



## Millennium Men Week 10: The Power of Sharing Your Testimony

Video: Penn Gets a Bible

Video: Stephen McWhirter's Testimony

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### Recap of what we've learned:

Manhood is under attack, but God has called us to Biblical manhood.

Biblical manhood means the following:

- We learn who we are by assessing our talents, skills, dreams and even our past
- We reconcile our past by forgiving any trespasses against us so that God can forgive us ours
- We learned when we are is not by mistake but rather by design. All of the events that are happening in this world, the current zeitgeist is no surprise to God.
- God has called us to honor the authority placed over us. Just or unjust, righteous or unrighteous, we are called to honor them and pray for them.
- We know that why we are made, our calling is what is in our hands, right now. If we are good stewards of what is in our hands, then God will expand our territory.
  - o Good stewards of our family
  - o Good stewards of our relationships
  - o Good stewards of our finances
  - o Good stewards of our temple
- We know that our fight is not against flesh and blood but against an unseen enemy that is very real.
- We know that God has called us for a purpose. His purpose must supersede our own desires in order for that purpose to be fulfilled in our lives. The prayer Jesus prayed wasn't, "my will be done" but rather, "God, Your will be done."
- Many of us are not fulfilled where we are because we aren't making disciples. We are called to be disciple makers. The Great Commission commands us to be disciple makers.
- We must be men of integrity in order to be effective witnesses.
- We must be intentional about discipleship. That means that we should constantly be looking for men to help.
  - o Discipling others requires three simple rules:
    1. Always be discipling
    2. Disciple with honor
    3. See what God sees in others

There is a crisis in the world, today. There's a crisis of truth. There's a crisis of faith. The church in America is losing ground, daily. People are leaving the church. Why? Has God changed? Absolutely not. Have our values changed? Perhaps. One thing that I believe has contributed to it is that many Christians no longer share their faith. Many believe that's the church's job or they have not been taught how to share their faith with someone. This is frightening.

**In 2017:  
3500 people per day left the US Christian Church.  
1700 pastors quit the ministry each month.**

**\*The Fuller Institute**

**According to PewResearch.com, the Muslim population in America will surpass the Jewish population by 2040 and will be the second leading religion inside the US.** The Average Muslim family in the US has 6.0 children per couple. The average Christian family is barely having enough to perpetuate their own population, a paltry 2.1 children per household. America is going to face the Muslim crisis by birthrate alone, if there is not a revival in America. We must change the course of our history before it's too late! We must spread the gospel and we should encourage Christian couples to have more children. After all, the Words of God still resonate, "Be fruitful and multiply." (Genesis 1:28)

### **What Can We Do?**

1. Your testimony is the opinions of others
2. Your testimony is based on who you are, even in stressful moments  
God gives grace, people don't.
3. Maintaining integrity is essential to being able to witness to others.
4. The best way to maintain purity is to find a healthy outlet for your sexual energy, physical energy and emotions

### **Your Opinion of You Matters**

You must value yourself and understand what God believes about you. Ask yourself, "Is what I believe about myself in alignment with what God believes about me?". It is virtually impossible to help others when you, yourself are still spiritually out of order. We have to come to a place of wholeness in the Lord, accepting who we are and all of the parts of our past and determine that God can use all of it. The right tool in the Master's hand can change the world! You are the right tool when you allow yourself to be used by Him. (2 Timothy 2:20) Two keys to effective ministry are:

- Self-worth
- Self-acceptance

### **What is Integrity?**

A Couple of Definitions: Integrity is the quality of being honest, having strong moral principles. **The state of being whole and undivided.**

Remember this about yourself: I am imperfect but yet in process. Philippians 1:6: *being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Integrity is the mark of lasting leaders. Anointing and talent will only get you so far.

3 legs of the stool. Stools don't stand without all 3 legs.

- Anointing
- Talent
- Integrity

**God freely forgives but people don't.**

Our relationship with God is based on grace  
*Our relationship with people is based on **trust***

**1 Samuel 16:7**

*<sup>7</sup> But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."*

**We must do everything to keep the trust of the people around us. 1**

Thessalonians 5:22 "*Abstain from all appearance of evil.*"

Billy Graham wouldn't even get on an elevator with a woman by himself. He would have someone go and check his hotel rooms prior to walking in, in case someone was hiding in there to make him lose everything he had worked for.

There are passions in all of us but puts them in the right spaces but monitor those things so that they don't get out of bounds.

**Possible pitfalls:**

- Fatigue
- Flattery
- Flesh

**Strategies for maintaining integrity:**

**Romans 12:1**

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.*

Each of you should control his own body. No one is above temptation. **We are all one step away from stupid.** First thing is an attitude of humility. Don't be so naive and self-confident that you could not stumble. This is why fasting regularly can help you form the discipline you need to control your flesh. "Discipline yourself, so no one else will have to."

### **Proverbs 16:18**

*Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.*

Keep a close watch on your spiritual temperature. What does it take for you to stay close to God? It can be different for each of us. Some need worship, some need more time in prayer, some need to spend more time studying the Word, and all of us need healthy relationships with Christians around us. Essentially, we need to be a part of a church. Not just attending but being an integral part of the Church means serving. We need one another most of all. These are the basic blocking and tackling of the Spiritual disciplines. I once read a book called, "Celebration of Discipline" by Richard Foster. In the book, Foster outlines the basics that we all need to maintain our spiritual health: Prayer, Fasting, Meditation, Worship, Reading the Word and Relationship with one another.

I find this statistic a bit disturbing: The Average Pastor Leaves the Ministry after only 7 years. Here are the top 3 reasons they quit:

1. Burnout
2. Used the Bible only to get messages
3. Thought they could never fail

## **WHY PASTORS LEAVE THE MINISTRY**

**by Fuller Institute, George Barna and Pastoral Care Inc.**

- \* 1,500 clergy leaving pastoral ministry each month. - The Barna Research Group
- \* 61% of congregations have forced a pastor to leave. - Christianity Today
- \* 83% of clergy spouses want their spouse to leave pastoral ministry. - Hartford Institute for Religious Research
- \* 90% of clergy in all denominations will not stay in ministry long enough to reach the age of retirement. - U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics
- \* 50% of pastors indicated that they would leave the ministry if they had another way of making a living. - Hartford Institute for Religious Research

- \* 90% of the pastors report working between 55 to 75 hours per week.
- \* 80% believe pastoral ministry has negatively affected their families. Many pastor's children do not attend church now because of what the church has done to their parents.
- \* 33% state that being in the ministry is an outright hazard to their family.
- \* 75% report significant stress-related crisis at least once in their ministry.
- \* 90% feel they are inadequately trained to cope with the ministry demands.
- \* 50% feel unable to meet the demands of the job.
- \* 70% say they have a lower self-image now than when they first started.
- \* 70% do not have someone they consider a close friend.
- \* **40% report serious conflict with a parishioner at least once a month.**
- \* **33% confess having involved in inappropriate sexual behavior with someone in the church .**
- \* 50% have considered leaving the ministry in the last month.
- \* 50% of the ministers starting out will not last 5 years.
- \* 1 out of every 10 ministers will actually retire as a minister in some form.
- \* 94% of clergy families feel the pressures of the pastor's ministry.
- \* 66% of church members expect a minister and family to live at a higher moral standard than themselves.
- \* Moral values of a Christian is no different than those who consider themselves as non-Christians.
- \* **The average American will tell 23 lies a day.**
- \* The profession of "Pastor" is near the bottom of a survey of the most-respected professions, just above "car salesman".
- \* Over 4,000 churches closed in America last year.
- \* **Over 1,700 pastors left the ministry every month last year.**
- \* Over 1,300 pastors were terminated by the local church each month , many without cause.
- \* **Over 3,500 people a day left the church last year.**
- \* Many denominations report an "empty pulpit crisis". They cannot find ministers willing to fill positions.

#1 reason pastors leave the ministry - Church people are not willing to go the same direction and goal of the pastor. Pastor's believe God wants them to go in one direction but the people are not willing to follow or change.

\*Statistics provided by: The Fuller Institute, George Barna, and Pastoral Care Inc.

### **Maintain your own marriage**

Don't spend more time on other people's marriages than your own. **Many people have more vision for their job than for their home.** More vision for their career than for their children

Develop healthy outlets for emotional and sexual energy.

- Sports

- Exercise
- Hobbies

Take part of the reserve we have and put it in a healthy place  
Guard your mind. The battle for sin always starts in the mind

**Biblical/spiritual equations: Submit to God + Resist the devil = He will flee**

Desire causes us to be dragged away and enticed

Desire leads to sin

Sin leads to death

Take captive every thought

### **Psalm 101:3**

*I will not look with approval on anything that is vile. I hate what faithless people do; I will have no part in it.*

### **The Power of YOUR Testimony:**

#### **Revelation 12:11**

*They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.*

#### **1 Peter 3:15**

*But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,*

#### **Formula for Success:**

1. Always Be Prepared
  - a. Practice Your Testimony
2. Pray for Opportunity
3. Listen Intently
4. Be Empathetic to the hurts of others
5. Desire to Build the Kingdom
6. Follow Up with the person
7. It takes about 8 touches of the Gospel for people to receive it.
  - a. Don't get discouraged. Your responsibility is with the seed. Not its germination.
  - b. Some sow, some water, some harvest.

Q: How do you share your faith with someone that doesn't use the Bible as a foundation?

Q: How do you share your faith with an atheist?

Q: What evidence is there that God exists in nature?

**You are called to make a difference. You are called to take ground for the Kingdom of God! I would like for each of you to think about making a Covenant with God about your life and its pursuit.**

**“Every man dies. Not every man truly lives.” -William Wallace.**

### **Why make a Covenant?**

When you take a stand for God, He will bless you. Samson’s parents made what the Nazarite vow for Samson even before he was born because God promised deliverance from the Philistines through Samson. (Numbers 6:1-21)

Making a Covenant with God is like entering into the Special Forces. You know the training may be difficult, but you want to train for it. In the New Testament, Paul made a vow to God and cut off all of his hair. We don’t know the nature of the vow—that was between Paul and God but the point is, vows still exist and they are powerful ways for us to demonstrate our love for God. And I know this about God—He honors those who honor Him. He loves those who pursue Him.

Vows are used in today’s society quite often. Every police officer makes an oath to serve and protect, every politician takes an oath of office and every soldier takes an oath to serve this country when they finish boot camp. That means if they get captured, they will not fight for another country or give information that would aid the enemy. They would die first!

Men say they’re looking for the deeper things of God. God says, “If you seek me, you will find me.” Men often say, “I don’t know what my purpose is...?”. Jesus said, to go into all nations, baptizing them and making them disciples. (Matthew 28:19) Jesus said that if we refuse to worship Him, then even the rocks would cry out and worship the living God! (Luke 19:40) We are called to be disciple makers and worshippers.

There is a great old hymn called, “Come thou Fount of Every Blessing” by Robert Robertson. In the hymn, he says, “here I raise my Ebenezer...” An Ebenezer is a stone of remembrance or rather a stone of witness! We should remember the great things that God has done for us! The Israelites were commanded by God to take an uncut stone from the where they crossed the Jordan River, one for each tribe, and stack them so that they never forget where God delivered them from the wilderness. We commemorate four years in college with a sheepskin on the wall, we commemorate a great hunt with a deer head on the wall but why aren’t we as Christians commemorating the many times that God has delivered us from our circumstance!

When my daughter was born, she was born with one kidney and the kidney she had was failing. Finally at about 20 months, the doctor scheduled a surgery in order to remove 2/3 of her kidney and hope that by cutting away the bad portion of the kidney, that the part that was left would function long enough for her to get old enough to qualify for a transplant. After the surgery, we took her to the front of our church and everyone prayed over her. When we went back to the doctor for her checkup, her kidney was whole and completely healed! That happened and it's so easy to forget after 20 years that God once healed my little girl. But my daughter has a scar on her left side that is an Ebenezer of her healing. That story, that scar is a witness to the things God has done in our lives and someone needs to know that God can heal! When we don't bear witness to what God has done for us, we are just as disobedient as we are when we willfully sin.

**Come thou fount of every blessing**

Tune my heart to sing thy grace  
Streams of mercy never ceasing  
Call for songs of loudest praise  
Teach me some melodious sonnet  
Sung by flaming tongues above  
I'll praise the mount I'm fixed upon it  
Mount of thy redeeming love

Here I raise my Ebenezer  
Hither by thy help I come  
And I hope by thy good pleasure  
Safely to arrive at home

Jesus sought me when a stranger  
Wondering from the fold of God  
He, to rescue me from danger  
Interposed His precious blood

O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let thy goodness like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee  
Prone to wander Lord I feel it, prone to leave the God I love  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above

**Let's cross the Jordan together. Let's make this Covenant together. May it be our Ebenezer. May we make this day a day to remember, like a lightning bolt in the Spiritual realm, where men decided together, to change the world.**



## **Statement of Faith**

*As a Millennium Man, I recognize and honor my Heavenly Father, through Whom all Creation has come. I confess with my mouth and believe in my heart that Jesus Christ is Lord, that He died for me and for all mankind. I accept Jesus as my Lord and Savior. Since He is my Lord, I am His willful servant. I know that since He made me in His image, and He knows me best, that His will for my life is certain, true and will bring me the most joy. I believe that I was born for such a time as this. My talents, abilities and dreams were given to me by Him. I was carefully knit together in my mother's womb. Everything about me was on purpose and for a purpose. My parents, my past, my sin and even sins against me, can all be used by God for His glory. The same God that used Joseph, who was sold into slavery in order to save the nation of Israel from famine, can use everything that I am for His glory. I am not a victim. I am more than a conqueror! Therefore, I choose this day, to lay down my life and pick up my cross. I choose to honor God in all that I do and say. My life is not my own. I was bought with a price.*

*I honor all people because they are the image bearers of the Almighty God. I will not harbor grudges or unforgiveness against any person, race, religion, gender or creed, but rather I choose to forgive, because I have been forgiven much. I honor my leaders, and I pray for them.*

*The focus of my life will be to seek His Kingdom first, even over my own comfort. I am called to love others because God loves me, and His desire is that no one should be lost. I accept my calling as a disciple-maker. I make a conscious effort to bear witness of the characteristics of my Father through the fruits of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Generosity, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control. Against these things, there is no law.*

*I know that my tongue is powerful and that at judgment, I'll be held accountable for every errant word. I choose this day, to use my tongue and the words of my mouth to be life-giving and Kingdom building.*

*I choose to be the spiritual leader of my family. I will pray over them, with them and for them. I will lead by example. I will find a church and serve in it. I believe the Bible is the inerrant Word of God. Every word is good for me and is the guide of my life.*

*I will engage in the Spiritual Battle against the enemy through prayer, fasting and the mighty name of Jesus, the name above all names. I will not shrink back when things get difficult, and I will not doubt the sovereignty of God. Though I may not understand, I choose to trust in the Lord.*

*I will keep my hands clean and my heart pure. I will not let my eyes linger on any vile thing. I will live generously, and remember the poor, the widows, the orphans and those imprisoned.*

*May God bless me this day with the renewed strength of the eagle, a sharp mind, a healthy body and an overflow of all things. May God bless me with faith, hope and endurance. May God protect my family from the enemy and may everything I put my hand to prosper.*

*In the Mighty and Everlasting Name of Jesus, Amen and Amen.*