

**WHY NOT TRY**  
**TO HIT THE**  
**REAL**  
**TARGET**



# CONTENTS

Introduction .....	i
<b>1</b> Before You Try To Hit The Target—The Big Question.....	1
<b>2</b> Build The Structure To Hit The Target.....	18
<b>3</b> Hit The Target With Big “S” And Small “s” Spirituality .....	37
<b>4</b> Hit The Target—5 Areas That All Men Struggle With .....	47
<b>5</b> Hit The Target—A Man’s Most Difficult Conquest.....	70
<b>6</b> Hit The Target—Attaining Spiritual Intimacy .....	85
<b>7</b> Hit Mini-Targets On The Way To The Ultimate Target.....	103
<b>8</b> The Biggest Challenge To Hitting The Target.....	126
<b>9</b> Overcoming Pastoral Resistances To Hitting The Target .....	142
<b>10</b> 9 Crucial Elements To Hitting The Target .....	158
<b>11</b> Study The Fish To Hit The Target.....	170
Bonus: Hit The Target With Knights21 .....	190
Our Viewpoint.....	202
Our Team.....	205

# INTRODUCTION



I was recently talking with a friend about my observations while traveling for Knights of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century over the past five years, particularly regarding the level of resistance churches face when they are considering the development of a men's ministry. In some cases, a men's program is not created because a pastor is doubtful about the likelihood of men responding positively. In other cases, men have asked their pastor for his permission to start a group and have been told no. Regardless of the reasons why, effective men's programs are rare. As we talked, I saw that the real challenge of starting a men's ministry is not that it cannot be done—it is rather that churches often fail to recognize or are ignorant of what it takes to get men involved.

As our discussion continued, I shared the statistics regarding the impact of a father's church attendance versus a mother or child's church attendance. If a child attends church, the likelihood of the rest of the family attending is less than 20%; if a mother attends, the likelihood is less than 25%; if a father attends, the likelihood that the rest of the family will attend is more than 90%. It is men who will lead their entire family to church. Every area of a church will grow when it discovers the secret of getting men involved in church. As my friend Dave Murrow explains in his book *Why Men Hate Going to Church*, when a church makes conscious efforts to appeal to men, the entire body of Christ will be strengthened. Men bring their families, and along with that, they bring a financial commitment and their friends.

In business, when an effective process, technique, value or procedure proves to significantly benefit a company, other companies rush to replicate it and revel in its positive effects. If the number of men attending church leads to the growth of the church (which equals more souls choosing to follow Jesus and increasing the strength of the collective force that is willing to fight the negative cultural trends of our world), wouldn't encouraging more men to come to church be a vital target? It is a fact that when more men come to church, the church becomes stronger. Filled with frustration, I asked my friend, "Why not try to hit the real target?" With so much at stake and such clear statistics, it makes no sense for Christians to continue following the ineffective status quo. The addiction recovery community defines insanity as "doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." Many churches are guilty of this; the target is men, yet they refuse to take aim and try to hit this crucial target.

If you are not interested in trying to hit the target, stop reading now! If you are still reading, it's because you see the value in involving men more intentionally in your church. You know what working with men can do, not only for their lives, but also for those they influence. Although you may have problems, insanity (at least in this regard) is not one of them. Our goal is to help you guide your passion for leading men, which will inevitably lead to a stronger men's program. Our focus is on men and creating an effective men's group in a church setting.

This book will not be a discussion of all of the church's reasons for not pursuing the real target or how to develop a man-friendly church. It is about the steps that are involved in creating a vibrant men's ministry. We will explore the components for the success of a men's program that will encourage men to meet regularly in the church and develop the kinds of relationships that enforce accountability,

including a relationship with Jesus. We will give you tips on how to help your program grow. We hope that you not only believe men are worthy targets to aim for as you work toward developing an effective church, but that you will give it your best shot. Take aim and ask God for His help and guidance—He will empower your ministry to succeed for His kingdom.

Each chapter has discussion questions at the end that can help with your group's organizational decisions. There are also questions that will give your leadership team an opportunity to talk together about what you collectively want to accomplish as a group. Growing spiritually as a team ensures that you will navigate through the various challenges of leading men in ways that honor God. This book will prepare you to accomplish what God has called you for. There are very few things that have a more significant impact than a man who has changed his life. 90% of men say they don't have a close male friendship; less than 1% of males participate in a church-led ministry to men; fewer than 10% of churches can sustain a vibrant ministry to men.<sup>1</sup> When you study and attempt to positively influence the negative cultural trends that are created when males isolate themselves, you are choosing to work on the cutting edge of change—for the church and the world. May God bless your efforts!

It may be helpful for some of you to read Chapter 11 before you begin your ministry efforts. This chapter presents various facts and research about males and identifies specific male needs that a ministry should focus on meeting, which will allow you to understand the context of some of the discussions from a strategic perspective. Since Chapter 11 has a more research-based, factual emphasis, it comes at the end of this book for those who are not as interested in this kind of information. Some concepts are repeated throughout

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1 Barna.org

the book, which we hope will increase your understanding of the basic building blocks of a men's program. At times, there may appear to be contradictions in some of our discussions, but they are necessary for achieving balance. Learn how to develop a leadership team that works together.

Knights21 has developed online resources that can help you create a successful men's ministry program. Visit [Knights21.com/target](http://Knights21.com/target) and select the **keywords** included throughout this book to access additional leadership tools regarding certain topics. Although Knights21 has produced many books and curriculum/DVD programs for men, this book is not meant to be an overview of our program or products. With the exception of a few references throughout, information regarding Knights21 and its design are included in the bonus chapter at the end of the book. We hope to help you achieve what God has called your team to complete, and as you do this with God's help, it is our prayer that you hit the target!



## **HIT THE TARGET—5 AREAS THAT ALL MEN STRUGGLE WITH**



God loves men so much that He cares about all of who they are. Understanding the big “S,” little “s” distinction and how they work together to complement each other in men’s ministry encourages a men’s leader to use any angle he can to improve a man’s life. A knowledgeable approach is something men not only appreciate, but are hungry for. This effort to engage men in every area of life helps them access any motivation they have for: self-improvement, life mastery, problem solving, relational harmony, skill development or understanding their own identities. The areas of life which motivate them can be used to point them to their need for a relationship with Jesus. They need this spiritual source of strength, not only for their future eternal destination, but also to be empowered by God on a daily basis to live life successfully. Many males are clueless about their need for God. Their own self-focus and aggressive nature causes them to rely on their own wits, muscles, strategies, hustle and manipulation to survive. God calls them to thrive, and to do this, they must meet Him. You can often break through a man’s defenses when he has a need or is experiencing a circumstance that creates stress that cannot be fixed. “Hitting bottom,” an Alcoholics Anonymous term, creates an internal state that motivates a person to look beyond themselves and seek other alternatives.

The 5 struggles which are discussed in this chapter are common issues that most males have difficulty with. Through a men's ministry leader's understanding of them, he has an opportunity to interest men in receiving assistance in an important area or theme of their life which they are already struggling with. Their motivation is then ensured as they feel the emotional discomfort of having a need and not yet reaching a solution. God wants this human need to be met; a relationship with Jesus is a starting point for satisfying this need. A man wants this need to be met so he can move on positively with his life. The church and its men's group are representatives of God's love. They step up and teach men how to deal with these 5 struggles. As men grow, they naturally invite others to join them. As they feel better about themselves, life and who God is, they have no doubt their friends will benefit as well. As challenging as these struggles are for each man to face, they represent opportunities for a men's ministry program to make a practical difference in every attendee's life. The big "S" is used to support men in their lives, which encourages them to discover the small "s" spiritual disciplines that can make them whole.

## **STRUGGLE 1: SEARCHING FOR MANHOOD**

Males have an inherent desire to become men. This instinctual need to believe in their manhood causes them to observe older men and try to create relationships with them in order to achieve manhood. Often a male's desire to be a man is so strong that he convinces himself that he has achieved manhood, even if he hasn't. Despite the fact that males mistakenly believe that manhood is simply achieved at a certain age, they also know instinctually that it requires toughness, an ability to face their challenges with courage, a willingness to take risks, endurance, the respect of other men and a drive to compete aggressively for life's rewards. Males understand that they cannot



achieve manhood on their own; it must be also be affirmed by others. Saying “I achieved it” just to themselves feels hollow, as they have an internal awareness that simply saying it to themselves is not enough. Their manhood must be acknowledged from an external source.

When males cannot find older men from whom to learn about manhood, they lower their expectations and look for affirmation from their immature male peers. Gangs and sports teams often become cheap substitutes for the positive manly relationships that males search for, but cannot find. The church, which should encourage these positive relationships, loses a great opportunity by not putting effort or resources into an outreach program for males to discover how to integrate God’s definition of manhood into their lives.

No matter what age they are, all males need to know that they have achieved manhood. If a male defines himself, or others define him, as less than a man, he will carry great disappointment within himself, which is often expressed aggressively. His real need—a relationship with Jesus—is ignored. Jesus is the Ultimate Man; if males are encouraged to move toward manhood, they will be more likely to appreciate the characteristics of who Jesus is and consider what a relationship with Him has to offer.<sup>1</sup>

Because of the reality of sin, each person has character flaws and negative tendencies. When a male chooses to pursue manhood and identifies what he needs to do to be a man, he will be immediately confronted with the negative aspects of himself which Paul describes in Romans 7. Willpower alone does not help a man change. His own self-destructive tendencies demand that he receives support and direction from outside of himself. Setting any goal is humbling, as a man’s internal resistances and sin nature work against his success.

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1 For further reading on seeing Jesus as the true definition of manhood, see *On Becoming a Real Man* by Edwin Louis Cole.

Our sin nature makes every area of life difficult. We must acknowledge our need for divine intervention in order to limit our self-destructive impulses.

Even males who do not go to church, whether Christian or non-Christian, recognize that much of what occurs in the world is negative. They want to become men; they look for ways to invest their time and apply their skills to being part of the solutions to the problems they see. They want to attach their God-given passion to a cause that is bigger than themselves. If these males are not judged for their lack of or difference in faith, they may be willing to come to church to explore ways to strengthen their manhood. This allows them to have regular contact with men who have ongoing relationships with Jesus Christ, which opens up opportunities to discover how faith in God interfaces with their manhood journey. The church can use a manhood program as an evangelistic outreach to meet the need to attain manhood that males feel and lead them toward the discovery of their real need—faith in Jesus. God wants males to find their manhood.

Many churches are experiencing an exodus of males between the ages of 18 to 25. This problem needs to be addressed directly. Not only are the souls of these individuals at stake, but the church's basic health and survival are also at risk. If you ask a three-year-old boy to make a list of how boys act and how girls act, he will be very specific about how he defines each gender and differentiates between them. If you ask him to do this again at age seven or eight, or when he is a teenager, his answers will often be the same. This internal list evolves over time and affects a male's behaviors and responses as he chooses to act according to his definition of a male and avoid the list that is female.

Because of weak or nonexistent men's ministry programs within the church, as well as a lack of obvious manly leadership (other than the

pastor), males have begun to internally classify church primarily as a female activity. As a result, as males grow up and become independent from their parents, they instinctually move toward doing what they believe men do. They may also observe their fathers' and other men's lack of involvement in church and decide that church is on the female list of behaviors to avoid.

A solution to this problem: the church can teach men about true manhood, while also providing them with a process that helps them work toward their own manhood. If the church reaches out to males in this way, it will attract them to the church and encourage their engagement with other men in the church. Jesus and manhood will be connected. They will begin to define the church as a place that helps them achieve manhood; they will start to see that being involved in the church and its mission to change the culture for God's kingdom is a manly act; they will equate leaving the church with saying goodbye to their manhood.<sup>2</sup>

Many males do not have consistently nurturing relationships with other men who regularly communicate how they define manhood. Ultimately, these males end up defining manhood based on what they see in the world around them. Because men in today's world are often not involved in the church, young males mistakenly conclude that church is not important and choose not to participate in it. I have talked to thousands of women who voice their concerns about the impact that the lack of a father figure has on their teenage sons. They long for the church to step into the gap by providing a positive manly influence in their sons' lives. If the church created a manhood program for 13- to 16-year-old males, it would provide an outreach through which any young male without a man in his life could interact with a mentor. From this system could come a pool of young,

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<sup>2</sup> For further reading on the relationship between men and church, see *Why Men Hate Going to Church* by David Murrow.

manly leaders who would contribute positively to the challenges of the future. Males are so hungry for a mentoring relationship that some of our misguided youths find terrorists and gang leaders who encourage and expect them to sacrifice it all through their violent actions. This is why our world needs strong men.<sup>3</sup>

As I travel the country speaking to men's groups, I often tell my audience, one man at a time, that each of them are sinful. I walk around the room, and as I point to each man and tell him that he is sinful, the general response is for him to nod his head in agreement. Then, I repeat this process, pointing to each man and telling him that he is not a man. This time, instead of nodding in agreement, their eyes often communicate a healthy sense of aggressive defensiveness. We have become so used to sin being a part of our lives that we tend to accept it as inevitable; manhood, on the other hand, is something that we continue to be willing to fight for.

Jesus Christ is the Ultimate Man; the existence of sin in our lives competes against our ability to become like Him. Knowing that we have sin in our lives should cause us to have the same aggressive response as we do when our manhood is challenged. The truth is—your manhood *is* challenged when you choose to sin. Another word for manhood is *sanctification*; the stronger a man is spiritually, the more like Jesus he becomes.

The church is missing the important connection between manhood and a relationship with Jesus, which enables a male's ability and motivation to personalize his spiritual struggle and mobilize his desire to fight for his faith as hard as he would for his manhood. The church should be actively creating opportunities to establish a process for granting manhood to males. Through a vibrant men's ministry, the

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3 For further reading on mentoring young men, see *Every Man's a Mentor* by Sam Mehaffie.

church can encourage males to study manhood and lead them toward a relationship with Jesus Christ, which is ultimately a life-changing choice. If Jesus is the Ultimate Man, growing as a man means becoming more like Him. The church can strengthen itself by developing a leadership pool of passionate young men who are willing to apply themselves to the various needs of the community and church around them. The church can use each of the 5 struggles of men as opportunities to effectively intervene in the negative flow of history by demonstrating the healing power that a relationship with Jesus has. The church's message that God has a purpose for each person is a powerful concept that males can orient their own spiritual growth around. It also necessitates the development of the big "S" which encompasses a man's whole potential and is given to God as "a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1 KJV) to carry out God's will on this earth.<sup>4</sup>

## **STRUGGLE 2: THE ISOLATION OF MALES**

If you ask a male to name six male friends who he can call for support if life suddenly crashes down on him, he probably will not be able to name two. Jesus, who came to us from God in the form of a man, had 12 disciples, three of whom He was particularly intimate with, as well as other friends who supported Him. Despite the imperfections of His support team, Jesus modeled the importance of developing supportive relationships. Men create a lot of acquaintance-level relationships, but rarely invest in them at deep levels. True friendship between men who know each other and are committed to each other's good is rare. In John Vawter and James Wetherbe's book, *Achieving High Performance Friendship*, they describe not only the importance of men developing friendships, but also the ingredients that make up this type of bond.

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<sup>4</sup> For further reading on the male struggle to find manhood, see *Men of Honor, Women of Virtue* by Chuck Stecker.

To build strong bonds with each other, men need opportunities to talk about their views of life, involve themselves in a common cause and overcome the natural defensiveness that often manifests itself when men relate to others. Establishing deeper relationships between men takes time and requires a setting where they can meet regularly with other men. What better place is there for this than the church? (**Starting A Men's Ministry Video**) Unfortunately, because of the lack of strong men's ministries within today's church, men who attend church cannot identify any more male friends than those who don't attend church. We are to follow the example Christ gave us for creating and maintaining supportive relationships, but this important aspect of life is often overlooked.

The hormone testosterone contributes significantly to a male's tendency to isolate himself. Testosterone causes high levels of competitiveness and aggression within him and makes him aware of his status in relation to others—not the best characteristics for building positive relationships. We know that men can overcome these hormonal challenges when their collective efforts and passion are applied to a project or a team event. The church should serve as a backdrop for encouraging men to overcome the isolation they naturally prefer and learn to work together. They will start putting more value on understanding who Jesus is in their lives instead of preserving the insecure, defensive tendencies that are naturally expressed when they relate to other men. Church programs for men should focus on increasing their understanding of their God-given design and the Bible's instructions for living a Godly life. Men's programs must also provide opportunities for action and teamwork, which encourages them to overcome their differences in order to build relationships that contribute positively to the overall ministry of the church.

We are in a spiritual war. Whether a man is a Dallas Cowboys' fan or (*sensibly*) an Eagles' fan makes no difference in this war. Men are passionate; they can overcome the negative effects of testosterone by applying their passion to a collaborative course of action that makes a difference in the world. An ongoing relationship with the God of the Universe, through Christ, can provide purpose for their lives. When men work toward a common mission-oriented goal, they are able to overcome their differences, resist isolation and learn to appreciate the unique gifts of other men.<sup>5</sup>

Men often feel ambivalent about the closeness that can occur as relationships are developed. How does a man express affection appropriately to another man? How does a man talk directly to another man about the importance of their emotional bond with each other without making both of them feel uncomfortable? Can he explain how much he cares for a friend and his dedication to their relationship without reverting to a joking or mocking style of affection? Since dependence is seen as unmanly, how does a man learn to depend on his friend without being dependent? Where is the line between a supportive relationship and a person who has become "clingy"? How can a man maintain the balance between his independence and his need for friends?

These are the emotionally-based questions that a man must answer as he develops male relationships. Because of the hurt that men have experienced in their relationships, it is often easier for them to say "I don't need anyone" than to sort through the uncertainty that comes with building a close relationship with another man.

The consequences of a male's difficulty with establishing positive relationships can often be seen in his family's relationship dynamics.

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5 For further reading on the passion found within each man, see *Wild at Heart* by John Eldredge.

Many times, he expects his wife to be his sole source of support. Because he isolates himself from other males, he hasn't developed certain social skills or the ability to express his emotions, which takes a toll on his wife, and often on his children as well. He expects her to fill the gap for his absent male friendships, but as a woman, she doesn't naturally understand life from his male perspective. If he put time and effort into developing a better male support system, he would be encouraged to treat her better, find manly solutions to his problems and receive advice on how to accomplish challenging household or life tasks.

A man can't give what he doesn't have, which makes it important for him to find emotional fuel within himself; his access to his emotional fuel allows him to relate to his wife and other family members in ways that build closeness. Many people struggle with receiving love and trusting those who love them. They are cautious about receiving love with "strings attached." If a man's sole support system is his wife, she will likely have difficulty trusting his love because she will wonder how much of his love for her is based solely on wanting her to take care of him. She questions if it is her strength that provides him with the ability to love her, or if his identity is strong enough to make that choice. When a man has healthy relationships with other men, he gains a source of spiritual and emotional fuel that carries over to his leadership at home. This fuel causes his wife not to feel that he is dependent on her; she realizes that his love for her is real, and she can rely on it.

A man who is involved with a team of Godly men will learn social skills and have opportunities to practice expressing himself emotionally, which will be transferred to his relationship with his wife. This can relieve the burden and the expectation to fulfill needs that she, as a woman, is not equipped for. She knows instinctually that



she doesn't have a natural understanding of his perspective on many of life's issues. By developing his own support system with other men, a man will be encouraged to treat his wife better, find solutions for his problems and learn how to lead well.

An isolated man is more likely to become involved in pornography, gambling or substance abuse. Instead of finding positive solutions for his questions about life, himself or his own emotional well-being, he makes choices that numb his responses to his emotions. Pornography gives him the opportunity to feel strong when he feels weak, attractive when he neglects his self-care and sexually stimulated without the energy and commitment that a relationship requires. The predators of life are more likely to attack when a man is alone. Even Jesus was tempted when He was alone. There is an increased risk of suicide, depression and other self-destructive choices when a man does not have accountability relationships. A man is designed to engage with a group of men who have developed relationships and commitments to each other that allow them to talk about themselves, their weakness and their sin openly—without fear (James 5:16). This type of consistent, supportive environment that encourages a man to analyze what causes him to fail, and where he can trust that he will be encouraged and not condemned, is very unique. It should be regularly available within a church setting and among the men in the church. Every man needs to find a band of brothers; otherwise, he will always be less than what God has called him to be. (Knights21.com/target – **Accountability Questions**<sup>6</sup>)

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6 Visit [knights21.com/target](https://knights21.com/target) and select the **keywords** included in this chapter to access additional leadership tools regarding the specified topics. For further reading on accountability for men, see *Character That Counts* by Rod Handley.

### **STRUGGLE 3: BEING EMOTIONALLY DISCONNECTED**

Manhood requires a man to make the courageous decision to develop all of who he is. This decision is a lifelong effort. There is a big difference between a man's God-given potential and his realization and use of his potential in the present. For a man to reach his full potential, he must establish a relationship with God, his designer, who will empower him to strengthen all the elements within him. One important element for a man to develop is his emotional I.Q. (E.Q.),<sup>7</sup> which helps him understand not only his feelings, but also the feelings of others. Men can assist each other in understanding the emotional maturing process. In relationships, there is a need to experience how men process their emotions. Friends who are men can be catalysts for teaching males how to appropriately express a wide variety of emotions. What was once ignored or compartmentalized can be utilized and increase their ability to adapt to life more fully. Males who have very few men available as role models are typically uncomfortable processing emotional responses. This decreases their ability to develop themselves and their God-given design. What is a man without passion?

Males who struggle with an emotional disconnect fail to tune in to the emotional messages that God gave them, as human beings. This lack of insight increases their likelihood for making negative choices. This contributes to a pattern of aimless behaviors, as they are unable to recognize and organize their deepest motivations. They have no idea what direction their next impulse will take them. This contributes to their overall boredom and inability to establish clear goals for their lives; they avoid their responsibilities and spend much of their time on activities that help them feel good temporarily; they complain about the way things are, but ignore their capability for the manhood God created within them which allows them to make a difference in the world.

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7 Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Random House, 2005).

Emotional I.Q. (E.Q.) is an important skill that is often considered when deciding who to promote into management in the business world. E.Q. is the ability to be aware of your emotions, express them well and be perceptive and responsive to the feelings of others. An employee who not only does their job, but also maximizes the effectiveness of other employees is highly valued. Being tuned in to the feelings and motivations of others is a sign of a high emotional I.Q.; it gives a person a competitive advantage. Men who learn to understand and express their emotions become the effective leaders God has called them to be. They overcome the culture's expectation for males to be emotionally disconnected. The emotionally insensitive comments that males are notorious for are not an option for a man.

Write one word you would use to describe the message of Christianity: \_\_\_\_\_. How is this word connected to the emotional expression of a strong man? How does this word confront a male's tendency to isolate himself from others? I believe that the Christian message is defined by the word *love* (Matthew 22:37); another word that comes close is *relationship*. God pursues a relationship with us because he loves us. This is because love is who God is (1 John 4:8). Love is an emotional word. When we confront someone and tell them that we are angry, like Jesus did with the Pharisees (Luke 11:37-52), we can be motivated by love. When we listen to someone's sadness over a significant loss, it is because we love them. Any ministry which helps men become more Christ-like must also teach and encourage them to express love.

When a men's program encourages men to talk to each other about what is happening in their lives, they will naturally develop their emotional I.Q. Listening to the variety of emotional responses from their teammates helps them recognize and understand feelings in themselves, which translates to learning to do it with others as well.

They learn to feel what another person feels; by learning to describe emotions verbally, they develop empathy which can be expressed to the people they care about. Because of the emotional disconnect that has been fostered by our culture, males need a process that restores them to their full emotional capacity. The Bible and its message of love can heal these emotional wounds and lead a male to solutions for his spiritual needs. An effective ministry encourages, coaches and exhorts a man to love as Christ does; it helps him develop the emotional capability to live out Christ's love in his daily life.

The biggest problem with a male being emotionally disconnected is that he will have difficulty making the emotional adaptations that life demands. No one gets through life without losses. Jesus wept over His friend Lazareth's death (John 11:1-37) and over Jerusalem's spiritual state (Luke 19:41-44); this display of emotion shows us how to mourn when life calls for it. Grief work is necessary at various stages of life. As we move from one life stage into another, we must learn to accept the changes that come with it. Whenever we choose to care about anyone or anything, we know that it is possible to lose that person or thing. When these losses occur, a man who is not emotionally disconnected can process his grief. A male who is unable to process his feelings holds on to the loss in unhealthy ways. This lack of emotional resolution creates anger and limits his expression of positive emotions.

Often, a male will be motivated to seek God when he can't continue to make himself numb to what he doesn't want to feel. At those moments, to stop feeling what his identity is not strong enough to process, he may become self-destructive, or conversely, he may become open to hearing what others have to say about their faith in God and His impact on their lives. Often a male has to be desperate to consider that living for his will alone is not adequate. The widespread nature of the emotional disconnect within us, as human beings, has

led to much of the violence that exists in today's world because the perpetrators are unable to understand what the victim experiences. His own lack of conscience, need to feel strong to compensate for his character weakness, inability to do his grief work, lack of confidence to deal with social slights, or desire to impress others causes him to choose to assault others—physically and verbally. As a result of his own unresolved victimization, he becomes hardened to the implications his behavioral choices have on others.

A men's ministry which encourages males to grow in their manhood and their faith addresses the following struggles: Struggle 1 – a man's search for Godly manhood; Struggle 2 – the relational isolation of the average male; Struggle 3 – the male's inability to express himself emotionally. By providing a forum for encouraging men's relationships with each other, the church provides a support structure for talking about and grieving the losses of life. Developing the ability to love God, others and oneself in Christ-like ways is a significant manhood achievement (Mark 12:30). Men must be encouraged to talk to each other in ways that build emotional bonds and stimulate spiritual growth. If the ministry only provides fun that is interspersed with periodic brief lessons, men will not learn how to emotionally support each other, nor will they take the time to practice their emotional skills. This diminishes the potential that God gives to us, as men, and limits the positive impact we are designed to have on the world. (Finding Your Dream Video)

#### **STRUGGLE 4: THE CULTURE—ALWAYS IN ATTACK MODE**

In Romans 8:22, Paul writes about creation groaning under the weight of its spiritual decline. Every year, we think the news can't get worse, but every year it does. We wonder if anything will change for the good of mankind. Ethics, backing up one's words with actions, and being of strong character have been replaced by politically