

What Struggling Men Have in Common

Working with men is my vocation, and I love it. However, every day I hear from men whose lives, marriages, and families are falling apart or barely hanging on.

Often it's because of emotional neglect—chasing some dream that didn't include their families. Other times it's because of mishandling money, substance abuse, pornography, prostitution, lapses in integrity, and so on.

While there is no common denominator for why men fail, most of these men do tend to have one thing in common. If they are Christians, it is uncanny how most of these men were part of a small group they no longer attend. As a result, they have become isolated.

Isolation is the devil's No. 1 strategy. Why? Because it's so effective. We all know from the National Geographic Channel that the lion never goes after the herd. The lion always attacks the stray ... the one who has become isolated. That's because every predator understands the strategic value of isolation—whether in the animal kingdom, human traffickers, or sexual predators.

Men are particularly vulnerable to this strategy of isolation. The reasons why men are so vulnerable is a different article, but what's the solution? First Peter 5:8 puts it this way: "Stay alert! Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." Easily the best way for a man to execute 1 Peter 5:8 is to be part of a group—like the one they used to attend.

Are you actively part of a group? If so, congratulations. There is safety in numbers. If not, I exhort you as your brother to find, treasure, and fully appreciate a group of

brothers with whom you can be honest, open, and vulnerable.

While there's no law that says you have to do such a thing, why wouldn't you? Only because of the temptation to live in isolation—the isolation the devil adroitly deploys to dull our love for Jesus.

And if you are a leader, please, please, please build a sustainable ministry model in your church that encourages all of your men to get into small groups over time. Yes, pray for their families, preach them the gospel and pick them up when they fall. But make sure you don't sentence them to try and live the Christian life in isolation because isolation is what men who fail have common.

Until every church disciples every man ...

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