

Justin's Adventure

A Young Knight's Quest

Into oRam's Domain

Seek First Ministries
www.seekfirstmin.org

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Introduction

Each year millions of boys grow another year older without understanding God's purpose for their lives. This story is designed to be an ongoing teaching opportunity for parents, particularly fathers, to both evaluate and engage their sons' hearts. As important, these lessons will present a "touch-point" for parents to connect their sons with God's Word.

Every chapter is followed by an exercise for fathers and their sons. I also would add that it is vital that we encourage and support our single moms as well. While it is the ideal that every growing boy have a godly father, we must do the best we can and look to assist our single moms. A devotional activity for the entire family is also included at the end of each chapter. It is only through engaging our children's hearts, that we can effectively teach them life's most important lessons. May God bless your family richly as you seek to live for His greater glory revealed.

Blessings in Christ,

Joe Waresak, Director
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The Quest Begins...

Once upon a time in a land far away there lived a young boy named Justin. He was the son of a great knight, Sir Zealor, who was known throughout the kingdom for his mighty strength and bravery. You must understand that during these times the townspeople faced many dangers from both evil men and from great beastly creatures. Accordingly, it was of vital importance that the knights were always standing guard ready to face the imminent attack that constantly lurked about them. Sir Zealor was the champion of all knights and was often called to train the younger knights in the ways of battle, chivalry, and honor. Frequently, Justin would watch his father prepare the younger knights for battle. As he watched them, Justin would picture himself one day wearing the full coat of armor fighting off evil's many foes...*just like his father.*

**“Listen, my son, to your father’s
instruction and do not forsake
your mothers teaching”**

Proverbs 1:8

Even more exceptional of this lad, Justin knew at an early age that the period of boyhood was, in fact, God’s training ground for eventual knighthood. As important, Justin knew that God gave him a father to instruct him as he pursued God’s calling in his life. He realized that some of his friends in the village did not have a father. Yet, his father and other knights would often include these boys within their own sons’ training.

Justin continued to grow in stature and wisdom. It was on a very special day, when the days are long and the sunsets seem to linger, that Justin’s father took him deep within the Dark Forest that bordered their courtyard grounds. In the truest sense, it was here that Justin’s quest began. As they walked, Justin’s insides were churning with excitement with each step he took. His father said little as they journeyed deeper into the forest. Yet, Justin knew by the grin on his father’s face that something special was in store for him. At that very moment, Justin saw a glowing light that illuminated even the blackness of the Dark Forest. He soon recognized

the light to be a roaring fire that appeared to be pulsating with a life of its own. As they reached the towering flames, his father stopped and knelt by his side. Sir Zealor looked intently into his son's eyes and Justin knew that his father was attempting to see past his exterior into his very heart. Sir Zealor began to share how at a very young age, he too, began his long journey into knighthood. Now it was Justin's turn to begin his quest. No sooner had his father shared this, Sir Zealor stopped and refocused his dark brown eyes onto Justin's deep blue ones. With a smile that seemed to reach from ear to ear, He shared with Justin their family legacy.

Sir Zealor first reminded Justin of their family creed. Over the years, Justin's father had often spoken about the creed and how it helped him to keep faith and family as his highest priorities. However, now his father excitedly expressed that Justin would have a chance to take hold of it as his own. The creed had been passed down from his grandfather, the great knight Sir Abram, as so often the torch of our heritage is passed down from one generation to the next. The creed was based upon the *Holy Scriptures* and provided a generational anchor for his family. At that moment, Justin knew that he would make the creed his own and pursue a life that would pass it on to the next generation.

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.”

Proverbs 1:7

On this special day Justin was given a shield of faith that had his family creed inscribed upon it.



To love God with all your heart, your soul, and your strength through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. To pursue justice and to seek good for others. To love mercy and to forgive others with a gracious heart as God has forgiven us. To bear others burdens as our own and to do everything for the glory of God.

His father's instructions were simple—to always keep the shield before him as a sign of his quest. In doing so, Justin would have a constant reminder of who he was and where he was headed. As Sir Zealor spoke, he paused and looked lovingly at his son and whispered softly, “There is no greater quest than to serve God, your family, and your fellow man.” Justin knew the depth of these words, for he had seen the living example in his father's life.

For years Sir Zealor had stressed to Justin that a creed without hands and feet is dead. He knew now that it was his turn to make the creed come to life. This great truth rooted in Scripture was the cornerstone of their family's legacy and the sustaining light that would guide him on his own quest.

On the walk home, Sir Zealor carried his sword in one hand and held his son's hand in the other. Justin absorbed every word his father spoke as he continued to instruct him in the ways of a knight. As they left the Dark Forest, the sun was still lingering over the horizon as if it could sense Justin's desire for this day not to end. Yet, as the setting sun dipped farther behind the distant mountains, Justin smiled as he began to dream of the many adventures the new day would bring.

Training/Discussion:

At the next opportunity, arrange a walk at sunset to discuss the first chapter. Remember to also include your grandfather or other mentor, if possible. We have some questions to get you started. Don't forget to do the family activity!

Discussion Questions:

1. Why was Sir Zealor picked to train the younger knights?
2. How old do you think Justin is? Why?
3. Why was the shield of faith so special to Justin?
4. Does your family have a "creed" or family mission statement? Do you regularly talk about it?
5. Why do you think Sir Zealor's family based their creed on the Bible?

For older youth/parents: Try to find all the Scripture verses that were used for Justin's family creed. Write out the Scripture on index cards and place them in visible spots throughout the house. See if you can memorize a verse every week. (For help see the bottom of page 13.)



Family Activity: Your Family Creed

1. Make sure you have your Bible nearby to look up any Scripture references that you want to use as the basis for your creed.
2. Discuss as a family why it is important to have a family creed. Even young children (pre-school age) need to understand the importance of having a standard—God’s Word, and a life mission—to glorify God.
3. Think about your family and the special gifts that God has given each individual. Now you are ready to write down three to four biblical values that you want to see your family live out. Use Justin’s creed as an example.
4. Once you have selected the Scripture references and have written out your creed, be sure to post it in an area of the house where everyone can see it. Have fun with it and let the younger children decorate it with stickers and stamps.

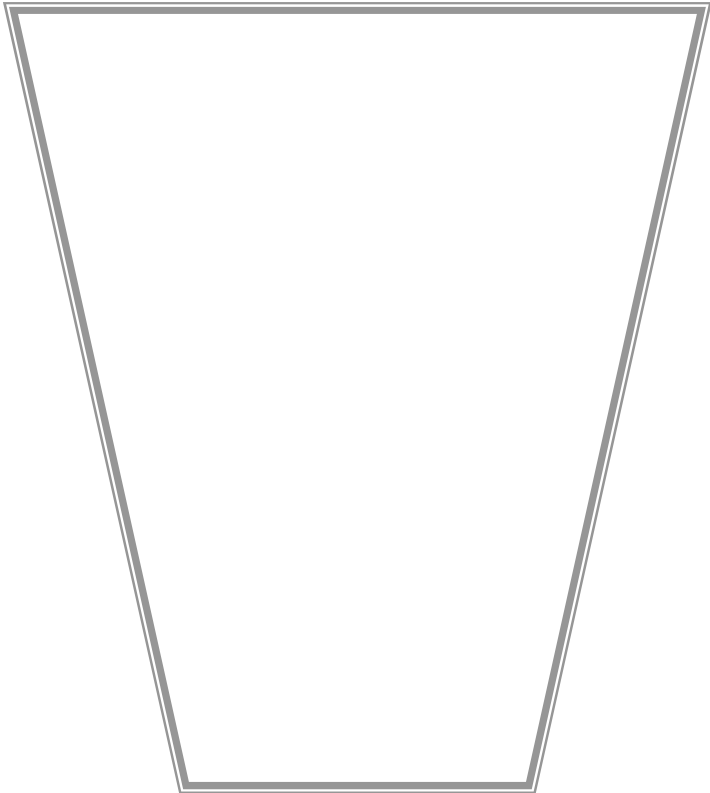
A final note to fathers/parents: The creed is intended to be built upon timeless principles. This is why Scripture is used as the foundation of the creed. However, as a page grows into a squire, and a squire grows into a knight, so too, the family grows together in the Lord. It is critical that fathers and mothers continually evaluate the spiritual needs of their family and develop goals that will encourage ongoing growth. We must be intentional with what matters most in life.

May God bless you and lead your family on life's greatest quest...to love God with all of your heart and to share His love with others. And remember, a creed "without hands and feet" is dead. Whether you have a written creed, or not, your life will speak loudly and tell your family and the entire world what your creed is. **What "creed" are you passing on to the next generation?**

**"Trust in the LORD with all your heart
and lean not on your own understand-
ing, in all your ways acknowledge Him,
and He will make your paths straight."**

Proverbs 3:5-6

Family Creed (Mission) Work Sheet



(Scripture used for Justin's Family Creed: Deut. 6:5, John 14:6, Micah 6:8, Matt. 6:14, Gal. 6:2, Eph. 1:12, and Col. 3:17)

His father's instructions were simple—to always keep the shield before him as a sign of his quest. In doing so, Justin would have a constant reminder of who he was and where he was headed.

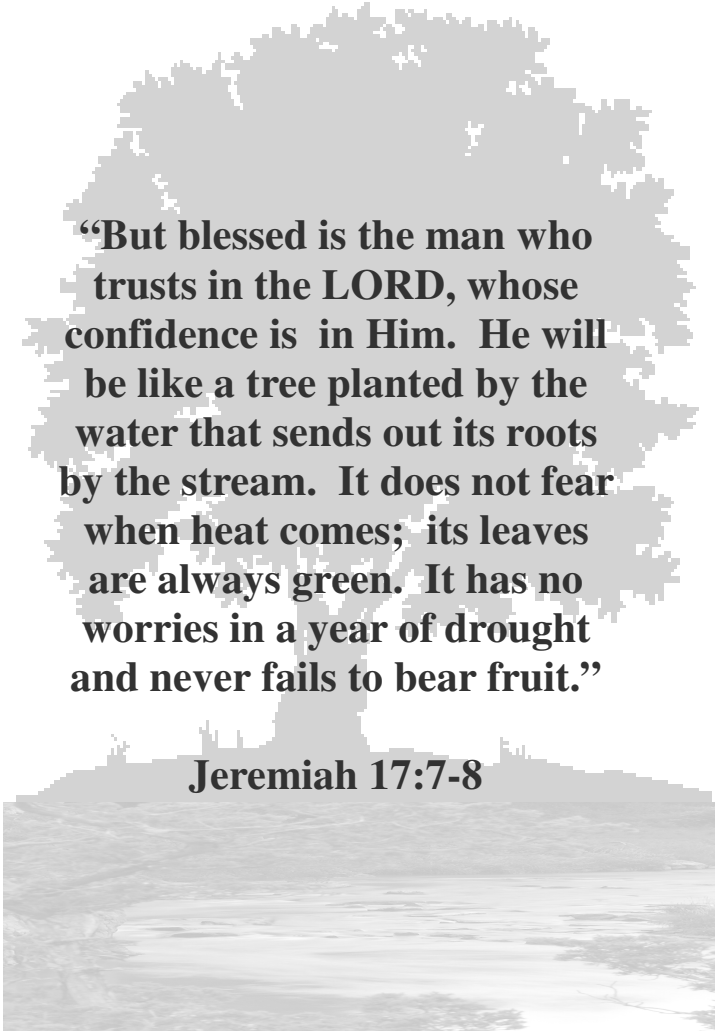
The Dark Forest

Justin blew out the candle and jumped into his bed. His bed was actually a loft suspended by four strong timbers that his father and he had cut down. Justin's sleeping fortress, as his mother called it, was very strong and was set high enough to allow Justin to have a special place to play and study. His father had also attached several hooks and pegs. One of the pegs now held the shield of faith given to him earlier that day. As Justin sank into his feather-filled bed, he glanced admirably at his shield. In the dim light of the moon, the sacred symbol of the cross seemed to give off a light of its own. The cross reminded Justin to say his nightly prayers thanking God for the very special day he had shared with his father. As he said "Amen," he took one last look at his shield before shutting his eyes...within seconds he was fast asleep.

Family Activity: A Tree of Trust

1. Schedule a family devotion this week based on the Bible verses, Jeremiah 17:7-8. Read out loud the verses and explain to your children this essential truth of our faith—we will find our greatest peace and joy when our lives are rooted in our faith in Jesus Christ.
2. Have each child write out the verse on one side of a large, blank index card or poster board. On the other side of the card, have them draw a picture of a tree near a stream.
3. Next, have the children write out different areas of their lives in which they need to trust God.
4. Finally, near the stream, write a list of ways that God nourishes our lives—Bible reading, praying, family, friends in Christ, etc...
5. Spend some time talking about the different ways **your** family trusts in God. Are there areas where you can improve? Conclude with a prayer that your family will be like the tree planted near the stream—with leaves that are always green and always bearing fruit, regardless of life's changing circumstances.

If possible, make it extra special and plan to have the devotion by a tree near a stream. Remember to display the Scripture verse and see if the entire family can memorize it.



“But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in Him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”

Jeremiah 17:7-8

Just then, Justin was reminded of something his father, Sir Zealor, had told him: Not to be anxious about anything, but as God's Word says, "present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:6-7

Hidden Passage

As Justin and Charity traveled farther and farther into the darkness of the forest, they could not help but begin to feel a sense of helplessness. Justin knew that whatever enemy had captured his father must be a formidable opponent. How were two children going to do battle against a likely fierce and powerful enemy? As if she read his mind, Charity reminded Justin of what their father had always told him, “The knight’s greatest armor is not found in the outer covering of metal.” “Rather,” he told Justin, “a knight’s greatest armor is found deep within his heart.” Quickly, Justin was reminded that God measures the man, not by his physical might, but by the size of his heart for God. This made him think of the story that his father often told him of David and the giant Goliath. Justin knew that by putting his trust in God, David, a small shepherd boy, defeated the most powerful of all warriors.

**“Man looks at the outward
appearance, but the LORD
looks at the heart.”**

1 Samuel 16:7

The farther they walked, the more Charity began to talk. Actually, it was more like a constant chatter, which was Charity's way to deal with the surmounting tension that seemed to hang heavily in the air. Since she loves to sing, her chattering soon turned into song. It was one of Justin's favorite songs. Charity knew it would help them focus on their source of hope, and not on their plight that seemed to loom all around them.

My heart sings of your praise,
My heart sings of your love.
Within the depths of my soul
I will forever praise you above.

Never will You leave my side,
Never will You let me go.
It is in Your hands, oh Lord
Where Your love will forever flow.

I will always wear Your armor,
I will always carry Your Word near.
As I know it is in Your perfect love
That will drive away all my fear.

I thank You for Your gift of love,
I thank for Your Son above...”

The words disappeared among the noise of a stick breaking nearby. Charity gave Justin a quick glance to let him know she had also heard it. They both knew what this meant—they were being followed. Justin once again uttered a quick prayer as he grabbed Charity’s hand. They were off and running. Without looking back they knew their chaser was quickly gaining ground. Within seconds, they could hear the noises of cracking sticks and the rustling of leaves right behind them. Justin and Charity knew that they could not outrun their assailant and stopped suddenly to face their aggressor.

Justin did not even have time to completely turn around before the unknown foe overtook him. He could hear his sister scream as he was thrust to the ground by the collision. As Justin attempted to get up off the ground, he was instantly consumed by a slobbering beast that repeatedly licked his face with wet, slobbered-filled kisses. It was Justin’s dog, Chase—

My heart sings of your praise,
My heart sings of your love.
Within the depths of my soul
I will forever praise you above.

Never will You leave my side,
Never will You let me go.
It is in Your hands, oh Lord
Where Your love will forever flow.

Another World

Justin held the leather strap tightly in one hand as Charity held his other hand. Before he could pull the door strap, Charity stopped him and suggested they pray one more time before entering into the unknown world that awaited them. Together they knelt before the mammoth tree, asking God to protect them and their father. The prayer only lasted a few seconds; however, they both felt renewed as they stood and grasped the leather handle hanging from the doorway. Just as they were about to pull the door handle, a loud, inhuman noise shrieked from behind them— and this time it was not their dog, Chase.

**“Every word of God is flawless;
He is a shield to those who
take refuge in Him.”**

Proverbs 30:5

Justin and Charity froze as the noise pierced the quietness of the forest. It was a sound that they had never heard; a sound that seemed to be screaming and pleading at the same time. With their hands bound tightly by the known and the unknown, Justin and Charity slowly turned. Charity gasped as she saw the source of the noise. It was not an animal; yet, it did not look like a human either. As Justin processed the creature before him, he felt fairly sure that he was now standing face to face with a Glum.

The creature stood nearly the same height of most men. Yet, because he was severely bent over from the waist up, the creature was actually taller than any man Justin had ever seen. The Glum's eyes were rather large and his hands and feet appeared to be twice the size of most men. The Glum's gait was stiff, as if he had fence posts for legs. Both Justin and Charity stood perfectly still as the creature approached them. Time seemed to creep forward for the next few seconds as the Glum began to speak to the children. Justin held onto Charity's hand and found immediate peace in remembering his Lord's promise always to be with him.

**“And surely I am with you
always, to the very
end of the age.”**

Matthew 28:20b

The voice of the glum, that at first sounded more like a scream, now spoke with a softer tone and in a more deliberate fashion. After a few seconds of listening to an assortment of meaningless sounds, the children began to decipher their own language being spoken. The creature told them that his name was Goth and reassured them that he would not hurt them.

Goth proceeded to tell them that his people, what the “Above-Grounders” call the Glums, were once a very civilized community that lived peacefully in this forest. That was until oRam, known as the “Evil One,” showed up many generations ago. Goth explained to the children that over 10 generations ago several Glums had happened to come across the Great Oak within the deepest part of the forest. As the Glums marveled at the gigantic size of the tree and its markings, one of them found the door and opened it. At that very moment, a shadow was immediately cast over the forest and oRam walked out from the inner trunk of the tree. oRram was not like any creature

they had ever seen and possessed many strange powers. Above all else, oRam was wicked. The legend tells of a great battle that took place many years ago between a heavenly angel and the evil oRam. The battle was fierce and lasted many earthly years. Yet, in the end, righteousness prevailed and God's angel banished oRam to spend eternity within the constraints of the Great Oak. The angel left the markings on the tree as a warning never to open its door. However, for whatever reason, the Glums ignored the warning and released *the evil* that once was held captive. Within weeks, oRam had taken over the Glum community and made himself king of the underworld beneath the Great Oak.

As Justin listened to Goth's story, he could not help but feel sorry for him and his people. Did he also hear Goth speak of God? Was it a trick to fool Justin and Charity into thinking they could trust him? At that very moment, Charity was thinking the very same thing. As if the Glum read their minds, Goth went on to say that they could trust him and confessed that he had been following them for some time. Goth shared that he escaped from oRam a little over a week ago after learning of his plan to take over the Above-Grounder's village.

As the moonlight began to shine through the thick darkness of the night, Goth continued telling the children that he had watched them earlier in the week while they were playing in the courtyard. It reminded him of how playful his own children were during those rare moments when oRam and his followers were not lording over them. As Goth shared the love he had for his own family, Justin could see the large tears that began to swell in his eyes. Charity glanced over at Justin and held his hand. Justin could sense her nervousness; yet, he could also tell that there was something about Goth that made Justin want to trust him.

Justin immediately inquired as to whether Goth knew anything about his father, Sir Zealor. Goth hesitated and then confirmed what Justin and Charity had feared. oRam and a band of his followers overpowered Sir Zealor as he knelt in prayer. They bound him and took him to oRam's kingdom below the Great Oak. Goth explained that it was all part of oRam's evil plan to take over the village. He knew that he would greatly increase his odds of success if Sir Zealor was out of the way. Unfortunately, Goth did not know about the taking of Sir Zealor until it was too late. He told the children that he wanted to help them rescue their father.

The only thing he asked, in return, was that they would help him and his people destroy oRam.

**“The Righteous One takes note of
the house of the wicked and
brings the wicked to ruin.”
Proverbs 21:12**

Justin and Charity glanced at each other and told Goth that they would need to talk to each other before deciding what to do next. Goth consented to their request and went on a short walk. When Goth was out of sight, Charity turned to Justin, and with tears in her eyes, asked her brother what he thought they should do. Justin, remembering what his father had instructed him regarding making alliances with others, told Charity that he needed to know first where Goth’s heart was. Then, they would proceed with prayer.

Upon Goth’s return, Justin inquired further about Goth’s previous reference to God and what he meant by it. Goth went on to say that all his people were God-fearers and believed in the one God that created heaven and earth. Justin showed the Bible to him and explained that the God that created the heavens and the earth had given us His living Word.