

BETTERMAN DEFINED

A BetterMan Courageously
Follows God's Word

PART 1



B

5
WKS

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A BetterMan Courageously
Follows God's Word

PART 1

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SESSION 1



MANHOOD AND COURAGE

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MANHOOD AND COURAGE

01 OUR JOURNEY TOGETHER

A. This is the first of four studies exploring at a _____ level God's definition of manhood.

B. Why do we need this _____?

- It's hard to become what you can't define.
- Many men today find themselves either _____ at their manhood or _____ the latest version the world offers. Both options lead to problems and pain.

Proverbs 14:12:

"There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."

- Without a God-defined vision of masculinity, men are _____ with their manhood today like never before.
 - More U.S. men ages 18 to 34 now live with their parents than with romantic partners.¹
 - About 1/3rd of men are either unemployed or out of the work force.²
 - "Deaths of despair" – those caused by suicide, overdose and alcoholism – have surged to unprecedented levels among men, rising between 56% and 387%, depending on the age cohort, over the past twenty years.³
 - 25% of husbands commit adultery.⁴
 - Close to half of all children of divorce in America have not seen their fathers in the past year.⁵

- Today, women are the sole breadwinners in 4 in 10 households with children.⁶

¹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/02/08/andrew-yang-boys-are-not-all-right/>

² <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/02/08/andrew-yang-boys-are-not-all-right/>

³ <https://www.statnews.com/2021/12/29/deaths-of-despair-unrecognized-tragedy-working-class-immiseration/>

⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/22/well/marriage-cheating-infidelity.html>

⁵ *Sex Matters*, Mona Charen, Crown Forum, New York, 2018, p. 186

⁶ *The Next America*, p. 12

02

GOD DEFINED MANHOOD

In **Genesis 1-2**, God calls Adam, the first man, to step up to four life-giving responsibilities that will not only define his manhood, but the manhood of every man after him.

A. A better man courageously follows God's _____.

- Man was created with a need for personal _____ to succeed.

Genesis 2:16-17:

“The Lord God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.”



B. A better man loves and protects God's _____.

Genesis 2:22:

“The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.”

C. A better man excels at God's _____.

Genesis 2:15:

“Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate and care for it.”

D. A better man blesses God's _____ with his children.

Genesis 1:28:

“God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it...”

These four life-giving responsibilities serve as four pillars upon which every man can build for himself a strong, God-glorifying masculinity. In Part 1 of this “Manhood Defined” series, we will examine what it means for a man to courageously follow God’s Word. What does that look like? How do you do it?

03

SOME HELPFUL PERSPECTIVES ON COURAGE

A. Courage is not the absence of _____. It is _____ forward in the face of fear.

“ I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear. - NELSON MANDELA

B. Men strongly relate to _____.

“ The fight is here; I need ammunition, not a ride.
- UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY

“ Our lives are not fully lived if we're not willing to die for those we love, for what we believe. - MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

C. Courage is not just a “man thing.” Women are courageous too! But we expect courage from men _____ when danger appears!

- The Birkenhead Drill: _____ and _____ first.
-

04

DANGEROUS WORLDS

A. Adam's Garden of Eden

- We think of this garden as an idyllic, beautiful, much-to-be-enjoyed paradise. But this garden was also a _____.

- The garden was inhabited by a dangerous _____. Because of that constant threat, man’s only hope of surviving and thriving was in following the clear instruction of God’s Word.

Genesis 3:1-6:

“And the serpent said, “Did God really say, ‘You can’t eat from any tree in the garden’?” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit from the trees in the garden. But about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God said, ‘You must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.’” “No! You won’t die,” the serpent said to the woman. “In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” Then the woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.”

- In this moment, Adam was called to courageously step forward and follow the instruction God had previously given him. Instead, he is overcome by the serpent’s false promises, by his willingness to join Eve, and by his own spiritual “_____” passivity.
- The story of the Garden becomes a tragic story of failed _____. With it, Adam’s story becomes one of failed _____.



B. Our World as Men

- Like Adam's garden, our world is good and beautiful, and filled with an abundance of opportunities and enjoyments. But it too is a _____.

- We have the same _____ Adam faced.

1 Peter 5:8:

"Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

- We too will be confronted by his lies over life's boundaries and sin's consequences ("You won't die!"). He uses these seductions in tempting us with ...
 - Love of money
 - Lust and sexual temptation
 - Sense of entitlement
 - Pride and/or wanting to appear perfect
 - Envy
 - Shortcuts to success
 - Gluttony
 - Alcohol and drugs
 - Spiritual apathy
- And when we sin, we suffer the same _____ as Adam.
 - Guilt and shame
 - Fear
 - Loss of transparency
 - Isolation



- Shunning responsibility and blaming others
- Self pity
- Because our garden is dangerous and our enemy wants to kill us, God gives us his Word which provides _____ and leads to life.

John 10:10:

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”

05

THE CALL TO COURAGEOUSLY FOLLOW GOD’S WORD

A. Courage has been a key ingredient to real manhood since Adam. With it, we press God’s Word into the dangers, challenges, temptations, and uncertainties of life. Courage takes God’s Word into the “war zones” of our lives to do battle!

- Courage is faith in _____.

James 2:26:

“Faith without works is dead.”

B. Spiritual courage is not natural, but _____. It grows as our relationship with God grows.

- Courage to follow springs to life when we daily _____ and _____ our lives to God and His Holy Spirit.

Psalm 27:14:

“Wait for the Lord. Be strong and let your heart take courage. Yes, wait for the Lord.”

C. So practically, how do we _____ ?

- We must first look to God and _____ He is there to _____ us.

Deuteronomy 31:6 (NIV):

“God goes with you; He will never leave you or forsake you.”

Philippians 4:13:

“I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.”

- We must carry our _____ in God to the fight.

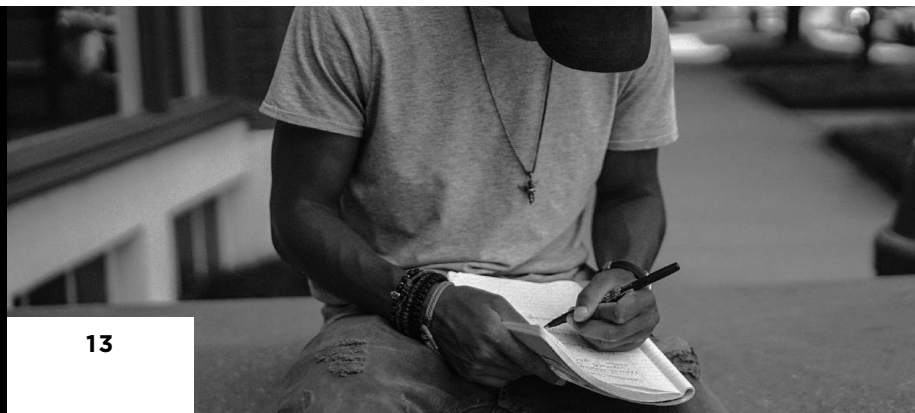
Joshua 1:6:

“Be strong and courageous!” (“Rak Chazak”)

- We must _____ step into the fight.

2 Corinthians 2:14:

“Thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ.”





DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS

1. What's an example of courage that you find especially inspiring? Share it and tell why?
2. Today we learned, or were reminded, that we live in a spiritual war zone and have a very real enemy "prowling around" seeking to ruin us. How does that reality make you feel? In what ways have you experienced the devil and his temptations in your life? Explain.
3. What's one area of life that's difficult for you to courageously follow God's Word? Be specific. How could applying what you learned today help you? Explain.

YOUR BETTERMAN QUESTION:

Before our next session, take a moment this week to reflect on your notes, and then answer the following question: What possible action step could I take from this session that could make me a better man? Write your answer in the space below.





MY SPIRITUAL LIFE STORY

AN INVITATION

Before coming back for Session 2, we want to invite you to spend some extended time this week with your table group members sharing with one another your spiritual life stories. So today, your table leaders will help you schedule this time to meet. Here at the beginning of your journey into “Courageously Following God’s Word”, this storytelling meeting is a special opportunity to strengthen your table relationships and add depth and context to your future, weekly BetterMan discussions.

WHEN YOU MEET

- Have your spiritual storytelling meeting in a private, comfortable, undisturbed setting. Provide lite refreshments. A table leader’s home is a great option for this gathering.
- Allow at least two and a half hours for this meeting.
- Your table leaders will lead you through this sharing time.
- This is a time for everyone to have the opportunity to personally tell his spiritual life story. Each person will have up to 15 minutes to share. (Table leaders will keep time and give you a “heads up” when you need to begin wrapping up your story after 14 minutes.)
- To help prepare you for sharing your spiritual story, you will be given 5 minutes at the beginning of the meeting to write down your personal thoughts and answers under the three categories listed on the following page. Even better, you can prepare for sharing your story in advance by writing your answers down before you meet. These written reflections will help to focus and guide you as you share your spiritual story with your table-mates.
- Table leaders will share their spiritual stories first. After everyone has shared his story, take a few minutes for the group to reflect and comment on what they’ve just heard. What stood out in these stories? Did any common themes emerge? What was most impactful?
- Enjoy this special time together!



**MY SPIRITUAL
LIFE STORY**

- Briefly share your spiritual background and the beliefs you were taught growing up. How did this spiritual upbringing, or lack of it, impact you? Was it good, bad, or both?

- What three words or phrases would you use to spiritually describe yourself now? Tell why you chose these words.

- What is your greatest spiritual challenge ... desire ... struggle ... question ... going into the future? Pick one and tell why.

SESSION 2



A MAN AND HIS SWORD

B

A MAN AND HIS SWORD

01 THE FIGHT

A. Every man is engaged in a lifelong spiritual _____.

Ephesians 6:11-12:

“Put on the full armor of God, so that you can stand against the tactics of the devil. For our battle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world powers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

B. The _____ battlefronts we face:

- The fight to grow with Jesus

Romans 13:14:

“But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.”

- The fight to overcome the flesh.

Galatians 5:16, 19-21:

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh ... Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing and things like these ...”

- The fight to overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:17, 21:

“Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. ... Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good.”

- C. No man, by himself, is able to _____ these fights.

Romans 7:18 (NLT):

“And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do right, but I can’t.”

- D. We need God for sure! But we also need a special _____ to fight with. God has given us His sword.
-

02

GETTING TO KNOW OUR “SWORD”

- A. Our sword is the Word of God.

Ephesians 6:17:

“And take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.”



B. The Holy Spirit _____ the word of God when it was written and _____ it to our lives today.

2 Timothy 3:16:

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

C. Some amazing facts about the Bible.

- Written in three languages: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.
- Written across three continents: Africa, Asia and Europe.
- Written over a span of _____ years.
- Written by forty different _____, many of whom lived centuries apart, in different cultures, in different countries, and in different settings.
- And yet, in spite of all the above, when the books they authored finally came together as One Book, it did so with what can only be described as with _____ unity and purity! No contradictions. No errors. Telling ONE amazing story!
- Everything in the Bible points us to _____. The Old Testament prepares the world for Jesus. The Gospels declares Jesus to the world. The rest of the New Testament explains Jesus to the world.

D. Personal benefits the Bible offers.

- Feeding on it is key to experiencing _____ life.

Matthew 4:4:

“Jesus answered and said, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.”

- Obeying it is key to experiencing God’s _____.

1 John 2:5:

“But if anyone obeys His Word, God’s love is truly made complete in Him.”

- Knowing it is key to experiencing _____.

John 8:32:

“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

- _____ it is key to finding God’s will.

Psalms 119:105:

“Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.”

“*If you are ignorant of God’s Word, you will always be ignorant of God’s will.* - BILLY GRAHAM

- Reading it is key to having _____ and _____.

Psalms 19:7-8:

“The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart.”

“*Within the covers of the Bible are the answers for all the problems men face.* - RONALD REAGAN

- Delighting in it is key to living a fruitful, _____ life.

Psalm 1:1-3:

“Blessed is the man
whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law he meditates day and night.
He is like a tree
planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers.”

03

DRAWING OUR SWORD.

- A. We need to understand the _____ of the Bible so when we read it, we know how to apply it to our lives.

“ *A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education.* - THEODORE ROOSEVELT

- B. It's relational purpose: To help us know Jesus and grow in our relationship with Him.
- The Pharisees read the Bible but did not come to know Jesus through it. Jesus challenged them saying:

John 5:39-40:

“You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.”

- When we rightly engage the Bible, we meet Jesus on His terms!

C. It's internal purpose: to help us overcome the flesh

- God wants His Word to work in us so that we become increasingly _____ to him and holy in him – so that we become more and more like Jesus.

1 Peter 1:14-16:

“So you must live as God’s obedient children. Don’t slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn’t know any better then. But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. For the Scriptures say, “You must be holy because I am holy.”

- God gives us His Word as a _____ to overcome anything that inhibits the work He wants to do in us.
- God uses His Word to _____ to us who we really are and to _____ us into who we need to become.



Hebrews 4:12-13:

“For the Word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”

“ *The object of the Bible is not to tell how good men are, but how bad men can become good.* - DWIGHT L. MOODY

D. It’s external purpose: to help us overcome evil with good.

- God wants His Word to help us stand against evil, and unleash his love and good works on others.

1 Thessalonians 5:15:

“See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people.”

Ephesians 2:10:

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”

04

USING OUR SWORD.

A. Let's look at how two men used their swords.

- Adam.
 - Adam was in the Garden. God told him not to eat of one _____.
 - The devil comes and _____ and _____ God's words. He tempts Adam to _____ with God and fulfill himself by striking out on his own.
 - What should Adam have done? Draw his sword! Use it! He should have remembered, quoted, and _____ God's Word.
 - Instead he trusts in himself, believes the devil's lies, and brings _____ to himself and the world.

Romans 5:12:

"Adam sinned, and that sin brought death into the world."

- Jesus.
 - Jesus was led by God's Spirit into the wilderness to meet the devil.

Matthew 4:3-4:

Then the devil came to him and said, "If you are God's Son, tell these stones to turn into bread." Jesus answered, "The Scriptures say: 'No one can live only on food. People need every word that God has spoken.'"

- Notice how the devil questions Jesus's deity as God's Son, and then tempts him to prove it by striking out on His own to meet His hunger needs rather than trusting God's Word for His life.

- And what does Jesus do? He _____ his sword and uses it! He refuses to strike out on His own, but rather trusts in God's Word to give Him life.
- He stands _____ with God's Word and the devil gives up and departs.

B. Like Jesus, God wants us to step forth and _____ and _____ our swords! He wants us to bring the Bible to bear in our everyday lives.

James 1:22-25:

“Obey God's message! Don't fool yourselves by just listening to it. If you hear the message and don't obey it, you are like people who stare at themselves in a mirror and forget what they look like as soon as they leave. But you must never stop looking at the perfect law that sets you free. God will bless you in everything you do, if you listen and obey, and don't just hear and forget.”

“*When you read God's Word, you must constantly be saying to yourself, 'It is talking to me, and about me.'* - SOREN KIERKEGAARD





C. Stepping forth will take _____. God may show you that you need to...

- Apologize to someone you wronged.
- Forgive someone who wronged you.
- Confront a sin in your life.
- Be more generous.
- Lay down your life for your wife.
- Work harder.
- Prioritize your kids over your job.
- Share your faith with someone far from God.
- Serve in a way that makes you uncomfortable.

D. Drawing and using our sword is how we win the _____ of this life.

E. Our battle cry:

“This is my Sword,
Where God is met,
Where men are made,
Where the enemy is defeated,
Rak Chazak!”



DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS

1. Which one of the personal benefits the Bible offers, listed under 2/D is most exciting to you? Choose one and tell why.
2. We learned in this session that God uses the Bible to reveal to us who we really are and who we need to become. When has God used the Bible to do that for you? What specifically did He show you? Explain. How have those revelations impacted your life?
3. In what area of your life has God been recently challenging you to courageously draw your sword and use it? Explain. How do you plan to do that? What help do you need?

YOUR BETTERMAN QUESTION:

Before our next session, take a moment this week to reflect on your notes, and then answer the following question: What possible action step could I take from this session that could make me a better man? Write your answer in the space below.



SESSION 3



BECOMING COURAGEOUS IN THE QUIET

B

01

WHERE DO WE BECOME COURAGEOUS? IN THE QUIET.

A. Without _____ time with God, we will be directionless and lack courage.

“ Nothing will help us grow spiritually more than spending time alone with God every day, reading His Word and praying. Time alone with God is essential to our spiritual welfare. - BILLY GRAHAM

- A better man prioritizes humbling and quieting himself before the Lord.
- For us to be effective in the _____, we must first let God and His Word do their _____ in us.

B. There has never been a man of God who didn't first learn to _____ with God. And it's in the quiet that we grow _____.

- Profile in Courage #1: David the Giant Slayer

Long before his confrontation with Goliath, David spent time alone with God as a shepherd in the fields. It was there his relationship with God and confidence in God grew strong!

1 Samuel 17:45:

When the Philistines and the giant, Goliath, threatened Israel with war ...

“David said to Goliath, ‘ You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of Hosts ...”

What gave David the courage to stand up to Goliath? His time _____ with _____.

Psalm 5:3

David said, “In the morning, O Lord, you will hear my voice; in the morning, I will order my prayer to you.”

- Profile in Courage #2: Daniel the Lion Tamer

A law was passed in Persia that prohibited praying to anyone except King Darius. Daniel refused to obey this edict and was punished by being cast into a lions’ den. He not only miraculously survived, no injury whatever was found on him.

What gave Daniel the courage to stand up to both the law and lions? His time _____ with _____.

Daniel 6:10:

After the law was passed, Daniel “entered his house and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God as he had been doing previously.”

- The world sees what we do in _____, but who we are is shaped by what we do in _____.

“ You can map out a fight plan or a life plan, but when the action starts, you’re down to your reflexes, that’s where your roadwork shows. If you cheated on that in the dark of the morning, you’re getting found out now, under the bright lights. - JOE FRAZIER

C. Jesus set the example of meeting with God in the _____.

- Jesus _____ his day in prayer.

Mark 1:35:

“In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there.”

- Jesus had to battle his fear of facing death on a cross, but through prayer, found the _____ to move forward.

Matthew 26:36,39

“Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to his disciples, “ Sit here while I go over there and pray ... And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.”

- If Jesus had to meet with His Father _____ to have the courage and strength to do God’s will, don’t we also?

D. Jesus taught his disciples to meet with God in the quiet.

Matthew 6:6

“But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

- We are dependent on our _____ with God for every good thing we will do.



John 15:5 (NIV):

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you abide in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

“ Spend plenty of time with God; let other things go, but don't neglect Him. We are not here to do work for God, we are here to be workers with Him, those through whom He can do His work. - OSWALD CHAMBERS

E. We live in a dangerous world. In the arena, we will come face to face with a host of intimidating challenges from the devil. In those moments we will need to draw on the courage that comes from God in the quiet. Therefore, we need to learn _____ to spend time with God.

“ It is impossible for a believer, no matter what his experience, to keep right with God if he will not take the trouble to spend time with God.
- J. OSWALD SANDERS

02

HOW DO WE SPEND TIME ALONE WITH GOD IN THE QUIET?

Some men avoid time with God because, quite frankly, they don't know where to begin or what to expect. Other men try, but then give up because the approach they use doesn't work and they become frustrated or bored or both.



Whether you are new to time alone with God or frustrated in your efforts to have this time, below is a proven “God time” outline that can help you connect with God in a rewarding way through its relational approach.

You can use this approach with whatever Bible reading plan you choose to use.

A. “Good morning God!”

- Start by _____ God, acknowledging who he is, and that he is in the room with you.
- You are meeting with your “Heavenly Father”! You get to have an _____, an _____, a _____ with Him!
- Be still for a moment and enjoy His presence.

Psalm 27:8:

“You have said, ‘Seek my face.’ My heart says to you, ‘Your face, Lord, do I seek.’”

B. “I praise you God.”

- Take some time to first focus on God and who He is. Call out His greatness. Voice particular attributes of God that _____ you are personally thankful for: His forgiveness that you needed, His recent guidance, etc. Remind yourself of what He has done for you. Rehearse how He has been good to you and blessed you and how much He is for you.

Psalm 145:2:

“Every day I will bless You, and I will praise Your name forever and ever.”

C. “I need you God.”

- Take time to discuss with God the specific things you need. Ask Him for _____.

Philippians 4:6:

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

- You can use this time to _____ sin and _____ for forgiveness.

1 John 1:9:

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

- You can also ask God for _____.

James 1:5:

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all.”

- Now transition from this moment to opening your Bible.

D. “I’m listening God.”

- Read a selected portion of Scripture asking: “_____, what do you want to say to me today?”

“ Until the Bible begins to talk to us, we really have not been reading it.

- A.W. TOZER

- Where should you read in your _____?
 - There are all kinds of Bible reading plans. The only _____ plan is _____ plan. Have a _____!

E. “I’m ready God.”

- After reading, ask: “What _____ thing are you asking me to do today God? I’m ready.”
 - Tell God you _____ him. Whatever He asks, you’ll do it.
 - Finish your “God time” by thanking Him for this special moment with you. You are now ready to walk with Him through the day and _____ to hearing His voice at any time.
-



DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS

1. Do you currently have a regular time alone with God praying and reading His Word? Yes or No? If yes, when, where, and how often are these God times?
2. If you are privately meeting with God, what specific practice or resource could you share with the group that has helped make your time with God be more engaging and meaningful? Explain.
3. Have you ever thought of time alone with God as producing more courage in you as it did in the lives of David and Daniel? How do you think that happens? Share your thoughts.
4. The “BetterMan” approach to time with God that we learned about today is very relational and conversational. Do you think this approach could help make your time with God more meaningful? Explain how. Would you be willing to try it out?

YOUR BETTERMAN QUESTION:

Before our next session, take a moment this week to reflect on your notes, and then answer the following question: What possible action step could I take from this session that could make me a better man? Write your answer in the space below.



SESSION 4



BECOMING COURAGEOUS IN THE FIGHT

B

01

WHEN WE LEAVE THE QUIET, WE ENTER THE ARENA

A. In the arena, our world, we have an intimidating enemy who is set against us.

1 Peter 5:8:

“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

B. People today often scoff at the idea of a personal _____.

- What do you think? Is he real?
- Just know this: the devil doesn't need you to _____ in him. In fact, if you _____ him, all the better for him in tempting, confusing, and misleading your life.

C. When we step out into the _____ of everyday life, we must be alert and ready to do _____ with this sinister opponent.

02

SATAN'S STRATEGY OF ENGAGEMENT

A. The devil's chief strategy is one of _____.

John 8:44:

“... there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

- Below are some of the _____ Satan uses against us:

B. “I can satisfy you.”

- Temptation promises satisfaction and often delivers it in the moment. But this thrill is only temporary. Soon the satisfaction sours and is replaced by guilt, regret, and emptiness.

James 1:15:

“When lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”

- Only _____ can offer the satisfaction we really want.

John 6:35:

“Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.’”

C. “There won’t be any consequences.”

- Temptation only mentions the benefits of an action while ignoring the consequences. It promises pleasure, but it pays with pain. It leads to a “less than” life. And often, we _____ someone we love.



Romans 6:23:

“For the wages of sin is death ...”

D. “You can be free.”

- Temptation will promise freedom but it’s actually a _____.
We end up _____.

Romans 6:16:

“You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living.”

E. “God would want you to have this.”

- God would not want anything for us that will lead us away from life.

James 1:13:

“When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone to evil.”

F. “God is holding out on you.”

- We often say “yes” to temptation because we fear we are going to miss out.
But the real miss of life is when we fail to _____ God for our needs.

Philippians 4:19:

“And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

03

THE PULL OF TEMPTATION TO SIN

A. Temptation typically starts with a _____.

- The thought might be, “I need that” or “I deserve some fun” or “Everyone else does it.”

B. The next phase happens in your _____.

- We start to think about the leftover chocolate cake, or your friend who can get you “those” pills, or the website you know you shouldn’t go to but want to.

C. Next comes _____.

- We know you shouldn’t, so you come up with reasons why you should. “It’s not that big a deal.” “No one’s perfect.” “What’s a little fun going to hurt?” “Just this once.”

D. Finally, we make the _____ to sin.

04

HOW TO FIGHT WITH SIN AND WIN

A. The first step is to _____ our signature sin(s).

- We can’t _____ an enemy we can’t or won’t _____.



- We need to call out our _____ “in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.” **2 Corinthians 2:11 (NIV)**
- What temptations pull at you the most? Which sins do you tend to give in to?

CHECK THE ONES THAT APPLY TO YOU BELOW:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unforgiveness / Bitterness | <input type="checkbox"/> Sense of entitlement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anger | <input type="checkbox"/> Gluttony |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Love of money / Greed | <input type="checkbox"/> Divisiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Envy | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual apathy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not loving | <input type="checkbox"/> Substance abuse (alcohol or drugs) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Antagonizing your kids | <input type="checkbox"/> Judge/overly critical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of self control | <input type="checkbox"/> Pride and/or wanting to appear perfect |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lust and sexual temptation | <input type="checkbox"/> Procrastination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shortcuts to success | <input type="checkbox"/> Laziness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not prioritizing God. | <input type="checkbox"/> Not serving/laying down life for your wife |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manipulating people | |

B. The second step is to create a winning _____ for dealing with our sin(s).

- Sometimes our best response for overcoming a temptation is to _____ from it.

2 Timothy 2:22:

“Flee the evil desires of youth.”

1 Corinthians 6:18:

“Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.”

- Sometimes our best move is to _____ from temptation ... literally!

Genesis 39:11-12:

“But one day, when he went into the house to do his work and none of the men of the house was there in the house, she caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me.” But he left his garment in her hand and fled and got out of the house.”

- Sometimes we can't flee, so we have to _____ the temptation head on and fight it.

Ephesians 6:17:

We need to fight with a weapon that has divine power and can take our thoughts captive and make them obey Jesus. What is that weapon? Remember, we learned our weapon is “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”.



Romans 12:2:

God tell us we need to “be transformed by the renewing of your mind”

When we renew our minds with the truth of Scripture, we “come to our senses and escape from the trap of the devil ...” **(2 Timothy 2:26).**

Then when we yield to the truth of the Bible rather than to the lies attacking us, Jesus says, “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” **(John 8:32).**

C. The third step is to _____ the help and encouragement of other men.

- Every man needs a “Band of Brothers” in his life to provide _____ and _____.
- Brothers can help us stand back up and recover when we fall to sin.

James 5:16:

“Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.”

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10:

“Two are better than one ... for if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.”

- Brothers can strengthen us when we are weak and struggling with temptation.

Galatians 6:2:

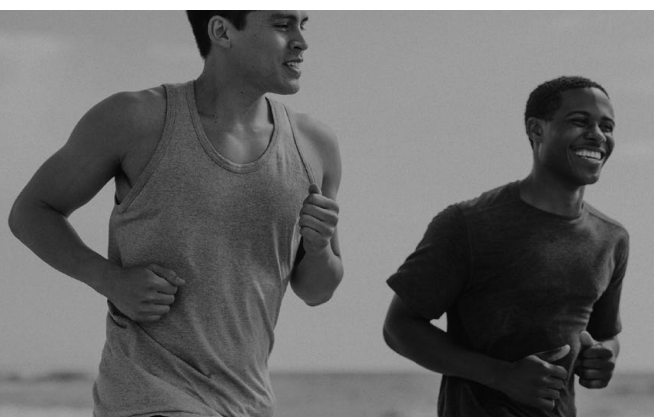
“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

- Brothers can provide sound wisdom for establishing a right way forward.

Proverbs 27:17:

“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”

- Brothers are a “must have” for any man who wants to become a BetterMan in the arena of everyday life.
-





DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS

1. In what area of life have you most felt you were fighting with the devil? How would you describe that fight?
2. Below are three “case studies” of men struggling with sin for your group to discuss.

Take no more than 10 minutes for each case study and talk over a “spiritual strategy” that could be used to help each man gain victory over the problem described. What Scriptures could you call on to speak into each man’s situation? What practical advice would you offer each man to consider? What resources (books, podcasts, counselors, etc.) could you recommend? What role could friends play to help each man deal with his situation?

- Man #1 is being pressured at work to be involved in an unethical business deal. He has a good paying job, but fears he may lose it if he refuses to participate. How should he face this hard spot? What’s his spiritual strategy? Discuss.
- Man #2 has been captured by pornography. How can he break free of this addictive sin? What should be his spiritual strategy? Discuss.
- Man #3 needs to be more of a spiritual leader at home. Unfortunately, he lacks confidence and holds back. Now his ongoing spiritual passivity is frustrating his wife and hurting his marriage and family. So how can he break out of this passivity and step up to a more engaged leadership role? What’s his spiritual strategy? Discuss.

YOUR BETTERMAN QUESTION:

Before our next session, take a moment this week to reflect on your notes, and then answer the following question: What possible action step could I take from this session that could make me a better man? Write your answer in the space below.



SESSION 5



BECOMING COURAGEOUS IN THE MISSION

B

01

MISSION IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF REAL MANHOOD

A. God desires to use our lives *today* to bring heaven to _____ and people to _____.

- He calls us to _____ others with the life and teachings of Jesus.

Matthew 28:19-20:

And Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

- He also calls us to _____ others with good works.

Matthew 5:16:

“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

Ephesians 2:10:

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”

B. Unfortunately, the natural gravity of our flesh will seek to pull us towards _____ and selfishness.

Galatians 5:17:

“For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; or these are in opposition to one another ... “



C. Only with God's help can we courageously _____ to the mission God has for each of us.

John 15:5:

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

02

JESUS CALLS US TO LIVE BEYOND OURSELVES

A. God's calling on people's lives has always been a call to live for _____.

- From the beginning, God has blessed people so they can be a _____.

Genesis 1:27-28:

So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, and subdue it ..."

- God called Adam and Eve to live beyond themselves and fill the world with kingdom builders who would bless the whole earth.
- Even after the fall of man, God continued to call His people to courageous lives of faith in order to bless others. Abraham is one notable example: order to bless others. Abraham is one notable example:

Genesis 12:1-2:

“Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.”

- When God’s people, the Israelites, are taken _____ and forced to live against their will in a foreign land, God calls them to be a blessing to the people there.

Jeremiah 29:7:

“But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to

- the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.”

B. Jesus came to live beyond himself. He didn’t shrink back but

_____ to live for others.

Matthew 20:28:

“... the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

C. Jesus calls _____ to live beyond ourselves and give our lives away to help others.





Philippians 2:3-7:

“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant ...”

Acts 20:35:

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

D. The call of Jesus means our faith is to be lived out by _____.

Leading	Loving	Giving	Teaching
Bettering	Caring	Sharing	Investing
Discipling	Witnessing	Serving	Proclaiming

03

OUR MISSION AS MEN

A. Our mission at _____.

- We are called to love, _____, and _____ for our wives and children. When we do, we follow the example of Jesus and honor God.

Ephesians 5:25:

“Husbands, love you wives, just a Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her.”

Ephesians 6:4:

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

- Some of the strongest words in the Bible are directed to men about providing for their families.

1 Timothy 5:8:

“But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

- What holds you _____ from embracing your mission at home?
- It takes faith and the _____ of others to be the courageous husband and father you need to be. Will you step up?

B. Our mission at _____.

- We have been called to set an example of hard work and _____ in the work place. When we do, we honor God and highlight Jesus.



Colossians 3:23,24:

“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men ... it is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”

Proverbs 10:4:

“Poor is he who works with lazy hands, but hard working hands get rich.”

- What holds you _____ from embracing your mission at work?
- It takes faith and the _____ of others to be the courageous worker you need to be. Will you step up?

C. Our mission in the _____.

- We have been called by God to draw people to Jesus both with our lives and with our words. When we graciously love others and share with them the good news of Jesus, we join God in helping people find the eternal life Jesus gives.

Acts 1:8, NIV:

“you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Colossians 4:5-6, NLT:

“Live wisely among those who are not believers, and make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.”

Matthew 22:39:

“Love your neighbor as yourself.”

- What holds you _____ from embracing your mission in the world?

- It takes faith and the _____ of others to be the courageous witness you need to be for Jesus. Will you step up?
-

04

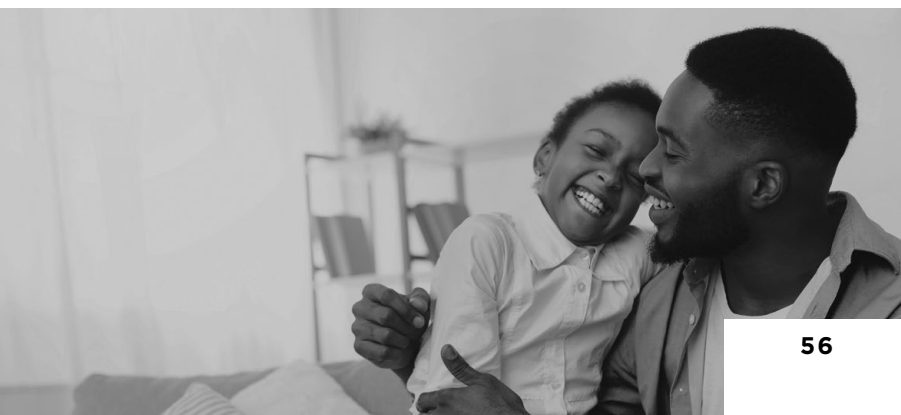
THE MAN YOU NEED TO MEET BEFORE LEAVING THIS STUDY

A. This man lives in the future.

B. He has not been _____. He has struggled. But again and again, he has stepped up to courageously followed God's Word. As a result ...

- His life has _____ for the better.
- He has made a _____ impact on others.
- He has brought _____ to God.

C. Who is this man? It could be _____!





DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS

1. Name a man (not in vocational ministry) that you admire as a “man of mission”? In what ways does his life demonstrate and illustrate spiritual “mission” as a priority? Explain.
2. Describe a time where you felt you were “on mission” with God. What did you do? What were the results? Explain.
3. As mentioned last week, we want to finish our BetterMan journey together by having every man share one or two personal action steps he is ready to commit to in the weeks ahead that he believes will strengthen his relationship with God and better help him in courageously following God’s Word.
4. Conclude your time by thanking God for these special five weeks together. Pray that the spiritual insights you have learned and the action steps you have planned will take root and bear fruit in every man’s heart. Rak Chazak!

YOUR PLAN OF ACTION:



SESSION 1: MANHOOD AND COURAGE**1. Our Journey Together**

- A. deeper
- B. definition
 - guessing, grabbing
 - struggling

2. God Defined Manhood

- A. word
 - instruction
- B. woman
- C. work
- D. world

3. Some Helpful Perspectives on Courage

- A. fear, moving
- B. courage
- C. first
 - women, children

4. Dangerous Worlds

- A.
 - war zone
 - enemy
 - do nothing
 - courage, manhood
- B.
 - war zone
 - enemy
 - deaths
 - direction

5. The Call to Courageously Follow God's Word

- A.
 - action
- B. supernatural
 - seek, surrender
- C. fight courageously
 - believe, help
 - confidence
 - boldly

SESSION 2: A MAN AND HIS SWORD**1. The Fight**

- A. battle
- B. three
- C. win
- D. weapon

2. Getting to Know Our "Sword"

- A.
- B. inspired, applies
- C.
 - 1,500
 - authors
 - miraculous
 - Jesus

ANSWER KEY

- D.
- real
 - love
 - freedom
 - Following
 - wisdom, joy
 - prosperous

3. Drawing Our Sword

- A. purposes
B.
C.
- obedient
 - weapon
 - reveal
 - transform

D.

4. Using Our Sword

- A.
- tree
 - questions, twists
 - break
 - trusted in
 - death
 - draws
 - firm
- B. draw, use
C. courage
D. fights

SESSION 3: BECOMING COURAGEOUS IN THE QUIET

1. Where Do We Become Courageous? In the Quiet.

- A. consistent
- world, work
- B. meet, courage
- alone, God
 - alone, God
 - public, private
- C. quiet
- started
 - courage
 - consistently
- D.
- connection
- E. how

2. How Do We Spend Time Alone with God in The Quiet?

- A.
- greeting
 - encounter, experience, conversation
 - still
- B.
- today
- C.
- help
 - confess, ask
 - wisdom

- D.
- God
 - Bible
 - bad, no, plan

- E.
- courageous
 - trust
 - open

SESSION 4: BECOMING COURAGEOUS IN THE FIGHT

1. When We Leave the Quiet, We Enter the Arena

- A.
- B. devil
- believe, dismiss
- C. arena, battle

2. Satan's Strategy of Engagement

- A. deception
- lies
- B.
- Jesus
- C.
- hurt
- D.
- trap, enslaved
- E.
- F.
- trust

3. The Pull of Temptation to Sin

- A. thought
- B. imagination
- C. justification
- D. choice

4. How To Fight with Sin And Win

- A. identify
- defeat, name
 - weaknesses
- B. strategy
- flee
 - run
 - face
- C. enlist
- support, accountability

SESSION 5: BECOMING COURAGEOUS IN THE MISSION

1. Mission is an Essential Part of Real Manhood

- A. earth, heaven
- reach
 - bless
- B. passivity
- C. step up

2. Jesus Calls Us to Live Beyond Ourselves

- A. others
- blessing
 - captive
- B. stepped up

**ANSWER
KEY**

- C. us
- D. reaching out

3. Our Mission As Men

- A. home
 - protect, provide
 - back
 - support
- B. work
 - integrity
 - back
 - support
- C. world
 - back
 - support

4. The Man You Need to Meet Before Leaving This Study

- A.
- B. perfect
 - changed
 - life-giving
 - glory
- C. YOU



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