



HOAW Newsletter

You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men (and women) who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:2 ESV

November 2022

HELPING MEN LIVE LIVES OF INTEGRITY AND HONOR

A Matter of Spiritual Rhythm

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Filling Up



Wringing Out

Scripture is clear about the necessity of growing in Christ. Becoming like Christ requires growing in our knowledge of Him AND living out our faith in bold relief against the backdrop of our culture.

The church exists to *"...equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.*

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body

grow so that it builds itself up in love." Ephesians 4:12-16 ESV

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ESV

Colossians 1:9-10 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. ESV

Over the course of many years in ministry I have noticed a pattern emerge regarding spiritual formation-the process by which we grow in Christ.

We tend to gravitate to activities that *nurture* us or activities that provide options to *serve*. If we fixate on one over the other a certain result will consistently express itself.

A healthy rhythm of nurture and service is necessary for becoming spiritually mature. Emphasizing one over the other stunts one's spiritual growth.

Let me illustrate...

If I were to place a sponge in a shallow dish and pour water over the sponge it would ultimately saturate. Additional water would spill over the sides. The sponge would no longer be able to absorb any more water. A sponge can only absorb a certain volume of water. More water will simply run over the sides once the sponge is saturated.

What happens when our spiritual sponge is saturated?

We become spiritually smug. Whatever we receive from that point on will not sink in—we are saturated.

When Christians focus their time and efforts primarily *'filling up their sponge'* through activities designed to provide input only, it won't be long before the water in their sponge turns sour. When that happens, you will often hear them say, *"I'm not being fed anymore."* *"I'm not learning anything new."* *"I need more spiritual depth."* *"I need to go somewhere else to continue growing in the Lord."*

If I were to wring out my spiritual sponge without filling it, the

sponge would become dry and ultimately crumble into pieces. It would take increasing effort to wring out anything from it.

When Christians focus their time and efforts primarily 'wringing out their sponge' through repeated acts of service without any nurture it won't be long our acts of service become a burden. When that happens, you will often hear them say, *"No one appreciates what I do around here."* *"I feel like I'm being taken for granted."* *"All I am is someone to use because no one else is stepping up."*

What happens when there is nothing left to wring out?

We plateau. We are serving on fumes. It takes more effort to accomplish what we have in the past with little effort. Our attitude shifts to a victim mentality. We constantly give of our time and talents—we continually serve without recharging our batteries; we are constantly wringing out without filling up.

The sponge must be wrung out before more water can be absorbed. A healthy rhythm between nurture and service is necessary for healthy spiritual development.

A life focused on receiving nurture alone will eventually result in spiritual arrogance...

"I'm not being fed anymore!"

A life focused on service alone will eventually result in fatigue and burnout...

"No one appreciates what I do!"

Our spiritual rhythm is the **fill up** our spiritual sponge through nurturing activities such as worship, prayer, study, reflection, fellowship, and personal application to our lives.

What activities are available to me to fill up my sponge?

And to **wring out** what we have learned into other people's lives through service and outreach.

What activities are available to me to wring out my sponge?

Our spiritual rhythm is to fill up and wring out, fill up and wring out, fill up and wring out!

If you were to list all nurture and service activities in which you are currently involved, how would both sides of activities look?

When deciding the appropriate rhythm for your continued spiritual formation, consider the following...

Which of your current activities make best use of your time and spiritual gifts? Which activities are redundant? To arrive at a healthy rhythm which activities should be eliminated?

Four reflection questions should be examined.

- What am I doing now that I should **KEEP** doing?
- What am I doing now that I should **CHANGE** doing?
- What am I doing now I need to **STOP** doing?

- What am I not doing now I need to **START** doing?

To grow in Christ, we need both nurture and service. I invite you to join the Fellowship of the Sponge committed to both nurture and service!

2 Timothy 2:2 You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men (and women) who will be able to teach others also. ESV

OTHER NEWS



Heart of a Warrior Ministries offers four journeys you can take to become who God created you to be.

The Foundation (Ground Zero) helps establish strong biblical foundations for the battles ahead.

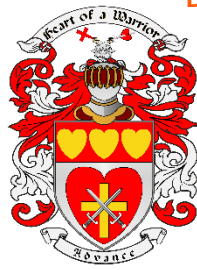
The Compass (Phase I) calibrates a warrior's heart and tunes that heart to the heart of God. I am currently leading 45 at Calvary Church WBL Campus on this journey.

The Map (Phase II) helps men focus on what matters in accordance with their unique divine wiring.

The Guide (Phase III) develops the spiritual discipline of being mentored and mentoring others.

Go to our website for more details. www.heartofawarrior.org/journeys/

If you would like to contact me directly, email me at Greg@HeartofaWarrior.org



Donations

Please consider giving to Heart of a Warrior Ministries. HOAW Ministries needs your financial support. Our ability to help men live God-honoring lives depends on the resources we can use to that end. Simply go to the donations tab on heartofawarrior.org. Thank you for being a subscriber.

Check out **The Store** on our website (www.heartofawarrior.org). There are downloadable resources you can use to lead a group through Phases I, II, or III, Foundations of a Warrior, and Bible Study Guidelines.

Websites for Men

Heart of a Warrior Ministries
www.Heartofawarrior.org

A Chosen Generation
www.achosengeneration.info/

Band of Brothers
www.bandofbrothers.org/

Church for Men
churchformen.com/

Every Man's Battle
<https://newlife.com/emb/>

Every Man Ministries
www.everymanministries.com

Iron Sharpens Iron
ironsharpensiron.net/

Iron Works
www.ironworksmen.com/

Legacy Minded Men
www.legacymindedmen.org

Life Way Men
www.lifeway.com/en/shop/ministries/men

Man in the Mirror
maninthemirror.org/

Man Up God's Way
www.manupgodsway.org/

Men's Fraternity
www.mensfraternity.com/

Men's Ministry Catalyst
mensministrycatalyst.org/

Men with No Regrets
www.menwithnoregrets.org/

National Collision of Ministries to Men
ncmm.org/

Ransomed Heart Ministries
www.ransomedheart.com/

Resolute
beresolute.org/

Restoration Generation
resgen.org/