life. That night, Cal Ellerby responded to an invitation to surrender his life to Christ. This was no ordinary life either, nor was a deep, purposeful relationship between myself and this man even remotely probable. At that moment, God was faithfully honoring the consistent prayers of Wilbur Ellerby, the authors own grampa demonstrating proof positive the very essence of Cal's message.

Some 38 years later, I've finished reading through the manuscript you now hold in your hands as a book – incidentally, a message that has the potential to radically impact your life and change the course of history.

Throughout the years, I've observed Cal faithfully respond to God's call on his life, complete with seasons of wrestling under what has become evident as a significant mantle.

I have been fortunate to journey alongside Cal, listing as he has processed visions of healthy, effective, vibrant, churches, church leadership and men in general, always with a mix of passion, conviction and humility, yet a forced discipline demonstrating a level of patient nurture that is not particularly a natural or preferred one.

Whispers from God often fall on deaf ears. People are busy and distracted by the very lives, responsibilities, and tasks, we find before us. Fortunately, there are leaders such as Cal, who are driven to hear these whispers from God and avail themselves as a conduit through which God can flow his love and purposes. "It's Grampa's Time", is the manifestation of one of those whispers.

This specific whisper both profound and timely. As you read you will find yourself drawn into a story masterfully woven together with a focus on biblical history, order, structure, and consistency.

The challenge you will find yourself forced to embrace or reject will eventually itself become a fact of history. While you get to choose your response, you will not defy the inevitable outcome of that chosen response. Leadership is not for the casually interested. It will always extract more than we intend to invest. Our role as leaders was not our decision. Being a patriarch is not a chosen position, but rather one determined by God himself. "...male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27). In current society, the male and female thing is a major issue. Cal effectively unpacks God's order and rightly identifies patriarchs, along with the crucial role we have been assigned from the beginning of time. Cal courageously does so in spite of, and in direct contradiction to what society is desperately insisting upon as today's new reality.

Max Depree¹ in his website of building foundations said, "The number one responsibility of a leader is to define reality".

Each chapter you are about to read is rich with foundational understanding, practical insight, demonstrated application, and relevance for this very moment.

1 Chronicles 12:32 states, "...from Issachar, men who understood the times and new what Israel should do...". David was fortunate to have men around him who understood the times and knew what to do! Who among us today understands our current times and knows what to do? I believe this book's author may well be such a person.

It's not uncommon to hear people state the obvious, whether good or bad, but it is less common to hear people also state what we should do in light of the obvious.

For most of us we are painfully aware the family unit has come under attack; this is not a recent phenomenon. Cal recently acknowledges that for quite some time we've watched our societal leaders and government undermine and in essence destroy the fiber and foundation of the family.

Men, in particular, have been marginalized and even neutralized in modern society. Rooted in a sense of fear men, have abdicated their God given roles and responsibilities to other sources and influences. Cal compellingly admonishes men to rise up against this illusion (lie) created by our arch enemy, and resume our God ordained role as patriarchs.

All men, grandfathers in particular, need encouragement and support in re-establishing their place and purpose on the earth.

As you read, you'll find testimony declaring a newfound sense of hope and purpose among men who have heard and responded to the message contained in these pages. Not only does your life matter you are an essential component of God's master plan for creation. Cal provides a powerful explanation of a man's DNA being biologically linked to God; no other aspect of God's creation can boast this reality.

As we observe the ongoing slaughter of biblical values and principles occurring daily on the earth, it can feel somewhat hopeless. In reality the task and challenge before us of turning this nation back to the values and principles it was founded upon is daunting. It's Grampa's Time will breathe new hope and energy into your soul as you discover the pattern God has established in generating his blessing and provision throughout time. In a day and age when confusion and absurdity are normalized, Cal brilliantly reminds us that God is not a God of disorder or confusion. Take courage and prepare to experience renewal and passion in partnering with God for his rich abundant blessing on our kids, grandkids, and future generations.

To “bless” is to invite God's presence in increasing measure and abundance. (Chapter 4). Might you be the one of the 1,000,000 men Cal is trusting God to raise up for the express purpose of invoking the powerful blessing of God? I implore you to carefully consider joining this mandate.

It's Grampa's Time

As you read, you will be quipped with a systematic process for invoking God's blessing upon your own grandkids, but even beyond your own, to the multitude of kids who have no functional dad or grandpa. Imagine the impact as we collectively lock arms and strategically invite God's blessing, in increasing measure an abundance. This is more than just a nice idea; it is crucial for our kids. Friends, Grampa, you are an essential part of ensuring God's presence and purposes for current and future generations. It is not just any old time in history;

Wayne Durksen - Kids Matter Leadership, CEO

1 De Pree, Max. (2004). Leadership is an Art. New York, NY: Currency

Chapter 1

It's Grampa's Time

"Now the word of the LORD came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."

Jeremiah 1:4-5

Grandpa's Bible. It is without question one of the most treasured possessions I own. I keep it in a blue plastic bag on my office bookshelf to protect it from the elements because it is like an ancient manuscript. The note on the inside cover says. J.W. Ellerby, Christmas 1946.

The cover on this beautiful old book is made of some sort of simulated leather which has deteriorated over the years and is literally falling apart. The pages are yellow and often detached from the binding with many of the pages being torn and tattered. As with any special possession repairs have been attempted by trying to reattach the torn pages with tape that is now clouded over, making the print beneath it impossible to read. I can just feel grandpa's emotions as he sought to restore and stabilize the deterioration of this sacred document. It was his connection to God. It was a part of him.

The constant handling has left those pages frayed and fragile but throughout the entire Bible there are handwritten notes on papers inserted into specially selected locations with comments and observations about the verses on those pages.

The gospels of Luke and John, the book of Acts, Romans, 1st and 2nd Corinthians, Ephesians and especially the Book of Revelation have the pages almost worn through and have countless references and observations written on the margins of each page. There are notes in red ink, blue ink and in pencil. There are words underlined and circled. Some are underlined twice with arrows pointing to other correlating scriptures that have been written in for further study and confirmation.

It's fascinating to me to identify the themes of Grandpa's passions and interests in the scriptures.

It's obvious from reading through his notes and observing what he read most and what he highlighted, that there were spiritual truths that had profoundly impacted his life and journey with Jesus.

Both Grandpa and my grandmother had had a powerful encounter with God. When I look at his notes and the portions of scripture he read most often, it is obvious that he was enthralled with the power of the Holy Spirit. I know also from speaking to my siblings and my aunts and uncles that grandpa also loved the message of the Name of Jesus, the grace of God, divine healing and the return of Christ at the second coming.

His Bible was a photograph of his heart. It unquestionably, is a reflection of his character and his longing to know God and His love for the world. Grampa's Bible literally tells his life story.

Grampa's Bible literally tells his life story

I was only 7 years old when grandpa Ellerby passed away. He was 73 and was known to be a man who loved to laugh and tell stories. Not that tall but thick and strong with large hands and a balding head. At least that's what I remember.

Grandpa homesteaded on the bald cold prairies of central Alberta in 1911 and lived in a one room sod shack with his two brothers for 13 years. He was a farmer who married late, raising a family of 7 children.

He continued farming until his passing, but on January 1st, 1939, he became a licensed minister and proceeded to travel into the northern native communities of Alberta to supply clothing, food and to preach the gospel and pray for the sick in those communities.

He was a man ahead of his time.

He printed a monthly newsletter that he sent up to those communities he served and to the many people who followed what he was doing. I vividly remember the old typewriter and the printing 'Gestetner' he used to produce his newsletter. When I think of it now I marvel at his vision and passion for the work of God and his deep love the First Nations people.

There were many experiences in my grandfather's life that made that old bible so valuable. Many were joyous and exhilarating but there were many trying times as well. I believe it was in 1956 that my grandmother became very ill and as I understand the story, grandpa Ellerby literally carried grandma out of the hospital, drove 200 miles to a crusade where he prayed for her condition. She was completely healed of what her doctor had told her was likely a cancerous tumor in her pancreas. Grandma Ellerby died in 1985 of old age.

Looking at his Bible and reading through it takes me to a place in my imagination that unveils something very precious to me. His Bible tells its own story. It gives me insight into a man who loved God with all his heart in a deep, personal and experiential way, a man who knew firsthand his Living Saviour. It gives me insight into his heart. Into his life. And maybe more importantly, into my own life.

I imagine him sitting at night after a long hard day's work on the farm with a coal oil lamp, resting in his chair with his Bible held close to his face. I imagine him reading, praying and worshipping Jesus with tears streaming down his cheeks with internal groans of gratitude and love for a God that he knew was real and who loved him unconditionally.

I imagine grandpa Ellerby praying for his children and his grandchildren that they too would know Jesus the way he did. I imagine him believing God for men and women of God in his own family tree that would be servants in the Kingdom. I see him praying that his family and their families would commit their lives to the service of Christ in order that the world for generations to come would be changed and impacted by the grace, mercy and forgiveness found in the wonderful and glorious name of Jesus.

When I think of my grandfather I can't help but think of King David when he cried out to God in Psalm 71:18 "Even if I am old and gray, do not forsake me oh God, until I declare your power to the next generation, and your might to those who are yet to come."

Just as David did, I believe my grandfather had vision for the next generation. He was a leader that recognized his personal responsibility to that next generation and yet he obviously recognized his utter dependency on God to impact that next generation. In some intrinsic way, he longed to leave a legacy to the generations that were going to follow him, that his influence and his relationship with Jesus might be carried on in their lives.

Jonathon Wilbur Ellerby was a true spiritual patriarch.

My Journey

On November 24th, 1985, I was ordained as a minister in the small community of Melfort, Saskatchewan. My grandfather would have been very proud I'm sure.

I was one more family member who had been motivated by the Lord to serve Him in full time ministry. My grandfather had been gone for nearly 20 years.

I had never spoken to him about ministry or even what it meant to be a Christian. He never left me notes or instructions or ideas or connections. I was just one of several grandchildren. I'm positive he loved each of us equally (well maybe my sister Bernice a little more) but there is no recollection of direct influence in my life.

Even though I have no memorable experience of grandpa Ellerby's instruction or tutelage, it is very interesting to me how spiritual affections carry on from generation to generation. Not one remote conversion but many, many cousins and siblings who have a passionate desire to serve the Lord in His Kingdom. Many of my relatives currently or at one point in their lives have served in full time ministry. My wife Mary and I ended up pastoring for nearly 20 years. Go figure.

Here's where my story starts to take on its own life and begins to lay the foundation for this book.

After pastoring for all those years and being in the business community for about 15 years after that I came to a point in my life where I found myself once again striving to know the mind and heart of God in a fresh way. He was leading me down a new path of discovery.

Longing to understand His ways in our current generation set me on somewhat of a quest. My pursuits led me to ask the Lord this question. "What does success look like?" I have since changed the word 'success' to the word 'fruitfulness' because that is what I was really longing to discern. If that sounds like a "deep subject" please don't misunderstand me. That really wasn't my intent. It was more of an observation question at that point in my life. My kids were grown, my life was stable and fulfilled and I was a first-time grandfather myself. There were no issues to contend with, just a longing to know the ways of God in a deeper way.

Every day for a few months I would walk and ask the Lord to give me a greater understanding of what it meant to be fruitful in life. It was a wonderful time of sensing the leadership of the Holy Spirit, resulting in many insights and realizations of simple truths in more profound ways. There really is nothing like the whisper of the Spirit of God into your heart and thoughts when you are quiet and open to Him. I felt like I was on an adventure. It was really a very cool experience. The principles that became clear to me really are the framework of a future book. I should divulge some of those principles here but they are for another time and a completely different subject.

There is nothing like the whisper of the Spirit of God into your heart and thoughts

The relevance of that journey however is this. It began to open my heart to hear the voice of God in a way that I had not heard for many years. I am convinced that the sovereign leadership of Christ was preparing me to hear something completely unexpected. A totally new plan that could change the world as we know it. I had to be retooled to be able to hear what God wanted to do with the vision He was about to give me.

When I left pastoring in the year 2000 I was pretty much burned out and had basically decided I was done with working with people. In fact, I actually said to the Lord, "I am done working with people". I wasn't sure how to make it more clear than that. I was tired and empty. I felt like I had nothing left to give. I concluded that going into business would be much more rewarding, lucrative and satisfying. I didn't need people or the ministry.

Eventually however, after all those years away from full time ministry for some reason I felt compelled to ask the Lord a question, “What does fruitfulness look like?” If you have ever been on such a journey you probably know that it always ends up with God challenging you with something that you assumed was dead and buried. I was no exception. I was about to find out that when you ask God questions he answers sometimes in life altering ways.

Encounter 1: The Midnight Whisper

It began one night in the middle of a deep sleep. I woke up and heard a very distinct voice. It wasn't audible but it might as well have been. The words I heard were like they were the conclusion of a conversation I had with God nearly 15 years earlier. “You might not need people, but people need you!”

That seemed like a horrible thing to say to a guy like me in the middle of the night. I had spent the last several years avoiding the idea of being involved with Kingdom service and I had no intention of starting again now. I concluded that what ever I ate the night before had obviously caused me to have a dream, or worse, a nightmare.

A few days after I heard that “voice” I was telling my brother about what I had heard. Normally he is my comic relief in life but on this occasion, he looked at me in a very serious way and replied with, “You had better be careful, that might have been God.” He was right. As much as I wasn't crazy about where this was going, I would be a complete fool to assume that if God had begun something, He wouldn't take it further.

Somewhat reluctantly I went to the Lord with a conditional acknowledgement of what I had come to assume was His voice.

When you have worked hard at shaping your world it can be very uncomfortable when God starts to rearrange it. I don't really like uncomfortable. I did, however, have a desire to discover the mind of God and it seemed clear that this experience was very much a part of that discovery. I was now, relatively open to hear the next part of what I felt was the opening volley from the Lord.

This is what I prayed. "Lord, I want to do something significant in the Kingdom that is consistent with my gifts and that I would enjoy doing." When I read that now I realize what an arrogant statement that is. It's kind of like, "Ok God, listen up, here's my plan." Thank you Lord for Your mercy and Your patience! If the truth were known, what I was really saying was 'God I am interested in serving You but I am not going pastoring again'. I'm just saying.

That was a defining moment for me. It was the first time in many years that I was at all open to what God might have me do for the Kingdom. It was exciting and yet curious at the same time.

Encounter 2: It's Grampa's Time

In October of 2013, my wife and I were holidaying with some friends in Mexico. We were about halfway through our time there when again I had a middle of the night encounter with what I have concluded was a second specific word from the Lord. This time the prompting was short and yet incredibly clear. The word was "It's Grampa's Time.!"

I recall being wide awake and thinking to myself, "This is a game changer." I knew exactly what the Lord meant. I obviously did not have all the pieces but I knew very instinctively what God was saying.

I knew and I believed that if I would be faithful to this call I could be a part of a movement that could literally change the course of our entire society.

God had a plan and He was inviting me to be a part of it. Can there be anything more exciting?

Over the next few weeks, I began to discern more and more of what God meant by the statement “It’s grampa’s time”. The Lord helped me to see that the patriarchal role of grandfathers has been largely displaced in our society and how contrary that is to God’s ultimate design of the way the family is intended to grow. It was, suddenly, obvious to me that the spiritual forces who oppose our faith in Christ had in fact been systematically dismantling the role of the patriarch in the family.

My immediate question was, “Why?”.

It was at that point I realized the patriarch literally holds within their hands an instrumental and strategic part of God’s blessing for all generations. It is grandpa’s responsibility to be a conduit of God’s blessing to all the generations that will follow him. This was the secret to my own call to the ministry. This was grandpa Ellerby’s legacy. His heritage. His role in God’s bigger plan.

The transition and transfer of Gods power from one generation to the next.

The spiritual forces of darkness understand better than us that if they can eliminate the influence of the patriarch, they can minimize the impact of God’s favor on the youngest of the generations. The elimination of the patriarch’s influence makes the following generations vulnerable to the assaults and attacks of our spiritual enemy.

As I prayed about this revelation and sought to understand more fully what God was saying to me, I began to see a blueprint take shape. It was making perfect sense. We were losing a battle because the enemy was slowly but surely dismantling God's divine order in the family. It is like the old adage of boiling a frog by slowly turning up the heat. I was beginning to see that the stove had to be turned off. It is time to restore our alignment with God's plan.

Jacob, Joseph and His Boys

As I will share in later chapters I felt like God was directing me to the story of Jacob and his son Joseph in Genesis 48. In that chapter the plan for passing God's blessing on to the next generation is clearly laid out. I have since defined it as the "5 Step Blueprint to Change the World." It is simple and yet profound. It is practical and yet mystical. Jacob demonstrated this blueprint in one of the most touching stories of the old testament.

After hearing of Jacob's imminent passing, Joseph immediately called his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh to his side to make their way to his father, who was now on his deathbed. His reasons were much deeper than just to pay his respects and say goodbye. Joseph understood something much more sacred had to take place before his father went to heaven. He understood that his dad had something that only he could give his children. Joseph's request was simple. Paraphrased he said, "Dad don't die until you have laid your hands on my two boys and spoken the blessing of God into their lives."

Wow that is a powerful picture. The transition and transfer of God's power from one generation to the next. That's it. That is God's plan for today.

The mobilization of men of God passing His blessing onto the next generation in order that they might be used of God to establish His Kingdom authority and presence throughout the earth. Not sure about you but I'm in.

The Blueprint

The scriptures lay out a magnificent blueprint for this transference of Gods blessing. Furthermore, it is shown multiple times throughout the Bible as a model of the way God intends for the family structure to be used as an instrument for developing His Lordship in every period of time. Unfortunately, our society has for the most part missed it. We have been victims of a diabolical ploy to displace the heads of the family tree. The patriarchs. So, what does the blueprint look like?

5 Step Blueprint

Step 1: Jacob understood his patriarchal role

Step 2: He understood what the Blessing of God meant

Step 3: He understood the power of laying on of hands

Step 4: He understood the power of the spoken word

Step 5: He imparted the Blessing in faith

As this blueprint became clearer and clearer to me I realized that God's desire and call was to mobilize men across North America to make a commitment to replicating exactly the pattern of Jacob. I am convinced that if we can help men to see themselves in the role God has appointed them and give them tools to assist them in their responsibility we can see a society altering shift that will unleash a move of God that has never been seen before in our nations.

Encounter 3: Mobilize 1,000,000 Grandfather's

The third middle of the night encounter, I felt like the Lord said, “Mobilize 1,000,000 men with this message and have them commit to the challenge.” Oh man, now I know I’m crazy. Who is going to listen to a wacko like me tell them to be a part of a movement to see one million men join together to impart God’s blessing to the next generation.

The night was quiet and the presence of God was strong making going back to sleep impossible. Who would want to? I was so wired with this new aspect of the vision that I decided to check out Amazon to see what I could find related to what I was experiencing. I honestly had no idea what to look for or what I would find. I typed into the search box the word “Blessing”. The first book that came up was the book “The Blessing” by John Trent and Gary Smalley.

I was not familiar with the book, but I was familiar with the names of the authors.

To my discredit they always seemed a bit touchy feely for me, so I had never read any of their books before, but as I skimmed through the pages I began to get excited to see that so many of the things the Lord was showing me were already in print right before my eyes. It was confirmation for me.

If God is doing something significant He will be doing it in many places using many different people. As excited as I was, however, the idea of reaching one million patriarchs who would make a commitment to participate in this vision just seemed so outlandish. I continued to scan through the rest of the book and what I discovered next totally blew me away. The authors were presenting the exact same vision to their readers. 1,000,000 family leaders speaking blessing into the lives of the next and youngest generation. I was absolutely floored. I couldn’t believe what I was reading.

I was absolutely blown away. I couldn’t believe what I was reading.

At this point I was convinced. These mid night promptings I had received were from the Lord. The challenge before me was immense, but now that I was certain God had spoken to me, I knew it was going to turn into a lifetime journey. What a humbling and exciting privilege to be part of something God wants to do throughout the world.

The “Grampa’s Time” ministry exists to “Enlist, Equip, Encourage and Empower 1,000,000 Grandfather’s and Father’s to Lay Hands on their Grandchildren and Children, Speaking the Blessing of God into Their Lives.”

Grandpa Ellerby had no idea. He faithfully and passionately served and loved Jesus. He was the conduit of blessing for my generation. His faithfulness contributed to Gods work in my life. It is the way the divine family structure is designed to work. As my family patriarch J.W. Ellerby fulfilled his mandate. And now it’s my turn. It is my responsibility that my grandchildren be the recipients of Gods blessing through my commitment as the family patriarch in their lives.

It is also your turn. I am convinced that the world is on the brink of a major move of God, and I believe that as God restores His divine structure in the family we will see an awaking in the youngest generation alive today that has never been witnessed before. My conviction is that where “Sin abounds, grace does much more abound”. No matter how dark the times, Jesus will never be defeated.

The remainder of this book is designed to present a practical plan for men like you and me to participate in what God is doing all over the world to re-establish His glory amongst the nations. It’s our time. It’s Grampa’s Time!

Chapter 2

The 5 Step Blueprint

“There is only one thing stronger than all the armies of the world: and that is an idea whose time has come.” - Victor Hugo

Every great accomplishment, every captivating story, every awe-inspiring structure or building starts with the same thing. An idea. When that idea begins to take on life, it requires articulation and a blueprint. Without a blueprint, it is impossible for others to participate in the actual “building” of the idea.

I have been involved in the construction of many buildings over the years. The first house my wife and I built, we, like anyone else, started with a dream to own our own home.

We started by looking at pictures of houses we would like to have and sorted them according to size and design. The first step was to find out if we could even afford to buy one. Being newbies at the game, we really didn't have a clear understanding of how to proceed with convincing a bank to give us the money for construction.

We calculated that we could afford X amount for a monthly payment and speculated what that amount of money would allow us to build.

Still only guessing we concocted a strategy to present to the lender.

Of all the pictures, we looked at, we selected three we liked, starting from the largest to the smallest. From there, I painstakingly collected quotes from different trades, priced out materials down to the penny and added in whatever contingency I thought would be necessary. Our plan was to go to the lending institution with the largest home we had a picture of along with all my calculations and do our best to submit as rosy a presentation as possible to win over the banker. We would begin with the largest house and work our way down to the smaller of the three if necessary.

Everyone needed a picture...so they knew exactly what they were building

To our amazement, the lender approved our financing first try. We were pretty excited. The first request from the bank after approval was, 'Do you have a blueprint available?' Since I had purchased 3 copies of blueprints for each house I proudly handed one over. He required two.

From there I went to the town hall for my necessary permits. They required 3 sets of blueprints. Then the excavator, the lumber supplier, the plumber, the electrician, the tin basher, the window manufacturer, the truss company, etc., etc.

Everyone wanted a copy of the blueprints. Everyone needed a picture of the house so that they knew exactly what they were constructing.

It's many years ago, but I think I provided a dozen or more copies of blueprints to different people involved in the construction process.

Everyone was singing from the same song book. Everyone was on the same page.

Gods Patriarchal Blueprint

In my pursuit to understand what God was saying to me about the patriarch's role in passing the blessing of God on to the next generation, I really wanted to have a Biblical picture of what that impartation was going to look like. I needed a blueprint. I had an idea and I believed that idea was the prompting of Gods Spirit, but I needed more. I needed a picture.

I began a diligent search of the scriptures to see what the Bible had to say about patriarchs and grandfathers. I came across Genesis 48 and it was like the Holy Spirit said to me, "This is it. This is your blueprint."

As I read through the chapter I was mesmerized by the imagery I could see in the story. It was like I was a part of it. It was like it was me and my grandfather. I was totally energized and eager to share the blueprint with the world. It was time to start building.

I'll explore this chapter in more detail later, but I would like to submit an overview here to give us some context for the blueprint.

The Genesis 48 Story

Some time later Joseph was told, "Your father is ill." So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim along with him. When Jacob was told, "Your son Joseph has come to you," Israel rallied his strength and sat up on the bed.

Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me and said to me, 'I am going to make you fruitful and will increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you.

Bring them to me so I may bless them." Now Israel's eyes were failing because of old age, and he could hardly see. So Joseph brought his sons close to him, and his father kissed them and embraced them

Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face again, and now God has allowed me to see your children too." Then Joseph removed them from Israel's knees and bowed down with his face to the ground. And Joseph took both of them, Then he blessed Joseph and said, "May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, the Angel who has delivered me from all harm --may he bless these boys. May they be called by my name and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and may they increase greatly upon the earth." Gen 48:1-16 NIV

There are portions of this scripture that require further study at another time but for the purpose our study regarding the basic blueprint, I included the scene as the Bible records it.

Joseph was the second most powerful man in all the world. I imagine him as a man of great power and wisdom. A man of significant stature. Charming, handsome, well groomed and a presence among the people. I am sure his self confidence was clearly evident and his position and wealth were obvious to all onlookers. There was nothing that he could not provide for his family. Even though there was a devastating famine in the land you know that his family did not go without.

He was an impressive man. There is something about him that I find immensely intriguing. It is apparent that his position and his power did not diminish his ability to understand and long for a broader knowledge of the God of his roots and an experience with the God of his father and his forefathers. Even though he was deeply entrenched in the Egyptian culture and politics he had not lost his awareness of God's leadership and covering in his life.

The part of the story that I find most riveting is Joseph's realization that his father, Jacob, had something that nobody else could provide for either him or his children. Ephraim and Manasseh were about to experience something that they had no idea of the impact it would make in their lives. Joseph obviously knew something and recognized its value for his family. He further understood that if his dad died before he secured that something both him and his children would miss out on a certain level of favour throughout their lives. What was that something? The answer. God's blessing.

I surmise the conversation between Joseph and his boys to have gone something like this:

Joseph: Boys we are going out to the farm to see grandpa Jacob.

Boys: Aw, do we have to. We were planning to go to the camel races.

Joseph: No camel races today. Get your things and get in the slave carried rickshaw. Grandpa's not well and we need to go see him before it's too late.

Boys: Oh alright. At least Grandpa usually has beef jerky.

They were kids and I'm quite sure not fully aware of the importance of what was actually taking place. Not unlike our own families, who may not comprehend what grandpa is up to when he lays hands on them and prays for them. Regardless of whether they understand or not this is about our responsibility before God to fulfil our appointed patriarchal role.

When Joseph and his sons arrived at his father's place, Joseph initiated a ritual that he clearly understood to be critical to his family's future. Joseph told his father that he had brought his two sons out for Jacob to lay hands on and speak God's blessing into their lives.

The story goes that Jacob rallied his strength to get off his deathbed and called the boys to himself. He then laid his hands on the boys and prayed a blessing over both Joseph and his sons.

Both Jacob and Joseph clearly understood Jacob's patriarchal role in the family. They both understood the authority associated with laying hands on another person and they both recognized the directive power of words.

What we see in this story is a blueprint. It is the picture we are looking for.

From this portion of scripture, the '5 Step Blueprint' is formulated. That which Jacob demonstrated with Joseph and his children is the same process you and I as family patriarchs should model in the lives of our children and grandchildren.

Step 1) YOU are the PATRIARCH.

Do not underestimate your place in your family tree. Headship is essential to God's divine family structure. The role of the patriarch in the Bible was one of leadership, stewardship and most importantly - covering. (Gen. 48:8-16)

Do not believe that you no longer play a very important role in your family. That is not true. More than ever our families need us. The patriarch does not necessarily have direct influence in the lives of the generations that follow but they do provide spiritual covering and blessing. Throughout the Old and New Testaments, the patriarchs imparted blessings to their children and grandchildren. The fruit of those blessings often took many years to be fulfilled but typically, evidence proves they were fulfilled.

It is my conviction that the greatest thing we can do to help shape the lives and the future of the generations that will follow us is to impart God's blessing upon them and then stand in faith together knowing, that God is faithful,

and that He will raise up strong men and women of God to change the course of our needy world.

Step 2) The BLESSING:

The purpose of the Blessing was to transfer or impart the divine covering of God over the recipient and to set the course for their lives. The concept of the blessing is used in the Bible over 600 times. The word "Blessing" literally means to "Invoke God for the purpose of prospering". Not every blessing recorded in the scriptures was meant for the same purpose, however, the blessings that are recorded typically focus on one or more of the following aspects or common denominators indicating the heart of God and the intent of the patriarch.

- 1) The KNOWLEDGE of God Eph. 1:3-14
- 2) The POWER of God 1 Chron. 29:11 Acts 1:8
- 3) The FAVOUR of God 3 John 2 Ps. 5:11, 12

4) The PURPOSE of God Romans 1:1 Matt. 9:37, 38

5) The DESIGN of God Ps. 139: 13-16 John 1:40, 41

I believe that when we pray for our families we should impart all 5 together or individually as appropriate times and circumstances dictate. They should be continually a focus of our commitment to our families, to see the Spirit of Christ released into their lives and to be a part of setting direction for their lives.

Step 3) Laying on of Hands:

The concept of laying hands on someone and praying the blessing on them goes all the way back to the book of Genesis and the blessing Isaac passed onto Jacob.

Jesus insisted that children never be prevented from coming to Him and when they did come the Bible says Jesus picked them up, laid His hands on them and blessed them.

1 Tim. 4:14, indicates that the laying on of hands was a common part of the church for the releasing of ministry in the Body of Christ.

There is something very powerful that happens when we “lay hands on” someone for the purpose of imparting God’s blessing into their lives.

Step 4) The Spoken Word:

The Apostle James indicated that the tongue is like the rudder of a ship which can direct the entire vessel. Proverbs declares that “life and death are in the power of the tongue”. It is with words that we can ignite dynamic life into the lives of our grandchildren and children. It is with our words that we can significantly encourage and support the awakening of God’s Spirit in them.

The Apostle Paul stated that “Faith comes by HEARING.... the word of God.” Rom 10:17. Speaking the words of blessing over our grandchildren and children therefore becomes an extremely valuable exercise for us as grandfathers and fathers.

Step 5) Faith:

The fifth component of the impartation, is believing that laying our hands on our children and grandchildren and then speaking the words of blessing into their lives will in fact release something in the Spirit within them. Everything in God’s Kingdom is activated by faith. Faith is the “substance of things hoped for.... the evidence of things not seen.” Heb. 11:1.

We can’t always see what is going on with the work of God and truthfully, many of us will not even be alive when the full work of the Holy Spirit in our family members’ lives becomes fully evident. If we think there is nothing happening in their lives, just because we don’t initially see the fruit, then we are not living by faith. There is so much going on in the unseen, spiritual realm that is very powerful and very positive.

As Winston Churchill said “never, never, never give up.” Faith is the energy. Faith is the power that keeps us motivated and confident that God will “complete that which He started.”

That is our blueprint. God wants to change the world and men he wants to use you. This is a major part of His plan. The reengagement of the patriarchs of families, laying hands on their grandchildren and

children speaking the word of the Lord in faith into their lives will change the course of history.

Men of God, your families, your communities, your churches and our nations need you now more than ever. We now have the framework, a picture, a blueprint to build from. God has a plan. All that is required is for you and me to join the journey and be a part of what the Lord is doing all over the world. It's our time. It's grampa's time.

This is the most significant contribution we will ever make to our family. We may or may not see in our lifetime all the fruit of this blessing, however we must be convinced that the entire world will eventually witness a powerful demonstration of God's work in their lives.

This Blessing was intended to be passed on to generation after generation through the faithful commitment and prayer of the previous generation. The Apostle Paul stated that we are Body, Soul and Spirit and that each part of us must be influenced by the Lord as we seek to serve Him. The impartation therefore is passed on by the Laying on of Hands (the body), through the Spoken Word (the soul) and activated by Faith (the Spirit).

Chapter 3

Generational Roots

"If the family were a fruit, it would be an orange, a circle of sections, held together but separable — each segment distinct."

Letty Cottin Pogrebin

"Like father, like son."

"Apple doesn't fall far from the tree".

His father is a plumber – the son is a plumber.

Her mother is a musician – the daughter plays the piano.

The uncle struggles with gambling – both his sons and his nephew already tend to visit the casinos.

Grandpa wouldn't "darken the door" of a church – the grandchildren view church as "religious junk."

His great great grandfather and his grandfather were ministers and now he is a minister as well.

It's obvious there are patterns that are repeated over and over again inside the fabric and framework of families. It's interesting how these patterns seem to run for generations. We have all witnessed how if an individual is a plumber there is often a high possibility that his son may become a plumber. Or if a woman loves music, her children may in fact become musicians. If you go a level deeper inside a family tree, you can often find similarities that are even more profound. Things such as attitudes, body movements, personal convictions or perspectives on life matters.

Inside the family gene pool, it's not uncommon to associate family members based on their physical resemblances. Same eyes, same height and body shape, dark hair, light hair, noses, etc. etc.

It's comical how when a baby is born the first words you hear out of the mouth of a curious onlooker is, "Oh I think she looks just like...." Or "he definitely has his mother's eyes.... or her fathers nose..."

My wife once pointed out that she could see some of my family features in a photograph of my great, great grandfather that was taken in the early 1800's.

We also share common qualities in our emotional and / or mental perspectives. Quiet demeanor, aggressive disposition, loud voices, compassionate vs. more insensitive and on and on the comparisons go.

I may have even heard it said when one of my children was misbehaving, “You act just like your father”. Imagine! Don’t laugh. It’s possible that you may have heard something similar yourself at one time

I am in no way a psychologist. Nor do I have any training in sociology or psychology. I am however fascinated that God has created us in such a way that we as family members are linked together with one another in far deeper ways than most understand or appreciate. The Apostle Paul says in 1 Thess. 5:23 that we are to “keep our whole Spirit, Soul and Body blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” These distinctions indicate that we are far more than just physical or social creatures. We are made up of body, soul and spirit.

This is the real mystery of our tri-part being. How are we connected spiritually?

I referred earlier to my great, great grandfather. His name was James Blackett Ellerby. He was born in 1748. He penned the following letter to members of his family on Jan. 01, 1807.

“It would give me unspeakable pleasure could I hear of you and all my dear brothers and sisters walking in the way of heaven. But I am at a loss what to say to you on the subject because I have wrote to you so frequently on this important subject. I have just been looking for that text with a design to preach from it this evening. “This year thou shalt die”. Perhaps before the close of this year on which we have just entered you and I will be numbered with the dead, then let us be ready for in such an hour as we think no the son of man cometh. O repent of your sins turn to God with all your heart and you may receive an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Jesus Christ.

As sure as you are living now upon earth you will seriously think of my exhortations. O that you may think of them before it is too late! Now whatsoever your hand findeth to do do it with all your might for there is no repentance nor knowledge nor device in the grave whither you are going. Nothing in the world would give me greater happiness and satisfaction of mind than to hear of and see my dear brother and sister enquiring their way to Zion with their faces thitherwards. Never will you, depend upon it, be happy till you forsake sin and turn to God with all your heart and soul. Now begin to live for God and heaven and cast this world and sin behind. But what am I doing I despair of ... unless God opens your eyes: therefore, I will bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named and lift up my heart to His throne in fervent prayer for you that you may be saved.

Please give my kindest love to your children my nephews and nieces and to all my brothers and sisters, Christn Richards and all my brethren and sisters in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Give my kind love to the preachers and particularly Mr. Gibbons.”

I remain your affectionate brother Jas Blacket Ellerby

Did my great great grandfathers encounter with Jesus actually have bearing on my personal journey? What was his experience? I'm curious to know what he looked like, how he thought and what interested him but more importantly I want to understand his faith.

The part I find most captivating about James Blacket Ellerby is that he was a circuit preacher in England in the 1700 and 1800's. He lived in tough times. There were respectable tradesmen, workers and street sellers but there were also hordes of poor and destitute who seldom had regular work, but lived as best they could. Petty and violent crimes were common in his day and consequences for those crimes were meted out harshly.

According to Dr. Matthew White, "rioting was a familiar feature of daily life in both towns and the countryside, and many people came to fear the power of the 'mob'. Crowd action was particularly strong in London, where people regularly threw stones at the carriages of leading politicians or booed unpopular ministers. In 1780, after the government had passed legislation giving more political rights to Catholics, thousands of people rioted for a week in London in protest. Catholics were attacked, and Catholic property smashed up. All of London's major prisons were burnt to the ground and the Bank of England came under attack. The incident became known as the Gordon Riots"

...people regularly threw stones at the carriages of leading politicians or booed unpopular ministers...

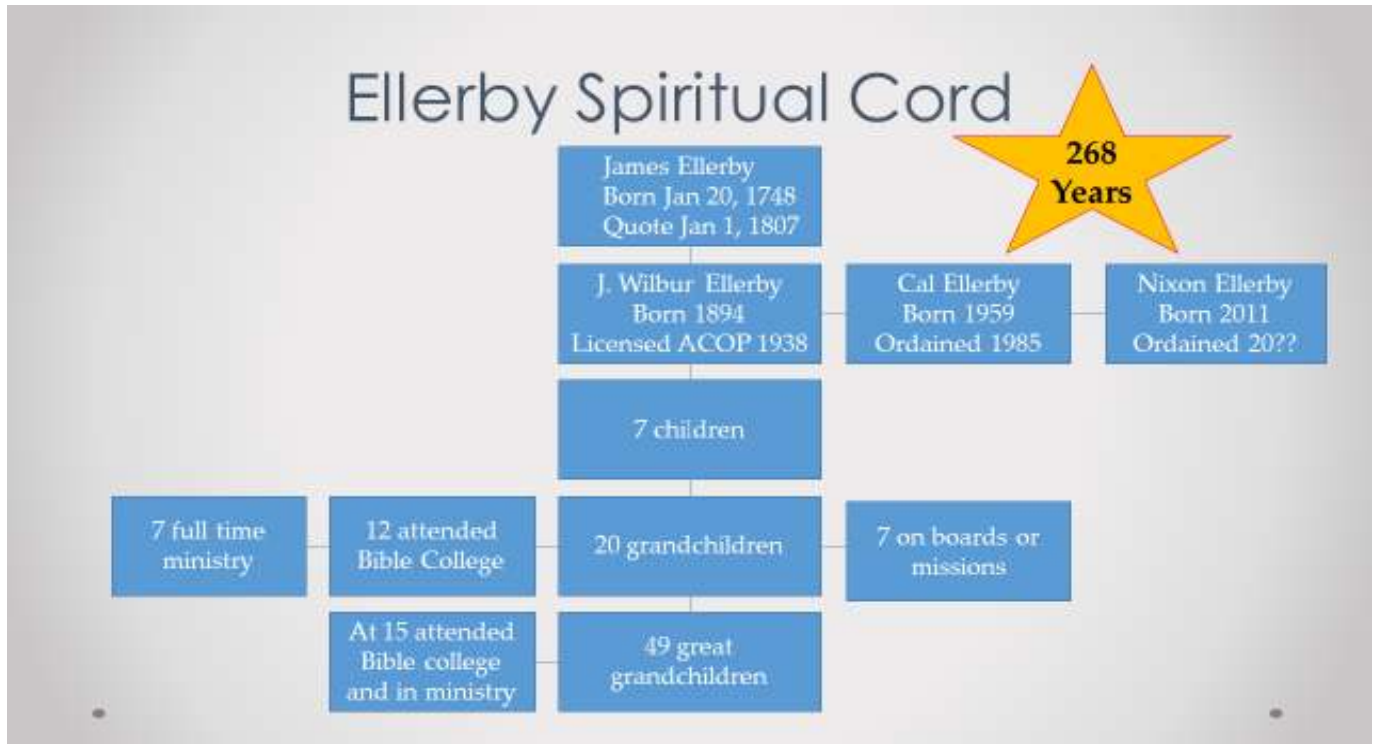
Tim Lambert explains how “the early 18th century was noted for its lack of religious enthusiasm and the churches in England lacked vigor. In the mid-18th century however, things began to change. In 1739 the great evangelists George Whitefield and **John Wesley** began preaching the gospel throughout the country. Wesley eventually created a new religious movement called the Methodists. In Wales, there was a great revival in the years 1738-1742. Scotland was also swept by revival in the mid-18th century.”

It was in this environment that James Blacket Ellerby was born. It was on the coat tails of that move of God that he travelled around the nation preaching the gospel and challenging people to give their lives to Jesus and to walk in a manner worthy of His Lordship.

His conviction is obvious. His passion was pure and his experience and transformed life undeniable. He had met Jesus and knew that his family needed to know Him as well.

I can only assume that my great, great grandfather had been significantly influenced by the likes of Whitefield and Wesley but I am also of the mind that he probably wasn't the first in the family tree that was a believer and an advocate of embracing Jesus as their saviour.

The correlation between my great, great grandpa Ellerby and those that have followed him is very intriguing to me. Look at the following chart:



There are many gaps that I do not have record of but what I do have shows a fairly consistent and common theme. Great great grandpa Ellerby was a preacher in the 1700 and 1800's. My grandfather Wilbur Ellerby became a licensed minister in 1938 and I was ordained a minister in 1985. Of my grandpa Wilbur's 7 children there came 20 grandchildren, 7 of which have served in full time ministry. Of those 20 grandchildren came 49 great grandchildren, 15 of whom have at least attended bible college with many going on to serve in full time ministry.

Something that took place in the life of my great great grandfather James Blacket Ellerby has found its way down through the ages to me and my generation all these years later. He was the patriarch of family members that love Jesus and have sought to serve Him over many generations.

This phenomenon is much more than an emotional, social or cultural occurrence. It goes far deeper than psychological or sociological patterns.

The manifest power of God has been witnessed in the hearts of many generations of my family. The individual relevance of a personal spiritual awakening has been repeated over and over again in the lives of these family members. Each one having their own unique story and encounter with Christ but each arriving at the same spot at the foot of the cross with the eyes of their heart opened and embracing the redemptive work of Jesus. Each one of my siblings, cousins and aunts and uncles that profess their love for Jesus is a living testimony of the power of great great grandpa's prayer and blessing. "Now begin to live for God and heaven and cast this world and sin behind

But what am I doing I despair of ... unless God opens your eyes: therefore, I will bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named and lift up my heart to His throne in fervent prayer for you that you may be saved."

A prayer that was prayed over 250 years ago.

What Does The Bible Say About Generational Foundations?

Deut. 30:19 "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curses. Therefore, choose life, that you and your offspring may live..."

When Moses assembled the children of Israel together to present to them the covenant that God was making with them, it was clear that this covenant was never intended to be a short term one generational promise. I love the way the instructions are laid out. God said to Moses I'm giving you an option here.

1. Deut. 30:19

1) "I have set before you..." Here's your choices. Follow me and worship me...or don't.

2) *“Therefore, choose life...” Make the right choice.*

3) *“So, that you AND your offspring may live....”*

It was clear from God's promises that the next generations were very much included in the covenant. The onus on the people was that the choice they were going to make that day was going to be carried on for generations to come. God was declaring that this decision was not to be made lightly because their children and their grandchildren would be profoundly impacted by their choice.

2. The 2nd of the 10 Commandments

“You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.” Ex. 20:5,6

The principle was clear for the children of Israel. If you worship other gods, the third and fourth generation of your family will suffer the consequences. But if you will have a heart for God then a thousand generations of your family tree will experience His blessings.

There is clearly a generational cord, a connection that ties the family together, making it one living organism.

3. David Spoke Prophetically

Psalm 103:17

“But the lovingkindness of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, And His righteousness to their children's children, ...”

Ps. 112:1,2 "Praise the LORD! How blessed is the man who fears the LORD, Who greatly delights in His commandments. His descendants will be mighty on earth; The generation of the upright will be blessed."

4. The Blessing of Abraham

"Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations.

I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God." Gen. 17:3-8

Without getting into the theology of the Blessing of Abraham let me say this. The foundation of our Christian faith is rooted in these promises. God was teaching Abraham that because of his faith the whole of mankind was going to be given the opportunity to enter into the fullness of God's plan for humanity.

Abraham was God's appointed servant

It is this very chapter of the Bible that reveals that God sees every generation at once. God sees the whole picture. We see linear, God sees complete. God not only saw Abraham but He saw you and me. Abraham was God's appointed servant to be "the guy". It was God's design to enlarge His connectedness with the rest of humanity for generations to eternity, by hand picking Abraham to be the Father of faith. And because of Abraham's obedience, trust and commitment to God's leading, salvation by faith alone became a reality.

Abraham was the "Father of faith" the patriarch, the one appointed as the "head" of the family tree. He was linked to many, many generations that would follow him. His actions for that day were going to set the course and lay out the necessary framework for not only his children but every one of his descendants.

5. New Testament Blessings of Abraham

Romans 4:20-25 "Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness."

The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification."

Paul unveils a wonderful truth here in Romans. “The words ‘it was credited to him’ were written not for him alone, but also for us...” The words were not just recorded for Abrahams benefit but that in His ‘all knowing, all wise foresight’, God was completing the bond between Himself and all those who would come to Him in faith, as Abraham did.

Gal. 4:14 “He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.”

“Look ahead Man, Look Ahead”

Grandpa. It’s your time. Imagine 200 years from today. What part are you going to play in establishing the experiences with Jesus of your great, great, grandchildren and beyond?

I cannot over state the importance for men of God to capture the vision and urgency to embrace their responsibility to be the disseminators of God’s blessing on their descendants. James Blacket Ellerby could not have known what the generations after him would look like.

He has been however, an integral player in the journey of people like me. He fulfilled his appointed placement by honoring the Lord Jesus with his life and passed on Gods blessing so that I could personally experience Christ in a most profound way.

Thank you grandpa.

Chapter 4

What Makes the Family So Important?

“There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations – these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit.”

C. S. Lewis

The Jewish culture is a rich culture, and the Jewish faith has developed magnificent symbolism and imagery associated with the scriptures. As westernized Christians, we often miss or even misrepresent the meaning of certain passages of the Bible either because we don't know or don't fully understand the context in which the passage was written. When we read the scriptures we generally interpret them based on our own western filters and our own understanding of English words that don't completely project the full intention of the author. We too often lack or at least don't fully comprehend the geographical settings, the middle eastern ethos and the history in which the texts were written.

One significant example of this is the meaning and understanding the Jewish culture has when defining the concept of blessing. As westerners, we have limited or confined the definition of blessings to mean one of three rather simplistic thoughts:

1. Happiness
2. Favour / provision
3. Thanksgiving

While each of these thoughts contribute to a partial understanding, there is a much deeper intent associated with the term.

When the Jewish people express blessing they are declaring their admiration for the Spirit of God who is enveloped in every aspect of the object of blessing. They are expressing their awareness of the intricacy with which God has represented Himself in that specific part of creation. It defines the reality that God wants to be seen at every level of our lives. That "...In Him we live and move and have our being".

On her website www.passoverataish.com, Daniella Levy writes a blog that gives us a little richer insight and clarification on this subject.

... first things first: what does the word “bless” mean, anyway? In Hebrew, the root that means “bless” is b.r.kh, and the Sages explain that it means “to increase” or “bring down Divine abundance.” When I “bless” you, I am asking God to increase your health, wealth, happiness or whatever it may be, to shine His light on you... in essence, to give you more of Himself. So what could it possibly mean for me to “bless” God for creating the apple I’m about to eat?

The key to understanding this is to recognize the purpose of these blessings. It is not merely to show gratitude.

The purpose of a blessing is awareness.

When I hold an apple in my hand and say, “Blessed are You, Lord, our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the tree,” what I’m really saying is a lot more than just “thanks for making this apple.” I’m saying, “Your presence in this world has been made that much greater, has increased, through this fruit You created that I am about to enjoy.”

I’m declaring that whatever it is I’m making the blessing for – whether it’s a food I’m enjoying, a roll of thunder I heard, or a mitzvah I’m about to perform – is increasing God’s presence in the world, through my recognition of His role in creating or commanding it.

This is one of the main themes of Judaism: channeling the Divine into the mundane and revealing the spiritual through the physical. Through this worldly experience, I experience God; and when I declare that recognition, I make His presence in the world that much more known.

Simply put: in this apple, I see God.

When we bless something or more specifically someone, we are in fact expressing our admiration for God as the creator of that specific thing or special person. People, the apex of God's creation, is understood to be even that much more valuable. They are not only the image of God but vessels housing the Spirit of God. That being said, when we bless our grandchildren and children we are literally acknowledging God's masterpiece within them.

Therefore, there is a far more profound reality that associates family members to one another. It is an unseen reality. It is a spiritual reality. It is "...Christ in me the hope of glory."

"So, God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them". Gen 1:27

What does this scripture teach us? We not only share the DNA of our parents and ancestors but we literally have the DNA of God woven into us. It is this very element of our existence that separates humanity from the rest of creation. We are the IMAGO DEI. "The image of God."

We are the Image of God. The Imago Dei.

"Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being". Gen 2:7

We breathe the very breath of God. No other part of creation has the breath of God emanating from their being. The angels marvel and the demons tremble at the beauty and majesty of God's most magnificent creature.

The Family is a Divine Living Entity

If man as an individual is the image of God, then it provokes further thought regarding the family unit as a collection of individuals bearing that image.

What is the significance of the family? Why is it so important?

Gen 2:18,20-24 "The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him... But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So, the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh."

Forgive me as I digress but I have to tell you that I totally identify with this verse. When I first saw my (now) wife, my immediate thought was in fact "Woah..... man! It's not good for me to be alone. I need one of those. Actually, I need that one." And subsequently less than a year later we were married and have enjoyed the pleasure of one another's partnership for the last 35 years. God comes up with some great ideas.

Ok, back to the family.

It was God who created the family by creating Eve for Adam and then gave them strict instructions to be "fruitful and multiply". Unless things have changed since then, I think Adam thought that was a wonderful idea.

The family. A precious fundamental to all of God's intentions

The relationship with God was now on a replicable trajectory. God's plan was now in full motion. Humans would continually reproduce and continually introduce more and more God breathed creatures into the world allowing this wondrous union between God and His beloved creation to stimulate joy and intimacy in a very beautiful way.

THE FAMILY!! It is a precious foundation to all of God's intentions.

The assembly of His masterpiece and the infusion of His Spirit portray to all of creation the splendor of His ultimate craftsmanship. Humanity. His fingerprints on them and His breath within them. That is what makes us different. That is what makes us precious in His sight. That is the mystery of all His creation. That is what necessitates redemption.

In his paper

“Family: More Than a Cultural Phenomenon” Rev. F. Stanley Keehlwetter wrote, “The traditional family unit, therefore, is more than the consequence of evolutionary social interaction or merely a cultural phenomenon. It is a spiritual entity, designed by God, with intrinsic value and purpose.”

I love Dr. Keehlwetter's statement that the family was “DESIGNED” by God. He had to have a system. He had to have a plan. No other part of creation had the same elements bestowed on it. To see this and understand it is to recognize the immense value Almighty God places on the family unit.

“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man, he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’ “Therefore, since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. Acts 17:24-29

Paul proclaimed clearly to the people of Athens that there was something profoundly special about humanity making it entirely unique from anything else in existence.

Even though God created everything in the world, only human beings and the family unit are living organisms in the divine sense. God Himself gives everyone “Life and breath and everything else.” People and families for that matter, are designed to function as one unit and to be sustained by an intimate relationship with their creator. The assembled groupings of human beings otherwise known as family are quite literally living, breathing, divine organisms.

Here’s what we know about a living organism:

It is made up of a multitude of individual, yet, connected cells and molecules. Each of those cells share the same DNA and is designed to live attached to the rest of the body. Each part is to contribute to the strength and life of the whole.

The family unit is a living organism in the divine sense

1. **This collection of cells is sustained by the same source.** In the case of the family, it is sustained by the very breath of God. There is a spiritual cord tying one generation to the other. God has put His life into the family connection. It needs the breath of God to remain healthy and alive.
 2. **The body is designed to nurture and care for itself.** The body embraces all other cells that share the same DNA. Every cell supports the others. It is a marvelous example of how love and acceptance are so vital to the over well being of a family.
 3. **The body is designed to protect and heal itself.** When one element or cell is wounded, the body is designed to fight off the enemy and preserve the health of the wounded member. Without this component, the body will ultimately become sick and die. When a family member is wounded the rest of the family is affected and needs to come to the aid of the wounded member.
1. **The body is designed to replenish itself.** The necessary elements of nutrition, exercise and proper environment all contribute to the ongoing energy and replenishment that the body requires. The absorption of nutrients, natural vitamins and sustenance are reminders of how the family requires ongoing investments of love, encouragement, enjoyment and fellowship.
 2. **The body is designed to reproduce itself.** The physical body sheds some 600,000 cells a day and reproduces new cells to replace those, every minute of every day. The family is continually cycling through members. The generations that pass on are replaced with new descendants that are entering this world to further expand the lineage and presence of the family and its name. Each one is connected to the previous and the next. The transference of Gods blessing from one generation is not just a nice social tradition. It is Gods plan for making sure that every generation experiences His love and communion.

I've always found it curious that when the Old Testament patriarchs passed a blessing onto the next generation they often prayed that the recipient of the blessing would have families as plentiful as the stars of the sky and the sand of the sea. Not until I realized that the family was a part of God's divine strategy did I understand how important this truth really is. It has always been His intention that the spiritual cord that houses His own spiritual DNA not be broken but be carried on from one generation to the next. He longs to express His love and His nature to every human life ever born and His chosen pathway for doing that is ideally through the family unit. He created families in such a way that the individuals of one generation might benefit from the faithfulness and commitment to God by each preceding generation.

The Apostle Paul stated in Acts 17 that,

“God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him. As members of one another at our very core, we begin to recognize the degree of our divine nature and eternal intent for our relationships. Seeing the family as God sees it, will help us to appreciate the role we play as patriarchs more fully. It will help us to see why we must be engaged in God's plan.

It will also help us to understand that every generation plays an important part in the lives and experiences of the generations that come after us.

It makes King David's impassioned prayer of Ps. 71:18 make greater sense.

“Even in my old age and gray hair oh God, do not forsake me until I have declared your power to the next generation and your might to those that will come”.

Grandfather's, as the patriarch of your family, God has placed you and appointed you as a catalyst in this masterfully designed and crafted structure. You may not always have the privilege, due to circumstances beyond your control, to directly shape and influence the lives of your grandchildren but

you are still God's choice for the continual spiritual connection and life in their journey to and with Him. The life of Christ will be exponentially enhanced through the involvement and contribution of grandpa. It's the way the spiritual DNA intertwines throughout the living organism known as "the family". As you exercise your responsibility of passing on the blessing of God to the next generation, you will be fulfilling the divine mandate bestowed on you by a God who has chosen to be reflected to the world through His most treasured creation. You got it. Your family!

Chapter 5

The Principle of Headship

“... although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

Philippians 2:6-8

As a kid, I remember hearing a story that has never left me. The story goes that in the early 1930's there was a farmer who like most, was doing his best to survive the dusty, drought plagued "Dirty 30's". It was a very difficult time and he did whatever he had to in order to provide for his wife and 5 children. The ground was parched from lack of rain and the livestock were thin because the normally rich and lush pastureland was now brown and dry. Typical of the small family farm, the farmer kept a few of every kind of farm animal that could provide the necessary sources of food and in some cases a means to trade for other essential goods.

There were the two plow horses, Mike, and Pat, 3 milk cows, a half dozen goats, 8 pigs and no farm would be complete without as many chickens as you could collect.

Chickens were the absolute staple for every farm family in the 30's. They provided nearly everything you would need at minimal cost and required very little maintenance. Eggs were served in some form at virtually every meal. If you didn't eat the eggs they were left under the hens to increase the flock by hatching a whole new generation of chicks. The chicken coop was well protected from any kind of predator and the daily contact with the hens actually became some what of a social gathering.

Chickens are interesting characters. When they meander throughout a yard they make a sound that really does resemble people speaking with each other. They are quite amusing and our farmer friend found it to be as such. He became rather attached to his chickens and even began to befriend certain ones in a special and somewhat sentimental manner. Each time he would go out to feed his flock there was one hen that would come up close and seemingly communicate her affection for the farmer, recognizing him to be her source of provision.

The farmer named this curious creature “Gerty” and he would look forward to being greeted by “Gerty” when delivering her meal. “Gerty” would come close to the farmer eating the seed from his hand, following him around the yard as he tended to the rest of the flock

The farmer and his chicken became personal friends in a way that was unique to only him and her. That relationship changed overnight however, when the farmer left “Gerty” to hatch her eggs and produce her own family of chicks.

As usual the farmer was out of bed early and out the door to begin his daily chores. He had not thought anything different of his daily tour around the farm, routinely hoisting hay for the cows, stopping to

talk and comb Mike and Pat, throw some slop to the pigs and chase a goat off the tractor seat again for the umpteenth time.

He strolled leisurely to the chicken coop, opening the door to release the hens into the yard for their daily walk and feast. To his utter surprise however, when he opened the door to the hen house a flurry of feathers and an ear-piercing screech attacked him from out of no where. It sent him striding backward almost knocking him off his feet. He was even more surprised when he realized that the assailant was none other than his good friend “Gerty”. The farmer collected himself and chuckled, realizing that “Gerty” was now the proud and protective mom of a family of 7 tiny golden chicks

She was just instinctively protecting her family. Even from the farmer. For several days “Gerty” made sure that nothing or no one was going to encroach within a safe distance of her family.

The part of the story I remember so vividly from my childhood is what happened next.

On a typically very hot July day on the prairies, the farmer noticed on the horizon what he initially assumed was dust. To his horror, he realized that what he saw wasn't dust but was in fact the smoke of a prairie fire moving swiftly toward his own farm. A fire in those days would spread several miles an hour and this one was rapidly closing in.

In a panic, the farmer called his family out of the house and began to prepare for the inevitable. He had to protect his home and do his best to protect his critters. The fire engulfed his barn, his feed and most of the surrounding trees but he did manage to save his house by throwing water on it from the well and digging somewhat of a mote around his home.

Devastated, discouraged but not defeated after the fire passed, the farmer began to take stock of his losses. The ground was scorched with piles of debris and the charred remains of small structures. All he could do was wander somewhat aimlessly from object to object remembering what was and assessing the cost and work of replacing the essentials. The fire had left little in its path that could be salvaged. Feeling empty and stunned, our farmer friend walked by a lump of smouldering ash that looked every bit like the rest of the burnt remains in the yard. He lazily kicked the pile, and to his complete amazement and eventually to his delight, out from under the pile scurried 7 little golden chicks.

Despite the devastation of the fire there was life that had been preserved in the form of a new generation of little chickens. A glimmer of hope began to well up within his heart. As he mused about the potential of rebuilding, it suddenly occurred to him, the pile of burnt rubble was in fact his good friend “Gerty”.

The 7 chicks were her family. She had literally given her life for her chicks. In the midst of overwhelming chaos “Gerty” had gathered her little ones to herself, covering them with her own body and her own wings in order that they might be safe from the fatal flames of a powerful prairie fire. From her sacrifice and the surrender of her own life, a new generation would immerge, live, and flourish.

As I said, the story of “Gerty” left an indelible image in my mind of what it means to give covering to those you love and are responsible for. Personal sacrifice when not tarnished by sin, is in the DNA of all of creation. It is the intrinsic nature of creation to care for their young. It is the representation of a loving, caring, merciful God that has demonstrated the same ultimate sacrifice in the person of our saviour Jesus.

True Biblical Headship

Our story gives us a great metaphor of what the principle of headship is all about. I love Philippians 2:6-8 because it portrays for us the truth of what it means to surrender our own lives for the lives and the care of those we have been appointed over. There is no room for selfishness. There is no room for personal ambition or manipulation at the expense of others. Jesus, “... emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant ,...” . This surrender was not about self promotion or self-preservation it was all about covering and stewardship.

True biblical headship is constantly under attack.

True biblical headship is constantly under attack. The distortion of this principle, because of sin, is evidenced everywhere. Family breakdowns and men behaving like egotistical controlling fools with their spouses and families are two clear indicators that we live in a society that has lost its way when it comes to embracing the true meaning and intent of family headship.

When Godly headship is functioning properly there is peace, harmony and security. God does not leave that which He establishes to itself without structure. He designed the family to operate in a structured and orderly manner. When we do things His way, we see the wisdom and fruit of that design unfold as He intended.

Unfortunately, the word of God is no longer societies guidebook for life which has resulted in confusion and anger instead of joy and life.

Adam and Eve

By design, the male was established to represent God as the leader in creation. Adam was created first, with Eve being created from the rib of Adam. Prior to the fall, Eve was Adam's "helpmeet". She was a full partner with Adam, even though Adam was clearly placed as the head of the relationship. Paul told the Corinthians that the man was to be the head of his wife and that Christ is the Head of man. If you understand the term 'head' in the context of covering as opposed to authority it becomes very liberating for everyone involved. Under a godly covering we are free to grow and become everything God wants us to be with a full sense of safety and security.

Adam and Eve's disobedience broke the purity of this union bringing upon the future of mankind a curse that would impact and establish the foundation of Satan's assault against the family ever since. Genesis 3:16 (NIV) "To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labour you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." The statement "your desire will be for your husband" quite literally means that in an unredeemed state the woman would long to control her husband, desiring to assume his place of headship. The flip side of that curse was that her husband would "rule over her". Built into the curse was the perfect storm of conflict. The woman longing for control and the man having the challenge of knowing and understanding the concept of ruler. Outside of a relationship submitted to Christ this battle for control continues to rage on.

Our culture clearly reflects this struggle. God never intended for this relationship to be an authoritarian order. Mankind was structured in a way that mutual respect and submission to one another would allow for harmony and love. A man's role is to give leadership and to represent God to his family not to dominate and overlord it..

The youngest generation is being robbed of God's best

|Men let me be clear. You have been given the position of 'head' over your family tree. You are the patriarch. Your position has come under relentless assault but if you abdicate your responsibility you are not walking in accordance with God's divine intention for your family.

The family will see an immediate resurgence of life and restored health if men will take their place as the heads of their homes. The youngest generation is being robbed of God's best and are extremely vulnerable to spiritual attack when the and father's do not serve them as physical, social, and spiritual heads in their homes. Men of God let's not allow that to happen any longer on our watch.

So, what has gone wrong? In the simplest terms, 'covering and stewardship' have too often been replaced with authority, domination, abuse, and manipulation.

The life of Jesus doesn't reflect egotism and control and yet no one would ever question His Headship and leadership in humanity. Jesus' ministry and life demonstrate the nurture, love and care that were necessary for the healing and redemption of everyone He met. He wasn't confused about His role nor was He insecure about serving those He was over. He didn't need to prove how important He was nor feel inadequate when he was questioned. Jesus clearly understood and embraced His Father's mandate here on earth. He is obviously the ultimate example of what true headship is meant to be.

Covering and Stewardship

The terms 'covering' and 'stewardship' best define what the role of the "Head" or patriarch should be.

Covering

What is covering? The idea of covering suggests protective care. As the head of our home men it is our job to provide safety and security for our family. Not just physical safety but an environment where all our family members can flourish and grow in all aspects of their lives. It is our job to nurture the home environment leading it to a place

where family members can discover their personal identity and be proud of who God has made them to be.

“Love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for it...”

Covering further implies that we must stand in the path of anything that might come against any members of the family. Moses declared in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 that it is our place to represent God to our family and to lead them into their own personal knowledge and experience with Him.

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.”

It is our job to teach and lead our families, establishing Christ as Lord. Joshua's declaration

“... as for me and my house we will serve the Lord...” is to be the mantra of the Godly patriarch over his own home.

We are like a spiritual umbrella on behalf of those God has given to our charge. We don't own or control anyone. We do however need to care, love, support and nurture each one in such a way that they will know Jesus themselves.

Stewardship

What is stewardship?

The dictionary defines stewardship as, "... a person who acts as the surrogate of another or others, ... the responsible overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving..." The idea of stewardship suggests accountability. Every human being belongs to God. The Bible says we are not our own but our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Every individual has their own direct and personal relationship with God. He loves each one as an individual. It is however, God's design to create an infrastructure called the family to care for and nurture each person into a properly functioning vessel of God's glory. God has made each person and each family unique. Everyone is different, everyone is special. Each human being is "...fearfully and wonderfully made...". That is the beauty of creation.

As patriarchs, we are stewards of the lives of the children and grandchildren that are placed within our care and in our family tree. We will give an answer for how we represent God to our family. The principle of headship places the responsibility on grandfather's and father's to be accountable for each of these very special created beings.

Our mission as the leaders and the heads of our families is to understand those uniqueness's and foster growth in each one in such a way that they might be able to reach the potential God has hardwired into them.

That is true leadership. That is Godly headship. That's the way the system functions in harmony with God's divine order.

What Does Jacob Teach Us About Headship?

Our study of Genesis 48 and the Patriarchal role that Jacob had with Joseph and his family, teaches us a great deal about how we too should serve in our own personal roles. Most cultures outside the western world hold the elders of their families in far higher regard than we do in the west. Our secularized society has been for years diminishing the respect and honor of the head of our homes. Western culture is always looking for ways to remove the influence of the patriarch when others are looking to draw from them.

I love the scene we are able to look in on from Genesis 48. Jacob clearly understood the responsibility he had as the family patriarch in the life of Joseph and his children.

A dear friend of mine made a very insightful and astute observation that I missed when I was writing this chapter. The anointing and the spiritual mantle on Jacob changed when Joseph showed up at his dad's house with his boys. The scripture says in Gen. 48:2 that "Israel" got up off his bed to meet his son. He is not referred to as Jacob but rather as "Israel". Why is that important? We need to go back to Gen. 32 to understand the significance of this name change.

Genesis 32:26-30 "Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered. Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome." Jacob said, "Please tell me your name." But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there. So, Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared."

Jacob was known as the “deceiver” prior to his encounter with God in Gen. 32. It was during that struggle that Jacob’s life changed and that he could from that night forward be known as the man “who had struggled with God”. His experience that night changed his life for ever. His personal understanding and perception of God would never be the same. He would never be the same. Now when he sat up to bless Joseph and his boys he was doing it as the man who “had met God face to face”. No more theories, no more assumptions, no more philosophical assertions. Jacob had met God, struggled with God and emerged a new man.

Jacob didn’t just know about God. He KNEW God himself

Men of God this should be our greatest desire and contribution to the next generation. As we get older we can reflect on the many times and experiences where we could fall into the category of deceiver, but let it be our story that we have met God “face to face” when passing blessing onto the next generations. That out of our personal struggles with God we can speak genuinely and intimately of His faithfulness and love for all those who come before Him.

1. Jacobs Position as Family Patriarch Was Highly Respected

Gen. 48:1 “Some time later Joseph was told, “Your father is ill.” So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim along with him. When Jacob was told, “Your son Joseph has come to you,” Israel rallied his strength and sat up on the bed.

It is apparent that Joseph realized the need for his children to receive his father’s patriarchal blessing. It is possible he had neglected this in his children’s younger days or maybe they weren’t of age yet. Regardless, the passing on of blessing was something that Jacob must have instilled in him from his childhood.

Gen. 48:12 "... Then Joseph removed them from Israel's knees and bowed down with his face to the ground ..."

Joseph heard his dad was dying so he hastily made his way to his dad's bedside and the scriptures say that as soon as Jacob heard Joseph had arrived he rallied his strength, got up off the couch and immediately began to discuss the blessing of God with his son. Joseph's posture, his humility and his honor for his father tell you all you need to know about the degree of respect he had for his dad.

There was obviously an intense appreciation for the role of the patriarch. Joseph was a powerful man and in the natural, certainly didn't need his dad to provide him with anything. I believe that what Joseph did understand was that something would be missing in the form of spiritual covering, that his dad embodied and that he didn't want to miss for either himself or his family.

It is something that we as the heads of our own families should discuss, teach, and communicate to our own sons and daughters. There can be a lot of misunderstanding in family relationships today that can prevent members of the family from receiving what God has for them. As the patriarch, we should find ways and means to educate our families about the power of blessing and help them to appreciate the role of the patriarch as a steward of that which is ultimately Gods.

1. Jacob Understood the Value, Power and Order of Blessing
2. Jacob Had Firsthand Experience of the Value of Gods Blessing

vs.3 "Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me and said to me ..."

Jacob's life had been anything but a straight line. In fact, his name literally meant "Deceiver". There were lots of ups and downs and he had a long history of narrow scrapes. The one thing that had sustained him in his life, however, was his knowledge that at 'Luz' God had blessed him. He knew what it meant to cling to the hope that comes with the blessing of God. He knew firsthand what God had given him, and he wanted each of his children and their children to know that same blessing.

Jacob had heard the voice of God

When you own something precious, something that might be irreplaceable you treasure it and protect it because you know its value. Jacob understood the value of blessing.

When Joseph brought his boys to be prayed for, Jacob knew that this was an incredibly valuable responsibility he was about to exercise.

1. Jacob had witnessed the Power of God for himself

vs. 4 "I am going to make you fruitful and will increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you.'"

Jacob had heard the voice of God. When you hear God, there is nothing that compares to it. The power and strength that comes through His voice leads you through your whole life. Vision, passion, energy and determination accompany His voice. A man convinced of the calling of God cannot be deterred from his mission. As the 'head' of his family, he knew that God had promised him something that must in turn be conferred upon his sons and their families. Jacob knew that the voice and promises of God were for all the generations in his family tree. He knew that God was powerful and eager for his descendants to hear His voice the same way he had.

When God speaks in the “First Person” to someone as He did to Jacob, they listen. Jacob had witnessed the power of God himself and knew how real that power was.

As he prepared to pray over his grandsons he knew what a powerful spiritual impartation and journey he was about to commission into the lives of these boys.

1. Jacob understood that there was a divine Order connecting the generations

vs.15, 16 “Then he blessed Joseph and said, “May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, the Angel who has delivered me from all harm --may he bless these boys. May they be called by my name and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and may they increase greatly upon the earth.”

Jacob understood headship and the role his forefathers played in his own journey and the role they were going to play in the journey of Joseph and his sons. Jacob names 5 generations in his prayer. He establishes that his “father Abraham and his father Isaac” were blessed and called by God, and then declares that God who had led him as a “shepherd his whole life” should now bless the fourth generation, Joseph and the fifth-generation Ephraim and Manasseh the same way.

Order of Headship in Gen 48

The headship principle is defined through the naming of these 5 generations. Abraham was not alive when Jacob lived but there is clearly a connection that God sees as important enough to include it in the scriptures.

Jacob understood that he was one more link in the patriarchal cord enhancing God's connection with Ephraim and Manasseh. He embraced the responsibility of 'headship' in his family as a means of passing God's favor onto them. It wasn't just "be a nice grandpa" thing, it was in fact a spiritual imperative.

1. Jacob Had Something to Give

Fulfilling the place of the patriarch or serving in a Godly headship role requires us to pay attention to our own lives and our own personal walk with God. If we are stewards of those placed in our care, then what we have to give them is a serious matter. We must be constantly reminded that we do not just live for ourselves. As the head of our family tree, we have tremendous responsibility placed on us to be conduits of God's blessing and favour to every generation that will follow us.

We must be constantly reminded that we do not just live for ourselves

Jacob's experience with God was the very thing Joseph desired for himself and his family and the very thing Jacob could pass on.

1. God Appeared to Jacob

vs 3 "Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, ..."

Having our own personal experience and story of an encounter with God enables us to speak with conviction and strength. Jacob didn't just know about God. He **KNEW** God himself. He could tell the story of how the Lord met him and spoke with him. He could tell of life altering experiences and the personal joy of having met the Lord in a special and significant way.

As the heads of our homes and families it is critical that we be constantly developing our personal walk with Jesus. It is our personal relationship and experience with Christ that makes the passing on of blessing such a powerful influence.

1. There God Blessed Him

vs. 3 "...and there he blessed me and said to me, ..."

We established in an earlier chapter that the word 'bless' literally means "To invoke God for the purpose of prospering." Jacob knew firsthand how God made things happen in ways that only He could.

He had seen the prosperity that came from God's blessing. He had the joy of being reunited with his own son when for years he had presumed him dead. As the head of his family Jacob could pass on the very hope and assurance that comes from witnessing God's favour in a personal and powerful way.

The Apostle Paul instructed the Thessalonians to "... give thanks in everything for this is the will of God." I recall as a kid an old hymn that was sung in church on a regular basis. "Count your blessings, name them one by one, count your many blessings and see what God has done.". Too often we lose sight of God's blessings in our lives. It is these blessings however, when recounted, serve as a tremendous testimony of His goodness to us and a reminder of the hope we have in Christ.

God's blessing is our story. Recount those blessings and tell your story to your own grandchildren and children.

1. God Gave Him Promises

vs. 4 "...I am going to make you fruitful and will increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you.'"

The promises of God change a person's life. As the head of our families the greatest thing we can pass on is a knowledge of the word of God and His promises to us as believers. When His promises are real to us then we can make them real to our grandchildren and children. "Thy word have I stored up in my heart..."

Jacob reiterated the promises God had made to him knowing full well those promises went beyond him and were very much for Joseph and his family as well.

What has the Lord said to you? Which of His promises are the most precious and meaningful to you? As the head of your family, you become the voice of those promises for the next generation. You have the privilege of shaping the journey of that generation by passing on those promises, making them real, powerful, and personal to your own descendants.

Jacob understood he was the patriarch, the 'Head' of his family. He knew that what he had to give would shape the very destiny of his grandchildren.

The Significant Role of Grandfathers

Grandpa you are the head of your family tree. You have been commissioned with the charge of providing spiritual cover for your family, to be a steward of those that the Lord has placed in your care. Represent God well and pass on His blessing. Set the course for their lives. Recognize the privilege and responsibility you have to be a part of the next great move of God by fulfilling your headship role faithfully as unto the Lord.

Chapter 6

The Wrestling Match

“Spiritual warfare is very real. There is a furious, fierce, and ferocious battle raging in the realm of the spirit between the forces of God and the forces of evil. Warfare happens every day, all the time. Whether you believe it or not, you are in a battlefield. You are in warfare.” Pedro Okoro

“This is a real Ring-a-ding-dong-dandy”. The all-familiar catch phrase of the legendary Ed Whalen with his very distinguishable voice would sound out across the TV air ways every Saturday afternoon. The undeniable pronouncement of another “Battle Royale” of Stampede Wrestling. Before Mr. Whalen would bid the audience, farewell, or declare “In the meantime and in between time this is another edition of Stampede Wrestling”, the likes of Adullah the Butcher, Gene Kiniski and Andre the Giant would have rolled around the mats and jumped off the top ropes of the wrestling ring. Gorgeous George, Stu Hart and the Cuban Assassin would have bludgeoned one another with “foreign objects” and Tor Kamata would have thrown salt into the eyes of Archie ‘the Stomper’ Gouldie, followed by a nasty “Judo Chop” to the throat, rendering him immobile, regaining the prized championship belt. Entertainment in its rawest form.

I remember those days vividly. So captivating and shrouded in mystery. Were these matches even real? Did the opponents travel together from venue to venue in the same station wagon, dining together in the same restaurants and sharing hotel rooms? Or were they really the arch enemies of one another as portrayed on TV?

Only Ed Whalen, Stu Hart, and the combatants themselves knew for sure. Well, pretty much everyone else knew also but no body wanted to really come out and say it. After all there was no better theatre for the male audience in the 60's, 70's and 80's.

Good vs. evil. The enticement and energy of such battles continues to be waged in the arena of life at every level. The concept of such warfare typifies the ongoing challenges that we as believers and specifically Christian men are faced with each and everyday of our lives as we seek to understand and follow the leading of the “Captain of Hosts”, our Lord Jesus.

The Bible frequently depicts the spiritual war that takes place in the realm of the unseen, a battle for the lives, minds, and souls of all of mankind. A battle that rages and is fought in such a way that if we are not aware of the tactics and strategies employed, we can become victims of a foe that is determined to “kill, steal and destroy”.

The Battle is real. Understanding That is the First Step to Walking in Our Victory.

Satan is real. Angels, demons, spiritual warfare--they all exist.

Just behind the veil of everyday life, lurking in the shadows, cloaked in mystery and confusion—is our prime spiritual enemy. Satan is real. Angels, demons, spiritual warfare--they all exist.

“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.” 1 Pet. 5:8-9

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ” 2 Cor. 10:3-4

“For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.” Colossians 1:16

In Ephesians 6:12, the apostle Paul presents a divine revelation he received that describes how Satan’s kingdom has been militarily aligned. He writes, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places.”

The Greek word for 'wrestle' here means "man to man combat to the death." It was used of two Greek wrestlers who fought to the death. As believers, we are involved in a spiritual battle, with Satan and the kingdom of darkness, where he is determined to eradicate mankind. Satan hates humanity hates the family and is scheming to destroy it.

Satan hates humanity, hates the family and is scheming to destroy it.

It is important to understand the way Satan sets up his dark forces because it will help us to understand why the attack on the patriarchs is such a tactical move of the devil and his spiritual military.

The organization of this kingdom is very clearly outlined in Eph. 6:12:

"... against the principalities, against the powers, against the rulers of this dark world and against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places..."

There are at least 5 different levels of authority within the satanic kingdom.

At the top is Satan or Lucifer, who is in command, however below him are 4 different ranks of his assigned henchmen.

The following categories help us to see how structured and organized his kingdom is:

1. Principalities. (Greek - Archas) - highest ranking beings.
2. Powers. (Exousias) - powers of authority.
3. Rulers. (Kosmokratipis) - world rulers of the spiritual darkness.
4. Spiritual hosts of wickedness. (Ponérias) - wicked spirits.

Rick Renner of Rick Renner Ministries has done extensive study on the subject of spiritual warfare and I have gleaned a great deal from his writings. I have paraphrased some of Mr. Renner's conclusions and how he has described the rank and file of Satan's forces in the following paragraphs.

Notice that at the top of this list, Paul mentions a group of evil spirits he calls "principalities." It is used to depict individuals who hold the highest position of rank and authority. Paul tells us that they are the top of Satan's kingdom and are powerful evil beings that have held their lofty positions of power and authority since ancient times — probably ever since the fall of Lucifer.

Paul goes on to tell us that the evil forces, second in command in Satan's dark kingdom, are a group of principalities he refers to as "powers." Demon spirits, who have received delegated authority from Satan to carry out all manner of evil in whatever way they can.

The third level Paul mentions is "the rulers of the darkness of this world."

This phrase described military training camps where young men were assembled, trained, and turned into a mighty army. This level of recruits were the special forces. They were just raw power when they first arrived in the training camp, however, as their training progressed and the young men were taught discipline and order, all that raw aggression was converted into an organized, disciplined army.

It tells you and me that Satan is so serious about doing damage to the human race that he deals with demon spirits as though they are troops!

He puts them in rank and file, gives them orders and assignments, and then sends them out like military soldiers who are committed to kill. Just as men in a human army are equipped and trained in their methods of destruction, so, too, are these demon spirits. And once these demons are trained and ready to start their assault, Satan sends them forth to do their devious work against human beings.

“Greater is He who is in me than he who is in the world.”

The Apostle Paul names a fourth level of rank he calls “Spiritual Wickedness”. These are the ‘Privates’ but still vile, evil, and wicked in every way. They thirst for power and reek havoc any way they can.

There is no doubt that Satan has a plan to destroy humanity and the family by any means necessary. The exciting and reassuring truth though is that

“Greater is He who is in me than he who is in the world.” Jesus promised “... I have over come the world

...”. Paul defines this victory so succinctly in

Colossians 2:15 “He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”

A Closer Look at Ephesians 6:10-12

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, ... “ Eph. 6:10—14 NKJV

There are 6 truths identified in these verses that define the spiritual wrestling match that we as the patriarchs in our families must be mindful of. These truths will help us to better approach our role as men of God and the heads of our family tree.

1. Vs. 11 - The Fight is Strategic and Intentional. The word for “wiles” or another translation calls it “Schemes” literally means a “Diabolical plot”. Satan has a scheme happening. It is a diabolical plot to destroy Gods ultimate creation. Us. The family.

24/7 Satan and his minions are working on strategy to breakdown and destroy humanity. This is important to understand because when you look at what has obviously been a slow melting of Christian values, principles, and truths in society it becomes clear that this assault has been by design. As any military leader, Satan surrounds himself with his forces to scheme up and employ tactics that are intended to dissolve God’s order.

There are no such thing as random events in history. There is a spiritual chess match that is always being orchestrated. Satan is patient and deliberate in his maneuvers. Even though we know he is defeated he will not quit until the final judgement.

Our families are his target. When you analyse the attacks that have come against the home, it is very apparent that families have indeed been the focus of these assaults. Thankfully, we have the promise and the hope of victory through Jesus, however being ignorant of Satan’s intentions is extremely unwise.

1. Vs. 12 - This wrestling match is not against people. I must admit that it can be very frustrating and very difficult to remember this point. When I listen to people campaign for things that I know to be clear violations of biblical truth I can get quite emotional about it and angry at the person. It is however contrary to the word of God to do that.

Paul was clear. Our fight is not against other people. We established in an earlier chapter that human beings carry the DNA of God and that how we treat them is action directed toward their Creator. As difficult as it may be sometimes, we must direct our energy against the spiritual forces that are behind the evil that we see unfolding in many areas of present-day life. Even though the people may be motivated by wicked ambition and behave in ungodly and unrighteous ways we still have to remember that Jesus died for them as well. Satan is using them like puppets to carry out his diabolical scheme. They don't even realise it.

Our fight is not against other people

I do believe that it is imperative for us as men of God to stand up and defend truth and defend our families but in doing that we must remember that the fight is still waged against spiritual forces who are using human agents to carry out the scheme. We begin every defense of our homes by praying against the forces that are behind the people carrying out his plans.

1. Vs. 12 – The Fight is against Spiritual Forces. As has already been established, there is an unseen spiritual enemy that we continually are opposing. The scriptures articulate the battleground as being one that is resident in the unseen. War against the enemy has been won in the Spirit through the work of Jesus and the ground must be secured in the spirit through the righteousness of Christ, His shed blood, the power of His Word established in faith.
2. Vs. 12 – There is a Hierarchy of Forces to Contend With. We have defined the hierarchy of forces that work against us but it is important at this point to explain the significance of that relative to us as the patriarchs in our families. The question needs to be asked “Why is Satan so focused on attacking the role of men in our society and more specifically their role in the home?”

As in any military system and any combat scenario the ultimate quest is to topple the leadership of your enemy. If you can get the troops separated from their leader you leave that platoon weak and vulnerable. Satan understands and recognizes the way God designed the family. The patriarch, the grandfathers and the fathers are the heads of their families. It is their job to care for, lead and protect their homes. If Satan can remove that leader from the battle, then the rest of the family members are far more susceptible to attack. In the same way Satan's armies are organized, the social and spiritual order of humanity is structured. God established men as the leaders of the human race. When that system can be broken down mankind becomes an easy target.

You are God's assigned agent to provide covering and care to your home.

The assault on this orderly structure has come in the form of displacing the fathers as heads of their homes. Even more specifically it begins by having the patriarchs of the families, the grandfather's, become increasingly more:

1) disengaged or

2) have them administer dominate control and manipulation leaving the family living in fear or alienation.

Without properly functioning, godly headship, the family unit becomes extremely vulnerable to the enemy's ploys. Just as the body cannot function the way it was designed when there is a problem with the head, so the family cannot live in a healthy way, with one another, without being under the proper headship covering of the family patriarch. A healthy head makes for a healthy body.

Grandpa? Dad? Can you begin to see how valuable you are and how important it is for you to be totally engaged in the lives and leadership of your family. You are God's assigned agent to provide covering and care to your home.

1. Vs. 12 - They Are Over This Present Darkness. This present darkness. What does that mean? The world is in an unclaimed state. Even though Jesus has provided redemption for mankind, the earth and those who have not accepted Christ's atonement, remain under the control of the spiritual forces that Adam forfeited them to. Paul calls it 'this present darkness'. The sin and wickedness that shroud our current state is a strong indication that Satan is indeed the "god of this world". Jesus said, "Even though we are in this world we are not of this world." We live in this darkness but we are in fact "seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

We are clothed in light. We are the righteousness of Christ but we must continue the wrestling match in this dark world until all of creation experiences the full redemptive power of Jesus.

We are the righteousness of Christ but we must continue the wrestling match

This present darkness is the world order, as can be witnessed in the natural, unrighteous, and unholy acts of a lost humanity. The direction of our society reflects the scheme that Satan has been working on for decades. The social issues that have been rapidly immerging as normal all have their root in the same fundamental strategy. So many of the challenges that currently effect our society have a common denominator. The removal, dismissal, and disengagement of men as leaders in our homes, communities, churches and nations. The immergence of the present-day cry of "Times have changed" all have a basic base line reality. An assault on men as the heads and patriarchs the way God designed it.

Look at the following social challenges.

1. "The traditional family" change
2. Divorce
3. Sexual identity confusion
4. Pornography
5. Single parent homes
6. Abortion
7. Youth Crime
8. Promiscuous lifestyles, adulterous living
9. Extreme feminism
10. Secularism in education
11. Unfiltered sin in entertainment
12. Disengaged fatherhood in family relationships

Each of these issues can be a flashpoint in our current secular and liberal culture and regardless of whether everyone agrees on the significance of them, I can say without reservation that each issue has largely emerged because of the absence of godly male leadership. When a godly, dependent on Christ man steps up and gives oversight, covering, protection and leadership these issues begin to lose their strength.

A man committed to the Word of God and who has a heart surrendered to Jesus will bring light into this present darkness. When we do things God's way, light dispels darkness and life rises out of death and defeat.

1. Vs. 12 - They Are Evil. I believe that it needs to be stated clearly and emphatically at this point that there is nothing innocent or benign about the tactics of the enemy. The social challenges that I listed earlier are not just a shift in opinions. They are the result of evil strategies intended for the annihilation, destruction, and elimination of humanity. We have been duped into believing that we are just old fashioned, out of touch dinosaurs in a more "progressive and enlightened" society. We are told that we live in the past and that there is no way to stop the move toward a more liberal and tolerant culture. Let me declare as loudly as I know how, "THAT IS A LIE!!!" It is very much a part of the scheme. It is very much a part of the evil ploy, of this present darkness led by Satan himself with all his forces that are working for him.

If we don't call it for what it is, evil, then we will fall into the trap of believing that our role has been so diminished that we cannot make a difference and salvage the current generation of children and all that will follow them.

The Apostle Paul's plea to the Ephesians was clear and strong. Paul said after you have done everything to stand, "Stand Firm." After you understand what is going on. Do not be deceived. It is time to take a strong stand. It was a call to arms. He meticulously describes the battle gear for the fight.

Eph. 6:14 "Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which, you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints....".

Ephesians chapter 6 is a vivid and detailed account of what the battle looks like, how the enemy works and the beseeching of believers to take up the fight to destroy the enemy and his schemes. It is my deep conviction that the "men" of God play a primary and critical role in this fight. You are the generals. The head of your own personal brigade. If you engage you can establish righteousness in your own camp and significantly contribute to what God is doing through out the world.

Our Hope Is in Jesus

Below are several great verses that, as a grandfather and family patriarch, we can commit to memory while taking our stand against the "Schemes of the devil" on behalf of our families.

2 Corinthians 10:4 "For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds."

Colossians 2:15 "He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him."

James 4:7 "Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

1 John 4:4 "You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world."

2 Cor. 10:3-5 "For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

Rom. 8:37 "In all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."

1 Cor. 15:57 "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Chapter 7

Step 1:

Embrace Your
Patriarchal Appointment



Embrace Your Patriarchal Appointment

I had just finished a Grampa's Time presentation for a group of about thirty guys and was in the process of packing up my things getting ready to head home, when I was approached by an obviously emotional gentleman. I will call him John as in John Doe. He was about 60 years old, well dressed and looking very much like many of the men that have attended any of my workshops or presentations. He was a bit stand offish, apparently not wanting to interrupt my activities and yet definitely eager to express something that had clearly impacted him. His eyes were red and it seemed obvious that he had been significantly moved during the presentation.

I stopped what I was doing and extended my hand and introduced myself. He did likewise but as soon as he said his name the tears began to well up in his eyes, albeit doing his best like all proud guys to control any indication of weakness, choking back the emotion that was literally on the verge of public display. In a somewhat broken and humble voice he said to me "I want to thank you". Assuming he had enjoyed and identified with the presentation and challenge, I responded with a rhetorical "You're welcome I appreciate the encouragement." John's facial expression told me there was more to his gratitude than merely a general gesture of appreciation. He had experienced something that was deeper than I had initially assumed. The emotion he was displaying reflected a discovery he had encountered during the session that would open a whole new world for him as a man.

What was it that had connected so deeply with my new friend's heart?

The comments John made have been repeated many times by other men that have attended our workshops. His thoughts are definitely on the fore front of many guy's minds, having been subjected to decades of misleading and even intentional assaults on their manhood.

With a genuine sincerity, John said “Thank you for giving me a place. I didn’t know where I fit or even that I belonged.” This statement has entrenched a conviction in me personally that has proven to be a strong indicator that God is doing something powerful in men around the world.

“Thank you for giving me a place. I didn’t know where I fit or even that I belonged.”

As our conversation continued John began to define a relationship with his family that I have heard over and over again in men across the country. Guys who have been successful in business, have had many milestones and achievements in life but have felt detached and often ineffective in their role as a father and a grandfather. Like so many, John had fallen victim to the lie that his role had largely been fulfilled and that his place as an influencer was for the most part in the past. John was discouraged and felt impotent in his function as a dad and grandpa.

The spiritual forces that we wrestle with have for decades been working through the channels of education, entertainment, politics etc. to minimize and displace the influence and leadership of the patriarchs. It is Satan’s plan to convince men that they should be “Seen and not heard.” This ongoing lie is a part of the diabolical scheme in the never-ending battle for the generations.

We are witnessing the fruit of a culture and society that has been largely void of godly headship. Mass confusion, chaos and an almost completely dismantled family structure has resulted in broken hearts, fractured lives and a world that is hopelessly trying to find it’s way without God.

Like John, I am seeing men everywhere looking for answers, longing to understand their role and diligently seeking the Lord for a fresh experience with Jesus so that the next generation can live under God’s favour.

King David prayed with passion in Psalm 71:18

“Now ... even when I am old and gray-headed, O God, do not forsake me, Until I declare Your power to the next generation, and your might to those yet to come.”

Sharing with men from all kinds of backgrounds and listening to the stories of so many, I have concluded that if we are going to see a national movement of patriarchal leaders, God is going to need to bring deep healing into the lives of guys. The emotional and spiritual brokenness of men runs deep.

I recall having sat with 3 older grandfathers following one of our workshops, each of whom had their own stories of pain they had carried through their whole lives. Taking turns, they spoke of how their childhoods were not great and how they felt very guilty for being what they considered to be poor fathers to their own children. To a man, they communicated how they so wished that God would allow them to have a “Do over” as a dad.

It was heart wrenching to see these older gentlemen who had been quite successful in the world's eyes, feel so wounded and disappointed with themselves.

As with these fellows however, it is always very exciting to see God do great things in men of all stripes as we pray together in repentance for the healing of their souls. It's so satisfying to hear guys stand up and say, “Thank you for giving me a place.”

Men Need to be Healed!

Having talked with men across the country and having sought the Lord for clarity on what the issues of their brokenness are, I have concluded there are about 7 root causes keeping men from engaging as the patriarchs God has appointed them to be. Like any root system there are many limbs associated with these struggles and I in no way can identify all of them, but I do feel like unmasking the following seven tentacles is a realistic place to start when approaching God for the healing of grandfathers and father's hearts.

If we are going to mobilize the patriarchs as key players in the restoration of our families, communities, and nations we must believe that God can and will bring healing to their lives.

7 Roots of Disablement

1. Having Been Poorly Fathered. In the generation of grandfathers this is a very common challenge. For so many older men especially, they have a common plight that their fathers were basically absent as they grew up. Stories of harsh words and excessive discipline have left an entire segment of our world feeling inadequate and weak as men. Whatever the root of this detachment from their fathers, a large percentage of senior men have spent much of their lives looking for acceptance and approval that they never received from their dads.
2. Living with Regrets. Being weighed down with disappointment and discouragement because of bad choices, poor modelling or unacceptable behaviour is an emotionally crippling tactic of the enemy. Whether real or perceived, once the heaviness of these feelings takes root it can become extremely difficult to get free to believe you can still play a significant role as a spiritual leader and influencer. The reality is this. Some guys are guilty of some very wrong choices while others wish they simply would have taken better approaches to being a dad or grandpa. Regardless of where you are on the spectrum it is necessary for you to get free from guilt, shame, and disappointment so that God can use you the way He wants to.

3. Believing Societies Lies. Men have been indoctrinated for years that their role is not valued. Confusion about where they fit is common. Abdicating responsibility as a grandfather and father is expected because of the spiritual oppression against strong godly leadership from men. Because much of our society has chosen to eliminate the scriptures as a guiding roadmap in life we have men going off the rails as leaders giving justification to the notion that they are sexist, chauvinist, controlling and overbearing people that can't be trusted. That is the message being projected on the world. So much so that too many guys, even Christian men have lost their conviction and resolve to be godly leaders for fear of being seen as such.
4. Demands of life. Stress is a deceitful and subversive ploy in Satan's arsenal of weapons. Money, time, resources, careers, relationships, and the list can go on and on. Life is busy and demanding. Chuck Swindoll defines it this way. "The tyranny of the urgent will always rob from the important." We all experience the constant vacuum which has an insatiable appetite for our attention and affections. If we don't control these demands and bring them into submission to Christ we will lose our ability to experience God's best for ourselves and those He has given to our covering and stewardship.
5. Sin. The secret world of men is usually what destroys them. All too often guys are controlled by issues that few people know about. Sin forces us into patterns that are not only destructive to our personal lives and those around us but it also stymies any hope of effective service in the kingdom. Sin creates guilt and condemnation, it robs of vision and expectation and imposes shame, disappointment, and discouragement. The devil uses sin cleverly to convince us that there is no hope, that our failures are so insurmountable that God would never allow us to be free and forgiven. Thankfully the scriptures declare that "...while we were yet sinners Christ died for us..."
6. Laziness. Prov. 24:33,34 "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man." We don't always have the energy or the motivation to actively fulfill our mandate as the patriarch but it can also be a spiritual tactic of the enemy to leave the next generation vulnerable. Jacob while he was on his death bed in Genesis 48 "rallied his strength and rose up from his bed to bless Joseph and his boys."
7. Fear. The fear of rejection, the fear of failure, the fear of man. It is so unfortunate that men who have been created with an intrinsic warrior heart can be so defeated by fear. It is almost like we don't know how to differentiate between fighting aggressively and still gently and courageously leading. I have witnessed too many men who shrink back from their role as a patriarch because they have concluded others are more spiritual, more gifted, or smarter than they are. They lose sight of the call of God on their lives and therefore those around them that truly need them are denied. Remember "God has not given us a spirit of fear."

How do we overcome these disablements? I think the Apostle James gives us some simple and clear instruction to receive healing in these areas.

James 5:16

Therefore, confess your sins to one another [your false steps, your offenses], and pray for one another, that you may be healed and restored. The heartfelt and persistent prayer of a righteous man (believer) can accomplish much [when put into action and made effective by God—it is dynamic and can have tremendous power] \The Amplified Bible

The Healing Process

1. Confess to one another. Share your heart. Share your struggles. Share your story. Hold one another accountable. Find a friend or join a small group.
2. Pray for one another. Lay hands on one another, anoint each other with oil.
3. Receive forgiveness.
4. Embrace truth. The word of God declares us forgiven. Jesus assures us He has overcome the world. Hide His word in your heart.
5. Walk in newness of life. Choose to walk in righteousness.

Our Ultimate Goal is to Get in the Game

Getting free from the debilitating vices waged against us is critically important. However, it can't stop there. There is a battle to be won. A war to be fought for the hearts and lives of a whole new generation. There is a new sound on the horizon. The sound of God's voice calling men of God from every corner of the nations to take their place in kingdom service. Men of God rise up and embrace your appointed role as the patriarchs in society and make yourselves available to the Kingdom as leaders and primary influencers in your families, in your churches, in your communities and in our nations.

I like the imagery of “Rising up”. It makes me think of Jacob in Genesis 48. He heard his son Joseph was coming and even though he was very ill the bible says, “He rallied his strength and sat up on the bed.” Despite his sickness and his weakness Jacob refused to lay down. I find that so inspirational. The challenge is too important, the stakes are too high. There is too much to lose for us as men of God to not be engaged.

Jacob Understood What to Do

At the beginning of this chapter, I introduced you to John. When John experienced his personal epiphany about who he was and what his role was as the patriarch in his family, his comment to me was “Thank you for giving me a place.” I have heard that statement or variations of it many times from men all over the country. There is a divine awakening happening amongst men that is setting them free from obscurity.

As often as I have heard that statement, there is a question that is asked equally as often along with it that requires even more attention.

The question is simply, “what do I do? I need help to know how to engage as the patriarch in my family.” My observation of men is that they prefer structure when being asked to serve in this capacity. Give them some order and a framework and the likelihood of them engaging goes way up.

Jacob has a lot to teach us in this area as well. I will give specific instruction on what to do next in the following chapters but I would like to point out some significant observations from Jacobs experience that can help answer the question, “What do we do as a family patriarch?” Jacobs personal motivations are revealed and helpful for our own personal quest to embrace our appointment as the head of our families.

Gen. 48:8-11

8 When Israel saw the sons of Joseph, he asked, "Who are these?" 9 "They are the sons God has given me here," Joseph said to his father. Then Israel said, "Bring them to me so I may bless them." 10 Now Israel's eyes were failing because of old age, and he could hardly see. So, Joseph brought his sons close to him, and his father kissed them and embraced them. 11 Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face again, and now God has allowed me to see your children too."

Vs. 8 He SAW the sons – Acknowledging and seeing our grandchildren and children as unique and specially designed people solidifies their sense of personal value. They aren't just another member of the family. Call them by name and elevate their worth through personal attention.

Vs. 8 He wanted to KNOW them – Every person is unique with special gifts, personalities, and interests. Get to know your family. Ask questions, find out things that are specific to their interests.

Vs. 9 He chose to CONNECT with them – It is often a choice that must be made to really connect with our grandchildren and children. Participate in their lives. Extend yourself beyond your own comfort zone.

Vs. 9 He BLESSED them – In the next chapter we will discover the different elements of blessing but let me say here that your responsibility for passing on blessing cannot and must not be overstated. The future and the encounters with God of your family members very literally rests in your hands.

Vs. 10 He expressed deep AFFECTION for them – Hugging, kissing, and jostling affectionately, strengthens your family's personal identity and self worth. The pure affection that you offer up to your grandchildren and children entrenches their personal security and self respect in a way that nothing or no one else can provide.

Vs. 11 He Confirmed God's LOVE for them – Let your family hear from your own lips that God loves them, that Jesus died for them and that nothing will ever separate them from that love.

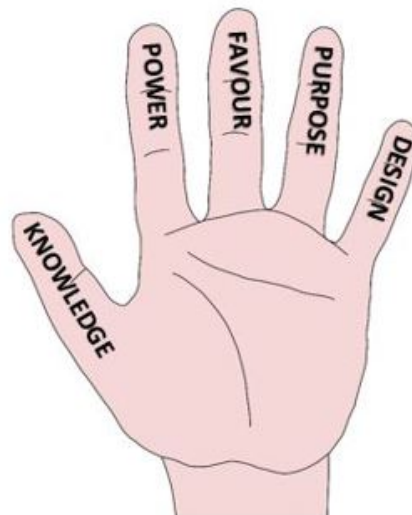
Understanding and embracing your role as the family patriarch is the first step in passing on God's blessing. It is imperative that you have a healthy perception of who you are and what your role is. If you are feeling restricted it is very important that you get healed from the debilitation that hinders you. The Kingdom needs you now. Your family needs you now.

In the next chapter, we will discover the second step of the 5-step blueprint. The concepts of blessing in a practical and functional frame.

Chapter 8

Step 2:

Pray the Blessing of God
into Their Lives



Understand the Power of Blessing

In Gen 48 why was it so important that Joseph get to his dad's bedside before his passing? What was the urgency? Beyond the emotional sentiment was there something more that pushed Joseph to get to His father so quickly after hearing of his impending death?

I believe the answer to those questions can be addressed with one word. The "Blessing". The blessing of God seems to be like a highly valued treasure. Something to be pursued, something to embrace that held tremendous personal significance. Esau after learning of Jacobs theft of his rightful blessing begged of his father in Gen 27:38 "But do you have only one blessing? Oh, my father, bless me, too!" Then Esau broke down and wept." Esau had been deprived of something that he obviously considered a deep loss. The denial of this seemingly priceless pronouncement was unquestionably important enough that it brought this big burly powerful man to tears. All players involved in this historic event realized that Isaac held the key to his son's destiny in a way that we in our current culture cannot fully grasp.

The transference of Gods blessing from one generation to another is clearly recognized in scripture as an exercise to be taken seriously and serves as an instrument to help craft the lives of those that receive it.

It is apparent that Joseph understood this reality and recognized that his father could impart something to his sons that no one else could to the same degree.

The entire scenario recorded in Gen. 48:1-4 speaks of urgency.

Genesis 48:1-4 (NIV) “Some time later Joseph was told, “Your father is ill.” So, he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim along with him. When Jacob was told, “Your son Joseph has come to you,” Israel rallied his strength and sat up on the bed.

Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me and said to me, ‘I am going to make you fruitful and increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you.’...”

Joseph heard his dad was dying so he immediately took his sons to see him. Jacob heard Joseph was coming so he immediately rallied his strength and got up to greet him. With no record of chit chat it seems that Jacob immediately began to explain and communicate how “Almighty God” had blessed him over the years, and how those promises were pertinent for Joseph and his family. Joseph longed to receive that blessing from his dad for his sons and Jacob was well prepared to give that same blessing to his grand sons.

What Does The “Blessing” Really Mean?

Over 600 times in the Bible the term or concept of blessing is spoken of. The logical question is what does it mean and how is it relevant to us as grandfathers and fathers and our families today?

John Oswalt in his work “Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament” defines the word “blessing” as, “to endue with power for success, prosperity, fecundity, longevity, etc. It conveys the idea of being strengthened, of our weakness being compensated for with God’s strength”.

According to Bakers Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology the word 'Bless' connotes several important principles that can help us understand the value of passing blessing on to our own families.

“God's intention and desire to bless humanity is a central focus of his covenant relationships. For this reason, the concept of blessing pervades the biblical record. Two distinct ideas are present. First, a blessing was a public declaration of a favored status with God. Second, the blessing endowed power for prosperity and success. In all cases, the blessing served as a guide and motivation to pursue a course of life within the blessing....

Three common themes are present in formal Old Testament blessings. First, the greater blesses the lesser, a fact picked up by the writer of Hebrews to demonstrate the superiority of Melchizedek to Abraham ([Heb 7:6-7](#)). Second, the blessing is a sign of special favor that is intended to result in prosperity and success ([Deu. 28:3-7](#)). Third, the blessing is actually an invocation for God's blessing: "May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful" ([Gen 28:3](#)).”

The first record we have in the Bible of the word “Bless’ is found in Gen. 1:20-22 (NIV)

And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.” So, God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.”

When God created His first living beings He added an instruction and an enablement that is repeated over and over again throughout the scriptures. “Be fruitful and increase...” It is the intent of God that all His creation be blessed and prosper as He enables them.

Gods Intended Purpose for Passing on Blessing

Why is the ‘Blessing’ so important? The scriptures give us dozens of examples of the blessing of God being imparted to individuals and the obvious value that is placed upon the exercise. What is it that God causes to happen when His blessing is pronounced on a person? There are far too many examples in the Bible of one generation passing blessing to the next to ignore or to miss the significance of this powerful experience.

When I personally pick up my grandchildren with the intention of imparting God’s blessing into their lives, I am doing it with a very clear understanding that by me being obedient to the Lord in this manner, I will be accomplishing something for them for the rest of their lives. I am convinced that I am serving as a conduit of God’s desire for their lives. That which I am exercising in the seen world is in fact releasing something extremely powerful in the unseen world. When I bless my grandchildren and children, God, the entire angelic world and all the forces of darkness are witnessing the establishment of the Lordship of Christ around the lives of each of them. It is literally a life altering, kingdom establishing, darkness shattering event. I would be grossly negligent to not embrace this responsibility and stand in as the patriarch on behalf of every member of my family, both in the present tense and for the generations that will follow.

I would be grossly negligent to not embrace this responsibility and stand in as the patriarch on behalf of every member of my family

That being said, what is actually happening when I pass on blessing? If when I pray over my family members I am expecting results what can I hope for and believe God for? I have listed 10 things that I believe happen when we pray the blessing of God over our families.

1) Invokes God's authority for the purpose of prospering.

This is the root meaning of the concept of blessing. All that we have, all that we are and all that we hope for, is God's to give. When I pray over my grandchildren and my children I am doing so in the Name of Jesus, recognizing that in His Name all blessings flow. I want to release into my families lives the power of God. I want to expect and believe that they will live in the realm of His kingdom and that He will give watch over them every day of their lives. I am speaking, invoking that authority into their world with the expectation that the authority of Jesus will accompany them at ever juncture of their life. I am believing that because I have been faithful in passing on this blessing they will have things happen on their behalf without them even realizing that it is God working mysteriously in their corner.

2) Creates a healthy spiritual passageway into the heart of the one being blessed

There is a constant battle for the souls and the lives of ever human being. The enemy never quits trying the "Steal, kill and destroy", but thank the Lord Jesus that His Holy Spirit is ever drawing and leading the hearts of our families to Himself. I call this phenomenon "the arrested moment" in a person's journey towards Christ. It is that moment in a person's life when suddenly there becomes a keen and defining revelation of God's grace and His incredible love for that individual. The moment when a response to Jesus is so real it cannot be explained or denied. It is that moment that you know this could only be God.

There are many hindrances on a person's road to discovering the grace of God. When we pray the blessing of God over that person's life we are in truth blocking out some of those forces preventing the experience from happening. We are helping to pave the way for them to having an open heart to Jesus' love.

As the patriarchs in our families, we play an instrumental role in establishing that passageway. In some ways, it authorizes the ongoing revelation of Christ's love and redemption to the next generation. It takes place in the Spirit, and is a principle clearly articulated in the scriptures and one that places much onus on us as grandfather's and fathers.

3) Affirms Christ's Lordship

When we pray the blessing of God over someone we are in essence telling them that it is right, wise and good to allow Jesus to be Lord in their lives. We are assuring them that it is ok. There is so much negativity that people must wade through when it comes to their walk with Jesus that when they hear someone with a degree of authority in their life speak words of blessing it creates a very liberating sense of attachment to the Lordship of Christ. In effect, you are creating a bond on their behalf with Jesus. That bond is emotional, intellectual, and spiritual. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. The word is Spirit and ignites spiritual realities in our lives when we hear it.

The Lordship of Jesus is what guides us into the freedom of truth. It is what gives us the confidence that He is good and that He never leaves us nor forsakes us. His Lordship is what moves people to become world changers and dynamic men and women of God. It is His Lordship that allows us to trust and to walk in obedience despite opposition and challenges to our faith and courage. The submission to Christ's Lordship is what sets us apart as believers and defines who we are as servants in His kingdom.

4) Invokes Gods favour

Quite literally we are speaking God's favour into the lives of our families in harmony with His word. The word of God is full of His promises for us as believers. Those promises to reflect His favour. When we speak blessing into the lives of our grandchildren and children we are being obedient to His word and we are alerting their lives to those promises for themselves.

The favour of God is a familiar theme in the scriptures and is often prayed for and promised to those that walk-in faithfulness to Christ. The very word 'blessing' implies God's favour. As the family patriarch, I am speaking that favour into and onto the lives of my family. By invoking this favour into their lives, we are binding the promises to them as spiritual benefactors.

5) Establishes spiritual perimeters

When we pray the blessing of God into the lives of our family members we are setting a perimeter around them in the spirit as well. The encroachment of the enemy and the tendency to wander both pose a threat to the well being of our grandchildren and children. It is my conviction that when we set this perimeter we are serving notice first of all to Satan, "Hands off". We are establishing spiritual covering and protection for them. We are declaring to the powers of darkness that this special person belongs to Jesus and they have no right or jurisdiction over them.

I have been told that cowboys of old carried with them a rope woven from horsehair. The rope was used at night to create a large circle on the ground which they would then set their sleeping blankets inside of. Snakes and other night crawls would not cross over the horsehair allowing the cowboy to have a restful sleep unafraid of any unwanted vermin attacks while they slept. The Bible speaks of a “hedge of thorns” surrounding the children of God for their protection from assaults of the enemy.

Secondly, I believe that when we pray God’s blessing over our family we are also determining boundaries for them to stay within themselves. My mother used to remind me as a kid “be sure your sins will find you out.” That little phrase haunted me while I was living outside of what I knew to be truth. Regardless of whether you quote such an ominous verse in your prayer or not, the principle and reality of the guiding influence of the Holy Spirit is ever present.

6) Establishes spiritual continuity from generation to generation

As I established in detail in a previous chapter, the continuation of spiritual connectedness from generation to generation is clearly a reality. That which my forefathers held to in their faith a few hundred years ago, has become a personal ideologue in my own life. Their love for Jesus is my passion also. Their desire to see the world impacted for Christ is my desire as well.

I know that my longing to experience and know Jesus in deeper ways will find its way through the corridors of the Spirit into the lives of my grandchildren, great grandchildren, and great great grandchildren and for generations beyond. What a magnificent hope.

7) Acknowledges and confirms dependency on God as Provider, Leader and Creator

By declaring in Jesus Name that He is the source of all that we have and all that we are, we are confirming in the hearts of our family that when ever they are in need it is God they will turn to. This confirmation and acknowledgement reassures them that Jesus cares, is intimately involved in their lives and that He can and will do for them the things they never dreamed or expected could happen.

8) Validates the uniqueness and identity of the individual

One of the most manipulative tactics of Satan against our grandchildren and children is the assault against their personal identity. In our present culture, our young people are constantly being subjected

to images and messages questioning their self worth and suggesting to them that they could be much more popular, or much less inadequate if they would just subscribe to a different product or style. Even though that has always been a challenge while discovering who you are as a young person, the advent of increased and elaborate commercialism has made it even more difficult in todays modern world of technology.

A much more diabolical attack is currently placing the youngest generation of today in the cross hairs of the enemy. Sexual confusion and sexual orientation. There is incredible pressure today for society to capitulate to the barrage of messages to not hold clear and strong alliances to the way God has created you as a person. Boys are boys and girls are girls. Who ever thought our society would so quickly digress into a Sodom and Gomorrah mentality. This is a spiritual battle and it can only be won in a spiritual fight.

When praying the blessing of God into your families lives speak truth into them and reaffirm them in who God has created them to be. They are fearfully and wonderfully made. God by His Spirit brings great confidence and internal witness to who we are as individuals. It comes through the revelation of who we are in Christ. That revelation is part of what we believe God for when we impart His blessing into the lives of our grandchildren and children.

Each member of your family has their own unique gifts, talents, and personality. That uniqueness must be encouraged and supported as they submit themselves to God for His ongoing development and leadership towards a rich and full life in Christ.

9) Stimulates vision for the course of their lives

In the natural we are often a product of our environment. It is common for some one to grow into the kind of person or even into the vocation represented by those they were most closely associated with growing up. We develop objectives and vision largely based on the influences of others. Likewise, our family members are also significantly influenced by the words that people have spoken to them or over them at pivotal times in their lives.

Jacob in Gen. 49 had a prophetic word for each of his sons.

In a spiritual manner, our sons and daughters can be profoundly impacted and influenced when a prophetic word or directive word is share with them during the exercise of praying blessings over their lives. Jacob in Gen. 49 had a prophetic word for each of his sons. Some words were positive and some not so much, but he clearly articulated his understanding of the direction their lives would take in the years to come.

When praying the blessing over my grandchildren I want to hear the word of the Lord for them and cast vision into their souls in a way that will contribute to the direction they will live their lives.

10) Connects the lives of the 'blesser' and the 'blessee'

There is something powerful that happens between people when they pray for each other. There is something significant that takes place when grandpa or dad lays hands on their grandchildren or children and speak the blessing of God into their lives. There is a bond that is forged in the Spirit that is unbreakable. It is very difficult to explain but it is very real. It is memorable and it is monumental. That indelible image of receiving something being pass on from God is etched into the heart of the individual in a life altering manner. It can only be explained as a "God thing". Powerful and precious.

The 5 Elements of Blessing

I have many times heard it said that men aren't sure what to say or what to do when it comes time to serve in a patriarchal way and to speak the blessing of God over their families. In some ways that is a sad indictment of us as men but mostly I get it. It is because of this lack of understanding that I looked at the scriptures to try to condense the principles of blessing down to a manageable and memorable presentation for men to use. After reading and rereading many of the Biblical examples of blessings I have assembled what I believe to be 5 elements or categories that cover most of the recorded accounts of blessing in the scriptures.

The purpose of these 5 elements of blessing is to create a tool that can be easily and effectively used to guide men through the process of this second step. If you are a little uncertain about what to pray over your family these 5 categories will assist you and lead you through a meaningful experience with your grandchildren or children.

I highly recommend that you commit these 5 elements to memory and be prepared to express them continually in your private prayer time, in one-on-one encounters with your family or in an open ceremony designed to publicly impart the patriarchal blessing on your sons and daughter's lives.

What are the 5 elements?

1) The KNOWLEDGE of God.

The greatest thing we can pray over our family members is that they would know Jesus in a deep and personal manner. It doesn't help our kids if they just know about Jesus through stories and Sunday school lessons. The only real strength they will gain spiritually is when they know Jesus for themselves in a powerful life altering way.

Ephesians 1:17-19 (NIV)

17 "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, 19 and his incomparably great power for us who believe."

2) The POWER of God.

There is a deeper and more significant level of anointing and authority in Christ when we walk in the fullness of His power in the Holy Spirit. It must be our desire and our place to pray that our grandchildren and children would be filled with the Holy Spirit. That they would experience the power of God in a way that would elevate their effectiveness in His kingdom.

Acts 1:8 (NIV)

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Acts 4:33 (NIV)

“With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God’s grace was so powerfully at work in them all...”

3) The FAVOUR of God.

The favour of God encompasses much of what we consider material and natural provisions and blessings. I suggest that when you pray you can categorize the favour of God in the following ways:

- Health
- Wealth and finances
- Relationships and family
- Protective covering from anything that may come against them

3 John 2 (NKJV)

“Beloved, I wish above all things that you may prosper and be in good health, even as your soul prospers.”

Psalm 1:3 (NIV)

“That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers.”

Psalm 5:11 (NIV)

“But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you. Surely, Lord, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield.”

4) The PURPOSE of God

One of the great discoveries as a child of God is when we figure out what unique call and purpose God has placed on our lives. Every individual has a unique role to play in kingdom service. As the patriarch in our family, we can play an instrumental role in praying for this revelation to become a reality in the lives of our grandchildren and children. To speak prophetically or to speak encouragement can create a desire deep within a child to want to serve the Lord in a powerful and meaningful way.

Matthew 9:37,38 (NIV)

“Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Romans 12:5-6 (NIV)

“... so, in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us...”

5) The DESIGN of God

The self image that a child or young person has of themselves forms a critical part of who they believe they can be in a complex world. There are so many mixed and confusing messages that they must filter as they seek to grapple with their identity. A right word and a healthy image spoken by the right person at the right time can set the course for that individual's entire life. If you couple that with the revelation that comes from the Holy Spirit on how precious and loved each person is you can witness the development of a powerful man or woman of God right before your very eyes.

Psalm 139:13-16 (NIV)

“For you created my inmost being you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful; I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.”

The High 5 Blessing

At one of our workshops, we were discussing as a group, diverse ways that we could use to remember the 5 elements of blessing and then use them in practical ways with our families. One of the young gentlemen, (interestingly enough neither a grandfather nor a father), that was attending came up with a brilliant idea that has stuck and been used very effectively all over the country now. We nicknamed it the “High 5 Blessing”.

Most everyone I'm sure is more than familiar with the ritual of giving a "High 5" to your children or grandchildren. Usually when I offer up a high 5 to my grandson he feels inspired to punch me in the stomach, but that is a story for another day. The idea behind the "High 5 Blessing" is to memorize each of the 5 elements of blessing and assign the individual element to one of your 5 fingers. When you have opportunity to place your hand on the recipient of blessing you can quickly or deliberately pronounce that blessing on their life. Each time you contact your family member, son or daughter or grandchild you can be imparting that blessing on them.

In the next chapter, we will talk about step #3. The laying on of hands and the power associated with that. Using the "High 5 Blessing" accompanied by a greater understanding of the transference of blessing through the laying on of hands can equip you with powerful kingdom tools to set the course of a young person's life.

Chapter 9

*Step 3:
Transfer Blessing By Laying
Hands On Them*



Lay Hands on Them

It had been a long day. In fact, it had been a long couple of weeks. They had walked as a group for miles in the heat and dust of the middle eastern countryside. There had been an incredible number of experiences that could not be explained sufficiently unless you had been there to witness them for yourself. The instruction, the parables, the pure divine insights were nothing short of celestial revelation. These simple hard-working men had been hand picked and subjected to such profound manifestations and eternally charged interactions that they really couldn't be blamed for being somewhat overwhelmed with the whole journey to date. It seems reasonable to assume that the disciples of Jesus were trying to process so much in such a short period of time that there had to have been a large degree of sensory overload.

Peter, James, and John especially had witnessed things that could only be listed in the 'beyond human comprehension' category. They were with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration just a couple of weeks earlier and were eyewitnesses to the unbelievable glory of God overshadowing Jesus, watching as His very countenance, and clothing became brilliant, heavenly white, radiating the power and light of God right before them. They saw and listened as Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus just a few feet away. They heard the thunderous majestic voice of Almighty God proclaim, "This is my Son in whom I am well pleased."

They could only stand breathless and in awe as they were allowed a peak behind the kingdom veil. What they witnessed, what they experienced had never been observed before and would never be seen on earth again. Imagine their emotions. Try to put yourself in their thought process. The whole experience had to have been nothing short of mind blowing for average laymen such as these guys. Oh ya, one more thing. Jesus said as they came down from the mountain, 'guys don't tell anybody about any of this'. You have to keep it a secret.

What? Thanks a lot. They had just witnessed the most spectacular event in history and they were supposed to just sit on it and not tell anybody. The excitement and adrenaline must have been incredible. They had to have been supercharged with both feelings and questions, and really could you blame them if they were feeling just a little bit self important.

For days, the journey took them from city to city listening intently to this magnificent man as he taught eternal truths about the scriptures and about himself. This small band of select men were riveted to every word Jesus uttered. Their jaws must have dropped each time a Pharisee came along with a new challenge trying to trip up this profoundly intuitive Rabbi regarding the law, only to have Him turn the truth on them, sending them away frustrated and angry again and again. Miracles, healings, demons being cast out day after day, city after city and crowd after crowd.

As word spread and the crowds got bigger, I can only speculate that there may have been lots of highly influential people and maybe even local celebrities all hoping to get in on the excitement. Human nature would suggest that it's possible the disciples faced the emotional intersect of feeling self important and understandably protective of Jesus as they did their best to navigate through throngs of people. Just months earlier they were nobodies. Simple fisherman and tradesmen. What a ride.

Those were the days and hours leading up to this moment. Mile after mile and stop after stop the disciples went back and forth between being security guards and students, knowing they were literally Jesus' inner circle. I can't help but think protecting Him and maintaining that inner circle status were foremost on their minds.

I'm sure it seemed perfectly logical for them to chase people away when they were bringing their young children into the crowd trying to get close to Jesus. After all the disciples had been observing Jesus bring very influential and highly educated and respected people in the community to a point of being speechless with His wisdom and stature. They watched as local politicians and religious leaders were stood up to and put in their place with rebuttals no one would ever have dared to attempt. That's what Jesus was doing and He was really good at it. How would He ever have time or interest in some kid? Did these people not know who He is? Or maybe they even wondered if the people knew who they were? Whatever they thought, they obviously concluded that Jesus would not be willing to give these children His attention.

Poor guys. They couldn't have been more wrong. Jesus had yet another surprise for them.

Jesus' Contact with the Children

Mark 10:13-16 (Phillips)

Then some people came to him bringing little children for him to touch. The disciples tried to discourage them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant and told them, "You must let little children come to me—never stop them! For the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Indeed, I assure you that the man who does not accept the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." Then he took the children in his arms and laid his hands on them and blessed them.

This simple four verse story is packed with insights and wisdom relevant to us today as the patriarchs in our own families.

While it's true the fundamental message of the text is that people must have the faith and openness of a child to be able to understand entrance to the kingdom of God, there is much more that we need to learn from Jesus and His handling of the people involved. It is very significant and relevant to note that there are three points of physical contact spoken of in this much-loved account.

Point of contact 1 in verse 13, is the families bringing their children to Jesus hoping that *"He might touch them"*.

Point of contact 2 in verse 16, *"He took them in His arms"*. One translation reads "He embraced them" and yet another says, "He hugged them".

Point of contact 3 in verse 16 says *"He laid hands on them and Blessed them"*.

By stretching your imagination, a little, it's possible to make the argument that a fourth point of contact could have happened as well. Point of contact 4 in verse 14, "When Jesus saw this, He was indignant with them". This point of contact might have been Jesus giving His disciples a swift kick in the backside for missing such an important reality. However, since the text doesn't actually say that we will leave it be.

The physical connection between Jesus and the children cannot be overlooked. It is very well documented that Jesus encouraged the children to come to Him and when they did He went beyond a passing "hi, how are you?" kind of introduction. The children clearly felt safe with Him and the parents believed His "touch" would have some kind of profound impact.

In this story, there are 5 key observations that need to be made to better understand the value of the 3rd step in the 5-step blueprint.

1. The Opposition

The story is told of Walt Disney that whenever he had a new idea for a story, an attraction or a character, if his team did not immediately oppose him he would not follow through with the project. His reasoning was that it wasn't far reaching enough if everyone initially agreed and therefore was not worth pursuing. Whether the story of Walt Disney is fact or fiction the moral of the story is true.

Every road to significance will be pitted with the potholes of opposition. Discouragement, hostility, animosity, or even just blatant resistance are the norm when we follow any pathway to fruitfulness. The Bible aptly articulates that Satan's agenda is designed to defeat or at least impair the work of God in our lives and the journey toward a full experience with Christ. "He has come to kill, steal and destroy."

It's interesting to note that the disciples here were just doing what comes naturally when something beyond the norm presents itself. They were not expecting these kids to be pushing their way into the crowd. Whether the opposition was inspired by spiritual forces of darkness or not is irrelevant. The issue is that Jesus' disciples were impeding a work God wanted to do and He insisted they stand down.

Here's the facts for us today. God is passionate about the children and deeply desires to bless them. It is our mandate to serve as the conduit of that blessing and we must not succumb to the pressures and oppositions that emerge and raise their ugly head seeking to prevent us from this eternally valuable mission.

As I established in an earlier chapter Satan has been systematically and strategically scheming to immobilize men in their role as the heads of their families, their communities, their churches, and our nations. There has been a concerted spiritual assault on headship and the place of the patriarch. This is by design and can be confirmed by simply observing what is going on in our present-day culture. There is a general fear of men, especially when it comes to their relationship with children. I readily admit that it is too often justified, however when analyzed proportionately the numbers are skewed to the point that no man is to be trusted. It is sad and so unfortunate that so many men have been rendered emotionally impotent because of this opposition. Loss of relationship, loss of affection and fear of physical contact with our grandchildren and children is the result of the lies of our spiritual enemies and their misguided messengers.

“Humble yourselves, resist the devil and he will flee from you.” James 4:7 NLT

Guys it's time to be men. Don't allow yourself to be pushed back. Stand up to the opposition and engage in the mandate God has called you to.

- **Jesus Insisted the Children Come to Him**

Without chasing down this story in too much detail I think it is worth noting a couple of really important points. First of all, Jesus Defined access to the kingdom through the children and was “indignant” with the disciples for hindering them from coming to Him. He immediately reprimanded His students for their lack of understanding. It was like His followers had not been paying attention to what He had been saying all along. Jesus immediately and forcefully took advantage of the moment to establish the value of the children and their innocent and trusting souls. Not only did He understand that these young ones were the future of His kingdom message but more importantly He saw into their hearts and knew that the openness and tender receptivity of a child was what was required of all mankind to experience what Jesus was offering. The doorway to the Kingdom of God could only be opened by the simple faith of a child.

Secondly, the parents brought those kids to Jesus. They knew that if they could get close to Him there would be some kind of God induced favour available to their children. I love the persistence of the parents. They were giving Jesus’ permission to place His divine approval on their little lives. Unless a person is in an unhealthy state everyone wants the absolute best for their family. These parents saw an opportunity to get their children close to God and they weren’t about to pass it up. Even if it meant fighting off the security guards.

As family patriarchs, we have been commissioned by God to represent Him in the Name of Jesus by bringing the children to Him today. Preventing them or denying them is completely unacceptable. Jesus is as indignant today about hindering the children as He was on that day and our mandate is no less crucial. “Do not forbid them for the Kingdom belongs to people like these.”

- **He Embraced Them**

As indicated earlier, different translations use different words to describe the contact Jesus had with the children. The translation I like says, “He hugged them”. Regardless of how you read it, the image is the same. Jesus gathered the children around himself and hugged them, jostled with them, gave them noogies and generally made them all feel like they were the most important human beings on the planet.

Verse 13 shows not only the heart of Jesus for the children but it clearly indicates the longing of the parents for their children. The parents continued to press in towards Jesus, “So that He could touch them”. I love that phrase.

When my daughter Tiffany was around 8 years old she taught me a lesson about the longing of a child that I have never forgotten. I was driving her to school one morning, following the same routine we followed every morning. I would be mindlessly driving, focusing on any one of a hundred things that required my attention that day totally oblivious to the 8-year-old little girl sitting behind me equally disengaged in the familiar surroundings of our daily ride, quietly reading her book. She always sat in the middle of the back seat between her two older brothers. From the time she got into the vehicle she would open up a book and not lift her head until we arrived at the school. Morning after morning the ride was the same. Very little conversation and very little distraction from her reading

It's pretty easy as a parent to miss opportunities when your children are quietly preoccupied with other things. This particular morning however she changed my thinking and my life forever with one simple innocent request.

I remember the scene vividly. I was driving with my left hand on the steering wheel and my right arm resting on the back of the front seat. My arm therefore was directly in front of where Tiffany was seated. Without raising her little blonde head and without losing focus of her book she spontaneously said, “Daddy, will you touch me.”

Her lips were making an innocent request but her heart was shouting a longing deep within her being. She was saying ‘Daddy show me you love me, reaffirm your protection over me, show me that you notice me and that I am important to you. Let me know we are friends and that I matter more to you than anything else in the world’. My heart melted and to this day whenever I am with Tiff or one of my boys I hug them as much as I can. I want them to know without me having to say anything, that everything Tiffany was expressing that day is true and more.

In his article “HANDS ON RESEARCH”, written in 2010, Dacher Keltner makes some interesting observations of about the power of touch.

“In recent years, a wave of studies have documented some incredible emotional and physical benefits that come from touch. This research is suggesting that touch is truly fundamental to human communication, bonding and health.

The benefits start from the moment we’re born. A review of research, conducted by Tiffany Field, a leader in the field of touch, found that preterm newborns who received just three 15-minute sessions of touch therapy each day for 5-10 days gained 47 per cent more weight than premature infants who’d received standard medical treatment.

This research sheds light on why, historically, an overwhelming percentage of babies in orphanages where the caretakers starved them of touch have failed to grow to their expected height and weight and have shown behavioral problems.

“To touch can be to give life”, said Michelangelo, and he was absolutely right.

From this frontier of touch research, we know thanks to neuroscientist Edmond Rolls that touch activates the brain's orbitofrontal cortex, which is linked to feelings of reward and compassion.

There are studies showing that touch signals safety and trust, it soothes. Basic warm touch calms cardiovascular stress. It activates the body's vagus nerve, which is intimately involved with our compassionate response, and a simple touch can trigger release of oxytocin, aka "the love hormone".

In a study by Jim Coan and Richard Davidson, participants laying in an MRI brain scanner, anticipating a painful blast of white noise, showed heightened brain activity in regions associated with threat and stress. But participants whose romantic partner stroked their arm while they waited didn't show this reaction at all. Touch had turned off the threat switch."

There is a reason why Satan wants to mess up the intimate relationships within families and the joy of affectionate touch from parents and grandparents with their children. Meaningful and sincere physical contact is a powerful vehicle for communicating the love of God and the acceptance of an individual by their Saviour. The more pure, unadulterated affection shown to a child the more likely they are to be able to receive the love that God has for them.

- **He laid hands on them**

When I read this part of the passage I immediately see how the intent of Jesus changes. Initially I see a picture of Jesus playfully communicating with the children by hugging them and having them sit on His knee, learning their names and identifying which family group they came with. I can see the proud parents smiling and pointing, mom and dad holding one another with deep satisfaction that their little one could get close to this amazing man. The text doesn't tell us how long this interaction went on for but there is a very distinct shift in behaviour at some point.

Jesus went from hugging to a much more intentional and purposeful display of action. The Bible says He laid His hands on them and blessed them. I'm not entirely sure what this transition of intent looked like but I do believe that the interaction had a two-fold purpose. One was to show acceptance and the second was to impart the power and favour of God on their lives. The fact that the text specifically denotes that Jesus "placed His hands on them" signifies the importance and the value of the expression.

I believe that Jesus' very countenance would have changed, recognizing that the lives of these children needed God's favour on them and that this was no small or frivolous matter. His was in fact setting the very course of their lives.

Biblical Purposes for the Laying on of Hands

The practise of laying hands on people and then imparting God's intentions is a common theme in the Bible throughout the Old and New Testaments. When we follow this powerful principle, we are entirely keeping the integrity of the scriptures and therefore we must be faithful and obedient in applying the practise according to His Word.

A Fundamental Doctrine

Hebrews 6:1-2 (NIV) "... the elementary teachings about Christ the laying on of hands, ..."

Healing

Luke 4:40 (NIV) "... the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them."

Receiving the Holy Spirit Acts 8:17 (NIV) "Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit." Impartation of Spiritual Gifts 1 Timothy 4:14 (NIV) "Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you." Commissioning for Ministry Acts 13:3 (NIV) "So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off."

Blessing

Mark 10:16 (NIV)

"And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them."

Extension Cord of Power

When I look for metaphors to define and describe the exercise of laying hands on some one to pray for them I always think of an extension cord. The cord is a conduit of power from the source to the appliance. In and of itself the cord is nothing more than a tool. The source is the power. The energy and the electricity resides in that source. The appliance or the recipient requires the electricity to fulfill it's intended purpose. Unless there is a means to connect the source to it, that appliance is of little value. When the extension cord is plugged into both the source and the appliance you have a completed circuit that releases the power in a way that maximizes the contribution of each component.

My dad use to tell a story about himself when he was a youngster. He grew up on the farm and by all accounts was very much a prankster and a mischievous boy. As a farm kid, he was always around animals and developed a fondness and familiarity for them. He loved the cows and the horses, but he was not crazy about the chickens and he definitely didn't like the pigs. The story I remember most about his dislike for the pigs was how he would introduce them to the new technology of the day. The electric fence. I can still see my dad telling the story with a wry grin on his face as he remembered the experience as if it was still a fresh source of personal pleasure.

The pigs would be wallowing around squealing and wrestling as only a pig can do in an area of the yard they weren't to be. Dad would be given the responsibility of redirecting them back to their assigned pen which if you know anything about pigs is not always a simple task. He seemed to enjoy it most when the pigs were camped out near the electric fence making it possible for him wade into the middle of them, take a pig by the leg, reach across and grab onto the highly charged fence. As you can imagine the electrical surge would go from the fence through dad like an extension cord into the poor unsuspecting pig. With a jolt, a screech and a kick, the pig would go high tailing it out of the area back toward the barn where it belonged.

Farming techniques at their finest. What an innovator my dad was.

As the patriarch in your family, you serve as the extension cord between the power of God and the value of the children when you lay hands on your grandchildren or children. It is your responsibility and opportunity to be plugged into God and then lay hands on your family with the expressed purpose of transferring His power and favour into their lives so that they can become everything that He wants them to be.

3 Ways to Practise the “Laying on of Hands” Principle.

I realize that some will have greater or lesser access to their grandchildren. It's not always expedient, practical or convenient to lay hands on family members so I offer some simple suggestions depending on your circumstances.

▶**Do it Privately.** If you can't actually be in the same room at the same time with your family members I suggest getting a photograph of them and lay hands on it. An actual picture or one on your phone or maybe even a letter or text from them might be the only contact you have. God is bigger than all impediments and looks on your heart and motivation. Your faithful prayer will bear much fruit.

▶**Do it Personally.** Find times and occasions when you can physically lay hands on your grandchildren and children. Being present and involved is a powerful life altering privilege and responsibility. Do not shy away. Lay your hands on them and impart the blessing of God on them.

▶**Do it Publicly.** Ceremonies are a very powerful way to establish and entrench eternal truths into the lives of children. The Jewish culture celebrates with many different festivals. The Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah are two of the most important. Public displays of recognition and deep personal acknowledgements of the individual make the experience profoundly important in the life journey of the young boy or girl.

As Christians we need to learn to celebrate the life of the child but more importantly the power of God and the desire of our living God to impact that child's journey with Him.

Family celebrations, church festivals, community gatherings and many other opportunities can lend to these special occasions.

- **He blessed them**

In Gen 48 we learned that Joseph recognized that his dad had something that no one else could give to his children. The patriarchs blessing. I don't need to restate the importance of this event, but I do want to make it clear that Jesus didn't just have play time with the children. He gathered them together, He laid hands on them and He **BLESSED** them. The obvious transition and emphasis of this part of the story makes it abundantly clear the value and significance God places on the exercise of blessing. As the old saying goes, "if it's good enough for Jesus, it's good enough for me". Do it!

Chapter 10

Step 4:

*Ignite the Life of God Through
the Spoken Word*



1

Speak Words of Life Over Them

As a kid I lived to play hockey. My dad was an excellent athlete and I'd watch him play and think, "some day I will be a player also". As a farm kid my siblings and I would skate on anything that looked remotely like ice. A snowy road, run off from the water trough for the livestock, sloughs, dug outs and even occasionally the outdoor skating arena in our local town. It was pure fun and a joy to skate and play the game. It was just a game. I became fairly proficient at it as I got older and opportunities opened for me to play at very competitive levels. Jr. hockey in western Canada in those days was considered elite and prestigious and that's what I aspired to. At home everyone was so encouraging and complementary of my abilities and passion to play. It became a part of my identity and I experienced nothing but support and a degree of respect.

I learned a lot about people and human nature when I moved away from home to play competitive top levels of hockey. I soon discovered that many if not most people and especially people that have a certain level of authority and control have little understanding of how to influence and lead others. In those days no one ever studied sports psychology or leadership principles, so they basically led out of their own insecurities and limited knowledge of both people and the game itself. The people of which I speak were 'coaches. Basically, most of them were and I will be kind, clueless. They honestly believed that intimidation, belittlement, and harsh criticism were how you get the most from a person's contributions and skills. I had never experienced being berated and made to feel incompetent, incapable, and insignificant like I did from these men.

My confidence and self esteem rapidly diminished and all but disappeared. Within a short time, my love for the game of hockey had completely disappeared. I hated it. The people that controlled the game had systematically reduced my perception of myself and my abilities as a player and more importantly as a person, on a scale of 1 – 10, to about a 3. To be clear it wasn't unique to me in any way. They spoke the way they did to everyone except their chosen stars. It was as much their attitude as it was their words but the culture around the game was very, very negative. Being yelled at and embarrassed in front of teammates was a normal and seemingly acceptable means of communication. Everyone learned to tolerate it but for me it created deep self doubt and insecurity.

What we say, how we say it, when we say it and to whom we say it, matters.

After playing several years I learned to endure the criticism as a part of life. After all, as I was once told, "That's just hockey". In those years I had limited success and often found myself floundering just to make a team or to be given limited playing time. I had been told many times how incapable I was, so it must have been true.

Season after season I would try to make the next level with my ultimate goal to play in the highest Junior league in the world. The Western Hockey League, or as it was affectionately known "The Dub." When the day came that I was told I had finally made a team and reached my much sought after dream I received the news with limited enthusiasm and a large degree of skepticism. My experiences of the past few years made me keenly aware of the potential disappointment.

In previous seasons if I made even a small mistake on the ice it would have resulted in disparaging criticism and prolonged periods of lost ice time. It's what I expected, and it was what I got.

It was in the first game of a new season, playing at the highest level I had ever played that it happened. The atmosphere was intimidating and yet exhilarating. I couldn't believe I was actually there, on the ice ready for the opening face off, in front of several thousand people. It was everything I had imagined and more. To be honest I was probably thinking, "just don't screw this up."

As a defenceman there are certain plays that are absolute cardinal rules. They cannot be broken, or you will most likely create scoring opportunities for the opposition. So here I am, the first shift of the first game in my long sought-after dream league. Off the opening face-off the puck went behind my net. I retreated to pick it up. As in many things in life my intentions were good, but my execution was poor. When I came out from behind my own net on the left-hand side I spotted one of my teammates on the right-hand side out toward our team's blue line. This is where one of those cardinal rules of hockey was broken. I attempted to pass the puck in front of my own net across the ice to the awaiting forward so that he could advance the play up the ice. There was only one problem. A highly skilled opponent happened to be standing right in front of my net in between me and my mate

The opposing player promptly intercepted my attempted pass and quickly shot it into our team's net. Oops. A few seconds into my Western Hockey League career and I was pretty sure it would now be over.

I was frustrated with my poor decision. I dejectedly headed off the ice to take what I assumed would be my place on the bench for the rest of the night, waiting for a verbal assault reminding me again of my stupidity. I stepped into the players box and sat down with my head drooped and my stomach churning, waiting, and bracing for the inevitable. Then in one brief and crucial moment everything changed.

To everyone around me and even the coach himself this moment was totally insignificant. He looked over at me sitting there with my long face and asked, “What are you doing?”. As an expression of self indictment, I answered “Didn’t you see what I just did?” His response was “Yeah, don’t do it again, get back out there.” I was stunned. His answer changed my life.

Not for several years had anyone in the game verbally extended encouragement and confidence in me. That one simple sentence spoken by the right person at the right time had radically altered my perception of myself as a player and more importantly as a person. I have said many times since about that night, 40 years ago, that it not only changed my life but set the course for my life. The words “Get back out there”, established in my mind the belief that I could do this.

The remainder of the season turned out to be a very successful one for me. I received the Top Defencemen award at the end of the year and was appointed an alternate captain on the team because of the confidence and leadership I demonstrated. Few other experiences in my life have had the level of impact that night did. Many, many times over the years I have reflected on that moment and reminded myself, “I can do this, and nobody can tell me otherwise!”

What we say, how we say it, when we say it and to whom we say it, matters.

This is what we know about the power of words.

- Life and death are in the power of the tongue

Prov. 18:20, 21 “From the fruit of their mouth a person’s stomach is filled; with the harvest of their lips they are satisfied. The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.”

- The words we speak bring healing

Prov. 12:18 “The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”

- The tongue steers our lives

James 3:1-5 “Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check. When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark.”

- Words create something out of nothing

Gen 1:3 “And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.”

- Words set the course for a person's life

Gen 49:1 Then Jacob called for his sons and said: “Gather around so I can tell you what will happen to you in the days to come.”

The Source of our Spoken Words

Luke 6:45 “A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.”

In Gen. 48 when Jacob called for Joseph's boys to come before him, he did two things. He laid his hands on them and he spoke very specific words over them. The words he spoke were intended to either reveal the course for these boy's lives, confirm the course for their lives or create the course for their lives. Regardless of the intent, it was the words themselves that Joseph was determined to receive from his dad. He was keenly aware that whatever his dad was about to say would impact his boy's journey for the rest of their lives.

We know that Jacobs words were powerful and divinely valuable because Gen 49 opens by Jacob calling for his other sons and saying, “Gather around so I can tell you what will happen to you in the days to come.”

These men were not young, yet they fully engaged in the invitation, seemingly aware of the magnitude of what was about to be spoken over them.

What was Jacob drawing upon to have such profound influence in the lives of his family?

Let's consider what the sources were from which Jacob drew this depth of wisdom and insight?

Jacob had:

- 1. Prophetic revelation

Jacob was clearly restating something he had heard the Lord put into his heart for those boys. Without sounding too mystical, there is no question that God places words, perspectives, and intuition into our minds that we could not have come up with ourselves. When you pray for your family and even when you are just thinking about them, ask God to reveal insights about that person that can help uncover the plans or encouragement Jesus has for them. Don't be afraid to share those thoughts and trust the Holy Spirit to confirm them in the hearts of your family members.

The whisper of Gods voice will never contradict His written word

The whisper of Gods voice will never contradict His written word, so hide His word in your own heart and He will use the scriptures as a guiding force in the revelations you receive. These prophetic insights will be the most influential and significant words you may ever speak over your family.

- ○ **Experience. He had met God**

I have a friend that said to me once, "I am now 67 and I finally have something to say." There comes a time when we, through our very life experiences finally have things that need to be said and need to be heard. Jacob had walked with God. There was no more theory or assumption. Only real life. What he spoke came from the encounters he had with God. What he imparted now was what he had witnessed personally and was now fully convinced to be truth.

Jacob had made grievous errors in judgement, been blatantly disobedient and yet been faithful in his service and commitment to God. His mistakes had cost him dearly and his loyalty paid him royally. The bottom line is he had pretty much seen it all. He knew firsthand the consequences of both choices.

As patriarchs, the treasures we have packed away in our memories, the things that have shaped us spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically are the foundation of which the next generation needs to build on. Give them away.

- ○ Knowledge of his children

Prov. 22:6 “Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not turn from it.”

It is said that this verse uses the imaginary of a skilled archer selecting an arrow based on the bend of the material the arrow is crafted from. Depending on the unique bend of that arrow the archer would compensate his aim before releasing the projectile. Each arrow was different, therefore each time the marksman shot, the trajectory would be slightly different to hit his target.

Gen 49 is an interesting study of how Jacob spoke a very unique word of prophecy over each of his sons. He knew them intimately and addressed them at least partially according to their personalities.

Each of the children in your life is a masterpiece of God. The Bible says they have been “fearfully and wonderfully made”. Get to know them. Learn their unique bent. Submit their individuality to the Lord and hear what God might have for them specifically.

- ○ Convictions of best paths

Prov. 6:23 “These commands are a lamp, this teaching is the light, and the corrections of discipline are the way of life...”

Jacob's convictions were more than opinions. He knew truth. He knew the word of God and he had lived both sides of obedience. The scriptures clearly indicate that foolishness is in the heart of a child and that guidance, direction and correction are a part of a guardian's responsibility to establish a healthy and wise pathway for the child.

Knowing the scriptures and drawing on our own past choices, successes and failures solidifies our understanding of how to speak strong words of encouragement and direction into the life of a young person

- **Courage in his declaration**

I love Jacob's strength when it came time to speak into the lives of his sons in Gen. 49. Basically, he ordered these grown men to "gather around because I'm going to tell you the way things are going to unfold in your life after I die." There was no pandering to their feelings or carefully side stepping the truth. He spoke clearly about the things he saw in the spirit because his own days were numbered, and the success or failure of his family was at stake.

I am not suggesting for one minute that we not be gentle and full of grace when communicating with our children or grandchildren. On the contrary. What I am advocating is that we lead with boldness, understanding our position as the patriarch and for the wellbeing of our family speak with confidence and courage when declaring the things of God over their lives.

- - **Recognition of his mantle of anointing and responsibility**

I have spoken at length through out the book about the role we play as patriarchs in our families. I do not need to restate this reality. I do however want to express with great fervor the truth that God has placed an anointing on the patriarchs to fulfill His purposes and plans for each generation. That anointing is divine, and it is released when we operate effectively in our role. We may not always feel so anointed but in the unseen realm that authority is clearly recognized and honored. The kingdom of God accompanies His own order and bestows favor and blessing when we function according to His ways. Embrace your placement and respect the mantle that rests upon you. You don't have to be the smartest guy in the room, but you do need to appreciate the mandate placed upon you.

What do we Speak Over Our Children

I spoke in an earlier chapter about doing workshops and how I get the same two comments presented to me repeatedly. "Thank you for giving me a place" and "I don't know what to do". Too often as men, we find knowing what to say or even what to pray over our grandchildren difficult.

Give some real thought to this experience and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you and guide you. James stated emphatically "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him." James 1:5. If you prepare yourself prior to speaking over the lives of your family, God will unfold deep insights and realities that will penetrate the heart of the child for the rest of their lives. This is no small task. Proceeding without God's leadership, limits the impact you can have on them.

God will unfold deep insights and realities that will penetrate the heart

The following guidelines will help serve as a roadmap to effectively deposit influential impressions and principles into the core of your family members lives. What a profound responsibility and privilege to be used by Jesus this way.

- **Be Specific**

When Jacob spoke over each of his sons in Gen 49, he did not use generalities in what he said. He very clearly addressed the individual based on what he saw and what he understood to be relevant for that specific man.

When we speak in vague and general terms the child will disengage and consider the prayer to be irrelevant. By focusing on the distinctive and exceptional aspects of the child's own journey we capture an opportunity for inspiration like few other moments in time. It's those moments and those words that become cemented into the developmental influences, of who they will become, as they grow up.

Being specific requires us to build relationship and to be aware of the challenges and potential of each child. Ask questions and pay attention to environment. By being attentive you will gain insights that can prove to be significant in your communicating God's blessing over them.

- **Use Trent / Smalley Temperament Analysis**

John Trent and Gary Smalley have done a marvellous job of using animals as a means of defining the character traits of children.

- ○ ■ **The Beaver typifies the analytical, self-disciplined, yet moody and often negative person.**
- **The Lion is the Strong-willed, decisive yet domineering and unemotional type.**
- **Then there is the Otter. This person is outgoing, talkative but can be undisciplined and given to exaggeration.**
- **Finally, the Golden Retriever. Easy going and calm but also indecisive and often given to procrastination.**

You can learn much more about this temperament study in the book “The Two Sides of Love.” By Smalley and Trent.

When speaking over our children, these caricatures can be very useful in affirming their strengths while riveting the unique design of God into their minds. The fact that each person is special and fearfully and wonderfully made, is an important reality and truth for every individual to embrace and appreciate about themselves.

- **Be Prophetic**

The concept of the prophetic word is often viewed differently by different people holding slightly different perspectives of the way the Holy Spirit interacts with us. Some believe that it should be solely a reiteration of the written words of scripture and others believe that there is room for promptings or impressions in your thoughts, inspired by the Holy Spirit, that are specific to a person or situation. Regardless of your convictions, one thing is certain. The prophetic word will never contradict the written word and must always be able to be confirmed by the scriptures.

One of my favorite verses in the Bible is the record of Jesus' encounter with Peter when He first met him and identified the potential in him. 'He brought him(Peter) to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas" (which means Petros). John 1:42 We know what Jesus spoke was a prophetic revelation, but it was also a declaration. The name Simon in the New Testament was a baby name and implied immaturity and in some ways weakness. Cephas meant Peter or Petros which means a rock. He was saying Peter you are going to be an important player in my plans.

I heard an old preacher once describe this conversation, as Jesus declaring over Peter "You are currently a pebble, but you are going to be a big strong rock." I like that. Jesus was creating in Peters thoughts and Spirit; imagery of what God had planned for him.

I strongly recommend that you speak positive, life shaping prophetic words or words that you believe are consistent with the scriptures, over your children. Literally pray Bible verses over them.

- **Speak Vision**

What do you see when you look at your grandchildren? Be careful about limiting them or your own perspective of what God might want to do with them. Dream big. Speak big and cast a large vision for your family.

I am always intrigued by the way certain families tend to follow the patterns of the previous generation. How is it that the Bush family can have both a father and a son become president of the United States. Is it because they were smarter than anyone else? I won't attempt to answer that. The only explanation is vision. George W. saw what his father did, and I am sure he was encouraged and convinced by his father and others that it was entirely possible and even probable that he could be president as well if he wanted to. You don't get to that position without someone instilling in you the original vision.

We can establish a pathway to greatness for our families

We can establish a pathway to greatness for our families through the spoken words of profound, life altering vision. Don't be timid. A life can achieve that which a mind can conceive. And a mind can conceive world changing vision when an appropriate word of encouragement is planted.

- **Speak life**

Be positive and encouraging. Guard against anything that can tear down. If life and death really are in the power of the tongue, choose life. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control are the fruit of the spirit. Everyone wants these for themselves and for their family. Words that reflect these characteristics will help to reaffirm the work of God in any person's life. It is a wonderful privilege to participate with the Holy Spirit in seeing that fruit blossom as part of your child's personality and world view.

- **The "Prayer of Blessing"**

When I hear men say, “Help me to know what to do”, I direct them to the ‘Prayer of Blessing’. This prayer is a compilation of the many places in scripture where someone spoke blessing into the lives of individuals or even over the nation of Israel. I have summarized these blessings into 5 categories.

- **The KNOWLEDGE of God**

The Apostle Paul prayed that the church of Ephesus would have an experience with God not unlike his own. He specifically prayed that the “eyes of their understanding would be opened” and that they would “know God.”

When a person has their own personal encounter with Jesus their lives will never be the same. Sunday school stories, healthy home representation of Christ, and strong influencers are all essential elements of raising some one to walk with God, but when that person’s life is transformed because of an intimate revelation of the grace of God and the love of Jesus, they will most certainly walk faithfully with Him.

Pray over your children that they would “KNOW God”

- ○ ■ **The POWER of God**

Jesus commissioned the disciples to wait in the city until they were “clothed with power”. The book of Acts is a historic collection of how God filled His people with His Spirit empowering them to proclaim the gospel and to change the world. Jesus declared that for those that are thirsty and that believe in Him, “Rivers of living water shall flow from within you”, and this “He spoke of the Spirit”.

As the patriarch in your children’s journey with Christ, it is an awesome privilege to pray with them to receive the anointing and infilling of the Holy Spirit. To see that river of living water flow out from them as they experience God’s POWER for themselves.

- ○ ■ **The FAVOUR of God**

John prayed for his friend Gaius that he would be “In good health and that he would prosper as his soul prospered”. The subject of the favour of God is a consistent theme throughout the scriptures. The longing of every person’s heart is that they would live under the covering, protection, and care of God. That His favour would be obvious in all that they and their family do.

I suggest you pray for your family that God would add His favour to their:

- Health
- Finances
- Relationships
- Protective care from anything that may cause them harm.

- ■

The PURPOSE of God

What is God’s plan for your child’s life? How does God intend to use them for His Kingdom? There can be no greater fulfillment than to understand the call of God on our lives and to serve Him faithfully and obediently in that call. Every human being has unique gifts, abilities, and desires that when coupled by the power of God unveil the destiny and purpose Jesus urges them to fulfill. Knowing what that purpose is comes through promptings of the Spirit. Whether large or small, the understanding of God’s call matters.

Grandpa, play your part by praying that the PURPOSE of God may be discovered by your children. Pray that their hearts will not rest until they engage completely in that call.

- ○ ■ **The DESIGN of God**

In a society that so desperately wants to mess with the identity and individuality of young people, it is more important than ever that we encourage our children to embrace Gods unique design of who they are. The Psalmist wrote that they are “Fearfully and wonderfully made”, and God told Isaiah that He had “formed him from his mother’s womb”.

Our children and grandchildren need to know how special and unique they are according to God’s design. We need to pray that there be no confusion as to who or what God has created them to be. Jesus challenged people to “love their neighbours as they love themselves”. Having a healthy, accurate appreciation and love for themselves enables them to have a joyous and godly perspective on the world in which they live.

They are the unique, specific, and exceptional DESIGN of God. May they see it and embrace it as their gift from the Lord.

Grandpa, do you have something to say? Say it like your children’s lives depend on it. Because they do.

Chapter 11

Step 5:

“FAITH” Believe God For
the Transformation



“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek Him.” Heb. 11:6

In 1986 my wife Mary and I had the great privilege of joining a small group of people who had gone into a community to plant a new church. They were a vibrant group of young families with tremendous energy and vision to establish a lighthouse in their new surroundings where they could raise their families and live out their faith. They had chosen an upstairs office space to gather every Sunday morning to worship and to serve as their church home for weekly activities. I remember the first time I went there and climbed the long, narrow, dark stairwell leading up to the small meeting room. It was cozy, with a very low ceiling and large windows facing out onto the street. I remember those windows being a great indicator of whether I was preaching good or not, because if I wasn't the people would be staring out the window, distracted by what ever was happening across the street in the parking lot. Like I said it was cozy

Maybe too cozy for a young pastor's liking. Even though the atmosphere was quaint and serviceable, it soon became obvious that the space was not adequate for the growth of the church nor the expansion of our growing families. It was time to move up.

Within a couple of years, these young, progressive, and visionary leaders began to pray and believe God for a facility that would accommodate the continual multiplication of our assembly. Through a lot of creative thinking and sacrifice we eventually secured land that would inevitably become the church building we could call our own. The challenge was significant and the cost of construction clearly beyond our immediate means. The only way that property could become a reality for us, was to gain the confidence of a lending institution that would provide us with the necessary finances to proceed with our plans. Fortunately, there were some successful businessmen in the group that had both the expertise and connections to guide us through the process of securing the necessary resources required to proceed with our vision

We met with the banker, negotiated the terms, and convinced the lender that we were in fact a good investment and that we would indeed be capable of meeting our end of the contract.

It was an exciting time. The agreement with the bank to fund our building project was the basis for which all future dealings could go forward. The architect, the excavation, the building materials, and all other contracts could be approached with certainty because we had assurance from an unequivocal source of provision, affirming we could meet our obligations.

It had nothing to do with our personal word or enthusiasm but rather it had everything to do with the documents from the bank stating they would cover us in the venture. The vision of our own church building where we could grow our congregation and impact our community could all become a reality because of that contract with the bank. It was our 'title-deed'. Not a single individual in the group could pay for one part of the project on their own

With the backing of that institution however, who was more than able, we marched on undaunted with the construction of our brand-new facility, and even though there was nothing yet standing, "by faith", we could visualize every aspect of our yet to be realized worship center. The excitement was palpable because we knew it was just a matter of time before our dream would be an actual physical reality. We had confidence based on a promise from a source bigger than ourselves.

Heb. 11:1, 2 "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the people of old received their commendation."

This verse has always captivated my interest. What does it mean and how is it relevant to us in our role as dad's and grandfather's?

This is how A.T. Robertson the renown Greek scholar defines faith in Heb. 11:1.

Hupostasis is a very common word from Aristotle on and comes from upisthmi (upo, under, isthmi, intransitive), what stands under anything (a building, a contract, a promise). See the philosophical use of it in [1 Thessalonians 1:3](#), the sense of assurance (une assurance certaine, Mngoiz), that steadiness of mind which holds one firm ([2 Corinthians 9:4](#)). It is common in the papyri in business documents as the basis or guarantee of transactions. "And as this is the essential meaning in [Hebrews 11:1](#) we venture to suggest the translation 'Faith is the title-deed of things hoped for'".

"Guarantee of transactions" or the "Title-deed of things hoped for". What marvelous pictures and imagery of what it means to have faith. Our 'Title-deed' is God's word. His promises given with absolute assurance that He will fulfill the obligation. His word is our hope. We can trust Him because He is faithful.

24 times in Heb. 11 the word "faith" is used of the great men and women of God who were holding a title-deed to a promise they had received from the Lord. Many if not most did not live to see the promise fulfilled, however in God's time those promises unfolded in the next or later generations.

Jacob was only days or even hours away from passing when Joseph brought his sons to his father. He knew he would not see the unfolding of his blessing in the lives of Ephraim and Manasseh, however he understood the urgency of the impartation. As the patriarch, Jacob embraced his responsibility because he believed the promises would ultimately be fulfilled. Why? Because he knew God, he held a 'title-deed'.

"being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus".

Phil. 1:6-10

The truth is many of us will not live to see the full evidence of God's blessing in the lives of our grandchildren. What is true however, is that we have a 'title-deed'. When we speak blessing over our families it must be done in faith. "On the basis or guarantee of a transaction". When we faithfully honor the position, role and responsibility of the patriarch in our grandchildren's lives we enter into an agreement with God. When we pray God hears and activates the process of doing His great work in them. That's our hope. That is our mandate. That's why we do it. It's because of the assurance of God's sovereign love and mercy. The fact that He loves our family members more than we do and longs to have them walk with Him, is why this privilege of passing on blessing is so important.

As the family patriarch you have a 'title-deed' from Jesus relative to your children and grandchildren.

The Development of Faith

Faith is somewhat of a mystery for most believers. It can be hard to 'muster' up the seemingly necessary emotion or enthusiasm to believe God for the results we want, especially during life's many challenges. When we read the "Hall of Fame of Faith" in Heb. 11 we can't help but wonder, 'how did they do it?'

Faith is a Spiritual Reality. It's the work that happens in the unseen rather than the seen. It's faith that precedes the victory on the field of spiritual combat. We march on toward that which we hope for, clothed in our spiritual armour, holding high the shield of faith knowing that the 'Captain of Hosts' leads us forward. The assaults that are levied against us and our families can only be defended by faith. The progress and triumphs in life are secured by faith.

"... without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek Him." Heb. 11:6

1. Faith COMES by Hearing His Word

"... faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10:17

When my children were born it was the most exciting experience I had ever had. I remember looking into the eyes of each one of my new babies and thinking to myself, "Wow they don't look anything like I thought they would." I know I should've had something a little more profound for thoughts but newborns having been packed away for nine months do not look anything like they will even in the few hours following their arrival. My point is, it's impossible to know what the future will look like for a child or even image what their physical appearance will embody. Every parent guesses and tries to figure out how tall they will be, what color hair, whose family traits will immerge, etc. The truth is you cannot know until they grow up.

Faith is like an embryo. The Apostle Paul, the Apostle Peter and the writer of Hebrews all exhorted the church not to stay spiritual babies but to grow up into adults by feeding on the Word of God. The basic DNA of the Spirit is birthed when we are born again but we can't imagine the full extent of our journey when we are still spiritual infants. It is through His word that we grow, develop wisdom, discernment and a hearing hear for His voice. It is Gods Word that creates the ability to trust Him and to believe Him for elements of spiritual power that nothing else is capable of. His word ignites life within our hearts because His word is Spirit. It is the essence of who Jesus is. To be full of His word is to be full of the Spirit of Christ.

Feed on His word and let faith arise in your heart for the lives of your family.

1. Faith is BUILT on His Promises

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." John 6:35

This is one of the most powerful statements in the entire Bible. These promises of Jesus are so often read almost rhetorically with little attention given to the hope He is offering to all of mankind.

Think about what Jesus said. “Whoever comes...” “Whoever believes...”. That means me. That means you. That means your grandchildren. “Will never go hungry...” “Will never be thirsty...”. Never! Really? Jesus made the most eternally secure declaration of all time.

He was giving all who would come and all who would believe, a God breathed, heaven sent promise. His word. It is His promises that our faith is built upon. Anchor your hope in the promises of God. The greater your understanding of His promises the greater your ability to rest in the assurance of His blessing being extended to your family.

1. Faith is DISCOVERED Through Experience

Of the 24 times in Hebrews 11 the word “Faith” is used, 12 of the references make note of people’s specific encounters with God as He moved them onward toward the promise of a better future.

Jesus is not interested in us simply sitting around dreaming of ethereal concepts or possibilities. It’s through our stepping up and living out His directives that we discover His faithfulness and divine activity in the joys and disappointments of real-world stuff. The pleasure of believing God and watching Him uncover the impossible is what having a personal relationship with Christ is all about. “In Him we live and move and have our being” Acts 17:28

When we walk with Christ He shows us His intricate participation in our lives. He opens windows and shuts doors along the path. When we travel together we learn His ways and recognize His voice. It is how we gain the ability to trust.

Children bring highs and lows. That's just the way it is. The experiences we share enable us to witness the hand of God at work. Behind every encounter is the craftsmanship of a living, loving God. Even in the trying times God is active. Trust and believe. Watch for the signs and indicators of His involvement. When you see Jesus orchestrate the things only He can, it will make trusting Him going forward that much more sensible.

1. Faith is STRENGTHENED Through Trials

“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.” James 1:2,3

There was a time that we as a family faced some significant crisis. The heartache and the stress of that time seemed unbearable. I remember vividly the moment when I felt God lifted the heaviness of the situation and inserted a glimmer of hope into my heart.

It was at that moment that I understood His pursuit of our lives never stops. That ray of light from His Spirit gave us courage that nothing else could provide. In hindsight that experience has proven to be one of the most valuable and important incidences in our entire pilgrimage as a family. It seemed insurmountable at the time but when God breathes life into your soul, confidence and conviction rise on supernatural wings enabling us to press forward into any battle. The pain of that occurrence forever altered our ability to believe Jesus in other major steps in our lives.

Get involved in yours kids lives even when times are tough. It's in that arena the faithfulness of a living God becomes real. It's in those times that our faith demonstrates what it means to present our "Title-deed" and send the adversary packing. We are here to do business. Let's get it done.

1. Faith is NURTURED by the Testimony of Others

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching". [Hebrews 10:24-25](#)

One of the great joys of my life is when I receive testimonies from grandfathers and dads who have actively embraced the role of patriarch in their family. I often get emails or even better, video's showing a grandfather laying hands on his grandchildren and praying over them. To read or watch the satisfaction of these men faithfully fulfilling their mandate is immensely encouraging. Stories of the faithfulness of God being demonstrated in the life of someone they love elevates my faith and motivates me to believe the Lord for greater things in my own family and my own ministry.

God told Abraham that He would bless him but also make him a blessing. It is never acceptable in the economy of the kingdom to just be a receiver and not a giver also. Jesus wants to pour into our lives but what we pass on is even more valuable. I was once told we are to be a pipeline not a pool. People need to be encouraged in their walk with Christ because that is what nurtures our faith. Tell your story. Share with others the things you have seen Jesus do. Get together with other men and encourage them with your testimony. Grow in your faith and help other guys grow in theirs.

Faith Lived Out

I've discovered over the years that most things we learn are a process and require step by step development before they really make sense and become operative. I believe faith is one of those realities. It is best understood when broken down into manageable components. What does it look like? How is it lived out in real life? When do I know that I am walking in faith? If we are going to effectively impart the blessing of God with authority, this process will inevitably lead us into a deeper awareness of the activity of the Spirit in our efforts.

Hebrews 11 is the textbook on faith. It is the framework of how faith works. If we are going to understand God's expectations regarding faith we must follow the lives of the great sojourners recorded in this chapter. Each of them exemplifies what it means to follow God and His leadership throughout their personal history. Each driven with confidence and expectation because of what they believed was the direction of the Lord.

1. Faith and Vision

The characters in Heb. 11 all had one thing in common. Vision. They saw something that was not yet real. It was this divinely revealed vision that caused them to press on in their pilgrimage toward a "a city whose builder and maker was God". Being able to see something in your heart even though it is not yet visible in the natural, is an integral part of faith. Not only should we anchor our faith to God's promises, but we should be asking for vision regarding each of our grandchildren.

My grandson is a very analytical thinker. He must process things in detail before he really feels comfortable moving forward with activities. He is a Beaver. Based on that trait, along with other elements of who he is, I have begun to formulate a vision for his future. I am believing God for certain things in his life because I see what can be and what will be.

People say, “we don’t know what the future holds”. That’s only partly true. Of course, we don’t know what pitfalls or opportunities the future has for them, but we do know what the word of God says, and we do know that it is possible to speak into existence things that are consistent with His word. Create a picture in your heart, a vision for your children’s lives that is in harmony with what God wants, then hold fast to that vision forever.

1. Faith and Obedience

“The very weapons we use are not those of human warfare but powerful in God’s warfare for the destruction of the enemy’s strongholds. Our battle is to bring down every deceptive fantasy and every imposing defence that men erect against the true knowledge of God. We even fight to capture every thought until it acknowledges the authority of Christ”. 2 Cor. 10:4, 5 J.B. Phillips N.T

The metaphor the Apostle Paul is using here is that of a walled Roman fortress that in the natural seems virtually impenetrable. He is declaring that even though the fight seems impossible it is still no match for the authority of Jesus. As in Eph. 6 Paul emphatically proclaims that he does not wage war in the visible world but rather in the spiritual world. He boldly states he can and will destroy the vices that set themselves up against the promises and truths of God. He says in the preceding verses that in the natural he is a bit of a chicken but in the Spirit, he is “bold” and courageous because he knows this isn’t his fight. This is the power of God endorsing His own authority.

The theme of 2 Cor. 10 is the violation of the purity of the gospel by people that were seeking to draw away believers from Paul's message of the gospel. They were creating doubt and deceit in this young church and what Paul was teaching. He tells these leaders that their deception is a spiritual attack and that he is going to fight every false thought and suggestion and make it submit to the authority of Christ. Many translations of the scripture use the word "obey" to define what Paul was saying. The word obey in this context comes from the concept of coming under the jurisdiction of a higher power. A lesser force subordinating itself to the pre-eminence of another.

Faith is just that. Regardless of circumstances or situations, we are to bring opposing thoughts and emotions into the submission of Christ. We are to subject them to the highest power. Nothing over rules His word.

We may be unsure of ourselves as patriarchs at times but our confidence is not in who we are as people. We are simply to surrender our thoughts and intents to the word of God and His promises. Learn to fight in the Spirit by bringing "every opposing defence" to the Lord. Make every imagination that wars against God's desire for your children, "obey", submit and conform to truth.

1. Faith and Action

When I was a kid there was an older gentleman that travelled around to churches doing "kids ministry". He was an eccentric character that did magic tricks, tell captivating stories and possessed all sorts of unusual gadgets and creatures.

To be clear this individual turned out to be anything but pure however it's still interesting the way God uses even the weakest vessels to influence our relationship and understanding of Himself.

One of the critters the old fellow owned was “Pedro” the turtle. Pedro was over 100 years old. An incredible piece of God’s innovations. What I remember about “Pedro” was that he spent most of his time recoiled inside his shell, safe and quiet. The only way to get him out and moving was to place a leaf of lettuce on the opposite corner of his bed in the aquarium he lived in. When that lettuce was placed inside his dwelling he would slowly push his head and legs out of his shell, so he could move forward toward his lunch. Once his head was fully extended he could advance. Not before.

Faith is a bit like a turtle. Unless we act, we can’t fully experience the leadership and activity of the Holy Spirit relative to our mission or plight. The pilgrims of Hebrews 11 continued to push forward and remain diligent in their pursuits because they believed that God had the ability and desire to reveal himself in those pursuits.

When we engage as Patriarchs in the exercise of imparting blessing in our grandchildren’s lives we will witness God’s participation in our actions. Too often I hear “I do pray secretly for my Kids” or “It’s a personal or private role that I play”. That’s not enough. Be overt. Get in the game. Push your head out of the shell and take action. Actively pursue every opportunity to lay hands on your children, to pray for them and be the “head” in their lives. Our action makes room for God’s demonstration.

1. Faith and Patience

“We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.” Heb. 6:12

Waiting, is a lost art in our culture. Many years ago, I had the privilege of touring some of the ancient Aztec ruins in southern Mexico. Fascinating, couldn’t begin to describe what is there. Miles of fence, pyramids, places of idol worship and cities constructed of river stone and rock all meticulously placed and secured with a combination of balance and mortar.

It is awe inspiring to look at. How in the world did they do it? The most bewildering part for me was the amount of work and the length of time it would take to complete such magnificent structures. One by one those rocks would have to be hauled from who knows where to the building site, then strategically placed within the schematic of the over all design. You talk about patience.

Instant gratification is rare in the kingdom of God. Moses' mother when she placed him in the wicker basket didn't know what would become of her son but in faith she had no choice but to patiently wait and watch as God worked His plan. It is not unusual in the Bible for there to be decades if not centuries between major recorded events. It requires great patience coupled with unshakeable confidence to see the intentions of God unfold in the lives of our grandchildren. When we speak God's blessing into their lives we then must wait and trust the faithfulness of Christ to be displayed over time.

Most of us as grandfathers will not even be alive when the full work of the Lord is realized in our family members. That's ok. We play an integral part of this eternal journey for them. That's how God created it to work. Be patient. Let Jesus do His stuff.

1. Faith and Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is the key that unlocks and reveals the proof of our faith. When I have promised one of my grandchildren candy they know that I'm going to give them that treat. If they were to stand in front of me and continually ask for the candy even though I'm offering it to them they would never receive it.

“Grandpa can I have a candy? Yes, take it. Grandpa can I have a candy? Yes, here it is take it. Grandpa can I have the candy? Yes, for goodness sake take the candy from my hand!” The continual ask does not indicate confidence in my provision. When they say, “thank you grandpa for the candy”, then reach out and take it that’s when I know they really believe the treat is theirs. When I believe that God’s word is true, and I have asked according to His will, I then begin to give thanks for the evidence of His promise.

As I look down the road of my grandchildren’s lives I have no idea what challenges they will face. But I know this. The scriptures tell me that Jesus will do a good work in them and He won’t quit until He is done. Therefore, I don’t continually ask Him to do a good work but rather I give Him thanks for the work He is doing.

“Thank you, Jesus, that you will introduce yourself to my grandchildren, thank you that you will fill them with your Holy Spirit. God, I give you thanks for your favour upon them and that You are revealing to them your purpose for their life.”

Faith is not really faith until you believe enough to be thankful. When you begin to give thanks, the answers are released in the unseen and will eventually be witnessed in the seen.

1. Faith and Hope

During the second world war at the age of 65 Sir Winston Churchill became the Prime Minister of England. Even though he was a man of considerable intelligence and capable political ability it was not those qualities that got him elected. The characteristic that endeared him to the English people was his almost supernatural ability to inspire hope.

Churchill's granddaughter, Celia Sandys, when honoring her grandfather in a speech given in 2012 said, 'The impact of my grandfather's words during World War II was more powerful than any weapon. ... Whether speaking in the House of Commons or on the radio the effect was profound. So many people have told me how his speeches gave them hope when they were in despair.'

Everyone knew that the German forces were advancing across Europe at an alarming speed and England was directly in their crosshairs. When it seemed all hope was lost, and the people were gripped with fear, Prime Minister Churchill would take to the radio on an almost daily basis and speak to the nation, giving them assurance that they were going to ultimately be triumphant in spite of the seemingly overwhelming odds. His famous dissertation '... we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall never surrender', became the rally cry of not only the nation of Great Britain but the entire assembly of allied countries. It wasn't strategy that won the war it was the inspiration of hope and courage that injected confidence into the hearts of ordinary people.

Much has been written about Winston Churchill, but author and poet [Alfred] Duff Cooper summed up the world's debt to this amazing leader in the following short poem.

'When ears were deaf and tongues were mute You told of doom to come; When others fingered on the flute You thundered on the drum; When armies marched and cities burned and all you said came true, Those who have mocked your warnings turned almost too late to you; When doubt gave way to firm belief and through five cruel years, You gave us glory in our grief and laughter through our tears; When final honours are bestowed and last accounts are done, Then shall we know how much was owed by all the world to one.'

"Hope deferred makes the heart sick." Prov. 13:12

When faced with the challenges of life, faith is what spurs us on with conviction that God is sovereign and able to do what we cannot. Without hope we become crippled with stress, discouragement and fear. Jesus said the devil comes to kill, steal and destroy but that He came to give us abundant life. It's those promises that inspire hope.

Faith makes all the other steps in the blueprint work. Without faith everything else becomes empty words and frivolous activity. Faith is the gun powder that launches the other elements into the unseen realm with authority and impact. It is faith that allows our hearts to rest and trust.

Chapter 12

The Patriarch's Challenge

"You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great" Zig Ziglar

In the Gen. 48 account of Joseph and his father Jacob, urgency was the impetus of everything that took place. Joseph found out his dad was dying and realized his boys needed to receive their grandfathers blessing before he died. Jacob responded as urgently as his frail body would allow when Joseph arrived, by getting up off his death bed and then laid hands upon his grandsons and promptly began to transmit his blessing into their lives. There was no time to waste. The hour was late, and the resolve of both men was obvious. It had to happen. Now!

All great missions start with a common denominator. Urgency.

When problems present themselves, it takes courageous men to respond to the challenge and to stand in the way of opposing forces. The battle for our families and our faith is rapidly closing in around us. There is a war being waged in the spiritual realm that is targeting our homes and our role as lighthouses to the world. We cannot lose hope or heart in this struggle. The opportunity to stem the tide of darkness is presenting itself to each man and patriarch that will accept the mission. God has a strategy that involves us as the heads of our homes. To miss the call and forfeit the responsibility is to place our children and grandchildren in jeopardy. Accept the mandate and engage in the fight. The kingdom needs us now. The times are urgent.

One of the greatest men of valour recorded in the scriptures is Nehemiah. Even though he worked for the king, Nehemiah was not a priest, he was not a nobleman, nor was he a politician or warrior. He was the king's cupbearer. He worked for the government, he was a civil servant. In other words, he was a relatively ordinary guy. Very much like ourselves or the men we associate with. Regardless of our placement in society, whether king or servant, we are all equal at the foot of the cross. As a coach once told me, "everyone puts their pants on one leg at a time."

God desires for you to be a world changer at some level.

God's choice of people to do His bidding is always curious to me. Nehemiah is a great example of how God, in His sovereign plan, placed this everyday kind of guy into the king's chamber, to eventually fulfill His divine objectives through him. Nehemiah didn't even realize what was happening. All he knew was that there was something welling up in his emotions about the depletion of Jerusalem. It needed to be fixed and he was God's chosen guy. What happened next was obviously important enough to make it into the canon of scripture. Never underestimate what the Lord is doing behind that scenes. You are in His plan. His purpose for you is to be a world changer at some level.

Nehemiah turned out to be an amazing leader with divine favour and wisdom upon him.

NEHEMIAH IDENTIFIED THE PROBLEM

“They said to me, “Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire.” Nehemiah 1:3

The problem Nehemiah faced was that both the identity and the security of the nation were in peril. Nehemiah was moved in his spirit to do something about the situation even though he was not someone with jurisdiction or even geographical relationship to the city of Jerusalem. He lived in the king's house.

As Christian men we are being confronted with a very similar spiritual battle. Our identity as believers is under intense assault. To be a Christian today in many parts of the world will cost you your life. In North America, the secular world has garnered a narrative of extreme bias and negativity against our faith and values. Walking with Jesus is becoming increasingly more divisive in a culture that has lost its way spiritually. Righteousness has become wrong and wrong has become right. As time marches on the ungodly influences of our society continually gain momentum.

In 1975 Bill Bright of Campus Crusade and Loren Cunningham of Youth With a Mission developed a theory and strategy built upon what they called the “7 Mountains of Societal Influence”. It was their assertion that these 7 areas were the foundation of any society and that as believers we have a mandate to influence these spheres with the message of Christ and His love for a fallen world. The 7 areas of influence are as follows:

- Family
- Religion/Faith
- Education
- Politics/Law
- Media/News & Commentary
- Arts/Entertainment
- Business/Economics

We don't have to do much analyzing to see that each of these areas has been significantly impacted by a profoundly ungodly and negative message. It appears Satan recognizes the potential in each area as well and has been very intentional in his plan to commandeer control over them in an attempt to dethrone Jesus and destroy mankind.

Ignoring these realities is to place our children and grandchildren in harms way. As men of God, it is our responsibility to recognize the situation for what it is and prepare to engage in this battle with vigor, strength and conviction. The home is the foundation for all the others. As the patriarch, you have the ability to influence the role your children and grandchildren will play in each of the 7 areas and the favour of God that will accompany them in their endeavours.

NEHEMIAH GRIEVED, AND WAS COMPELLED TO ACT

“When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven”. Nehemiah 1:4

When does the societal climate become severe enough to move men into action? How close to home will the darkness have to get before we say, “Not on my watch”.

Nehemiah was overcome with concern by the circumstances his community faced. He couldn't take it anymore. Something had to be done. You can literally feel the anguish in Nehemiah's writing. “I sat down and wept”. The injustice of the times consumed him and gripped him emotionally. It was like he couldn't think of anything else. “I mourned and fasted and prayed”. All this ordinary guy could think of was that his world needed God's help and he was going to make himself available to correct the unacceptable conditions.

It's unfortunate that we get pacified by the “slow melt” of spiritual deceit because the consequences don't always have direct impact on our personal world. The old adage “bad things happen when good men do nothing”, applies today more than at any other time in our block of history. God help us to be grieved enough to compel us as the “heads” of our homes, churches and communities to act.

NEHEMIAH RALLIED THE ELDERS AND THE PEOPLE, TO REBUILD THE WALLS

Then I said to them, “You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.” I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me. They replied, “Let us start rebuilding.” So, they began this good work. Nehemiah 2:17, 18

It was clear to Nehemiah that the undertaking was immense and that the cost was going to be high. The opposition was fierce, and the threats were real. There was no way this could be done without the participation of many capable, motivated and gifted stakeholders. I love how this great leader appeals to the obvious in his call to the people most effected. “You see the trouble we are in.” He didn’t isolate the situation just to his own observations. He included all who were impacted as one group. He didn’t say “I’m the only one bothered by this”. No, he emphatically beseeched his friends to look honestly at the situation and to engage in correcting the problem regardless of how dire it appeared.

Men of God we are being called to service. We are under attack and it is imperative we respond. The walls have been breached. The tactics of our spiritual enemy are diabolical, and the fight is at our door. The task is daunting, and the stakes are high but, “when we are weak, He is strong”, if we take our place and “resist the devil he will flee from us”. The promises of our living Lord are so wonderful and encouraging. When we align ourselves with His ways we will be triumphant. A willingness to “see the trouble we are in” implores us to step up, link arms together, push back the powers of darkness and “let us start rebuilding”.

NEHEMIAH’S VISION AND INSPIRATION WERE BEYOND HIMSELF

“And I looked and arose and said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, “Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families.” Nehemiah 4:14

All great leadership recognize that the responsibility they bear is to move a group of people toward a better future. As Bill Hybels refers to it, they are driven by a “holy discontent”. The acknowledgement that things must change in current circumstances and that they carry the mandate, opportunity and anointing to lead the group into a new dimension or paradigm. Good leaders become captivated and inspired by need for change, identify a solution then fervently work toward mobilizing those they have charge over toward that hope.

As the patriarchs and men of God in our family structure the mandate, opportunity and anointing are incumbently ours to employee. Nehemiah gave an impassioned speech and plea to those that had joined him in this immense undertaking. The people were losing momentum, were weakened by fear and had lost sight of the role God was playing in their mission. The enemy was taunting them, and it seemed as though the hurdles and barriers to success were beyond their capacity to overcome. The job looked overwhelming.

“Where there is no vision, the people perish” Proverbs 29:18-27 KJV

The most important role any leader plays is that of crafting and articulating compelling and motivating vision. Helping people see what can be, what will be if they endure and press onward. Passionately imploring the questions “What if, why not and if not us then who?” Vision is seeing that better future, being convinced it can happen and that things will be different when we arrive. Nehemiah’s courageous speech made the possibility of success seem plausible and worth the effort.

In the movie Braveheart, William Wallace was zealously rallying his warriors to press on in the fight and to not tolerate or accept the tyranny of the English any longer. When provoked by one of his soldiers with the idea of surrender he responded by saying, “You can surrender and live.... for a while, but you nor your children will ever be free.” Our participation in this quest is not about us. It’s about the next generations. Your grandchildren and their children and, their children’s children. We are at the current pinnacle of our family trees. The choices we make today create a continual flow of favour on our descendants. Our engagement and dissemination of blessing in their lives now strengthens the cord that ties the spiritual lines of divine activity together for hundreds of years to come. What a powerful reality.

As we come to the close of this book, I am deeply moved and inspired by Nehemiah’s challenge to his colleagues. It has become my own battle cry to men throughout our nations.

Nehemiah’s 3 Point Challenge:

- **Don't be afraid**

“Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgement that something else is more important than fear.” Ambrose Redmoon

Be courageous. Be the “Head”. Be the leader in your family. Never surrender. Never give up.

Nehemiah acknowledged the reality of the opposition they were facing from their enemies and the impending threat they were up against. He was smart enough to recognize the emotional pressure his people were under. Sometimes fear needs to be acknowledge for what it is, and threats need to be exposed for what they are for them to be overcome and be defeated.

Repeated throughout the scripture great leaders appealed to their followers with the call, “Don’t be afraid”, “Be strong and courageous”. Jesus buoyed the spirits of His own disciples with the promise, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33 In John’s instruction to the church, regarding the false teachers that were trying to mislead new believers, he told 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.” 1 John 4:4

Sometimes we just need to be encouraged that we can do this, that future generations are depending on our courage and determination. I believe this, the kingdom needs us now. Let’s do it.

- **Remember the Lord**

When I first began to serve Jesus and make Him Lord of my life it was a revelation of the grace of God that transformed who I was and how I viewed my place in the world. An overpowering awareness of my sin and the absolute unconditional love and forgiveness of Christ was more than I could fathom. To this day many decades later the very thought of His grace makes me very emotional.

I can’t begin to repay what Jesus has done for me. Nor does He want me to repay it. What He does want is for me to trust Him and follow Him. To believe He loves me enough to lead me through the landmines of both this world and the unseen realities that we live amongst. That He can and will do for me the things that I cannot do for myself. He has taken complete control of my journey. He is Jehovah Jireh, “The Lord who has seen ahead and made provision in advance.”

God asks for our obedience and willingness to be who He has called us to be. The rest is up to Him. As Nehemiah said to his partners. “Remember the Lord who is great and awesome.” Our hope is in Him.

- **Fight for your families**

In the movie “The Darkest Hour” while enroute to a meeting with the war cabinet, Winston Churchill left his motorcade and intentionally used the subway train to get to the parliament buildings. On the train Churchill sat with the people who were living the best they could despite the ominous threat of war. One by one he asked them their names and looked them directly in the eye, wanting to both see what they were feeling and to transmit hope in return.

When returning to government he began his defense of his opposition to a peace agreement with Germany by reciting the names of the people he spoke with on the train. He took out a small piece of paper where the names of each of these individuals were written and clearly announced each name to the governing officials. He was putting a name to the blank faces of the people who would be affected by the decisions that were about to be made

Every person mattered. Every person was a son, a daughter, a brother, a sister, or a mom or dad. The fight was so much more than a strategic battle of wits or supremacy. It was about loved ones.

Nehemiah stood before those who had joined him in the great task of rebuilding the city, in spite of what seemed impossible odds, and put a name to every face represented by these workers. “Fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.” Neh. 4:14

Why does the “GRAMPA’S TIME” mission matter? It matter’s because the very lives of Nixon, Callaghan, Kensington, Beckett, Oakley and Theo depend on it. They depend on papa fulfilling his mandate on their behalf. The future of these precious gifts from God lies in the balance. I see there faces, I name their names and I embrace who they are as masterpieces created by a loving Heavenly Father. Put the names of your own family on the list. Call their names out loud. Take your place on the wall with like minded brothers as we rebuild that which the devil is trying to dismantle. We will change the world. Now is our time. It’s Grampa’s Time.

The GRAMPA’S TIME Vision

“To Enlist, Equip, Encourage and Empower 1,000,000 grandfathers to lay hands on their grandchildren and to speak the blessing of God into their lives “.

The
"Grampa's Time"
Prayer of Blessing

In the Name of Jesus, _____ I pray the Blessing of God into your life:

1) I pray that you would **KNOW GOD** and that you would experience Jesus in a very personal and intimate way. That you would experience:

- Your own personal revelation of His amazing grace.
- His forgiveness, mercy, and love.
- The life changing power of His word.
- The authority of the marvelous Name of Jesus.

2) _____ I pray in the powerful Name of Jesus that you will experience and walk in the Almighty **POWER OF GOD**

- That you will be full of the Holy Spirit
- That you will live under the Anointing of the Holy Spirit
- And that whatever you set your hand to do will see the authority of God released in you
- And that courageously you will know, live out and proclaim the Righteousness of Christ in the world in which you live.

3) I pray _____ that the **FAVOR OF GOD** will be continually on your life. That Gods Favor will be on you and that you will prosper in every way: -

- In your relationships
- In health
- In your finances
- Your relationships
- And that you will live under the protection of the Holy Spirit from those that may seek to cause you harm.

4) _____ I declare that the **PURPOSE OF GOD** for your life will be fully revealed and fully employed in order that you may serve Jesus with boldness and clarity.

- I pray in the Name of Jesus that your heart will not rest until you walk in the fullness of Gods call on your life.
- I pray that the advancement of the Kingdom of God will be your passion and that His anointing will enable you to serve Him all the days of your life.

5) _____ you have been “Fearfully and wonderfully made”, you have been created unique and special in the wisdom and foresight of God. You are the specific and special **DESIGN OF GOD**.

_____ God in His eternal plan has declared you to be the head and not the tail, to be a rock and not a pebble, to be blessed and to be a blessing.

- I pray in the Name of Jesus that you will from this day forward walk in the confidence of who God has made you and that your unique character traits and gifts will influence the world in which you live to turn to God and follow Him.
- May you understand your strengths and surrender them to the Lord that He might enable you to be all you can be.
- May you recognize your weaknesses and by the grace of God submit them to the Holy Spirit that He might help you to walk in self-control and obedience to Christ.
- You are special!!!

As I lay my hands on you now, may this Blessing be recorded in the heavens and be fulfilled by the grace and loving-kindness of Almighty God. Amen

The
"GRAMPA'S TIME"
PLEDGE

I, _____ pledge, to actively fulfill my role as the Patriarch in my family. I commit to faithfully impart this "Blessing" into the lives of my children and grandchildren, by laying my hands upon them and by declaring with my mouth that they will fully experience the KNOWLEDGE of God, the POWER of God, the FAVOUR of God, the PURPOSE of God, and the DESIGN of God. By faith I am believing that the eternal purposes of God will be fulfilled in them through this "Blessing".

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ POSTAL

CODE: _____

EMAIL

ADDRESS: _____

If you choose to join other men of faith by making this commitment a part of your personal life journey, please submit it back to GRAMPA'S TIME so that your name can be added to the list of others who are pledging to change the world through their grandchildren. You can submit your pledge by:

Visiting the Grampa's Time app on either Apple or Android and filling out the form there.

As we seek to fulfil the mission of influencing the lives of our grandchildren through the role of grandfathers and patriarchs throughout North America, I recognize that it is impossible to do it alone. If you have made this commitment and believe this to be a significant endeavour, will you join me in presenting this pledge to others that might share the same passion, encouraging them to yoke themselves with us in the pursuit of preparing the generations ahead for the glory of God. You can participate in this way by simply directing these like-minded men to the Grampa's Time app and have them commit to the pledge along with you. Thank you for your commitment to Christ and to the lives of our grandchildren.