Are You Ready?

I can't believe I get to do this!

I have the incredible privilege to lead discipleship cohorts for Kingdom-hungry leaders. These groups are called Rock Solid—rock solid on the inside and dangerous for the Kingdom on the outside. And what happens in the lives of these leaders over the course of the nine-month journey is like getting an invitation to sit in a sky box at the Super Bowl. I've got the best seat in the house for the best game in town!

On opening night, our key focus is to talk about what it means to BE PREPARED—to be ready on the spot, in the moment, for any assignment God may have in store.

To enlarge our understanding of what PREPARED looks like, we draw from there-is-nothing-that-compares training of a Navy Seal. To get a close-up of the training of a Seal, just read Lone Survivor. It is the heart-pumping, can't-put-it-down story of Marcus Luttrell's unimaginable pursuit of survival in the mountains of Afghanistan as he is hunted down by the Taliban. But leading up to the retelling of this mesmerizing story, Leading Petty Officer Luttrell devotes chapter after chapter to the grueling training that every Navy Seal undergoes.

The bottom line is this: a Navy Seal is PREPARED. Drop him anywhere and he lands on his feet. At a moment's notice, he is mission-ready.

So we ask the question: Do we take preparedness as a leader as seriously as a Navy Seal?

To that question, I offer this assessment from Dallas Willard: *A successful performance at a moment of crisis rests largely and essentially upon the depths of a self wisely and rigorously prepared in the totality of its being—mind and body.*

To press the point further, years ago, the authors of Ascent of a Leader dropped this bunker-buster right in my backyard: There is no greater loss than to come to that purpose in life for which we were born and to not be prepared. Reality check for sure.

So how do we ramp up our readiness as leaders? How do we elevate our capacity to be mission-ready? Consider these two thoughts.

See life as preparation. Preparation is largely a matter of perspective. Getting caught up in the daily drama of our own lives is too easy. With deliberation, we need to step back. Often. It's choosing to have eyes that see all of life as a curriculum personally designed…by God…for you. It's affirming His purposefulness, even when your current circumstances seem random, confusing, or counterproductive. It is a commitment to rehearsing that He is constantly and thoughtfully placing experiences, challenges, understandings, skills, set-backs into your toolkit that will serve you well in the days ahead.

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Don't audit, enroll. I love the lyrics of country music singer Lee Ann Womack in her song, "I Hope You Dance", especially when she refrains: *And when you get the chance to sit it out or dance, I hope you DANCE*. What's my point? There's a big difference between sitting and dancing and between AUDITING and ENROLLING. If you audit a course at the university, you may (or may not) show up for class. You may (or may not) complete the assignments. And you may (or may not) learn the material. The temptation we each have is to live on the fringes of life. Or to find the nearest exit door. Or to look the other way. Or to hope someone else steps up. But when it comes to God's schoolhouse of preparation the only option is enrollment. It's all in—full engagement, full participation.

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Long story short, Rick Warren, author of bestseller *The Purpose Driven Life*, reminds us of God's ultimate game plan when he writes, "You were born by His purpose and for His purpose."

And to find and fulfill that purpose calls for a **lifelong pursuit of preparedness**.

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