



Family Module

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A Man's Purpose in the Home

A Beautiful Design Pt. 3 – Man's Purpose (53 Minutes)

Presenter: Matt Chandler

<https://youtu.be/S4pGOzJ-jBk>

Synopsis of the Family Module: The home was created by God first—before the government and the church. Therefore, it is the oldest institution on earth and the building block of society. As has been repeated many times, “As the home goes, so goes the nation.” In this Module, we will discuss man's God-given role as spiritual leader, husband, and father and give practical suggestions as to how you can fulfill these roles in such a way that will honor God.

Synopsis of this Session: This session focuses on God's design for man and his marriage. We will see the unique facet of leadership known as “headship” and how this concept is to be carried out in the home, the church, and the culture at large.

Session Introduction

1. The *Imago Dei* (Latin for “created in the image of God”—Gen. 1:26-27; 9:6) is God's investment in humanity of God-like glory and the moral capacity to rule the earth as His representatives.

To be created in the image of God does **not** mean that man was created in God's physical image because He has none. God is spirit. (Jn. 4:24) To be created in the image of God does mean that we were created in:

- God's **mental** image. Like God, we have the ability to think, make decisions, make choices, create, plan, and reason.

- God's **moral** image. Also, like God, we have the ability to discern what is right (moral) and wrong (immoral).
- God's **spiritual** image. We have a spirit that can commune, fellowship, and enter into a personal relationship with God.

As God's creation, made in the image of God, we have elevated worth. We are worth more than the animal kingdom and creation in general. The purchase price of something determines its value. Everyone is worth "Jesus" to God, the highest price ever paid for anything in the history of the universe! Therefore, we should honor and respect each other.

2. What it means to be a man is not merely a question of _____.

What it means to be a **man** is more than biological. A **boy** is a male but not a man.

3. It is important that our wives understand what God has called us to be and then challenge us to be the man God has called us to be by setting the standard high. (You may want to encourage your wife to watch this video with you (**or a daughter of dating age**) so she will understand what God has called men to both be and do and then hold you accountable.) We need our wives to both _____ us and _____ things from us.

"Where men fill the purpose and design as the Bible has outlined it, humanity flourishes. Where men refuse to step into the space that men are called to fill—the world burns." – Matt Chandler

4. When men do not take part in God's design:
- The **family unit is** _____ (divorce rates, single parent households, gang participation, absentee fathers, cohabitation, men not leading their families, etc. all increase).
 - The **church is** _____ (fewer healthy families, fewer male role models, a decrease in church attendance, decrease in obedience to the word of God, an increase of indifference toward spiritual things, people switch from a biblical worldview to a secular worldview, Bible knowledge decreases, etc.).
 - The **culture** _____ **down** (crime rates, substance abuse, school dropouts, disrespect for authority, rebellion, and sinfulness in general all increase).

5. A word that needs to be redeemed in our culture is the word _____.

Headship is the unique role of leadership God decreed for man in establishing God's order in the following three arenas of life:

- Home.
- Church.
- Culture at large.

Let us suggest the following practical ways to show headship in the home:

- Pray with your wife daily.
- Lead your wife in a Bible study in your home.
- Pray with your children every day.
- Share an age-appropriate devotional with your children every day.
- Ask forgiveness from both your wife and your children when you mess up.
- Live out a consistent example of your faith Sunday thru Saturday.
- Faithfully take your family to church.
- When watching television with your children, use it as a teaching time. Ask your children questions such as, "Why do you think he/she said that or did that? Could it have been said/done better? What would you have said/done and why?"
- Use every opportunity as a time to teach about your faith (i.e., I taught my sons biblical theology while playing catch with a baseball).
- Repeatedly demonstrate to your family that faith in Christ means something.
- Answer your family's spiritual questions. If you don't know the answer to their question, admit it, and then find the answer and share it with them.

6. Genesis chapter one provides a general narrative of creation—what God created on each of the six days of creation. Genesis chapter two provides a detailed narrative of the creation of a man, a garden, and a woman. Moses writes:

"When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, ⁶ and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— ⁷ then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. ⁸ And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹ And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ¹⁰ A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers ... ¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (Gen. 2:5-10,15-17 ESV)

7. The task given to man by God was to _____ and _____ Eden.
- God gave man the task to cultivate the garden, which is a work to do, before sin entered our world. (Gen. 2:5-15)
 - This is why “lazy” men are a detriment to the flourishing of the human race. We were not designed to be lazy.

“Some occupation is necessary to happiness. Lazy people would not enjoy even Eden itself. A perfect man is a working man.” – C.H. Spurgeon

God designed men to work. **Does this mean that work is a part of the curse of sin? Why or why not?**

The unique leadership role of man was established by God in an effort to establish God’s order in the following three areas:

1. Headship in the _____.

The Bible teaches that the root of all family problems is a spiritual problem. If there are problems in our homes, it is because people are not rightly related to God. The word of God teaches that if we are right in our relationship with God, we will be right in our relationship with one another. (1 Jn. 3:10-18; 4:7-12,16-21) Men, for Christ to be the head and heart of your home, he must live in your heart first.

Headship in the home is cultivated and carried out in three ways:

A. _____ Love.

Men, the key to loving your wife is to love God. It is God who gives us both the desire and the power to love her the way that Christ loves the church (1 Jn. 4:7-12) If we keep the first and greatest commandment—to love God (Matt. 22:37-38) we will be able to keep the second greatest commandment—to love others in the same way as we love ourselves. (Matt. 22:39)

Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church. The apostle Paul declared:

“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,” ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ **In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own**

bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.'" (Eph. 5:25-31 ESV)

Paul's primary point is that men are to love their wives in the same way, and to the same extent, as Christ loves the church. **How did Christ demonstrate his love for the church?**

A husband who sacrificially loves his wife does not dominate or demean her but is willing to sacrifice his own needs, comfort, and if necessary—his own life for her. **In what ways does a man demonstrate a love for his own body? In what ways does a man demonstrate his love for himself?**

There is no list of rules in the Scriptures on how a husband is to treat his wife. There is no need for one. If we really love our wives the way God intends us to—we will treat her as God treats us and the way that we want others to treat us. (Matt. 7:12)

B. _____ Direction.

Men have a God-given responsibility to cultivate the spiritual climate in the home. God will either bless us for creating a spiritual climate in our home or judge us if we don't.

Men are to set the example in conversation, prayer, forgiveness, Bible reading, leading his family to a saving knowledge of Christ, etc. One of the primary ways to control the spiritual temperature in our homes is to pray with our wives on a daily basis. Sociologists tell us that the divorce rate for American non-Christian couples who marry for the first time is 1 in 2 marriages (50%). They also tell us that the divorce rate for Christian couples who marry for the first time is also 1 in 2 (50%). Sociologists further tell us that the divorce rate for married couples who pray together is 1 in 1,152!

It is important to realize that children tend to follow the example of their father—good or bad. Educator and theologian Voddie Baucham stated the issue very well when he said, "If I teach my son to keep his eye on the ball but fail to teach him to keep his eyes on Christ—I have failed as a father." Someone said, "Jesus loves me this I know for' my daddy showed me so."

C. _____ Provision.

Men are to provide for the physical care of their families which includes shelter, clothing, food, education, etc. God commands men to provide for the physical needs of their families but our responsibility does not stop there. Most men are good providers but our family has other needs than just the physical. Our family has spiritual, emotional, and mental needs too.

If a man does not work hard, he is refusing to mirror to his sons and daughters what it means to be a biblical man. When a man refuses to work hard, he is in effect rejecting one of the purposes God had in creating man, damages his own soul, sets the wrong example for his family, and belittles the image of God.

Points to Ponder

- ♦ A lack of competence does not minimize our responsibility.
- ♦ A lack of desire does not minimize our responsibility. Some days we do not feel like exercising headship but we are to do it anyway.
- ♦ The expectation God has for me is that I accept responsibility to do what I am called to do even when I do not feel like I am qualified or when I do not feel like doing it.
- ♦ Our failures can become an opportunity to reveal God's grace to our family. One way to receive God's grace is to own our failures. We do this by confessing our wrong behavior, actions, reactions, or emotional responses to our wife, or our children, and then humbly asking them to forgive us.

When we create a spiritual climate in our homes, our wives and children feel safe and loved and the family will flourish. **Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?**

- ♦ Material things will **not** make your family spiritually flourish!

In the video, Matt Chandler shared how he had ministered to many young women with BMWs and fashionable clothes who hated their fathers and treated themselves cheaply. He then contrasted the former to other young women driving a "hooptie" who lived with a godly confidence because their fathers genuinely loved them and created a spiritual climate resulting in a family that flourished.

2. Headship in the _____.

We also see headship functioning in the church. The apostle Paul wrote:

“The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. ² Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵ for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church? ⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷ Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.” (1 Tim. 3:1-7 ESV)

Where an all-male eldership practices authority in the church that is harsh and uncaring, they are outside the bounds of both God’s beautiful design and Scripture. Male headship is a God-given role for the work of establishing order that will enable the home and the church to flourish.

3. Headship in the _____ at Large.

Men are by design physically stronger than women. They have broader shoulders and more testosterone to build muscle mass and physical strength in a way that is beyond the normal female.

Because we are designed by God to be stronger than females, world history records, until a recent trend, that it is men who go to the front lines of the battlefield and die. We do not send our women!

- On July 20, 2012, in a movie theater in Aurora, Colorado, three young men pushed their girlfriends to the floor and then laid over them to protect them from a gunman. All three men were shot and killed and their girlfriends were wounded but all three women lived. The world heralded these men as heroes. **Why?**
- On January 13, 2012, the ship *Costa Concordia* struck a rock and capsized off the coast of Tuscany and thirty-two people were killed. There were reports of the captain abandoning the sinking ship and men shoving women and children to the deck in an effort to get to the life rafts first. These actions were universally condemned. **Why does this matter?**

- In some sense it is physical and in another sense it is spiritual. When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, who did God blame? (Gen. 3:8,9) God blamed Adam for introducing sin into the cosmos. (cf. Gen. 3:10-12; Rom. 5:12-19)
Why is that?

The boy goes down and the girl goes free! This is how God designed it to work in the home, in the church, and in culture at large.

♦ _____ **Men.**

It is important to note that being male does not give you authority over all women. A single man has no direct authority over a woman unless he is an elder in the church or has a sister. Yet, you have been charged by your heavenly Father to protect all women and serve them as if they were your sisters.

Headship is primarily worked out in the home with your wife.

♦ **Physical** _____.

Physical attractiveness has an expiration date but godliness never goes out of style and is in fact, eternal. (cf. 1 Tim. 4:8; 1 Pet. 3:1-6) While physical attractiveness is only skin deep, godliness is ever deepening year after year. It is “godliness” that is truly and eternally “sexy.”

“In a good friendship, you will find godliness to be sexy in a way physical sexiness will never compare. Seeing godliness in your wife is like logs continually thrown on a fire. This is what we should be pursuing beyond the physical attraction!” — Matt Chandler

- ♦ _____ your sons the difference between a man and a boy:
 - A boy lets a door slam in the face of a woman. A man holds the door open for a woman.
 - A boy mocks his sisters. A man shares gifts of his heart and mind with his sisters.
 - A boy shoves girls—men never shove girls.
 - A boy hits girls—men never hit girls.
 - A boy says, “That’s not fair!” Men do not say that! Men do not want fair—they want the fight!

- Anything less is outside of God's design and purpose for a man. A father's God-given responsibility is to teach our "boys" what it means to be a "biblical man." If you do not do it—who will?

Conclusion

We all need to reset our lives on a regular basis. It has been said that the first manned mission to the moon was off course 96% of the time. The space capsule was constantly making mid-course corrections which allowed them to hit their target. Frequent personal evaluations will show us where we are in relation to hitting our target (what we stated in our eulogy). This is why we describe our *Life Plan* as a living, breathing document. It will need revision over time. If we make as many mid-course corrections as necessary—we too can hit our target.

A Man's Purpose in the Home



Die to Live

33 The Series - Volume 5: A Man & His Marriage

Session 2: Die to Live (35 minutes)

Presenter: Tierce Green

<https://app.rightnowmedia.org>

Synopsis of this Session: This session focuses on the key ingredient of leadership modeled by Jesus—servant leadership and the enemy of servant leadership—self. We will then focus on the four distinct roles of servant leadership in the home.

Session Introduction

1. The enemy of servant leadership is _____ (ME).

We must guard against the tendency to develop a “me-first” mentality. (a.k.a. self-centeredness, selfishness, self-interest, etc.) We have developed a “me first” mentality when we begin to think about what we can “get” rather than what we can “give.”

Paul reminds us to “... do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.” (Phil. 2:3 ESV)

The Enemy of Servant Leadership

The following is a game-changing statement: Marriage is **not** primarily about our _____. When some people are not “happy” in their marriage, they give-up and move on to someone else they think will make them “happy.”

Authentic Manhood is about a life that is lived for the glory of God and for others. Jesus said:

“... love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matt. 22:37-39 ESV)

When you are focused on yourself and your own happiness ... _____ are your own worst enemy to servant leadership.

The Essence of Servant Leadership

The “Paradox Principle” states that we die to ourselves in order to truly live. We _____ to live. Jesus told His followers:

“... If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For whosoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.” (Lk. 9:23-24 ESV)

Jesus further said:

“... whoever would be great among you must be your servant ... ⁴⁵ for even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mk. 10:43,45 ESV)

The apostle Paul said this about Jesus:

“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant.” (Phil. 2:4-7 ESV)

The grace Jesus offers us in His self-sacrifice is both the _____ and the _____ for our servant leadership in marriage.

The apostle Paul also said: “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” (Eph. 5:25 ESV) Someone defined love as, “A willing self-sacrifice for the good of another that does not demand reciprocation.” This is the way that God loves us (cf. Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 3:16) and the way we are to love God (Matt. 22:37) and one another (Matt. 22:39).

Our motivation: When we have personally experienced God’s amazing grace toward us, and the power of His forgiveness in our own life, we become motivated and even _____ to forgive and show that same grace to our wife.

The apostle Paul admonished, “Bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.” (Col. 3:13 ESV) The Golden Rule states that we are to treat others as we want others to treat us. (Matt. 7:12)

The “Paradox Principle” is at the core of every _____ and vibrant marriage.

The Different Areas of Servant Leadership

The Scriptures identify four distinct roles of servant leadership:

1. The husband’s role as spiritual _____. (pastor of his family)

The husband is to be the spiritual leader of his home because:

- He was created first in God's order. (cf. Gen. 1:26,27; 2:15,18,21-25; 1 Cor. 11:3,7,9)
- Eve was created to be a helpmeet for her husband Adam. (Gen. 3:18)
- God said Adam should lead Eve. (Gen. 3:16)
- The pattern in the Old Testament was that the husband was the priest of his family. (cf. Ex. 12:1-14,21; Josh. 24:15; Job 1:5)
- God commanded it in the New Testament. (Eph. 5:22-24)
- God created in the heart of a woman the desire to be led in spiritual things by her husband. (1 Cor. 11:3,8,9,16)

The wife wants her husband to take the leadership role in the family for two reasons:

- So that he will be the kind of man she can respect. (Eph. 5:33)
- So that her children will grow up to be just like their father.

This is so important that if your wife does not receive spiritual leadership from you, she may look to others for it (the pastor, a Bible study teacher, or another Christian leader at church). This could be disastrous!

This does not mean you have to be a spiritual _____. Our wives don't expect us to be "Billy Graham" but they do expect us to lead them spiritually. A husband leads his family spiritually by:

- Continually growing in his own spiritual life.
- Leading the family altar—praying privately every day with his wife and also leading in daily family prayer and Bible reading/devotions.
- Taking the family to Bible study and church on a weekly basis.
- Fellowshiping with dedicated Christians and their families.
- Teaching the family spiritual truth throughout the week.

As we bless the soul of our wife, our soul is blessed as well. The best way that a man can "bless the soul" of his wife is to pray with her every day. A second way that a husband can "bless the soul" of his wife is in what he does in the first few minutes after he comes home from work.

Men it is time that we rise up and fulfill our God given responsibilities in the area of spiritual leadership. God wants you to do it, your wife needs you to do it, and you need to do it for the sake of your family.

2. The husband's role as emotional _____.

This is all about being aware of and sensitive to our wife's _____. As men, we tend to "suppress" our emotions. As you well know, our wives do **not** suppress their emotions but "express" their emotions. We must allow our wives the freedom to express their emotions even though it may at times make us feel uncomfortable.

Husbands are to "... live with your wives in an understanding way." (1 Pet. 3:7) Peter admonishes husbands to study their wives. Men, your goal should be to have a PhD degree in understanding your wife! What are:

- Your wife's deepest needs?
- Your wife's goals in life?
- Her greatest fears?
- What has she always wanted to do but not yet done?

If you don't know the answer to these questions and many others like them—ask her.

Wise is the husband who makes a habit of keeping up to date and being keenly aware of what his wife is _____ and thinking. Wise is the husband who does the work to know himself emotionally and has a plan to meet his emotional needs.

Servant leadership also includes the oversight of joy and _____ in your home. "Fun" is a missing ingredient in homes today. The home should be a happy place.

3. The husband's role as financial _____.

Financial provision for the home is a basic _____ of manhood. Paul clearly presented man's role as financial provider when he said:

"If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." (1 Tim. 5:8 ESV)

Paul's point is that when someone who claims to be a believer has not exercised the forethought to provide for the future needs of those in his or her circle of family relationships, and especially the needs of his or her immediate family, they are worse than unbelievers who instinctively know to take care of the needs of their family.

Oversight of financial health also means you are planning for the _____. The "future" will soon be here for all of us whether we are ready or not. Let us develop a plan to be ready. (we will discuss this in detail in the Financial Module of MD⁵)

4. The husband's role as physical _____.

At a basic level, this means a husband stands between his family and physical danger. But it also includes protecting the home from:

- Evil people.
- Evil influences.
- Evil philosophies.

And might also include keeping some things within his home. Things such as:

- Christ
- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness
- Goodness
- Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-control
- Forgiveness
- Encouragement
- Hope
- Grace
- Mercy
- Fun

The man takes the lead and supports his wife by staying on top of what his family is _____ from the outside, proactively guiding them toward healthy influences.

Discussion Questions

1. How does the phrase “I’m just not happy anymore” fly in the face of true servant leadership?
2. What did Paul Tripp mean by “the greatest problem in marriage lies within me?”
3. Paul Tripp states that most men want to disconnect when they get home from a long day at work. Can you relate to this? How could we increase intentionality and energy?
4. Tierce Green talks about homes of fun, laughter, and energy. How should we incorporate this into our *Life Plan* of creating memory moments?



The Five Love Languages

In 1992, **Dr. Gary Chapman** authored a book entitled, “*The Five Love Languages: How To Express Heartfelt Commitment To Your Mate*” which became a bestseller and actually spawned about a dozen follow-up books. **The premise of Chapman's book is that although couples speak the same language**—in our case English, **when it comes to communication in marriage, they are in effect speaking foreign languages to each other.** Chapman believes that each person in a marriage relationship communicates his or her feelings to their mate through what he calls “*love languages*.”

The emotional love language that you speak, and the language that your spouse speaks, may be as different as Chinese is from English. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to both learn what “*love language*” our spouse is speaking and we must also share with our spouse which of the five “*love languages*” we are speaking. Chapman states:

Once you identify and learn to speak your spouse’s primary love language, I believe that you will have discovered the key to a long-lasting, loving marriage ... We cannot rely on our native tongue if our spouse does not understand it. If we want him/her to feel the love we are trying to communicate, we must express it in his or her primary love language.

The chart below summarizes the five love languages couples speak. We suggest that you and your wife sit down with the chart and mutually discover each other’s love language. Then, we suggest that you practice what you both have learned and take your marriage to a whole new level of fulfillment, intimacy, and satisfaction.

In the following chart, the column on the left lists the Five Love Languages. On rare occasions, you will find a husband and wife who speak the same love language. This is helpful because you know what you need from your spouse and can therefore easily understand what your spouse needs from you. However, most couples will need to discover what love language each speaks and then teach each other how to speak that language to each other.

The second column is labeled, “How to Communicate” and aids in a general understanding of the vocabulary of each of the Five Love Languages. The third and last column labeled, “Actions to Take” gives suggestions for specific steps to take in order that you may begin speaking the Love Language of your spouse.

	HOW TO COMMUNICATE	ACTIONS TO TAKE
Words of Affirmation	Encourage, affirm, appreciate, empathize. Listen actively.	Send an unexpected note, text, or card. Genuinely encourage, and often.
Physical Touch	Non verbal - use body language and touch to express love	Hug, kiss, hold hands, show physical affection often. Make intimacy a thoughtful priority.
Receiving Gifts	Thoughtfulness, make your spouse a priority, speak purposefully.	Give thoughtful gifts and gestures. Small things matter in a big way. Express gratitude when receiving a gift.
Quality Time	Uninterrupted and focused conversations. One-on-one time is critical.	Create special moments together, take walks and do small things with your partner. Weekend getaways are huge.
Acts of Service	Use action phrases like “I’ll help...”. They want to know you’re with them, partnered with them.	Do chores together or make them breakfast in bed. Go out of your way to help alleviate their daily workload.

The Five Love Languages



Grace Based Parenting

33 The Series - Vol. 6: Authentic Manhood

Session 2: Grace Based Parenting (34 Minutes)

Presenter: Tim Kimmel

<https://app.rightnowmedia>

Synopsis of this Session: In this lesson, we will define what is meant by “grace-based fathering” and then share practical suggestions as to how you can create a climate of “grace” in your home.

Session Introduction

The psalmist declared:

“Behold, **children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward.** ⁴ Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one’s youth. ⁵ **Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them!** He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.” (Ps. 127:3-5 ESV)

Solomon said that children are a “heritage from the Lord.” The Hebrew word translated in this verse as “**heritage**” means, “inheritance,” “possession,” or “property.” Solomon also said that children were a “**reward**” from God. Children are to be received as a “grace gift” from God. And finally, Solomon stated that the man whose “**quiver**” (house) is full of children will be extremely happy (“**blessed**”) because the more children you have, the more blessings from God you will receive.

In summary, Solomon stated that children are an undeserved blessing from God with a divinely intended purpose.

Dad's Job

The job of a dad is to connect to the _____ of your child in such a way that it makes it easier for them to connect to the heart of God. Our heart connection to our kids is highly influenced by our own heart connection with Jesus. Therefore, your walk with God is essential to demonstrate to your children that God himself is a loving father.

Types of Fathers

There are three basic parenting styles. They are:

1. _____ Fatherhood.

_____ cannot be our starting point in our role as a dad. Fathers, you have nothing to fear in your role as parent because God is on his throne! He answers prayers, gives wisdom, and empowers you to be the man of God that you desire to be! The apostle Paul told Timothy:

“For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” (2 Tim. 1:7 ESV)

“Courage is when you’re scared to death but you saddle up anyway.” – John Wayne

2. _____ Based Fatherhood.

Sin management and spiritual behavioral modification is not a fun home to grow up in if you are a kid. Why? Because kids are not perfect, frequently make mistakes, and never measure up to expectations.

There are two major problems with this style of parenting:

- Outward compliance to a set of rules may be achieved, but there is no change in the child’s heart. Someone described the heart attitude of a child parented by a performance-based father as “sitting down on the outside but standing up on the inside.”
- The good a child does is completely overlooked. The child is punished for bad behavior but **never** rewarded for good behavior. The child develops a “defeatist” attitude and feels that no matter what they do, he or she will never measure up to dad’s standards.

In this style of parenting, the child becomes an extension of the father's ego. When this occurs, the child may have a lifetime of problems!

3. _____ Based Fatherhood.

God is a parent ... He is parenting us as we are his children. Fathers, we should treat our children as God treats us—with grace and a lot of it! But what do we mean by **GRACE**? The Greek word translated into English as “grace” simply means, “gift.” Grace has been correctly defined as, “God’s unmerited favor to the undeserving.” This definition of “grace” aptly applies to the relationship between a grace-based father and his children. We still have rules in our homes but infractions are dealt with in grace.

The apostle Peter encouraged believers with these words:

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as **good stewards of God’s varied grace**:¹¹ whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies – In order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” (1 Pet. 4:10-11ESV)

We are to be good stewards of the “grace” that God has bestowed upon us by being gracious with everyone. This “everyone” includes our children.

The apostle Paul adds:

“And **God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that** having all sufficiency in all things, **you may abound in every good work.**” (2 Cor. 9:8 ESV)

God bestows his grace upon his children so that they may prosper. If we extend God’s grace to our children—they too will prosper. Grace based parenting is simply treating your children the way _____ treats you.

A Grace Based Dad

Let’s consider several important characteristics of a “Grace Based Dad.”

1. A grace-based dad gives his children the freedom to be _____.

A grace-based dad gives his children the freedom to be “different” whereas performance-based parenting molds children into our own image. Sometimes “different” manifests itself as something that we would label as “weird,” “strange,” “bizarre,” “goofy,”

or “quirky.” Dads, if we try to mold our children into our own image, or the pre-determined image we want for them, then our parenting style is performance-based and **not** grace-based. Doing this will “exasperate” a child—something the Bible commands us **never** to do. (Eph. 6:4)

We encourage you to be careful about trying to make moral or biblical issues out of your arbitrary preferences. Hair length, hair styles, hair color, clothing styles, styles of make-up, body piercings, tattoos, etc. are **not** moral issues but preferences. Therefore, they should not be dealt with the same way as moral infractions.

Everything changes when we let God's _____ take over. A grace-based father creates a home “everyone wants to come home to.”

2. A grace-based dad gives his kids the freedom to be _____.

It takes courage to be open and “vulnerable” with our children. However, if you want your children to be open and be honest with you—you have to be open and honest with them. If you want your children to respect you—then you must respect them.

Our desire is to create a home where our kids do not have to wear a _____. Home should be a “safe” place where we can all take off our masks and be open and honest with each other. Our homes need to be a safe place for our kids to work through all the dangerous and fragile stuff of their lives. Fathers, build a home that is a “safe” place for all who live under your roof.

3. A grace-based dad gives his children the freedom to be _____.

By “candid,” we mean that you should develop such a relationship with your children that they feel “safe” with you and can be “honest, truthful, open, frank, and respectful.” A “safe” place where our children can verbalize their doubts and fears without fear of being rejected.

Our children have questions and they are going to seek answers from someone. Dads, let that someone be you! They will receive good advice from you but that might not be the case if they seek answers from their peers.

The apostle Paul admonishes, “Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.” (Col. 4:6 ESV)

The writer of the book of Hebrews encourages believers with this admonition:

“Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb. 4:16 ESV)

As believers, we are invited to draw close to the throne of God's "grace." Our children should view coming to us with their fears, doubts, problems, frustrations, etc. as coming to a "throne of grace."

Paul, the apostle, adds: "Let all **bitterness** and **wrath** and **anger** and **clamor** and **slander** be put away from you, along with all **malice**." (Eph. 4:31 ESV) Fathers, in dealing with your children, heed Paul's admonition and put away these six things.

If we are just trying to control our kids, we will _____ them. The writer of the book of Hebrews further said: "See to it that **no one** fails to obtain the grace of God; that no 'root of bitterness' springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled." (Heb. 12:15 ESV) The "no one" the writer of the book of Hebrews was referring to includes our children. If our children fail to receive the "grace of God" from us, they may become "bitter, cause trouble, and become defiled."

When your child sins, and they all do:

- Do not let it surprise you. Sinners do one thing very well and very consistently—sin!
- Do not take it personally. Their actions are not a reflection upon you.
- Do not be passive. Take appropriate action.

The best way to make sure that they speak _____ to us is to speak respectfully to them. If you disrespect your child, he or she may disrespect you. If you yell at them, they may yell back at you. Our point is that if we respect our children, they will respect us. If we respect their opinions, they will respect ours.

4. A grace-based dad gives his kids the freedom to make _____.

The Christian home must be a place where disappointments are tolerated, hurts are endured, and where mistakes never mean the end of a relationship. Quoting from the book of Hebrews again:

"My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. ⁶ **For the Lord disciplines the one he loves**, and chastises every son whom he receives." (Heb. 12:5-6 ESV)

Unconditional love is the foundation of God's discipline of his children. We should also discipline our children out of a heart of unconditional love. Discipline, correction, and boundaries are all forms of _____. Discipline and correction are a high form of "grace" as God disciplines those whom he loves.

Jesus gives us the freedom to be different, vulnerable, candid, and to make mistakes. Parents should follow the example of Jesus and give our children the freedom to be different, vulnerable, candid, and make mistakes.

Discussion Questions

1. Tim Kimmel says that “our heart connection to our kids is highly influenced by our heart connect with Jesus.” **Share what this looks like in your life.**

2. **Compare and contrast fear-based, performance-based, and grace-based fatherhood. Which of these is your natural tendency?**

3. Tim shares four different kinds of freedom that grace based dads offer to their kids. **Which of these do you find the most difficult to offer your kids and why?**
 - Different
 - Vulnerable
 - Candid
 - Make mistakes



Parenting Towards True Greatness

33 The Series - Vol. 6: A Man & His Fatherhood

Session 3: True Greatness (34 minutes)

Presenter: Tim Kimmel

<https://app.rightnowmedia.org>

Synopsis of this Session: In this lesson, we will define what is meant by the phrase “true greatness” and then share the four qualities of “true greatness.” We will also share practical steps to instill “true greatness” in the hearts and lives of our children. And finally, we will address how to prepare our children to answer the “Three Biggest Questions in Life.”

Session Introduction

In this session, Tim Kimmel shares several “keys” to “true greatness” that we should model biblical “success” before our children and then help them find the path that leads to “true greatness” in the eyes of God.

If you chase the goals of the world, it is easy to get off _____. If you were to take off in an airplane on the equator and fly 1 degree off course, by the time you circumvent the globe, you will be 500 miles north or south of the equator. The point is that being off course even a little when training our children can have disastrous consequences!

Most parents are inclined to aim their children at a future focused on success. **Why do you think that is?**

It's easy to take very legitimate parts of a child's life and over-prioritize them. We can sabotage our children's future when we make _____ the goal of their future rather than an outcome of living a truly great life. According to Jesus, "True greatness" is a passionate love for Jesus Christ (the first and great commandment—Matt. 22:37-38) that reveals itself through a compassionate love and concern for others. (the second great commandment—Matt. 22:39)

The Apostle John warned:

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world – the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life – is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever." (1 Jn. 2:15-17 ESV)

Why is it that we should not love the world or the things of the world? Because the world is "passing away" but the things of God will last "forever." Therefore, if we aim our children toward wealth, beauty, power, or fame—we set them up for an adulthood that is _____. "True greatness" is not measured in who I am or what I have done. "True greatness" is measured in whose I am.

Defining "True Greatness"

"True greatness" is a passionate love for Jesus Christ that shows itself in an unquenchable love and concern for _____. In his letter to the church in Rome, the apostle Paul summarized "true" greatness in these words:

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." (Rom. 12:1-2 ESV)

Learning to live a life of "true greatness" sends children into the world focused upwards toward God and outwards toward others. The apostle Paul admonished believers to:

"Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth." (Col. 3:2 ESV)

"Aim at heaven and you will get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you get neither."—C.S. Lewis in *Mere Christianity*

God blesses the person whose priorities are right.

The Four Qualities of “True Greatness”

Let us now turn our attention upon the four qualities of “true greatness”:

1. A _____ Heart.

The first characteristic of “true greatness” is a humble heart. Humility can be simply defined as a reverence for God and respect for others. Paul accurately defined “humility” in his letter to the saints in Philippi:

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interest, but also to the interests of others.” (Phil. 2:3-4 ESV)

James, the Lord’s half-brother explains the reason we are to be humble:

“God opposes, the proud but gives grace to the humble ... ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.” (James 4:6,10 ESV)

Solomon weighed in on the discussion of humility with these words:

“The reward for humility and fear of the LORD is riches and honor and life.” (Prov. 22:4)

A humble man of God receives everything he is searching for and more.

2. A _____ Heart.

The second characteristic of “true greatness” is gratefulness. According to James, gratefulness is an appreciation for both the gift and the giver:

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” (James 1:17)

The Apostle Paul admonished all believers to:

“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thess. 5:18 ESV)

It has been wisely said, “It is not what you have in your pocket that makes you grateful—but what you have in your heart.”

3. A _____ Heart.

The third characteristic of “true greatness” is a generous heart. Jesus declared:

“Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put in your lap. **For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”** (Lk. 6:38 ESV)

A “generous” heart takes great delight in sharing with others what God has entrusted to them. Sir Winston Churchill made this astute observation, “We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give.”

4. A _____ Heart.

The fourth characteristic of “true greatness” is a servant’s heart. A servant’s heart can be defined as a “willingness to act in order to help someone else.” Because Jesus is the perfect example in all things (1 Pet. 2:21), the Apostle Paul wrote:

“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in **Christ Jesus**, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but **emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant**, being born in the likeness of men.” (Phil. 2:5-7 ESV)

The essence of sin is pride. The essence of servanthood is selflessness. We serve God by serving others which is a selfless act. Dads, teach your children the skills they need to be successful in life. The marketplace is hungry for people who are humble, grateful, generous, and who have a servant’s heart.

How To Instill “Greatness” In Our Kids

1. Be _____ of “true greatness” to your kids.

The way that we live our lives is the “example” that we are setting for our children to follow. Men, if you do not have a good relationship with God, how can you expect your children to have a good relationship with God? The old adage is still true, “More is caught than taught.”

2. “True greatness” becomes the _____ in your home rather than the exception.

Joshua declared to the children of Israel:

“And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. **But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**” (Josh. 24:15)

As the spiritual leaders of our home, we need to declare, even as Joshua did, that our family is going to serve the Lord even if no one else does.

3. Provide opportunities for your children to _____ the lifestyle of “true greatness.”

Expose your children to other great children. As Solomon said, “Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.” (Prov. 27:17 ESV)

4. Valuing and praising our children’s _____ at “true greatness.”

There are only two ways to change behavior—positive reinforcement or discipline. Use positive reinforcement to encourage your children. We are what we celebrate so be on the lookout for attitudes and behaviors of “true greatness” and praise your children for

Preparing Kids To Answer The Three Biggest Questions in Life

There are “BIG” questions in life. If we get the answer to the “BIG” questions right—the answers to many “smaller” questions will take care of themselves. So, what are the “Big” questions in life that our children must get right?

1. What is my _____ going to be?

The apostle Paul summed up the Christian life in the following words:

“So, whether you eat or drink, or **whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.**” (1 Cor. 10:31)

And to the church in Colossae, Paul wrote:

“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” (Col. 3:17 ESV)

Never forget that you are the pastor of your family. It is therefore your responsibility to shepherd your children's hearts. Help your children answer questions such as, "Why am I here? What is the purpose of life? What is the most important thing in life? Where am I going when I die?"

A commitment to "true greatness" frees your children to pursue _____ plan for their lives rather than the worlds.

2. Who is my _____ going to be?

The second greatest decision in life concerns your life's mate. Teach your sons the qualities to look for in a wife and teach your daughters the qualities to look for in a husband. You should model before your children what a loving husband looks like and how to love God, love your mate, and love others. One of the best gifts that I can give my children is to love their mother.

3. Who is my _____ going to be?

Missionary to China J. Hudson Taylor stated the issue so very simply: "If Christ is not Lord of all, he is not Lord at all!" In other words, if Jesus is not first in everything in your life—he is not first in anything. Jesus spoke these famous words in the Sermon on the Mount:

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but **lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also** ... ³³ But **seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness**, and all these things [**eat, drink, or wear—vs. 25**] will be added to you." (Matt. 6:19-20,33)

Thomas A. Kempis actually gave a great definition of Lordship when he prayed, "As Thou wilt; what Thou wilt; when Thou wilt." **Can you pray this prayer for your own life and then teach your children to pray it?**

Neal Postman made this profound observation: "Children are a gift we will send to a time we will not see." If this is true, let us send to the future an asset and not a liability. Let us send a giver and not a taker.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Are we pointing our children toward worldly success or “true greatness?” Is it easy to settle for success versus “true greatness?”**
- 2. Which of the four qualities of “true greatness” do you find it most difficult to impart to your children? Why do you think that?**
 - ☐ A humble heart?
 - ☐ A grateful heart?
 - ☐ A generous heart?
 - ☐ A servant’s heart?
- 3. Reflect upon the personal example of “true greatness” that you are living before your kids and then contemplate practical steps on how you better model these qualities.**



Your Porn Battle Plan

Your Porn Battle Plan – Warrior (37 Minutes)

Presenter: Craig Groeschel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEBKwpmKoG0>

Synopsis of this Session: “One of the greatest traps facing men today in leading their families is sexual immorality—particularly internet pornography to be more specific. This session will address how men should prepare a well thought out battle plan so we are not blindsided by the enemy.”—Craig Groeschel

Session Introduction

The word “pornography” actually comes from two Greek words— *pornos*, which refers to a “prostitute” and *grapho* which means, “writing.” Literally the word “pornography” means, “writings about prostitution.” Therefore, in the language in which the New Testament was written, the word “pornography” refers to any kind of writing, art, or pictures that depict illicit immoral acts.

The dictionary defines pornography as, “The depiction of erotic behavior (as in pictures or writing) intended to cause sexual excitement.” Pornography is sometimes difficult to define but we think it is safe to say that we all know it when we see it!

So, how bad is the porn problem today? Consider the following shocking statistics:

- ♦ 30% of all Internet traffic involves pornography.
- ♦ There are more than 40,000 porn websites on the Internet.
- ♦ There are 28,258 views of porn per second on-line.
- ♦ There are 116,000 searches per day on the Internet for child pornography.

- ◆ The global revenue from the porn industry is \$20 billion dollars every year.
- ◆ The porn revenue in the United states is \$10 billion dollars every year.
- ◆ Only 4% of the world's population lives in the United States but we consume 60% of the global supply of porn! And then we wonder why our nation is falling apart!
- ◆ 85% of the revenue from pornography in the U.S. goes into the pockets of organized crime!
- ◆ \$3,075.64 is spent on Internet porn every second.
- ◆ 70% of men admit to viewing porn regularly.
- ◆ The average age when a child first sees porn on-line is 11.
- ◆ 63% of American men admit to viewing porn in the workplace at least once in the last 3 months.
- ◆ 36% of American women admit to viewing porn in the workplace at least once in the last 3 months.
- ◆ 21% of American teenage girls admit to texting nude photos of themselves.

So, how bad is the porn problem among Christians? Consider the following:

- ◆ 69% of U.S. pastors say that porn has adversely affected their church.
- ◆ 1 in 5 youth pastors and 1 in 7 senior pastors use porn on a regular basis and are currently struggling with it. That is more than 50,000 U.S. church leaders!
- ◆ 37% of U.S. pastors admit that viewing pornography is a “current struggle.”
- ◆ In a city where a *Promise Keepers* men's weekend event is being held, the hotels report a 400% increase in pornographic movie purchases.
- ◆ More porn is viewed on Sunday than any other day of the week.
- ◆ Overall, 64% of Christian men and 15% of Christian women view porn monthly.
- ◆ For Christian men ages 18-30 years old, 79% view porn monthly.
- ◆ On the other hand, Christian men who are happily married are 61% less likely to look at porn.

Pornography is fast becoming America's # 1 sin!

No warrior goes into battle with the goal of abandoning their post, becoming a slave to lustful images, wrecking their life, losing the faith of the people they love, hurting those who have trusted them, betraying their spouse, shaming their children, being stripped of all spiritual confidence, living in a spirit of shame, taking everything they value and trading it for momentary selfish lust. No warrior thinks this way. Yet, there are good people who love God who do this every day.

During WWII, the Axis powers dropped pornographic pictures from airplanes over the Allied troops. The purpose was to distract the soldiers from the real battle and to keep them focused on their own selfish desires. Today, Satan is exposing the warriors of God to pornography to distract us from the spiritual battles and to shift the focus to ourselves.

So, how do we combat this spiritual dilemma? What can Christ's warriors do? In this session, we will help you develop a battle plan for personal victory over the enemy of our souls.

What Happened in David's Life That Led To His Moral Failure?

David, king of Judah and then king of Israel, was an amazing man. There are 929 verses of Scripture recorded about him. He was a poet, musician, king, leader, and a brave warrior, but he is often described by just 3 of the 929 verses written about him. (2 Sam. 11:2-4) **Why do you think this is?**

The prophet Samuel told the following story from the life of David:

"In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. **In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel.** And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. **But David remained at Jerusalem.** ²It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. ³And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, 'Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?' ⁴So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.) Then she returned to her house. ⁵And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, 'I am pregnant.'" (2 Sam. 11:1-5 ESV)

So, what can 21st century men learn from a man who lived 3,000 years ago?

1. David Wasn't Where He Was Supposed to Be

Our text tells us where David should have been and then where he actually was:

"In the spring of the year, **the time when kings go out to battle**, David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. **But David remained at Jerusalem ...**" (2 Sam. 11:1)

Where should David have been? David should have been on the battlefield leading his armies. **Where was David?** In Jerusalem. (2 Sam. 11:1)

When we are not where we should be, and not doing what we should be doing, we too are vulnerable to fall prey to the attack of the enemy. If we are not daily practicing the “spiritual disciplines”—reading the scriptures, memorizing scripture, praying alone and with our wives, involved in a weekly Bible study, worshiping, journaling, fasting, meditating on scripture, etc., it is only a matter of time before we fall into some form of sin.

In addition, if we associate with the wrong friends, go to the wrong places, listen to the wrong music, watch the wrong television programs or movies, read the wrong material, etc.—we too are vulnerable to the enemy’s attacks upon our soul.

2. David Let His Guard Down and Became Vulnerable to Temptation

David let his spiritual and moral guard down and thus he became more vulnerable to temptation. We too are vulnerable to sin when we are _____. The apostle Paul issued the falling warning about being over-confident:

“Therefore let **anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.**” (1 Cor. 10:12 ESV)

Paul’s admonition is to be on guard against any and all temptations of the world. Remember, we are always potentially vulnerable.

It is tempting for us to _____ others who have fallen into immorality. However, a condemning spirit of others may be an indicator of a prideful attitude that says, “I would never do that!” As a warrior for the Lord, we have to be honest and wise. Never become over-confident about your moral strength. Never!!!

Solomon cautioned his son, “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” (Prov. 16:18 ESV) Solomon also forewarned his son: “For many a victim has she [**the adulteress**] **laid low**, and all her **slain** are a mighty throng.” (Prov. 7:26 ESV)

We all need to be aware that there are times when we are more susceptible to moral _____ than others. Such times might include:

- ◆ When we are wounded or hurt.
- ◆ After we have a fight with our spouse.
- ◆ When we are lonely.
- ◆ When we are bored.
- ◆ When we are discouraged or depressed.

- ◆ When we are proud and perceive ourselves to be stronger than we really are.
- ◆ When we are disconnected from the Lord.

_____ the times when you are most vulnerable and have a battle plan in place so that you will not succumb to temptation.

Secondly, identify **areas** where you are personally most vulnerable to exposure to pornography. Those areas might include one or more of the following areas:

- ◆ Social media.
- ◆ Playing computer games at night.
- ◆ Traveling on business.
- ◆ A hotel room TV.
- ◆ Movies.
- ◆ Magazine or computer articles.

Men, we are only as strong as we are honest with ourselves. We must be careful because our hearts will deceive us into believing that we are stronger than we really are. (Jer. 17:9)

We too are vulnerable when we do _____ put safeguards in place.
Safeguards such as:

- ◆ Do not be alone with women in any context.
- ◆ Block all adult content on digital devices. (television, laptop, tablet, or smartphone)
- ◆ Have every activity on your computer, laptop, or phone tracked. Inspect in order to achieve what you expect!

One may ask, “Are you that weak?” Maybe we are not normally weak, but we never know when that moment might come. (1 Pet. 5:8) To take away the strength of sin, we must stop feeding it. (Gal.5:16)

“Why would I focus on resisting temptation in the future when I have the power to eliminate it today?”—Craig Groeschel

We are vulnerable when we feel _____. King David felt entitled to have Bathsheba. When we yield to sin through our “entitled thinking,” there are profound consequences:

- ◆ It changes the way we think. (cf. Rom. 8:5-6; Col. 3:1-2)
- ◆ It poisons what is pure and holy. (Heb. 13:4)
- ◆ It dishonors God—the Holy Spirit is living in us! (cf. Eph. 4:30; 1 Thess. 5:19)
- ◆ It robs of what you really want – intimacy that is both relational and spiritual, as well as physical.

Jim Bakker, President of the PTL Television Network, had an affair with a woman named Jessica Hahn. One of the reasons this affair occurred was that the men closest to Jim constantly told him, “Look at how much you are doing for the cause of Christ.” “God couldn’t do it without you,” “God is lucky to have you,” etc. As a result, Jim Bakker began to believe that he was “special” to God and therefore, “entitled” to break a few moral rules. The result was that he was publicly humiliated, his wife divorced him, he lost the PTL Network, and he spent years in prison.

Warrior of God, flee _____ —**not** sex! Paul admonished believers in the strongest possible terms:

“Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.” (1 Cor. 6:18–20 ESV)

We need to keep sex in its correct biblical perspective. Sex itself is **not** bad. God is not against sex. In fact, he is the one who invented sex! The writer of the book of Hebrews expresses this thought very clearly when he wrote:

“Let marriage be held in honor among all, and **let the marriage bed be undefiled**, for **God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.**” (Hebrews 13:4 ESV; cf. Prov. 5:15-20; Song of Solomon 7:6-8,10-12)

Sex within the bounds of the _____ is always approved by God. Sex outside the bounds of marriage is always sin! (cf. Prov. 6:25; Mt. 5:28; 1 Jn. 2:15-17)

Guys, let’s resolve to be a man of honor and integrity.

The Battle Plan Against Porn

1. Confess your sin to _____.

- ♦ In case you have had a moral failing, there is hope. David repented of his sin and his relationship with God was restored. (cf. Ps. 32:5; 51:1-13)
- ♦ Remember God’s promise “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 Jn. 1:9 ESV) If you confess your sin, repent of it, you too can be forgiven!

Remember, God redeems all that he allows!

2. Confess your sin to godly _____.

- ◆ Confess to God for forgiveness and confess to other men for healing. (cf. Gal. 6:2; James 5:16)
 - We do not just need our wives to help us, we need men too.
 - There are details that may be best not to share with our wives but with other men to flush our moral system.

3. Remove the triggers that tempt us to _____.

- ◆ Be wise, do not be careless or even stupid.
- ◆ For example, David should have told himself, "David, stay off the roof!"
- ◆ The best way to not succumb to temptation is to take positive steps to prevent it!

4. Get necessary _____ help as needed.

- ◆ Counselors. (pastors, professional counselors, godly men, etc.)
- ◆ A Twelve-Step group. (we recommend *Celebrate Recovery* because of its strong focus on Christ as the true "Higher Power.")

5. Let the goodness of God heal your wound.

- ◆ Never forget that God's grace reaches deeper than our sin. (Rom. 5:20-21)
- ◆ Praise and thank God because his mercies are new every morning. (Lam. 3:22-23)

6. Let us suggest several principles that you might want to incorporate into your battle plan:

- ◆ When traveling alone:
 - Do not turn a television on.
 - If you think you cannot live without television for the evening, have the hotel turn off access to the movie channels in your room and place a picture of your family on top of the television.
- ◆ Give a close friend permission to ask you regularly how you are doing in the area of lust.
- ◆ Memorize scripture verses on the topic of lust and recite them to yourself daily.
- ◆ Specifically pray that the Holy Spirit would guard your eyes, thoughts, and associations. Ask him to cleanse any improper thoughts and any pictures you might have in your mind with the blood of Christ. (Rom. 8:5,6)
- ◆ Make a "covenant with your eyes" even as Job did. (Job 31:1)
- ◆ Practice the spiritual disciplines daily. (Ps. 119:11)
- ◆ Resolve to think the right kind of thoughts. (cf. Phil. 4:8; Col. 3:1-2)
- ◆ Incorporate several other suggestions that we make in this lesson as well as your own thoughts because after all, you know yourself the best.

So, what is your battle _____ to combat the lure of pornography?

Final Thoughts

With Christ there is real intimacy that is far beyond physical intimacy. Physical intercourse is best when there is spiritual intercourse between your heart and your wife's. Godliness in our wives is incredibly attractive! (1 Pet. 3:1-6) Think beyond just the physical!

Our minds will always be a battlefield, but we do **not** need to be victims to the enemy's attack. You have a precious someone to protect, you have a kingdom to advance, and you have a battle to win.

Do not be passive! Accept _____. Prepare for battle! Keep fighting! He (**God**) is worth it! She (**your wife**) is worth it!

In closing, our prayer is that the prayer of the psalmist will be your prayer too:

"May those who hope in you not be disgraced because of me, O Lord, the Lord Almighty; may those who seek you not be put to shame because of me, O God of Israel." (Ps. 69:6-7 NIV)

Information We Hope You Will Never Need

Should you, or someone you know, need help in overcoming an attraction to pornography, we suggest the following two steps:

1. Practically.

Practically speaking, there are tools to protect your heart from being attracted to or to combat an addiction to pornography.

- If you may be addicted to pornography.

If you fear that you have an addiction to pornography, there is help. We would suggest that you go to www.covenanteyes.com, www.PureOnline.com or www.PornAddiction.com. There are free articles and support groups available to help you.

We would also recommend the following Christian books on breaking the addiction to pornography:

- o *Every Man's Battle: Winning the War on Sexual Purity One Victory at a Time* by Stephen Arterburn.
- o *Pure Freedom: Breaking the Addiction to Pornography* by Mike Cleveland.
- o *The Game Plan* by Joe Dallas.
- Internet Filtering program.

There are quality internet filtering programs that will completely block your computer from accessing pornographic websites such as www.bsecure.com.

- Internet accountability software.

Another helpful tool is available at www.X3Watch.com. X3Watch is an accountability software program that tracks your internet browsing and sends a report of any objectionable websites you have visited to an accountability partner of your choosing. 75% of U.S. pastors admit that they do not make themselves accountable to anyone else for their Internet viewing habits. This is one of the reasons that 37% of U.S. pastors admit that viewing pornography is a “current struggle.”

2. Spiritually.

If you are addicted to pornography—do **not** despair as it is **not** the “unforgivable sin” or the “unconquerable sin.” God can and will enable you to overcome it if you:

- Make sure you have genuinely placed your trust in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. If you have **not** trusted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, there is no possibility of true and lasting victory over pornography. Jesus Himself declared, “Apart from me, you can do nothing.” (Jn. 15:5 ESV) So, if you are not sure of your salvation, seek counsel from your MD⁵ facilitators.
- Confess your sin to the Lord and by faith receive His forgiveness for your sin. (1 Jn. 1:9)
- Seek His help daily in prayer. Prayer is your best weapon in the spiritual war for your mind. Ask the Lord to cleanse your mind with the blood of Christ, to fill your mind with His truth, to block out unwanted thoughts and desires, to strengthen you, and to help you to overcome the temptation to look at pornography. (Phil. 4:8,13)
- Recognize that the Holy Spirit is available to you to give both the desire and power to overcome your addiction. (cf. Rom. 8:5-6; Eph. 3:16)
- Renew your mind by filling it with a steady diet of God’s Word. (cf. Ps. 119:11; Rom. 2:1-2) Ask the Lord to fill your mind with things that are pleasing to him. (Phil. 4:8)
- Commit both your eyes and your mind to the Lord. (cf. Job 31:1; 1 Jn. 2:16)
- Ask God to protect you from further exposure to porn. (1 Cor. 10:13)
- Work on building a stronger relationship with your spouse.

These are all requests that God will both honor and answer. You are not alone in this battle and there is both help and hope.

□ Remember, that when it comes to lust, every man is struggling or lying!