



▶ Choosing the Best

by Dan Schaffer

All of us, as Christians, struggle at some level with sin. (1 John 1:8-9) But, recently I have found myself struggling with an even subtler enemy—the temptation to choose the *good things* in serving God at the expense of the *best* He is offering me.

what specifically God has called us to? I doubt there is any follower of Christ that wouldn't want to know God's specific calling for their life. *So, why do we have such a difficult time finding it?*

I believe that the answer is illustrated in Luke 10. Both sisters were acquainted with Christ and both of them highly valued their relationship with Jesus. Yet, one was focused on *being* with Him and the other on *doing* things for Him.

In Luke 10:38-42 we find that Christ exposed this dilemma. Mary and her sister, Martha, had invited Jesus and His followers into their home. This choice burdened Martha with the perceived responsibility of hospitality. She was focused on the details, the *good things*, which could be done for her guests, but resentful that Mary was not helping her accomplish this good and worthy task.

This answer is further described in 1 John 2 where John gives us a clear description of the mature spiritual man. The mature man *knows* God intimately (in the Hebrew culture, the word "know" was used to describe sexual intimacy). It is through this intimacy that he is beginning to know God in His completeness and is reproducing the passionate pursuit of God in others. To fully accept and engage God's calling upon my life I must be (1) focused on Him and, (2) beginning to move towards a deeper, more intimate relationship with Him. But, if I am not walking with Him and allowing His heart to transform mine and be reproduced in me, I will not be able to stay close enough to Him to see His best for me.

When she brought this complaint to Jesus He patiently responded, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen that which is better and it will not be taken away from her." I find myself caught in this dilemma many times. There are so many good and needful opportunities to choose from, but if I accept the responsibility for the good instead of choosing the better or best, I, like Martha, miss out on the most important opportunity.

For the Church, is building men into spiritual fathers the best focus? As pastors and church leaders, what are the good things that are keeping you from focusing on the development of building spiritual fathers who are able to reproduce the passionate pursuit of God in others?

Years ago, I remember reading the account of a man who had spent much of his life in Christian ministry. He had been working hard for God and now he was physically, emotionally and spiritually exhausted—feeling hopeless and joyless. Have you ever felt that way? What was wrong with this picture?

I remember when Harvey, a dear brother of mine, sent me a letter, a number of years after we had both left Promise Keepers. This letter clearly communicated the principle of choosing the "best." He said, "My joy has doubled, no it has tripled since I have learned to work *with* God instead of trying to work *for* Him." *Will you begin today to search out that calling and begin to experience the freedom and joy that comes with doing only God's best and rejecting the calls of the many good things that we could be doing.*

God revealed to him that freedom, joy, and peace were found only in knowing God intimately and doing only what God had called him to.

We must ask the same question as this man, *how do we find out*

Thoughts from a Woman's Heart

No matter your age or how "together" you may be by the world's standards, *Spiritual Fathers: Restoring the Reproductive Church* will be a challenge to become the full man that God sees you becoming with time, work and dedication to achieve his goal. The path Dan Schaffer has outlined is truly for the committed and for those who can envision the bigger picture of how today transcends to tomorrow. The book is convicting and straightforward. The best part is that Dan provides a detailed roadmap in how to achieve the goal. It's easy to identify a problem and criticize without providing a solution, but Dan *has* the solutions in how to reach this goal. The effort men put in *now* will have lasting effects for future generations.

in order to obtain the goal (particularly, beginning with the earthly father/son relationship Dan discusses). In order to go forward with God in a healthy way, and to see him as a loving Father, the wounds or disappointments from the earthly father/son relationship must first be worked through. Though this can be painful, I felt that this was one of the most valuable points Dan made. He begins with the roots of that earthly, significant relationship, and says that you may need to *go back* in order to *move forward* with God. A healed foundation must be present so that the right relationship and perception of God can be formed or reestablished. This is an excellent, vital point for any man in a relationship with God, and I like how Dan says, "First things first."

Not only did this book motivate me to pass it on to my husband and pastor, but stood as a resource of clear instruction and hope in how men can spiritually reach their fullest potential; and by doing so, they are giving their children every opportunity to develop and attain that realization as well.

This book convicted me. The observations on present-day church conditions, backed up by statistics/facts, were insightful yet disheartening. And I enjoyed reading the touching stories about Dan's encounters with men, both here and abroad, regarding their spiritual transformations. *It only seems fair that the next book should be for the other side of the equation—Spiritual Mothers!*

The church has a great deal to look forward to by investing in their men and seeing to it that the future of the church and its children will continue to thrive collectively and individually—not just under the direction of a group of elders or a single pastor. Some of the work may be intense, but certainly necessary

Written by Linda Tang
Proofreader for *Spiritual Fathers Book*

Personal Prayer Requests:

- Strength and wisdom for Ken and Bonnie to balance family and ministry responsibilities.
- Wisdom and direction for Dan'l as he looks at taking a pastoral position (serving on the weekends) in a church about an hour from his home.
- Strength, health and wisdom for Dan and Jan as they move further into 2006.
- Last few months have had some health issues for Rick but have also been spiritually rich! Pray for healing and continued moving of the Spirit.

Ministry Prayer Requests:

- Clear direction for Building Brothers as we get the message out that God has entrusted to us.
- The resources and strength necessary to carry the message to the church.
- Health as a team as we've all been fighting staying healthy.
- God will bless with financial resources in 2006 to assist in taking the ministry to the next level.

BUILDING BROTHERS™

PMB 337 • 11757 W. Ken Caryl Ave., #F
Littleton, Colorado 80127



Ministry Update

▶ **Building Brothers Leadership Training**

May 11-13, The Building Brothers Leadership Training (formerly Facilitators Training) travels to Hartville, Ohio. We will be partnering with Suffield Fellowship Church as we introduce this training into this region of the country. Please download the brochure at www.buildingbrothers.org and share it with pastors or ministry leaders who might be able to attend these three life-changing days. Also, this represents a great opportunity to design a model that can be used to host interactive seminars all over the country!

▶ **Spiritual Fathers Book**

Like the birthing of a baby, the book has finally arrived! Please go to our website www.buildingbrothers.org to see a preview. Order your copy today!

▶ **Kansas City, Missouri**

March 12, Ken and Dan will be presenting Building Brothers Phase II Training in two Church of God (7th Day) congregations: Kansas City, Missouri and Topeka, Kansas. We continue to hear great reports of how this process is drawing these men closer to Christ and to each other.

▶ **Wister, Oklahoma**

March 18-19, Ken and Dan will be teaching Building Brothers Phase IV Training at Wister Church of God (7th Day) Church. Pastor Chip Hinds continues to be amazed at the transformation that he's personally witnessing in the lives of his men.

▶ **Denver, Colorado**

April 15, Dan and Ken will be presenting Building Brothers Phase IV Training at Outside the Walls Ministries. They have a tremendous group of men who have been spiritually on fire since starting this process.

▶ **NCMM Leaders Meeting**

April 21, Dan has been invited to host two workshops at the NCMM (National Coalition of Men's Ministries) Spring Conference that will be held here in Denver. Pray that this will be a good opportunity to connect in a meaningful way with pastors and leaders from around the country.

▶ **Page, Arizona**

April 22, Dan will be presenting Building Brothers Phase III Training at Faith Bible Chapel. There continues to be exuberance for this process within all the men involved and the church congregation.

▶ **United Methodist Men**

April 22-23, Dan will be traveling to California to teach Building Brothers Phase I Training to 12-15 congregations within the United Methodist Church. This will begin a year-long pilot process within this denomination. Pray that God will protect and bless this movement that is taking place through these leaders.

▶ **Germany/Hungary**

August 24-September 5, Dan will be traveling to further our partnership with CMT (Christ-like Man Training). The focus of these two weeks will continue the training required to launch the Building Brothers year-long process in early 2006. The first part of his trip will be spent in south Germany and the second in Hungary. Our hearts continue to be aligned with our brothers in these two countries.

PMB 337 • 11757 W. Ken Caryl Ave. #F • Littleton, CO 80127 • Phone/Fax 303-972-2775 • www.buildingbrothers.org

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