FIGHTERS/KEEPERS/LOSERS/REAPERS

CARL BEECH WITH ROY CROWNE AND ALEX WILLMOTT
**Biogs**

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**Carl**
Carl is married to Karen and has two daughters. He's the leader of CVM (an international men's movement) and the founder of 'the code'. Previously a banker, church planter and senior pastor, he is convinced he is a great chef, plays the piano, loves cycling, movies and sci-fi books and caught a record-breaking catfish on the river Ebro in Spain.

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**Roy**
Having worked for Youth for Christ for 28 years, Roy then became co-founder of Hope 08, alongside Andy Hawthorne and Mike Pilavachi, and is now the Executive Director of Hope, a mission initiative in words and action, with the Church working together for the next three years to 2014. He loves to preach, teach and see the Church being good news in order to bring about transformation. Roy lives in Rugby with his wife, and they have two sons.

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**Alex**
Alex is a 27-year-old former newspaper reporter who heads up the communications department for Christian Vision for Men. He is from Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales, and enjoys football, rugby union, golf and snooker. Alex became a follower of Jesus when he was 16 years old and has recently written a fantasy novel called *Selah* which is available on the Amazon Kindle.

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We’ve finally cracked it!
After being asked to write daily notes for men a number of times over the years, we’ve finally nailed it. So, in a nutshell, here you go and let the journey begin!

It’s a simple and well-proven approach. The notes are between 150–300 words long. Each day begins with a verse and ends in a prayer. It will take you no more than a few minutes to read but I hope that what you read stays in your head throughout your day. The notes are numbered rather than dated, so it’s OK if you miss a day to pick it back up. If you want to study with a group of guys you can easily keep track of where you are up to or swap ideas on that particular study online (we’ve a Facebook page). If you want to be part of a band of brothers internationally swapping thoughts, insights and prayer requests then you can do that as well by using our new Facebook page.
In each issue, I’ve asked some of my mates to contribute. In this one, big thanks go to Roy Crowne and Alex Willmott for their insights and thoughts. They’re both great guys going after God’s heart. We really hope that the subjects from Fighters to Reapers really speak in all of our lives and help us stay on the narrow path!

So there it is. The Word of God has such power to inform and transform our lives, so let’s knuckle down and get reading.

Your brother in Christ

Carl
‘Next to him was Eleazar son of Dodai the Ahohite. As one of the three mighty warriors, he was with David when they taunted the Philistines gathered at Pas Dammim for battle. Then the Israelites retreated, but Eleazar stood his ground and struck down the Philistines till his hand grew tired and froze to the sword.’

2 Samuel 23:9–10

David’s mighty men were the biblical equivalent of Special Forces. These guys were off the chart when it came to warfare, heroism and all-round testosterone-fuelled escapades. First up we have Eleazar (I’m missing out Josheb-Basshebeth because it’s hard to base a devotional solely on the fact that he killed 800 men in one battle with a spear! I suggest you read the whole chapter).

The line that jumps out at me when I read about Eleazar is that his hand ‘froze to the sword’.
Basically, he didn’t quit. He hung in there until the job was done, clearly to the point of exhaustion. Now, obviously we aren’t facing hordes of marauding Philistines, but we do have our own battles and challenges. I’ve often noticed that men have a real tendency to give up too quickly when the going gets tough. Perhaps there was a vision God gave you to do something but you feel like quitting because it’s hard? Perhaps there’s a situation at work or a relationship you feel like giving up on? Let me put this to you today: Have you stood your ground until your hand has frozen to the sword? Sometimes we just need to grit our teeth and be a bit bloody-minded. I wonder how much good stuff doesn’t happen because we guys quit too quickly.

Prayer: Father, develop within me a bloody-minded spirit that doesn’t quit at the first sign of trouble but is tenacious and gritty, so that I may better serve You. Amen.
'Next to him was Shammah son of Agee the Hararite. When the Philistines banded together at a place where there was a field full of lentils, Israel’s troops fled from them. But Shammah took his stand in the middle of the field. He defended it and struck the Philistines down, and the L ORD brought about a great victory.'

2 Samuel 23:11–12

Some commentaries written by people with theological brains the size of small planetary systems have various theories about why Shammah decided to make a stand in a field full of lentils. None of them suggest that it’s anything to do with militant vegetarianism, but they do conjecture that perhaps it was because lentils were a valuable crop. Now, I’m a simple man and I’ve got my own simple theory and I don’t think we need to dwell on the lentils too much. The point is this: the enemy was advancing and
Shammah was having none of it. He drew a line on the ground and decided that no Philistine was going to cross it. Often as men we need to draw such a line and hold it. We just need to decide which field it’s going to be in and what our lentils are! Perhaps it’s the banter in the office, or the slightly inflated expenses claims that people around you put in. Maybe it’s stuff you’re looking at that you know deep down you shouldn’t be. Whatever you resolve to make your field of lentils, fight hard and don’t let the enemy cross the line!

Prayer: Show me where I must no longer compromise. Give me the courage to draw the line and the strength to make my stand. Amen.