

Hero Leader's Guide

Intro:

We believe that the next seven weeks can forever change the course of the young men you are mentoring! Something powerful occurs when we men decide to let our guard down and become vulnerable. That's when "iron sharpens iron," and as the pastor/leader of this group, you now have an incredible opportunity to shape future families and marriages by shaping the heart of a young warrior today. Thank you for investing in this generation. Thank you for being an answer to prayer. Thank you for refusing to merely sit around criticizing our culture. Instead, you're stepping up, endeavoring to create a new one.

In order to steward the moments God will give you with your small group during the next few weeks, we want to offer you some practical insights for making this experience both memorable and long-lasting for everyone involved.

1. Develop a prayer list with the names of each student in your group. Make it a priority to call them out by name each day during the course of your journey together. Record and write down answers to your prayers along the way.
2. Give out your email address, Facebook site, cell phone number, etc. to those in your group. This communicates that you are not only willing to step into their world, but that you are willing to let them step into *your* world as well.
3. Take the liberty to add, delete, or modify the content in this curriculum freely. It was not intended to be exhaustive, but simply to be a guide with a weekly goal in mind. You obviously already see value in communicating to students, so we've designed the curriculum so that you can implement your own teaching style while still meeting the intended weekly goals.
4. Stay sensitive to God during this process. In the course of a group meeting, someone may become vulnerable and open up. This is an incredible moment to minister the love of the Father to a student. Allow the pressure of "getting through the lesson" to subside. In the last analysis, the only true weekly goal is to develop warriors. If this turns into a fourteen-week-long series, so be it!
5. Prepare through prayer. We have all been to small groups and witnessed what happens when a facilitator shows up unprepared. I once heard someone say, "If we sweat in preparation, we won't bleed in battle." The effort you sow in preparation will reap a great harvest in the end. Prioritize your calendar now and make time to develop the topic effectively.

Now let's share a few principles about communication and leadership:

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In Mark 7:31-37, Jesus healed a deaf-mute. Imagine being a hurting man with such a deep cry in your heart, and yet being unable to verbalize it or to hear even a trace of hope spoken to you. I see striking similarities in the young men of this generation. There are many outlets of communication out there, ranging from Twitter to Facebook, email to texting, Skype to the good old fashioned phone call. There's probably never been so many avenues of communication available in the history of the world, and yet there are so many in this generation who are spiritually mute, unable to voice that longing they are experiencing deep down inside their heart.

Jesus implemented a great strategy for this situation. While the crowd asked Jesus to lay hands on this individual on the spot, Jesus instead took him away from the crowd, where the miracle of healing occurs. That miracle was incredible in and of itself, but especially so when you notice how Jesus used a form of sign language to communicate what was going on as He worked this miracle. God doesn't just want to heal us, but to heal us in a language that we can understand. As leaders, let us remember that. What you say and do is very important, but what is heard is equally important.

"Preaching" and "communicating" are two fundamentally different concepts. The Pharisees "preached," and yet their communication did not produce a culture shift. America, too, is full of "preachers" who slickly fulfill their weekly duties with three-point sermons, all beginning with the same letter. But while they're speaking regularly, they aren't really communicating effectively. Look around. Our sermons are not impacting culture and they aren't producing change.

We can't just speak. We must connect, and speak in a language that people understand, as Jesus did with the deaf-mute. The purpose of these sessions is not to grow a larger, more exciting youth group or to blind our students with our oratory brilliance. Our purpose is to become smaller, to create tight knit community in small groups that will shake their world. Intimacy and conversation is best facilitated in a smaller setting, and small group discussion can produce big change in a person's life if we open up and become vulnerable. You'll only grow larger by growing smaller.

We want to share a few practical thoughts on communication and leadership before you begin covering the material with your group. Here are the "ground rules," if you will:

1. Listen attentively. Pay attention. Look them in the eyes when they speak.

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2. Seek connection. True communication is not monologue, but dialogue. Avoid the temptation to seek impact without involvement.
3. Ask open-ended questions. The Word is clear that the mouth speaks the overflow of the heart. One of the greatest ways to get your finger on the pulse of any group you're leading is through dialogue, so asking questions that require only one-word answers won't help!
4. Our culture is at a crossroad and our students want Truth. Still, don't be afraid to admit some of the questions you have yourself. As leaders, we can be answering too many questions, rather than questioning more answers. Your questions will generate much dialog, too.
5. Be yourself. Your students need to know that you aren't tucked into bed by angels each night and that you didn't walk on water this morning as you jogged near the lake.
6. Establish an atmosphere of honesty. Before each group meeting, it always helps to remind everyone that there is no such thing as a stupid question, and that whatever you talk about in the group, stays in the group. It's useful to write up a covenant of confidentiality and to have each member of the group sign it, which also forms a sense of commonality and brotherhood between them that others don't share. Encourage group interaction as much as possible. If only certain individuals are doing most of the talking, change things up. Be proactive. For instance, going around the circle and asking everyone to share. That is a great way to provide a platform for sharing.

It is no accident that this generation finds itself “left in the land” and surrounded by the enemies of God:

These are the nations that the Lord left in the land to test those Israelites who had not experienced the wars of Canaan. He did this to teach warfare to generations of Israelites who had no experience in battle.

Judges 3:1-2 (NLT)

God has purposely placed this particular group of young men in your path for such a time as this. You are to train them for war, as we are in a spiritual battle (2 Cor. 10:3-6). By the end of this class, you will be amazed at the growth that has taken place in the lives of these young men!

Session 1

Study in conjunction with Chapter 1 of Hero

Materials needed: Envelopes, notebook paper and pens

Before the group begins, take a few moments to introduce yourself and to answer the following questions. Once you are finished, take turns, one by one, and respond to the same set of questions. The purpose of this exercise is to get to know one another, set the pace for the next few weeks, and encourage everyone to let their guard down.

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you and what grade are you in?
3. What do you like to do for fun on the weekends?
4. What has Jesus been doing in your life?
5. Do you have a girlfriend? If so, how long have you been together? How does she feel about you taking this class?
6. Have you ever thought about what you want your family to be like when you get married? Do you want it to be like your home now? Please explain.
7. Who is one of your favorite heroes from the Bible? Why?

Open in prayer

Hero is an incredible book that teaches us how to take a stand in our culture and to be the type of man God created us to be. I love the question Fred asked in the introduction: “Are you leaving the women in your life better off for having known you?” If you can answer this question right now with a yes, then your goal for these sessions is to learn strategies to will enable you to always be able to answer that way. If you cannot confidently answer yes to this question right now, there is hope. God loves you, and the blood of Jesus can make you clean and whole again. Take a moment and write a letter to your future spouse. Express to her your desire to present her before God as a pure bride on your wedding day. Express to her how you will treat her like a princess. What will you do?

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Now that the letter is finished, think about this concept: what if you were to court this young lady for three years and never end up marrying her? During your life, it is quite likely that you will eat out or mini-golf or go to a game with someone else's future wife when you're dating. You may very confident that you are destined for each other, but this young lady may actually marry a missionary to the Philippines some day. Being a hero means that you not only live like a warrior for God because it affects *your* life, but also because it affects her life. She is God's daughter, and it is the right thing to do.

Take a moment and read this quote from Winston Churchill from page 12: *What is the use of living, if it be not to strive for noble causes and to make this muddled world a better place for those who will live in it after we are gone.* What comes to your mind when you read this quote?

Point to drive home: The point we want to drive home here is that each one of us has an obligation to make this world a better place. Anyone can be a follower. It takes a real man to be a leader and to live for a cause greater than himself. With this in mind, living a life that is focused on gratifying our sinful desires is a cowardly approach. Living in purity and leaving a mark for God on this generation of young ladies is a great and noble cause!

What are some practical things you can do to make this world a better place for women to live in? (Okay, guys, let's put on our chivalrous hats and get old-fashioned! Let's resurrect some ideas from the olden days when guys still opened up the door for the lady as she walked in to get ice cream!)

Point to drive home: Open up the car door for her, take the lead in praying over the meal together, pray before you go out to spend time together, open the door for her as you walk into the mall, carry an umbrella and keep her dry when it rains, drop her off at the door if it is snowy or icy out, etc.

On page 15, Fred shared from his heart about the fact that his dad was his hero. What is your dad like? How has your relationship with your dad affected the way you look at God?

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Point to drive home: If your dad was a man of God, knowing and understanding how to live like a hero in your culture probably comes a bit easier. Many of us, however, were never taught the Word of God by our fathers, and we weren't shown how to live it out by that "high priest" in our home, either. If you're like many young men in our culture today, you are a genuine rookie when it comes to being a real man, and your view of manhood is defined by those men you've idolized in your life. This determines whether or not you see God as someone who winks at sin, or as someone who asks you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

Fred's dad was his hero. But he also mentioned that his dad "knew" the so-called "real" truth about manhood. What does our culture describe being a man's man as? What measures your manhood at school? At church? On the ball diamond or basketball court?

Point to drive home: Our culture defines manhood in many non-sexual ways, like how much beer you can drink, how much weight you can bench, how much money are you making, and how tough and brutal are you when bullying others. Still, nothing quite defines manhood out there like your prowess with women. How many girlfriends you have had in your life? How far did you go with girlfriend this weekend? On the sidelines or in the stands, making crude remarks about the cheerleaders can make a guy feel like he's "one of the boys." Even at church, having a girlfriend seems far more important than it should and, in many youth groups, the lines between the secular and sacred are becoming blurred. The bottom line is this: our culture is fragmented and wounded, and without Christ as their model, they've got no idea what a real man even is.

Read 2 Samuel 11 and 2 Samuel 12:1-7.

There are many truths hidden in this lengthy passage of Scripture, but let me draw your attention to 2 Samuel 11:1, where the author reveals that this was the time when "kings go to battle." In other words, it was the time when the nation's warriors of God should have been at the front lines of battle, fighting for God. Where was David?

In the past, the king had been an incredible leader on the battlefield, but now he'd become comfortable. He decided to let the others fight the battles, while he rested back home in peace and safety. In retrospect, it would have been far safer for David to have been at the front lines staring the enemy in the face than it was to be back in his palace surrounded by the comforts of home. Why? During the time of battle, David chose the easy way, and he committed adultery as a result.

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The prophet Nathan's parable delivered God's assessment of what David had actually done to Uriah and his home, and the imaginative characters in his narrative communicated just how furious God was that this blessed and favored king would commit such a selfish, heinous act.

1. In this story, who do you think the rich man represents? (**David**)
2. In this story, who does the poor man represent? (**Uriah**)
3. What about the lamb? (**Bathsheba**)

There was also a fourth character in Nathan's parable, called the traveler. Who or what might the traveler represent? List some of your ideas:

Point to drive home: A stronghold of thought is a sympathy for sin, a place in your life where you've given the title deed over to the devil. It's a habitual sin that must be crucified and conquered, a way of thinking that affects how you perceive and filter truth, a set of lies you've believed about God and your manhood.

While the identity and purpose of the traveler in this parable is not entirely certain, we *do* know one thing for sure. A "traveler" had been allowed to join up with David and stay at his side as he traveled along his spiritual journey. This traveler had likely been with David for a long time. Who knows? Perhaps he came alongside David as he stared at the shapely young women making their way back and forth from the well for water, when David was a young man. Whatever the case, David was *still* carrying this traveler's baggage, and its weight had finally buckled him, leading him to a place of compromise, death, and destruction. When he looked over and saw Bathsheba, he stared on lustfully. Rather than "bounce his eyes" and turn away, David "sent for her." The principle for all men is clear. **If we don't dump our travelers, they eventually become our idols, our places of worship.**

So now it is time to make the commitment. You are a part of this group because you want to succeed. You want to become a modern day knight for Jesus. You want to live like a hero.

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Since that's true, you must deal with the travelers in your life before you go any further. You must make sure your heart is pure and that your definition of manhood is accurate. From this moment on, you must only accept the best into your heart!

Take some time and give the students an opportunity to write down or share who the "travelers" are in their lives, so that they can drown and bury them in the blood of Jesus. Encourage them. Remind them that repentance from sin is possible if they embrace forgiveness by faith. Remind everyone that God loves them (1 John 1:9; Romans 10:9) and that He, too, travels with them on their journey.

Before closing, let's write another letter, as well. Address this one to the young lady you are now in relationship with, or the next one you will join in relationship. Your purpose in this letter is to express your commitment to be the spiritual leader and her defender in your relationship together. Take a piece of paper and an envelope, and then spend the next few minutes writing down the covenant you intend to keep with this special young lady. Promise to treat her like the princess she is. Seal it up, and then present it to her father before you take her on your next date! It may seem odd, uncomfortable and even a little difficult to write a letter to a woman that you may not have met yet. But hey, heroes don't live out of their comfort, but out of their character! As you write, be sure to list some Scripture verses that you will use as your compass in your relationship. List some standards and guidelines you'll set up for your journey together. Pour out your heart now, and then keep the covenant later. You, or that missionary to the Philippines, will be happy you did!

Close in Prayer

Homework This Week

Develop a list of specific things you will pray for your future spouse and/or current special lady in your life. Pray for health, excellence, modesty, a heart for God, self confidence, understanding and knowledge of the Word, wisdom in decision making, self determination to maintain her standards, financial blessing, godly friends to surround her, etc.)

Pray Regularly

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- set aside time each day for prayer and worship
- journal after or during your prayer time
- attend prayer meetings prior to youth group of Sunday service
- fast one meal this week
- pray for your future spouse

Develop a Passion for the Word

- take notes during church services
- read the Word regularly
- set aside some time to go over the notes at least one time before the next service
- commit to memory 1 Cor. 10:13

Read Hero—make sure you’ve read through Chapter 6 before Session 2.

Session 2

Open in prayer

Take a few minutes and share testimonies from last week's prayer time, fasting, and Bible reading. Ask the students what they read in the Word, and then ask them to share their prayer list for their future spouse/special young lady.

Afterward, take a moment and go around the circle and ask students to recite 1 Cor. 10:13. It would be good if you go first as the leader, because this sets precedent that you aren't asking them to do something that you aren't willing to do yourself! Remember, as leader, you must flee the temptation to have impact without involvement.

Recap from last week:

What do you remember from last week's study?

Point to drive home: The relationship between our earthly fathers and our definition of manhood, the definition of manhood in our culture in comparison with the Word of God, the "travelers" in our lives which must be dealt with and overcome, the letter we wrote to that special young lady and the promises we made to her.

This week, we are going to build off of our desire and commitment to be heroes in our culture. In order to be most effective, we need to look at the current condition of our culture and recognize the tactics of the enemy.

In chapter two, entitled "Baal," Fred does an incredible job of contrasting the conditions of the culture we live in today with the same tactics the enemy tried to impose on God's people a few thousand years ago. Take a moment and discuss the similarities from chapter two.

Point to drive home: The followers of Baal elevated sexual fertility and sex to a sacred pursuit as a form of worship (our culture worships sex and uses sex to sell almost anything). They promoted the feminine view of our world and an interaction with a feminine energy which governs life (our culture promotes "Mother Earth" and denies the creation by our Loving Father), and their prostitutes lured men into immorality around the altars as part of worship (everything from Hollywood to the lyrics of songs seem to lure people toward an immoral lifestyle). Baal

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worshippers also promoted child sacrifice and perversion with children (abortion and the rampant child molestation in our culture is obvious.). It is powerful to ponder the thought that when you're engaging in sexual perversion, you're actually aligning yourself with the same spirit that's behind child molestation. While that's a bit jarring, all sexual perversions are rooted in the same spirit.

In that secret conversation behind the scenes between Balaam and King Balak, Balaam essentially said to the king, "Hey, if you want to take these people out, entice them into sexual sin. Once there, God will take their protection away, and you'll conquer them." What tricks has *our* enemy employed to try to lure America away from God's blessing and protection?

Point to drive home: The lie of self gratification and the indoctrination of our youth and children through Hollywood and mainstream music. The fact that almost every primetime television show has allusions to sexual promiscuity. The fact that even when you can watch a family program, you must skip the commercials so your children won't witness a lesbian kissing another lesbian during an ad for one of America's favorite reality shows. Handheld pornography on Ipods and cell phones. Temptations across the Internet, Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube.

Before I began following Christ, I had no trouble labeling the behaviors or thoughts that were contrary to the Bible as "sin." I still label them as sin. But today, many Christ followers don't. They're following a new trend, and call such thoughts and behaviors "weaknesses" instead. Have you accepted the lie that your sins are merely "weaknesses." If so, it'll be much easier to accept bad behavior into your life, even that behavior from which you once repented in the past. How has the enemy tried to build such traps into your life to lead you away from God?

Point to drive home: What do you find yourself accepting as behavior that you once repented of?

In chapter 5, we are reminded that while we can't get rid of our male brain, we *can* redeploy it! Read Romans 12:1-2:

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

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It's clear from this verse that we don't have to live a life marked by impure thoughts. We can have victory in our mind. The Word of God is the key to transforming how we think and what we think about.

Now read Joshua 1:8:

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

List a few reasons why digesting the Word of God regularly in your life can help you:

Point to drive home: Before Joshua was commissioned to enter the enemy's territory and take over the land, God reminded him of the importance of digesting His Word. *Remember the Book as you take Jericho! Remember the Book as you face the Amalekites! Remember the Book when the Philistines come upon you and try to lure you away to serve their sex-saturated, demonic religion.*

Joshua 1:8 reminds all of us that the Book of the Law is to be in our mouth (so that we can pray it, speak it, and declare it). We can "make" our way prosperous simply by meditating on the Law, and we can guarantee ourselves success in the weeks and years to come by being careful to follow everything in the Word (note it says everything, not just those things which are convenient and easy!).

In *Hero*, Fred declared that great men are defined by great wars. You are obviously in a war, and the weapons of your warfare are not carnal. As a warrior, one of the greatest weapons you possess is prayer:

If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.

Isaiah 7:9b

No man stands as tall as when he's standing on his knees. The prophet of Elijah went head to head with the spirit of Baal. Was it easy? No, it wasn't easy at all, but then again, God doesn't just ask us to do the easy things. How did Elijah choose to attack? He prayed, and as a result, he had a significant impact upon his culture.

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God has committed His power to help you to make a similar impact upon *your* culture today:

For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him....

2 Chronicles 16:9a

God is looking for someone just like you who is willing to commit to changing this world. If you'd simply fully commit yourself to being like Christ, you'll surely leave your mark, because He'll spot you and strengthen you. Remember, being like Christ means you'll be in prayer. Modern day warriors implement the same disciplines of prayer that the men of God in the Bible did, because we know what they knew—prayer changes things.

For the rest of this session, let's explore how you can stand up for God in your school and community by getting down on your knees. As you develop a solid prayer life, you will find yourself stronger than you ever dreamed possible, in Christ.

Elijah was a man of God! He took on an evil culture and successfully fought against Baal, a strong principality in the spirit realm. Did he have his difficulties? Absolutely. There were times when he felt all alone in ministry, and time he didn't feel he could finish the race that God called on him to run. He even fought depression and suicidal thoughts. In spite of all that, Elijah managed to completely redefine the role of prophet in the Old Testament. He openly challenged the prophets of Baal to a spiritual duel. He was the first prophet to miraculously raise someone from the dead. He established a legacy for the next generation of prophets through Elisha.

Yet remember, Elijah was just a man, like you and me. What set Elijah apart from other men of His day and rendered his work for God so distinctive? The apostle James points us to prayer for the answer:

Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

James 5:17-18

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Prayer will give any man a great capacity in God, as God showed us many times throughout the Bible:

- Prayer influenced the destiny of Israel many times through Moses. (Exodus 32:7-14)
- Prayer was used by Samson for one more opportunity to defeat the Philistines. (Judges 16:21-30)
- Prayer gave Hezekiah fifteen more years of life. (2 Kings 20:1-6, Is. 38:1-6)
- As men, we believe in prayer. But sometimes what we believe and how we behave is different.
- King Josiah sought God for four years before he began his reform! (2 Chronicles 34:1-3)

Men have learned and experienced the same thing more recently, as well:

- Prayer does not equip us for the greater work; prayer *is* the greater work.” (Oswald Chambers)
- As the Berlin wall finally came down in Germany, one communist official lamented, “We were prepared for every eventuality, but not for prayer.”
- “We have given too much attention to methods and to machinery and to resources, and too little to the source of Power, the filling with the Holy Ghost.” (J. Hudson Taylor)

In the battle for purity in our relationships, we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against evil powers and principalities. The Bible is clear that our weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God. If we are to be truly effective and win individually, we must first tap into His world through the power of prayer. Once we do that, we can set our eyes on changing the world.

Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

Colossians 3:2-3

In other words, you must access *His* world in order to change *this* one. How do you tap in to His world? Charles Spurgeon said it simply. “Prayer itself is an art only the Holy Spirit can teach us. Pray for prayer. Pray until you can really pray.” Just get started, and learn as you go. God will teach you on your way. The following are a few quick tips to help you as you go:

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- I. Always remember, prayerlessness is the ultimate pride.
- II. Prayer is the laboratory in which young men are built. Prayer isn't so much about changing "out there," but about changing "in here" first.
- III. The purpose of prayer isn't necessarily to get a hold of the answer, but to get a hold of God.
- IV. Your prayer life will set you apart:

In God's eyes. (2 Kings 9:1-3)

"And Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets, and said to him, "Get yourself ready, take this flask of oil in your hand, and go to Ramoth Gilead. Now when you arrive at that place, look there for Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, and go in and make him rise up from among his associates, and take him to an inner room. Then take the flask of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, "Thus says the Lord: I have anointed you king over Israel." Then open the door and flee, and do not delay."

In your enemy's eyes. (Acts 19:11-16)

(One day) the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?"

- V. Prayer merges our world with God's.
 - A. Because of an atmosphere of prayer, Paul saw the jailer in the darkness and brought God world into that awful prison (Acts 16:25-29)
 - B. No one can access heaven except by prayer. (John 3:12-13)
 - C. Moses was the intermediary between His world and ours. (Deut. 9:25-27)
 - D. Testimonies of answered prayer.....(take some time and share some answered prayers in the group)

As Christian men, our lack of power can be directly attributed to our lack of prayer. As Spurgeon said, we must pray for prayer in America, and create a *culture of prayer*. When students and leaders begin praying, things happen. What can happen when we pray?

The 1859 Revival In Ulster (Northern Ireland) profoundly touched the nine counties of the North. Sectarian violence slowed almost to a halt, and prostitution and drunkenness declined. A brewery had to close on account of the down turn in sales. One hundred thousand people made commitments to Christ. History suggests that the spark that lit this fire was a Friday night prayer meeting that started with four young men in the village of Kells in 1857. It was to be three

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months before it grew beyond the initial four, but by 1859 the parish of Ballymena was the scene of one hundred prayer meetings per week, sixteen a night!

Here are some practical tips for creating a culture of prayer within a youth ministry:

- Develop a team of prayer warriors, grandma's and grandpa's, shut-ins, even students, who will pray during your youth services.
- Hold regular scheduled prayer meetings. We used to have one each week on Tuesday night.
- Monthly young men's meetings where I modeled prayer for them.
- My interns and I devoted Thursday mornings to prayer.
- Prayer/altar time during our services with trained teams
- Be a leader who prays.....we reproduce who we are. Our students don't do what we say, they do what we do.
- Pre-service prayer, in a place where the worship team isn't practicing and the sound team isn't finalizing the slide show. This must be a sacred time.
- Send out a prayer calendar to parents with specifics.
- Put prayer requests weekly in bulletin.
- Develop prayer partners:
 - 1) Paul asked prayer from the Romans (15:31), Ephesians (6:19-20), Colossians (4:3), and others.
 - 2) The earliest biblical example of prayer partners is Moses, Aaron, and Hur in Exodus 17:8-13. They saw the need, seized the moment, and shared in the victory.
 - 3) John Maxwell's book *Partners in Prayer* is a great resource.

Homework This Week

Pray Regularly

- Set aside time each day for prayer and worship
- Journal after or during your prayer time
- Attend prayer meetings prior to youth group of Sunday service
- Fast one meal this week
- Pray specifically for the areas you find yourself compromising in
- Pray for your future spouse

Develop a Passion for the Word

- Take notes during church services
- Read the Word regularly
- Set aside some time to go over the notes at least one time before the next service
- Commit to memory Eph. 5:3-5. To go a little further, try memorizing 1 Cor. 9:24-27.

Read Hero—make sure you have read through Chapter 9 by Session 3.

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Authors: Fred Stoeker and Heath Adamson, Youth Pastor

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Session 3

Recap from last week: What do you remember from last week's study?

Point to drive home: The modern day comparison of Baal worship, the importance of the Word of God and prayer in positioning ourselves for success.

What was your prayer life last week after we went through the teaching on prayer? Did you see any breakthroughs? Did anyone have a hard time concentrating when they prayed? Is prayer always supposed to be easy, or am I the only one who struggles with prayer sometimes?

Point to drive home: At times, consistency and fervency in prayer can be difficult. Often times, the difficult things bring about the greatest reward. Just ask an Olympian who sacrifices weekends to train for the gold medal. Effective prayer takes discipline and faith. Prayer is not a suggestion. It is our honor to petition God for divine intervention!

Last week we looked at the importance of taking a stand for God in our culture. We realized that standing firm in our faith is not optional; it is mandatory. We learned of the importance of renewing our mind and the power that prayer can have in our personal lives, future families, and nation as a whole. This week, we are going to get even more practical. We are going to cover chapters seven through nine. In these chapters, Rose and Jasen talk candidly about the expectations men feel that women have in relationships that aren't accurate at all.

We hear first hand from Rose that women want to be treated with respect. So, we are going to learn how to establish boundaries in order to make success in relationships and purity more attainable. Remember, we miss 100% of the shots we never take. So, let's get started.

Read Genesis 5:1-2 (KJV)

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.

You may notice something strange as you read this verse. God created "male and female," but called *their* name Adam. He didn't call them Adam and Eve. The Lord would walk through the Garden of Eden, calling out to Adam, and both would come. God designed men and women to

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have such a pure and unified connection that He could call out one name and both man and woman would come to Him. Sin caused a division to come to this unity that man and woman enjoyed together, but it was that type of connection—emotional and mental, friendship and love—that God intended for our relationships to have. That is still the kind of connection women long for in their relationships, but because of sin, our culture paints a very different picture of them, as Rose and Jasen communicated so well.

Read 1 Peter 3:7

In Chapter 7 of *Hero*, there is a short excerpt of quotes about what our culture thinks women want. Take a few moments and add to that list based on your experiences and the conversations you have been a part of or overheard.

Point to drive home: Women want a guy who has a really cool car and a lot of money to spend, women want a guy who has huge biceps and is the toughest guy in school, women want a guy who isn't emotional and is rock solid tough all of the time, women want a guy who will get her to do what she says she doesn't want to do, etc.

What does God's Word have to say about the message our culture is sending you to cave in and become a sexual coward? (1 Thess. 4:3-8; 1 Cor. 6:13; Eph. 5:3; Heb. 13:4; Deut. 22:13-17, 28-30)

Point to drive home: It is God's will that we abstain and stay pure, it is our responsibility to know how to possess our own vessel, we belong to God, we are not even supposed to have a little bit of immorality amongst us, God will hold us accountable for our sexual behaviors and we should live cautiously and reverently, purity in the marriage bed was a big deal in the Old Testament and should still be today.

How will you apply these verses to your life?

Sexual purity isn't about being a good little boy and staying clean by "missing out." It is about being a hero, and becoming a person who enables a young lady to experience all that God has for her in relationship. It all starts with a choice. One choice can then become a habit. Such habits form your character and, ultimately, your character fuels your destiny. Each choice that we

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make, then, is a seed, and sooner or later we will live off and live with the fruit from those seeds planted so long ago. (Gal. 6:7-10).

For the next few minutes, we are going to develop a list of choices that we can make to keep the enemy at bay and stay proactive, rather than reactive, in our relationships, rather than reactive.

Let me help you get started:

1. Realize that what our culture says about the desires of young women is skewed. Deep down inside, what every young lady wants is to know God and be love by Him. As a hero, I can become someone who expresses that pure love to a young lady that makes God proud.
2. Establish clear boundaries when it comes to relationships, such as not finding ourselves alone at night, etc.
3. Point to drive home: It is up to you to be the leader.
4. Point to drive home: Accountability must be pursued and is not overrated. Accountability, however, is only as effective as you are willing to be honest and transparent.
5. Point to drive home: Commit the Word of God to memory strategically in the area of purity.
6. Point to drive home: Develop a picture in your mind as to what you want your family legacy to look like in years to come. Make this a matter of prayer today.
7. Point to drive home: If you find yourself in a relationship right now that isn't pure, you should seek counsel and pray about taking a break until you become the man you need to become.
8. Point to drive home: You can do it!

The choices you make as a young man will cascade throughout all the generations of your family tree. Let me illustrate that by sharing a study of the descendents of two contemporaries, Jonathan Edwards and Max Jukes. Mr. Edwards was a Christian man, known around the world for his impeccable character and his love for God. Mr. Jukes a self-professed atheist, and couldn't stand the thought of God. When someone tried to share Christ with him on his deathbed, he whispered with his last breath, "Jesus Christ? I will have nothing to do with that man."

One man chose to fear the only true God, and the other chose to ignore Him. See how those single choices affected generations to come, and you will also see the difference between *living a legacy* and just *living a life*.

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Among the 1394 descendants of Jonathan Edwards, there were:

- 100 preachers and missionaries
- 60 public officials
- 75 army and naval officers
- 65 college professors
- 45 men of prominence
- 60 physicians
- 11 judges
- 13 college presidents
- 3 U.S. Senators
- 1 U.S. Vice President
- 295 college graduates, many of whom were governors of states and ministers to foreign nations

Among the 540 known descendants of Max Jukes:

- 310 died as paupers
- 130 were lifelong criminals
- 100 were drunkards
- One-half of the women were prostitutes
- 7 were murderers

The choices and the list of standards you'll make to defend your relationships do matter. They insure that you will be a hero to a young lady and, subsequently, to an entire generation. Remember, your life will only last as long as your last breath. Your legacy will last as long as eternity. Abraham Lincoln said, "What matters is not who my ancestors were, but who my children or grand children become." He's right, and if we work together now, we can make a difference in the lives of our children, grand children and, if the Lord tarries, generations far off.

This week, we learned of some boundaries you can implement in your relationships. Next week, we'll see why it is not enough to just set the boundaries on what you will or won't do physically together. You must also be willing to defend those boundaries with your entire heart. You must defend God's daughters and their purity, leaving every single girl better off for having known you.

Before we close, take a moment to write down some names of the girls in your life. Now, we are going to spend time in prayer for these young ladies, just like a father would pray for his children, or a brother would pray for his sisters.

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Homework This Week

Pray Regularly

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- journal after or during your prayer time
- attend prayer meetings prior to youth group of Sunday service
- fast one meal this week
- pray specifically for the areas you find yourself compromising in
- pray for your future spouse
- pray for willpower to do the right thing in your relationship (present or future)

Develop a Passion for the Word

- take notes during church services
- read the Word regularly
- set aside some time to go over the notes at least one time before the next service
- commit to memory Job 31:1, Heb. 13:4

Read Hero—make sure you have read through Chapter 12 by Session 4.

Go Deeper

If you find yourself in a compromising relationship and you have tried to stay pure, but it isn't working, what should you do? Some of you may have to make some tough choices this week if you are going to be a hero. Talk with your pastor, teacher, or group leader in confidence about your struggle. You can trust them. You may have to break up with your girlfriend, take your computer out of your room, have your youth pastor or parents approve all movies you watch, get rid of your cell phone for a few weeks, etc. We are not suggesting that you become religious and develop a list of rules that no one can follow. We are suggesting that you take whatever steps are necessary to stay pure.

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Session 4

Recap from last week: What do you remember from last week's study?

Point to drive home: We looked at what a woman really wants from her relationship with a man which is contrary to what our culture communicates, the importance of taking proactive steps rather than being reactive in regards to our purity, the concept of leaving a legacy and how we reproduce who we are spiritually.

- Were any of you able to implement some of the standards or boundaries you developed for your relationships? Who would like to share some victories from last week? Does anyone need prayer because you lost a battle?
- Did anyone have to make a hard, but noble decision last week in order to move forward and be the man God created you to be?
- What stood out from your Bible reading last week that you would like to share with the group?
- Although we haven't made a practice of it every week, who took the challenge to memorize Job 31:1 and Heb. 13:4? Take some time and have students share the Scripture memorizations.

We said this week we were going to cover the topic of purposing in our heart so that the boundaries we established last week will last and endure the tests to come. We are going to put this off one more week. In order to move forward, we need to take a step backward to really look at what God says about sex and purity in relationships. It always helps us stick with our decisions when we understand the "why" factor, so let's understand why.

In chapter eleven, Fred lists the three essential longings of the female heart. Do you remember what they were? (Leaders, see *Hero*, page 95)

Point to drive home: Am I lovely? Will you fight for me? Will you sweep me into a great adventure with God for us to share together?

The United State's Secret Service is filled with trusted individuals who are willing to lay down their lives for the president. The reason they are willing to live so sacrificially is because they understand the big picture. The future of our country is always at stake when a president dies in

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office, as well as world peace. The members of the Secret Service take an oath to protect the president with their lives because they love our country, and they understand the scope of responsibility surrounding that oath.

Championship athletic teams are also filled with players who are willing to give up their individual acclaim for the sake of the higher call. Individuals don't win championships. Only teams win championships, teams whose top scorers are even willing to step out of the game if they aren't performing well that night. Championship players understand that at the end of the game, what matters most is the win, not their personal playing time or their own recognition. Individual scoring records always pale in comparison wearing a championship ring.

Whether you are a member of the Secret Service or a star athlete or a young man growing towards hero status in your relationships, understanding the broad scope of why you are doing what you are doing will firm up your resolve during difficult times. Read Proverbs 14:4. What does this Scripture mean to you in the context of your relationships?

Point to drive home: One of the practical applications of this verse is that sometimes life can stink! However, it will be the times that stink that bring about much increase. Why? Remember the reason why you purchased the oxen to in the first place.

This generation of young ladies deserves your best, even though living a pure life and being a hero isn't always easy. You will face ridicule. You will be challenged. At times, you may even fail yourself and God. No matter how much it stinks, it is always worth it when you consider the big picture. Being a hero to a young lady means you understand the three longings of her heart.

When you look through the eyes of God and understand to purpose behind the physical intimacy between a man and a woman, these three longings begin to make perfect sense. This bigger picture makes your sacrificial defense of her heart perfectly sensible and easier to do, as well.

Why is inappropriate physical and mental sexual behavior not only wrong, but a poor choice all around? (Take a moment and read through these Scriptures. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; 1 Corinthians 6:13, 18; 10:8; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 5:3)

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Point to drive home: It goes against God's Word which carries eternal consequences, it carries with it shame and guilt which isn't how God designed us to live, it causes a whirlwind of consequences such as STD's, abortion, financial hardship, severed family relationships, lack of enjoying our youth, etc.

God made you intentionally. He designed the intricate structure of your body, soul and spirit in a way that would bring glory and honor to Him. God gave you hormones and desires for good reasons. Why would God create us with a desire for sex only to ask us to stay pure until marriage?

Point to drive home: God is not the ultimate "party pooper." He knows best and knows us better than we know ourselves! God placed the gift of sex on the earth as a special gift to be celebrated between husband and wife. When you wait, it makes the celebration even more meaningful. The devil always tries to pervert and twist what God has made good.

The "411" on sex in God's view:

1. God is pro sex. Sex is a gift, not a curse.

The world paints a picture of sex as a dirty act; something to be ashamed of. The Bible states clearly that it is the one thing that demonstrates pure love between husband and wife.

Genesis 1:31, Genesis 2:18

2. Sex is intended for:

- Procreation. The purpose of having children.
- Identification. The purpose of "oneness" in marriage.
- Recreation. The purpose of pleasure and enjoyment.

3. Sex is designed for marriage alone.

- Genesis 2:21-25. God took one rib from Adam!
- Hebrews 13:4

When sex is used in the context of marriage, it is a beautiful gift. When it is used outside of marriage, there are consequences. **God created you to "have life, and life more abundantly."**

What happens when we are involved in premarital sex?

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1. Guilt. 60% of students surveyed said premarital sex produced guilt. **God wants you to be free of guilt. That freedom is part of the abundant life.**
2. Low self-esteem. You will be naked and ashamed if you disobey. Genesis 2:24-25. **God made you; you are “fearfully and wonderfully made.” (Ps. 139)**
3. Poor relationships. When you want to “break up”, it’s harder. **God wants you to have abundant life as a single man, and an awesome marriage later.**
4. Sexual addictions. If you don’t slay the giants in your life, you will end up serving them. **Freedom from giants is part of the abundant life. God wants to be real in your life!**
4. Spiritual emptiness. You leave part of your soul with somebody else.

Point to drive home: (Proverbs 6:32. The Hebrew word for “himself” is “nepes,” meaning “soul, spirit and mind.” It comes from “napas” meaning “the breath of life.”) In some sense, people involved in pre-marital sexual immorality have multiple “spiritual” personalities.

Obviously, God loves you so much that He wants all of you!
Genesis 2:23, Genesis 5:4, 1 Corinthians 6:16

Above and beyond this, there may be:

- Loss of virginity
- Unwanted pregnancies
- Illegitimate children
- Forced marriages
- Abortion
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Cervical cancer

Is it any wonder that a loving God would ask you to stay pure for marriage, even though He created you with your sexual desires?

Point to drive home: God knows best and He is aware of the consequences that are around the corner after you have your “moment of passion” which you will regret later. God loves you and knows what is best for you!

Our culture treats sex as if it has no spiritual or emotional value.

An 18-year old British college student is auctioning off her virginity on the Internet, and so far the bid is up to 10,000 pounds. Rosie Reid estimates that she will leave school over 15,000 pounds in debt, hence her drastic decision. Earlier

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this year, American Cathy Cobblerson, 24, offered her virginity on eBay for \$100,000 to pay off credit card bills (eBay later pulled the docket). Another cash-strapped student Peru, aged 21, was going to auction off her virginity on a Chilean radio station, but she backed out of her plan when a female benefactor offered her 1,700 pounds to change her mind.

Deep down inside the heart of every young woman are three longings. Let's take a moment to list them out again.

Point to drive home: Am I lovely? Will you fight for me? Will you sweep me into a great adventure with God for us to share together?

Now that you know the Truth about intimate relations and know a little about what the Word teaches, list some ideas you might use to show a special young lady that you are willing to guard those three longings of her heart. Find Scripture verses in the Song of Solomon that you can pray through in response to the three longings.

1. Am I lovely? (For example; Song of Solomon 1:5; 2:4; 4:7-8)

Point to drive home: 1:5 "Lord, I pray that my future wife would be able to see her beauty when the world tells her that she has blemishes. No matter how "dark" she feels, let her see her beauty."

2. Will you fight for me? (For example; Song of Solomon 6:1-4, 10, 8:6-7)

Point to drive home: 6:1-4, 10 "When my wife feels unsafe, I pray that my love for her would remind her of an army with banners that is coming to her rescue, so that she will not be afraid no matter what the circumstances!"

3. Will you sweep me into a great adventure with God for us to share together?
(For example: Song of Solomon 1:4, 2:10-12; 3:1-5)

Point to drive home: 2:10-12-"Father, in the Name of Jesus, thank you for the seasons we go through in life. I know that we will face challenges and that at times we will walk in a spiritual winter. Thank you, though, that no matter what, you are always with us. As you walk with us, you are powerful and loving enough to take our "winter" moments and make them bloom overnight! Thank you that the season of singing is on the horizon and that we are on a journey with our loving Creator!!"

Homework This Week

Pray Regularly

- Set aside time each day for prayer and worship

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- Journal after or during your prayer time
- Attend prayer meetings prior to youth group of Sunday service
- Fast one meal this week
- Pray specifically for the areas you find yourself compromising in
- Pray for your future spouse. Pray specifically for the three longings of her heart.
- Pray for will power to do the right thing in your relationship (present or future)

Develop a Passion for the Word

- Take notes during church services
- Read the Word regularly
- Set aside some time to go over the notes at least one time before the next service
- Commit to memory Song of Solomon 2:10-12

Read *Hero*—make sure you have read through chapter 15 by next meeting

Going Deeper

One of the things I have found helpful is to go through Psalm 119 and pray the verses specifically for my wife. For example, from Ps. 119:7, I pray that “she would learn the Word of God.” From Ps. 119:39, I pray that fear and reproach would drop off of her and that she would never be afraid of anything.” I have found over 30 ways to pray for my wife out of this chapter and make it a regular practice. Rather than giving them all to you, take time to get into the Word and make your own list. It will mean more anyway!

Session 5

Recap from last week: What do you remember from last week's study?

Point to drive home: There are reasons why God asks us to live purely, the three longings of the female heart are perfectly designed for a man to fill, we can use Scriptures like the Song of Solomon as a guide in prayer for our spouse or future spouse.

- Did anyone commit to memory the Scriptures from Song of Solomon? If so, take time for them to recite them.
- How many of you took time to go through Psalm 119 to develop a specific list for praying for your future spouse? Did anyone "go deeper?"

Open in prayer

In Session Three, we made a list of practical choices that we could make to not only stay on track, but to win the race. What stronghold myth did Jasen tackle in Chapter Thirteen?

Point to drive home: A physical connection brings out the emotional connection. Setting boundaries on the physical inhibits your relationship from growing.

On pages 101-102 of *Hero*, there was a list of creative approaches for cultivating a relationship with your special lady, while simultaneously using wisdom and caution (remember, your special someone will not think of you as corny. On the contrary, if you're a man with heroic standards who's creatively building romance into your relationships, you're every young ladies dream!) Can you think of other ideas you've implemented in your relationships?

Point to drive home: The list they develop is their own. I would encourage you to take a moment and share what you did when you were courting your spouse. How did you propose? If you are still single, what ideas or dreams do you have about your dream dates in the future?

Now that we are in the creative vein, we are going to do a fun exercise. Take ten minutes to write down your dream scenario for proposing marriage one day. What restaurant will you go to? Will you have any regrets in your relationship up to that point, and will you have remained sexually pure? Will you have spoken with and received the blessing of her father (or an authority figure if he isn't in the picture?) As her hero, how will you ravish her heart?

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Take some time and have the group read their lists!

On page 118, Jasen said, “A lot of people push the line the other way, asking, *How far can I go without sinning? Where’s the line? Can I touch you here? Can I go on to there?* But my line was backed up so far away from the danger zone that even if I blew it and kissed Rose, I wouldn’t have compromised my walk with God.”

This attitude is so vital to living like a hero in your relationships. Can you think of any example from the Bible where people pushed the line too much and found themselves sitting in the middle of sin and destruction?

Point to drive home: For example: Lot’s wife turning to look at the destruction of Sodom; David looking at Bathsheba and rather than turning away, he sent for her; etc.

We are reminded on page 119 of *Hero* that obstacles are ahead. There is no need to be fearful that we will fall, but we do need to be aware and “understand the times and know what to do.” (1 Chron. 12:32) One thing that helped Jasen was having a Christian friend who had always left his dorm room door open when entertaining his fiancé during his engagement. Jasen was wise to surround himself with other heroes with similar standards. In Galatians 3:1, the apostle Paul asked, “Who has bewitched you?” Notice that he didn’t ask, “*What* has bewitched you?” There is a big difference. What does the Bible say about choosing friends wisely? Can you think of any verses that communicate the importance of “learning how to warm yourself beside another man’s fire?”

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Point to drive home: It's been said, "Show me your friends, and I will show you your future." See verses 1 Cor. 15:33, Prov. 27:17, Prov. 27:6, Prov. 4:10, 2 Thess. 3:6, 2 Tim. 3:1-9.

Split the group up into smaller groups, and ask them to make a pact with one another. The purpose of this is accountability. Have them develop a covenant or agreement that they will implement with one another. The commitment is simple: As men, we are either thermometers or thermostats. In other words, we will either heroically set the spiritual temperature around us, or we'll passively blend in and reflect the temperatures set by others. Heroes are thermostats. They will set the temperature around them, and work with their brothers to maintain that temperature.

Close in prayer

Homework This Week

Pray Regularly

- Set aside time each day for prayer and worship
- Journal after or during your prayer time
- Attend prayer meetings prior to youth group of Sunday service
- Fast one meal this week
- Pray specifically for the areas you find yourself compromising in
- Pray for your future spouse. Pray specifically for the three longings of her heart.
- Pray for will power to do the right thing in your relationship (present or future)
- Pray for your small accountability group that you started this week

Develop a Passion for the Word

- Take notes during church services
- Read the Word regularly
- Set aside some time to go over the notes at least one time before the next service
- Commit to memory 1Cor. 15:33, Prov. 27:17

Read Hero—make sure you have read through chapter 16 by next meeting

Go Deeper

Next week we will spend the bulk of the time studying the Word and discussing practical application to our lives from the strategic Scriptures we look at. If you want to read more Scripture applying to the topic we discussed this , please look at 2 Peter 3:1, Eph. 4:1, 2 Cor. 10:5, Heb. 13:7, 18, 1 John 5:2-4, Prov. 10:17, 11:6, 4:11-13, Psalm 149:4-6.

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Session 6

Open in prayer

This is the last time we are going to gather formally together to discuss *Hero*, but remember, this is not the end. These sessions have been only the beginning for each one of us as we journey together to become the heroes God created us to be in our generation.

During the course of this group study, we have learned and practiced some strategic things. You must continue to practice these disciplines. Remember, Job didn't just make that covenant in Job 31:1. He kept that covenant, through discipline and commitment to God. It will be the same for you. The simple disciplines of praying each day reading the Word consistently will separate the heroic men from the boys.

How do we take what we have learned and apply it to our lives so that we might finish the race well? Before we answer that question, let's recap the seven goals of the book *Hero*.

1. As a guy, your fight for sexual purity is actually a fight for your manhood. Going to bed with a girl is not your ticket into manhood, but your ticket out.
2. The decisions you make today in your battle for sexual purity will cascade over the girls and guys around you today and over those that follow you in the next generations. You are responsible for those decisions, and for those people.
3. Sexual purity starts with taking on the *mark of manhood*—that willingness to embrace suffering and social pain for the sake of God and His higher call, that willingness to make a firm stand for sexual purity in an antagonistic culture.
4. The popular media and your peers have created strongholds of thought and a double-minded approach to dating that keep you tripping up in your battle for purity. You need to understand where those strongholds are, and tear them down.
5. As a man, you are the one who is primarily responsible for leading your relationships into godliness and sexual purity. It isn't enough to *set* the boundaries for what you'll do physically

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together. You must also *defend* those boundaries, with your entire heart. You must defend God's daughters and their purity, leaving every single girl better off for having known you.

6. As a generation, you can choose to do some hard things and reverse the sexual revolution that is gripping our nation, if you will choose to stand and fight together.
7. Teaming up with others can help you win. Team up with your dad, with your brothers and with your friends and leaders in the youth group. Make it your business together to win together.

Read 2 Peter 3:11-12, 14. How should we live our lives according to this Scripture?

Point to drive home: We must “look” and “watch” for the times and be prepared with our response. We are to be diligent. We are to be blameless. Accepting anything in our lives which is contrary to Scripture as “normal” sets us up for failure.

Read 2 Peter 1:3-4. What does this mean to you?

Point to drive home: He has given us what we need to live according to His Word, what we don't know can harm us (Hos. 4:6), we must know the Word and how we are to live, there are exceedingly great promises in store for us as we journey with Christ, through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross we have been given a new nature and can live victoriously over the lies of the world and not give in to the corruption which is caused by lust.

Read Revelation 14:3-5. It says they “kept themselves pure.” This is a powerful concept. We cannot use God's sovereignty as an excuse to be lazy. Each one of us must take responsibility for what God does in and through our lives. Have you ever wondered why that some seem to run faster and go farther in the Kingdom than others? After all, God loves us all the same and has called each of us to a clear and strong purpose. The truth is, at the end of the day, there are many chosen and talented individuals who lose the race (like Judas Iscariot) because they chose not to take responsibility for what God was doing in their lives and they chose not to finish strong. Let's take a look at the following verses and see how they'll help you take responsibility and finish strong in the race for purity in your relationships:

1. Jude 20-21. What does it mean to “keep yourself?” How can we do this?

Point to drive home: We must use self control.

2. Acts 19:21. How do you “purpose in your spirit?”

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Point to drive home: Make up your mind that you are going to live for God. Period.

3. Acts 7:38-39. What does it mean to “in your heart, turn back to Egypt?” What do the following verses have to do with this principle? (Psalm 95:10, Psalm 44:18, Hebrews 3:10)

Point to drive home: Most people do not wake up one morning and decide that they are going to throw away all that Christ has done for them and turn to the ways of the world. Usually, it starts with a little seed in the heart. If we want to change our lives and actions, we must renew our mind.

4. Read Mark 9:22-23. Notice that Jesus was asked, “Can you,” but He responded with, “Can you?”

Point to drive home: A lot of what happens in this life is up to us. He has already paid the price. He is looking for someone to take Him at His Word and apply the victory He has already won.

5. Read 3 John 2. What does this tell you about the relationship between who you are on the inside and what God can do through you?

Point to drive home: They are directly related. You cannot separate the two!

6. Read John 10:10. The apostle John said that Jesus has come that you “might” have life. Whose responsibility is it to make sure the “might” happens?

Point to drive home: Again, we are simply trying to show that He has already defeated the enemy on the cross. It is up to us to choose life, not death.

What is the bottom line? You have been entrusted with much truth and wisdom during the previous sessions. If you don’t get with it and apply it to your life, it will become nothing more than another batch of information sloshing around in your head. Look, reading about heroism is good. Desiring to become a hero is even noble. But *becoming* a hero is your cause. It’s everything.

Ask God to help you become a hero. That’s important. You should pray that way. But remember, when you are staring temptation in the face, God won’t make the choice for you. Yes, He’ll make a way of escape for you, and He’ll be cheering you on! But it will be you making that

choice. Will you take that way of escape? Will you apply the principles you've learned, and escape the temptations so common around you?

As we close, let's take a look at one more story from Scripture on the subject of taking a stand. There are some concepts David understood before he defeated Goliath. If we are going to defeat the giant sexual enterprise in this great country of ours, we need to understand David's mindset.

Read 1 Sam. 17:1-53.

Goliath came out taunting God's people regularly, challenging them to send out a man to face him in battle. Your enemy isn't bashful or afraid, either. But just like Goliath, he is on the losing side. With Jesus Christ as your Savior and with the Holy Spirit living inside you, you will always be on the winning team. You will not be fighting *for* victory, but *from* victory. But to be a champion on the battlefield of dating, you'll also need to develop genuine character, like David did. David's character traits help us understand why he defeated Goliath so easily:

1. David was faithful. In verse 20, we're told David "left the sheep with someone". He was resolute and faithful in even the small areas of life. What "small areas" are you going to be faithful in as you take on this giant called sexual impurity?

Point to drive home: Do your homework, obey your parents, don't give in and gossip about people, turn the other way if you find yourself looking at a woman lustfully, smile at people, keep your word, volunteer at school and at church, impact your community in service, etc.

2. David traveled lightly. In verse 22, we're told that David set aside his baggage and supplies, in order to run to the fight. Is there any baggage that you need to lay aside, such as guilt and shame, or even that girlfriend you need to break up with because her weaker standards are weighing you down in the fight?

Point to drive home: Take a moment and share a tough decision you had to make in the past, such as stop spending time with a certain friend, in order to live the life God called you to live.

3. David had a kingdom focus. David's countrymen said, "The giant is so large that we cannot win." Instead, David said, "He is so large that I cannot miss, and besides, he's challenging the

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glory and honor of the living God!” What you see will largely determine your outcome. While David’s countrymen always fled away from the battle because of Goliath’s size (verse 24), David actually ran to the battle! Sure, when it comes to the Baal culture, you’re up against a giant. But what does the Word of God say that promises victory?

Point to drive home: 1 John 3:8; Hebrews 2:14; 2 Cor. 2:14.

4. David knew his cause, and that it was worth fighting for (Verse 29). As a result, David became a hero in his generation. What cause is motivating *you* to become a hero in *your* generation?

Point to drive home: To establish a legacy for future generations, to model for our culture how to have a healthy relationship, to fulfill the three longings of the heart of the young lady I will marry someday, etc.

5. David fought privately. David enjoyed public victories, but only after he had enjoyed private victories (verses 36-37). What are some private victories you need to have before you can change the course of this country?

Point to drive home: Defeat the fear in your life that says you cannot win and you will always struggle. Defeat the atmosphere of your home, even if you’re growing up in a house with unbelieving parents who don’t support your faith in Christ. Learn to defeat the enemy when he tempts you.

6. David knew the weapons he had at his disposal. David knew where to go in order to get the weapons he needed to win (In verse 40, he went to the brook or river, for instance). When you face the battle head-on, where will you find your weapons? Within the context of David and Goliath, what does Hebrews 4:12 mean to you?

Point to drive home: The Word of God is our weapon in defeating the enemy. The head is where the mouth is, and as you chop off the enemy’s head you also silence his mouth. The Word of God (Mt. 4) is our weapon in silencing the mouth of the enemy as he lies to us.

7. David attacked the giant. He was the only one out of the crowd that was willing to stand up and fight. Because of one man, Israel enjoyed victory that day (Verses 51-53). As you fight this giant in your personal life and become the hero God created you to be, what types of victories do you want to see happen in your generation?

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Point to drive home: Stop the pornographic industry from thriving, produce movies in Hollywood that are entertaining and yet morally pure, write songs that will be #1 sellers without exploiting women as objects, model for young boys what a man of God is really like, see your children grow up in a home that isn't ravaged by divorce and adultery, etc.

With this material fresh in your mind, let's close with this exercise. Write down the goals you have for yourself, the priorities you are establishing, and the strategies you'll implement to become a hero. Be detailed. Once you are finished, seal them up in an envelope and hand them to your pastor/teacher/facilitator. Since they are sealed, they'll remain private. Six weeks from now, take responsibility to set a personal time to re-connect with your leader, and ask him to bring that envelope to your meeting. Open the letter and read it in front of him, and honestly report where you are in the process. Pray together. Remain transparent. Ask your leader to keep you accountable. Ask your friends to keep you accountable. Perhaps one day at your wedding altar your leader will present this letter to your spouse at the same time you're presenting your own letter to her.

We are proud of you for rising above the cultural lies and for being a man. Because of your heroic walk with girls, our world will never be the same.

Closing declaration in prayer:

Thank you, Lord, for young champions who are willing to run towards the battle lines. They cannot be denied the victory!

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