

A Man's
Battles in The
Red
Zone



Making decisions during the critical
times of your life!

A Man's Battle in the Red Zone

Preference

This study is designed to help you make decisions during the critical times of life, when the stakes are high and the risks are real. The basic theme is built around one single thought:

“If today is really the first day of your life, how are the decisions you make today impacting your tomorrows?”

It may be a simple thought, but if you could see the future impact of the decisions you make today, what would you change? How would you change the way you make decisions?

Every decision you've made in the past has put you or someone you love on a very specific path. Likewise, the decisions you make today will lead you or someone else down a new path. What seems like a small decision today, could lead down a path that has a big impact on someone's life tomorrow.

What if you had the ability and insight to see the path each decision you make will lead? Would you change anything? Hopefully, working through this study will help you answer these questions!

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I hope most you have completed Manhood Revolution and you are learning how to apply **Galatians 2:20** (*I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.*) and **Ephesians 5: 1-2** (*Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved [a]you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma*). If you have not completed your Manhood Plan, no worries, you can circle back and complete it as you work your way through this study.

In the Manhood Plan you learned four key things about yourself. The points were;

- Discovering who we are, “Awakening”
- Discovering where we are in life, “Awareness”
- Discovering how to turn our life around, “Pivot”
- Your Legacy

These are key elements of your life as a Godly man and they play a major part in your decision making when you are in the critical times of life – The Red Zone. When you are in the Red Zone and need to call an important play, what resources do you draw from?

Another part of the Manhood was to develop your Accountability Group. A Band of Brothers as it is referred to in various other studies and books. If you would compare this to a football game, this would be the coaches and other men on the team. These are men you respect and trust. Men you know that truly care about you!

The phrase “In The Red Zone” is nothing new. If you’ve watched a football game, you’ve heard this term repeated over and over. It is a critical part of a football field and teams are measured

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by how well they perform when they are in this area of the field. It is said that 80% of a football game is played between the 20 yard lines. But, it is how well a team performs inside the 20 yard line that determines their overall success, their time spent in the Red Zone!

In life, you spend most of your time doing normal everyday "stuff". The decisions you are faced with during this part of your life don't always have a big impact on your tomorrow's. Eventually, there comes a time when you are faced with a critical decision, a decision that has a huge impact on you as well as the ones you care most about. This study focuses on how well you respond during those critical times of your life. In other words, your Life in "In The Red Zone"!

Each decision you make leads you or someone you care about down a path. Sometimes the paths are well defined, the edges very easy to see. Other times, the paths do not have well defined edges and it becomes easy to wander off the path and into areas you shouldn't be.

There are several things that play a part in your ability to make decisions and impact how you respond during the critical times in your life. One thing is how you live your life during the normal times, the time spent between the 20 yard lines. One of the biggest risks you face is falling asleep. Not falling asleep in the physical state, but asleep in your awareness of things happening around you. You can become so comfortable with your daily life that you grow numb and lose real feeling to everything happening around you.

When you get to this stage of life a couple of things can happen, you can become very complacent and personally preoccupied. "Slow Fade" by Casting Crows says:

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"It's a slow fade when black and white have turned to gray
Thoughts invade, choices are made, a price will be paid
When you give yourself away

People never crumble in a day"

You start digging "ruts". Your daily routines follow the same path every day. The more comfortable you become with your routines, the deeper the ruts become. Then one day, one of the walls of your ruts caves in and you are lost. You have gotten so comfortable in your "normal life" that when something changes you don't know which way to turn. Your mind keeps telling you to follow the same path you've been following but that path is blocked and you're paralyzed! You have become so complacent with the "normal", you are lost and can't decide what to do next. You're confused, having lost the ability to focus and think clear enough make good decisions.

This may have been part of what happened to Adam in the Garden of Eden. When Eve was being tempted by the serpent in **Genesis chapter 3**, Adam watched and did nothing. This is very typical of us sometimes in our daily lives and routines today. You see things as they are unfolding around you, but you are so caught up with work, sports, plans for the weekend, or just hanging out with your buds you miss the opportunity to prevent something from going very wrong! Other terms we start to use are "I'll get to that later" or "I'll take care of that tomorrow"! We ignore the issues or put off the bigger they become.

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As you become comfortable with your "ruts" and the daily routines of your life, you take God's grace for granted! Eventually you get to the point where you are telling God, "I've got this"! You no longer believe you need "His" help.

You have become preoccupied. Your days are full of things to do and you run from event to event! Your daily life has turned into a race track. The pace of your life has become so fast you are going in circles trying to catch up and just survive. You start taking short cuts! You've lost all balance and control in your life. Next, you start eliminating things. Most of the time you eliminate things so you can catch up at a later time. But, you never catch up because you can't get your head above water.

One of the first things you eliminate is your "self time". Not the "self time" you spend with your buds or doing things you like, but the time reserved for yourself. Time you spend in prayer and reading God's word. Your routine has become so full you fool yourself into thinking you can make time later and that time never comes! This is when you start relying on yourself for making the difficult decisions and not seeking God's guidance.

You also start avoiding critical decisions or hoping they will go away. You don't have the time needed to make the right decision. You ignore these events until they've grown into something overwhelming. Out of the blue you are blindsided and are hit by something you thought you had time for later. Had you not been so consumed by your own daily life and its selfish desires, you would have been aware of the events as they were happening around you. You would have been ready when the time came to make a decision.

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Either one of these situations can have a major impact on your tomorrow's, not to mention on those close to you! The question becomes, "how do you prevent this from happening"?

First you must understand some of the things that make you who we are and governs your thinking process. It's your normal thinking process that keep you from taking action. This process prevents you from seeing things clearly and hinders your ability to prepare for events in the Red Zone. I think **Proverbs 23:7** states one of the main reasons you are often caught off guard by life's events. **Proverbs 23:7** says, "*For as he thinks within himself, so he is*". This verse is talking about a selfish man and how he sees himself. I think we all have a tendency to be selfish at times. This selfishness is brought on by some of the things you were taught in your youth. This type of behavior was influenced by your parents and other influential people in your early life. All during your youth you were taught how to behave, how to act, what to say and what not to say. These influences had both a positive and negative impact, and they are still part of you today. Whether you want to admit it or not, these influences are part of your DNA.

Influences in your life came from two very distinct areas. The first was from the things you were told by your parents. The other area of influence came from people you wanted to be like when you were growing up. You watched everything they did and tried your best to be just like them. Good or bad, it didn't really matter. All you knew was that other people admired them and if you could be like them, you would get the same admiration. But the admiration never came or fell short of what you were expecting. This left you wanting more admiration and drove you to try almost anything to achieve recognition. How you

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eventually acted depended on which statements from your youth you let influence your choices most of the time.

Listed below is a brief list of the typical statements we all probably heard when we were growing up. Check the ones you remember. If you remember the statement(s) today, it is still having an impact on you!

Check the ones you heard while growing up:

Negative Things

- Why can't you be more like your brother!
- You're good for nothing?
- You'll never amount to anything!
- Stop acting like a sissy!
- You'll never learn!
- You're so stupid!

Positive Things

- You can do anything!
- You are the only one that matters!
- You are perfect!
- Everyone wants to be like you!
- It's not your fault!
- You're special!

I'm sure there are others statements you remember! Write these additional statements down on a sheet of paper. If you really look hard at both the positive and negative statements, you'll be able to see the patterns they've created and their impacts on your life.

All these comments you heard while you were growing up were made with good intentions. The statements and comments were made to make you a stronger man! However, these untruths still affect your thinking today.

You also heard what I call, "myths". Myths such as, "real men don't cry". Men were not to show any type of emotion and we were probably told, "this is a sign of weakness.

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These myths still exist in our society today. In today's society, men are allowed to show basically only two emotions, happiness and anger. I remember growing up one of my father's favorite sayings when I got hurt was, "it doesn't hurt, just rub it and it will be okay"! I know he meant well and deep down he was concerned, he was only trying to make me tough! I think of all the things he missed in life because he was taught as a young man not to show emotions! As my dad aged, I was lucky to see his softer side. He really was a caring man and loved his family! Because of these early influences on me, I have to say I made some of the same mistakes my father did. I did not make them on purpose, it was just part of who I was! Some of the traits I developed are based on what I was told or witnessed while growing up. These traits are still being fed me today!

Traits can be divided into two categories: Personal Traits and Life Style Traits. Personal Traits are the behaviors we inherited through the influences in our lives and our genetics. No matter how hard we want to ignore it, we must face the fact we do have some of the physical traits of our parents.

Life Style Traits are things we choose for ourselves such as what type of home to buy, size and location of our home, type of car we drive and where we shop! This is all done by personal choice in an effort to exhibit the image we want people to see! Our image may be to be involved in everything so that you can be seen and admired by others. This could be anything from the activities of your children to your involvement in church activities. Your desire is to be noticed. Another choice you make is to remain in the background. You don't want to stand out, someone will want something from you or ask

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someone will want something from you or ask you to do something. You just want to be left alone so you are free to do "your thing". You don't have to worry about "anyone else".

You become so consumed with your own wants and desires, you lose sight of things as they happen all around you. You lose track and contact with reality! You turn a blind eye to things you don't want to deal with or that interferes with your life. Some examples are:

- ❑ Your wife and her need for your time and attention
- ❑ Your children and their activities
- ❑ Your daughter's new boyfriend
- ❑ Friends that don't agree with your lifestyle
- ❑ Guidance from your band of brothers
- ❑ Things at work that require extra time and attention

Then one day you wake up and find you've separated yourself from those around you and don't have a clue who you are or what you're doing! The people you live with have become strangers. The attention you denied your wife, she is seeking from other directions! It doesn't have to be another man, she can gain attention from activities and group involvement. What has happened, she no longer seeks your attention or you! You have become room mates! Your children have done the same thing! They no longer seek your approval for things they need or do! All the approvals are given by their mother. At this point, if you needed to make a critical decision for your family, you would have to depend on your wife! You have become isolated in your own home. All the freedom you wanted for yourself, you got it! As a stranger in your own home, you know the names of your wife and children and they know your name, but you don't know anything else about them! You don't the names

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of their friends, any of their interests or what they like to do. On the other hand, your wife and children know everything about you! They see you for who you truly are! They have watched you day after day slowly withdraw and separate yourself from them. You ignored their cries for attention and they went somewhere else to find the attention you deprived them! You're alone!

Earlier I referenced **Proverbs 23:7** talking about our selfishness. We don't think of ourselves as being selfish. When we look at ourselves in the mirror, we see what we want to see. **James 1:23-24** describes it best. *James 1:23-24 says he is like a man looking at his own face in a mirror. For he looks at himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind*

of man he was" . This is not something we do intentionally, it goes back to our traits! You have let the childhood influences and the myths you were told guide you! Can you change your traits? Yes! In the Manhood Plan you gained some insights on how to begin to change some of these traits. In this lesson, we will dig a little deeper. You will learn how to identify the negative influences that impact you and how to control or remove them completely. If you have already started your Manhood Plan, go back and review some of your answers or comments. Double check to make sure you were completely honest! We don't intentionally tell untruths when we talk about our past. We sometimes overlook or ignore some of the painful parts because they are too hurtful or embarrassing. But, you must recognize these painful and embarrassing moments for what they are and the influence they have over you. Facing and admitting these memories in your past is the "only way" you can work through them and start to change in a positive direction.

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At the end of this study is a short self assessment. Work your way through the assessment and take time to answer each question honestly. Make some notes about each question and the memories they stir. See if you can identify or start to recognize some of the traits in yourself! Do you see any habits or patterns that directly reflect back to any of the myths you were taught as a young man? It is important to be completely honest when answering the questions. This is the only way to gain insight, take control and create a change in you!

A psychiatrist once said that human beings have four basic needs. They basic needs are love, forgiveness, purpose and hope. For us men, I would like to add respect to the list. We are proud of the things we've accomplished and we want others to respect us for those accomplishments. But first, you must learn to respect yourself.

The first step in gaining self respect is truly understanding your innermost thoughts. Earlier we discussed **Proverbs 23:7**, "*As he thinks within himself, so he is.*" You can sort through the old messages that play in your mind while removing the negative impact they have on you. It doesn't matter if the messages are true or false! You control how they impact you. You can push the myths aside and eliminate the power they have over you.

If you need to seek forgiveness for something, then go to God and seek it! Then you must forgive yourself. If you need to forgive someone else, then do so and remove the control they have over you. It's important to gain control over your thoughts and begin to see yourself as God sees you. If you search the book of **Proverbs** (NASB) the word "man" is listed over a 100 times. Each one is a brief glimpse at a Godly man. Take some time to read each verse. A favorite of my is Proverbs 12: "*The way of a fool is right in his*

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own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to counsel". As men, we are capable of convincing ourselves of almost anything! No matter how absurd it may be, if it is something we want; we will believe anything we tell ourselves! That is why so many men are alone today. They see the man in the mirror and see who they want him to be. They can't see or won't let themselves see all the faults hidden deep inside.

Search through the book of Proverbs for the word "man" and read some of the verses. Below list the verses that stand out or get your attention. The verses that get your attention will also stir something in you. Jot down your thoughts or feelings as you read each verse. Don't wait and say I'll come back and write things down! You will have lost the pure emotion! Don't give time the ability to dull your senses and rob you of what God is stirring in your heart. Identify the verse and the feelings it stirs.

Verse
Thoughts / Feelings
Verse:
Thoughts / Feelings

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Verse:
Thoughts / Feelings
Verse:
Thoughts / Feelings
Verse:
Thoughts / Feelings

Secret Faces



Another important step in understanding what impacts your ability to make decisions during the critical times is your Secret Life. Face it, we all have one. Your Secret thoughts hidden within or the different face's you put on for the different crowds you associate with.

We've all taken that second look or had that stray thought wander in and out of our thoughts. Sometimes you let that thought stay just a little bit too long. Or, you let your eyes gaze in the wrong direction and at the wrong thing just a little too long. Sometimes it becomes as simple as thinking, "what if". The term "what if" is a very powerful phrase and can create a lot of positive thought provoking ideas! But "what if" can also create a lot of empty spaces in your life. When your "what if's" turn to things you wish you had done or to choices you have made, (right or wrong) it can create holes you can't fill and voids in your life you try to fill everyday but can't.

Then you have the other types of, "what if"! These are the ones that lead you down the wrong roads. When you meet the new woman at work and she is nice and friendly. To be polite, you ask about her family and get to know a little more about her. Each day when you run into her, you chat a little more about family and things they like to do. As the conversations continue, they move beyond surface topics to personal ones. You enjoy the conversations and the time you spend with her. You start creating more opportunities to spend time with her at work. This is where the "what if" phrase becomes a problem. The

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moment the “what if” enters your mind, in God’s eyes you have already sinned. Many times we men write this off as, “I was only looking”. To God, this is a sin.

This is not the only type of “what if” that will take you down the wrong road! Look at the following list of “what if” thoughts and check all that you have had at one point in your past. Be honest in your answers. Also think about the negative impact they've had on your life.

What If -

- I had not gotten married right out of school?
- I had gotten that last promotion?
- I made time for myself instead of being stuck at home?
- I could be like Joe Black? Then I could be more ?????
- I could be the man I wanted to be???

These are just a few. Write down your “what if’s” below and really think about them. How are they impacting your life? More important, how are they influencing your ability to make clear decisions in the critical times? Your time in The Red Zone!

My “What Ifs”

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

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I think that Nathaniel Hawthorne puts it in a way we can understand our "what if's". In his book "The Scarlet Letter", Nathaniel wrote:

"No man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself, and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be the true face".

If you take time to stop and really think about this, we all have "what if's" that we wear as different faces! We put these faces on at different times depending on the situation we are in. We have a happy face, sad face, angry face, well you get the picture. But it is the man underneath these faces we need to understand. It is "this man" Nathaniel Hawthorne was talking about. The "what if" man. You can be one man at work, a different man at home, and yet another man at church. At some point you forget which man you really are. You also have your Secret "what if" self hidden beneath all these faces. This is the face of the man you really want to be. He could be built around a man you admired in your youth or a type of man you have created in your mind. But, there is something in you or your life today preventing you from becoming the hidden man. Gordon MacDonald put it this way in his book, "Pastors at Risk".

"We need to face the plain fact that about an inch beneath our Christian skins is a barbarian... who desperately wants to get out and express himself".

This is the man we really need to know and understand! It is "the barbarian" or the hidden man inside us we need to understand. We need to understand how the "hidden man" impacts our decision making during critical times.

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In his book "Enemies of the Heart" Andy Stanley wrote:

"We've all grown very adept at covering for our hearts. In fact, we're so good at it that most of us have no idea just how corrupt we really are".

While the word corrupt may be a strong word, Andy Stanley's point is still very true! You have become so good at keeping the inner man hidden, you sometimes lose sight of the hidden man and his Secret desires. And unconsciously, those Secret desires surface and influence your ability to make good, sound decisions.

I think at this point it would be a good idea to understand a little about the hidden man. While Gordon MacDonald uses the term "barbarian", I don't think we all have a barbarian hidden inside wanting to get out pillaging and looting. You need to be really honest with yourself and what are you hiding. What is it that you keep tucked away so no one else can see? The man just beneath the face you show everyone else. Look at the list below and take time to examine each one. Then check all that you keep hidden:

- Fear
- Need for respect
- Desire for adventure
- Hidden pain
- A Secret habit
- Guilt
- Anger
- Arrogance
- Past Secrets
- Hidden failures
- A Secret relationship

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If we are honest with ourselves, most of us hide more than the ones listed. And, I'm sure there were some that came to your mind as you read through the list. The question is, how do you understand and control this hidden part of you?

The answer to that question is learning how to identify the early warning signs exhibited by your Secret life. Before we can answer that question, there are a couple of other questions we should explore. They will help identify areas of our Secret Life. The two questions I want you to ask yourself are these:

How do I act when I think no one is watching?

How do I act when I am around different groups of people?

The first question is almost straight forward. The thing that complicates it is that it has two parts:

How do you act when you are alone?

How do you act when no one is watching?

You may think these two questions are the same, but they are not! How do you act when you are alone? Are there hidden behaviors you have that no one knows about? When you are alone, what do you look at on the computer? When there is no one to keep you in check, who are you? When you are out of town, alone, how do you act? This is where the hidden faces really want to come out and play! You are free to express yourself in a place where no one will know and satisfy the hidden hungers inside you.

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You don't have to be out of town for these hidden faces to show themselves. How do you act when you are alone in traffic and someone cuts you off? Do you smile and give them space or do you lay on the horn, get right on their bumper just to make sure they see you and know what they did! How do you react when they don't pay any attention to your actions? Do you get even more upset? Do you find you sometimes do this without thinking when your family is in the car with you? Or, when you are at a public store and the clerk or someone doesn't help you or respond to you with respect? Do you turn the other cheek or do you let them know how you feel? Do you act one way until you see someone you know and then change your behavior? You quickly change faces and bring out Mr. Nice Guy. Are you so dumb to think they didn't see your behavior before you changed faces?

The downside to this behavior is the more you feed the Secret Faces the more they want. The more you feed these Secret Faces the more they start to show themselves in your normal, everyday life. Most of the time they show themselves and you aren't even aware of it. But more importantly, the more these Secret Faces are fed, the more they start to have an impact on your ability to make clear decisions during the critical times.

It is very confusing to you and everyone around you that this Secret Face has multiple faces and is fueled by multiple needs. The most common face is the need to be accepted and liked. To feel the need to be accepted, we create different faces for different groups of people. We have a face for work, a face for church, a face for family, a different face for our activity life (golfing, hunting, fishing, etc) And yes, we have a different face for when we are around other Godly men. The need to feed these faces is complicated, but the problem these different faces create is a simple one. Sooner or later we get so caught up in the

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different lives we are living we forget who the "real man" is and what face he is supposed to wear!

You might be thinking this would be impossible. How can someone forget who they are? Go back and look at **James 1: 23 & 24** and then consider this, you have a face for the guys at work and the guys at church. One evening you go out to dinner with the guys from church and run into a group of guys from work, which face do you wear? You can't wear both! When you don't know which face to wear, how can you know who you are? Can you remember who the man is you saw in the mirror? More importantly, how can you make good decisions in the critical times when you don't know which face to wear?

Another part of understanding our Secret Life is understanding the three (3) kinds of sin and how they feed each face. Each Secret Face we have touches one of these three kinds of sin. The three kinds of sin are defined as Physical, Mental and Hidden.

Physical – Action

The act of doing something against God's word.

Mental – Knowledge

Knowing the right thing to do but doing nothing.

Hidden – Secret The art of thinking of something or someone, but taking no physical actions. You only watch and wish and do nothing.

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When you feed your Secret Face with one of these actions, are you committing idolatry? While that might sound like a harsh statement, it's true. When you give way to your Secret Face, you set it above everything else. In your willingness to do what is necessary to satisfy the craving, you are placing this Secret Face above God and everything else! The moment you feel the craving, the hunger deep inside you starts to burn but you also hear a voice in the background telling you not to give in! That voice is the Holy Spirit inside you giving guidance. When you ignore the voice of the Holy Spirit you have placed the Secret Face "above" God and created an idol! An idol something you worship above everything else. It may only last for a few hours or just a few minutes, but it is still an idol just the same.

Not me! I would never do anything like that! These thoughts go through your mind! That is the "Macho Man" inside telling you that's not you; you aren't that way! This is another Secret Face you have that helps you justify the things you do and the different faces you wear. It is another idol that you worship and feed.

How and why does this happen to you?

You start to believe the lies you tell yourself. You've become so effective at justifying your Secret Faces that you lose track of the line between right and wrong, where the Secret Face ends and the real you begins. When you reach this point, you start redefining the line between right and wrong as it relates to each Secret Face you wear. What was once a very clear, very distinct separation has now become gray! The line of separation is almost invisible and because it changes with each Secret Face, it becomes even harder for you to define the "real" you.

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Some of the lies you create to justify your Secret Faces are:

- Just to look is not really wrong.
- No one is getting hurt.
- This helps me relax.
- It makes me a better person.
- My wife doesn't care.
- If no one else knows it's okay.
- This is an exception.
- All my friends are doing it!
- I don't want to be different or stand out so I must blend in.

I'm sure there are a lot of other lies you create to justify the Secret Faces and the things you do. The question now becomes, how do you control the appetite(s) of your Secret Face.

One of the first things you must do is admit the truth that you do have a Secret Face! We all do. Only when you admit to the truth can you start to identify your Secret Face(s). Complete the following section! Take time to pray and ask God to reveal all your Secret Faces to you.

Identify your hidden faces. Then identify the impact this hidden face has on your ability to make decisions at critical times in the Red Zones of life. Next, explain the steps you are going to take to expose and remove this hidden face so that it no longer has control over you.

The Hidden Face –

The Impact or control it has over you:

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Your plans to expose or eliminate this hidden face:

The Hidden Face -

The Impact or control it has over you:

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Your plans to expose or eliminate this hidden face:

The Hidden Face -

The Impact or control it has over you:

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Your plans to expose or eliminate this hidden face:

The Hidden Face -

The Impact or control it has over you:

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Your plans to expose or eliminate this hidden face:

If you were honest (remember this doesn't work until you are willing to be completely truthful with yourself) and identified your Secret Faces, can you begin the process of eliminating them. You do this by recognizing the early warning signs and the things that stirs or feeds the Secret Face. In other words, the things that awakens the hunger inside you and causes the Secret Face to come out.

At this point is where it becomes hard for us as men. We have to face the truth and admit we are broken. That hurts our pride! To admit we have short comings goes against everything we have tried to prove to the world and to ourselves didn't exist. But no matter how hard this is or how much it hurts your pride, this step is one "you must take"!

Take time to think and pray about what you have just read. Write down your thoughts below. Pray for help and guidance.

Barriers



To break the hold these Secret Faces have on you, you have to set up barriers. By placing barriers in certain parts of your life you can avoid the habits that feed the craving of your Secret Face. The problem with barriers is we have trouble determining where they should be located. If we were standing on the edge of a cliff, we would think having a barrier right at the edge is okay. It will keep you from walking over the edge of the cliff and keep you safe. What happens if you lose your balance and fall over the barrier? There is no safety zone that allows you time to recover. Barriers have to be set in areas that are far enough away from your breaking point, the point of no return! You set the barriers in places that ensure you have time to make corrections when you start feeling the cravings. If you set your barriers right at the edge of your breaking point, there is no room to correct yourself and by the time you realize what is happening it is too late. You have already crossed the line and your Secret Face has won – again!

To understand how and where to set your barriers, you must first be able to identify the habits that lead or feed your Secret Face. A habit is something you do automatically, without thinking. Your habits are such a part of who you are, you are not aware of them or when you do them. Remember earlier we talked about being confused and not knowing who you were, these habits have a lot to do with creating that confusion. They come so naturally that you are not aware of them or how they are impacting your ability to make decisions during the critical

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times. Example of a small habit: if someone were to throw a rock at you what would you do? Without thinking you would most likely duck! You didn't take the time to think, should I catch the rock, should I turn my back, no you ducked! This is a habit you've developed over time and it is a simple action (habit) you take for self preservation. By understanding your habits and why you do them, you will learn where to set your barriers so you have plenty of time to recover and change direction!

Habits can be something as simple as having to be somewhere or do a certain thing at the same time everyday. If you get thrown off your schedule, your entire day is off balance. Below, I would like for you to identify some of your habits. This is important as you will need them a little later.

Your List of Habits

Habit 1:
Habit 2:
Habit 3:
Habit 4:
Habit 5:
Habit 6:
Habit 7:
Habit 8:

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Now that you have put your habits down on paper, review each habit and relate it to the Secret Faces you wear. Also, take a look at the huge amounts of time and energy you are spending on these habits. If you can't relate a habit directly back to one of your Secret Faces, look at it from another view. How much time does the habit require from you to keep your Secret Face hidden? Just as you develop habits to feed your Secret Face, you also develop habits to keep your Secret Face hidden. You have little feel good habits that deceives you from seeing the real you. That habit of getting to church early so that you can be seen by others or have the chance to shake everyone's hand. Is that really you or do you go to church to mingle so you feel good and lessen the guilt of your Secret Faces?

Take the time to list the Habit and the Secret Face it is related to in the section below:

Habit	Secret Face
Habit	Secret Face
Habit	Secret Face
Habit	Secret Face
Habit	Secret Face
Habit	Secret Face
Habit	Secret Face
Habit	Secret Face

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Now, here is what I would like for you to do with your list of habits. Sit down and share your list with your wife! What! Why would you want to do something like that? Well, for beginners, your wife knows you just as well, if not, better than you do. She lives with all of your habits. And yes, she is aware of some of the Secret Faces you wear. She sees the Secret Faces when you are around the different groups you associate with. There is no one better qualified to validate your list than your wife. I would also venture to say she may have a few more to add to your list. Don't let your pride get in the way! Take the time to do this, it will only strengthen your relationship with your wife! *

Habits Identified by my wife: * If you are not married, pick someone who knows you best.

1
2
3
4
5

I hope you completed the prior step! * Getting your wife's input is really the first step that enables you to establish real barriers. Real barriers that will help you control your habits, if not eliminate them. Your wife also makes a great accountability partner! Again, this will only strengthen your relationship with each other! So don't be afraid or ashamed. Remember, she is your first ministry aside from God! * This is a critical step that must be done, whether it is your spouse or a friend/relative you have chosen.

Band of Brothers and Mentoring

BAND OF BROTHERS



Mentoring

The other step in managing your Secret Faces and habits is having a true, Band of Brothers. These are men you totally trust, not men you hang out with or go to the gym with. Pick men that know everything about you! Men that know the innermost Secret Faces of your life still love you.

These men aren't easy to find and you will go through some pain and heartache looking for them. But these men are out there and they are worth the pain of the hunt. You have to be patient. Men looking for the same type of brotherhood could be watching you. Are you someone they could trust? You say you are, but what do your actions say about you? Just as you have watched other men and seen their different sides or their Secret Faces, other men could be watching you and looking for that brotherhood connection. You must remember they see your Secret Faces too. So, how do you move forward?

In your efforts to find Godly men, you will spend time together at retreats, church functions or your children may be involved in some of the same activities. Your task is to break the ice with a man and start discussions about building that brotherhood bond. As you get to know each other, you may each have some of the same habits. You can start by sharing your desire for the brotherhood accountability to help you fight off these

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unhealthy habits. You have to be vulnerable, but that doesn't mean you spill your guts about everything during your first discussion. You must make sure he is ready for that brotherhood bond. If he isn't ready at this point in his life, you must continue your search. But don't close this door, you still have the opportunity to build a mentoring relationship. Mentoring is not a one sided affair, each man in the mentoring relationship learns from the other. You learn through each other's life experiences. Even though you don't develop that deep brotherhood accountability relationship, you have impacted the life of another man, and he has impacted your life. Hopefully, you are strengthening each other's relationship with God in the process.

The word "mentoring" is not found in the bible. But, "acts of mentoring" are described from the beginning to the end of the Bible. In most cases, each time mentoring happens in the Bible, it is when someone is facing a critical time. One of the most famous examples is when Nathan confronts King David. Read **2 Samuel 12:1-13**. Nathan calls David's hand on something he's done. Nathan doesn't get in King David's face, but Nathan allows King David to view his wrong from someone else's point of view. When King David saw past himself and saw his actions clearly, he saw the truth. King David saw what the truth looked like and he was ashamed! King David also learned how his poor decisions would impact his family. Read the rest of **2 Samuel 12** to understand how the decisions or choices of King David's impacted his family.

As all mentors do, Nathan was there to help guide King David. When Nathan saw something wrong, he was there to offer wise council. You can almost compare mentoring to the game of golf. When a pro golfer needs help making a decision on what type of shot to make or which club to use, he turns to his caddy. A mentor could be considered a, "Life Caddy". A life

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Caddy is someone who is there to help you during the difficult times. It is someone to offer you good, sound advice because he has your best interest in mind and his advice is based on solid biblical teachings.

The relationship between Nathan and King David can be viewed as either one of brotherhood or mentoring; it has a little of both elements. Sometimes a true mentor and mentee relationship turns into a brotherly bond, but that is not the purpose of a mentoring relationship. A mentor and mentee relationship is meant to last for the different seasons of your life. The length of the season depends on the mentor and mentee relationship, but the brotherly bond lasts for a life time.

You might be thinking you don't have the desire to be a mentor. You just don't have the time to invest into another man! Well, like it or not you are mentoring someone! If you claim to be a Godly man, if you stand in a group of men and say God is the leader of your life, others are watching. They are watching to see how a Godly man lives and as they watch you are living the life of a mentor! So, the question you must ask yourself is this: "Is your life a positive or negative impact on those watching?" Can they see God through your daily life? Or, is your life described in **James 3: 14-26**? These verses talk about faith and works. The question is; Do the works of your life match the faith you confess to having?

Meanwhile, your search for your Godly brothers continues! With each relationship, each mentoring contact, you grow closer to your band of brothers. You may feel that all is lost and nothing is working out the way you expected. But, as mentioned before, other men have been watching you in your mentoring relationships! They have been watching you as you live your life as a Godly man. Through your works and your walk, they began to see you as

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that man who would make a good Godly brother and they start seeking that relationship with you!

To be a true brother in Christ to someone, we must be faithful to God and be willing to be his hands and feet. If God could call up twelve ordinary men and use them to change the world, why can't he use you? Just work to impact one man at a time! Through that one mentoring relationship you will impact the world. Each mentoring relationship you encounter creates a ripple effect in the lives of others. If you have ever thrown a rock into a pond you'll understand. From the moment the rock breaks the surface of the water, rings of water (ripples) go out in all directions changing the surface of the water as they pass across the pond. Each mentoring relationship you have with another man creates the same ripple effect in life. You are not changing the surface of the pond, instead you are changing lives!

As we are told in **Galatians 2:20**, "*I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.*" As Christ gave Himself up for you, you must surrender your life to Him. Be willing to let Him be Lord and Master over your life.

Mentoring is best described in **Proverbs 27:17**;

(NIV) **Prov: 27:17** **As iron sharpens iron,
so one person sharpens another.**

As you live life with other men and your paths cross, you are sharpening each other and making yourself a better tool for God to use. This is the power of a true brotherly bond between men and among men .

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It's kind of like living your life for someone else. Stop and think about it. We were given two commandments in the New Testament. In Mark 12: 30 we are told "*you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.*" In Mark 12:31 it says, "*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*" *There is no other commandment greater than these.*"

Your life is not yours! Your life is meant to be a reflection of your love for God and what he means to you! While everyone else benefits from your action, you are not living your life for them. You are living your life for someone else, God.

In an act of true love and devotion, God gave you complete control over your life. You have the choice to love Him in return and let your life be a reflection of that commitment or you can reject His love. The choice is completely left up to you!

Once you have accepted the reality that your life truly does belong to God, you make the choice to live your life for Him and everything become crystal clear. You begin to recognize your Secret Faces and their habits. You also begin to recognize the excuses you use to justify or hide your Secret Faces. You no longer carry the burden around with you worrying that someone will find out your secret faces. You are set free!

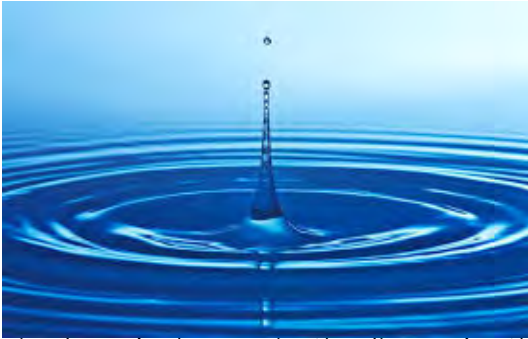
Does this mean life will be easy, no it doesn't. In most cases it becomes harder. There are two huge factors that don't want you to change, the world we live in and the current ruler of this world, Satan. Remember the ripples on the surface of the pond, those ripples

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you created with each mentoring relationship also impacts Satan's world. He would do anything to break up or stop those ripples. In the beginning, it's hard because of the grip he has on you and the lies he's told you are hard to see through. This is where your band of brothers are really important. The stronger you become in your relationship with God, the weaker he (Satan) becomes and the less this corrupted world controls you. As you grow in Christ the phrase "being politically correct" has no control over your thinking process any longer, it is just a lie created by Satan. You are living out Romans 13:9 that says, *You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet.* You follow other commandments that can be summed up as, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Eventually the phrase politically correct, has no meaning to you. Loving your neighbor as yourself removes the lie that Satan has created.

We are called to love everyone as our brother in Christ. To love them not because of their situation or circumstances, but because Christ loves them "just as they are". Their situation was created by man, by the human choices we make. The truth be told, they were created by Satan when he tempted Eve in the garden. That was when the downfall of the world began and he is using the same lies against you today. But you see, if you would just follow that one verse, **Romans 13:9**, you would treat your brother with respect and have his best interest at heart. And, he would have your best interest at heart. Just think how different the world would be if we all followed **Romans 13:9**. But, it has to start some where, one ripple at a time.

Choices



Choices and decisions we are faced with today can change the world. In your decision to follow Romans 13:9, you are choosing to live Galatians 2:20. In making the decision to live your life according to these two verses, you will create ripples of change in the lives of others as well as in your own life. Your ability to make decisions during the critical times in The Red Zone, will become much easier. Your vision and focus will be clear and will enable you to think straight during the Red Zones of your life!

So, what's it going to be?

What's your choice?

Will you make the commitment to let God have control over your life?

There was a book written by John Ortberg that describes one reason it is important to think this way. The book is called, "It All Goes Back In The Box". When it's all said and done at the end of your life, it all goes back in the box. In his book, John compares life to a Monopoly game. All the property and money you've acquired during the game, it all goes back in the box at the end. When the game is over and the lid is closed, the only thing that matters is "how you played the game". What's remembered is the integrity with which you made decisions and loved those around you. That's all that's remembered when the lid is closed and everything is placed in the box. The only

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thing that will live after you depart and become part of your legacy is the integrity with which you made decisions while you were alive.

In **Luke 12: 15-20**, Christ put it this way in a parable, *15."Then He said to them, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions." 16."And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man was very productive". 17."And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' 18. Then he said, "This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods". 19. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry." 20. But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?"*

When it's all said and done, it "all goes back in the box" and you will leave this world with nothing except the treasures you gained while walking in faith and serving others as the hands and feet of God. So the last question for you is this: when your stuff is placed in the box, will your decisions and the choices you made be favorable on the ones you leave behind? Or, will they struggle because of the bad decisions and poor choices you made?

Most importantly, **Will they be able to look to your life as an example of a Godly man?**

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Below is the list of Personal Traits. There is no right or wrong answers. This is simply a check list for you to help identify some of the things that make you who you are. Take the time to read each one and to look back at your life to see the trait in your life. Hopefully at the end, you will be able to look at the list and see both the negative and positive traits in your life. You will then be able to put together your plan to strengthen the positive traits and remove the negative traits. Good luck!

Personal Traits

Never Seldom Sometimes Often Always

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I feel a strong responsibility to help the people around me.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I tend to be conscious of my behavior around others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am highly aware of others' behavior around me.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have trouble saying no, even when I know my plate is full.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I constantly seek the approval and respect of others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am overly critical of others and they way they act or just because they are different.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have the habit of always watching the time.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am easily angered or irritated.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have the tendency to quickly talk to speed up a conversation so I can move on.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you react strongly when you are criticized by your wife?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you react more to criticism from a woman more than you do to criticism from a man?

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Never Seldom Sometimes Often Always

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you find yourself in a hurry more often than not?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you find it difficult to fully listen to someone when they are talking, usually you think of other things?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am always prepared.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I pay attention to the details.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I keep to myself and blend in with the background.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I sympathize with others' feelings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I mess things up and don't always follow through with my commitments.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I always have something to say.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	When assigned a task, I quickly complete it.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I don't often put things back in their place when I use them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I like to impress people with things I've done.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have a deep fear of anger or rejection of others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I often feel guilty about "should haves" and "ought to's".
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I wonder about what others say about me.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am afraid others will really see me for who I am.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you impatient with others when they don't respond to you in a timely fashion?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you likely to ask for help from others?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have to always win to feel satisfied?

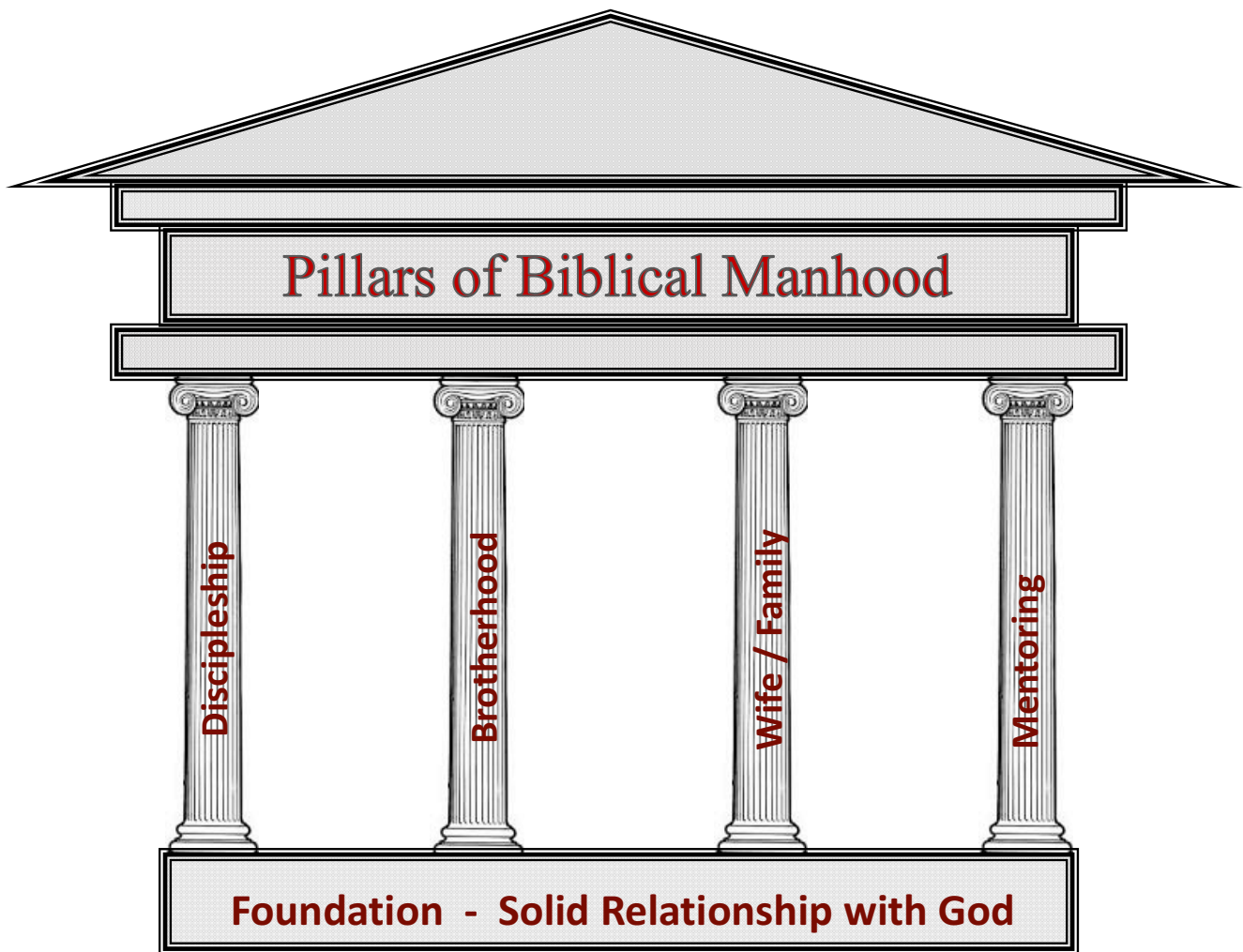
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Never Seldom Sometimes Often Always

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have to constantly strive to better yourself to feel complete or a sense of achievement?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you tend to make decisions that impact others without their input?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you make decisions that impact your wife without her input?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you have difficulty admitting when you are wrong?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you get upset when your wife makes decisions without first consulting with you?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you a highly competitive person?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	When you make a decision that affects your wife, do you just let her know and expect her to comply without asking any questions?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you use manipulation or guilt to get your wife to comply with your decisions?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you experience anxiety when wife's mood is different than expected?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are you comfortable talking with your wife about things that upset you?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you feel underappreciated by your wife when she disagrees with your decisions?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you tend to isolate yourself from your wife in difficult situations?

A Man's Battle in the Red Zone

I hope this study has brought some insight into the different areas of your life. These are areas we all struggle with and places we all need a brother to lean on from time to time. If you will build your life based on the structure below, you will find that when it comes time to make a decision during a critical times of life, (In The Red Zone) you'll be prepared.



Thought to Remember:

If today were to be the last day of your life on earth, how do the decisions you make today impact the tomorrows of the ones you love?

