



MEN OF COURAGE

BIBLICAL MANHOOD
DEVOTIONAL GUIDE



EmpoweredHomes



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ABOUT THE WRITERS

OMAR GARCIA

Omar Garcia, the Missions Pastor at Kingsland, leads the people of Kingsland to serve in some of the most challenging locations around the globe. He has a heart for fathers and prodigal sons and meets weekly with his Band of Fathers core group.

Omar and his wife Cheryl have 3 children and 3 beautiful granddaughters. They enjoy spending time at their off-grid cabin in Big Bend. He enjoys ultra-marathon canoe racing, mountain biking, backpacking, and is on a quest to summit the 7 highest peaks in Texas.



GIL HARRIS

Gil Harris is the owner of Katy Auto Care in Katy, Texas. He and his wife Traci are members of Kingsland where they have served in student and adult teaching roles. Gil also serves as the Men's Ministry Director at Kingsland. Having fought and won his own personal battle with alcohol addiction, he is able to meet men where they are and guide them toward finding their place and purpose in God's kingdom.

Gil loves the outdoors and adventure. In his words, "there is nothing more exciting than double lunging a white-tailed deer or hog from his bow blind in South Texas."





BOBBY COOLEY

Bobby Cooley, the Discipleship Pastor at Kingsland, is passionate about empowering homes across the nation. He loves equipping men to live out the Gospel in their homes and community everyday. Each week you will find him meeting with men one on one and in a core group to help men live out of true fulfillment.

Bobby and his wife Jennifer have 3 children who love to have fun at all times. When we are not playing sports, we love fishing, hunting and being outdoors.



BRIAN STONE

Brian Stone is the Lead Pastor of Connection Point Church in Kansas City, Missouri. He has a passion for God and His Word and learning to live more like Jesus. Brian has shared his story and this message with men around the world.

Brian and his wife Holly have two children. They enjoy family adventures as they hike and backpack, ride mountain bikes, play sports, and often serve people in difficult communities. Brian's greatest adventure is following Jesus and striving to live as a man of courage for his wife, family, friends, and church.


SEEING BEYOND YOUR GENERATION



If you're reading this, it tells me something wonderful about you: You are a man who cares deeply about following after the heart of God, and that may matter more than you realize.

We speak often at Kingsland about being made in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27), and that means we've been given the gift of demonstrating many of God's attributes in our own lives. In fact, the capacity to which you demonstrate who God is to your household impacts those around you in profound ways.

In the Ten Commandments, the Lord established that we were not to fashion another image for the purpose of worship. Do you remember the consequences of such an action?



“Do not make an idol for yourself in the shape of anything in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. Do not bow in worship to them, and do not serve them, because I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, bringing the consequences of the fathers’ iniquity on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me, but showing faithful love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commands.” (Deuteronomy 6:8-10, CSB, Emphasis Added)

It’s a sobering thing to know that my actions as a man can have such consequences. On the other hand, don’t miss the promise here as well: when we choose to bless those in our midst and demonstrate the love of God to those in my household, the impact extends to 1000 generations!

I don’t know about you, but that type of return seems like it’s worth the investment! That’s what I’m praying will happen in our households as we embark on this journey together as Men of Kingsland. I can’t wait to see what God has in store! Would you join me?

Ryan Rush | Senior Pastor

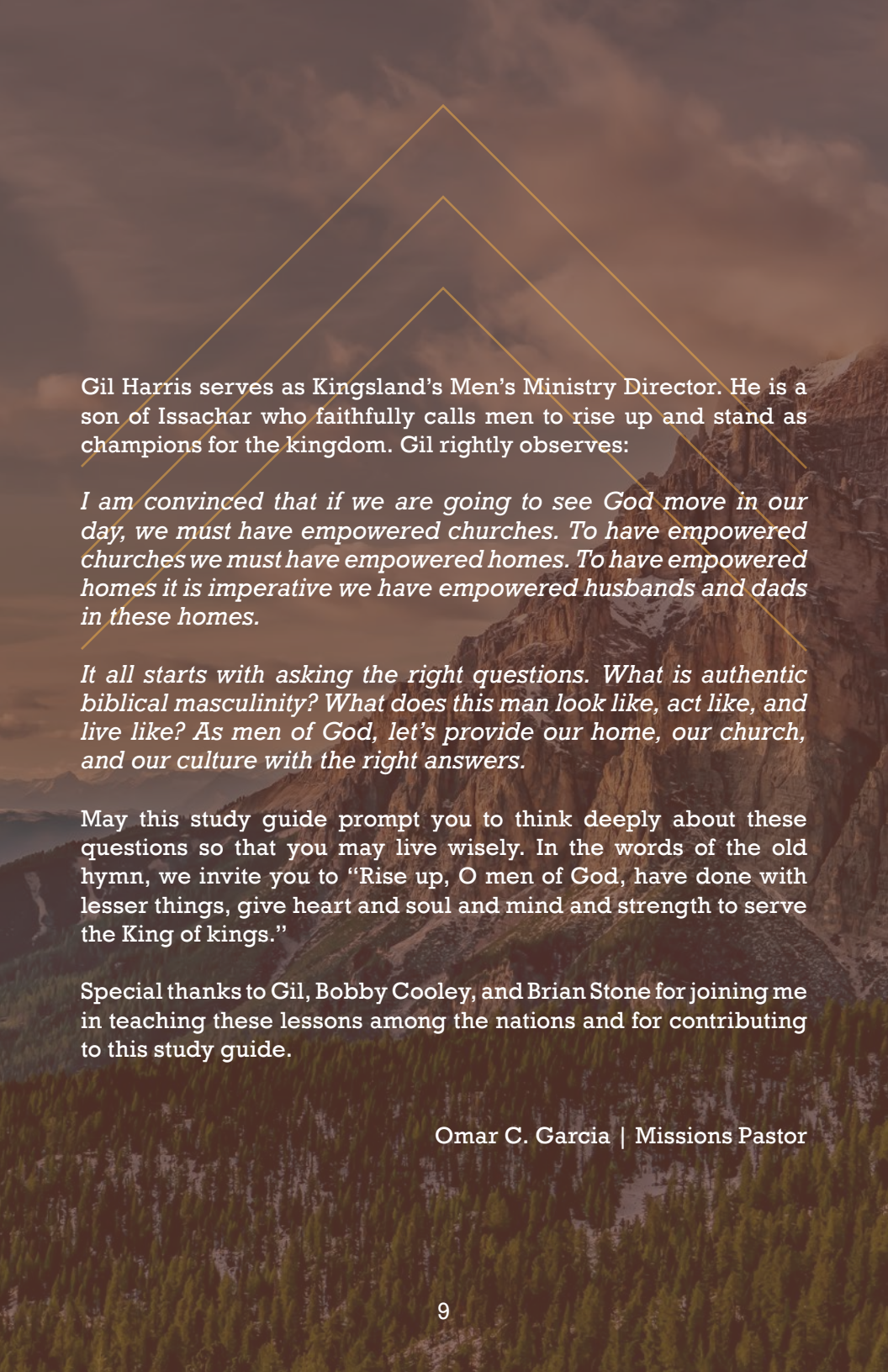
A CALL TO SEE CLEARLY

20/20 vision is a term used to express the ability to see things clearly, especially at a distance. I wish that I had 20/20 vision but, alas, I have had poor eyesight for most of my life. My annual visit to my optometrist always results in adding just a little more strength to my bi-focal prescription.

While my physical vision continues to deteriorate bit by bit every year, I do pray for 20/20 vision in regard to spiritual discernment. We live in days when our culture is progressively drifting farther away from life as God intended for it to be. We must, therefore, have clarity of vision as never before in order to understand what is happening and what we must do.

I have long admired the sons of Issachar in the Old Testament. While we don't know a lot about these guys, the Bible describes them as "men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chron. 12:32). We can safely conjecture that the sons of Issachar were not passive but instead were men who thought deeply in order to live wisely.

This study guide has been written with the sons of Issachar in mind. The kingdom of God needs men who understand the times — men who have the requisite courage and audacity to push back on a culture that seeks to redefine manhood. More than ever before, we need men who will embrace God's vision and design for biblical manhood and who will shine as lights "in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation" (Phil. 2:15).



Gil Harris serves as Kingsland's Men's Ministry Director. He is a son of Issachar who faithfully calls men to rise up and stand as champions for the kingdom. Gil rightly observes:

I am convinced that if we are going to see God move in our day, we must have empowered churches. To have empowered churches we must have empowered homes. To have empowered homes it is imperative we have empowered husbands and dads in these homes.

It all starts with asking the right questions. What is authentic biblical masculinity? What does this man look like, act like, and live like? As men of God, let's provide our home, our church, and our culture with the right answers.

May this study guide prompt you to think deeply about these questions so that you may live wisely. In the words of the old hymn, we invite you to "Rise up, O men of God, have done with lesser things, give heart and soul and mind and strength to serve the King of kings."

Special thanks to Gil, Bobby Cooley, and Brian Stone for joining me in teaching these lessons among the nations and for contributing to this study guide.

Omar C. Garcia | Missions Pastor

HOW TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL MEN'S CORE GROUP

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Men must do life in community with other men. Many men get into trouble because they do life alone. Alone is dangerous. Men must build community with a trusted band of brothers — men with whom they can pray, who will come alongside in times of trouble, and who will help hold them accountable.

THE CHALLENGE

Many men prefer to do life alone. Meeting with other men requires initiative and effort. While some churches occasionally address men's issues or have a men's gathering, it takes much more than that to lead men to embrace God's vision and design for biblical manhood. Encouraging men to become a part of a band of brothers who study, serve, and share adventures will result in building stronger men.

GUIDELINES FOR SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

- Lead your group through the lessons in this guide.
- Always start on time or no more than 5 minutes late.
- Involve the members of your group in reading or asking the questions in each lesson.
- Ask men to respond to each question or to offer a comment.
- Each man must share using I, me, or my and not refer to what others are doing.
- Allow each man to speak for himself and do not address another man's issues.
- Be aware of the time and allow each man equal time to share.
- Do not allow any one man to dominate the conversation.
- Do not try to fix or counsel others in the group but instead offer encouragement.
- Always close your meetings with prayer.
- Spend time together after the meeting to foster deeper relationships.
- Make sure that each member of the group have one another's contact information
- Plan a service initiative and adventure at least once or twice a year.
- Assure every man that what is shared in the group will be help in confidence.

FINAL THOUGHTS

You will have an incredible core group of men if you follow these guidelines. However, the most important aspect of all is you — your willingness to be vulnerable and transparent. Each man must show and model these. A man must feel safe to share his heart. When he sees another man modeling honesty he will be encouraged to do the same.

Gil Harris | Men's Ministry Director

THE CULTURE WAR

BY OMAR GARCIA

Lesson 1 | Understanding the Times

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Satan, referred to in Scripture as “the god of this world” (2 Cor. 4:4), is determined to redefine manhood and ultimately to destroy men. He does so by trying to press men into the world’s mold (Rom. 12:2). Men of courage must be discerning. Like the sons of Issachar, they must understand the times and how to stay strategically aligned with God’s purposes (1 Chron. 12:32).

THE CHALLENGE

Satan is the ruler of “the domain of darkness” (Col. 1:13), the realm of those who do not have a personal relationship with Christ. The values of this domain differ from those of “the kingdom of His beloved Son” (Col. 1:13). Men of courage must determine to serve only one master (Matt. 6:24) — to live according to the values of the kingdom of His beloved Son.

DISCUSSION

- In what ways do the values of your culture differ from the values of Scripture?
- Identify one way in which your culture is trying to press you into its mold.
- How has this impacted the way you think or live?

When a man comes to faith in Christ he is a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). God delivers him from the domain of darkness and transfers him to the kingdom of His beloved Son (Col. 1:13) where he is given a new citizenship (Phil. 3:20). God then begins the process of conforming that man into the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29). Conformity is an inner change with an outward expression.

- How should a man who has become a new creation live?
- Why is it important for a man to submit daily to the Holy Spirit?
- What keeps you from submitting to the leadership of the Holy Spirit?
- Think of one area of your life that does not reflect the values of the kingdom of His beloved Son. What can you do to change that?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

List one thing about yourself that you would like for the men in your group to remember in prayer. Invite one or more of the men in your group to hold you accountable for living according to the values of the kingdom of His beloved Son. Pray together.

THE CULTURE WAR

BY OMAR GARCIA

Lesson 2 | Understanding Our Enemy

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The Apostle Paul warned that we must not be ignorant of the schemes of the devil (2 Cor. 2:11). Because our enemy hates God, he also hates God's plans, purposes, and people. One of his schemes is to destroy men and to keep them from embracing God's vision and design for biblical manhood.

THE CHALLENGE

The man is the foundation of the family and the family is the foundation of society. The best way to destroy the home is to keep men from understanding and fulfilling their roles as defined by the Scriptures. When men fail to fulfill their God-given roles, then women and children suffer and ultimately the work of God's kingdom suffers.

DISCUSSION

- If you were the devil, what plans would you implement to destroy men?
- Peter admonished his readers to be alert because Satan is like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour (1 Pet. 5:8). What does it mean to be alert?
- As a husband and father, what should you guard against in order to protect your home?

- What threats is your home currently facing?
- What steps are you taking to eliminate or neutralize those threats?

When lions hunt, they always look for animals that are young, weak, slow, injured, or isolated from the herd. In the same way, Satan looks for those who are young in the faith, weak in their faith, slow or lazy in their faith, and those who are isolated from others.

- What areas of your life are vulnerable to attack from the enemy?
- Why is doing life alone dangerous for a man?
- What can you do to become more alert, aware, and ready to fight the enemy?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Share one thing that you will do to guard your life and your home against the schemes of the enemy. Have each of the men in your group pray for the man to their right. Determine to do life in community with other men because alone is dangerous.

THE CULTURE WAR

BY OMAR GARCIA

Lesson 3 | Guarding Our Eyes

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

God tells us that our eyes are important. What enters through our eyes ends up in our minds and eventually in our hearts. Once there, these things can influence our behavior. The Apostle Paul said, “But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts” (Rom. 13:14). This is why we must guard our eyes.

THE CHALLENGE

One way in which the world tries to press us into its mold is through what we look at. If we look at pornography, for example, we begin to think differently about women. We begin to see them as things to be used. That is not how God wants us to think about women. What we look at can harm us by creating distance between us and God and causing us to diminish the value of others.

DISCUSSION

- What kinds of images does the world want you to stop and look at?
- What relationship do your eyes have with pornography?

Does the world care about what you set before your eyes? The Psalmist said, “I will set no worthless thing before my eyes...” (Ps. 101:3). A man of God is careful about what he looks at because

he knows that the images we see can harm us and make us think in ways that do not honor God.

If we allow worthless things to enter through our eyes we are feeding our lusts — and in moments of weakness, our flesh will remind us of those images and use them to tempt us to sin against God.

- How have images you have looked at led you into temptation?
- What is one practical step you can take to guard your eyes?
- Who can you invite to hold you accountable for what you look at?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Confess to the Lord the inappropriate things that you have allowed to enter your life through your eyes. Commit your eyes to the Lord. Set them apart for Him. Ask the Lord to convict you when you try to set worthless things before your eyes.

THE CULTURE WAR

BY OMAR GARCIA

Lesson 4 | Guarding Our Speech

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Although the tongue is one of the smallest parts of the body, it can do great evil (James 3:5-8). Our words have power. Our words can build others up or destroy them. Our tongue can cut others deeper than a knife. A man of God must allow God to control his speech. The Psalmist (141:3) said, “Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!” He also said, “I will guard my ways, that I may not sin with my tongue...” (Ps. 39:1).

THE CHALLENGE

The Apostle Paul (Ephesians 4:29) said, “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification, according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.” Each of us live with the constant tension of speaking good or speaking evil. Unless we commit our tongue to the Lord, we are capable of doing great harm to those we love and others.

DISCUSSION

- What is your speech like?
- Do you build up (edify) or tear down your wife and children with your words?
- In what ways have you hurt your family with your tongue?

- How would your wife or children describe your speech?
- Do your words reflect that God is in control of your speech?
- If others were to describe your speech what would they say about you?
- Does your speech show that your tongue has been pressed into the world's mold?
- What words do you need to remove from your vocabulary?
- What is one practical step you can take to control your speech?
- Do you need to apologize to someone you have harmed with your speech?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Tell God about all of the ways in which you have used your tongue to hurt others. Ask God to set a guard over your lips and to help you to use your tongue in a way that pleases Him.

THE CULTURE WAR

BY OMAR GARCIA

Lesson 5 | Guarding Our Ears

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

What we listen to matters because one of the ways in which our enemy tries to press us into his mold is by getting ideas and thoughts into our heads and hearts — ideas that are not consistent with what God wants for us. Our enemy also uses noise to distract us from hearing God’s voice.

THE CHALLENGE

We live in a noisy world. We are so accustomed to noise that some people become uncomfortable with silence. They prefer to have some noise, even if its in the background. Mother Teresa understood the value of silence. “We need to find God,” she said, “and he cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence.”

DISCUSSION

- What ideas or messages are you listening to that are not consistent with God’s Word?
- How do these messages influence you to behave?
- What do these messages tell you about how you should treat your wife and kids?

Leviticus 8 records the story of the consecration of Aaron and his sons. God had chosen Aaron and his sons to serve Him as priests. As part of the consecration ceremony, Moses slaughtered a ram and then put some of the blood on the lobe of Aaron's right ear (Lev. 8:24).

Why? To remind Aaron and his sons that they were to listen only to God. If you are a believer, you are covered in the blood of Jesus, God's perfect sacrifice. Imagine that God has put some of that blood on your ears, just as Moses did to the ears of Aaron and his sons.

- What messages do you need to stop listening to in order to listen to God?
- What noise are you allowing to come into your ears that is distracting you from hearing the voice of God?
- How can you minimize the noise in your life?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Zephaniah, one of the minor prophets in the Old Testament, said, "Be silent before the Lord God." As a group, spend a few minutes in silence. Ask the Lord to help you build more silence into your life and to help you be discerning about what you listen to.

THE CULTURE WAR

BY OMAR GARCIA

Lesson 6 | Guarding Our Minds

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

What we think about matters because our thoughts control our actions, our attitudes, and our feelings. If we allow our minds to be filled with ideas and views that are contrary to God's, then those ideas will eventually show up in our behavior. We must, therefore, seek to actively guard our minds.

THE CHALLENGE

If our enemy can win the battle for our minds then he can control us and use us to serve his purposes. For example, if we fill our minds with pornographic images, then we will begin to think about God's gift of sex in the wrong way. When we allow our minds to be filled with filth then we are in danger of thinking about or treating others in filthy ways.

DISCUSSION

Our minds are like the fuel tank in a car. If you put in bad fuel in the tank, then the vehicle will not operate correctly and will eventually stop working in the way its maker intended it should work.

- Are you putting more of the world's fuel or God's fuel into your mind?
- What obstacles keep you from filling your mind with God's Word — His divine fuel?

• Do you read or meditate on God's Word daily?

• What ideas is your culture trying to get into your mind that are contrary to what God says is good?

The Apostle Paul (Rom. 12:2) said, "...do not be conformed to this world, but instead be transformed by the renewing of your mind..."

To be transformed means to make a dramatic change. We renew our minds by filling them with God's Word. When you fill your mind with God's Word and then obey His Word, God will make dramatic changes in your behavior. The world will see that you think differently.

If someone were to look at your actions today, what would they conclude about how you think?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Read Psalm 1 and then personalize it and make it your prayer. For example, "God, I am determined to not walk in the counsel of the wicked nor stand in the seat of scoffers..."

THE CULTURE WAR

BY OMAR GARCIA

Lesson 7 | Guarding Our Hands

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The hands of a man are important. Our hands represent our capacity to labor as well as to express our love. God wants to use our hands to selflessly advance His purposes in our world (Phil. 2:3-4). Jesus understood the importance of His hands. His hands figured prominently in almost every episode of healing in the Gospels. The way in which He used His hands set Him apart from the religious leaders of His day.

THE CHALLENGE

Our culture constantly pressures men to use their hands for personal gain, to express dominance, and to control situations. When men regard their hands as being the hands of Jesus, God is able to do good things that impact culture.

DISCUSSION

- How does your culture influence you to use your hands?
- In what ways do you use your hands for selfish gain?
- Have you ever used your hands to hurt your spouse or your children or others?
- Do you have lazy hands that refuse to work or to do the right thing for your family?

Remember that when Moses consecrated Aaron and his sons he put some blood on the thumb of their right hand. This was to indicate that their hands were to be used for God's purposes.

- In what ways can you allow God to use your hands to bless others?

In "Primal: A Quest for the Lost Soul of Christianity," author Mark Batterson noted: "The power of touch, even on a human plane, is an amazing thing. But when you add the power of God to the equation, it sets the stage for something supernatural."

- What would happen if you said to God, "I want for my hands to be the hands of Jesus. Use my hands to do what Jesus would do."

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Look at your hands. Study them carefully. If you are willing to give God control of your hands, then lift them up toward heaven and commit them to Him in prayer. Determine to think of your hands as the hands of Jesus wherever you go.

THE CULTURE WAR

BY OMAR GARCIA

Lesson 8 | Guarding Our Feet

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Our feet take us places. The book of Proverbs has much to say about feet that run rapidly to evil (Prov. 6:18). Our feet also represent our walk. For example, Psalm 1:1 tells us that we should “not walk in the counsel of the wicked.” Psalm 119:105 says, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” Men of courage should allow the Word of God to illuminate their path and guide their feet.

THE CHALLENGE

Our culture pressures men to go to places that will distance them from God. It also leads men to stay away from situations where God can use them to make a difference in the lives of others. Men must commit their feet to God and allow Him to determine the direction of their lives.

DISCUSSION

The writer of Proverbs said, “Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure” (Prov. 4:26). Take some time to ponder your feet.

- What does your walk tell others about your faith?
- What places have your feet taken you that would displease God?

• How have your feet put you in danger of allowing the world to press you into its mold?

• Psalms 17:5 says, “My steps have held fast to your paths; my feet have not slipped.” How can your feet hold fast to God’s paths?

One of the most distinctive aspects of the life of Jesus is that He moved in the direction of people in need. And because He did so, He made a difference in the lives of others.

• Do your feet take you in the direction of people in need?

• What places should be off-limits to your feet and why?

• What is one thing you can do to have a more meaningful walk with Christ?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

The old hymn, “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing” has these important lines: “Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love. Here’s my heart, oh, take and seal it Seal it for Thy courts above.” Ask the Lord to help you daily to keep your feet from wandering.

A BATTLE TO FIGHT

BY GIL HARRIS

Lesson 1 | The Battle Against Passivity

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

God has created each of us in His image. Because He is a warrior, we are a warrior, and He has placed in the heart of every man a battle to fight (Ex. 15:3; Rev. 19:11). According to Genesis 3:1-7, Adam had an opportunity to stand up for his wife and to stand against the enemy. Adam had a choice — and he chose to do nothing. Too many times we are just like Adam. Instead of becoming a warrior and fighting against the enemy we become silent, quiet, and passive.

THE CHALLENGE

Our challenge as men is to learn why we are passive and choose not to fight against the enemy. 2 Timothy 1:7 says, “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” Fear will always keep a man from engaging in the battle that God has called him to fight. We must ask God every day for His love, wisdom, and power to war against all the schemes of the devil.

DISCUSSION

- How does it make you feel to know that you have been created in the image of God?

- In what ways have you always known deep in your heart that God wants you to be a warrior?

- Share about a time in your life when you had an opportunity to engage the enemy and chose not to.
- Why do you think you were passive?
- What needs to happen in your heart in order to become the warrior God desires you to become?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Confide in each other what needs to happen in your heart in order for you to become a warrior. Perhaps you need more of God's love, more of God's wisdom, or more of God's power. Pray individually for each other, asking that God would answer these prayers.

A

BATTLE

TO FIGHT

BY GIL HARRIS

Lesson 2 | The Battle for a Man's Heart

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

This scripture cautions, “Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life” (Prov. 4:23). As men, it is so easy for us to live and operate from our minds, our knowledge, and our senses. However, when we choose to neglect living from our heart we can be easily drawn into to the ways of our culture and totally miss the plans God has for our lives.

THE CHALLENGE

Men must guard and protect their hearts from anything that might lead to living according to fleshly desires. Jesus taught that the treasures of this life can compromise the heart of a man (Matt. 6:21). We must guard our heart because it is from our heart that we really love God (Lk. 10:27). In order to follow God completely, we must keep our hearts free to hear and trust him.

DISCUSSION

- How easy is it for you to trust your common sense than to trust God?

- What are some examples of how a man will lean on his knowledge rather than follow his heart?

- What are some things that have taken over in your life that has stolen your heart?
- What have you had to guard and protect your heart from?
- What are some things you need to change now that will help you love God with all your heart?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Confess to God and one other those things which compete for your heart. Ask God to reveal how you have not guarded your heart and instead allowed knowledge and common sense to take over. Express your desire to love God deeply with all of your heart.

A BATTLE TO FIGHT

BY GIL HARRIS

Lesson 3 | The Battle for our Wife

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

After our relationship with Christ, the most important relationship in our life is with our spouse. God said that a man is to leave his mother and father and be joined to his wife (Genesis 2:24). The Hebrew word used here has a much deeper meaning than to just be together. It literally means to abide with, over take, and pursue hard. A man must make this relationship more important than any other relationship in his physical life.

THE CHALLENGE

Our challenge as men of courage is to fight “for” our wife rather than to fight “with” our wife (Ephesians 5:25). It is our obligation to win the battle for our heart, and then help her win the battle for hers. Too many times a man will respond to his wife out of his brokenness and pain instead of responding out of healing. We must learn to love our wife just like Christ loves us. We can never love this way without being full of Christ’s love for us.

DISCUSSION

- How have you been guilty of not making this relationship the most important one in your life?

- Why is it easier to fight with our wife than to fight for her?

- What is the greatest battle that your wife needs you to help her win?
- Many times a wife will not let her husband fight for her. What do you need to do to win back your wife's trust?
- This will be a very hard fought battle. Do not give up. How do you need more of Christ's love in you to win this battle?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Confess to each other how it has been easier for you to fight with your wife instead of fighting for her. Pray and ask God to forgive you for not loving your wife in the same way that He loves you. Forgive yourself for your failures in this area and ask God to heal your heart.

A

BATTLE

TO FIGHT

BY GIL HARRIS

Lesson 4 | The Battle for our Children

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

If we do not fight for the hearts of our children, then who will? The Bible teaches us that children are a heritage, a blessing, a gift from the Lord (Ps. 127:4-5). Many men view their children as an unwanted responsibility. We must realize they are a gift from God and they deserve our undivided attention, love, and affirmation. They will one day become adult men and women who we will want to have deep, and meaningful relationships with.

THE CHALLENGE

The apostle Paul cautioned parents about what to do and not do in regard to their children. Fathers should not provoke or agitate their children to the point of anger and frustration (Eph. 6:4). Instead, they are to teach them, lead them, and be an example for them in the ways of God. Fathers must guard against the temptation to always tell their children what they are doing wrong and should look for opportunities to affirm what they are doing right.

DISCUSSION

- In what ways have you neglected your children?

- In what ways have you been quick to point out what your children are doing wrong?

- How can you be a better example for Christ to your children?
- In what ways can you affirm what your children do right?
- How can you actively begin to fight for the hearts of your children today?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Confess to your brothers how you have failed to fight for the hearts of your children. Ask God to give you the same heart for your children that He has. Ask Him to show you how to encourage them and be the father they deserve. Forgive yourself for the mistakes and failures you have made as a Dad.

A

BATTLE

TO FIGHT

BY GIL HARRIS

Lesson 5 | The Battle for our Church

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Matthew 16:15-18 records a conversation between Jesus and Peter in which Jesus talked about the importance of the church. The Scriptures makes it clear that Christ loves the church. The word “church” translates a Greek word that means “the called out ones.”

Christ died for the church. The church is made up of redeemed sinners who have placed their faith and trust in Jesus for salvation. The church is not a building. We are the church. Christ is building us into a people of faith and has given us the responsibility of taking the good news to the world. Men of courage understand the place and priority of the church and serve the purposes of God through the church.

THE CHALLENGE

We must remember that even though we are serving the church we are ultimately serving Christ. It is easy for us to place more attention on serving in the church than having a meaningful relationship with Jesus. Nothing should ever take the place of our relationship with Christ.

It is in the church that we develop trusting relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Being a part of a local church will always bless and enhance these relationships. We must always fight and pray for the church, our pastors, and its leadership.

DISCUSSION

- Why should you be committed to a local church?
- In what ways has the local church been a blessing to you and your family?
- How can you go to battle and fight for the church you are committed to?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Ask God to show you how you have neglected being a part of the local church. Ask Him to help you find the right church. Once found, ask Him to help you commit to being an active and engaged member. Ask your brothers to hold you accountable until you have made this connection.

A

BATTLE

TO FIGHT

BY GIL HARRIS

Lesson 6 | The Battle for your Community

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

After the people of Israel had returned to Jerusalem from Babylonian captivity, Nehemiah led them to rebuild the walls of the city (Nehemiah 4:11-14). The enemy immediately threatened and tried to discourage the people from this important work. Nehemiah told the people to not be afraid but instead remember God. He told them to fight for their families and the city of Jerusalem. If we don't fight for our communities then who will?

THE CHALLENGE

The greatest challenge in the battle for our community is time. We know what needs to be done. However, after fighting battles for our own hearts, for the welfare for loved ones, and for our church, there is often little time left to give to our community. But, as in the days when Nehemiah led the people to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, we must fight. We must allow God to use us to make a difference in the lives of those who cannot fight for themselves and in our own neighborhoods and communities.

DISCUSSION

- What are some needs in your community that are not being addressed?

- Of these needs, which ones are you personally gifted and able to help with?
- How can you invite your wife and children into meeting these needs? (We call this shared mission.)
- Discuss how much time you can give as a family to meeting these needs.

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Ask God to forgive you for not fighting for your community. Ask Him to lead you and your family to move in the direction of people in need and to use you to make a difference in the place where you live.

A

BEAUTY

TO RESCUE

BY BRIAN STONE

Lesson 1 | The Battle for the Beauty

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Proverbs 30:18-19 states, Three things are too wondrous for me; four I can't understand: the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a snake on a rock, the way of a ship at sea, and the way of a man with a woman. The Beauty. She can be a mystery for men that we never solve (Prov. 31:30). In fact, she is not a mystery to solve but rather a beauty to rescue from the lies of the enemy (John 8:44).

The story is usually the same. A princess is trapped in a tall brick tower guarded by a great dragon. The prince on the ground below (that's you) looks at his love with a passion — ready to risk his life to save her and take her as his lover. The prince goes to battle with the dragon, and after much bloodshed, he defeats him, scales the wall, rescues the beauty and rides off on horseback to live with her happily ever after.

THE CHALLENGE

This is a childhood story yet every single one of us identifies with its core message. Women want to be chosen, fought for, and loved. Men want to be warriors who rescue and defend (Ex. 15:3). The truth is the devil is real and just as his lies keep men out of the battle, his lies keep women locked in a tower (John 8:44). Just as we are willing to fight physically to save our wives from distress, we too must be ready to fight spiritually to save our wife and our marriage from the lies of the enemy.

Are you ready for the rescue mission? As men of courage, we must prepare to go to battle for The Beauty.

DISCUSSION

- How does this common fairytale reflect your story? (Separated by the enemy.)
- How have you considered your wife's interaction with you to be impacted by lies she has believed about herself? (Not lovely, delighted in, or worth fighting for.)
- How have you considered your interaction with your wife to be impacted by lies you have believed about yourself? (Don't have what it takes, not strong enough.)
- What truth can you begin to speak to your wife today? (You are lovely, I delight in you, I will fight for you and for us.)

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Pray for God to help you see the true battle for your wife. Ask Him to show you the lies of the enemy that keep you grounded in the fight and her locked in the tower. Ask God to show you how to fight for the heart of your wife with the truth of Scripture and the words of your heart spoken to her. Commit to fighting for her rather than with her.

A

BEAUTY

TO RESCUE

BY BRIAN STONE

Lesson 2 | Women in the Image of God

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The Bible opens with a critical truth about mankind we must understand if we are going into battle for the beauty. Genesis 1:26-27 states, Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth." So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female.

As we dive deeper into a man's relationship with women we want to focus on two main areas: First, the women in your general community. Second, the women in your life and immediate relationships, namely your wife and daughters.

Did you know that God desires to rescue a beauty? Do you know who she is? His Bride, the Church (Eph. 5:25-27). The church is His Bride and she is highly valued! In the same way, we must realize the value of women in our community and in our homes.

THE CHALLENGE

Genesis 1:26-27 teaches that women are made in the image of God in the same way as men are. Men and women are both equally made to reflect God to the world and are equally valuable in His eyes. Men often think they are king. A biblical man understands he is not the king, he represents the King and has been entrusted with His daughters. As men of courage, we must honor God by honoring women.

DISCUSSION

- In what ways does your culture think negatively about women?
- In what ways are women treated negatively in your culture?
- How does knowing women are made in the image of God (made to equally reflect God with men) impact a Christian man's thinking and treatment of women?
- What is one action you can take to speak God's view and value of women in your community?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Ask God to give you eyes to see the beauty of His image as reflected in women. Pray for others to see the value of women as well. Commit to representing God in your area of influence to help others see women as God does. Pray for the courage to be a reflection of God's strength as one He has entrusted with His daughters.

A BEAUTY TO RESCUE

BY BRIAN STONE

Lesson 3 | Woman as the Helper

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

God created the woman after the man to be a helper with him. Genesis 2:18 states, Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him.” We often look down upon this idea of helper, however, this would be a misunderstanding of the biblical meaning. God is Israel’s helper (Ps. 33:20), the Holy Spirit is our helper (John 14:26), Jesus submitted to the Father (John 6:38). The woman being a helper is not less than. Instead it is part of how she reflects the fullness of who God is to the world (Psalm 46:5).

THE CHALLENGE

In John 4, Jesus spoke to a Samaritan woman in public thus breaking culture and religious barriers. In Luke 7, Jesus comforted a widow. In Luke 8, Jesus touched an “unclean” woman. In Luke 10, Jesus taught a woman one-on-one. In Luke 13, Jesus touched and healed a woman who was paralyzed on the sabbath to the frustration of the religious leaders. In John 8, Jesus saved a woman caught in adultery. He was harsh with her accusers but gentle with the woman. In John 12, Jesus allowed Mary to anoint Him and praised her for her offering. In John 20, Jesus first appeared to a woman after His resurrection. It is clear that Jesus respected, protected, and defended women. According to Colossians 3:10, as Christian men, we are becoming more and more like Jesus. As men of courage, we are to treat women the way Jesus did.

DISCUSSION

- How does the title of Helper elevate rather than downgrade women?
- How does the way Jesus treated and interacted with women impact the way we as Christian men should treat and interact with women?
- How does this relate to our call to rescue the beauty?
- What is one step you can take to better the treatment of women in your community, church, and city?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Thank God for blessing man with a helper, a helper that fulfills the image of God through mankind. Ask God to show you ways you have treated and interacted with women in a negative or harmful way. Commit to being the light of Jesus to the women in your community.

A BEAUTY TO RESCUE

BY BRIAN STONE

Lesson 4 | The Question in the Heart of Every Man

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

In the heart of every man is the question: Do I have what it takes? We seek the answer to this question in many different places, such as work, money, popularity, and physical strength. The most dangerous place we take this question is to women. Don't take the question to her! This is going to her with weakness rather than strength, but worst of all it leads to sin. It leads us to lust, pornography, cheating, multiple women, flirting, etc. You put on her a burden she is not meant to carry.

Only God can satisfactorily answer the question. Jesus said, "Everyone who drinks from this water will get thirsty again. But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again. In fact, the water I will give him will become a well of water springing up in him for eternal life" (John 4:13-14). Our true burden lies deep in our heart in the form of an unanswered question you are trying to answer with worldly things that never fill your hunger or quench your thirst.

THE CHALLENGE

As men, we must take our question to God. You have what it takes! You are created by God, set free by the Gospel, empowered by His Spirit, fully loved by your Heavenly Father, and you are more than a conqueror in Jesus Christ! Live out this strength at home with your wife, in the community with women, and every place you go. As men of courage, we do not go to the woman in weakness but go fully satisfied in Jesus and fully alive as a man of God (John 8:36).

DISCUSSION

- If we are honest, every man wonders if they have what it takes when it matters most. How do you identify with this question?
- Looking back now, how have you been taking this question to the woman?
- As a man looking for satisfaction and courage, what is one way you can begin taking this question to God?
- What would it look like in your marriage and your relationship with women if your question was truly answered by God?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Thank God for sending a Savior who not only saves us from sin but satisfies the deep longings of our hearts. Ask Him to show you how you have mishandled this question and taken it to the wrong places, especially the woman. Commit to taking back from the woman and taking it to God alone. Live in the strength of a man fully satisfied in Jesus.

A BEAUTY TO RESCUE

BY BRIAN STONE

Lesson 5 | Fight for the Heart of Your Wife

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Men, just like you, women have a question deep in their heart that Satan uses to wound her (2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Peter. 5:8). The question in the heart of every woman is, Am I lovely? or Am I worth fighting for? As we battle for the heart of our wives (and daughters) we must go to battle against our true enemy and the lies he has spoken to her (Eph. 6:10-11).

Paul states in Ephesians 5:21-22, 28, “submitting to one another in the fear of Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord... In the same way, husbands are to love their wives as their own bodies.” Notice that men and women in marriage are to submit to “one another.” Men submit by loving their wives as Jesus loved the church (Eph. 5:25), demonstrating His love by laying down His life (Romans 5:8), defeating the enemy (Rev. 12:10; 1 John 3:8), and speaking truth setting us free (John 8:31-32).

THE CHALLENGE

Look at the countenance (expression) on your wife’s face. What do you see? You see a reflection of your leadership as a lover. The same way you are to look to God for the answer to your question, you are to lead your wife to find the answer to her question in Jesus (Luke 1:45). Men of courage fight for the heart of their wives by putting her first (Prov. 3:15), battling the real enemy, and speaking God’s truth to their hearts and minds.

You can do this. Do not be afraid. Take courage. You have what it takes (Joshua 1:9).

DISCUSSION

- How would you describe the countenance of your wife's face? What does that tell you about your leadership as a lover?
- How often do you fight with your wife rather than for your wife? How can you respond differently now that you know the true enemy and where the battle is (with the lies of the enemy)?
- What verses of Scripture can you memorize and use to speak God's love, sacrifice, protection, and truth into the heart of your wife?
- How does this relate to our daughters and what can you do to speak God's truth into their heart?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Ask God to give you eyes to see the lies deep in the heart of your wife. Ask Him to give you the truth you can speak into her life that will set her free. Commit to learning the truth you can speak to your wife (and your daughter) so they know God's love, live in freedom, and pursue Jesus with all their heart.

A

MAN OF

COURAGE

BY BOBBY COOLEY

LESSON 1 | A Man of Courage Submits to God not Culture

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Jesus said, “For where you treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matt. 6:21). A man must know his heart and whether it submits to earthly things or to God. Men of courage submit to God not culture. They care deeply about the things that God cares about and treasure the things of God more than the things of this earth. We must be careful lest we understand this concept intellectually but fail to live out its values practically.

THE CHALLENGE

It is easy for men to say that they love Jesus and then to focus on other relationships more than on our relationship with Him. It is easy to say we value our marriages but fail to set down our devices in order to pursue the heart of our wives. Our priority lists often say one thing while our calendars prove another.

Submitting to God means saying “no” to things that don’t matter so that we can say “yes” to the things that do. Jesus submitted to His Father (John 4:31-34) and did not allow anything to distract Him from His mission.

DISCUSSION

- What stirs your heart as a man?
- If you are honest, what do you spend most of your free time on?

- What are ways you submit to culture first?
- What steps do you need to take in order to make Jesus the center of your life?
- What are some things you need to start saying “no” to?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Ask the Lord to reveal to you ways that you place culture or worldly things above God. Ask Him for strength to submit yourself entirely to God.

A

MAN OF COURAGE

BY BOBBY COOLEY

LESSON 2 | A Man of Courage Takes Responsibility and is not Passive

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Many men today have become passive. They simply go with the flow, allow others to speak for them, and fail to take responsibility. They love the glory and are the first to stand up and take the applause for doing good. However, what about when things go wrong? We are good at making excuses and passing off the blame to others. When Adam ate from the fruit, he was being passive (Genesis 3). He should have told Eve to walk away from the tempter. Men of Courage take responsibility and are not passive.

THE CHALLENGE

This world is not as it should be. Something is broken. That is why men must not remain passive but instead take responsibility and act like men — like the leaders and warriors that God has created us to be.

1 Corinthians 13:11 says, “Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.” Acting like men this means men must stop acting like boys. Boys play games, men fight for victory. Boys make excuses, men take ownership. Boys run and hide, men stand firm. Boys lie, men tell and live by the truth.

DISCUSSION

- Name a few guys that you would consider “Real Men.” Why?

- What makes you a man in your culture? (money, job, wife...etc?)
- Do you agree or disagree that men today are mostly passive? Why or why not?
- Why do you think Adam was passive?
- Examine your own life and identify areas in which you need to take more responsibility.

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Make 1 Corinthians 13:11 your prayer. Ask the Lord to help you to be watchful, to stand firm, to act like a man, and to be strong. Pray about areas in your life in which you have become passive. Ask God for the courage to take responsibility in each of those areas.

A

MAN OF COURAGE

BY BOBBY COOLEY

Lesson 3 | A Man of Courage Lives Sacrificially and not Selfishly

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Human nature is inherently selfish. From both biological and psychological standpoints, our design has continued to evolve in a mode of self-protection. Perhaps this is at the root of our cultural heart; why we seem to be steeped in self-love. Everything we see and hear is another brash or subtle encouragement: love yourself!

Men of courage are not selfish but instead live sacrificially. Jesus said, “Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way to finding yourself, your true self. What kind of deal is it to get everything you want but lose yourself? What could you ever trade your soul for?” (Matt. 16:25-26)

THE CHALLENGE

We are naturally selfish creatures. As followers of Jesus, our lives should reflect His life — a selfless and sacrificial life. We must put others above ourselves (Phil. 2:3-4), especially our family. We must care for those who are hurting and in need (Matt. 25:40). We put aside the desires of our flesh (Gal. 5:16-17). We must strive to set an example, like Jesus did when He washed the disciples’ feet (John 13). He lowered himself so that others could do the same. He did so not in weakness but in strength.

DISCUSSION

- Do you think sacrifice equals weakness? Why or why not?

- What ways do you see selfishness in others?
- What ways do you find yourself selfish?
- How should a man respond to living sacrificially? What does sacrifice look like for you?
- Think of one area of your life in which you need to stop being selfish.

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Examine your heart. Think about each area of your life. Examine work, hobbies, your family, your time, what you spend your money on. Ask God to help you to live sacrificially rather than selfishly in each of these areas.

AN ADVENTURE TO LIVE

BY BOBBY COOLEY

Lesson 1 | Adventure is a Gift from God

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

God created each of us in His image. Because He has fashioned a world for us that is full of adventure, He must be a God who values and enjoys watching us take pleasure in what He has made for us. The mountains we climb, the rivers we swim, the oceans we sail were all made for us. The adventure God has created for us is His gift to us. The most important aspect of adventure is that it is in these moments that a man of courage connects with God in deep and meaningful ways.

THE CHALLENGE

Our challenge as men is to not be guilty of these three things:

First, denying that we need adventure. So many men have been told to grow up and act like a man — suggesting that we stop doing the things we enjoyed doing as young men and boys. We should never stop enjoying the outdoors and outdoor activities.

Second, abusing adventure. Because adventure provides so much excitement and adrenaline, many men become adventure junkies. They begin to spend too much time participating in outdoor activities and neglect their responsibilities at work and at home. Men of courage must set proper priorities.

Third, not having shared adventure. The greatest aspect of adventure is having shared adventure with our spouse, children, and other men. We must not become men who are isolated from

others. It is too easy for a man to get caught up in selfish hobbies, activities, and adventures and only be concerned for himself.

DISCUSSION

- What are your thoughts about adventure?
- How have you denied yourself the excitement of experiencing God given adventure?
- Share with your group how you have either abused adventure or used it to connect with God.
- How can you have shared adventure with your wife or your children or other men?
- What can you do this week to engage in the adventure God has planned for you?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Ask God to show you how to have shared adventure with your wife, family and other men.

AN ADVENTURE TO LIVE

BY BOBBY COOLEY

Lesson 2 | Kingdom Adventure

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

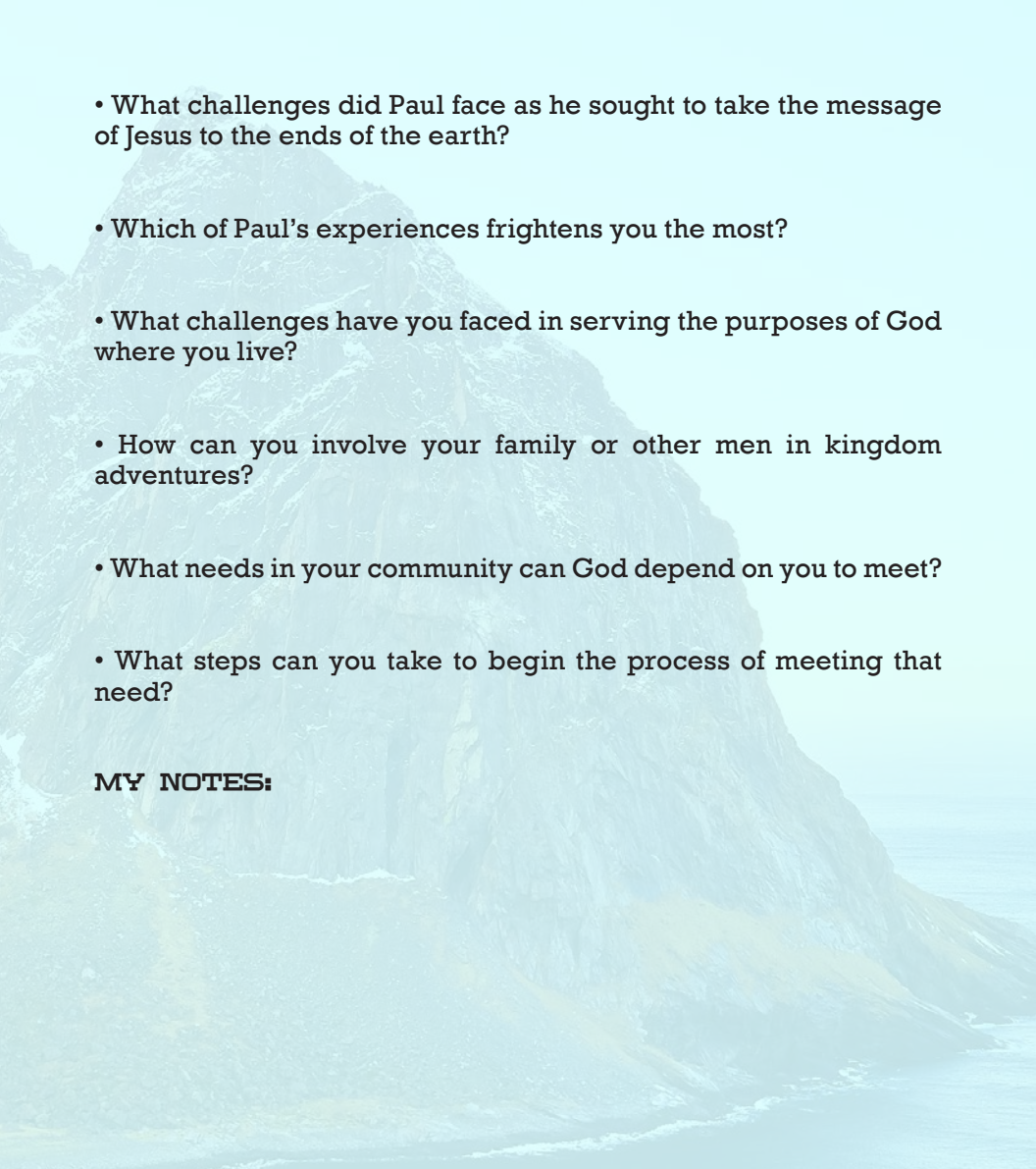
As followers of Jesus Christ, we have a responsibility to obey the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) and to live according to the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:36-40). The Great Commission is defined by the mission of Jesus. He said that He came “to seek and to save that which was lost” (Lk. 19:10). The Great Commandment is defined by the movement of Jesus. According to the Gospels, Jesus moved in the direction of people in need and made a difference in their lives.

THE CHALLENGE

Pursuing the passions and purposes of God requires that we lay aside our personal interests for the sake of something greater than ourselves. Doing so means that we must be willing to forsake comfort and to be inconvenienced. Living adventurously for the kingdom of God means doing things we never thought we would do among people we never thought we would meet in places we never thought we would go.

DISCUSSION

In 2 Corinthians 11:24-33, the Apostle Paul described some of what he experienced on his kingdom adventures. His story teaches us that there is no greater adventure than to obey the Great Commission and to live according to the Great Commandment. Read this passage aloud.

- 
- What challenges did Paul face as he sought to take the message of Jesus to the ends of the earth?
 - Which of Paul's experiences frightens you the most?
 - What challenges have you faced in serving the purposes of God where you live?
 - How can you involve your family or other men in kingdom adventures?
 - What needs in your community can God depend on you to meet?
 - What steps can you take to begin the process of meeting that need?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Ask God to open your eyes so that you can see your family and your community clearly. Tell God that you want to commit your hands and feet to Him that He might use them for His purposes and His glory (Matt. 5:16).

AN ADVENTURE TO LIVE

BY BOBBY COOLEY

Lesson 3 | Adventure in Community

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Adventure is the pursuit of passions. When we are passionate about something, we tend to spend time and energy doing that thing. When we are living out our adventures, we come alive.

The key to sustaining adventure is to bring others with you. Doing life in community is important and having adventures in community brings significance. Proverbs 27:17 says “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.” We need each other, especially when it comes to adventure.

Jesus surrounded himself with other men on purpose. They lived an incredible adventure, together. Men of courage don't sit on the sidelines, they pursue adventure in community.

THE CHALLENGE

Often when we pursue adventure, we do it alone. It is natural for us to isolate ourselves and spend time alone. However, when it comes to living out the calling God has for us, He wants us to do it with others. Our hearts come alive during adventure, even more so when we do it with others.

When we are with our brothers, we have a shared story of victory or defeat — a story worth telling, over and over.

The next time we set our minds and hearts out for adventure we must ask the question, who can I bring with me.

DISCUSSION

- What are you passionate about?
- What are some of your hobbies?
- When was the last time you spent time with other men?
- When was the last time you did something that activated your heart?
- Who can you invite to join you on your next adventure?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Ask the Lord to reveal to you men you can invite into your next adventure. Give thanks for the men in your life who have poured into you and made you better.

AN ADVENTURE TO LIVE

BY BOBBY COOLEY

Lesson 4 | Pursue a Family Adventure

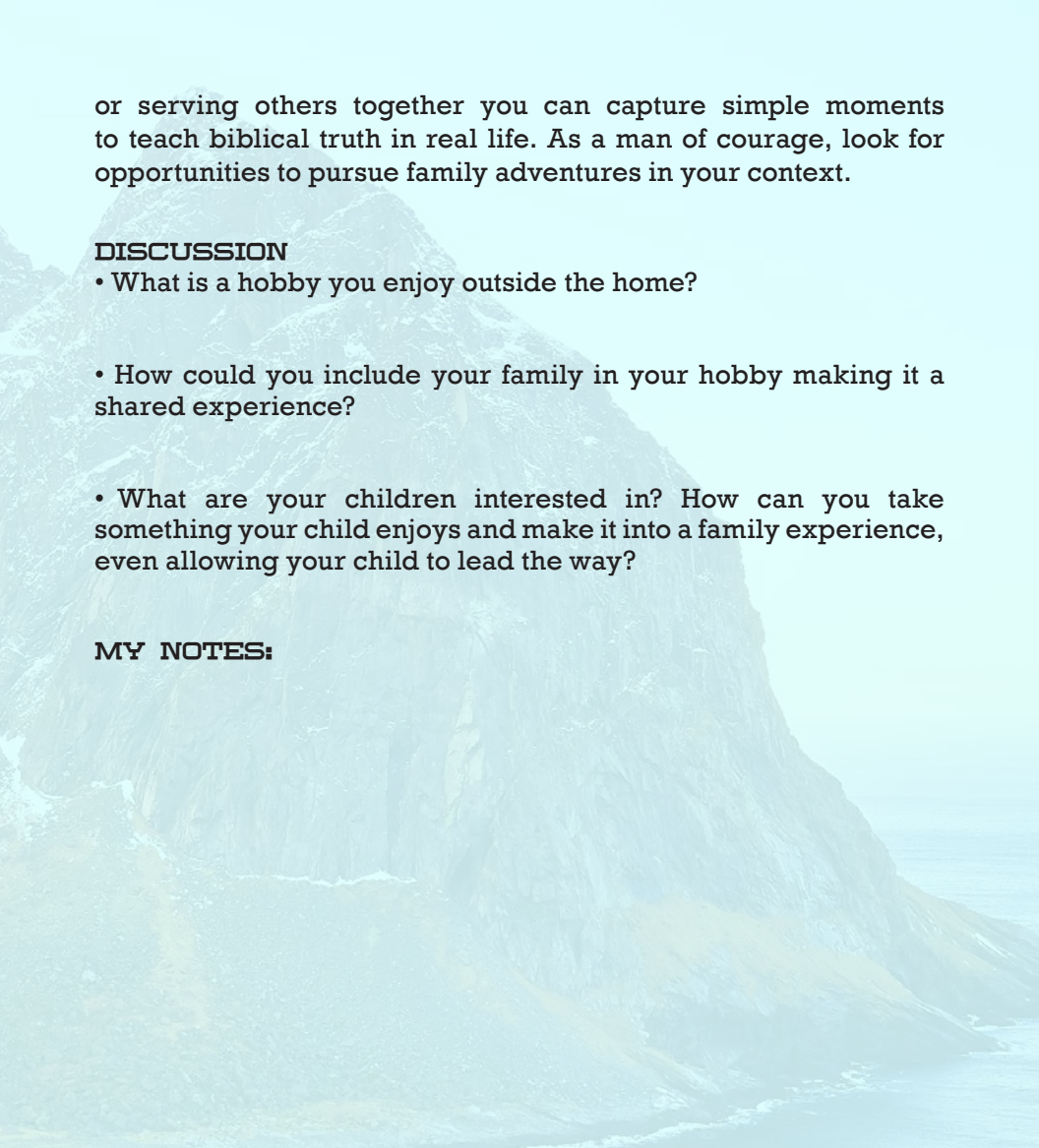
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

To create a strong and healthy family you must spend quantity and quality time together. Moses laid out this command as he gave parents both the responsibility and the strategy to pass on your faith to kids in your home. Deuteronomy 6:4-7, “Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

We are to live out and pass on the faith to our kids in our everyday life. There is a great opportunity to do this as you have a shared family adventure together. Stepping out of your ordinary routine, away from TV and phones where you have a shared experience of talking to one another, depending on one another, creating memories by doing hard things and funny things bond a family in ways staying at home and staying inside never can. This gives you the opportunity to show your family the fullness of who God is (Eph. 3:14-19).

THE CHALLENGE

On any adventure your family does together be sure to capture God moments (Proverbs 22:6). There are moments God provides for you to demonstrate and teach biblical principles, which is a critical part of your responsibility as a parent (Psalm 78:1-7). Whether it’s talking about perseverance as you hike up a hill



or serving others together you can capture simple moments to teach biblical truth in real life. As a man of courage, look for opportunities to pursue family adventures in your context.

DISCUSSION

- What is a hobby you enjoy outside the home?
- How could you include your family in your hobby making it a shared experience?
- What are your children interested in? How can you take something your child enjoys and make it into a family experience, even allowing your child to lead the way?

MY NOTES:

PRAYER

Ask God to show you an adventure you and your family could experience together. Ask Him to prepare the heart and will of you wife and children. Ask Him to make the way possible for this to happen (travel, money, time, etc.) Commit to finding a family experience you can all share together and following through on doing it.

Be on your guard,
stand firm in faith,
be men of courage,
be strong;
do everything in love.

1 Corinthians 16:13-14



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