

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY[®]

EXTREME GRANDPARENTING

the
ride
of your
life!



DR. TIM & DARCY HIMMEL



TYNDALE HOUSE PUBLISHERS, INC., CAROL STREAM, ILLINOIS

“Tim and Darcy Kimmel speak from experience to provide a framework for the new era in grandparenting. Filled with their passion for building the family, this book is a call to action and a guide for grandparents striving to glorify God by building relationships.”

—DR. DENNIS RAINEY
President of FamilyLife

“Sometimes they come for a visit, and sometimes they come to live with you, but grandchildren always offer an opportunity for positive impact. For grandparents who take their role seriously, *Extreme Grandparenting* will give you the tools. As a grandparent, I highly recommend it.”

—GARY D. CHAPMAN, PH.D.
Author of *The Five Love Languages*,
and *The Five Languages of Apology*

“In *Extreme Grandparenting* my good friends Tim and Darcy Kimmel have given me, and others who are and will be grandparents, an invaluable resource for understanding and executing the unique God-given role of passing on a godly legacy to our grandchildren.”

—DR. TONY EVANS
Senior Pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship

“I love being a grandpa! It almost makes growing older worthwhile! And thanks to Tim and Darcy Kimmel’s insights in *Extreme Grandparenting*, I now know how to do a much better job of loving my grandkids and blessing them in ways that will have eternal significance. Every grandparent needs to read this book.”

—GARY SMALLEY
Best-selling author and proud grandpa

“The ultimate reward of having kids is having grandkids! But with the reward comes an amazing opportunity. Wide-eyed, grandkids love their grandparents, and no one has the opportunity to impact their lives quite like their parents’ parents. Our friends Darcy and Tim will help you capture the moment.”

—JOE AND MARTIE STOWELL

Teaching Pastor, Harvest Bible Chapel

Former President, Moody Bible Institute

“*Extreme Grandparenting* is the very best book we’ve read about understanding why it’s imperative to invest our lives in our grandkids. Don’t miss out. Grab a copy for yourself and buy one for each of your kids—that way they won’t think you’ve gone crazy. (Just tell them you’re crazy over being a grandparent!) And as Tim and Darcy would tell you, ‘Get going on the ride of your life!’ Tim and Darcy are leading the pack, and we are extremely proud to be following their footsteps in grandparenting with a purpose!”

—DR. GARY AND BARB ROSBERG

America’s Family Coaches and authors

of *The Five Sex Needs of Men and Women*

Extreme Grandparenting

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A Focus on the Family book published by

Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188

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Editor: Mary Ann Jeffreys

Cover design by: Jessie McGrath

Cover photograph of boy and grandfather, copyright © by Maria Teijeiro/Getty Images.

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Kimmel, Tim.

Extreme grandparenting : the ride of your life! / Tim and Darcy Kimmel.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN-13: 978-1-58997-460-9

ISBN-10: 1-58997-460-3

1. Grandparents—Conduct of life. 3. Grandparenting. I. Kimmel, Darcy, 1951- II. Title.

HQ759.9.K56 2007

248.8'45—dc22

2007005380

Printed in the United States of America

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 / 12 11 10 09 08 07

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Starbucks Grandparents

Hil I'm Tim Kimmel, but you can call me Grandpa.

And I'm Darcy Kimmel, and you can call me Darcy.

As you know, parents get the naming rights on their children, but grandchildren seem to get naming rights for their grandparents. Grandchildren get to call us whatever they come up with when they start to talk. Before it's over, we could end up being called any one of a bunch of names: Nana, Mimi, or Gramma; Papa, Granddad, or Pap. And we'll answer to any of them.

We relish our title of grandparents and, just like you, are desirous to know all we can about the grand role that we have the privilege of playing. Over the past three decades, we have been studying family relationships, writing about them, speaking about them, and encouraging others to fulfill their commitments and keep their promises.

Although we have dedicated our lives to educate, equip, and encourage families for every age and stage of life, we do not consider ourselves experts. We're just veterans. We each grew up in a family with six children. We have been doing constant research on the dynamics within families since we started Family Matters back in 1982. So far, we have published 10 books on how to let grace flourish within families. We've spoken to literally millions of people along the way about how to make the most of the unique relationships within marriage and the extended family.

God was wise to give us four children of our own to keep us in

touch with reality. And realizing that a day would come when we would enter the holy of holies of parenting—grandparenting—we have been focusing on this wonderful role and taking detailed notes along the way. We have learned from the experiences of other grandparents and from the examples of our own parents (our children's grandparents) and grandparents, and we have learned from being grandparents ourselves. We are very excited to share with you what we have learned from our research, our observations, our interactions, our biblical study, and our own personal adventure down the back roads of grandparenthood. As you shift gears into this new thrill of grandparenthood, you are in for the ride of your life!

Twenty-First-Century Grandparenthood

There was a time when grandparents looked like their houses often smelled: old, musty, out of date, and out of touch. Some still do. Most don't.

You may not have heard the rumor going around, but the word on the street is that 60 is the new 40!

And it's not just a physical thing we're talking about. Grandparents not only look younger, they often act younger and *think* younger than the grandparents who came alongside them when they were children.

It's not out of the question to see a grandmother stop by Starbucks on her way home from the gym. She orders a Frappuccino ("nonfat milk, please"), pulls out her BlackBerry to check her email, and then text messages a business contact in Australia followed by another to her son at a university three states away. She may have five or six decades of living in her rearview mirror, but she is as contemporary as the *New York Times* sitting on the rack in the corner of the coffee shop.

A generation before, this woman's husband was more likely to have worn a blue collar to work than a white one. He would have been a tradesman or a man who worked with the land. His commute

home from work was seldom more than a few miles. He was one of those grandfathers who still washed his own car and shingled his own roof. And there was a day on the calendar when he knew he would be able to walk away from his work for good and live on his Social Security.

Not anymore.

Most likely, the man married to this Starbucks grandmother has a college education, a passport with several stamps in it, and more money in his retirement accounts than his grandparents made in their entire lives. He doesn't make major repairs on his car or house. It's not that he's incapable of doing these things, but they simply don't make economic sense for him. Besides, his crowded schedule doesn't afford him the necessary time those chores of the past required.

And if you want to see any recent pictures of the grandkids who fill these people's hearts with so much pride, they can make them appear on the screens of their cell phones in about the time it takes you to ask them if they'd mind.

The one thing today's grandparents have in common with their predecessors in past generations is that they carry in their hearts an innate and overwhelming love for their grandchildren. We call it a "Grand Love." We're convinced it's a *God* thing. Since the time Adam and Eve became the first grandparents, people in this role have always been inclined to spill over with pride when they think or talk of their grandkids.

But that is about as far as the comparison to our predecessors goes.

*Word on the
street is that 60
is the new 40!*

New Complexities

Today's grandparents have to process far more complex dynamics with the children whose photographs cover the doors of their refrig-

erators. For starters, grandchildren are more likely to be scattered all over the map of the Northern Hemisphere with multiple time zones separating them from their grandparents. This makes it far more difficult to enjoy the hands-on influence for which grandparenthood is known.

Because of the impact of divorce that haunts this new crop of grandparents, it's not uncommon that a breakup has occurred—either in the grandparents' marriage or in the marriage of one of their children. Besides the stress this puts on the kids and the “yours, mine, and ours” pressure this puts on the parents, grandparents are having to figure out where they fit into the lives of the kids within these blended families that often grow on one or more limbs of their family trees.

When it comes to finances, decades of a growing economy and rising property values have created grandparents who come to their position with far more discretionary resources than their successful counterparts in former generations. And there are a lot more of these types of grandparents. We're not suggesting that the average grandparents are wealthy. They aren't. And there are still many who come to their position with tight margins in their finances. But more and more, this generation of grandparents clearly has greater financial options going for them. This is both a blessing and a curse.

Money often complicates the relationships between grandparents and their offspring. When it comes to the financial holes children can dig for themselves, many of today's young families are deeper in debt than were parents raising their kids in the closing decades of the twentieth century. These financial challenges often create an economic connection between grandparents and their children that fogs up the bigger family picture. Where is the boundary line between being involved too much or too little in our children's financial lives?

And what about the challenges facing parents trying to raise their children within today's moral climate? Reality may not always be the

bearer of good news, but it nonetheless must be embraced. The fact is that today's parents come to their jobs with far more cultural competition against their moral values and far less understanding of how to raise truly great kids. Today's grandchildren process enormous challenges to their concept of personal identity, their sense of confidence, their view of success, and their ability to figure out where they fit in the bigger world that surrounds them. All this simply means that grandparents can't assume they can ever come close to carrying out their God-given responsibilities if they are only giving accidental attention to their job.

Grand Help and Grand Hope

On the contrary, if grandparents want to make a positive difference in their grandchildren's lives, they must have a plan.

We've got one for you. We didn't make it up. God did. As always, the God who dreamed up intergenerational societies based on healthy families left a schematic in His Word for how to be an effective grandparent. As it turns out, God saw fit to give us grandparents four basic roles to play in our grandchildren's lives. We'll show you exactly what they are. And when we carry out these roles, we get a chance to not only help our grandchildren live far more fulfilling lives, but also increase their chances of making a significant impact on eternity.

Even with a plan, there are factors that complicate our ability to play these roles. Perhaps you didn't do as effective a job of raising your kids as you would have liked. The sins of commission and omission stalk your relationship with your kids. Perhaps this has left some heavy chips on your children's shoulders and some serious distance between their hearts and yours. These emotional distances often make it difficult for grandparents to play a significant part in their grandchildren's lives. We're going to help you with this.

We're going to learn about grandparenting up close as well as

from a distance. We'll talk about the money issues, the time issues, and the discipline issues. And we're going to deal with the problem that millions of grandparents are contending with—playing the role of parent to their grandchildren. We'll show you how to make the most of this often-difficult situation.

We'll look at the problems that develop and the kind of position you can play in your grandchildren's lives when your own children go through a divorce.

It's not uncommon for our children to take themselves and their families in a different spiritual direction than our convictions would prefer. We'll learn how to walk the delicate balance this scenario requires.

And there's the issue of spoiling and favoritism. How do you spoil "properly" and avoid favoritism altogether? We'll show you how.

Grandparenthood is not just another phase of your life; it's a sacred calling. You have the opportunity to influence another generation of children; you play an

eternal role in their lives. It's not often that we get such a significant second chance.

It doesn't matter whether you prefer listening to your music on a cassette or an iPod, whether you

Grandparenthood is a sacred calling.

drop your checks in the mail or pay your bills online, whether you've been around the world or barely cleared the county line, you can play a profound and contemporary role as a grandparent. And you can have a blast in the process, having more fun than you ever did as a parent. Not only that, but you can help other grandparents be better equipped too.

You hold in your hands the big picture of grandparenting. Having the bigger picture in your mind and eternity in your heart turns inconvenience into opportunity, sacrifice into significance, and more

of your time and energy into profound ministry in your grandchildren's lives. Knowing your clearly defined roles keeps the end product in mind.

Just like with parenting, the days may seem long, but the years are even shorter. That's why we must not only step up to the opportunity before us, but do so in a way that has the most lasting impact for good.

A great precept we ran across early in our lives that has helped us make wise choices about the things that matter most is this: Never sacrifice the permanent on the altar of the immediate. When it comes to our role as grandparents, there are a lot of low priorities that masquerade as urgent ones. There are a lot of myths and lies that masquerade as conventional wisdom. We're going to help you separate the wheat from the chaff. When you are done reading this book, you will understand the amazing opportunity you have been given and will have learned the priorities that will keep you from allowing the immediate to hold you hostage.

This book not only develops the overarching principles and the practical ways you can bring the best out of your grandchildren, but it contains tools that will show you how to use its principles until they become second nature. And the coolest thing is that it provides all you need to study it with others in your church or neighborhood who want to be better grandparents too.

Whether you're new to the role or a seasoned veteran, your confidence and stock value are going to go up by the time you get to the end of this book. In the process, you are going to gain a better grip on the joy that can be found in loving your children's children.

For Further Thought and Discussion

One generation will commend your works to another;
they will tell of your mighty acts.

They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and I will meditate on your wonderful works.

They will tell of the power of your awesome works,
and I will proclaim your great deeds.
They will celebrate your abundant goodness
and joyfully sing of your righteousness. (Psalm 145:4-7)

1. What are some of the differences you see in the grandparents today and your parents or grandparents?
2. Based on those differences, what advantages did your parents or grandparents have? What advantages do you have in your role of grandparenthood today?
3. What are you hoping to learn or gain as a result of reading this book?

*Heavenly Father,
Thank You for this blessing of grandchildren. As I read this book,
please speak to my heart and help me to be open to the conviction
of the Holy Spirit as I seek to grow in my role. I want to be the best
grandparent I can be and I can only do that with Your help.
Please show me how I can celebrate Your abundant goodness
and commend Your works to my grandchildren. Amen.*

part one



A GRAND CALLING

1

Putting the *Grand* Back in Grandparenting

Most grandparents would agree they have a role to play in their grandchildren's lives, but many aren't sure what that role is. They think they're doing well to send a card on a special occasion, offer a well-thought-through blessing at Thanksgiving, and occasionally take in a ball game together. But too many grandparents fail to realize the huge influence for good they could be in the lives of their grandchildren.

A gentleman in a field-test group for our DVD study that complements this book told us, after finishing just the first session, that even though he knew he had certain responsibilities as a grandparent, he never thought his sphere of influence was as great as it is.¹ By the end of the field test a paradigm shift had occurred for all the participants. They had a uniform desire to “step up their game” as grandparents. They also had a newfound excitement about what this role of grandparent could mean for them personally as they finished out their time here on earth.

It used to be that grandparents were nearby extensions to the greater family. Some even assumed they would finish the last couple of decades of life living in the same home as their grandkids. This was often anticipated and welcomed by everyone in the group picture. Some still enjoy this configuration, but as a twenty-first-century game plan, it is the exception rather than the rule.

And that's okay. Often, the configurations of the past were based

on economics or convenience rather than some well-planned design. But, even if planned, the current alternatives aren't necessarily an improvement.

A lot of people who wear the mantle of grandparent still have kids of their own at home and are holding down full-time jobs. They have many years before they will either choose to or be *invited* to join the ranks of retirees. However, when you put the total years the average person is a grandparent in perspective, most of them will be spent in those retirement years. If they aren't careful, these grandparents could find themselves duped into embracing some of the cultural misinformation going around about how we are to view the last part of our lives. Will they misunderstand the term *empty nest* to mean freedom from any responsibility for their offspring? Will a warped view of what retirement is supposed to look like unwittingly encourage them to squander their greater role as grandparents?

Living Legends

If we could hand you anything that serves as a fitting symbol of your role as a grandparent, we'd hand you a golfer's glove. And it's not because we are suggesting you spend all of your free time on the golf course (though for at least one of the persons writing this book it would be fun to see what that feels like for a month or two!). It's just that golf is one of the great synonyms for life.

On those occasions when people who golf actually get to hit a round, they are often reminded of how much practice they need. Golf is a game that requires incredible skill within an environment of relaxed but focused concentration. Most people aren't born with the natural talent needed to be good at it. When you're a hacker, you have to do your best to develop your skill as you go along. That's what we often feel like when we take on our first major role in life—parenthood. But golf also offers some great parallels when it comes to this subject of grandparenting.

For instance, in professional golf, one of the finest tours in the PGA is the Champions Tour. This is a collection of the best golfers over 50 years of age—the crème de la crème, so to speak, who show a new generation of golfers how they got to be so good. These are the legends of golf who have endured the grueling demands of the PGA Tour and still have an immense love for the game. Grandparenting can be like that. It's a chance for parents who have fought a good fight and charted a good course to mentor a new generation of moms and dads.

But there's another great parallel that golf offers to the subject of grandparenting. Often you hit the golf ball, and it doesn't go where you thought you were aiming it. You shank one into the woods or drop one in the lake. Unfortunately, because of the way the game is scored, those shots end up costing you dearly. But it's nice when the folks you're playing with give you a touch of grace. Someone says, "Hey, man, why don't you play a mulligan?"

For those of you who haven't taken up the game of golf, let us explain what that expression is all about. When someone grants you a mulligan, you get to take the shot over again and not have the original one count against your score. It's a chance to redeem yourself from the trouble you got yourself into. In a way, it describes what it's like to be a grandparent. It's like a second chance to make a profound and positive impression on a child's life—even if you struggled to do so with your own children.

Some people are given a greater amount of natural ability when it comes to golf. It's the same with parenting. Some of you—perhaps thanks to God-given insight or growing up in a certain type of fam-

*Grandparenting
offers us a chance
to help groom a
generation for
greatness.*

ily—have done a terrific job of raising your children. Others of you wish you had known more at the time or been able to dedicate more of your waking hours being the kind of parent your child needed. Here's what's great about grandparenting. It's like God whispers in your ear, *Why don't you play a mulligan. How about if I give you another chance to leave a powerful impression on a member of your immediate family?* Whether or not we were as effective as we wanted to be as parents, grandparenting offers each of us a chance to once again help groom a generation for greatness.

Welcome to the Best Years of Your Life

Most parents don't think much about their future role as grandparents when they welcome their first newborn into their hearts. They are too preoccupied to look that far ahead. But it is the logical and next step to our role as parents. And just like parents should have a strategy and a vision for their role, grandparents need one too.

Until recent years, most grandparents would say, "What's the big deal about being grandparents? We don't need a book to tell us how to take a kid fishing or show one how to bake cookies or read a grandchild a story in the rocker." But grandparenthood is more than rocking chairs—especially in this culture of fractured families and overloaded schedules. Grandparents can fill in the gaps and bolster the effectiveness of parents.

Rabbits and Storks

Some parents have to wait a long time before their married children bring them home some grandchildren. They drop subtle hints, such as wrapping a birthday present in a disposable diaper, or not-so-subtle hints, like ambushing their kids at Thanksgiving with questions such as, "What's taking you two so long? Haven't you figured out how this whole baby thing works?"

Other parents find themselves caught a bit off guard by the news that they are going to be grandparents. That's what happened to us with our first grandchild. We were just getting used to having a married daughter and a son-in-law. On Christmas Eve, seven months after our daughter's wedding, we were entertaining a houseful of family and friends, including our son-in-law's parents. It was there that our children chose to pull the four of us aside and present us with their Christmas present in private. When our son-in-law's mom and Darcy saw the small rectangular box containing their gift, they assumed it was the completed wedding video we had been anxiously awaiting. We would soon discover that the wedding was in the distant past and new adventures were about eight months away. Our son-in-law's mom opened the box, screamed, immediately shut it, and then threw it to Darcy.

Darcy couldn't imagine the reason for her reaction, so she cautiously removed the cover of the box only to discover two positive home pregnancy tests.

We are extremely grateful they don't do that test with rabbits anymore.

It took about 30 seconds for the news to register with the moms. It took a bit longer for the dads to figure out what all the screaming was about.

But it didn't take long for any of us to decipher what it all meant. For Darcy and me, grandparenting is something we had been thinking about and studying for years. Because of our work with families, we have been keenly aware—sometimes painfully—of the strategic role grandparents play or fail to play in their grandchildren's lives. Our children were offering us a chance to come alongside them and cheer them on as they assisted God in a miracle. They were in the process of creating new life, and we were given the opportunity to help them give that new life great meaning. Grandparenting is a sacred trust, a chance to imprint a child for true greatness. And just like parents have a God-given bond with their children, so grandparents have a natural

affinity to their grandchildren. Grandparents and grandchildren represent a marvelous love affair between the generations.

It's true! There's something unique about the natural connection grandparents have with their grandchildren. And vice versa. There are few things that compare to the uninhibited shriek of a grandchild running through the open front door, ignoring everyone else in her path, until she flies into the arms of grandma or grampa. The smothering affection of a grandchild who couldn't care less about how old you are or how you look makes you feel like you live a gilded life. And

*Grandkids have
an innate desire
to love and be
loved by their
grandparents.*

there's something hauntingly attractive about the calm connection of a teenager to his grandparent, especially when that teenager is going through a period where he's convinced his parents have lost their minds.

Grandkids have an innate desire to love and be loved by their grandparents. In fact, sometimes they actually develop a more peaceful relationship with their grandparents than they have with their own parents. As we mentioned in the introduction, that's what we like to call "Grand Love." This wonderful connection between the hearts of grandchildren and grandparents can sometimes annoy the parents caught between the generations. They wonder why their parents get along better with their children than they do. Someone has suggested the reason grandparents get along so well with their grandchildren is that they both share a common enemy!

A lot of you know exactly what that means. You've been conspiring with your grandkids to even up a few scores! But regardless of whether your relationship with your own children went smoothly or had a lot of bumps, you want to make sure you don't miss this divine

opportunity to help your children raise a person who can stand strong and make a significant difference in the world.

A New Type of Grandparent

Let's take a look at how this present generation of grandparents compares to past generations. Presently, there are close to 80 million of us in the United States alone. The National Survey of American Households indicates average age of a first-time grandparent is now 47. They're the best educated, most active, and youngest "older" generation that has ever lived. Almost all of us have graduated from high school, and 7 out of 10 have attended college or technical school. In spite of the pressures on us financially, we still have more discretionary income than our parents or our grandparents could have ever imagined. We continue to work or earn income years longer than our counterparts of the past generation. We're not into rocking chairs and Metamucil as much as our grandparents were. We compute more and crochet less. We buy more and bake less. Our hand-painted Volkswagen van has been replaced by an SUV or a motor home. The more vigorous among us have exchanged tie-dye for t'ai chi. And almost all of us have exchanged love beads for love handles.

The bulk of this generation of grandparents tends to shy away from thinking they are old. They're more street-smart, financially savvy, and sexually active than their predecessors. And when it comes to energy and how much activity we are used to cramming into a typical day, the new challenge is not whether we can keep up with our grandchildren, but whether they can keep up with us! It brings to mind something Peggy Noonan said. Peggy is not only a presidential speechwriter, author, and columnist; she is a careful student of our culture. She is also a member of this current generation of grandparents. She wonders, as so many do, just what kind of impact we will have. Listen to how she framed the issue. Ms. Noonan says, "We are and have been the most significant demographic fact of American

life in all of American history. We changed, in our youth, the culture of a great nation, sweeping it with our music, our movies, our art and styles and tastes in entertainment. Our assumptions about sex changed the sexual landscape. We altered our country's political climate when we decided to oppose a war, changing American attitudes about our government in the process."²

A question needs to be asked: Based on all that our generation has done, will we proceed to redefine grandparenthood too? Well, in response to this question, not only do we think we will redefine grandparenthood, but we're convinced we already have. But to follow up that question: Is what we're coming up with an improvement, or is it a digression from what God expects of us? Many of the things this generation has going for it—better health, economic flexibility, and affordable mobility—can also work against it when it comes to making a commitment to remain a vital part of the nuclear family. We have so many more options for where we live, where and when we travel, how long we remain in the marketplace, and how we can spend our discretionary time. Unlike our own parents or grandparents, we are not tied down to our hometown or a job that ends at age 65. We have the world before us! We want to challenge you to make sure your children and their children are always a huge part of that world.

You've no doubt heard the running joke among grandparents that goes something like, "If I had known grandchildren were going to be this much fun, I would have had them first." It gets a polite laugh, but we all know why God never meant for it to be that way. God placed a strategic order into a family's timeline. Grandparenting is an earned privilege that fits right into God's perfect plan. There are reasons why He wanted us to be parents first. Obviously, He wanted us to raise the kids to whom we give birth. But He also wanted to use this time to groom us to be loving, effective grandparents once our children started giving birth to the next generation. God wanted us

to experience those 20-year-long wake-up calls called *children*, so when the time came, we would be able to come alongside our own grown children with a more seasoned and tempered view of life as they try to raise their own kids.

The Words of a Seasoned Grandfather

We have some favorite passages of Scripture that encourage us as grandparents, but there is one that really stands out like a theme for our lives as mentors to a new generation. It's Psalm 71:17-18. The Bible doesn't say who the author of this psalm is. But we can take a fairly good guess. We can assume the writer is someone who has lived a long life and has taken careful notes along the way. And because Psalm 71 references six other psalms—some are quoted verbatim—and all six of those psalms were written by David, there is a good chance this psalm was penned by him too, most likely toward the end of his life. That would make it a psalm written by a man who made a lot of mistakes as a father. And yet, as he moved into the twilight of his life, he wanted to use what opportunities he had to imprint a new batch of young people with truths he'd learned along the way. This passage presents words of wisdom from a person who knows how to turn the lessons of life—even the regrettable ones—into practical help for those who follow behind.

Listen to how he summarizes the essence of a person who uses the end of his life to touch the people just starting theirs: "Since my youth, O God, you have taught me, and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds. Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, O God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come."

The writer of this psalm is reminding all of us that during these years when we get to sit on the top limbs of the family tree, we have more than an opportunity—we have a responsibility—to use our

position to make a difference in the lives of the people closest to us. We need to be committed grandparents. We need to see this as one of the best opportunities we will ever be offered—outside of raising our own children—to do something that lives on long after we are gone.

Much of the media coverage regarding senior adults talks about the search for significance apart from the marketplace. Someone shared something with us about life, and it fits perfectly as we close out this chapter: “Rather than filling your life with things to make you feel significant, fill your life with significant things.” Your grandchildren are very significant. They are the best reasons in the world to be proud God chose to put the word *grand* in front of your title.

Starting Out on the Right Foot³

1. Don't nag your kids until they produce grandchildren.
2. Let them make the announcement to your family and their friends.
3. Don't play the name game. Let them come up with the names of their children, and then smile.
4. Resist the temptation to tell about all your pregnancies and births.
5. Accept the fact that they are going to do things differently than you would and did.
6. Offer your assistance, and then back off until called upon.
7. Make an effort to get to know the other set of grandparents. You are going to be co-conspirators with them.
8. Don't start going wild with your purchases. Ask permission or advice before you go crazy in the baby department.
9. Build up their confidence by affirming their ability to be good parents.
10. Pray, pray, pray for your kids, for the baby, for the other grandparents, for the siblings, and for yourselves.

For Further Thought and Discussion

Since my youth, O God, you have taught me,
 and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds.
 Even when I am old and gray,
 do not forsake me, O God,
 till I declare your power to the next generation,
 your might to all who are to come. (Psalm 71:17-18)

1. During your lifetime, what are some of the ways God has taught you about Himself?
2. What do you want to tell your children about God's power and might when it comes to raising their children?
3. How are you personally continuing to grow in your faith so you can tell your grandchildren about God's work in your life in the present tense?
4. Knowing what you know now, has your philosophy of parenting changed much since you were raising your children? How does this affect your view of your children's philosophy of parenting?

Heavenly Father,

*Thank You for all You have taken me through in my life.
 Thank You for the things You have taught me about Yourself and myself. Now Lord, please help me use my life to pass on Your love to my grandchildren. Thank You for this second chance to be used by You for Your kingdom. Amen.*

notes

Chapter 1

1. For more information on the *Extreme Grandparenting: The Ride of Your Life!* DVD Series, go to www.grandparenthood.net.
2. Peggy Noonan
3. Kathryn and Allan Zullo, adapted from *The Nanas and the Papas* (Kansas City: Andrews McMeel, 1998), 11–12.

Chapter 2

1. Tim Kimmel, *Raising Kids for True Greatness* (Nashville: Nelson, 2006).
2. Tim and Darcy Kimmel, *Extreme Grandparenting: The Ride of Your Life!* DVD curriculum (Scottsdale: Family Matters, 2004).
For more information, go to www.grandparenthood.net.

Chapter 3

1. Melody Warnick, “Your Family Next Door,” *Better Homes and Gardens* September, 2006.

Chapter 4

1. Tim Kimmel, *Grace-Based Parenting* (Nashville: W Publishing Group, 2004). To learn more about this book go to www.familymatters.net.

Chapter 6

1. Arthur Kornhaber, *The Grandparent Guide* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2002), 165.

Chapter 11

1. Bob Moos, “Grandparents Face Challenges Raising Another Generation,” *Dallas Morning News*, September 7, 2004.