

STRIVING FOR THE COMPLETE MAN – Part 2

INTRODUCTION

By A.D. 80, gladiator battles in arenas had evolved from freestyle fighting into a well-organized blood sport. Fighters were placed in classes based on their record, skill level and experience.

A **gladiator** (from Latin *gladius*, “sword”) was an armed warrior who entertained audiences in the Roman Republic and Roman Empire in violent confrontations with other gladiators, wild animals, and condemned criminals.

Arena – from the Latin word *harena* which is translated as ‘sand, sand-strewn place of combat’

This month, we are beginning an exciting new phase in our Men’s Ministry. Today, I continue speaking to the STBC men in the second part of a two-part series titled:

STRIVING FOR THE COMPLETE MAN

READ Col 1:28-29

Paul’s strategy is twofold:

- 1) to make God’s Word fully **known**
- 2) to make God’s people fully **grown**

So That: We may present every **San Tan Bible Church man** complete in Christ.

We want our STBC men to grow as mature developed sons of God. We don’t want to be stunted runts.

We don’t want to continue on as babes in Christ.

We are not satisfied with entry level Christianity.

We are at not merely concerned with getting in the doorway of salvation by the hair of our chinny-chin-chin.

The Word of God always shines its spotlight of truth on all believers. But the particular application and exhortation in these two sermons are directed toward the STBC men.

Proposition: As we launch into our new Men's Ministry, we will be embarking on an in depth look at God's man in 6 arenas:

- I. God's Man in the **Mirror**
- II. God's Man in the **Word**
- III. God's Man in the **Home**
- IV. God's Man in the **Church**
- V. God's Man in **Work**
- VI. God's Man in the **World**

Review from the first part of this two-part series which I began two weeks ago:

The **1st Arena**, ... God's Man in the **Mirror**

Point – This is who you are when no one is looking.

Who you really are. → What are your daily disciplines?

The **2nd Arena**, ... God's Man in the **Word**

Point – Men deep in the Word of God – Expository men!

History is shaped on the backs of men of discipline, men of the Word. Names etched in the annals of history: Luther, Calvin, Owens, Bunyan, Edwards, Spurgeon, Tozer, Lloyd-Jones

Illustration – Think of Calvin and Luther. The reason why Calvin and Luther were used so mightily by God → they were **expository men!** They systematically studied and taught through books of the Bible.

Calvin came back to his church in Geneva after a five-year exile and picked up the next verse from where he had left off!

At the heart of any and all discipleship → the *sine qua non*, the **irreducible minimum** is we proclaim Christ!

Today we continue with the next four arenas:

The **3rd Arena**, ...

III. God's Man in the Home

Point – The most basic and fundamental unit of society is the **family**.

Point – God created marriage. God looked at man in his singleness and said it is not good. God created man male and female. The most sacred of institutions at the human level.

Marriage is a gift from God. Marriage is a commitment made with God and made with each other

The illustration of marriage from the beginning to the end of the Bible:

- From **Gen 1:28** – “God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”” (The very first words from God to man)
- To **Rev 21:2** – “And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.”
- The whole book of **Song of Solomon** is devoted to marriage – **8:7** – “Many waters cannot quench love, nor will rivers overflow it”
- **Eccl 9:9** – “Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life, and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun.”
- **Heb 13:4a** – “Marriage is to be held in honor among all” – usually means “precious” in the New Testament
- **1 Cor 3:12** – “gold, silver, precious stones” – same word that is translated as ‘honor’ in Hebrews

- **1 Pet 1:19** – “with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood* of Christ”

Illustration – Marriage is an ocean of deep unseen wonders. How sad that many people today treat it like a backyard swimming pool for lounging around as long as we feel like it.

Far too many do not treat marriage like an ocean of wonders to be explored and enjoyed but instead treat it like a mud pool to wade and wallow in.

God designed marriage to be a *unique* display of His glory. Husband and wife are bound by covenant into the closest possible relationship for life.

Application – Your marriage is a testimony to the relationship between Christ and His bride, the church. Your marriage will either tell the truth about that relationship, or it will tell a lie. No commitment you can make is as solemn or as official as the one you make to your husband or wife in the covenant of marriage.

Illustration – A **braid** appears to contain only two strands of hair. But it is impossible to create a braid with only two strands. If the two could be put together at all, they would quickly unravel. What looks like two strands require a third. The third strand, though not immediately evident, keeps the strands tightly woven.

Application – In the same way, God’s presence in a Christian marriage, like the third strand in a braid, holds husband and wife together.

Application – Whatever will bring the most joy and spiritual blessing to your wife, just do it. You will know when there is something that matters to her. This is not brain surgery.

➔ **Sacrificial** love and **nourishing** love

Application - Sacrificial love and nourishing love ARE...
giving up your desires, goals, plans for her needs and desires

The 2 best gifts to give your wife:

- 1) an unwavering walk with God
- 2) an unshakeable confidence in the sovereignty of God

Point – Defend your **wife**. Defend your **children**.
Your role as **husband** and **father**

Nourishing love does NOT ... *focus on behavior*

Provide rules and guidelines for your children, but these rules should not be a noose that strangles them.

If you concentrate all your energies on correcting external behavior, you will end up training a hypocrite.

Nourishing Love ... *lives out the Gospel before the child*

Illustration – 1 Sam 13:7 – “all the people followed him trembling”

- Israel is weak because her king is a weak, fearful man

Illustration – 1 Sam 17:48 – “Then it happened when the Philistine rose and came and drew near to meet David, that David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine”

Application – Saul focused on the size of the enemy.
David focused on the size of God.

Application – Your goal as a father is to live in such a way that your children see what God the Father is like. Your children should see a reflection of the heavenly Father in you.

Application – Teach your child to **seek** the Lord by precept and example. Let them see you **sacrifice**. Let them see your **discipline**.

What a great joy it is to have son or daughter come stumbling in at 4:30am and catch you in your quiet time to curl up in their blanket beside you.

Be the same at home, church, work, sports
→ avoid hypocrisy like the plague!

Nourishing Love ... *shows affection*

Application – Listen to them. Give them your time.

Application – Provide an atmosphere of love and confidence

Nourishing Love ... *disciplines lovingly*

Eph 6:4 – “fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

Controlled and consistent discipline based on clear principles creates an atmosphere where children will flourish.

Discipline more for attitude rather than for action

Discipline for → disobedience, disrespect, dishonesty

Lack of discipline == Lack of love

Prov 13:24 – “He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.”

Nourishing Love ... *focuses on the heart*

Your top priority as a parent is to be an evangelist in your home.

Illustration – Why did you lie/steal/etc? Where did that come from? What do you need? → You need a new heart

Application – Father, you give your children the Gospel:

- 1) To **break** their hard hearts and
- 2) To **heal** their broken hearts.

Men, have you failed in the past?

→ today is the 1st day of the rest of your life

- What can you do right now?
- What can you do tomorrow?

You are replaceable at your job, on your team, even in your church ministry. You are not replaceable as your wife's husband ... as your children's father.

The 4th Arena, ...

IV. God's Man in the Church

Point – What is discipleship?

- Discipleship is inviting someone to imitate your life.
- It is helping someone to live each day, in light of the final day.

Christianity is **personal**. But it is not **private**.

If you have been reconciled to Christ, you have been called to the ministry of reconciliation. If you have been made a disciple, then you are commanded to make disciples.

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|---|
| You have to humble yourself to be disciple ... and ... you have to humble yourself to disciple someone else. |
|---|

Proof – **Col 1:29** – “And for this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me”

“**labor**” – great energy: physical, mental, and spiritual
“**striving**” → avgwni,zomai –this Greek word is where we get the English word “agonize” – it is used for **warfare, fighting**
John 18:36 – “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews;”

Proclaiming Christ is a struggle. It is a battle. It is a war.

Col 2:5 – “even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.” → orderly regimen of soldiers
→ an army of disciplined soldiers

Spurgeon – *“I find that marching and quick marching are much easier to God’s warriors than standing still.”*

Get busy! Be about discipleship and being used by God.

Prov 27:6 – “faithful are the wounds of a friend.”

Some people won’t want to admonish others because they think I’m not doing a very good job with the plank in my eye. How can I go to my brother about the speck in his? However, the ministry of admonishment calls upon every Christian. No exceptions.

Application – Don’t hate your brother by hiding instruction from him.

The **5th Arena**, ...

V. God’s Man in **Work**

Point – How should work be viewed??

- As a curse or blessing?
- To be avoided or embraced?
- A hindrance to ministry or ministry itself?
- Is it to be tolerated by God or ordained by God?

Point – Work is an: ordinance, gift, ministry, mission field

Proof – **Eph 6:5-8**; Col 3:22-25; 1 Tim 6:1-2; Tit 2:9-10; 1 Pet 2:18-21

Your witness at work is the testimony of your life

Prov 3:4 – “you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and man.

1 Tim 3:7 – “he must have a good reputation with those outside the church,”

If we understand work as a mission field, then what manner of men ought we to be??

How should we conduct ourselves on this mission??

Turn to: Prov 6:4-11

Prov 26:1-11 – Blistering language for the fool

Prov 26:12-16 – A sluggard is worse off than a fool (vv. 13-16 define as sluggard, v. 16 especially)

Remember, sleep is overrated ... coffee, however, is not ☺

Illustration – Flight back yesterday afternoon was at risk of being completely cancelled. I didn’t want to run the risk of getting stranded in California since I am preaching this morning, so we bailed, rented a car and drove back last night. I only had 2 hours of sleep. → You have heard me say before ... the coffee ministry is one of the most important. Perhaps you mistakenly thought I was joking ☺

The **6th Arena**, ...

VI. God’s Man in the **World**

Point – In the world but not of the world.

Proof – **Phil 3:13** – “Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead,”

Illustration– “The man who runs in a race must not be interested in the landscape. If he begins to look at the mountains and the charm of the flowers in the hedgerows, he will not win the race; he must be intent on one thing only. To win the race.

Martyn-Lloyd Jones gave the illustration of a farmer who was driving his car along a narrow road on his way to visit a farm, when suddenly he came upon a flock of sheep and a sheep dog. His problem was how to get past these sheep. Then he described the amazing way in which the sheep dog dealt with the situation, how he kept and had his eyes upon the flock and made his calculations, running backwards and forwards.

“But the interesting thing was that a little terrier belonging to a nearby house came out and tried to pick a quarrel with the sheep dog, coming to him and barking at him. The writer of the article pointed out the magnificence of that sheep dog that completely ignored the yapping terrier. He knew he had a great job to do - he had his sheep to get past the car - so he did not pay any attention to the terrier: ‘One thing I do,’ said the sheep dog.

That is the way in which Christians are to work. They don’t look at these distractions - the world is full of distracting interests, some of them legitimate, some not. But those who want to be like the Apostle Paul don’t look at them - only at one thing!”

Application – We must invest ourselves in discipleship. Must wisely and benevolently admonish one another.

We are to be teachable.
We are to be truth-filled.

To be teachable – does not mean we are to be slaves to every legalist with the weakest conscience. But we should be like the wise man in Proverbs who rings out the kernel of truth. He hunts down the benefits that can be gleaned even from legalist admonition.

Psalm 141:5 – “Let the righteous smite me in kindness and reprove me; it is oil upon the head; do not let my head refuse it,”

Spurgeon – “Oil breaks no heads, and rebuke does no man any harm; rather, as oil refreshes and perfumes, so does

reproof when fitly taken sweeten and renew the heart. My friend must love me well if he will tell me of my faults.”

To be truth-filled – There are distinct academic and pedagogical overtones the very word disciple. There is no disciple without a teacher.

Teach believers to know the truth to practice the truth and to obey the truth.

People often want every truth, the doctrines of grace, microwavable, serve up ready-made and easily digestible.

They often want to stay as far away as possible from the deep end of the theological pool.

Like little toddlers with the little blue life vest and the inflatable arm wings in the pee only wading pool.

Calvin – *“Unless there is knowledge present, it is not God that we worship, but a specter or ghost.”*

We want mind and heart; truth and love; light and heat.

CONCLUSION

Thomas Brooks – Precious Remedies Against Satan’s Devices – *“Know that it is not the knowing [man], nor the talking [man], nor the reading man—but the doing man, that at last will be found the happiest man.”*

Accountability is the friend of integrity. Your advancement in grace and knowledge and sanctification will be directly related to the horsepower of the men around you.

We are praying for men, some of whom have never attended or connected with other men in the church, to step out and pursue the prize → “we may present every man complete in Christ.”

Join us, Saturday morning, March 16th, for Men's Ministry Kickoff – at 6am, right here in the cafeteria.

Theodore Roosevelt – *“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, and comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; who does actually try to do the deed; who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotion and spends himself in a worthy cause; who, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly. Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though checkered by failure than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much because they live in the gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat.”*