

## ***Knights of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century***

### **Week 1 –**

I want to welcome you to Knights of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This year we're going to deal with Warrior the clarity of a knight. Of all the issues we're going to deal as a guy, you've got to know what is worth fighting for. What is it that drives you? What caused you to understand how to fight and how to be successful at that, because a man is designed to do that. The key is knowing what's really worth fighting for.

I think back to a story in my life where my son Joel who is twenty-six now would have been nine then, so it's like what, sixteen, seventeen years ago. We're up in New Hampshire near Mt. Monadnock and we are climbing, doing some rock climbing, and we've actually taken a group of students with us from a conference I was speaking at and we decided that we would just kind of do this a hundred and ten foot cliff. And we had set up a pretty safe area that we would train everybody in. They had like a training cliff. There was about a sixty, seventy foot slope that if you fail you'd get hurt but nothing would be damaging unlike the hundred and ten foot cliff which would be fatal and so we set up a bunch of save zones. As I'm working with different students, we're putting on helmets and putting on the repelling gear, keeping in those zones, I suddenly

hear a cry. Now it's a cry that only a parent recognizes. It's a cry of your child, your child in trouble. Now there's a bunch of kids around, there's a bunch of adults around, but I can only hear one voice. It's the voice of my son, Joel. I immediately look around to see where he is. He's not in the zone I'm at which is near the high cliff so I shoot towards the low cliff. When I get there, I don't see him but I see his hands and I hear him crying, "dad, dad, come" and I come racing over. Now I don't like to be near cliffs without a repelling gear on. It's just I'm not a big guy right on the edge thing, but at that moment it didn't matter. My son was in trouble. I dove out, grabbed his hands. As we would now think about it, just as he was about to let go, who knows if he had fallen he would have broken some bones, he would have survived. But I remember grabbing him and all of my focus and all of my attention was on a fight for him. When I pulled him to safety and we hugged, we suddenly had this realization that that was the most important moment. I knew, I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt what was worth fighting for. I knew that of all the students there, everybody that's engaged in there, that when I heard his cry, everything became clearer. My vision was impeccable. I knew that of all the things that I could look for, of all the things that were important at that moment, I knew what was important. It was Joel and his safety and his recognition.

I think sometimes, guys, we have to stop and realize that we have all these possibilities of battles to engage in and all these things to do. We have to stop and ask ourselves, what's really worth fighting for. And when we ask what's worth fighting for, it's really about what is the vision, right. What are we going to think through in this area of saying that's work my focus, that's worth my attention. That's what we're going to spend this year understanding. How to have right attention and then where, not only where that attention needs to go but what to do with it once you have it.

Now in order to do that, know that we as guys fight, but so do women. Women also fight. Men and women both fight. Now we fight differently. So for you to just take a quick test to find out whether you're like this more like leaning towards a woman or a man, let me give you a quick test that will tell you the difference between men and women, alright. This will help you walk through this. Here it comes with nicknames.

Nicknames. If Laura and Suzanne and Deborah and Rose go out for lunch, they will call each other Laura, Suzanne, Deborah and Rose. If like Charlie, Bob and John go out, they will affectionately refer to each other as Fat Boy, Godzilla, Peanut Head and Scrappy. Eating out. When the bill arrives, Mike, Charlie, Bob and John will each throw in twenty dollars even though its only thirty-two fifty. None of them will have anything smaller and none of them will

actually admit they want change back. Guys, right? If girls get their bill, out come the pocket calculators and they calculate how much each should get and what the tip should be.

Money. A man will pay two dollars for a one dollar item he wants. That's the way it works, right? A woman will pay one dollar for a two dollar item that she doesn't want.

Bathrooms. A man has five items in his bathroom, tooth brush, shaving cream, razor, soap of some kind and a towel from Holiday Inn. A woman has a lot number of items in a typical woman's bathroom is three hundred and thirty-seven. A man would not be able to identify most of these items, right?

Difference. How about arguments? A woman has the last word in any argument, right? We all agree on that, right? In fact, why we know that is anything a man says after that is the beginning of a new argument. Exactly. When it comes to cats, women love cats. Get used to it guys. Men say they love cats, but when women aren't looking, men kick cats.

Alright, future. A woman worries about the future until she gets a husband. A man never worries about the future until he gets a wife, sort of typical about us guys.

Success. A successful man is one who makes more money than his wife can spend. Rare, but successful. A successful woman is one who can find such a man.

Marriage. A woman marries a man expecting he will change but he doesn't. A man marries a woman expecting that she won't change and she does.

Dressing up. A woman will dress up to go shopping, water the plants, empty the garbage, answer the phone, read a book and get the mail. A man will dress up for weddings and funerals, reluctantly to both.

Natural. Men wake up as good looking as they went to bed. Women somehow deteriorate during the night. Now, I know, I know, it's true. My wife will tell you. My wife is knock dead gorgeous. She an amazing woman, but she'll say my hair other being messed up, I look like the same guy. She on the other hand, it changes.

Offspring. When it comes to our kids, a woman knows all about her children. She knows about the dentist appointments and romances, best friends, favorite foods, secret fears, hopes and dreams. A man vaguely is aware of some short people living in the house.

Now see, now if you're going, yeah, yeah, those are some – most of these are true for you, we're realizing that the biggest difference between a man and a woman isn't just on that list, it's really what battles we fight. The biggest difference is what battles are important for us to fight. I want to think for a minute about some battles that are important for you to fight. I mean of all the issues

that you're dealing with in your life right now, I want you to think about what's the battle that's the hardest for me to deal with at this very moment. It's the focus on my mind. It's what keeps me up when I try to go to sleep. It's what wakes me up in the middle of the night. It's the first thought in the morning. Is it about an illness? Is it about something with business? Is it one of the kids? Is it your marriage? Is it something to do with economics? Where is this issue that you're thinking about that kind of drives who you are? Now I want you to take literally ten seconds. We're just going to be quiet for ten seconds here, and I want you to think through what are, what is that number one issue that you're willing to fight for. Think about it. Ten seconds.

Now it's interesting how I would answer that. I've had a chance to think about it a lot longer than you have. It falls into two categories. If you know anything from Squire, if you've been with us last year, we talk about the heart of every woman. Being the secret service agent in the President's life, you know what I mean, that kind of a concept. That's really big for me. That drives a lot of what I do and to be honest with you, doing what we're doing right now. Talking to me and calling them up into knighthood, those things really drive me. Now I will also be honest with you. I have a son at twenty years of age who right now is struggling with brain cancer and that also is a focus of that point. But these are the things, these

are the battles that are really worth fighting for. And you go, okay, now we have our battle down and some of you have this very noble big thing, some of you have one that you might even be ashamed to tell somebody. The reality is that we have them. As a matter of fact if we were to stop right now and you were to tell the guy next to you, you would each have something that's on your mind that you're fighting for. Now what causes us to get distracted from those things? What causes us not to see those things?

Well there's a lot of different things. But you, probably the number one thing for guys is sexuality. More than any other area, what gets us distracted from those areas are when we get kind of tripped up with stuff, things like sex. Let me give you a couple stats on sex that will help you understand where this happens. You know that the men think about sex, seventy percent of every man thinks about sex every day. Seventy percent of the men. That means if you're sitting in a row with ten guys and you're sitting in a group with ten guys right now, seven out of ten of you thought about sex today. The other three weren't being honest, alright. That's sort of the way it works. Now for women, on the other hand, about thirty-four percent or one out of three thinks about sex every day and they might have been exaggerating. There's that kind of a concept and that's sometimes what drives us to get distracted sometimes. We wonder why isn't it as important to them as it is to us.

There's some other reasons. You see, we've mishandled sexuality as a culture. Do you know that it used to be years ago that a person would have one, two or three partners sexually in their lifetime and sometimes it would be those numbers because a mate had died. Now, decades later, for males 20.8 different partners a male has had in his sexuality. 20.8. I don't know what the .8 is all about but if you think that, that's overwhelming because with each one of those relationships, for you, it doesn't feel like a big deal but for the woman, there's wounds and scars that are connected. So as a result, a woman's number is much lower than that. The average partners that females have had have been like 6.4 or something in that area at that percent. So when you look at the difference of what that works, how that works, it's a huge percentage difference between those two. But I will tell you, there's scars in every one of them. It's what distracts us from what's important. ]

There's something that we need to understand I think when it comes to this area. You know if I ask men in an honest survey according to this particular company that was surveying, if I said to you, how many of you have only had one partner, about twenty percent of males, about thirty-five percent of you. Now knowing that there's damage that comes with this, knowing that there's stuff that leaves us wounded and hurt, I think we need to understand what distracts us from our fights.



Another thing that distracts us from our fights is sometimes we don't even know how to get into our fights. Sometimes we find ourselves not knowing how to engage in this particular battle, we, we – because we don't even, we're not even sure we can fight or win the fight. I'm mean that's some why we have problems with sexuality, but some of it is because we've been wounded. We have this vision. Let me give you the title of Trail Number 1. It's a warrior's vision. That's our title. That's what we put before us to say if there's anything that's important for us as men, it's the vision of a warrior. Well what makes us hard for us to have a vision. If, what happens if my vision gets lost or I never got one. Bill Hybels talks about in his book "Axiom", this axiom that vision leaks. What a great statement – vision leaks. So even guys that have vision, it sort of leaks through all kinds of things from the issue we just talked about with sexuality and a variety of other reasons that distract us from life. But some of you have had trouble having a vision at all. You know why? You have trouble having a vision, because nobody ever gave you one.

Do you know that if you go into prison, ninety-four percent of the population of a prison in the U.S. are males. And of that ninety-four percent, eighty-five percent of them would be considered fatherless. Where do you think we get most of our visions? They get handed down. They get given to us. And when fathers fail to

engage with us, when we as men fail to hand onto the next generation, all kinds of problems happen and as a result of that, we have a bunch of guys that have no idea what it means to be a man, a knight. And we have no vision, no vision beyond the simplistic, no vision beyond the immediate. We're going to learn to have a vision. We're going to learn to have clear visions, and not only clear visions, clear visions that will change the world around us.

In the movie "Gladiator", which how else can you get together on a movie about warrior – get together about warriors – to not include the movie "Gladiator" in it. Russell Crowe is the guy. He General Maximus for instance. He is, at this particular scene that I want you to think about, in this scene the battle is just getting ready to rage. On one side on this hill are the hoards of the barbarians. On the other side is the disciplined Roman northern army. They have just found out that the enemy will not surrender. They found out because their messenger comes back without his head. At this point, the commander, a man who has a vision now of a battle that's before him bends down, scoops up some dirt in his hands and rubs his hands in that dirt getting ready for the battle and then says to his men as he walks by them strength and honor and they slewed back strength and honor. They have a vision. They have a reason for what they're about to do. But then he says a word that he's yelling to all the men as he's speaking to them just before the battle.

He goes, what we do today will echo into eternity. As that scene fades, you have this amazing resonation inside of your soul going my vision today will impact the world tomorrow. What I do today will echo into eternity and it's not just Roman battles done by gladiators. It's battles that we face. So gentlemen, let's start to think about how can we have a vision as a warrior. How can we have it with clarity?

Walk with me if you would. Take your notebooks and open up to the very first trial. Then in the first trail, we're going to look at the page that says a warrior needs to be constantly vigilant. Love that statement. A warrior needs to be constantly vigilant.

Number one. Roman Number one. Vigilance is important because the forest life is not what it appears. Vigilance seems to be important because the thing that we live in is not what you think it is. The forest, let me tell you what the forest is for you guys that didn't do Squire with us. The forest is the world around us. It's life as we do it. The forest has some trail markers to guide us through but it's basically a place that we get to change. The forest for the most part, you can just walk through it until you need to move a trail or create it to a better correction. That's a man's job. Now if I had said to you, change life, change the world, that gets overwhelming. But I'm going to say change the forest, you can move that tree, you can move that brush, right. It's something we can do. In this particular moment you need to understand what happens with the

forest. The forest is in the job of conning us. At every level, it's trying to trick us. It's trying to deceive us into thinking that it's vision, it's direction will dictate our lives. So you're going to have to be vigilant.

Let me show you a couple of things that I think will help us through that. Number one, under Roman numeral one, it gives circumstances more weight than a knight's values or principles. It gives, this forest gives circumstances more weight than the values of and principles of a knight. So it basically says, if you live by circumstance, so you don't have any vision, there's no telescope that you're looking out there to find out where do I need to go on the map. Basically what you're doing, you're just doing life. It just kind of leads me around. I follow the path of the forest. If the path of the forest is good and healthy, awesome. The problem is that it isn't. Principles and visions need to be that which a man has. Values that drive you. We'll talk about principles especially when we do Oracle next year, but we'll talk on it this year as well.

Look at number two. To be vigilant in this forest, now when you saw what it fears, it makes the definition of a relationship about taking not giving. It makes it about taking, not giving. Now this is one that I struggle with a great deal. When I got married, it was about taking, not giving. When I grew up, my mom took care of me until my dad came home. I was the head of the household. I was

the stuff until my dad came home and then he got everything, but it was always about a man being taken care of by a woman. Now I was raised in an era of time when women were different than they are today, expectations for a woman was very different. A matter of fact, to show you that, in Good Housekeeping magazine in 1955, the following article appeared. I'm going to read it for you. It's a little bit long, but this is what my mom was raised in. As a matter of fact, to be honest with you, I think my mom could have written this. I mean this is one of those things that just feels like this was sort of her story, how we were treated as men and everything about it made me think that men are supposed to be taken care of. Knights think that they're supposed to be taken care stop being knights. Trust me.

Now here's the article from the May 13 article of Good Housekeeping 1955. "Here's what I want folks to go. Have dinner ready. Plan ahead, even the night before to have a delicious meal ready on time for his return. This is a way of letting him know that you are already thinking about him and are concerned about his needs. Most men are hungry when they come home and the prospect of a good meal, especially his favorite dish, is part of a war welcome needed." My dad's favorite dish was meatloaf. We had it a lot. Sorry. "Prepare yourself. Take fifteen minutes to rest so you'll be refreshed when he arrives. Touch up your makeup. Put a ribbon in your hair. Be fresh looking. He's just been with a lot of weary

people.” I’m just envisioning my wife saying, he’s coming home. I’m putting a ribbon in my hair. It’s just not going to – at any rate.

Alright, “be a little gay”. That was before that means what it means now, okay. “Be a little gay and a little more interesting for him. His boring day may need a lift and one of your duties is to provide it.”

Boy that’s a big word. My wife loves it when I say that one. “Clear away the clutter. Make one last trip through the main part of the house just before your husband arrives. Gather up school books, toys, papers, etc., and then run a dust cloth over the tables. Over the cooler months of the year you should prepare and light a fire for him to unwind by.” Apparently even if you don’t have a fireplace, set the coffee table up on fire, because she needs something smoking and burning in the house. “Your husband will feel he’s just reached the haven of rest and order and it will give you a lift too. After all, catering for his comfort will provide you with immense personal satisfaction.” So glad I’m just reading this to guys, right.

“Prepare the children. Take a few minutes to wash the children’s hands and faces. If they’re small, comb their hair and if necessary, change their clothes. They are little treasures and he would like to see them playing the part. Minimize all noise.” I have four sons, minimize the noise. “At the time of his arrival, eliminate all the noise of the washer and dryer and vacuum and try to encourage the children to be quiet.” You’d have to muzzle my boys I think. “Be

happy to see him. Greet him with a warm smile and show sincerity in your desire to please him. Listen to him. You may have had a dozen important things to tell him but the moment of his arrival is not the time. Let him talk first. Remember, his topics of conversation are more important than yours.” Guys, I want you to know that what happens here at Knights, stays here at Knights. Nobody goes home and says this to their wives. I’m just reading you an article from well over fifty years ago. “Make the evening his. Never complain if he comes home late or goes out to dinner or places of entertainment without you. (Laughing) “Instead, try to understand his world of strain and pressure and his very real need to be at home and relax. Your goal is to make sure your home is a place of peace, order and tranquility. It’s where your husband can renew himself in body and spirit. Don’t greet him with complaints and problems. Don’t complain if he’s late for – if he’s late home for dinner or even if he stays out all night. Countercism is minor compared to what he might have gone through that day.” I want you to know if I stay out all night and don’t tell Lynn, what I’m going to go through the next morning is major compared to what that minor would have been. “Make him comfortable. Have him lean back on a comfortable chair and have him lie down or have him lie down in the bedroom. Have a cool or warm drink ready for him.” Should have both probably. “Make, arrange his pillow. Offer to take off his shoes. Speak in

low, soothing and pleasant voice. Don't ask him questions about his actions or question his judgment or his integrity. Remember, he's the master of the house and as such will always exercise his will with fairness and truthfulness. You have no right to question him. A good wife always knows his place."

Now, guys, this is what gets us in trouble sometimes as men. We think it's about giving. No we don't. We think it's about taking. We think it's about what we receive. We make the world around us. A knight does not exist as a knight to take. He exists as knight to give and make a difference. You got to be vigilant against the world that's selling that. Now obviously, we're saying some very different today, but you know the same actions, the same things are true when a man has an attitude that he's a receiver not a giver, we're in trouble.

Look at number three. It bases personal power on wealth, authority, political connections, and family lineage. In other words, the forest is not what it's appearing. It's going to make you think that certain things are more valuable than they are. It's going to make you think that power and wealth and all these things will somehow satisfy you, that this is what you need. It's connections. It's family history. Those things, guys, all they do is distract, distract you from your vision, what's really important. Guys, it's not about us, remember. It's not about even what makes us feel good. It's



about what makes a difference in the world in which we find ourselves and how do we walk through it with a clear vision.

Look at another one, number four. It sells inner personal, inner personal attractiveness as youth, physique, similarity, and the brand name. In other words, it doesn't let you be an individual. It just makes you conform. The world is trying to con you. The forest in which you live is trying to con you. You got to be vigilant against it. You are not the sum total of how you look. You're not the sum total of what you have on. You're not the sum total of how young you can be. In fact, you're so much more than just the physical appearance of the body. When we look at the core of who a man is and we take our dog tags from last year, you guys that are Squire and you graduated, the body is just one part of the six parts of the core. When the whole forest that we live in is trying to just sell that you're just one thing and just satisfy it, and it's crazy, right.

Look at number 5. We're going to kind of fly through this. It relies on, one, knowledge apart from context. In other words, we want to gather as much information as possible but I really don't care about the context of it. It's sort of like the information highway. Number two, it relies on data apart from application. I know what I should do, but I don't do it. I know all this information. We're the richest people in information on earth. We have all kinds of

information that we have going on here, guys, but the reality is men, we're not applying so it's just data apart from application.

Education, apart from emotional and faith guidance. In other words, I can know all this stuff, but I don't have any substance to it. Remember our core is much bigger than just our body and it's bigger than just your mind. Right. There's a soul and a spirit, the shadow. Your core is much more than all that.

Look at number six with me if you would. The – will I be at the vigilant against this conning force, is it promotes a good life as one that, one, makes us comfortable, makes us comfortable. Two, maximizes our good time. One, it makes us comfortable. It makes us feel good. Then secondly, it maximizes our good time. You hear where this is going, right? This is all about you. It's all about us. It's all about what takes care of us. It demands little effort. We want to be lazy men. We want to be men who don't have to do much. It demands very little effort. It's promoting a good life as one that should come naturally as if we could, just if you just let it alone, every guy will do the right thing. You let guys alone, they don't do the right thing, they do destructive things. And finally, it defines a good life as one that is solely defined by us. I've just defined for you, if you look at that, a man's solely defined by us, I've just defined for you a spandex male.

You know what a spandex male is? It's the man you don't want to be, right? You guys that are Squires, you've been through that. You know that when, a man in spandex is not an appealing kind of man, and that's the guy you could see all the stuff, well it's just about what makes me feel comfortable. It makes me feel good. That's just been described. That's what the forest is promoting and when we start playing in that realm, we get in trouble. So let's take a look at the second Roman numeral.

Vigilance is important because the forest can be in direct contradiction to a warrior's knighthood calling. In other words, there's a reason why you and I exist. And that's fighting us. It's in contradiction. Underline the word contradiction because it actually, the forest fights you. It fights you every day that you're alive. It's fighting you because it's saying I want you to be something different than what you're called to be. We are called to be that which is a representative of the God of the universe. We've been called to be knights and when we make decisions that make a difference and bring health and clarity and instead, man, we get this contradiction of the fact that we're so much less than that.

Look at this. It stimulates the warrior's sexual instinct while promoting compromise, lack of discipline and temporary pleasure. What it promotes is something that is all about men. What's going to feed your sexual instinct? In your being, we'll talk about this on

week eight. We're going to talk about sex, the kryptonite of a knight. We're going to talk about this area that just debilitates us. If your instinct is not handled, it will mess you up, sexual instinct. You know how bad it is, let me give you some stats on pornography. Here's one. Every second, this is every second, three thousand and seventy-five dollars and sixty-four cents is being spent on pornography in America, every second. This is according to Comp Score Media Matrix. Every second, twenty-eight thousand, two hundred fifty-eight internet users are viewing pornography every second. Every second, three hundred and twenty – three hundred seventy-two internet users are typing adult search engine terms into their search engines. Every thirty-nine minutes, a new pornographic video is being created in the United States. As a matter of fact, more than seventy percent of the guys between the age of eighteen and thirty-four have visited a pornographic site in the last month. Those are all according to stats. It's – we live in a culture that is fighting us. It's selling something that can't possibly satisfy and we'll talk a lot about that as we walk through this.

Number two, under Roman numeral two, it suggests that his emotions be ignored. Man, write out that word emotions – be ignored or inflexible in his expression or given free reign. There are all the parts of our emotion that it says you have to not deal with these things. You don't have to have emotion as part of who you are

or you can just explode out or they can somehow be sort of expressionless in our life that they become these things that are just there. I think sometimes we get really caught up in the idea that the forest is trying to tell us that we get to decide what's good for us and what we can and cannot take advantage of. Guys, you have emotions as part of who your brain that thinks, the brain that feels. You can't ignore it. You just can't let it run rapid either. There's all, there's a balance that we have to find in between.

Look at number three. It defines a male by his livelihood rather than his relationships. What we want to do is, what does a man do for a living instead of what a man is. See, we're not really called human doings, we're called human beings, but the reality is we kind of measure each other by what we do and we don't really work on relationships and so we have to be careful of that, because really to be honest with you, everything about being a knight is about relational. It's not about what you do. You actually aren't remembered very much for what you do. You're remembered for who you impact and the difference you make.

Look at the next one, number four. It says this. If he values the importance of the spiritual part of his core. What happens is this. Underline spiritual. In order for you to truly come alive, one of the issues you're going to have to deal with in this part of your core is your spirit and how you approach life and what you do with it.

That's how you're going to fight against a culture that's fighting against you.

There was a leader by the name of George Washington. Every week when we get together, I'm going to talk to you about a warrior, talk to you about a warrior, somebody from history, a politician, somebody. George Washington was a fascinating guy. He was a very humble and reluctant leader. If you know much about his story, dad dies when he's like twelve, becomes a surveyor when he's fourteen. He actually owns his business by the time he's seventeen. His brother dies, his older brother who he kind of was involved with. His brother dies when he's twenty. And when he does, George Washington becomes a commissioned army officer in the British Army because even though he didn't have schooling, he just had that, kind of that right out of his brother's involvement. He also was commissioned at the same time to survey the entire state of Virginia. He was a leader in the French and Indian War, had some losses, had some victories and when he got to the point where all of a sudden the United States said that's it. We're about to have a war with England, they came to George Washington and they asked if he would be the chief of the army and he was reluctant and said he wasn't worthy. And they said, no, you need to be it. So he did and he led well and when he won, they said we need you as our president. And he said, you know what, I'm not sure, what about

Adams. What about this guy, what about that guy. No, we want you. So reluctantly and humbly, this guy was changing the forest as a knight, not as everybody else would have done forest living if we were to look at guys today doing things. George Washington when he did, here's what was said of him at his funeral. He was the first in war. He was the first in peace. He was the first in the hearts of his countrymen. First in war. First in peace. First in the hearts of his countrymen. Do you know what that means? It means that George Washington led as a knight. I really believe that guys from history can remind us of what we can be. Now understand that the forest only fights against us and tries to con us. The forest is something else.

Look at Roman numeral number three. Vigilance is important because within the forest growth is possible every day but it does not come easily for the warrior. In other words you can grow but the forest self is going to resist you. So it's not going to come naturally. It's not going to come easily. Look at this. There is a danger, number one, of his shadow's influence and from his spandex male ruts. What happens is you need to understand that we have two things fighting against us. Patterns that we've doing wrong and the shadow. In our core, you can't remove the shadow's hard word for sin. It permeates who we are. It moves in that direction. It causes us to feel like man there's very little hope, very little opportunity for

us to move forward. One of the things that I want us to understand is that when we start to find this resistance to us, we can grow through it.

Look at number two. Positive involvement with other knights will change his perspective. When you and I are being resisted by the forest, you're not going to do it alone. Why you're going to break into campfires, why are you going to get involved with other guys and why you're going to find yourself involved in small group talking things through, because you're not designed to do it alone. So as a man you and I are going to have guys around us.

Look at number three. This calling to a higher purpose must remain in the forefront of his mind. One of the things that I love about this is that there's a bigger reason why we're around. There's a purpose for us. There's something about why we're here that takes us to a higher level of nobility. That's what George Washington was about. It's seen beyond the moment, seeing beyond us.

Every week we're also going to look at what you have in front of you called Knightly News. Knightly News is about a man from the Bible, a book that I will not in any way apologize for. I believe it's the word of God written to us to understand how our spirit comes to life. We're going to refer to it one of these every week. This particular week it's a man by the name of Thaddeus. Now Thaddeus is one of Jesus' twelve disciples. Actually his other name that you



might know him by is Judas but not Judas Asiscariat, not the bad Judas. This is actually a good guy, but you don't know anything about him. In fact, the only thing we know is this one encounter that is listed for you. Jesus Christ is talking. Let me read for you exactly what Christ says. He says "those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my father will love them, and I will love them and reveal myself to each of them". Very cool things. Thaddeus is one of the guys sitting here listening to this, but listen to what Thaddeus says. Thaddeus is understanding there's something bigger going on. It's bigger than him. It's bigger than these guys sitting around him. This is a world kind of thing going on. And here's what he says. "Lord, why are you going to reveal yourself only to us and not to the world at large?" What a phenomenal question What Christ says in response to that is huge. The question is profound. It has to be a bigger purpose There's a higher purpose for us, right? When you get this, guys, you're going to have such clear vision. You understand why you're here, what you're about, but you have to resist this particular movement of the forest against you because it's fighting you at every turn. So the only way to grow is you're going to have to push through it.

Look at number four. You need to understand a knight, a warrior, his potential is never fully achieved. You are growing,

you're becoming, you're making a huge difference. So what a warrior does at this particular point is I think he begins to feel like you and I can grow beyond ourselves. I have more to give. I have giftedness from God. I have a calling from God. I have something to do that will make the difference. Now over here, there's a bunch of stuff I want that will make me feel good and everything else but when you have a clear vision, you know what you're about. You know what it's about that God's directing you to do. You get excited about the possibility of growing beyond you. I take you back to the movie "Gladiator". After the battle that you had seen earlier or we talked about earlier of what's happening, you had this opportunity for Maximus who won the battle to now be called into the Emperor's tent, Marcus Aurelius' tent, you Caesar. Maximus knows Marcus Aurelius well. He's kind of grown up in his house, he's been a loyal, loyal friend and an amazing military leader. But he's brought into his tent and it is said of him, we must think and be quiet here together. Let me whisper among us. Tell me. Tell me about your home. Tell me about your wife and children, where you live and what you've come from. Tell me about all those things that are so important to you. Maximus given permission by Caesar talks openly and freely and then the Emperor says to him, now I want you at this point to listen carefully. Rome needs leadership and I'm not going to live very long. Maximus I ask for one more thing from you and

Maximus stands up and he salutes as you would expect a leader of this caliber and says, whatever your wish is. He says I want you to be the leader of Rome when I die. Maximus says a thousand times, no sir and that moment, this incredibly powerful moment, Marcus Aurelius says, that's why you must be the leader, because you're a man of pure heart. That's why you must be the leader, because of your attitude to say it's not about power, it's about a higher calling. And he gives him several hours to decide. What about Commodus, that Commodus is that son of Marcus Aurelius and Marcus really knows it and he says, you know he's not a good man. It needs to be you. So as the scene fades, as it comes to an end, you see Maximus is now going to think about it. So, here we are thinking about the offer to be the leader of the world empire. What's Maximus' response? He's reluctant. He's not worthy. It's not his. It's knightly. It's understanding that we're part of something bigger and will consider it. And you know that if things went differently in the movie, they don't, but if they went differently he would take the position and do it well because he does this.

Look with me at the last few things to understand what knighthood is. Therefore a warrior must function as a knight. He regularly clarifies his vision in light of the forest in which he finds himself. So, gentlemen, be vigilant about your vision. If you're going to function as a knight, you're regularly going to have to

clarify your vision. Be writing it down, be talking about it. In order to graduate, you'll actually have a knighthood plan. You'll need to talk vision. You need to talk vision bigger than the satisfaction of your stomach fifteen minutes from now, bigger than the satisfaction of your sexuality a few days from now, bigger than whatever you think it is that will satisfy. It's bigger than that. It's what are you going to do for those around you. That's the vision of a knight. That's what we're calling you up to, a bigger purpose. Even in the middle, I don't know how bad your circumstances right now, bigger than your current circumstances. Some of you are dealing with an illness right now and you feel like I can't even move forward from this point. It's just so debilitating to even think about it. You're still alive. You still have purpose.

Look at this, the second thing, he understands the six elements of his core, body, mind, soul, spirit, shadow and self, and utilizes the two protection systems, armor and chain mail. You take out your dog tag or if you don't have a dog tag and this is your first year, the guy next to you does and on it, it has those six elements of the core. A knight is committed saying I will use all six elements and I will make choices based on the protection it's offered, my armor and the understanding from my chain mail and those choices are going to make all the difference. And you know what those choices mean guys, there's a spiritual component to this. If you leave out

any one of these components, you're going to be in trouble and we're going to talk a lot about that connection to that component.

The last thing I want you to consider is this. He does not attempt to live, grow or fight alone. Everyone of us in this room are not going to go through this journey alone. We're going to take our core, we're going to keep it intact and we're going to make a difference. I think sometimes we have to understand why we're making a difference. I think because the forest demands that something of significance happens today. I mean the forest is looking for a hero. So many of our heroes have fallen. I remember at the Masters in 2010, it was the year and Phil Mickelson won the Masters. It was also the year that Tiger Woods fell. Tiger Woods, the hero crashed. Phil Mickelson was in a very different place in his life. He didn't take in beyond eighth in any tournament that year. See, two very important women in his life, his wife and his mother both were battling breast cancer. So Phil Mickelson was going to house after house with the golf clubs alone at night, very similar to Tiger Woods but for a completely different reason. On this particular day, on this particular magic moment, Phil Mickelson was ahead by five strokes. His bride had not been at his side at all during the whole time. He would – they had shown up on Tuesday and she was so sick that she couldn't come to the golf course. But he would go every morning with one of his daughters to play chess at a local

coffee shop and they would watch movies at night and they just kind of did family things together. But on this day, five strokes up, all he needs to do is get a par and a par and then a birdie, ten foot birdie putt and he ends and he becomes the Master champion. Phil will tell you that when he saw his wife standing there at the eighteenth hole, it was the most important moment for him and he got it at that point. As he fell into her arms weeping, holding her tight, he knew that the most important thing was not the Masters. The most important thing was what he was holding. In a world where we're dying to see good men win, I have to tell you that Woods will win tournaments in years to come and he will come back and the golf world will be satisfied, but on this day in the golf world, the good man, good husband, the good father, the good son won.

When you have the right vision, tell them. When you have the right vision, the good man, good son, good father, good husband will win and when it does, the worst as we know it will change. Join us in the twenty-three more trials to be together next week.