

# The Journey to Biblical Manhood

## Challenge 7: Mission

### Session 1: God Has a “Personal” Ministry Just For You

Unedited Transcript

Patrick Morley

Good morning men. If you would, please turn in your Bibles to Ephesians chapter 2. I want to mention an upcoming opportunity for those of you who are golfers. Eric Emerson, just raise your hand over there. Eric is involved with the Central Care Mission of Orlando. They're having their 15th annual golf tournament coming up on October the 9th, and you are cordially invited to participate. There's some flyers on the table, and so if you'd like to be involved with that, you can take that, fill that out, or you can just talk to Eric. Eric, I'm sure you'd be willing to talk to them. Right?

Great. So, it's a great mission. I actually met Eric, and I met the guys when I was invited to speak down there, and it is doing a profoundly important work here in our community. So yeah.

Turn to Ephesians chapter 2, and then let's do a shout out. So, we have 12 to 15 men who are meeting in the Hill City, South Dakota area. Jack Jewett is their leader. It's a ministry there. They've been doing this since 1993, and so I'm sorry guys. I just don't know how we missed you all these years, but actually I'm kind of wondering how many more groups like that do we have around. So, raise your hand, let us recognize you. No man fails on purpose they say, so the group offers a preventative process, which will help men learn how to succeed through men's mentoring. It's sponsored by the Hill City Area Ministries. I've been on their website, and actually I learned about this Bible study the day after they had their Bible study when I was in South Dakota. So anyway. Sorry guys. But we do want to welcome you to the Bible study, and would you join me in giving them a rousing and a warm Man in the Mirror welcome. One-two-three. Hoorah. Welcome men. We're glad to have you with us.

So we're in this series, The Journey to Biblical Manhood, and the purpose of The Journey to Biblical Manhood is making disciples. It's to become the disciple that Jesus wants us to be.

So I was teaching a seminar one day, and a young man, Kyle, 28 years of age, came up to me, and he said, "I was talking to my wife the other day. You know, we love each other very much. We both work. We love our jobs. We're making good money. We have every material thing we need, but I said to her the other day, You know, we get up, make the bed, go to work, come home, make a little dinner, do the dishes, relax a little, go to bed, and then get up the next day, repeat." And he said to her, he said, "It's just so boring." And then he looked at me squarely, and he said, or asked the question, I guess. He said, "What's the point? What's the point?"

And so I asked Kyle, who is 28 years old. He's been a Christian at that point for seven years. I asked Kyle a few exploratory questions, and then I asked him, What are you doing to serve the Lord? And he said, "Golly. To be honest with you, I really haven't given that much thought, and I really am not doing much of anything to serve the Lord." So, he was in that stage of his faith where he thought Christianity was about God serving him. He had not yet grown in maturity to understand that yes, God does serve us, but that in order for him to feel fully alive, that he had not yet gotten to the point of man serving God or him serving God.

So, we're going to look at this seventh challenge for the next three weeks on mission, on developing a personal ministry. You have these Faith and Life objective cards on your table. Three of them, one for head, one for heart, one for hands. I will understand my abilities and gifts and how they can be used for God's glory. I will prioritize my life around a prayerful sense of mission and purpose, and I will find an outlet that allows me to use my gifts for him on a regular basis. So, that's where we're headed.

Today, the message is entitled God Has a Personal Ministry Just for You. God has a personal ministry just for you. And so, this problem that Kyle was going through, is that as you go along and you grow, what should happen is that we would fill up in our relationship with Jesus, and if we fill up in our relationship with Jesus, or as we fill up in our relationship with Jesus, it is inevitable. It is inevitable, if you bring yourself into the real presence of Christ on a regular basis, it is inevitable that you will come to a point where you can no longer be happy unless you're doing something to express your gratitude through service.

Brother Lawrence, I get a lot of my inspiration just by reading the stories of great Christians through the ages. This one has been read and reread a few times, and Brother Lawrence said this in his little book, The Practice of the Presence of God. "I tell you that the sweet and loving gaze of God insensibly kindles a divine fire in the soul, which is set ablaze so ardently with the love of God that one is obliged to perform exterior acts to moderate it."

In other words, he's so filled up in his relationship with Jesus, he has to do something. It's like, and I feel like this. I feel like this a lot. I have these great devotions, and I feel filled with Jesus, and I feel like my heart's in a pressure cooker. I feel like I'm going to explode unless I can do something to express that in some kind of service.

So, the other day, I had to be in the office at 11:00 for some meetings, and I'd been doing some work at my home office, and there were some tree trimmers. This was Tuesday. They were supposed to come at 1:00. Well, they show up at 9:00, and so I couldn't stay. I needed to get to the office for the meeting, and so I'm pulling out of the driveway, and I'd been rushing to get ready for the meeting. I'm pulling out of the driveway, and here are these four tree trimmers, and so one of the ways that I relieve the pressure is I hand out books. There are organized ministries, your church, this Bible study, the mission, and then there are organic ministries that are just as intentional, and there are probably more of them, and they're probably, in terms of just actual spiritual productivity, probably a lot more happens organically than in an organized way. Of course, you have to remember that there wouldn't be organically happening ministry if there weren't churches that were equipping people, so there's that too.

But anyway, so I have this philosophy that I'm going to give a book to every man I meet who will take it, and I've never had anybody not take it because I ask them. I say, "Do you read books?" And I say, "Well great, I've got a book." If I say "Do you books?" And they say, "No I don't read books." I say, "Well, that's

great because I write books for men who don't read books." And so it doesn't make any difference what they say, they're going to get a book, right?

And so I've got this ministry, and I'm pulling out the driveway, and I say, "Oh darn. I'm gonna be late for the meeting." So I stop my car, and I got out, and I signed a copy of *The Man in the Mirror* to each of the four guys, and then went on my way. But I had to do that just to ... It's an exterior act to moderate the loving gaze of Jesus Christ. That's where we want to be. Many of you are there. That's where we all want to be.

Let's talk about what God has in mind just for you. Ephesians chapter 2. And so, I'm going to encourage you at another time. There are a lot of scriptures that I put in here today. I'm going to encourage you at another time, you can read the full passage from verse 4 down through verse 10, but it says in verse 10, For we are God's workmanship, or I think the Living says, For we are God's masterpiece created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which he has prepared for us in advance.

And so, one of the questions I put to a text is what did we learn from this text that we would otherwise never know, and actually there are a lot of texts that will give us some information about God that we would otherwise never know. We actually learned two things today. Two things in this text that we would actually, otherwise, never know, and the first one is that, reading the text, it says, For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works. We are created to do good works. This is to my father's glory that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my what? Disciples. We are actually created to do good works. Did you know that?

Well, this is the text that helps us understand that, and then second thing we learn here, that these good works, God prepared them in advance. Before you were a believer, actually from the foundation of the time, since God exists outside of time, this all happened, like whatever, I'm a little fuzzy on all that, but anyway, God actually prepared the good works that he has for you in advance. So those four guys that were lined up on my driveway as I was trying to drive out. I was like this, I had my I'm in a hurry. I'm in a hurry. Oh darn. There they are.

So I saw these four guys lined up, and I stopped. That was prepared in advance for me to do, and I was created to do that, and you have things like this that happen to you all the time, and of course, you can drive on and not see them, or you can could just let the pressure valve off, and stop and do the thing, or it's the young couple with the little baby walking through the Home Depot lot, and he comes up, and you can tell they're down on their luck, and you can tell he's not a street corner beggar, and he just says, Sir, could I talk to you? We're staying at the Salvation Army. It's \$9.50 a night, and I've got \$10, and he says, "Do you think you could do anything to help us out?" And you say, "I'll do that. I'll do that." That, that is moderating the loving gaze of God through an exterior act. This is so good.

Then, way back up in verse 4 and 5 it says, But because of his great love, God who is rich in mercy has made us alive in Christ. He made us alive in Christ, so that one of the things we can do is be saved, and it talks about all that in there, but one of the things, part of it is is so that we can do the good works for which we've been created. He's made us alive, and actually, it's good work that ... He makes us alive to do good works, but good works also make us alive. I mean, how happy or how alive do you think a lion would be if he couldn't roar? How happy or how alive do you think an eagle would be if he couldn't soar across the sky? And how happy or how alive do you think a Christian man can be if he can't serve God? It's just not possible. It's just not possible. You can't be happy. Kyle, you can't be happy. You can't be

alive. It's not possible, unless you are filled up in your relationship with Jesus, and then out of the overflow are serving others.

And so the Big Idea here today. **I will feel most alive when I'm doing the works God created me to do.** Now, we don't do these works to gain the cross, to earn salvation or earn merit. We talk about this all the time. But, once we have the cross, once we have salvation, and once we grow in our relationship, then we're going to feel most happy, most alive, most useful when we're doing the works that God has created to do.

I almost put here I will never feel more alive, which actually might even have a little more grit to it, but I didn't have enough space on the line so I put this.

Okay. So now, what's the plan? What's the plan? Okay, we're going to feel alive when we're doing these works, so what's the plan? Well, God has a plan. God has a great plan, and you know, I just don't know how much time we can afford to spend on it, but I don't know how much time we can afford not to spend on it.

So, his plan is the great commission, Matthew 28:18-20. All authority in heaven and on earth has given to me. Therefore, go and make worshipers of all nations. No? Go and make workers of all nations? Brow beating them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. No. It's therefore, go and make what? Disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you, and I will always be with you. Wow. Wow.

So what did we learn from that text that we would otherwise never know? Well, we learned something very important from that text we would otherwise never know. We learned what our marching orders are. It's go and make disciples. It's not go and make workers. Work is important, but make disciples who understand who God is, and then when they feel the loving gaze of God on them, they will have to do exterior acts to moderate it too, but we don't try to get them to be workers, we try to get them to be disciples. You see how it works?

And so, these are the marching orders. We learn this. We would otherwise not know that this is what we're supposed to do. So, I always ask you the question, okay, what's obvious about this text? Occasionally, I remind you that when I prepare a message, I remind myself, I have it on my worksheet that a poor message will take the obvious and make it obscure. A good message will take the obscure and make it obvious. But a great message will take the obvious and make it obvious.

So, what is obvious about this great commission? What's obvious about this great commission is that making ... Watch this ... Making disciples is God's designated way to release the power of his gospel on every problem men face. It doesn't make any difference what the problem is. This is God's designated way to release the power of his Gospel on all of our problems.

And so, what is the one thing that if you were to fully understand it and truly believe it would change everything about your ministry? It's this. It's that it doesn't make any difference how Kyle got into his current situation. It doesn't make any difference how the four tree trimmers got into their current situation. It doesn't make any difference how that father with his wife and little child in the Home Depot parking lot got into their current situation. However a man got himself into his current situation, the only solution is to disciple him out.

Now, a lot of people use disciple in a very narrow sense, but Jesus never used that in a narrow sense. His mission is he came to seek and to save the lost. His mission is total, global conquest, and so what did he do? He did three primary activities. Number one, he relieved human suffering. Okay, he came to seek and save the lost. His mission is total global conquest, and he's doing what? He's relieving human suffering. Why? Because that's part of what it means to make disciples.

Paul said it in Galatians 2:10 when he went up to the Jerusalem council. I'm trying to talk to fast. Up to the Jerusalem council. They said, they commended him, and they said, they reminded him to take care of the poor, and he said the very thing that I was eager to do, relieving human suffering.

Jesus relieved human suffering. He taught people about the kingdom of God, and then he trained disciples to do what he did. Those are the three primary activities of God. Those are the three primary activities of this great commission.

And as I've already said, you can do it in an organized way. You can do it in an organic way. You can serve in your church. The church can help you figure out what it is that you should be doing. We can help you here. You can volunteer. You can go on Man in the Mirror website. It says on the Man in the Mirror website. It says we help men disciple men. Four ways you can take the next step. And there's a button for you can push. It's like a button. It needs to go click. Use your mouse, but not your hand. Oh, I guess you can use your hand if it's a, you know, handheld.

Okay, and then there's all this organic stuff going on. I've talked a lot about that already I guess. So, that's God's great plan, and we're going to feel, and so it involves doing works. I will feel most alive when I'm doing the works that God has created me to do. So, the final piece here is how do you get started?

So, this is getting down to the meat of the coconut. On your tables, it's vacation. This table's empty. My gosh. You missed it buddy. You missed it today. You are so wrong. You are so wrong up there in North Carolina in that cool 65 degree weather. We hate you!

On your tables are these documents. Spiritual Gifts Assessment Tool. This is something I put together a number of years ago, but I updated it just for you. Just for you, I did this.

And so, how do we get started? We get started the first step is to understand how God has gifted us to do the works that he's created us to do, the ones that will make us feel alive. And so, the text for this, I want us to look at. This is actually where I really wanted us to get. I wanted to build the case, but this is where I wanted us to get.

So we're going to look. Let's start. Ephesians chapter 4 verse 11. Why? Because that's where my Bible happens to already be open to. Now it's a good place to start. Verse 11. It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people to tithe.

Well, I'm sure a lot of pastors would like it if it said that, but it doesn't say that. It says to prepare God's people for what? Works of service. The good works that we've been created to do that he created in advance for us to do. Why? Why is this all happening? It's so that the body of Christ may be built up until

we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the son of God and become mature, Kyle, become mature, obtaining the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Flip to 1 Peter chapter 4 verse 9. 1 Peter chapter 4 verse 9. Or turn in your device. Verse 9. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others. What did we talk about gifts? Well, we're getting there.

Whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. Now he starts to break it down a little bit. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. So there apparently are speaking gifts. Okay? And then it says, if anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. So there are apparently speaking gifts, and there also are apparently service gifts. All right?

Now, if you would, turn to Romans chapter 12 verse 3. Romans chapter 12 verse 3. Hey, is it better for you to turn and look at these scriptures yourself or just sit and listen? From a learning theory perspective, how many of you would actually prefer to read along the verses? I'm doing a little survey here. All right? And how many would prefer to sit and listen to them and try to absorb them that way? You know, you learn more audial learners? Okay. Okay. Interesting.

So, I'll keep doing it the way I've doing it for 30 plus years. Romans chapter 12 verse 3. For it is by the grace given to me I say to everyone of you, do not think of yourselves more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment. Now, we're going to give you a chance to do that during what is normally the discussion time. To think about yourself with sober judgment in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ, we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Here we go. We have different gifts. There are different gifts. Some speaking. Some serving, and as we'll learn, some, which are sometimes called signifying. We have different gifts according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve. If it is teaching, let him teach. If it is encouraging, let him encourage. If it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously. If it is leadership, let him govern diligently. If it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

And then, if you would, finally turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 12. 1 Corinthians chapter 12. We're going to have 19 or 20 gifts by the time we get done here guys. And so, verse 7. We'll start there on this. Now to each one, that would be each of you and me, to each of us, the manifestation of the spirit is given for the common good. To one, there's given through the spirit, the message of wisdom. The spiritual gift of wisdom. To another, the message of knowledge. All of you students who know everything in the Bible backwards and forwards and far more than I, that's a spiritual gift. To another, faith. The gift of faith. Now actually that's one of my gifts, if the gift of faith. To another gifts of healing by that one spirit. To another miraculous powers. To another prophesy. To another, the ability to distinguish between spirits, sometimes called discernment. To another, the ability to speak in different kinds of tongues. One of the signifying gifts, and there's still another, the interpretation of the tongues. All of these are the work of one in the same spirit, and he gives to each of them just as he determines. Why? Because he's created good works for you to do in advance, and he also knows that you will need spiritual gifts to do that.

So, Jim Seibert who is a legend around here. Jim Angelakos is our administrator now. His predecessor was Jim Seibert for like 17 years, and so the first time Jim told me this. He said, the first time that I heard you were going to be talking about determining our spiritual gifts, I didn't know what that was. I thought you were going to be handing out presents. But then, Jim dove into what we're diving into right here today, this part of it, this getting started part of it, and he learned how to serve. He learned that his gift was service, and that's how it kind of progressed here, and then he also learned how to share his faith, and so he was able to lead his son, who had AIDS to Jesus three days before he died. He led his son to Jesus on a Friday, and three days later, he was raised from the dead. And then he was able to lead three other young men on that ward also to faith in Jesus.

And Jim said this to me. He said, "After knowing Jesus, the greatest thing that has ever happened in my life was learning my spiritual gifts." That's how valuable this is. That's how important this is. I don't have time to tell you that story.

So, here's what we're going to do. I want you to take a look at this, and you can see that on page one are the service gifts. On page two are the speaking and signifying gifts. So this first page is actually a list of the gifts along with a one or two-sentence description of what it is and an example of what it is. All right?

And then, on the third page, are some steps you take to determine your spiritual gifts. Some questions for study and reflection like I just talked about in that verse, and then I'm going to ask you to actually, as you read through this list of gifts, to narrow down which ones of those might apply to you, and there's a legend at the bottom of page three where it says narrowing. So, in the blank space before each of those gifts, you want to put a yes for if it's yes I think I possess this gift provisionally or absolutely you know it either way. M, maybe. N for no, and D don't know. I don't know if I possess this spiritual gift or not. And then, I think that's probably going to be difficult to even get that far today, but if anybody gets that far, then you can rank them and so forth and begin to get feedback.

We're going to be doing this over the next several weeks. Let me tell you why we're going to be doing this over the next several weeks. This is now at least the third time that I've done this, and I have discovered that unless ... I discovered this. I was teaching a seminar on the seven seasons of a man's life, and for the season of reflection, I asked the men just to sit in place for 20 minutes in a discipline of silence and answer a few questions, and then I walked away for a break, and a young 32-year-old man, he said, "Hey, I just want to say thank you." He said, "This is really great. This is the only way that I would ever stop long enough to actually do the reflection. If you would have told me to do this when I got home, it would have never happened." And that's what's going to happen. You're going to walk out of here, and you're going to be pulled right back into the stream of debts of duties that you have.

So we're going to take some time right now. So instead of doing the discussion questions as normal, we're going to impose right now a discipline of silence and ask you to just begin working through this, and then I'll come back up at five of and just see how far we got.

With that said, why don't we conclude an enjoyable morning with a brief prayer.

So, our dearest father, We come to you with humble hearts right now knowing that every good work that we do is something that we're really doing because you created that thing in advance for us to do whether it's that chance encounter with those four tree trimmers or in the Home Depot parking lot or

where the young man is trying to figure what's the point. So whatever the case might be, or through a mission trip organized by our church or teaching a class at our church, whatever it is. Lord, all those things are things that you have prepared in advance for us to do, and so we thank you. We're humbled by that, because those are the things that really, not the only things, but they make us feel alive, and we never feel more alive than when we're doing that, and especially in our own families, so we thank you. We ask that you would tutor these gifts to our hearts. Help us to understand what our gifts are, and help us to also then take those and use them as a spring board into the ministries we already have or into other ministries that you might want us to do whether that's organized or organically. We ask this, Jesus, if your wonderful and your power, Amen.