

Knights of the 21st Century

Trail 7 –

Here we are at Trail 7 and we're dealing with instincts, last week, this week, that whole problem when we get right to the edge of our lives. You have to make that choice, that what we're going to call on Trail 7 is gut check, that moment that you check to see how you're doing. Are you just way too close to the edge? You see, what happens for us is our instincts are actually designed to protect us around the edge. The instincts are to help us with the cliffs of life to know exactly how far we need to get close to the edge and how far back we need to go. It's interesting that it's not just simple as some of you are fearless and you can run right up to an edge and doesn't scare you and some of you are petrified of heights. It isn't that simple. It's actually far more complex than that because so many factors go into how we deal with the struggles within us when it comes to our instincts, whether they're balanced or not balanced. So, let's work that out.

Let me read you this statement that will help you with Trail No. 7, gut check. It's this statement. In any given behavioral decision, there are both good and bad reasons for a choice. Some decisions might be five to four in favor of a particular action and thus ambivalence exists. Ambivalent action, not completely trying, robs

the individual of the wisdom of that choice. Here's a situation that we find ourselves in guys. That when it comes to our instincts, when it comes to what to do when we get to the very edge of danger, to know whether to take another step forward, to take a step back, to what to do, it's not simply a matter of black and white. There are so many parts that come into it. There are so many factors. Half the factors say I need to forward and do this and half of them say I need to pull back. That's what instincts are all about. There are so many factors that cause us to sometimes hit that moment when we go, I'm not sure whether I should do this or not. We're right on that edge where there's four nos, for yeses and the fifth will cause you to decide one way or the other. And that's where it sort of gets a little scary.

Consider these concepts when we think about that, those factors. If you do this and you don't take action, you become ambivalent, you're going to fail to realize achievement. In other words your fear will dominate you and instead of you achieving what you were designed to do, you'll actually be spending your whole life standing at the top of the cliff going, I can't go any further. I should go further, but I'm afraid and I don't want to just walk away. It's too beautiful or too cool or whatever it is and our achievement level gets cut back. That's when we can't make that decision and we just kind

of stand frozen. Dealing with your instincts will help you push through that.

Here's another one. He fails to develop his personal strength. See, I don't like heights but I love repelling. To this day when I go repelling, that very first moment when I go over the edge of the cliff and I'm leaning back in and the Caribbeeners are – I know they work, I know how this whole thing happens, but it's still, just going over that edge is so scary. The strength that I develop every time I go over the edge is I'm not just conquering my fear. I'm not just depending on the rope and the harnesses and the gear. What I'm actually doing is I'm actually strengthening who I am taking me a little beyond my comfort zone, causing me to say, you know what, I'm capable of more than I thought I was. That's the journey of instincts. What instincts do for us is it allows us the opportunity to say I can be more than I am because my instincts will help me guard along the direction as long as I keep them in balance.

So achievement and personal development, but watch this one as well. He fails to receive clear feedback. You're not going to get that feedback we talked about the other day that if you don't take this risk and say - I don't want you jumping off the cliff. I don't want you going too far. I don't want you falling to your death. It's if I don't take this next step, testing the ground and all that, I'm going to never understand what I can actually do. Now why do you take the

next step and test the ground? Well it's feedback to see whether you think that piece of the ground will hold you on this edge. I don't men playing on the edge. I want you playing on your edge. I don't want you being this risk-taker that's a crazy guy. I want you to be a man that's taking your being as a knight to the highest place it can go.

In your Knightly News, there's a man by the name of Mordecai. Mordecai is an interesting guy. Mordecai is a guy that allows us to feel that the common ordinary man can do extraordinary things. Let me tell you about Mordecai. He's a slave. He's actually a slave that's been given a high place in the kingdom. He's been given a high place in the kingdom because he's a wise man, because of things he shares, he shares well. He's well, he's developed extremely well. He has a gorgeous, gorgeous niece. Her name is Esther. It's what the Book of Esther, you'll see his story is in that book about her name. It's the only book in the Bible that doesn't use the name of God and yet it teaches more principles about God than just about anything else you'll read. It's this moment through, where Mordecai is a man of high principles. He's sort of on the edge, because here's the edge he's on. There's a guy by the name of Hayman who's a second in command below the king. Hayman expects everybody to bow to him. Mordecai bows only to God, doesn't bow to him. So as a result of that, Mordecai is getting in

trouble, staying on the edge, getting in trouble and the whole nation of Israel actually gets in trouble because Hayman talks King Ahasuerus into kills all the Jews of which his queen Esther, the niece of Mordecai is one. Something happened for Mordecai at this moment. He says to his niece, listen, we are doing what is right. However, the nation of Israel is in serious trouble and you're going to have to go into the king's presence. She goes, I can't go into the king's presence unless he calls for me. He kills anybody that comes into his presence unless he drops his scepter. He goes, you need to do this. And then the verse, that is in Esther, Chapter 3, verse 14, it says right at the end of the verse, it says, don't you know what if you were made for just as a time as this. Let me read it for you exactly as the verse goes. It says, "Who knows. If perhaps you were made queen for such a time as this." Mordecai playing on an edge takes her to the edge of her own experience so she can become one of the greatest women we've every known. She'd become this woman that makes this huge change. She does take that risk and the story of Esther is an amazing story. You need to read that. It's probably the most powerful story of sequences as God, even though not mentioned in the whole book, as God is working out, the highest good of those who learn the art of having to bear guns checked by god, letting their instincts do what they're designed to do.

So that's what we're going to do. We're going to look at three more instincts today that I think will help us in the journey a little bit towards being all you're designed to do. Follow me.

Roman numeral one, the instinct to fight. Now see we talked last week about fleeing. We talked about self-preservation. We talked about bonding. This one, the instinct to fight is true of men and women. Women will tend to fight more parochially, more involved with family units, more in – because of bonding things. And guys will tend to fight just because they fight. So, as a result of that, for you, you're going to have to check this, gut check it a little bit harder.

Now, what's it good for? How does it work? Look at number one. There are times when aggressive responses are helpful such as when unhealthy nations and dictators attempt to politically dominate. They are times when injustice is taking place, innocents are being wounded and you have to step up and say wait a minute. I can't do that. You know throughout history there have been children who have been up against other children who are being unfair to children. The whole big thing that's going on about bullying in our country. It's about when there's kind of this innocence. On a national level, when those that are helpless are involved in being wounded and dangerous and killed, and there's a time when fighting becomes necessary and a lot of wars have been fought over those

noble reasons. As you well know, a lot of wars have not been fought over noble reasons.

Look at another reason. When an individual blames others, thereby refuse to take responsibility and avoiding healthy pushback, there's a time sometimes when, when somebody in a family let's say is doing something that is making it everybody else's problem and wounding everybody. There, I can't tell you, my wife came through a horrible, horrible background. Her mom and dad were very dysfunctional. Her – the background in which she experienced some of her growing up has all kinds – there's alcohol abuse involved, there's sexual abuse involved. There's all kinds of junk. There are times when I have to fight, I had to fight early on in our marriage against that. Now to be honest with you, I was a terrible warrior. And I didn't do a very good job of it. Both her parents are dead now and I haven't had the chance, I didn't have the chance to protect her as I could have. But there are times when you have to fight against that which is unhealthy, both on your own being and on the being of – on behalf of others. Family is the easiest place to see this although it takes place as I mentioned in a lot of other areas when people are being bullied.

Look at another reason why it's a good reason to fight. When defending one's viewpoint is necessary for the team to come up with the best decision. This one's more of a work related thing. You

know, it's when you defend your viewpoint. Have you ever been sitting around a table with a bunch of people and everybody seems to be going in one direction, but you got this gut, you got this instinct that if you don't push this, there's a wrong decision that's going to be made. Sometimes for the good of the team, you got to be willing to stand up and fight for your own perspective. I remember one time one of my sons said something cruel to their mother. For the sake of the team, I had to respond. Now I was trying very much not to ever be physically harmful to my sons. I remember at this moment, I just sort of lost it. I just jumped in there and actually my older son said, whoa, whoa, back down a little bit dad. Now, I wanted to jump in and deal with it. I just couldn't quite bring that instinct all the way into control. I needed to fight and I needed to protect Lynn. She needed to be honored, but I also needed to have that brought into balance and control. And that's always true with our instincts. Guts check, that's what we do.

Look at the next one. When he loves, when those he loves need to feel the commitment of being fought for. Now here's several ways we need to fight for those who are being loved. One, protecting from their enemies. In other words, we need that idea of how do we protect one person from another. Remember when you were a kid, and you'd always say this – my dad can beat up your dad. Now I don't think I could beat up anybody, but my kids would

say that about me. My dad can beat up your dad. You know what that is? It's the family being protected by someone who is bigger than life, and when my kids were little, I was bigger than life. Now all of my sons are bigger than me now. All of them. So the reality is that now I go can you guys protect me? Can my sons beat up your sons? But the reality was at that time, they were saying we believe this should take place. This is the ones you love. This is getting to the very tight family relationship.

Look at the next one. Those he loves need to feel the commitment of being fought for by confronting them with the expectations that will follow their principles. Just do you know, if one of my sons comes and he asks me if I love him to let him do X and X is damaging to him, I will say no. I will fight for principle. That's part of fighting and there are times when I've had to take stands on stuff that are very, very uncomfortable. There are issues that I'll suddenly lose my popularity with my kids, doesn't really matter. It's not a popularity contest. I am not their buddy. I'm their dad. I think that so often that we miss this. I think we get caught up in not learning to fight for the right things. Guys, if you have an instinct for something, don't back down. Every once in awhile I get caught up and get confused because I feel like I should have fought for something and I backed down from it and I didn't have good models. My dad would back down. He would fight for stupid things

and not fight for good things, so I don't really know exactly what I should stand with and so I'm constantly going to guys that I trust and going to my God and of course Lynn and I work this out. But I think so often, this is what you and I have to zero in on. There are times we have to fight for principles.

There's a third area when we love our families and love those around us. Spending quality time with them. I'm going to fight for time. I don't know about you guys, but I have a lot of time commitments. There is no, it's so simple to work a sixty hour week. I mean so easy. Matter of fact, sixty hour weeks sometimes are more the norm than the exception and I will tell you I think there's danger in that guys, especially if you have children, especially if their younger. I have certain, certain of my sons needed to spend time with me. My second son and my fourth son need time spent. My oldest son and my third son need other issues in their love language but my two sons need that. I have to make time with them. I have to make time for Lynn and you have to fight your schedule for that. I have an AA who works for me. She is amazing. She is so gifted at what she does. She's my gatekeeper. You can't make an appointment with me just on a one-on-one conversation. You will have to talk to her and then she'll tell you that I'm four weeks out. Now the reason I'm four weeks out is I probably my calendar is that full but it also, she is just buffering for me. She's allowing me this

idea of man I got to make sure that he is not blowing what's important. Gatekeeper, fight for that. She fights for it in my life. I fight for it in my life while Lynn fights for it in our life.

The next one is supporting them emotionally. It is our job to support the ones we love emotionally. So that means that we let them talk. We have an open door policy in our house in our bedroom. The guys knock, they come in. On very rare occasions if they knock and they can't open the door, they know not to come in. But outside of that, they knock, they come in. And you know what, my seventeen year old who's definitely bigger than I am come in and lay in the bed in between us and he will just share what's going on in his life. So there's moments, there's those emotional things. Fight for those moments. Those guys are well worth fighting for.

There's a couple things in marriage I'd really recommend that you fight for. Maybe just give you kind of this cool vision. In your workbooks, this is not going to be in notes that you have, so turn to page forty-four in your book where you can take personal journal stuff and write these down real quick. My job with Lynn as I care for her, as I fight for her, some days I – what I need to fight for, here's one of them. Responsibly guide life's adventure. I want Lynn to live an adventure. I want Lynn to be successful. I want Lynn to be the president of the family that gets to do her fullest potential, right? That's my job. My job is to guide that adventure. So when Lynn

says, you know what, I'd love to go out to Colorado for a week and backpack by myself, I want to make that happen so that her adventure can take place. I also need to guide the adventure both in her career and everything else. That does not mean I control anything. It means that I am a part of the process of saying I want Lynn to live an adventure. I want Lynn to be fulfilled. My greatest joy to be honest with you really is to see her fulfilled. Probably more than anything else other than my relationship with Christ is seeing her fulfilled. My next greatest joy is seeing my grandson taken care of or just seeing him is pretty much it, but outside of that, man, those things are huge. Alright, in marriage help your wife live her adventure.

Number two. Naturally look to protect. Now I'm thinking about you guys right now who are saying well I'm not married. Or I was married and blew it or whatever else or something happened and it really wounded me in the process or – I understand all that. The principles are still the same. Whether or not we apply them to a marriage or whether we apply them to a dating relationship or whether we just apply them across the board in healthy relationships. The need to protect is everything. My wife when she feels protected by me feels loved by me. I need to fight for the things that will wound her. So if I sense somebody is wounding her, then I'm going to move in. I'm going to step in between, protection.

Everyone behind me should feel safe, right? That's when we get to that area of fighting for people.

Third one. Passionately seek relationship. Passionately seek relationship. This is so important that you understand. If Lynn says to me, honey, what do you want for your birthday? Guess what I say. I give the male answer. You know what the male answer is? It's not another toy. If you say it's another toy, you're a sick man. The male answer is I want sex. Honey all I want for my birthday is sex. Let's have just wild crazy sex. That's, for years that's all I've wanted for my birthday. Guess what? Every year I've ever asked Lynn what she wants for her birthday, to my horror she's never said sex, never once. I'm willing to give it to you baby. I'm here, for you on your birthday. You know what, passionately seek relationship. When Lynn thinks what does she want for her birthday, her _____ to love is gifts, premeditated acts of thoughtfulness. But what happens when I get involved with her is her longing, a woman's longing is relational. Remember, emotionally responding. That's what our job is. So be very, very careful that we don't get carried away and make it about our thought process. It's about their thought process. We're the secret service agent caring for their thought process and who they are. It's a fun adventure.

One more, take a look at it, and that's in a marital relationship This is important for us. Thoughtfully long for oneness. When you

get to sexuality, it is not about me. It's about oneness. It's about relationship. Everything about sex is relational. We're going to talk about that next week when we talk about kryptonite which is a whole male sexuality thing. When we get there, I want us to understand that that part of our existence is really designed to be about oneness. Why I believe women are wired different than men sexually? It's because it drives us to oneness, not to just a quick experience and so getting there is part of the exciting part of our journey. So that just helps you a little bit to know these are things well worth fighting for.

Couple more things across the board not necessarily in a marriage. Learn to fight for when hurdles stand between your goals and your ability to achieve your calling. When there's hurdles that are standing between the things that you need to do and what you're calling, you have to fight beyond those. I got through and I got to be careful on time here for you guys, but I want you to know that I've gone through an interesting journey. I wanted to be the head of things. I've owned companies. I've been a senior pastor. I've had multiple staff people working for me over the years. I want to be the head of something and in recent days, I realized I hit my calling. I probably am not going to spend a lot of time being the head of something. I'll be on a team. I'll be pretty important in that team, but I probably won't be the head of it. That was a hard learning lesson

for me. I had to learn what to fight for and what not to fight for and so I sold my companies. And I'm not the senior pastor at LCBC. David Ashcraft is and I'm not the head of Knights of the 21st Century. Roy Smith is. I, I've learned a positional thing that's going on and now I'm fighting for that position, so it's a clarity thing.

One more thing to fight for and that is when his values are being challenged through dishonesty, domination, manipulation, and abuse. When your values are being challenged, when you're going through this time, when somebody is trying to make you do the wrong when you know what the right is, fight. Fight. Maybe it's flee, maybe that's part of your fight. Maybe it's self-preservation, but you're going to have to fight so that you do not give in. A lot of us are giving in to stuff we should never give into, alright. Now what happens when aggressive response is harmful and I think we're sort of easy for us to know this one. When one reacts without fully listening to the truth and another person's position. When somebody reacts without fully listening to the truth of another person's position, that is the wrong time to fight. I'll confess to you, I haven't had many punching blow fights in my lifetime. I've had a few, not many. One of them occurred, I think it was my sophomore year in high school. I'm sitting in the lunch room when a guy by the name of Ken walks up to me and goes, hey Keith are you mad at Donny? What are you talking about? Are you mad at Donny for what he did?

What did Donny do? Well Donny wrote all over your shirt during your last period in class. I said what? Yeah the whole time you were sitting in class, he's writing all over your shirt man. You didn't feel it? I said, no. So I get up, I walk across the cafeteria and there's Donny eating liverwurst and onion sandwich. I have no idea what he's eating and I go bam. That's the kind of way I fight, when a guy's not looking eating a sandwich, but I hit him across the ear and he goes, wham and liverwurst and onion goes flying up and he turns and he goes, dude, dude, what was that for? I said for this, for what you did to me. For what? For writing on my shirt, you jerk. Keith there's no, nothing on your shirt. I didn't write on your shirt. Yeah you did. John, John, see this stuff on my shirt. Keith, ah, there's nothing on your shirt, man. That's the kind of fights I have because I didn't check out. Donny I see was far more gracious. He did write on my shirt for the next six years just to teach me a lesson right through college. But the reality was, you know what's happening. He's saying – I'm saying to him, dude, I'm not checking it out. Guys, a lot of us get in trouble because we don't check it out.

Let me look at the second thing that deals with when not to fight. When one actions needlessly crush an individual beyond what is helpful to their development. There's a time when you crush somebody by your action. We do that a lot with our kids. Be very careful about how we crush a spirit. What's important to a child and

we dismiss it, there's a whole bunch of stories I can tell you about that whole area in my life and in Lynn's life and in, but I tell you, I've worked real hard not to do that. I remember moments in my life where I've needlessly crushed somebody with a word, with an action. Maybe it's rooted into my own fear, maybe it was rooted in my own need to elevate myself. Guys, when you fight, you destroy somebody else, it gets overwhelmingly destructive.

Look at the next one. Times when an aggressive response is harmful is when anger is utilized to cover up true emotions such as sadness, grief, fear, anxiety and disappointment. Anger is an interesting thing. It kind of bubbles up and explodes out of us. Sometimes all it is, is just covering up stuff we can't even speak into. Part of my journey with Caleb on this round of cancer, is that we're sort of, I'm trying to figure out my emotions. I mean my emotions are all over the place. I mean things that I used to tolerate I'm not tolerating right now and it's not in the boys, certainly not in Caleb. It's not there. It's coming up in other areas, things that, that's the way they've been for awhile and now all of a sudden they're going to the top. What you feel, what you feel down there when your fist helps you deal with what you feel down there, you're not fighting for the right reason. It's when you need a gut check to figure this out.

Look at the next one. Times when an aggressor response is harmful is when fighting for any, an issue may distract from a more important and significant goal and boy that's so key. I think one of the hardest things for us to grab is if we're not careful about what issues we fight for, we're going to miss the most important ones and sometimes you get caught up in minutia and you fight for things that aren't really important.

We talk about warriors from time to time. There was a warrior, a leader. His name was Ronald Reagan. He was the President of the United States for a period of time, actually ran for President three times, only got elected the last time and then got re-elected, but ran twice before he got elected. He was an interesting man. Obviously you know he was an actor. Obviously you know he was a man who had changed the position and one time was a new deals guy and then obviously became the master of Reaganomics and some of his view of what was important about the world. And he was all about balancing budgets and he was all about getting rid of the Cold War. He was all about certain things that were very much part of him when he became the President. As he had done this swing in his life, he became a man of high principles. This man of high principles, these were his driving goals. It's what would take him on and on as he would go down this thing. Reagan knew what was worth fighting for and what wasn't worth fighting for. It's what

makes us now look back on him, even if you, no matter what your political persuasion is, there's a degree of respect for what he accomplished. He dropped inflation that was huge. You know he dropped the prime lending rate. He dropped all kind of things as well as dropped the wall in the Cold War. In that process, Ronald Reagan gives us a glimpse into who he is. In this quote that I want you to read, I'll put it on the screens. To have a vision to dream of a better, safer world and the courage, persistence and patience to turn that dream into reality. Reagan had the sense as a leader that these are the things that are important. These are the things worth fighting for, be known as and to this day, regardless of how you view him politically, you look at him as a man that went, wow, he made this amazing commitment and stayed on track. Now in order to do that though, he's going to have to deal with this. How do you make that commitment and still do the second one that we want to look at, the second instinct and that's to avoid pain.

The instinct to avoid pain. Roman numeral two. In order to have an instinct to avoid pain, a knight is going to need to do the following. You're going to need to expand his pain threshold. If you're going to be a warrior, you're going to have to learn to expand through pain threshold. Some of the guys I respect the most are guys that are special forces guys and all you guys that are in that area, well done. I appreciate you on so many levels. We can't thank

all of the veterans enough, I mean just what you guys have done to make our nation a very different place. For you that are listening overseas and in other parts of the world, part of what we have in the United States is this amazing freedom that's been made possible by guys like this. I believe that guys that are in special forces, especially guys like Navy SEALs, one of the things they need to learn to do in order to become the man they're designed to do is to raise their pain threshold. Hence, not a Navy SEAL. Wish I could be. I'm pretty impressed with that. I actually have sons who are willing to do that. Or guys that have just the courage to take it to the next level in their athletics or whatever else. You and I need to learn the joy of raising our pain threshold. Pain, emotional pain, physical pain, on every level, and that's part of what it takes to be a strong knight. The avoidance of pain sometimes means that we raise our pain level.

Two, he needs to stay away from situations and relationships that harm him. You and I need to stay away from things that do damage to us. I think that when we miss this, we go through pain unnecessary. I really want us to think always about the person that's causing us to get wounded unnecessarily. I know I keep coming back to this guys. I know we keep talking about this trail, after trail, but it's so big for a guy. See I believe that relationships are huge for men. I think we need to have these relationships. But

if you don't take men that call you up, but rather men that tear you down, you keep ending up feeling all kinds of pain you weren't necessarily having to deal with.

Let's look at the next one. Instinct to avoid pain, a knight needs to listen to the messages that pain sends. You need to listen to what's important so that if you're feeling good all over but you have a pain in your knee, that's what you listen to. If you're feeling good with your business but this one area is starting to drive you crazy, you listen to that. If everything's working pretty good in your family but there's this area over here, you need to listen to the sources of pain. And so just to say it's okay, I'm just going to ignore it, doesn't solve this. There's a reason why there's a reaction bubbling up. There's a reason why you're feeling what you're feeling. To ignore it doesn't mean it's going to go away.

Third, fourth one. Utilize his experience with pain to understand others. One of the reasons that this avoidance to pain issue when you embrace it and understand this area of not avoiding pain, you're going to understand a part of this so you can help other. The Bible talks about it in 2nd Corinthians Chapter 1. It says sufferings we go through to help other people. That's good stuff. It allows us the opportunity, guys, to say to somebody, I understand. It's where tenderness comes from. Every knight look at that suit, that suit over here is a tough hard shell of a suit. You better learn

the art of tenderness or it will always feel as you're walking around as a knight as someone that's dangerous and we're going to talk a lot about that and some of the things that are the most powerful weapons we have.

Let me look at a few more. Number five, tolerate pain that comes from – okay, I'm just going to fly through these, there's kind of cool – attempting to reach any goal. You write down a knighthood plan. You have goals. It's going to require pain. Two, striving to serve others. There's always pain in being a servant. It's easier to receive than to give. Getting in shape physically. To reach that goal, to take the pain to get you to the next level. To do more crunches. Living up to one's values. It's harder to live up to your values than it is to just give in and do what you feel like at any given moment. Being interpersonally connected in any intimate relationship. It's easier to deal with pain if we understand that men, you're going to have to be relational.

In the movie "Pursuit of Happiness", Christopher Gardner is, is a guy that's in pretty bad shape financially and is trying to better himself. His dreams keeps getting shattered because he's trying to better himself. His wife has now left him in the journey that he's in where he's working for free for a brokerage firm hoping to be one of the only hire they'll make out of all the interns that work through this program and Christopher, Chris has a son named Christopher and

when his life leaves him, he leaves the son too. And Chris is incredibly committed to his son but has nothing. So they're sleeping in rescue missions and wherever they can find and in the scene I want you to think about right here, you find Chris and Christopher in a subway station and he's pretty sure that he has no place for them to sleep that night. And so, he build a story, a story around a machine that his last machine to sell that might give them so money. It's a bone density scanner and he tells his son that it's a magical machine. The son doesn't believe him. He says, try it. You can take us to transporting machine. It's a time machine. It can take us anywhere we want. So Christopher joins in the game and they decide they want to go back into history, way back, back into the dinosaur age. Christopher pushes the button and then his dad helping Christopher to avoid the pain of the moment, makes an imaginary world and takes him into the bathroom, seals the door up to the bathroom, puts paper towels all over the floor and says this is our cave and let's Christopher fall asleep in his arms as he sheds tears flowing down his face as he realizes the danger in which he's put his son in. Having no other recourse, that scene, that powerful moment in that movie as you're all watching it, you'll always remember it. If you've seen the movie, you'd remember it. That, that moment where he is just holding his son, crying, you get the idea o what it means to, man I need to avoid pain, whatever it takes for

those around me and sometimes I have a tremendous personal sacrifice in creating kind of this magical world. It's interesting the resiliency of children. You see it later in the movie as you continue to walk through it.

Let me give you the next instinct, the instinct to pursue pleasure. Roman numeral three. That's something a knight needs to do, an instinct to pursue pleasure. What I like about this that's so cool is that in the movie "Pursuit of Happiness" you see all the pain but it's all designed to what – pursue happiness, in pursuit of happiness. It's the pursuit of pleasure. Pleasure's a cool thing. Let me give you a couple things about that I think will help you. Number one, it will enjoy the positive benefits of hard work. If all you do is work and you receive nothing out of it, it will drain you. It will just wear you right out. The pleasure will give you the benefits of hard work. Um, when the other day I got done doing a particularly large project for our company, and um, I found myself exhausted. I mean I found myself absolutely exhausted and there's just something amazing about just laying down on a bed and just resting for a little bit. I didn't even take a nap. I'm a Phillies fan, so I watched the ball game and as I was laying there, it was amazing just how refreshing that simple act of pleasure. But it was the result of hard work. If I hadn't work hard, I couldn't afford to lay there, right? I have to do

things, but part of the joy is learning the art of receiving pleasure that will help you work through things.

Look at another thing it will do for you. Number two. You're going to learn to say no to doing some things just because they feel good, they feel good. That's really important guys. You're going to learn to say no to things because pleasure is a lot of places. Um, I – there are certain foods that taste really good to eat. You love to do it. You need to learn to say no because, hey, it's not always going to be beneficial. If I gave you poison on your favorite food, it would taste good but it's not good for you, right? So the art of learning to say no, you got pleasure, it's out there. You need to learn the art of knowing when to say no, when not to say no, because things are by designed. God designed us pretty cool. We live in the world of pleasure. It's that instinct that we have.

Look at the next one. The instinct of a knight to pursue a pleasure needs to exchange an immature viewpoint of what is pleasurable in life for one that is consistent with the manhood process. I want us to think in terms of what is noble here. I want us to think in terms of not just what feels good for the moment, not what just feels good for just a couple seconds. If I told you how many guys have messed up their lives for a few minutes of pleasure. In fact, I don't have to tell you. You know, right? You've done it. I've done it. Hurt somebody. Learning to control this instinct, you

get to the edge, don't just jump. You have no parachute on. You have no bungee cord. Don't just jump over the edge. Sometimes you and I need to sit here and we need to say when we get right to the edge and all those rocks are down there, all the danger is there, guys, back off. Stop playing on that edge. I don't even have to tell you what that edge is. You know, you know in your own life. I know where mine are. You know where yours are.

Look at the next one. In Roman numeral number four, it says this, and I love this. How to deal with the outside battles for the knight to be victorious over his instincts. Here are some things he must do. These are absolutely essential that a man does. Use his aggression to help himself and others live better lives. If you want to be victorious over the battles, you're going to have to use your aggression to help himself and others live better lives. There's something about this that I want you to understand. Fighting is a natural instinct. It will make a difference for those behind you. In almost every movie you've ever seen. In almost every book you've ever read, in almost everything you've ever imagined as a kid, the thing that made them so worthwhile was everybody you that needed to be protected. The nobility of a knight is when he gets this idea that I am engaged with you for a purpose. My aggression is not to get what I want. It's to protect what's important. It's fighting for the truth in a world that doesn't fight for truth. So your instinct to fight

is a good one. Take advantage of it. Learn to control it. If you don't control it, you're just punching swing at the wind. You're Don Quixote hitting windmills. You get involved in doing things that are just foolish. So, take the idea of aggression and understand that that's part of who we are and how we work.

Look at another area that comes under how all this comes together as we're looking at these six instincts, these last three we've been looking at. Accept and move towards the pain necessary to exercise new strength areas. You want to be victorious over the instincts. You're going to have to accept and move towards pain. It is necessary to exercise new strength areas. That is so key to where you and I develop. Everything I'm going to ask you to do, I'll be honest with you. Here we are in week seven, right? We're not even really a third of the way through and I'm going to ask you to keep moving with me because I'm going to move you towards the pain. Now I'm not going to drop you off the cliff. I'm not going to let you get shattered, but I'm going to let you play on this edge a little bit. You're going to play on the edge not because the goal is to fall. Actually the goal on this edge, this gut check, is to cause you to say do you have the courage to do what will take you to the next level? This gets so exciting. So I'm willing to fight where I need to fight. I'm learning to avoid pain when it's necessary to avoid pain, but I'm

also willing to embrace pain when it will take me to the next level. These are all those instincts.

And then the last one that we've been talking about. The one about pleasure. Look at this statement, number three. Develop his core and experience joy as his reward. As you develop the core within you, you take all the parts of your dog tag, all the things we have in that core, and you say, alright, I'm going to start exercising right choices. Everything on the dog tag ends up with a right choice. I take my body, my soul, my spirit. I take my mind. I take my shadow. I take this whole area that we call self and I make choices and those choices when they're made well running after things that will bring reward but our goal is a very different kind of reward. So you want to utilize your core. See what will make the difference between stupid choices and good choices is when you make all the consideration of your core. Remember, if you don't have your spirit alive, your instincts will dominate you. Your shadow will dominate you. So you have to connect God through Christ to keep that spirit alive, because when you do, you start making better choices.

There's this moment in the movie "Pursuit of Happiness" where everything that Chris has gone through has been painful, everything. And now it's coming down to that decision, as to whether or not he'll get hired by the company. I want you to think about this scene. One of the guys in the company walks up to Christopher, it's the day

before and he says tomorrow's the big day. There they are in the bathroom. They're washing their hands and he says has it been hard? Has it been as hard as it looks? And yeah, it's been hard. We've just watched and experienced the whole movie. We know it's been hard but has it been worth it. I don't know. I think so. And he leaves work that day, takes Christopher to a beach, or sort of the shores where the San Francisco Bay Bridge is and he talks about all of his life, he's had dreams and all of his life how he's failed to hit those dreams. All his life he just wanted to be something and all of his life he's tried to be more and more and it's just not working. Could this be one more failure? You feel the tension as the two of them celebrate on the beach, Christopher in his innocence, Chris feeling all the pain. And then that day, the next day when he's called in and you feel the tension. He's called into the office and you know this is either you made it or you haven't made it moment. And the guys gather around him and they said, well, he said I wonder if you'd be willing to wear that shirt that you wore today again tomorrow because he on his first day of work had come right from a job he was doing, didn't even have time to go home and get changed. He came in a dirty tee shirt, and now he's wearing a dress shirt. He said are you willing to wear that shirt tomorrow because tomorrow you're going to work with us and you see it. You see the tears well up in his face. You know this time it's not tears of a cave

protecting his son in a subway somewhere. These are tears of happiness. They ask him if it's been as hard as they think it is and he says, yeah, yeah it's been hard, real hard. But he thanks them, greets them and he walks down those stairs and you feel the freedom as he leaves his company and he sees the crowds rushing by and he raises his hands and he goes, it's been worth it. He went to the edge, played right there. He checked his gut and his instincts coming under control made all the difference.

You know, you feel that scene, don't you? You feel everything about it and you think, can I raise my arms and can I say has it been worth it? Has it been worth it? Well it has. It really will. I'll tell you as a knight, it's worth the pain. It's worth pushing through it. It's worth finding what's worth getting pleasure over. It's worth the whole idea of knowing when to fight. These things all fit.

Now there's one more you need to look at. It's number four and you'll need to come back again and deal with this trail next week. It's this. Return next week to learn the ways and manage and guide man's most difficult instinct. That's the instinct of your sexuality. It's the kryptonite of a male. I want to do something differently as you anticipate next week. I want you to take your books and close them for a second so that you're all looking at that same front page and then just simply open the front page. Remember a couple trails ago, I read to you the code of honor. Well

below the code of honor is actually a prayer, a commitment prayer. Up until this point I haven't really prayed with you and instead of me just praying sort of at you, I'll pray with you. I'll actually read this and you read it along with me.

Prayer of commitment. I think this is a prayer of commitment of a knight who's willing to go to the edge. He's willing to say, you know what, I believe that I can be what God designed me to be. In order to do that, I'm going to have to release some things and grab others. Let me in closing read you this prayer, our solemn commitment. God, you've created us as males to be men. And from the beginning we have failed to step up to your calling. Speak to me this day in clear terms regarding where I am on my manhood journey. Let me see the next steps of self-confrontation and development and give me the strength to do the right thing. May I have an interest and love towards my brothers who are on a similar journey and allow me to be a present and positive partner in our mutual work. May my wife, children, church, work site, community and world see my changes and rejoice in my contributions to their lives. Because of your strength, I pray.

Gentlemen, Knights of the 21st Century warriors are men who deal with our instincts and if our gut is checked, we can change the world. Thanks for joining me.