

# Lord Sterling

## WORKBOOK *and* STUDY GUIDE

The following studies use scenes from the book to help launch discussions about a particular topic. These aids are not meant to be the end-all of any conversation. They are just to be the spark to begin an open discussion between Christian men about subjects that relate to them. There are issues confronting men today that are common and could be addressed if they were talked about. Do not misunderstand the intent of this Bible study guide. It is to help men see how great God is, and how He will work in and through their lives—if they will only let Him. If any of these topics are troubling to you, first and foremost pray and ask God for guidance, and then consult with one another in your group. Feel free to contact me if I can be of assistance. [rb@lordsterling.net](mailto:rb@lordsterling.net)

*-Robert Blackwell*

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## HOW DO OUR LIVES OCCASIONALLY REFLECT TRAIL TAVERNS?

1. These taverns were of *“interest to those whose destination lay beyond, and whose needs were of the immediate.”* Life unfulfilled becomes, for some, a mad rush toward something that will make it worth living; something that will give it purpose. Like the Trail Tavern, some people see their occupation, their relationships, and their station in life only as a place to be while they are looking for that place they would rather be. They never experience peace though it stands before them; continually looking for completeness while it reaches out its hand to them. Refusing the love of their redeemer and looking instead for the acclaim of men.

- Are you where you want to be in life? Are you satisfied?
- Tell at least one thing in your life that you know takes away your peace.
- What is a common deterrent to a closer walk with God?
- What can we do to guard against it?

Ephesians 3:20 - John 16:33 - 1 Peter 5:7

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## WHO ARE YOUR FRIENDS? WHO DO YOU WORK FOR?

2. When Banyon entered Landra's room to protect her from her guard, she said to him, ***“your pretty talk will win you no favor with me. You are a sword for hire; your allegiance is bought for a copper. Your soul will perish in this world for lack of love.”***

Banyon was a mercenary who hired himself out to guard, protect, and do battle if necessary. He was good at what he did, but being good at something does not justify any harm that may come as a result. Working for a person or company that is known for being dishonest or immoral damages your reputation and your character. Even if you are not personally involved in the actual wrongdoing. Stay away from gray areas. If you have to convince yourself it is not wrong, it probably is!

- Do you have a responsibility for the mission of your employer? Where do you draw the line?
- What do you call it when someone sacrifices their virtues to obtain a new job or maintain the one they presently have?

Deuteronomy 25:13-15 - Luke 16:10-12 - 1 Corinthians 15:58

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## WHAT IS THE MEASURE OF A REAL MAN?

3. While Prince Phillip was searching for the proof that Landra was in Castle Richet, he heard many legends ***“of evil men and heroes of battle; of small men who were great and great men who were small.”*** The greatness of a man is not just measured in stature. His honor, fairness, and loyalty are all measures when it comes to how others consider him. Often people simplify their feelings toward another by stating it in one word.

Be totally honest

In one word, how do you perceive yourself? \_\_\_\_\_

In one word, how do others perceive you? \_\_\_\_\_

Compromising ideals or morals can lead to a life of a “small” man no matter how well known you become. Being obedient to God's Spirit will build up your character that will count you among the very blessed even though you may be known by only a few. With this character comes influence. People admire men who are confident and who live what they claim to believe.

- How important to God is your reputation?
- What can you do to improve your influence on others?
- How can fellow Christians help?

Psalms 112:7 - Hebrews 13:6 - Proverbs 20:7 - Proverbs 22:4

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## WHAT PITFALLS LIE ALONG THE ROAD TO NOTORIETY?

4. King Phillip had Idea-men who invented great things. Although he could have kept these things for his own people, he shared them with other kingdoms. These wonderful new things made the King well thought of throughout the land. ***“There was not a single King who had not declared a holiday in honoring King Phillip. So common were these new things from the Land of Boochell that anything new and different became known as a ‘Boochell.’”*** As it turned out, the enemy provided these things. It is dangerous for anyone—particularly in a leadership role—to begin to listen to his/her own press; to begin to think of themselves too highly. Many great leaders of the world in politics and religion have come to ruin by succumbing to their belief in their own self-worth!

- How do you see this lesson taking shape in your world?
- How should we react when people praise us for what we have accomplished?

Proverbs 22:4 - Philippians 2:3 - James 3:13 - John 5:41

Matthew 6:1-4

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## WHAT DO TITLES REALLY MEAN?

5. Sire, Sir, King, Prince, Lady, and Queen are titles used throughout this story. Titles are inherited or earned in many different ways. As Sterling, Dutch, and Phillip are climbing up some rocks, Sterling lets us in on his feeling about a particular title. ***“And another thing, you call me Lord; indeed, I’ve had enough of men placing titles on other men earned or no. “Sterling” will do just fine.”*** Treating people different because of station, position, or company title can be very wrong. Give respect where it is due, but guard yourself against paying special attention to someone just because they are popular, rich, or politically connected. This is a form of prejudice and when practiced will cause that person, and any who witness it, to lose their respect for you.

- Although salvation is purely a gift from God, can we earn positions of importance in His service?
- How are we to respond when given these opportunities to serve?

Mark 10:44-45 - James 4:17 - Galatians 3:28

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## WHAT ARE SOME PEOPLE WILLING TO RISK TO BECOME FAMOUS?

6. While talking to Phillip, Sterling stated, “*a man who feels himself inferior to other men wishes himself revered. In a strange way he often feels he can steal that reverence from another.*” Sterling paused. *‘When he comes across someone who has a reputation of being strong and valiant, it makes him feel even smaller. So, he risks life itself to steal the glory from the one revered.’*” People are often willing to give up everything to try to gain that which will not last. To covet a person’s possessions is easily identified as being wrong. As well as possessions, people also covet another person’s position, status, influence, and popularity. God wants to give you the desires of your heart, but only when they are in line with His will. Obedience is the answer to true joy.

- What are some of the compromises you have seen people make to accomplish short-term fame?
- Is notoriety a worthy goal in the service of God?
- What would be a legacy of worthy accomplishment?

James 2:1-26 - Romans 12:3 - Ephesians 2:8-9

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## SHOULD WE LET THE WORLD HAPPEN TO US?

7. Landra, in Castle Rischet, recalled her father, King Phillip, often saying, “*It’s not the chances you get, but the chances you take that make the most difference.*” Have you ever said to yourself, “I will never get another chance like that?” So often we sit back and wait for opportunities to present themselves. We don’t realize that usually the best opportunities are the ones intentionally made. No one owes you good fortune, you must seek it out. If you know the desires of your heart, and want to see them fulfilled, first ask God for guidance and wisdom, and then search for opportunities to accomplish your goals. Always keep within your Christian convictions. Pray and ask God to open your eyes to possibilities, and to never let you lose sight of His perfect will for your life.

- What kind of chances might a Christian have to take in life to get ahead?
- What is the danger in not ever taking chances?

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Remember if the opportunity “has to be taken now or it will get away,” it is most likely not a part of God’s perfect will for your life. God is never hurried, so He wouldn’t put you in that situation either.

Proverbs 10:5 - Luke 19:12-27 - Proverbs 6:6-11

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### WHY SHOULD WE SHOW RESPECT FOR EVIL?

8. When Sterling jokingly accused Dutch of using the black arts to learn about the garrison at Castle Rischet, Dutch chastised him. *"Do not speak of things of which you know nothing. Bar your soul that you not be required to learn more than the nothing you know already. The Black house is not to be laughed at. And, the day you accuse me of thus will be the last we are as friends."* Sterling immediately apologized to him. Jibing or picking at someone can be a thoughtless act and not meant to offend. But, there is always some thread of truth in every jest.

- Why is Dutch so sensitive to this innuendo?
- Are there lessons we should learn about taking evil forces in the world so lightly?

Without doubt “He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world.” But to think you, without the power of the Holy Spirit, could accomplish anything in this arena is foolish.

Jude 1:9 - 1 John 4:4 - Psalm 27:1 - James 4:7-8

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### HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND WHEN WE LEARN WE HAVE HURT SOMEONE?

9. When Sterling realized his joking had hurt Dutch, he immediately tried to make it right. *“My friend, if I have wounded you in any way, I break before you my pride, and beg your forgiveness. I meant no harm, but see I have, in jest, trodden on burdensome ground. I declare with you a lifelong friendship which I will never intentionally break.”* Never allow a broken relationship have time to fester. Do what is possible on your part to set it right. Friendships are precious and should be counted as treasures. Guard them, cherish them, and nurture them whenever it is needed.

- What was Sterling doing when he crossed the line with Dutch? Can we learn anything from that?
- Do you make opportunities to let your friends know you appreciate their friendship? Why is this hard for some people to do that?

Ephesians 4:26 & 32 - Colossians 3:13 - Romans 5:3-5 - Hebrews 12:15  
James 1:19

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### CAN WE QUICKLY DISCERN THE CHARACTER OF A NEW ACQUAINTANCE?

**10.** While being interviewed, the leader of Dutch’s cook-pot captives told the group about Banyon and his recent history at Castel Richet. Dutch saw through the man’s dislike of his ex-commander and made an observation, “*A man’s true worth, like truth itself, lies not in the victory or the vomit, but somewhere in between.*” It often requires spending much time with a person to learn their true nature and character. However, through the Holy Spirit an attentive Christian can be provided insight and understanding into what motivates another person, and what actions can be expected from them. This is but one of many benefits from walking in the Spirit.

- What did Dutch’s statement really mean?
- How is truth best tested?

1 Corinthians 2:13 - John 14:15-17, 26 - John 8:32 - 2 Timothy 2:15

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### HOW WILL YOU DIE? AND, HOW MANY TIMES?

**11.** When Banyon was inflicted with Galorick’s red tufted pin, he continually came and went from sleep. Captain Russell commented, “*this is a true curse of the other world. Not just to die, but to die a hundred times before the end.*” Although Christians may be concerned about how they might die, most are not afraid of death itself. The reason is because we know what happens next. If we truly believe what Jesus said, we can be truly confident in what is to come. If we are saved to eternal life, how might the statement that we should die and die again be true? There is an important concept referred to as “dying to self.” Even after we are saved we are in a constant struggle with our evil natures we were born with. But we can have victory over it because of the power of the Holy Spirit

living in us. So by dying to self and that old evil nature daily, we give the Spirit a chance to teach and mature us in the Lord.

- If you were called Home today would you have regrets?
- Do you feel you have been able to gain control of your evil nature? Why or why not?

Jeremiah 17:9 - James 1:13 - Proverbs 23:7

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### MAN CANNOT SERVE EVIL AND GOOD!

**12.** When Phillip first speaks to Banyon and his men, he acknowledges that he knows they once served the evil Dala. He then says to them, ***“your actions in defense of Princess Landra outweigh all else. And, since you seem to be now without pledge, I offer, in the name of King Stephen of Boochell, all the benefits, the wages, and the residence of the Palace Avorine of the Land of Boochell.”*** It is important that when a person empties him or herself of worldly things that they are filled with something else; as it was with the Elite. They had been committed to an evil service. When they threw off that evilness they needed a new commitment and a new direction in which to serve. Allow the Holy Spirit to fill your thoughts, your time, and your relationships so that when the time comes your battles will be more easily won.

- Are there things you do that are a part of your evil nature that you know are not a part of your heavenly pledge?
- How is service to King Jesus like the pledge and service to an earthly King? How is it different?

Matthew 6:24 - James 4:7 - Romans 12:1-2 - Philippians 2:5-8

In your mind have you ever unsheathed your sword, held it out before you, knelt before Jesus, and offered Him your service until death? What would happen?

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### HOW DO YOU PREPARE FOR SPIRITUAL BATTLE?

13. When Dutch and Daniel were preparing to help Banyon out of the darkness, they were shown a rocky knoll. Daniel commented that he was not comfortable with the exposure. Dutch said softly, “*for what we are about in this place, it matters not that we hide, for it is not with the human eye our presence will be known.*” If the evil forces in this world lack anything, it is not in the area of intelligence. Since they do not have foreknowledge, they depend on their network of spies. If Spiritual warfare is taking place isn't it likely that forces of evil, as well as heavenly forces, are involved? Nothing good or bad is hidden from the spirit world. Never underestimate nor take for granted their influence on your daily life, good and bad. “But fear not for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”

- Are the evil forces in the world worried about you? Are you a blip on their radar?
- Our ability to deal with evil in the world, whether spirit or flesh, is based on what power?

1 John 4:4 - Romans 8:31 - John 16:33 - Philippians 4:13

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### HOW CAN YOU BECOME WISE?

14. While Daniel and Dutch were preparing to help Banyon, Daniel asked Dutch how he could become wiser. Dutch answered, “*Many say, “Wisdom is born of hard work and hardship.” But the stories of the Great Light tell of wisdom that is given; that is neither earned nor purchased. They teach that true wisdom is given to those who continually ask for it.*” Most people think that wisdom is earned by time and experience, but I have known young people who were unusually wise in their decisions, and older people who were still foolish. The Bible says we should desire to be wise, and there is nothing we can do to earn it. Wisdom itself is a gift from God. His wisdom has the ability to see the consequences of our actions before we do. We should pray daily that God will bestow more and more of His wisdom upon us.

- Can you think back to times you could have used a little more wisdom?
- What would be the legitimate reason to not ask God for wisdom daily?

Psalms 111:10 - Proverbs 16:16 - James 1:5 - 2 Chronicles 1:7-12

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## DO YOU FEAR OTHERS KNOWING YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN?

15. After registering the Elite at the games at Queens Field, and returning to the camp, Sterling spoke to the group of soldiers about the competition that would begin the next day. He said, “***Fear not losing the first but never lose the last.***” Like the competition at Queens Field, when you prepare to share the truth of the Gospel with someone you are actually preparing to battle the enemy. We often become afraid of humiliation or rejection by a friend or acquaintance and take the coward’s path of silence. But know this, you may be the only Jesus that person ever meets. It may be totally up to you. Prepare by learning the Word, pray to your Father for wisdom and guidance, then do your best. You will never be disappointed for trying. That is all He asks. Leave the victory to God. He has done great things in and for you. Never allow yourself to be seen as being ashamed of Him.

- Have you ever allowed the opportunity to stand up for your Lord and share the love of Christ to pass by? Why?
- Do you wish to be brave? Can you think of a better reason or a better cause for which to rise to that occasion?

Romans 10:14 - 2 Timothy 1:7 - 2 Corinthians 3:12 - Acts 4:29

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## ARE YOU GENEROUS WITH PRAISE?

16. A few minutes before Sterling was to compete in the games, an older Captain approached hoping to introduce Sterling to a young protégé who was with him. Sterling recognize him “***If you take the time to let this fine warrior teach you what he knows, you will need no other instruction!***” ***Sterling was obviously sincere in his praise. Both the Captain and the young warrior had gotten what they desired, and more.***” Always be generous with your praise of others. It shows kindness and speaks a lot about who you are and your own confidence. It is said, what people remember most about meeting you is how you made them feel. Never underestimate the importance of that fact, particularly when it comes to your Christian witness. To genuinely point out another’s good points or talents is giving a gift that costs you very little, but is of great value to the receiver.

- Are you known for a loving, winning attitude, or the business-like, no-nonsense method? Both attitudes are used in different situations, but which describes you more?
- Can you think of a relationship in your life that could benefit from a sincere compliment?

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### HOW DO YOU MEASURE?

**17.** After Sterling's bout with the Claymore Guard, he and Phillip went back to camp and sat under a tree to talk. In answer to one of Phillip's questions about being able to get whatever he wanted, Sterling said, "*Truthfully, I have searched all my life to find what I really want. I have never felt I belonged anywhere and have never amassed any wealth. I have known great men and those memories are beyond value to me, but I cannot say I have had any worthwhile desire, much less achievement.*" Here was a man who by worldly standards had the respect and acclaim of many, and the fear of more than a few. He should have been able to acquire anything he desired. Yet he still looked for completeness in his life. Men are born with a need to find God. Everything they strive for, or covet, is to fill that place in their heart fit only for a mighty God and loving Savior. True fulfillment and pure joy are found only in service to the One and only.

- What accomplishments have you achieved that you have not yet lain at the feet of Jesus?
- Have you reached the place in your life where what God wants is what you want?
- Is your success measured by your obedience to Him?



### ARE LEADERS ALWAYS CHOSEN BY THOSE WHOM THEY LEAD?

**18.** Sterling and Phillip continued their talk under the tree. Sterling spoke, "*Leading men into battle is not the difficult part. Keeping them there and bringing them back shows what kind of leader a man is.*" A leader must earn the respect of those he expects to follow him. Someone can be placed in authority but he/she must—through careful actions—climb the ladder of admiration with those in their charge. Only after demonstrating leadership qualities will he/she be given loyalty. Sometimes you may be placed in a situation where there are one or many people who are in need of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But you may have to work and wait over time until you have earned the

right to be heard. When they have watched you over time, and observe how you react in good and bad situations, they will then determine whether you can be trusted and followed.

- Have you ever had anyone come to you for spiritual advice? Why or why not?
- It takes time to build a reputation as a follower of Christ. How long does it take to ruin it?

Proverbs 22:1 - Proverbs 3:4 - Isaiah 33:14-16 - 2 Timothy 2:15

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### HOW IS BEING LOST, WELL...BEING LOST?

**19.** When Banyon was describing his time in the darkness he said, ***“I wandered in my mind, being unable to wake. I was in total darkness, except for a light in the distance. A voice told me to run from the light, and I did until I was told how to find my way....the Light was The Light of the World, the Great Light Himself!”*** Though the Light is symbolic, but it is also real. The people of the world live out their lives in darkness. They rationalize and justify the things they do by thinking “everyone does it.” They say to themselves, “I am no worse than the next guy.” Then the Light comes. It may be from a Christian simply living a good life. But the light in a Christian’s life shows up the darkness in the man of the world’s life. The worldly man has two options: 1) Clean up his own life, or 2) put the light out, and remain in the comfort of darkness. This is why the world fights against Christianity. It is lost in the dark and is ignorant enough to want to stay there.

- Is God’s Light in your life bright enough to be used by someone else to find their way to the Truth?
- Do you live or work in a dark place that needs the Light of the World? Will you do what God saved you to do?

2 Samuel 22:29 - Psalm 36:9 - Matthew 6:22 - Luke 11:33-35  
John 1:3-5 - John 3:18-20 - Romans 13:12

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### AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER? YEP!

**20.** The morning after Sterling and Banyon had realized they were brothers, Sterling woke and *“pondered the previous night’s activities, and smiled when he thought of his brother. Banyon, yes Banyon, was his brother. He looked down, smiled, shook his head, and thought to himself: And just the kind of brother a man would want to have, too!”* Some families are close, and some are not. It is easy to discard responsibilities we have to our families. This is most often done because we know they know us better than anyone. If anyone is going to throw something up in our faces about our previous life, before Christ, it will be our family. Although this is true, that in no way makes us unaccountable for our brothers, sisters, parents, or our own children. Be the person you need to be to repair hurt feelings and broken relationships. Never think a friendship is beyond rebuilding if in doing so will bring God glory and honor. You think it’s too hard? Don’t tell me, tell God!

- What is keeping you from calling him/her and telling them you are sorry, even if it wasn’t your fault?
- What role does pride play in all this? Why should that embarrass you?

Joshua 24:15 - Proverbs 12:7 - Proverbs 22:6 - Ephesians 2:19  
1 Timothy 3:2-5 - 1 Timothy 5:8

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### WHAT IS THE WORST THING ABOUT DYING?

**21.** At Captain Russell’s memorial by the river, Dutch spoke, *“it is never easy to say farewell to a friend. It is harder yet when the farewell is forever. The worth of a man is said to be counted in the hearts of those he leaves behind. The best men are those who unselfishly defend the defenseless, and champion the causes they feel are just.”* It is easy to go along with the crowd and let life happen to you; never standing for anything, thus never being in conflict with anyone. To defend something means you have chosen sides; to have made a determination as to the right or wrong of an issue. To defend something means you have made a stand. The cause of Jesus is one thing truly worth standing for. By making a public profession of your faith you are accepting the responsibility to not only defend but go on the offense. When the time comes for testimonials, will it be said you were full of the Spirit, and lead others into battle for the souls of men? That you placed His flag at the top of the mount, and held that ground against all who would defame the name of the Lord Almighty?

- Have you ever stood on a hill over-looking the battle and made a shallow statement like, “Wow! That is a real battle?” Shouldn’t you ride down the slope and engage the enemy at the gates of their strongholds?
- What is the outcome when good people do nothing?

1 Peter 3:15 - 2 Timothy 4:1-22 - 2 Timothy 2:15  
Matthew 5:11-12

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### ARE APPEARANCES ALWAYS DECEIVING?

**22.** After their good showing at the games, the new Elite of Boochell entered their new home city; most for the first time. Dutch and Phillip were sitting atop a wagon when Dutch suggested Phillip should be waving to the crowd taking credit for all that had happened. *“Phillip wrinkled his nose, ‘I did nothing in this but what appeared to be right.’ Dutch chuckled, ‘My friend if every man did what appeared to be right there would be much love and understanding and much less war in the world.’”* Many times what is right is not a hidden secret, not covered in a mist, and not hard to determine. It is what is obviously right! People struggle with all sorts of social pressures and coercions that make them act in ways they know are wrong. Don’t think peer-pressure is just for young people. Social drinking, dirty stories, one-ups-man ship, gossip, foul language, bragging, bullying, revenge, and many more are actions known to be wrong, but are done because we think others may label us as weak or afraid if we don’t go along. It will take years of reading the Scripture and living in a close relationship with the Holy Spirit for you to gain control of your flesh. But, you can begin that journey without doing what you know now is wrong.

- Is it hard to stand up and let people you work with know that you disagree with them on something? Particularly if it is an issue of what is right or wrong?
- What is a good reason for letting a bad word slip once and a while?

James 4:17 - Isaiah 1:17 - Proverbs 31:8-9 - 1 Corinthians 10:13  
1 Corinthians 15:33-34 - Galatians 1:10

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### CAN YOU SEE THE ENEMY?

**23.** On their way to the Willow River Delta, Sterling, Daniel, and Phillip were shot at with arrows. Sometime later Sterling commented on the action. ***“An arrow is a quiet killer and when used in ambush has no honor.’ It was obvious to his companions that the mighty Sterling was uncomfortable with the idea of fighting an adversary who did not have to stand before him to do battle.”*** Although most of the spiritual battles you wage in life will be with your own evil nature, there is an outward enemy as well. Satan is real and he is all about in the world in which you live. He is not omniscient (all knowing). He is not omnipotent (all powerful). And, he is not omnipresent (everywhere at once). He is powerful, but is no match for the name of Jesus. You need to know he and his legions exist, but do not fear them. “He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world.” Though you may not see the enemy, you can do battle with them—if God so calls you to do battle—using the power of the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is a promise that comes from Jesus, and you can stake your life on it (many have). Sharpen your sword with the study of the Scripture and say what is right and appropriate. Carry your armor proudly and with loving kindness stand for your king.

- Is there anything you are afraid of?
- Is there anything God will not defend you against?

1 Peter 5:8 - James 4:7 - 1 John 3:8 - 1 John 4:4

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### WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?

**24.** While returning from the games, King Phillip became very ill. While talking to Landra, Banyon shared with her a dream he had; ***“In the dream, I again saw the darkness, but this time from above. Though, very dark, I could see another wandering. I could see the light in the distance, yet he did not move toward it. I awoke furious because I wanted to help, but could not make the man see the light.”*** Our purpose in remaining on this earth after we are saved is to live obedient lives that bring God glory. And in doing so gain the ability to share the story of Jesus with others, and introduce as many as possible to the Father. Be prepared to take that opportunity as often as it presents itself. The experiences you have had in life are often used by the Spirit in wonderful ways of ministry. Because you have survived certain trying situations, and seen God work through them to your benefit, you have a place to stand when testifying to what you know is the truth.

- Do you ever feel the burden of the people around you, and their need to know the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ? Do you think you should?
- What kind of experiences have you had that taught you things about God and his promises?

John 16:13 - 2 Corinthians 5:17 - Revelation 20:12 - 2 Timothy 1:7  
Colossians 1:1-29

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### DOES HONOR SUPERSEDE RIGHTEOUSNESS?

**25.** As Banyon chased Mason through the streets of Boochell and into the candle shop, some things were made clear to him. *“He now knew that Mason, the ‘Advisor’ who had been trusted by the King, was behind the King’s sickness. Banyon thought immediately about his own disgrace of not having been true to his pledge to Dala. He thought but for a moment, and then thought of Landra and Dala’s treatment of her. At that instant and for all time, he disregarded his acts as treason, and never again in his life recalled them as such.”* Have you ever been in a situation that brought up uncomfortable memories? You could not run from them so you resigned yourself to examine them. In doing so you’ve discovered the memories were time specific and, in fact, time had changed your feelings about them. Now you have a better view of what actually happened, and what you thought was a disaster then is now a melancholy moment. God’s live-in standard is perspective. He will continually create in you a new nature, a new view to your life, and to the lives of others around you. The key is to seek to see your surroundings through His eyes.

- Do you have any old memories that are keeping you from forgiving others and moving on with a life in Christ?
- Do you have any memories that keep you from forgiving yourself? What is the obvious solution?

2 Corinthians 7:10 - 2 Corinthians 5:17 - Isaiah 43:25 - 1 John 1:9  
John 16:33

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## ISN'T WAKING UP WITH GOD GREAT?

26. Banyon awoke in the Spirit House to a beautiful morning. He spoke to the Great Light, got up, and went to Dutch who was cooking over the fire. ***“Just as he was about to speak, Dutch turned toward him with a big smile. ‘Feels good, doesn’t it?’ Banyon, still smiling, furrowed his brow, ‘Of what do you refer?’ ‘Waking up with the Great Light, knowing that you are where he wants you, and that you’re doing what he wants you to do.’”*** Making a life with Christ provides you the ability to wake each morning feeling complete; feeling you are in His will. Or, knowing you are not and preparing to make adjustments. There is a confidence that comes along with many gifts of the Spirit that brings reassurance not just in yourself, but also in your surroundings. God is in charge. He is able, and the Spirit, continuously in your heart, takes away all fear of that not being the case. You learn more and more about Him until you are confident in Him and Him in you.

- Do you know people who hedge their bets, agreeing with their non-Christian friends when a spiritual subject comes up? Are you that person?
- If you believe a person can have a very close walk with Jesus what is stopping you from sharing that fact with them?
- If you have a good relationship with Jesus, what suggestions do you have for others about how to maintain a closer walk with Him?

Jeremiah 29:11 - Romans 12:2 - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18  
1 Peter 2:15 - John 6:28-29

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## WHAT IS THE PLAN? DON'T YOU HAVE A PLAN?

27. Daniel, Dutch, and Banyon were on their way to the games. Banyon began to ask questions about the Light that had brought him out of the darkness. ***“He was told of the Great Light’s covenant with mankind regarding right and wrong. He was also told of the Great Light’s Son who came to live among men, and to show them the Great Light’s new covenant of eternal life, and forgiveness based on belief and acceptance of the Son. Banyon’s heart became heavy and felt he must do something about this covenant or perish with the thought. Dutch explained that he must accept the covenant. He knelt by the side of the road that day before they arrived at Queen’s Field, pledged himself to the Great Light, and accepted the Son’s covenant of eternal life.”*** It is as simple as that. People through the ages have tried to make it harder. The Scriptures say believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, accept Him as your Lord and Savior, and you will be saved. There is nothing you can do to earn it and there is nothing you can do to deserve it. You must come to almighty God empty handed and broken hearted. You must acknowledge who He is and who you are. It doesn’t matter how much good or bad

you have done in the past. Leave it behind and humbly approach the throne and offer all of yourself to His care. His gift of undeserved favor will thrill your soul and finally provide you the power to defeat your evil nature. The result of this action will not go unnoticed.

- Have you been saved by God’s grace to eternal life?
- If so, do you remember the moment when it happened?
- If not, isn’t it time you did so?

Ephesians 2:8-9 - Romans 6:23 - John 3:16 - Romans 5:8  
Ephesians 1:13

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### DOES IT STILL MATTER THAT THERE IS A LADY PRESENT?

**28.** When Phillip, Daniel, and Sterling arrived at Lace’s boarding house, they eventually fell into conversation about the years past. Sterling told of his life since Gilsomlay. *“As he talked he skipped over parts of his life and deeds that Phillip was familiar with from earlier campfire talks. The Prince started to recall these missing actions, but Sterling’s quick glance reminded the younger man that there are things of life and lust you don’t discuss in the presence of a lady.”* One of the victims of the feminine revolution was the respect that was once paid to women, specifically to ladies. In an attempt to gain more “freedom” (their word, not mine), women insisted they be treated as equals not just in pay scale and employment opportunities, but socially as well. What unfortunately happened was that men stepped back and gave women what they thought they wanted. To do this, real men had to set aside the natural instincts to protect and defend. The fallout is confusion in the role of men and women. Women now ask, “Where are the real men?” and men ask “Where are the real women?” What is needed is for Christian men to return to having the respect due to women without the dominance. And women need to allow men to provide for them with understanding and devotion. Meeting in the middle, and understanding the needs of each, will help return society to some sort of balance.

- Do you treat women, with whom you come in contact, differently, let’s say even “special?” Do you show them respect and admiration?
- Will women act differently if you treat them differently?
- When was the last time you asked another man to watch his language because there was a lady present?

Proverbs 31:30-31 - Galatians 3:26-29 - Acts 10:34 - 1 Peter 3:7

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## WHAT IS A TIDE?

**29.** As Sterling, Daniel, and Phillip rode out on the delta, they were unaware of the danger they were placing themselves in. It became clear when the Barken were running at breakneck speed across the mud flats. *“The shower of mud and slime from the ground covered the horses and riders. ... Never had Phillip in all his years of riding truly appreciated the ability of the Barken bred horses. The slightest slip or stumble would be the end. The mist began to catch them. They all knew it was the air being forced ahead of the water ... the rhythm of the horses became one; the excitement overpowered them all. Daniel placed his head down beside the neck of the wonderful horse on which he felt so privileged to ride. ... He did not want to think about the water. ... ‘Run, big fellow! Run!’ he said softly.”* We find ourselves occasionally in places or in encounters where we don’t belong. It may be something we’ve caused, or situations out of our control. Nonetheless, we have to deal with the unpleasantness. It is on these occasions that our inherited gifts of the Spirit play the most desirous and obvious role. Sometimes, the Spirit tells us we should avoid confrontation; to run with all our might. Other times we are lead to plant our feet firmly in His will and stand strong for what is right. It always means we accept responsibility for whatever actions result in the situation, but how God wants us to handle it may be different than we expect. Whatever He asks of you He will provide the ability for you to accomplish. For instance, while hanging out with a friend you find yourself in a nightclub, and realize this place is not where you should be. It may be a time to risk your friendship, excuse yourself, and leave. Or, another time while in the break-room, you become aware that some of your fellow workers are going to play a harmful trick on another worker. It may be time for you to intervene. In these types of situations, you may feel there is too much at risk. But when can you ever justify placing what you know is right on the altar of your comfort and popularity? God will always give you a ride out of the circumstances. Whether a horse or strength of character He will provide.

- Have you ever sat quietly while mischief was underway?
- Can you underestimate God’s desire to provide for you, even when you have done something stupid?

Romans 13:4 - Proverbs 25:26 - 2 Corinthians 12:9 - Joshua 24:15

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### DOES MAN HAVE A BASIC GOOD NATURE?

**30.** When Sylvia began telling Crazy Sara's story of Vitar, she told when King Olin met the King of the Mobedites. ***“King Olin was warned by his advisors of the Mobedites's reputation; but he replied, ‘No man will bring harm to one who offers him no threat.’”*** There are many people who believe that man is naturally good. If given a leg up and opportunities to be good he will naturally be good. On the contrary, the Bible says that man is naturally evil. His nature controls and enslaves him from birth. Man's only hope for controlling his evil nature is through the power of the Holy Spirit. Man, left to his own devices, will turn to a depraved, selfish, and sinister nature. He must be taught and tutored in wholesome living. But, even then he has no power over his nature without the power that comes from a gracious heavenly Father.

- Have there been times in your life when you have struggled with doing what was right? Does becoming a Christian remove that struggle from you?
- Does God's never ending responses to your needs build your confidence in Him?

Genesis 3:1-24 - James 1:13 - Romans 5:12 - Romans 3:23

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### HOW DOES WHAT YOU THINK OF YOURSELF AFFECT WHAT OTHERS THINK OF YOU?

**31.** The Great Light had opened King Olin's eyes to his mistake in creating the statue of himself. He realized his failure too late. ***“The men, forced to live humble lives, had been happy with what they had for all about them had the same. All knew the King had wealth, but such a kind heart and ready purse had made them love him ... until the statue. The flaunting of wealth and the apparent unconcern of the hurting below poured salt into the wounds of the people. Twelve men had come to prove their equal and eliminate the reminder of their poverty.”*** King Olin had succumbed to his evil nature. His selfish attitude became more self-centered. It was not that he no longer cared for his people he just cared for himself more. Jesus said, “Love others as much as you love yourself.” There is an old axiom; People remember you most by how you make them feel. When you think of yourself as better than anyone else, you are not only hurting yourself, but you are damaging the Kingdom of God. When you disparage or belittle others, your opportunity to do anything else vanishes. God's people should build up and encourage. They should love and empower others in His name.

- Can you say that all your relations with others are based on your attempt to help and enrich them? Or, do you have relationships that only serve your interests?

- What part of God has He sent to give us wisdom and insight so we can be on fulltime alert to selfishness, and constantly on the lookout for the needs of others?

Acts 20:35 - Galatians 5:13-14 - Philippians 2:1-11 - Matthew 5:16

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### WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

**32.** When Sara pushed out into the River Crone, she was obedient to her leading, but didn't know where it would take her. *“Many kind people provided help for her on her journey down the river. Though she was always careful not to reveal the bundles wrapped tightly and kept beneath a large woven basket.”* Have you ever felt like you were floating down a river you had never been on before, and although the trip was not unpleasant you didn't know exactly where you were going? This sounds scary, but if you are on this journey in obedience to God's leadership, and if you feel you are in His will, enjoy the ride! God carefully allows you information, as you are able to use it. He reveals His purposes to you only if you need to know. If we truly knew everything that was to come, it would damage our faith. It brings Him much more satisfaction when you say, “Though I walk through the valley of death I will fear no evil,” because I trust in His promises and have faith in His word.

- Do you hedge your bets when it comes to giving everything over to Him? Have you ever thought, “I will go to church but I will also do what I need to, to stay ahead in the world!”
- It is important to be willing to drift with God letting Him steer the raft. Do you fight giving EVERYTHING over to Him? Do you keep taking it back and doing it your way?

Ephesians 5:2 - Matthew 16:24 - Matthew 22:37 - 2 Corinthians 9:7

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### WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

**33.** Dutch needed help to do what was necessary to help King Phillip find his way out of the darkness. He spent days with Banyon by the Blue River teaching him the scriptures, and helping him grow in knowledge and spirit. When the time came, in the King's chamber Dutch spoke to Landra, *“You must let us do what we must to save your father from the darkness.”* She thanked him then turned and spoke to Banyon. *“Do with your*

*heart what I cannot with mine.*” Banyon told her, **“We can only ask that the Great Light enter the darkness and lead your father out.”** It is very hard to turn things we consider important over to someone else to accomplish. Even if we know the other person is better qualified to do it. That is particularly true with God. There is never a question about His willingness to help or His ability to realize the desired end. We just want to do it “our way.” We keep coming up with ideas, and jumping back in when what we should do is let God handle it. The ability for us as Christians to lean on and become more dependent on him comes from studying His scripture, praying to Him, and watching Him succeed, again and again! Nothing will build your faith like experiencing His fulfilled promises.

- What gets in the way of your dependence on God?
- Do you really think you can do a better job than He can?
- Have you ever really turned a problem over to God and stopped thinking about it to prove it?
- Has He ever *failed* you?

*No, he hasn't, and never will!*

John 3:16 - Hebrews 13:8 - Philippians 4:19 - John 8:58  
Revelations 1:8

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### WHAT ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT?

**34.** While King Phillip was sick there were some disturbances in Boochel. Captain Maxwell reported to Banyon, **“I feel it is most important for the King to regain his health. For that is the basis of the people’s fear.”** One of the first things that happens when we realize things are out of control is we begin to fear the unknown; what might happen. Even if there is some justifiable concern often our increased fear is based on a self-generated list of “what ifs.” In fact, Christians are enabled to live a life beyond petty worries based on three things: 1) God is in control. 2) You belong to Him and He has promised to provide for your needs. 3) Even when bad things do happen, He will see to it that it works out to your best interest. Now, it is necessary that you be obedient and remain in His will. But He has promised to help you do that as well. When you worry you are saying that whatever it is you are worried about is bigger than God and beyond His control. The only thing that limits God is you.

- Is God in total control? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- When is it most common that you let the little things of the world creep into your life and cause you to worry?
- Why is it hard for you to really turn problems over to God, and let him work them out to His glory and your gain?

Romans 8:28 - 1 Peter 1:5-9 - James 1:12 - James 1:17

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### DO YOU HEDGE YOUR BETS?

**35.** While on an outing, Landra and the Elite were surprised by a group of Mobedites. As Sill and the Princess were racing away on their horses, one of the men in black caught up with them. He struck at Landra with his sword. *“A ring of steel on steel could be heard as Sil swung his blade back to parry the strike. Sill ...leaped from his own horse onto the back of Landra’s and into the face of the pursuer. The black horse stumbled and the pile of horse and humans impacted the ground in a cloud of dust. ... Sill stood up, lifted his sword, and plunged it into the dark figure who lay near him. He then did the same to the dying horse.”* We are often less afraid of commitments when we provide ourselves with a plan of escape, a way out. Rarely are we sold onto something to the point of total commitment, one hundred percent, withholding nothing. More often we carefully agree to things making sure we can back out of the agreement if it becomes too demanding. Some people even approach God with that same “Plan B” attitude. “I will try it and see if I like it. If not I will try something else.” A part-time Christian is a dangerous person not only to the Kingdom of God, but to himself as well. He/she is still allowing partial control to their own evil nature they are truly conflicted. The power to control that very nature is only provided when a person commits their heart to the Lord of all Creation, the giver of love, and the hater of evil. Never underestimate what He is able to do through you when you hold nothing back. Like Sill, you know the risks, you accept the consequences, and you take the leap.

- What part of your life do you struggle letting God have?
- Do you act like you are sold out to God?
- Would those you work with or live with think you are totally committed to God’s service?

Malachi 3:10 - John 14:15 - Matthew 7:21 - 1 John 2:15-17  
Hebrews 12:1 - 2 Timothy 1:12

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### DO YOU KNOW WHAT “FREE” MEANS?

**36.** As Banyon entered the Kings chamber Dutch, Landra, and King Phillip were laughing. When He asked why the merriment, the King told him of his time in the darkness. *“For weeks I knew little of anything but darkness. I thought of what you had told me about the time you were in the darkness, but I could not remember how you had been freed. Several times I saw the light off in the distance. As I would begin to move toward the light, a voice would speak to me and say: ‘It’s a lie; it is not the way out. It is darkness, even darker than this.’ That would scare me and I would run from it. Several times I even heard the light speak my name, but the voice that had been with me told me to run, so I ran.”* Banyon could picture everything the King was telling

him, and he remembered the fear. The memory of it made him angry, but even as his anger rose, a peace came over him and he was released, and reminded afresh that he would never enter the darkness again. With that thought, he smiled and laughed out loud. The memory of past “bad days” can weigh you down to the point you are too heavy to move. You simply become unable to cope; unable to forgive. When the offer of freedom is extended to you, your evil nature will make all kinds of excuses. It will use worldly reasoning and even lie to keep you in the darkness. But your soul knows the truth. The freedom Jesus offers has no limits, no boundaries. When he says “free” he means “free.” Free from the punishment of sin, free from the bad memories of sin and free to not sin again. The joy that comes from knowing you are truly free goes beyond simply feeling good and enters the realm of the supernatural. When you truly understand what you have been freed from, and who accomplished such a task, you throw your head back reach up with both hands and cry out loud “Thank you God, thank you Jesus! Praise your name, I am free!”

- Are their memories from your past holding you back from really letting God have your life? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you believe God has the power to make right anything that has gone wrong in your world? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Well?

1 John 4:15 - 1 Corinthians 8:6 - Romans 8:28-29  
1 Thessalonians 2:13

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### WHAT ARE YOU DOING...UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

**37.** The rain on the Willow River delta continued to fall as Sterling, Daniel, and Phillip readied themselves to leave. Phillip and Sylvia were sitting together looking through the window at the rain. Sterling entered smiling at the two. He then said to Sylvia, “***I must apologize again for abducting you. Though you have been of great service in our endeavor, I regret taking you from your home, to which he motioned at the rain through the window, ‘If this keeps up, you will be unable to return for months.’ Sylvia smiled at him. “Worry not m’lord for if your sword were pure gold and you presented it to me, it would mean less than you and your company’s acquaintance.’ She finished her statement while smiling at Phillip. ‘If my sword were pure gold m’lady,’ Sterling added, ‘I would be so boastful a man, you would not wish to be about me.’”*** It is easy to become consumed by the circumstances in which we find ourselves. It is natural to be affected by the things that befall us, but we must always remember that it is the One and only we serve. He is able to do anything that we have need of. He has you on His mind and nothing that happens to you goes unnoticed by Him. Serve Him in obedience, asking for direction, and going where He leads, and you will have no reason to worry. He has

promised peace. As it is said, “Grow where you are planted.” Don’t waste your life regretting the past. Find some firm ground on which to stand (in His Word). Stand up straight and accept the power that comes from praise; the power to rise above the circumstances and to bring a lost and dying world with you.

- Do you feel defeated or victorious? \_\_\_\_\_ Is it reflected in how you appear to others? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is it an insult to God for you to let the world strip from you that which He has offered? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- What thing, past or present are you letting get ahead of God in your life?
- What are you going to do to change that?

Philippians 3:13-15 - 2 Corinthians 7:10 - 1 John 1:9

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### WHY ARE ANTIQUES DESIRABLE?

**38.** As the group left the Willow River Delta, they looked back at the boarding house. Standing out front was Lace and Solinda waving their last farewell. ***“I will not soon forget that pretty home, ’said Daniel,‘ or those within.’ They all agreed. Daniel turned to Sterling with a question. ‘Lace’s apartment building is attractive and unique, for it is the only building on the street with a balcony at every window. How did that come to be?’ Sterling took one last look at Lace in the distance, and sighed, “Because it was built by the old craftsmen of Gilsomelay back before the invasion. And like most things that survive hardships it has acquired a certain beauty just for having survived.”*** When trouble comes along we often go to God wringing our hands saying, “What did I do to deserve this.” We question God’s wisdom in allowing us to be in this situation. How quickly we forget His perfect will and His attention to it. If you find yourself in trouble there can be only one of two reasons you are there: 1) You are outside God’s will and in disobedience, and your problem is self-inflicted. 2) You are in His will and He is providing you experiences you need to serve Him better. In either case you should praise Him for whatever is happening. You don’t praise Him *because* it is happening but in spite of it happening. He is either nudging you back into His path or He is refining your spirit, and strengthening your faith. Lean on Him and when you have survived you will bring Him glory and be of more value to the Kingdom.

- When bad things happen do you go to Him pouting or praising?
- Name something in your life you struggled with letting God help you through.
- If it is over, what did you learn?

1 Peter 1:6-7 - Zechariah 13:9 - Proverbs 17:3 - Job 23:10

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### HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

**39.** Landra, Banyon, and Freeman entered the Spirit House and called for Dutch. *“Hello.’ Came a familiar voice as the back door was partially opened then slammed. Again it was partly opened but no one appeared. The end of a stick eased through the crack, held the door, and then an entire armload of wood fell in the threshold. Banyon and Freeman hurried to Dutch’s assistance. The little man entered climbing over the pile of wood. He laughed out loud. ‘Let us help,’ offered Banyon. ‘Gladly,’ answered Dutch bending over the pile. ‘I always try to carry too much and end up having to do twice the work.’ He straightened and looked at Banyon. ‘There is a lesson in there somewhere.’ The two traded smiles and began again to pick up the wood.* A willing servant must be careful. What God is looking for is obedience not sacrifice. The church is notorious for “riding a good horse to death,” or abusing the servants’ hearts of the congregation. If God is leading you into some type of service, it is important for you to do it. If He is not, it is just as important for you not to do it. In serving where you are not called, you may be ignoring what you should have been doing with that time, or you may be keeping someone else from serving in that position. When asked to serve, always take time to pray and ask God to make His will clearly known to you. He will! If you take on too many responsibilities, you will be so overwhelmed that you will reach a point of burning yourself out and wind up damaging yourself and possibly those around you. It is better to obey and serve at a capacity that will always be enjoyable and fruitful and one that will continually bring Him glory.

- Have you ever under or overdone it in God’s service?
- How does peer pressure come to bear in this type of circumstances?
- Who are you doing it for?

1 Samuel 15:22 - Exodus 19:5 - Matthew 9:13 - Proverbs 21:3

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### DO YOU FEEL IT?

**40.** As Dutch sat with his friends in the Spirit House he entered into a conversation with McHofe about how to have a relationship with the Great Light. *“Can I,’ blurted out McHofe. ‘Can you what?’ Answered Dutch. ‘Can I talk to the Great Light and receive the offer of His Son?’ ‘Any who wish to, may.’ Answered Dutch. ‘Why are you so quick to accept what I have told you?’ McHofe shifted in his seat. He realized the others were listening to what he would say, and wondered if he should wait until he could talk to Dutch alone. But a moment’s thought told him he could not wait.* No one can be saved without the Holy Spirit’s involvement. When that calling occurs, a

decision must be made; either acceptance or rejection. It is referred to as “The quickening of the Spirit.” At that moment the Spirit convicts a person of their need for Christ and His saving grace. He shows them how guilty of sin they really are, and how they are truly undeserving of His favor. It is a terribly humbling experience that breaks the heart and fills it with remorse. But, in the midst of this Jesus stands stretching out His hand saying “Come I will make you white as snow.” He makes this offer not as a result of anything you can do, but because of what He has already done. Since each person has free will, they can reject the calling and eventually the Spirit will cease to work on them. And that is a most dangerous place to be.

- Do you remember when you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior? When and where did it happen?
- Have you ever led someone to Jesus, introducing them to the redeemer of their soul?
- Is there someone in your life now you would regret not seeing in the next life? Why would you not tell them?

Acts 16:31 - John 16:31 - John 16:8 - John 6:65 - John 6:44  
1 Corinthians 12:3

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### WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED LOVE?

**41.** While visiting the Spirit House Landra and McHoff had surrendered to the call of the Great Light. The next morning while doing his turn at sentry, Banyon was praying when Landra approached him. He was truly startled and jumped to his feet. She apologized. *“I didn’t mean to startle you.” Banyon’s legs were now weak and he took several deep breaths. He placed his hand on the lovely woman’s shoulder. “You? Please don’t be.” He smiled and pulled her to his chest. He laughed and she laughed. He gave into his condition and sat down on the ground pulling Landra with him. They lay on his crumpled blanket laughing for a few moments. Banyon rose up on his elbow and looked at the woman who had stolen his heart. She smiled. He drew her close and kissed her. It was a kiss unlike any he had ever known. His feelings of love for her were not only flesh, but born of Spirit. He would never forget that feeling or that kiss.”* The feeling between a man and woman who are both saved is truly wonderful. If they each are in His will, and working to bring Him glory there is a powerful sense of completeness that comes to their relationship. And, coming to his throne together just feels right!

- Are you fortunate enough to have this kind of a relationship with your spouse?
- If not are you doing all in your power to help them become committed to His will that they will be able to meet you in such a relationship with God?

- What could you do to make it better?
- How often do you and your spouse pray together?

Mark 10:8 - 1 Corinthians 7:2 - Hebrews 13:4 - Ephesians 5:33

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### WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS?

**42.** On the way back from the River Willow Delta, Sterling heard a voice that said *“Fear not for you are chosen of the Light. Seek ye first The Light and His glory will come to you and yours.”* When he shared this with his companions, Sylvia spoke to him. *“It is not for men to know their destiny. For mere men may crumble from the joy or despair of it. Only a man capable of that task and in need of the knowing would be told such....”* Often we ask God to help us. We even ask to know what lies ahead. But, God in His wisdom rarely provides us with such information. For if we knew much of what was ahead we would become fixated on it and do nothing to increase or improve the outcome. We would just wait on it. It is God’s will that we work hard, play hard, and enjoy life as we propel His kingdom into the world. It is not promised that we will have it easy but rather the opposite. But, willingness to persist in obedience in spite of trials brings God much pleasure.

- When was the last time you did something you didn’t want to do simply because you felt it was something God wanted you to do?
- Is God’s happiness a priority for you? Or, is your own happiness what motivates what you do?
- Could you donate something you have that you are proud of to the church, just to show God He is more important than it, what?

Jeremiah 29:11 - Proverbs 19:21 - 2 Corinthians 9:7 - Malachi 3:10

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### WHEN IS THE TIME TO FIGHT?

**43.** After returning from the Northern Village, Banyon prayed with his men before the coming battle. *“We stand before you Lord prepared for battle. We face overwhelming odds and wish only that we be found to have met death with honor. We acknowledge your power over evil and ask that if we must die, it will be in your service. Love of brother and kindness to everyone is taught in your Word. But, the evil within men, when allowed to go unchecked, darkens the land to all. We go now as your champions,*

*and should any glory come to our names for what is accomplished this day, may it be said it was done for the Light of Eternal Life.”* Our world is getting darker and darker; driven by men’s evil nature and the lord of darkness himself. Consider for yourself how bad it would have to get for you to pray this same prayer. Is there a point that you would put your own happiness, health, or even life at risk for the sake of the Kingdom of God? For that is the test of Lordship. To say and believe, “If I could serve my Lord Jesus Christ more by dying than what I will accomplish in living....take my life” means He is Lord of your life.

- Hopefully, you will never be asked to back that up. But, will you truly make that offer?
- What are the five most important things to you in your life?
- What keeps you from committing any one or all of these things to Jesus in His service

2 Corinthians 4:5 - 2 Timothy 2:15 - John 14:21 - 1 Kings 20:28  
Proverbs 19:21

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### DO YOU KNOW THE ENEMY?

**44.** Dutch, explaining his scroll dream by the river said, *“For always in the world evil will impose itself on others, and evil upon entering a man blinds him from the truth and goodness; thus evil lives out its purpose through its host.”* Although we all have within us an evil nature that we must fight against, there are also truly evil entities in the world who attempt to work destruction in the lives of believers. Were it not for angels, ambassadors from God almighty, Christians would be unable to survive the onslaught. These heavenly hosts protect, defend, and communicate to and for us. They are not to be worshiped, but are to be appreciated. Thank God for everything including his warriors He has sent to interdict on our behalf with the alien world in which we live.

- Since becoming a Christian have you ever had unexplained assistance in times of trouble?
- Is there good reason to give God glory for these beneficial occurrences?
- Why do you think some people ignore these opportunities to thank God?

Hebrews 3:9-12 - Hebrews 1:14 - Acts 27:23 - Psalms 34:7  
2 Chronicles 16:9

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## WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME?

**45.** While on their journey through the snow to the North Shore, the Elite took shelter in a small town. When asked the purpose of their journey, Sterling told them, ***“For all that is good we venture out into these conditions. We go forth to seek out evil and darkness and to that end we bring with us the Light of the World.”*** Sterling made no apology for their quest, no watered down explanation, no politically correct excuse. He told of their urgent need to obey their Lord. Then he told them the same urgency was for them. When opportunities present themselves to you, do you play down your involvement in the church or with fellow believers? Are you afraid others will hold you accountable for what you say and expect you to live up to what you claim to believe? You are correct, they will, and yes, you should. The world hates a hypocrite. If you profess one thing and live another, the world will ridicule you. So live rightly and be good! Then, if you believe in Jesus, say so! Better to live with accusations from non-believers than the same from the creator of the world who you claim to worship.

- Have you ever consciously avoided letting the people you were with know you were a Christian?
- What are the consequences of letting opportunities to share His love go unused?
- Are you bold enough to give back to the man who gave His all for you?

2 Timothy 3:5 - Titus 1:16 - 1 John 4:17 - Acts 19:8

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## WHO GOES WITH US?

**46.** As the Elite moved toward the North Shore they encountered an old woman. She attempted an attack, but an invisible wall protected them. After the encounter, Daniel spoke to Dutch. ***“It is the Spirit of which we have seen this day. May that same Spirit protect us throughout this journey.’ Dutch commented, ‘Why should he not go with us? Is it not from the Spirit’s direction that we make this journey?’”*** We often think we are expected to perform obedient acts for God on our own strength and abilities. Does it not seem natural that God in His love for us and in His desire for us to succeed would use His power to uplift and support us in His endeavor? Would He send us and not go with us. Would He challenge us and not provide us the resources to be victorious? Of course not! What do you think love is?

- Have you ever found yourself discouraged? When?
- What do we forget when our attitude becomes that of defeat?
- What should we do to defeat--defeat in our lives?

Isaiah 47:10 - Isaiah 46:4 - Isaiah 41:10 - 2 Corinthians 9:8  
1 Timothy 6: 17

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### WHO'S IN CONTROL HERE?

**47.** While on their trip to the North Shore, Landra came to Banyan to find out what he thought they would find there. Banyan said to her, ***“Life is not an endless ocean where waves come and go washed in out with no plan or reason. The things that happened to us happened because we let or refuse to let the Great Light lead us. This journey is all for Him and He is in it. If He is with us, does it matter who or what is against us?”*** We so often like to blame one thing or another or one person or another for the bad things that happen to us. The fact is that ultimately we are responsible. God wants very much to help us with our day-to-day lives. And the success of our lives is based on whether we let him help us or not. Often when he gives us guidance we refuse it, and as a result, find ourselves in bad situations. The reality of it is that we can blame no one but ourselves. Conversely, when we live and walk in the Spirit we can depend on Him helping us make right decisions even when we are not expecting trouble.

- Why do we struggle at letting the Holy Spirit play an active role in our lives?
- Are you too much of a controlling person to let someone else call the shots?
- Or, is it that you have never seen Him work in your life so you just don't believe He is really there?

Matthew 28:18 - Colossians 1:17 - Deuteronomy 31:5,6  
Psalm 73:23, 24 - Hebrews 13:5

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### REJOICE ALWAYS?

**48.** After being captured, Dutch was lamenting he and his companion's circumstances. His emotions faded away and were replaced by joy. ***“Oh yea! As the scriptures say, ‘In the darkest hour He is with us. Believe and know that I am Lord, and if I be with you who can be against you.’”*** Do you ever let the circumstances you are in take control? Do you ever become so depressed that you want to give up? The Bible says that we are never alone. God is constantly aware of our troubles and wants to help. The only thing that stops him is you. You have the power to overcome depression and sorrow. Give your cares to Jesus! Get His perspective on your state and give Him control. He knows the real problem. He knows what is truly motivating the people you may be in conflict with. He knows how to resolve the problem to your best advantage.

- Do you ever get depressed? When?
- Would it help to truly know people's motivation? Why?

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- Can you give an example of listening to God and having the answer come to you? If not, stop and think why not?
- That may be one of the most important questions you are asked today!

Psalm 139 - Colossians 2:7 - Mark 4:24 - Deuteronomy 32:1-2  
Philippians 4:7



### WHERE DOES YOUR TREASURE LIE?

**49.** In the castle’s master bedchamber, the group found the “key” to Vitar. On the walls were written the words **“RICHES, FAME, POWER, AND PLEASURE”** These words were not the key to the treasure of Vitar. It was the light that exposed the sin of man when in pursuit of these things. Well, aren’t these things easy identify and avoid, not necessarily? These are broad names for desires we all have. If given opportunity many would fall into the traps represented by these things desired. I would never succumb to RICHES. I just need a little more money to make my life easier. I would never succumb to a desire for FAME. I just want to be able to brag about my team winning the championship. POWER, well not me I just want to be the boss for the money. And PLEASURE, I wouldn’t cheat on my wife, I just enjoy looking at porn. The instant you think you are invulnerable you are most at risk. Acknowledge your weaknesses to God and ask him to remove the temptation. Then don’t cry when he does.

- Which one of these temptations are you most likely to struggle with? When?
- Have you ever really asked God to release you from the power of one of these sins? When?

Matthew 6:13 - Matthew 26:41 - 1 Corinthians 10:13  
1 Timothy 6:9 - Romans 7:18-24 - Ephesians 6:10, 13

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### CAN A LIFE BE BEAUTIFUL?

**50.** As Dutch began to tell what he had learned from the tapestries in Castle Ianon, particularly the last one, he described what it looked like. **“It was made of carefully woven colors. There was a pattern as though there was a purpose to the stitching, however there was no scene, no story to herald.”** Yet it showed careful planning and design. Dutch told them it represented the future. He eventually surprised them by showing it to them. **“So some of the stitches represent the times when this person’s life plan was renewed in a new direction. So no matter how many mistakes he or she made**

***the Spirit lead him or us, toward yet another goal.***” So often we think we have done something or gone somewhere that places us beyond the Spirit’s leadership or influence. God loved you so that while you were yet a sinner He died for you. What could you possibly do that would be beyond His capacity to reach you and interact with you in your decisions and choices? Each day when you wake up, sit on the side of the bed, and examine where you are and know that God has a perfect will for your life from right there. With His help renew your commitment and begin fresh in His will.

- What were the circumstances around the last time you were disappointed?
  - In others:
  - In yourself:
- What things from the past burden you down?
- Do you believe you have been forgiven for those things?
- Have you forgiven yourself?

Romans 12:2 - Psalms 37:23 - 2 Corinthians 4:16 - Ephesians 4:23

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### **HOW GLORIOUS IS THY NAME, OH LORD!**

**51.** After crossing the Tovis Broad River the second time, Sterling spent a whole day speaking with a Light Agent who told him ***“The Great Light created man to bring the Great Light glory. When man obeys Him, it accomplishes that end. He gave man the ability to worship or reject Him. For worship was the only thing The Great Light couldn’t give himself.”*** God made man in His own image. Choice was one of the characteristics of God He gave man; the ability to do or not do something. He has made it clear that we are to worship Him. But if we had to, it would mean nothing to Him. The fact we can “not” do it, makes it wonderful to Him when we do. Praise and worship are two different things. The church today is getting better at praise and worse at worship. We Praise God for what He has done, we worship Him for who He is.

- Do you remember ever sitting down and acknowledging how great God is and how insignificant you are? Out loud!
- You had to have done it when you were saved. Have you done it since?
- Have you ever sat long enough for God to acknowledge your worship?
- What or who gets in the way of your true worship?

Romans 12:1 - John 4:24 - Hebrews 13:15 - Psalms 29:2

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### ANGLES FROM WHERE?

**52.** The night before the battle the Elite met their Light Agents in their dreams. McHoff asked, *“How will it be tomorrow?”* The agents answered, *‘The battle tomorrow will be fierce. You must use every skill you’ve learned. Your strength must be whole.... We have been assigned to fight with you on the right and the left. You will not be able to see us for our efforts will be with the evil forces that strengthen the men who oppose you. But, just as you press the battle of the flesh so we will go before you to ease the temptation. As you battle the Mobedites we will give you strength so you will not fall.’* Do you ever make such bold stands that Angels need to strengthen and protect you? Do you feel like a warrior? If not, then something is wrong. Your Christian life should be full of encounters where you hold up the truth in righteousness and refuse to move. You should do it often enough that people within your sphere of influence know what and whose you are. Defending the faith with blade or word is a cause of the highest order, but it must always be done in love and compassion. To be the mighty warrior, success in the world’s way and for love is a wasted life.

- Name two times when you let a challenge to Christian faith go unchallenged.
- Why did you do or say nothing?
- Next time, say out loud “Angel Alert!” And take the stand. Never be ashamed of what Christ has done for you.

Psalm 144:1 - Exodus 15: 3 - 1 Peter 4:6 - 1 Samuel 17:48-49  
1 Corinthians 16:13

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### ARE YOU FREE, TRULY FREE?

**53.** After the battle with the Mobedites, several of the Elite were riding with Dutch on his wagon. Charles asked Dutch what they would do now. Dutch answered, *“You have served the Light well and are free men in the truest sense of the word.’* Charles said, *‘You mean we are free to go where ever we want?’* Dutch chuckled, *‘Well that too, but you are now truly free. You know the power of the light and you will never be pulled into bondage by evil men, false ways or wrong desires.’* For those things will bind you out of the Light as quickly as any dark army.” You really have no excuse for doing things contrary to what God wants you to. Once you have accepted Jesus as your savior and invited the Holy Spirit into your heart, you have amazing, supernatural abilities at your disposal. You may or may not learn how to use this power. The key is giving it all to the One who made you able to have it in the first place. This freedom has many manifestations. But, it all depends on you surrendering every part of your life, being

willing to do whatever He asks, learning the word and applying what it teaches. Being dependent on God is the perfect way to freedom and powerful Christian living.

- What did God tell you about what He wants you to do to others?
- How can you do that to people you don't really like?
- Would that be supernatural?
- The facts about Jesus are liberating. The truth about Him is redeeming. The process of accepting Him is humbling. His presence in your life is peace-making. The life that follows is glorious.

Romans 6:18 - John 8:32-36 - Galatians 5:1 - Psalms 118:5

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