MEN'S FRATERNITY

Knights of the 21st Century

TRAIL 5

KEITH: So here we are. We're trying to be defenders. And trying to be a defender where we're trying to figure life out a little bit because behind us are people to care for, people that we need to make a difference in and so we're trying to figure out how do I handle my wounds, their wounds. How do I become a man of high moral character? How do I help their needs be met? We're trying to see it and figure this out. How do I have the right amount of armor to know what to do? And the problem is, when we try to do things for people and we try to do things with people, it's that people aren't always something we can trust. I mean there are good, moral, wise people in the world. Those categories of people, you kind of say, you know what, you can count on them. And then there's evil people, people that are just flat out trying to kill and destroy and lie and cheat and then there are the people in the middle that are the foolish. That's what really gets me kind of muddy because they're probably trying to be good, but they do foolish things that make them appear to be evil and we're trying to protect everyone at this particular point. That's what we're trying to do and so the big question today is, how can I clearly see what needs to be done in the world in which I find myself? How can I, as a knight, as a defender, be able to see through a world that is sometimes fuzzy because of foolishness?

Defender

We're going to talk about our chain mail. We're going to talk about this part of the armor that's tighter than from the suit of armor that covers us. This chain mail goes over our core, our being, who we are. And as we talk about it, we need to understand that sometimes we are raised by good people, moral. Sometimes people influencing us early on that created our belief systems were just the kind of people we needed them to be. But sometimes one of the struggles that we have is that we're sometimes involved with foolish people. Probably none of us were raised by evil people. They're pretty rare, but foolish people and our belief systems get all convoluted as a result of that. Today we want to make sure.

We're going to look at two significant areas – our chain mail, what is it that covers us and what are things that were provided that helped that truth or sometimes hinder it to be part of who we are understanding. Remember always, the chain mail is that ability to say I know what I believe to be true and I will act and feel safe because it is what it needs to be. So keeping that in mind, I want you to take your books and open up to Trial Number 5 and we're going to look at – there's a couple great paragraphs that Roy has written there. You can kind of go through those any time as you want to study it. But let's look at this next statement in IV.

Our chain mail organizes the filters that are created as a result of our experiences which allow us to anticipate what will happen in the

future. Because of this, our chain mail, A, develops a true perspective which helps us see life for what it is and what it may become. You know, it's interesting that the window here is so hard to clearly see through like that one. And it's so hard to get a real perspective and in the middle of our chain mail, in the middle of the stuff that we've had, sometimes if I don't have good filters, man, I'm not going to see life for what it is. If you have great filters, if you have this down, man it's going to work on every cylinder. The problem is that we all have a little bit of rust in our chain mail. We always have a little bit of that which we're not confident of.

So look at B, because I think it will help us understand that. Develops weak links that cause us to distort reality because of our negative mindset. What happens in our life is that the stuff that takes place in our journey sometimes will foolish people – there have been movements when I've been a foolish father, I've been a foolish husband, I haven't tried to do evil. I haven't tried to be on that side. I wanted to be good but I did foolish things and it gives beliefs into that which distorts the perspectives of the family members that I'm trying to protect, right. I have those already in me and I give it to those behind me. So how are we going to handle this? Well you need to understand a couple things that does that.

Let's look at No. 1. Unfortunately the lens which have been creases as a result of the threats or emotional turmoil carry more weight in terms of our predictive mindsets. Just so you know, the bad things have more

pull than the good things in your memory banks. So let's say you went to a restaurant 17 times, had 16 great experiences and one time you got food poisoning, you'll remember that time. Great vacations, one bad. You remember that time. We have this way to remember. So just so you know. In your chain mail you have a more likely possibility of sticking with the stuff that hurt you instead of going to the things that are true.

Look at No. 2. The legends we develop as a result of the wounds we experience in our relationships vary based on how significant the person is to us. The legends we develop – it's really interesting – and the wounds we've experienced, it's going to be something connected to a person. That's why we ask you guys the tough questions. Tell us about your mom. Well you're going to do that next week actually. It's why we're going to ask you a couple weeks later, we're going to ask you about your dads. We're going to ask the hard questions, not because we think your mom or you dad are evil or even foolish. It's just that they're there and significant people have significant weight into our lives.

Alright, for example, let's look at 3. Our mother, remember I mentioned that, as one of our primary nurturers creates a powerful chain a male filter within us. This lens affects what we expect in relationship to – look at this one – our definition of ourselves and our value. From your mom, you're going to get that. I mean it's just going to come and so wherever you mom is – so I'm going to do a little quick test. Let's say there are 5 of you sitting around watching this right now or maybe there's

a hundred of you guys, alright. I'm going to ask you all to do the exact same thing. I'm going to ask you when you think of your mom, is it good, not so good or somewhere in the middle, alright. Good, not so good, somewhere in the middle. Now I know this is like holy ground, right. I'm going to ask us all to do this thing. When you think of your mom, raise your hand if you think good. Raise your hand if you think good. Now, by the way, I'm raising my hand because I think good when I think of mom, right, even though there's some problems that came – not so much her fault but because of some wounds that I received. So good, right. How many of you not so good. Man, you remember your mom. My wife would have to raise her hand on this one. Alright. And then how about somewhere in between? Now I just want you to kind of notice the guys around you because we all have moms, and those moms all impact where we go.

Look at the next point. Our perceptions of what women are like. How you view a woman is going to be connected to how you view your mom. How you view your mom is this interesting concept. It's, it's, if I view my mom in a certain way, it impacts how I view women. They're really needy and always needing something from you and just never able to feel good about herself. That's going to impact how you view a woman because that's your earliest memory of a woman. That's the way it works. It's going to help you see something clearly if you understand that in your chain mail is your mom. It's just there.

Look at 3. Our ability to trust in others. This one is really interesting. Our ability to trust in others has everything to do with the fact that if I couldn't trust in her, how do I trust in you? She'll take care of me right? You got it? See how those hand raises make a difference?

Let's look at the next one, No. 4. Our father who is significant as a nurturer and a model creates a lens within us that causes us to develop certain expectations regarding what a man is and what a man should or should not do. One of the things that is really fascinating is I'm going to do the exact same thing regarding your dad now. Now, he's not as much a nurturer. Men don't nurture half as much as they model. I launch my sons. Lynn still wants to nurture those sons we launch, right. I mean it's sort of the way it works, right. But I want you to do the same thing with your dad. Now all of you have a dad. Some of you only have a sperm donor dad who just has never been a part of your life. Some of you have adoptive fathers or stepfathers or birth fathers. Some of you, your dads died and you didn't know him very well. Whatever, I want you to talk about the man that's pretty significant in your life in this area. Here's what I want you to do, was he good? If he was good, raise your hand. Was he not so good? Raise your hand. Was he somewhere in the middle which is where I would raise my hand with my dad, good early on, not so good later, turned good just in the last few days of his life. So how does that impact us?

Defender

Guys you can't do life without those pieces being part of how you perceive things. You have to look at that because it will help you understand truth which is where we're going to go and learn how to do as a defender so you can protect those behind you.

Look at 5. Any important adult role such as a teacher, a friend, a relative, will create a lens for which we learn to understand the forest. Anybody in our lives will be that person that somewhere along the line is going to influence us. Maybe it's a coach, teacher, friend. I had some interesting – my dad had three brothers, one of which was the coolest of all the brothers but he was really had trouble being faithful to his mates, multiple marriages, but he was a cool guy. There was another one, his younger brother, who was the guy that was just always around, sort of faithful, around, didn't know him real well but he seemed pretty good. There was another brother where one day he and his life living in New Jersey which might explain this story, living in New Jersey suddenly disappeared. I mean their clothes were gone, their car was gone, all their furniture was left. They were gone. We never heard from them again. Never. He was gone. I was probably about 8 when that happened. Now in New Jersey, he could be under a building somewhere. You know how that works there, but I have no idea what happened to this guy. My dad thinks he actually like entered a cult, he and his wife, and disappeared, but we never heard from them. That's in my chain mail. I can't pull it out. You have that. It's going to impact how you do life.

Defender

Look at the next one. In your Knightly News, there's a guy by the name of Mephibosheth. Now that's a weird name for a guy. He has an interesting role. He was dropped as a baby and he's therefore crippled and he was in a household where his father was a bad king. It was in his chain mail. He actually would have – Saul would have ended up in the bad category, you know what I mean. So he had a chance to redeem it but it was stuck in his chain mail. Later on he will have an encounter with now a good King named David who has taken over for his father's kingdom by God's design. Mephibosheth will choose to follow David for a while until there's a coup against David and then he picks to go against David.

Let me put this statement on the screen for you. He was as crippled as a child but given mercy and kindness from a king. Isn't that interesting? He was given it and yet what happens is, that kindness, that demonstrative care wasn't responded to by him. Now he should have responded by the good side of this, but he went bad. Why? Because what happened in the process is he somehow couldn't see life clearly. That's what happens when we do this.

Look at No. 6. Our significant peer relationships create lenses that either support or conflict with our view of ourselves. Want to do an interesting thing? Think about significant peer relationships in your life. Who was your best friend under 10? Johnny Hopson. Who was your best friend under 15? Joel Foster. Who was your best friend when you

got married? Steve _____. Who is your best friend now? I mean, see how that works? All of those guys had significant impact in my life. Johnny Hopson was scarred by hot water when he was a kid. I never saw anybody with scars until I knew Johnny. So it had an impact, just the scars alone let alone all the conversations. Joel is where I learned about sexuality as we stood up – sat up in the tree fort and talked about it together when we were early pre-teen guys. And Steve was my best friend who stood with me no matter what happened in my life. I have 7 guys now who are my best friends. They are all part of my chain mail and if you're not careful, those people – bad choices, right. If they live on the not good, but ah hah, man that impacts who we are as guys.

Look at the next one. Our view of our body affects us as we become aware of our appearance, genetic capabilities and physical strength. One of the things that's interesting is how you view yourself. Do you like you? I mean you're all stuck with your genetics, you know that right? Your height is sort of predetermined. You can't jump more and get higher or pat yourself on the head and get shorter. It's just there. Your hair, whether it comes or goes, I mean there's genetics, right. There's a whole bunch of genetics, even athletic strength and abilities. There's so many parts of your genetics that are there, and you know what, that's part of your chain mail. I have been told that there's guys who are short that struggle with being short. It's called a short man syndrome or whatever it is. Because I've always been close to 6 foot – I'm shrinking now which is

cool, so you short guys, I'm catching up. One of the things that's interesting as I look at that part of our lives, that hasn't been a big part of my world, but it's always a part of it, just where there's a positive, negative or somewhere in between.

Look at the last one. A different kind of lens is created anytime an emotionally significant event or trauma occurs which is outside of our control. When I talk to you about beliefs, you'll hear a part of my story that that lens gets fuzzy during that part of the story. And actually, to be honest with you, make sure that I am right on my belief. It's kind of a cool deal, but trauma impacts it – car accidents, the death of somebody you love, a natural event, a divorce. Those things are all part, you can't pull this out. So guys, don't ignore it. That's what we love to do as guys. We throw the problem in the closet, ignore it until it smells. We can't do that. What we have to do is say wait a minute. I got to look at this trauma in my life and understand that it's part of how I believe. It's part of your chain mail.

So when we come back to our chain mail, the reality is it's the closest thing to our core and it will speak into us truth or not. So therefore, look at V. A knight learns to understand and utilize his positive filters while at the same time working to create the lenses that were created when he was younger which are distorted. So what happens is this. What you understand from our issues, we need to understand that there are some things that are not right in who you and I are. There just

aren't. My dad stopped trusting God when I was 12. That was an interesting part of my existence. It will impact how I do so many things.

So look at A. No one can enter adulthood entirely free of filters and accuracies. The reality is guys that all of our lives have some fuzziness. I mean all of it, all of us. I mean all of the truth is just not easy to see because there's been input into us that hasn't always been good. There's parts of us that are just inadequate because parts of us have inaccuracies, part of it. When I mean inadequate, it means that we see something so differently than God intended us to see it so these filters speak into us, and we all have them. So you can't go to your campfire, which we're going to break to our campfire in just a minute. You can't go to a campfire without somehow, some way, everybody sitting around that table has a distorted view of the truth of who they are, of what is right, of what is wrong because of who has had input into their existence.

Look at B. As a result of their lens distortion, many males find themselves in the same negative circumstances over and over again. Aren't you amazed that you make the same mistake over and over again, same foolish thing? Some of you guys all of your life you grew up in an environment where your dad was not a man of integrity. In fact, your dad struggled with addictions and abuse and you find yourself sliding into that over and over again and you keep repeating it. And you knew it was wrong, you hated it and you didn't want to be part of it and you still find yourself in that? Now it may be more of an extreme, but guys, that's what

happens with us. We sort of start to live with our distortions. Now, you say well this is getting a little hopeless Keith. If I'm going to see life clearly, protect those behind me, and my chain mail sometimes can't be trusted, the cool part about it is you can change this chain mail. I mean you can change the chain mail. But God knowing the falling world in which we live in said, let me, let me help you with the chain mail. Let me give you some things that make all the difference in the world. The things like what kind of tribes, what kind of elders, what kind of principles do I live by, where's my soul, where's my spirit? He gave us some things that are within us, deeper than this that have had input into us and then cause us to see truth a little bit differently.

Now the easiest way for us to do this is instead of me talking to you about this, we'll get together with the 4 guys up at the roundtable table and they're going to talk through those 5 areas from their perspective and then I'll just wrap this whole thing up. Hey, join us in the roundtable room.

ROBERT: Hey guys, welcome to our campfire. We're going to continue now and I'm going to read VI. There are 5 trail markers that can help a man to understand and change his lenses, all of which help him develop a more mature outlook on life. So 5 trails, trail markers.

The first one is the trail marker of the tribe. This trail marker contributes to a man's life as a result of his participation in the community. The community ultimately reproduces itself through the

lenses that are created in its children. The tribe, and we're going to talk about these points here about community, so do want of you want to take that?

T.C.: I'll take number 1. The tribe establishes rules and behaviors that support the safety of its members, provide a positive expectations for the community, and encourage harmony within the community. And, right off the bat, you know, if there's anybody that may not have a family. I mean your campfire is your family. This is my family and that should provide us as a comfort right away. These brothers, these men are here for you, but our jobs, for those of us who do have family, our job, that's a community, all those people you work with, your actual family if you have one, that's a community, the people in your actual community, just any group of people working together for a common goal, that's your community. That's your group. You want to be able to bond with these people, grow with these people, to where that produces a positive outcome. So that's how I look at it. I don't how, if you guys want to illuminate on that.

ROBERT: Well I like the point you made there, you know. It's not necessarily just your family, but any community you kind of come into. That's your tribe.

CLAIR: I got number 2. The tribe provides opportunities for social involvement through which relationships are developed. I've been fortunate to be part of a large men's group, Knights chapter for what 9

years now we've been together and doing life together there, watching those relationships form is critical. I am naturally pushed toward being relational. I enjoy people and actually when I look at my week, priority wise, that's right up there. How are we going to connect with people with our friends, how are we going to put other people together in social environments. And it's kind of fun to watch. You bring groups together and you watch where the relationships form. Sometimes you're part of it. Sometimes you're not. You were just the catalyst that created those relationships.

ROBERT: Kind of intentional about it.

CLAIR: Very intentional, yeah I am.

ROY: No. 3. Creates beliefs that define the greater good of the community as more important than one person's personal convenience. There are rules that come with living together and unfortunately our prisons are filled with individuals who kind of said, you know, what you go, I want, you know. Or here's a rule about the use of drugs, etc., I'm not going to pay attention to that rule or, you know, I'm not going to pay my child support as part of taking care of my family which is a tribe and that, you know, so the tribe kind of goes the whole needs to work together and is greater than the sum of its parts, kind of. In other words each person has to kind of submit to something bigger than themselves. Otherwise, I'm going to take what you want and they got to

come up with rules to make it fair. And that's part of life. Being part of a tribe means I can't do some of the things I might impulsively want to do.

T.C.: That kind of just eliminated the first point that we made. You're supposed to establish rules and behaviors that support the safety of everybody so we, you know, your family, your campfires, your churches, your jobs, your teams of any kind, you know even if you're on a sports team, whatever that environment is with you the collection of people, the goal is to establish a set of rules and behaviors that make it safe for everybody, that everybody can grow from and everybody has the right expectations so everybody knows what success looks like and you know it when you see it and everybody is helping each other to achieve that. So, that's pretty cool.

So I'm going to 4 now. Four says, encourages personal development through its medical educational, legal and religious systems. Now we spoke on this a little bit in previous trails that in my life, in my tribe, I wasn't taught these things. They weren't a priority. So what you do is you spend life making mistakes in these areas. You know, you're not educated. You don't know about insurance. You don't know, you don't know how to follow rules. You haven't established the importance of following rules and so you make a lot of mistakes and even in my recovery stages where I did learn, that was much later in life where as if I had learned that in a tribe before – you know, we talked about medical, I know how to take care of myself. I know about insurance. I know how

important it is to go and learn and grow educationally. I respect the legal system and I understand laws. You know, I want to be on the right side of the law and in religious systems, you know, studying God's Word regularly, waking up and praying and asking God to guide me in my day. These are things that should be established in a tribe right away and they set a good foundation to get started.

ROY: You know one quick thing and then we got to get going here is I have a loss in my life that just became apparent. And I guess I thought about it once or twice before, but I grew up in a small town and we didn't have any teams. We didn't have any fathers or groups of guys and there's knights out there right now that give a lot to soccer teams, their daughters teams, their sons teams, stuff like that and then I remember I moved out of town and the very next year they started a little league. And I remember coming back and visiting some friends going, man, I wish I would have been a part of that. So I mean some guys right now, you know, have really given to their tribe by volunteering in church and volunteering on various sports teams.

ROBERT: Absolutely. So that's great. We kind of talked about all those things and how they relate. This trail marker really relates to the tribe but as we continue, we're going to hit on another trail marker here which is of our elders.

That's point B. The trail marker of the elders. This trail marker is especially important to young males who tend to learn more through

active pursuits than through words alone. Pretty important, our elders. Clair, do you want to talk about this?

CLAIR: Yeah, jump to point number 2, if you don't mind. Elders have wisdom that can be shared which helps a young man to broaden his perspective on life. Limits. I grew up believing there were limits and I needed elders. I needed my dad and some other guys to come along side me and say, you know what, there are no limits. And when I think about that, I love football. I'm envious of the fun you've had and the game that you got to play. Because of my size and physical limits, I never thought I could play football. And so I picked soccer. Didn't really like it. Didn't have a passion for it. But something about my body, I can kick a ball, like far, like three quarters of a soccer field. It just launches and so they put me in a fullback position. I think they might call it a sweeper today. I never once thought about pursuing football and just out of curiosity, about a year or two ago I looked up the NFL. The kickers have an amazing career. They have a lot of fun. They don't get hurt very often so it's pretty cool. The smallest kicker in the NFL is something like 5 foot 6. I'm bigger than he was, but I never pursued it because no one ever told me. So, as an elder I am committed to the next generation. I want them to hear what Paul said in Philippians 4:13. He said, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. There are no limits.

ROY: Okay, I want to go back to number 1 here, B.1. The elders in a community have developed perseverance and have clarified

their own lenses, which enable them to assist others who are in the process of changing their lenses. You know, there is a reason why older guys are older guys. It meant that somehow they made it through a whole series of life issues that otherwise they could have gotten knocked off in life, you know, like by driving fast, doing crazy things. So there's a certain level when you see an elder of perseverance, where you can look and go, that guy may have scars but he's gained strength because of his scars as he went along.

T.C.: That's awesome. I'm going to take 3. You guys move to 3. It says elders have skills that can be transferred to any eager student, for example, fixing cars, working on computers, and building houses. I don't want to kick a dead horse at all, but this is very important. This right here it just shows how you pass things down. I speak to people who always say, hey, in the world we live in now, you better pick up a trade. Like you better know how to do certain things or you're not going to be able to have a job. And so, with the elders knowing how to –these are good examples guys working on computer and be able to build houses, to sit up here and for an elder or a leader to be great at that, man, you're going to pass on at some point and you should be reproducing yourself. You should be like here is everything I've learned that made me successful. I'm going to show you how to do that so you can do anything, you show and you just keep going and it's the same way with making disciples and things like that, you know, I know how to make a disciple. I

know how to lead other people to Christ. I'm going to be gone though and I want to show you how to do it and you keep passing it down. But if you don't pass it down, this says these skills can be transferred, but you got to, you have to do it because if you don't, you end up like me. When I was growing up not know how and I had to find my own way. I love how it says any eager student can be taught, so we as students, you got to want to learn and be eager to listen and be humble and follow what you're being taught. So it's a nice little team.

ROY: Yeah, and every guy out there has something that – a skill that they can transfer. And so many guys just go well, I'm not a speaker. I'm not an actor, you know, or I'm not an entrepreneur, you know, and reality is, every man in every campfire, it would be good for him to be able to talk about what skill he has and take ownership of it because with ownership comes responsibility in order to be able to transfer it.

T.C.: Yeah, everybody has a talent.

ROBERT: That's for sure.

CLAIR: Yeah, No. 4, the elders have influence as they set high expectations for what it means to be a man. I think the word that jumped out to me there, well two words, influence – we don't control. We are influencers so we put every ounce of energy in. But the word high. Society is lowering the bar of manhood everywhere we look. Do you guys see it? I mean, it's driving me crazy. Anywhere from print media,

certainly on line. The internet has done us no favors in racing the bar of manhood. Movies, music, almost everywhere I look. Billboards are constantly driving me in a direction I don't need to go. So I've got two sons, 21 and 18. They are at pivotal ages where they're setting cement around what's going to be their character for the rest of their lives. And I am adamant about using every ounce of influence I have every chance I get to call them up. So we do go to the movies together and we love it. But we have a habit after we leave that movie of which things are going to stick and which things are going to be left go because Hollywood made a bad choice on our day.

ROBERT: So we got 5?

ROYS: Yep, 5. Elders model a realistic view of what life is truly about. You know, in our youth there's a tension between elders and youth. It's a good tension. The youth teach the elders, keep a hold of your passion and keep going and keep contributing. Don't give up. So the youth kind of motivate the elders, but the elders teach the youth how to kind of take that idealism and make it into something that's real. So that what they're working on isn't some broad vision that's impossible, but the elders help guide the passion of youth into a realistic pursuit that can actually be completed.

ROBERT: You know as I listen to you guys, I'm just briefly reminded that how like when I was a teenager, I thought I knew everything. My parents knew nothing. And then went I got into my 20's, I

realized how much smarter my parents really were and the older I get the more I appreciate their experience. It just helps guide me.

CLAIR: There's another disservice I'm watching with our youth. You walk into the average young man's or even a young girl's bedroom today, and you see the trophies on the wall and you would think they're an all star athlete. We're giving trophies out for almost everything today. And I love the fact that we're encouraging them, but then they hit the real world and you don't win every time. Not every effort is counted as a win for sure. So just that real close as well. Man, we got so much to teach this next generation.

ROBERT: For sure. I'm going to hit these next three points real quickly here. C. Personal standards. These are principles that are chosen as behavioral guidelines which the young man can use to make decisions. Pretty self-explanatory, right. We have these standards and these points that we hope these young men, and as we develop that we're going to use to guide us.

D. The soul's inner voice wants to help the man fulfill his life's purpose and develop his strengths. Again, that goes together with those standards, that inner voice for us believers we know as the Holy Spirit. That really teaches us and guides us so that we can continue to develop into our purpose.

And E. A man's virtuality is developed through an ongoing relationship with God and affects the clarity of his lenses in several ways.

And we're going to divide these points here. Does someone want to take 1?

T.C.: I'll take 1. So when it says that a man has developed an ongoing relationship with God and affects the clarity of his lenses, the way he sees things, the way he views the world, the way of his life in several ways. Number 1, a man's spirituality encourages him to make sure that his view of reality is true and honest which in effect requires his lenses to be accurate. This is, I look straight as just self-examination. Through Christ for me, He asks me to take a deep look at myself and be real with myself. You can make no advances in life, you can't accomplish anything unless you are first transparent and real with God and real with yourself. That's going to be the starting point. If I'm not very good at something, then I just got to say, I'm not very good at here. I want to be good at here and through the lenses of Christ for me, I say okay, He's going to dictate what success is and I'll always – that's what I'm going to chase. It's a clearly defined measure of what success is and it is through my spirituality and so for me, that's my guide, that's my driving force. I know each day what success is and who measures it and then I can make an important plan on how to achieve it.

ROY: So some days there's a ouch when I hear Jesus say, Roy do you love me and I remember Him saying something very similar. Peter do you love me? So sometimes in those moments of self-reflection there's a little bit of an ouch.

CLAIR: Point No. 2 says a man's spirituality helps him understand the underlying reasons for the negative influences that exist within the forest. I'm curious to see what you guys get out of this. What I got was there's an attack on manhood. I mean we're talking about manhood. This is our topic here is developing Biblical men, or men that live their lives by Biblical principles. There feels like there's a consorted effort as I look at different things. I don't think it's by accident that billboards take my mind to a place that it shouldn't go or that movies, like we were talking about before, influence me in the negative ways. So looking at the negative influences, seeing them for what they are, helps me resist them. So what do you guys get out of that?

T.C.: John 10:10 immediately comes to mind. The bottom line is, Satan has an agenda and Christ has an agenda. Satan is to kill and destroy anything good in my life and Jesus Christ wants me to have life in abundance and these two things are going to continue to fight each other – me wanting to do right, Satan wanted me to wrong, my flesh versus my spiritual nature are going to fight my entire life and everything we're talking about here at Knights helps you to feed the right dog. Do you know what I mean? There's two dog pulling the sleigh, one going right and one going left. This one is doing the wrong things. This one's doing the right things. The one you feed the most is where you'll go and this stuff is helping you feed the man that needs to lead in the right direction and it's just, your spirituality helps you understand this battle and knowing

that Satan wants to rob me of all these things, he's going to, he'll attack, he'll attack me every single day so life is rough and I know that going into it. So that defines all my negative influences. I'm going to battle them and use these things and these principles to come out on top so that's how I view it.

ROBERT: Yeah, I think of Joseph also really quickly and I think at the end of everything he had gone through and he got to see his brothers again, he said, what you meant for evil, God meant for the good. And that's just beautiful how that could work out.

ROY: Number 3. A man's spirituality helps him develop a realistic plan which increases his ability to cope with life's challenges and gives him the strength to make the right choices. Every day we get a choice – am I going follow what Jesus has for me that day or am I going to try to live life on my own particular strength. And when I've learned to submit my plans to God and recognize that He has sometimes plan different than I plan, and so I start off my day going this is what my day is going to be like and within a very short period of time I get a feeling my day is not going to be what I thought my day was going to be, either by my own negative choice or some other kind of life event. It's nice to know God is a part of all that and can strengthen me and help me as I turn my life over to Him to do his plan.

T.C.: Alright, 4. A man's spirituality helps him comfort the lenses that exist as a result of his woundedness and assists in his healing

process through his relationship with God. There are a lot of examples in scripture where people go through tough times and they may not understand it, and even if they get upset with God or upset with life or upset with people, when they ask God why it happened or He reveals why it happened and they see that they are being sharpened through it, and then they look at how they come out on the other side, you start to welcome your trials because you've seen God deliver you through these trials. So your spirituality does help you confront things the way you see things, the way you view things. So from here on out I'm going to treat trials as not ah man here comes another trial. I'm looking at life like umm, this is an opportunity to grow.

ROY: This kind of also says that basically growing up without parents that gave you, you know, all that you needed or being in a neighborhood that wasn't the greatest in terms of woundedness is not an excuse because God stands by ready to kind of take all of those negatives and turn them into a positive.

CLAIR: Now, point number 5 says the study of the Bible and a man's acceptance of it as a true resources assists the man, as it can be used as a standard against which to evaluate his lenses. Oh, I think about user manuals. We get a new tool or something, a new computer, you name it. We're pretty lousy about going to that manual. Someone who knows a lot more than we do about that product, how to use it, how to operate it, wrote that manual and thinking about a new car. We were in

my van last night. There are so many buttons on that thing. Honestly, if I don't pick up the manual _____ what everything does. I know when I pushed that one you flew out the door. That wasn't the best choice, so. But here's the analogy. God wrote a life manual for us and, you know, we have such a tendency to say, hey I got this. I'll figure it out. I'm a man. There's so much wisdom in there. I run businesses and I read a lot of business books. I'm amazed how many times, whether they know it or not, they're basing their business principles off of Biblical beliefs. So I go back to the Bible and I say, oh my gosh. All that information I needed was in there and how did I miss it. So just challenging myself and hopefully you guys, the study. It's an active pursuit. The study of the Bible is an amazing filter for how we evaluate our lenses.

ROY: I actually think the book of Proverbs is the best business book in the world. You know, I mean, Solomon was in charge of a lot. And, to me, to do business from my perspective without having the Bible to be there to guide it is really, really scary.

T.C.: And then look at this. You say I love this part. It can be used as a standard against which to evaluate his lenses. So that means you've already kind of set a perspective of how you see things before you accept that as truth or not truth. You use the Bible to evaluate it, like you stack everything up against scripture and then you'll know. You'll have the right perspective. That's pretty cool.

ROBERT: That pretty much will give you the right perspective, right? That's great stuff. So you know all these trial markers as we listen to them and we talk about them, it's interesting, because they may seem obvious like, oh duh, right, like you can see how that fits, but it's amazing to listen to it, to define it, to actually lay it out and when you really look at it that way, it just really helps you kind of develop your view of things and then understand where to look for that resource.

Listen guys, I thank you for hanging out with us here in our campfire. I'm going to go kick it back to Keith. He's going to help you and lead you out of here but we're going to continue talking about our action steps here.

KEITH: So there you have it. Things aren't always clear. But God's invested some things in us that will enable us to get that clarity. So while the lenses aren't always crystal clear, whether you have good or evil or somewhere in between, you're able to filter through your chain mail and decide whether or not that's what it's supposed to be and was we just talked about – what the guys talked about up in the room, the reality is that we can also look at what is God providing for us that act as sort of like trail markers. Guys, it's that we can dwell on the truth because the bottom line is, you and I want to be involved in keeping those behind us safe. Why? We're defenders. See you next week at Trial No. 6.