



**MY VIRTUAL MENTOR**

**6 CHALLENGES**  
EVERY CHRISTIAN MAN  
**MUST CONQUER**

**LEVELING UP TO A NEW & IMPROVED YOU**

**BY DAVID ROBERTSON**



# ARE YOU UP FOR A CHALLENGE?

I've yet to meet the man who hasn't faced significant challenges in his life. Most men I know have navigated through the murky waters of trouble, trials, trauma, and temptation. Some did better than others. Several failed forward, and a few are still stuck in the sin cycle. The bottom line is all men, everywhere, always have and always will face challenges. But the good news is that with God's help, we as men can face our challenges with confidence and competence knowing that God's ability to protect us is greater than the enemy's ability to destroy us.

*"No, in all these things [challenges] we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."  
(Romans 8:37)*

*"The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne"  
(Revelation 3:21 ESV).*

In this brief eBook, I want to outline what I believe are the top six challenges that most, if not all, Christian men are going to face in their spiritual growth journey.

**CHALLENGE #1:** My Launch - Starting, staying, and finishing strong

**CHALLENGE #2:** My Compass - Locating where you are and where God wants you to be

**CHALLENGE #3:** My Discipleship - Becoming a fully developing follower of Jesus

**CHALLENGE #4:** My Life - Learn to live the balanced blessed life

**CHALLENGE #5:** My Manhood - Becoming a model, kingdom, and courageous man

**CHALLENGE #6:** My Legacy - Paying it forward

# LEVELING UP TO A NEW & IMPROVED YOU

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This eBook was designed to be an interactive experience. I've dedicated a chapter to each challenge and provided some application exercises at the end of each chapter to give some hands-on ideas to conquer your own challenges. I'll begin each chapter with an excerpt of my own story of how I, by God's grace, ultimately conquered each challenge myself and provide every tip, tool, and life hack I can to accelerate your own progress. Are you ready to level up to a new and improved you? Let's get started!

# Level up



## CHALLENGE

# LEVEL 1

## MY LAUNCH STARTING, STAYING, AND FINISHING STRONG



### DAVID'S STORY

*This used to be me. I was a world-class starter but a lousy finisher. This flaw cropped up in books I never finished, classes I dropped, relationships I neglected, and commitments I allowed to fall to the wayside. Not cool. It took years, but I finally awakened to the reality that I needed mentors in my life. To get what I never had, I was going to have to do something I had never done. So, I humbled myself, raised my hand, and asked for help from some men who had proven track records in taking a project from start to finish successfully.*

### THE POWER OF MOMENTUM

Momentum is an astonishing force. Picture a train with three engines pulling a hundred boxcars going down the track at 55 miles per hour. One word describes this force: unstoppable. There could be a five-foot reinforced concrete wall on the track and when the train hits it at full speed, the wall has got to give. It must yield. It must move aside and make way. Why? Momentum.

How can you harness momentum in your own life to experience your own breakthrough? It will involve conquering the challenge of starting strong, staying strong, and finishing strong.

### START STRONG

One pastor remarked that he discovered the toughest piece of equipment at the gym: the front door! Getting started, in anything, is often the hardest part. Many men get stuck at the starting line. They are “fixing to commence to begin to start” a new project or habit but never do. Passivity, procrastination, or poor time management all add up to a false start, a slow start, or no start at all. That’s the problem and we as men get it. So what’s the solution? Momentum. How do we get the ball rolling and build up steam?

Think about the bullet points below and how they might apply to a situation you are currently in where you feel stuck.

- Identify the thing you want to start
- Write it down
- Set a ridiculously low goal
- Set a launch date and time
- Tell somebody
- Begin to work the plan

## STAY STRONG

Now that your train has left the station, it's time to get up to speed and build momentum. Remember back in the day when our cars didn't have power steering? Standing still, it was tough to turn the steering wheel. Once we started moving through, it was easier. This is how momentum works.

At this point, resist the temptation to get frustrated if progress is too slow. The big idea is you are moving! It seems the hand of God is moved by motion. In the following examples, notice how supernatural activity interrupted the situation when obedience led to action.

- "Stretch out your hand" (Matthew 12:13) – a man's malformed hand completely restored.
- "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk" (John 5:8) – a paralytic is healed.
- "Go wash in the pool of Siloam" (John 9:7) – a blind man comes back seeing.
- "Go show yourselves to the priests" (Luke 17:14) – ten lepers are miraculously healed.
- "Follow me" (Matthew 4:19) – ordinary men transform into Christ's apostles.

My pastor, Ron Kairdolf, has been teaching our congregation for years that "God is not moved by our need, He is moved by our faith." When we put our faith into action and move forward in obedience, we begin to harness the power of spiritual momentum. Below are some suggestions to stay strong on a task, project, or emerging habit.

- Chunk it down
- Form a daily ritual
- Keep going
- Celebrate small wins

I've taught men for years that it's not just important that men get saved; it's important that they stay saved. How I wish this were true of all the men that I have invested time, energy, and effort working with over the years. You know the drill. Even Jesus lost one apostle who didn't stay strong – Judas Iscariot. There's hope for us gentlemen!



## FINISH STRONG

If you've ever been on an airplane traveling to a destination, you know the joy of touching down. Just as with a touchdown in a football game, there's some joy in knowing you have arrived at your destination. That's the challenge facing every man alive today – to finish strong. Most men I know want to finish strong in their marriage, their career, their health, their ministry, and especially passing the baton on to their children. This speaks of legacy. Two examples from the Bible that perfectly illustrate this are Jesus and the Apostle Paul.

- “I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.” (John 17:4) – Jesus

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (2 Timothy 4:7) - Paul

The bottom line is finishing strong glorifies God. Here are a few suggestions to finish strong:

- Don't quit
- Keep going
- Never give up
- Stay the course
- See it through

The reasons the points above are not new information to you is that nearly every man knows what he should do, but often he doesn't do it, or at least consistently enough to finish strong. This is the very reason I put this as the first challenge every Christian man must conquer. The Challenge is universal and timeless. Every man throughout history has had to contend with the challenge of starting, staying, and finishing strong.



## CHAPTER 1 APPLICATION EXERCISE

- What is one thing that you need to start doing this week?
- What have you started already but find yourself inconsistent. Write it below. Next, write one action item you can do to make a course correction to get back on track.
- What accomplishment are you most proud of that you finished? Write it below.

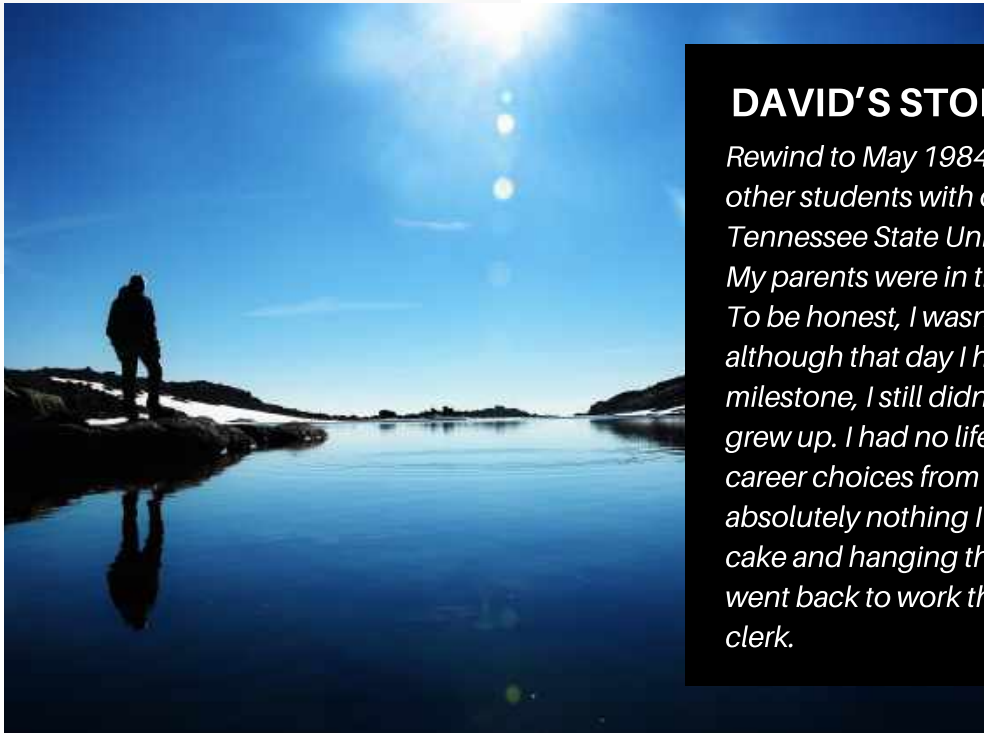
Now, write a few ideas of how you can transfer helpful tips that helped you succeed to a new project you may be struggling with.



## CHALLENGE

# LEVEL 2

## MY COMPASS LOCATING WHERE YOU ARE & WHERE GOD WANTS YOU TO BE



### DAVID'S STORY

*Rewind to May 1984. I was seated with hundreds of other students with our caps and gowns at Middle Tennessee State University getting ready to graduate. My parents were in the crowd. I should be happy, right? To be honest, I wasn't. I was confused. You see, although that day I had accomplished a major milestone, I still didn't know what I wanted to be when I grew up. I had no life direction or goals. In the list of career choices from Archeology to Zoology, I could find absolutely nothing I wanted to do or be. So, after eating cake and hanging the diploma on the wall at home, I went back to work the next day at Kroger as a checkout clerk.*

If I knew then what I know now, I would have had a huge head start in living a fulfilled life. I wasted so many years partying and not planning. Knowing God's general will or purpose for our lives is made crystal clear in the following verse:

*"...Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made" (Isaiah 43:7 NIV).*

You, my friend, were made to be a son in the family of God whose life on earth glorifies your Heavenly Father. What that specifically looks like is the nature of the first challenge we must conquer – discovering God's purpose for your life.

I now know that to discover God's purpose for our life, there are three critical questions we must answer. We will examine these questions in this chapter and then allow you to find out how this looks for you. Here are the questions I wish I had known to ask back then:

- What are my core values and passions?
- What are my natural abilities and spiritual gifts?
- How do my past experiences and future opportunities work together to reveal God's purpose for my life?

# 1. DISCOVER YOUR CORE VALUES & PASSIONS

The first indicator of God's purpose for your life involves how He uniquely created you to be you. Your values and passions are an excellent indicator of how God hardwired you as an individual.

What brings you joy? What causes you to become angry? What would you love to do for no money?

What is that thing that you would gladly get up early or stay up late to do? That, my friend, indicates a core value and intense passion in your life. Once you discover how God wired you and begin to flow with His design, you will start to experience the joy of fulfilling your life mission.

# 2. IDENTIFY YOUR NATURAL ABILITY & SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The second clue we have in determining God's will and purpose for our life involves our natural abilities. Some men are good at multiple things, but every man is good at something. Maybe you're mechanically inclined, and if the job involves working with your hands, you're good to go. Perhaps your critical thinking skills are off the charts, and you like to figure things out. (When playing Scrabble, I want you on my team!) Maybe creative arts, music, drama, or writing are your thing. I don't know what it is, but you do, and so does everybody who knows you well.

When a man gets born again (John 3:3), he inherits spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:7,11). These may include leadership, mercy, administration, servanthood, or prophetic giftings.

The big idea is that your Creator has endowed every man and woman on the planet with natural abilities. Born-again believers, however, have the added benefit of spiritual gifts bestowed by God to enable them to fulfill God's mission for their lives.

# 3. CONSIDER YOUR PAST EXPERIENCES AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

The third way the Lord helps us to discover His purpose for our lives involves our past experiences. God not only wants us to get past our past, but He can redeem even the hurtful things. Fortunately, not all past experiences have been negative. Our milestones and achievements are excellent evidence of future direction. In any case, past experiences, good and bad, can serve as spiritual markers that effectively point to our future purpose.

For example, I have always been a collector of discipleship tools. Some men collect coins, caps, comics, or baseball cards. For the last thirty-plus years, I have been collecting tools, tips, templates, and timelines to help men go further faster in their faith. I know that sounds weird, but it is what it is. I am who I am. This is me. I'd love to share these with you in a feature on my website called "Your Library" where you can access a ton of resources in a forever free format.

Now it totally makes sense why I find so much joy in being the founder of My Virtual Mentor. I see clearly how my core values, spiritual gifts, and past experiences all blend together seamlessly to lead men to go further faster in their faith.



## CHAPTER 2 APPLICATION EXERCISE

### CORE VALUES & PASSIONS

1. What brings you joy?
2. What would you do for a living if money were no object?
3. List your top 5 core values (examples may include: attitude, generosity, servant hood, teamwork, family, faith, etc.)

(1) \_\_\_\_\_  
(2) \_\_\_\_\_  
(3) \_\_\_\_\_  
(4) \_\_\_\_\_  
(5) \_\_\_\_\_

### NATURAL ABILITIES & SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. What do you love to do because you are good at it?
2. What do others say you are amazing at doing?
3. Take the free online spiritual gifts test ([gifts.churchgrowth.org](https://gifts.churchgrowth.org)) and record below your top 5 spiritual gifts.

(1) \_\_\_\_\_  
(2) \_\_\_\_\_  
(3) \_\_\_\_\_  
(4) \_\_\_\_\_  
(5) \_\_\_\_\_

### PAST EXPERIENCES & FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

1. List one or two negative past experiences that you can now see how God redeemed for your good.
2. What are you excited about in your future that may contribute to your life purpose?



## CHALLENGE

# LEVEL 3

## MY DISCIPLESHIP BECOMING A FULLY DEVELOPING FOLLOWER OF JESUS



### DAVID'S STORY

*As a triathlete, I put three sporting disciplines together to complete a race: swim, bike, run. In the same way, when I was a brand-new Christian, I had to discover and then work a discipleship plan involving a number of spiritual disciplines. I started off with the basics like reading my Bible through for the first time using the One-Year Bible approach. Then I read it again the next year. Then again. Thirty years later, I've never stopped. Reading the Bible daily was the catalyst for me discovering many other essential spiritual disciplines that served as building blocks to my maturing faith.*

### STARTING SMALL

Airline pilots don't emerge from the womb that way. They are born AND trained. We all start our lives the exact same way – as babies! It works the same way when we are born again spiritually.

### MILK, BREAD, MEAT

A newborn baby craves its mother's milk instinctively. The analogy applies to our spiritual life development as well.

*"Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation" (1 Peter 2:2).*

The expectation is, of course, to continue to grow spiritually and mature. However, this does not happen automatically. As with so many things, it is a choice every man must make on his own.

*"You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God's word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food" (Hebrews 5:12 NLT).*

To conquer the challenge of becoming a fully developing follower of Jesus, we must necessarily find and follow a discipleship plan. We need a map to follow. We need mentors in our lives to serve up the right spiritual food that we can digest and not choke on.

### LEARN, LIVE, LEAD

I've noticed three elements of the spiritual growth process as this section title suggests: learn, live, lead. The prophet Ezra illustrates this principle perfectly.

*"For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the Lord,  
and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel"  
(Ezra 7:10 emphasis mine).*

Note the underlined portions in the verse above. Ezra was learning, living, and leading others in the ways of God. Similarly, it must be with us to continue to move our way through the levels of our own spiritual maturity.

My friend, we must develop basic spiritual disciplines like daily Bible reading, prayer, and worship. We must understand and practice fasting, giving, and serving. We need to connect with mentors who can hold us accountable and correct us when we are making poor choices.

We need to locate where we are on our spiritual journeys and where God intends for us to be. Then we must be willing to do the hard work of living out our faith and leading others to benefit from our own experiences.

## **DEVELOP, MENTOR, BUILD**

Once we establish a solid foundation of our faith, then we can develop ourselves in the more advanced things of God. While we value mentoring in our lives, we eventually become a mentor to a friend or two who we care enough about to share our lives with. If we are faithful, God will promote us to build our own team in some capacity in or outside the walls of the church.

## **YOUR THREE KEY LIFE DOMAINS**

Three strategic domains that will inevitably identify your maturity level include The Secret Place, the Gathering Place, and the Public Place.

### ***The Secret Place***

This is what we might call your devotional life. This is your daily meeting with God. It is taken from Psalm 91, "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (91:1). Jesus spent intentional daily time in the Secret Place to get His marching orders from His Father.

***"So Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise' (John 5:19).***

May we get our "marching orders" for the day in the Secret Place where we read God's Word, pray, worship, journal, listen in silence, or any other practices that help you connect with your heavenly Father. One thing is certain: your time in the Alone Zone with God will manifest in the other two domains.

### ***The Gathering Place***

This has to do with your home and church life. It all starts at home. For us men, it means becoming the spiritual leader to your wife and children that God desires. At times this is a tall order, but the Holy Spirit is on site to help you without fail.

The other expression of the Gathering Place is church. The local church is God's brilliant idea to help bring us to Christian maturity. It is in this context that we can fulfill the over 50 "one anothers" the Bible commands the disciple to practice. Love one another, pray for one another, carry one another's burdens, etc. cannot be fulfilled on the back nine holes of the golf course on a sunny Sunday morning. It is in the church where we can give, support, submit, and serve. It is here where our faith will be tested as we learn to resolve conflict biblically. The Church is God's wonderful provision for us to becoming fully developing followers of Jesus.

## ***The Public Place***

Finally, there is the Public Place. This is work, the gym, Wal-Mart, Chick-fil-A, your child's school, Starbucks, the theater, the gas station, & everywhere else your life naturally requires you to be. The public forum is the ideal place to let your light shine as a follower of Jesus (Matthew 5:16). It is the domain in which our inner life is lived in such a way that people know by our words and behavior that we have a hope and expectations that transcend the problems of modern culture.

## **CHAPTER 3 APPLICATION EXERCISE**

### **THE SECRET PLACE**

1. Do you have a daily time with God on your schedule? If yes, when? List elements you include.
2. If you don't yet have a daily meeting with God, would you consider starting with a 15-minute Quick Start Plan (5-minutes of Bible reading + 5 minutes of prayer + 5 minutes of listening to one worship song)? If you agree, right now set an alarm on your smart device to set this appointment tomorrow.

### **THE GATHERING PLACE**

1. Why is serving on a team or attending a small group in your church worth your time?
2. What would be a stretch goal for you as far as your involvement in your faith community? Write it here.

### **THE PUBLIC PLACE**

1. One way I feel I could live my faith out loud better could be...
2. Outside of church, I feel most connected to God when I am...



# CHALLENGE LEVEL 4

## MY LIFE LEARN TO LIVE THE BALANCED BLESSED LIFE



### DAVID'S STORY

*I was overwhelmed, overworked, & overcommitted. I was in full-time ministry on staff at a church and worked at the university library at nights. I was enrolled in graduate school taking two online classes, one that required at least thirty hours each week of coursework - no joke. I tried my best to find time to exercise, eat clean, and maintain my relationship with my wife, daughter, and friends. Still, the yard needed mowing, the car needed an oil change, and it seemed like a dozen other daily demands cried out for my attention. As I tried to manage the meltdown in this crazy season of my life, I was forced to come to a humbling conclusion: I had bitten off more than I could chew.*

### CAN YOU RELATE?

Maybe you can relate to my story. Do you struggle to fit it all in? Do you struggle to make time for the things that matter most? My friend, if you do, you're in good company. All of us as men do. That's why we need to know how to manage our lives. In this chapter, I'm going to show you precisely how to do that.

Here's what I have come to believe: a balanced life is a blessed life, and a blessed life is a balanced life. In this section, we're going to answer three questions that are relevant to our life balance: First, let's take inventory. Rate yourself below.

- Am I fit?
- Am I faithful?
- Am I fruitful?

Then I'm going to provide one power principle that has proven to be the "secret sauce" for me to conquer this challenge in my own life.

First, let's take inventory. Rate yourself below.

Check the number that best describes you right now in each category.

	1	2	3	4	5
	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
FAITH					
FAMILY					
FITNESS					
FINANCES					



## AM I FIT?

- Am I physically fit? – Do I have the discipline of stewarding my bodily health?
- Am I financially fit? – Do I subscribe to the 10/10/80 Plan? That is, return 10% of your income in the form of the tithe (Malachi 3:9-10), 10% into savings, and living within a budget on the remaining 80%? Or are you like many men in our culture who live on the 0/0/110 Plan? They give zero, they save nothing, and they spend about 10% more than they make?
- Am I relationally fit? – Am I in proper submission to those in authority over me? Am I in right relationship with my co-workers on the job? Am I stewarding those relationships with whom God has given me influence?

## AM I FAITHFUL?

- Am I faithful to God? – Do I value growing my relationship with God daily?
- Am I faithful to my wife? – Do I receive sexual gratification exclusively from my wife?
- Am I faithful to my family? – Am I intentional about mentoring my kids or grandchildren?
- Am I faithful to my ministry? – Am I serving on a team at my church?
- Am I faithful to my employer? – Does my work ethic glorify God?

## AM I FRUITFUL?

- Am I fruitful to refresh others? – Is my life one that gives or takes energy from others?
- Am I fruitful to reproduce? – Am I reporting the character of Christ in me in others?

## THE SECRET SAUCE

I'm going to go out on a limb here and resist the temptation to give you a list of things to do to achieve the holy grail of the balanced blessed life, as in, "Brother, if you do these seven things, then you'll live life better and be better at life."

What if we were to distill the secret ingredient to the balanced blessed life to a single word? Here what I believe it is: rituals.

## RITUALS

You may have heard the saying "habits can make you or break you." There is some truth to that. Interestingly, good habits are as hard to break as bad habits. Throughout the Scriptures, we see evidence of men of God who practiced rituals, routines, and rhythms that help them stay on mission.

Here's what this looks like for me. I want to give credit to productivity guru Michael Hyatt for his teaching on daily rituals. Although I have never met Michael Hyatt, I have elected to follow him as one of my remote mentors by listening to his podcasts and reading his books. He introduced me to the power of daily rituals at one of his conferences, and it has changed my life. Rituals I practice on weekdays include:

- Morning Ritual
- Workday Startup Ritual
- Workday Shutdown Ritual
- Evening Ritual

These rituals are as short as humanly possible. I find that if I stay on top of them, I not only get things done, but I get the right things done. Having said that, I do block off enough time on my daily schedule to actually do them, and if I get done in less time than I've allocated, so much the better.

## MORNING RITUAL

- Get up early at the same time using an alarm.
- Take communion.
- Listen to the Daily Audio Bible.
- Complete a couple of You Version Bible daily devotionals with a few men's groups.
- Listen to three worship songs on Pandora.
- Say out loud daily declarations I put together each year.
- Go to the gym to work out while listening to teaching and leadership podcasts.
- Have a daily meeting at Chick-fil-A for one hour with a man I'm mentoring or a man who is mentoring me.
- Prayer walk for 20-25 minutes.

## WORKDAY START RITUAL

- Check my email with the goal of inbox zero.
- Check and answer all texts.
- Check voicemail and return calls.
- Prepare for meetings.
- Begin work on my Top 3 priorities I set the day before.
- Once I nail my top 3 priorities, I attack my pick lists of other tasks or projects.

NOTE: The genius to this strategy becomes apparent if you "batch" your communication to only a couple of times each workday instead of being constantly interrupted by notifications.

## WORKDAY SHUTDOWN RITUAL

- Inbox zero.
- Return calls and texts.
- Review calendar for tomorrow.
- Set Top 3 priorities to tackle in the morning.

## EVENING RITUAL

- Get my gym bag ready for tomorrow.
- Lay out my clothes to wear.
- Prepare my healthy snacks for the next day.
- Fill up my bottles of water to make my intake goal.
- Spend 30 minutes debriefing the day with my wife and praying together.
- Read one chapter in my book of the month.
- Get to bed on time.

Some days I hit the bulls-eye, and others I graze the target. But at least I'm aiming at something each day. Weekends are different by design, and I relax my expectations and weave in entertainment.

These rituals may feel forced to some men, but to be honest, I've found them to be quite liberating. It's like living within a budget where every dollar is named. My rituals are a "time budget" to make room for things that would otherwise get hijacked by the demands of a busy day.

## CHAPTER 4 APPLICATION EXERCISE

Write some bullet points below of how the four weekday rituals we discussed might look for you.

### ■ MORNING RITUAL

### ■ WORKDAY STARTUP RITUAL

### ■ WORKDAY SHUTDOWN RITUAL

### ■ EVENING RITUAL



## CHALLENGE

# LEVEL 5

## MY MANHOOD BECOMING A MODEL, KINGDOM, AND COURAGEOUS MAN



### DAVID'S STORY

*As I matured as a Christian, I began to see the value of being in the right place at the right time with the right people doing the right things. This turned out to be a prescription for accelerated spiritual growth for me. I began to study men in the Bible after whom I wanted to model my life. I began to hang around men who were passionate about advancing God's kingdom more than personal agendas. I was inspired by regular guys I knew facing incredible hardships with courage and integrity. It didn't happen overnight, but over time, I began to follow in the footsteps of Jesus more and better. Over a period of three decades of ministry, I found myself becoming more like the men that I admired.*

In this chapter I want to talk about what biblical manhood looks like. A biblical man is first a model man. Secondly, he is a man consumed with God's kingdom agenda. Lastly, this man is a courageous man whose character guides his often-difficult decisions. Let's talk briefly about these three types of manhood mantles that we can grow into.

### A MODEL MAN

Simply put, this is the kind of man that we can use as a role model to pattern our own lives after. We need to lower the bar from the unrealistic concept of a perfect man. Jesus was the one and only, right? Nevertheless, there are some qualities that characterize this type of man that we can integrate tegrate into our identity.

Here are a few characteristics of a model man that can aspire to imitate.

- A model man is a man of God.
- A model man is a devoted family man.
- A model man keeps his word.
- A model man tells the truth.
- A model man pays his bills.
- A model man is sexually pure.

While perfection is unattainable, excellence is attainable. It's a choice we make every day in every situation. What if every church in the USA were made up entirely of men exactly like you? Could it survive? Could it pay its bills? Could it conduct its ministry teams? Could it reach its community with the gospel?

## A KINGDOM MAN

Jesus was very clear about the necessity of putting first things first.

*"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you"*  
(Matthew 6:33).

This assertion speaks of priorities. What might this look like in the 21 st century? Perhaps the statements below might be true of a kingdom man.

- A kingdom man is growing exponentially in the Secret Place.
- A kingdom man is serving faithfully in the Gathering Place.
- A kingdom man is influencing dramatically in the Public Place.
- A kingdom man is investing financially into the local church and missions.
- A kingdom man is more interested in God's agenda than his own.

God is manifesting the kingdom of the earth today through the willing hearts of men and women. It is an exciting time to live! May you and I be kingdom men who are seeking first the kingdom and the righteousness of God in Christ.

## A COURAGEOUS MAN

Courage can take many forms. Hollywood has portrayed some brave moments on film that entertain and inspire, but real-life courage is not relegated to a script. Courage often involves taking a step.

- Stepping out - walking the path God's Word outlines rather than a politically correct one.
- Standing out - daring to be different when the world is pressuring you to conform.
- Speaking out - overcoming the temptation to remain silent when others (like the unborn) need an advocate.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr said, "The time is always right to do what's right." Right is right no matter who opposes it. Wrong is wrong no matter who endorses it. May we have the courage to step out, stand out, and speak out when it counts.

## CHAPTER 5 APPLICATION EXERCISE

1. List the names of 3 men you consider to be good role models for your life.
2. What is one thing you can do in the next seven days to advance God's kingdom in these life domains?
  - A. The Secret Place (your personal devotions)
  - B. The Gathering Place (your church)
  - C. The Public Place (your job or in the community)
3. Write a few sentences about a time when you felt like you exercised courage to make a difficult decision. How did this make you feel? Did it impact anyone close to you?

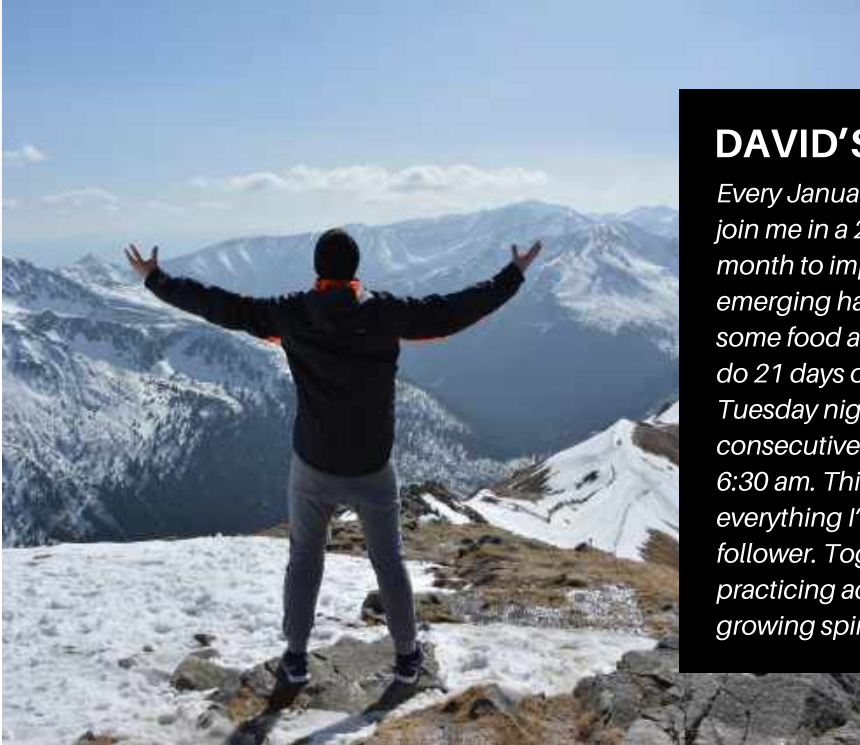




## CHALLENGE

# LEVEL 6

## MY LEGACY PAYING IT FORWARD



### DAVID'S STORY

*Every January through June, I try to recruit up to seven men to join me in a 21-Day Challenge. We take the first 21 days of the month to improve one vital relationship, focus on two emerging habits, and complete three special projects. We fast some food and media. We all follow a simple Bible plan and do 21 days of YouVersion devotionals. I host a check-in call on Tuesday nights for a half hour, and we meet for three consecutive Saturday mornings for breakfast at Chick-fil-A at 6:30 am. This is my attempt to pay it forward: to give away everything I've learned on what it means to be a Christ follower. Together, these men and I are building friendships, practicing accountability, forming prayer partnerships, growing spiritually, and eating chicken. Multiplication is fun!*

So far, we have looked at four challenges every Christian man must conquer. These included the general categories of mission, mentoring, management, and manhood. In this final chapter, we will discuss the importance of multiplication.

### PASSING THE BATON

On August 21, 2008, at the Beijing Olympics, the United States dropped the baton in the men's 4x100m relay and were disqualified from the finals. Tyson Gay, the best sprinter in the USA at that time, became the biggest loser after the team failure. Gay said, "I dropped it. I tried to reach for it, but it wasn't there. I should have made sure; I guess it was my fault."

The shock and disappointment of this Olympic moment illustrates the impact of failing to hand off the baton to the next runner in a relay race. In the same way, the effect of us as men failing to "pass the baton" of our faith to the next generation has even greater consequences.

It is imperative that you and I pass on our values, experience, and love to those that matter most to us before we pass away. We see this concept illustrated throughout the Scriptures. Examples include Moses, Elijah, David, Paul, and Jesus.

### PAYING IT FORWARD

It's been said that success without a successor is not success. Our Christian faith is but one generation away from extinction. Nothing in nature is mature until it can reproduce. It's time to pay it forward.

## WELL, EXCUSE ME!

Many men I know don't feel qualified to pass the baton of their faith to the next generation. They think they have screwed up too badly and thus forfeited the right to give advice, wisdom, and counsel to their biological or spiritual children. Some use excuses like:

- "I've made too many poor decisions in my life to help anybody else."
- "I still don't have all my crap together."
- "I don't know the Bible too well."
- "That's what the church is for."

Can I suggest that you may have gone through what you went through to help somebody get through what you got through? If you are born again, you are a testimony of grace! You are a real live example of how God can roll up His sleeve and reach down into your fallen humanity and rescue you from sin, addiction, or an ungodly lifestyle.

## FOUR WAYS TO PAY IT FORWARD

All you need is you. You are the greatest you that ever was or ever will be. There is nobody like you on the entire planet. The people that love you, love you because you are you. Billy Graham was a phenomenal evangelist, but as good of a person as he was before he died, he could never be my wife Monica's husband or my daughter Abbey's daddy. That's my job. Your spouse, your kids, your co-workers, your neighbors, your workout partner, your small group members, your teammates, all have one thing in common - you! Everywhere you go, there you are!

I'm saying use the influence that you have been given to speak into the lives of others in your slice of the world. Here are four simple ways to do this.

## ENGAGE THEM

Make the call. Send the email. Tap out the text. Reach out and invite them to share a meal or coffee with you. In other words, take the initiative. That's what leaders do; they go first and as a result create powerful moments.

Here are some excellent conversation starter questions you might consider getting the ball rolling.

- "What's on your mind?"
- "Anything else?"
- "Where are you winning?"
- "What's kicking your butt right now?"
- "What do you want or need and how can I help you?"

Not in every case, but more often than not before you can speak truth into somebody's life, you have to "earn a hearing." In other words, you can't make somebody feel like your "evangelism project." You can't ram and cram truth down anybody's throat no matter how wise your counsel may be. To receive from you, they must be:

- Teachable
- Hungry
- Humble
- Appreciative

The first thing is to engage them. Next, give the tools they need to locate where they are and where they want to go in their spiritual journey.

## EQUIP THEM

None of us know it all, but we have learned a thing or two along the way. Even our mistakes can help others if we are vulnerable enough to share them. Rituals or habits that you have mastered and now take for granted might be just the thing to help another person ascend to the next level. Things like:

- How to read the Bible daily;
- How to pray without it being a religious thing;
- Why you need the church, and the church needs you;
- Why humbling yourself leads to promotion;
- Why being faithful in tithes and offerings is equated with good stewardship;
- Why deferring gratification is a powerful discipline.

We could give countless examples of how the life lessons you have learned could equip the next generation. It would be invaluable to them to share a few resources that have impacted you:

- Podcasts you listen to;
- YouTube channels you subscribe to;
- Important books you have read;
- Wise mentors you want to introduce them to.

Your “Toolbox” is overflowing with resources, gadgets, and gizmos that would equip that person you care about.

## ENCOURAGE THEM

I’ve not met anyone so spiritual and holy that he doesn’t need encouragement from time to time. We want it. We all need it. We crave it. Life is hard enough without toxic people saying negative things about you. When you think you have encouraged them enough, do it some more.

Finally, and this may seem counter-intuitive, but once we pass the baton to them, we need to let them run hard with it.

## EMPOWER THEM

We need to empower those we aspire to inspire. If we have done our due diligence to engage them, equip them, and encourage them, then they should start to show signs of confidence to move forward in their life purpose.

If we want to get the results that Jesus got, we may need to begin doing the things that Jesus did. The one thing that Jesus did that was more empowering than any other is that He simply loved His followers - warts and all! At the end of the day, we can do no better.

When all else fails, love those you are trying to help because love never fails (1 Corinthians 13:8).

In a sense, passing the baton of your life is sending a message through the person you are mentoring to a time you will not live to see. This is your legacy. May you be strategic with the time you have left to engage, equip, encourage, and empower as many people as possible in the next generation for the glory of God.

## CHAPTER 6 APPLICATION EXERCISE

1. Write the name(s) of any young man you feel God is nudging you to become intentionally available to in a mentoring relationship.

Prepare some ideas to impact them more effectively by working through the 4-step process described in this chapter.

2. I will ENGAGE them by... (check all that apply):

- ☐ Scheduling a regular coffee or meal appointment weekly for 3 months
- ☐ Creating a Marco Polo (free app) channel to establish a video chat with them
- ☐ Invite them to join you in some fun activity or work project
- ☐ Attending an event that is special to them
- ☐ Setting up a weekly check-in call with them during your commute from work
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. I will EQUIP them by sharing with them the following three tools that have helped me personally grow spiritually:

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_

4. I will ENCOURAGE them by:

- ☐ Finding out their birthday and adding it to my calendar to call them
- ☐ Setting aside one hour on my calendar within the next seven days to meet with them face-to-face.
- ☐ Contact them to affirm them for something good they have accomplished recently.

5. I will EMPOWER them by:

- ☐ Invited them to pick out a Bible study to do with them on [pursuegod.org](https://pursuegod.org)
- ☐ Ask them to pick out and host a 5-minute/day YouVersion Bible Plan for 7 days to do together
- ☐ Ask them to help you discover the answer to a question about the Bible that you have had (and show them how to find the answer)

# CONCLUSION

## WE'RE ON A MISSION

Make no mistake; God has an ingenious plan for your life. Jesus didn't just save us FROM a sinful lifestyle; He saved us FOR a victorious destiny. We can absolutely know his will and purpose for our lives and live a life that pleases God.

JOHN 10:5,27 KJV

(5) "And a stranger will they not follow but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers...My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: (27).

## WE NEED MENTORS

Behind every great man are great men. Typically, we are most influenced by the five men we allow into our inner circle, either personally or virtually.

From the time we are born, we are in a continuous learning process. The Bible is filled with examples of mentors like Moses & Joshua, Elijah & Elisha, Paul & Timothy, and Jesus and His Twelve. God's master plan of evangelism for the world was Jesus and his small men's group.

2 TIMOTHY 2:2 NKJV

"And the things you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others."

## WE MUST MANAGE OUR LIFE BALANCE

Life comes at us fast and hard. Whether we are married or single, the sheer volume of decisions we must make every week to achieve or maintain life balance is extraordinary. Fortunately, we have a role model in Jesus Christ who modeled what a balanced blessed life could look like. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we too can live the abundant life that Jesus sacrificed His life that we might obtain.

LUKE 2:52 NIV

"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

## WE ARE MORE THAN MALE; WE ARE MEN

God is not expecting us to be Jason Bourne, James Bond, or a member of the Avengers to impress Him. A man that does what is right, just, and fair captures His attention. In this eBook, we contrasted maleness with real manhood. We dared to suggest that masculinity has less to do with anatomy and more to do with character. We aspire to become model men, kingdom men, and courageous men.



Ezekiel 22:30 ESV

“And I sought for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the breach before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none.”

## **WHEN WE MULTIPLY WE FULFILL OUR LEADERSHIP MANDATE?**

Do you remember the story in the Gospels of Jesus multiplying five loaves and a few fish to feed a multitude? In the same way, if we will allow the Lord to bless us, to break us, to give us as a gift to a hungry world to feed them with the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, it will start a revolution. Generations will be forever changed when you and I stand up, step up, and speak up.

## **GENESIS 1:28 ASV**

“And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”



## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

David Robertson is the founder of My Virtual Mentor, an online platform leading men to go further faster in their faith. David has over thirty years of Christian ministry experience and is a triathlete. He and his wife Monica live in Middle Tennessee, and together they have one adult daughter, Abigail Grace.

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