





**Jim Moelk**, one of my youth group leaders and a retired Presbyterian Pastor, said, "Maybe God will give basketball back to you." Jim Moelk's words became prophetic. *My dream started as I shot baskets in my driveway on a hoop my dad constructed at 165 Gianhurst Drive, then bounced its way to 112 Jay Drive in the same neighborhood as I played one-on-one with my good friend Eddie Adams, a starting shooting guard on the Penn Hills Varsity Basketball Team, and his brother Lee. The dream then bounced its way to Beulah Presbyterian Church's gym and then on to Grove City College as I attempted to walk-on and to Cleveland's Richfield Coliseum, Boston Garden, the HemisFair Arena in San Antonio and to gyms and courts with Sports Ambassadors in Honduras, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and El Salvador, then with PAO in Spain and Portugal as a player, fan and coach. This book celebrates the specific ways God has fulfilled Psalms 37:4 (Delight in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart!) in my life, commemorates many special basketball anniversaries, such as basketball's 125<sup>th</sup> birthday, the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Big Parkway East Church Basketball League, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Pittsburgh Pipers ABA Championship, of Sports Ambassadors' 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Penn Hills High School's latest WPIAL championship, and challenges people to advance the Kingdom of God through basketball ministry, as Dr. Naismith envisioned.*

"What really has mattered is the bonds I've enjoyed as a result of the game."  
— Dave "Slater" Meritt, former PAO basketball player and high school coach and very former teammate

"How a guy plays basketball says a lot about him."  
— Mark Oboe, my teammate who played on the famous '73-'74 PAO Panther team that won 22 consecutive games

"Without Christ, your life is like this basketball. It looks good on the outside but there's rotting on the inside."  
— Bud Schaeffer, Sports Ambassadors Director

"Naismith's mission was to create a game that would provide a means for him and others to lead other young men to a personal relationship with Christ."  
— Historian Tony Ludt

"This gym will be a place where Herodotus are isolated."  
— Pastor Laurie Milligan at the Biblical church dedication to Beulah's church gym where the Big Parkway East play

"You really feel like you're part of something."  
— Mike Mercer

"It's a community."  
— Brennan Eastley

"It's like a brotherhood."  
— Adam Holy

"We get to see our basketball friends tonight."  
— Willard G. Spalding

"We thank you for friendships that last a lifetime."  
— Doreenous Grimsley (All talking about the Big Parkway East Church Basketball League)

"You don't stop playing because you get old. You get old because you stop playing."  
— George Bernard Shaw

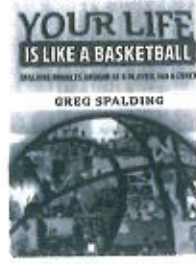
"Why even shoot around? You'll either make it or you won't."  
— St. Matthew's basketball player about his game shooting practice, who was my teammate for 23 years on Beulah's team in the Big Parkway East



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