

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

### **Trail 10 –**

Every year at our Knights of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that we have, that I tell you about it, LCBC and we have well over a thousand guys get together, we celebrate Veteran's Day right around the same time when Veteran's Day is celebrated here in the United States. For us and U.S. culture, for you guys that are watching this around the world, in U.S. culture, it's just an opportunity for us to stop and say thank you guys for the men and women who have served in the military. And in this case obviously it's just guys because it's at a Knights event and we started doing it because it gives guys a chance to say, hey, here's what you did and thank you. So what we do is we bring the guys upon on stage and last year it was well over a hundred guys from a variety of wars. I don't think we had anybody from the Second World War, maybe one guy, but I don't think so but obviously from that point on, right up to very modern day experiences that are taking place. It's one of those movie things we do. Each guy gives the branch of military, his name, his rank, his branch of military, the time period in which he served, and then what the guys do is they give this standing ovation. It's actually spontaneous. The only we do with it is say when you stand, don't sit till all the men have returned to their seat. Well it takes a long time

for a hundred guys to get to back to their seats and the whole time guys are clapping and then when they sit, then the rest of the guys sit and it's one of those moments when you honor man. It's like you realize that this man has done something so significant. We've had guys tell us, especially guys from Vietnam tell us that they have never ever been thanked for that part of their lives and it's part of who they are every day. I think why we do it is it talks about that aspect that we talked about that the last trail when we have this chance to advance to make a difference, to take back ground, you know, and to make a difference in the world and whether the war was employee's mind just or unjust, fair or unfair, these men put their lives on the line. There's something so noble about a man saying, I'm not doing this for me, I'm doing it for those behind me, those I protect. As we take that opportunity to thank the guys, we also during that time period though, thank guys that hadn't made a decision that killing was not something they were comfortable with. We call them here in the United States conscientious objectors. They are people who say I'm not real comfortable in taking a life, because you know what guys, it's not natural for a man to kill. There are studies done that during the Civil War, if you were to look at all the kill ratios on the field, it appears that about ten percent of the men did eighty percent of the casualty rate, because it just isn't natural for a man to point a weapon at another man and take his life.

And so we take a minute and we say, hey thank you for being willing to stop and say, you know what, I can't take a life. I can't join that aspect, but I'll serve somewhere and they served in the Corps in some form whether it was helping in medical issues or other areas all saying that you know what, the value of a life is important to me, but the value of the cause or the principle is important to me and I'll respond and so we take that opportunity to thank them.

Whether we're thanking a veteran or whether we're thanking somebody who has objected conscientiously and didn't run to another country but actually dealt with it, when we thank those guys, we're saying, you know what you're doing? Do you know what you did in your action? You take this knighthood and you take it to another level where you build a bridge to another person as if you span from one side to the other to make a difference. In a very overtly way it shows what every man is designed to do individually and that is to be a knight who protects others and makes all the difference.

This is the tenth trail that we're on. Well actually two weeks we're going to deal with the same issues. It's principles of who a man are. We call it a man of steel. The man of steel is the one who has created with these beams, with these girders, with these principles, that man of steel makes all the difference in bridging the gap. So we're going to walk through those principles, understand

them a little bit and by the way, gentlemen, I actually want to tell you ahead of time, thank you. Thank you by putting principles into your life, you will span the gap and you are going to make a difference in somebody else's life. So we're going to look at today eight principles and the next time we get together we'll look at seven more. So join me if you would. Take your books and open to the man of steel.

In Chapter, the very beginning of that chapter, it makes this rather long Roy-written paragraph here. As the warrior proceeds to his knighthood quest, there are few things more certain than the force of the forest against him. Understand that there's something moving against you. That's what the forest is doing. We've been talking about that. The identity of the warrior is decided by his sold core, his flexible armor, his positive chain mail and his well-developed beliefs. Now I want to stop there in the middle of that paragraph for a second and tell you a little bit about catching you up to who we are if this is your first year. It mentions in here that you're going to have armor. That's what protects you on the outside. If you want to have a definition of that, you'll notice an asterisk in your paragraph. In the back of the book there are definitions that will tell you what the armor is used for and what chain mail is used for and these beliefs, these principles.

Years ago we had borrowed a definition from an organization called Men's Fraternity out of Little Rock, Arkansas. Learned a great deal from that team of men and they had a definition that Robert Lewis came up for manhood and it was reject passivity, accept responsibility, lead courageously and live for greater or live for God's reward. It gives the definition of what a man's designed to do. What we're asking for in this journey is that we would somehow or another break the passivity that doesn't build bridges to a man that will build bridges. For the most part we became passive. This is saying if you have the right principles, you build the right amount of steel in a man, that passivity will go in the other direction.

Let me finish that paragraph out for you. As the fifteen knighthood principles become integrated into the way he approaches life, the healing of old wounds and filter occurs allowing a man to fulfill his calling. If you understand what we're talking about when we say changing the filters, in your chain mail there is some stuff that you're received that have caused you to believe certain things. And those beliefs are somehow or another causing you to not see things as clearly as possible. So what happens is, when you have our core intact, that's the part of the dog tag here that talks about those six items, and you have it well protected by a good chain mail good armor, you're going to start making really strong decisions. One of the keys to this, one of the keys to having all of this together

is to have principles that will guide us as men to know what kind of structures to build for us to bridge the gap to other people. So that's what these principles are all about. Let's take a look at a few.

As we think about it, okay I have to think about, okay what's a good principled guy? Well under Knightly News, before we even look at the first principle, there's a guy by the name of John the Baptist. As a matter of fact if you don't know much about the Bible, you actually probably have heard of this guy. John the Baptist was actually called by Jesus the greatest of all prophets. He's a cousin of Jesus. He's six months older than Jesus. He arrives on the scene. He will actually die approximately six months before Jesus will die. So Jesus dies by the age of thirty-three, John the Baptist will die by the age of thirty-three. They want to spend their lives together. They lived in two different areas, probably about an eighty mile difference in where they were growing up, but John the Baptist will be engaged in baptizing Jesus. John the Baptist will declare that Jesus is God. He'll do a lot of these things but something happens in the middle of or near the end of his ministry on earth, John the Baptist where all these people are coming to him. I mean he has crowds happening all the time. He's the stuff and John the Baptist gets to this point where he says, you know I really believe that what I'm doing is important and it's the sudden \_\_\_\_\_, yeah, we do too and then all of a sudden, Jesus' ministry starts

happening and disciples start leaving John and going with Jesus. The crowd started leaving John and going with Jesus. Now John believes what he was doing was important, but he also had clear principles, clear understanding which guide him. So when his disciples came to him and said everybody who used to be with us is now going with that guy you baptized, you know what John says? He says these words. I'm going to read them for you. John says, no one can receive anything unless God gives it to them from Heaven. You, yourselves know how plainly I told you, I am not the messiah. I am only here to prepare the way for him. I am not the messiah. I am not Jesus. I'm only here to prepare. This man so clearly knows who he is. He so clearly knows his voice, but he also has unique principles because now he knows his voice, but listen to the principles that go with it. It is the bridegroom who marries the bride and the best man is simply glad to stand with him and hear his vows. Jesus is the bridegroom, the church is the bride. I'm just the best man. I'm just the witness, right. He says, therefore I am filled with joy at his success and then he puts these words. Let me put them on the screen for you. He must become greater and greater and I must become less and less. When Jesus says those – when John says those words about Jesus, he says, my principle causes me to know my place. My desire is to decrease and let him increase. That's the kind of man that builds bridges with principles,

principles that will cause you to build across structure to help other people. John gets it. It's not about him. It's not about his world, but what Jesus has done and who he is.

Look at the first principle, Principle No. 1. Males are born while men, knights are forged. Men, I love this. Discover that males are born, but men are forged. What does that mean? It's your boot camp. It's your training that takes a man from being who he is to something far more. What basically you have to understand is, when God created us, He created us in a world that was fighting against us becoming a knight. So God will then respond both internally and externally to begin creating within us this movement towards knighthood. That is what steel is made of. That is the steel of the structure. When a man of steel understands who he is, he says, I've been forged. I've been made into this thing. You got to reject passivity to do that. You got to accept responsibility. You got to lead with courage if you're going to start to do that. Let me give you a couple things to help you understand what it means to be forged.

A man cannot achieve, number one, his potential without stress, challenge, hardships, and some form of environmental heat. So just so you know, you can't get there without a problem. I want you right now to think about a current problem in your life, whatever it is. I have a son who is battling cancer. That is a current problem



in my life. I have some other things that I'm working through. Think about something in your life. What's a problem that you're dealing with and as I'm talking, I just want you to simply write down that problem. What is that problem? That problem, that thing that you have that's on your mind. It wakes you up in the middle of the night. It's your problem. Alright.

As you think about that, look at number two. As you write down this problem, avoids of such effort ensures spandex males ways. You are not going to be able to solve this particular problem that you're thinking through, whatever that problem is, you're not going to be able to solve it if you just simply avoid it. It doesn't go away. I had the opportunity to buy an eighteen year old young man a couple months ago. Died in a car accident, no way to say goodbye to his family. I want you to know that the father of that young man is a Knights graduate. He's a guy that has been with us for a few years. As he's been working through the loss of his youngest son, there are things, there are principles that are holding him together during these days. If you don't think those principles got stronger during these days, you're mistaken. This heat of this loss, the need of him to care for his family, the need of him to work this out, that heat is expanding the kind of man he is, is making him stronger. Do I wish he didn't have to go through it? Do I wish I didn't have to go through the problem I'm faced with? Do you wish you didn't have to

go through the problem you're faced with? Yes, but if you just put your head in the sand, guys, it doesn't go away. Men, men are forged. All males are born but men are forged.

Look at number three. All problems are seen as opportunities to further the knight's potential. So every problem that you face is seen to help them become all they're supposed to be. When my first two sons were born, Josh and Joel, they both had some problems with their livers kicking in, and when they did it put them in the hospital a little bit longer, we fought for their lives a little harder, but it was actually, as I look back on it, the beginning of us understanding what it would mean to be a parent. It was sort of a training ground for us. When my grandson was born, I want you to know he was born a male. It made him a grandson, right? But in order for him to become a man, a knight, he's going to have to be forged. I know that's going to involve some uncomfortability. As a grandfather, let me tell you, I don't want him to be uncomfortable. I want him to be spoiled and take care, I'll give him whatever he wants and if my son messes with that kid, I'll be down there in a minute to teach him a lesson, right. That's my grandson. There's something special about that, but I know in order for him to become a knight, for him to become the man he was designed to be, it's going to mean some forging development.

Look at Principle No. 2. A man knight is responsible for all of his choices. A man is responsible for every one of his choices. Guys, you're never going to build a bridge to anyone if you don't start making choices that are a right for you, correct in their direction that you're designed to be as a man, right for those around you and ultimately right for those who need you to come through and be what you want to be. You are the sum total of your choices. It's not somebody else's fault so where you are right now is based on the choices that you've made.

Look at number one. Number one says this. If a man is not happy where he is in life, he must evaluate his poor choice paths. If you're sitting here and you're not happy with where you are, you're saying, okay, I'm not happy with the direction I'm in, you have to understand that there's some poor choices that are part of this path. I've owned several businesses in my lifetime and the last one I got rid of about a year ago, and I made some choices in that business that were pretty good. But I also made some that were not as good. I'm not necessarily a great business man. My voice drives me to something else other than, than to do business, but one of the things that's interesting is that I can look back as we realized that I had some debtors that I had to pay as everything in our economy was changing and high retailers weren't paying me on time and I was having trouble paying my suppliers, when I was hitting that

moment, I could take it back to choices that I had made. There were choices that others had made too, but there were choices that I had made and until I stop and say it's my responsibility and if I just bury my head in the sand, I'm not going to solve this thing. So what I have to do is I have to stop for a few minutes and go okay wait a minute. This is the sum total of some choices and in this case, some poor choices especially because I didn't like where the business was. If you don't like where you are, it's probably a poor choice somewhere in there.

Look at number two. The power of a choice starts with the attitude that a man possesses when facing reality. You got to take a hard look at reality. When you sit here and you go, okay I am where I am as this man, I got to look at the reality of my choice. And I was able to track back how I got to a place where to be honest with you, I'm in a very good place now. I can't actually believe how far we've come in one year. But the reality was about a year and a half ago, I was in a pretty tricky spot regarding my businesses and so now all of a sudden I have this opportunity to go, okay, I had to take a look at reality. I had to take a look at reality and hard core crunch it numbers, figuring out how I was going to solve this problem. I have some personal beliefs that affect me on this one. I personally, I can't go bankrupt. Now I have other guys I know well who because of decisions, because of issues in their life had no choice but to go

bankrupt. I can't for personal things, doesn't mean anything to anybody else, but for me, one of my choices is to not go bankrupt. So I have to now solve this problem. Now my world is nowhere near as big as guys that own millions and millions and millions of dollars. Well my issue was I couldn't do that, so I had to take a look at my reality where I was, my principles and make choices in light of it. It's how this whole decision-making process comes with our core.

Look at number three. Number three says good choices require – and underline this – decision-making that is integrated with awareness of emotion and thought. Good choices require decision-making and what you have to do in order to have good decisions made is you have to get to the point where you can say, you know what, I'm responsible for this choice. I'm responsible for what I've decided to do. And so let me give you, if I can, to show you the principles that I work through personally to work through my situation. Now I'll tell you now I don't own the businesses. I owe no one. Everybody's paid and to be honest with you, all my payments are better than they've ever been in my life. So hey, everything's cool. My whole debt asset ratio is now changed and things are really in a good place, but I don't own the businesses. Now how did I get there. Let me give you a couple steps. If you want to take – go into your book – this isn't in your book somewhere, so go to page

63 in your books. I want to walk you through some steps on decision-making.

Alright. Number one, is it a desired or a required? Is my decision that I'm about to make, is it a desired on my part or is it a required? Desired means this in a perfect world. I like it. Requirement means I have to. Now my desire is to be out of debt. My requirement is to make sure that no one is owed and not getting paid. That's a requirement. Out of debt is a desire, but I want to make sure that no one's not being owed and not being paid, so if it's on a payment plan or whatever else. So I have to take a look at that. How am I going to solve that.

Look at the next one. Does it violate one of my principles? In my case, as I told you, I can't go bankrupt. So does my choice – write that down – does my choice violate one of my principles. That's why we're going to give you fifteen. I actually believe you'll find that there are probably more principles than what we're about to give you as you develop as a knight, as you expand the bridge of your life, you'll add principles to it. If you get excited about that possibility, but we're giving fifteen and one of my principles is that in my choices I don't go bankrupt. So that's does it violate a principle? Does it violate and you'll see some other principles. Does it violate any things that are really true? I can't lie. I have lied. I can't lie as a man with good integrity for any reason.

Therefore, whatever choice I have to make has to be consistent with that.

Look at the next one. Does it hurt anyone? Does it hurt anyone. The desire required, does it violate one of my principles? Does it hurt anyone? If somebody's getting hurt by my choice, I at least need to be aware of it. There are times you have to make choices that will hurt. It will hurt you. It will hurt others. I mean that's just part of the nature of it. If somebody's trapped in a car, the only way to get them out is to remove the metal that's trapping them in the car, but it will hurt. You have to know that it will hurt and the choice you're making is to help them and sometimes that involves hurting. But knowing, does it hurt anybody, to just arbitrarily hurt people and not know, it undoes what you're designed to do as a knight.

The next part of decision-making. What does my gut say? What does my gut say? I need to make a decision here and when I stop for a moment, I do a gut check. What does my gut tell me? I think sometimes you go off your intuition a little bit and sometimes you'll make decisions that you're saying, whoa, whoa, whoa, back off of this one. I wanted to take one action and the action was with a bank that I thought would solve the problem, but when I started to examine that possibility, I actually saw another action that caused me to back away from that for another one. But what caused me to

do it? I wasn't positive I should move towards that particular decision. Gut check. Check your gut. This is all happening in sequence. It is all sort of working through this so we make good decisions.

Look at the last one. How would I feel about it later? How would I feel about this decision later on in my life? I think so often that's so important for us as guys is to decide how do I feel? How do I feel as I look back on it? Now I'll be honest with you, this part of my life I feel really good about. I feel like it has all worked out really well. I owe nobody. Everybody's covered, all my creditors are covered and I'm actually in a good positive direction by actually thousands and thousands of dollars in a good positive direction. And in that area, it's like okay, I walked through the process. Now I will tell you that I have a bunch of other decisions that I've made, a bunch of other choices in my life that are not that healthy that I look back on it, I don't feel good about them. A lot of wounded people along the way, a lot of stupid things along the way. In fact, a lot of things that get me sometimes to what I'm still dealing with now that go back into my life. Alright, choices.

Look at Principle No. 3. It's another principle that we can take a look at as men. Principle 3, a man's, a knight's world, is constantly in motion. It means that things are constantly moving around. I'm told that there's a bridge in Philadelphia that actually



has on it these boxes that set a tone to keep the bridge from humming or vibrating in certain weather conditions and certain traffic conditions, so that the bridge is the world's in motion, right. The earth is in motion. So that bridge can have the give it needs but not get caught in a rhythm that will destroy it. I think sometimes guys we have to understand that as we're building this pretty solid man of steel structure, understand that the world is a moving target. The world around us is moving. What used to be the world's value system is changing. What used to be the economic system is changing. What used to be the love relationship you have is changing. My children are not going to be in my house forever. Thank goodness. They are going to leave and when they leave, I have to be prepared for that. Things change. I get older. You don't bounce back as fast as you used to. Those things you got to understand the world around us is in motion. Those are personable, but man there are some things that are big that are going on.

Look at the principles that go with that – look at – underneath that. While a man lives in the forest, he never, number one, fully achieves his potential. While you live in the forest, just good news for your guys, even though you are living in it, you are never going to fully achieve your potential. There is an eternal nature of who you are and you're moving towards that eternity. You're never going to hit it so enjoy the motions. So you think you solved it, you might

even change. You might need to adapt. You know years ago nobody went to gyms. You know why? Because everybody exercised every day in their craft on the farm and everything else. Now we have gyms because people sit behind desks all day, driving cars all day, play on computers all day and as a result of that, we need to go to a gym to keep our bodies going. That's a change. You have to adapt to those changes. The world around us is in motion.

Look at number two. The ability to adapt and change is a skill that must be developed. Obviously we've just been talking about it. You need to adapt to it. You need to say I'm going to now catch up to it. I need to have this skill, this world in motion, this change take place. I have to be involved in what that, how that works.

The knight's character, number three. The consistent support provides safety to those he influences. While I'm still working towards this adapting world and I'm still working towards all this, understand that my character has everything, everything to do with what's going to happen behind me. So I have to be always working that and if I've made bad choices, I've got to correct that and start to move forward in the development of who we are.

Look at the next principle, Principle No. 4. It works this way. A knight is amazing. A man, the knight, is amazing. Now I don't when the last time somebody told you, you are amazing, but I will tell you by the very created design, a man is an amazing thing. And

when you function not as a male but as a knight, man, who is amazing the impact. One of my jobs as a dad is to tell my children, I have sons, I love you. I am proud of you. This is what you're good at. These are things that God told Jesus. These are things you need to be telling your sons. I can tell them that and when I tell them that, you know what I'm saying? You're amazing. You're amazing in all that you can be. Guys, don't let anybody undersell who you are. If you're going to be a bridge that's going to span the gulfs and rescue and help people, you're going to have to understand, you're amazing.

Look at number one under men are amazing. Knights have within them the ability to accomplish some miracles feats of sacrificial giving through servant leadership. Miraculous feats. You have within you the ability to accomplish miraculous feats. That on so many levels. If up until this moment the book you've written has a lot of garbage in it, from this moment on, with Christ changing and your choices consistently made with what He can do and renewal of who you are, as you start to move forward guys, you can re-undo some of the stuff you've done, or you can correct it or maybe more significantly, create some things that you never thought were possible. Miraculous nature of a man is because not only is he physically strong or mentally strong, it's because when a core is intact, it includes so many aspects of a bigger picture, that the

things you do, things that men have done have blown us out of the water.

The thing about that, number two. For maximum achievement, a man must know his elements and responsibility for all actions. You got to know the elements around you, you got to know what's happening and you got to say, I am responsible for my actions – reject passivity, accept responsibility. A man who is understanding who he is made to be, what he's made to be, will understand that he can do things that nobody thought he could be. And when that starts taking place in your life, you're going to begin to believe what life might have beat out of you. I don't know where you're sitting right now. Maybe you're sitting right now in a jail cell and you're saying, you have no idea how much I've screwed up. You have no idea how hard it feels to get out of this whole that I've dug. And I tell you that if you start right now saying I'm responsible for where I am and I'm going to move forward, it will change. The same path that got you there saying I can be irresponsible, you'll change and say I will be responsible.

Look at number three. Worth comes from the man's creator and is evidenced through the knight's relationships. Our worth comes from our creator and it's going to be evidenced in the relationship that we have with a man as a man. You know, God created you. He designed you. He designed you to be a knight. He

designed you to be a structure that could make a huge difference and in so doing, you have to sometimes embrace that.

You all know the name Nelson Mandela. I think you probably know that he spent twenty-seven years of his life in prison for his principles that he would not waiver on. What you might not know is he started for a black law firm in South Africa. You might not know that he came along side of several organizations that were promoting the development of blacks within a white-driven South Africa. What you might not know is what he battled for years about. When he ended up in prison, he was given the opportunity to be released on many occasions if he would just renounce his principles. But he couldn't. It was the worth of all men. It was the fact that we needed to get rid of a partite. We needed to have a culture in which men were recognized no matter what their race was, no matter what their color was and so he would stand for his principles and even though release, I mean a horrible jail cell, six by six jail, the release was available and he would turn it down. Over a period of time and there would be the presidents of the nation would talk to him. Finally the clerk and Mandela would come to an agreement. Mandela would be released. Mandela would ultimately become the President of South Africa, change it in great ways and will bring back unity instead of allowing a partite to so swing the other way when the black culture would attack, in essence the white

culture and the two cultures began to blend together slowly under his vision. His character is amazing and his clarity was amazing. His principles guided him. I want you to think about him in jail for twenty-seven years under a pretty cruel situation. I want you to listen to this quote. I'll put it up on the screens for you. Here it is. The quote says, the greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall. No wonder he received the Nobel Peace Prize. When you have that kind of an attitude, you say I don't care what happens, I can rise again and again and again. That's the kind of warriors that are out there. Men that we can follow. Men of principle. When you become a knight of principle, you build great structures and change the world as we know it.

Look at Principle No. 5. A man does whatever it takes. A man, a knight, does whatever it takes. When you understand that one, it means that it's going to do whatever it takes to get this done, I'm going to have to do that. Now he doesn't do whatever it takes illegally. He doesn't do whatever it takes in a wrong way. He does whatever it takes to accomplish his task as a knight. He does whatever it takes, whatever risks that are necessary after he weighs it all out and thinks it all through.

Look at number one under Principle 5. He does not expect to fulfill his calling easily. It is going to be hard to fill your vision.

Look at number two. He often must choose to do what is hard. He is going to have to make choices to move into that which is difficult. Now if you understand that, it isn't going to be easy. It's going to be hard. Men need to say, if it's hard, it's hard. If it takes a lot, it takes a lot. I want to give.

Three. He expects to complete a goal that he sets. A real man says if I'm going to set a goal, if I'm going to build this bridge and cross the chasm, if I'm going to be a man of steel, I'm going to expect that what I set out to do, I'm going to do. I'm not going to try at life. I'm going to do at life. It doesn't mean you want setbacks. It doesn't mean you want failures. It means that you're going to move forward. You're going to march with strength.

Number four. He prepares for the tough tasks in his future. I love that statement. He prepares for tough tasks in his future. You never know when they're coming. I think one of the hardest things for me is when somebody in my family like Caleb, going through what he's going through with his cancer, is hurting and I have to guide my family. It's a tough area. I actually have been trained in that through a variety of other experiences that happened in my life and it sort of helped me for that moment. Nothing really prepared me for that particular moment, but the training, the toughening us up. Guys, if you're going to do what it takes, you're going to have to be tough. You have to learn to say no to some things. You have to

not worry about your convenience. That principle, Principle 5 will set you up for Principle 6.

Look at Principle No. 6. A man, a knight, is dedicated to continuous learning. In order for you to do what you need to do, in order for you to accomplish what you need to accomplish, you have to be open to receive all the time, information. When you receive information, as you get it, you go, okay, this information I now need to take and make a decision about in light of my core, so the brain that thinks, the brain that feels, my genetics, all the body goes into that. The mind with the king, lover, warrior, friend goes into that. When you put all these thing together, your soul, what it craves and your spirit coming alive in God, when you make choices knowing your shadow's fighting against you, information will be absorbed and understood as you build forward. How we build bridges today is different than how we used to build bridges. We learn. We are continuous in our learning. We experience different things.

Watch – here are the principles that will guide you through this. Number one, he never believes he knows it all. It kind of goes without saying, but if you believe you know it all, you're going to have trouble being a knight.

Number two. He has learned to listen to others and believes that even the forest can teach him. He is constantly getting feedback. He is constantly thinking about what he needs to do.



He's listening to everything around him, in the forest and other people.

Three. He recognizes that true learning necessitates follow up actions. When you've learned something, you need to act on what you've learned or it just becomes this great graveyard. It's like you have a library living in you that you never opened the books in. So what you want to do is you want to take action on what you learned. That's what makes us valuable as men. Don't be afraid of new truth. Don't be afraid of a new principle. Don't be afraid to discover that, you know I thought was true is not, this is true and move in it. There's so many things that as I've grown and the only reason I don't think I've ever written a book is because I'm pretty sure I'd have to write a recant of the book because I've come to learn new things that caused me to understand what I've said then isn't necessarily true. The things I've learned about marriage, from the time I got married until now. I used to do marriage seminars all the time and then realized I wasn't very good at being a husband. So it's the process of learning and applying those truths.

Look at the last one. He must be willing to be open and vulnerable and humble. Boy those things are so very, very important in our lives. It's that ability to stop and say what's really important. There is a movie that you may or may not have seen. It's called "Taking Chance". It was an HBO movie. Um, "Taking Chance" was

about a young soldier, a PFC named Phillip Chance. He was killed in action in 2004. It's his journey of his body being brought across the United States to his family. It is an absolutely moving, moving thing. For me to talk about a veterans and to think about this movie, it's just overwhelming and you'll see each person show respect to the casket that is accompanied by a soldier. In this case, it's accompanied by a colonel, Colonel Strobel. He has felt like maybe he should be the one to be in that casket instead of this young man. In fact, let me have you reflect on this scene as you think about what got him there. There's this amazing moment when he has now come and brought the body home and as he's brought the body home, it's in the middle part of the United States, he finds himself meeting with the sergeant from Chance's platoon who was with him when he died and he finds himself being with veterans from different areas and he finds himself being with his friends. And in the discussion, they're just talking through and laughing through all the things that they've experienced with Chance and his courage, even how he died, and as he's leaving, Strobel's leaving, he's talking to an old Korean veteran, Korean War veteran, and the veteran says to him, so how you doing? And he goes, you know, I should be there. Strobel said, but I didn't want to be there. I wanted to be home with my wife and my kids and so I took another desk job instead of going into action again. I'm a marine. I should have been there. And the

veteran said to him, you think you're a coward because you stay home and take care of your wife and children? You think you're a coward because you don't go in the front lines where these young men are going even though you have in the past. Sir, you're wrong. You're wrong. The principles of who you are, are just as important and you've been a witness of Chance and his life. A witness. Gentlemen, you need a witness to take a look at what you and I are becoming and saying look at this live. So as Colonel Strobel accompanied the casket across the United States, he took this young man home and witnessed that he was valuable. As that scene ended, I remember looking and thinking, you know what, I don't want to downplay how important it is for you and I to honor one another in our growth process, to honor each other in our life and in our death. It really builds by this, it's so much easier when you can find a man of deep principles. I'll talk about another scene later that talks about the death of the death of the principles of Private Chance and the difference he's made in other people's life.

Look at Principle No. 7. Principle No. 7. Only the true you will get you through. Only the true you will get you through. You and I will spend a lot of time trying to figure out who we are. That's what Knights is all about, helping you understand your inner voice, helping you understand your history. Helping you understand how you've handled all that. The true you. The true you known will make

a huge difference. In Chance's life, it was the true him. He was a guy that celebrated life right up really almost until his death and was courageous – would much rather take the position of danger than leave his own comrades in that position.

Look at the principles that go with the true you. Number one, he believes in high levels of honest reflection and integrity of actions. Don't be afraid gentlemen to stop and think about what's happened in your life and what you need to do. Reflection and integrity of actions.

Two. There is no room for falsehood or posing in a knight's life. Here's what we mean by posing. There's no room for you to fake it. Posing is you act like what you think somebody wants you to act like at the given moment. Posers are the ugliest thing knights do. Any guy who poses as a knight, everybody thinks they're safe behind them, they get massacred because he's just a poser. You can spot a poser because he tries to play the game but his principles don't match. He has to be true to who he is, true to where he is. A man who is clear about where he is in the journey is so much better off. I have a guy that's been with us for about five years in our Knights program. He has now been five years sober. He will tell you that where he is now that compared to where he is, he's come a long way, but he'll also tell you that in his mind he's a drunk. He's just one step away. Five years sober, amazing guy, has

touched a bunch of lives. He was rescued by the way by a bunch of knights who just fought for him through their campfire. I look at him and I go, he knows who he is. He doesn't con. He doesn't deny his past. He takes his life and looks at it in light of his past.

Look at the next one. A compromise of his character is never an option. He will not compromise, gentlemen. He will not compromise. He'll learn that that's not what happening to you, your character is what you have.

Look at number four. He honors God's divine image within him as a standard for all his behavior. You will understand that if God made you, that you want to be seen in His image and a reflection of him, so you'll honor Him by being true to what He made you to be. So when you start to think about what, who you are and what the problems are that you face and the journey you have and the choices you made and all the principles that we've talk to this particular point, think about this. You have the chance to be what God designed you to be, even with all the dents, even with all the damage, even with all the wounds along the way.

Last principle for this week, Principle 8. A man shapes the forest more than the forest shapes the man. I absolutely love this one. A man shapes the forest more than the forest shapes the man. Spandex males are shaped by the forest all the time. They become what everybody wants them to be. They're very pliable, it's all about

them. It's just they're absorbing, but a knight, he is changing the forest around him.

Let's walk through these principles. I think it will help you understand how this works. Number one, he has an awareness of the corrupt nature of the forest and the potentially aggressive tension that can be created by it. He is aware that the forest has danger all over it and he is aware that the tension that that creates never goes away. It is relentless. If you've ever seen the movie "Lord of the Rings", you know that the ring race for the evil and they were relentless. They continuously moved in. Don't ever underestimate the nature of the forest and how it's trying to suck you in and con you. A good knight doesn't do that.

Number two. He needs to know what parts of the forest he can accept and what he needs to change. You need to be discerning. A man's going to need to have mentors, elders in their life. He's going to have to learn what is right and wrong, discerning what he can take from the forest and what he can't. It becomes extremely important.

Number three and the last issue. He protects those he leads from the forest's negative bent, and by serving them with a loving heart. He protects those he leads. He understands that behind him, there are people that come along and he goes and gets involved in

saying, I'm going to change the forest because those who follow need that.

I want to take you back about principles to this man in this movie "Taking Chance". Let me take you to this particular scene. It just is so emotional. The colonel has walked into the room with his family, Chance's family sitting there. He meets each one of them. He gives them items from Chance, talks about how that he's been honored everywhere he goes across the United States. You see the blood being washed off of the medals that are his dog tags are now being given as each person lovingly cared for the process of Chance. Chance's injuries caused the casket to be closed. They can't even see their son. Then they bring him in and the entire town has shown up for his funeral. And then that casket is carried on a horse carriage through the town. As it's being carried, and as a reflecting, the letter is being read, the letter is being sent by Chance's commander and in it, it talks about Chance's character and his, how he was a hero in life and how he was a hero in death. But then it says something about this. It talks about the deep principles of Chance. It says, I believe without a shadow of a doubt, if we had more men like Chance, there'd be no need for the Marine Corps. When that scene hits you and you hear those words, and you see that gun salute, and you realize this young has given, paid the ultimate price. If we could have more men like that, there's be

no need for warriors in a military sense. You'd be a warrior of the Knights of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We'll work on seven more principles the next time we get together. See you then.