

THE CHRISTIAN MAN COACHING GUIDE



A RESOURCE TO DECIDE
WHAT KIND OF MAN YOU WANT TO BE

PATRICK MORLEY



MAN IN THE MIRROR

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The Christian Man Coaching Guide

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INTRODUCTION

Ask a Christian man who is succeeding in life, “What’s your secret?” and he’s probably going to tell you, “I had a mentor.” Or “A man took me under his wing and showed me the ropes.” Or something similar.

There’s no greater pathway to Christian success than for one man to intentionally coach (mentor, disciple) another man about how to integrate faith into all aspects of his life. That’s what Moses did for Joshua, what Elijah did for Elisha, and what Paul did for Timothy.

This guide will help you coach or be coached through the ten issues men say matter most in my book *The Christian Man*. Here are three suggested ways you can use this guide:

- You can be the coach or mentor who asks another man, “Would you like someone to help you think through the big decisions about Christian manhood?”
- You can ask a more experienced Christian man, “Would you be willing to coach me through *The Christian Man Coaching Guide*?”
- You can also work through the coaching guide with a new or existing small group.

This coaching guide contains ten sections. Each section begins with a *shaded area* that includes coaching goals, a big idea, and a discussion starter. That’s followed by a short narrative called “The Big Picture.” The shaded “Interact” areas with Scripture and questions are for you and your coach to discuss. In addition, each section offers one or more “action steps” to help you *intentionally* decide what kind of man you want to be in each of these ten key areas of biblical manhood. Optionally, you and your coach or group can also discuss the reflection and discussion questions at the end of each chapter of the book *The Christian Man* (www.TheChristianManBook.com).

By the time you’re finished, you will have a much clearer picture of the man you believe God is calling you to become. You won’t be able to implement everything you want at once, but you will have a written record of the action steps you want to take. So please turn the page and let’s get started!

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PS: You can download a digital copy of this coaching guide at no charge at www.TCMCoachingGuide.com and have permission to make an unlimited number of photocopies.

1. IDENTITY

Coaching Goals

- To understand your identity as a Christian man
- To interact with your coach about identity
- To discuss, understand, and write down your most important roles and attributes
- To make a declaration of your intent to pursue Christian manhood
- Other: _____

The Big Idea: Your “naked before God” identity is founded on faith in Jesus, the roles he gives you, and attributes that reflect Christian character and conduct.

Let’s get it started!

- How big of an issue is understanding your identity for you, and why?
- What are the questions you would like answered about identity?

The Big Picture

Part of your identity is like the clothes you wear—what you do, what you have, what you look like, who you know, and where you live. These make up your “obituary” identity—the visible things others remember about you when you’re gone.

The other part of your identity is like the body under the clothes: what men say really matters most when they take stock of their lives—your wife, your children, your friends, your faith, your heart, your calling, your character, and how you conduct yourself. These make up your “naked before God” identity. This—your true identity—is founded on faith in Jesus, the roles he gives you, and attributes that reflect Christian character and conduct.

Roles

The most visible roles for most Christian men are husband, father, friend, worker, citizen, churchman, servant, steward, witness, and disciple maker. The roles that are precious to me are son of God, disciple of Jesus, friend, servant, temple, vessel, and charge of the Holy Spirit.

Interact: What are the roles that are most important to you, and why?

Action Step—Roles: Write down the roles that are most important to you:

Attributes

Another way to think about “who I am and what my life is all about” is the kind of men we want to be in **character** and **conduct**—or “attributes.” God has not left this to chance. He has told us which attributes to prize most, and he has promised to give us those attributes freely through his Spirit out of the overflow of abiding in Christ.

Interact: Read Galatians 5:22–23 and Luke 18:9–14. Discuss your best attributes and the ones you need to work on.

Action Step—Attributes: Write down the attributes you want to people to think of when they think of you:

Action Step—a Prayer of Surrender: Are you ready to drive a stake in the ground that who you are in Christ is who you really are (or who want to be)? If you’re ready, pray the following declaration out loud, together with your coach or small group. If you’re not ready yet, you can revisit it later.

My Declaration of Christian Manhood

Heavenly Father, I am tired of weak, unsatisfying faith. I am weary of leading a divided life. I want to be so fully “in Christ” that others want to catch what I have. As a “new creation,” I long to know your love for me as a son, disciple, friend, servant, temple, vessel, and charge of the Holy Spirit. I want to experience and infectiously exhibit all the fruit of your Spirit, with all humility.

So here today, I take my stand. I repent of all my worldly and sinful ways and put my faith in Christ alone. I hereby declare that from this day forward, I will stop seeking the God, or gods, I have wanted and will start seeking the God who is. I pledge to lead a Bible-saturated life of devotion and study of God.

My desire is to renew my mind, to be a man after God’s own heart, to live out of the overflow of a vibrant relationship with Jesus, and to fully follow Jesus Christ with my whole heart each and every day. I will make it my business to live in right relationship with God and in right relationship with all people, and to exercise my gifts to fulfill your calling on my life.

My true identity is “in Christ.” I commit to live openly for the glory of God in all my ways. I openly confess that I can do none of this apart from your grace, Father, through Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, I pledge my allegiance this day to a life of Christ-centered manhood. If they cut me, I want to bleed Jesus. Amen.

(sign and date)

Suggestion: Periodically reaffirm this declaration—whenever you become aware that you’ve gotten off track and/or annually, near the start of each new year.

2. LIFE BALANCE

Coaching Goals

- To believe that setting priorities is key to a balanced life
- To self-assess how you've done so far in five major priorities
- To interact with your coach about priorities
- To discuss and write down your most important priorities and personal goals
- Other: _____

The Big Idea: Living by priorities will empower you to manage the pressures that will otherwise manage you.

Let's get it started!

- Have you intentionally set priorities before?
- How big of an issue is life balance for you? Give an example.
- What are the questions you would like answered about leading a balanced life?

The Big Picture

Your priorities are what's most important to you. The key to a balanced life is deciding your priorities before you're under a lot of pressure to make a bad decision. Priorities will empower you to manage the pressures that will otherwise manage you.

What are the priorities of a Christian man? There's no formulaic answer to that question, but here are five priorities common to most men. Let's start with a candid self-assessment of how you're doing so far.

Action Step—Self-Assessment (underline or circle best answer):

Loving God

Very faithful | mostly faithful | somewhat faithful | not faithful

Loving Wife, Children, Friends

Very faithful | mostly faithful | somewhat faithful | not faithful

Vocation: Work, Rest, Recreation, Health

Very faithful | mostly faithful | somewhat faithful | not faithful

Money

Very faithful | mostly faithful | somewhat faithful | not faithful

Ministry

Very faithful | mostly faithful | somewhat faithful | not faithful

Interact: What surprises you about your answers?

Now let's do a deep dive into these five bellwether Christian priorities (and applicable subcategories). Read the narratives, look up the Scriptures, consider the sample goals, set personal goals for the kind of man you want to be, and then interact. Since this is the longest section of the coaching guide, consider taking two or three sessions to complete.

Priority: Loving God

Loving God is the unequivocal top priority for the Christian man. When Jesus was asked, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law," he replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:36–37).

Relationship with God

There is a God we want, and there is a God who is. They are not the same God. The turning point of our lives is when we stop seeking the God we want and start seeking the God who is. Read Psalm 96:1–9; Ezekiel 1:25–28; Revelation 4; 5; 21; 22. Are you seeking the God you want or the God who is?

Sample Goal: I really want to get to know Jesus. I will search for the God of the Bible, inviting him to change the core affections of my heart. I will begin each day with faith and repentance.

Action Step—My Goal: _____

Self-examination

Many of us today are in a “structural hurry”—a fast pace is structured into our lives. Resolve to call a periodic time-out for personal reflection. Read Psalms 17:3; 26; 32:8; 139; 2 Corinthians 10:3–5; 13:5.

Sample Goal: I will take one morning each month to slow down, examine my heart, think deeply about my life, and make needed changes based on how I understand God’s larger purposes for my life.

Action Step—My Goal: _____

The Bible

Personally, I have never known a man whose life has changed in any significant way without regular study of God’s Word. Read Psalms 1:1–3; 119:9–11; 89–104; Matthew 22:29; John 20:30–31; Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:16–17.

Sample Goal: This year, I am going to read through The One Year Bible and memorize one Scripture verse each month.

Action Step—My Goal: _____

NOTE: We’ll dialogue more about the Bible in section 3 (“Spiritual Growth”).

Prayer

Prayer is simply talking and listening to the One who loves you more than you can ever love yourself and who wants to give you everything you need. Prayer is hard work, but prayer is what releases the power of God into human activity. Read Matthew 6:5–15; 22:21–22; Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6–7; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; James 5:16; 1 John 5:14–15.

Sample Goal: I will spend time in prayer before making any major decision. I will begin each day with prayer.

Action Step—My Goal: _____

Church

Who benefits by convincing you that you don’t need to be part of a church group? No one—and least of all your own family. Maybe you have church hurts. But where do you think the idea came from that dropping out and isolating yourself would bring healing? If you’re hurting, speak up. Don’t isolate yourself from the one group whose exclusive mission is to help you become all that God wants you to become. Read Hebrews 10:23–25, Luke 4:16.

Sample Goal: I will seek ways to be actively involved in my church.

Action Step—My Goal: _____

Interact: Which of these subcategories have been your strongest? Which ones need to be strengthened? How can I as a coach help you?

Priority: Loving People

Cut the Bible, and it bleeds neighbor love. The priority of loving people captures the *essence of everything* taught in both the Old and New Testaments. Does that sound like overstatement? Galatians 5:14 reads, “For the *entire law is fulfilled* in keeping this one command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’” (emphasis added).

Loving My Wife (If Married)

Most of us are either married or hope to be one day. Most marriage problems would disappear if we would simply speak to our wives with the same kindness, courtesy, forethought, and respect with which we speak to our coworkers. Read 1 Peter 3:7.

Sample Goal: After God, but before all others, I will make my wife my top priority. I will prove by the way I spend my time that my wife is truly the most important person in my life after God but before all others.

Action Step—My Goal: _____

NOTE: We’ll look at several practical “action steps” in section 4 (“Marriage”).

Loving My Children (If a Father)

If your children are doing well, all of your other problems will fit into a thimble. Be your children’s spiritual leader, greatest fan, encourager, cheerleader, mentor, and example. Tell each child every day, “I love you!” and “I’m proud of you!”—like God said to Jesus in Matthew 3:17. Also read Ephesians 6:4 and Colossians 3:23.

Sample Goal: I will rotate taking one child each week on a “fun date,” tell each child I love them and I’m proud of them every day, and pray for them each day.

Action Step—My Goal: _____

NOTE: We’ll look at several practical “action steps” in section 5 (“Children”).

Authentic Friendships

What's really going to help you long-term is to find a friend or two, or join a small group, and live life together with a few brothers with whom you can process what comes your way. Read Proverbs 27:6,17; Ecclesiastes 4:9–10; John 13:34; Galatians 6:1–2; Philippians 2:4.

Sample Goal: This year I will either start or join a weekly men's small group (or become even more committed to the group I'm already in).

Action Step—My Goal: _____

NOTE: We'll look at several practical "action steps" in sections 3 ("Spiritual Growth") and 6 ("Friendships").

Interact: Which of these subcategories has been your strongest? Which ones need to be strengthened? How can I as a coach help you?

Priority: Vocation

Work

Most of us will spend more time at work than any other place. Work is not merely a platform to do ministry; it *is* ministry. Do your work with uncompromising excellence as if doing it for the Lord Jesus—because you are! Read Genesis 1:27–28; 2:4–15; 3:17–19; Colossians 3:22–24.

Sample Goal: I will stop thinking of work as merely a means to other ends and begin to look for intrinsic value in the work I do.

Action Step—My Goal: _____

NOTE: We'll have more to say about your vocation in section 7 ("Work").

Health, Leisure, Rest, Recreation

Good health includes mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual wholeness. Health is a gift from God, but we are responsible to create a proper balance with rest, recreation, nutrition, and exercise. Read Psalm 1:1–3; Isaiah 40:29–31; Luke 5:16.

Sample Goal: I will study one new subject completely foreign to my normal routines (e.g.; astronomy, interior design, sailing) and exercise three times each week. I will get off Adderall.

Action Step—My Goal: _____

Interact: How are you doing in these areas? How can I as your coach help you?

Priority: Money

When the tenth of the month rolls around, your landlord isn't looking for Jesus; he wants cash! Money is very important, but it won't solve all our problems. Pray for a "conversion of the wallet." Be generous. Be a steward. Read Matthew 6:24; 2 Corinthians 8–9; 1 Timothy 6:6–10.

Sample Goal: This year I will tithe by faith and save 5 percent.

Action Step—My Goal: _____

Interact: How are you doing in this area? How can I as your coach help you?

Priority: Ministry

Where do you see your community groaning for relief? Who are the people God wants to help? Where does he want you to make a contribution? Use your spiritual gift(s) for the glory of God by loving and serving others. Read Matthew 5:14–16; 28:18–20; John 15:8–17; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 4:11–16; 2 Timothy 2:2. In the next section on "Spiritual Growth," you will have an opportunity to determine or affirm your spiritual gifts.

Sample Goal: This year I will gain a better understanding of my spiritual gifting and ask my pastor for a way to use it.

Action Step—My Goal: _____

Interact: How are you doing in this area? How can I as your coach help you?

NOTE: We'll look at practical "action steps" in sections 3 ("Spiritual Growth") and 9 ("Culture").

3. SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Coaching Goals

- To understand what it means to be a disciple, and how you become one
- To interact with your coach about growth
- To make some decisions about how you want to grow
- Other: _____

The Big Idea: A Bible, a small group, and serving someone else will solve 90 percent of your problems.

Let's get it started!

- How big of an issue is spiritual growth for you and why?
- What are the questions you would like answered about spiritual growth?

The Big Picture

To become a disciple of Jesus is the highest honor to which you can aspire. A disciple is:

- called to live “in” Christ (salvation, abiding)
- equipped to live “like” Christ (growth, transformation)
- sent to live “for” Christ (love, service)

Interact: Does this definition of a disciple resonate with you? Explain.

The goal of spiritual growth is to become that disciple. Discipleship is God's designated way to release the power of his gospel on every problem you face. No matter how you got yourself into your current situation, the only solution is to disciple your way out.

How do you become a disciple? Men grow through the practice of spiritual disciplines. A Bible, a small group, and serving someone else will solve 90 percent of your problems. You and your coach may discuss other ways to grow, but if you get these three disciplines right—plus pray with and for your wife (next section)—everything else will essentially fall into place.

Interact: Read and discuss Hebrews 4:12; 10:25; 13:20–21 about the Bible, a small group, and serving others.

Action Step—The Bible: How can you access your Bible for the maximum return on the time you invest? Commit to a daily quiet time. During this time, read, meditate, and pray. You can also journal and sing. If this is new for you, plan on five minutes a day. Read a chapter of the New Testament and say a prayer. Men who are further along will often increase their quiet times to thirty or sixty minutes. Consider

reading a version of *The One Year Bible* or using a one-year Bible reading plan. Plan for five or more days a week.

Interact: Discuss why the Bible is an integral and indispensable part of spiritual growth.

My Response: _____

Action Step—A Small Group: Jesus started a small group to bring his first disciples to full maturity. No other method has been shown to be even remotely as effective at changing men's lives. Commit to be part of a small group. The best kind of small groups do life together—they share what's really going on, stay small enough to really get to know each other, and help each other grow in Christ.

Interact: Discuss why a small group is an integral part of spiritual growth.

My Response: _____

Action Step—Serve Someone Else: The key to serving others well is to understand and apply your spiritual gifts. Basically, you want to discover, "What makes my heart beat fast and puts a smile on my face?" Read the four passages that deal with spiritual gifts and service: Romans 12:3–8; 1 Corinthians 12:1–31; Ephesians 4:11–16; 1 Peter 4:9–11.

Interact: Discuss why serving someone else is an integral part of spiritual growth.

NOTE: We'll have more about where and how you can serve in sections 9 ("Culture") and 10 ("Sharing My Faith").

Complete the following tool to assess and identify your spiritual gifts.¹ Put a check mark next to gifts you think you may have and discuss with your coach. Then rank your top three gifts.

Service Gifts

_____ **Mercy:** Special ability to show sympathy to the suffering saints. Meals to the sick, hospital visits, phone calls, emails, texts, and visits to the hurting. A vocation as a nurse or physician.

_____ **Service:** Special ability to joyfully serve behind the scenes. Set up chairs, serve as an usher, assist leaders. A vocation in customer service or landscape maintenance.

_____ **Hospitality:** Special desire to offer home, food, and lodging. Host missionaries, Bible studies, singles for dinner. A vocation in food service or tourism.

_____ **Giving:** Special desire and financial ability to give above and beyond a tithe. Generosity toward youth mission trips, deacon fund offerings, parachurch ministries, a suit for the pastor. A vocation in philanthropy.

_____ **Administration:** Special ability to orchestrate program details. Committee work, volunteer for church office, conference/seminar supervision. A vocation in business.

¹ These examples (along with speaking and signifying lists) are adapted from the work of Carl Smith (personal correspondence), Kenneth J. Gangel (*Unwrap Your Spiritual Gifts* [Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1983]), and Leslie B. Flynn (*19 Gifts of the Spirit* [Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1974]).

_____ **Leadership:** Special ability to preside or govern wisely. Boards of Christian ministries, visible roles, elders, deacons, committee chairmen, run nursery program, fund-raising. A vocation in management.

_____ **Faith:** Vision for new projects that need doing and perseverance to see them through. Building programs, new ministries. A vocation as an entrepreneur.

_____ **Discernment:** Ability to detect error. Meet with teachers who may be teaching incorrectly, write letters to the editor. A vocation in law.

Speaking Gifts

_____ **Knowledge:** Spiritual ability to search and acquire scriptural truth. Academic pursuits, writing, teaching. A vocation as an educator.

_____ **Wisdom:** Special insight into applications of knowledge. Counseling, teaching, discussion group leader, accountability groups, friendship. A vocation as a counselor or personal coach.

_____ **Preaching:** Special ability to rightly proclaim and expound God's truth. Preachers, lay preachers. A vocation as a public speaker.

_____ **Teaching:** Special ability to explain Scripture in an edifying way. Sunday school teachers, Bible studies, home groups, children, youth programs. A vocation as a teacher.

_____ **Evangelism:** Special ability to clearly present the gospel to nonbelievers. Sunday night church visitation program, share faith with contacts on job, sponsor outreach events. A vocation as a salesman.

_____ **Apostleship:** Special ability to begin new works. Missionaries, church planters, Christian service organizations. A vocation as an entrepreneur.

_____ **Shepherding:** Unique ability to care for a flock of believers over the long haul. Pastors, elders, nursery program. A vocation as a manager.

_____ **Encouragement:** Special skill to inspire, encourage, and comfort. This may be through friendship, counseling, writing letters, and the like. All vocations.

Signifying Gifts

_____ **Miracles:** Spiritual ability to actuate the supernatural intervention of God against the laws of nature.

_____ **Healing:** Spiritual agency of God in curing illness and disease and restoring to health supernaturally.

_____ **Tongues:** Spiritual ability to speak in a language foreign to speaker.

_____ **Interpretation of Tongues:** Spiritual ability to interpret the message of one speaking in tongues.

4. MARRIAGE (IF YOU ARE OR PLAN TO BE MARRIED)

Coaching Goals

- To interact with your coach about marriage
- To learn how to have a realistic set of expectations
- To adopt a daily prayer that will improve your marriage
- To understand the concept of your wife's emotional bank account
- Other: _____

The Big Idea: After God, but before all others, I will make my wife my top priority.

Let's get it started!

- How big of an issue is your marriage or desire to be married, and why?
- What are the questions you would like answered about marriage?

The Big Picture

For those God calls to marry or remarry, marriage is the Eiffel Tower of human relationships, majestically towering high above every other relationship. Read Ephesians 5:25–33 for the longest and most elegant instruction the Bible offers a man about his role as a husband. Make your wife your top priority, after God but before all others, with these calls to action.

Action Step—Adopt the 70 Percent Mind-Set: Family systems scholar Edwin Friedman wrote, “In reality, no human marriage gets a rating of more than 70%.”² That's five out of seven days. Expect a couple of days to be a little off—moods, pressures, stress. Bottom line: your marriage may be better and more normal than you thought!

Interact: Do you have realistic marriage expectations, or have you expected too much? Explain.

My Response: _____

Action Step—Pray for Your Wife: Here's a sixty-eight-word prayer that captures the essence of what the Bible teaches about marriage:

Father,
I said, “Til death do us part”—I want to mean it.
Help me love You more than her,

² Edwin H. Friedman, *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue* (New York: Guilford, 1985), 69.

and her more than anyone or anything else.
Help me bring her into Your presence today.
Make us one, like You are three in one.
I want to hear her, cherish her, and serve her—
so she would love you more and we can bring You glory.
Amen.

Commit to pray the Marriage Prayer every day. See the “We Version” and the “Pro Version” of the Marriage Prayer in the chapter titled “Marriage: Finding a New Best Friend in My Wife” in *The Christian Man*.

Interact: What would change in your marriage or future marriage if you pray the Marriage Prayer for her every day?

My Response: _____

Action Step—Fill Her Emotional Bank Account: Every human being—you, your wife, or the woman you’re going to marry—has an emotional bank. With every interaction you have with her, you are either making a deposit into her emotional bank account or making a withdrawal. Every word you speak, every gesture you make, every minute that you give her or don’t—*everything* about your relationship is either a deposit or a withdrawal. Commit to treat your wife with the same kindness, courtesy, forethought, and respect you would show a coworker.

Interact: If you are married (or in a relationship you think will lead to marriage), what emotional deposits do you think will be most meaningful to her?

My Response: _____

Interact: Are there any other calls to action that you think need to be implemented in your marriage? Write them down:

5. CHILDREN (IF YOU HAVE OR PLAN TO HAVE CHILDREN)

Coaching Goals

- To understand the dual role of a father to love his children while also providing enough structure to drive out folly
- To interact with your coach about fathering
- To identify some practical ideas that will help you be a dad who makes a difference
- Other: _____

The Big Idea: “Yes, I love you, and no, you can’t have your own way.”

Let’s get it started!

- How big of an issue is understanding fatherhood for you, and why?
- What are the questions you would like answered about fathering?

The Big Picture

Every Christian father wants his children to grow up to love God and to love others. What’s the problem? Read Proverbs 19:3; 22:15; Ephesians 6:4. Your challenge is to provide enough structure to drive out folly while never letting your children have any reason to doubt that you unconditionally love and accept them. Counselor and author Larry Crabb has a simple, practical formula for correcting folly: “Yes, I love you, and no, you can’t have your own way.”

Interact: Will your children be able to look back and say, “Yes, my dad loved me unconditionally”? Will your children be able to look back and say, “No, my dad did not let me have my own way, but I know it was for the right reasons”?

Interact: Ask your coach to talk about his experiences as a father if applicable.

Action Step—Practical Ideas: To help you be that dad who makes a difference, here are several practical ideas that can help you.

- ☐ I will love their mother well.
- ☐ I will disciple my children.
- ☐ I will lead family devotions.
- ☐ I will pay my children for personal devotions.
- ☐ I will take my children to church.

- ☐ I will spend time with my kids.
- ☐ I will set work/family boundaries.
- ☐ I will give my kids time the way they want to receive it.
- ☐ I will date my teens.
- ☐ We will eat dinner together.
- ☐ I will regularly pray for my children.
- ☐ I will encourage my children with words.
- ☐ I will tell my children often, "I love you" and "I'm proud of you."

Interact: Check off four or five ideas that intrigue you most, whether that's now or later when you start a family. Discuss why you checked them. Discuss with your coach a plan to start doing these practical ideas.

6. FRIENDSHIPS

Coaching Goals

- To understand the Bible's emphasis on friendships
- To interact with your coach about friendships
- To join or start a small group
- Other: _____

The Big Idea: What's really going to help you long-term is to find a friend or two, or join a small group, and live life together with a few brothers with whom you can process what comes your way.

Let's get it started!

- How big of an issue is friendship for you, and why?
- What are the questions you would like answered about friendship?

The Big Picture

A true friend, a 2:00 a.m. friend, is someone who will stick with you when you have to declare bankruptcy, go through a divorce, are in bondage to drugs or alcohol, have a moral failure, lose your job, or have to deal with a child who has gone off the path. A few 2:00 a.m. friends can make up for a multitude of disappointments.

Interact: Read Proverbs 17:17; 18:24; 27:6, 9, 17; Ecclesiastes 4:9–12; John 15:12–13; 13:35; Galatians 6:1–2. As you can see, friendships are a central theme of the life and teachings of Jesus. Do you have a friend or two like those described in these Scriptures? Ask your coach about his experience with Christ-centered friendships.

Action Step—Meet with a Friend or Join a Small Group: What's really going to help you long-term is to find a friend or two, or join a small group, and live life together with a few brothers with whom you can process what comes your way. Commit to meeting weekly. Who is the man or a group of men you can ask to meet with and do life together?

My Response: _____

7. WORK

Coaching Goals

- To develop a personal theology of work
- To interact with your coach about work
- To assess with your coach's help if you are in the right vocation
- Other: _____

The Big Idea: There is no greater feeling than to believe, "This is what I'm supposed to be doing, right here, right now—even if it's hard."

Let's get it started!

- How big of an issue is work for you, and why?
- What are the questions you would like answered about work?

The Big Picture

Men are created for work. There is no greater feeling than to believe, "This is what I'm supposed to be doing, right here, right now—even if it's hard." Unfortunately, not many men have a "theology of work." That's unfortunate, since most of us will spend about half of our 112 waking hours each week at work if we include getting ready and drive times. Half of your life!

Interact: Read these verses and write down the main points—your theology of work—in your own words. Then discuss your answers with your coach. What did you learn that has changed your view of work?

Genesis 1:27–28; 2:18 _____

Genesis 3:17–19 _____

Ecclesiastes 2:24–25 _____

Ecclesiastes 5:18–19 _____

Colossians 3:22–23 _____

1 Thessalonians 4:11–12 _____

2 Thessalonians 3:6–12 _____

Interact: Are you able to say, “This is what I’m supposed to be doing, right here, right now—even when it’s hard”? Why or why not?

Action Step—Assessment: With the help of your coach, answer these questions:

1. How are you wired?
2. What does that tell you about yourself, and about the types of positions that would satisfy you in the long term?
3. What are your social needs?
4. What are your health/stress needs?
5. What is your long-term vocational goal?
6. Assuming time and money are no object, what would you do if you could do anything you wanted? Why would you not do it?
7. Based on your previous answers, are you in the right work or should you make a change?

If you think you want or need to make a change, work with your coach to write down the specific steps to take, and by when. The more specific the better.

8. LUST (WHETHER YOU ARE A SINGLE OR MARRIED MAN)

Coaching Goals

- To understand God's design for sex
- To have a good definition of lust (departure from God's design)
- To interact with your coach about lust and sexuality
- To pray for forgiveness and sexual purity
- To develop an intentional plan to stay away from unwanted sexual behavior
- Other: _____

The Big Idea: The practical solution to lust (and other sexual immorality) for most men is to get married and enjoy regular sex with their wife.

Let's get it started!

- How big of an issue is lust for you, and why?
- What are the questions you would like answered about sexuality, lust, and unwanted sexual behavior?

The Big Picture

Sexual attraction is one of the most powerful primal forces God has created. Every man feels it undeniably. When used the way God intends, sex is beautiful, even holy. But we each know that sexual desire is one of the most easily corrupted and difficult to tame of all human desires. Which is why you need to understand the right way to deal with this powerful drive.

Interact: Discuss with your coach what these verses say about sex and sexual immorality: Job 31:1; Matthew 5:27–28; 1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:1–9, 36; 10:31.

Lust is “mental adultery”. Jesus says you don't have to commit the “physical” act to commit adultery. “Mental” adultery is also adultery. So, yes, lust is sinful. It's a departure from God's plan for sex. Nevertheless, “mental” adultery is not the same as “physical” adultery. Lust is thinking about or imagining sex with a woman not your wife. Here's a good working definition for lust:

Lust is mental adultery by seeking out ways to look at, watch, listen to, read about, or covet any woman other than your wife to arouse yourself sexually, escalated if you masturbate.

Interact: Each of you share your own struggles with lust.

Action Step—a Prayer: The beauty of Christ’s gospel is that no matter what you’ve done, you can be forgiven. Forgiveness is there for the asking: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Pray this prayer together out loud with your coach or group:

Lord Jesus, thank you so much for your Word, that we have not been left alone to sort all this out. You’ve given us ample advice, wisdom, counsel, direction, and even commands on how to walk out our sexual lives in this world, and so we thank you for that. By faith, I repent of all my sex sins—indulging in pornography, sexual fantasies, habitual masturbation, heterosexual or homosexual immorality, incest, adultery, and every other kind of sexual sin. By faith, I ask you to restore me to a right relationship with God the Father through the power of your Holy Spirit. Please tutor the truth of your Word to our hearts so that we might be able to have victory in our temptations and battles with lust. We ask this in Jesus’ name. **Amen.**

In the future when you lust—and you will—pause and think about what you’ve done, and when you are genuinely sorry, simply thank Jesus that he already died for that sin, ask for his forgiveness, and move on.

Action Step—An Intentional Plan: The most important practical thing you can do to get free from unwanted sexual behavior is to have an intentional plan. Here’s a plan that has worked for others. It was developed by a man who hit rock bottom with unwanted sexual behavior and who now lectures on the subject. I’ve included a blank line after each idea so you can make your own intentional plan as a call to action.

Interact: Once you write down your plan, ask your coach to review it, ask questions, and interact with you.

Identity: Find your identity in Christ—understand what that means and what a relationship with Jesus means you have access to.

Confession: Confess to everyone you can—all of it, get it in the light, get it in the open. First to a trusted handful of individuals, including your wife if married, church leaders, and eventually others over time—make it a lifestyle. It’s tough but essential for healing. A weight will lift off your shoulders. Walking in the light should become a lifestyle. Begin living in such a way that there won’t be anything to confess because everything will already be in the light (more on this below).

A Group: Focus on building a grace-based relationship with Jesus. Do this with a group of other like-minded men. Plugging into an accountability group connected to a reputable sexual purity program is highly beneficial.

Accountability: Tell three to five guys, “I don’t want to keep secrets anymore,” and ask them to hold you accountable by calling or texting to check on how you’re doing. Ask them to monitor your computer with software like Covenant Eyes. Include as appropriate your wife, friends, parents, and men from church.

Purge: Purge all pornographic content from your home, your devices, your social media accounts, etc. Delete apps, people, websites, etc. that may be triggering lust. Stop visiting locations or hanging out with people who are not a good influence on you. It’s not worth it.

Counsel: Find a good Christian counselor.

Health: Take care of yourself through diet, exercise, sleep.

Retreat: Go on a men’s retreat with your church, especially one that has a session on sexual purity.

Mentor: Find an older man who also once struggled with pornography and is now walking in victory.

Serve: Focus on helping others, which takes healing to the next level. Living a life for self will eventually leave you empty and lead you back into your bondage. We are called to not just sit on our freedom but to use it to help others get free as well. “Therefore, go . . .”

Temptation: The best way to overcome temptation is to not put yourself in a position where you will be tempted. But when it does come, change your circumstances. Leave, pray for “a way of escape,” play worship music, call a friend, consider the consequences, consider how Jesus or your spouse would feel/react, and remember you are never really alone when you are acting out. God is right there with you.

Sin: When you fail—and you will—confess to Jesus, receive his full pardon, accept his grace, and tell a confidential accountability friend.

9. CULTURE

Coaching Goals

- To believe that God is sending you to make a difference, and what this could look like in practice
- To interact with your coach about your role in culture and write down a plan
- Other: _____

The Big Idea: God wants each of us to find some broken, unredeemed part of our communities and claim or reclaim it for the glory of Christ.

Let's get it started!

- How big of an issue are the problems in our culture for you, and why?
- What are the questions you would like answered about culture?

The Big Picture

You know the issues: education, school violence, protecting innocent children, the economy, federal deficits, school debt, finding a job that pays well, racism, politics, human trafficking, the environment, poverty, social justice, fatherlessness, divorce, homelessness, gang violence, immigration, social media bullying, internet scams, sex scandals, police shootings, abortions, and disputes over how to define marriage and gender issues—to mention many of the more visible ones. I know you care, but no doubt you've wondered, *What can I do? I'm just one man.*

Interact: Read and discuss these verses with your coach: Jeremiah 29:4–7; John 9:4; 17:15–20.

God desires to send you to some unredeemed corner of culture so you can claim or reclaim it for the glory of Christ. This idea goes to the heart of both the cultural mandate and the Great Commission. We are the stewards of Christ's gospel in a broken world. The good news is that men around the world are engaging and influencing the culture for the glory of Jesus Christ, and you can too. You may already be in the game. If not, this is your invitation to suit up and take the field.

Action Step—A Challenge to Engage Culture: God is looking for men willing to engage and redeem civic affairs, the education system, public service, commerce, manufacturing, service industries, the justice system, education, the military, government, first responders, health care, medicine, the trades, and every other arena for the glory of Jesus Christ.

Interact: Will you be that man? Discuss and answer these questions with your coach:

1. Where do you see your community groaning for relief? It could be any of the issues already mentioned or something else, such as addiction, teen pregnancy, or single moms. Maybe it's the battle to save families that is raging in neighborhoods across the city—your neighborhood. Maybe it has to do with people slipping through the cracks. Maybe it's about your peers who need Jesus. Maybe it's an issue that divides us.
2. Which two or three of those issues most grab your heart?
3. Where are you most needed?
4. Where can you make the most difference?
5. For the cultural issue that's most burning in your heart, what would loyalty to Jesus Christ look like? What would it look like to be found faithful in that area?

Write down what you plan to do:

10. SHARING MY FAITH

Coaching Goals

- To gain confidence about why and how to share your faith
- To interact with your coach about sharing faith
- To develop the tools and skills to share your faith
- To identify three friends for authentic spiritual conversations and pray for them
- To role-play sharing your faith with your coach
- Other: _____

The Big Idea: Many people are ready to become Christians right now. They are ready, willing, and able, but no one has ever actually engaged them in an authentic spiritual conversation.

Let's get it started!

- How big of an issue is sharing your faith for you, and why?
- What are the questions you would like answered about sharing your faith and having authentic spiritual conversations?

The Big Picture

Men are asking, "How can I acquire boldness in spreading the gospel? What are some practical ways I can share my faith at work? What is a great way to break the ice with people?"

Interact: Read and discuss Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:17–20. Ask your coach about his experiences in sharing his faith.

Blue Like Jazz author Donald Miller, in his business book *Building a StoryBrand*, has created an incredible summary of what happens in every story worth telling: "A CHARACTER who wants something encounters a PROBLEM before they can get it. At the peak of their despair, a GUIDE steps into their lives, gives them a PLAN, and CALLS THEM TO ACTION. That action plan helps them avoid FAILURE and ends in a SUCCESS."³

You and I—we are the guides. As guides, we need two things: (1) someone in despair who needs a guide, and (2) a plan of action that leads that person to reconciliation with Christ and the people they love.

³Donald Miller, *Building a StoryBrand: Clarify Your Message So Customers Will Listen* (Nashville: HarperCollins Leadership, 2017), 20.

Action Step—How to Have Authentic Spiritual Conversations with Your Friends: What follows is a step-by-step process to help a person change their life in Christ. First, we'll discuss how to break the ice and start a spiritual conversation. Then I'll give you a proven, time-tested way to share your spiritual story. Finally, I'll give you what you need to help someone become a believer in Jesus.

Step 1: Start Spiritual Conversations: Everyone has thought about God, and most people would love to talk to someone about spiritual things. Use this “Golden Question” to break the ice: *“Where are you on your spiritual journey?”*

Step 2. Share Your Story: After you've listened carefully, tell the person you're talking with where you are on your spiritual journey by adapting your 3-Minute Elevator Story that you've prepared in advance, using the following guide.

How to Prepare a 3-Minute Elevator Story

Use this worksheet to prepare a 3-minute “elevator speech” of your faith story (testimony). Time it to about one minute for each of the three sections. You can always talk longer if you have more time, but by doing it this way, you'll “always be prepared” (1 Peter 3:15).

Interact: Work and revise with your coach until your speech tells your story in a compelling, pithy way.

BEFORE (150 words): What was your life like before you embraced Jesus? Empty, confused, lonely, disillusioned, futile, lacking significance, without purpose or meaning, discontent, successful but still not happy? As much as possible, relate your story to what you know about their story.

HOW (150 words): How did you come to profess faith in Jesus? Where? Who showed you the way? Why did you respond? As prompted, mention the love and holiness of God, being convicted of your sins, hungering for something real, understanding who Christ is, desiring eternal life, asking Jesus to forgive your sins, and having faith in Jesus.

AFTER (150 words): What has Christ done in your life since? Pick areas that have changed which relate to the person's struggles.

Step 3. Share Jesus' Story: You are the guide, so now it's time to tell them about Jesus and his gospel. Here are three essential ideas and corresponding verses to guide what you say.

1. *God loves you very much.* John 3:16
2. *Jesus died to forgive our sins and to give us eternal life, purpose, and meaning.* John 10:10; Romans 5:6; Ephesians 2:8–9; 1 Timothy 1:15.
3. *We become Christians when we personally confess our sins and believe in Jesus.* John 1:12; Romans 10:9; 1 John 1:9; 4:15.

Interact: Read and discuss now these verses with your coach until you are comfortable that you understand and can explain the gospel of Jesus.

Read them later to someone after you've heard their story and they've heard yours.

Step 4. Ask the Platinum Question: Many people are ready to become Christians *right now*. They are ready, willing, and able, but no one has ever actually asked them this Platinum Question: *"Have you ever personally confessed your sins and put your faith in Jesus?"*

To not ask this question would be like you walking into a car showroom, drooling over a car, and after thirty minutes of talking it over with a salesperson, hearing them say, “I can see you’re really interested in this car. Tell you what. Why don’t you give me your name and phone number and I’ll call you in a couple of weeks to see if you’re still interested?” The salesperson would have missed their moment. So please, ask this question! What comes next will last forever.

Step 5. A Prayer of Faith: If they say in response to the Platinum Question, “No, I have not,” then ask them if they would like to. If they say yes, here’s a prayer you can pray out loud, one phrase at a time, asking them to repeat after you:

Lord Jesus, I need You.

I believe you love me and came to die for my sins.

I am filled with a deep sorrow for my sins.

By grace through faith, I receive you as my Savior and Lord.

Please forgive my sins and save my soul.

Thank you for your forgiveness, the gift of eternal life, and the promise of life to the full.

Please change me into the person you created me to become. Amen.

Action Step—Identify Friends: Write down the three people with whom you would most like to have an authentic spiritual conversation, and start praying for them:

(1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____

Interact: Complete this section by role-playing the five-step process with your coach, keeping the three names you wrote down in mind as you role-play.

CONCLUSION

Congratulations to you and your coach or small group! During this experience you have pieced together a clear picture of the man you believe God is calling you to become. This may surprise you, but you now know as much as anyone about biblical manhood. That's because there is no "secret" knowledge about how to be a man.

Between these topics and how you have been guided by your coach, you now have what you need to passionately love God, protect and provide for your family, treat others well, find satisfying work, and courageously stay the course while experiencing contentment, peace, and joy.

Now what? Download more copies and pass it on! And let me know how we can help you in your ministry to men at patrickmorley@maninthemirror.org.

For the glory of Christ and no other reason,

Patrick Morley