

CA 01 EMAW 01 FINDING THE ONE THING – Loving God through Having Quiet time

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FOSTER: I want to start today's program with a question: "Guys, how important is it for you to know that your life counts for something significant?" Deep down, most men have a strong desire to make a difference. But sometimes our lives often seem stuck in the mundane of dead-end jobs, the same daily routine at home, and not much more. As a result, having a life with real purpose and meaning can seem like a distant dream. However, this is not what God intended life to be. You don't have to be a victim! You can live life to its fullest!

Welcome to Champions Arise, I'm Foster Braun. Today Kent Darcie and I are going to look at the "one thing" that can put meaning and purpose in your life. We'll also discuss how you can obtain this "one thing" even with all the demands you face every day. So stay with us. We'll be right back with Champions Arise.

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FOSTER: Kent I'm looking forward to this series of programs. I think men are going to find them helpful.

KENT: Men can get a lot from this. We're going to be looking at principles from the book "Every Man a Warrior", by Lonnie Berger. In this series we'll be discussing marriage and kids, and money and sex and work and how men can truly succeed in life.

FOSTER: And that brings us back to the issue I raised at the beginning of the program: that there is "one thing" we can do to move from mundane lives to purpose filled lives. But there's a lot of people in the marketplace who are trying to convince us that **they** know the "one thing" that will give purpose and meaning to our lives.

KENT: That's right. Sometimes we're told, if you get to the right position in your company, or make more money, or lose weight—get in great physical shape, **then** we'll have the good life—one that's filled with purpose.

FOSTER: But we've also heard of people that seem to have all of that, and they still aren't happy.

KENT: Absolutely true. Often we see athletes, financial people, or celebrities who have achieved everything that **is supposed to** give them purpose and significance but (in spite of having all that) some were so miserable they killed themselves.

FOSTER: So how can we know what the "one thing" really is?

KENT: The best way to find "*What really is the meaning and purpose of life,*" –the "one thing" if you will, is to ask the One who made us. God.

FOSTER: He created us so He knows what would give true purpose to our lives.

KENT: Exactly. And we get a glimpse of this truth in Jesus' time.

One day the religious rulers were challenging Jesus and basically asked Him “What is the “one thing” God says that will give people meaning and purpose in their lives?”

We see this conversation in Matthew chapter 22. The people that were confronting Jesus said

“Teacher which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.” (Mt 22:36-38)

So what we see, is the first and greatest of God’s commandments—the action we can take that gives us purpose and significance—is to love God!

And **this** is the really neat thing. God **wants** a relationship with you and me. **God’s eternal purpose is a love relationship with us.**

FOSTER: It’s about the relationship. Not about obeying a bunch of rules.

KENT: Yes. Loving God is the foundational cornerstone of our whole Christian life. And that’s not based on rules,

But when you love someone (our wives for example) there are certain things you do and don’t do – simply because you love her. And it’s the same with our love relationship with God.

And this is critical to understand because it’s in that relationship that we find purpose and meaning in our lives.

FOSTER: A close relationship with God is the “one thing.”

KENT: That’s right.

FOSTER: Okay, but Kent I think a lot of us have heard that Jesus should be the “one thing” or “main thing” in our lives. Many of the men in our audience have probably heard that taught in church or at a men’s event. So this is my question:

If we all know this, why do we seem to struggle in this area?

KENT: First I wouldn’t assume that everybody knows this. There are a lot of “one things” competing for our attention. But once we realize how important this is, it’s difficult to do, because any love relationship takes time. And a love relationship with God is no different. Jesus said loving God should come first.

FOSTER: That implies it’s the highest priority; something we do before anything else. It’s kind of like the guy who spends all his time with his car. Always cleaning it and polishing it and buffing it. In bad weather, he puts a protective cover over it. Basically he....has a love relationship with his car.

KENT: Yes. We want to spend time with things or people we love. Ideally that’s our wives and kids and not our jobs or hobbies.

And initially, it happens naturally. For example, when most of us were dating our wives, it was a priority that eventually moved from *trying to just get her attention* to gaining her love. But as time passes, it doesn’t **continue** naturally. Here at Champions Arise we know that. And this is why we do programing that helps men learn the disciplines and skills that need to be developed to be purpose-filled Christian men.

FOSTER: Just like anything else it requires learning some skills to do it right. I’m reminded of a story where a dad was teaching his daughters how to drive. After the daughters got their

learner's permits, he didn't take them out onto the highway. The first thing he taught them was how to drive in a big parking lot. Then, when they were ready, they drove in quiet neighborhoods. Eventually they were allowed to drive on busy streets and after all that, they were able to drive on the highway.

KENT: I did the same thing with my kids. Because if they were going to be safe drivers, they needed to develop certain skills.

Without those disciplines and skills, they wouldn't achieve the goal of driving safely.

In the same way, we need skills that can help us develop a deeper love relationship with God. Without them, we won't achieve **the goal** of living a life that has real significance because our loving relationship with God will suffer. And that's the problem many of us have now.

FOSTER: For anyone that joined us late, you're listening to Champions Arise with Foster Braun and Kent Darcie. We've been discussing how the "one thing" that will give meaning and purpose to our lives is loving God with all our heart, and soul and mind and strength. But this requires our time. So, Kent, how do we find time for this, with all of the other things that crowd our days?

KENT: Lonnie Berger, in his book *Every Man a Warrior* says that it starts by having a daily quiet time with God. A special time every day that is put aside just for God.

FOSTER: I'm sure some of the men listening are thinking, "I want to deepen my relationship with God, but I don't have two hours for quiet time every day!"

KENT: Lonnie Berger is just talking about 15 minutes a day and he breaks it down into three steps he calls the **ABCs of Having Quiet Time**.

A - As you read some verses from the Bible, **ask questions** and write down your thoughts.

B stands for **best verse and best thought**. Choose the verse that really stands out in the section you are reading, write the verse down and then write why it stood out to you.

C – communicate back to the Lord in prayer how this portion of scripture impacted you.

FOSTER: So you'll need a Bible and a journal or paper to write on.

KENT: yes and 15 minutes.

FOSTER: So you have your Bible and paper, read some verses in the Bible, and do the ABCs of Quiet time.

A was Ask questions. Are there specific questions to ask?

KENT: In his book *Every man a Warrior*, Lonnie Berger recommends these questions.

- Is there a commandment to obey?
- Is there a promise to claim?
- Is there a sin to avoid?
- Is there an application to make?
- And is there a new thing I've learned about God?

These questions help us to dig deeper into God's word and get the most out of it.

FOSTER: We went through that kind of quickly, but you can find more information on what we're discussing at our website www.championsarise.org.

So let's review the ABCs of quiet time again.

KENT: Sure. A is Ask Questions

B Find the best verse or best thought, write it down, and write down why it stands out.

C is communicate back to God what impacted you in prayer.

FOSTER: And this process begins with about 5 minutes of Bible reading

KENT: Try reading a chapter or so each day.

FOSTER: That seems doable. But if a listener is new to reading the Bible, where should they start?

KENT: A good place to start, is in the New Testament with one of the Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. That is where you learn about Jesus.

Once you start, you'll probably find it hard to stop. But after you've read four or five books in the New Testament, try reading a book from the Old Testament.

I like to read a psalm or proverb every morning. But a book like Genesis would be good too.

FOSTER: So the 15 minute Quiet Time starts with five minutes of Bible reading

KENT: then you allow 7 minutes to think about what you've read and to jot down the key verse that stood out and your thoughts on that verse.

Doing the journaling is important, but writing is becoming a lost art for many men.

I love to write and I find journaling to be very helpful and insightful with what's going on within me in my relationship with God, but the thought of writing their thoughts down is kind of intimidating to some men.

You don't have to write down every thought. This is not a school report. Just the main ones. And after about 7 minutes, you finish with three minutes of praying with God.

FOSTER: 5 minutes of reading, 7 minutes of reflection and writing. 3 minutes of prayer. 15 minutes a day. I can do that!

KENT: me too. And I will, because God (Almighty God and Creator of the universe) wants a love relationship with me, and I want to live a life where I make a difference.

FOSTER I believe most men do. So Kent, as we finish our time today, is there anything else we should know about having a quiet time?

KENT: It's very important to choose a time and place to have your daily Quiet Time. When picking a time, a lot of men choose the morning, but some may find that the evening works best. For others the lunch hour is the time that works. What is important is to choose a consistent time. And you want a place where you can have your quiet time without interruptions and distractions.

The other thing, is journaling is important. Writing down your thoughts forces you to think, and dwelling on God's Word helps us to grasp His love and His will for us at a deeper level. The

Prophet Isaiah wrote about God's love in chapter 54:9-10 "For the mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you." Dwelling on a verse like that can change your whole day!

FOSTER: Kent, this has been a very helpful discussion. I believe many men have the desire to have a deeper love relationship with God, but have been frustrated when they've tried to make it happen.

If that describes you as you listen today, we encourage you to start having quiet times. Begin today or tomorrow. And don't be discouraged if it doesn't go smoothly at first. It may take time to reset your priorities and establish your new routine. But it's worth it.

This "one thing" can put meaning and purpose in your life. And someday you'll look back and realize that your most precious moments on earth were the times you spent with the Lord in your quiet time.

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Closing

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FOSTER: Thank you for listening to Champions Arise where men are equipped and strengthened to meet their God-given potential 'Finding the ONE THING' was the theme of today's program. The material for this program came from the book *Every Man a Warrior*, by Lonnie Berger. This book can be used by individuals, small groups, or in classes at church. For more information visit the website www.championsarise.org.

Our hope is you will find true meaning and purpose by making your love relationship with God the foundational building block of your life and all of your relationships. We also invite you to join us as we continue this "every man a warrior series."

This is Foster Braun with Kent Darcie. Thank you for listening to Champions Arise. May God mold you into the man He knows you can be.