

## Will Your Child Throw a 100mph Fastball in Hell?

Written by Richard Boureston

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There is no one more important in a child's life than the child's father. The father is irreplaceable and critical to the child's all around well being. Fathers have an amazing responsibility to train and shape their children.

It is the dream of many fathers for their children to succeed in sports, particularly boys, for many reasons including: overcoming both internal and external obstacles, benefits of physical exertion, character building, and learning how to work with others.

So fathers often pour themselves into their children's success as they repetitiously drill the fundamentals with their child until they reach an age appropriate perfection. If a child asks the father to throw the ball, kick the ball, bounce the ball, swim, ski, surf, etc, the father often happily, or if not happily, willingly agrees. Many fathers will coach the team, drive the child up and down the state, stay all day during the tournament or swim meet, all in an effort to encourage and support the success of their child.

With today's technology and understanding of bio-mechanics, the bar is being lifted higher and higher for children who wish to succeed in sports. While today a 100mph fastball is standard fair, in twenty years from now it will most likely be 105mph or 110mph. While the dedication and discipline and athletic prowess is commendable, I fear that it may be at the expense of the

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child's salvation.

I know that on earth it isn't fancy, it isn't glorious, millions of people won't be shouting your or your child's name, but I want to encourage you, as a father, to daily drill the Christian fundamentals with your children. There are no medals or crowns or tiaras or sashes. But this is an endurance race and if we remain steadfast until the end, we will receive the crown of salvation that will last for eternity. [*Someone who read this decided I was encouraging a works based salvation in this paragraph and has called me a heretic. □ Nothing could be further from the truth. □ We □ achieve □ salvation through God's grace and His grace alone. □ But we are commanded by God as fathers to train our children in the Lord (Eph. 6:4) and we are commanded to remain steadfast and run with □ perseverance □ (1 Cor 15:57-58, Heb 12:1-2).*]

I encourage you to pour your life into your children's spiritual well being with the same passion and fervency you do into helping them be successful in sports. There are millions of saints and angels celebrating the work of God's kingdom. Join them.

Sports are amazing. I love sports. I love taking myself beyond what I was capable of before. I love watching my children succeed at something they failed at before. I love a good Cinderella story. So don't think I am anti-sports.

But there is great satisfaction for me to see my 5 year recite the entire Psalm 139 or my 10 year old recite all of Psalm 24. There is an overwhelming joy that I feel when my children choose kindness over selfishness or open the Bible and read without me reminding them. There is a depth of togetherness within our family, because God's Holy Spirit is uniting us.

What am I suggesting you do?

Just spend 15-20 minutes a day with your child(ren) as a family reading the Bible and praying, the fundamentals. Read a chapter or passage of the Bible and then pray to God. How do you pray? Just talk to Him. The less fancy you are the better. Keep it simple and authentic. If you have no idea where to start reading the Bible, the Gospel of John is a great place to start.

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What if you don't have enough time? What if you are too busy? You might be thinking, "there is simply no way with everyone's schedules to make this happen!" Well I guess you have a choice. We use to be that busy. But we chose to simplify our lives at the expense of the girls being on the gymnastics team so I could have time to gather my family together after dinner and seek God in our lives.

The choice you make will have a definite effect on your children's faith. So be the man God expects you to be and lead your family to God every day. I promise, and so does God, that they will thank you when they have grown and you will receive a great reward in heaven for your faithfulness and self-sacrifice.



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