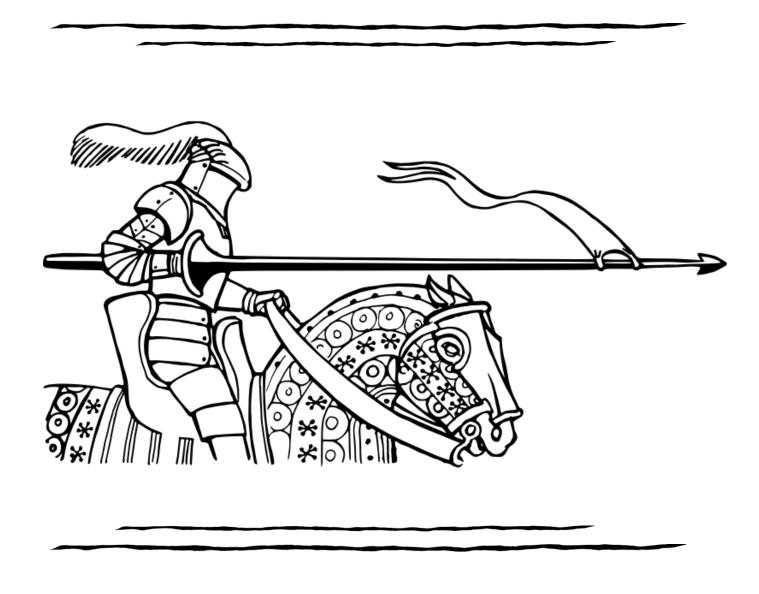
Chivalry:

A Study for Little Knights



J. Aaron Gruben

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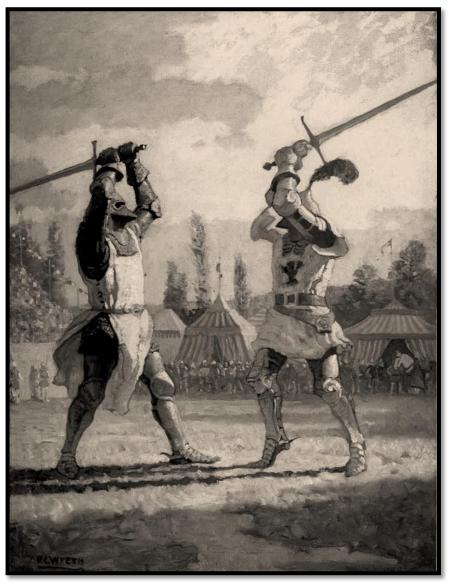
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A book for	(Student's name)
Age and grade:	
What I want to learn from this book:	



"Sir Nigel Sustains England's Honor" by N.C. Wyeth, 1902.

Note to Parents

The goal of this book is the same goal I suspect underlies all of your efforts in educating your child—to make them better people and better Christians. This is a character study. In it you and your child encounter fascinating people and events from a distant age, both from history and medieval literature. This book may well open the doors to a lifelong interest in studying the past. But the main goal is not to teach about the knights so much as about the living code they followed. For chivalry is still very much alive today. And that's because chivalry is essentially a list of qualities that will help you become a better servant to God and your fellow man. It is codified Christian servanthood. While writing this study I prayed that it will help propel your child into the adventure of an active, thoughtful life of Christian service. Serving God and other people are, after all, the two greatest achievements our children can undertake (Matthew 22:37-40), as they are the practical outworking of their chief end in life: "to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever"

40), as they are the practical outworking of their chief end in life: "to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever" (Westminster Shorter Catechism).ⁱ

But this is no ordinary character study. One of the thrilling things about Ancient Code Chivalry is that it connects us to the past in a real and exciting way. Though the details have been adapted for our modern age, you and your child will be learning to apply the same spirit of chivalry into your lives that a 12th century knight would have learned. If you choose to incorporate the Ten Commandments of Chivalry into your life, you will be sharing in the same eternal quest as the greatest paragons of knighthood in chivalric literature and history. You will be

Here are a few tips for using this book to teach your young child:

marching in step with great men!

• Each aspect of chivalry in this book will be covered in two parts over two chapters, which are alternated: a fictional story about a page boy learning the concepts of chivalry, and then a more traditional lesson section explaining a concept of chivalry directly to your child.

• Take your time and have fun. I organized the study into 22 lessons. But there is nothing wrong with taking several days to go through one lesson or going several days without reading anything. You could split up the reading and activities into separate days as well. Take the time you need to keep your child's interest, and really make sure they are learning the content. This isn't meant to be core curriculum, but a supplement to your homeschool: so make it fun for your kiddo. Don't feel bad about skipping activities either (like the "dust off your quill crayon" section if your child hates coloring).

 There is one memory verse every two chapters (covering one commandment of chivalry). I found YouTube song links to help with memorization for most of the Bible verses I've linked on my chivalry resources page.

• Always remember that chivalry is about action. Try to help your children put the commandments of chivalry into practice and build habits of living them. You'll find many of the study questions ("Think about it, talk about it" sections) and many of the "Quest

of the Day" sections helpful for this. They've been designed to move the commandments of chivalry from paper into action in the reader's life.

- Try to help your child understand the difference between historical chivalry and ideological chivalry. This can be a tough concept for little guys, but it is vital to remember that we want to live the basic ideals of chivalry (the concepts behind the commands) and not necessarily emulate the same actions of knights in history. Not every knight acted chivalrously. And not every medieval application of a chivalric concept is appropriate for modern lives.
- Give your child a sketchbook you can set aside to use while you read the stories in each chapter. I have included suggestions of pictures for students to draw as they listen to the readings in each chapter. Depending on the student, this may help keep their interest in the story as you read it and make things more fun.
- There are **periodic bold words** scattered through the daily readings. These are meant for your little knight to read aloud as you go.
- Most of the "Think about it" questions have answers in the back of the book in Appendix A. The questions with answers will be marked with an asterisk: *
- I have a page on my website with color versions for some of the pictures in the book and YouTube Bible verse memory song links. Go to: www.nmgrubens.com/chivalrykidresources, or just follow the link from the page for the study. (Find the password in the print copy of the book.)

I believe chivalry speaks into our broken, modern age in incredibly relevant ways. My life has been made better as I've reformed and applied its ideologies. I'm thrilled to have you and your student join me and my family on the magnificent adventure of reviving the beautiful and ancient code of Chivalry!

J. Aaron Gruben

"What then is chivalry?

So strong a thing, and of such hardihood,

And so costly in the learning,

That a wicked man or low dare not undertake it..."

—from The Life of William Marshall

Lesson 1

Meet Guibert of Ghent!

Bible Reading

Hebrews 13:8

Psalm 78:3-4

Job 8:9-10

This strapping young **lad** is Guibert of Ghent. You say his name like this: "Gwee-burt of Guh-ent." And you probably say it's a funny name too. But long ago, in Guibert's day, it was a perfectly ordinary name. He is 7 years old, and his father and mother have sent him to live with his Uncle Enguerrand (pronounced: "En-grr-ond") to start training as a knight. Uncle Enguerrand is a wealthy **knight** with lands near a city called Rouen, over 170 miles away from his home. In Guibert's day it was common for families to send their young sons far from home to be taught by noble families how to be knights. First Guibert will be a page, serving in the household of his uncle while he learns basic skills. Around the time he turns 14 he will become a squire, and hopefully a knight when his squire school is done.



In this book you will read a story about Guibert, then read a lesson about the knight's code of chivalry afterward. And the story starts today with young Guibert sitting in a bumpy ox-cart, rattling down a rocky road over a green and open countryside...

Guibert reached a hand into a slightly soggy tunic pocket and pulled out a small, **brown toad**. He was a lame toad, whom Guibert had rescued the summer before from a big feathery heron, and decided to keep as a pet. He named him **Zwang**. Zwane could be cranky, but it was nice to have someone to talk to.

"We are on the road, Zwane! Tonight, you and I start our path to knighthood!"

"Ribbit," answered Zwane. He blinked and rubbed his squishy eyes as if to say, "Faugh! T'will be no easy walk through a garden, boy! Believe me, I know about these things."

"Though, I doubt knights (or even page boys) are expected to carry toads about in their pockets. I'd best keep you hidden while I'm at the **castle**."

Guibert put Zwane back into his pocket. Roger the cart driver peeked back oddly at the boy, who seemed to be talking to himself.

The trip from Guibert's home of Ghent, to the **French** town of Rouen took four whole days. But he was excited to see the sights and sounds of Rouen at last. Can you imagine an entire town surrounded by walls of thick stone and tall towers? Most cities in Guibert's day were like that. And most of the houses were made of wattle and daub, which

looked a bit like stucco or adobe would look today. Rouen was an important seaport in northern France, and Guibert gaped at a forest of masts jutting up from the many ships which bobbed up and down in the **harbor**. Guibert's father once told him the story of a monster called the gargoyle, who had a fat fish head and teeth and scales, and bubbled up from the sea at Rouen's

Throughout the book you'll find scrolls like this with ideas for pictures you can draw while listening to the story...

Draw Guibert of Ghent riding on an oxcart.

harbor many years ago, and flooded the whole countryside by spitting out seawater. Guibert would have liked to explore Rouen's busy streets, but the sun was getting low, and he had to ride on to his uncle's fief outside the town.

Do you know what a fief is? A fief is the land a knight owned. It was given by the lord he served, in return for service (usually fighting in a **War**) he did for the lord. Enguerrand had a large fief, and in the center of it was a massive stone castle in which he and his family lived. Guibert passed through a little village full of rough hovels and poor farms, all were part of his uncle's big fief. His oxcart drove by a mill beside a pretty stream, and he tossed some of the bread his mother packed him to a beggar leaning against it.

At long last, he arrived! They were at the castle gates of Château Bon-heur before the sun set, plodding over the wooden **drawbridge**. Guibert stared at the long and colorful pennons (a type of long flag) that floated on the towers overhead. He liked the pascal lamb symbol that adorned the corner of the biggest pennon best. He felt just as nervous as I'm sure you would, if you had to leave home and go live in your uncle's castle when you were only a kid. But he also felt excited. He



was excited to meet new people and to learn new things. Most of all he was excited to learn about chivalry, the code of knighthood, and start his long training in the hopes of becoming a real knight!

As he got down from the cart, he heard the horn blowing for supper.¹ Roger bid the boy farewell at the gatehouse of the bailey² and turned the oxcart home. There were busy folk all around as Guibert made his way across the baileys to the **keep**— which is the house a knight and his family lived in. He passed grooms sweeping the stables, a laundress and her helper carrying baskets of laundry to wash, a smith pounding hot metal on an anvil before a roaring fire, a girl with a basket full of sweet-smelling herbs headed toward the kitchen, a boy herding foul-smelling **goats** toward their pens, and many more colorful sights.

When he came to the keep Guibert was ushered into the great hall to see his uncle. This was a huge, open room on the second floor of the keep, with a high ceiling and two fireplaces blazing in the far wall. The windows were high and barred. Candles and torches lit up the hall in a dancing, red, cheery light. There were painted tapestries and knights'

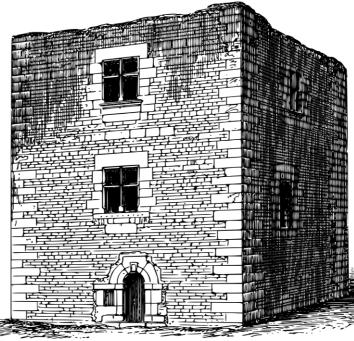
¹ Castle-folk in Guibert's day ate a simple breakfast early in the day: bread and wine (for the lord and his family and guests) or ale (for servants). Dinner was between 10am to noon, supper in late afternoon, and sometimes a "late supper" just before bed.

² A bailey was one of the courtyards of a castle, enclosed by the castle's walls. Many castles had more than one bailey, and Château Bon-heur had two, one inside of another (*inner bailey* inside of a bigger, *outer bailey*).

shields hung all around. The floor was strewn with rushes. Three big wooden tables spread down the hall, each crowded with happy, feasting people. There was a separate table upon a raised floor at the far end of the great hall, where Guibert was presented to Uncle Enguerrand.

Sir Enguerrand sat in a great oak chair with his family around him. He was a tall man and looked very noble. A **heavy sword** with a silver inlaid handle and cross-guard was strapped at his thick belt. Long dark hair fell out from beneath a circlet of silver and fell in waves down to his broad shoulders.

"Greetings, lad," he said. "Your father is a good man, and I expect you to learn well and do him honor. I'm



A castle's keep.

sure you are excited to learn the ideals of knighthood and the code of **chivalry**, as well as the skills of fencing and hawking and many other knightly exercises."

Guibert was glad indeed at the sound of such exciting lessons, and said so.

Uncle Enguerrand interrupted him. "But first you must report to the head cook for scullery work." (Scullery work means washing dishes and doing occasional kitchen jobs). "One of the boys has become sick and Cook is desperate for more help. It will only be for a few days. Then you'll help wait at table during dinner with the squires, and carry messages for my wife, Lady Ermingard." Guibert felt considerably less thrilled. Uncle Enguerrand saw the sad look that crossed his face. "Why so downcast, lad?"

"I was hoping to learn about knighthood, Uncle: not to wash **dishes**," Guibert answered.

Draw a table with happy people feasting.

"Ah..." quoth Sir Enguerrand. (Quoth is a fun old word for "said.") He rose from

his seat and stepped down from the dais, put a hand on the boy's shoulder, and walked with him around the hall. "Let me tell you a story, lad, that a priest told me when I was sent as a page boy to my own uncle's house long ago. 'Tis a story of our **Lord Jesus**. He had been betrayed already by that wicked man Judas, and knew that He was going shortly to die on the cross. And it was then, before the very last supper Jesus ate with his friends, that He did something very knightly... Something that taught us the heart of chivalry. Do you know what that was?"

Boys in those days did not usually have the Bible around, and generally couldn't read anyway, so they only knew the stories in Scripture their mothers or priests told them (or that they saw in pictures on tapestries and stained glass). Guibert did his best to guess. "Did He practice swordplay with them? Did He teach them how to be valiant?"

Uncle laughed. "Nay, lad, nay! He did none of those things. He bent down, took the servant's rags, and washed the disciples' smelly feet."

Guibert was confused, and said so.

"Right glad am I to find you honest and plainspoken, boy!" Sir Enguerrand commended him. "You see, Guibert, noble knighthood is for service. Before you can take up a sword and mount a **hors** in battle, you will have to learn well how to use your strength and skills to serve the people around you in more ordinary ways. The meaning of chivalry is 'armed strength in the service of the **unarmed truth**.' In the future years I am going to teach you how to be strong: strong in many ways. But the thing you have to learn at the very start is to use your strength

for God and for other people. Just like Jesus, who is God himself, and has all the strength and wisdom of God: and yet washed the feet of His disciples and served them. Now, you sit here and eat. Then get you to the kitchen, eh?"

After he had eaten, Guibert went with an almost happy heart to the kitchen. It was a short walk down a narrow spiral staircase, and out the door to a separate little building in the bailey near the hall.³ The minute he stepped into the place he was attacked by a barrage of strange

smells: spices of all sorts, boiled meat on a hook, the smell of **hogs** roasting, the crisp smell of cut vegetables, and the strange scents of boiling broths and soups. There were fires all around the crowded

Draw a pig roasting on a spit over a fire and a big pile of dishes. room: three were lit inside little fireplaces set in the wall, over which iron kettles and pots hung on chains with simmering liquids inside and steam belching out, and there was one ruddy blaze of a fire in the center of the room over which pig carcasses turned. The head cook (who was named Buford) was a busy man, with hardly time to

talk to Guibert in between his orders to the scullions—these were boys whose full-time jobs were to wash things in the **kitchen**. His wife (Dame Blanche) was with him, though she served the folk in the hall as the pantler,⁴ and came and went from the kitchen all day. She was a portly and worried lady, and seemed very superstitious⁵—but Guibert liked

her.

Cook Buford put Guibert to turning the spit that roasted the pigs after he rinsed some dishes. It was hot work, and dull. Guibert kept having to swat away **embers** that shot toward him and singed his skin. But they couldn't burn away the excitement he still felt to learn about chivalry. This kitchen work would only be for a while, and it in he remembered to do it as an act of **service**. It was the first step in his adventure of

seemed almost exciting when he remembered to do it as an act of **SQTViCQ**. It was the first step in his adventure of chivalry!

In this book you ______ (write your name) will read about Guibert's adventures, and learn about **chivalry** along with him! Far from being a code only for Guibert's day, you'll find chivalry is something thrilling and useful for your life now!

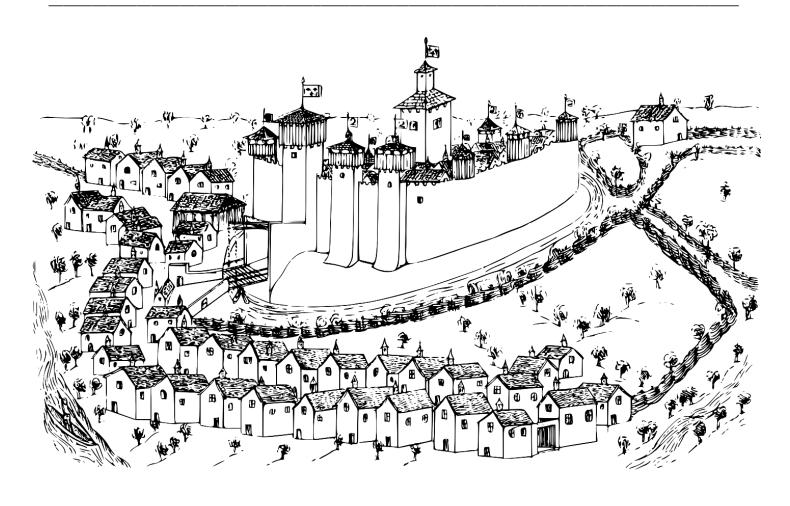
³ In Guibert's time the kitchen wasn't in the keep—as it would be later in the Middle Ages. There was often a separate building called a "scullery" where the dishes were washed. A garden and fish-pond would be nearby. In the hall inside the keep were service rooms called a "buttery," where drinks were stored, and a "pantry," where food was stored for serving diners.

⁴ This funny name does not mean that she sewed pants. It means she was in charge of the pantry.

⁵ Superstition is a false or exaggerated belief in something otherworldly, like ghosts or black cats bringing you bad luck. Medieval folk tended toward superstition, often because they mixed up older paganism with Catholicism.

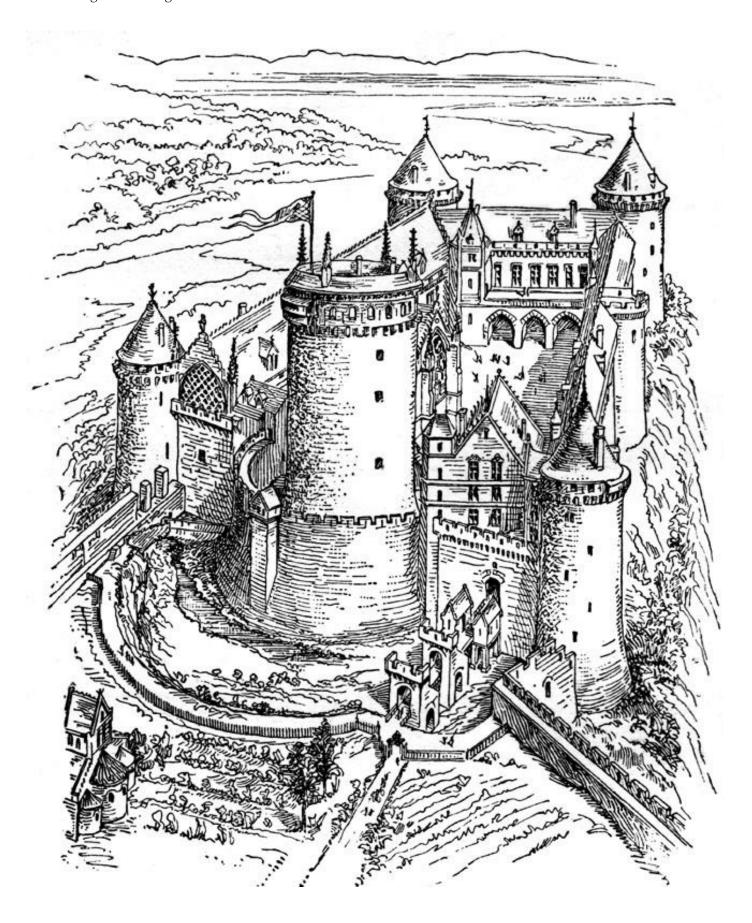
Think about it, talk about it

Would you be scared to go live in a new house away from your parents like Guibert? Would you be excited to learn hov
to be knight?
What is your favorite thing about the Middle Ages and the time of knights?
Why do you think knights would need a code to live by? *



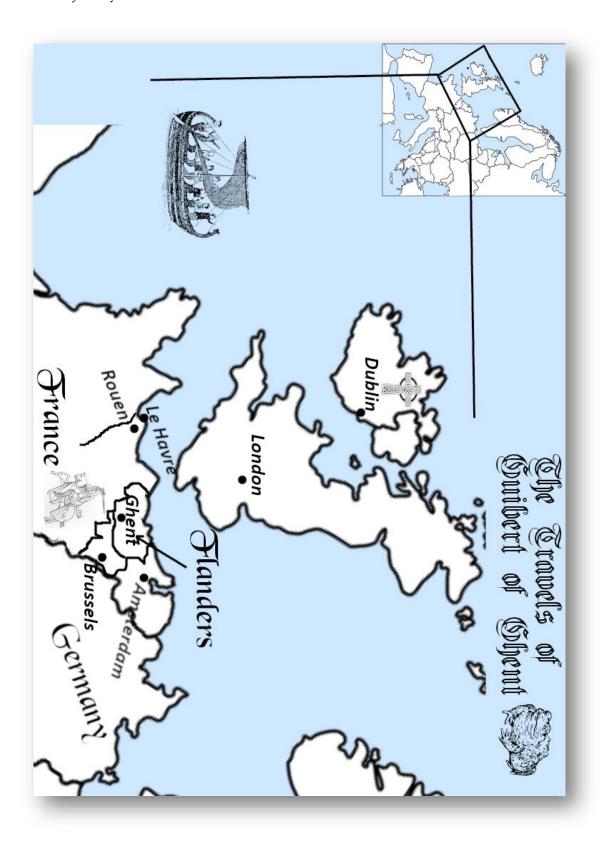
Dust off your quill crayon

Color this grand looking castle!



Quest of the Day

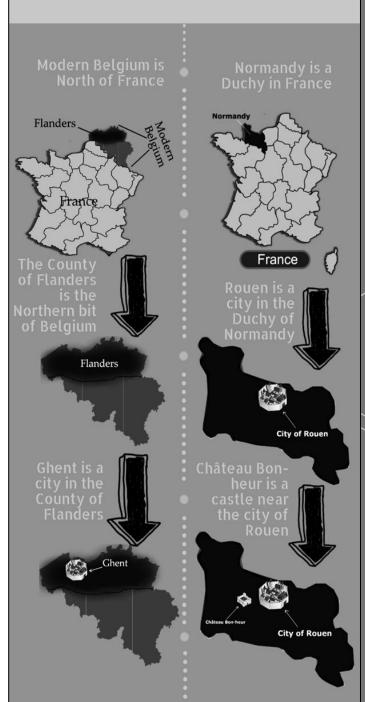
Rouen is a town in Normandy. Can you think of a famous Duke of Normandy who did something important in 1066? Here is a map with medieval France as it was during Guibert of Ghent's time. Draw a solid line from Ghent to Rouen to show Guibert's journey.



MEDIEVAL PLACES



Guibert's Geography at a Glance





Memory Verse

"So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light." -Romans 13:12

Quotes

"I wonder what the boys of today would think of Myles's training. With him that training was not only of the mind but of the body as well, and for seven years it was almost unremitting... To make one's way in those days meant a thousand times more than it does now. It meant not only a heart to feel and a brain to think but a hand quick and strong to strike in battle and a body tough to endure the wounds and blows in return." –Howard Pyleⁱⁱⁱ

"A boy's life is very flexible. It takes but a little while for it to shape itself to any new surroundings into which it may be thrown." –Howard Pyleiv

"Society expected each man to aspire constantly to Chivalric Behavior; in return, they gave him an honorable place in the union of men." –Arno Borst, *Medieval Worlds*"

"What are words—empty words—in the balance with the deeds of the manly men?" –Frank Hudson, *The Song of the Manly Men*vi

Lesson 2

What is Chivalry?

Bible Reading

Judges 21:25

Matthew 22:37-39

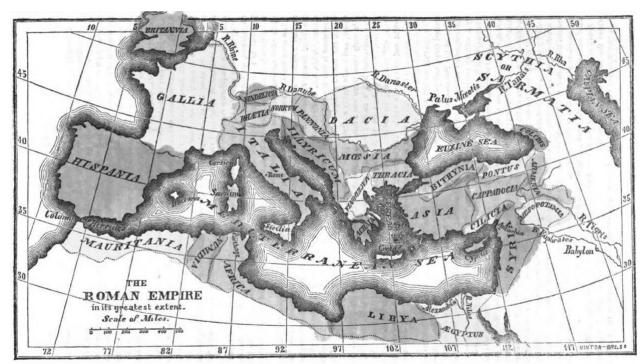
Hebrews 6:10

What is a knight? Would you be a knight if you had **armor** or a **sword**? No. You might be a fighter with a sword. But to be a knight you would have to have special training, and be made a knight by another knight—and most importantly you would have to live by a set of rules (something we call a code). The set of rules a knight lived by in the Middle Ages was called chivalry. Even though it's been hundreds of years since knight times, chivalry is still a wonderful and very useful code for us today!

It's important, though, to understand that there are two types of chivalry. There is a history type of chivalry, which is the rules used by knights in their times. And there is an ideal type of chivalry, which is the reasons behind the rules. There are no more fighting knights today, so the history type of chivalry is not something to live (though it is interesting to read about). But the ideals, the reasons behind the knight's rules, are still useful for us to live. The main purpose of this book is not to teach you about knights. It is to teach you about chivalry: the living **erged** and **eode** of knighthood. And through chivalry you can really share in the same mission and spirit as the best knights who lived and died in years long ago. In the rest of this book, we will follow Guibert of Ghent's story as a page to learn chivalry with him. And out of the chivalry of his day we'll discover the ideals of chivalry useful for us in our day.

The Middle Ages

What were the Middle Ages? Have you heard of **Rome**? The Romans had a huge and mighty empire that stretched over a large part of the world. They were the ones in power when Jesus was born. About 400 years after Jesus was born, the Roman Empire began to weaken and crumble away. Fierce tribes of barbarians with weird names like the Franks and the Vandals and the Goths tromped all over Roman lands. Eventually Rome's empire crumbled away entirely. The Middle Ages are the years after Rome was gone and before the Renaissance and the Reformation, when more modern ideas and technology began to take hold of the world. It lasted about 1000 years,



from the 400s (most people say 476 AD, when the last emperor of Rome was kicked off his throne) to the 1400s.

It was in the wild and scary times of the early Middle Ages, just after Rome fell and the barbarian **tribes** were sacking cities and causing trouble, that chivalry started. Strong and powerful men in those days loved war. They burt people and took whatever they wanted. There

in those days loved war. They hurt people and took whatever they wanted. There was no powerful government or emperor to tell them they couldn't do these bad

things, and they didn't have rules to tell them they couldn't do these bad things, and they didn't have rules to tell themselves they couldn't do them. But **God** had rules. God does not like it when people hurt or kill each other or take things from others just because they are too weak to defend themselves. And so, when the barbarian tribes became Christians through the work of God and the bravery of many Christian

warrior with a big ax.

missionaries, they needed new rules to show them how to use their swords and strength in right ways. They needed the code of chivalry, those rules for knights, to teach them how God wanted them to live nobly.

Léon Gautier

The code of chivalry was not invented in one day. It grew over many years, and it was a long time before most of the knights agreed to it. It was told from knight to knight, and written in bits and pieces over many years, instead of being written down once on one list. This makes it confusing to **study** chivalry.

Fortunately, a man with a crazy long name and a weird job compiled the bits and pieces into one list to create the code of chivalry in 1883. His name was Émile Théodore Léon Gautier, and he was a **professor** of medieval handwriting. We usually just call him Léon Gautier instead of saying his long name. You say his name like this: "Lay-own Gow-tee-air." In addition to knowing a lot about the handwriting of the Middle Ages, he was the smartest expert on a type of **epic** poems from France called *chansons de geste* (literally "songs of deeds"). These were story poems, telling all about the brave deeds of knights at the



court of a king named Charlemagne. Léon Gautier went through these poems to learn what exactly chivalry was. He came up with ten specific commandments of chivalry, which is really great, because now we can study and remember one list of knightly rules instead of having to read through all the books of the Middle Ages to figure out what chivalry was. We are going to learn how to live Léon Gautier's Ten Commandments of Chivalry (with some slight changes) in this book.

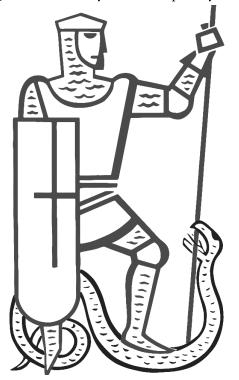
The Heart of Chivalry

A definition is an explanation of what a word means, and we should define chivalry before we learn more about it. What exactly is chivalry all about? Léon Gautier defined it just like Uncle Enguerrand did. He said chivalry is "armed strength in the service of unarmed truth." This is a definition of the **history** form of chivalry and was especially true

for knights in the Middle Ages. Another way to say this is that chivalry is a way for a knight to serve God and other people using his strength and knightly training.

The simplest definition of chivalry for us today is this: chivalry is "codified **Christian servanthood**." This means chivalry is a list of things we can learn as followers of Jesus that will help us become great servants, or helpers, just like Him. Chivalry is a way to live as a helper.

You can see that, even though the history form of chivalry for knights was for boys, the ideas behind chivalry are just as much for girls as they are for boys. Chivalry is for everyone! It's for princes and princesses. It makes our lives more useful to God and our neighbor, and it makes life a grand adventure of doing good!



Think about it, talk about it
What is the difference between the history type of chivalry and the idea type of chivalry? *
What are some ways the two definitions of chivalry (Gautier's and mine) are similar? *
If chivalry is about using your strength, do you have to be strong to be chivalrous? Are there different ways to be strong? *
What does it mean in the Bible reading that everyone "did what was right in their own eyes" (Judges 21:25)? Is it good
to do what you want to without listening to anyone else? How was the time in Israel that this verse was written about
like the time in Europe after the Roman Empire fell? *



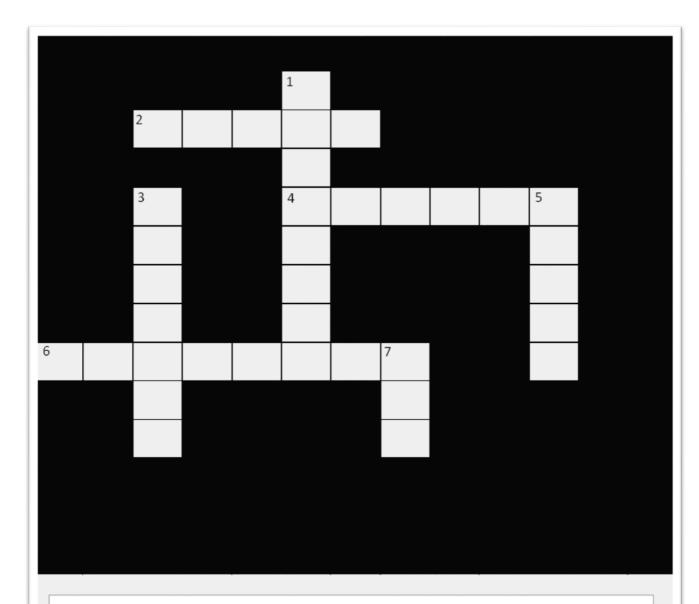
Dust off your quill crayon

Color this lovely picture!



Quest of the Day

Complete you puzzling crossword! The answers are in Appendix A if you get stumped.



Across

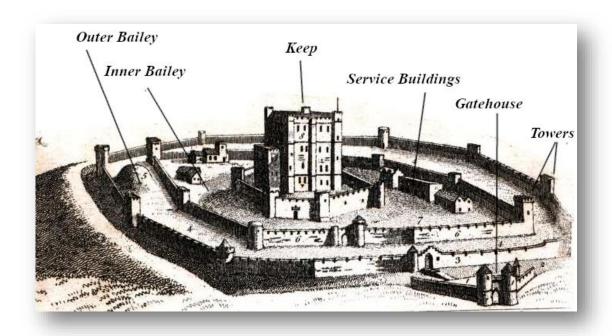
- 2. Guibert's new city
- 4. The reasons behind a knight's rules
- 6. The rules a knight lives by

Down

- 1. The time of the knights
- 3. Scholar who wrote the Ten Commandments of Chivalry
- 5. A tool of a historical knight
- 7. The person responsible for making you chivalrous

Bonus Quest!

Build a Lego castle! Here is a real castle that looks a lot like Château Bon-heur. Can you build something like that? If you can, maybe you should grow up to become a Certified Fortifications and Siege works Professional Consultant! They are in short supply right now.



Quotes

"There is more than one kind of Chivalry, and lance thrusts are not everything! In default of the sword we have the pen: failing the pen, speech: and in default of speech, honor in our lives!" –Léon Gautier, in his preface to *Chivalry*

"Yesterday's the past, tomorrow's the future, but today is a gift. That's why it's called the present." -Bil Keanevii

"Chivalry is not just a fancy word with a neat meaning; it's a way of life." -Vaughn Ripleyviii

Appendix A: Answer Key

Lesson 1

Why do you think knights would need a code to live by? They needed a code so they would have rules to teach them how God wanted them to use their strength in the right ways. This would help them know how to live and fight nobly.

Lesson 2

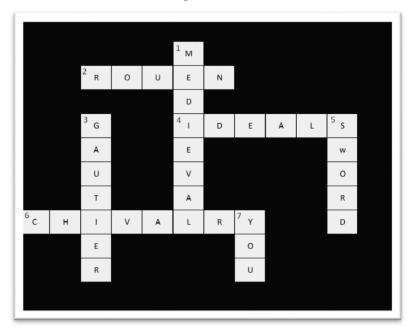
What is the difference between the history type of chivalry and the idea type of chivalry? History: rules used by knights in the Middle Ages. Ideal: the reasons behind the rules we can use in the any age.

What are some ways the two definitions of chivalry are similar? Some examples: being a servant, helping others, obeying God's truth.

If chivalry is about using your strength, do you have to be strong to be chivalrous? Are there different ways to be strong? You do not have to be physically strong, but you do have to be strong in some ways. Some different ways to be strong: physically, mentally, will-power (not giving up), morally (resisting temptation), emotionally (being strong despite circumstances).

How was the time in Israel that this verse was written about like the time in Europe after the Roman Empire fell? Everyone worshiped whatever gods they wanted, did evil things, and generally broke God's laws.

Answers to the crossword puzzle.



Endnotes-Works Cited

Parent's Note

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- v Forgette, Steven. "Quotes about Chivalry & Knighthood." The International Fellowship of Chivalry-Now. Web. 7 February 2019. www.chivalrynow.net/articles/steven.htm
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