

TRUE NORTH: A SERIES FOR MEN

Episode 03 – Building Faith

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1. Dr John Best said:

“So as a Christian man, I would tend to equate that (spiritual well-being with faith. But spiritual well-being is connected with things that give you purpose and meaning. Why do you get up in the morning? What’s important for you?” *Dr John Best*

a) Do you ever feel empty inside? Like Sam’s washing machine without the motor?



b) What do you think the phrase “spiritual well-being” means? What would the opposite of “spiritual well-being” be?



c) What gives you purpose and meaning? Why do you get up in the morning?**2. Nancy Pearcey quotes a woman from Houston:**

“On Mother’s Day, we would hand out roses and tell the women they’re wonderful. On Father’s Day, we would scold the men and tell them ‘Won’t you do better?’”

Have you ever felt on the receiving end of a scolding? How did you react?**3. Consider this comment by Ed Davies:**

“...this resurgence in young men going to churches where they (*the churches*) offer something quite solid to hold on to.” *Ed Davies*

a) What factors may be at work to bring these young men to church?

b) What is the “something solid to hold onto” they are looking for?**4. Nancy Pearcey said in the episode:**

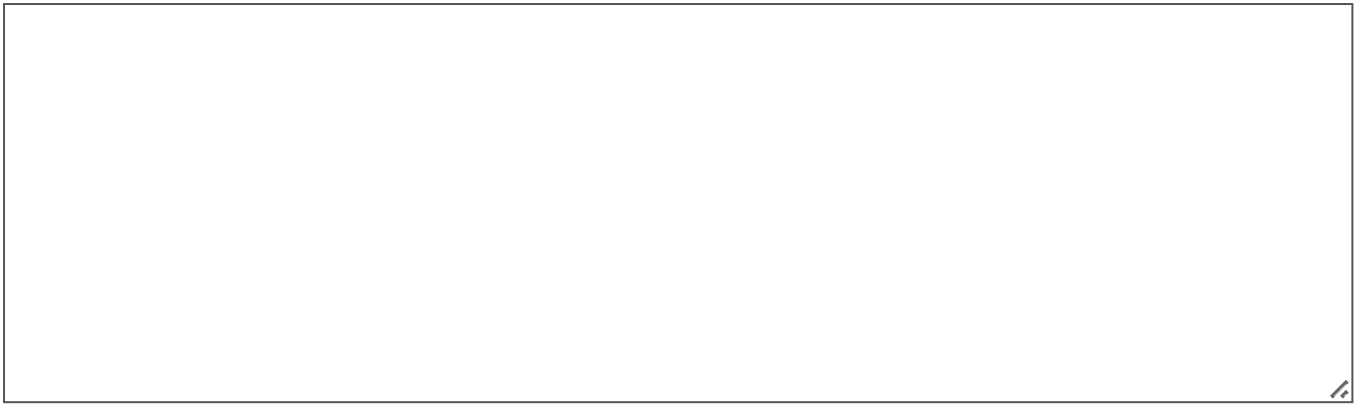
“Do you know, if you look at history, there was a period where it was called a movement called ‘muscular Christianity’. And it was a movement to try to bring more men into the church, and they found that what worked was giving men something practical to do.” *Nancy Pearcey*

Men like to do stuff, get stuff done. What could churches or men’s groups do to help involve men, especially men who aren’t naturally readers or comfortable discussing issues of faith?

**5. Matt Fuller spoke about a young man who visited church, noticing how people prayed. The young man said:**

“‘That’s really honest. Is that what church is like? You’re honest to one another?’ ‘Yeah.’ ‘Oh, I’ll come back in the new year.’ Who knew? Honesty, realism, in a culture which is increasingly superficial – yeah, there’s appeal to that.” *Matt Fuller*

a) How can Christians get past the small talk where we pretend we have life all together?



b) What might change if we spoke “the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15) to one another about what’s going on?



6. Read the following Bible passage:

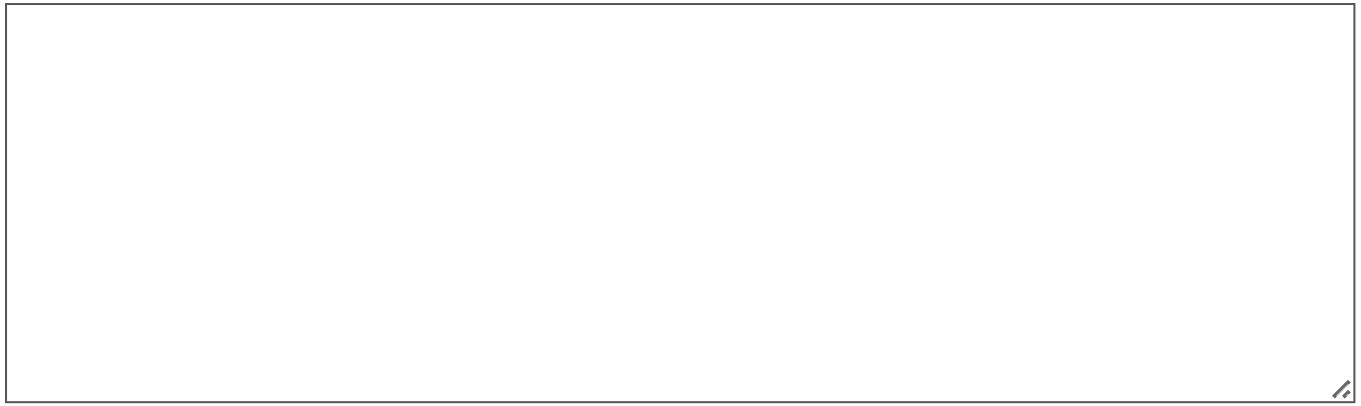
“Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” *Ephesians 6:4*

a) What are some of the key aspects of bringing children up in the instruction of the Lord?



b) How can you support men who are committed believers, but who have children who are not living as Christians? What do these men need?





7. Dr John Best reflected on a period in his life post-surgery:

“Happiness can come and go. So when I hurt my shoulder and I knew what was involved with it and it overlapped with some other very difficult situations with some people close to me, I just decided I was going to let myself be sad for a while. I was just going to rest in that sadness, but still have peace. You know...make good decisions, stay healthy, talk to God more about it and it was helpful.” *Dr John Best*

a) How have you dealt with times of sadness in your life? Can you be sad and still be at peace?

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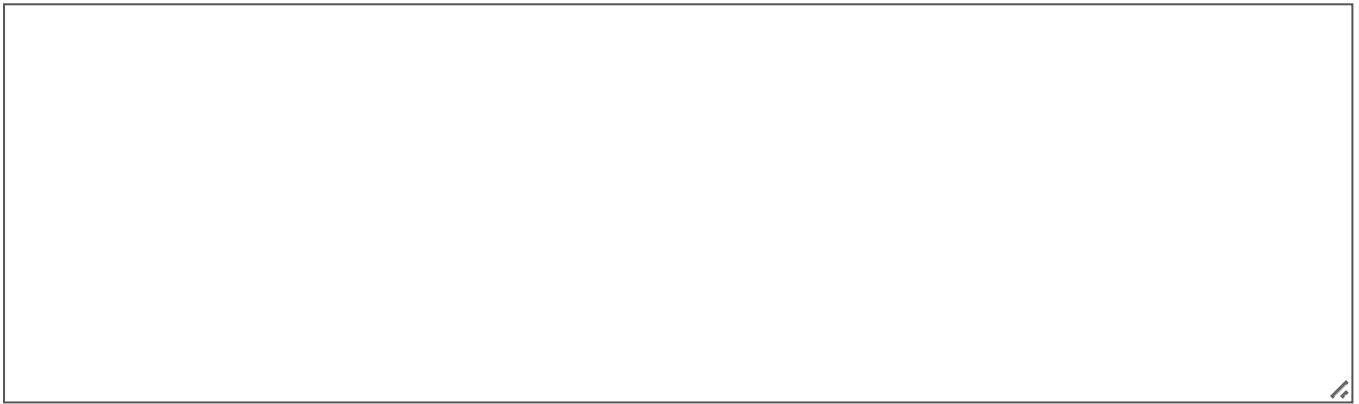
b) Read the following Bible passage: “Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.” Romans 12:15. If you are a follower of Jesus, how has faith made a difference in those times? How can men support their mates in those times?

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8. Sam Chan quoted Jesus' parable about two men coming to pray to God.

"To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people – robbers, evildoers, adulterers – or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." *Luke 18:9-14*

a) Who is the audience of this parable?



b) How are these two men different? Why are they the way they are?



c) What is the twist in the story that would shock most people in our culture?

9. Beau Loughhead said:

"I cried out to God in experiment.... I had a sense that He was there and interested and cared..." *Beau Loughhead*

What does Jesus promise to each person who does this?

10. Beau also spoke about his desire to speak to others about Jesus:

"I'd been so long with no one talking to me about God, but I ask that God would give me opportunities to share the reasons for the hope that I have, and that happens in a way that stems from love of God and love of neighbour." *Beau Loughhead*

What might happen if we pray for those opportunities?