

The Tape Measure

Nugget of Wisdom

The strongholds we have in our life can destroy. Pride is a stronghold. Pride will hold your ground, even when you know you're wrong.

First General Order

Before beginning, come together as a group to briefly discuss prayer needs and pray for God's guidance, wisdom, and protection over this time.

Mission

Think back to a time in your childhood, typically between the ages of 9 to 12, when you knew you were wrong but chose to stand your ground anyway. Was there a moment where pride kept you from admitting the truth or backing down? Tell that story.

Mission Execution

Sit face to face with no distractions, hold hands, and maintain eye contact. As one speaks, the other listens fully without interruption, without correcting, and without trying to fix anything. As the receiver, your role is not to judge, but to understand the emotion behind what is being said. If you feel comfortable, close your eyes at times to help you focus, listen deeply, and feel what your partner is feeling. Learn to recognize their emotions, how they process, and how they experience the moment. Take a few minutes each and do not rush the process. Be fully present with each other. This is not about being right, it is about being known, understood, and becoming one with each other.

Questions

What did you feel in that moment when you chose to stand your ground? Was it pride, fear, embarrassment, or something else? Do you recognize that same feeling showing up in your life today?

Have there been moments in your current relationships where you knew

you were wrong but continued to push forward anyway? What did that cost you or the other person?

What keeps you from apologizing in the moment—fear of being seen as weak, losing control, or something deeper? How has that affected your relationships over time?

As you listened to your partner's story, what emotions did you hear beneath their words? Were you able to stay present without judging or trying to fix anything?

A stronghold is like a castle you retreat to when under attack, but it can also keep others out. Some of the stones may be pride, arrogance, selfishness, the need to control, or procrastination. Are you willing to remove one stone at a time?

This Week's Mission

After you read this week's mission, if you do not feel comfortable trying to execute it, please do not do so. Simply read it and discuss it with each other. It may not be as profound, but it can still have the same effect.

You may choose your own subject, but here are two examples to guide you. This is an exercise. No one's feelings need to be hurt.

The wife prepares what she believes is the best dinner she has ever made. The husband's role is to come up with multiple rational reasons why it is not. Before you begin, write down five to ten reasons. It could be the wrong size skillet, generic ingredients instead of brand name, the temperature slightly off, not served with the right drink or utensils. Deliver your responses calmly and firmly.

Reverse the roles. The husband washes the car and believes it is the best job he has ever done. The wife now identifies several reasons why it is not. It could be a missed spot on the hubcap, a bug still on the bumper, the trunk not cleaned, the seat not adjusted, or dirt still on the carpet. Again, be calm, be firm.

As you go through this, recognize what is happening. You are intentionally taking away from the other person something they believe they did well. Now stop before it goes any farther. Apologize to each other. Sit together and talk about how it felt.

Were your feelings taken away? Did you find yourself retreating? Were your feelings hurt? Did you become irritated or even angry? This lesson shows how something small can create a much larger problem within a relationship.

What we are trying to understand is why pride can become a selfish stronghold that we hold on to. Any stronghold can damage a relationship. Let's learn to lovingly help, listen to, and understand one another.

Prayer Focus

As you open or close in prayer this week, include this in your own words: ask the Lord to reveal where strongholds exist in your life, especially pride. If they do exist, ask for the strength to begin removing them. If they do not, ask for the wisdom to never lay the foundation for them to be built.

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Homework

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If you think you can, you probably can. If you think you can't, even if you can, you won't.

First General Order

Before beginning, come together as a group to briefly discuss prayer needs and pray for God's guidance, wisdom, and protection over this time.

Mission

Think back to a time in your childhood, typically between the ages of

10 to 12, when you felt labeled or misunderstood. Was there a moment where you felt others believed something about you that was not true? Did you ever try to prove them wrong? Tell that story.

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Questions

When you were labeled or misunderstood, how did it make you feel about yourself? Did you begin to believe it, or did something inside you resist it?

Have there been times in your life where you proved something once, but chose not to continue? Why did you stop—was it lack of motivation, lack of recognition, or something else?

Do you currently carry any labels about yourself that may not be true? How have those beliefs affected your decisions, effort, or confidence?

As you listened to your partner's story, what emotions did you hear beneath their words? Were you able to stay present without judging or trying to fix anything?

Where in your life today do you know you are capable of more, but have chosen not to pursue it? What is holding you back?

This Week's Mission

This week, I want both of you to think about something simple you can do for the other person. It may take a little thought, because it is not something they have asked for, demanded, or even expect. It could be something as small as placing their shoes by the chair they sit in,

setting out their silverware before dinner, or taking care of a small task they normally do themselves. There are hundreds of examples. Keep it simple, but make sure it requires some level of effort.

Commit to doing this for each other five times this week. Your schedule does not change. You still go to work, you still handle your responsibilities, and your daily routine stays the same. There are no excuses. You are simply creating the ability to do something intentional for each other within the life you already live.

As you do this, pay attention. Notice that you are capable of it, even when you feel busy. As the one receiving it, do not overlook it. Recognize it. How does it make you feel when someone does something for you without being asked?

What is happening here is simple. You are learning how to serve one another.