

CA 07 EMAW 07 THE SECRET TO A CHANGED LIFE

(MUSIC THEME)

**FOSTER:** Welcome to Champions Arise...where champions...arise. Are you a champion? I'm not referring to an Olympic champion or sports hero. I'm talking about a champion for God in what you do in the world and in your home. And have you arisen? Have you moved from mediocrity and a ho-hum-boring Christian life, to aggressively seeking a daily deeper love relationship with God?

I'm Foster Braun and I'm with Kent Darcie. Together, over the past few programs, we've challenged men to start daily quiet times with God,

- to journal,
- to memorize and meditate on Scripture,
- and to deepen their prayer lives.

For some of you these programs have changed your life. For other men, even after hearing these programs, life is the same as it's always been. So what is the difference? What is the secret to a changed life? The answer to that question is our topic today on Champions Arise, so please stay with us.

(MUSIC THEME IN – 5 S.)

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**FOSTER:** Kent, before we started our program today, you said that this was a critical program for men to grasp. Can you explain why?

**KENT:** In this series, we've been discussing material from the book, "Every Man a Warrior" by Lonnie Berger. And soon our programs are going to start talking about practical areas where men face challenges. We'll discuss money, marriage, raising children, the workplace, purity, and dealing with hard times. But we can't work on these issues until we lay a strong biblical foundation in our lives. And we can't lay a strong biblical foundation in our lives without making changes—course corrections if you will.

At the beginning of the program you described two groups of men: the group who are applying what they've learned, and the group of men who haven't. Basically, one group has taken James 1 verse 22 to heart and to be blunt, the other hasn't. James 1:22 says "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

**FOSTER:** Some of us may be more familiar with the King James translation of that which says: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

**KENT:** Yes, we need to do what the verses say, not just hear them. Even agreeing with them doesn't help if we don't apply them to our lives. This is important because, in this series we've been teaching the building blocks for a love relationship with God. But this is how **Jesus** described a love relationship with God in John 14 verse 23, "*Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.*"

Jesus also said “*If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.*” Matthew 16:24. Choosing to be obedient by denying ourselves is not always easy.

Lonnie Berger shares an example of this in his book. He tells of a couple that was referred to him for help who were deeply in debt. They both worked, but they had a large mortgage on a big house. They took out a second mortgage to buy a second home on a lake and a boat. They were referred to Lonnie because they were about to be declared bankrupt. When Lonnie asked this couple what they felt needed to change, they both got angry and said, “Well, whatever we do, we’re not going to lower our standard of living!”

**FOSTER:** Wow. That reminds me of when Jesus said, “You cannot serve God and money.

**KENT:** Yes, but basically you can’t serve God and anything else.

**FOSTER:** What do you mean?

**KENT:** The example of the couple with the two houses dealt with money. And as I mentioned, we’re going to discuss handling money in a godly way in an upcoming program, but a man can’t move to that stage until he has a strong foundation in the word—which requires quiet times and the other steps we’ve discussed in this series. And we aren’t going to have quiet times if sleep is more important. Or playing sports is more important. Or work is more important, or relaxing because we deserve it after a long hard day is more important. Anything short of obedience is disobedience.

**FOSTER:** So you’re saying that if I choose to spend the night playing on the computer and don’t have time for quiet time, I’m being disobedient.

**KENT:** I think, if we are honest, we have an amazing capacity to live in denial. We believe we can do both and we usually can’t. Men believe they can overcome anger, or sexual temptation, or have a vibrant Christian life without the daily discipline of quiet times with God.

Lonnie Berger gave an example of this too.

He was having breakfast with the leader of a large Christian Fellowship. When the church first opened it started with just a few families, but in ten years, it had grown to having over 600 people attending services. The leader Lonnie was having breakfast with explained that he had two other full time associates and a competent administrative staff, but he was frustrated by the lack of mature spiritual leaders that were available to run the different departments of the church. As the senior leader, he was tired and overwhelmed. So Lonnie began to ask questions and began to focus on two key areas:

First, “What are you doing to build your men spiritually?” and second, “How effectively are the church leaders training men to do the work of ministry?”

To his surprise, the leader said that he felt the church was doing fine in those areas. So Lonnie probed deeper and asked him. “What percentage of the people in your fellowship are having a daily time of study and meditating in the word of God?” And how many people were they leading to Christ? (What Lonnie wanted to know was how many people were having a daily Quiet Time, and knew how to share their faith?)

The response from the leader was the same to each question, “I don’t know, but I think most of them.” However, Lonnie knew that this was probably not the case.

**FOSTER:** That's an interesting example Kent, and I want to look at this in more detail, but first, you're listening to Champions Arise. This is Foster Braun and I'm joined by Kent Darcie. We are discussing the secret to a changed life, based on the book "Every Man a Warrior" by Lonnie Berger.

Kent, I'm troubled with that last example. It seems like the leader and the men in the church thought everything was ok, but it wasn't. How does that happen?

**KENT:** The leader obviously didn't understand what it takes to produce spiritually mature leaders. Reading the Bible and praying regularly is essential, because attending church once a week, isn't enough to create solid spiritual leaders. Any more than men who only play a game of soccer on the weekends, but don't lift weights, don't practice plays, and don't build up their endurance, could play soccer with a professional team.

**FOSTER:** That makes sense, but men don't connect the same principle to their spiritual life.

**KENT:** Exactly, but the purpose of daily quiet time with God, memorizing and meditating on scripture, and taking our prayer time to deeper levels, **is not** so we can be better men, husbands, and fathers. That is the result of those disciplines. The purpose is to deepen our relationship with God. And a deep relationship with God results in a changed life. And the neat thing about a changed life is changed lives....change...lives. A man who has a deep love relationship with God is going to positively impact his wife, his kids, and his world. And we all know that this world needs the impact of Christian men who love the Lord with all their heart, and soul, and mind, and strength.

**FOSTER:** But in a lot of cases, that isn't what we see in the world today, is it?

**KENT:** No, in many cases, it seems like the world and its ways have washed away the impact of God's church, instead of the other way around. In fact, some years ago there was a book called, "The Frog in the Kettle". It was by George Barna.

The book describes how if you have a pot of hot water and drop a frog in it, the frog will quickly jump out. But if you put that same frog in a pot that contains water that is at room temperature, the frog will stay in. But as you turn the heat up, the frog doesn't notice it, because it's cold blooded. So the frog never hops out and eventually is killed.

Barna's point in the book was that many Christians are luke warm like that frog. As society gets more sinful, Christians aren't responding with God's truth, because they don't know the word of God and because of that, are acting the same way as non-believers.

Basically, if we aren't having regular quiet time with God, and developing a deeper love relationship with Him, our lives aren't going to reflect the change the world needs to see.

Christians are called to be good influences on society. Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless." [Matthew 5:13 - NLT]

**FOSTER:** And that is not a place we want to be.

**KENT:** No, but as Christian men—those men who have come to faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and therefore have a living relationship with Him—we must take an honest look at our spiritual lives. Are we doing the things that are necessary to deepen our relationship with God

and “be thoroughly equipped for every good work,” as the Apostle Paul wrote, or are we pretending?

We’ve been focusing on James 1:22, about not just hearing the word, but doing it. But let’s read this verse in its full context. This is James 1 verses 20 – 25 from the New Living Translation *“Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls.*

*But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the word and don’t obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don’t forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.”*

The Secret of a Changed Life is choosing to love and obey God and receiving His blessings.

**FOSTER:** I also noticed that looking intently into the Word of God was an important part of that verse.

**KENT:** Yes that is why memorization and meditation are part of the process of deepening our relationship with God. King David who was described as a man after God’s own heart wrote in the psalms, *“Open my eyes that I may behold wonderful things from your Law.”* [Ps 119:18] and he wrote *“Your word I have treasured in my heart that I might not sin against you.”* [Ps 119:11]. God wants these scriptures to be the desire of all Christian men. And then we can receive the blessing we read about in Psalm 1: *“You will be like a tree, firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season...and in whatever he does, he prospers.”* (Ps 1:3)  
We all have difficulties in life. To face these challenges as a Champion means we need to build on the right foundation...the foundation of time with God and His Word.

**FOSTER:** Kent, this has been another challenging teaching. Can you go over the main points again please?

**KENT:** Sure, We’ve focused on the verse in James 1:22 that says that it’s not enough to just be hearers of the word. We also discussed that the Bible says if we truly love God, we’ll be obedient to His commands. We’ll do them. And our listeners can learn about this in lesson 8 of Lonnie Berger’s book “Every Man a Warrior.”

**FOSTER:** Thanks Kent. We’ll be right back.

(MUSIC IN.)

CLOSING

(MUSIC OUT)

**FOSTER:** I want to thank you for listening to Champions

Arise where men are equipped and strengthened to meet their God-given potential. Today we discussed the secret and impact of a changed life. The material for this program is from lesson #8 in the book "Every Man a Warrior," by Lonnie Berger. His book can be used by individuals, small groups, or in a class at your church. For more information on his book or to hear this or any of our previous programs in this series, visit our website at [www.championsarise.org](http://www.championsarise.org). I'm Foster Braun with Kent Darcie. Thank you for listening to Champions Arise. May God mold you into the man He knows you can be.

(MUSIC BUMPER OUT)