Knights of the 21st Century
Defender: The Duties of the Knight
Trail 1

KEITH: Welcome gentleman. Year five of Knights of the 21st Century. We call this Defender, the duties of a knight. I know for some of you guys this is your fifth year. You've been doing this with us, walking with us each year. For some of you, this is your second year or your first year. Wherever you are in the journey, I want to let you know that there are going to be guys in what we call campfires, an opportunity that you have to get together with a couple guys after we're done teaching here where you have a chance to say, okay, what did I miss? What do I need to learn? And don't worry, being part of year five doesn't throw you off at all. What we promised year one, we promise again year five.

First of all, we will always call you up. We will always elevate you and let you know what God has designed you to be and encourage you to do that. Which brings us to two, which is the fact that God has a design for you and we're going to help you find that design. Three, we're not going to ever apologize for the fact that everything we teach here comes from the Bible. We don't necessarily use the Bible where you're turning and looking at it, but it's rooted in that because we trust that authority. The fourth thing that we promise every year is that you're going to make some male friends, guys that are going to do life with you, guys that are going to fight for you. I have seven guys that are going to carry my casket the day I die. It's these guys that have made a difference in my life that are the guys that I count on. We are going to help you develop those relationships. Guarantee it, these four things will take place.

But maybe another significant one is this – here in year five we're going to teach you to make every environment you walk in safer. So no matter where you are, what you do, when you enter that environment, that environment will feel safer because you've arrived - at work, at home, in the community, wherever you are. That's what Defender is all about.

It's interesting. In order for us to talk about this, we're gong to have to talk about the fact that all of us are going to struggle somewhere along the way of having wounds. Those wounds are struggles that where we go, I trusted somebody to make a difference in my life, I've trusted somebody to reach out and to grab and hold onto me, and they let go. Maybe it was

you. Maybe you've wounded yourself. And maybe it was a parent, maybe it was your best friend, maybe you feel it was God. We cannot escape the fact that in the world of a defender, what we do are protecting people with wounds, starting with us, but far more significantly, everybody else that we're going to be involved in and making them feel save. We need to do that because there are wounds. Sometimes when you go to grab somebody and they hold onto you, it's secure and sometimes they let you go.

And we're not going to do this alone. We're going to do what we did last year, for those of you who were with us last year at Roundtable. There are four guys that are going to journey with us. They are businessmen, actors. They are guys that are involved in doing all kinds of different things in their lives. There is the author of Knight's, the owner of Pennsylvania Counseling Services, a psychologist. There is a pastor. There is all kinds of lives that these four guys represent. So what we're going to do and I'm going to introduce them to you and then they're going to interact a little bit early on here as we talk about some wounds.

The first guy I want to introduce to you is a guy by the name of Robert Amaya. And Robert Amaya is coming through right over here. This is an amazing man who we have grown to come very, very close together. Good to see you bro. Hey would you just share a little bit with what is going on in your world so they know who you are and what's happening?

ROBERT: Sure, sure. Hi, my name is Robert Amaya. I'm an actor and I'm also a minister of the Good News of Jesus Christ. It's an absolute pleasure to be here once again with you guys and go through this journey and see exactly what God is going to do. Thank you Keith.

KEITH: Thanks so much Robert. One of the other guys is a guy by the name of Clair. Clair Hoover. I know, it sounds like a girls' name, but it's a guy's name and he's definitely that kind of a guy. I want you to meet Clair. Tell them a little bit about you.

CLAIR: My name is Clair Hoover. I'm a local business person here in Central Pennsylvania and married 27 years, 2 children; a 21 year old and an 18 year old, sons. I just want to tell you guys, I know this is year five, yeah year five, and you've gotten to know some of the teaching team

along the way. I want to tell you these guys are real. People like Keith and ... amazing guys. My life is better, having been part of them and I trust the time you're going to spend in year five with us, you're going to become a better man getting to know these guys.

KEITH: That's true. We have guys that are amazing men and then there's T.C. T.C. saw legs is not always – he actually is an amazing brother and a very good friend and much stronger than I am. T.C. is going to share with you just a little bit about him.

T.C.: Yeah, thanks Keith. T.C. Stallings. I live in Ontario, California and I have –

KEITH: Wait a minute, isn't Ontario in Canada?

T.C.: Canada, yeah, I get....

KEITH: You are so confused...

T.C.: You get that mixed up all the time. There is an Ontario in California. A lot of people don't know that. That's where I live. I've been married, it will be 13 years this June, 2014, so I'm excited. I have two children. I am an actor as well, like Robert – my man Robert. And I'm an author as well of a book called *Playing on God's Team*. And I'm looking forward to doing year two. It's going to be great. And I'm looking forward to helping you guys build yourselves up and become the man God has called you to be. So I'm looking forward to it.

KEITH: I can't believe you got a plug in for your book already. I thought like week three or week four to pull that one off.

The last guy on our team is the man who six years ago, he and I sat down and said, hey, how to we create a movement for men. Roy Smith is the Director of Pennsylvania Counseling Services, overseas Knights of the 21st Century and has written all of the material that we have a chance of presenting. And so, Roy, it's good to have you brother. Love you man.

ROY: It's good to be here. I've been married for 38 years. I have 2 children. I'm an ordained minister. I have a Ph.D. in psychology and I run

a big counseling service in Central Pennsylvania with about 575 employees. And every year I come back trying to understand these minds that I get a chance to work with. I am yet to figure it out and we have a few more sessions here to kind of figure them out. If you have any ideas, let me know.

KEITH: Good luck on that. That's going to be tricky to do.

Now guys, I want you to take your books and open up to Trial No. 1, it's called Wounds. And in there, you're going to see this. There's a couple paragraphs that Roy's written. You can read those any time. But I. says this: News Flash – Life is not always fair. Everyone experiences some form of pain. There are two ways that people deal with the fact that no one gets through life without being wounded in some way.

I told you that we're going to deal with the fact that we have wounds. And what we're going to deal with as we look at this is, the guys are going to kind of interact with some of the points you're going to find in the next few minutes and the fact that they have wounds. They know that guys have wounds and we also know that everybody you and I are designed to make feel safer have wounds. And how are we going to make a difference? It's kind of a heavy way for us to begin, but it's a reality. And for you guys that are doing year five, here's what we're going to do – a man adapts by this. Roy, why don't you share?

ROY: Well Keith, you're right. It is a tough job, but somebody's got to do it. And that is that every man has to learn to process grief, emotional grief. And as a result of life, life is always going to send a few things at you that you don't like. I had to scare these guys, but research shows that this is an area that differentiates the most between males and men. Men are able to grieve and process their emotions and these losses. Males kind of try to drink themselves through it or ignore it and then it cuts off their ability to be real emotionally with other people.

ROBERT: A man adapts by learning from each painful event that he experiences. You know, often times, especially for some of us that are married, we find that if something goes wrong at work or somewhere else in our lives, we tend to take that anger and release it on kind of like the other relationships in our lives. So, for example, what we'll end up doing

is we'll go home and then we'll release that fury, for example, on our families, on our wives, and on our children. Not a wise thing to do. A man does not behave that way. What a man does is he learns through those experiences. Listen, I'm an actor. Rejection is a part of the game. I go to auditions and more often than not, I'm being told – guess what? You're not exactly what we're looking for. So, what I do, however, is I adapt to that. I say, you know what, next time I am going to be better. I am going to fix what I need to fix and adjust what I need to adjust. You see pain for a man is not something that stops you in your tracks. On the contrary, pain becomes something that you learn to work with and it makes you better.

CLAIR: A man adapts to pain by developing new strengths. And one of the things I think about, when I am at the peak of my game – business, personal relationships, you name it – we talk about the concepts of a mountaintop. The reality of a mountaintop is a really cool place to be. But it's also pretty drastic. The winds are pretty swift and we also know the rainfall amount on top is not enough to nurture new growth.

So guys, I hate valleys. I hate going through them. But each year I have less and less fear. I know in the valley is where the fruit develops. That's where things actually grow. That's where I will develop my strengths. I will make it to the next mountaintop but you are going to have pain in life and you do need to develop new strengths to be able to get through that part of your journey.

T.C.: The next one is, a man develops by helping others who have similar wounds. Helping those by having similar wounds. Sometimes for me going through life, you know, you kind of regret some of the things you go through, whether it is losing a job or losing a child – you know that's pretty tough – a death in the family, or just anything that is really, really hurtful and you're always wondering, if you're like me, you're saying, God why did this happen to me? Why did this happen to me? I think you find out as you go through life and you run into somebody else who has gone through a similar situation, if you come through that situation and you've come out successful, you want to share that anecdote with another person. And you're passioned about that because you know if it worked for you, it will work for them. You can see that person's life change for the better and so, it is easy to connect with somebody when you share

something that they've been through and you just find common ground right away and then you can see that person, their life change through you just vibing with them and connecting with them, and then they're inspired to think that they can come through it because they are looking at living proof that it can happen. So that's, that's how we adapt to other people, you know, I've been cut, you've been cut, I healed. Look at my healed wound. I can help you to be the same way.

ROY: You know, a lot of us men, we struggle with the concept of submission and it's hard to kind of see God as a part of what is going on around us. I'm able to kind of go like this physically. Technically, way back when, God gave me the ability to go like this, but each day we men have the opportunity to either say, I can do this, or I can see the God's love and power behind me and rely upon that to do this. Many of us, every day, start out our lives going I got this. And part of becoming a mature man is recognizing I've got this because right behind me is God's love and power giving me the power to do it.

KEITH: It's interesting that each one of the guys, as they've been working through this journey, have a part of where they go, you know what, having wounds is not a bad thing. In fact, a man's going to have a wound, he's going to learn to adapt and become. So we thought it would be cool if they'd share some of the perspectives of their wounds because in order for you to heal somebody else, you're going to need to have worked through your own wounds. Guys, there are a bunch of people standing behind you. They need your safety. They need your protection and you're going to need it out of your wounds being healed and dealt with.

Now, there's a problem. Sometimes we don't get healed when we have a wound. Sometimes we become victims. A man becomes a victim when certain things happen in his life. Let's walk through these things, a couple of these areas with T.C.

T.C.: Alright. First one is, a man becomes a victim by allowing himself to feel crushed and giving himself permission to quit. Now this is interesting because for everybody, look there's rules to life. I know for me, there's a formula that I believe in. I'm sure you probably do too. I work hard. I got do the job. I should be rewarded for my hard work. That's one plus one equals two, as my man Roy would like to say. What happens when that doesn't work out? What happens when the rules of life doesn't produce what it should? Then you feel like, hey, that's unfair. And you get tired of life treating you unfair and therefore it's like, you know what, I'm

not going to play this game if the rules don't always work out the way they should. And instead of taking the mentality of, you know what, it didn't work out for me, but you know what, I'm going to dust myself off and go again, it's like, no, it's not worth it because the rules aren't working out. That's allowing yourself to be a victim of the circumstance. Instead of strengthening yourself and just saying, hey, I'm going to move on. I'm going to keep this thing going, and then the next one will work out. You get this positive outlook. So, that's what we do. We allow ourselves to feel crushed by giving ourself permission to quit and it's usually when the rules don't work out. But guys, sometimes life isn't fair, but that doesn't mean you lose your passion.

CLAIR: We – Roy, Keith and I – are blessed to be part of men's group here in Central Pennsylvania to literally a couple hundred men that do life together weekly and we get to hear amazing stories. Unfortunately, one of the saddest stories that approaches us is a man who has given up dreaming. Every man was born was with dreams. When we were young – there's a Toby Keith song, I remember. He said I should have been a cowboy. I should have learned to rope and ride. And that song is filled with regrets. Guys, don't stop dreaming. The minute you stop dreaming, you're starting to die. And so, I just want to encourage you. There is a business principle that I've followed my whole life. The business principle is very simple. It says you never lose. You either win or you learn. It's not losing. If things don't work out the way you hoped, it's not a win but it's not a loss. It's a learning experience. And I just want to challenge you when it comes to dream, just give you a little bit of courage, just a phrase that I keep at my desk. It very simply says, "Don't ever stop shooting for the moon. Even if you miss, you're going to land among the stars."

ROY: Every day I make a decision. I make a decision whether I'm going to be a man that day or a male. And one of the key ingredients that kind of separates the difference between a male and a man is whether or not as a man I am willing to open up my life every day to have other people help me succeed where I'm not able to do it on my own. There's a male part of me that just wants to be isolated and just wants to say what I do is, I can do everything, I don't need any help, all that kind of stuff. And part of being a man is recognizing that life is bigger than me and I need these guys and people out there that will help me succeed.

ROBERT: You know, a male becomes a victim many times by using his anger to create other victims. I have a nephew, a young nephew. He is almost 5 years old and he has a – I was observing him one day and

when my sister, his mom, disciplined him, he got really, really angry and he went into a bedroom. He didn't want to talk to anyone and whenever anyone would try to approach him, he'd look at them and say, leave me alone. I don't love you. I don't want to be with you. I'm angry because my mom disciplined me. It's kind of interesting. I don't that that's a behavior that's too far off from something we carry with us even into adulthood. I mentioned that example earlier of a man that gets angry and takes it out on his family. I think often times we find it easier to just release that anger and that fury among innocent victims just because we want to feel like there's some kind of justice or balance that we can somehow recapture. Guys, it's a whole lot easier to try to pretend to be a victim. It's a matter of really figuring out how to properly behave in that circumstance.

T.C.: Alright. And then the next one is, a man becomes a victim by denying God's presence and purpose in his life. Those key words there – presence and purpose. The presence of God creates accountability. You know God is always with you. And the purpose is when He made you to do.

Just for a moment I want you think of a piece of fruit and let's go with an orange. Orange, and think about the seeds. Those seeds are pre-packed with what it takes to become an orange. It can't be anything else. So that orange, let's say it had a choice. It decides it wants to be a pineapple. It wants to the beautiful colors and all that stuff. It wants to be popular. It wants to live in Hawaii, whatever the orange might want to do. But it's pre-packed to only be that orange. If it spends time trying to be anything else, it's going to be unsuccessful. It's not going to make it and that's what leads you to be a victim. I can't do it. I can't make it. But you were never designed to be a pineapple and if you just focus on what you were made to be, which is an orange, that's what you will become and you will live out your purpose. And that's what we need to do. If you spend life trying to be something that God never made you to be, that's what leads to depression and you become a victim. But Psalms 139:16, if you read that, it will tell you how God designed you with a purpose in mind. To try to be anything else would be a waste of time. So discovering your purpose and the presence of God being your accountability, that will stop you from being a victim.

KEITH: One of the most amazing things is we find ourselves guys realizing that we're in one of those two categories. We're wounded. I mean we've all been wounded. In fact, we up in our roundtable room, we'll

talk later. We'll share with you some of our wounds and we've been wounded. We either look at ourselves and say that wound will help me to adapt so I can protect those that I've been given to protect or my wound will cause me to be a victim where I feel like man, I was just let down. Somebody went to grab my hand and released it, didn't hold on like I thought they would. And so as a result of that we end up in one of two places.

Now look at II. It says people act in various ways as a result of choosing not to deal with their forest wounds. People who have not processed their pain will create wounds in others. So let's assume, guys, that you're not adapting and you're a victim. Just so you know, you're going to be pushing your wound on other people. So instead of protecting, we're actually adding to the wound. Instead of us being that hand they can trust to hold on to them, you actually become the very hand that lets the let go and lets them be vulnerable.

Look at A. A man has difficulty giving to others in nurturing ways if he has not been nurtured himself. So let's assume that you and I are going to struggle with giving nurture to somebody else because we haven't felt nurtured. One of the problems, you'll hear my wound. One of my wounds was the fact that I was sort of overly bonded to my mom kind of thing. It was actually where if felt that women took care of men, so I always felt like I had to be nurtured and cared for. The problem was that was that I actually stopped giving. I always wanted to get. It's kind of an interesting thing. Your wounds are going to affect how you nurture others, how you value others, how you care for them wisely. Not overdoing it, not under doing it but with the wisdom we need.

Look at B. Some people are competitive about obtaining the necessities of life because they believe there are not enough resources to go around. Sometimes we get really competitive because we're wondering if there's enough stuff for us to survive. It's also like there's not enough air, and I got to hold on to whatever air I have. There's not enough food or there's not enough oranges because they're all becoming
pineapples or whatever it is we're talking about. The reality is we go through this thing where we say, I wonder if there's enough resources to cover for me and so as a result of that, I'm only worried about fixing my wound. I'm not going to deal with anybody else's and so we become competitive with each other. I don't know where you are no this journey but guys, if you're not protecting wounds, you're probably creating them.

Look at C. Some people devalue themselves so that any closeness in their relationships create negative comparisons. One of the risks of us being involved with the guys here on stage is we're going to compare ourselves. There are some good looking ones and there are some ones that are not as good looking. You can kind of judge for yourself where that works. We compare ourselves in body types and your life experience, odd job opportunities, people that get involved with us. Let the guys share with you a couple of ways that we get involved in comparison which takes us off tasks of protecting and healing those from being wounded. Clair is going to share with you first.

CLAIR: So the principle is, if I feel I like I'm not a person who has value, then I expect others are going to reject me. There's a music artist out right now by the name of Matthew West. He has a song called *My Name Is* and the premise of the song is that we all walk around with name tags on. So if your name is I am wounded or your name is I'm a loser or whatever it is that your inner speak is telling you, people sense it. And here's the sad part about it, if you think you're a person without value, it's a self-fulfilling prophecy. If I approach you and I don't value myself, at the end of the day the way I handle myself, the way we interact is self-fulfilling, you're not going to value me either. So guys, make sure you know what your name is. Make sure it's positive speak that you're telling yourself I am of value and others will find value in you as well.

ROY: Thanks a lot Clair. When someone feels negative and able to see themselves as rejected, a number of bad things happen and it just kind of multiples. Another way a person thinks is that if feel like I am not valuable and you like me, you must make a poor choice of friends. So the minute I want someone out there to like me, the minute they start to connect up with me and I start to have a relationship with them, I go, man, you really have poor choice because if you knew me, you wouldn't like me. And so, the sense of self-rejection eats away as a subtle asset below everything eating away at all my foundational relationships because I honestly believe if those people cared me, if they cared about me they made a bad choice because no one cares about me.

CLAIR: The next point is if I feel like I'm not valuable, I will feel my lack of value even more when I'm in the presence of others. And so I find myself maintaining distance from others. This again is a really dangerous downward spiral. Isolationism and then those inner voices start repeating themselves even more and more, the negative spiral continues. We talk about it in our men's group together, about the lions and gazelles

and we asked the question, which gazelle does the lion kill. And the answer we often get is the weakest. The truth is if you study the animal kingdom, it's not the weakest, it's the gazelle that is alone. You can be the strongest gazelle, but if you're separated from the pack you get taken down. So guys, distance from each other, don't let it happen and if you're having a hard time relating with people, again remember that people will find you interesting as soon as they find out that you are interested in them. So reach out. Do not let isolationism happen to you.

ROBERT: If I feel like I am not valuable, I might as well act the part because it is easier than hoping for something that will not happen. Does that ever sound like you? I mean you know that kind of hopelessness or despair because you really feel like, well you're not worth anything anyway so I might as well just act like it? The truth is for those of us that are in Jesus Christ, we have found infinite worth. Check out this verse from Luke, Chapter 12, verse 6 through 7. It says, "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies and not one of them is forgotten before God? Why even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not. You are of more value than many sparrows." What a beautiful thing God tell us, that we can understand, that we are so valuable in Him that he cares for even the little hairs on our head. He's got them all numbered. Guys, we can't be walking around moping around. We are sons of a king.

T.C.: Alright, that's awesome. Here's the other one. Now this one you'll find to be pretty common. I've even done this in my own life so I can kind of relate to this one. It says if I feel like I am not valuable, I need to constantly earn your attention. Therefore, I must please you at the cost of being who I really am. This is how a male becomes a victim. And I like to call this just being a chameleon. It's the easiest thing to do, is to whatever I need to do to please a person, whatever I think they like that that's what I'm going to be. Anytime that I'm around, you know, if I see that this will work and give me the attention that I desire, then that's just what I'm going to be. And it's an easy thing to do but the cost of that, the problem of that is you don't get to be you. There's two things wrong with that because when you do start being you, if they like the other person, the moment you start being you, you're going to lose them anyway. And then you never understand really who you are and you just become this social chameleon. You just change with the times, change with the moment and then you're never happy, you're never pleased and that just leads to, you know again, things like depression, things like being a victim, because you can't please anybody else. But the problem is you're

too concerned with pleasing other people and you're not even concerned with pleasing yourself because yourself wants to be itself and you won't let it and that's how you become a victim.

KEITH: We like this tendency to be victims because that's really what we would then do naturally. One of the things we do when we go through that is we say, you know, what about my wounds? What I'm going to do guys is I'm going to let you know that in a few minutes you're going to break from what you're doing right now and you're going to get into a small group we call campfires. Andy you're going to go to a room. We call it a roundtable room where you're just going to get together and you're going to talk through some things. The guys are going to go up to that roundtable room to sort of talk now, and then I'll join them as we talk about our wounds. And I'm going to ask you to look at yours as well.

Keeping that in mind, here's what D says. People have chosen to given into their shadows by choosing to manipulate, dominate, control and abuse others. Now guys the shadow is what we call sin. So you see, God will never let go of your hand. He will never let go of you. He will always, always hold on. You can let go of Him, but He won't let go of you. On the other hand, you and I have, we have this thing called sin which will from time-to-time we go absolutely selfish, absolutely victim, and we create wounds in other people. One of the things you have to be careful of is when we are doing damage to people because of the damage that we have within us and that damage is expressed when we would call sin or shadow.

As you look at the next slide, we're looking at statement about a guy by the name of Achan. There's a thing called Knightly News in your books that we're going to do each week. It's just a story from the Bible. It's going to have something applicable to the very thing we're talking about. Achan is a guy who is perfect for the thing on his shadow. Achan, like everybody else, was supposed to do one thing. He chose not to do it. He saw something that he wanted. He knew it was wrong. He took it and he hid it and as result of that, people died. So the statement is the rest of the community was not safe because of the greed won over by the rules from Joshua 7:9-22 is the story of Achan. One man. Guys, if you don't deal with your wounds, you will wound others. You will let go. You will do damage. So we got to deal with this whole victim area.

Look at the next area, E. People live only for the moment and do not care about anything beyond the pleasure they receive. It's almost self-

explanatory. It feels good, I do. If I makes me happy, guess what's going to happen? I'll wound me. I'll wound others.

Look at F. People don't recognize that their imperfections cause them to be too self-focused which causes conflicts and hurts others. You and I find ourselves dealing with the fact that when the world revolves around me, everybody over here that I'm supposed to protect isn't going to be protected. Everybody behind me that's supposed to be safe, I'm so busy dealing with my own stuff. You cannot live in the victim world. You got to adapt to your wounds as a man.

Look at G. People expect others to heal their wounds and meet all of their needs. We expect others to heal our wounds and meet all of their needs. Guys, the God of the universe is willing to heal your wounds. People can't. They'll try. I can't really heal anybody. I can just give them a safe environment for them to deal with what they have to deal with. That's my job as a man, protecting those behind me. So keep that in mind as we kind of say, okay, let's leave victim here and let's look at this.

Look at III. While a man is dealing with the ways that life has treated him unfairly, the forest throws even more challenges at him. So what happens is this, the world is already tough, right. People hurt us. Our parents hurt us, friends hurt us, things have happened in our life that has caused damage and now all of a sudden the world hurts us. The environment in which we find ourself.

Look at a couple things here that go with the environment in which we find ourself. A, there are floods, earthquakes, fire, pollution, snow, ice, tornadoes, throughout all of which make a person's daily existence more difficult. You just have to pick up a newspaper and you'll see everything from mud slides to tornadoes to fires, damage is taking place. It is impacting and making wounds. It always does.

B, there are limited resources. The reality is that there's only so much of everything. Now it's interesting as we look at that. We don't have a limited God but the world in which we find ourselves does have limits. And you and I need to understand that that creates hardship. It creates some wounds to go with it.

C. There is – I disconnect between people's needs and the availability of forest resources. There is a disconnect between what we have as a need and the availability of the forest resources. Now that's sort of where this comes into play. There's somebody somewhere in the world that is starving to death and you're eating at a buffet line. You know that there's enough food because you're eating at a buffet line but there's

people starving to death over here and that creates wounds. I mean there's an inequity. There's a need issue that doesn't always get responded to.

Look at D, all under environment. There are diseases that attack healthy people. You can be the most healthy individual out there and there are diseases that just hit you, right? And it's not fair. It doesn't always make sense. Runners die of heart attacks, vegetarians get cancer. I mean it doesn't always make sense but the reality is that healthy people are attacked. So keeping all those things in mind, they are all where wounds come from. So whether you view yourself as a victim or adapting as a man, there are certain things in the environment that just hit us.

E. As humans, we sometimes hurt the environments by making ecology inconvenient. The environment gradually adapts to the damage we create by becoming less hostile. We actually become our own worst enemies. We actually have the environment wound us, right. Now you know all this, you see all this, you know how this works, how it goes, why it goes the way it does but it's all contributing to wounds and they just feel so unfair sometimes.

Look at F – random acts of violence by others. You just simply find yourself having somebody you love hurt by a person for no reason, a mob mentality or a person in the wrong place at the wrong time or premeditated acts. I mean all this creates wounds. So what are we going to do about it? Well we're going to make a decision to protect.

So look at IV. The forest wounds us even further by selling us negatively focused ideas that contradict manhood. The forest is going to sell you negatively focused ideas that contradict your manhood. Now here's what I want you to do. This is going to be a self test. If these are true of you, just put a check. In other words, these are the things that have kind of wounded you over the years and just check it off. That kind of personalizes this whole journey for us, alright.

Look at A. You can only live well by taking care of yourself. So you decide that you are the god of you, right. It's all about you and you can care for you. That's a lie that's been sold to us. So if you're in great shape, therefore you're going to be able to master all these wounds or whatever else. Be careful, check that one – are you so narcissistic that that's where it goes?

Look at B. Rules, standards, accountability must be avoided in order to protect my freedom. That rules get in the way of what I want to be, you know. In other words, I'm just free. I'm allowed to do whatever I want and

why should I be limited by the world around me and so if that's a problem for you, check it, including the speed limit, although within five miles.

Look at C. My value is determined by what I do, not who I am. My value is determined by what I do, not who I am. You know we always ask, what do you do for a living, but really the issue is, we're not really human doings, we're human beings, right. Who are you? In fact, to protect those behind you, in order for us to get involved in making a difference in those behind us and not letting them down, you're going to have to deal with the idea of protecting who you are.

Look at D. Manhood is determined by age, physical strength and sexual prowess. We're going to determine who we are by what age we are, what our strength is and all that, how _____ we are. It doesn't measure who a man is. As a matter of fact, there's a problem with that, a lot of wounds come out of that. So, is that one you get off that you've been taught or sold?

Look at E. Whatever has been done in the past predetermines a person's future. Whatever's been done in the past predetermines a person's future. I've already messed up, it's too late, I don't get another shot at this. I've blown it. The pages have been written and therefore that's who I am. That's not who you are. You have a brand new page to write. What are you going to do with it? But is that one that you kind of deal with.

Look at F. The power to effectively deal with forest challenges is unrelated to a man's ability to follow God's guidance. And it's more about the strength he has to handle them on his own. We sometimes come to the conclusion that we don't need God, right. We just don't need Him. We can handle us. It's about taking care of us and we're in charge of our own faith. Well the reality is, there's a Creator who absolutely will never let go of you – never, ever. So you need to trust Him and what He can do in your life. We're going to walk through that journey together this year. So maybe that's one you check off.

Look at G. What really counts in life can be seen, controlled, manipulated and measured. You should ignore the spiritual world. If I can see it, I believe in it. If I can't see it, I don't trust it, right. That's sort of the area. We want you to understand that the one solid grip is from God to us. All the rest of us are going to try to have good solid grips but it is solid. You can't see it. It's more real. So is that one you've been _____. Check that one off if you haven't seen it until now.

Look at H. The nature of the forest is random and chaotic and purely based on chance. You and I cannot trust the world in which we live. We just can't. We are finding ourselves in this world that's absolutely out of control because we don't think there's a controller, we don't think there's a God. There is.

Now, here's where it takes us. It takes us back to where we started. See, there are wounded people that need us to hold onto them. And if we are the kind of person that will hold onto us, they can count on us to keep them safe and secure. The reality is in your life there are people who need you to do that.

What we're going to work through this year is being a defender where every environment you enter is safe. In order to do that, we have to take a look at our wounds and how to protect the wounds of others. Join us up in the roundtable room as we kind of talk through it at our campfire and as you talk through it in yours. Good to have you with us.

ROBERT: Honestly, I feel better, I came up stronger on the other side. I feel like, you know, I was able to work those issues out. Really what God did in guiding me as I look back is an incredible thing. I'm stronger for it.

T.C.: Keith, how you doing brother? Robert was just talking about wounds that he's been though. I was just thinking the whole time why he was going is I personally mostly have been wounded by regretting my childhood, regretting how I grew up, where I grew up, the fact that my father wasn't in my life. You know I would see the other kids with their mom and their dad working together and therefore their incomes come together. And they don't necessarily have to live in the neighborhood that I live in because their families are working together and my mom's by herself. I felt like my father robbed me of a better life because he's not there helping mom. So my mother has to work extremely hard. She can't come to like my games, things like that. I'm not represented in the stands, you know. And all these other kids, their fathers have the fruit for after the game, get the signs, go whoever go, whatever. I don't have that because circumstances don't allow that so it was just like I felt robbed of a lot of my childhood. And then, you know, as you get older you pay for these things because you know, no one's teaching me how to pick a college because no one in my family went to college. So I hated that. I wasn't prepared for these things. No one knew. And then you get into debt. When I was a young college card, I already picked up credit card debt because no one talked to me about that and how to get ready for – no one talked

mortgages because no one has ever bought a house. So it was like in my family line, they just wasn't prepared to prepare me for the things I would face so I learned by trial and error and those errors created some deep wounds. You can create debt. You don't know how to be a husband right away. You're not prepared for anything. And then you're upset about things from your children that you felt like, if a dad was there teaching you, or a better prepared mom or anybody, that you can make better decisions as you move on in your life. And so it took me a long time for those things to heal because I paid for those things for several years until I made enough mistakes, learned how to do it right, got myself together, patched up some of those to the point where I am now. But I'm now 36 years old and when you start off with a more solid foundation and a more solid system, man, you're taught some of these things early that you know, I'm 13 years old and I may already know how to fill out an application. You know, you hadn't learned until you're done the line. Those things hurt, you know, those hurt and it took a while to heal up.

ROY: Like one loss here creates a whole series of losses as a result afterwards.

T.C.: Yeah, I am paying for my father's mistakes, his father's father's mistakes, because obviously no one prepared him and who knows where that started. But at the end of the day, here I am as a result of it. Well was. I'm better now.

CLAIR: It's interesting. Nobody gets to escape the wounds. So T.C., I was fortunate. I had a mother and father my whole life. However, I didn't have something that you had. I would have killed to be an athlete. I have no athletic ability…(laughter).

ROY: Although the good thing is, you always knew on the playground of life when you were going to be picked. Last or second to the last (laughter).

CLAIR: In fairness Keith, you got to play football for what four years in high school, the drawback, whatever that position was (laughter). So here was the wound and nobody escapes them. And I had mom and dad, but no athletic ability, average student and I dealt with rejection. Something I really have to guard against. I hate being rejected. I'm a people person, love relationship and I can get wounded so quickly.

I remember probably the height of it, somewhere in high school, which can be a cruel time if you don't have a whole lot going for you. I just didn't or didn't perceive I did which is probably self-fulfilling. I didn't see value in me so others didn't value me. And I remember at one point in

high school feeling so low, had my best friend at the time and just said, you know what, I am going to learn to live my life not needing people, just flat out not going to need them. And I walked into a period of isolationism. Fortunately he stuck by me and helped pull me out. But then in my twenties or early twenties, I started discovery some skill sets that I had, but even today, even with you guys in relationships we have here, I have to be guarded against it. I can get re-wounded so quickly. You just have to be aware that those are lies, most likely from the enemy that I don't listen to and enjoy relationships.

KEITH: And that's pretty common wound, because eventually you go around a table, there are either the guys that said, you know I was picked in the first three, or the guys that were picked in the bottom. Very rarely do you remember being the middle guys. Do you know what I mean? So there are a lot of wounds that come out of that whole environment.

ROY: Well you know, there's a number of different types of wounds. When I thought about this, I thought about, you know, my parents moved around a lot because I was a minister's kid so every time we got used to an area it seemed like we had to leave, so, you know, that's a wound I had. Friendship, sometimes one in particular where someone embezzled some money from me and I thought we were partners. It took me a couple years to figure that out, you know. But the one I thought about sharing was an experience that occurred to me when I was 16 years old, 16 and ½. I had a brother named Rhett and Rhett was like 6 foot 2 at 14 years old, played center on the basketball team and when you looked it him, it was like T.C.'s muscles. They were natural, you know. I mean I grew up with this huge brother two years younger than me and everybody kind of looked up to him and one day I stayed home – he stayed home from school. We thought he had the flu. That night he was in a coma and five days later he was dead because, you know, they didn't give him a shot of penicillin. It was encephalitis and somehow it got to the brain and all that. And here I am, you know, for all my years thinking even though we fought constantly at brothers, some day you kind of know, you fight as brothers but you know he's got your back, you know. And then suddenly, boom, just like that I'm by myself. I have two sisters but their eight and ten years younger than me and now all of a sudden life suddenly changes. So I takes a while to work through some of these wounds and whenever I still think of Rhett, there is a part of me that again grieves at that loss, even though that loss happened many years ago.

CLAIR: It was interesting, you know, how you were saying you go through sort of a litany of different places where wounds can come, you know. So somebody will say something, and you'll say something about not being an athlete and I'll remember a wound. And you'll say something about loss of somebody when Caleb got cancer a couple years ago, there's a sense if you never thought it was your kid. And what do you do with that, you know, and what do you do with that and how do you handle those wounds. So I think probably for me, it always come back to probably where I've done the most damage as a result of a wound. I have a bunch of wounds and the guys will hear about them this year as we talk about defender, but there is something that I didn't realize.