

4 Tips to Aim Your Sword at the Enemy

Let me share with you some of the characteristics of men that I have seen who have their sword facing the enemy, alert like Gideon's men at the water (Judg. 7).

1. Commit to Be Clean

A man aiming his sword will one day in his life make a commitment to be clean. While speaking at singles and youth conferences, I often have young men and women come to the altar to commit their sexuality to Christ.

The Bible says, "For as [a man] thinketh (yes, I like the word thinketh) in his heart so is he" (Proverbs 23:7a, KJV). As a psychologist, I know we are today the sum of our commitments and the discipline to keep them. As a man, if I commit to something, I will attract the people and things I need to fulfill that commitment.

When men commit to a clean sexual life, it attracts people, ideas and strategies such as accountability software, accountability, partners, groups and materials to help them stay clean. The commitment you have in your heart already may be why God brought these people to your life so you can keep the commitment you made to Him. Remember, for more than 30 years, I worked with men who dropped their sword and then picked it up. Your clean commitment clears your vision, and you will begin to see threats to this commitment to stay clean. Prepare for them, and have victory and a clear conscience after winning those battles.

2) Have a Plan

When you carry a sword, you realize you are at war. The enemy is taking out more than 50 percent of our men and our male

Christian leaders. I remember having to fly out of town after my pastor fell. I sat on the plane with the proverbial napkin and wrote down the names of my own pastors and their wives who had fallen specifically to sexual sin. I have been a Christian for over 30 years, and I counted exactly 50 percent of my pastors or their wives who fell publicly to sexual sin.

This is a war! Warriors have a plan for their various environments. Let's start at the home of a warrior. The internet is blocked, because he doesn't want a porn store attacking him or his family. There are clear boundaries and accountability around the cell phone and Facebook (real warriors have little time for this anyway). Accountability software reports are sent to his wife and accountability partner.

They have a plan for work: Who they can go to lunch with, their conversations. They also have a plan for when they travel or when their spouse travels.

They have a plan for the opposite sex in general: hugs, touch and praise. They even have a proactive plan for entertainment: television, magazines, movies, wherever they are. They are thinking ahead of the devil, not thinking about what they can get away with, but rather how they can get away from the filth of the world.

3) Honest and Accountable

A plan is great if it is implemented. A man whose sword is aimed at the enemy is honest and accountable. He lives in an environment of temptation. If he opens an email and sees something inappropriate, he tells somebody immediately. He cooperates with his wife, as to what things she wants to know (I suggest behaviors), and has a man or men he tells even dumb thoughts, as well.

When you're at war, you keep your sword up by being honest and accountable. A man who has a commitment and a plan is honest

and accountable, and will be much more likely to be successful. If he drops his sword at a lust level, and then gets honest and accountable, he is less likely to drop it on the sin level. He would have had to choose to lie and be unaccountable to get that far down the road.

4) Consequences

Here is an idea that can literally quash inappropriate behaviors if you have struggled. Some men don't mind being honest about the occasional, or even regular slip of lust, porn or masturbation, but they don't stop these behaviors. They do what I call "puke and go," and continue to return to the vomit of their unclean behavior.

The man in this situation may have a sex addiction or just needs to put consequences in his life for his behaviors. Most guys struggle because of classical conditioning. You may remember Pavlov's dog: ring the bell, feed the dog? Well, let me introduce you to what I call, "Stop peeing on the carpet." When a dog pees on the carpet, you spank it, and it stops, because peeing on the carpet is now associated with pain.

Adding a consequence also can change your behavior. If you look at something, or do something inappropriate, have a consequence set up and do it.

A consequence is something that hurts you. The consequence has to be painful to you. If you ride a Harley, it stays parked, if you choose to drop your sword. These consequences are shared with your wife, accountability person or group. If you do something requiring a consequence, then do the consequence.

I find that when men, especially those who have struggled in the past, add this layer of consequences, it keeps their sword up and ready for battle. The men who in the past have lost this battle for decades, change into men who are protectors of those they love, due to the humility of consequences.

You absolutely deserve to be clean your entire life. The fact that you are reading this article, shows you are most likely acutely aware which way your sword is currently facing. Congratulations if you have a plan and are working it. If you need to switch the direction of your sword, do so. Start with a commitment; tell a man; get accountable and honest, so you can be clean your entire life.

God's Spirit is calling out to men in every nation to lift up their swords and fight. He has called you to be the protector of those you love, not a perpetrator of pain. It's men who will protect their families, churches and cultures. It's men in the last decades who have dropped their swords, making our church impotent to address a culture getting sicker by the day.

Men are the solution God has chosen. When the world is in trouble, He sends a man. You are that man; look at your sword's direction. Listen to the call of God in your life. Look at your wife and children's faces and their futures that largely depend on you. Will you stay unclean and indulge yourself in a little temporary pleasure and risk their future as you fertilize lust, sin and death?

I don't believe for a minute that you are that kind of a boy-man. I believe there is a man inside of you who wants to look at your wife (or future wife) and children's eyes and from the deepest part of your being, with every cell in your body, say the word "clean"! As you lift your sword and fight the good fight, fight to win and be the patriarch of the blessing of purity God has ordained for you to be.

Remember, it's not the scars or even the failures you have had in the battles, it's winning the war that counts. Our God is calling out the warrior in all of us today to be His solution for the condition of this unclean world. So aim your sword for our God and our families; let's take back our land and hear our God say, "Clean!" {eoa}

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