

THE BIG 3

How To Be a Christ-Like Leader

Student's Guide



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Vision Statement:

FOCUS, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, is a national collegiate outreach that meets college students where they are and invites them to examine the meaning and purpose of their lives. Through large group outreach, Bible studies and one on one mentoring, FOCUS missionaries are equipped to introduce college students to the Person of Jesus Christ and the Catholic faith, empowering them to share His love with the world.

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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

Kickoff

“Verso L’alto”

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

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.)

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.

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

For Jesus, what does leadership mean?

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

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 *shamaring* 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.

Read Genesis 3:1-13

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

“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

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 want 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.

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

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

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.)

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.

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.

Virtue Versus Values

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.

“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

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

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.

Chapter Two

THE FREEDOM TO LOVE (I)

God's Design for Human Sexuality

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.”

“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.”

“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

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.”

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 solider, 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

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 steepes, 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.

Notes

The Power to Lay It Down

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?

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.

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

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

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...

-
-
-

Notes

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..."

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.

Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians addresses the believers' struggle to live chastely.

Read his instructions in 1 Corinthians 6:13-20

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

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

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.

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.

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.

Chapter Three

THE FREEDOM TO LOVE (II)

Breaking Free

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.

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 flittered 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 wants 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

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.

Notes

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

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 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 Sméagol'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.

Out of Control

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

Read this account in 2 Samuel 13:1-20

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

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

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.

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).

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).

“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

“... [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*

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.

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

John 8:31-36

Romans 6:1-11

2 Corinthians 5:17

Philippians 4:13

“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

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.

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)

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?)

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

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

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.

Chapter Four

SOBER INTOXICATION OF THE SPIRIT

An Invitation to Sobriety

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

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

Notes

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?"

“It Makes the Heart of Man Glad”

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?

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.

First, why are laws put into place?

What is the law on underage drinking?

For a biblical perspective, read Romans 13:1-7

What does Paul say about following laws?

Are there ever laws that should not be followed?

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

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).

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.)

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).

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

“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.”

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 *sophron*, 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).

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.

Read Ephesians 5:18

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, 1

Chapter Five

A LIFE WELL-LIVED

Excellence in All Things

Kickoff

“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.

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)

Notes

Excellence in All Things

“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 separatist approach destroys the ‘unity of life’ and creates the modern madness of feeling torn in two.”

—Matthew Kelly, *Rediscovering Catholicism*

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)

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

What does Scripture say about a Christian's involvement in the world?

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)

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.

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.

Excellence for Life

Read Colossians 3:23-24

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

"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

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.

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.

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.

Chapter Six

COUNTING THE COST:

Leadership in Action

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

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.

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.

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.

Vision for Leadership

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.

Leaving a Legacy

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.

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

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

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

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

Read Acts 19:8-10

What is Paul’s method of evangelization? Is it effective?

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

Read 2 Timothy 2:1-2

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

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.

Read Acts 4:13-21

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

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

Read Luke 14:25-35

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)

In light of the topics we’ve discussed in the past few weeks, what would following Jesus Christ cost you?

Are you willing to pay the price?

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

