Bob: It's Father's Day weekend, and there's a new movie being released this weekend—not in theaters, but available on demand—you know how that's working these days. It's a movie called Selfie Dad. The writer/producer of the film, Brad Silverman, says this is a comedy about dads stepping up to be spiritual leaders in their homes.

Brad: At the heart of the story, it's really a callout to dads to try to really invest in their families—invest in their [wife], invest in their children—essentially by being shepherds through the Word of God in their homes. Wherever you are in your walk with God—just sharing what you're learning; God giving you what you need through the Word of God—and sharing that with your family.

Bob: This is FamilyLife Today for Friday, June 19th. Our hosts are Dave and Ann Wilson; I'm Bob Lepine. You'll find us online at FamilyLifeToday.com. Are you up for something this weekend/Father's Day weekend?—something that will make you laugh, that'll make you think, that'll make you smile? We're going to talk about a new movie called Selfie Dad that's coming out. Stay with us.

And welcome to FamilyLife Today. Thanks for joining us. I don't know how many of our listeners know this; but if they don't know by now, they're going to figure this out. We like movies, right?

Dave: Oh, yes!

Ann: Yes, we all like—

Bob: Not all movies are God-glorifying, but there's something about stories that take me into an understanding of humanity/an understanding of what's going on in people's lives. I remember reading a quote, years ago, from a guy named Ken Gailer. He said, "Good art is like a stepstool in a room with high windows." He said, "When you step onto it, you get a view you weren't able to get before."

Dave: That's good.
Bob: I’ve gone to movies in the past that have given me a view on life that I hadn’t gotten before, because I get entered into other people’s stories.

Dave: Bob, you know what happens to me—

Bob: What happens to you?

Dave: —at every movie?—[Laughter]—every single movie.

Ann: I will vouch for this, because I know—

Bob: Ann, what happens to Dave?

Dave: I’m not even going to tell you; I’m going to let my wife tell you.

Ann: Dave cries in every single movie—whether it’s something very emotional and gripping or it could be Firehouse Dog—[Laughter]—he cries.

Dave: Firehouse Dog is a real story; my son brings it up all the time. I watched it on an airplane. He looks over and he says—

Ann: —coming home on a mission trip.

Dave: —“Why are you crying, pop?” [Tearfully speaking] “The little dog came back to the firehouse!”

Anyway, it’s because of what you said—story—it grips my heart, and it emotionally moves me. I love it!

Bob: You are not a crier in real life, right?

Ann: Well, this is the tension; because I’m like: “Why aren’t you crying in life with me?”—like: “Let’s bond through this emotional…”

Dave: How about we just step right into my marriage?—there it is. [Laughter] But it’s true! In a movie theater, with the lights out—no, seriously—there’s something that, when art is done so well and excellently, and takes you on a journey, it always moves me.

Ann: It has the ability to move the soul.

Bob: It does.

We’re always happy when we can come to our listeners and say, “There’s a new movie that is coming out that is going to move you.” This is one that was headed for theaters;
but of course, we know what’s gone on there; so it’s opening this weekend, video on demand. It’s called *Selfie Dad*.

**Dave:** And we’ve already seen it, and I cried.

**Bob:** You cried in *Selfie Dad*?!

**Dave:** Yes, I did! [Laughter] Why are you looking at me like that?

**Bob:** Because it’s—[Laughter]—it’s *Selfie Dad*—I watched it, but I don’t think I choked up watching this particular movie.

**Dave:** Bob, you need to get in touch with your emotions. [Laughter] Come on, when *Selfie Dad*—we’ll talk about it.

**Bob:** Brad Silverman is joining us on *FamilyLife Today*, the writer and director of *Selfie Dad*. Welcome.

**Brad:** Bob, it’s *great* to be here to talk to you guys.

**Bob:** Brad has been on *FamilyLife Today* before *because* you wrote and produced a movie, back a decade ago, called *No Greater Love*.

**Brad:** That’s right.

**Bob:** And then, a few years later, a movie called *Grace Unplugged*; it was in theaters.

**Brad:** That’s right; right.

**Bob:** It’s been awhile; but this is your *new* movie, starring our friend, Michael Jr.—

**Brad:** The one and only, yes, Michael Jr.

**Bob:** —in the starring role; and it’s a comedy.

**Brad:** Right.

**Bob:** We should also mention you brought a friend with you, so—

**Brad:** I did.

**Bob:** —Pastor Adam Tyson is here. Welcome to *FamilyLife Today*.

**Adam:** It’s great to be here.
Bob: We’ll explain in a little bit why you brought Adam with you.

Brad: Sure, sure.

Bob: Give us the rundown on this movie.

Brad: Okay; *Selfie Dad*, from a plot standpoint—you mentioned Michael Jr—he’s a very brilliantly funny guy. It’s basically a story of this—he plays this former comic, and now he’s having this midlife crisis—so he starts this YouTube page.

Now, playing his foil/his boss is someone you probably know, Chonda Pierce.

Bob: Yes!

Brad: Chonda—now, if you know Chonda—she’s a *genius* comic as well. You put Michael and Chonda together—the odd couple—it’s almost like, even when the camera wasn’t rolling, as you can imagine, we’re all just crying [with laughter] behind the scenes. [Laughter]

But Michael starts a YouTube page, and it works. He becomes sort of this comedy dude on social media to really try to get rid of this midlife crisis/to capture that long-lost dream of being a comic.

Bob: Right.

Brad: At the heart of the story, it’s really a callout to *dads* to try to really invest in their families—invest in their [wife], invest in their children—essentially, by being shepherds through the Word of God in their homes. Wherever you are in your walk with God—just sharing what you’re learning; God giving you what you need *through* the Word of God—and sharing that with your family.

Bob: “Step into a spiritual leadership role in the home,” and that sounds *intimidating* to a dad.

Brad: Right.

Bob: To a dad: “Spiritual leadership—I can’t be a spiritual leader—because I’m not a really spiritual guy.” But you’re saying it’s not that complex. You can just live your faith, out loud, in front of your family and bring them into it.

Brad: It’s funny you mention that. Part of the reason why the first part of what the film is about—it’s this comedy, because it’s, I think, at some level, just looking at my own frailties, and failures, and weaknesses, and journey—and just kind of, in a sense making fun of that. In a sense, just saying, “Hey, maybe these things that I’ve struggled with”—and tried to illustrate those in a comedic way through the brilliant Michael Jr.—
“and then maybe other people can relate to that and maybe soften the awkwardness or tension and say, ‘Yes, now in this comedic setting, let’s step up our game and be the dads we’re called to be.’”

**Dave:** I would say the interesting thing is, early in the movie, I see myself in Michael’s character; and I see a lot of men in my church in Michael’s character, simply as the Bible in the back of the car. I don’t want to give away the movie, but he doesn’t pick it up for another week—

**Brad:** Right.

**Dave:** —Sunday to Sunday. I’m like, “That is *most* men—not just *some*—*most*.”

Man, the journey that this “Selfie Dad” goes on—of course, you have to explain “Selfie Dad”—everybody’s hearing this title and “What does that mean?” I had no idea until I saw it in the YouTube channel—like, “Oh, there it is.” What does “Selfie Dad” mean?

**Brad:** “Selfie Dad” is sort of a play on kind of the concept of this self-centered world that we live in. Everything about this particular story was just really looking at my own weaknesses and seeing: “What is my motive for doing this? Why am I getting up in the morning? What is my mission in life as a human being, as a dad, as a father, as a follower of Christ?”

Sadly, so much of it is centered around *self*—evident by this barrage of culture that—it’s too self-focused. It’s sort of a play on that, in the negative, if you will, but sort of making fun of it at the same time.

**Bob:** In the movie, Michael’s married.

**Brad:** Yes.

**Bob:** He has two kids. You’re watching them kind of be isolated from one another. The teenage daughter is kind of starting to explore her boundaries and sneaking out; and the son is kind of in his own YouTube world, and online, and gaming; and that’s what life’s all about. He and his wife are kind of drifting toward isolation; she’s frustrated with his lack of spiritual leadership.

I do have to tell you, there’s a little Easter egg in here that we just howled over when we watched the movie. [Laughter] One of the actresses in this movie—[Laughter]

**Brad:** Yes, yes; yes, sure.

**Bob:** —is Karen Abercrombie, who played the older grandma woman in *War Room*, who kept saying, “You need to be *fighting* for your husband!” She’s *that* character, right?
Brad: Yes.

Bob: She’s in this movie as a friend to Michael’s wife; and at one point, she’s asking this wife, “Do you pray for your husband?”

Brad: Right.

Bob: The wife says, “Well, yes, not as much as I should.” Karen Abercrombie says—you wrote this script—[Laughter]

Brad: I vaguely remember it, yes.

Bob: She says, “Have you seen the movie, War Room?” [Laughter] And how does the wife respond?

Brad: “I don’t really like Christian films.” [Laughter]


Brad: Right.

Bob: The character’s saying, “I don’t like Christian films,”—to Karen Abercrombie, who was in War Room—I just love that little Easter egg.

Dave: That was a nice drop.

Ann: Yes, that was.

Brad: In the right audience, it can be the showstopper; in the wrong audience, no one gets it. I love that. [Laughter]

Dave: Yes, that’s good.

Brad: I love that aspect—like, “What are they laughing at?”—that’s great.

Bob: I thought it would be appropriate, since he’s not here with us, if we just reached out and saw if we could break through to the star of this film.

Dave: Selfie Dad himself!

Bob: It turns out that his agent has cleared the way. We had to go through four levels of red tape to get there.

Brad: He’s very big.
Ann: He's very, very big.

Michael [via phone]: You texted me, bro. [Laughter]

Dave: Just ask him how big he is.

Bob: He is with us on *FamilyLife Today*—Michael Jr.!

Michael: Yes; as a matter of fact, you guys are three of my favorite white people. [Laughter]

Bob: We should say, Michael, you had an opportunity to work together with Dave and Ann Wilson in Detroit about four or five months ago. Tell about that.

Michael: I did. It was great, man. We got to talk about marriage and just laugh.

Dave: It was a dream come true for Ann and me to combine humor and comedy with working on your marriage. In fact, Michael came up with the title of: “Funny How Marriage Works” sort of date night. I hope we can do it all over the country; it’s just a really great night for couples.

Michael: Yes; it’s weird that it’s a dream of you and your wife, though. [Laughter] A dream come true?—really?

Dave: I’m just trying to make you feel better.

Bob: You’re about to be on screens in living rooms, tens of thousands of living rooms, this weekend in homes all across the country.

Michael: That is so cool. I thought it was something worse the way you set it up: “You’re about to be…” [Laughter] I’m like, “What happened?”

Bob: You had a movie that was out—this was maybe more than a year ago—that was out for a couple of nights, called *More Than Funny*, right?

Michael: Yes, my comedy special; yes. This is actually a theatrical of features that Brad Silverman put together, who’s there with you; right? Brad’s there, right?

Brad: That depends what you say; that depends what you say. [Laughter] I’m here, man.

Michael: That dude is a great director—extremely funny—just a great, great dude. I’m excited about this movie—really, really excited.
I was in *War Room*, but I actually made it in a couple more scenes in this one; so that’s great.

**Bob:** You’re in almost every scene in this one. This is new for you, to be acting in a feature-length film like this.

**Michael:** You know, I’m very excited about this; I think those guys did a great job. The movie is a *great*, great story; and then Brad was kind enough to couple *his* sense of humor with mine on the set. We actually were able to create some pretty cool moments on the set; they weren’t even scheduled/weren’t even planned. We just created them on the spot, and they ended up in the movie. I think the people are really going to enjoy the fact that—I think they’re just going to enjoy the story; and then the stuff that just happens as a result of us being open and willing to, one, listen to God, and two, use our talents to see what could show up on the screen.

**Brad:** Amen!

**Michael:** It happened. You guys will see it as pretty dope [excellent].

**Bob:** Part of what drew you to this project was the overall message of this movie. I know this has been a passion of yours—as you speak and do comedy—is to see couples, and dads, and families oriented around God’s Word and basing what they do on God’s Word.

**Michael:** Yes. No, no, no; that’s not it. It was the money. [Laughter]

**Bob:** Brad told me how much you got paid; it was *not* the money. [Laughter]

**Michael:** It *wasn’t* the money at all. You’re a hundred percent—I’m all about being a dad. If I could be in a film—like anytime I’m on stage, anything I do, any joke I write—is really about the verses that separates the Old Testament and New Testament. It’s about, “What can I do to help return the hearts of the sons to fathers and the fathers to sons?”

If I could do a *movie* that’s going to encourage dads to be a dad the way that our Father has showed us to, then I’m all in. I’m completely about that, even if it means stepping out the back of this convention center [in which Michael’s currently performing], and waiting to rejoin these people, and do what I need to do. I *really*, really am excited about this movie.

**Bob:** Well, we appreciate you taking a few minutes to be a part of today’s program; and I hope everything goes well at the convention center and you have a good night tonight.
Michael: Yes; you guys are awesome. Thank you so much. Great job, Dave; you’re doing awesome! And Bob, dude, you’re awesome; [Laughter] man, you’re great. You know, the other dude is not normal. What is his name? [Laughter]

Brad: We love you, dude; we’ll see you soon, man.

Michael: You guys are awesome; thanks.

Bob: Thanks, Michael.

Ann: Thanks, Michael.

Dave: Have a good show, Michael.

One of the things I love about Michael is so many people know his humor/know his comedy, and that’s all you sort of get to see sometimes. And yet, when you’re around him, there’s a heart for God that is so pure, and a passion for the gospel getting to people. I mean, his real dream is to use comedy to share the gospel; and everywhere he goes, people come to Christ.

I just love that about him. It’s bigger than comedy; comedy is just his tool. That’s so great that he’s a part of this movie. As I watched the movie, I could see, “Here’s the message”; and it’s straight from your heart, Brad, I’m sure, and from Michael’s.

Bob: Let’s explain why Adam’s here.

Brad: Yes.

Bob: You’ve hardly said a word, other than, “Thanks for allowing me to be here.”

Adam: Hey, I’m having a great time, man, [Laughter] just hearing about the movie; and hearing you guys just to discuss what God’s doing in putting this thing together.

Bob: Later in the development of this movie—just a couple of months ago, as you were finishing it up, Brad—you had something pop into the project that you weren’t expecting.

Brad: I think it’s a very good way to put it, even understated, perhaps. We finished this project; and we shot some scenes at our church, called Placeteria Bible Church in northern L.A. county.

Bob: That’s where Adam’s pastor.

Brad: Adam is the pastor of that—dear friend of mine—we’ve been very close for many, many years.
One day, we’re at the church—again, the actual parking lot, if you remember/think Selfie Dad, where he puts the Bible in the trunk—in that very spot, a couple months later, someone says, “Who brought the SUV Lamborghini?” [Laughter] The buzz starts going around the church; someone looks out and says, “Kanye West is here!” We kind of went up to the—we have like a cry room—right?—for little babies, right? The friend, who brought him there, they kind of took him up, kind of away from the crowd.

Bob: Right.

Brad: But Kanye West is there. We start talking around, just amongst our little church of 350 people; and he comes back.

Bob: —a second week.

Brad: —a second week. And he comes back again.

Bob: Of course, by this point, most of our audience has heard about what’s been going on in Kanye’s life for the last year, since he first showed up at the church. But Adam, you had no idea you were going to have an unusual visitor show up that particular Sunday.

Adam: Not at all. It was just a regular Sunday; you’re there, ready to preach the Word and minister to the people and the flock that God’s placed before you. After the sermon was over, somebody came up to me and said, “Guess who was here today?” I’m like, “Who?” They’re like, “Kanye West.”

We had been talking a little bit about him and praying for him. There was a guy at our church, who had told us about how he worked for him, and how he had been having conversations about God. He came in a little bit late/left a little bit early, and it was just amazing that he was there. We’re like: “Praise God! That’s so cool that he came!”

Bob: He came back; he initiated a conversation with you?

Adam: Well, he came back a second time; at that point, I didn’t see him again—people told me he was there a second time—at that point, in my heart, I knew that God was at work. Then on the third time, he waited at the back of the church. When I finished preaching—many pastors try to greet as many people as you can—so I’m waiting back there.

He just came up and introduced himself. He said, “My name is Kanye West; could I talk to you for a moment?” I said, “Absolutely!” We stepped right there in the parking lot—where Selfie Dad was filmed/where a lot of the movie was filmed—and had a wonderful conversation, just hearing about what God was doing in his heart and in his life.
Bob: Since that time, you’ve been meeting with him somewhat regularly, doing Bible study with him; right?

Adam: That’s right. Yes, we started a Bible study up about a month or two later. We'd meet every other week and we'll have opportunity just to teach the Bible, answer questions, and really reach out with the gospel to whoever comes to this Bible study.

Bob: He’s spiritually hungry.

Adam: There’s no doubt. He wants to learn God’s Word; he wants to know “What does the Bible say?” When you can show it to him from the Bible, he’s all in. You’re just talking—he’s like, “Hey, show me in the Bible where it says that,”—he'll say that at times.

Bob: Interesting.

Ann: So you’re discipling him.

Adam: I would say that there are a lot of people, who are pouring into him; but I have the privilege of probably just opening up the Word with him, helping him understand it, answer questions that he has, and just to pray together with him that God would help him be the man that God's called him to be.

Bob: Adam, you know that there’s a lot of cross-talk on the internet about: “What should we think about this?—he went and spoke with this guy,” or “Do we believe this?” or “I don’t think it’s real,” and all of that. You’re in the middle of all of this; what’s your coaching to us?

Adam: You know, I think we should just treat each person with respect and with utmost honor. I believe that, from what I see in Kanye's life and what I’ve heard him profess with his own mouth, there’s no doubt in my mind that he loves the Lord Jesus Christ, that he wants to honor God with all of his gifts and all of his talents. He has said that many times. What I’ve seen in private is no different than what we’re hearing in public. He loves the thought that God has redeemed him; and he’s quick to say, “I've been delivered, and I want to use my life to glorify God.”

It's just been amazing to see the journey that God's taking him on as he uses his resources, his time, his talents—whether it be music, whether it be designing something, whether it be building something—he wants to pour everything into it being a God-glorifying experience that would point to the fact that God is real and that God saves people and that, as a redeemed person, everything you do is an expression of worship to our Lord and Savior.

Bob: He has said it’s cool with him if you use one of his new songs in Selfie Dad.
Adam: Just basically said: “Hey, Kanye, there are some guys at our church that are filming a movie. It’s all about this dad being reawakened in his love for Christ/in his walk for Christ.” I even told him: “A lot of this is what’s going on in your life. These guys want to know if they could use one of your songs, out of Jesus Is King, on their movie.” After he watched the trailer, he just said, “Yes, absolutely!” [Laughter]

Bob: So the first movie from Hollywood to have a Kanye West gospel song in it is Selfie Dad.

Brad: That appears to be the case; crazy! That’s what we planned all along.

Dave: Yes, there you go! [Laughter]

I would just say this, Adam—you know, as I’ve watched you mentor Kanye, and one day in Detroit got to literally be with you—what a beautiful thing that God has brought you into his life. What happens out there in the public world and the media world is often nothing close to what’s really happening; everybody has an opinion. Yet, knowing there’s a man of God—who’s a man of the Word—mentoring Kanye, it’s beautiful that God’s put you in his life.

Now, it’s beautiful that he’s paired you together in this movie; and it’s going to have an impact on the world. It’s pretty exciting to see what God’s doing.

Bob: Adam, tell listeners about how you and Dave got connected in Detroit.

Adam: Well, my wife actually grew up in Detroit, and she had been there a long time. We were able to go back there to visit recently; and we decided: “Hey, we have to go visit Kensington Church. We have to go hear Dave, and maybe Ann will be there too.”

We got up early, went to the service, and were able to connect with Dave after the service, just for a few moments just to talk and get to meet him/took a picture together.

Dave: I didn’t even preach that day. My son preached, right?—Cody?

Adam: Yes, we were actually bummed; we were super bummed. [Laughter] We were like, “Oh, man!” But Cody did a great job, and we really enjoyed being there.

I didn’t think that much about it other than it was an honor to meet you and we connected with a conversation after the service.

Dave: The reason you knew me was—

Adam: —from FamilyLife Today.

Dave: —right here; yes!
Adam: We had heard your testimony—we had heard you guys as guests on the show; we had heard all about you [Ann] flipping across the stage and you [Dave] trying to catch her/you turned around and walked away. [Laughter] We heard all kinds of stuff about you guys! We’re like: “We like this couple! This couple is the real deal.”

Bob: When Kanye did a Sunday service in Detroit, you called Dave and said, “Can we connect?”

Adam: I was actually just scared out of my wits! He was like, “Will you come preach at this event in Detroit?”

Dave: —the first time, right?

Adam: The very first time. I said, “Hey, I don’t know if you want me to do that.” He was like, “Well, why not?” I’m like, “Well, if I preach, I’m going to preach the gospel, and that will be a little bit of a different flavor than what Sunday service has had up to this point.” He’s like, “That’s exactly what I want!”

Next thing I know, I’m on a plane, heading to Detroit; but the day before I left, I’m like, “I’m going to call the one man that I know in Detroit that I would love to come help me experience this, maybe give me some wisdom of how I could approach the situation and be faithful in this opportunity.” I called Dave out of the blue, and he was kind enough to return my call.

Bob: This is all pretty amazing—this kind of harmonic convergence that’s happened here—between the movie, between the church, between you guys here at FamilyLife Today—


Bob: —Michael Jr.

I hope our listeners will have a movie night this weekend/Father’s Day weekend. Maybe invite another family to join you, as long as you feel safe doing that; but sit down together, watch the movie, Selfie Dad. It’s available, video on demand. You can go to our website, FamilyLifeToday.com, to get access to the film. Again, the website’s FamilyLifeToday.com. It’s opening this weekend, and Father’s Day weekend’s the right weekend to watch it.

Again, go to FamilyLifeToday.com for more information about how you can view the movie, Selfie Dad. This is a movie the whole family can watch together; or get a couple of families together, as I mentioned. Our website is FamilyLifeToday.com. If you have any questions about how to access the movie, you can call us at 1-800-“F” as in family, “L” as in life, and then the word, “TODAY.”
I hope that a lot of listeners will do this, in part because there are people paying attention what kind of movies people want to watch. The more people that watch a movie like this on opening weekend, even with a video on demand, studio executives are paying attention and will make films like this if audiences will support them. You can see the trailer for *Selfie Dad* on our website, FamilyLifeToday.com; and you can get information on how to view the entire movie, again, when you go to FamilyLifeToday.com.

We hope you have a *great* Father’s Day weekend. I hope you and your family are able to worship together with your local church in some way or another this weekend, and I hope you can join us back on Monday. We’re going to talk about what happens when your marriage goes through trial, after trial, after trial; and it starts to wear on both of you. How do you sustain the us-ness of your marriage when things are pushing you apart? Jeff and Sarah Walton join us to talk about that. I hope you can be here as well.

I want to thank our engineer today, Keith Lynch, along with our entire broadcast production team. On behalf of our hosts, Dave and Ann Wilson, I’m Bob Lepine. We will see you back on Monday for another edition of *FamilyLife Today*.

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