



# SURRENDER

ONLY TO ONE



## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Published by SOF Missions © Copyright 2018 in partnership with The Warrior's Journey® and Three Clicks Publishing® Used under license, all rights reserved.

Design © 2018 SOF Missions and The Warrior's Journey® All rights reserved.

Motion Picture © 2016 SOF Missions. All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, except as may be expressly permitted in writing by the publisher. Requests for permission should be addressed in writing to SOF Missions; 11928 Sheldon Rd., Tampa, FL. 33626

ISBN: 978-0-578-20465-9

Subject Heading: MILITARY \ PTSD \ VETERANS \ MARRIAGE \ DOMESTIC RELATIONS

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Printed in the United States of America

01-142018 1

Powered by SOF Missions and The Warriors Journey



# CONTENTS

MEET THE TEAM	I
ABOUT THE MOVIE	II
INTRODUCTION	III
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE	VI
SESSION ONE : THE PROBLEM OF SUICIDE	10
SESSION TWO : THE COMMITMENT TO SERVE	20
SESSION THREE : GUILT	32
SESSION FOUR : ANGER	43
SESSION FIVE : GRIEF AND SHAME	54
SESSION SIX : MARRIAGE AND FAMILY ISSUES	67
SESSION SEVEN : HOPELESSNESS	79
SESSION EIGHT : SURRENDER	91
A CALL TO ACTION : DR. DAMON FRIEDMAN	105

# MEET THE TEAM



## **DAMON FRIEDMAN, D. IS.**

SPECIAL TACTICS OFFICER (LTCOL), U.S. AIR FORCE  
**PRODUCER, EDITOR, AUTHOR**

Damon Friedman is an elite Special Tactics Officer and leader in special operations with four combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. He is the recipient of 3 Bronze Stars (one with valor) and the Combat Action medal among other awards. In 2011 He started SOF Missions, a non-profit organization aimed at helping veterans. He is the executive producer of the film SURRENDER ONLY TO ONE which creates awareness of the PTSD and suicide epidemic among the veteran community. He holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Lewis University, University of Oklahoma, and a doctorate in Intercultural Studies from Fuller Theological Seminary. He, his wife and two kids live in Tampa, Florida.



## **DEAN BONURA, D. MIN.**

CHAPLAIN (COL), U.S. ARMY (RET.)  
**AUTHOR**

Dean Bonura is a retired Army chaplain with over 30 years of military service including two combat tours and several deployments to the Middle East and Bosnia-Herzegovina. He has ministered to Service Members and their families at military installations in the United States, Europe, and the Middle East, and has served at several levels of command from battalion to installation. He is the recipient of the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star, among other awards. He also is the author of Beyond Trauma: Hope and Healing for Warriors (2016) and holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Corban University, Western Seminary, and a doctorate from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Denise, live in Memphis, Tennessee.

# ABOUT THE MOVIE

## SURRENDER ONLY TO ONE WARRIORS WIN WHEN THEY SURRENDER TO GOD

FOR ONE WILL SCARCELY DIE FOR A RIGHTEOUS PERSON—THOUGH PERHAPS FOR A GOOD PERSON NONE WOULD DARE EVEN TO DIE—BUT GOD SHOWS HIS LOVE FOR US IN THAT WHILE WE WERE STILL SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US.  
ROMANS 5:7-8 (ESV)

BUT THANKS BE TO GOD, WHO GIVES US THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.  
I CORINTHIANS 15:57 (ESV)

**Surrender only to ONE is a movie dedicated to understanding the myriad of traumatic issues military warriors and their families face, and providing spiritual and lasting solutions that enable healing and spiritual growth.**

The stories conveyed in this film are true. The five men and one woman you meet are combat veterans who experienced horrors of war that no one could imagine. All served as Special Operators in the various branches of the military. We'd call them patriots and heroes; but they would say that they were just doing their job. They were fulfilling their oath to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States." We'd say that's a noble thing. They'd say they just wanted to serve because they loved their country and wanted to protect their families. However, they paid a dear price. Each of them came back to us broken, shattered people incapable of enjoying the life they once knew. Their stories are full of pain and heartache. Many of them found themselves unable to adjust to civilian life, haunted by the things they did and the things they saw. Some of them, finding themselves at their wits' end, attempted to end their pain by suicide. Others tried to drown their pain in alcohol or take it out on others in various forms of abuse, such as domestic violence or road rage.



# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IT MEANS TO SURRENDER

**For most people, especially military veterans, the idea of surrender is a foreign notion.**

Warriors don't quit and they certainly don't surrender, not if there is still a will or a means to resist. But this film is not about surrendering to the enemy; it's about defeating the enemy. It's about finding faith and discovering a new purpose for living. It's about experiencing hope where there was despair and peace where there was once hatred and violence.

At the close of the American Civil War, General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia fought a series of delaying actions as it retreated west toward the little town of Appomattox Court House in Virginia. The losses of Richmond and Petersburg, Lee's logistical support and supply base, pretty much spelled the end of his army and the South's chances for victory. It was only a matter of time as Grant's Army surrounded Lee's Army, closing the door for escape.

So it was in April 1865 that Lee met with Grant at Appomattox and agreed to generous terms of surrender. The war was basically over and the South had lost. Yet, the surrender led to reconciliation. It brought a divided and bloodied country together again. It instilled hope for a better future. It also meant peace.

**“IT'S ABOUT FINDING FAITH AND  
DISCOVERING A NEW A PURPOSE FOR  
LIVING. IT'S ABOUT EXPERIENCING  
HOPE WHERE THERE WAS DESPAIR  
AND PEACE WHERE THERE WAS ONCE  
HATRED AND VIOLENCE.”**

THIS FILM IS ABOUT A SIMILAR KIND OF SURRENDER:  
THE SURRENDER THAT LEADS TO IMMEDIATE  
**RECONCILIATION** AND **PEACE**. IT'S A SURRENDER THAT  
ENDS ALL THE HOSTILITY OF A WAR THAT RAGES WITHIN  
ONE'S SOUL, THE EFFECTS OF KILLING, THE AFTERMATH  
OF WAR AND ALL ITS EVIL. WHAT IS THIS SURRENDER?  
IT'S SURRENDERING TO THE COMMANDER OF THE  
UNIVERSE, TO **JESUS CHRIST**, THE CREATOR AND SAVIOR,  
THE ONE WHO DIED FOR ALL OF US, THE ONE WHO WILL  
PUT AN END TO ALL EVIL, PAIN AND SUFFERING  
ONCE AND FOR ALL (REVELATION 21:4).

War changes anyone associated with it—the warrior, his or her family, and the myriads of innocent people caught up in it. It's a nasty but sometimes necessary business. But what's also unfortunate is that the war often continues inside after the warrior returns home. She or he may experience enormous grief over the loss of fellow comrades, grief or guilt over decisions that were made or actions that were taken. So many of these also experience a deep sense of hopelessness and loss of purpose. They feel isolated and alone, unable to reconnect to family and friends. Many marriages end in divorce. Some relationships lead to abuse or violence. Besides such clinical issues as hyper-vigilance, sleeplessness, or intrusive thoughts, most of these heroes suffer from uncontrolled anger and irritability. Anger, a very common symptom, is easily triggered by a sight, a smell, or a thought, and can lead to violence beyond the battlefield.

Thousands of people in our veteran communities are suffering today from the effects of their combat experience. More have served now in the military in Iraq or Afghanistan than those who served in Vietnam. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have become America's longest war. According to statistics kept by the Veterans Administration, *over 1000 vets attempt suicide every month, and approximately twenty-two take their lives every day.* That's horrific.

BUT THERE'S HOPE. THERE'S HELP. THERE'S AN ANSWER TO THIS PROBLEM.  
AND THAT'S WHAT THIS FILM AND DISCUSSION GUIDE IS ALL ABOUT.

The prayer of this writer and the producer is that you will find lasting healing by your full participation in this small group program; that you will discover the answers to the things that give you pain, that have disrupted or even destroyed your life. God is there for you. He loved you enough to give his life for you and provide a way for you to live a whole new life full of joy, hope, peace, and purpose (2 Corinthians 5:17).



# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

**THE SURRENDER ONLY TO ONE DISCUSSION GUIDE IS INTENDED FOR USE AFTER VIEWING THE ENTIRE FILM. IT'S DESIGNED TO PROMPT AND GENERATE DISCUSSION AROUND EIGHT THEMES FOUND IN SURRENDER ONLY TO ONE.**

Incorporating relevant Scriptures and probing questions, the guide encourages group interaction and individual reflection to promote understanding and spiritual growth.

While each theme is considered separately as a “stand alone” discussion topic and/or topic for personal reflection, collectively they represent eight parts of a whole that are based on the entire cinematic presentation, culminating in a call for action or decision.

**THE GUIDE CONSISTS OF EIGHT GROUP SESSIONS THAT ADDRESS A SPECIFIC THEME. EACH SESSION PROVIDES FOR GROUP INTERACTION AND INDIVIDUAL WORK.**



**THE EIGHT SESSIONS CONTAIN FIVE SUBSECTIONS:**

- 1 SESSION OVERVIEW
- 2 KEY SCRIPTURES
- 3 GROUP DISCUSSION
- 4 AFTER-ACTION REVIEW
- 5 PERSONAL REFLECTION

**1. SESSION OVERVIEW:** Each session begins with a session overview that's designed for use in a group setting. It introduces the group to the theme that will be the focus of the discussion and later individual work. It also orients the group to the particular topic identified in the film, and prepares the group for the discussion questions that follow. The group leader reads through the session overview and answers any questions from the group. As part of the session overview, the leader also introduces the growth objectives that are listed for that particular session. The objectives are tailored to the session's theme. The leader responds to any questions related to the session objectives. In subsequent sessions, the leader has the option to conduct a brief review of the previous session and allow for sharing of personal reflections from the previous session.

---

**2. KEY SCRIPTURES:** Relevant Scriptures are listed for each session and are used to enhance group discussion and aid in individual work that's conducted between sessions. Group members may read each Scripture out loud or silently, and leaders may clarify questions that arise from the readings. Members of the group will have opportunities later in other sections to respond to questions related to Key Scriptures.

---

**3. GROUP DISCUSSION:** Group discussion focuses on scenes from the movie, *SURRENDER ONLY TO ONE*. Since the group has already viewed the entire movie, only clips from the movie are viewed. One or more clips approximately 1-4 minutes in length are listed under "Scenes for Review" and are relevant to the session's theme. The clips form the basis for the discussion questions. Space is provided in the guide for members to record their own responses to the questions as well as responses from others.

**4. AFTER-ACTION REVIEW:** This section is designed to summarize the group session and is intended to tie the elements of the session together by integrating the Scriptures, the Scenes, and the Discussion into several “Lessons Learned.” The leader may ask several cognitive, emotive, and behavioral questions such as: “What did you learn from this session?” “What emotions did you experience?” “How did this session help you in your faith journey?” And, “What actions will you take from here?” The section is designed to bring closure to the theme and ensure the group is prepared to do their individual work and be ready for their next session. Leaders also ensure group members feel safe and comfortable before they leave the meeting.

---

**5. PERSONAL REFLECTION:** Each member of the group is given an opportunity to further reflect on the material covered in the group session. The section is individually completed after the group session and focused on personalizing the material. It includes a “Let’s Go Deeper” portion that’s geared to more interaction with the Scriptures. During the Session Overview for subsequent sessions, the leader may ask members of the group to voluntarily share their reflections from the previous session. Leaders will allow a few minutes for sharing, and then take a few moments to summarize the previous session as well as introduce the new session’s theme.

# SESSION ONE



## THEME ONE: THE PROBLEM OF SUICIDE

### SESSION OVERVIEW:

In this session you will consider the problem of suicide among veterans and military members. Suicide among Service Members and veterans is at epidemic proportions with 5000 to 8000 vets taking their own lives each year. That's twenty-two suicides every day. No one knows how many more attempt suicide. The issues that lead to suicide are multi-faceted: unresolved guilt, grief, or shame; inability to reconcile with the problem of killing; pain associated with loss of hope, meaning and purpose; and, all the associated effects of trauma fueled by anger, various losses, and inability to adjust to civilian life or manage stress.

### GROWTH OBJECTIVES

- TO APPRECIATE THE VALUE GOD PLACES ON THE PERSON
- TO UNDERSTAND ONE'S UNIQUENESS BEFORE GOD
- TO LEARN THAT THERE IS A PURPOSE FOR EVERY PERSON CREATED BY GOD
- TO RECOGNIZE THE RESOURCES GOD GIVES TO SUSTAIN AND ENJOY LIFE

# KEY SCRIPTURES:

GENESIS 1:28-28A (ESV):

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them.

GENESIS 2:7 (ESV):

Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

PSALM 8:3-6 (ESV):

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

ROMANS 5:8 (ESV):

But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

PSALM 139:13-17 (ESV):

“For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!”

ISAIAH 41:10 (ESV):

“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

## **ISAIAH 40:28-31 (ESV):**

HAVE YOU NOT KNOWN? HAVE YOU NOT HEARD? THE LORD IS THE EVER-LASTING GOD, THE CREATOR OF THE ENDS OF THE EARTH. HE DOES NOT FAINT OR GROW WEARY; HIS UNDERSTANDING IS UNSEARCHABLE.

HE GIVES POWER TO THE FAINT, AND TO HIM WHO HAS NO MIGHT HE INCREASES STRENGTH.

EVEN YOUTHS SHALL FAINT AND BE WEARY, AND YOUNG MEN SHALL FALL EXHAUSTED;

BUT THEY WHO WAIT FOR THE LORD SHALL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH; THEY SHALL MOUNT UP WITH WINGS LIKE EAGLES; THEY SHALL RUN AND NOT BE WEARY; THEY SHALL WALK AND NOT FAINT."

# GROUP DISCUSSION: SCENES FOR REVIEW

**“THE EPIDEMIC”** (03:21-05:38)

**“BABY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?”** (39:01-41:15)

**“I’M DONE”** (48:29-49:06)

**“ONE GUN, ONE BULLET”** (49:07-51:14)

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe the “epidemic” referred to in the opening scene of the film. (See *“The Epidemic.”*) Based on the film, what are some of the stressors or signs of potential suicide?
2. In what ways have you been affected by suicide in the military community?
3. Those who contemplate suicide feel all their options are exhausted. Their pain is just too great; they think the only way they can put an end to the pain is to kill themselves. They give up. They surrender to the enemy. How is surrendering to God so much different than surrendering to suicide?
4. Do you think the problem of suicide is spiritual, warranting a spiritual answer or solution? Why or why not? (See *“One Gun, One Bullet.”*)
5. To what extent do you think faith in God helps a person deal with the kind of issues that might lead to suicide? How so? (See *“One Gun, One Bullet.”*)
6. Do you agree with those who say that Jesus saved them from killing themselves? Why or why not?

# AFTER-ACTION REVIEW

1. What new information did you learn about the problem of suicide among military members and veterans?
2. What person in the film did you feel a connection to and why?
3. How were you affected emotionally as you viewed the scenes on suicide?
4. Based on Key Scriptures presented in this session, why are you important and valued? What does God say about you?
5. Based on the scenes in the movie, can you identify some of the resources that were available to those contemplating suicide? Can you think of others?
6. In the final scene that you reviewed, how did the fellow Operator help his teammate who was contemplating suicide? Why is this significant?

# PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. Ask yourself: Am I special to God? Why? How does this perspective of being valued by God shape your ability to navigate your faith journey?

2. In one of the final scenes, an Operator is contemplating suicide, calls a friend who connects him to fellow Operator who shares the message of Christ with him. Given the scenes you reviewed, what is that message? How does it apply to you?

## *REVIEW THE KEY SCRIPTURES FOR THIS SESSION*

---

- How does the knowledge of being created in the “image of God” help you understand the value of human life?
  
- What does it mean to you that God has given humanity a unique and honored place in creation? *(See passages in Genesis 1, 2 and Psalms 8, 139.)*

## *LETS GO DEEPER.*

---

- What verses could you use to help someone thinking about suicide?
  
- Review Isaiah 40:28-31, 41:10. How does the knowledge of God’s strength and presence help you look at your life differently?

**EVERY 65 MINUTES  
WE LOSE ONE  
AMERICAN HERO,  
NOT FIGHTING AN ENEMY  
DOWN RANGE, BUT A  
VICIOUS INWARD ONE.**

**GEN OHMER**



# SESSION TWO



## THEME TWO: COMMITMENT TO SERVE

### SESSION OVERVIEW:

In this session we examine what's involved in service to the Nation and to God. It takes commitment to serve. It takes a willingness to put one's life on the line for the benefit of others. You will hear from Special Operators who answered their Nation's call and volunteered to serve. They were prepared to do whatever it took to protect the Nation even at the cost of their own lives. But the evil of 9/11 isn't the only evil we face. Christian warriors face a spiritual enemy even more insidious than the Taliban or terrorism—they face the forces of Satan who are determined to destroy and discredit the faithful. Warriors for God also have a mission—to proclaim truth where there is falsehood and shed light where there is darkness. These warriors must serve God with a similar level of commitment as military warriors serve, and be prepared to combat evil wherever it is found. In this session, you will learn how to combat your spiritual enemies and be victorious in your Christian life. It begins with a commitment to serve.

### GROWTH OBJECTIVES

- TO UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF COMMITMENT
- TO IDENTIFY THE ELEMENTS OF SERVICE
- TO RECOGNIZE THE CHALLENGES OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE
- TO APPLY THE SPIRITUAL RESOURCES OF SPIRITUAL COMBAT

# KEY SCRIPTURES:

## DEUTERONOMY 6:5 (ESV):

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

## DEUTERONOMY 11:13-14 (ESV):

And if you will indeed obey my commandments that I command you today, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, he will give you rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oils.

## JOSHUA 24:14-15 (ESV):

Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.

## 1 SAMUEL 12:24 (ESV):

Only fear the LORD and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things he has done for you.

## PROVERBS 3:5-6 (ESV):

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

## PROVERBS 16:3 (ESV):

Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established.

## COLOSSIANS 3:23-24 (ESV):

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

## 2 TIMOTHY 2:3-4 (ESV):

Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him.

## **EPHESIANS 6:11-20 (ESV):**

PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD, THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO STAND AGAINST THE SCHEMES OF THE DEVIL. FOR WE DO NOT WRESTLE AGAINST FLESH AND BLOOD, BUT AGAINST THE RULERS, AGAINST THE AUTHORITIES, AGAINST THE COSMIC POWERS OVER THIS PRESENT DARKNESS, AGAINST THE SPIRITUAL FORCES OF EVIL IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES. THEREFORE TAKE UP THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD, THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO WITHSTAND IN THE EVIL DAY, AND HAVING DONE ALL, TO STAND FIRM. STAND THEREFORE, HAVING FASTENED ON THE BELT OF TRUTH, AND HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND, AS SHOES FOR YOUR FEET, HAVING PUT ON THE READINESS GIVEN BY THE GOSPEL OF PEACE. IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES TAKE UP THE SHIELD OF FAITH, WITH WHICH YOU CAN EXTINGUISH ALL THE FLAMING DARTS OF THE EVIL ONE; AND TAKE THE HELMET OF SALVATION, AND THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD, PRAYING AT ALL TIMES IN THE SPIRIT, WITH ALL PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION. TO THAT END KEEP ALERT WITH ALL PERSEVERANCE, MAKING SUPPLICATION FOR ALL THE SAINTS, AND ALSO FOR ME, THAT WORDS MAY BE GIVEN TO ME IN OPENING MY MOUTH BOLDLY TO PROCLAIM THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL, FOR WHICH I AM AN AMBASSADOR IN CHAINS, THAT I MAY DECLARE IT BOLDLY, AS I OUGHT TO SPEAK."

## GROUP DISCUSSION: SCENES FOR REVIEW

---

**“THE OATH”** [03:21-05:38]

**“IT’S ALL I EVER WANTED TO DO”** [7:48-9:15]

**“A NEW REALITY”** [11:32- 13:01]

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Warriors take a solemn oath to “support and defend” the U.S. Constitution. It is a big responsibility involving sacrifice, commitment, and determination. What are other elements of commitment? What does it mean for the Christian warrior? (See *“The Oath”* and *Key Scriptures.*)

2. The Oath of Enlistment ends with these words: “So Help Me God”. Why is God’s help important to fulfilling the Oath? How might you seek God’s help for the battles you face? (See *“The Oath.”*)

3. Since 9/11 many brave men and women raised their hands and volunteered to serve. Given the dedication and sacrifices it takes to serve, how might these things help you understand what it means to serve God? (See *“It’s All I Ever Wanted to Do.”*)

4. The attacks on 9/11 brought a new reality to America and the world. America faced a determined and vicious enemy. Only national and individual resolve will see this to the end. We’ve witnessed the resolve and sense of commitment among our warriors. How does this commitment translate to the Christian warrior’s enlistment in God’s Army and enemies he or she faces? (See *“A New Reality”* and *2 Timothy 2:3-4.*)

5. Based on some of the readings of Scripture, what tactics, techniques, or procedures might you glean in order for you to combat your spiritual foe? (See *Key Scriptures.*)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS CONT'D:

6. The Bible, God's War Manual, not only tells us how to defeat our enemy, it identifies some attitudes and actions that the warrior should adopt. We might refer to this as adopting a "Battlemind". Based on the Key Scriptures in this session, what are some of these attitudes or actions?

# AFTER-ACTION REVIEW

1. Identify at least three life-lessons you gleaned from this session.
2. How were you affected by the commitment of the warriors you heard from in the scenes mentioned above?
3. Is there such a thing as partial commitment? Why or why not?
4. How does commitment translate into service? How does it relate to spiritual warfare?
5. How does committing yourself to God also involve trust and surrender? (*See Proverbs 3:5-6, 16:3.*)

# PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. In your own words define commitment. What does it mean to make a commitment to God?

2. List three ways you can serve and demonstrate your commitment to God:

1.

2.

3.

## REVIEW THE KEY SCRIPTURES FOR THIS SESSION

---

- Please complete this sentence:

“You shall \_\_\_\_\_ the LORD your God with all your \_\_\_\_\_ and with all your \_\_\_\_\_ and with all your \_\_\_\_\_ .”

[DEUTERONOMY 6:5]

- Take a moment and identify one thing you will do this week to put this verse into practice.

- Review the Key Scriptures and underline, in your opinion, all the words that relate to commitment and service.

- Please complete this sentence:

“Put on the whole \_\_\_\_\_ of God, that you may be able to \_\_\_\_\_ against the \_\_\_\_\_ of the devil.”

[EPHESIANS 6:11]

- Name at least one way the devil schemes against you.

*(Hint: Review Ephesians 6:12-20.)*

- What is one thing you can do to combat the spiritual forces of evil?

*(See Ephesians 6:11-20.)*

## *LETS GO DEEPER.*

---

- Review Ephesians 6:11-20 and identify the nature of the spiritual enemy we face.
  
- Read through Ephesians 6:11-20 found in the Key Scriptures and underline the weapons that comprise the Armor of God.
  
- From this list, identify the only offensive weapon God has given you.

**I'M GOING TO SERVE,  
I'LL DO IT FAITHFULLY,  
AND I WILL STRIVE  
TO BE MY BEST AND I WILL  
NEVER GIVE UP.**

**BR**



# SESSION THREE



## THEME THREE: GUILT

### SESSION OVERVIEW:

Combat creates incredible stressful situations. It places enormous pressure on the shoulders of our warriors to the point where they might feel everything depends on them. This deep sense of personal responsibility for the lives of others or for the success of the mission, whether it resides at the lowest ranks or at the highest levels, can be unhealthy. It may lead to unrealistic expectations, or worse, undeserved guilt. This form of guilt manifests in expressions like, “My guys are dead because of me.” Or, “It’s all my fault.” War is also a messy business where innocent people die. Sometimes children die. Mistakes are made. Warriors have to deal with these things too—things that they may have done or thought they had done. Many suffer with some form of guilt, whether they regret the loss of life, or the brutality, or actions that resulted in bad outcomes. Regardless, they suffer. Then there is the question of absolution: “Will God forgive me?” Or, “Can I forgive myself?” In this session we’ll consider how combat makes a warrior vulnerable to guilt and self-doubt. We’ll review several scenes, listen to testimonies of fellow warriors, explore the problem of war-related guilt, then consider ways to deal with guilt, deserved and undeserved.

### GROWTH OBJECTIVES

- TO UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF GUILT
- TO IDENTIFY THE FORMS OF GUILT
- TO DISCOVER THE REMEDY FOR GUILT
- TO EXPLORE THE PROSPECT OF FORGIVENESS

# KEY SCRIPTURES:

## ROMANS 3:9-12 (ESV):

“What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: ‘None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.’”

## ROMANS 3:23-24 (ESV):

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

## EPHESIANS 2:13-16 (ESV):

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

## COLOSSIANS 2:13-14 (ESV):

And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

## EPHESIANS 4:32 (ESV):

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

## PSALM 32:1-2, 5-6 (ESV):

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found; surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him.”

## GROUP DISCUSSION: SCENES FOR REVIEW

---

**“IT’S MY FAULT”** (17:24-20:35)

**“I’D ALWAYS TAKE POINT”** (21:25-23:02)

**“A LITTLE BABY’S CRIB”** (27:15-28:20)

**“IT DOES SOMETHING TO PEOPLE”** (32:02-32:50)



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The modern battlefield is a complex, intense, and lethal environment requiring employment of sophistication, skill, and synchronization of weaponry? Given these facts, what are some of the pressures warriors face when they find themselves in this environment?

2. In the scene, “It’s My Fault”, FN says, “If any of these guys die, it’s my fault.” Do you think FN is accurately assessing the situation given its complexity? Why or why not?

3. In the scene, “I’d Always Take Point”, KA tells us how he led his guys when there was an IED threat. He took full responsibility for the safety of his men and was determined to get all of them home safely. How is this approach commendable? How is it risky? How might inevitable failure lead to guilt?

4. War unfortunately involves the loss of innocent people. This reality can shake one’s faith in God and in others. When TY threw the concussion grenade, he didn’t know that it would land by a little baby’s crib. He could have killed the baby. Fortunately, the baby was safe with her mother. But it’s not always the case. How does a warrior reconcile the loss of innocent lives with their military duties? How do warriors deal with the guilt they experience? Is this form of guilt deserved?

5. The horrors of war affect everyone. Killing is especially egregious because killing is not a normal act. How does a Christian reconcile the killing of human beings with their role in war? How might the problem of killing lead to guilt? How might this kind of guilt lead one to question the love and forgiveness of God?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS CONT'D:

6. According to the Key Scriptures, everyone is guilty. Everyone has sinned. Everyone has failed. This is deserved guilt. The remedy is forgiveness through Jesus Christ who died for sin. In war, there is also deserved guilt. People commit atrocities. People fail to follow orders. People commit crimes. But many times, innocent mistakes are made or warriors take on burdens they don't deserve. This is undeserved guilt. Another form of undeserved guilt is survivor's guilt—"I lived but my buddy died." What is the remedy for this undeserved guilt?



# PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. Ask yourself: “Have I experienced guilt over actions I took in combat?” Do you think it was deserved? Why? Why not? If you feel guilty about an action you took in combat or a failure to have taken action, list the options you have to reconcile with your guilt:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

2. Whether guilt is deserved or undeserved, even a careful review of the facts of the event often leaves the warrior without resolution of the guilt.

If you find yourself at this point, review Psalm 32:1-2, 5-6 and use the following words as an expression of prayer to God: Father, I’m carrying an awful burden of guilt for what I did in combat and/or what I failed to do...

**Write it down here:**

...I cannot change what happened but I can ask you to forgive me for it. Based on the promise of your Word, I acknowledge my sin(s) and confess it/them to you. I claim your forgiveness of all my transgressions and am confident that you will no longer hold me guilty. Thank you. Amen.

## *REVIEW THE KEY SCRIPTURES FOR THIS SESSION*

---

- Read Romans 3:9-12, 23-24. What does it say about the human race?
  
- According to Romans 3:23-24, how is someone justified or made right before God?
  
- Ephesians 2:13-16 teaches that Jesus Christ is our \_\_\_\_\_.

# LETS GO DEEPER.

---

- Fill in the missing words:

And you, who were \_\_\_\_\_ in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made \_\_\_\_\_ together with him, having \_\_\_\_\_ us all our trespasses, by \_\_\_\_\_ the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, \_\_\_\_\_ it to the cross.

COLOSSIANS 2:13-14 (ESV)

- What was your condition before God intervened in your life?

- What did God do for you?

1. God made me \_\_\_\_\_.
2. God \_\_\_\_\_ me of all my trespasses.
3. God \_\_\_\_\_ the record of debt that stood against me.
4. God set aside that debt with its legal demands and \_\_\_\_\_ it to the cross.

- What does this mean for you?

**I HAVE THE PRESSURE  
ON MY SHOULDERS, THINKING,  
IF ANY OF THESE GUYS DIE  
ITS MY FAULT.**

**FN**



# SESSION FOUR



## THEME FOUR: ANGER

### SESSION OVERVIEW:

The problem of anger and rage is pervasive in our veteran community. The constant and demanding requirements of the battlefield coupled with repeated sleep deprivation fuels an inevitable explosion of anger. Without periodic rest and refitting, the warrior is at risk of expressing his anger inappropriately during and after the battle. Factors that also contribute to anger are unresolved grief, over exposure to battlefield brutality, and inability to reconcile intrapersonal conflicts with one's combat experience. Anger builds in a warrior like a head of steam—if left unchecked, it will explode. Anger is a physiological effect that not only is tied to battle fatigue and exposure, but also to a sense of detachment and isolation, two factors often experienced by warriors. In this session you will hear first-hand from those who experienced anger on and off the battlefield. You will discover how unresolved anger leads to acts of indifference, hatred, and revenge, and how often it is associated with other issues, such as perceived injustices and loss of meaning and control. While anger must be considered separately, it is never a separate issue. It's always associated with other post-traumatic stress effects including guilt and shame.

### GROWTH OBJECTIVES

- TO UNDERSTAND THE CAUSES OF ANGER
- TO IDENTIFY THE VARIOUS EXPRESSIONS OF ANGER
- TO DISCOVER APPROPRIATE WAYS TO DEAL WITH ANGER

# KEY SCRIPTURES:

PSALM 37:8 (ESV):

Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil.

MATTHEW 5:22 (ESV):

But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire.

EPHESIANS 4:31 (ESV):

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

DEUTERONOMY 29:25-28 (ESV):

Then people will say, 'It is because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them out of the Land of Egypt, and went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they had not known and whom he had not allotted to them. Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, bringing upon it all the curses written in this book, and the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger and fury and great wrath, and cast them into another land, as they are this day.'

JAMES 1:19-20 (ESV):

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God."

NEHEMIAH 9:16-17 (ESV):

But they and our fathers acted presumptuously and stiffened their neck and did not obey your commandments. They refused to obey and were not mindful of the wonders that you performed among them, but they stiffened their neck and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them.

## KEY SCRIPTURES CONT'D:

JOHN 2:14-16 (ESV):

In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the moneychangers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, 'Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade.'

EPHESIANS 4:26-27 (ESV):

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.

PROVERBS 15:1 (ESV):

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

## GROUP DISCUSSION: SCENES FOR REVIEW

**“I DIDN’T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH IT” (20:38-21:24)**

**“A MASSIVE ADRENALINE DUMP” (33:31-34:57)**



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The incessant demands placed especially on Special Operators, compounded by multiple deployments and constant missions impact a person's ability to maintain emotional equilibrium. In LN's case, these things took a toll on him. How did these factors affect LN? How does his experience correspond to yours or others?

2. Intense combat exposure, involving participation in horrific situations, killing, and in things the warrior has no control over, contributes to unresolved anger issues later. This was the case for LN and BR. Identify the various issues that contributed to your anger. How did you cope? What did you do with the anger?

3. Inappropriate combat-connected anger manifests in combat and especially after and is often triggered by something, such as a sight, a sound, or a smell. What has triggered your anger and how was it manifested? What did you do to deal with it?

4. In the scene "A Massive Adrenaline Dump", BR relates how anger, among other issues, is associated with a lost sense of direction and purpose. How is this especially true among those who are trying to readjust to civilian life?

5. Based on the Key Scriptures for this session, how are legitimate uses of anger different from inappropriate expressions of anger? For example, God was angry with the nation of Israel because of their disobedience; and Jesus was angry at the money-changers because they were making his "Father's house a house of trade." Ephesians 4:26-27 says: "Be angry and do not sin." So, at what point or in what circumstances does anger become sin or inappropriate?



# PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. List the triggers that often cause you to express your anger or rage inappropriately. In other words, what sets you off?

1.

2.

3.

2. What are some ways you might mitigate the inappropriate expressions of your anger? *(Hint: Review the Key Scriptures. Also, discuss this question with a trusted friend.)*

3. If you are experiencing a “lost sense of direction or purpose,” identify two or three short-term goals that might help you regain a sense of direction for your life? You might share these with the group. If you are guilty of anger or rage, what does God say about that? *(See Key Scriptures.)*

## REVIEW THE KEY SCRIPTURES FOR THIS SESSION

---

- Fill in the missing words:

“A \_\_\_\_\_ answer turns away wrath, but a \_\_\_\_\_ word stirs up anger.”

PROVERBS 15:1 (ESV)

- What are some of the harsh words you typically use?

- Fill in the missing words:

“Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be \_\_\_\_\_ to hear,  
\_\_\_\_\_ to speak, \_\_\_\_\_ to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the  
\_\_\_\_\_ of God.”

JAMES 1:19-20 (ESV)

- Since the expression of anger has a lot to do with communication, what is one thing you could do to change the way you communicate with others?

# LETS GO DEEPER.

---

- Develop an action plan that identifies a situation that triggers your anger and the steps that you will take to mitigate its inappropriate expression.

Use the following format:

1. Situation/Topic:

2. Goal/Objective:

3. Action Steps:

- 
- 
- 

- What do you think the Scripture means when it says, “The anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God”? (*See James 1:19-20.*)

**I HAD BECOME SO ANGRY,  
SEEING SOME OF THE  
HORRIBLE THINGS THAT PEOPLE DO  
TO EACH OTHER, JUST FULL OF  
ANGER AND HATE AND  
I DIDNT KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH IT.**

**LN**



# SESSION FIVE



## THEME FIVE: GRIEF AND SHAME

### SESSION OVERVIEW:

Grief for a warrior is a huge concern. The problem of grief, grief over the loss of comrades, grief over perceived failures or actions, is not easily resolved. Grief that causes pain and sorrow can haunt a warrior for years after the battle. Another combat-connected effect is shame. While shame is not directly tied to grief, and more often related to guilt, it is an associated problem that changes the way a warrior sees him or herself. Shame is a deep sense of unworthiness and uncleanness; and whether that sense is deserved or undeserved does not change anything. The perception of shame becomes the reality for so many warriors. In this session we'll consider both of these issues. It will be evident from the testimonies you hear that these issues are very real for warriors. It is important for warriors suffering with grief find relief from their pain. It is equally necessary that they also experience cleansing from their shame, shame associated with all the violence and killing, shame associated with failures and perceived guilt. The good news is that Christ offers comfort to those who grieve and cleansing to those who are ashamed.

### GROWTH OBJECTIVES

- TO UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM OF GRIEF AND SHAME
- TO RECOGNIZE THE VARIOUS CAUSES OF GRIEF AND SHAME
- TO DISCOVER THE SPIRITUAL SOLUTIONS TO GRIEF AND SHAME
- TO EXPERIENCE GOD'S COMFORT AND SPIRITUAL CLEANSING

# KEY SCRIPTURES:

## JOB 1:20-21 (ESV):

Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. And he said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has take away; blessed be the name of the LORD.'

## 1 SAMUEL 18:32-33 (ESV):

The king said to the Cushite, 'Is it well with the young man Absalom?' And the Cushite answered, 'May the enemies of my lord the king and all who rise up against you for evil be like that young man.' And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And as he went, he said, 'O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!'

## NEHEMIAH 1:3-4; 2-5 (ESV):

And they said to me, 'The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire. As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

And the king said to me, 'Why is your face sad, seeing you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of the heart.' Then I was very much afraid. I said to the king, 'Let the king live forever! Why should not my face be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' graves, lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?' Then the king said to me, 'What are you requesting?' So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said to the king, 'If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it.'

## PSALM 42:9, 11 (ESV):

I say to God, my rock: 'Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?'

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

## KEY SCRIPTURES CONT'D:

PSALM 31:9-10 (ESV):

Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress; my eye is wasted from grief; my soul and my body also. For my life is spent with sorrow, and my years with sighing; my strength fails because of my iniquity, and my bones waste away.”

PSALM 34:18 (ESV):

The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

LUKE 4:18A (ESV):

The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor.

JOHN 11:35 (ESV):

Jesus wept.

2 CORINTHIANS 1:3-4 (ESV):

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

PSALM 51:1-2; 7; 10; 12; 14 (ESV):

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

## KEY SCRIPTURES CONT'D:

ISAIAH 54:4-5 (ESV):

Fear not, for you will not be ashamed; be not confounded, for you will not be disgraced; for you will forget the shame of your youth, and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more. For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called.

ROMANS 10:11 (ESV):

For the Scripture says, 'Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.

1 JOHN 1:9 (ESV):

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

## GROUP DISCUSSION: SCENES FOR REVIEW

**“HAVE YOU GONE NUMB?”** (26:14-27:14)

**“BLOOD TRAILS”** (30:05-30:48)

**“I WAS NO LONGER GOOD ANYMORE”** (23:57-24:53)

**“WHAT AN UGLY PERSON I WAS”** (43:10-44:19)

**“THE BIGGEST DIRT BAG IN THE WORLD”** (36:29-37:07)

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The loss of fellow comrades eventually takes a toll on the warrior. This was KA's experience. While the military conducts solemn memorials for the fallen, they rarely bring complete closure and often leave those closest to the fallen feeling numb and angry. How is KA's experience similar to yours? How did you deal with your grief? (See *"Have You Gone Numb?"*)

2. The experience of grief distracts from the mission and can make the warrior less combat effective. In KA's case, his grief made him callous to the suffering of others, such as the grieving father in the scene, "Have You Gone Numb?" What can a warrior do to mitigate risk to himself/herself and the team when grieving? What might a teammate do to help a comrade who is dealing with loss?

3. Battlefield violence and the experience of loss, not only contributes to grief and pain, it numbs a warrior. It's like a switch that goes off in the mind. If left unchecked, it may lead to battlefield vigilantism and even atrocities. KA tells us that he felt evil and just wanted to "kill everything." In what ways do you relate to his experience and how did you deal with it? How did it later contribute to your sense of shame or lack of shame? (See *"I Was No Longer Good Anymore."*)

4. Shame has far reaching effects in a person's life. FN talks about being selfish, unfaithful to God, and violent. LN talks about being humbled and broken down by God. This sense of brokenness and humbleness, while it is very painful, can become the means God uses to lead a warrior to Himself. If you have come to this place in your life, what is keeping you from surrendering yourself to God? (See *"What An Ugly Person I Was."*)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS CONT'D:

5. KA says that after he got out of the military, he worked as a security guard but felt like a loser, a dirt bag. Why do you think some veterans feel this way? What are some ways a warrior might address this sense of loss and feeling of shame? (See *“The Biggest Dirt Bag in the World.”*)

6. Given the Key Scriptures you reviewed, what does God say about grief and shame? How does the reality of God’s Presence and the availability of His provisions encourage you to give yourself to God and receive His help?



# PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. Ask yourself: “Do I continue to grieve over the loss of comrades?” If yes, how has this grief impacted your life, the way you see yourself and others?
  
2. Are there actions you’ve taken in combat for which you feel ashamed? If yes, how has this shame affected the way you see yourself?
  
3. Based on the Key Scriptures, what can you do about your shame? What can God do for you?

## REVIEW THE KEY SCRIPTURES FOR THIS SESSION

---

- What does God say about grief and what does God offer to those who grieve?

- Please complete this verse:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of \_\_\_\_\_  
and God of all \_\_\_\_\_, who \_\_\_\_\_ us in all our affliction, so  
that we may be able to \_\_\_\_\_ those who are in any affliction, with the  
\_\_\_\_\_ with which we ourselves are \_\_\_\_\_ by God.”

2 CORINTHIANS 1:3-4 (ESV)

- According to 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, how many times does God use the word “comfort”?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- According to Isaiah 54:4-5, God promises to remove the shame and disgrace of his covenantal people. Do you believe God can forgive and cleanse you of your shame? Why or why not?

## *LETS GO DEEPER.*

---

- Please review Psalm 51:1-2, 7, 10, 12, 14.
  
- Circle every word that has to do with sin. How many did you find?
  
- Now, circle every word that has to do with cleansing. How many did you find?
  
- Given God's comfort, mercy and love, do you think God can give you comfort for your grief and cleansing for your shame?

**I FELT LIKE A LOSER.**

**KA**



# SESSION SIX



## THEME SIX: MARRIAGE AND FAMILY ISSUES

### SESSION OVERVIEW:

Grief for a warrior is a huge concern. The problem of grief; grief over the loss of comrades, grief over perceived failures or actions, is not easily resolved. Grief that causes pain and sorrow can haunt a warrior for years after the battle. Another combat-connected effect is shame. While shame is not directly tied to grief, and more often related to guilt, it is an associated problem that changes the way a warrior sees him or herself. Shame is a deep sense of unworthiness and uncleanness; and whether that sense is deserved or undeserved does not change anything. The perception of shame becomes the reality for so many warriors. In this session we'll consider both of these issues. It will be evident from the testimonies you hear that these issues are very real for warriors. It is important for warriors suffering with grief find relief from their pain. It is equally necessary that they also experience cleansing from their shame, shame associated with all the violence and killing, shame associated with failures and perceived guilt. The good news is that Christ offers comfort to those who grieve and cleansing to those who are ashamed.

### GROWTH OBJECTIVES

- TO RECOGNIZE THE CHALLENGES OF REINTEGRATION AND REUNION
- TO UNDERSTAND HOW COMBAT-RELATED TRAUMA AFFECTS MARRIAGES AND FAMILIES
- TO IDENTIFY WAYS TO MITIGATE RISKS AND VULNERABILITIES
- TO DISCOVER APPROPRIATE SOLUTIONS THAT ARE FOUND IN GOD'S WORD

# KEY SCRIPTURES:

## MATTHEW 19:3-6 (ESV):

And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, ‘Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?’ He answered, ‘Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together let not man separate.

## EPHESIANS 5:22-30 (ESV):

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.

## COLOSSIANS 3:12-14 (ESV):

Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other, as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

## COLOSSIANS 3:19-21 (ESV):

Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

## JAMES 3:6-8 (ESV):

And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

## KEY SCRIPTURES CONT'D:

JAMES 3:13-14; 16-18 (ESV):

Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth.

For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.

1 PETER 3:7 (ESV):

Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

EPHESIANS 4:26-27 (ESV):

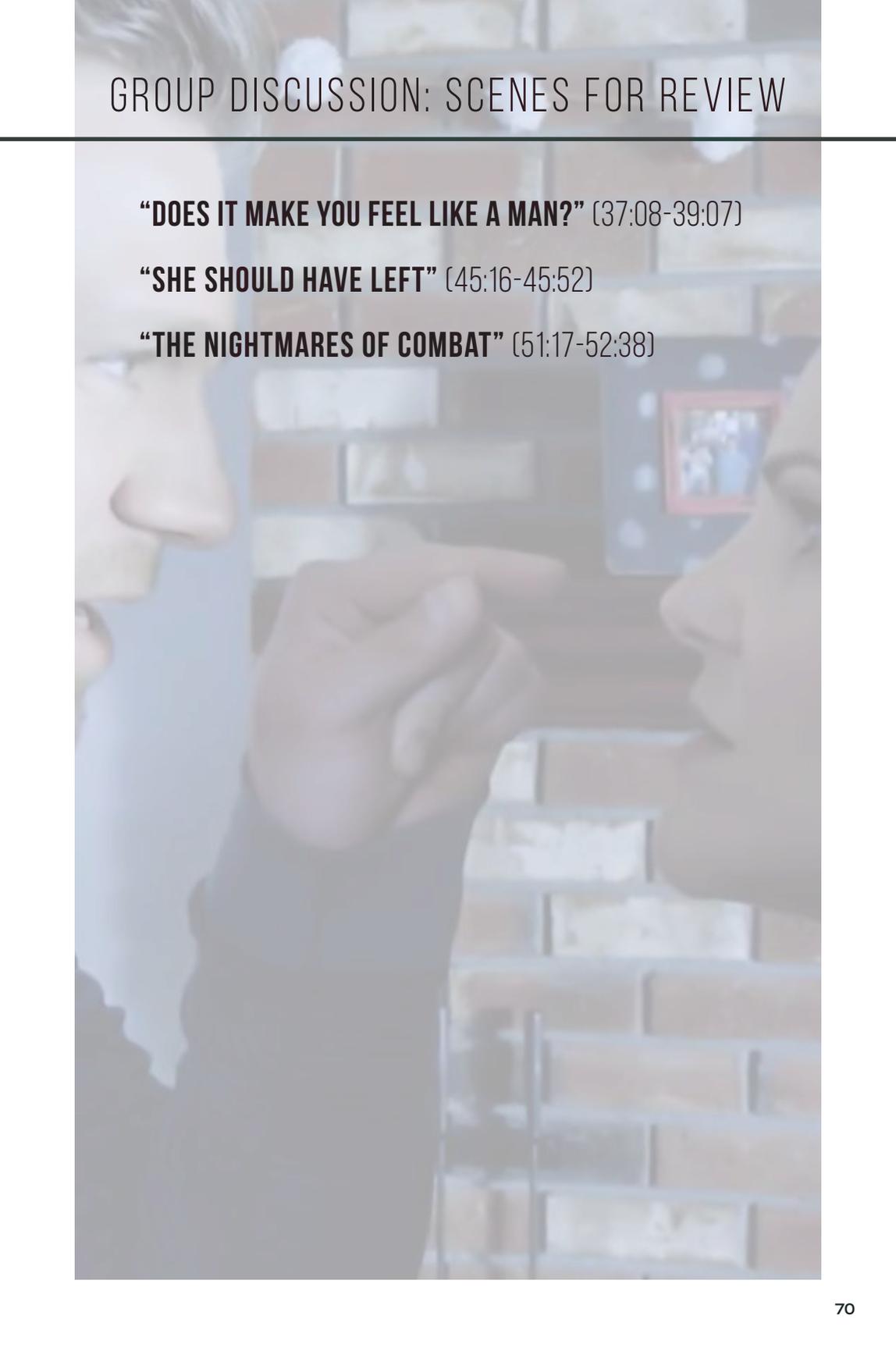
Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.

JAMES 1:19-20 (ESV):

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

PROVERBS 15:1 (ESV):

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.



## GROUP DISCUSSION: SCENES FOR REVIEW

**“DOES IT MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE A MAN?”** (37:08-39:07)

**“SHE SHOULD HAVE LEFT”** (45:16-45:52)

**“THE NIGHTMARES OF COMBAT”** (51:17-52:38)

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Reintegration with one's family is a daunting task for any returning veteran. But warriors, suffering from the effects of the battlefield, are at particular risk for readjustment problems. In the scene, "Does It Make You Feel Like a Man?" what were some of the issues LN faced? How were they affecting his marriage? How were they affecting his health?

2. What did you observe about LN in the party scene? What do you think was going on with him? How does the inability to switch gears from a battlemind to a civilian mind lead to feelings of isolation? How does it affect communication? (*See "Does It Make You Feel Like a Man?"*)

3. Combat veterans return to their families thinking they've come home to the way things were when they left. But things have changed at home as well. Nothing remains static. Both LN and FN were heading for divorce because they failed to recognize the changes among other issues. What are some ways military couples can "battle proof" their marriages so that they're less vulnerable to divorce?

4. Military separations and deployments take their toll on the family. The family faces many challenges back at home. They have to manage without the warrior. This only becomes more complicated when warriors return with their "combat baggage." They may be suffering with lingering stress and ongoing issues such as grief, guilt, shame, and anger. These things, if not addressed, are a powder keg just waiting for the fuse to be lit. What guidance does God give for addressing these issues as they affect the family? (*Hint: Review Key Scriptures and refer back to previous sessions. See also "The Nightmares of Combat."*)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS CONT'D:

5. Combat-related trauma and its effects present unique challenges because the negative effects usually manifest at home, impacting families, and often leading to divorce. If you've been affected in this way, what were your struggles, and how was your family impacted? Consider both LN's and FN's struggles and how those struggles affected them and their families. How did you cope and what answers did you find? (*See also "The Nightmares of Combat."*)

6. Sometimes the problems warriors and families face create opportunities for God to speak into lives. In the scene, "She Should Have Left", FN tells us that God was speaking to him. How does God use difficult things in our lives to get our attention, to look to Him for help?

# AFTER-ACTION REVIEW

1. What new information did you learn about issues that contribute to marriage and family problems?
2. How were you affected by the testimonies of LN and FN? Could you relate to their experiences? In what ways?
3. If you experienced readjustment issues when you returned home, what were those issues and how did you deal with them? How might you address those issues differently in light of what you learned in this session?
4. What steps can you take now that will protect your marriage and family from the negative effects of your combat experience?

# PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. How have your family or friends been affected by your post-traumatic stress issues?

2. What were those issues and how did you deal with them? How did you respond to family members or friends?

3. Identify the top three marital or family issues that you've struggled with the most. List them here:

1.

2.

3.

4. What Key Scriptures might you use to address at least one of these issues?

5. Write down your action plan to address this issue: *(An action plan identifies the issue, one or more objectives, and one or more steps, actual things you will do to put the plan into action.)*

## REVIEW THE KEY SCRIPTURES FOR THIS SESSION

---

- Fill in the missing words:

“Who is \_\_\_\_\_ and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of \_\_\_\_\_. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. For where \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ ambition exist, there will be \_\_\_\_\_ and every vile practice. But the \_\_\_\_\_ from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.”

JAMES 3:13-14; 16-18 (ESV)

- How might God’s wisdom help you relate appropriately to your spouse and family?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- In James 3:13-14, 16-18, what are the attitudes one should avoid? List them here:

1. Bitter \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ ambition
3. \_\_\_\_\_ and be \_\_\_\_\_ to the truth

## *LETS GO DEEPER.*

---

- Review the Key Scriptures and circle all the action words. For example, Ephesians 5:22-30 tells husbands to “love” their wives.
  
- Based on your discovery, write down an action statement, that is, something you will do this week to strengthen your marriage and family.

**WHAT STARTED OFF  
AS MARITAL COUNSELING  
...BECAME THE START OF  
SOME PTSD COUNSELING.  
LN**



# SESSION SEVEN



## THEME SEVEN: HOPELESSNESS

### SESSION OVERVIEW:

The residue of war generates many existential questions and concerns that, if left unanswered, set the warrior on a downward and deadly spiral into an abyss of hopelessness. Warriors who find themselves in this place see no way out. They feel alone and isolated. Withdrawn, they lose meaningful connections with others. They've not only lost hope about the future, they've lost purpose and meaning for their lives. Buried beneath fear, anxiety, and disappointment, they search for ways to cope but without success. Unless these wounded souls find hope, their lives are over, and sadly, many commit suicide. However, there is hope for the hopeless and meaning for those who've lost it. That hope is found in Jesus Christ who guarantees that he'll raise the most desperate and lost warrior to a new life full of hope, peace, and joy.

### GROWTH OBJECTIVES

- TO UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM HOPELESSNESS IN THE WARRIOR COMMUNITY
- TO RECOGNIZE THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO FEELINGS OF HOPELESSNESS
- TO DISCOVER THE SPIRITUAL SOLUTION TO HOPELESSNESS AND LOSS OF MEANING
- TO EXPERIENCE THE HOPE THAT GOD GIVES TO THOSE WHO TRUST HIM

# KEY SCRIPTURES:

## PSALM 40:1-2 (ESV):

I waited patiently for the LORD; he inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.

## PSALM 39:7 (ESV):

And now, O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you.

## PSALM 42:5 (ESV):

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

## ISAIAH 41:10 (ESV):

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

## JEREMIAH 29:11-14 (ESV):

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

## ROMANS 15:13 (ESV):

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

## COLOSSIANS 1:3-5A (ESV):

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven.

## KEY SCRIPTURES CONT'D:

### HEBREWS 6:17-20 (ESV):

So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

### 1 PETER 1:3-5 (ESV):

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

## GROUP DISCUSSION: SCENES FOR REVIEW

**“WOUNDED SOULS”** (24:55-26:12)

**“COMPLETELY HOPELESS”** (34:28-36:25)

**“NOTHING SEEMS TO HELP”** (41:22-43:08)

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. As we have learned so far, the demands placed upon our warriors and their families are significant and sometimes overwhelming. What resources are available to these warriors and their families? Who do they turn to for help? (See *“Wounded Souls.”*)

2. Warriors and their families can rely on God. How does God speak to the myriad of painful issues such as fear, anxiety, and hopelessness that arise in the aftermath of battle? (See *Key Scriptures.*)

3. Reunions for most military members are difficult and even stressful. Everyone has expectations about the reunion. It takes constant communication and understanding to make reunions productive, leading to complete reintegration at home. However, when warriors return home with unresolved issues or begin to experience post-traumatic stress, positive and complete reintegration becomes a major hurdle. What steps can warriors and families take to mitigate potential reintegration problems? (See *“Nothing Seems to Help.”*)

4. Loss of hope, purpose, and meaning experienced by some warriors can have devastating consequences. LN almost committed suicide. His issues rocked his life and nearly devastated his family. BR asks, with a profound sense of loss and hopelessness, “Now what?” What would you say to BR? How might you use the Key Scriptures to help him see that God is there for him and others like him? (See *“Completely Hopeless.”*)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS CONT'D:

5. Feelings of isolation and the warrior's experience of physical symptoms such as sleeplessness, jumpiness, and nightmares, reflect the devastating changes war creates, changes that follow the warrior after the battle. How have you experienced these and other symptoms? How did you cope? How might God help you with these symptoms? How might a community of faith provide unconditional love and support? *(See Key Scriptures.)*

# AFTER-ACTION REVIEW

1. What new information did you learn about hopelessness?

2. How did the three scenes you reviewed from the movie impact you? Do you think General Ohmer understands the problem? Do you agree with his conclusion? Why or why not? Do you think the senior leadership of the military understands the problem? Are there other issues that need to be addressed?

3. In what ways were you able to relate to what BR was saying in the scene, “Completely Hopeless”? How pervasive do you think these issues are?

4. Can you trust God in the battle and after the battle to give you what you need to survive and thrive? Why or why not?

# PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. What does it mean to you that God is the “God of hope”?
2. To what extent do you think post-traumatic stress has spiritual answers?
3. Have you felt hopeless or experienced a deep sense of loss? How have you coped?
4. Based on the Key Scriptures, what is God saying to you about hope?



## *LETS GO DEEPER.*

---

- Please Review Romans 15:13.
  
- What does God promise to you in believing?
  
- According to Hebrews 6:17-20, how sure is the hope God provides?

**GUYS ARE STRUGGLING WITH  
A SENSE OF PURPOSE  
IN THEIR LIVES. THEY'RE SAYING,  
I DID ALL THIS AND NOW,  
NOW WHAT DO I DO? I'M LOST.  
BR**



# SESSION EIGHT



## THEME EIGHT: SURRENDER

### SESSION OVERVIEW:

The effects of combat-related trauma run deep, down to the warrior's very heart and soul. Typical interventions such as clinical treatments and group therapies are inadequate and usually ignore the spiritual dimension to trauma, issues related to guilt, profound grief, and shame among others that we've considered in this guide. In this session, you'll hear from Special Operators who discovered that God brings healing to wounded hearts as well as to hurting families. As they turned to God, trusting in him, they found hope and healing. They experienced victory over the things that had been destroying their lives. It was not about holding onto what they had, but giving everything to God—surrendering their struggles and their lives to the only One who could save them from their problems and themselves. Only as they surrendered themselves completely to him, did they experience forgiveness for their guilt, cleansing from their shame, and comfort for their grief. In turn, God gave them a new life abounding in newfound hope, purpose and meaning. He restored broken relationships and bound up the wounds of the heart, assuring a lasting and complete healing of heart and soul.

### GROWTH OBJECTIVES

- TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS TO SURRENDER TO GOD
- TO RECOGNIZE HOW GOD USES HURTS TO DRAW WARRIORS TO HIMSELF
- TO DISCOVER THE SPIRITUAL SOLUTION TO THE EFFECTS OF WAR-RELATED TRAUMA
- TO EXPERIENCE PEACE WITH GOD AND THE PEACE OF GOD
- TO KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED AND REDEEMED BY GOD

# KEY SCRIPTURES:

## PSALM 145:18-19 (ESV):

The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them.

## JEREMIAH 33:3, 6-8 (ESV):

Call to me, and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known. Behold, I will bring to it health and healing, and I will heal them and reveal to them abundance of prosperity and security. I will restore the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel, and rebuild them as they were at first. I will cleanse them from all the guilt of their sin against me, and I will forgive all the guilt of their sin and rebellion against me.

## JOHN 1:11-13 (ESV):

He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

## 1 JOHN 5:4-5 (ESV):

For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

## ACTS 16:30-31 (ESV):

Then he brought them out and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' And they said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.'

## 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-5 (ESV):

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold first to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

## KEY SCRIPTURES CONT'D:

### ROMANS 5:1-5 (ESV):

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

### HEBREWS 4:15-16 (ESV):

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

### EPHESIANS 1:7 (ESV):

In him [Christ] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.

### 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 (ESV):

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

### ROMANS 5:6-9 (ESV):

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die. But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

### JOHN 5:24 (ESV):

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

### JOHN 6:35 (ESV):

Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

## **ROMANS 10:9-13 (ESV):**

BECAUSE, IF YOU CONFESS WITH YOUR MOUTH THAT JESUS IS LORD AND BELIEVE IN YOUR HEART THAT GOD RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, YOU WILL BE SAVED. FOR WITH THE HEART ONE BELIEVES AND IS JUSTIFIED, AND WITH THE MOUTH ONE CONFESSES AND IS SAVED. FOR THE SCRIPTURE SAYS, 'EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME.' FOR THERE IS NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN JEW AND GREEK; FOR THE SAME LORD IS LORD OF ALL, BESTOWING HIS RICHES ON ALL WHO CALL ON HIM. FOR 'EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.

## GROUP DISCUSSION: SCENES FOR REVIEW

---

**“GOD HAD BROKEN ME DOWN”** (43:49-44:19)

**“IT’S JUST A DIFFERENT KIND OF WAR”** (44:20-45:15)

**“A HOLISTIC APPROACH”** (52:39-53:07)

**“HE CHANGED ME”** (53:11-58:25)

**“I WANT YOU TO SURRENDER TO ME”** (45:54-48:28)

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The battles don't end when the warrior returns home. They may be different but no less lethal. But God can use them to get your attention. In the scene "God had Broken Me Down," LN came to realize that God was there for him when he found himself at the "end of his rope". How has God been there for you when faced with similar battles? Or, what might God be saying to you in the midst of your struggles?

2. Your life might be a complete mess. You feel broken and ashamed. You struggle with guilt over things you've done and things you've seen. You may be struggling with self-doubt, relationship failures, and a host of other issues you don't really care to talk about. These were the things LN, TY, and FN struggled with as well. You might think like FN that you'll call on God when you get your life straightened out. But that'll never happen. What's keeping you from calling on God now and surrendering to him?

3. The enemy is all around. The enemy may be ongoing grief, regret, financial problems, nightmares, or loss of meaning, purpose or hope. The enemy has many faces. Warriors, like a lot of other people, try to soothe their pain with alcohol, drugs, illicit relationships, or anything else. These things are not the answer. The way to defeat the enemy is not surrendering to the enemy but to the One who has the power to remove these things from your life. How might surrendering yourself to God prove to be a sign of strength and not weakness? How has the testimonies of those you've heard from in the scenes you reviewed helped your understand that God is there for you, to deliver you from the things that torment you?

4. In the scene, "A Holistic Approach," General Ohmer says we need a holistic approach to address the problems of post-traumatic stress. Later in that scene, he declares the solution is in trusting God. Do you agree with his assessment? Why or why not?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS CONT'D:

5. Clinical and morality-based solutions are not sufficient to address the wounds of the soul. Human beings are also spiritual beings with spiritual needs. The wounds of war often reveal the real wounds of the heart that inevitably relate to sin. Christ, who also suffered greatly, understands the wounds of the soul and is qualified to heal the warrior's heart. Review the Key Scriptures. Can you identify how Jesus Christ is qualified to rescue the wounded warrior?

6. What does God promise to those who are willing to surrender their problems and themselves to God? (*See "He Changed Me" and Key Scriptures.*)

7. What has Christ done for the warrior and for all people? What does God require in order for a warrior to surrender himself/herself to God? Are there any conditions?



# PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. Ask yourself: “Have I considered Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as the solution for my problems?”

2. What did Jesus Christ do for you?

3. What does it mean to put your trust in someone?

4. Have you ever put your trust completely in God? Have you ever placed your faith in Jesus Christ, who died for you?

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PLACE YOUR FAITH IN CHRIST AND RECEIVE FORGIVENESS FOR YOUR SINS, YOU MAY USE THE FOLLOWING PRAYER TO EXPRESS THE DESIRE OF YOUR HEART:**

Jesus, today I take an oath to Your kingdom, I enlist to follow and serve You the rest of my days. I fully recognize the many decisions that I have made, dishonor You—many of them you call sin.

I understand these sins lead to death—death that is eternal and will keep me from experiencing joy and peace with You.

I understand I do not deserve Your grace.

However, I've learned You have an overwhelming and immense love for me, to the point You launched the ultimate rescue mission for my life. When the enemy ambushed me, You responded by sending a commander to lead a quick reaction force to save me.

***His name is Jesus.***

I recognize that in the battle, he gave his life for me, his actions of valor appeared on a cross. This sacrifice paid for my sins. Jesus died for me. However, death could not keep him—he won that battle. He rose from the dead on the third day, and today is seated at the right hand of God the Father, praying for me.

Today, I recognize Jesus as King, Savior, Son of God and the commander of the universe who holds all power in the palm of his hand. I believe, by surrendering my life today, I become a new person, a kingdom warrior in pursuit of bringing the message of hope and purpose to a lost and broken world.

***Amen.***

## REVIEW THE KEY SCRIPTURES FOR THIS SESSION

---

- Please complete this verse:

“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the \_\_\_\_\_ which I preached to you, which also you \_\_\_\_\_ and in which you stand, by which also you are \_\_\_\_\_, if you \_\_\_\_\_ fast that word which I preached to you— unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ \_\_\_\_\_ for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was \_\_\_\_\_, and that He \_\_\_\_\_ again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.”

I CORINTHIANS 15:1-5 (NKJV)

- Can you identify the three facts of the gospel, which Paul preached?

1.

2.

3.

- According to Romans 10:9-10, what does require from us to be saved from our sins?



**BUT THE REALITY OF IT, IS THAT  
IM SURRENDERING TO GOD,  
NOT SURRENDERING TO THE ENEMY...  
ITS NOT A SIGN OF WEAKNESS,  
ITS A SIGN OF STRENGTH.**

**AB**



# A CALL TO ACTION: DR DAMON FRIEDMAN

The attacks on 9/11 marked a turning point in our national history. Since then, 2.7 million men and women have deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan in support of the war on terror. On that fateful September day, 2,977 American lives were lost at the World Trade Center in New York, on a farmer's field in Pennsylvania, and at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. We've been fighting the enemy of our country for over fifteen years, and it doesn't look like the war is ending anytime soon.

Union Army General William Tecumseh Sherman once said, *"It is only those who have never fired a shot nor heard the shrieks and groans of the wounded who cry aloud for blood, more vengeance, more desolation. War is hell."* How right he was. The effects of combat are wide and far reaching. Besides the physical and social devastation, war affects generations, touching many lives and affecting each warrior in unique and personal ways. The only commonality between all warriors is that no one leaves war unscathed.

Many veterans know exactly what General Sherman was talking about. Unfortunately, many have lost hope in life and taken their own lives. A Department of Defense study conducted in 2012 revealed that over twenty veterans commit suicide everyday. This is ten times greater than the loss of life in combat. Regrettably these statistics not only affect service members, families feel the effects of war as well. For example, incidences of domestic violence among returning service members have increased dramatically and rates of divorce have skyrocketed. War is hell.

The Veterans Administration (VA) has implemented numerous programs to address the issues of returning service members. They've made a concerted effort to help our veterans. But much more needs to be done, especially in the area of spirituality. Failing to address the spiritual component is leaving a gaping hole in the overall treatment of our warriors. Our personal conviction at SOF Missions, which solves a plethora of issues, is based on full surrender to God. When a warrior comes to the place of surrender, she or he realizes the battle can't be won alone. The enemy, in whatever form it takes—post-traumatic stress, alcoholism, or abuse, is just too strong.

**Surrender is the moment when a battle-hardened warrior takes a knee to something greater—bows to the One who holds all power and might, the Creator of the universe and the Living God. This is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, the Warrior-King and Savior of humankind. Through Him, warriors experience healing and find lasting peace. He is the only One who can take the guilt, anger, and bitterness away, and bring a person into a place of hope, peace, and lasting rest.**

In 2014, I attended a senior leader's conference in California. While there, I met Pastor Greg Laurie, Dwight Thompson, and the entire Harvest America team. After sharing the devastating statistic of over twenty veterans committing suicide a day, they urged SOF Missions to spearhead a movement and launch a film that could bring hope and purpose back into the veteran community. Without delay our organization took action. Three years later, our vision became a reality.

We have made it our goal to bring national awareness to the combat struggles that veterans experience such as moral and spiritual injury and PTSD. This film has been our main weapon, reaching hundreds of thousands of people. On September 11th, 2016, the film was pre-released in a few venues in Southern California. We were blown away by the overwhelming positive response. Over twenty-five thousand people saw the film and heard the message of our fearless Leader and Commander who fights for us and is in the business of saving lives. Since then, SURRENDER ONLY TO ONE has won or been nominated for awards in over six national and international film festivals, and we are ramping up for our official launch on September 11, 2018.

## The Heart of a Warrior

Our forefathers, those legends living during the time of the American Revolution, were hard-core men—I mean bad to the bone! They were the Spartans of that era, godly men who understood the power of God. They also understood the odds as they faced the most powerful military in their world—the army and navy of the British Empire. In battle terms the colonists were no match for the British. The shocking truth is that they didn't care—they chose to fight. It was liberty over tyranny, death to slavery. The American Revolution was a bloody and gut wrenching war. But by some miracle, despite numerous losses, the colonists were eventually victorious. I don't know how they won, but they did. I believe it was by sheer grit and heart, and through the power of a relentless God. Today, America is one of the freest countries in the world—few nations have ever known such liberties. But the cost of those liberties is great, paid in blood by millions of men and women who have given their lives so that the rest of us might be free to enjoy the liberties of a free nation: freedom to worship, to speak our mind, to choose our livelihood or to live where we want.

In Numbers 14:9; Joshua says to the people of Israel, *“the Lord is with us! Don't be afraid...”* The truth is, God has called you to be a warrior, to engage in a righteous fight—against evil. But in order to win, you have to be prepared. You must learn to train and have the heart of a warrior. Then, you must take action—fight! Theodore Roosevelt once said:

*“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”*

The Man in the Arena (23 April, 1910)

Today, men are failing to be warriors because they won't fight. They choose to be one of those cold and timid souls. Why? I believe it is because they are ill-prepared and lack the confidence to serve. We live in an entitled generation, one that seeks immediate gratification and wants everything for nothing. What is the result of this sense of entitlement? It is a weak generation. Where are our Spartan warriors? Where is the courage to do what is right? A Spartan is a warrior who is ready to defend a nation. The Spartan is a freedom fighter and a liberator of the oppressed. If you ask me—we need more warriors today! We need warriors to fight for freedom and liberation.

Will you fight for what is right? Will you fight for God, your family, your community, and your country? Will you be the warrior God has called you to be? Are you willing to step into the arena? Will you be the man whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood or the cold and timid soul who didn't know victory or defeat? Today, in a nation going south—God is calling you! He is looking for warriors that are faithful to Him. 2 Chronicles 16:9a says: *“For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.”* There's a lost and broken world out there, and they need Spartan Warriors.

Be strong at heart. Prepare mentally. Train physically. Get in the fight!

Godspeed,



F. Damon Friedman



SOF Missions is a military and veteran's service organization made up of veterans, health care professionals, contractors, group leaders, missionaries, volunteers and everyday people who are passionate about making a global impact for God's Kingdom. SOF Missions creates awareness of the severe challenges our veterans are experiencing. We develop support groups to help veterans who struggle with PTS and PTSD, and sponsor veterans through an intensive, personalized program that provides a holistic path of wellness. Our goal is to help warriors know God, the Commander of the Universe, and recognize their ultimate purpose in this life.

Please visit [www.SOFMissions.com](http://www.SOFMissions.com) to check out the resources we make available to military members, veterans, and their families.



The Warrior's Journey is an interactive online resource for military members, veterans and their families. It presents the message of faith as a path for them to find wholeness in everyday life. In cooperation with other military partnerships, foundations, and non-profits, TWJ presents a wide range of resources that cover the unique issues that they encounter in service and at home. VISION of The Warrior's Journey is that warriors and their families will live in wholeness and be equipped to navigate the issues of life. MISSION of The Warrior's Journey is to help warriors and their families discover and grow in their journey with God by providing contextual opportunities to participate in an active faith community of believers. STRATEGY of The Warrior's Journey is to interact online with warriors and their families in finding wholeness in daily life by searching, presenting, connecting, growing, and belonging.

Please visit [www.TheWarriorsJourney.org](http://www.TheWarriorsJourney.org) to check out the resources we make available to military members, veteran and their families.