

Rock Solid Men

Are You Ready for Anything?

Edited Transcript

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Well, I am so excited to start this series with you guys this morning. We here in Orlando had an event called the Better Man Event. How many of you went to the Better Man Event? Awesome. That's fantastic. We had 7,500 men gathered at the arena on UCF's campus, University of Central Florida's campus, and we heard from some great speakers throughout the evening and we handed out this followup guide. How many of you have ever been to an event and you go to the event and it's awesome, and you leave the event feeling inspired? You sort of feel like on a spiritual high and then, three days later, what happens? The phone starts ringing. The bills are due. The project ... You've got to get that project turned in at work and like a week later, you're trying to remember who the speakers were, much less what they said. Two weeks later, you don't remember if that thing that you went to is two weeks ago or a month ago. All the air has just sort of seeped out of the balloon.

So, what happens is when we have an event mentality, we just sort of have a blip, a little spiritual blip. But, the problem with a blip is you just go right back to where you started from. You don't really have a lasting impact and the other problem with a blip is, as men, if something doesn't make a lasting impact on us, we'll try it a couple times, but after that we're kind of done, I've noticed that with a lot of guys. So, we didn't want The Better Man event to be a blip, so we partnered with them, they came to us and we partnered together and we created a follow-up step so that every man that came to The Better Man event would get a bible study, a six-week bible study and then those of you guys that were there, you saw ... We actually, from the stage, invited guys and said, "Hey, grab this book out." And you guys ... I was on the stage. You guys couldn't see this, but I asked everybody to hold it up and there's something cool about 7,500 people holding up a bible study in the air, waving them at you as you say, "Hey, let's go do this together."

So, we want to start a movement of men who are studying the bible together. That's what the bible study is all about. That's why we put it on the internet is because we want a movement of men across the country, across the world, who are studying God's word together and that's what we're doing with The Better Man version of Rock Solid Men: Solid Foundations. So, we're starting this week with Rock Solid Men. We're going to do a six-week series and we're going to look at a couple of bible verses from the end of I Corinthians 16: 13 and 14 are the verses that we're going to look at, all right? So, if you've got a bible, go ahead and turn to I Corinthians 16 and let's do some shout-outs.

We've got a group of guys in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Did I not say that right? Why are you all laughing at me? Sheboygan, Wisconsin. I've always wanted to say Sheboygan, so I'm just going to keep saying Sheboygan. Sheboygan, Wisconsin led by a guy named Jeff, a leader named Jeff. Their group is preparing for a spiritual battle, a group of guys who meet weekly in individual homes that rotate around using the video bible study. A group of men desiring to battle the world and win it for Christ. So, that's Jeff and the guys preparing for spiritual battle in Sheboygan and then here's Chris Rondeau. Chris is an Area Director. He's been with us for quite a while now. He's in the upstate South Carolina region. Chris is a guy who really understands what it means for men to reach into his life and help him through difficult times. He

says, "There was a point in my life when I needed a few men to reach out to me and lift me up. I know that there are others that need the same thing as I did. Man in the Mirror provides training to create more of these types of men. Where? Inside the church."

And that's really our goal is we want to help churches create a discipleship pathway for every man. And that's what we do here. We want to create a discipleship pathway. We want the bible study to be a pathway that leads you towards a deeper relationship with Christ and so that's the goal always of the bible study and certainly of this series on Rock Solid Men. So, let's give those guys a warm welcome, the guys from Sheboygan and for Chris. Sheboygan! There's like shouts for Sheboygan from the crowd. Way to go, guys.

All right, so let's dive in. Here's our verse here, I Corinthians 16: 13 and 14. "Be on your guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be men of courage. Be strong. Do everything in love." And that "be men of courage phrase" in the Greek that it was written in? Some translations like the ESV translates that as, "Act like men." "Being a man of courage is acting like a man," Paul says. And so we're going to look at these attributes. So, if you look through this verse, you'll see five attributes of manhood. "Be on your guard." Vigilance. "Stand firm in the faith." Faith. Courage. "Be men of courage." Strength. "Be strong." And love. Vigilance, faith, courage, strength and love are five amazing and powerful attributes of biblical manhood. We are called to be vigilant, faithful, courageous, strong and loving. And so we're going to unpack that over the next six weeks, over the next six sessions, we're going to unpack these attributes.

You all should have this Rock Solid Men workbook. So, I'm going to have you pull that workbook out and we're going to go to session one and talk about vigilance, talk about vigilance and our title today is **Are You Ready For Anything?** Vigilant is about being ready for anything. Now, we're going to not use a normal handout for this series. We're going to actually use the Rock Solid Men Life Plan. So, if you're getting this on the internet, we'll have PDFs of this available for you to download or you can actually order these books. That makes it a little bit easier for guys to use. And then all the guys here in the room, you've got your Rock Solid Men Life Plan. What happens if you forget it next week? You can get another one. They're fifty bucks. Yes, thank you. So, please bring your book, because we'll go broke if we have to give all of you a new book every week. So, bring your books or bring fifty bucks, either way. Actually, you know what? Bring the fifty bucks, that would be great.

So let me show you ... I'm just going to, on the screen here, show you the layout of this page and then we'll just use this page as our outline, all right? So, on the left side you'll see Consider This. This is where we introduce the concept for the week. We're talking about vigilance and then we'll look at a key passage and then you see we're going to talk about what's a rock solid tool that helps you with this attribute of manhood? We'll give you a challenge to actually implement that tool in your life and then we'll have discussion questions that we can go through and then an activity idea that your table can do during the week. So, the Consider This, the passage, then the tool, then the challenge, then the questions, and then the activity idea for the week. Does that make sense? All right, good.

So, let's jump right in with the Consider This section and talk about vigilance. In your book here, we have this passage from Luke. This is what Jesus says about vigilance. Luke 12: 35-40 says this. "Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning and be like men who are waiting for their master to come from the wedding feast so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks." And then listen to this turn that Jesus takes here. "Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at the table and he will come and serve them. If he comes in the second watch or in the third and finds them awake, blessed

are those servants. But know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. You also must be ready for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

And so Jesus is telling in this teaching. He's saying you need to be ready when the master comes. You need to be vigilant. You need to be prepared for when the master returns and Jesus shows up in our lives and we need to be ready for when Jesus shows up in our lives. We need to be ready. And there's even this amazing promise that if we're ready for Jesus when he shows up in our lives, what does he do? He turns the table on us. The master becomes the servant and he serves us. And what did Jesus do when he showed up? He died. He sacrificed himself for his people, for the people that he loves. He took the role of a servant. Paul says in Philippians, he didn't account a quality or his status of equality with God, a thing to be grasped, but humbled himself. This is the God that we serve, guys, and we need to be ready for him when he shows up.

And then he also talks about this idea of being prepared. If you knew the thief was coming, you wouldn't leave the house empty, right? So, who's the thief? Satan's the thief, right? And so we need to be ready. We need to not leave the house unguarded. Satan's going to come for us. He's going to come for our families. He's going to come for our jobs. He's going to come for our witness, for our reputation. We need to not leave the house empty. We need to be connected with God so that we're prepared for those times when the thief shows up. This is the essence of vigilance. But, look at this picture. This is a fencer. There's a picture kind of like this in the book, too, and the great thing about this picture is that it shows sort of the two aspects of vigilance, okay? So, the guy on the left, he's defending himself, right? He's defending himself. He's trying to keep the fencer on the right from stabbing him, from slashing him. And then, of course, the fencer on the right in the picture, he's attacking. He's looking for an opening. He's looking for an opportunity to score a point.

And I think this is a great picture of what vigilance looks like. There are times when we need to be defensive, when we need to react to what's happening to us and be prepared, as Jesus said, for the thief to show up and there's times when we need to be opportunistic, when we need to look for the opening, when we need to be proactive in our vigilance. And so you can see Peter and Paul both talk about these things. So, let's look at some passages. If you have your bible, turn to I Peter 5, verse eight. Look what Peter says. It says, "Above all." I should read chapter five and not chapter four. Chapter five verse eight, "Be sober-minded, be watchful, be vigilant," right? "Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour." So, Peter's like, be ready, be watchful, be on the alert. Make sure that you can see him coming and then Paul, in I Corinthians 10. Flip over a little bit to I Corinthians. It's about halfway through the New Testament.

I Corinthians 10:12 says this. "Therefore, let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed, lest he fall." All right? So, be ready. Don't get complacent, Paul is saying. You think you're on solid ground, but pay attention. "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability. But with the temptation, he will always provide the way of escape that you may be able to endure it. Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry." Flee. So, Paul is saying if you're going to be ready, you've also got to be ready to do what? Like, stand up and take it like a man? No, he equates resisting temptation with fleeing from idolatry. So, why does he put temptation with idolatry? Because idolatry is putting something in front of God. We all worship something, right? So, Paul is saying worship God, get away from making anything else more important than your relationship with God because when you do, that's when temptation is going to come after you, is when you try to make something more important than God or you're not paying attention.

So, being defensive is about paying attention, taking heed, lest you fall, all right? So, what about being proactive? What about being offensive? Well, let's go back to I Peter, because I'm sure you kept your finger there. I Peter 3:15 says, "In your hearts, honor Christ, the Lord is holy. Listen, always being prepared." Being vigilant. "To make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. Yet, do it with gentleness and respect." The next verse, "Having a good conscience, so that when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame." So, this passage is interesting, because it's in the middle of a little time that Peter is talking about being persecuted. So we say, "Oh, always be ready to give a defense with gentleness and respect," yes, but this is covered in a promise from Peter. They're going to come after you, right? So you've got to be ready. You've got to take those opportunities to speak the truth of the gospel and do it with gentleness and respect. Do it in such a way that your reputation stays intact. Be ready for it. Be ready for it. Be proactive.

And then Paul back over to I Corinthians again, Paul says in I Corinthians 9, verse 19, "For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all that I might win more of them. To the Jews, I became as a Jew in order to win Jews. To those under the law, I became as one under the law, though not myself being under the law, that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law, I became as one outside the law, not being outside of the law of God, but under the law of Christ, that I might win those outside the law. To the weak, I became weak that I might win the weak." Listen to this. "I have become all things to all people so that by all means, I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings."

Paul is saying, "I'm so in tune to who I'm talking to, I'm going to become as much like them as I can. I'm going to speak to them as much in the way that they can hear the truth of the gospel as I need to. I'm going to put it in their language forms and go into their culture. Whatever it takes, I'm going to do whatever it takes so that I can preach the gospel to people and they can't find it. I'm going to be ready for these opportunities and then he talks about how he gets ready. "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize, so run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we, an imperishable. So, listen, so I do not run aimlessly. I do not box as one beating the air, but I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I, myself, should be disqualified."

He's talking about making sure that he's ready, that he's prepared when those times come and when he's not in those times, he's getting ready. He's being vigilant, all right? So, vigilance, being on your guard, is about paying attention. It's about being ready for the opportunities and it's about protecting ourselves. You know, we can be vigilant in our families. How do we have to be vigilant in our families? Well, if you've got sons, you've got to be vigilant. You've got to watch out for these things. There's way too much stuff that's a couple of clicks away and we, as dads, we need to be paying attention. We need to be vigilant to what is on our kids' phones. What they're watching on TV. Who they're hanging out with. Who their friends are. Where they are. What they're doing. We need to be vigilant about those things.

Our wives. Are we protecting our wives? Are we being careful with how we talk to our wives, with how we interact with our wives, with what our wives are hearing from the culture around them about how they're supposed to look or how they're supposed to act or what it means to be a Godly woman. Are we protecting our wives from what might harm them? I've talked about this before, but you know, one of the most frustrating things in the whole bible is in Genesis 3 when Eve takes the apple, or takes the fruit and eats it and then gives it to Adam who what? Who was with her, you know? Guys, if a snake is talking to your wife, kill the snake. Be aware, be in the moment, be vigilant so you can protect your wives. We

could go into lots of different areas, right? But I think probably in our families is the place that we see this play out the most.

So, what then is the tool that we want to use to make sure that we're vigilant and I would say that prayer, prayer is the tool that we want to use. So, if you look in your books, you'll see Ephesians Chapter six, verse 18 and this will be a great verse for you to memorize, okay? "And pray in the spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." So, why is prayer connected with vigilance? Well, Paul connects prayer with vigilance, right? He says "Pray," and then he says, "Be alert." So, Paul seems to be connecting these things together because prayer, being in constant communication with God or in consistent communication with God is the best way for us to be in tune with how the world's working with what God wants for us.

And so this is actually our Big Idea here, that consistent vigilance ... Excuse me, **constant vigilance requires consistent communication with God. Constant vigilance requires consistent communication with God.** So if you want to be vigilant, pray and then as you pray, God will communicate with you. God will engage in conversation with you. God will speak into your heart. You will become more aware of the things that are going on around you. And so, how do we put this into action. Well, here's our rock-solid challenge. Start a prayer journal. Now, I'm going to tell you that I used to be really good about this and I've kind of fallen out of it lately. I have not been good at keeping my prayer journal lately, so I just got a new one. I went out and got a new little hard cover book and I started writing the things that I'm praying about and that's why I had to close it quickly so none of you could read it.

And here's the great thing about a prayer journal is if you will pick a time every day and even if it's a couple minutes, I promise you, if you will take a couple minutes every day and don't say, "Well, I'm going to pray at stoplights," like that will do it for me. That's not going to do it for you. Get some time. Get up five minutes early, sit in your living room or in your kitchen. I love guys that say, "Oh, I do my quiet time in the bathroom every morning." I'm like, "Don't do that. That's just ..." Sit in a chair, like in a real chair, like a real guy, like a real man and take some time to pray and then jot down maybe some requests that you might want to bring to God. Because, I don't know about you, but I pray and then five minutes later, I can't remember what I prayed.

So, when I jot it down, it's a good reminder to me that I brought thee things to God and then as you do this a couple minutes a day, it will become five minutes a day, it will become 10 minutes a day, not because you're like a super-disciplined guy, but just because your relationship with God is going to deepen and you're going to want to spend time. I don't want you to do something you don't want to do. I want you to want to spend time with God. That's what I want for myself. I don't want to have to discipline myself to it, like something I don't want to do. I want it to be a habit and something that I just do without thinking. Something that grows and that the affections of my heart are turned more towards God and prayer is the great way to do that. And then, about once a month, go back and read through the things that you wrote over the last month or go back maybe even farther.

And here's what will happen. You will be astonished at all the things that God has done in your life that you didn't even realize because you forgot that you prayed about it. That person that was sick. That once they were better, you're like, "Oh, I don't even have to think about that anymore. They're better." That's how I am. It's like they could be on their death bed, but if a week later they're feeling better, "Oh, yeah, I guess they weren't feeling good last week, yeah." Because we sort of compartmentalize our lives. But if you will read back through your prayer journal, you will be astonished at what God has done and it

will deepen your relationship. You will believe more that God actually loves you, if you will just jot some notes down and go back and check it, all right?

So, that's my challenge to you. I've taken the challenge. I've started my new prayer journal. I'm going to keep it up. I pray that you guys will do that as well. So, the last part of this talked about our key passage with our Consider This, to talk vigilance. We talked about prayer as a great tool for you to stay vigilant. We gave you a challenge now to actually go and implement that in your lives. So, now, we're going to talk about it. We've got some discussions in your book on page five. Five discussion questions there. So, I'm going to break to the tables in just a second, but I want you to notice the next thing on the bottom is an activity idea.

So, how cool would it be if the group that you're in, that you're studying this material, that you came up with a movie night and we're using fencing as our analogy, so my challenge to you is to find a movie with a great sword fighting scene and so the Princess Bride is a great movie. It's hilarious. Gladiator, you know, arggggh! Are you not entertained? Right, that will be a great one to see with your friends. You know, Braveheart. You know, good manly movies and get some guys together. Get some Cokes, pop some popcorn and have a great time watching a movie together, just being guys together.

So, that's an opportunity for you this week is to do that activity together. So, we're going to break to the tables. Is there anybody that's here for the very first time? Anybody here for their first time? So, Pat is going to host a table up here. We would love to get to know you a little bit better, just to give you maybe a little layout of how the bible study works and so please join Pat up here if this is your first time and guys, we're going to break into tables. Let me pray for you real quick and then we'll see you next week. Father, thank you so much for this time together and thank you for the call to be vigilant, the call to be aware of what's going on. Lord, would you draw us into consistent communication with you so that we can be constantly vigilant, protecting ourselves, our families, and being opportunistic with ways to build your kingdom and share the gospel, for your glory, in Jesus' name. Amen. Thanks, guys.