

Nihil Obstat: Benjamin Akers, STL, Censor Deputatus

Imprimatur: Most Reverend Samuel J. Aquila, S.T.L. Archbishop of Denver

August 1, 2013

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Information: 303-937-4420 YDisciple.org AugustineInstitute.org

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN 978-0-9960157-4-5





#### Following Jesus: A Road Map

In this study, we'll explore the meaning of real manhood. You'll learn what it means to be a man of greatness, and how to become one yourself through discussions on the four marks of greatness and the three virtues that give the freedom to be truly great.

As you participate in this study, use these points to guide you. Add your own notes, observations, or questions in the space below each point. If images or symbols come to mind, include them as a way to help you process and remember the key take-aways from the lesson.

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#### Q<sup>2</sup>: Quotes and Questions

"Reputation is rarely proportioned to virtue." -St. Francis de Sales

"Do not be afraid to be saints. Follow Jesus Christ who is the source of freedom and light. Be open to the Lord so that He may lighten all your ways."

—St. Pope John Paul II

"The Church . . . is held, as a matter of faith, to be unfailingly holy. This is because Christ, the Son of God, who with the Father and the Spirit is hailed as 'alone holy,' loved the Church as his Bride, giving himself up for her so as to sanctify her; he joined her to himself as his body and endowed her with the gift of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God." The Church, then, is "the holy People of God," and her members are called "saints." —CCC 823



A man of greatness forms his heart in virtue so he has the power to live in truth and freedom. Here are three tips for building virtues for freedom:

- 1. Examine your conscience.
- 2. Get accountability partners.
- 3. Go to Confession regularly.
- → Can you think of a bad behavior you wanted to quit but couldn't? How did you beat it?

→ What are some ways you can build virtue into your life?



Read 1 Samuel 11:1–12:17, the story of David's infidelity with Bathsheba. David was truly a man of greatness, a man after God's own heart. But even he grew complacent and got off track. He didn't examine himself to recognize his weakness to lust, he didn't stay accountable, and then sinned greatly. However, David repented greatly as well. God forgave him and David became one of the greatest men in history.

Take some time this week to work on the virtues Chris outlined in the last video.

- 1. Examine your conscience to root out your weaknesses. Where are you struggling to be a man of greatness?
- 2. Find an accountability partner. It may be a best friend or a priest that you trust, but it should be someone you can confide in.
- 3. Go to Confession. This could take care of #2 and strengthen you in grace at the same time.

PRAY: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me."

David wrote Psalm 51 in repentance after his transgression with Bathsheba. Say the verse above, Psalm 51:10, every night this week and ask God to make you a man of greatness.



Use this "Marks of a Man of Greatness" checklist to do a self-evaluation this week. How do you measure up? What can you do to change the areas in which you struggle? Read the Bible verses as a prayer during your time with God this week. Ask God to strengthen you and help you become the man God intended you to be.

#### **Loves Jesus:**

- Lives according to God and not the culture (Romans 12:1-2)
- Appreciates and correctly handles the Bible (2 Timothy 2:15)
- Doesn't love the world but seeks what is holy (1 John 2:15-16, Philippians 4:8)
- Isn't embarrassed to show his faith in public (Mark 8:38)
- Shows openness to God and humility (Proverbs 2:1-10, 1 Peter 5:5, Romans 12:16)

### Lives for others:

- Is self-sacrificing (Ephesians 5:25-28)
- Is secure and confident respecting God (Proverbs 14:26-27)
- Doesn't use harsh language to put others down; affirms and builds others up (Proverbs 15:4, Ephesians 4:29)

#### Puts himself at the service of women:

- Treats his sisters and mother with respect, as he would a future wife (Matthew 25:21)
- Respects purity and innocence in young ladies (2 Corinthians 11:2-3)
- Values purity, in himself and a prospective girlfriend, and is willing to live and act different than the world says to guard himself (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8, Ecclesiastes 7:26)
- Can look at a girl without lust or impure thoughts (Proverbs 20:11)
- Isn't ashamed to be identified with his family (Ephesians 6:2-3)
- Is a gentleman—polite, respectful, and honors women by opening doors, etc (1 Peter 3:7)
- Isn't crass—doesn't burp, swear, or tell disgusting stories. (Proverbs 13:5, Ephesians 5:4)
- Loves his children (Matthew 19:13-14)

#### Forms his heart in virtue:

- Is industrious and not lazy (Proverbs 12:27)
- Admits when he's wrong and is not stubborn (Proverbs 12:1, Proverbs 29:1)
- Is patient and not quick-tempered (Proverbs 14:29)
- Deals with difficulties logically, with wisdom, and not with unstable emotional responses (Proverbs 17:27, Proverbs 12:18)
- Works hard and is responsible with money (Colossians 3:23-24, 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12, Luke 16:10-11)
- Has self-control (Titus 2:6-8)
- Expresses himself intelligently and not in crude "street talk" (Proverbs 17:20, 1 Peter 4:11, Ephesians 4:29)

#### ADDITIONAL BEAR FRUIT IDEAS

Here are more ways to put what you learned into practice this week:

- Prayerfully reflect on and own up to your vices by writing them on paper. Next to each vice, name the virtue that you can act on instead this week. Be specific about when and where you can practice your virtuous actions.
- Go Online and visit www.therebelution.com. The Rebelution is "a teenage rebellion against low expectations." It was started by two teen brothers, Alex and Brett Harris, who were tired of seeing their peers check out in a media-saturated youth culture that reinforced lower and lower standards and expectations on teens. They believe the teen years should serve as a "launching pad for life" rather than a "vacation from responsibility." The brothers wrote the book Do Hard Things and started a counter-cultural youth movement of young people from around the world who reject the youth culture that is zapping their energy and instead choose to strive for greatness.

At the site you'll find articles about how to build character and competence to overcome the complacency inherent in today's youth culture. You'll also find case studies and testimonials of young men who are doing great things seemingly well beyond the capacity of their years. There's also an online community where you can network with like-minded young men preparing to change the world. (NOTE: This is a Christian site but it's Protestant, so not all of the theology and biblical interpretations match up with Catholic doctrine. But it's very valuable for developing a mindset and attitude of greatness.)

- Read the inspirational article, "A Call to Manhood" at http://livelikemen. com/2011/12/a-call-to-manhood/. It embodies much of what this study is about. Starting with a video, "This Is War," it calls men to real manhood. It doesn't talk about the kind of guy who knows about how to get a girl into bed, or the kind of guy who spends all of his time in the gym and is so built that he looks funny when he walks, or even the guy who thinks that providing financially for his family is the only support that is required of him. These are guys, boys even. They are certainly not men.
- Learn more about Fr. Vincent Capodanno at: http://www.vincentcapodanno.org/ testimony/witnesses/. On the site you'll find articles, resources, and testimonies from people who knew him and witnessed his heroism. While there, say the prayer for his canonization found under "Cause" in the dropdown menu.
- Read this article on Chastity.com (http://chastity.com/chastity-qa/how-far-too-far/modesty/it-wrong-wear-bikini/it-) about how a man's brain is affected by seeing women in bikinis. Studies show when these images were viewed, the "region of the brain associated with analyzing a person's thoughts, intentions, and feelings" was deactivated. The women were dehumanized in the minds of the men viewing. The article also discusses the implications these findings have on the ability of men to practice chastity and chivalry when confronted with scantily clad women. Great food for thought for both women and men.

# **Notes**

