

THE BIG 3

How To Be a Christ-Like Leader

Leader's Guide



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A NOTE TO THE LEADER

Thank you for agreeing to lead this Bible study and to model what it means to be a Christ-like leader to those in your study.

The Goal

The goal of this study is to help participants see themselves as leaders on campus, seeking to imitate the leadership of Jesus Christ.

The Bible study goes about this goal in three direct ways:

- 1.) Chapter 1 focuses on what it takes to be a leader. Rather than gifts or talents, leadership is about the witness we exhibit through our character.
- 2.) Chapters 2-5 concentrate on how to build a foundation for leadership. Simply, it challenges the participants to take on FOCUS' "Big 3:" chastity, sobriety, and excellence, so that they can be leaders by example through their moral authority.
- 3.) Finally, chapter 6 seeks to give your participants a vision for leadership. It seeks to give them guiding principles in their quest to lead others to Jesus Christ.

Preparing for the Study

- Give yourself time before the study to think and pray about the material. You will be a much better Bible study leader if these truths have taken root in your heart. The group won't go much deeper than you do.

- Work through the Leader Guide on your own and make notes in the margins about how you want to ask particular questions or how you want to emphasize certain points.
- Anticipate how your group might respond to the content. Some sections will need more clarification than others. Perhaps your group will want to spend more time discussing a particular point that is especially relevant.
- There will be some sections and questions in each chapter that will not be in the Student Guide. This will allow you as the leader to have some more material to go through during the study. These sections and questions are available in this Leader Guide. Be sure to include them each week in the study.

Leading the Study

- Be sure every person in your group has the Student Guide. *This series assumes that they have completed the Student Guide before they come each week.*
- Emphasize that the study is not a lecture, but a discussion. Some will participate more than others, but no one person ought to drown out the others.
- Encourage each member to apply the study questions in a personal way. Say the question is, “How does this call to be a servant-king impact your friendships?” Rather than, “I should be more helpful,” a more personal answer would sound like this: “I am called to anticipate and to meet their needs in whatever way I can. I won’t have the answer for every situation, but what I can do is look for opportunities to respond as a servant. To begin with, I should make time to spend with my friends rather than just squeeze them between the cracks in my academic life.”
- Read the opening story out loud with the group for each chapter and spend some time on the discussion questions. This will take some time, but it will provide a light start to the meeting. “Diving in” too quickly might lead to cramps and injuries.
- Don’t be afraid of disagreements. These can lead to growth and further discussion outside the group. If you are at a standstill, move the group along and explain that God may lead them in a certain direction later in the series. At the same time, if it is a disagreement on Church doctrine, don’t be afraid to stand up for what the Church teaches as truth.

- It might be helpful to periodically summarize the topics you've discussed and give a preview of what's ahead. This gives continuity to the study and helps draw together distinct ideas throughout the series.

On How to Use the Leader Guide

- Most chapters begin with a story. We recommend that you have members of the study read a paragraph at a time as you go around in a circle.
- The remainder of each chapter will include Scriptural verses, discussion questions, and quotes to help you create a conversation on the topic and content in the chapter.
- The Leader Guide that you hold includes all of the instructions you will need to lead the study along with snapshots of every page in the Student Guide. Please see an example from your Leader Guide below to see how this works:

- In this example, the number 8 prompts you to ask one participant to read 1 Corinthians 6:13-20. Green instructions by the numbers in the Leader Guide indicate that the corresponding sections in the Student Guide include a question, explanation, or story etc. for the group. These are the words you say aloud. Also, notice the number in the box in the bottom right hand corner—this indicates which page of the Student Guide you are viewing.

- As for the actual questions, they are guidelines for you to effectively facilitate the progress of the Bible study. As you prepare for leading the study, you may find that the questions are worded differently than you would ask or that there is a question or set of questions that you find more helpful

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>7 Ask: <i>Could I have someone please read 1 Corinthians 6:13-20?</i></p> <p>8 Ask: <i>According to this passage, what happens when Christians commit sexual immorality?</i></p> | <p>7 Read his instructions in 1 Corinthians 6:13-20</p> <p>8 According to this passage, why is it wrong for a Christian to engage in sexual immorality?</p> <p>9 Why does Paul call our body "a temple of the Holy Spirit" (v. 19)? What are some practical implications of this truth?</p> |
| | 16 |

Answer: Paul points out that "Your bodies are members of Christ" (v. 15). Our body is Christ's body. Whatever we join to ourselves, we are joining to Christ. What will we do with Christ's body?

9 Ask: *Why does Paul call our body "a temple of the Holy Spirit" (v. 19)? What are some practical implications of this truth?*

Answer: When Paul calls the body a "temple," he is using a word that is filled with meaning. This temple is not just any temple. He is referring to the Temple in Jerusalem. Everything was holy and consecrated to God in the Temple. Nothing that was not holy was even allowed inside because the Temple was where God dwelt! (For more on the temple, feel free to have the group look at one or all of these passages: John 2:16; II Chronicles 2:4-6; I Kings 8:10-11; Isaiah 56:7; Psalm 79:1-4.)

in generating discussion around the topic at hand. You may also find that asking the questions in a different order works better. If any of these are the case, please use whatever is more comfortable for you, as long as it covers the same material. The questions we have written are simply a guide. We do have one request if you write new/different questions. Please send them to us at focusquip@focus.org. We are always revising our material and would love your feedback. Who knows... you might help us improve our study, and as a result, touch a soul for all eternity through your suggestion.

- You may also find that there is too much material to cover during one week. This is where experience is helpful. As time goes on, you will be able to determine how much material to cover, what to skip, and what to add that isn't in the Leader Guide. You will also learn which tangents are helpful, and which ones take you off course. We have designed the chapters so that, on average, a typical Bible study can complete the material while having meaningful conversation in the span of one hour. However, you may find that you need more or less, depending on the composition of your group.

Welcome

1 *Ask: Could I have someone please read the “Welcome” section?*

1 Welcome

This Bible study is intended to call men to true leadership in Christ. FOCUS does not simply want students to know Jesus Christ; FOCUS also wants to build up college students who can make an impact for Jesus Christ in the world. This begins on the college campus by equipping men to reach their peers. In this study, we will start out by introducing what true Christian leadership is and what it takes to be a leader. Then, we will focus on FOCUS’ “Big 3” as we discuss what type of witness is needed in order to make a student stand out on today’s college campuses amidst his peers. Finally, we will look at some practical directions for how a leader acts on the college campus.

Chapter One

TAKING THE LEAD

What It Means to Be a Leader

FOCAL POINT: God’s design for every man is for him to be a leader as a servant-king. There may be many voices telling us what men ought to be, but we must make it a point to listen to our Creator and Father. All men must know that they are called to leadership in some form.

SPECIAL PREPARATION: Know the terms in this chapter well (virtue, value, gift, character) and how to explain them to others. Be ready to provide examples from your own life where you have seen these principles at work.

OPENING STORY: The aim of this story is to raise the question, “What does it mean to be a man of leadership?”

Kickoff 1 Kickoff

“Verso L’alto”

1 *Explain: To start each chapter, there is an opening story. Probably the best way to use this opening story is if each person reads a paragraph. I will start and then let’s go clockwise.*

Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati was born in Turin, Italy on April 6, 1901. His mother, Adelaide Ametis, was a painter, and his father, Alfredo, was an agnostic and an influential senator. Many of the stories of Frassati’s short life come from his time as a student where he proved himself to be a man among boys when compared to his peers.

Frassati was both a man and saint in the truest sense of the words. Here was a man who loved mountain climbing, skiing, smoking his pipe, and playing practical jokes on his friends. At the same time, Frassati was known for his all night vigils in adoration, his devotion to the Blessed Eucharist, and his daily prayer life. He was a man of action who went into the homes of the poor and sick giving them food and, at times, paying for their children’s education. He marched in political protests and stood up against the immoral secular festivals of his day. On one of his mountain expeditions he coined the phrase “Verso L’alto”, meaning “toward the top”, which was applicable to his prayer life, his evangelization, and his mountain climbing.

Frassati was not remembered so much for his talents as much as for his charity which gained him so many friends. Through his loyalty, his infectious laugh, his willingness

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to embark on any adventure, he exercised a sort of magnetic attraction which created innumerable friendships. Below are some quotes from a few of his friends:

In his university’s Christian society (Cesare Balbo Circle) he was known as: “(the) member who, without looking for the honour, possesses innumerable friends and enjoys a pleasant authority over them, who knows each and is beloved by each, puts himself out to please them, accepts every duty and carries it out to the general satisfaction.”

From a rector of the mountain chapel that Frassati frequented: “I singled out Pier-Giorgio immediately from the others for the ascendancy which he exercised over his comrades and for the optimism which he exuded... his Catholicism, neither casual nor narrow, was vital, active, and rich in dynamic apostolicity.”

One of his friends, struck by his ability to attract others, said this: “His secret for gaining hearts and souls was his unalloyed charity.”

Finally, when his days as a student were coming to a close, and he was very near to the completion of his engineering degree, Pier Giorgio contracted the deadly poliomyelitis virus (polio). Though he was dying at a young age, Pier Giorgio went joyfully to his eternal reward in Heaven. Even with his last days he showed his care and regard for others. On one of his last days he scrawled out, in weak and shaky handwriting, instructions for getting vaccinations for a poor sick man he had been caring for.

(Adapted from *The Soul of Pier-Giorgio Frassati*. Mercier Press: Cork, Ireland, 1960.)

2

Ask: What stood out to you about the life of Bl. Pier-Giorgio Frassati?

Answer: There are many things that stand out, but be sure to point out that he does not fit the mold of most people's image of saints. He was a man's man, who climbed mountains and smoked a pipe; while at the same time, he was in a vigorous pursuit of holiness and evangelization.

Ask: How did Pier-Giorgio attract others to himself? What was his method for taking leadership?

Answer: He was able to lead others through his example of charity. This example won them over, and then he was able to speak into their lives.

Leadership

In a world that values fame, wealth and success, Frassati proved that true leadership stems from the witness of charity. It is this great love that attracts souls and gives one the credibility to lead others by example and speak into their lives; this is the Christ-like leadership that will change the world. In this chapter, we will look at what it means to be a leader in the image of Jesus Christ.

First, let's see what Jesus said about leadership and what kind of leader Jesus was.

2

2 *Ask: Could someone please read Matthew 20:20-28 and Philippians 2:3-10?*

2 **Read Matthew 20:20-28 and Philippians 2:3-10**

3 For Jesus, what does leadership mean?

3

3 *Ask: For Jesus, what does leadership mean?*

Answer: A leader serves others and lays down his life for the sake of others.

4 *Ask: How does this leadership compare to what the world normally associates with leadership?*

Answer: The world thinks of leadership in terms of power. Someone in power is in control of people, money, and resources; leadership isn't a place to serve; it is a place to be served.

Ask: In what ways are you personally challenged by Jesus' vision and example of leadership?

4 How does this leadership compare to what the world normally associates with leadership?

As with many things, the Gospel message turns our whole way of thinking upside down. Jesus' death and humiliation on the cross actually leads to His exaltation. Whoever wishes to be great must become the servant of others. This is ultimately how God designed things in the beginning.

The Assault on Beauty

5 In Genesis, Adam shared in God's role of having dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:26-28) and keeping or protecting (The Hebrew *shamar* which is often translated "keep" means "to protect, to guard, to keep watch.") Thus, we see that man is to lead by *shaming* everything that God entrusted to his care—including his bride, Eve. This is what his "dominion," his authority over the realm, means. He is a king, but not of the tyrannical variety. Rather, he is a *servant-king*, ruling in order that every subject in his kingdom may flourish.

6 **Read Genesis 3:1-13**

7 How would you describe Adam's response in verses 6 and 12, given his role as a servant-king of the garden?

3

The Assault on Beauty

5 *Read this paragraph (leader).*

6 *Ask: Could someone read Genesis 3:1-13?*

7 *Ask: How would you describe Adam's response in verses 6 and 12, given his role as a servant-king of the garden?*

Answer: He fails in both areas. He neither accepts his authority as he blames the sin on his wife, nor does he accept his role as a servant in failing to protect his wife.

Having What It Takes: Character Versus Gifting

8 Ask: What is the difference between character and gifting?

9 Ask: Could I have two volunteers—One to read *Philippians 3:17* and another to read *2 Timothy 3:10-11*?

10 Ask: What is Paul saying about his style of leadership? What is it based on?

Answer:
Ultimately, leadership is based on our character—who we are, not what we can do. Paul's leadership

is based on modeling for others what it means to be a Christian. It is leadership first and foremost by witness. As Pope Benedict XVI has said, "To evangelize means: to show the path [to Christ] — to teach the art of living."

"There are serious and humbling implications [in the Fall] for every man. Don't miss this principle...: The entire family suffers when the head of the family falls short. When a man loses sight of this noble commission from God, he wallows, losing direction and perspective. When a man loses hope, his vision fades and his people perish. When a man loses direction, he tends to waste or abuse his God-given masculine energies and capacities on selfish and/or destructive pursuits...masculinity off-course and run amuck is incredibly destructive."

—Stu Weber, *Four Pillars of a Man's Heart: Bringing Strength into Balance*

Do you agree with Weber's analysis of the situation? Why, or why not?

Having What It Takes: Character Versus Gifting

8

Above, we looked at what kind of leadership Jesus Christ demands of His followers. We also analyzed where Adam, and at times all men, fail to be true leaders. Now, we what to see who we need to be in order to be a leader for Jesus Christ.

When the world thinks of leaders, it often thinks of people who have the most gifts. Our mindset is this: "If I'm a good speaker then I can lead" or "If I am popular and have a social presence then I have what it takes to be a great leader." Of course, the opposite of this happens as well. We might think, "I am not like him or her" or "I cannot do this or that," so therefore "I can't be a leader."

Leadership involves the use of gifts and talents, but one's gifts do not *determine* authentic leadership.

When St. Paul writes his letters to various Churches, he instructs them on what is important for leadership.

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9

Read *Philippians 3:17* and *2 Timothy 3:10-11*

10

What is Paul saying about his style of leadership? What is it based on?

5

11 Read this paragraph (leader).

Tell the Swordsman example: Think of a swordsman. The quality of the sword he possesses is helpful, but if he doesn't know how to use it, he will be less effective than someone with a short, dull sword who knows how to fight. Furthermore, it does not matter how good your sword is if you do not have the courage or strength to use it well. The same holds true concerning our gifts.

Ask: Based on our discussion about gifts versus character-based leadership, do you think anyone can be a leader? Why or why not?

Answer: Anyone who is willing to be a witness and set an example can be a leader. Also, different leadership roles require different gifts; we are not all called to lead in the same way.

12 *Ask: What about the examples of gifts versus character from the Bible? Did any example stick out to you?*

11 A leader is not a pointer who says “go that way,” but a pacesetter who says “follow me.” Gifts are important and can be helpful in leadership, but they are just a tool.

The world is filled with people who have great gifts, but are not good leaders—so is the Bible. (Bible verses are given if you want to look at each example in more depth.)

12 **Samson**—He had the amazing gift of strength, but ultimately succumbed to the enemy because of his lust (Judges 16:1-31).

King Saul—His physical stature surpassed everyone in Israel, but he was not obedient and lost God's favor (1 Samuel 9:1-2; 1 Samuel 15:1-35).

King Solomon—He was known as the wisest man in the world, but he is plagued by greed and lust. His actions ultimately caused a civil war (Sirach 47:12-25).

On the other hand, the Bible is filled with examples of those who were not gifted that were used by God.

5

13 *Review these men. Then, ask: Why do you think God uses the lowly and humbles the mighty?*

Possible Answer:
By using the lowly, others can see how powerful God can be. It is because of Him they are effective, not just because of the person. It shows us how important God is in the equation and not just our talents.

13 **Abraham**—He was old, a sojourner, and had a barren wife; yet, he became the father of many nations, not because of his gifts, but because of his great faith (Romans 4:18-20; Hebrews 11:13).

Moses—Despite his old age and poor speaking ability, he was called by God to confront the Egyptian Pharaoh. Through him, God delivered the people out of Egypt (Exodus 4:1-13).

Apostles—Most of the apostles were uneducated fisherman, and yet these were the men that Jesus chose to begin His Church and spread His message to the ends of the earth.

5

Virtue Versus Values

14 Our world often talks about what people value. Our Church often talks about virtue. What is the difference between the two and how can it help our understanding of leadership?

Values are *ideas* and *ideals*. Values are principles that we think are correct, but at the same time they can change over time and with experience.

For example, I might value honesty, but when money or pride are on the line, I might not actually be honest.

Virtue is not just thinking correctly, but doing something right and living in the proper way. Virtues don't change over time.

6

Ask: How do you think the example of Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati fits into the discussion about gifts versus character? What do you think attracted people to him more, his character or gifts? Why?

Answer: While Pier-Giorgio certainly was gifted, his friends most often noted his charity, something that wasn't dependent on his gifts.

Virtue Versus Values

14 *Ask: What is the difference between virtues and values?*

15 Ask: *Could someone please read CCC 1803?*

Big 3

16 Ask: *Could I have someone please read these closing paragraphs?*

15 “A virtue is an habitual and firm disposition to do the good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself. The virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions” (CCC 1803).

In sum, virtues are habits, but not just habits. They are habits that help us to choose—and do—the good. This is often difficult. But over time, as these virtues are built up, we are able to choose the good *consistently*, with joy and with ease.

If we want to be great witnesses and lead through our character, virtue is an absolute must. Lots of people can talk about what they value, but the actions of virtues speak louder than words.

Big 3

16 So far we have looked at what leadership means from a Biblical perspective, and examined how we can practically live it out through character and virtue. As we saw in the examples above, from Jesus Christ to Bl. Pierre Giorgio, from Abraham to the Apostles, it is one’s character above all else that helps us draw others to us and allows us the opportunity to lead. Character is what sets us above the rest. In this

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study, we want to look at three virtues that are vital to the formation of our character during our time as college students: chastity, sobriety, and excellence. FOCUS refers to these as the “Big 3.” By working on these virtues, we will strengthen our witness, build a strong will, and develop clarity of mind that will provide a foundation for our leadership.

Jesus Christ has called us to the light of the world and the salt of the earth. He wants us to let our light shine before men for all to see.

7

Chapter Two

THE FREEDOM TO LOVE (I)

God's Design for Human Sexuality

FOCAL POINT: Chastity is the power to love other people the right way. The man, who is chaste precisely because he is not turned in on himself, is able to take genuine concern in the people around him and thereby build authentic relationships. Lust is love deformed and mangled—like the man at the beginning of the opening story. In Christ, lust can be transformed into generous, life-giving love—the kind of love that was demonstrated by Christ on the Cross (cf. Romans 5:8).

SPECIAL PREPARATION: Read and pray over the opening excerpt by Lewis several times. Pay close attention to how C.S. Lewis portrays lust in the account.

Kickoff

1 Ask: *Could I have three volunteers to help read the story?* (Have them take turns reading the story as you see fit.)

1 Kickoff

“Sir, There’s a Red Lizard on My Shoulder”

In his novel *The Great Divorce*, C. S. Lewis’ details the experiences of souls on an imaginary day-long “fieldtrip” to Heaven. In one of these accounts, Lewis tells of ghost-like man who approaches the foothills of Heaven with a red lizard of lust perched on his shoulder. The reptile, an old-time companion, unceasingly whispers to him words which bring him comfort. As the man gets closer to Heaven, the lizard begins to mutter into his ear. At first, he snarls and yells at the lizard, telling it to shut up, but as the lizard ignores him and continues, its words bring a smile to his face. The man turns around and begins to limp away from Heaven quite satisfied. At this point, an Angel, aflame with splendor, calls out behind him [Lewis is eyewitness and narrator]:

“Off so soon?” said the voice.

“Yes. I’m off,” said the Ghost. “Thanks for all your hospitality. But it’s no good, you see. I told this little chap,” (here he indicated the lizard), “that he’d have to be quiet if he came—which he insisted on doing. Of course his stuff won’t do here: I realize that. But he won’t stop. I shall just have to go home.”

9

“Would you like me to make him quiet?” said the flaming Spirit—an angel, as I now understood.

“Of course I would,” said the Ghost.

“Then I will kill him,” said the Angel, taking a step forward.

“Oh—ah—look out! You’re burning me. Keep away,” said the Ghost, retreating.

“Don’t you want him killed?”

“You didn’t say anything about *killing* him at first. I hardly meant to bother you with anything so drastic as that.”

“It’s the only way,” said the Angel, whose burning hands were now very close to the lizard. “Shall I kill it?”

“Well, that’s a further question. I’m quite open to consider it, but it’s a new point, isn’t it? I mean, for the moment I was only thinking about silencing it because up here—well, it’s so damned embarrassing.”

“May I kill it?”

“Well, there’s time to discuss that later.”

“There is no time. May I kill it?”

“Please, I never meant to be such a nuisance. Please—really—don’t bother. Look! It’s gone to sleep of its own accord. I’m sure it’ll be all right now. Thanks ever so much.”

“May I kill it?”

“Honestly, I don’t think there’s the slightest necessity for that. I’m sure I shall be able to keep it in order now. I think the gradual process would be far better than killing it.”

10

“The gradual process is of no use at all.”

“Don’t you think so? Well, I’ll think over what you’ve said very carefully. I honestly will. In fact I’d let you kill it now, but as a matter of fact I’m not feeling frightfully well today. It would be silly to do it now. I’d need to be in good health for the operation. Some other day, perhaps.”

“There is no other day. All days are present now.”

“Get back! You’re burning me. How can I tell you to kill it? You’d kill me if you did.”

“It is not so.”

“Why, you’re hurting me now.”

“I never said it wouldn’t hurt you. I said it wouldn’t kill you.”

“Oh, I know. You think I’m a coward. But it isn’t that. Really it isn’t. I say! Let me run back by tonight’s bus and get an opinion from my own doctor. I’ll come again the first moment I can.”

“This moment contains all moments.”

“Why are you torturing me? You are jeering at me. How can I let you tear me to pieces? If you wanted to help me, why didn’t you kill the damned thing without asking me—before I knew? It would be all over by now if you had.”

“I cannot kill it against your will. It is impossible. Have I your permission?”

The Angel’s hands were almost closed on the Lizard, but not quite. Then the Lizard began chattering to the Ghost so loud that even I could hear what it was saying.

“Be careful,” it said. “He can do what he said. He can kill me. One fatal word from you and he *will*. Then you’ll be without me forever and ever. It’s not

11

natural. How could you live? You’d be only a sort of ghost, not a real man as you are now. He doesn’t understand. He’s only a cold, bloodless abstract thing. It may be natural for him, but it isn’t for us. Yes, yes. I know there are no real pleasures now, only dreams—all sweet and fresh and almost innocent. You might say, quite innocent....”

“Have I your permission” said the Angel to the Ghost.

“I know it will kill me.”

“It won’t. But supposing it did?”

“You’re right. I would be better to be dead than to live with this creature.”

“Then I may?”

“Damn and blast you! Go on can’t you? Get it over. Do what you like,” bellowed the Ghost; but ended, whimpering, “God help me. God help me.”

12

Next moment the Ghost gave a scream of agony such as I never heard on Earth. The Burning One closed his crimson grip on the reptile: twisted it, while it bit and writhed, and then flung it, broken-backed, on the turf.

“Ow! That’s done for me,” gasped the Ghost, reeling backwards.

For a moment I could make out nothing distinctly. Then I saw, between me and the nearest bush, unmistakably solid but growing every moment solidier, the upper arm and the shoulder of a man. Then, brighter still and stronger, the legs and hands. The neck and golden head materialised while I watched, and if my attention had not wavered I should have seen the actual completing of a man—an immense man, naked, not much smaller than the Angel. What distracted me was the fact that at the same moment something seemed to be happening to the Lizard. At first I thought the operation had failed. So far from dying, the creature was still struggling and even growing bigger as it struggled. And as it grew it changed. Its hinder parts grew rounder. The tail, still flickering became a tail of hair that flickered between huge and glossy buttocks. Suddenly I started back, rubbing my eyes. What stood before me was the greatest

12

Ask: How would you describe the relationship between the man and the lizard on his shoulder?

Answer: He has a love-hate relationship with it. On one hand, he is enslaved to it and knows he wishes to end his imprisonment, but at the same time he fears what will happen if the lizard is no longer there.

Ask: What is the significance of the transformations that occur in the man and the lizard after the Angel kills the lizard? Specifically, what do you think the author is saying about how lust and chastity work?

Answer: Lust is love defiled and starved; like the lizard, it is fundamentally parasitical. When we give our lust over to God, however, He can re-create it into something new and glorious, far more beautiful than lust ever was—or could be. Freed from this imprisonment, we can grow to our full stature like the ghost in the story.

stallion I have ever seen, silvery white but with mane and tail of gold. It was smooth and shining, rippled with swells of flesh and muscle, whinnying and stamping with its hoofs. At each stamp the land shook and the trees dindled.

The new-made man turned and clapped the new horse’s neck. It nosed his bright body. Horse and master breathed each into the other’s nostrils. The man turned from it, flung himself at the feet of the Burning One, and embraced them....In joyous haste the young man leaped upon the horse’s back. Turning in his seat he waved a farewell, then nudged the stallion with his heels. They were off before I well knew what was happening...already they were only like a shooting star far off on the green plain, and soon among the foothills of the mountains. Then, still like a star, I saw them winding up, scaling what seemed impossible steeps, and quicker every moment, till near the dim brow of the landscape, so high that I must strain my neck to see them, they vanished, bright themselves, into the rose-brightness of that everlasting morning.

—C. S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*, (New York, NY: Touchstone, 1996), 96-102.

13

The Power to Lay It Down

2 *Ask: What comes to mind when you hear the word “chastity”?*

2 What comes to mind when you think of “chastity”? Monks and nuns who have taken a “vow of chastity”? Being single? Being sex-deprived? The goody-two-shoes who shudders at every reference to sex?

3 *Ask: What are some things the media (MTV or otherwise) tries to convince us about love, sexuality, and lust?*

3 Unfortunately, contemporary culture has for the most part prevailed in shaping the Christian’s understanding of chastity: some reject everything popular culture says about sex, while others have attempted a compromise between “old-fashioned” Christian teaching and MTV. The results can be quite surprising, to say the least. Yet the Bible calls us to be transformed by the renewal of our minds (Romans 12:2) so that we see things from God’s perspective and not the world’s perspective. In this chapter and the next, we will examine what the Bible, Sacred Tradition, as well as the Magisterium (the teaching authority of the Church) have to say about chastity, and what all this, in turn, says about us.

4 *Ask: Could someone please read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8?*

But what does all this have to do with servant-leader? That’s a question we’ll tackle at the end of this chapter.

4 Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

5 *Ask: What are the three things that Paul exhorts us to do according to the will of God?*

5 In this passage, Paul highlights 3 things God wants for you so that you can grow in Christ. What are they?

It is God’s will that I...

-
-
-

14

Answer:

- That we abstain from immorality
- That we know how to control his own body in holiness and honor
- That we do not transgress, and wrong our brother in this matter

Chastity gives us control over our bodies and lust robs us of it. Until we have control over our own actions, we cannot lay down our life for others, simply because we cannot give what we do not possess.

Ask: What does it mean for a man to “control his own body” (v. 4)? What are some concrete ways that you try to control your body? (As the leader, you should begin the discussion with an example from your own life.)

Say: A story might shed some more light on this topic. Here is a story by Christian Counselor Neil Anderson.

I was asked to visit a marriage and family class in a local secular college and present the Christian perspective on the topic...

One young man was clearly disinterested in my presentation. He pulled his desk away from the group and read the newspaper while I talked. Apparently he was listening, however, because he frequently interjected a vulgar noise in protest of my beliefs.

When I opened the floor for questions, one young woman asked, “What do Christians believe about masturbation?”

Before I could answer, the young man announced proudly so everyone could hear, “Well, I masturbate every day!”

There was an awkward silence as the other students anticipated my response to his challenge. “Congratulations!” I said at last. “But can you stop masturbating?”

The young man was silent for the rest of the discussion. When class was dismissed, he waited for the other students to leave. As he strolled by me, he taunted, “So why would I want to stop?”

“I didn’t ask if you *wanted* to stop,” I replied. “I asked if you can stop, because if you can’t, what you think is freedom is really bondage.” Neil T. Anderson, *A Way of Escape* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1994), p. 18.

Ask: What did you think of the story? How does it relate to controlling our bodies?

Answer: The counselor challenged the man to examine whether masturbation was freedom for him or bondage.

Ask: What is the connection between the man in the opening story and the student in this story?

Answer: They both thought they were in charge when something was really enslaving them.

“Glorify God in your body...”

6 *Ask:*
The next section deals with Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. Could someone brief us on what the atmosphere in Corinth was like at this time?

Now let’s return to Genesis 1:26 for a moment. To be made in God’s image and likeness means that we are made to give of ourselves the way God gives of Himself—totally, completely, without holding back. On the night before His death, Jesus said to His disciples, “This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: that one lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:12-13). Jesus Himself embodied this relentless self-giving on the Cross: “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

Re-born in the Second Adam and united to Him by our faith and our Baptism, this total, complete and boundless self-giving is our supreme and highest calling. Chastity is not about dos and don’ts. *Chastity is the power to love others in the right way.* The first condition of loving others rightly is that we must know how to control ourselves. After all, a man cannot give what he does not have. The man who is tossed around by the waves of his desire and his lust is not free to give himself to others—much less lay down his life for anyone. Like the man with the lizard on his shoulder, he cannot come to full stature, and remains dwarfed. Hence the command to “control your own body.”

“Glorify God in Your body...”

6 The Christians in Corinth had a particularly hard time with chastity. Like a typical commercial city, Corinth was exposed to diverse influences and rampant immorality. Of the 12 pagan temples there, the most infamous was dedicated to Aphrodite, the goddess of love, whose followers practiced religious prostitution. At one time, 1,000 temple prostitutes served in this temple. Naturally, those believers who lived in this sex-crazed culture were faced with severe temptations against purity. **15**

Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians addresses the believers’ struggle to live chastely. **16**

Note to Leader: These questions are intended to highlight the principles that form the core of Paul’s teaching on sexual morality. Help the group see how Paul’s instructions about chastity are built on these foundational truths. Notice Paul’s method of handling the issue: when challenging the Corinthians to sexual purity, he first spends a good amount of time explaining what God has done for us (He gave His Son as the “price” of our Redemption) and who we are (our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit). Then, from these truths he draws the application: be chaste. If you skip the foundational truths and head straight for the “why-your-behavior-must-change” talk, you could potentially produce some tightly-wound legalists.

7 *Ask:*
*Could I have
 someone
 please read 1
 Corinthians
 6:13-20?*

8 *Ask:*
*According to
 this passage,
 what happens
 when Christians commit sexual immorality?*

7 **Read his instructions in 1 Corinthians 6:13-20**

8 According to this passage, why is it wrong for a Christian to engage in sexual immorality?

9 Why does Paul call our body “a temple of the Holy Spirit” (v. 19)? What are some practical implications of this truth?

16

Answer: Paul points out that “Your bodies are members of Christ” (v. 15). Our body is Christ’s body. Whatever we join to ourselves, we are joining to Christ. What will we do with Christ’s body?

9 *Ask: Why does Paul call our body “a temple of the Holy Spirit” (v. 19)? What are some practical implications of this truth?*

Answer: When Paul calls the body a “temple,” he is using a word that is filled with meaning. This temple is not just any temple. He is referring to the Temple in Jerusalem. Everything was holy and consecrated to God in the Temple. Nothing that was not holy was even allowed inside because the Temple was where God dwelt! (For more on the temple, feel free to have the group look at one or all of these passages: John 2:16; II Chronicles 2:4-6; I Kings 8:10-11; Isaiah 56:7; Psalm 79:1-4.)

10 Ask: Paul says, “You are not your own; you were bought with a price” (v. 20). What is this “price” he’s talking about? How does this statement fit into his teachings about sexual morality?

Answer: Paul is trying to get his listeners to realize the importance of their bodies.

These are not just any bodies; they are the bodies that Christ has redeemed through his death on the cross. He is hoping to change their vision of their bodies in order to change the way they use their bodies.

11 Ask: What role does chastity play in being a servant-leader?

Answer: Chastity and the freedom that comes with it are necessary if we are to serve others. Sin in general—and sexual sin in particular—has the uncanny power to lock us into self-absorption. A man who is concerned only with himself cannot be what God has called him to be as a leader.

10 Looking at what we’ve covered, what role does chastity play in being a servant-leader? Before you read on, take a few moments to write down your answer to this question.

11 At the end of our opening story from *The Great Divorce*, C. S. Lewis describes the transformation one man undergoes when he surrenders his lust to God. The parasitical lizard turns into a glorious stallion, upon which the man—now grown to full stature—rides into heaven’s dawn. The man who is dominated by lust cannot be leader in the truest sense of the word, because lust inevitably leads to self-absorption. His ability to take action and think for himself is diminished precisely because he is not free to do so. To the degree that he is unchaste, a man also fails to be a true servant-king. Because he is turned inward on himself, he cannot look out for others and defend them when the Enemy rolls around.

Our hope of riding the stallion lies in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the one who will enable us to conquer all things and share in His triumph. By His grace, every man can be changed from a pale shadow into a full-statured victor.

16

In the next chapter, we will look at the threat of sexual bondage and the deliverance that Jesus Christ gives us. As you proceed, ask the Holy Spirit to show you how you can love someone in your life rightly—and obey His promptings! He might ask you to call this person, to ask for forgiveness, to anticipate and fulfill a need they might have. Whatever it is, rely on His strength for the power to do it.

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Chapter Three

THE FREEDOM TO LOVE (II)

Breaking Free

FOCAL POINT: Lust enslaves. In so far as we are chained by it, we are unable to love rightly. *Sexual bondage* occurs when we are addicted to sins against chastity and can no longer choose *not* to give in to them. Only the grace of God in Jesus Christ can make us free. By tapping into the wisdom and the experience of the Church, we can follow in the footsteps of countless Christians who have struggled against lust and prevailed in Jesus Christ.

SPECIAL PREPARATION: You will need to know the general outline of this chapter to handle the discussion well. If you have a sense of where the chapter is going, you can move things along or hover over one section, depending on the needs of the group. More than any other chapter in this series, this one will provide the opportunity for the men to be vulnerable and honest with each other. Be careful to moderate this, however—it need not turn into a time of public confession. Be prepared to set the tone with your answers to the questions and the examples you use. As the leader, you should spend about two hours praying over the material—especially the Scripture passages—and holding yourself up to the mirror of God’s Word, preferably before the Blessed Sacrament.

This chapter may be particularly long, but most of it is text—stories and quotations that will hopefully facilitate discussion in your group. You do not have to cover every page in detail. Here is where your knowledge of the group comes in; go as deep into the material as your group seems willing. More than likely things are going to get uncomfortable at some point, and if that were not the case, chances are

that masks are still on and defenses are still up. On the other hand, be cautious about pushing the comfort zone. Draw out the answers; don't force them out. If a member is reluctant to participate, there is no need to coax him into doing so.

OPENING STORY: In place of this, you can watch the clip from “The Return of the King.” Another good clip is the Sméagol-Gollum soliloquy in “The Two Towers.” The answers to the discussion questions might give you a hint as to the extent that your group will want to talk about the issues that will surface later.

Kickoff

1 *Ask: Could someone please read the story from *The Lord of the Rings*? (This is of course, if you do not watch parts of the movie, see note above)*

1 Kickoff

“Give us that, my love...”

In his immortal masterpiece, *The Lord of the Rings*, J.R.R. Tolkien introduces to the reader to Sméagol, a creature who was once not too different from the peaceful, merry Hobbits. One day, however, Sméagol's discovery of the corrupting Ring of Power changed his fate forever. Here is Gandalf the Wizard's account of what happened:

[Sméagol] was interested in roots and beginnings; he dived into deep pools; he burrowed under trees and growing plants; he tunneled into green mounds; and he ceased to look up at the hill-tops, or the leaves on trees, or the flowers opening in the air: his head and his eyes were downward.

He had a friend called Déagol, of similar sort, sharper-eyed but not so quick and strong. On a time they took a boat and went down to the Gladden Fields, where there were great beds of iris and flowering reeds. There Sméagol got out and went nosing about the banks but Déagol sat in the boat and fished. Suddenly a great fish took his hook and before he knew where he was, he was dragged out and down into the water, to the bottom. Then he let go of his line, for he thought he saw something shining in the river-bed; and holding his breath he grabbed at it.

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Then he came up spluttering, with weeds in his hair and handful of mud; and he swam to the bank. And behold! when he washed the mud away. There in his hand lay a beautiful golden ring; and it shone and fluttered in the sun, so that his heart was glad. But Sméagol had been watching him from behind a tree, and as Déagol gloated over the ring, Sméagol came up softly behind.

“Give us that, Déagol, my love,” said Sméagol, over his friend’s shoulder.

“Why?” said Déagol.

“Because it’s my birthday, my love, and I want it,” said Sméagol.

“I don’t care,” said Déagol. “I have given you a present already, more than I could afford. I found this, and I’m going to keep it.”

“Oh, are you indeed, my love,” said Sméagol; and he caught Déagol by the throat and strangled him, because the gold looked so bright and beautiful. Then he put the ring on his finger.

No one ever found out what had become of Déagol; he was murdered far from home, and his body was cunningly hidden. But Sméagol returned alone; and he found that none of his family could see him, when he was wearing the ring. He was very pleased with his discovery and he concealed it; and he used it to find secrets, and he put his knowledge to crooked and malicious uses. He became sharp-eyed and keen-eared for all that was hurtful. The ring had given him power according to his stature. It is not to be wondered at that he became very unpopular and was shunned (when visible) by all his relations. They kicked him, and he bit their feet. He took to thieving, and going about muttering to himself, and gurgling in his throat. So they called him Gollum, and cursed him, and told him to go far away; and his grandmother, desiring peace, expelled him from the family and turned him out of her hole.

He wandered in loneliness, weeping a little for the hardness of the world, and he journeyed up the River, till he came to a stream that flowed down from the mountains, and he went that way. He caught fish in deep pools with invisible fingers and ate them raw. One day it was very hot, and as he was bending over

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the pool, he felt a burning on the back of his head, and a dazzling light from the water pained his wet eyes. He wondered at it, for he had almost forgotten about the Sun. Then for the last time he looked up and shook his fist at her.

—*The Fellowship of the Ring* (New York, NY: Houghton-Mifflin, 1993), 52.

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Ask: How did the Ring of Power affect Sméagol's character?

Answer: It changed his life and his identity. It caused him to murder his friend and to deceive his family. He left his home and proceeded to live a gruesome lifestyle.

Ask: What are some similarities between Sméagol's bondage to the Ring and a person's enslavement to sexual sin?

Answer: Instead of Sméagol possessing the ring, it possessed and controlled him.

Bondage of the Will

2 *Ask: Could someone read this section out loud for us?*

Note to Leader: no specific questions need to be asked after the story about Jake. If participants are interested, you could ask what they think about the story or if they think lust works like this every time. The next section, Out of Control, is meant to connect with

Jake's story. Spend some time on the first two questions before you get to the last two. Notice how the questions "funnel," i.e., become more personally demanding.

Bondage of the Will

Jake was a junior in high school when he stumbled upon pornographic pictures on the computer he shared with his older brother. He didn't tell his brother because he was afraid to talk about his own fascination with the pictures. Habitually, he began to check his brother's computer for new images when his brother was out and slowly became entrenched in sexual fantasy and compulsive masturbation. He felt terrible after each time, and went to Confession as soon as he could, yet his resolve to stop seemed to matter less and less.

When he went to college, Jake resolved to start afresh and erased all the pornography he had stored in his computer. He also committed to getting involved in the campus church, which he did. He joined a Bible study, sang in the choir, and tried his best to attend Mass on weekdays. For his first month in college, he stayed "sober" and was glad he did. However, Jake soon found himself resorting again to pornography, sexual fantasy and masturbation whenever he was lonely or stressed out about school. There were times when

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the images seemed to be constantly lurking in the recesses of his consciousness, slipping out to surprise and terrorize him in the middle of class, conversation with his friends, at dinnertime, or even during Bible study. It was as if his imagination was slipping out of control. He couldn't talk to anyone about this because he was too ashamed about it all.

When he finally mustered up enough courage to ask Lisa out—he'd had a crush on her since the first week of school—he found himself plagued by impure thoughts about her throughout the entire evening. The pornographic images he'd been exposing himself to began flashing through his mind. He tried to concentrate on their conversation during dinner, but it was difficult, and Lisa began to sense something was wrong. He became so ashamed and frustrated with himself that he ended the date early and took Lisa home after dinner. When he got back to his dorm room, he lay in bed thinking

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about how he ruined the date without even trying. Despite all that happened, within minutes he found himself surfing the web for pornography.

Unfortunately, Jake's experiences are not entirely unique among college students. Many men, Christians or not, find themselves trapped in sexual addiction, and cannot seem to find a way out. The Biblical term that describes this state is slavery. Few people who wrestle with sexual sin would be comfortable using this word to describe their situation, yet many Christians find themselves repeatedly faced with a deep entrenchment in sexual sin despite their best efforts. The Apostle Paul wrote, "*Do you not know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slave to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?*" (Romans 6:16). Lust left unchecked can, like Smeagol's desire for the Ring, lead us into a downward spiral of alienation, loneliness, and bondage. The good news is, Paul continues, through Jesus Christ "*you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness*" (Romans 6:18). Victory, though costly and difficult, is entirely possible for the Christian!

In this chapter, we will look at what God's Word has to say about the threat of sexual bondage and how Jesus Christ can deliver us from its grasp. Before you proceed, take a moment and ask God to open your heart so that you can be completely honest with Him as you study His Word.

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Out of Control

3 *Ask: Could someone please read 2 Samuel 13:1-20?*

Out of Control

The story of Amnon and Tamar is one of the most lucid illustrations of sexual bondage in the Bible.

3 **Read this account in 2 Samuel 13:1-20**

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4 *Ask: What details in the story indicate that Amnon was enslaved to lust?*

Answer:

Amnon became frustrated and ill because of his attraction to her (v. 2). He was depressed morning after morning (v. 4). And, most obviously he raped Tamar.

Ask: Notice the sudden change in Amnon noted in verses 15-17. How would you explain this abrupt behavior? What does this change say about Amnon's "love" for Tamar (v. 1)?

Answer: He was only concerned with what he wanted and not about actually loving Tamar. If he truly loved Tamar he would not have raped her. Motivated by lust and not love, he becomes angered by her rejection.

5 *Ask: What does this passage of Scripture have to say about the effects of lust on a man?*

Answer: Lust can control his life and make him do terrible things he wouldn't normally consider doing.

6 *Ask: Has lust affected the way you think, speak or act? If so, how?*

4 What details in the story indicate that Amnon was enslaved to lust?

5 What does this passage of Scripture have to say about the effects of lust on a man?

6 Has lust affected the way you think, speak, or act? If so, how?

Breaking the Bonds

In the previous chapter, we saw that man was made to give of himself totally, completely, and without holding back. Chastity, in the light of God's design for man, is the power to love others in the right way. Sins against chastity thwart God's design by sabotaging our power to love rightly and—especially in the cases of masturbation and pornography—turning our focus inward, towards the satisfaction of our desires and cravings.

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Breaking the Bonds

7 Note to Leader: For this section, there are no questions. This is for a reason: so you can formulate your own questions to tailor the discussion to your group's level of openness. Hopefully, your group members would have gone through this section individually before coming to the study. If you get a sense that participants are not responding, feel free to read a few of your favorite quotes and then, ask non-threatening, inviting questions. Here are a few suggestions. (You may have to lead with a personal response, but wait a minute or two before doing this!)

- What do you think it means to have sin “reign” over us, as Paul says in the quotation from Romans?
- Did everyone get a chance to go through this section and pray about it? Would someone like to tell us about his experience?
- What is something you learned in this section?

7 Scripture gives us this exhortation in Romans 6:12-14:

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. Do not yield your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

If you have disobeyed God in the area of sexual purity, ask for His forgiveness in the sacrament of Confession. Not only will He forgive you, He will also give you the grace you need to be victorious over temptation and sin. Begin anew with a commitment to “yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness.”

What follows are some sexual sins that you might've struggled with in the past, or are struggling with right now. As you go through this list, pray the prayer below:

Holy Spirit, I want to be the man You have made me to be. Reveal to me every use of my body as an instrument of wickedness. Open my eyes to see Your Truth and free me from every lie of the Enemy. Help me to rely on Your strength alone for victory in my struggles. Apart from You, I can do nothing. Amen.

Masturbation

In masturbation, sexual pleasure is sought outside of the marital bond, “in which the total meaning of mutual self-giving and procreation in the context of true love is achieved” (Cf. CCC 2352). [See also the quotation from C. S. Lewis below.]

Pornography

“[Pornography] offends against chastity because it perverts the conjugal act, the intimate giving of spouses to each other. It does grave injury to the dignity of its participants (actors, vendors, and the public), since each one becomes an object of base pleasure and illicit profit for others. It immerses all who are involved in the illusion of a fantasy world. It is a grave offense” (CCC 2354).

8 Read the Lewis quotation.

(Of all the quotations in this chapter, this is perhaps the most powerful.)

Ask: What is Lewis saying here? “Do you agree with Lewis? Why, or why not?”

Fornication (Sexual intimacy outside of the marriage covenant)

“Flee sexual immorality [Greek: *porneia*]. Every other sin which a man commits is outside the body; but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you now know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body” (1 Corinthians 6:18-20).

Emotional Promiscuity

“I have seen far too many young men commit a kind of emotional promiscuity with a young woman. He will pursue her, not to offer his strength but to drink from her beauty, to be affirmed by her and feel like a man. They will share deep, intimate conversations. But he will not commit; he is *unable* to commit.”

—John Eldredge, *Wild at Heart*

Lustful Looks/Thoughts

“But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matthew 5:27).

8

“For me the real evil of masturbation would be that it takes an appetite which, in lawful use, leads the individual out of himself to complete (and correct) his own personality in that of another (and finally in children and even grandchildren) and turns it back; sends the man back into the prison of himself, there to keep a harem of imaginary brides. And this harem, once admitted, works against his ever getting out and really uniting with a real woman. For the harem is always accessible, always subservient, calls for no sacrifices or adjustments, and can be endowed with erotic and psychological attractions which no real woman can rival. Among those shadowy brides he is always adored, always the perfect lover; no demand is made on his selfishness, no mortification ever imposed on his vanity. In the end, they become merely the medium through which he increasingly adores himself...After all, almost the *main* work of life is to come out of ourselves, out of the little, dark prison we are all born in. Masturbation is to be avoided as all things are to be avoided which retard this process. The danger is that of coming to love the prison.”

—C.S. Lewis

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“... [I]n most Western cultures, where sexual mores have blatantly moved toward pagan standards, the doctrine of the sanctity of body needs to be heard anew within the Church. Sexual immorality is still sin, even though it has been justified under every conceivable rationalization. Those who take Scripture seriously are not prudes or legalists at this point; rather, they recognize that God has purchased us for higher things. Our bodies belong to God through the redemption of the cross; and they are destined for resurrection.”

—Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*

A Christian either rules his inclinations, or his inclinations rule him.

—St. John Vianney, *On Temptation*

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Hope of Deliverance

9 Say: *Let's see what Scripture has to say about victory over sexual sin? (Pick out 2 verses for the group to read aloud and consider.)*

Then, ask: "What do the passages say about victory over sexual sin?"

10 Say: *Do you really believe in these truths? Sometimes we can recognize something is true in our heads, but it has a hard time reaching our hearts. How can we not only understand these truths, but live them out each day?*

Hope of Deliverance

Now that you've renewed your commitment to obey God, we'll continue with the question, "Can I be delivered from sexual bondage?" Next, we will ask, "How can I experience this freedom?"

Perhaps you've often wondered if you'll ever be victorious in the area of sexual purity. Perhaps you've been struggling with particular sins for years. Well, let's set aside how you feel about the future, and see what *God*, the Author of Truth, has to say about this.

9 What does each of these passages have to say about victory over sexual sin?

John 8:31-36

Romans 6:1-11

26

2 Corinthians 5:17

Philippians 4:13

10

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Answer: One way is through Scripture meditation. See Psalm 119:11 for how Scripture can help.

“How can I experience this freedom?”

11 *Ask: Could someone please read the quote by St. John Cassian?*

12 *Read this paragraph (leader).*

13 Note to Leader: Have a different member read the different time-tested keys out loud. For each key, you can also ask “How do you think this component helps us live chastely?”

“How Can I Experience This Freedom?”

“If we were really eager, as the Apostle puts it, ‘struggle lawfully’ and to ‘be crowned’ (2 Timothy 2:5) for overcoming the impure spirit of unchastity, we should not trust in our own strength and ascetic practice, but in the help of our Master, God. No one ceases to be attacked by this demon until he truly believes that he will be healed and reach the heights of purity not through his own effort and labor, but through the aid and protection of God. For such a victory is beyond man’s natural powers...Thus, no one can soar to this high and heavenly prize of holiness on his own wings and learn to imitate the angels, unless the grace of God leads him upwards from this earthly mire.”

—St. John Cassian

12 God does not call us to do the impossible. Because chastity is His will for every man, He is sure to give us every grace we need to walk in it. How can you receive His grace to live/grow in chastity? From Sacred Scripture, Sacred Tradition and the collective experience of the Saints, the following 5 time-tested keys can be derived. As you read through this section, write down questions that come to your mind or thoughts you would like to discuss with your Bible study group.

13 *Knowledge of self*

- Have I acknowledged my weakness before God?
- Do I truly believe that only in Jesus Christ can I be truly chaste?
- Have I given anyone permission to hold me accountable in my walk with God? (See Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

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Denial of self

- Do I moderate my enjoyment of pleasure?
- Have I acknowledged my weakness before God?
- Do I eat too much?
- Do I drink too much?
- Am I inordinately afraid of suffering in all its forms (physical discomfort, being inconvenienced, being ignored or unnoticed, etc.)?

Obedience to God’s commandments

- Am I obedient to all that God says to me in His Word (in Scripture and Sacred Tradition as interpreted by the Magisterium)?
- Is there an area where I am in rebellion against Him (e.g., by refusing to forgive another person, by placing yourself in situations where you find yourself tempted frequently)

Cultivation of the moral virtues

- What is a specific virtue that will strengthen chastity in me? (Being patient with myself? Turning my eyes away from magazines at the checkout counter? Anticipating and meeting the needs of people around me?)

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Fidelity to prayer

- Am I spending time alone with God every day?
- Am I willing to make the effort to receive the Eucharist worthily and more often?
- Do I go to Confession regularly, even when I have not committed any mortal sins?
- Have I asked for and relied on the help of Mary, my true mother in Christ?
- Am I memorizing Scripture, letting it fill my mind and spill into my actions? (See Psalm 119:11; Matthew 4:1-11)

Bodily fasting alone is not enough to bring about perfect self-restraint and true purity; it must be accompanied by contrition of heart, intense prayer to God, frequent meditation on the Scriptures, toil and manual labor. These are able to check the restless impulses of the soul and to recall it from its shameful fantasies. Humility helps more than everything else, however, and without it no one can overcome unchastity or any other sin. In the first place, then, we must take the utmost care to guard the heart from base thoughts, for, according to the Lord, 'out of the heart

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Chastity and Masculinity

14 *Ask: To close, could someone please read the final section?*

proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, unchastity' and so on (Matthew 15:19). We are told to fast not only to mortify the body, but also to keep our intellect watchful, so that it will not be obscured because of the amount of food we have eaten and thus be unable to guard its thoughts. We must not therefore expend all our effort in bodily fasting; we must also give attention to our thoughts and to spiritual meditation, since otherwise we will not be able to advance to the heights of true purity and chastity. As our Lord has said, we should 'cleanse first the inside of the cup and place, so that their outside may also be clean' (Matthew 23:26).

—St. John Cassian, *On the Eight Vices*

"Here is a rule for everyday life: Do not do anything which you cannot offer to God."

—St. John Vianney

Chastity and Masculinity

14 At the beginning of this Bible study series, we saw how God desired Adam to be a servant-king. This is how he was called to love every creature God has given him. Above all, this is how he was to give himself to his bride, Eve. Every man is called by God to love in this way. In the covenant of marriage, the husband gives himself totally to his wife. In taking the promise or the vow of celibacy, a man gives himself to his Bride, the Church. Both are responses to God's invitation into spousal love; both imitate the Lord Jesus Christ, who "loved the Church and gave Himself up for her" (Ephesians 5:25).

It cannot be overemphasized that chastity is more than just dos and don'ts (and that, mostly don'ts). *Chastity is about loving rightly.* This virtue enables a man to possess himself, enables him to enter into real relationships—and therefore make a sincere gift of himself. After all, it was God's plan from the beginning.

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Chapter Four

SOBER INTOXICATION OF THE SPIRIT

An Invitation to Sobriety

FOCAL POINT: Alcohol is good in and of itself, but its abuse robs us of our freedom and brings about disastrous consequences. On a college campus, there are varying and strong opinions about alcohol. Amidst all of these voices, we as Christians ultimately have to submit to the authority of God’s Word. We will approach alcohol, then, from the perspective of its proper use, since it is foolish to evaluate something based on its abuses. (For example, the fact that adultery occurs does not mean that the monogamous nature of marriage is unrealistic or depraved.)

SPECIAL PREPARATION: Read principal passages several times such as John 2:1-11.

Once again, your knowledge of the group will come into play. Do the group members veer to one extreme or the other? Do many of them struggle with sobriety? Are they mostly non-drinkers who hold vicious stereotypes of people who drink (“frat boys,” “lushes,” etc.)? Given where they are coming from, which parts of this chapter will they find particularly difficult to swallow? Looking ahead will help you steer the course and place greater emphasis on points that will challenge the group.

OPENING STORY: On opening section, have each group member read a quotation. This section is intended to draw out the group members' opinions about alcohol. Be sure to pose both the discussion questions. Refrain as much as possible from making assertions or "correcting" what the men might say. There will be plenty of time to challenge them with God's Word later. For now, just let them voice their opinions, disagree, and wrestle with the issue.

Kickoff

1 *Ask: Could I have a different person read each quote?*

Ask: Of the four students quoted above, with whom do you identify most? Why?

Ask: What do you think about the decisions each of these men have made?

1 Kickoff Thoughts on Drinking

I gave up drinking after I began to take my faith more seriously. I don't think it's sinful or anything like that. It's just alcohol reminds me too much of my lifestyle before I met Christ—too many keggers, staggering home some ungodly hour of the morning, waking up with a hangover. Now, when I go out with my friends to a bar or a party, I'll take a soda. I definitely lay off the alcohol. My buddies respect that. In fact, it usually makes them ask me why I changed my mind, and that gives me an opportunity to talk about my faith.

—Tom

Yeah, people sure ask questions when they see a Christian drink, don't they? I usually like a beer with my meal when I go out with my friends, and more than once, somebody will say, "I didn't know you drank!" I think it's good for people to see Christians drink—breaks down stereotypes, you know? Helps people see that Christianity is about a relationship with Jesus Christ, not a bunch of dos and don'ts.

—Andy

One night we were walking home from the bars and my best friend Kyle stumbled and had to crawl across the street to get to the other side because he was so drunk he

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couldn't get up. The next morning when I woke up that was all I could think of: Kyle on his knees, laughing himself silly, and I too liquored up to help him. I just thought to myself, "That's not what real men do for one another." That's why I decided that it's all got to stop. I still go out and have a drink or two, but not more than that. It's simply not Christian.

—Paul

My friends and I have had this discussion before, and I think drinking, in moderation or not, is simply wrong. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, so why should we damage them with alcohol? I think it's a matter of common sense: if it doesn't do you any good, you shouldn't do it.

—Chris

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What do the Bible and the Church have to say about alcohol? Is it okay to drink at all? What about drunkenness? Is it all right to get wasted every now and then, as long as it doesn't become habitual? What does sobriety have to do with becoming the man God wants you to be? Ask a different person, you'll get a different answer. On a college campus, opinions about alcohol abound—and more than likely you have your own opinions on the subject too.

In this chapter, we'll take a look at what God's Word has to say about alcohol; its use and its abuse. We'll concern ourselves chiefly with the mind of God, not the minds of men. As with every other subject, the crucial question is, "What does God have to say about this whole thing?"

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"It Makes the Heart of Man Glad"

2 *Say: You read a number of passages in Scripture on alcohol. Let's look at John 2:1-11.*

"It Makes the Heart of Man Glad"

2 **Read the following passages of Scripture carefully: John 2:1-11, Sirach 31:25-30, Isaiah 25:6, and Galatians 5:19-21**

What do they reveal about God's attitude towards alcohol use?

33

Ask: Could

someone please read John 2:1-11? While they are reading, I want everyone to place themselves in the scene as if you were present at the feast.

Ask: In this passage, it is thought that Jesus changed about 180 gallons of water into wine. Would you have been disturbed by Jesus' actions? Why, or why not?

Ask: How would you describe your attitude towards alcohol?

Ask: What do Jesus' actions in this passage reveal about his stance towards alcohol?

Answer: Reading Matthew 11:16-19 would also be helpful for this discussion. The point of referring to Matthew 11:16-19 is this: Jesus Himself said that He drank; and—we might note—He drank often enough to acquire the reputation of a "drunkard" in the eyes of some. Let God's Word confront them!

3 *Ask: With all of the passages in mind, how would you sum up the Bible's teaching on how to enjoy alcohol?*

Answer: The Bible clearly shows that there is no problem with drinking alcohol and using it for enjoyment. However, at the same time it cautions people to not drink in excess because of the effects that it can have on a person.

3 In 3 sentences or less, summarize the Biblical teaching on the proper enjoyment of alcohol.

"The virtue of temperance disposes us to avoid every kind of excess: the abuse of food, alcohol, tobacco, or medicine. Those incur grave guilt who, by drunkenness or a love of speed, endanger their own and others' safety on the road, at sea, or in the air" (CCC 2290).

Of Age: The Question of Underage Drinking

Is there any law that is more controversial than underage drinking? Is there any law broken more frequently on college campuses?

In this section, we will explore the issue of sobriety as it involves underage drinking. Is it an issue of morality? Why does our government have such strict laws against it? Is it immoral to break a law? Let's explore Scripture, the reasoning of the Church, logic, and history for some insight.

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4 First, why are laws put into place?

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Of Age: The Question of Underage Drinking

Note to Leader: While many students can understand the reasons not to get drunk, it is harder to understand why someone cannot drink under the age of 21, especially if they know how to handle alcohol. FOCUS' call for underage students not to drink is a radical call that provides an incredible witness on campus. This section presents a step-by-step argument against underage drinking. Your job is to take your small group through this argument in this section.

4 *Ask: Why are laws put into place?*

Answer: For the sake of the community or, in other words, the common good.

5 *Ask: What is the law on underage drinking?*

Answer:
National
Minimum
Drinking Age
Act of 1984
made it illegal
for those under
21 to purchase
or publicly
possess alcohol.

In regards to consumption of alcohol by those under 21, no law was made nationally. However, every state has its own laws in regards to minors drinking under 21. Some states do not allow it in any circumstance; others allow it in private at the home of a parent/guardian with their consent etc. For state-by-state laws, feel free to check out: <http://www.alcoholpolicy.niaaa.nih.gov/stateprofiles/>.

| | |
|----------|---|
| 5 | What is the law on underage drinking? |
| 6 | For a biblical perspective, read Romans 13:1-7 |
| 7 | What does Paul say about following laws? |
| 8 | Are there ever laws that should not be followed? |

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6 *Ask: Could someone read for me Romans 13:1-7?*

7 *Ask: What does Paul say about following laws?*

Answer: We need to follow them or bring God's wrath upon us.

8 *Ask: Are there ever laws that should not be followed?*

Answer: Yes, there are. For instance, in ancient Roman times, not worshipping pagan gods. One example in our modern times would be a doctor who refuses to perform an abortion.

9 Say: Then, the question is: Is underage drinking an unjust law?

Answer: Let's look at what the Catechism has to say.

9 Then, the question is: Is underage drinking an unjust law?

10 The Catechism of the Catholic Church speaks to this point:

“The citizen is obliged in conscience not to follow the directives of civil authorities when they are contrary to the demands of the moral order, to the fundamental rights of persons or the teaching of the Gospel...When citizens are under the oppression of a public authority which oversteps its competence, they should still not refuse to give or to do what is objectively demanded of them by the common good; but it is legitimate for them to defend their own rights and those of their fellow citizens against the abuse of this authority within the limits of the natural law and the Law of the Gospel” (CCC 2242) **34**

10 Ask: The Catechism of the Catholic Church talks about unjust laws. Could someone please read paragraph 2242?

11 Ask: So, according to the Catechism, when should we not follow civil authorities?

Answer:

1. Contrary to moral order.
2. Contrary to the fundamental rights of a person (e.g. food, shelter, clothing, inherit dignity).

11 So, according to the Catechism, when should we not follow civil authorities?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Drinking alcohol is not a fundamental right like food and shelter etc. and would not be a reason for going against the law. Neither would the Law of the Gospel since nothing is stated in the Gospels in regards to a drinking age. The only criteria to examine would be the moral order (laws which serve to maintain societal order and which support the common good.) **35**

3. Contrary to teachings of the Gospel.

12 *Ask: In looking at the statistics, do you think a lower drinking age would be helpful for morality and the common good?*

13 *Ask: But, what if individually you don't have a problem with alcohol, shouldn't you be able to drink?*

14 *Tell the Racecar driver analogy:*

As a racecar driver, one usually drives around 200 MPH on a racetrack. They learn how to safely go this speed while turning around a track. What if a racecar driver took his car on a regular highway and went 200 MPH.

Ask: Could he claim that the law didn't apply to him because he knew how to handle a car at this speed?

Answer: Surely not. He sets a poor example for other drivers by encouraging this behavior among others who cannot handle driving at 200 MPH. The law is made for the common good and does not depend on the abilities of the individual.

12 See the three statistics below

1. The Centers for Disease Control looked at 49 high quality, peer-reviewed studies of places that changed their drinking age and found conclusively that a 21 minimum drinking age decreases fatalities by 16 percent according to Shults, Ruth, et al. ("Reviews of Evidence Regarding Interventions to Reduce Alcohol-Impaired Driving," American Journal of Preventive Medicine 21 (4S) (2001): 66-88).
2. About 25,000 lives have been saved since the 1975 inception of MLDA laws. It is estimated that between 700-900 lives are saved each year due to these precautionary measures taken against teen drinking according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).
3. From 1983, when the minimum 21 drinking age was first introduced, to 1989, when all the U.S. state adopted the law, other countries around the world saw increases in underage binge drinking, while the U.S. experienced a 15 percent drop among high-school seniors according to MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving).

13 But, what if individually I don't have a problem with alcohol, shouldn't I be able to drink?

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14 "It is right not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that makes your brother stumble" (Romans 14:21).

Think back to why laws are made in the first place; they are made for the common good—to protect you and me. By upholding the law, you will help others who can't handle alcohol."

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15 *Ask: Do you have any questions about the topic of underage drinking?*

Guarding the Springs of Life

16 *Ask: Could someone read Ephesians 5:18?*

Ask: Paul emphasizes a contrast in this verse between being “filled with the Spirit” and being filled with wine. How does sobriety affect your freedom to be a servant leader?

Potential Answer: It allows us to make correct decisions and to think clearly. It helps us control what we think, say, and do.

Ask: Have you struggled in the area of sobriety? Under what circumstances?

Ask: What are some steps that will help you exercise moderation if you drink?

15 **Notes**

Guarding the Springs of Life

We have seen how the Word of God praises the proper enjoyment of alcohol, and condemns its abuse. As sons of God, made in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:16-28), we walk in freedom and dignity through the exercise of our intellect and our will, the God-given powers by which we know and love. One of the most damaging

The word “sobriety” comes from *bria*, meaning “measure”. Hence, the man who is sober is the one who observes the measure or limits in drinking and other enjoyments affect his reason. The Greek words translated as “sober”, *nephaleos* and *sophrone*, are related to vigilance and self-control.

consequences of drunkenness is that it deprives us of our ability to know and to love.

In Biblical usage, the word “heart” denotes the center of the

human spirit, from which flows the “springs of life” (Proverbs 4:23)—our emotions, thought, motivations, courage, decision, action. It is “*the place of truth, where we choose life or death....[It] is the place of covenant*” (CCC 2563).

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16 **Read Ephesians 5:18**

It is in the light of these truths that the prophet Hosea listed drunkenness among the sins that “take away the understanding [literally, ‘heart’]” (Hosea 4:11). As Paul, the third student at the beginning of this chapter, observed in an indirect way, drunkenness is an affront to our dignity as men and sons of God. A man who cannot walk straight (much less think straight) is no man of dominion.

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Note to Leader: This is a time for the men to be honest about their struggles with sobriety. If there are group members for whom drunkenness is no longer an issue, let them share their wisdom and experience with the rest of the group. If drunkenness is not an issue for your group members, ask them how they can be edify and encourage those who struggle with this habit. [For instance, see Ephesians. 4:29]

If your past has been characterized by the abuse of alcohol, realize that, at this very moment, the Lord Jesus Christ holds out for you a new beginning and true freedom in Him. Yield to His lordship and walk in His forgiveness. Go to Confession if you need to. Perhaps your road to sobriety or moderate drinking will be long and difficult, but every victory will take you one step closer to becoming the man who God made you to be.

If you've never struggled with drunkenness, ask God how you can help to lift up and build up your brothers in this study who have a hard time in this area. Thank Him for placing you in a position to be an encouraging brother.

"Therefore, prepare your minds for action, be sober, set your hope fully upon the grace that is coming to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

—1 Peter 1:13

"We learn that we should shun drunkenness, which prevents us from avoiding grievous sins. For the things we avoid when sober, we unknowingly commit through drunkenness."

—St. Ambrose of Milan, Sermon on Abraham

Chapter Five

A LIFE WELL-LIVED

Excellence in All Things

FOCAL POINT: As Christians, we are called not only to be excellence in our faith lives, but in every area of our lives. We wish to expose our whole lives to the light of Jesus Christ. While we may not be successful in all our endeavors by the world's definition, the Lord asks that we give a sincere gift of ourselves and take up our cross daily and follow after Him. This way we can model the Son of God, Jesus Christ in all that we do.

SPECIAL PREPARATION: If you have the opportunity, see the film "A Man for All Seasons" and select an appropriate clip for the viewing of the group (the final court scene is highly recommended).

OPENING STORY: If you have selected a clip from the movie, you can show it after reading this account.

Kickoff

1 Kickoff

1 *Ask: Could someone start us off by reading the story?*

Ask: It is obvious that St. Thomas More had a deep faith life. What else is notable about his life?

Answer: His martyrdom is very notable, but also his ability to be excellent at so many things—politics, scholarship, writing, care for the poor, and family life.

Ask: Consider a time when you had to stick to your guns about something and accept the consequence that came. What made you do it?

"The King's Good Servant, but God's first"

In the 1529, Sir Thomas More rose to the rank of Lord Chancellor of the realm of England, second only to the king. Educated at Oxford, More was first and foremost a scholar, though he excelled in many areas. Despite his considerate means, he lived a simple life and often invited the poor to dine with his family. Sir Thomas was known to be a just man and, above all, a man of profound holiness; his typical daily routine included the Liturgy of the Hours in the middle of the night. He was a wonderful husband and father who provided a first-class education for his daughters, an uncommon occurrence at the time.

Not all was well, however. The King—Henry VIII, a close friend of Sir Thomas, was angry. He was displeased with the Pope's refusal to grant him permission to divorce his wife, Catherine of Aragon. He also knew that Sir Thomas More, his Chancellor, stood with the Pope's decision. Thomas did not separate his personal beliefs from his office. Despite the King's persuasion, Sir Thomas refused to change his mind and sign a petition to Rome for the divorce.

When the King began to move against Christians who opposed his wishes, Sir Thomas felt compelled to resign as Chancellor, and moved back to his home in Chelsea.

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There, with the little money he had left, he hoped to live out a quiet life with his wife and his children. He had longed to be able to resume studying and writing, but his troubles were not yet over.

In 1534, he was arrested after refusing to sign the Act of Succession which recognized the offspring of Anne Boleyn, the King's second wife, as heir to the throne. Sir Thomas believed that Christ had explicitly forbidden divorce and therefore Henry's first marriage was the only valid one. He was imprisoned in the Tower for 15 months and, despite persuasion from his family and his friends to sign the Act, he persisted in his convictions. During this time, much of his property was confiscated.

When asked to comment on the Act of Supremacy which declared the King to be the Supreme Head of the Church in England, he refused and was charged with treason. In a hearing twisted with false testimony, he was found guilty and sentenced to death by beheading. His last words from the scaffold were, "I am the King's good servant, but God's first."

(Adapted from Kristin E. White, *A Guide to the Saints* (New York: Ballantine, 1991), 364-366)

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Excellence in All Things

2 Ask: Could someone please read the quote in the next section?

3 Read the next three paragraphs (leader).

Then, ask: Which way do you struggle with more?

4 Say: Scripture calls us to let the light of Christ shine on all aspects of our lives that we may be the “salt of the earth” and “light of the world.”

Ask: Could I have three people read the Scripture passages?

5 Ask: What does Scripture say about a Christian’s involvement in the world?

Excellence in All Things

2 “Many people feel they need to leave the values and principles of their faith outside of certain activities in the same way they leave a coat in a waiting room. The modern world tries to separate faith from reason, the professional from the personal, the means from the ends. This separationist approach destroys the ‘unity of life’ and creates the modern madness of feeling torn in two.”

—Matthew Kelly, *Rediscovering Catholicism*

3 In the opening story, St. Thomas More lived a life of unity. In regards to holiness and our earthly duties, there are two different ways to miss the mark.

First, we can be, “*Too heavenly-minded to be of any earthly good.*” The notion behind the saying is the Christian who is too busy praying, studying the Bible or going to Church to pay any attention to earthly affairs or fulfill his every day responsibilities at school or at work.

Second, people can be so involved in earthly things that they fail to bring their faith into the picture.

Which way do you struggle with more—being too caught up with earthly or spiritual things?

“Man, made in the image of the Creator, redeemed by the blood of Christ and made hold by the presence of the Holy Spirit, has as the ultimate purpose of his life to live ‘for the praise of God’s glory’ (cf. Eph. 1:12), striving to make each of his actions reflect the splendor of that glory.”

—John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* (The Splendor of Truth) **41**

4 Read the following passages on how to live out your faith in this world: John 17:15-19, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, and Matthew 5:48

5 What does Scripture say about a Christian’s involvement in the world? **42**

Answer: God wants us to be in the world, but also to sanctify the world. He wants us to “take every thought captive to obey Christ.” And we should pursue holiness in such a way that we shoot for perfection.

6 *Ask: In what areas do Christians today fail to live out excellence? (In the workplace? In the production of Christian media and art? In politics?) Why is this the case?*

Ask: In what areas do we fail to live out excellence?

Ask: We also don't want to simply focus on our weaknesses. In which of these areas can you best be an inspiration and a role model to others?

An Eternal Perspective on Excellence

7 *Ask: Let's read through the next section. Could someone start us off? Then, we will just go in a circle reading the individual paragraphs.*

The Bible gives us four guiding principles that will enable us to sanctify everyday life and fend off “earthly uselessness.” They are all found in Paul’s letter to the Colossians:

- **Total Reliance:** Do everything in the name of Jesus (3:17)
- **Unconditional Gratitude:** Be thankful in all things (3:17)
- **Supernatural Perspective:** Work as if serving the Lord and not men—because that is really the case! (3:23)
- **Prudent Conduct:** Conduct ourselves wisely in the presence of non-believers (4:5-6)

6 Consider the various realms of your everyday life and where you might fail to be excellent:

- Family life (e.g., how you treat your parents, siblings, etc.)
- School (e.g., your attitude towards classes, professors, grades, etc.)
- Work (e.g., your use of time at work, your relationships with co-workers, etc.)
- Social life (e.g., what you do on weekends, conversation topics, etc.)
- Recreation (e.g., your behavior in sports, responsibility in societies and clubs, etc.)

An Eternal Perspective on Excellence

Earlier, Paul told us in 2 Corinthians 10 that we should “take every thought captive to obey Christ,” realizing that “though we live in the world we are not carrying on a worldly war.” We need an eternal perspective if we are going to live lives of excellence.

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Many things could be said on prayer, but only a short method on how to pray will be given here. It is easy to remember with the acronym ACTS—**A**doration, **C**onfession, **T**hanksgiving, and **S**upplication.

Adoration—Praise God for who He is. He is the creator of the entire universe and yet at the same time chooses to be present to us. “In him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28).

Confession—Make an examination of conscience. Recognize the areas in your life that have not been excellent. For serious or repeated sins, plan a time to go to Confession with a priest.

Thanksgiving—With a heart of gratitude, thank God for what He has provided and the things he has done in your life.

Supplication—This is where you can make petitions to God. Ask for the strength to grow in a certain area, to handle a relationship correctly or to pray for someone you know.

This is just an example of one method of prayer. There are many methods available for prayer and in fact some people do not use a method at all.

It is recommended to meditate for at least 20 minutes each day. Scripture or other spiritual works are particularly helpful for facilitating meditation.

For more on prayer, ask your Bible study leader or FOCUS missionaries.

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Ask: What have been some effective ways for you to pray?

Ask: Have you ever changed your mind about something because of a time in prayer?

Excellence for Life

8 *Ask: Could someone please read Colossians 3:23-24?*

Excellence for Life

8 **Read Colossians 3:23-24**

9 *Ask: It is easy to get caught up in worldly success, but according to Colossians who should we be working for?*

9 It is easy to get caught up in worldly success, but according to Colossians who should we be working for?

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Answer: In the end, God will be our judge, no one else.

10 *Ask: Could I have someone read the quote by Os Guinness?*

10 "If we define all that we are before our [God] and live our lives before one audience—the Audience of One—then we cannot define or decide our own achievement and our own success. It is not for us to say what we have accomplished. It is not for us to pronounce ourselves successful. It is not for us to spell out what our legacy has been. Indeed, it is not even for us to know. Only the caller can say. Only the last Day will tell. Only the final 'Well done' will show what we have really done."
—Os Guinness, *Prophetic Untimeliness: A Challenge to the Idol of Relevance*

11 In the Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes*, we are told that "Man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for himself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of self" (*Gaudium et Spes*, No. 24).

Excellence in all things calls us to consistently make a sincere gift of ourselves. By practicing excellence in all we do, we can build up the habit of excellence in our lives. In time, God will call us to give His gift through our Vocations and our vocations ("Big V" Vocations are priesthood and married life. "Small v" vocation are what type of jobs we will have). By living a life of self-giving now, we can more properly know how to give of our lives through our Vocation and our vocations.

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Ask: In light of this quote, why do you think prayer is so important in our pursuit of excellence?

Answer: In prayer, we can examine our actions and our motives in light of Jesus. If we sit before our Lord, we can ask Him face to face to purify our motives and give us strength to continue our progress.

11 *Ask: Could someone please read the quote from Gaudium et Spes?*

12 *Ask: What are some steps that you have taken to determine your Vocation and your vocation?*

Note to Leader:
There is a tendency of Catholics in college to quickly discern their vocation and to write off one vocation or another. Help your participants see that discerning any vocation is usually a slow process, and one that requires sustained effort and attention.

12 What is God calling me to? How is He calling me to leave a legacy? In the business world? Through mission work? Through the priesthood?

We can be tempted to separate “holy” activities from “non-holy” activities. The reality is that God calls us to make all things holy; wherever we are and in whatever we do, we are called to pick up our crosses and follow after Him. That is, in whatever vocation (or Vocation) we choose, God ultimately calls us to sacrifice our lives for others.

13 St. Thomas More is a great example of a man of excellence. He was excellent in all aspects of his life, and, when called to do so, he was able to give the ultimate gift and sacrifice his life for the faith. To be great men, we must take small steps of excellence each day.

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13 *Ask: Could someone please read the closing paragraph?*

Chapter Six

COUNTING THE COST:

Leadership in Action

FOCAL POINT: College students have an incredible opportunity to shape the world. Through the transformation of self, the investment in others, and the boldness to evangelize, students can leave a tremendous legacy.

SPECIAL PREPARATION: Picture your group at the beginning of this study and think about how they have changed over the course of the study. Where do they need to be challenged? How is God calling them into leadership?

OPENING STORY: This story involving St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. Francis Xavier encapsulates the chapter as a whole. Throughout the study feel free to refer back to this story for examples.

Kickoff

1 *Ask: Could someone please start us off by reading the story?*

1 Kickoff

“What profits a man to gain the whole world if only to lose his soul.”

In the early 1500s, two college students were rooming together at the University of Paris, located in the Latin Quarter. One of the students, Francis, was from a noble Spanish family, while his roommate, Peter, was a Frenchman and the son of peasant farmers. Both men excelled at their studies, despite the rigor of their schedules; at the university, students rose at four in the morning each day with class starting at five. Classes continued throughout the day until five in the afternoon, with short breaks for prayer, Mass, and siesta. Dinner was followed by more study and night prayers. The university was filled with men from different countries, but the only language allowed inside or outside of class was Latin.

Despite this strict schedule, the Latin Quarter was filled with all sorts of vices—brawling, drunkenness, and sexual immorality were quite commonplace, both among students and their teachers. Peter and Francis both stayed out of much of this trouble, but more out of fear than the pursuit of God. Francis hoped to take an ecclesial post and to use his nobility to live a posh lifestyle in luxury and comfort. Peter, on the other hand, could not quite decide what he wanted to do. At times he would want to get married and become a lawyer, a teacher, or a physician, at other times he wanted

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to become a simple priest or a monk. For three years Francis and Peter roomed together until one day their lives were completely changed with the arrival of a new roommate.

On that day, a thirty-six year old man by the name of Iñigo joined their room. Iñigo, more commonly known as Ignatius of Loyola, already had a storied life. He began his young career in pursuit of worldly fame and fortune through military conquest; however, a cannonball to the leg had left him bedridden for months. With little to do or read, he read two books, one on the life of Christ, the other on the life of saints. When comparing the glory of worldly fame and fortune to the glory of serving God like saints such as St. Dominic and St. Francis of Assisi, Ignatius had a conversion experience and gave his life completely over to serving God. Early on, he had decided to start an order of men, or a company as he called it, to follow Jesus Christ. Despite his age, he hoped to obtain degrees at the University of Paris in order to help legitimize his preaching.

Peter, like many other students, was quickly moved by Ignatius and soon shared his desire to win souls for Jesus Christ. He became a disciple of Ignatius and wished to join his order. Francis, on the other hand, was quick to make fun of Ignatius and Peter. Clinging to his desire for an ecclesial position and a life of ease and comfort, he soon received a job as a professor.

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Over the course of three years, Ignatius worked on Francis. Despite Francis' nobility, his lifestyle caused him to go into debt. Ignatius supplied him with money from the alms he had begged for from wealthy merchants. Ignatius also found for Francis students whom he could tutor to help provide a steady income for himself. Yet, Francis was still resistant to Ignatius. Francis sent letters home for papers to be sent to him to confirm his noble status so that he could continue his pursuit of comfort. During this time, Peter left university on vacation, leaving Francis and Ignatius together. When Peter came back, his roommate of six years had changed. He had finally given in to Ignatius' heeding, "What profits a man to gain the whole world if only to lose his soul." Francis wished to join Ignatius in winning souls to Jesus Christ and in time became St. Francis Xavier. St. Francis Xavier baptized hundreds of thousands of souls in Asia and was by most accounts, the greatest singular missionary force since St. Paul.

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Ask: Before his conversion, what sort of man was Francis?

Answer: While avoiding some of the vices of his day, he wanted riches, fame, and a comfortable lifestyle.

Ask: What did Ignatius do that led to Francis' conversion?

Answer: Ignatius did not say a magic phrase or convert him on the spot. It was through sharing his life with Francis over the course of several years that helped win him over. Ignatius also continually sought out Francis and showed him generosity through giving him money to help cover his debts. Eventually, Ignatius gained credibility and his message finally stuck with Francis.

In the first chapter, we looked at what true Christian leadership was. The last four chapters were dedicated to the three specific virtues of chastity, sobriety, and excellence. By mastering these three virtues on the college campus, we can develop the character to be a leader to our peers. In this chapter, we will give you a vision for leadership and some direction in how to lead on campus.

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Vision for Leadership

2 *Read: Could I have someone please read these paragraphs in the section “Vision for Leadership”?*

Vision for Leadership

2 The potential for development while a person is in college is astronomical. Dr. James Dobson, the founder of Focus on the Family, describes this time as the “critical decade.” Between ages sixteen and twenty-six, “most of the decisions that will shape the next fifty years will be made, including the choice of occupation, perhaps the decision to marry, and the establishing of values and principles by which life is governed.”

The students with whom you interact today on the college campuses of America will be the future leaders of our country and our world. Never again will you have the opportunity to live, work, study, and recreate around so many people in such a close proximity. Furthermore, never in your life will you have more time to invest in the lives of others. The combination of these four elements (the critical decade, future leaders, close proximity, and an enormous amount of free time) creates the perfect storm for evangelization.

On top of all this, our culture is at a critical juncture. A war is raging for the hearts and souls of men and women. God is calling for a generation of students to lead others to Jesus Christ and His Church. In his encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*, Pope John Paul II proclaimed, “the moment has come to commit all of the Church’s energies to a new evangelization and to the mission *ad gentes*. No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples” (RM, para. 3). Our Church is asking you to commit your energies to proclaim Christ to all people. Now is the time to take action. Now is the time for leadership.

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Ask: Why is college the “perfect storm” for evangelization?

Answer: The combination of these four elements: the critical decade, future leaders, close proximity, and an enormous amount of free time.

Leaving a Legacy

3 *Say: Let's look back to what Pier Giorgio's friends said about him at the end of his life.*

Ask: Could someone please read the quotations said about him?

Ask: If you died at the end of your college career, what people to say at your funeral? What would your legacy be?

Leaving a Legacy

3 Let's look back to what Pier Giorgio's friends said about him at the end of his life:

In his university's Christian society (Cesare Balbo Circle) he was known as: "(the) member who, without looking for the honour, possesses innumerable friends and enjoys a pleasant authority over them, who knows each and is beloved by each, puts himself out to please them, accepts every duty and carries it out to the general satisfaction."

From a rector of the mountain chapel that Frassati frequented: "I singled out Pier-Giorgio immediately from the others for the ascendancy which he exercised over his comrades and for the optimism which he exuded... his Catholicism, neither casual nor narrow, was vital, active and rich in dynamic apostolicity."

One of his friends, struck by his ability to attract others said this: "His secret for gaining hearts and souls was his unalloyed charity."

Take some time to think about your own life. Just like Pier Giorgio Frassati, what if you died at the end of your college career? What would you want people to say at your funeral? What would your legacy be?

Thinking about our legacy helps us live with an end in mind. And, having this end in mind, we can shape our lives around this end goal. When we think of what job we will take, who we will marry, or where we will live, we should act with this end in mind and ask: "what will allow me to make the most impact for Jesus Christ in what I am doing?"

Now, let's look at how we can practically make an impact for Jesus Christ while students on campus.

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Start Here

4 *Ask: What is one thing from this study that has helped you transform a part of your life or has inspired you to transform an aspect of your life?*

Heroic Generosity

5 *Ask: Could someone please read Acts 19:8-10?*

6 *Ask: What is Paul's method of evangelization?*

Answer: Instead of preaching to the masses, Paul took his disciples to the school of Tyrannus and teaches them there in small groups.

Ask: Is Paul's method effective?

Answer: The method is very effective. In the span of two years, Paul is able to reach many who lived in Asia Minor, what is now Turkey, at the time.

Start Here

Many who are excited about spreading the faith quickly look to what they can get involved in or what program they can develop. While these are important, our

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starting place must be ourselves. The three virtues we saw in the previous chapters will help form a foundation for our witness, but we must always continue to transform ourselves.

In the first few years of his pontificate, John Paul II took the first ever papal trip to Ireland. Ireland is a predominantly Catholic country with a rich Catholic heritage. Out of the three million residents of Ireland at the time, one million of them showed

up at Phoenix Park in Dublin to hear the Pope speak. His most famous line from that speech was, "Be converted every day." While Ireland had a lot of Catholic culture and Catholic

*"If you are what you should be, you will set the world on fire!"
—St. Catherine of Siena*

things, he wanted to remind them that our faith calls us to constantly conform our lives to Jesus Christ through daily transformation.

4 Our pursuit of personal holiness is the most important things we can do. It is the foundation for sharing Jesus Christ with others, by sharing what He has done for us in our own lives.

As leaders, our lives must echo the words of St. Paul "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1).

Ask yourself:

- If I am asking others to follow Jesus, am I following Jesus each day?
- If I am asking others to follow me, am I following the leadership that Jesus has placed in my life?
- If I am asking others to become servant-leaders in the image of Jesus Christ, am I a servant-leader?

Heroic Generosity

5 **Read Acts 19:8-10**

6 What is Paul's method of evangelization? Is it effective?

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7 Ask: Could someone please read 2 Timothy 2:1-2?

8 Ask: What does Paul exhort Timothy to do in his evangelization efforts?

Answer: Paul instructs Timothy to take what he had heard from Paul and entrust it to other faithful men who can in turn teach it to others. In other words, what Paul did to Timothy,

Timothy is to do this for others who will do this for others and so on.

Ask: In the opening story about St. Francis Xavier, how did Ignatius embody the example given by Jesus and St. Paul?

Answer: Ignatius chose to invest in the lives of Peter and Francis for three years while they were his roommates. He continued to work with Francis because he knew that Francis was a man who, if converted, would win over many souls.

Boldness

9 Read this paragraph (leader).

Paul describes his method further in his second letter to Timothy.

7 Read 2 Timothy 2:1-2

8 What does Paul exhort that Timothy do in his evangelization efforts?

Paul did preach to the masses. But, he often reached souls through investing his life into small groups of people. As he writes in his first letter to the Thessalonians, he and his fellow workers gave the believers there, “not only the gospel of God but also our own selves” (2 Thessalonians 2:8). In this way, believers multiplied. Paul essentially replaces himself through this method. When he is gone, others are able to do the work that he did. This is exactly what Jesus did as well! While Jesus certainly preached to the masses, He spent much of his life pouring Himself into twelve men. In particular, He picked out three men who were the closest to Him - Peter, James and John. After His death and resurrection, He gave His Apostles the authority to continue spread the good news and building up His kingdom here on earth.

Boldness

9 Recall the example from chapter one about the swordsman. No matter what kind of sword he has, he is nothing if he doesn't have the skill to use it or the courage to fight. By pursuing virtue, we begin to develop the skills needed for our own personal witness to others. Now, we need the courage to share Jesus Christ with others. God wants a generation of Catholics to be daring enough to do whatever He asks of them. He wants us to be proactive in sharing the Gospel with others.

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10 *Ask: Could I have someone please read Acts 4:13-21?*

10 **Read Acts 4:13-21**

11 What were Peter and John up against? Why did they continue to preach despite the obstacles?

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11 *Ask: What were Peter and John up against? Why did they continue to preach despite the obstacles?*

Answer: The Jewish leaders wanted to beat them or even kill them. They couldn't stop preaching because of what they had seen and heard.

Counting the Cost

Evangelization is not just for those who are no longer afraid of reaching out to others. It is for those who may *still* be afraid, but decide to reach out anyways.

"The world promises you comfort, but you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness."

—Pope Benedict XVI

Counting the Cost

12 **Read Luke 14:25-35**

13 According to verses 26-27, what are the requirements for becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ?

"For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life?" (Matthew 16:26)

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12 *Ask: Could I have someone please read Luke 14:25-35?*

13 *Ask: According to verses 26-27, what are the requirements for becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ?*

Answer: To be a disciple, one must put Jesus above all else—our families, our possessions, even our own life, and to take up our cross and follow after Jesus.

- 14** *Ask: For Xavier, he put following Jesus above all else as he traveled to India, Japan, and China to share the Gospel. This lifestyle cost him nobility, wealth, and a life of comfort. He suffered hardships along the way and eventually died off the coast of China. In light of the topics we've discussed in the past few weeks, what would following Jesus Christ cost you? (Ask for volunteers to share their answer).*
- 14** In light of the topics we've discussed in the past few weeks, what would following Jesus Christ cost you?
- 15** Are you willing to pay the price?

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Leader Note: Feel free to have you participants reflect on Pope Benedict's quote: "The world promises you comfort, but you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness." (On page 56 in the Leader Guide)

- 15** *Ask: Are you willing to pay the price?*

Note to Leader: Here is a quote you can use to help discussion: "There are some who wish to be humble, but without being despised, who wish to be happy with their lot, but without being needy, who wish to be chaste, without mortifying the body, to be patient without suffering. They want both to acquire virtues and to avoid the sacrifices those virtues involve: they are like soldiers who flee the battlefield and try to win the war from the comfort of the city."

—St. Gregory the Great

- 16** *Say: Let's close with the prayer by St. Ignatius of Loyola in your Student Guide.*
- 16**
- Teach us, good Lord,
to serve you as you deserve,
to give and not to count the cost,
to fight and not to heed the wounds,
to toil and not to seek for rest,
to labor and not to ask for any reward,
save that of knowing that we do your will.
Amen.
—St. Ignatius of Loyola

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