

**# 010 12/20/99 Making a stronger first-half effort**

I recently heard someone talking about the importance of leaving a legacy for future generations. He spoke of life as a football game and talked about how we often put on extra effort in the second half of a game to reach the goal of winning. He said that many people, after reaching the midpoint in life, redouble their efforts to leave a legacy. I agree that becoming a grandparent, or even reaching the grandparent age, does increase a person's concern for the youngest generation. It should not be the concern of that generation alone.

If I regret anything about the job I did as a parent, it is that I did not teach enough of my Christian heritage. My children tell me that I taught them large doses of values and heritage. Looking back, I know I could have taught them more. I recently studied the life of Joshua. Joshua's generation had learned from experience and from Moses' guidance. They were blessed because they followed God's instructions. For some reason, his generation did not teach their children what they knew. Perhaps they assumed that their children would absorb the values they had learned. It did not work that way. Future generations were disobedient and paid the consequences.

If I had known as a young parent what I know now, I would have realized that the first half of the game is the most important for leaving a legacy to future generations. I would have studied the Bible more because I needed to be well grounded in what I was teaching. Bible study and prayer with my children would have been integrated into the very fabric of their daily lives. I would have listened more carefully to their questions. I would have slowed down so that I had more unhurried times to talk to them.

I am making this confession because there are many young parents today who are still playing the first half of the game. It is not too late to see the importance of early effort in the game of training children. Perhaps those parents who make a strong effort in the first half will not have to be so concerned during the final quarters of the game.

