

CA 30 Social Assets TFP2 (This is a new topic and new script)

FOSTER: John sat quietly and drank from his cup of water. “How does she do that?” he thought. He watched his wife talking with the other ladies like they’d been friends for years—even though they had just met. John smiled at another guy who sat a couple chairs down—also sipping his water, but they didn’t speak. On the drive home John’s wife filled him in on all she had learned about the ladies—who they were married to, how many kids they had—she even told John the name of the guy he smiled at. “**How** does she do that?” John thought.

Welcome to Champions Arise. This is Foster Braun and I’m with Kent Darcie. How **does** John’s wife do that? And why can’t John? Is he just shy? Does he not like people? Did God forget to give John a “*how-to-be-social*” gene? God created women *and men* as social beings, so it’s important for John, *and you and me*, to find the answers to these questions. So please stay with us here at Champions Arise.

MUSIC IN

FOSTER: Kent, on our previous programs we’ve discussed how God has equipped men with mental assets and emotional assets. Today we’re going to look at another area. God has blessed us with social assets. Which basically is the gift of relationships.

KENT: Now Foster; whenever I hear the words “men” and “relationships” in the same sentence, it’s almost always negative—what we aren’t doing, how men could be doing better. That is not our purpose today.

FOSTER: I agree with you Kent, but when I hear stories like the one I told about John at the beginning of the program, it sure feels like we’re missing something.

KENT: That’s true. When I’m out with my wife, it amazes me how quickly she and a group of ladies are talking about things I never talk about with men. For me it’s, what do you do? Where do you live? How’s your sports team doing?

FOSTER: Ok Kent. On behalf of many of the men listening, why is that a problem? Why do I have to ask fifty questions and learn about some guy’s fifth cousin’s Mom’s dog who had surgery or something?

KENT: I don’t think we have to learn about the...cousins...dog’s... sister’s...fleas or whatever it was. *Champions Arise* is by men, for men. Our goal as men is to be more like Christ; **not** to be more like women. So as we look at our relationships, we want to look at them through the lens of Jesus Christ.

FOSTER: That sounds fair.

KENT: So since Jesus is our standard, let’s look at a one of His relationships. A key relationship Jesus had was with His disciples Peter, James, and John. We see this in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Foster, please read Mark chapter 14, verses 32 through 34. These verses take place after the last supper and before Jesus’ arrest.

FOSTER: Sure. Mark 14: 32-34.

“Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch.”

KENT: Thanks. I want to point out a couple things. Jesus entered the garden with all of the disciples, but He only called Peter, James, and John to go further with Him. As a result we see two levels of relationships here.

In John 15:15 Jesus says, *“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.”*

In this verse Jesus calls **all** of the twelve disciples His friends.

FOSTER: So today that would be equal to your team of coworkers or your men’s group.

KENT: Yes. They are people you’re very familiar with. Know them by name and probably know some things about their lives.

But Jesus separates Peter, James, and John from the group. And after it’s just the four of them, what does He tell them?

FOSTER: *“My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death.”*

KENT: This verse tells us that Jesus was troubled and deeply distressed. For men, this is the time we try to be alone. We don’t **want** anyone to see us this way—deeply distressed. But Jesus could have left Peter, James, and John with the other disciples, and faced this very emotional hardship alone. But He chose to invite them into His private space. So what does that tell us about Jesus?

FOSTER: He wasn’t embarrassed to be real in front of Peter, James, and John.

KENT: Good. What else?

FOSTER: Jesus trusted them.

KENT: That’s right. We know on at least two other occasions, these three were with Jesus when the others weren’t. They had a deeper friendship with Jesus.

And the question we all have to ask ourselves, is do **we** have a small group of special friends like Jesus had? Men that we feel comfortable allowing them to see us at our worst.

FOSTER: That’s a challenging question.

KENT: Particularly considering the topics we’ve discussed on Champions Arise over the last two programs. Two programs ago we talked about complaining and bitterness. On our last program we spoke about depression in men. With issues like these, we need one or two men that we can be open with—without fear of embarrassment or shame.

And this is critical because life can be hard. If you’re having problems in your marriage, who are you sharing your concerns and fears with? Who is giving you counsel?

Maybe you have a medical issue and you're scared. Who are you telling how you really feel? Or perhaps one of your kids has walked away from the Lord, or isn't doing well in school and you're afraid for their future. Who knows that? Very often we think we're alone, but we really aren't. There are people out there who would help-- if they knew there was a problem.

FOSTER: The same way we would help if we knew one of our good friends had a problem. And if your just joined us, this is Champions Arise. I'm Foster Braun and I'm with Kent Darcie. We are discussing God's view of the type of healthy relationships men should have. Kent, I see what you mean about the need for relationships that are deeper than we normally like to go, but why don't we do this naturally? Is it because of how God made us as men?

KENT: That's a part of it, but in the book, "the Four Priorities" by Dr. John Tolson and Larry Krieder, they list four relationship barriers that can block men from healthy relationships. The first is we believe that we have to hide our feelings.

FOSTER: I know I'm asking a lot of "why" questions today, but why do we hide our feelings? Why does that seem so natural for us? I know it frustrates our wives and I doubt God is too happy with it either.

KENT: I doubt He is. But I think one of the reasons is our dads didn't share, and their dads didn't share so we don't share either. We've been conditioned to believe that sharing how we feel is not something men do. Another reason, and this may be a bigger one, is we believe that if anyone knew who we really are, how we really are, that people wouldn't like or accept us.

FOSTER: What is the next barrier to deeper relationships?

KENT: The second barrier is we have unresolved resentments. In extreme cases, people are offended by what someone did or said and end the relationship. However more often, a relationship doesn't grow because it drifts apart.

FOSTER: What would cause a relationship to drift apart?

KENT: Usually, there is an imbalance of some kind in the relationship. It might be that the commitment is one-sided. **You're** the only one making the effort to keep the relationship going. Competition can also cause a relationship to grow apart.

FOSTER: Explain what you mean by competition

KENT: Say you have a close relationship with someone at church and your friend is chosen to help with the singing, but you aren't—even though you wanted to. After a while, if you aren't careful—and spending regular time with the Lord, jealousy and bitterness can creep in and poison the relationship. A powerful example of a relationship **that didn't** have competition was David and Jonathan in the book of 1 Samuel chapters 13 through 31.

In that story all of the ingredients **to damage** a relationship were there, but they stayed very close friends. I encourage our listeners to read about the relationship Johnathon and David had.

FOSTER: This is interesting. What else can cause relationships to drift apart?

KENT: Verbal betrayal, being put down or made fun of all the time, and smothering can all cause relationships to drift apart. I think betrayal and smothering are pretty obvious, but I want to make a quick observation on putting people down or making fun of them. Ephesians 4:29 says, *“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”*

If the conversations in a relationship are filled with snide comments or humor that hurts or embarrasses the other person, it will destroy the relationship.

FOSTER: According to Ephesians 4:29 it's unbiblical too. But getting back to the barriers to relationships men face, what is the third barrier?

KENT: The first barrier was hiding how we really feel. The second was resentments that we let build up instead of giving them to the Lord.

The third barrier is engaging in risky behavior. Normally risky behavior is associated with teenagers, but it seems like some men never grow up and mature. Even though they're Christians now, they think it's ok to *release some stress* by doing illegal behaviors, or abusing alcohol or drugs. But acting this way doesn't deepen relationships. They can destroy marriages and families though.

FOSTER: I'd like to add that if you are struggling with drug, alcohol, gambling, or sex addiction, get help from your pastor or other church leader. Don't wait and don't be ashamed or embarrassed. Just get help.

And Kent, what is the fourth barrier to deepening relationships?

KENT: The fourth barrier to deeper relationships is when changes in life happen. Life always changes.

One big change can occur when a person accepts Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. When this happens, even though the Bible says that angels in heaven rejoice, everyone down here isn't always as happy. Sometimes it can be very tough to be the only Christian in a home or work environment and, unfortunately, relationships can be strained.

FOSTER: Are there other areas where changes can impact a relationship?

KENT: Another change that can affect relationships is when someone moves away. In the western culture, people don't stay in one area for long times like they used to. You can develop a good strong relationship with a man when suddenly, one of you have to move away. And even with the new technology we have today, it's still likely that the relationship will change.

FOSTER: That can be hard, but building the relationship is still worth it

KENT: The key is using Jesus as our standard. And I'd like to ask our listeners. Do you have a Peter, James, or John type relationship in our life? If Jesus had that type of relationship, shouldn't you?

Jesus decided a deeper relationship was important enough that He put His trust in Peter, James, and John. Now they did fall asleep in the garden after Jesus asked them to pray, **but** they also turned out to be the first leaders in the Christian church.

FOSTER: Kent, this has been very interesting, Can you do a quick review of what we've covered please?

KENT: Sure. We looked at Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane and how He had a group of friends who were the twelve disciples, **and** a closer group of friends who were Peter, James, and John. These relationships were important to Jesus and should be important to us as well. But there are barriers to deeper relationships that men face.

These include, having hidden feelings, resentments, risky behavior, and changes in life. Therefore we must actively pursue strong relationships. They will prove good for us, our relationship with our wives, kids, families, coworkers, and with God.

FOSTER: Thanks Kent. We'll be right back.

Music Theme in

Program Close

FOSTER: Thank you for listening to Champions Arise where men are equipped and strengthened to meet their God-given potential. Today we discussed the importance of pursuing deeper relationships. This material was based on chapter 14 the book "The Four Priorities," by Dr. John Tolson and Larry Kreider which is published by "The Gathering USA" in 2007 and used with permission. You can learn more about this book and listen to any of these programs at our website championsarise.org. I'm Foster Braun with Kent Darcie. Thank you for listening to Champions Arise. May God mold you into the man He knows you can be.

Closing Tag

CA 29 TFP2 CHOOSING JOY OVER DEPRESSION (Formerly CA 31 TFP2)