

Week 3: A Partner with the Most High

Sunday: The Heart of a Man

“Excuse me, what?”

If you have kept up daily with the devotions, then it has been 2 weeks since you left bootcamp. The clarity of what you heard God say at bootcamp might be slipping, and the enemy will surely be interested in returning you to your former position of inactivity or complacency. Let's focus this week on our partnership with God into an adventure and battle.

- Read Judges 6:1-16 and answer the following questions.
- What is the situation with the people of Israel in this passage? Why are they hiding out? Is this the destiny God had for his people?
- What significant thing happens in verse 7 that gets the story going in the right direction?
- What does the prophet say to help the people understand their current situation? (7-10)
- The Lord God had chosen a specific man named Gideon to partner with Him in His redemptive purposes for the people of Israel at this specific time. An angel messenger meets up with the candidate and begins a conversation about partnership. The angel says, “The Lord is with YOU, mighty warrior.” Gideon replies “Excuse me, but what are you talking about? (my interpretation for emphasis). Have you ever had a time when God invited you into an adventure or a mission? Have you incredulously said, “Excuse me?”
- What question are rolling around in the mind of Gideon about the purposes and characteristics of God? Finish the questions:
 - If the Lord is with us, WHY.....
 - Where are the wonders.....
 - Did the Lord bring us.....
 - The Lord has abandoned.....
- What is God's response through the messenger? “Go in the _____ you have and _____ Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not _____ you?” (14)
- More questions in the mind of Gideon because he (shall I say we?) is not used to the Lord God inviting us to something big and important. Can you hear Gideon say “Excuse me, but how in the world am I going to save Israel? I am the LEAST in my family?” Do you identify with this kind of hesitancy in entering the battle?
- What does the Lord say in verse 16? I want to encourage you to meditate on that today!

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Monday: Your Place in the Larger Story

“How’s that dream working out for you?”

- Read Genesis 37:1-20 And answer the following questions designed to get you thinking about how you fit into God’s kingdom and plan.
- Jacob had a son that was chosen by God to be BIG in the story of redemption of the nation of Israel. The young Joseph had an early awareness that he had a very bright destiny that would include honor and rulership. However, not everyone close to him had the same understanding about his future. What did his brothers think of the “favorite child?” Who are the people in your life that have treated you like the older brothers treated Joseph?
Write them here: _____
- In verse 5 and 6 Joseph has a “dream” about his future role in partnership with God. How did the brothers respond to the big dreams of the kid?
- In verse 9 Joseph recounts a second dream. I guess I might have exercised discretion and not shared my second dream after the negative response to my first dream. The second dream even shocked the father. I’ve heard young men talk big, but this kid has allowed his status as golden child to go to his head! Or is it that God really has a plan for this young man?
- Jacob sends the young Joseph to check on the older brothers who are working with the flocks. When the older brothers see him coming, they plot to kill him. “Here comes that dreamer, come let’s kill him, and then we will see what comes of his dreams” (18-20)
- If you continue reading the story you learn that Joseph escapes death, but he is in for something I might consider worse, a long path of hardship and suffering. In no way do the next years in Joseph’s life resemble the dreams he had when younger. During bootcamp there was an awakening in you (hopefully), and you began to believe that you would go home to overcome past patterns, that you will fight spiritually for your wife and kids, that God would start to talk to you and help you make sense of the daily grind. Big dreams about a new walk were birthed. But the enemy and his minions have no such plan for your life. At what point do the haters and destroyers steal your visions of a real growing walk with Christ? Hence the question “How’s the dream working out for you?”
- I am sure that God loves you the way Jacob loved Joseph and I am sure that God has a calling on your life. I am sure you will be invited to partner with Him to do something great and important. And I am sure that you can perceive that there is some form of a distance between where you are, and where you dream of being someday. Dare to ask, “Father where do you need me in the kingdom?” Now wait, until He gives the dream...

Week 3: A Partner with the Most High

Tuesday: The Wound and the Poser, Breaking Agreements

“Pain talking non-sense”

- Read Job 16:6-22 and answer these questions that get your mind thinking about how a sinful outlook deflated Job’s understanding of the motives and purposes of God.
- I’ve been reading the book of Job because a brother in the Lord suggested that we study it, but I usually avoid it because I do not care for the gravity of the backstory. God allows Satan to take away the creature comforts from Job’s life to see what substance is deep in the soul of Job. The wound comes from the destructive hand of the enemy.
- Who does Job credit with the misfortunes of his situation? _____
 - God you have worn me out, You devastated my whole household
 - You shriveled me up, You tear me in anger, You gnash your teeth at me
 - You turned me over to the ungodly
 - You abandoned me to the clutches of the of the wicked
 - You shattered me when all was well
 - You seized my neck and crushed me
 - You made me a target for Your archers
 - You burst upon me like a warrior
- Did God really have an evil outlook toward Job and attack him like this, OR is the pain in Job’s life speaking? It is true that God is bringing a wounding into Job’s life, but it is a wound to reveal God’s glory and provision to Job. God’s purpose is for Job to come to know Him deeper.
- In what way is Job “posing” as he accuses God? What false agreements has Job made with his pain?

I see Job posing as one who might understand God’s ways when as a human, he cannot even begin to fathom the ways and mysteries of God. The pose is a belief that God has betrayed him. The pose is a propped view of self, and a demeaning view of God.

- Do you sometimes start accusing God when things are not going your way? What comforts do you reach for when the closeness of God is distant? Do you sometimes see yourself as abandoned by God and this gives you justification to go to your favorite vices?
- The truth is that you will never be abandoned by God. You may go through tough times, but you can be assured that God is watching over every detail of the road of suffering, just like He watched over the suffering of Job. When in pain, be quiet, do not talk nonsense. Trust that a partnership with God requires some purging of the old self.

Week 3: A Partner with the Most High

Wednesday: The New Name, Identity in Christ

“Crossing Over”

- Read John 5: 24-28 and answer these questions designed to get you thinking about the new person you are becoming as you learn your identity in Christ.
- Jesus is speaking in this passage. He states that if you hear his words and believe the in the Father who sent him, you will have eternal life and will not be judged (for sinfulness). How would you put this truth into your own words so you can explain it to someone else?
- If this hearing-believing thing happens in your life, Jesus says you will “cross over from death to life.” What is the coolest bridge you have crossed? What about your passage was most memorable? I’ve crossed the bridge over the Royal Gorge by foot. The bridge sways several feet in the howling wind while you are thousands of feet in the air above the Arkansas river. Very cool! The cross of Christ has now become a bridge for you to pass from death to life.
- I worked for a season in Adventure Therapy and loved running the Zipline. I would fasten up and safety check the riders. Most were nervous before the plunge on the platform 40 feet up. I liked asking “What are you going to leave over here with me as you move forward?” I’d like to ask you a similar question “What did you leave on the other side before you crossed over?”
- Are there some other things showing up in your life that really look like they belong on the “Before Christ” side of the bridge? What are those things you could write down here?
- According to the words of Jesus, condemnation is in the future of those who have not crossed over, but not for you! Consider what it says in Romans 8:1-3 “There is therefore now NO condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.” Condemnation is a tactic the enemy uses often in the life of the believer who does not realize the deception. Conviction is when the Holy Spirit is calling you out because you are acting out of the will of God. If this is the case it is time to repent and restore your standing in Christ. Condemnation is that guilty heavy feeling that I do not have victory over anything. It is a lie from the enemy. Break that agreement that you are condemned. You have crossed over into life! Walk in that truth today!

Week 3: A Partner with the Most High

Thursday: An Adventure to Pursue

“Make mine a Double”

- Read 1 Kings 19:19-21 and answer the following questions designed to spark your love for adventure that God placed inside of you.
- The time has come for the prophetic mantle of Elijah to be passed down to a successor. God instructs Elijah to find a man named Elisha who will partner with God to speak to God’s people. When Elijah arrives, Elisha is doing his normal life thing, plowing, and farming. Elijah throws a personal cloak around Elisha and walks away. Elisha runs after him and says, “I need to say goodbye to my mother and father.”
- Elijah gave Elisha plenty of opportunity to pass on the calling to be a prophetic voice, but Elisha was ready for the adventure. He took his oxen and sacrificed them and burned his plowing equipment. Don’t miss the fact that this team of oxen and equipment is his means of providing for himself and his family. He is leaving it behind to follow the calling. He tells his parents “I am away to follow the call of God upon my life.”
- For the next seven to eight years Elisha attended Elijah watching and learning until the day that he watched Elijah take a trip to heaven in a chariot of fire. Before his departure, Elijah asks Elisha what more could be done before the parting. Elisha asked for a “double portion of your spirit” and it was granted. The spirit of Elijah passed to Elisha and he had a great prophetic ministry!
- I was pastoring a congregation in North Carolina, we had a nice house, a stable life, and the beautiful mountains for recreation. God whispered to my heart that an adventure was ahead that would require me to give up my identity as a pastor. A few months later we were visiting family in Texas for Christmas. God spoke clearly to me (and confirmed through my wife Jenna) that He wanted us to take a big step of faith and move back to Texas in faith. He said specifically that if I would trust Him, that he would bless me beyond my “wildest imagination.” We said “Yes” even though it was hard. We moved to Texas without selling the house, and without a job prospect. We also had about 18k of student loans from my counseling degree.
- I was led miraculously by the Lord to take a job in social work, but it was so hard to give up being a pastor. My whole sense of purpose and identity was tied to that role. A few months later the adventure that God had whispered into my heart came to fruition as the Lord opened up a pastorate in a little church that had almost closed. I was able to work with at-risk youth AND lead a little congregation. A double portion for a double ministry!
- Fast forward 2 years: I can’t explain it mathematically, but we never missed a payment on the house in North Carolina until it sold, and we were completely debt free. We were blessed beyond imagination! When God invites you to partner up with Him, I say go for it! He will bless you and give you the double portion! He rewards those who seek him!

Week 3: A Partner with the Most High

Friday: A Battle to Fight

“Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon”

- Read Gen 4:1-10 and answer the following questions designed to get you thinking about battles you will fight in the kingdom for your family, your faith, and within yourself.
- Cain was the first son ever born to a human couple. His mother said, “With God’s help I have brought forth a man.” Later a brother was added to the first family. Cain gravitated to farming and soil. Abel gravitated to working with flocks and animals. When it was time to worship Cain brought some of his produce, and Abel brought portions from the firstborn of his flock. The offering of Abel was acceptable to the Lord, but the offering brought by Cain did not make the cut. What are your thoughts on why Abel’s offering was favored, and Cain’s did not bring God’s favor?
- When Cain reflecting on the fact that the younger brother had offered an acceptable sacrifice and he had not, he became jealous and angry. God wanted to continue His relationship with Cain and offered him instructions on how to offer an acceptable sacrifice. “If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?” Cain must have known what God meant. But God warned him “If you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door, **it desires to have you**, but you **must** rule over it.” You know what happened next, the crouching tiger (sin) and a hidden dragon (Satan) caused the death of a brother.
- The battle was within Cain, but outside forces were working for an outcome. There was a costly choice for Cain to make to conquer the fleshly response to the situation. God told him that he must win the battle and not let evil rule him, but he allowed the flesh to override what God spoke into his life. You and I face this same struggle about forty or more times every day. Crouching sin is ready to pounce and a hidden dragon is working to destroy God’s design for our lives. Cain should have been fighting for the life of his brother and he ended up taking the life of his brother.
- What war is going on inside you? What is the battle about? Are you facing jealousy, anger, lust, envy, pride? Would you be willing to list out the areas where the hidden dragon is baiting you into sin?
- Have you embraced the call to crucify your own will and fight for good of your brothers, and family, and for your faith? You must rule over it! If you can bring to bear God’s truths from the Scriptures and stand firm in your faith, you can win this battle! Partner with God for spiritual victory.

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Saturday: A Beauty to Save

“Cover Me”

- Read Ruth 3:1-11 and answer the questions designed to get you thinking about how to spiritual cover the heart of a woman.
- Let me start this sappy “love a woman” devotion with something masculine guys can relate to. The leader of the small band of soldiers yells out “Cover Me!” He bolts from the safety of a protective barrier to advance toward a strategic position while his compatriots lay down suppressive fire. The sudden flurry of artillery causes the enemy to seek protective barriers and provides a safe passage for the one who is advancing. Keep that view of “covering” close as we progress through the story of Ruth and Boaz.
- In Ruth’s story she is in a very vulnerable position. She is widowed and a foreigner. Naomi (her mother-in-law) knows that Ruth needs a covering. In her cultural context, Ruth needs a man and the security and stability that this would bring her. Naomi tells Ruth “Fix yourself up, I have a plan to help you snag a husband (well that’s some modern vernacular).
- Boaz is a respected man in the community, and he is a kinsman redeemer for Naomi’s family. The “kinsman redeemer” is a plan put into place to help continue family lines in the event of an untimely death of a relative. When the plan goes into execution, we find Boaz calm and rested from an evening of good food and drink. He wakes up to find his own “feet” uncovered and a young woman lying there. He asks, “Who are you?” and she says “Spread the corner of your garment over me, you are the guardian redeemer of our family. “
- What is she saying by her words “Will you cover me?” Let that sink in for a minute and let’s make the jump to the subject of the woman in your life. “Will You Cover Me?”
- Imagine the questions in her heart: Will you battle for me? Will you extend your strength and provide a safe place for me? Will you lay down suppressive fire (in daily prayer) so that I can do my part in this venture? Will you protect me? Will you provide for me? Will you bring stability and security into my life? Will you extend yourself?
- Are we in this together? Are you willing to go into the city market and fight to make me yours?
- I have been married working on 28 years. I have borrowed a practice from some guys in my church who pray over their wives every day. Jenna and I hold hands and pray over EVERY Day and I ask God to help me provide strength and direction for our day. I am partnering with God to bring spiritual life into our family and our walk with Christ.
- Can you hear the heart cry of the woman in your life, “Will you Cover me?”

Week 4: Standing Tall and True

Sunday: The Heart of a Man

“A Second Chance to the Right Thing”

- Read Judges 13: 1-6; 24, Judges 16:25-30 and answer questions that get you thinking about how God created the heart of a man for a battle, an adventure, and to rescue a beauty.
- Before Samson was born, he had a great destiny before him. He was to be a special child that would (from verse 5) grow up and “take the lead in delivering Israel from the hands of the Philistines.” Along with the calling came some unique gifts and talents including being set apart for God and superhuman strength. Have you ever considered what special gifts, abilities, or talents that the Lord put into your life to help you in your personal journey of entering the battle? If you do not know how God designed you for your specific role in the kingdom, ask Him to reveal to you what He blueprinted for you. Write out your answers here:
- If you follow the stories about Samson in Judges 14-16, you find that a problem developed in his character that plagued him in his role as a leader to deliver Israel. The problem was that he became aware of his special status and it went to his head. He was impetuous, short tempered, cocky, and had a loose interpretation of the requirements of his Nazarite vow. He was special and knew it. He felt like he could flirt with danger and come out unscathed. He was particularly vulnerable to the attractiveness of women. Is there an area of your life that leaves you particularly vulnerable to being taken out by the enemy?
- The story that most defines the unpredictable performance of Samson has to do with his interactions with a woman named Delilah. She was promised 100 pieces of silver if she could convince Samson to reveal the secret of his strength. He gave her false explanations 3 times and each time she tried to steal his strength. With “nagging and prodding” she wore him down and he finally gave in to her persuasiveness. She put him to sleep in her lap and had his head shaved. With his hair cut, he lost the blessing of strength and he lost his eyes to gouging.
- During one festival the Philistines had Samson brought out for a show. I see the heart of man created and called by God to life of greatness when Samson humbles himself and calls out to the Lord. “Lord remember me, give me strength just once more.” Have you ever asked the Lord for a second chance to stand tall and do the right thing? Have you ever asked God to remember the calling He put on your life?
- Samson knew that the next burst of strength would be his last. But in dying right in the middle of the battle he accomplished a great task in taking out many of the enemies of Israel. Even though he had acted foolishly on many occasions, God empowered him to stand tall and true in the end. Is there something that you need to take a second shot at? Is there something unfinished, undone, or unresolved that you can ask God for the strength to make right? Let me give you one of my all-time favorite sayings “it’s never too late to do the RIGHT thing.”

Week 4: Standing Tall and True

Monday: Your Place in the Larger Story

“Warning: Math Test Ahead”

- Read John 6:5-15 and answer the questions designed to get you thinking about how you can be part of a bigger story of God’s redemptive mission (instead of acting as if you are the center of the universe.)
- When Jesus saw the great crowd approaching, what do you think was his main concern? How does this concern accurately capture the overall mission of Jesus as being one sent by the Father?
Main concern of Jesus in this situation:
Main mission of Jesus in coming to earth:
- Why does Jesus ask Philip an impossible math question? What “test” is he presenting to Philip?
- Way to go Captain Obvious (Philip)! 6 months wages would not purchase the needed meals for this size crowd. This is a logistical nightmare! Perhaps, although it is an extremely pessimistic thought, Philip does not really want the “Jesus train” to be responsible for this “hungry crowd situation.” I think a better answer Philip could have given would have been “I don’t know Lord, but you know all things.”
- Way to step up Andrew with the find of the century: five barley loaves and two fish! But his mind is in the same situation as Captain Obvious: “But how far will they go among so many?” Be honest, if you did not know the end of the story, what is likely to have been your answer to the question of Jesus?
- Why did Jesus feed all those people?
- Was Jesus inviting the disciples to think about the needs of people and the message of good news? Explain your answer:
- Is it conceivable that God would invite you to battle for the lives and souls of the crowd, knowing that you lack the obvious resources and would need to rely upon him to accomplish the task?
- What in your life would be the equivalent of the 5 loaves and 2 fish?
- I see Jesus training his followers to see the needs of people and to be ready to ask for kingdom resources to get behind closed doors to present the gospel. I am looking for your commitment to stand tall and true and to be ready to take your place in battling for others.

Week 4: Standing Tall and True

Tuesday: The Wound and the Poser that Emerges

“You’ve Obviously Got the Wrong Guy”

- Read Exodus 3:1-13 and answer the following questions designed to get you thinking about “wounds” in our lives that prompt us to develop a false identity to avoid having to be real with God.
- Can you conceptualize the different contrasting lifestyles present in the life of Moses? Early on he was raised in the home of the Pharaoh. Every opportunity and advantage had been offered to him. Prestige, influence, power, authority, and decision making were a big part of his daily identity. Now he is out in the back 40 (Midian) herding sheep. Can you imagine the level of resignation that would be necessary to step down and into this new lifestyle? Can you imagine the guilt, shame, embarrassment associated with the secret murder of an Egyptian supervisor, being called out by the Hebrews for assuming a “Savior” persona, and then running for your life to escape the reproach of your family and the arm of the Egyptian law?
- I am assuming, but can imagine a person in this situation, at his age, reflecting on his former life, that he might be in a spot of perpetual despair. And then a God whom he barely knows shows up to invite him into one of the most key and pivotal events in redemptive history.
- What is Moses’ response to the revelation of God’s presence? (verse 5)
(Does this remind you of Adam’s response after his fall?)
- The Great “I Am” invites Moses to join Him in a huge adventure of redemptive purpose requiring faith and action. Immediately, by his responses I can see a wound revealed (I am borrowing a bit from chapter 4), here is how it manifests:
 - Who am I that I should go? (3:11)
 - Who shall I tell them sent me?
 - What if they do not believe me or listen to me? (4:1)
 - What if I cannot speak well enough to convince them? (4:10)
 - You have got the wrong guy, please send someone else. (4:13)
- What is the wound in Moses’ life? Write out a descriptive phrase for it:
- How is the “Wound” a threat to the will of God in Moses’ life?
- Thankfully, God is patient and Moses consents (with some accommodations) to join God in the mission of deliverance for the people of Israel. Thankfully, God is able to use Moses in great ways, but if you watch the life of the great prophet closely, you can see the wound showing up (fits of anger, impatience, lack of wisdom) along the way.
- What might you say to Moses to encourage him to stand tall and true? Now say it to yourself!

Week 4: Standing Tall and True

Wednesday: The New Name

“Making the Cut”

- Read Gen 17:1-14 and answer the questions designed to get you thinking about new identity in relationship with God.
- When team roster decisions are made and published, we call it “the cut.” I did not make the “cut” as a Junior for the varsity baseball team and spent another year on the JV (I am still in therapy trying to work through this trauma.) In the Old Testament days, when two parties made a serious agreement, they would “Cut” a covenant. They would cut up animals and say, “if you break this agreement, you will end up like these **cut up** animals.”
- In Genesis 15 God and Abram “Cut” a covenant. Abram prepared a sacrifice and God passed through the cut pieces of the sacrifice. God promised to bless Abram with land. In chapter 17 we have the story of a Name Change confirming the covenant between God and Abram. In 17, what does God say to Abram in verses 1-8?
 - Walk _____ and be _____
 - I will make a covenant and I will _____ your numbers
 - You will be the _____ of _____ nations
 - You will no longer be called Abram, you will now be _____
 - You will be _____, Kings will come _____
 - I will give you the land of _____
- Abraham is instructed to pass down the symbol of the “cut” by practicing circumcision, which is the cutting of the foreskin of the male. Many spiritual applications could be applied, but the one pressing for today’s devotion is the tie between cutting and new identity, a covenant identity. When a man comes to faith in Christ, he is reckoned as a son in the family of God. Although he was born outside the family, the cutting (sacrifice) of the body of Jesus, provides a means of passage into a relationship with the Father and the Son. We then “Cut ties” with the old identity like a spiritual circumcision as we walk in covenant with God.
- Listen how Paul describes this new identity: [Romans 8:12-17](#) ¹²Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation-but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. ¹³For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷Now if we are children, then we are heirs-heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.
- Check the roster: You made the cut! Stand tall and represent your new family!

Week 4: Standing Tall and True

Thursday: An Adventure to Pursue

“Adventure in Disruptions, Interruptions, Hassles and Struggles”

- Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 and answer questions that will get you thinking about how to keep the spirit of adventure alive even considering the daily grind. By now you are about a month away from the richness of the teaching and experiences of boot camp. Reality should be settling you back into your old routines. Or are you facing things differently?
- At bootcamp we were on a mission to recover our heart. Paul has found a secret to keeping his heart intact and the secret fountain of daily renewal. Can you sift through what he says in 16-18 and put into words his strategy?
- Did you catch the way he is framing his daily annoying struggles? He is proposing that his view of light and momentary troubles as contributing to an eternal glory, instead of taking joy, momentum, and spiritual energy away from his reserves. Do you think that this is a realistic strategy, or pie in the sky?
- How does he keep such a keen focus on eternity? Doesn't he have to live in the same grinding world that we live in?
- Read James 1:2-4 and answer questions about keeping your spirit of adventure alive in the grind.
- The writer James is proposing that you adjust the way you mentally frame the trials you face. Instead of allowing them to drain your joy, how are you instructed to view them?
- The strain of difficulties upon your faith actually makes your faith stronger, more resilient, and the daily discipline of perseverance will eventually produce a great outcome for your faith. What is it (4)?
- Read 1 Peter 1:6-7. Peter says he knows that his readers are rejoicing even though they have some unpleasant sufferings in their lives. What does he say can be the outcome (the result) of standing tall and true during times of suffering?
- I am proposing that if we view the daily difficulties of life as an exercise in the practice of adventure, that it can possibly build character and maturity in us. Is it more fun to net a Brown trout while fly fishing the Arkansas? Is it more fun to mountain bike down Snowmass? Is it more fun to take a Boone and Crocket bear in Alaska? Of course! But those wild adventures are spread apart, at least they are in my life. There are a whole lot more dull, annoying, difficult, draining, or interrupted days in my life and yours.
- What if we considered each difficulty as an opportunity to invite God into the situation, and to take some wild step of faith with Him in the lead? Give it a try and send me feedback.

Week 4: Standing Tall and True

Friday: A Battle to Fight

“A Battle Won by a Song”

- Read 2 Chronicles 20: 14-24 and answer questions that are designed to get you thinking about spiritual warfare and how to win spiritual battles.
- The backstory of the passage: The armies of Ammon and Moab have assembled to make war against the Southern tribes of the nation of Israel. King Jehoshaphat responds by looking to the Lord God for guidance on how to mobilize for the impending conflict. The people of Israel followed the King’s lead and gathered from every town to pray and to seek God.
- Jehoshaphat is aware that his military resources to face the army coming against him are lacking, and that his nation is outmatched. He appeals to God and asks for specific guidance on what to do. (verse 12)
- The Lord sends word through prophets that the people of Israel are not to be afraid or discouraged because of the vast army coming against them. God promises to fight for the people by saying “The battle is not yours, but the Lord’s.” God does expect the army to take up their positions, but He says that they will see deliverance.
- Next comes one of the most unusual and ridiculous military strategies ever used in a conflict. It is just the kind of thing that you see in the Old Testament when the Most High God is involved. The King appoints men to SING to the Lord and to praise Him for the splendor of his holiness. The choir is placed IN FRONT of the army. They begin to sing and praise the Lord. Can you see, without switching to a spiritual mindset, any military advantage to such a strategy?
- But work it does! The Lord God sets ambushes against Ammon and Moab by causing their allies from Mount Seir to begin fighting amongst themselves. Then the men of Moab and Ammon begin to fight each other. When the men of Judah come up over a ridge, they see the enemy armies lying dead on the battlefield.
- The spiritual application is not difficult to make. I am hoping to inspire you to enter your next spiritual battle armed with the awareness that your praise and worship is a powerful battle tool. When God is called upon to rescue his people he listens. When God’s people acknowledge that they need God’s help, He is glorified. Use your spiritual armor described in Ephesians 6. Quote scriptures that will cut through lies and expose enemy tactics. This is how the Sword of the Spirit (the Word of God) is brandished and implemented.
- Fight a spiritual battle with songs of praise and worship. It is not a battle against flesh and blood, it is a spiritual battle. Stand tall and true as a soldier of the Most High God.

Week 4: Standing Tall and True

Saturday: A Beauty to Rescue

“Love Covers a Multitude of Sins”

- Read Hosea 3:1-4 and answer the following questions designed to get you thinking about fighting for the heart of a woman.
- The backstory of the passage: There is a prophet who is instructed by God to take a wife of questionable ability in the category of “faithfulness.” The failure in honoring vows and her failed fidelity are framed to confront the infidelity of God’s people in their relationship with Him. By having Hosea continue to take the wayward wife back, God demonstrates his loving patience and willingness to continue His side of his covenant relationship with his people.
- Let me ask a hard question and get it out of the way, “Could you do it?” Hopefully, you will never face infidelity. I have been blessed that I have not. If this curriculum catches on and gains ground, then most likely it will eventually come into the hands of a man who has faced this very scary and humbling reality.
- But I have been sinned against. I’ve been disrespected. I’ve been shut out. I’ve heard words said in anger that cut deep. I have been refused. I have conscientiously focused loving behavior in the correct love language and gained nothing from my effort. And in these times of hurt I have justified the return of evil with an eye for an eye. What about you?
- It is noble to fight for the heart of a woman. The concept brings meaning to my confusing life and helps me believe that I am honoring the One who saved me by being protective and nurturing to the wife He provided for me. But when she does not appreciate all that: real hard to keep going.
- Which reveals the true measure of Love. Biblical love covers a multitude of sins. From the little sins easily overlooked, to the ones that cause hurts that linger for years. It reflects the kind of Love the Father had for Israel, and the kind of Love Jesus has for his bride, the kind of love that can heal the wound of the woman in your life.
- I recently officiated the wedding of some dear friends in my congregation. I did not need to, but I reminded them that things would get REAL hard, REAL fast after the honeymoon. I reminded them of the key points of 1 Corinthians 13. Here it is again for you for a refresher:

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸ Love never fails.
- Stand tall and true regarding the woman in your life, Love. And then love some more.