MEN'S FRATERNITY

Knights of the 21st Century

Trail 6

KEITH: Hey guys, I want to welcome you to our campfire, our roundtable area. This is where we spend a lot of time just doing life with each other, figuring things out. Probably the most important time to do life with each other is when you're going through a crisis, when you're trying to figure out what's your next step. But also, sometimes when you got to take a look at yourself and you're going to evaluate it differently than you normally would. One of the things that I think of when I think of this kind of a model of what we're about to do, it's allowing you to evaluate your mom. We looked at our chain mail and we said, okay, let's take a look at whether good, not so good, somewhere in the middle and we all kind of acknowledged where that was. Well this is going to let you figure that out as we go.

What I want you to do is this. Mom seems to be holy ground for us. The problem is that some of that holy ground can throw dirt in ways that you weren't prepared. And so, as a result of that honest evaluation is never a criticism or never saying mom's not enough or anything else. It's just saying mom was X. That's what it was. It wasn't – there isn't a right or a wrong here. So I want you to relax a little bit. In fact, what you're going to see as we go through this is your reflection of your mom's eye and as you see that reflection, there's actually a reflection of your mom in

you. I mean even though it is obviously a female eye and it's obviously not your eye, there is a reflection of that somewhere in it so looking through this process, it's going to be very, very helpful for us and actually pretty healthy. So don't panic. Don't feel like you're doing something you shouldn't be doing.

The God of the universe, when He came to earth had a mom and on days made wrong judgments. An Jesus responded to those and said, hey, that's not your call mom. You don't get to decide when I come out as a Son of God. You don't get to decide whether I've done this or that up to your standard and pleasing as an adult. No indication that before he was in his thirties, but the reality was he took care of his mom, but he also didn't let his mom control the situation. That's what we're really doing. That's all we're really doing.

Now so you know, my mom is dead a dozen years, is a saint. I mean she's just an amazing woman. But when I evaluate her, she's not going to get all perfect scores any more than any of you guys that have your life together. So as you think this through, and we're going to work this out together. Each of us will kind of score it as we go, like you're going to score it yourself at your seats. But what we're also going to do here is what I want you to later in your campfire and interact with each other on it. We're going to kind of reveal it. So I thought what we'd do is each one of us kind of take a section. We all had moms, we have a different perspective.

So instead of me just doing it the whole time and all you'd hear about was my mom, we'll have it go all the way around so you can hear about each guy's in their journey a little bit. So that's what we're going to do. So take your books, open up to Trail Number 6 and we're going to take a look at moms, the reflection of her, alright.

Keep this in mind, your mother was one of the primary people to influence the filters that your chain mail developed. As a primary nurturer in your life, she defined the roles that supportive relationships are expected to have in your life. Your mom's a giver, right, a nurturer?

Now look at Number 1. A man takes responsibility for the way his filters influence his daily life. He understands how his mother's role in his life affects his chain mail and works to maximize the positive impact of her nurturing. Guys, I want you to understand that I want you to take a good hard look at your mom and say, what is it that's in me that's going to stay? What is it that's become truth? That's what this is all about. And then what is it that's going to have to go, that's caused me to believe certain things?

Did you ever feel like your mom liked your brother more than you or your sister more than you? You have to deal with that. It will impact how you make a choice. To be honest with you, if I interviewed your mom she probably wouldn't say she liked them more but on days it felt that way. So keeping that in mind, here's what we're going to do.

Look at A. I want you to evaluate your mom as a female caretaker, alright, so again if your mom wasn't very – you weren't very active with your mom, you're not going to be able – you have to take a female caretaker in your life. Please distribute 3 points between the 2 attributes that are listed – you'll see this laid out in your books – based on how she displayed these attributes. For instance, if the first attribute had one point, the second would have two. It's going to always total to three. If the second one had three, the first would have none or zero. Just so we get the scoring system down. This is always confusing for us as guys. This is the way we're going to do it. Every answer you'll have like a No. 1 and 2 answers. One of those will either have the number 0, 1, 2, or 3 and the other will have whatever is necessary to get there to get at a total of 3. So if your first answer is 0, the next one is 3. If the first answer is 1, the second answer is 2. I know we're already confused, right. Three is your total, 3 is your total. You can't have 2 zeros. You can't have a 4. Alright, she's not the immaculate conception mother. So you can't have, you got to stay on the 3. Do you see what we're going to do? Actually what this does is it actually keeps us from feeling like we're slamming our moms. It really does. It gives us that opportunity, alright. So ready? Hold onto your hats. We're going to have a lot of fun together.

No. 1. The lens filter through which you view your mother contributes to your definition of the forest as an adult. And you guys know that when we use the term forest, what we're saying is it's a world in

which we live that we can affect and we can change. Now you're an adult and your mom is still part of your history even though you are no longer underneath that control, you feel that. So what we're going to do is take a look at that in this section, right. So here we go. We're going to evaluate.

No. 1 or point 1. Was your mom's attitude positive because she viewed herself as strong and capable of making the changes that are required in order to deal with a variety of forest circumstances, alright, that's 1. Or, the other point that goes with that – was her attitude negative because she was anxious, defeated by life, rigid or rule oriented. Alright, you got, see the way it works. So we're all putting scores down right now. Now see, you guys, this is what's so unfair. My mom was awesome, so she's a 3 on the first one a 0 on the second. Alright, a 3 on the first one a 0 on the second, totaling to what – 3, yeah, you got it. That's the way we're going to do this.

ROY: Well the next time we do this, guys I'm going to instead of doing – I'm going to create an algebraic formula (laughter) okay, with a little bit of calculus in it. Yeah, that way this will look easy to you.

KEITH: Thanks for making it a little bit harder, alright. How did you score your moms, guys?

T.C.: Well for me, I'm actually making it maybe a little more difficult. I've been doing this throughout for some of them where I felt like she was just really a certain way half the time. I gave her 1.5. I really…

ROY: I told you, calculus an algebra would have worked.

T.C.: For the first one, 1.5 and for the second one, 1.5, because really, it really, my mother half the time she was positive views and the other times she was just defeated ...

KEITH: Okay, that's fair. Guys apparently you can do whatever you want. You can put 1.7 and 1.3. As long as it equals 3, that's all we care about.

T.C.: _____, I would have to say 1 for first, 2 for the second. (laughter)

CLAIR: I got mom with an A minus on the first (laughter). Actually I gave her a 1 on the positive attitude, 2 on the negative, just I remember more times a defeatist attitude that life is just not fair and I don't know what to do, you know frustration.

ROBERT: I myself had a 2 and a 1. She was definitely leaning more to the positive end but she did struggle a little bit with the negative aspects of it.

KEITH: Just so everybody knows. You mom, alive now?

CLAIR: Mom's alive.

T.C.: Mom's alive.

ROBERT: Mom's live.

ROY: Alive.

KEITH: My mom's not alive, okay, so I'm free and clear (laughter).

ROY: We have to make a deal here. Nobody sends this to our mothers. (Laughter). My mom, it's amazing. Sometimes just one word in the whole question decides the number. The word positive equals 0. so therefore, the other one has to be a 3.

KEITH: So your mom's the exact opposite of mine. So let's look at the next one, alright. Did she demonstrate a good work ethic because she had the confidence to step toward the challenges of a work environment? I love the way we're stating these things in a little bit broader way. Or, did she ask helpless, lazy or disinterested? Alright, so how does your mom do in that? Alright, which one's that. Again, we're back to my – my mom would not always get 3s, but she's getting 3s here. So guys, make sure you're score 3, my mom's 3 on the first one and 0 on the second one, alright. So how did your mom score on that?

ROBERT: Definitely a 3 for me on the first one. My mom never stopped working. I mean all the time she was just a work machine.

T.C.: You know it's funny. At first I had a 2 and a 1 because my mother did always work, but she never really had the best attitude about it. Then I thought about it and felt like it's a 3 and a 0 simply because regardless of her attitude, she knew she had to do it. You know, when you look at the second one, that defined the first one. She was never helpless, lazy, or disinterested. She just went to work upset every day, but she went. So there's a 3 for the first and a 0 for the second.

KEITH: And it's interesting because it doesn't address her attitude. It addresses....

CLAIR: I got a 3 as well. A 3 and a 0, amazing work ethic, second jobs and a little bit of a conflict here, because I gave her a little bit of a slam on being positive than negative. I never heard her complain about those second jobs. They were tough.

KEITH: Now, to make sure you're a good test giver here, Roy, you better not have a 3 and a 0 because we're four 3s and 0s.

ROY: Well actually, it's interesting because some of our moms at one point worked in the home and then didn't work. You know how they worked in the home and then sometimes they worked outside the home. So my mom did both and in both kinds of situations for many years of my life she was just in the home. She was a 3. She had a good work ethic and she never really acted lazy or disinterested.

KEITH: So that will be interesting guys. If you answered where your mom wasn't a 3, we just all said our moms were 3 and very diverse moms. We all said a 3 on that one. Your mom might not have been that way and so keeping that in mind, again, your score is your score and it's correct, unless it's T.C.'s system and (laughter).

Let me take you to the conclusion. Look at your books here and there's a conclusion. How we define life affects the level of effort we are willing to put into it as well as what we get out of it. Now this is not about your mom. The conclusion is about you. So just for a minute, let me

explain to you this is what I'm thinking. If you, as a guy, find yourself having certain attitudes, certain things, it can be very reflective of the scores that your mom reflected here. So what you do is say, okay, that's part of my chain mail. So understand the conclusions are going to take you to what about me. It's not a conclusion about your mom. It a conclusion about you in light of what your mom was or wasn't, so it will help you understand that.

As we go through that, T.C. is going to take you through the next set of points.

T.C.: Alright, let's go through the next set. Here we go. B says our mother teaches us here view of women through the behaviors she demonstrates to us. Alright, so here's the first comparison. It says did your mom model independent behaviors? Was she involved in her own growth-focused pursuits, or was she more interested in being taken care than in taking care of others? This will be interesting. I would love to hear what you all have to say about your mom, well you better say, I take care (laughter). But for me, mine was a 2 and a 1. Mine was a 2 and a 1. My mother was very independent but when it came to taking care of others, this is where I personally felt like there was a little bit of a disconnect there. I want to know where you guys come out.

KEITH: You know it's funny, my mom, I was thinking when you first gave the question it was a 3 and a 0 like I was on an average. Because my mom really doesn't like to be taken care of. The problem is

that there was a part of my mom that caring for others was, in fact, let me read the statement that you gave, because I thought it was like Roy's. It was a word that does something. Did your mom model independent behaviors? She didn't. I mean she really didn't. She was very confined to my dad and to me. So all of a sudden instead of me giving her a 3, I went to a 2 on this one, even though she didn't like to necessarily being taken care of. I mean I remember my mom was dying of cancer, and I came over to the house and she says, hey, Keith, bring me your feet here, and she rubbed my feet as she's dying. So obviously she's taking care of somebody else, but I think the very thing is she couldn't even deal with her dying in essence because of that independent. So she's a 2 and 1.

CLAIR: I ended up with a 3 – 0 again. The word independent. You said one word could trigger it. That was it for me. My mom was very independent growing up. I noticed it. About, I want to say 15 years ago my dad had a catastrophic injury and it led to a health condition where he could basically die at any moment. Her independence was almost required at that point. It came out much stronger than ever. She had to live with him but also assume he may not be there tomorrow. It created a real interesting dynamic in our family.

ROY: You know sometimes we men are seen as simplistic and this whole process to me creates a death because it causes us to be able to look at ourselves and as we look at our mothers and start to see the fine tuning, that's why those words are so important because we start to

see stuff below the surface that we're kind of used to seeing. In my mom's case I put 2 and 1.

ROBERT: Yeah, you know, this is one of those cases where it was hard for me to score and the reason is because on the negative side, was she more interested in being taken care of than in taking care of others. Now my mom was all about other people and especially her children, her family, you know, and friends and stuff, but she definitely was not very independent. She relied a lot on my dad and stuff for kind of like that self-worth, and so, I mean I ended up scoring a 2 and a 1 but, yeah it was one of those tricky scores.

KEITH: It's good, because you didn't have to go to 1 ½, did you? (laughter)

T.C.: Alright, so let's go to the next one. Alright. 2. Was your mom able to handle her anger and frustrations appropriately or did she frequently respond with rage that was out of control? Was she cold and uncaring? Um, this one, this one was tough for me because my mom was not the second one, you know where it says cold and uncaring. She wasn't that. But she also didn't handle frustration very well. So I kind of struggled with this one, but I had to go 3 and 0 because of the second one. That doesn't define her at all. So while she didn't always handle frustration appropriately, she did handle it good enough to where she wasn't any of the things in the second line there.

KEITH: Yeah, it's interesting because my mom was the same thing. The second line was so clear and my mom wasn't that and then I started looking at – and really to be honest with you, I don't think I ever saw my mom really lose it.

CLAIR: When I think about this, I think about the conflict between my parents and that's when I saw most of her character there. I gave her a 1 and a 2. I think that conflict could have been handled better, the bitterness and hanging on of faults and everything that you don't want to see between your parents.

ROBERT: You know with me, it began, another difficult score for me. I gave her a 2 and 1, but and the reason is because she didn't frequently respond with rage, but here's the thing – my mom's Latin and (laughter) and it took awhile, but one the time – hey, I mean the wrath, hand of God was coming down, so you know, it was difficult, there were those times. But she was never cold or uncaring, so 2 and a 1.

ROY: Well, I'll tell you (laughter). I am so sorry but we got to talk reality here, don't we? (laughter) There's a reason why Knights exists. (laughter) Okay, and life wasn't perfect for me and actually I'm thankful for God for it because I've gotten a lot of strengths and I was able to write some things about Knights because of how I grew up and one of the early images of myself in life was a little boy with a pillow over my head as my mom would be yelling long into the night having what they called discussions because we came from a Christian family, they called

them discussions that were loud enough that I literally needed a pillow to sleep. So based on handle her anger – it's hard to say she was cold and uncaring. I don't think that's accurate but when you look at how angry she got and how loud it was in the house and even as I brought my wife into the home or anybody into the home, eventually they would eventually get to see it. So my life honestly is 0, 3.

T.C.: Alright, guys what's going along with us at home, let's keep going with that. So number 3. Did your mom show that she was competent by her ability to plan and achieve her goals or was she aimless, just going along with the daily flow? For me it was a 1 and a 2. My mother, my mother was competent. She wasn't aimless but she led life dictate to her what was going to happen. That was a big, big kind of flaw with my mom. You know it was a day to day thing, you know for her, and that would dictate everything and that made it rough because you didn't know which mom you were going to get. So, that's kind of how it was with my mom. What about you guys?

CLAIR: I gave her a 1 and a 2 and honestly I'm grading on the curve. (laughter) _____ is 0 and 3. One of my passions in life, and you guys know it, I love designing life, planning, thinking ahead. And, man, as I transitioned from being her child to a peer as an adult, I tried to instill that in their lives, that boy your lives could be so much better financially, every piece of it, if you just thought ahead a little bit. Never go there.

KEITH: Yeah, my mom wasn't aimless, but she did go along with the flow of my dad, so she would have been 1, the top one being a 2 where she still did a lot of achieving goals and all that, but there was this daily flow that my dad created that she lived within.

ROBERT: I give my mom a 3 and a 0. My mom was never aimless. I mean my mom lived at home and she was a homemaker and housewife, but my goodness, like every day there was some kind of cleaning going on, an agenda. My mom was just awesome when it came to working.

ROY: Yeah, I gave my mom the same thing – a 3 and a 0. Some of the time it felt al little rigid, but it's technically 3 and 0.

KEITH: A 3 and a 0 for your mom (laughter).

T.C.: So was your mom self-disciplined? Did she avoid an addictive lifestyle in regard to alcohol, drugs, booze, sex or financial impulsivity, or did she have difficulty with self-control because of this? Did she harm others or herself. For me, this was a 2 and a 1 because my mom personally did struggle with some of those things. For her, she, for awhile she drank and she currently to this day is overweight and that's still a struggle for her. She's got to take a lot of medicines and things like that. And so she didn't really have control and it harmed others because it made her upset. You know, it affected her mood and her well being so then that kind of translates to the family. So, how do you come up?

CLAIR: Grading on the curve again – 1 and 2. I try to be generous but this is an area she struggled with, finances, I think about food. Man, it's that weird thing when you want something better for your parents than they want for themselves. That's a weird place to be.

KEITH: Can you give – did you ever give your mom a 0 and a 3 and is that hard for you?

CLAIR: It is hard for me. I'll grade Roy's mom. I've known her forever. (laughter) Yeah, as we were talking about earlier before we started this trail, why this desire not to judge our moms.

KEITH: Yeah, and I think guys, I want you to see that because I think sometimes it's hard for some of us to go to that, because we want to be positive. We want to be who we are so I appreciate that lack of ability. (laughter)

ROY: Well to me, you know, sometimes when we score our moms realistically or tough and you can use the curve. It's fine. It's a way of honoring of them. You know, it's a way of saying, I love you even – and I care about you and I don't have to pretend that you're not something that you are. So I'm able to kind of look at her and give her the number and yet I can honestly sit here and say I love my mom. I love my mom at times more based on who I am than on who she is.

CLAIR: And mom, if you end up seeing this, I wanted to give you a 1 and 2 (laughter).

T.C.: But Roy makes a good point, because I look at some of these and I'm saying to myself, she just wasn't all of these things and for that reason, I can't give her a 3 or a 0 here. So that's a good point.

Alright, so we'll go to the next one. Was your mom able to have fun? Was she playful? Did she have a good sense of humor or was she serious? Was she unable to suspend her judgment which limited her ability to have a good time? I'm proud to give my mom a 3 in the area of able to have fun. That's one thing she did great, especially in times where we may not have a whole lot of money or anything like that. My mother knew how to – she had a great sense of humor, she could laugh through the tough times and things like that, so she knew when to be serious, but my mother had an awesome sense of humor.

KEITH: Yeah, it's funny. I had to struggle to move my mom from a 3 to a 2 on this one. She had less fun with life the older she got because of my dad – 2 and 1.

CLAIR: I got a 2 and a 1 on it and it came down to, I still remember mom where she was frustrated with dad and walked into a social environment and couldn't get past it.

ROBERT: Yeah, I gave mine a 2 and a 1 as well. She was a lot of fun most of the time, but yeah, if something was going on that was upsetting, it was hard for her to be able to put that aside.

ROY: You know, I gave my mom a 0 at the first and a 3. And I'm not saying she never had a good time, but I'm saying that when we

were with her, you always needed to protect yourself which limited your ability to experience the good time with her.

T.C.: Let's keep going guys at home. Let's go ahead and look at the next one here. Did your mom show that she cared for others and valued them by reaching out to help them or did she keep to herself – was she passive when it came to reaching out to help others? Again, I gave my mother a 3. She, she hated to see people suffer. She is the type that honestly irresponsibly gave. Now if you guys don't know what I mean by that, it's just like you give so much you can't even take care of yourself. There's a beauty to that but then there's kind of a irresponsibility to that. But my mother gave.

KEITH: My mother was a 3 too.

CLAIR: I got a 3 and I've used the word sometimes irresponsible too, but there is a beautiful part of that, incredibly giving person.

ROBERT: You know, my mom surprisingly was a lot more passive. She really just kept it more within the family, never really reached out to the community, so to speak, in her community, so I graded her a 1 and a 2.

ROY: I gave my mom a 2 and a 1. There would be clear ways that she would try to reach out because of her faith and minister to others.

T.C.: Alright. Let's go to the next one here. Did your mom forgive others and move past the ways that she had been hurt by others

or did she carry grudges, have difficulty forgiving others and expressing regrets? My mother is a 3, 0 here. She – my mother held grudges. I think to this day my mother struggles with the people who hurt her. She's been through a divorce and some other things. She's got children, my other brothers and sisters that she doesn't have the best relationship with.

KEITH: So your mom was a 0, 3?

T.C.: Yeah, a 0, 3, yeah. She's just – people didn't – she didn't feel like people respected her a mom like they should when it came to my other siblings.

ROY: My mom's like your mom – 0, 3. Carry grudges.

ROBERT: My mom was like a 1 and a 2. She definitely would carry grudges.

CLAIR: I got a 0, 3. The grudges stuck, couldn't get past them.

T.C.: Man, that's interesting.

CLAIR: That is.

T.C.: Alright, last one here. Did your mom show that show as valued, that she valued family life by making her relationship with her family a priority or was she absent a lot? Was she involved in only her own interests? This is interesting. This is one of those things where I had to do the whole 1.5 thing (laughter). I don't know how to quantify this, because my mother, she values family life but she wasn't the best at knowing even what to do. She it didn't feel like it, if that makes any sense to anybody. I don't know what you guys came up with.

ROBERT: My mom was a 3 and a 0. She did everything for the family, everything.

CLAIR: I got a 3, 0. Amazing amount of investment in the family.

ROY: I went 2, 1, although sometimes her involvement with the family was not good, she was more family centered than outside the family.

KEITH: One of the things that you're going to see, guys, as you look at your Knightly News is there's a woman named Sarah and Sarah interestingly enough, in the Bible you don't mess with Sarah. She is Abraham's wife. She is the one who really does some pretty Godly and amazing things. Sarah gets into some trouble. She allows her husband to literally lie about her so that he can be safe. This is one of the most cowardess things Abraham can do when he lies to a couple of kings and then talks her husband into having sex with her hand maiden because she doesn't think she's going to get the son that God's promised her. She never gets mad at him for the lies, but she does get mad at him for this baby that was produced and this child that competes now against her son, Isaac. And so when you look at what's written with the Knightly News about Sarah, listen to these words. She could forgive her husband's self-protecting lies, but not the woman who carried his child. She could forgive her husband for what he did but not this. You got to understand. In order for us to look at a woman in the Bible like that, we're doing what

we're doing right now. You know what, Sarah did really good with this. She forgave her husband some lies, but man, she talked her husband into having sex with a woman and never forgave the woman, never forgave that child and never really forgave him. So how do you score Sarah? That's what we're doing. We're just figuring this out as we go so as you read the Bible, you'll understand it. Not everybody is a 3 in the Bible and so that's part of our journey too. So, that just says that.

So why don't we go to the conclusion.

T.C.: That's a great point, that's a great point. Alright, let's wrap this up. Alright so in conclusion guys, women can sense what we think of them as women which causes them to act in ways that match our expectations, whether positive or negative. My mom knew how I felt about her in terms of whether I thought she was loving or whether I thought she was, you know, mean to me and things like that. And she did respond accordingly which affected our relationship, so just keep that in mind.

The next one was in terms of character, we should not expect any more from a woman that we do of ourselves. Man, that – I can't expect her to be no better than as a person that I would expect myself to be. That's called being a hypocrite and we definitely don't want to do that. And, finally, for the third point, when we respect the strength and capabilities of the women in our lives, we can better assist them in achieving God's call for greatness and for, you know, whether it's mom or

whether it's wives or sisters, whatever, women in general, you know, I knew – my mother is much better now than she was back then and she did the best with what she had, the best with what she knew. And, you know, we got to meet people where they are and we can help them grow in that way by just, you know, knowing what they have to offer and they help them build them up. _____ I can't set expectations on my mom that she had no idea of how to achieve them. She's like night and day right now. And so, yeah, that was a good section. I enjoyed that section.

ROBERT: We're going to move on to Section C. Through her behaviors and responses our mother teaches us what men are like. Now check out number 1. Did your mom have high expectations of the men around her which included that they treat her with respect or did she just accept the way that any male acted toward her? One of you want to respond to that?

ROY: 2, 1.

T.C.: 3, 0.

ROBERT: Yeah, I was like that, 3, 0, for sure.

CLAIR: 1, 2.

KEITH: I'm a 1, 2 too, yeah.

ROBERT: My mom, it was like you're going to respect her (laughter). That was interesting.

Alright, point number 2. Did your mom provide a standard for how you should behave and confront your imperfections when appropriate or

did she allow herself to be treated like a doormat because she needed your attention any way she could get it? My mom, again was a 3, 0.

T.C.: My mom ...

ROY: 2, 1.

T.C.: 1, 2.

CLAIR: 2, 1.

KEITH: 2, 1 and I think it's interesting, when you look at that, some of those terms are really powerful, being treated like a doormat, those things actually changed mine from a 3 to a 0 to a 2 to 1, because there were times when my dad just did not – my dad always loved my mom, but didn't always value a woman as he should.

ROBERT: You know, my dad, there were times that he might start to do that, but I'm telling you, my mom would not allow it (laughter). I'm telling you, I'm telling you.

ROY: She knew he had to close his eyes at night (laughter).

T.C.: My mom was not a doormat, but the thing is, my mom does things – she did whatever she needed to do to get their attention. So this is kind of difficult.

ROBERT: Well I get it. I get it. Let's look at our conclusion. A knight should be challenged by the positive parts of his mother's filter which allow him to expect great things from himself and to have confidence in his ability to do the hard work that will make this a reality. Look guys, we have to look at the positive parts that make up our mom

and really be able to work hard and use those to help us develop our lives.

CLAIR: Well let's move on to Section D. We develop a filter as a result of our experiences with our mother which helps us understand our own self-definition. So what we're going to do here is providing more evidence of how we view ourselves today as a man, the way our mom – our experience with our moms has an amazing impact on how we come up with that definition. So let's give these a shot here.

Number 1, did your mom affirm your value by treating you in ways that made you feel worthwhile and significant or did she treat you were like you were a problem that needed to be tolerated?

KEITH: Yeah, mine was 4, 0 – I mean 3, 0. (laughter).

ROY: Mine was 1, 2 and when my mom said you are just like your dad, it didn't take a rocket scientist to realize that wasn't a compliment.

T.C.: 1.5., 1.5 (laughter). My mom loved, she loved me greatly but she just didn't know how to do what gave – what probably made your moms 3s, my mother just didn't know how. She desired but didn't know how.

KEITH: I always feel like you should have the early years, later your answer (laughter).

CLAIR: So that's the last split you get. Everything else (laughter). I got a 3, 0 there. Four kids in our family all felt incredibly valued by her.

So, number 2, did your mom accept your unique personality and encourage you even in ways that were different than she was or did she expect you to live according to her own expectations and lifestyles? I got a 1, 2 here. I think she did have this push for everybody she met to become like her and it didn't always work.

T.C.: 3, 0. I was the youngest of 6 and there was a lot of failure on top and she just, she decided to let God arrange me. She let me be who I needed to be.

KEITH: That's really funny, you said what you said. This almost for me, because of a Christian brain, almost forces at least a 1 on the bottom line, because you sort of expect them to behave like a Christian, so my mom is a 2, 1. I mean she wanted to give me a lot of freedom, but we had this narrowness that kind of resisted, so I got a 1 there.

T.C.: But my mother was such an immature Christian at the time, I ended up teaching my mother how to be a Christian as a young person.

KEITH: Yeah, and in some respects there's a freedom that you had that I didn't have by that.

T.C.: Yeah, she had no clue.

ROY: Mine was 1, 2.

ROBERT: I was just like Keith, a 2, 1.

CLAIR: Okay, good. Number 3. Did your mom demonstrate the importance of your relationships with her by spending time with her or did she leave you alone to fend for yourself? I was happy to be able to give my mom a 3, 0 here. I don't ever remember feeling like I was abandoned, like her interests were above mine. How about you guys?

T.C.: I was a 2, 1.

CLAIR: Early mom or late mom, T.C.?

T.C.: This is early mom. I was 2, 1. She was more like that, but she didn't know how to take interest in the things that things, like she wasn't coming to my games and things like that for awhile to support me. She learned how to do that later on.

KEITH: It's funny because mine changes when my dad comes home. When my dad comes home instead of being a 3, 0, it goes to a 2, 1 and maybe rightfully so. I just always felt like sort of less than important and I think my sister really felt that way. So, but for me I was a 2, 1.

ROY: My mom in that case was a 0, 3. No one ever came to a sporting event in my family. Everything I did, I did alone.

ROBERT: I was a 3, 0. My mom was just always there – I was never alone.

CLAIR: We're at number 4. Did your mom encourage your intellectual development by responding to your natural curiosity and your

need to do well in school, or did she do little to stimulate and encourage new learning. I gave a 2, 1 here. I think she was fairly good in this area, but she was not well educated. I think it was 8th grade, would have been where she finished at. So her ability to encourage me beyond that was a whole new territory. So I felt the encouragement, but not, it wasn't perfect.

KEITH: So you spent two years in 8th grade in honor of your mother (laughter).

CLAIR: High school were the best six years of my life. (laughter.

T.C.: 2, 1. My mother wanted to see me excel but like your mother, not educated that well so she didn't know how to help me personally.

ROY: Well and interestingly enough, despite all the letters I gave in the past, 3, 0 and one of the reasons for the 3 on the positive side is my mom went back to school very late in life and got both her Bachelors Degree and her Masters Degree in social work, interestingly enough and that was an important model to me regarding school.

KEITH: 3, 0.

ROBERT: Yeah, 3, 0.

CLAIR: Good. Excellent. Point number 5. Did your mom view your emotional growth as an important component of your developmental process and encourage you to express your feelings or did she react to

you according to her mood expecting you adjust accordingly? I gave a 1, 2 here. She was – I had to figure out when we woke up where she was going to be on that particular day and we had to respond to it. She was not going to move our direction in an empathetic way.

KEITH: Mine's 3, 0, very positive.

T.C.: Same as you, 1, 2.

ROY: 0, 3.

ROBERT: Mine is a 3, 0 but only because it never had nothing to do with actually adjusting to her mood, you know, at all, so, I had to go that way.

CLAIR: Roy, you're doing 0, 3s now without even blinking (laughter).

ROY: You know some people, you know, every day you live in a world where you have to judge their mood and that mood ends up controlling you and that was part of my life. So I've gotten really good at sensing moods.

CLAIR: Let's go on to 6. did your mom put energy into your physical development by teaching you healthy eating and exercise habits and by taking you regularly to the doctor or dentist or did she allow you to eat anything you wanted and respond passively to your medical and dental care? I gave this one a 1 and a 2. I think there could have been more effort in that area and kind of when we look at – it's interesting, the

way we raise our kids, I look at that model and said, no, we're going to something a little bit different.

KEITH: My mom's Pennsylvania Dutch, and as a result of that, gravy goes on everything, so it's a 2, 1. She wasn't trying to be bad, just gravy goes on.

ROY: And times have changed. There's so much, so much that our moms didn't really know that is known now from a nutritional perspective, so I gave her the benefit regarding that. Mine's 2, 1.

T.C.: My mom was awesome. It was 0, 3. I could have a snickers for dinner if I wanted (laughter). I ate whatever I wanted and (laughter). She struggled in this area and tremendously still suffers from it today, so I ate whatever I wanted.

ROBERT: Mine was a 2, 1. I mean she definitely wanted to make sure that we were well fed and taking care of us in that regard.

CLAIR: Latin food, you gave her a 2, 1?

ROBERT: That's the thing, I was just going to say, that's the Cuban food.

CLAIR: Alright, last one is number 7. Was your mom fun to be with? Did she encourage you to have fun with your friends or did she choose to be socially isolated by herself. This one to me is an easy one, 3, 0. My mom absolutely wanted us to have fun, joined in the fun when she could and way to go, mom.

KEITH: 2, 1.

ROY: 0, 3.

T.C.: 3, 0. My mom excelled in this area. She was fun.

ROBERT: I wish I could give like a 3, 3 on this one. I'll tell you why, because definitely she encouraged us to go have fun and be with my friends and everything but, but she just, she just really just lived a life that was very isolated. She didn't really connect to people outside of just the home and she still struggles with that today for various reasons. But if I had –

KEITH: So basically 1 1/2 , 1 ½ is what you're saying.

ROBERT: Well yeah, but (laughter). She just excelled in pushing us to have fun.

CLAIR: Alright, well let's conclude this section. Guys, I think I called this – we did a little bit of venting here. We were honest with our moms but this is where you enter the no whining zone. Listen to this conclusion. You are responsible to be a knight of God's calling whether or not you felt valued, accepted, encouraged, challenged, cared for, or nurtured by your mother. A knight controls his mother's filter by maximizing the positive ways that she treated him and grieving the ways that we submit, that may have been negative, allowing you to let go of her negative attributes. So to sum it up, you are responsible. You're a man now and time to let go. Time to stop blaming mom for those things. However, we are impacted, our filters are impacted by who she was and how she treated us. Take the positive, let go of the negative.

ROY: Yeah, and the guy that wrote that, okay.

KEITH: 0, 3.

ROY: Yeah, 0, 3, okay. So there are no excuses, absolutely no excuses. God has called you to get strength regarding from some of that stuff that was negative, move beyond it, and be what God has called you to be. No excuses.

Alright, your mother showed you the meaning of life. Did your mother encourage your faith because she valued her own faith or was she disconnected from a faith system?

T.C.: 3, 0. My mother may have not been the greatest Christian in the world, but she was at – you were going to love the Lord, no question about that.

KEITH: 3, 0.

CLAIR: Yeah, 3, 0.

ROBERT: 2, 1.

ROY: 3, 0.

Alright next one, did your mother have a purpose in her life on which she based her success and her meaning or did she view life as less about living and more just about surviving?

T.C.: That was tough. I don't even now how to score that one. My – I don't think my mother – I just think she tried to follow the Lord, but she just left life dictate so much, she just lived it without a plan and guys, I guess if I had to, I'd say, 1 and 2.

KEITH: I never saw my mom apart from my dad, so as a result of that it's a 2, 1. It probably would be a 3, 0 without my dad, but 2, 1.

CLAIR: I got a 1, 2 and if I think about it, always in survival mode, sometimes so comfortable I think she created an environment that just put her back in survival mode.

ROY: Yeah, my mom felt like there wasn't enough to go around, so competitive for what little was there was so important. So I gave her a 1, 2.

Did your mom support the view that there is a right and wrong way to do things or was she unconcerned about her personal level of morality and more interested in doing what she wanted at any particular moment? My mom would tell you – read her Bible every day and I would give her a 3, 0 in this regard.

CLAIR: My mom's 3, 0.

ROBERT: 3, 0.

KEITH: I got a 3, 0.

T.C.: Ah, 1.5, 1.5 (laughter.

ROY: Come on, you have your last shot for a fraction, right now. (laughter)

Alright, let's get to conclusions here. Let's look at how we can conclude. Life happens whether or not your mother provided a positive filter for you. A second one is that there is no mother who is able to create a completely perfect filter within you. Therefore, it is important to

allow God to help you find the distortions in your filters so that you can choose to live differently. We can't use these individuals in our lives that loved us at whatever level and use them as an excuse. We need to be able to go on with our life and create the life that God has called us to.

KEITH: I think one of the things that is so fascinating. I hate to admit this with you sitting in the room. What was brilliant about this particular trail is that it allows us to take the negative things from our mom and find the positive. It makes us responsible that we can't say, you know what, my mom made me do this in a negative way. There's something so cool about it because all of us have different moms but we found ourselves saying, you know what, I'm responsible for my choices in light of my mom. And just so you know, you don't ever deal with your mom in a vacuum. Your mom had a mom and her mom had a mom. So, again, remember about woundedness. We come into that. So some of your moms didn't score as high as others, but boy, give grace, swim in the background of what they've come through and what they've done and so, guys, thanks for taking the courage to do this.

Now go to your campfire and just do what we did. Just go around and work through the numbers unless you're T.C. and then you just don't have to say anything. Great to see you. We're going to be dealing with some things in Trail No. 7 next week that I think are really going to help you understand your belief system. See you then.