

THE
SAINT
BUILDER
FOUNDATION

Be Saintspirational

THE FLYING V'S
SOAR TO NEW HEIGHTS
BY LIVING A LIFE OF VIRTUE

SCOTT A. FROYEN

PREFACE

I wrote a book a while back, [*"sAint Me?! A Practical Guide to Building and Living Your Personal Plan Toward Sainthood."*](#) It contains a chapter about vices and virtues. My premise was, and is, that the seven deadly sins (collectively, the vices) are the root cause of most of our worldly problems. But good news, they can be overcome by practicing their contrary virtues.

Collectively I refer to them as the V's. To help myself improve I developed a worksheet to track my daily V behavior. As I contemplated what to call it while walking our dogs, a flock of geese appeared in formation overhead. Obviously a sign from above. So its name became the Flying V Tracker. I'll share it with you in chapter 9.

The V's were briefly discussed in the book using my basic level of knowledge at that time. Since then I have learned significantly more. I recently wrote a blog series covering each of the V's in more depth. Based on the positive response, I thought it might be helpful to put it all together in this short book for your reference. I pray that it helps you at least as much as it has me in the daily battle to overcome vice with virtue.

Godspeed, Scott

p.s. I recommend that you read through this entire e-book once before performing any of the challenges included. The conclusion chapter contains a suggested path for you to follow to become more virtuous in your daily living. You can do it! Enjoy...

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. <u>Introduction</u>	<u>4</u>
2. <u>Diligence vs. Sloth</u>	<u>6</u>
3. <u>Temperance vs. Gluttony</u>	<u>9</u>
4. <u>Charity vs. Greed</u>	<u>11</u>
5. <u>Patience vs. Wrath</u>	<u>13</u>
6. <u>Kindness vs. Envy</u>	<u>16</u>
7. <u>Chastity vs. Lust</u>	<u>18</u>
8. <u>Humility vs. Pride</u>	<u>20</u>
9. <u>Keeping Score</u>	<u>23</u>
10. <u>Conclusion</u>	<u>26</u>

CHAPTER 1

- INTRODUCTION -

LEAVE ME ALONE...I'M TRYING TO BE A BETTER PERSON!

My wife, Melanie has been extremely busy lately. When she finally arrives home each day she is exhausted. But I am eager to learn about her day and tell her about mine. We always have many of interesting stories to share, but she is tired and I'm usually not. The difference in our energy levels seems directly correlated to the number of people we have interacted with. A few for me, many for her. Interesting...

Anyway, one recent evening I was ready to talk and she wasn't. We were in our separate offices and I couldn't see what she was doing. I kept asking her questions and was getting no response. Finally she gave me an answer in the form of a loud statement, "**Leave me alone, I'm trying to be a better person!**"

That got me out of my chair quickly. I was trying not to laugh out loud and get myself in even more trouble. I saw that she was praying the rosary. I stood there and stared at her with a smile. She eventually looked up and we both cracked up laughing. I told her she was already the best person I know. Then I asked if I could use that line for an article.

Do you ever feel that way? Like if it wasn't for all the other people around, you could be a really good person. It does seem like it might be easier, but it's certainly not practical. We depend on each other to survive and to thrive. We were put here to serve each other through our unique missions, built around our individual talents. We are interconnected. We are interdependent. We need to get along. We want to get along. Sometimes it's just a real challenge.

Since writing the [sAint Me?!](#) book I've had some really interesting discussions and debates with people from many diverse backgrounds and beliefs. The two things we always agree upon is that

- 1. We could all be better people, and**
- 2. The world would be a much better place if we were.**

Duh! Pretty obvious I know. But it's been obvious for thousands of years and we still have a lot of problems. Nearly all of them are caused by our collective bad behavior. And we have the ability to solve them all by actively and consistently striving to be the best possible people we can be. But we don't. Why?!

I'm not saying we are all bad people. In fact I know very few who are. And who am I to judge. I don't think any of us strive to be bad people. I could be wrong. Maybe the few ruin it for the many? I don't know. But I do know that I can be better. I assume that is true for most of us. We are all human and it is difficult to consistently think, say and do what is right and good. Especially in a world where the opposite is so often rewarded. Nice guys finish last. The squeaky wheel gets the grease. Just two examples of traditional wisdom that seem backwards to me.

Oh I just remembered, there is a third area of common agreement. In the creation of a better world though being better people, we should each **start by improving ourselves**. To look in the mirror

before pointing fingers at others. To **be the person you want to interact with out in the world.**

So where do we start? I always go back to basics. Working to behave more virtuously. One of the few things we have total control of in life is how we choose to behave. Maybe that's an illusion, but I choose to believe it's true. I control my personal behavior. Others have an influence on it, but the decisions I make are mine alone.

I choose to pursue the virtues. To do what is right. To sin less. To do good and avoid bad. I use the seven deadly sins (vices) and their contrary virtues as a guide. Here's the list in virtue/vice order (I call them collectively the "**V's**"):

- 1. Diligence vs. Sloth**
- 2. Temperance vs. Gluttony**
- 3. Charity vs. Greed**
- 4. Patience vs. Wrath**
- 5. Kindness vs. Envy**
- 6. Chastity vs. Lust**
- 7. Humility vs. Pride**

I wrote about these in the book, but not in much depth. At the time I didn't have enough knowledge. But I've done my research now and am ready to share it with you. The following chapters each discuss one pairing of V's. My aim is to you to understanding what they are, how to identify them in your daily activities, and what specifically you can do to win on a daily basis. What is winning you ask? I'll tell you later.

For now I'll "leave you alone so you can be a better person."

CHAPTER 2

- DILIGENCE VS. SLOTH -

LIONS AND SLOTHS AND BEARS, OH MY!

Are you ready to save the world...one person at a time...starting with yourself?

Virtue will save the world. Vice is certainly doing quite the opposite. Over the next 7 chapters we will discuss how to overcome vice with virtue. To overcome the 7 deadly sins with their contrary virtues.

Let's start with Diligence. Actually, let's start with the vice first; Sloth. Then talk about how we overcome it with Diligence.

First a few definitions to justify the title and enhance your trivia knowledge.

- A group of lions is called a pride. Pride is the deadliest of the vices.
- A sloth is a cute little slow-moving mammal.
- A group of bears is called a sloth. Less deadly than the pride, but still scary.

I like to think of the vice of sloth as a cross between the cute little mammal and the scary bears. It's alluring and frightening at the same time.

The vice of **Sloth** is a reluctance to work or make an effort. Laziness, idleness, inactivity, inertia, sluggishness, shiftlessness, apathy, listlessness, lethargy, complacency, indifference. Ugh, I need a nap. Sloth is not doing what you know you should do. Doing the bare minimum needed to get by. Wasting time.

While rest is necessary to rejuvenate ourselves occasionally, too much will lead to unhappiness and even depression. Have you ever slept too long and felt groggy all day? It's that feeling. Sloth zaps your energy. Being lazy tends to make you even lazier, it's a vicious cycle. So why would we ever be slothful?

Two main reasons I believe, (1) we have no clear purpose, and (2) even with purpose life is hard and we seek to escape at times.

When we have no purpose, we don't know what to do. We have no destination and therefore no roadmap to guide our actions. So we wander aimlessly. As humans we crave purpose. We want to be valued. We want to make a positive difference in the world. We want to thrive, not to just survive.

We are in a constant search of purpose, consciously or unconsciously. And since our human tendency is to avoid pain and to gain pleasure, we avoid the pain of having no clear purpose with the pleasure of distractions. There are so many to choose from. Our phones and televisions are always nearby. We can easily get lost in them. The hours pass by painlessly. They bring us short term pleasure, or at least no pain.

Even if we do know our purpose we are susceptible to sloth. The reason; Fear. Fulfilling our purpose

will be difficult at times. We will occasionally doubt our ability to succeed. If we obsess about that doubt it grows into fear. Then we look for an escape. Back to distraction. Where's my phone?

You are obviously a diligent person or you wouldn't be reading this. I'll bet you are really busy too. Can we be busy and slothful at the same time? What if we are busy doing the wrong things? Do you ever do the easy tasks in life and avoid the more difficult? I'm guess we all do at times. Two words; Avoidance and Procrastination, sure signs of sloth!

This is depressing! I saw a funny sign once. It said, "Dear Optimist and Pessimist, while you were arguing about whether the glass was half full or half empty, I drank it. Signed the Opportunist." Let's seize the opportunity to overcome sloth with diligence.

Diligence is careful and persistent work or effort. Conscientiousness, dedication, commitment, tenacity, perseverance. Doing what you were meant to do with passion. Making a positive difference for the benefit of others. Taking action. Being proactive. Focusing your efforts on important work. Avoiding distractions. Determination and persistence in the pursuit of worthwhile goals. Now that's exciting and energizing!

You immediately know when you cross paths with someone who is living a life of diligence. They are enthusiastic, passionate, energetic, positive, happy, determined and in constant pursuit of excellence in all that they do. They are inspiring and motivating. They know their purpose and mission in life. You want to be around them and to be like them.

God has given each of us a number of gifts. Chief among them Life, Talents, Free Will, Time, and His Grace along the way. I believe He also gave us all a personal mission, but that is a huge topic for another time. And I believe He gave us all a common purpose; to come back to Him.

Think about it. God gave us all these great gifts. What does He expect in return? No one really knows. Maybe nothing. He did give us a few commandments. Love Him and neighbors (everyone else). Maybe that's it. But how do we show our love?

Personally I feel a responsibility to use these great gifts to become the best me I can be. To serve others using the time and talents I've been blessed with. And to behave morally, to pursue virtue. That's my purpose. I actually think we all share that purpose. To do the best we can and eventually make it back to God. To be saints.

I attempt to do this through using a simple three-step daily process I call **TAP**, as in tap my potential. It stands for **Think, Act and Pray**. Start Give it a try.

Think – Be aware of the choices you make. Interesting, as I just typed "be aware," I left out the space. Spellcheck changed it to "beware." Sometimes I think my mistyping is not accidental. Like in this case, beware is a good warning. As in, if you are not in a continuous state of awareness about the choices you are making, beware the consequences.

Being aware is the #1 thing we can do immediately to avoid sloth and practice diligence. To make conscious choices in line with our purpose. To be the best we can be for the benefit of others. My friend Jim is so clear about this purpose: "To make it to Heaven and bring as many others with us as we can." So simple!

How do we do that? By doing what matters most and avoiding what matters least. By focusing our time and attention on the important things in life. Our health, our relationships with God, family, friends and neighbors, continually learning, and actively developing our talents and using them to serve others.

Here's the thinking question I ask myself many times in a day: **What's Important Now (WIN)?** This is a question Lou Holtz asked his players to think about each time they had a choice to make about how to spend their time. Actually this is both a what and why question. What should I do and why should I do it? The why answer should be that it helps us fulfill our purpose.

As I have become more spiritual, and in the spirit of striving to become a saint, I now ask God this question often, "**What should I do next to bring JOY to the world.**" By joy I mean something that is showing love for **Jesus** and **Others**, and helping **You** become your best self. Are three acronyms in one article too much? Moving on with TAP...

Act – Take action. Once you have thought through your options to WIN and bring JOY, make your choice. Then make it happen. Have no fear. No avoidance or procrastination allowed.

Pray – Think and pray are usually overlapping for me. I think that is a good thing. Thinking on our own without help from above can be dangerous. So in addition to the WIN and JOY questions throughout the day I make sure to start and end each day with prayer.

To start; Thank you for the opportunity of a new day, please guide my activities, and give me strength to carry on. To end; Thank you for the help in the things I did well, I'm sorry for my failings, I resolve to do better tomorrow, and thank you for the great gifts You have blessed me with.

That's it, three simple daily steps to being diligent. Personally I think diligence is the key to overcoming all the vices. The ability to control our behavior begins and ends with diligence. We must be determined, persistent and consistent in exercising self-discipline to do what we know we should do, and to avoid all else.

Need some practice? Pick one thing you will do this week to be more diligent and less slothful. Something simple. Make it fairly easy. Like replacing a half hour of television or phone time every day with prayer or reading the bible. Or wake up a half hour earlier and go for a walk. **Think and Act and Pray** on one thing. Make it happen!

CHAPTER 3

- TEMPERANCE VS. GLUTTONY -

THE FAST PATH TO TEMPERANCE

Gluttony is literally a deadly sin. The number one killer in our society is heart disease. The primary cause of this is obesity which is mainly the result of eating too much and exercising too little. Gluttony and sloth. How are you doing in overcoming sloth with diligence? Did you successfully complete last week's challenge of replacing one sloth behavior with diligence?

Gluttony is an inordinate desire to consume more than what one requires. Overeating, insatiability, piggishness, voraciousness. Drinking to excess.

The latest statistics show that two-thirds of adults and nearly thirty percent of children in America are overweight or obese. Every time I look into this issue the numbers are higher. Especially among our youth. Then there is alcoholism and drug addiction.

I could go on about all the problems we have related to gluttony, but I wouldn't be telling you anything you don't already know. Let's talk about the solution instead...Temperance.

Temperance is moderation or self-restraint, especially in eating and drinking. Self-control, self-discipline, self-denial, abstinence, restraint, moderation.

The virtue of temperance is focused on meeting our needs. In contrast, the vice of gluttony is consumed with fulfilling our wants. Meeting our basic need for food and drink is temperance. Anything beyond our basic need is want, therefore gluttony.

Have you ever heard the saying, "You sure are a glutton for punishment?" Gluttony does indeed carry its own punishment. We cause our own health problems by gluttonous behavior. Why? Because temperance is hard. But why? Because we have to control our appetites. Wait, that shouldn't be hard. We should be in total control of ourselves, right? Our own behavior is the only thing we really have control over. Or do we? Apparently not!

Why is it so difficult to control our cravings? I think part of it has to do with our definition of needs and wants. There seems to be confusion about the distinction between the two. The line between them has been blurred by our expectations. When we get something we want it somehow magically transforms itself into a need from that point forward.

I'm fascinated by the way people describe their needs on those home buying shows on HGTV. All we really need is the structure. Well, electricity and plumbing are nice too. The rest is all want. But they always use the word need instead of want. Do we really need a three-car garage and an ocean view?

For purposes of this discussion I propose the following as our working definitions of need and want:

Need – That which is required, necessary, essential...Temperance.
Want – Everything else. Desires, cravings...Gluttony.

When I catch myself saying that I need something that I actually just want, I remind myself of the movie “The Jerk.” Specifically the scene where Nathan is shuffling out of his mansion picking up ridiculous things he says he needs. If you need or want a laugh...[check this out](#).

So what do we truly need to eat and drink? The simple answer, enough to survive. I could go into daily calorie and water needs. And bore you with a vitamin and mineral discussion. You likely know all that stuff anyway. Since our goal is to inspire and motivate ourselves to become more temperate, let's try something different. I find that making myself feel guilty is a good way to change my behavior. Is that a Catholic thing? Try this.

I recently reviewed our last grocery store receipt and labeled each item as either a need or a want. The result was roughly 30 percent need and 70 percent want. I noticed that the needs corresponded with the things Melanie picked out, and the wants were primarily mine. Oops!

We shop weekly and the amount is usually about the same, \$100. I wondered how much we spend on wants in a year, so I multiplied \$100 x 52 weeks x 70%. The result, \$3,640. Wow, that's a lot of want, or let's just call it waste to add to the shame.

Then I wondered how many meals could have been provided to the hungry with our annual wasted dollars? The Food Bank of Iowa states that they can provide 4 meals for every dollar contributed to them. $4 \times \$3,640 = 14,560$ meals. Okay now I feel really guilty. I'm a horrible person! Makes ya think, doesn't it?!

So here's what I'm going to do to become more temperate. I'm going to Fast. ***The fast way to becoming more temperate is to Fast.*** A fast is to abstain entirely from or limit food. I'm going to attempt to limit my food and drink intake to my needs, not my wants.

There are many ways to fast. I'm no expert. I think of it as denying myself in some way. In this case, from food I want but don't really need. I thought about starting small, with one food type and then adding others over time. But I know that won't work for me. I've tried it before. I end up substituting one bad food for another and defeat the purpose. The cold turkey approach works much better for me. You are probably more disciplined.

Know thyself and choose your own approach. Fast from one thing for a day, week, year, forever. Fast between meals. Fast from a meal each day for a week. Fast entirely for a day. Do whatever works to help you become more temperate.

To deny myself my wants, I simply won't buy them. If I don't have the wants in the house I can't eat them. Brilliant! Maybe we can reduce our grocery bill in half. We'll donate it to the Food Bank resulting in providing over 10,000 meals annually to the hungry in Iowa. Interesting, by becoming more temperate we are also becoming more charitable. Growing virtue in one area tends to grow it in others as well...Nice!

I just realized that the best way for me to succeed in my temperance quest is to not go to the grocery store at all. Melanie can do all the shopping since she only buys our needs anyway. Another brilliant strategy. Think she'll buy it? No way!

Here's the challenge for the week; Fast from one of your food wants. Pick just one. One you know you shouldn't eat anyway. You can do it!

CHAPTER 4

- CHARITY VS. GREED -

I WANT AN OOMPA LOOMPA NOW!

On to Greed and Charity. I woke up thinking about the movie, “Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory.” This was my favorite movie as a kid and remains so to this day. I’m going to assume you have seen it. If not, stop reading and go watch it. You’ll be glad you did.

Spoiler alert - Charlie ends up winning the factory by demonstrating his strong moral character. All the other kids lose due to a vice; mainly gluttony, greed and pride. My favorite was “I want it now!” girl who demanded her father buy her an Oompa Loompa and a Golden Goose. Now that’s greedy! She ends up being declared a bad egg and falling down the garbage chute to the furnace. Mr. Wonka says the furnace is only lit every other day, so she has a sporting chance of survival. If you have 3 minutes to spare, check it out [here](#).

On the other hand, Charlie resists the greedy urge to sell his Everlasting Gobstopper to Slugworth. And that selfless act won him the factory. The movie ends with Mr. Wonka reminding Charlie not to forget about the man who suddenly received everything he ever wanted. Charlie asks, “What happened?” to which Wonka replies, “He lived happily ever after.” I don’t think that is true in this life. But living a life of virtue may get you to the next, eternal life in heaven...which I certainly hope has a candy factory.

Greed is an extreme desire for wealth or material gain. Covetousness, materialism. Also known as avarice; an insatiable desire for riches; the inordinate miserly desire to gain and hoard wealth. Acquisitiveness, cupidity, selfishness, miserliness, stinginess.

We all know the bible verse (1 Timothy 6:10) that states that, “For the love of money is the root of all evils.” We all need some amount of money to meet our basic needs and to enable us to achieve our mission in life. As we discussed last week, the big question is; What do we truly need? Tough question. Or maybe the answer is just not what we want to hear.

As Jesus chose his disciples he told them to leave everything they owned and follow Him. I’ve always assumed they didn’t have much back then. Still it must have been a tough decision. Like it was for the rich man who asked Jesus what he had to do to get to heaven. He was told to sell everything he had and give to the poor. The man walked away from that challenge. Is that what we are asked to do too? I don’t know. I think we all need to let our conscience (the Holy Spirit) be our guide. Just keep asking the question, “**How much money and stuff do I really need?**”

As with gluttony, the line between needs and wants is blurry in our instant gratification culture. Advertisers are brilliant in their portrayal of wants as need. Plus we can have what we want now and pay later. Why wait? What’s the problem? Well I just heard that credit card and student loan debt are at the highest levels ever recorded. By contrast, the savings rate is at the lowest level. That’s a problem. An impending crisis. Oh, and the national debt is a record \$21 trillion, about \$65,000 for every citizen...wow!

Greed seems to be winning. At the same time, I don’t think any of us would call ourselves greedy.

I don't know anyone I would call greedy. No miserly Scrooge types. I know a lot of people with a lot of stuff, including me. They are all also very generous, donating their time and money to good causes. Is that greedy? Maybe. Mostly I think it's pride. Keeping up with the Joneses.

I've bought a lot of stuff. Looking back and asking why, I don't think greed or pride was the reason. Rather it was in search for happiness. Maybe that is pride. Or maybe spending was an unconscious strategy to keep me going to work. I really don't know. But I do know the stuff only made me happy temporarily. Like a kid at Christmas. Get a bunch of toys, play with them for a while and then move on to wanting something else.

I'm going to conclude that most of our accumulation of stuff is the result of attempting to buy happiness. It doesn't work. It's a vicious cycle. We buy stuff because we're unhappy, and we're unhappy because we buy stuff. It's time to stop the madness. To start a new cycle, one of saving and giving.

Charity is the voluntary giving of help to those in need. Kindness and tolerance in judging others. Aid, relief, alms, philanthropy, benevolence, goodwill, compassion, consideration, concern, kindness, sympathy, indulgence, tolerance, leniency.

Charity is giving of your time, talent and treasure with no expectation of receiving anything in return. It's giving with an attitude of gratitude. The strange thing is, the more you give the more you seem to get. Apparently it's a law of nature. And it makes you happy too. Way happier than stuff. Think about it, don't you enjoy giving gifts more than receiving them?

I have this crazy dream of developing a tiny house community of striving saints. Not like a cult or commune or closed society. Just a place for like-minded people to live a life of simplicity and service. Residents would be normal members of society with regular jobs and lives. I'm not sure how the raising children thing would work. Maybe they get their own even tinier place? It's just a place to live and learn from each other. To inspire each other to live virtuously and with a sense of purpose. To serve others and become our best selves.

Why tiny houses? Because it would require us to give most of our stuff away. To only keep the things we really need. Like only the stuff that would fit in a 400 square foot area. For us that would mean getting rid of about 85 percent of our belongings. Could you do it? If you've never seen a tiny house, [check out these models](#).

Another advantage of living with less is that you have less to do. It frees up your time. No yard work, little cleaning, and more desire to get out of that tiny space and do something useful in the world. To be charitable.

Here's your challenge for the week. First, actually count your blessings. Write them down, everything you are grateful for. Next, think about what you would do if you were actually moving to a tiny home. What would you keep? What would you do with the rest? Start doing that now in some small way. Give away one thing to charity this week. And let me know if you want to invest in the tiny house community. I'm joking, well kind of...

Just had a thought that we should also have a tiny clubhouse for gatherings. And maybe a miniature golf course and wading pool. Okay, I'll stop...

CHAPTER 5

- PATIENCE VS. WRATH -

YEAH, YEAH, PATIENCE – HOW LONG IS THAT GONNA TAKE?!

Time to develop the “patience of a saint” to avoid the “wrath of God.”

Wrath is angry, violent, or stern indignation. Anger, rage, fury, outrage, displeasure, annoyance, irritation, ire, madness. This was the dictionary definition and synonyms I used when writing the [sAint Me?!](#) book last year. In my mind at the time, wrath and anger were synonymous. I now see a very important difference.

In my daily bible reading I came across a verse recently that had never stuck out to me before. It states, **“Be angry but do not sin” (Ephesians 4:26)**. Apparently anger alone is not a sin. Makes sense now that I think about it. Jesus was sinless yet he got angry a few times as I recall. Like overturning the money changer’s tables in the temple. Or calling the religious leaders of the time hypocrites quite often.

Jesus’ anger was righteous indignation at sin that was being committed. Of course he was angry at the sin, not the sinner. He obviously showed great love for the sinner. We are called to do the same, to be angry at the sin we see in the world. That anger is designed to spur us to action to avoid sin ourselves, and to not put up with it in others as well. But we must take care to **hate the sin but love the sinner. To judge not lest we be judged.**

So what exactly is the deadly sin of wrath then? Anger directed at a person is wrath. And anger that is generated by something other than a sin is wrath. Well technically maybe it’s not wrath unless you act out in some way. But even just feeling angry is bad for your health; physical, mental and spiritual.

I have a personal wrath test. When I am feeling annoyed, disturbed, upset, disappointed or angry about something I ask myself, **“Is this feeling the result of a sin that has been committed by myself or someone else?”**

- If no, get over it now and move on with your life before you turn it into a sin.
- If yes, what are you going to do about it to improve the situation and to avoid having your anger become wrath?

I do something about a yes answer immediately so the anger does not fester and grow into something worse, like hate or rage. It’s usually something really simple. Like acknowledging my mistake and asking for God’s forgiveness, or saying a prayer for the offending person. Remember, hate the sin, love the sinner.

Here are a few hypothetical situations to try out the wrath test:

Situation 1 - You are driving and approaching an intersection. You have a green light. As you are about to pass through you notice that a cross-traffic driver is speeding through their red light. You

slam on the brakes to avoid a collision. The driver of the other car honks and makes an obscene gesture at you.

Test – Are you angry? YES! Was a sin committed? Yes, wrath was directed at you. So you can be rightfully angry, but what are you going to do about it? Don't react back. Say a quick prayer for the other driver to get over their wrath and to arrive safely at their destination. Nice job, you avoided turning your anger into wrath and showed love for your neighbor.

Situation 2 – You are starting up your pressure washer for the first time following the winter. You go through all the preparation steps and pull the cord to start it. You have prepared yourself to be patient because past experience tells you it will likely take at least 10 pulls. 25 pulls later you are really annoyed. It finally starts but the hose to the sprayer flies off and water is spouting everywhere including on you.

Test – Are you angry? Oh yeah! Was a sin committed? No, machines can't sin. Did you get over it? No...I said a couple choice words and noticed a neighbor laughing. Oops...that's wrath. But then I got over it and laughed with the neighbor. And yes, that actually happened to me yesterday...oops.

Situation 3 – Your spouse has the tv remote control. You are watching a recorded show so you don't have to watch the commercials. They keep forgetting to fast forward through the ads. You remind them several times but it keeps happening.

Test – Are you angry? Getting there. Is it a sin not to fast forward? Ah...no? Okay, definitely not. Did you manage to keep your mouth shut and just go with the flow? Amazingly yes. Nice work, no wrath...this time. Keep up the great work, that takes true patience. Maybe the patience of a Saint? Not really...but it's something.

Patience is the capacity to endure pain, difficulty, provocation, or annoyance with calm. Tolerance, restraint, composure, indulgence, resoluteness, fortitude, serenity, stamina. Think before you react. Serenity now.

I thought about becoming a doctor but I have no patience...or is that patients. Sorry, bad old joke. But truly, I struggle with consistently demonstrating patience. And I know exactly why. Expectations. How I set them in my head occasionally sets me up for impatience. An example may help here.

Do you like to fish? I can't stand it. I have no patience for it. Why? My expectation is to catch many fish quickly. That is an unrealistic fishing expectation leading to impatience. So I choose not to participate. By contrast, those who enjoy fishing love the whole experience, not just the catching part. Their expectation is to relax in nature and maybe catch a few fish. The only thing that could make them impatient is fishing with someone like me.

Managing expectations will help you to become significantly more patient. Here's how it works. Whenever you set out to do something, imagine the best possible outcome. Then develop a plan to achieve that outcome. And finally, very briefly think through the things that could go wrong along the way. Then go forward with your plan expecting the best, yet being mentally prepared for the worst.

For example, every time I drive I expect people to obey the laws and to be courteous. But I drive defensively knowing that will not always be the case. When something goes wrong I am then

mentally prepared and therefore more apt to be patient.

You can use this patience strategy on anything that could potentially annoy you. That's your challenge for the week. List all of those things. Then pick one and try it out. Personally, I'm going to give Melanie full control of the tv remote for a week. I declare this "Patience of a Saint" week. Take care to not let your anger become wrath. Remember, patience is a virtue.

One last note. Do not use the managing expectations strategy to reduce your anger about sinful acts. Instead, channel that anger into redoubling your efforts in striving to become the saint you are meant to be. And to show others the way.

CHAPTER 6

- KINDNESS VS. ENVY -

LOOK OUT, HERE COMES THE GREEN-EYED MONSTER!

Guess who coined the term, “the green-eyed monster,” and in what book it was first used? William Shakespeare, Othello. Might as well just give you the answer and save you a 15 second search. I’m “green with envy” at how quickly the kids of today can do research. Remember going to the library and using something called a card catalog? Is that even a thing anymore?

Envy is a feeling of discontent or resentment aroused by a desire for someone else’s possessions, abilities, status, or situation. Jealousy, covetousness, resentment, bitterness, discontent.

The deadly sins we’ve discussed to date are all tempting because of the temporary pleasure they appear to provide. Sloth is relaxing. Gluttony brings us tasty treats. Greed buys us something fun. And with wrath we get to let off some steam. Envy on the other hand does nothing but make us unhappy. There is no upside...so stop it!

Envy causes us to think the worst of and for others. This is obviously not a “Love your Neighbor” outlook. Unchecked envy sets off a vicious cycle of resentment, anger, hatred and wrath. It leads to the sins of gossip and lies, and maybe even violence. For what? Do we really think tearing down others will build us up? In fact, it does quite the opposite.

Seriously, what is there to envy in another that you don’t already have? Stuff, material possessions? Do they really matter? Once we have met our basic needs, the rest is all want. Maybe even greed. Should we envy greed?

What about the attributes and accomplishments of another? Should we envy those? Why not admire them and use them as inspiration and motivation to do the same? To use our talents and abilities to achieve great things in this world. We should be grateful for all that we already have, and for all that we are. Let’s build on that.

Yet we continue to envy. Why? Is it our competitive nature? Our need for recognition? The desire to prove our self-worth to ourselves and others? All of the above and more? Sometimes I think envy is just an excuse for our own lack of becoming the person we know we can be.

My personal opinion is that we are envious because we tend to get our sense of self-worth by comparing ourselves to others. Here’s the problem. There will always be someone else who has more possessions, abilities, and status than you. We set ourselves up for constant disappointment with this outlook. So stop comparing!

Do you think God compares us to each other? Or does He instead compare us to the ideal He has in mind for us? How about we do the same? How about you compare your present self to the best possible self that you can imagine becoming? Then set out to be that person. Become the saint you are meant to be!

That is what true champions do. By champion I mean someone who has become the best in their

field of endeavor. Champions don't worry about beating someone else to become the best. They continually strive to become the best they can possibly be. Their outlook and attitude is what gets them to the top and keeps them there. They have an ideal state for themselves in mind that they aspire to achieve. Being better than others is merely a result of their efforts, not their aim.

I find it interesting that all great champions have a rival. I'm thinking about sports in particular here, but I'll bet this has general applicability. They have someone to compete with who serves to make them better. They push to make each other better. And in doing so they both achieve a higher level of performance than they would have on their own.

These rivalries are often portrayed as bitter at the time they are happening. Yet as time passes the rivals nearly always become friends. They have a deep respect for each other and an appreciation for what they got from the other to help them achieve excellence. That's the other side of envy; brotherly love. Let's call it the virtue of kindness.

Kindness is the quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate. Caring, helpful, thoughtful, unselfish, selfless, altruistic, compassionate, sympathetic, understanding, big-hearted, benevolent, friendly, hospitable, neighborly.

Kindness wants the best for others. We are truly happy for their success. We are inspired and motivated by who they are and what they are achieving. We want to help them and learn from them. We know that by working together we can all achieve more.

Life is not a zero-sum envy game. Your win is not my loss. We can all win. We can push each other to achieve more than we could on our own. We can be friendly rivals, encouraging each other to pursue excellence. To becoming the saints we are all meant to be.

Two familiar sayings just popped into my wandering mind. A rising tide lifts all boats, and loose lips sink ships. I think these mean that kindness to each other keeps all of our boats afloat, but take care to navigate around the rocks of envy that are always lurking in our path.

Like charity, kindness extended with no expectation of a return always comes back to you in some way. So help others become their best selves. Know that somehow that will help you to do the same.

As with the other virtues, kindness begins with an attitude of gratitude. If you are truly grateful for who you are and what you have, it is difficult to be envious at the same time. And be grateful for the good fortune of others as well. Let those around you know how much you respect and admire them. Especially those whom you might have envied in the past.

If you are not yet completely over envy, do this. Pray for those you envy. Pray that they continue to be blessed with all the good things in this life and that they remain in God's good graces. I find it impossible to pray for someone with envy in my heart. Try it for yourself.

I feel much better now. That sick green feeling is gone. Ending envy might just be the quickest path to lasting happiness.

CHAPTER 7

- CHASTITY VS. LUST -

LAND ON THE SIXTH DAY GOD CREATED...LUST?

“God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and God said to them: Be fertile and multiply” (Genesis 1:27-28).

In creating us men and women He also gave us sexuality as a means to continue our existence. And to make sure we did, He made it very good. Combine our strong sex drive with the gift of freewill and our imperfect nature, and boom...Lust came into existence.

We have successfully multiplied to a worldwide population of 7.6 billion. Unfortunately we have also created and multiplied other less than fruitful results from our sexual activities. Sexually transmitted diseases, abortion, pornography, adultery, divorce, single mothers, absent fathers, prostitution, human trafficking. All problems that just keep getting worse. You would think the devil had invented our sexual desire. He has certainly taken advantage of it.

Lust is an inordinate craving for the pleasures of the body. Intense desire, passion, yearning, longing, lasciviousness. **Chastity on the other hand is the state or quality of being chaste; moral purity.** Celibacy, purity, innocence, abstinence, virtue in both thoughts and actions.

This is a tough one. As C.S. Lewis pointed out long ago, “Chastity is the most unpopular of the Christian virtues. There is no getting away from it; the old Christian rule is, either marriage, with complete faithfulness to your partner, or else total abstinence.”

Adhering to this view would certainly cure all the problems listed above. But it is not a popular stance or the prevailing wisdom in our current culture. In fact, I fear chastity is considered a joke to most. It is ridiculed while lust seems to be celebrated.

In all the other “V” pairings we have explored there is a fighting chance of living the virtues by utilizing our own ability to control ourselves. We can be diligent, temperate, charitable, patient and kind. I wonder, do we really stand a chance of being chaste in our current culture left to our own devices?

Sex is all around us. Sex sells. What would advertisers do without it? They count on our lustful desires. And they feed them constantly with words and images. Movies, television, music, magazines, the internet; It’s all full of lust inducing content. This constant barrage of visuals has successfully desensitized us to the negative consequences of our lustful behavior.

The prevailing attitude of popular culture tells us that if it feels good, do it. Why wait? It’s just sex. It’s not hurting anyone. Everybody’s doing it. You only live once. Bad things won’t happen. There’s a pill to make sure, and another one just in case. What’s the big deal?

Lust and sex can ruin lives quickly! That’s the big deal. A very short period of pleasure followed by a lifetime of regret and hardship. Or maybe you get lucky this time. But luck runs out eventually. Why do we take the chance? We want to belong. We want to be loved. And we want it now.

So how can we possibly overcome the luster of lust with the unpopularity of chastity? Unlike the other vices where a little self-control can go a long way toward improving our virtue, we need significant help from above on this one. Lust is too strong an emotion, and too willingly accepted and even promoted by society. Plus there is the chemical reaction within us that can quickly become a runaway train. We have little control of the brakes. We will crash.

Let's make our first line of defense asking for Gods help. Ask it often. Whenever the initial lustful thought begins in our mind, stop and say, **"Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil!"** Admit our weakness and ask for strength.

Next, take a stand. Chastity is the courageous choice. It takes confidence that you are doing the right thing, and determination to not let others persuade you otherwise. No premarital sex. No extramarital sex. A loving faithful relationship with your partner for life. And welcome children. Is that all so bad or so difficult? Or is it too good to be true? No drama. No surprises. I like it!

Avoidance is a good defense as well. Avoid visual stimuli and situations that can lead to lustful thoughts, words and actions. Don't feed the beast. Stop, drop and roll was my next thought. You know, the advice we are given if we are set on fire. Best to forget the drop and roll in the case of lust. Just stop! Once a lustful thought begins, stop thinking...look away, walk away. Remember, a person's body is the body of a person. Don't objectify and dwell upon it. Acknowledge the beauty created by God and move on. Honor and respect the person.

We all want to be respected and loved. We all are...by God. We really don't need any more than that. But we want it. So look for it in all the right places. Our families. Find that one person you are meant to spend your life with. Be patient. That person will come along. You will know when they do. Not because of lust, but because of love. Choose love over lust. Know the difference.

Lust takes away from another. You want something from them. It's all about you. Love gives to another. You want the best for that person. They are more important to you than you are to yourself. Amazing!

Here's your challenge for the week. Recognize all the lustful words and images that you are subjected to in one day. Start a count in your head as you begin your day. You will be amazed at how many there are. You will likely lose track by noon. That's fine. The purpose of the exercise is simply awareness. Think of one way you can reduce that daily count for yourself. Start doing whatever that is immediately.

CHAPTER 8

- HUMILITY VS. PRIDE -

THE FEW, THE HUMBLE, THE ASPIRING SAINTS

Humility is the virtue that enables all the others. It is easier to be Charitable, Kind, Patient, Chaste, Temperate and Diligent if we are first Humble. Humility starts with gratitude. To be grateful for the past that has made us who we are today, and for the opportunity ahead to be all that we can be. The few, the humble, the aspiring saints.

What can stop us? If God is for us, who can be against us? Only ourselves with our foolish pride. Pride is the deadliest of the deadly sins. It leads to all the other vices. To Greed, Envy, Wrath, Lust, Gluttony and Sloth. Humility is our secret weapon to defeat them all. Consistently practicing this one virtue will drastically improve our odds of becoming the saints we are all meant to be.

“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” 1 Peter 5:5

“Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.” Matthew 23:12

Humility is a modest opinion of one’s own importance. Modest, humble, servile, respectful, deferential. **Pride is an excessively high opinion of oneself.** Narcissism, vanity, vainglory, arrogance, conceit, bigheadedness, smugness, self-importance, egotism, superiority, immodesty.

C.S. Lewis gave three reasons for labeling pride as the deadliest sin; (1) the devil became the devil through pride, (2) pride is the cause of every other vice and (3) pride is a completely anti-God and anti-others state of mind. It directly violates the Greatest Commandments by putting ourselves first. He sums it all up by saying:

“There is one vice of which no man in the world is free; which everyone in the world loathes when he sees it in someone else; and of which hardly any people, except Christians, ever imagine that they are guilty of themselves.”

“There is no fault which makes a man more unpopular, and no fault which we are more unconscious of in ourselves. And the more we have it ourselves, the more we dislike it in others.”

Pride is a lust for power over everyone else. To be in control. To always get our way. An attitude of do it my way, no compromise, always right, can do no wrong, don’t care what anyone else thinks, says or does. Pride says, **“My will be done.”**

Humility says, “Thy will be done.” We exist to serve God, and He wants us to serve others. We do that by striving to become our best self. By developing and utilizing our talents to help others. And behaving in a virtuous manner. This is the only way to achieve lasting happiness.

“If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all.” Mark 9:35

“Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves.” Philippians 2:3

God's point of view regarding pride is quite clear. But it has opposing meanings in our society. The first two dictionary definitions I found were positive: (1) a sense of one's own proper dignity or value; self-respect, and (2) pleasure or satisfaction taken in an achievement, possession, or association. Quite different than the "excessively high opinion..." version.

We are told to take pride in ourselves. To have confidence in ourselves. To rely upon ourselves. To take credit for our achievements. To be self-promoters. Alternatively, humility is often associated with weakness. Being passive, submissive or insecure. Nice guys finish last. You will certainly be swimming upstream in our culture by valuing humility over pride.

"A dead thing can go with the stream, but only a living thing can go against it." G.K. Chesterton

Truly humble people are actually quite the opposite of what we've been led to believe. **Humility is thinking less about yourself, not less of yourself.** It is a quiet confidence. Striving for excellence in all that you do. Selflessly serving others. Seeing the value in all people. Seeking wisdom and truth. Boldly standing up for what is right and just. Working collaboratively with others to make the world a better place. Giving credit and taking blame. Letting your actions speak louder than your words. Walking your talk. Humbly turning yourself over to God for guidance and strength. Doing it His way rather than yours. Thy will be done.

Interestingly, we all start out humble. We are dependent on our parents for survival. Is having our diaper changed the first lesson in humility? Then we start to learn. The more we learn, the more pride we build. It doesn't take long. As teenagers we know it all. Thankfully we still have parents around to tell us differently. We act as if we don't believe them, but we know better. Then...

I was just struck by the thought that our pride kicks into high gear at the moment we choose to stop learning. When we think we know it all. Or at least know enough to survive on our own. When we believe we are no longer dependent on anyone else. Our personal independence day. The day we exalt ourselves. That is a sad day for God. The day you place yourself over Him.

This is a dangerous place to live. Trouble is, it can also be a place where you can thrive in this world. Until eventually you are humbled by some event. It will happen. And when it does, guess what? You will naturally do the things a humble person does. You will depend on others to pull you through the hardship. Maybe even to change your diaper. And you will come back to God. He didn't want it to have to be that way, but He is glad you are back.

Of course a better way is to never reach that prideful state in the first place. Place God first in your life now. Be dependent upon Him. Maintain an attitude of gratitude. Keep on learning. Serve others. Be humble. "Stay gold Ponyboy." Seems like an appropriate quote from the classic book "The Outsiders" by S.E. Hinton. You will likely often feel like an outsider in your quest to defeat pride with humility.

Here's a humility challenge for you...and me. Think of something you have always "kind of" wanted to do. Kind of meaning, you have thought about it briefly and then immediately put it out of your mind as something you know little about, and you feel less than optimistic about your chances of success. So you dismiss it. It might even scare you. For instance, dancing or singing in public would fit the criteria for me.

Your assignment is to create your list of possibilities, pick one to work on, share it with someone else and set a date by which you will humble yourself by at least trying to do it. When you do, notice how you naturally do the things a humble person does. Finally, take the lessons learned from the experience and replicate them into your everyday life. And let me know how it goes. I chose dancing...well assuming Melanie agrees...and our friend Holly agrees to teach us.

Success! We have now learned how to defeat all of the seven deadly sins with their contrary virtues. Thank you for reading. I hope you have learned as much as I have. And that you have put at least some of it into practice already.

Next, a simple way to pull it all together.

CHAPTER 9

- KEEPING SCORE -

SHALL WE PLAY A GAME?

Have you seen the movie “War Games” from way back in 1983? It must still be popular since you have to rent or buy it on all the popular streaming services. Anyway, the plot is that a military supercomputer asks a hacker to play a nuclear war simulation game that nearly ends in the real mutual destruction of the USA and Russia. It concludes with the computer displaying a message that says “WINNER: NONE.” It then says that nuclear war is a strange game in which *the only winning move is not to play*.

Seems to me that the opposite is true in the game of life. In fact it’s more like the lottery; *you can’t win if you don’t play*. Lets call “winning” living a life that gets us to heaven. Playing is demonstrating our belief and faith in God through working to develop our talents, serving others and behaving virtuously. Good news for us since we have already learned how to defeat the seven deadly sins with their contrary virtues over the last seven weeks. How are you doing so far? Are you winning?

The great thing about games is they have an objective scoring system so we know how well we are performing. And based on our results over time we can determine what we need to work on in order to continually improve. Let’s use the game of golf as an example.

In golf you count how many times you hit the ball to get it into the hole. You compare that number against what has been determined to be a good score for the hole; i.e. par. Par is basically determined by how many shots it should take you to get to the green, plus two putts.

Knowing this helps you to determine what you need to work on to get better. Drives, approach shots and/or putts. Work on those things and try again. Simple, and the fun part is seeing the improvement in your score over time. That’s why so many people like to golf. Plus it is one of the few valid excuses to get out of work without faking an illness...I mean being sick.

What does this have to do with playing the game of life and behaving virtuously? Plenty. I have a simple game for you. I’ve been playing it for a year and a half. It has helped me significantly improve my V behavior. I thought it might help you as well so I’m happy to share it with you now.

Here is a worksheet to help. I call it [The Flying V Tracker](#). It lists all the V’s with summary descriptions, and has blank spaces where you can record your performance on each V, every day.

Here’s how it works. During the course of each day you track all the good and bad things you think, say and do back to the Virtues and Vices. We instinctively know when we do good or bad. That pesky thing called a conscience tells us. You usually know when you are feeling particularly good or bad about yourself. In order to play the game you need to be acutely aware of these feelings and to stop and think about what is causing them.

Ask yourself one question. Why? Why did I just think, say, or do that? Or maybe fail to do something you know you should do. If you ask yourself why enough times you will end up realizing that the root cause of your good or bad was one of the virtues or vices. The seven deadly sins are the

underlying root cause of all sin. Thankfully their contrary virtues are the root cause of all good.

Once you have identified the appropriate V, give yourself a point. A positive one for displaying a virtue, and negative for a vice. Use hash marks to tally each good or bad behavior in the respective V (vice or virtue) row. When you are done for the day, total the marks for the vices and the virtues separately. There is a row for each of those totals. Then subtract the vices from the virtues to get a net score. Positive is obviously better.

I can tell you that when I started doing this the net daily total was usually negative. Then I learned to catch myself before doing the bad, and instead chose to do the good. Paying attention made all the difference.

Just for fun I developed a grading system, kind of a par for the course guide. I actually used some fancy statistical modeling tools to develop it in case you are wondering. It's just a guide. I obviously have no authority to award points or grades. I simply use it as an awareness tool to identify improvement opportunities and motivate me to do better.

Here's my grading table. Look up your daily net score below to determine your grade.

- **Greater than 10 = A**
- **6 to 10 = B**
- **0 to 5 = C**
- **-1 to -5 = D**
- **-6 to -10 = E for effort**
- **Less than -10 = F for fire...Come on...fire up your inner saint.**

When I first started tracking, my goal was simply to avoid the vices. A defensive strategy. While I had some victories, it became obvious that only through actively pursuing the virtues would I ever consistently get a passing grade.

So I went on offense. I now attempt to proactively, persistently and consistently live the virtues. It works when I do. Focusing on virtue gives vice little time to rear its ugly head. No doubt the enemy will continue to tempt us with the easy path of vice, but we can overcome him with a little self-discipline. Our behavior is one of the few things we can control. The beauty and curse of free will.

There is your winning strategy, use the virtues to defeat the vices every time. The battle of good versus evil can be won, it's up to you.

Here is your challenge. Play the Flying V game during the upcoming week. Track your behavior daily and compute your score and grade. At the end of the week compute a net score and grade for the week. Then look at the net scores for each virtue/vice pairing and pick one virtue to work on. Review the chapter specific to that virtue and determine what specifically you will do to improve. Then do it!

One last piece of advice. Pick the virtue that will give you the greatest improvement in score. Focus on proactively demonstrating that virtue. Avoiding the vice is harder. Telling yourself not to do something is more difficult than telling yourself to do something. Somehow the "not" gets skipped over in your mind and the thing you don't want to do becomes the thing you will in fact do.

“For I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want.” Romans 7:19

Play the game again the following week. You will see improvement! I'd really like you to commit to playing for an entire month. You will be amazed at how quickly you improve simply because you are paying closer attention to your behavior. You might even find that you are happier. It feels good to be consistently virtuous.

CHAPTER 10

- CONCLUSION -

THE SAINTS WERE NOT PERFECT

“The saints are the sinners who keep on trying.” Robert Louis Stevenson

Trying to do what? To be virtuous. To proactively, consistently and persistently pursue virtue. To make a positive difference in the lives of others. To develop and utilize their talents to serve others. Sound difficult? Yep. Is it worth the effort? Absolutely! To be your best in this world and to make it to the next, heaven and eternal life. What’s the downside to trying? We will fail at times. So what? Learn from them and move on. Strive to get a little better each day.

Here is my advice for how to proceed. Pick one vice you want to overcome. Then work to improve the associated virtue. Working to proactively pursue the virtue will at the same time reduce the vice. Dedicate an entire month to developing that one virtue.

To change our behavior we first need to change our habits. The things we think, say and do on auto-pilot. Habits take time to change. Most studies conclude that it takes at least three weeks of solid effort to instill a new habit. Let’s do a month just to make sure.

Choose one virtue to work on now. If you are feeling very ambitious and confident, pick the vice you have the most trouble with and choose its contrary virtue. Or choose the one that will be easiest for you. Here’s the list again for your quick reference:

1. Diligence vs. Sloth
2. Temperance vs. Gluttony
3. Charity vs. Greed
4. Patience vs. Wrath
5. Kindness vs. Envy
6. Chastity vs. Lust
7. Humility vs. Pride

Here’s some really good news. Working on one virtue actually helps to improve them all. They are interconnected. So just pick one. Commit to working on it every day for a month. See what happens. You will be amazed.

Once you have made your choice, read through the relevant V chapter again. Then make your specific plans for how you will overcome the vice with virtue. Start at the beginning of a month. Review your progress daily. Play the Flying V game daily just for that one set of V’s. Then pray for strength and guidance for the following day.

At the end of month one, once you have mastered your first virtue, move on to the next. Seven months from now you will be an expert. And on your way to becoming the saint you are meant to be. Personally, I continue to use the Flying V Tracker to review my daily behavior. Although it has gotten consistently better, I know it will be a lifelong struggle. But I’ll keep trying and hope you will, too.

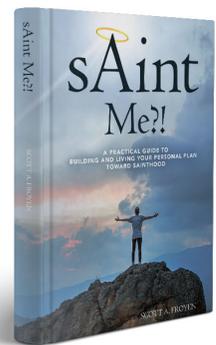
- ABOUT THE AUTHOR - SCOTT A. FROYEN

A graduate of the University of Northern Iowa, Scott started his career as a certified public accountant at KPMG, servicing clients in the financial services industries. He spent the bulk of his career in the health insurance industry as a leader in the areas of finance, operations, and sales. In all roles, he led development and execution of strategic and operational plans, continuous process improvement, and culture enhancement. His strong customer focus and desire to provide the highest possible value for the dollar earned him the unofficial title of fix-it guy.

He and his spouse Melanie met at a disco on a New Year's Eve and were married a year later on a leap-year day. They have two children, three grandchildren, and two dogs. He played collegiate tennis and has continued competing to this day. He also plays the drums in upbeat blues and classic rock cover bands and is a six-sigma black belt.

Scott has volunteered for many organizations over the years, his most significant contribution being as a board member and past chairman of LifeServe Blood Center in Des Moines, Iowa. Currently he serves on the executive committee at the Des Moines, Iowa St. Vincent De Paul Society. He is also a member of the Knights of Columbus.

He and Melanie co-founded The Saint Builder Foundation. They have a vision of reviving heaven on earth through their mission of guiding, motivating, and inspiring people to strive to become the saints we are all meant to be. To learn more about how you can participate in this endeavor please visit saintbuilder.com.



Available on [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com)

This content is the intellectual property of The Saint Builder Foundation.
Sharing this ebook is encouraged if it remains in its current format.
You may not change the content, copy it or charge for it.
© 2018 The Saint Builder Foundation. All Rights Reserved.

THE
SAINT BUILDER
FOUNDATION

Be Saintspirational

Like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com).

Follow our [blog](https://www.blog) to receive doses of saintly inspiration directly to your inbox!

Sign up for our quarterly [e-newsletter](https://www.e-newsletter).