

When We Get Ahead of God

The first rule of baseball that every kid learns comes down to this: HIT THE BALL.

One of the joys of fatherhood was teaching both my sons to play baseball. (Another one of the joys was the fact they didn't know how lousy I actually was at baseball.) We'd head to the backyard with a ball and ginormous plastic bat.



"You stand there. When I throw the ball to you, swing the bat and hit the ball."

And that is exactly what each son would do. I'd throw and he would swing. Every time. It didn't matter if the ball was in the strike zone or in the next county (I told you I was lousy), he would swing the bat. After all, that's what I told him to do.

We often do this with God. We sense God's leading in a certain direction, and so we rush out without slowing down to see how God wants us to accomplish it. The first opportunity we have, we swing away.

And miss.

Abram did that very thing. God told him his heirs would become a great nation through whom the whole world would be blessed. That meant, of course, that Abram would need to have a child. His wife, Sarai, had no children and, well, she was getting up there in years. So, with Sarai's help, Abram found the solution. *If God wants me to become a great nation, then God obviously wants me to have a son—so I'll go have a son.* Which he did. With the wrong woman. And not in God's plan.

Abram swung and missed.

This brings us to the second lesson I taught my sons: Don't swing at every ball.

Ted Williams is considered one the greatest hitters in the game. He wrote a book *The Science of Hitting* that was

devoured by a lot of boys with big dreams. His book included a diagram with 77 baseballs.

Each color-coded baseball had a batting average listed on it corresponding to Williams' expected batting average for pitches throughout his strike zone.



Display of Ted William's hitting zone at the Baseball Hall of Fame

Ted Williams' strategy was to wait. Wait for the right pitch.

God has plans for you and me, but we need to wait for the right pitch. We know what God wants us to do, but we don't need to force open the door of opportunity. We are to wait on God's timing.

Abram erred, but God corrected his course. He learned what we need to remember: **God's plans are always better than our own.**