



# Field Support Manual

**A daily devotional guide to keep the fires of change  
going in your life after Bootcamp is over**

**Philip H Garvin**

## Band of Brothers Field Support Manual

Here's how the Field Support Manual came about....

I (reluctantly) attended a Band of Brothers Bootcamp about 4 years ago and it totally changed the direction of my life. I have attended plenty of other seminars, pep-rallies, concerts, worship services, ministry training events, retreats, and even seminaries in my personal pursuit of finding, understanding, and implementing God's plan for my life. Somehow, the teaching and format of the Bootcamp reached down and unlocked a previously locked door in my understanding and altered my compass bearing for the good.

Since I was so powerfully impacted, I wanted to give back to the Bootcamp project. In my spiritual man, I sensed God calling me to write out some daily support devotionals for those men who make either a first-time commitment to follow the ways of Christ, or a first time commitment to FOLLOW (get serious about) the way of Christ.

I am making progress in my own journey of Godly masculinity. I am practicing accountability in some guys groups where I regularly reveal where I am falling short. I am working on honing and mastering my fly fishing, bow-hunting, mountain biking, rock-climbing, woodworking, guitar playing, firearm aiming, heart of a woman protecting skills. I have been married 28 years to the same woman. I raised 2 sons. I built the home where my wife and I live. All this sounds more masculine and powerful than it is in real life.

I decided to yield my life to the walk of following Christ when I was 6 years old. For work, I have the amazing privilege of pastor shepherding a group of believers to fulfill God's call as a local Bible believing/living congregation. I am also a licensed professional counselor, and I have a small practice of guiding people through the quagmires of their lives. It seems with those kind of credentials (at least to me), I would not have needed, nor would have been radically affected by, a men's bootcamp. Thankfully, God had mercy and thought it would be a good time for me to make some real progress in my spiritual journey.

I have tried to capture the major themes of a typical Bootcamp and leverage them into a week's schedule. Here is what you will see under a particular theme for the week:

- Sunday: The Heart of a Man (God's design for a man)
- Monday: Your place in the Larger Story (How you fit in to God's Kingdom and the Bigger Story)
- Tuesday: The Wound and the Poser that emerges (How sin and wounds deflate your destiny)
- Wednesday: The New Name (Your New Identity in Christ)
- Thursday: An Adventure to Pursue (God's design for your heart for adventure)
- Friday: A Battle to Fight (God's design for you to win spiritual battles)
- Saturday: A Beauty to Save (God's design for you and your relationship with a woman)

Blessings on your journey! You have what it takes. The only foe you will meet that has the power to stop you from making real progress is you. The other battles are very winnable. Set aside some time to read the Bible passage and answer the questions. You do not have to do these lessons to grow in your masculine journey, but You will have to set some time aside, preferably EVERY DAY with the Lord to keep growing, THERE IS NO SHORTCUT.

Go for it!

Philip H Garvin

\*These subject areas come from the book [Wild at Heart](#) and teachings of John Eldredge.

## Week 1: A New Direction

*Sunday: The Heart of a Man*

“He wrestled with God and came out a new man”

Read Gen 32: 22-30 and then answer the following questions:

- Why do you think it was important for Jacob to get away from his family and things and be “alone” before his big wrestling match with God (vs 23)?
- Do responsibilities and possessions get in the way of your understanding where you stand with God? Do you need to set aside time each week (and day) for reflection on where you stand with God?
- What do you think this wrestling match between the angel and Jacob is really all about? Why is God revealing himself to Jacob in this manner? How does God affirm Jacob’s masculinity in this encounter?
- What do you admire about Jacob’s approach to the whole match? What was Jacob really wanting out of the situation?
- What is your understanding of the significance of the name change from “Jacob” to “Israel?”
- What is the significance of how Jacob named the place (Peniel) where he struggled with God?

At some point you might find that you are in your own big wrestling match with God. It could be that you are most likely being challenged by the Lord to grow out of a childish frame of thinking and behaving into a more spiritually mature place in life. This story captures a change in Jacob’s focus, direction, and destiny. It was big. It left a permanent physical reminder of his encounter.

- What wrestle are you facing with God right now? Is it time for a new direction? Are you ready for God to reveal something about your destiny as a follower of Christ?

## Week 1: A New Direction

*Monday: Your Place in the Larger Story*

*"Get Ready to Move"*

Read Joshua 1:1-11 then answer the following questions:

- The former leader of God's people, the great and venerable Moses has died, and Joshua is the next man up. What do you imagine Joshua might be the feeling in taking on this great responsibility? Do you think he might be anxious about his place in the story of God's people?
  
- What did God say that might convey that God thought Joshua "had what it takes?" (vs 3-6)
  
- What cautionary instructions did God give Joshua about the behavior and attitude that would be necessary for him to be able to accomplish the mission? (vs7,8)
  
- What battles did God foresee in the life of Joshua that would need to be addressed as Joshua assumed the role of leadership for the people of God? What emotional struggles would accompany Joshua in his new role? (vs9)
  
- What was Joshua's response to the instructions he received? Did he fully embrace the challenge and take up the responsibility to lead, or did he shrink back from the challenge? What did he tell the rest of the leaders to indicate his state of mind? (vs10,11)
  
- Henry Blackaby says in the study Experiencing God, "You cannot stay where you are AND go with God." You are going to have to move forward. Moving forward will sometimes be a battle with fearful challenges and a need for courage. What is God saying to you about His calling on your life and your destiny in serving Him? Where in your life is it time to "get ready to move out?"

## **Week 1: A New Direction**

*Tuesday: The Wound and the Poser, Breaking agreements*

*“Not top 10 in the life of Abram”*

Read Genesis 12:10-20 and answer the following questions:

- In chapter 12 of Genesis, God called Abram to a big adventure! He was to leave his homeland and go to a new land prepared for him by God. In this calling there was a promise from God to make Abram into a great nation, even though at this point Abram had no children. In verse 7 God promises to give Abram the land he was traveling through, and Abram responded by worshipping the Lord there.
- As the journey unfolds, verse 10 reveals that a challenge presents itself (a severe famine) to Abram. Have you noticed that between the promises of God, and the arrival in the “promised land,” there always seemed to be some difficult circumstance that calls into question the promises of God that we have recently received?
- In verse 11, Abram foresees that danger may accompany his travels and it is related to the beauty of his wife. Do you find yourself offended at Abram’s abdication of responsibility to cover his wife with strength and protection by exposing her to danger and seeking self-preservation as he moves into uncharted territory? Why or why not?
- What wound or weakness is on display in this plan devised by Abram? Is there a sin in asking his wife to join in him the intentional deception? What consequences could such a plan have to a marriage or to God’s plan for this couple?
- In what way is Abram acting as a POSER? Can you think of a time that you have failed to provide Godly covering for the vulnerable ones in your life because of some plan to preserve your sense of self?
- Would you be willing to confess to the Lord right now for any responsibility to “man up” that you have missed and ask for help to face troubles and uncertainty with courage and determination?

## **Week 1: A New Direction**

*Wednesday: The New Name*

*"From Object of Wrath to Valued Asset"*

Read Ephesians 2:1-10 and answer the following questions:

- This passage makes the sharp contrast between the course of a life before meeting Jesus Christ, and a life after having been reborn in the Name of Jesus. In verses 1 through 3, what are about 5 things that characterizes a life before meeting Jesus?
  
- In verse 4, Paul the writer states that there is something about God that is a game changer, what is it? Do you know the meaning of MERCY? If you do not, Google it now. What did God do for those who were the recipients of that mercy?
  
- Please make a list of all the reasons that qualified you to be included into God's family, especially highlighting your personal strengths, abilities, or characteristics (verse 8):
  
- Hopefully in the question above you came to realize that it is only by God's GRACE that you came to know God's redemptive love. Do you know the meaning of GRACE? If not, please Google it now and write out a working definition.
  
- Verse 10 notes that those who are reborn into Christ are "God's workmanship." In the original wording the concept of "workmanship" means a highly valued, finely crafted piece of art, like a masterpiece. Of all the grand things God has created, have you ever considered that a saved person is one of God's finest pieces of creative expression, highly valued, and carefully planned?
  
- So, what does God want to do with his "workmanship"? Does God lock it in a vault or museum, or does He intend for us to be about "doing good works" for His kingdom?
  
- As you reflect on your New Identity as a believer, do you want to act more like an object of wrath, or like a newly created Son of the Most High God?

## **Week 1: A New Direction**

*Thursday: An Adventure to Pursue*

*“Ready for whatever may come”*

Read Acts 21:10-14 and answer the following questions:

- If you read chapter 20 and 21 of Acts, you can understand that the apostle Paul is anxious to get back to Jerusalem and wrap up his latest missionary journey. You will start to get the picture from his conversations with the elders from Ephesus that he is aware that his journey ahead is fraught with danger and could end badly. A prophet named Agabus confirms that if Paul continues forward, the outcome is most likely a worst-case scenario. His traveling companions beg him to reconsider and to take evasive action immediately.
- What is Paul’s response to their pleadings?
- What does his response reveal about his level of commitment to his Lord?
- What level of courage and tenacity would it take to stay on course, even when you have a pretty certain idea that the mission will end badly?
- Have you ever allowed your fear, or close associates, or need for self-preservation, to cause you waiver in your commitment to doing what God would have you to do?
- If you can think of a specific time that this happened in your life, what are your reflections of that situation now? Have you even considered confessing that situation to the Lord?
- Do you love your life or the Lord Jesus more? Do you need to grow in your love for the will and plan of God for your life? Do you need to detach from the things of this world that are competing for your first loyalty? Make a list of things that are competing for your attention and loyalty right now:

## Week 1: A New Direction

*Friday: A Battle to Fight*

*“He fought a lion, in a pit, on a snowy day”*

Read 1 Chronicles 11:22-25 and answer the following questions:

- It’s honor roll time in hall of courage and battle. The men that attached themselves to David as he was emerging into a young leader were very accomplished in masculinity. This one soldier, Benaiah, is a burly fierce chap.
- List out some details about the listed accomplishments:
  - 2 Men of Moab:
  - Lion:
  - Egyptian Giant:
- If you can generate a mental video, it plays out like scenes from an Avenger movie. Which of the three battles do you like most? Although I can visualize and tremble at the octagon match with the 7-footer, I like the vignette about the lion. I like how Benaiah reportedly went INTO the pit to fight the lion. And don’t forget, it was snowy, so the footing was at best slushy/sketchy and might have given the lion (with four feet on the ground) even more advantage.
- The Bible calls our enemy a lion (see 1 Peter 5:8) and the battles with him are as difficult as fighting a lion, in a pit, on a snowy day. Only strength in battle tactics, courage, and readiness will write your name in the win column.
- You can increase your battle tactics, courage, and readiness with a few measures of discipline for each day. Regular, sustained times of prayer increase our spiritual discernment, which could give us an early alert system to an impending attack. Refreshing ourselves in God’s Word daily prepares us mentally and spiritually, and it equips us with Truth to use in combat. Readiness comes from practicing humility and watching out for potential areas of weakness where we are most often tempted. I recommend committing a few key Scripture verses to memory. These will be your most effective weapons against an attack. Always confront lies and temptations with Truth. Do not make an agreement with the enemy about your inability to fight back, the unwillingness of the Heavenly Father to fight for you, or your need to go outside of God’s provision for your needs to be met.
- Some key battle verses to start with include:
  - Philippians 4:13
  - Ep 6:10-18
  - 2 Cor 10:4



## Week 1: A New Direction

*Saturday: A Beauty to Save*

*"The weaker partner"*

Read 1 Peter 3:7 and answer the following questions:

- In Genesis 2:18-25 you have the account of how God brought to Adam a helper that would be suitable to help him fulfill his destiny of rulership over the earth. Here is the passage:
  - **Genesis 2:18-25** <sup>18</sup>The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." <sup>19</sup>Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup>So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. <sup>21</sup>So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. <sup>22</sup>Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup>The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." <sup>24</sup>That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. <sup>25</sup>Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.
- In the Hebrew account of the passage the words translated "suitable helpmate" come from the words **Ezer** and **Kenegdo**. **Kenegdo** means "suitable for him," "meet for him," or "help-meet." It has connotations of "like," "as," "opposite to" and "equal to." **Ezer** is more interesting. It is used in other passages to mean a "powerful rescue" or "support" and quite often is used of God when he provides "Saving rescue" or support to His people. It communicates "strength" and "help." After I preached this our marriage life group began saying she was built to "Save him (Adam) from himself" which is not completely accurate nor inaccurate at the same time.
- If the word for the woman means that she is "opposite, but equal" and designed for "strength, saving, and rescue," how do you reconcile the role and design differences that cause the Biblical writers to outline that a woman should be under the authority of a man?
- In your relationship with the significant woman in your life, do you "cover her with masculine strength" in providing spiritual leadership, or do you require her to "rescue you, save you, or lead (from a position of weakness) by your passivity? In what ways are you striving to grow out of adolescence into manhood by taking up your rightful role as a spiritual leader in your relationship with the woman in your life?
- Have you reconciled and resolved the Biblical roles for the man and the wife?

## Week 2: Measures of Success

*Sunday: The Heart of a Man*

*"From Hero to Zero"*

Read 1 Kings 19:1-13 and answer the following questions:

- 1 Kings chapter 18 is one of my favorite passages. Here is a summary: The chosen people of God are seriously falling short of their destiny and they have fallen into the practices of pagan neighboring nations by worshipping Baals and false gods. The worship of the Most High God has been neglected. God inspires the prophet Elijah to challenge the prophets of Baal to demonstrate once and for all the true King of Heaven. The plan calls for the construction of two alters, with the true God demonstrating power by consuming the sacrifice. Baal's prophets wail and cry out all afternoon, but the sacrifice remains untouched. Elijah calls to God, fire falls from heaven and completely consumes the sacrifice. Great victory for God because the people repent and turn back to Him by doing away with the false prophets. I cannot even imagine the spiritual and emotional high for Elijah after witnessing God's awesome power. Then chapter 19 rolls around and Elijah goes from Hero (of the Faith) to Zero in 4 seconds flat.
  
- Can you offer an explanation to why the words of a wicked queen have the power to "take out" a prophet, right after he has witnessed the consuming power of God and the vindication of God's ownership of the people of Israel?
  
- Have you ever experienced a weakness or vulnerability in your spiritual man, right after a powerful fresh experience of God's movement in your life? (You better get ready if you are not already experiencing this phenomenon a week out from bootcamp)
  
- What is going on in the heart and mind of the prophet? Why is he wanting to give up everything? Can you see this pattern playing out in your life? Why does this happen?
  
- Did you notice how the Lord helped Elijah in his moment of weakness? Please list out the sustaining actions that the Lord provided through the angel.
  
- The next time you find yourself taken out and ready to throw in the towel, I hope you think of the words the Lord spoke to Elijah in verse 13: "What are you doing here, Elijah?" It could be a call for you to question your predicament. The same God who powerfully works to demonstrate His power can give you the strength to overcome your moody funk. Are you ready to power up and get moving?

## Week 2: Measures of Success

*Monday: Your Place in the Larger Story*

*“Chosen for a Sifting”*

Read Luke 22:24-34 and answer the following questions:

- What are the disciples arguing over right there at the last supper with Jesus?
  
- Can you think of any explanation to why this would be the time that they are wrestling with such issues? Why do you think this issue is coming up right now? (I have a theory)
  
- What does Jesus say about how we find our place in His story? How does His way of demonstrating leadership differ from the ways to the world?
  
- Do you wrestle with comparing yourself with others and trying to outdo others in a manner to draw attention to yourself?
  
- Jesus singles out one of his disciples. I suspect because this fellow would have been right there in the middle of any conversations about places of importance. Often you find Mr. Simon Peter going into action way before he has considered consequences or benefits. Jesus tells Simon that the devil has asked the Father for special permission to “sift him.” I recently read the book of Job where the devil asks for permission to do something similar in Job’s life. It does not sound like a fun experience.
  
- How does Peter assess his readiness for the dangerous events that might come?
  
- What do you know about how Peter actually performs when “sifted?” (Luke 22:54-62)
  
- As you work to find your place in the Kingdom of the Lord, are you ready to embrace what “a sifting” may reveal about your need for a closer inspection of your daily cross? Are you ready to stop comparing yourself and embrace your own calling and destiny in the Kingdom?

## **Week 2: Measures of Success**

*Tuesday: The Wound and the Poser*

*“Not ready to give up my best suit”*

Read Matt 19:16-22 and answer the following questions:

- Do you think the young man genuinely was interested in making sure he was on the right track in a religious context? Do you think his question about inheriting eternal life was genuine?
- Why do you think he asked for clarification on which commandments to follow? Was he looking for a loophole or to focus in on the ones that mattered? (Or was he hoping Jesus would say the ones that he had already fulfilled in his own mind?)
- When he asks Jesus “What do I lack?” what do you think he is really asking? Have you ever wrestled with this question?
- Did you notice how Jesus changes the subject of the conversation when he says, “If you want to be PERFECT, then ....” Why did Jesus do this?
- So, reading along it is at this point that we find that the young man had been somewhat successful in his young life because he had great riches. Do you think that his wealth had become a “fig leaf” for his measure of himself? Was his success a stumbling block to truly finding eternal life?
- Why do you think, if he was so intently looking for spiritual answers just moments before, did his motivation disappear and his momentum was zapped? Perhaps he was looking for an answer that fit his personal narrative? What was his personal narrative?
- The passage says that he went away sad “because he had great wealth.” My assessment is that “wealth had him.” Without this outward trapping of life, I don’t think he could stand and face the adventure of pursuing the Master. His wealth was him. He was rich, but empty.
- What is your favorite fig leaf? What is your personal narrative about where you stand on your spiritual journey?

## Week 2: Measures of Success

*Wednesday: The New Name*

*"A Glorious death certificate"*

Read Gal 2:19-21 & 2 Cor 5:17 and answer the following questions:

- In writing this passage, Paul says in verse 19 "For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God" What? Read it again. Can you write out what you think he is saying in your own words:
  
- Now in verse 20 he says, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me." My understanding of this truth is that my own personal life (the one that was dead because of my sin) had to die for me to be "reborn" into Christ. When the Spirit of God baptizes me into the death of Christ through my faith, I come up from baptism as a new creation. As I come up, my spirit person is united with Christ, with his resurrection life. The life in me is new, it is Christ living in me. I am a new person. When did that happen in your life?
  
- When I stand before God, I will not have to stand on my own. I will be able to hide behind (IN) the person of Christ. When the Father, in his role as judge looks down, he will see the righteousness of his Son, not me (Praise the Lord!) "[Colossians 3:3-4](#) <sup>3</sup>For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup>When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory."
  
- This new identity helps me resist sin and temptation because I reckon myself as dead to sin and alive to God. When I do sin, I can confess and claim forgiveness in my identity in Christ. I am no longer a "sinner" because I am a new creation in Christ. How do you think knowing this will help me live differently?
  
- How are you doing in reckoning your old person as dead and your new person as alive?

## Week 2: Measures of Success

*Thursday: An Adventure to Pursue*

*"Come follow me"*

Read Matt 4:18-22 and Acts 4, and then answer the following questions:

- Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John (sons of Zebedee) were by trade fishermen. What can you imagine would be the appropriate level of intelligence, sophistication, and refinement for commercial fishermen? Now imagine you were starting a new entrepreneurial venture where your main product is a new ideology and the primary purpose was to attract new investors, would you consider commercial fisherman as high on the prospect list for upper tier account reps? Why or why not?
- So, can you imagine, from the perspective of a fisherman (the rough skinned, foul mouthed, aromatically unpleasant guys) what it must be like to be recruited by a Master Teacher to "follow?" Can you just imagine the experience of going from long days of yanking fish by net, to a barrage of seekers, life changing words spoken from another universe, and daily experiencing miracles by the hand of the fellow who invited you to come along? Can you hear Jesus say, "Now you guys are going to fish for men"? Talk about a mixed metaphor!
- Fast forward a bit in their lives to days of walking with the Son of God: If you read along through the gospels you consistently see a lack of maturity as the fishermen jockey amongst themselves for the opportunity to become "top advisor" for Jesus. Apparently becoming the one to sit immediately "right and left" of the Master in his approaching kingdom is totally attainable for guys who just recently moved up from "fish college." Have you ever noticed when an unqualified person is elevated quickly how the lack of character prep shows up? Has this ever happened in your life?
- Fast Forward again to a scene near after the death of Jesus. In John 21 (vs 1-6) it appears that the adventure of following Jesus had lost momentum and appeal for Peter and some of the other guys. When they did not quite know what to do next, the formerly abandoned fishing nets seemed a logical choice. And what a terrible night they had! They find they can't even fish well anymore: all night fishing, not a single stinking fish. Thankfully, the Master came upon them. After some serious soul therapy Peter's is refocused from "fish catching" back to his true calling "men catching."
- And now to Acts 4. Peter and John are spreading the message entrusted to them by the Master and the religious leaders are looking to shut it down. Listen to the reaction of those watching fisherman living a life of adventure: <sup>13</sup>"When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. Have you ever considered that your calling to follow Christ is the greatest adventure you could possibly endeavor?"

## Week 2: Measures of Success

*Friday: A Battle to Fight*

*"Youthful Exuberance"*

Read 1 Sam 17:1-9; 34-50 and answer the following questions:

- What is the biggest guy or challenge you've ever faced in a battle?
- I played on a high school football team that made it into round 1 of the state playoffs one year. The opposing team's running back was a giant and he had run all over every 4A team they had faced that season. For one half we stopped him because our coaches had us prepped for blood and war. However, in the second half, his size and strength prevailed, and we were overrun. The Denison Yellowjackets went on to win the state championship that year. I remember being in proximity to that running back, he seemed to be 7 foot 280ish (most likely a fearful mind exaggeration.)
- Can you even imagine the size of a 9-foot battle-hardened champion? The passage recounts that Goliath's spear head weighed 15 pounds. Can you even throw a 15-pound barbell across the room?! Can you calculate the strength it would take to hurl a spear of that size with skill and accuracy? His armor reportedly weighed in at 125 pounds. Could you even stand up or move across a room with that on? (Not me at 50!) As Goliath shouted his taunts and verbal threats, the armies of Israel cowered. Intimidation based upon size of threat was maximized.
- And then a very young fellow named David (maybe late teens; certainly not old enough to join the ranks of the enlisted men) hears the taunts and his spirit is moved to action. David tells the fighting men and the King "Let no one lose heart on account of the Philistine, your servant will go and fight him. Misplaced Bravado?"
- David's exuberance was reported to King Saul and he was brought before the King for a consultation. King Saul attempted to dissuade the young man from the inconceivable plan, but the "talk" failed to discourage him. Have you had people try to talk you out of a big fight for the right cause?
- A key to David's confidence is revealed when he cites that the LORD delivered him in troubles in the past, and the Lord will do it again. Do you have that kind of confidence in the Lord's strength?
- You have a spiritual enemy who seriously outsizes you many times over. He most likely has a big championship belt buckle from the many times he has already sent you for a dirt nap. I hope when you face off next time, the words of David will come to mind: "**1 Samuel 17:46-47** <sup>46</sup>This day the LORD will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. <sup>47</sup>All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands."

## Week 2: Measures of Success

*Saturday: A Beauty to Save*

*"How much is a Bride worth?"*

Read Eph 5:22-33 and answer the following questions:

- How far was Jesus willing to go to demonstrate his love for His bride? Vs 25
  
- Loving a bride is likened to the attention and care that a man might demonstrate in making sure that his own body is cared for and his own needs are met. In what ways might you "care for" the needs of your wife?
  
- It is somewhat ironic but not unfathomable that I am typing out this devotional thought the day after it comes to light that I am failing miserably to "care for" my wife in manner like the Lord Jesus did for His bride. It was hard to hear my girl tell me that she often feels "lonely" and that her needs are going unmet, especially after I have been cruising along thinking that my relationship with my wife is the area where I am clearly scoring "A+." (Refer to section on self-deception) I remember the very powerful and lifechanging moment it was as I sat in my first bootcamp and heard the teaching about the roles of the man and woman. It was embarrassing as the Holy Spirit revealed that I had previously been afraid to "take the lead" in my relationship with my wife. I had loads of resentment that she was not "validating me." I had made an agreement with the devil that she was "against me." I was in fact longing for a Father's validation that was clearly provided but not appropriated. I broke that agreement that I had made with the enemy and wrote it right at the top of the paper that went into the fire that night. I came to realize that it was my job (and responsibility) to "love her and give myself up for her" and that it was ok for her to need me, and for me to take the lead (I have what it takes).
  
- I was in guys small group this morning and the author of our study book penned a prayer for guys like you and me (knuckleheads) to read (often) and it really challenged me, so I pass it on to you:  

"Father, I want to choose the narrow path that leads to life. I stand in need with deep challenges in my marriage of which I simply don't know what to think or what to do. Jesus, I am asking for your life to infuse our marriage. I'm asking for you to give us your heart for each other. Holy Spirit, would you teach me how to love my wife? God, I'm asking for your grace to infuse me with a capacity to risk radically cherishing my wife and coming to the center of her heart and story, getting to know her more than I do, and choosing to be known by her more than I am. Would you shepherd me in this process as I take bigger risks? Would you help me increase my vulnerability with her? I agree with the full portion available for a man and a woman, two made one, under heaven. Expose my unbelief and shine light on where you are inviting us to go next in recovering everything you intend in our marriage.

Excerpt From  
[Becoming a King](#)  
Morgan Snyder