

Captivating Christianity
Men in HD Retreat – Session 3
Saturday Night – Transformational

Introduction

- **A Word on Milestones**
 - **Saturday night is power night.** It's when we pull back the veneer and things get raw. Out of the whole retreat, tonight has the most potential to be a **MILESTONE** in your life.
 - There's more to life. There's more than what you have experienced. There's more to God. There's more to you.
 - **What Would They Say About You? (Milestone/Fork)** – I will lay out a series of men tonight from the Bible and assess whether they are a role model or a train wreck. I want you to think for a moment about **how an outsider would describe your life in a nutshell**. What would they say about how you've lived and the trajectory you are on? None of us are perfect, but perhaps they would say something that you wouldn't be proud of...
 - **Tonight can be a Milestone, a fork in the road to live differently from here on out.** Maybe tonight will be a day that you mark in your calendar forever. The day that you started to become more fully who God built you to be.

Lesson

- Story of My Dad
- **"Role Models and Train Wrecks"** – The Character of a Man of God
 - [Php 3:17–18 – "Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸ For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ."](#)
 - Learning Lessons from Those Who Have Gone Before Us
 - I'll give you the info but you have to make the call – I'm going to lay out a survey of men in the Bible and explain how God can use you, right here, right now, but it's going to require surrender to get started or go deeper.
 - Looking Forward - It matters less where you came from and more where you are going. Where we've come from matters, don't get me wrong. There are so many lessons to learn from our own history, but do not let that define you and limit where you can dream God can take you.
 - Beyond Trauma - Don't live FROM your trauma. Let your trauma provide traction to live stronger. Yes, you got devastated. Yes, you have struggles. Yes, for a long time they felt like they defined you. But again, God can do the impossible. God can take what was either your failure or the failure of someone who harmed you, and turn it into one of the greatest redemption stories in history.
 - What makes the difference between a role model and a train wreck life? – Let's find out.

- **Role Models – 3 men worth imitating – tough guys, smart guys and holy guys** (doesn't matter how God built you, you matter).
 - **Tough Guys**
 - **Joshua & Caleb**
 - Their Story
 - Joshua – The first time we meet Joshua he is leading the newly freed Hebrews in their first military clash. The Amalekites, a quasi-Hebrew, Canaanite desert group attacked them and Moses' aide, Joshua was called to lead the war for Israel. Joshua was a tribal leader from the tribe of Ephraim. His story starts with fighting and ends with fighting. He not only led this one but was the commander of God's army in Israel all the way through the Promised Land campaign. He took over for Moses. He led with strength. He didn't get any of the glory or recognition (he only went halfway up Mt. Sinai, not seeing God but not being with people either; he guarded the Tent of Meeting AFTER God's glory left) and served second in command for decades.
 - Caleb – We first meet Caleb as a chief from the Tribe of Judah, later to be Jesus' tribe. He is one of the 12 spies to spy out the Canaanite land. He stood up to an angry mob and told them that if God says we can do it, we can do it. It doesn't matter what giants are in the land, we've got this. They almost got stoned for it until God showed up physically.
 - *Jos 14:10–12 - "...behold, the LORD has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. ¹¹ I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. ¹² So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said."¹*
- Warriors - godly killers – my apologies to the pacifist in the room – I have a very high respect for soldiers and 1st responders. They are doing what most of us could not and certainly will not do. It's messy, scary and difficult. But in dangerous times we need those that are able to do what needs to be done. The Military needs Christians too. 1st responders need Christians too.
- Faith-filled - The only older generation to get in the Promised Land – Moses didn't even go. But Joshua and Caleb did. Due to their

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Jos 14:10–12). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

faithfulness. We need people who believe God at His Word, period and are willing to trust to the point of death.

- **Confident & Strong** – It's weird for some people to see confidence in a person. Usually strong confidence is seen as arrogance, but it doesn't have to be. We need people who believe we can take the hill. We need Christians who walk with swagger because they know the power of the Lord.
- **Smart Guys**
 - **Joseph** – Joseph was a super gifted kid. He was a little cocky but a good kid. His dad favored him and caused all sorts of dysfunction in the family over it. His brothers ended up hating him and sold him into slavery to Egypt. He served faithfully and then got thrown into prison for a rape he didn't commit. He languished there, but God-honoring, for YEARS. Eventually he was released and ended up in Pharaoh's house. He interpreted a dream and made a strategy to bless Egypt.
 - **Hyper-Gifted** – The 2nd youngest of 12 kids, Joseph came out of the womb special. He had special dreams and was really smart. But he didn't know how to steward his gifts very well and rubbed people the wrong way as a kid. At 17 he told on his brothers when they did bad stuff. He then had a couple dreams about his family bowing down to him which he shared willingly. It didn't go well. He had dreams all through his life and was able to interpret others dreams too.
 - **Super Smart & Successful** – everywhere Joseph went, God was with him and used his intelligence to advance. In Potiphar's house he rose in prominence. In jail he rose to prominence. In Pharaoh's house he rose to prominence. But it was under Pharaoh's household that his brilliant strategy was most notable. After God revealed a coming famine, he organized a massive storage effort in Egypt that ended up not only sustaining Egypt and the region but helped Egypt flourish in the worst times economically.
 - **Brilliant Business Man** – He made Pharaoh bank. He didn't keep it for himself. He was content doing his job with excellence and everyone respected him. At his death, Egypt mourned. He also provided for his Hebrew family and their safety.
 - **Man of Integrity** – he had a lot of opportunities to line his own pockets and satisfy his own lusts, but he turned those down for the Lord's sake. He was super solid. His riches and popularity didn't ruin him.
 - **Holy Guys**
 - **Daniel**
 - **Gentle but Strong** – It is most likely due to how he got into the position as a foreigner, so close to the pagan king, that Daniel was a Eunuch. The way the Bible portrays him is that he never has a wife or kids. He is a quiet man of study, patience, gentleness, but powerful and strong in his heart and mind. He's the lion pit guy. There's nothing

weak about him. But his power was internal. He stood up for people when the king was going berserk. He said difficult things to the kings. He was a man of righteousness.

- Wise² - Daniel was on a whole other level than the rest of people. His crew were second to none. Listen to this passage.
 - Da 1:3–4, 17, 19-20 – *“ Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility, ⁴ youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to stand in the king’s palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans... ¹⁷ As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams... ¹⁹ And the king spoke with them, and among all of them none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Therefore they stood before the king. ²⁰ And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom.”*
 - Righteous & Spiritual
 - The 10-Day Vegetable Fast Story – Daniel & The boys wouldn’t defile themselves ritually by eating the food of the Chaldeans.
 - The Prayer with Windows Open – that led to the lion pit.
 - The Dreams, Visions & Interpretations – a lot of the book of Daniel is radical supernatural visions and prophecy.
 - God’s OT Shortlist - Eze 14:14 – *“...even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver but their own lives by their righteousness, declares the Lord God.”*
- Train Wrecks – 4 men who let their lives be ruined – some were always bad but some started good but fall apart terribly. **There are selfish guys, godless guys, distracted guys and angry guys.**
 - Sidenote - Bad Dads and Bad Husbands – It’s really difficult to find good husbands or good fathers in the Bible. I’m sure there were plenty but their life details aren’t talked about. A lot of men were caught up in themselves and didn’t invest in their wives or invest in their kids.
 - **Selfish Guys**
 - **Samson** – it was always about him. The epitome of wasted potential.
 - Self-Obsessed – Samson is a jerk. He’s super smart and super strong. He looks at everything through a lens of what it can do for him. He wants a wife and gets one but blows it. He wants a hooker and gets her and it eats him alive. He toys with the bad guys and they ultimately get him. He’s cocky and self-obsessed

² Ezekiel 28:3

- Wasted Anointing – What an amazing ability that God gave him through the Holy Spirit. Defeating enemies in the most spectacular way. But nope, he’s godless and ruins everything. God has to use him DESPITE him.
- Died Alone – Ultimately, he is a pawn used by God to kill Philistines, but there he is all alone with no eyes in a pagan temple. No one to love, no one to love him. He chased everyone away and now he dies. His dying wish is vengeance for himself.
- **Godless Guys**
 - **King Saul** – was in the middle of God’s plan but missed it.
 - From Practical to Practical Atheist – Saul wasn’t really a God-guy. He leaned into the ways of the world and the things of this world. He tried to do a God job by regular means and fell apart. He said a few things about God and had a prophet, Samuel, who always told him about God, so he knew but lived as a practical atheist (as if God didn’t exist). He refused to do it in the Lord’s power, the Lord’s timing. He saw everything through a human lens and it cost him the kingdom.
 - Driven by Insecurity – Saul was paranoid. At first he didn’t want to be king because he knew he was only great on the outside. Then when king he tried to cover up his lack by bravado. Then David shows up who is a legit guy and it scares Saul into murder plans. Then he gets busted by Samuel for not doing his religious job right and he blows that by grabbing Samuel and trying to control it. He was a mess his whole life. He was served up a great life but couldn’t even enjoy what God gave him, he was too up in his head. Died in his insecurity.
- **Distracted Guys**
 - **Solomon** – everything kept taking his attention away from the best.
 - Wasted Gifting – Solomon was the wisest man in the world by gifting. He was a botanist, a proverbs writer and scholar, a king and an entrepreneur. It all led to nothing.
 - 1 Ki 3:12–14 - *“Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. ¹³ I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. ¹⁴ And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.”*
 - 1 Ki 4:29–34 – *“And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore, ³⁰ so that Solomon’s wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. ³¹ For he was wiser than all other men, ...and his fame was in all the surrounding nations. ³² He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. ³³ He spoke of trees, from the cedar that is in*

Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall. He spoke also of beasts, and of birds, and of reptiles, and of fish. ³⁴ And people of all nations came to hear the wisdom of Solomon,..."

- Good Intentions without Follow Through – Solomon wanted to be a good guy. He wanted to do the right things. He just couldn't follow through.
 - 1 Ki 3:12–14 - *"Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father, only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places."*
- Distraction From the Main Thing – Women were his main downfall. He had 700 wives and 300
 - 1 Ki 11:1–8 – *"Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, ² from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the people of Israel, "You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love. ³ He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart. ⁴ For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. ⁵ For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ⁶ So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and did not wholly follow the LORD, as David his father had done. ⁷ Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. ⁸ And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods."*
 - He died and left a legacy of garbage - 1 Ki 11:9 – *"And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel,..."*
- **Angry Guys** – too many men allow unresolved hurt and trauma to make them angry and they let that anger drive and ruin their lives.
 - **Jonah** – A resistant racist.
 - The Heart of Racism – Jonah was told to go preach to Nineveh the capital of the pagan Assyrian Empire. They were the epitome of self-exaltation and anti-God. Nobody liked those guys in Israel, especially Jonah. So when God called him to preach to them, he rejected the call and ran the other way. Eventually he went but reluctantly. He preached doom and judgment and then waited for them to die.
 - A Resistant Wineskin – God brought a revival on the mega-city. It's estimated that there were 120,000 in Nineveh in those days. After 40

days of preaching and grace of God, the whole city repents under the king's leading. Jonah was super mad! He wanted God to fry them all. He admits that he didn't want to come because He knew that God was compassionate and might turn away from His anger.

- *Jonah 4:1-3 – "Jonah was terribly upset, and angry too. 2 He prayed to Yahweh, "I implore you, Yahweh. Was not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I ran away to Tarshish earlier—I knew you were 'a kindly and compassionate God, so patient and full of grace, ready to relent over punishment.' 3 So now, Yahweh, please take my life away because I would rather die than go on living."*
- **Dying in Bitterness** – This is how his story ends. Tragic.
 - *Jon 4:5-8 – "Jonah went out of the city and sat to the east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, till he should see what would become of the city. 6 Now the LORD God appointed a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort. So Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the plant. 7 But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant, so that it withered. 8 When the sun rose, God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint. And he asked that he might die and said, "It is better for me to die than to live."³*
- **Complicated, Normal, Human Guys** – Usually, we are a mixed bag. The men we talked about are only mentioned in the Bible as a highlight reel. I'm sure there's so much more to them.
 - Abraham – The pinnacle of faith one time and then forcing his wife to lie twice to save himself, the next. Willing to sacrifice his promised son to God one day, and then having multiple wives in his own plan, the next.
 - Aaron – The first high priest of Israel, highly gifted and yet builds the golden calf in one of the greatest leadership failures of all time.
 - King David – Man after God's own heart, but commits adultery.
 - Gideon – Scared and skeptical but leads battles for God and then at the end he leads Israel astray to other gods.
 - Peter – Walked on water, but denies his Lord.
- **But God Works through Good Choices and Radical Redemption** – your story isn't over.
- **We were built for MORE** – don't settle for less.
 - Don't be the sum total of your experience. Be more than that.

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Jon 4:5-8). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

- Don't live up to what people have said about you, live up to what God has said about you.
- Don't take the easy road. Don't take the path of least resistance.
- The greatest men of God pushed through to BECOME what God made them for. I want nothing less for you.
 - 1 Ti 4:12–16 – *"Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. ¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵ Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. ¹⁶ Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers."*

Conclusion

- **What impact is your character allowing you to have in the Kingdom of God?**
- **Is the trajectory of your life one that will allow you to be a spiritual role model, or a spiritual train wreck?**
 - 1 Th 1:4–10 – *"For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶ And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷ so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸ For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. ⁹ For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come."*
- **With a Decision Tonight – Not only are you transformed, but...**
 - **Become a Role Model** - you can turn your life around and become a role model that your kids, your grandkids, your friends can look at and see Jesus.
 - **Love & the Holy Spirit** - It's not about being great, it's about falling in love with God and letting the Holy Spirit change you.
- **ALTAR CALL** – each church brings a counselor
 - **Explain the Gospel Simply**
 - **Pray with them to receive Christ** – if you prayed that stand and come forward – we have guys here who want to chat with you about next steps and pray with you right now.
 - **Recommit Time (if I feel led)** – solemn moment.

- **Altar Call and Night Conclusion:** Let's just exit quietly and let them be transformed for God, as you leave for the small group time (be thinking about your role models and who you want to be and what legacy you want to build)

- **4-5 Small Group Questions**
 1. Who was a spiritual role model for you in life? Why?
 2. Who have you seen start out great but end up as a train wreck and why? What can we do differently?
 3. What character of the Bible do you relate to most?
 4. What character flaw is most likely to be used by Satan to take you down? How will you defend against it?