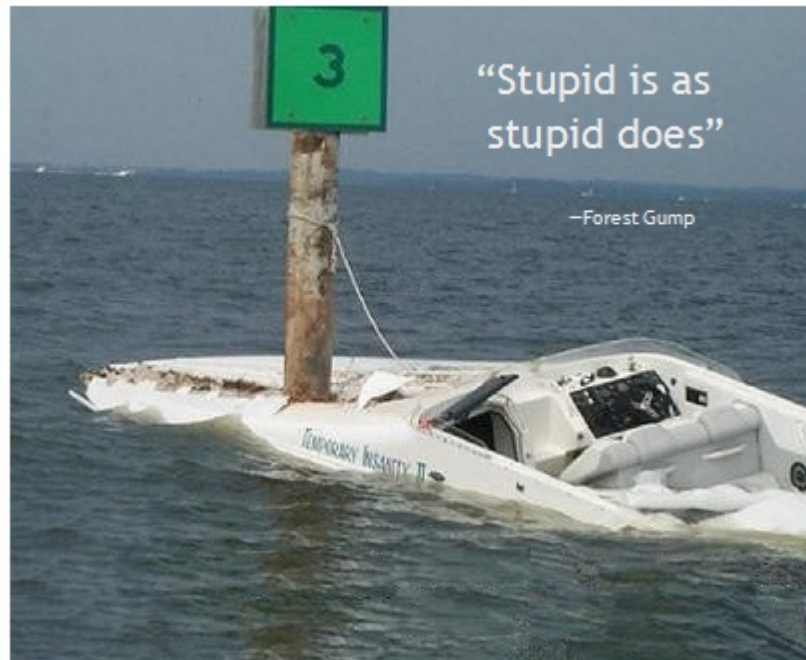


# The REAL Man's File Volume One.



Who Will You  
**Decide 2 Be . . .**  
the Simple Man **or** Much More?

Keith P. Gore

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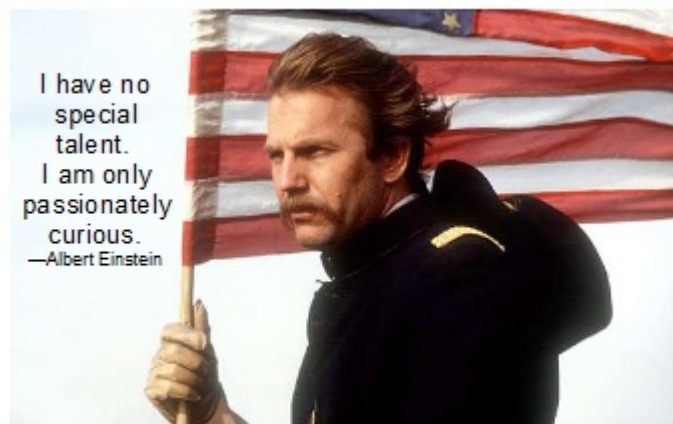
## Introduction

**The detective called me into his office. His look, somber and he asked me to tell him what I knew of and did with my brother Matt, starting with yesterday morning. He - Matt – was now in custody and those last 12 hours were the worst of my life.**

But that story is not why we're here (more on that at the end of this book). Now it was twenty five years from that time and it was the early September time frame of 2013. My wife and I were now empty nestors and I had joined various other men in living in our area to participate in weekly 'men of faith' meetings. We were pursuing Dr. Robert Lewis' **Men's Fraternity** program called '**The Great Adventure**'.

Now, years later I realize – what was good then, is needed now. Every man needs a '*go to file*' to help on their path forward. So know this . . .

As those meetings unfolded, what I saw as disappointing, was that we were covering good information but not enough men have the time or opportunity to pursue this as well. This book was created so men could have an easy to read insight as to what we should be aware of - information that is good to ponder, and then to be able to build from - where they deem best.



Those efforts then became the foundation for this book.

**Why?** Because our country needs more **REAL** men.

**How?** By taking the good information we learned and in simplifying it so that '*men on the go*' can review and leverage it in easier ways.

Yes I know that free time for all men is always a challenge and my approach for this book is that each chapter is a type of quick read (via a "letter to myself" type approach on things that I wish I knew back in my younger years). Which boils down to a few minutes invested in learning and growing as a man is always better than just wanting to do well.

So if you are curious, you want to be smarter 'sooner rather than later' and you want to have ideas as to how to do so - then know this:

Everything shared here is based on the following challenge . . .

**It would be great if all young men would realize they need to make the time to invest in themselves for gaining insight to becoming men, fathers, and someday grandfathers who are courageous men of faith, of honor and of great success - those who made a difference.**

Therefore, to help you to achieve the above, think of this book as summarize recap of Dr. Robert Lewis' '**The Great Adventure**' program that I mentioned earlier. We all need to realize that it is a different world and if we don't take action to succeed, we will fall into the mundane. To help prevent this, the pages that follow have ideas and challenges shared to help get you started and on your upward journey (aka '*to help get you to move from just thinking and into actions where required*').

And to close out this introduction - please know this. If what you find covered in the following pages has you wanting to move beyond a '*simple man*' status, then please pursue the two follow up books that will be available soon. Those are; **The REAL Man's File Volume 2** and **The REAL Man's File Volume 3**.

Oops, I almost forgot – please keep in mind, this is just **“a guy's book”**. Nothing fancy, just a simple approach that you should view as a . . .  
**“let me read, ponder and pick out what I like”**.



Also, like tools in your tool box, the following are 'files' in your file cabinet to leverage when best, where best and how best by you.

So, if you want to do yourself a favor, I also recommend that you have a notebook handy to jot down your thoughts – or mark this up - as to actions you will want to follow up on as you read through this book.

And last of all - yes in the following pages you will find that there are different fonts, colors, maybe a fuzzy visual or two and even some goofy humor mixed in here and there (and most of them to just ensure an added emphasis). Basically a lot to consider to give you some ideas.

**It all boils down to this.**  
**Just pick out what you like and move forward from there.**

# So what's in here (aka Contents)?

Here are the topics covered to help you to become much more than a simple man.

## How Best 2 Pursue?

### 1.0 - In The Beginning

1.1 (File #1) - Real Men Decide, Demand & Defend

### 2.0 - Think

2.1 (File #2) - Questions & Considerations

2.2 (File #3) - How are you wired?

### 3.0 - Thoughts

3.1 (File #4) - They say heaven is a . . .

3.2 (File #5) - What is your perspective on eternity?

3.3 (File #6) - Refocusing your life

### 4.0 - Considerations

4.1 (File #7) - Time

4.2 (File #8) - Adventure Busters

4.3 (File #9) - History's Great Adventurers

4.4 (File #10) - What is your Unique Design?

### 5.0 - What Next?

5.1 (File #11) - Evidence of your Unique Design

5.2 (File #12) - D2B a Good Example

5.3 (File #13) - Do you care?

5.4 (File #14) - Are you a Servant by Design?

5.5 (File #15) - Who am I (in 20 words or less)?

### 6.0 - Action Time

6.1 (File #16) - BHQs 2.0

6.2 (File #17) - Wired 2 Achieve

### 7.0 (File #18) - Anything More?

## How Best 2 Pursue?

First, please keep in mind that this book builds from **Dr. Robert Lewis'** program called **"The Great Adventure"**. My thanks to Robert and his **Men's Fraternity** program for not only helping us to take a hard look at ourselves, but also for challenging us to become better men (and if you can, pursue his in-depth program - you'll be glad that you did).

Second, is a thank you to those who took all the various pictures and to all who have said the quotes that you will find spread throughout this book. Like this one to help get us going:



Third, is a **big 'thank you' to you**. I know your time is limited and all I ask is that as you read through each chapter, ask yourself . . .

**Is there something I can learn from this? Or, does this help me to realize things I should do or stop doing?**

If you think you are up to the learning challenge, then read on and please remember: none of us are perfect but pursuing the **'Much More'** is the challenge we should not avoid.

## 1.0 - In The Beginning

Okay, our starting point is where you are at now. What you will see throughout this book are words in reference and in support of a place to start a growing faith action as we strive to become the men that we need to be. To do so, we'll start with these two points:

**First, I assume you are (at least) like I was - a simple man.** Possibly blessed in various ways and or challenged along the way. It boils down to, we are who we are. The question I raise and why this book is here, all comes down to this simple challenge: Who will you decide to be or as I like to 'play on the words' . . . who will you decide to be (D2B)?

Hence the '**D2B**' shown often in this book.

**Second, as you ponder the type of man that you want to be, keep the following in the back of your mind and have them as your own considerations as you pursue your future.** So then, do you want to pursue a life that achieves one or more of the following? Becoming . . .

**A Real Man** who becomes the type of a man that you are glad you became (of honor, of integrity, of impact).

**A Dedicated Dad** who can get some ideas on becoming the best Dad they can be (learning from others, adding to your knowledge).

**A Proud Grandpa** who has the opportunity to share his advice based on his lessons learned or at a minimum, to build upon his desire to help his next generation(s) that will follow.

**Why?** Because all men are on a journey whether they realize it or not. Some have prepared well for that journey, others possibly not as well as they should. For those that want to gain some additional insight into doing better - I hope you will join in on this adventure now unfolding.



As to what is this adventure? I'll start with the following. Think of all these words, pictures, quotes, questions, and challenges shared throughout this book as a way to help get you to start thinking about who you are and of the type of man that you want to become. Because:

We started as a **group of guys** with **good intentions**. As we learned and talked, we grew into a **band of buddies** who work together to **become better men**. We invite you to join us so that we have men across our country becoming a **mass of men**; who **make the right choices**, who **make the sacrifices** needed, who **make a positive difference** in their homes and in their communities.

Yes, you probably have a slight smile at the words just shared (I thought you'd at least chuckle) but you get my point and don't you agree, we may as well have fun doing it – right?

It all boils down to this. Decisions have to be made and actions taken. The following (File # 1) is your starting point. **The key question - are you up to the challenge and ready to start?**

### [1.1 \(File #1\) - Real Men Decide, Demand & Defend](#)

**Before you begin: Ask yourself, 'what is a man?' Then ask, 'am I the type of man that I want to be?' With those as your starting point, now read the following to determine if you have the right mindset or if you have to make some adjustments for your time ahead.**

Now the following is to get some points shared for the young men. **That they should work to decide, demand and defend upon those aspects that will guide them for their years ahead.**

By that, I mean that young men need to:

- a. Decide as to the type of man that you want to be.
- b. Demand an accountability of yourselves – that being no excuses, and pushing yourselves day in and day out to achieve what has to be done.
- c. Defend the character you wish to have (make it one of honor).

Now the above are just a few of the expectations as to the types of challenges that young men should consider and pursue. What all must understand is that these are also interesting challenges upon all men as we age (they are not the 'do these once and you are done' type of things).

So at this point, you are probably wondering: what is next?

You must first accept that we don't know how many or how well our days ahead will be. When things begin to unfold not as you like; start with the plan to just handle them as best you can (leverage mentors, friends, etc. for advice) and use those challenges as learning experiences.

Next, remember that all men have great opportunities at various stages of their lives but the 'how and when' we all make the decisions that we need to, that then enable us to address those opportunities, is the great challenge upon us. For example, Robert shared with us:

*“Wouldn't you like to finish this stage of your life with satisfaction and be ready to enter the next stage with confidence?”*

Every man must then determine what are the success points they are striving for. To help you on this, consider these words.

***“A good name is more desirable than great riches;  
to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.” Proverbs 22:1***

If all the above has you starting to think, then answer these questions:

\_ So, what say you? Do you agree?

\_ Do you have some ideas or actions to note and to pursue?

*Okay, the above is the first challenge for you. Are you going to just ponder it a bit or take some action to make sure it has sunk in ?*

*What I recommend is that you get yourself a note book and start to write yourself notes, reminders or challenges as you deem best. If you want to but are not quite sure how you want to do so – here is an example that I will share with you. And since I like the aspect of creating my own set of files, you will see my examples like the following:*

**Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> File # 1 = Decide, Demand & Defend.**

This day **I have decided** to be a man of honor. One that my wife, my kids, my friends, myself and for God – that I will be glad that I became.

No more excuses, I need to think more on how I will act, I need to step up and to do what I need to do, not just what I want to do. That means I have to look at the bigger picture – where I am at in life, what I should be doing, my goals, my relationships and my faith.

**I want my words and actions to defend the character that I want to embrace and what I want others to see.** I want to show that I am working to grow in faith, that I am respectful, trustworthy, friendly, courageous, compassionate and as best I can – to be humble. I am going to try and learn to be more like the example that Jesus taught and lived.

I know I will make mistakes but I will apologize when I need to and I will learn from those mistakes. I have been blessed with a fantastic wife and great kids – they deserve the best from me and I want to make them proud. Thank you God, I am starting today and I ask that you love, your blessing, your guidance and protection be upon my family and I.

*There you go – my first notebook action. How about you? It can be whatever you want, just start and write down what makes sense to you.*

## 2.0 - Think

Now you will start to see the summarized topics that we (our lakes area men) covered and what we began to ponder and to pursue. Know that all the earlier words shared and in the 'what is to follow' are just the key points we covered and they are for your consideration - you get to decide what to act on. Also know that if you have any questions/comments, use our **D2B** website to contact us on any questions (go to this website and we'll respond as soon as we can: [decide2be.weebly.com/contact](http://decide2be.weebly.com/contact) ).

### 2.1 (File #2) - Questions & Considerations:

**Before you begin: You can see that asking questions of ourselves (aka 'starting to think') and being honest in answering them - it enables us to get insight to our mindset. Also, think about what would be the two or three tough questions that you would ask yourself at this point in your life and now consider the following.**

From **"The Great Adventure"** we were reminded that every man should make the time to . . .

First - Understand the big picture (how these – below - fit into it and what not to forget):

**I want to pursue a full life.** This means finding the right balance between a sense of purpose, the right fit, a mix of fun (adventure) and the pursuit of destiny.

**I understand that too much, too long, leads to overload.** Don't fall into the trap of thinking you have to be heads down all the time, that you sacrifice your life just to have a career.

**To know that our jobs should be a means that enable us.** And that is for those things we need for our family and for the adventure (the life) that God wants us to have.

Second - Ask the '*Big Hairy Questions*' (BHQs):

**Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going?**

Know these BHQs above could be viewed as 'trick questions'.

I say this because if you are a single man, working to get on track; you may have one set of answers. If you are a married man and working to provide for your family; you may have another set of answers.

Or, if your kids are grown and are out on their own (and you are wondering what is next?); you may have yet another set of answers. That is okay, answer these based on your 'now' situation.

For us Christians, Robert shared that in scripture, we can see these answers for those BHQs:

**First, I am a Man created by God.**

**Second, I am a Man commissioned by God.**

**Third, I am a Man who will be ultimately judged by God.**

Each of us must decide if we accept these scripture based answers or if we believe there are other answers that apply to ourselves.

So it all boils down to - **what say you?**

Third - where to begin? Start first by considering these words:

***"When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me." 1 Corinthians 13:11***

Know that these words above are a litmus test for men.

We must ask; have we made the transition, to put our youth behind us and do we pursue manhood as we should? Young men can use this step from their youth as the starting point for their manhood.

Another way of looking at this is to ask; what are the milestones for us as men to know and pursue? If we men don't ask ourselves the "big hairy questions" that we should, how then do we know if our life is on track?

As you ponder this, and if you choose to not do the above – then know that you will most likely see the lyrics from the Beatles song ‘Yesterday’ as applicable for you.

*“Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away.  
Now it looks as though they’re here to stay.  
Oh, I believe in yesterday.*

*Suddenly, I’m not half the man I used to be.  
There’s a shadow hanging over me.  
Oh, yesterday came suddenly.*

*Why she had to go? I don’t know, she wouldn’t say.  
I said something wrong. Now I long for yesterday.*

Please consider these words as shown to the right - do they ring true for you (or someone that you know)?

*Yesterday, love was such an easy game to play.  
Now I need a place to hide away.  
Oh, I believe in yesterday.”*

So it is good to ask ourselves – am I already stuck in yesterday?

Now I assume you would prefer to pursue a life that has few to no regrets if possible. It can be done because there are many perspectives that we should take the time to consider - for example:

"Am I enjoying life, or am I burdened by too much responsibility, or do I need help?"

Or... "how do I make my family life an adventure and not feel like it is a grind; and do I connect with my wife and kids in ways that they appreciate?"

Or... "I would like to have a cause to live for;  
and how do I go about finding one?"

In our men's group, we learned of and discussed the **four adventures** available to us for a blessed and successful life (to then help on the above BHQs, the answers are listed below).

**Some key points for the following should be noted:**

The following framework is one that all men can pursue. Now are these the only choices? No, but if you think about where you are at in your life, how well you are doing and on what you want to achieve yet ahead; you will see that at a minimum, they may be some real good starting points to build some plans around.

For example, from the **"The Great Adventure"** we have these four following considerations (and know that these brief descriptions are just a start to help you to understand the options available to us all):

**1) The Family Adventure:** Team with your wife and focused on your family. Define and pursue understanding, involvement and intimacy. What is the end result? Achieving an outcome of happiness and a legacy assured. For more insight review: **Psalm 127:3-4 and Proverbs 10:1**

**2) The Noble Cause Adventure:** Team with others and focus on a broader contribution to your community or to the world. Pursue a calling that is a right fit for you and achieve an outcome of energy and deep satisfaction. For more insight review: **Ephesians 2:10 and Titus 3:8**

**3) Man-Size Adventures:** Team with friends and focus on exploring. Pursue new challenges and achieve an outcome of fun and great memories. For more insight review: **Ecclesiastes 5:18 and 1 Timothy 6:17**

**4) Spiritual Life Adventures:** Team with God and focused on your faith. Pursue love and worship and achieve an outcome of peace and an eternal life. For more insight review: **John 10:10 and 1 John 5:11-13**

Know that the above four adventures listed are options. If those don't seem quite right for you, then define and pursue the adventures that you, your loved ones and or friends will enjoy.

If all the above has you starting to think, then answer these questions:

- \_ So, what say you? Which BHQ do you need to address?
- \_ If one of the 'Great Adventures' makes sense to you – what do you need to do next to pursue it?

## 2.2 (File #3) - How are you wired?

**Before you begin: We need a way to look at ourselves that may help us as we determine what do we know of ourselves and where do we want to go based on that knowledge? The following may surprise you.**

First, you need to understand **'The Adventurer's Wiring'** (the *'what makes us who we are'*). The following is just a tip of the iceberg view of what we learned and discussed. For example, if today you paused and pondered your life, you would see the following aspects (the framework for how we are wired is noted via the bold text shown in the following).

We start life with **our birth** (our design is enabled). We have **our past experiences** (those that were positive and those that were negative). They become the carry over nuances that impact **our present lifestyle**. What we do today are **our pursuits** (those are driven by the challenges or problems we are working to address and the various convictions we have). These with the events unfolding become the variables that prompt **our plans** (what we will do for the short term and long term). Which then become our plans to shape **our future perspectives** (the *'what are my dreams?'* and *'what is God's purpose for me?'*).



The above all assume you have a desire for faith and a pursuit of it. No matter what - whether faith does or does not factor into our lives, it all leads to **our death** (and at that time, our legacy is revealed). If we pursue our Christian faith, there is an eternity (our destiny) yet ahead.

So you're now wondering – okay, interesting but how do I leverage this? Well, there are two paths that you can choose from for next steps. The first is to brush this insight off and keep plugging away at life as you have been doing. Or there is the second, to make the decision that you want more out of life. I hope you choose the second as we did - to succeed in life, and if you did, then know that you need to understand your wiring. **Why?** Because:

- 1. Knowing our design is critical for understanding and rightly positioning our lives.**
- 2. The past is always with us for good or bad.**
- 3. How we "see and embrace" the future affects our lives more than most know.**
- 4. The wise adventurer lives with the end in mind.**

As you think on this, remember as Christians, **our Maker (God) gives us assignments** ("*to each according to his on ability*" Matt. 25:15).

Which also means **as He calls, He equips**. We men need to look back over our life periodically; to see what we've done well and not well on, to know what we love to do and to then pursue with responsibility to our loved ones - those things that our dreams embrace.

As your journey unfolds, you will periodically come to the intersection of "Looking Back and Looking Forward." When there, review the positives and negatives (and that means to look left and right, up and down as needed). Adjust your plans accordingly and then step toward to the future in confidence.

Challenge yourself to move beyond good intentions and remember the following in doing so:

**First** - A real man makes the time to consider his death and the aspect of eternity. His thoughts on those then become the factors that influence how he will adjust and live his life going forward (how he will deal with loved ones and friends, efforts at work and in the community, etc).

**Second** - All men must understand the world's two metaphysical views of life and death (and these are just a few summary points – let us know if you would like to know more on these).

The Religious world wide view. . . . says ***we are the Less and are derived from the More.*** *That our life points to a meaningful continuance after our death.*

The Secular world wide view. . . . says ***we are the More who are derived from the Less.*** *That our life is what it is and ends with a meaningless death.*

Because in knowing these world wide views, Robert reminds us . . . we understand the environment we live in. As Christians we embrace:

***"For I am fearfully and wonderfully made."*** Psalm 139:14

If all the above has you starting to think, then answer these questions:

- \_ So, what say you? As you review your 'wiring' – what are the key points and actions that you need to understand or pursue?
- \_ And as you pursue your faith, what are those actions to ensure?

*Okay – you are still reading and that is good but what about your efforts to write down your thoughts or actions needed in your notebook? I'll give you two more of my examples to see if those help. Here goes:*

**Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup> File # 2 = Questions & Considerations.**

This is a good one because I will probably circle back to this to review and to revise as needed. **First – who am I?** Well on the outside I am most likely viewed as above average but I know I am so much more. God has equipped me to learn, to grow and to succeed. **Second – Why am I here?** I am blessed with my family and with a job that enabled me to pursue my purpose. **Third – Where am I going?** I know my that salvation is set but I have things to achieve, places to see and lessons yet to learn. I am excited to do this with my family and where I can, I want to help others. My motto (Faith, Service, Integrity & Desire) enables me for the framework that I want to build from.

I also realize I need to be careful – I will work hard to succeed in my life but I want to find the balance so that I can also enjoy time with my family. I also want to work at reading my Bible daily and in opening my heart and mind to the Holy Spirit (I need God's counseling).

As to the adventures – I have to ponder those more to see how best I can enable them over time. Not sure how or when, I'll keep this open.

**Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup> File # 3 = How am I wired?**

I like this 'my birth, my past experiences, my lifestyle and pursuits' as key points that I need to think more about. I'm going to take some time to ponder this and then determine what makes sense to jot down as to things I need to stop doing, things I want to pursue and how I will do these. I know that God has enabled me - thank you God! I'm going to find ways to do what I need to do. More to come.

*So there you go – some examples from my notebook. I hope they help give you some ideas as to what type of things you need to make note of.*

## 3.0 - Thoughts

Now that you have all the above reviewed and under your belt (as they say), I hope you are starting to think (per our chapter 2.0 challenge). For example: “does any of this make sense, should I be doing some things differently?” There is nothing wrong in thinking like that. To help lead you forward, please consider these three key thoughts as a framework to build upon.

### [3.1 \(File #4\) - Is heaven a factor?](#)

You have probably have heard the saying - "Heaven is a place on earth" and yes there are so many other descriptions of heaven as well. The big question, **what would you say is heaven?**

**Before you begin: For this subject, we'll build from a Christian perspective but before I touch on those aspects, I have a preliminary question for you. If you were to die today, what would your obituary be - words about a life of good or bad or of nothing significant? (how you answer this will be a factor in what happens after you die)**

If you have not had a chance to think much on life after death but you at least feel you may have something more after you die - than consider this, a **Christian Perspective:**

**First**, ask - would God be pleased with my life, how I've changed, what I'm pursuing? Let's assume you answered yes (you believe in Jesus and you believe you will have a life in heaven).

Then know what the Bible says: **Heaven is a place of . . .**

[Resolution](#) (to the loose ends of our life),

[Altered States](#) (yes in our new bodies and in our relationships),  
[Personal Rewards](#) (for our actions in this life that please God),  
[New Status and Position](#) (there will be responsibilities for us),  
[New Adventures and endless Surprises](#) (we will not just be '*sitting on clouds and playing harps*').

**Second**, now the above is a starting point. If those words above interest you, look up Eccl. 12:14, Matt. 19:27-30, Luke 19:24-26, 1 Cor. 2:9, 1 Cor. 3:12-15 and Rev. 21:1-8 (all of these Bible verses give some good insights to the above words about heaven and what to expect).

**Third**, this is also a wake up call that all should know. That being: “[not everyone will go to heaven](#)“ (just reference Matt. 25:31-46 and then reflect on your life and the legacy you are creating, it all matters). Also ponder your loved ones – will they join you there as well?

If all the above has you starting to think, then answer these questions:

- \_ So, what say you - do you agree?
- \_ Embracing our Christian faith challenges us to learn more on heaven. Do you believe you understand heaven enough or are there more actions you need to pursue?

### [3.2 \(File #5\) - What is your perspective on eternity?](#)

**Before you begin: Let me first do a level set. All this information being shared does tie back into 'The Great Adventure' series. I hope the summary points provided, along with all the quotes I've pulled together, help you to see the value in what Robert's program provides. He is challenging us in many ways and to think of heaven and our time ahead, for once we arrive - is just a start.**

**If you ever get a chance to pursue this program or others by Dr. Robert Lewis and his Men's Fraternity mission, I would recommend your participation. His book and all that I share is to help you to see that there is so much great information out there. Pursue those that you can and build upon the following.**

As men of faith, consider *'Every Man's Adventure with Eternity'*.

Did you know that the decision we make (or not) in regards to our faith, is one of the most important decisions that we will ever make?

For when we decide if we do or do not have a faith, that the rest of our life will be impacted by that decision.

You may not agree with what is stated above and that is okay - just know that I encourage you to consider the following (and to know that this is just a few summary points to help you to think on this further as you should).

Now, if you are a man that is wondering . . . **Am I on track, do I have the right perspectives and priorities, and do I have the right action plan in place for my years ahead?**

Then you may want to consider the following.

First, if you have a faith - whether it be Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Mormonism, Christian or whatever, do you know the differences between them?

Second, assuming you have a faith and are trying to pursue it - we assume you have these two questions. a) How good do I have to be to merit heaven? And b) Is there another way to heaven besides being good enough (do we know what good enough is)?

Robert shared the following as a summary view of his life now, based on his Christian faith. I share it as follows because you may see aspects in your life for you to consider.

**The work Jesus has done for me (NOW).**

***He forgives all my sins.*** "When you were dead in your sins, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins." Col. 2:13

***He gives me an eternal life.*** "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life." 1 John 5:11-13

***He makes me a child of God.*** "Yet to all who did receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12

***He guarantees my place in heaven.*** "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body." Philippians 3:20-21

**The work Jesus desires to do in me (NOW).**

***He helps me to experience an abundant life.*** "The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10

***He helps me to do good works.*** "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Ephesians 2:10

***He helps me to love others (for Jesus said . . .).***

***"Love each other as I have loved you."*** John 15:12

***I earn or forfeit rewards in heaven.*** “For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work.” **1 Corinthians 3:11-13**

Now all the above is a lot to consider (thank you for doing so). It all leads back to that big question we must all ask . . .

**do I believe there is something after I die?**

If all the above has you starting to think, then answer these questions:

- \_ So, what say you - do you agree?
- \_ Do you need to pursue other readings, to gain further insight?

### **3.3 (File #6) - Refocusing your life:**

**Before you begin: I share the following to help you as you reflect on the possible need to refocus your life. Consider these as you pursue your years ahead.**

We all should know that there are two ways for going through life; where the first is what most men do - that is by . . .

***Comparing and Competing*** (which tends to be the reactive lifestyle with unhealthy pressures).

Or the second which is the approach we all are encouraged to consider and that is by . . .

***Envisioning and Enjoying*** (which is a proactive lifestyle with healthy pursuits).



This points us to an action that we all should do at least once (now is a good time) and then it would be beneficial to do this periodically as our years unfold. What is that? We each should set aside some time and begin to draft our responses to the following - **Before I die I want to:**

**Be what? Do what? Have what?  
Enjoy what? Leave what?**

Why think and answer these?

Because if we don't ask these questions of ourselves - you know what will happen? We'll end up with what happens to too many men - that is a pity party.

These questions that we ask of ourselves are a good start for our personal plan (also called our "Sacred Ground" by Dr. Robert Lewis) for refocusing our life.

And if you're still not sure you want to make the time for that review, then at least ask yourself if that pity party will be worth it? (and before you answer that - consider the following).

**"I saw that all toil and all achievement spring from one person's envy of another. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind."**

*Ecclesiastes 4:4*

**"Be very careful, then, how you live - not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil."**

*Ephesians 5:15-16*

Thank you for considering the above and as a 'fun reward' for you, the following chuckle is for your consideration:

**Breaking News:**

*The **Pity Train** has just derailed at the intersection of **Suck It Up and Move On**, and crashed into **We All Have Problems**, before coming to a complete stop at **Get Over It**. Any complaints can be forwarded to 1-800-waa-waaa.*

*This is Dr. Sniffle reporting LIVE from Quitchur Complaining.*

***Don't Forget . . .***

***We all slip up from time to time.***

***The challenge:***

***What do we learn from those slip ups?***



When you answer this question from above – know this; you will then have to determine what actions you will have to pursue in order to enable the results you now wish to achieve.

If all the above has you starting to think, then answer these questions:

\_ So, what say you - have have you noted questions or action items that you should pursue next?

\_ If not, then please ask yourself:

What do I want to become? What do I want to do?

What do I want to have? What do I want to enjoy?

What do I want to leave others when I die?

## 4.0 – Considerations

If you are wondering how best to determine what will help you the most - know this. Making the time to read, to learn, considering the what is going well and what is not going well - is the right first steps. But remember that we must also go beyond first steps to succeed.

### 4.1 (File #7) - Time:

**Before you begin: I'll mix things up a bit for the following to see if you're liking what we share as we go. Just remember, life surprises us all the time.**

**First** - who said "I don't know what I should do,  
I only know what I can do" (?)

**Second** - do you know the words written some three thousand years ago that would become a '**top of the charts**' song in 1965?

**Third** - do you know who said "**Men should not just live, they should live well**" (?)

To answer those, let us take the above questions one at a time.

For #1) The '*... know what I can do*' quote?

That quote is from the movie **Star Trek Into Darkness**, and in it, Kirk is telling Spock that he (Kirk) needs to do what he needs to do, regardless of the consequences.

That quote (when I first heard it) just jumped out at me as one that all young men basically get caught up in – that young men do the best they can as they juggle their challenges in life, with their wife, their kids, work, etc. It is the reality check – to do what you have to do.

Yes that is a good place to start from but we must remember that a lifetime of true success, requires more.

For #2) Those words written so long ago, were then popularized in the song ‘**Turn, Turn, Turn**’ from the Byrds in 1965.

Did you know their lyrics were adapted from verses in the **Book of Ecclesiastes**, the third chapter? Those words are shown below.

They are attributed to King Solomon as he had shared what he had learned, what he had struggled with and what he recommended. The key message for us is to remember that life has seasons and how we manage each of those is the key to our success.

To everything (turn, turn, turn). There is a season (turn, turn, turn).

And a time for every purpose, under heaven.

A time to be born, a time to die. A time to plant, a time to reap.

A time to kill, a time to heal. A time to laugh, a time to weep.

To everything (turn, turn, turn). There is a season (turn, turn, turn).

And a time for every purpose, under heaven.

A time to build up, a time to break down. A time to dance, a time to mourn.

A time to cast away stones, a time to gather stones together.

To everything (turn, turn, turn). There is a season (turn, turn, turn).

And a time for every purpose, under heaven.

A time of love, a time of hate. A time of war, a time of peace.

A time you may embrace, a time to refrain from embracing.

To everything (turn, turn, turn). There is a season (turn, turn, turn).

And a time for every purpose, under heaven.

A time to gain, a time to lose. A time to rend, a time to sow.

A time to love, a time to hate. A time for peace, I swear it's not too late.

*We learn that we need to make the time, to review how we are managing the seasons of our life - it is as simple as asking ourselves, “how well am I doing at this time?”*

For #3) Then for the third question asked above, the ‘*Men should . . .*’ quote was from the movie titled ‘**The Immortals**’.

In it, Zeus is shown talking with Theseus about how a man should pursue life. When I heard that quote I thought that it is a good one for we as men to know and to ponder as we work to put the big picture together for our life (where are we at, where do we want to go, what are our priorities, etc).

Now all three of these considerations shared above tie back to how we as men look at life and how we make the decisions that then impact our life (and those of our loved ones). They are intended for us to ask. . .

### **Are we in charge of our life or just reacting?**

One path requires us to plan, to make sacrifices, to honor commitments, to take action and in some cases, not. The other path is the easier one; others are to blame, life is just not fair or maybe tomorrow will be better.

Is this how you view things?

I don't know if you are like me but I'd rather step up to the challenge than just wish for the best.

We all have challenges and seasons of life to work through. Our time is limited and some get more years than others. I know in my extended family we have had some die from cancer, another struggle with and then die from the complications of a brain tumor, one died at 3 weeks of age from SIDs (a long happy life is not guaranteed for anyone).

If all the above has you starting to think, then answer these questions:

\_ So, what say you - do you agree?

\_ Do you have some ideas or actions to note and to pursue?

## 4.2 (File #8) - Adventure Busters:

**Before you begin: Don't overlook the words from above, time is precious and how we use it or waste it is up to each one of us. Now, when on the path of wasting time, those actions will lead us into trouble (regrets). See if you recognize any of the following.**

The challenge for us all is to get control of our life (for those things we can control). It is not something we can keep putting off. Remember, [The Great Adventure](#) is available to each of us if we decide that it is worth pursuing. Our group has learned that Real Men, Dedicated Dads and Proud Grandpas make decisions that impact their loved ones and themselves, that they are glad they made. We then need to know what types of things derail us. For example. . .

Know that: **Wrongheadedness** (ignorance, pride, stubbornness, and foolishness) slows us down and **Wrongdoing** (what could be called our sins of omission and our sins of commission) holds us back. All should know that this '*Double Life*' can trip us up on our life's pursuits.

**Do we want a life that is dysfunctional?** (unstable and in conflict) Like a shallow marriage, children who are wounded, with no direction or cause for our life and Spiritual judgment.

**Or do we want a life that is functional?** (stable and consistent) That is a marriage that is intimate and has trust, children who are of good character, where a Noble Cause is enhanced and Spiritual blessings unfold.

We also learned that men often make the '*horrible mistake of pursuing sexual shortcuts*'. We need to remember that sex is a gift from God for us, that it is a union of souls and bodies and that it has boundaries.

We men can make sex a stumbling block to our great adventure. For your reference, these Bible verses below went along with our discussion and lessons learned (keep them in mind). First, Old Testament wisdom:

*"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."*

**Proverbs 27:17**

And second. there is New Testament wisdom:

*"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." Hebrews 12:1*

The key points for this section is to have insight to those things that can 'bust' our pursuit of **'The Great Adventure'**. There was a lot of great information that we covered and I'll share some of the key points as follows (think of them as pitfalls to be aware of). Be aware of . . .

### **Life-Draining Marriage Problems**

We men need to realize what should not be done when we have issues or problems in our marriage. For example: We withdraw and try to solve the problem alone or we may use intimidation and try to force our wife to adjust to our expectations.

**Proverbs 16:25** remind us *"There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death"* (aka "guys, don't use the wrong approach").

When you remember that your wife is your partner, there are right ways to address challenges. For example: learning and growing (work to understand even if you don't agree, ask why and listen).

### **Life-Defining Wounds**

These wounds are unresolved issues from our past that impacts the quality of a man's life now.

For example, do you have a **Father wound**, an **Overly Controlling Mother wound**, or a **Trauma wound** (abuse, rape, divorce, suicide or death in your family, an awful church experience)? These need to be addressed - get help, pursue the healing (take these wounds head on).

### **Life-Paralyzing Addictions**

Unfortunately, most (those with this) deny they have a problem. Has anyone ever told you - or you have thought that you have a sexual or drug or alcohol or anger or gambling addiction?

Most likely, if you think yes, you do.

You can not beat an addiction by yourself - you need help (a team for counseling & support).

Isolation empowers addictions. We need to be honest, we need to get real and we have to be committed if we want to overcome an addiction.

In closing on the above, I also included the following because of the time frame that was unfolding. It was Friday Nov. 22nd, 2013 and it was the 50th Anniversary of President John F. Kennedy's assassination. I share the following because he was a man who holds a unique spot in history. In one way, he achieved one of the highest offices, that of the President of the United States but in another way, he had his flaws like many men and we can learn from him. So, consider the following.

On the cover of the August 4th, 1961 LIFE magazine that I have is a picture of JFK with his words. . . ***"Any dangerous spot is tenable if brave men will make it so."*** The article inside about him, wrote of the challenges in the world (at that time) and of how Kennedy and his administration were trying to address them. The article closed with these words from a speech he was writing. He wrote ***"In meeting my responsibilities in these coming months, I need your goodwill and your support and, above all, your prayers"***.



In reading that, I thought those words could be applicable to us all for our years ahead. And although I like those words he said and wrote, I was also impressed by the words of his wife, Jacqueline Kennedy who in writing to Nikita Khrushchev on December 1st, 1963 (thanking him and his wife for their sympathies and encouraging ongoing peace efforts).

She wrote... *"While big men know the needs of self-control and restraint - little men are sometimes moved by fear and pride. If only in the future the big men can continue to make the little ones sit down and talk, before they start a fight."*

Yes those quotes are all 50 years old but they still have significant insights into men of today. We must decide, are we Big men, Little men or do we ***Decide 2 Be "Real Men"*** ?

If all the above has you starting to think, then answer these questions:

- \_ So, what say you - are you heading the wrong way in life?
- \_ Or are you stuck with an old wound that is not enabling you to move forward - and if yes – is it time to move forward?

### **4.3 (File #9) - History's Great Adventurers:**

**Before you begin: We all are aware of some great people of the past; our men's group discussed some of history's great adventurers and before I get to them, Robert encouraged us to look at life as follows - with a football game mindset.**

**Would you agree that these times of our life are valid?**

We're warming up = **Ages 1 to 20** (we're getting ready for the big time).

**20 to 40** = the first half (we are heads down and charging forward).

Half time = **40 to 50** (these years are when men are deciding what are the changes now needed? Adjustment plans are put in place).

**50 to the last day** = the second half (our accomplishments and goals not achieved are our focus).

Now, before you determine if you agree or not with the above - Robert also asked us to consider the following – that many men are stronger in one half of their life than they are in other.

**Consider these examples:**

Men who were strong in their first half of their life like King David and King Solomon. And men who were strong in the second half of their life like Moses and Joshua.

Yes there were other figures from history besides those names known from the Bible. There were other men who showed they could live a complete life of success. Robert shared one that most of us would not remember, that being Caleb.

If you go and read **Numbers 13:1** through **14:32**, you would see how he in the first half of his life was successful. Unfortunately most of the other young men of his generation were the type that wandered and squandered their strengths and opportunities.

Then if you go on to read in **Joshua 14:6-15**, you would see that the raw faith from Caleb's youth, grew into the faith that he maintained in his older years. He did not make the mistake of most older men, he did not settle down and retire, he continued to fight and to succeed in all that he pursued (from his youth, all the way to the end of his days).

So as you ponder this, I'll close with what all of us men should know:

- a) Our background is never the deciding factor in life, the faith that we pursue is.
- b) A real adventurer lives by an inner vision, not by outer circumstances or cultural pressure.
- c) Our greatest victories are decades in the making, a great marriage, noble character, healthy and productive children, and great accomplishments.
- d) All men need to regularly invest in their marriage, to make their wife their best friend, to learn who they are and who they are not, to live within their means, and to get to know God personally.
- e) That older men need to know - don't retire to relax, but refocus and to build on your strengths, to clean up unfinished business, to reconcile, to forgive and to apologize, to make restitution (when needed); to discover your noble cause and to serve others.

What we learned and what you should know is that all men are on their journey and what successes, failures or adventures are yet ahead are unique to each of us. We just have to decide how we will navigate our way through the ups and downs that unfold in our life. Start with . . . are you a first half or a second half type of guy or one working on a full life of successes?

With that answered, then ponder your years yet ahead. Know that hard decisions and sacrifices have to be made if you want to succeed in the years ahead, in order to ensure you have the great adventures you'll be glad you have. It is never too late to pursue the right things.

If all the above has you starting to think, then answer these questions:

- \_ So, what say you - do you agree or have more questions?
- \_ Do you have some ideas or actions to note and to pursue?

*Yep, I can imagine on this file you are wondering . . . what do I write here for this one? Well, not every file will prompt an action at this time but it could in some time down the road. You may just want to make a note as to your initial thoughts and then circle back. Here is mine.*

**Jan. 9<sup>th</sup> File # 9 = History's Great Adventurers.**

I like the football scenario summary and yes, I'm in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half - so I want to make sure my writings are on track, working to get published, etc. As to history figures – I like the summary on Caleb but I am more like a second half guy like Joshua. My good intentions during the first half of my life were okay but I now want to be more focused to ensure my progress on my purpose (my writings, helping others, etc).

*There you go – simple to start is okay and add to it when needed.*

**4.4 (File #10) - What is your Unique Design?**

**Before you begin:** For section 4, we addressed some interesting information about understanding our 'unique design'. I've summarized some key points for you:

**a) Remember, every man is intended to have a great adventure (God's plan for us).**

**b) Consider these words from Peter Drucker; "Most Americans do not know what their strengths are. When you ask them, they look at you with a blank stare or they respond in terms of subject knowledge, which is the wrong answer." We need to pursue the following.**

If you are a man of faith, you should know that every person has been uniquely crafted and gifted by God to perform various meaningful tasks of service to Him and to others.

That means that each of us should know that understanding our own unique design provides these practical benefits:

- You can gain a deeper appreciation for our special God given gifts and abilities.
- You learn to evaluate work and service opportunities with greater clarity and confidence.
- You can discover the invaluable insights for connecting better with all kinds of people.
- You experience a new freedom to employ your unique design in more meaningful ways.

Why does this matter? Because if we don't really understand the gifts, the talents and the responsibilities that we have, then we not only short change ourselves and our loved ones, sadly we also dishonor God who enabled us.

As you ponder the above, see if you recognize these words from John Cougar Mellencamp's song - '**Jack & Diane**'. The song was of the days of youth, and of thinking that we can do anything (being confident & no worries), but then with these words on reality:

*'Oh yeah life goes on. . . long after the thrill of livin is gone.'*

Yes, the excitement of our youth can quickly change into: where have the years gone, why am I not ahead as I wanted or why have I not achieve my goals? Is this you? So if you have regrets and for whatever reason, are not where you want to be in life – then know that you can make decisions to change. You just have to want to make the hard decisions and make changes.

If you agree, then remember:

*“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Ephesians 2:10*

If all the above has you starting to think, then answer these questions:

- \_ So, what say you - do you understand your unique design?
- \_ Do you have some ideas or actions to note and to pursue?

*This is another one of those that may be a challenge as to the 'what do I need to jot down at this time?' Here is what I noted for myself, maybe it will help trigger some ideas for you.*

**Jan. 10<sup>th</sup> File # 10 = What is my Unique Design?**

I had to stop and just think back over my years as to how do I fit in, what have I experienced, what do I like, dislike, what am I learning as to what God is teaching me, etc. etc.

For me, I find it interesting that my Mom was 30 and my Dad was 33 when I was born, that my life was progressing but my faith life really awoken when I turned 30 – how I felt when I needed God's help and His Holy Spirit talked to me, my faith decision then, the comfort and peace I received and how I've been working to grow in faith since then.

And as I think of who I am, what drives me – I see God at work, He (the Holy Spirit) is whispering, guiding me forward. I have so many writings now in process – on growing as men, on growing in faith and on encouragements for my extended family members. I also know I need to be careful and to stay in prayer – for I want God to tell me if I am heading down a wrong path. I am so excited for what I am pursuing and I thank God for His work within me!

*There you go – my last example of a notebook writing. You have to decide what you will write, how it starts, what you circle back to and expand over time. I can not stress enough – please make the time to start writing down what comes to mind. You will not regret it.*

## 5.0 – What Next?

I assume with all the above shared, you are starting to wonder what next steps should you be considering. That is goodness. Coasting along thinking everything is good or okay is a risking approach to life.

Ponder, pursue, assess, adjust - are the key actions for us as men to grow and to achieve the success we are really glad about. For example, consider the following insights.

### 5.1 (File #11) - Evidence of your Unique Design:

**Before you begin: By now you should be pondering your 'design' - the what makes you tick? If not, you're making a mistake. So, think a bit on that and then read the following.**

First, consider these level set nuances (to help you on pursuing and understanding your unique design). They are provided to help you to get a broader perspective.

First - what are the examples of our uniqueness? They should be understood as:

- a) Our physical make up is distinct.**
- b) Our perceptions are not the same.**
- c) Our styles of communication differ.**
- d) Our approaches to learning vary greatly.**

Second - remember that everyone is uniquely crafted and gifted by God to perform meaningful tasks of service to Him and to others. We are here for a purpose - do you know what yours is?

Consider these words below from **Psalm 139:13-16** (this is applicable to each of us):

*"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in  
my mother's womb.  
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful, I know that full well.  
My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place,  
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.  
Your eyes saw my unformed body;  
all the days ordained for me were written in your book before  
one of them came to be."*

Now, with the above flipping your 'thinking' switch on - let me add to the above with this. Bullets a, b, c & d identified above is your starting point. You may be similar to some family members or friends but when you really boil it down, you are a unique man.

The good news to add with that awareness of your unique design, is that we are enabled with some additional abilities when we pursue our Christian faith. For those of you already pursuing your faith, you're probably seeing those gifts - what we should view as 'Faith Gifts' (and you need to know that we receive those at our conversion to our Christian faith).

Please note - all that I share is based on the assumption that you have a Christian belief or are pursuing a Christian faith. If you just are not sure or have any questions, don't forget you can always use our **D2B** Contact Form (as mentioned before) and let us know of any questions.

First, we need to understand and probably agree that some talents that we have are enabled from our birth (we Christians view these as Grace Gifts crafted by God at conception). Those could be musical, math or memory type talents or they could be speed, agility, strength, etc. I'll assume that you agree - most may not assume or believe those types of talents or abilities are gifts from God - you either inherit those or you're just lucky to get them.



So lets move beyond those and talk about those who have committed to their Christian faith; they will find that some gifts are enabled at their conversion (being '*born again*').

There are two types of Faith Gifts and they are understood as follows:

Conversion Gifts = to turn away from self toward God, according to Jesus (we are born again).

Spiritual Gifts = are unique God given abilities that He uses to enrich and to empower His original design within us.

For those gifts, here is what the Bible tell us of . . .

### **Conversion Gifts (from John 3:1-8):**

*"Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him." Jesus replied, **"Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."***

*"How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered, **"Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."***

**Spiritual Gifts (from 1 Corinthians 12:4-11):**

*"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and He distributes them to each one, just as He determines."*

Yes, all the above is heavily focused on those in faith or wanting to pursue their faith. If you don't want to consider these that is okay (your choice). Just remember, each of us has a unique design and some just may have different gifts than what you have and that is okay.

With the above, does it have you thinking, then answer these questions:

- \_ So, what say you - do you agree?
- \_ Or do you have some ideas or actions to note and to pursue?

**5.2 (File #12) - D2B a Good Example:**

**Before you begin: Now these words below are to give you a 'curve ball', to see if you are paying attention and pondering all that you should (a type of midpoint test).**

**Remember that everything that you think, say and do are all aspects that define your character. Being good and wanting to help others when you can are real nice, but ask yourself - is that all that I want?**

What about, I want to advance in my career . . . or, I want to be a better husband . . . or, I want to be a better father, etc. We each can be better but we have to want it, to understand what it takes to achieve those and to know what abilities we have and what we need in order to make these dreams, goals, desires come to fruition.

So thank you for holding on and in working your way through any difficult times that may arise in everyone's life. You never know who is watching you – which brings up - are you a good example to others?

**Remember... If you can't be a good example,**



**then you'll just have to be a horrible warning to others.**

And yes, the picture above is something that would catch most of our eyes (guys are like that). The words are to poke fun at ourselves.

Yes a little 'bad humor' as they say, to see if you're paying attention. Don't forget, as we've shared over all the chapters above - we all are unique, we have talents and it is whether we use those talents for the great adventure ahead . . . is up for us to decide (and while we pursue our life, know that others will be watching and deciding if you are a good or a not so good example to follow).

If all the above has you starting to think, then answer these questions:

- \_ So, what say you - do you agree?
- \_ Do you have some ideas or actions to note and to pursue?

### 5.3 (File #13) - Do you care?

**Before you begin: Ponder - what do you care about . . . your health, happiness or success or of those things for others? If you are not sure than know that you can pursue this survey as well if you wish. What this survey action does is to provide those who take it, a profile of their personality (aka an insight to those things that you should be aware of, to care about).**

So if you do care, you have to want to better understand:

My Strengths - what are these core aspects?

My Viewpoint - what perspective do I use to view life?

My Motivators - what are the wants and needs that make me come alive?

The Subject Matter - what resources do I enjoy working with the most?

The Abilities - what actions describe how I go about doing things?

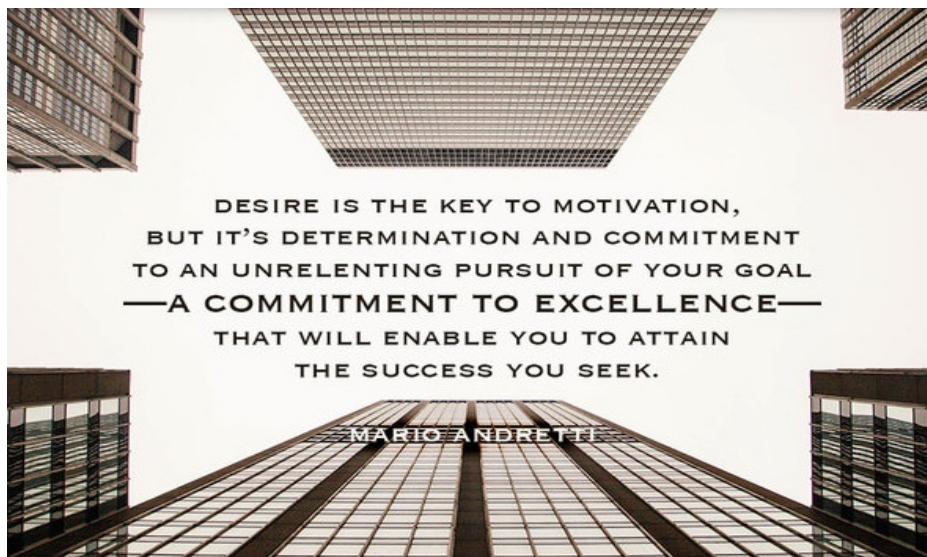
The Setting - what environment best expresses who I am?

My Relationships - what type of relationships do I work best with?

There is a “**Servant By Design**” survey available to us all. Do you have to take this survey? No. Will it help you if you do? Probably yes but that is only if you want to gain a better perspective of who you are, why you do what you do, what things motivate you, etc.

Consider this: if we better understand the various personality types, not only ours but in doing so we can better recognize the personality types of those that we interact with. If you would like to take the survey that we did, know that it is an online survey that anyone can take (for a fee) and it can be found at <https://youruniquedesign.com>

In closing on this consideration, remember that life is a challenging journey that we all are engaged on and it all comes back to the key questions we ask of ourselves. Are you asking them?



If all the above has you starting to think, then answer these questions:

- \_ So, what say you - does pursuing this survey make sense?
- \_ If you think so, then make the plans to pursue this soon.

## 5.4 (File #14) - Are you a Servant by Design?

**Before you begin: I'm sure you are wondering - what is this? It relates to the survey that I mentioned in the previous section (above). For those of us who took it, we gained some good insights into our personality profile. Although I would encourage all men to pursue that type of a survey, but if you don't - you just limit the type of information that is available to yourself. You decide.**

What I share in the following is to give an idea as to the type of insights that can be found by those who pursue this survey.

**First** – Too often, too many men don't “**Know Thyself**” (an ancient Greek aphorism). Most likely though, we assume that all would agree that over time we each have a pretty good awareness to the type of personality we have, our strengths and weaknesses, etc.

What most probably think though is they are not quite sure how they would describe or put their own personality into the right awareness and perspective.

**Second** - The "Servant by Design" online survey provides a specific profile that can be leveraged for a better understanding of ourselves in regards to the personality aspects that we have and the environment in which we best excel within.

You may be wondering - **what does this all mean and should I care?**

To answer this, you must ask of yourself the seven questions listed in the previous section (on strengths, perspective, motivation, resources, abilities, environment and relationships).

Then know the following . . .



If you can answer those or at least get good feedback from loved ones or trusted friends on them, then you are on a path toward insights. It all comes back to getting honest feedback.

If you can get that, then pursue it so that you can continue those things that help you and you can stop or adjust those things that keep you from your goals.

Now to close on this challenge of gaining insight, remember that the few questions shared already are just the starting point. Those that want to succeed, ask of themselves all the tough questions as well.

For example:

**What should I start or stop doing?**

**Am I managing my finances where I not only pay my expenses, I also have a savings plan and a long range plan for retirement?**

**Do my loved ones see in me the type of husband, father or grandfather that they are proud of?**

Are there more? Yes, we just have to make the time and determine the good, hard questions that we need to ask of ourselves. Therefore, do yourself a favor and make the time to think of those good hard questions and then pursue the following questions below.

\_ So, what say you - are these questions above the right ones and if there are others – what would they be?

\_ Do you have some ideas or actions to note and to pursue?

## 5.5 (File #15) - Who am I (in 20 words or less)?

**Before you begin:** For section 5, we now come to this wrap up action item and it is a way of seeing how honest you are with yourself. Think of this as working on writing your own type of personal summary. To help you to understand what this means and the direction we're heading, first consider these words and then continue:

**Honorable, Dedicated, Faithful, Brave, maybe even Innovative and Compassionate.** But those are just a starting point.

Would you use any of those words to describe yourself? If you take a few minutes and look back to review the words shared in the previous sessions covered above, you will see we had pursued a survey action that was based on your input. For those who took the available survey, you have information on your various characteristics (how compassion, logic, imagination, values, and/or other aspects exist within you and how often we use some of our capabilities versus others). So what?

### **The key things to keep in mind:**

If you really understand the characteristics, the strengths, the abilities etc. that you have - could you describe those in any type of a brief and accurate way? Go ahead and in 20 words or less, try to write this out (this would be your own type of personal summary).

It all comes down to having a desire to understand aspects of ourselves and enabling us to have insight as to those characteristics in others.

Yes the above may be something different.

\_ So, what say you - can you accurately describe yourself?

\_ If you can – are you good with that description?



## 6.0 - Action Time

You are now near the end of our topics and discussions that we pursued as we learned from Dr. Robert Lewis' program '**The Great Adventure.**'

Remember, thought without action is just that - thought. Don't get caught with the various **would'a, could'a** or **should'a** regrets that too many have. Challenge yourself to start doing things that will change the path you're on toward those actions and achievements that will make sure you are pursuing the life that you want to have.

### 6.1 (File #16) - BHQs 2.0

**Before you begin: This file brings us back to some of the additional BHQs that we need to ask of ourselves (reference File #2 for the initial Big Hairy Questions). Based on the answers you state below, know that at this time, you have to start making some hard decisions.**

Now this file 16 has us thinking of those those events that can be called, our defining moments. Each of us, whether we realizes it or not, has these. Those are when we pause, reflect and begin to determine . . .

And by the above, I mean:

- **Who do I want to be** (the type of man, husband, friend, co-worker)?
- **What do I want to pursue with my life** (to do, to achieve and to leave behind)?
- **How much effort** (of my blood, sweat and tears) **will I give before I quit** (stop or give up)?



Now there was a lot more than those few good questions but for you, reading this now, they are a sufficient start for what you need to think about. And while you ponder these questions above and your answers, take a few minutes to read these two sets of words from scripture.

The first set is from Moses and the second set is from Joshua ...

*"See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction.*

*For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him."* **Deuteronomy 30:15-19**

*"But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served or the gods in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."* **Joshua 24:15**

What then is the take away from these that you have?

If you can not look back over your life so far and see some 'defining moments' – then you should be wondering if you are just coasting through life. If you see some 'defining moments' and you want to make sure you will have the impact on your life (as you wish) going forward, then make the time to read those additional three BHQs stated above and to write out your answers to each of them.

If you do so - what you have written is now your first pass game plan for your next year ahead. Keep those words written available and then read them periodically as you begin to make action plans.

You can also adjust them as insights come and know this – at a minimum, you can take those answers written and review them in context to File #17 (below), leveraging your insights as to your wiring diagram, your compass and your purpose statement.

And BTW, it would be a good idea to review all of those BHQs shared every couple of years or so.

If all the above has you starting to think, then answer these questions:

- \_ So, what say you - do you agree with the actions recommended?
- \_ Do you have some ideas or actions to note and to pursue?

## 6.2 (File #17) - Wired 2 Achieve

**Before you begin:** This file will now wrap up these sessions that we pursued. Think of the following as a key walk away from **"The Great Adventure"**.

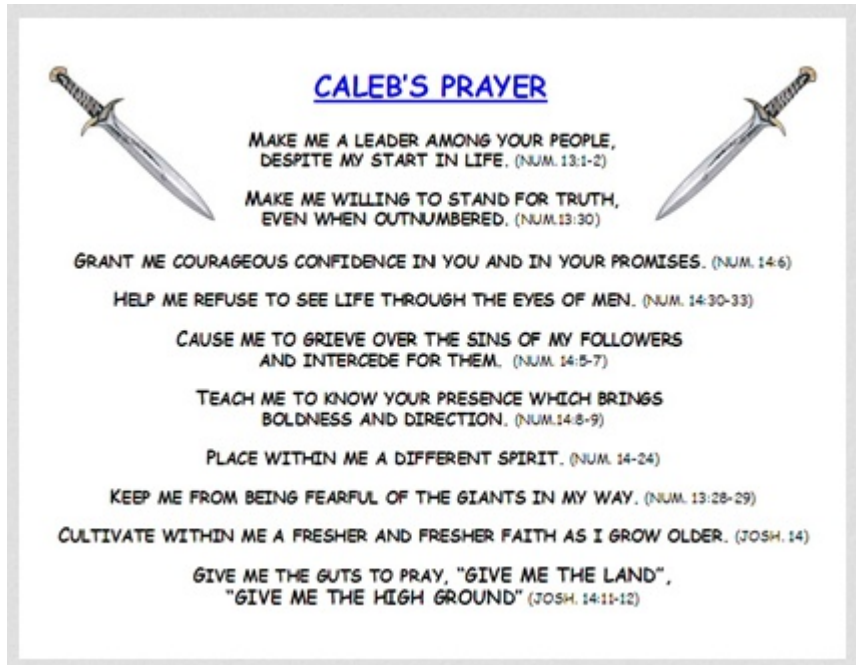
**And please note:** Caleb's Prayer as drafted and shown in the visual below, reflects the strong life he lived. Is that prayer one that you would consider and pursue or does it trigger a more specific prayer that represents your life and the goals that you have?

Our program closeout had these key points shared and they focused on the **Sword of Manhood**. Which reminds us that real manhood is one of a fight - the good fight (and Paul's words in **1 Timothy 1:18** are a great framework for us all . . . to stay in faith and to fight the good fight as we pursue our lives going forward).

**We remember** the Inward thrust of the sword (for ourselves) . . .  
**to fight against passivity and doubt.**

**We pursue** the  
forward thrust of the  
sword . . . **to**  
**conquer the**  
**challenges in our**  
**lives and to have a**  
**clear vision for our**  
**future.**

**We anticipate** the  
upward thrust of the  
sword...  
**to celebrate a life**  
**well lived, with the**  
**expectation of**  
**success and more to come.**



Caleb's prayer as shown to the right is just one way that we can pray  
and pursue our life. **What say you?**

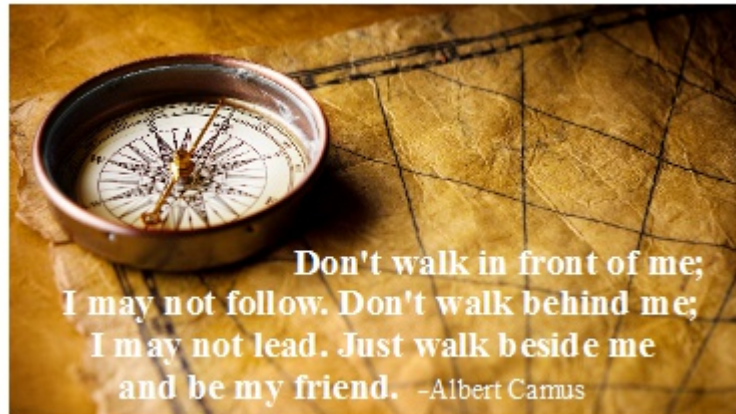
And in seeing those words and in remembering all that we covered, we  
should take a moment to reflect on the key insights now shared, that you  
can leverage. For example:

Our **wiring diagram** helps us understand how we as men are wired.  
It helps us to understand the factors that have impacted us and guide us  
as we live our lives going forward.

We should ask - do I understand how I am '*wired*'?

Please do not skip over this – make the time to think on this and  
to jot down your thoughts.

Our **compass** is that list we have created and will adjust as needed. The '*before I die*', the '*I want to . . .*', and the '*sacred ground*' actions that will help us to move forward on those actions critical to us.



So then, we ask . . . **Do you have a compass, a plan or whatever to guide you as you now move forward in your life?**

And remember, our **purpose statement** (remember the personal 20 word write up that we recommended earlier) is how we now understand our unique design and the skills God has given us so that we have a foundation to build upon.



So ask yourself: Do I know my purpose, why I am here and what I want to achieve? If not, now is the time to start thinking on this.

To close, I encourage all men on your pursuit of the great adventure that is before you - to ask - what is my take away on all of this?

- If you are not sure of '*how you are wired*' – go back to File # 3 and review that information and what you noted about yourself.
- And if you are not sure of '*your compass*' – go back to File # 6 and review those questions and what they prompted from you (before I die, I want to . . . ).
- Last of all, if you are not sure of '*your purpose statement*' – go back to File # 15 and review the words that you wrote down to describe yourself (your '*in 20 words or less*' self description).

With the above, you have a great start on understanding who you are, what makes you 'tick', what you want to pursue and how you will do so in going forward. Also know, that you can contact us (for questions or whatever) at any time via our Contact Form:

(which can be accessed via <http://decide2be.weebly.com/contact-form.html> ).

If all the above has you starting to think on your internal wiring, then answer these questions:

\_ So, what say you - did anything from the above surprise you?

\_ Do you now have some ideas or actions to note and to pursue?

*Please know this. Looking back over your life and having a good idea as to what makes you as you are, can then be used to make decisions as to where you are at and where you want to go in your time ahead (which also ties into your compass).*

*Force yourself to get out of the 'reaction mode'. Quit letting life push you up, down and all around. You can make the hard decisions and the sacrifices needed to move forward – just do it!*

## 7.0 (File #18) – Any More?

There you go, plenty to ponder from **”The Great Adventure”** as I summarized those sessions that our mens group pursued (and yes, along with some of my additional items). Everything shared is for you to consider and I encourage you to decide upon them as you deem best. **Now was all that shared, will it be of benefit?** For some yes, and for others, maybe just some aspects and that is okay – you get to decide.

And **Why?** Because if you have read and thought over all the above, you now have a greater insight as to what we men tend to think about or have failed to consider. But also know that all of this information is just the start that all of us as men should consider.

If you are interested in digging deeper on all that I shared in this book, then I encourage you to pursue the following:

First - the [www.mensfraternity.com](http://www.mensfraternity.com) web site is your gateway to the Men’s Fraternity program referenced in this book, as well as to the other two programs that preceded it.

I’ve participated in all three of those programs and they are very insightful. I recommend them all.

Second - our [www.Decide2Be.weebly.com](http://www.Decide2Be.weebly.com) web site is updated weekly with the quick reads that will help you as you continue to grow. It also has the Contact Form that is available for you to send us any comments, questions or recommendations (and we will respond as quickly as we can).

And most important - **D2B Inspired** in all that you do.

Third – and before we go further, take a look at the following and then consider our eleven week challenge (you are invited to try it and to see where those lead you). Why ?

Because the choices we make are like the paths we take.

**“Walk with the dreamers, the believers, the courageous, the cheerful, the planners, the doers, the successful people with their heads in the clouds and their feet on the ground. Let their spirit ignite a fire within you to leave this world better than when you found it.”** (Wilfred Peterson).

And don't forget that **INSPIRATION** is what influences and stimulates us. Do you inspire others? Embrace the dream to do so. Jonas Salk's words below are also great ones on this challenge.

**“Hope lies in dreams, in imagination and the courage of those who dare to make dreams into reality.”**

Now as to the framework for the our challenge – do you remember the visual and words shared in chapter 5.2 (being a Good Example)? Well the following is of that same approach - to challenge yourselves for the weeks ahead. Here goes:

*But before I get to those 'weekly challenges', let me share these words. I hope all of the above has helped you to start thinking with a broader view of life and you are now working to jot down some thoughts and hopefully even working to take some actions that are now needed.*

*In the pages above – I have shared 17 considerations (what I call files 1 through 17). Yes I have even more files to share and that is what I will pursue via books 2 & 3. Should you do what I encourage? That is a good question. Just start thinking and decide what actions you want to pursue. All the above are re-enforced by the the weekly challenges that I now share in the following pages (file 18). Think of it as a way to take a framework of the information shared and to try pursuing it (like a test drive).*

*Best wishes and thank you all.*



\_Week 1 - **"Decide 2 Be Better" Challenge.**

First, you need to remember that you are not much different than most of us; good intentions but wondering where best to start. So where or how do you start? Know that it doesn't matter, just start.

If you don't, then accept the fact that these words that Dr. Robert Lewis reminded us of – the lyrics from the song "**Nowhere Man**" (by the Beatles) will end up applying to you.

*He's a real Nowhere Man, sitting in his Nowhere Land.*

*Making all his nowhere plans for nobody.*

*Doesn't have a point of view, knows not where he's going to.*

*Isn't he a bit like you and me?*

*Nowhere Man, please listen, you don't know what you're missing.*

*Nowhere Man, the world is at your command.*

*He's as blind as he can be, just sees what he wants to see.*

*Nowhere Man, can you see me at all?*

*Nowhere Man, don't worry, take your time, don't hurry.*

*Leave it all 'til somebody else lends you a hand.*

*Doesn't have a point of view, knows not where he's going to.*

*Isn't he a bit like you and me?*

Second, know that we men can quickly race through the years and find us tired, older and in some case being a nowhere man. The challenge is for us to take on life, to do those things that make us glad for who we are and what we become. At a minimum, we can become better men.

We just have to try by pursuing the . . .

***"Decide 2 Be Better" Challenge.***

**We all can want to be better, whether we are just depends if we take the actions required to be a better person.**

**It starts with the desire to improve and is completed by the actions that we take that work us toward our goals.**

**What those actions are depends on us.**

And don't forget,

**"You can't live a positive life with a negative mind."**



Week 2 - **"Decide 2 Be A Dreamer"** Challenge.

This week, make the time to ponder and to write down your dreams.  
Such as:

**What excites you; what would give you that feeling of significant accomplishment or what would you like to be known for?**

**Our dreams are the big things that may be just a bit beyond our abilities but we can't get there if we at least don't take that first step.**

The challenge is to not over think this. Think – what do I want to have by the end of this year, in five years, in ten years? Once you have jotted down what you want to have or to achieve by some date, then you have to jot down what type of actions you will have to pursue in order to achieve those goals, dreams or whatever.

Having these jotted down, now has your first step completed. Put these in a place that you will see often. Realize sacrifices have to be made (your time or finances).

You can do it, just start!

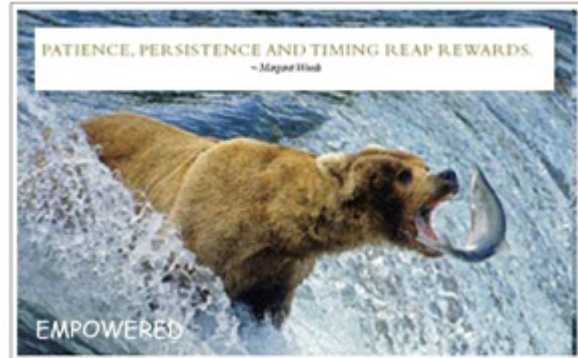
\_Week 3 - *"Decide 2 Be Empowered"* Challenge.

This week, first consider . . .  
Do you feel empowered, or do you see it in your family and friends?

Second, this is a **WARNING**.

**You are entering a  
NO DRAMA ZONE.**

**Be prepared to leave your  
baggage behind and become that empowered man you  
were born to be.**



Although the words above are to help you ponder the challenge of empowerment and to give you a bit of a chuckle. Just remember that in order **to succeed in life...**

- (a) Know who you are and who you are not.
- (b) Trust God's Word and plans for you.

\_Week 4 - *"Decide 2 Be You"* Challenge.

No, we're not talking about the current you - we're talking about the you that you are glad you became. For example, Da Vinci painted one '*Mona Lisa*' and Beethoven composed one '*Fifth Symphony*'. Which leads to yes, God made one version of you and He custom designed you for a one-of-a-kind assignment. When God gives an assignment, he also gives the skill.

So if you are the 'you' that you want to be, then continue on. But, if you are not happy with who you are and the path you are on, then start identifying and pursuing the changes required.

\_Week 5 - "**Decide 2 Be Driven**" Challenge.

The dictionary explains 'driven' as:

- 1) **Compelled by personal need (striving to achieve personal goals because of a strong need or inner compulsion).**
- 2) **Having a particular thing as a principal cause (each of us needs to determine what being driven means for us personally).**

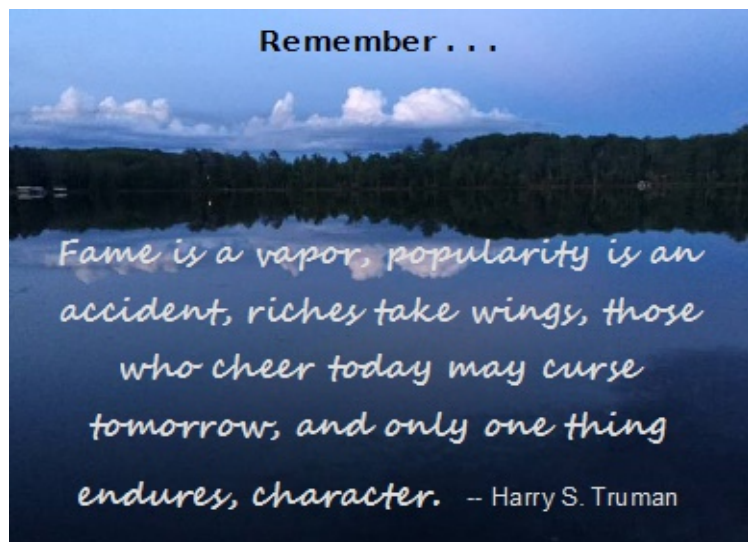
**“To become what we want, we must do what we don’t.”**

And being 'driven' requires a passion, a dedication, a perseverance to do what is needed over the weeks, months and years ahead. You can do what as to be done – commit to it!

\_Week 6 - "**Decide 2 Be Reflective**" Challenge.

As in making the time required, doing a review (reflect) of the things you’ve done and of the things you would like to do is key to determining if you are on track in life as you wish. And if you want to join us and pursue a life as a REAL Man, a man of character, than know this:

**We know that how we live our life determines our position in eternity and that it is not too late to start doing the right things because, the only difference between the SAINT and the SINNER is that every Saint has a past and every Sinner has a future.**



Week 7 - "**Decide 2 Be Not That Guy**" Challenge.

Now this is one of the most dangerous topics that any man can get tripped up by. First, consider these words:

*"With persuasive words she led him astray; she seduced him with her smooth talk. All at once he followed her like an ox going to the slaughter, like a deer stepping into a noose till an arrow pierces his liver, like a bird darting into a snare, little knowing it will cost him his life. Now then, my sons, listen to me; pay attention to what I say. Do not let your heart turn to her ways or stray into her paths. Many are the victims she has brought down; her slain are a mighty throng."* Proverbs 7:21-26

Second, consider these words below (although I shared them a couple of years back, they were good words of warning then and they are good words still today). And this situation is one that would not be applicable to you, maybe you have a friend who is at risk – help them if you can.

**Could this be you or someone you know?**

The man was driving to work as he usually does.

Things were going well at work, his family was good, etc. As he approached downtown, he saw a pretty woman - she smiled at him and he smiled back.

The next day, the same thing unfolded - the same pretty gal was there and this time she waved at him and he waved back at her. This continued to unfold and he began to look forward to seeing her, smiling and waving.

But then he got to thinking "Wait a minute . . . where is this leading to . . . what should I do?"

Nervous that he may make a bad decision and put his family at risk - he told his good friend what was happening and asked him . . . "What should I do?" His friend replied,

**"Take another route to work!"**

**Remember:** Temptation is one of the many challenges we need to take on in life. What that is for each of us and how we react to it is up to each of us to address.

**Don't be that guy, do what you have to in order to avoid any temptation that could arise.**

Week 8 - "**Decide 2 Be a Real Man**" Challenge.

For this week ahead, consider our **Real Man** challenge. Because real men have the following:

**Real Conclusions** as to life,

**Written Convictions** for their values and goals to pursue,

**Friends who they are Accountable to** as honest mirrors to tell us the right and wrong in our life that we may be pursuing.

If you see the above as factors in your life, then you are on the right track. If you are not sure, consider these challenges that Dr. Robert Lewis states that that **Real Men** do.

Would you agree?

*A REAL MAN includes his wife in envisioning their future.*

*A REAL MAN accepts spiritual responsibility for his family.*

*A REAL MAN is willing to say "I'm sorry" and "Forgive me" to his family and friends.*

A **REAL MAN** discusses household responsibilities with his wife and makes sure they are evenly distributed. He also consults with his wife on all major financial decisions. A **REAL MAN** follows through with commitments he has made to His wife. A **REAL MAN** provides financially for his family's basic living expenses. A **REAL MAN** frequently tells his wife what he likes and about her. A **REAL MAN** deals with distractions so he can unite with his family. A **REAL MAN** initiates family traditions. A **REAL MAN** makes the time to give all his children practical instruction about life, which in turn gives them confidence with their peers. A **REAL MAN** honors his wife in public, and lets her and their children into the interior of his life. A **REAL MAN** makes sure he and his wife have drawn up a will and arranged a well conceived plan for their children in case of death.



The **typical man** doesn't understand **Multitasking**...

Some would say...

It is the art of just doing twice as much as you should, half as well as you could.

**But REAL MEN take up the challenge and do all things with pride.**

And . . . a **REAL MAN** encourages his wife to grow as an individual and provides time for her to pursue her own personal interests.

For those of you not married, you're wondering, what should you do?

Look at this same list again and consider the characteristics required: those being faith, communication, commitment, honor, integrity, compassion and sacrifice. If you are not seeing aspects of those in your life, just start pursuing them. They are a great foundation to pursue.

**Week 9 - "Decide 2 Be Caring" Challenge.**

For this week's challenge, I think all would agree, that we as men, probably are not as caring as we should be. That is a big challenge for us. How we interpret that and pursue it is up to each of us.

And per this Christmas time chuckle - I just hope it and the words below help to encourage you as you take on the life that you are glad you did.



**remember. . . How we care for others is a great start.**

**Week 10 - "Decide 2 Be Innovative" Challenge.**

For this challenge, compare your definition of being innovative versus what the dictionary states:

“The action or process of being innovative – a new method, product, idea, etc.”





So to close on this - would you consider yourself an innovative person?

If your answer to this is no – why not?

We all can be innovative, just remember. . .

**It helps to have good intentions but it is even better when we have good insights.**

Week 11 - "*Decide 2 Be an Achiever*" Challenge.

For this final week of our eleven week challenge, first take a few minutes to review and jot down the different things you've taken on and you have completed in the past ten weeks. You'll see by that list that you already have shown you are an achiever. **The key, what is next?**



**What can we do? "*Decide 2 Be an Achiever...*"**

**"Don't be pushed by your problems, be led by your dreams."**

Ralph Waldo Emerson

And yes . . . after I made and posted this picture and quote above, I saw that I spelled 'Emerson' wrong. Sorry about that, and just another example that good intentions only go so far.

I left that error as is so that I have a reminder for myself – that is to try new things, to do the best that I can and if I make mistakes along the way, that is okay. Apologize when needed (yes I am sorry about that Mr. Emerson), learn from your mistakes and keep pushing forward.

There you go, **TRMF Vol. 1 (D2B the Simple Man or Much More)** is now complete. I hope you got some good ideas to consider and you began to pursue actions that are now taking your life down a new path.

If you like this book and want more – to push yourself even further, then watch for our Volume 2 to come out soon (**D2B a Growing Man or a Stumbling One**).

Till then, know this. Our country needs more men to be better, to serve, to lead, to teach, to do what is needed across all our communities.

**We wish you success in all that you pursue!**

**Oops, I almost forgot . . .**

In the **Prologue** I share words about the worst 12 hours of my life. There is actually so much that unfolded that day, as well as over the weeks, months and years since then. Although all of that may be best suited for a separate book, I'll share the following:

Leading up to that day in April, I was trying to be a good man, a good husband and a good father.

Having a tragedy unfold in your life and having it impact your family and extended family is something that you never expect, a *'that happens to others'* type of thing.

That day was like a sucker punch, one that I never expected and once it happened, I stumbled as I tried to reset and move forward.

It is now 30 years since then and all the major events of my life have been impacted by what happened that day.

That brought me to '*what type of a man do I want to be*' actions that I have been pursuing since then.

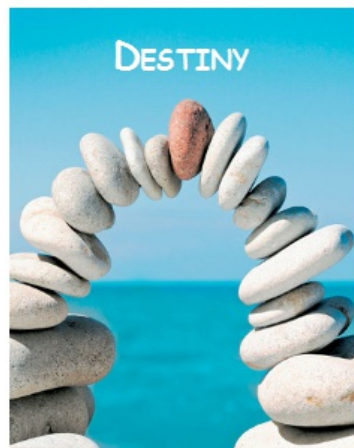
In Volume 2 (aka **D2B a Growing Man or a Stumbling One**) I will share further on that sad tragedy and the impacts that unfolded from there as they relate to these books in process.

To close then (for now) - each of our lives will take us down interesting roads based on the decisions we make. Some will bring about pleasant surprises and others, nightmares or struggles of various kinds.

Being prepared for tough times is a great goal but we also have to be realistic, that sometimes we will be caught off guard by events that unfold and end up impacting us in ways we never expected.

Hence this book and the follow up ones to come. The sooner we decide as to the type of men we want to be and the type of life that we wish to have, we then get on the journey toward no regrets.

The **typical man** doesn't understand **Destiny**...



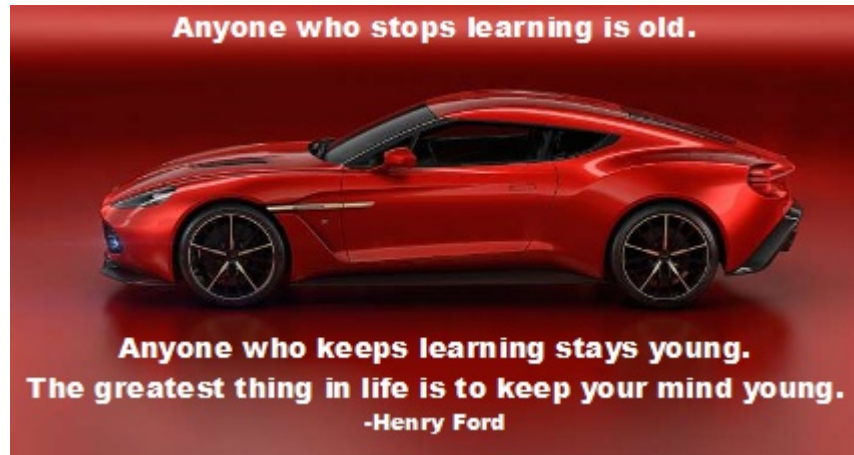
Some would say. . .

**Even the most ambitious pebble will never grow to be a big rock.**

**But REAL MEN know it is not the size of the man in the fight, it is the size of the fight in the man that counts.**

*That then is what we call 'a wrap'.*

*And as I stated earlier, this is just the start. Join us on the follow up **REAL Man's Files** coming out soon. Till then, remember . . .*



*Because we need more **REAL Men**.*