Chapter 1: The Hidden Value of a Man

Reread the opening story. In your own words, describe what J.D. had done or not done that led his wife to seek a divorce.

Do you identify with any aspects of J.D.’s story? If so, which ones?

Without reading ahead, what would you guess was the “secret” of J.D.’s reconciliation with his wife?

What is your reaction to each of the following statements? Why?

- “It’s as if men are awakening from their own personal Vietnam experience of having been browbeaten and ridiculed by the media, and some in the women’s movement, for just being men.”
- “We can hardly wait for you to finish this book and join with us and the thousands of other men around our country and beyond who are tired of the state of the family.”
- “Every man has tremendous value.”
- “When you discover how to use this age-old power, you’ll see a closeness and fulfillment in your marriage and family that you wouldn’t have believed possible.”

Chapter 2: The Two Swords of Value in Every Man

Have you ever been insensitive to your impact on your family? Would your wife give the same answer? Why or why not?
The authors describe two swords every man possesses. Which one do you tend to wield most often? Why?

If you asked your wife and children, how would they feel about the fullness or emptiness of their emotional and physical tanks?

Read 1 Kings 2:2-3. In King David’s advice to his son Solomon, which sword was he telling Solomon to strap on? Why do you think David gave him this advice?

**Chapter 3: When We Fail to Pick Up the Gold Sword**

Why do men find it so hard to wield their gold sword at home?

Read Proverbs 18:21. What does it say about the power of the tongue? Briefly describe a time when you were wounded by somebody else’s words. Do your words to those closest to you generally promote life or death?

How would your wife and children describe your pursuit of your career? How has that pursuit affected them? What changes might you need to make in this area for the sake of your family?

By now you’ve probably been challenged to change in at least one other area. Which one? What kind of help do you need?
Chapter 4: Creating Your Own Gold Sword

Read Ephesians 5:22-23. Then, in your own words, define *headship* and *submission*. Finally, give an example of what each looks like in everyday life.

How do you understand the concept of mutual submission? How does it (or would it) work in your marriage?

If you were to write a constitution for your family, what principles and goals would it contain?

How can you show honor to your wife and children this week?

Chapter 5: Seven Reflections of the Gold Sword, Part 1

What can you do to make your family feel more secure?

How many times a day do you praise your wife and children? Think of something right now for which you can praise each of them, and then tell them the next time you see them.

What can you do to make your wife feel more protected?
The authors mention three communication methods. Which one are you best at using? Which one would you like to become better in using? How would it help you? What would it take to do that?

Chapter 6: Seven Reflections of the Gold Sword, Part 2

Read James 1:19-20. What do those verses add to your understanding of using the gold sword?

Reread the story of Jim. Who was being hurt by his refusal to forgive his daughter? What steps did he follow in resolving his anger and restoring his relationship with her?

What lessons about meaningful touch do you learn from Norm and Bobbie’s story?

On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the highest), how would you rate yourself as a financial steward? Why?

Of the seven reflections in chapters 5 and 6, which one do you need to master most? Why? What will you do to start the process?

Chapter 7: Being Male May Be Hazardous to Your Family’s Health

What are some inherent strengths of males and females? How have your strengths and your wife’s strengths benefited your family?
Read 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 and Colossians 3:12, 16. How do those verses add to your understanding of what it takes to be a man?

On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the highest), how would you rate your level of mastery for each of the following qualities?

- encouragement
- comfort
- persuasion
- compassion
- kinduess
- humility
- gentleness
- patience

The authors list six suggestions for how to make your words count. Which of those six would mean the most to your wife today? Plan a time to bless her with those words.

**Chapter 8: The Little “e” Can Spell Big Trouble**

What are the “sword stealers”? In what ways have they taken the gold sword out of your hands?

Make an honest list of the expectations you carry around in the following areas:

- work
- recreation
- food
- people
- travel
- ministry

In what ways do you expect these things to fill your empty cup? Why?

How does 1 John 2:15-17 relate to this chapter?

Read Proverbs 4:23. What guard stations do you need to build in your life?
Chapter 9: Women Who Hide Our Swords

Read 1 Peter 3:7. What does it mean to live with your wife “in an understanding way”?

Think of a time when you misunderstood your wife. What happened? How did each of you feel as a result?

How does your wife’s personality affect your leadership at home? Have you given her any reason to take the leadership away from you? Explain.

Describe the last time you closed the spirit of one of your children because of anger. If the hurt has already been resolved, how did you do that? If it hasn’t been resolved, what steps can you take to begin that process?

Chapter 10: Healing the Hole in Our Hearts

Did your relationship with your dad leave holes in your heart or give you a healthy heart? Explain.

Read Ephesians 6:4. Then recall a time when you did something that exasperated or frustrated your children. What, if anything, did you do to change the situation?

Who has mentored you most in the past? What did you learn from that person?
The authors talk about a “rite of passage” or “authenticating task” that marks the transition from being a boy to becoming a man. What has helped you to feel you’ve arrived as an adult?

Chapter 11: When Actions Don’t Measure Up to Words

What mirages are you chasing? What has the pursuit cost you?

On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the highest), how would you, your family, your business associates, and your neighbors rate your level of integrity? What would cause them to respond that way?

How important to you is the image others have of you? Explain.

Read Psalm 15. What characteristics describe the person who is welcome in God’s presence? Which of those qualities do you need more of? How might you develop those qualities?

Chapter 12: The Hidden Power of Friends

Read again the story of Kyle. Do you have any friends like his? If so, how have they demonstrated their friendship? If not, where might you find such friends?

Who provides accountability for you? How has that accountability helped you?
The authors state, “The degree of self-control you have is in direct proportion to the degree of self-acceptance you have.” Why is this true? What does your level of self-control tell you about your degree of self-acceptance?

Reread the story of Mark in this chapter. How do you think Mark would describe the impact of his small group? What impact would you like a small group to have on your life?

Chapter 13: What to Do When Nothing Else Works

If you could ask for expert counsel in any area of your life right now, what would you ask?

Which of this chapter’s five reasons to avoid a particular counselor do you think is the most important? Why?

Of the seven guidelines to use in choosing the right counselor, which is most important to you? Why?

If you think you would benefit from seeing a counselor, what might keep you from going? How can you overcome those obstacles?

Chapter 14: Master of the Gold Sword

After describing the benefits and responsibilities of using our gold sword, the authors ask, “So why do we still hesitate to pick it up? What will motivate us to move from thought or good intention to action?” How would you answer that question?
As you read the description of Jesus in this chapter, how do you think following His example would affect your life? Why?

Is it any easier for you to admit your weaknesses now than it was at the beginning of this study? Why or why not?

To gain God’s power, the authors say we need to do three things. What are they? Which is easiest for you? Which is hardest? To what extent have you done them? What is keeping you from going further?