

# MANHOOD RITES & BLESSINGS

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THE ANCIENT PRACTICE OF PREPARING YOUR SON  
FOR MANHOOD



*"This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."  
Father God*

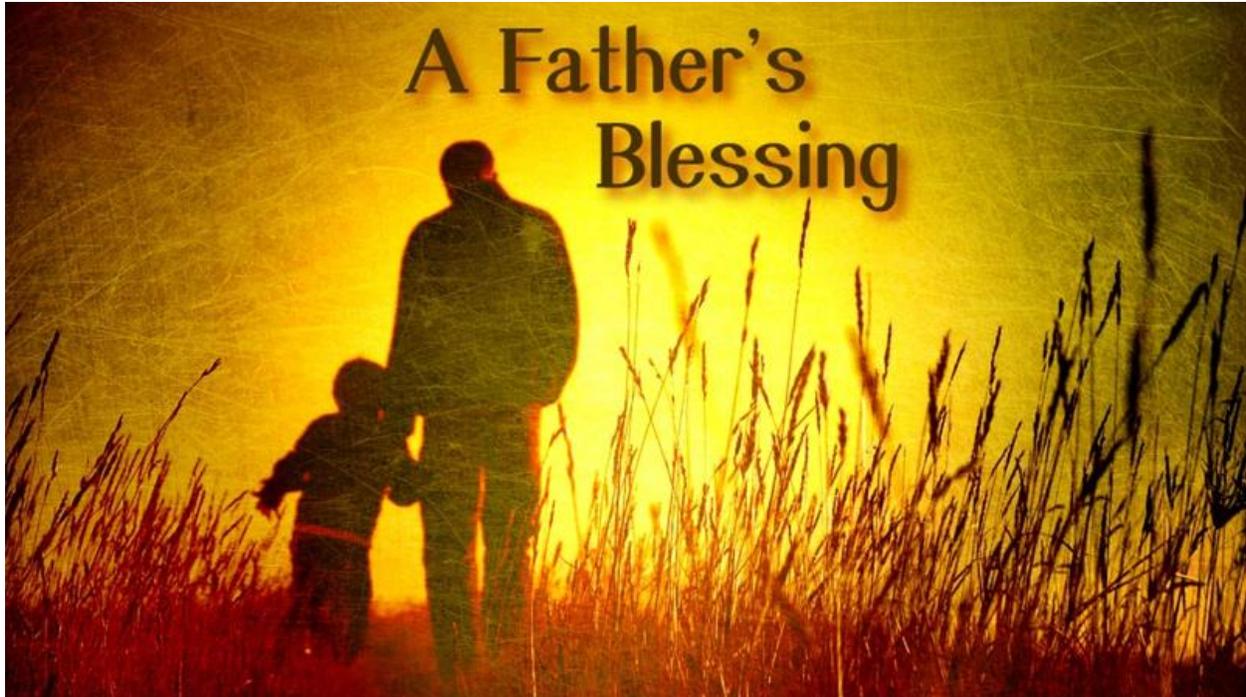
BY MARTY MILLER

# What Every Son Needs from His Father

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A father's knowledge and skills should be shared with his children at different stages of life. And at every stage of development, a child should receive a Father's Blessing. There should be 8 intentional blessings pronounced from birth to age 21. In addition, it is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED to provide other blessings at significant events such as baptisms, graduations, weddings, baby dedications, and end of life. In addition, during the journey to adulthood, a father should provide at least 3 Rites of Passages which corresponds with the stages of increasing freedom, power, and responsibility. Below is a table the lays out chronologically the stages of development, the skills and experiences a father should provide, and the blessings and the rites that he should provide for his son.

Stage of Development	Checklist of Skills and Experiences You Provide <i>Do some research and fill this in!!!</i>	Father's Blessing	Rite of Passage
1. Baby Stage (0-1.5)		Baby Dedication	
2. Toddler Stage (1.5-2)		First Prayer	
3. Preschool Stage (3-5)		Riding Bike	
4. Early School Stage (6-8)		1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	Preparation for School Summer before 1 <sup>st</sup> grade
5. Late Elementary Stage (9-11)		Summer Camp	
6. Early Adolescent Stage (12-14)		6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Preparation for Puberty Summer before 6 <sup>th</sup> grade
7. Middle Adolescent Stage (15-17)		12 <sup>th</sup> grade	Preparation for Independence Summer before 12 <sup>th</sup> grade
8. Late Adolescent Stage (18-21)		Leaving Home	
9. Early Adulthood (21+)		Marriage	
10. Early Adulthood (21+)		Grand Children	
11. Early Adulthood (21+)		Spiritual Leader	
12. Late Adulthood		End of Life	Passing the Mantle to Son When your health fails



## PREPARING FOR "THE BLESSING"

You were hand selected by God to instill in your young man a sense of security, hope, and confidence that comes from experiencing the love of his heavenly Father through you. Don't worry, you don't need to be perfect, but you do need to be present and purposeful. This weekend you will have the opportunity to be both.

One of this weekend's highlights will occur on Saturday afternoon. You will have the opportunity to participate in a simple yet beautiful ceremony we refer to as "THE BLESSING". During this ceremony you will give him a symbolic gift, which we provide, and you will encourage him by communicating these three things:

1. I love you because...
2. I am proud of you because...
3. I see that you are on the path to becoming a fine young man; I am here for you, and want to offer you my blessing for your journey.

This worksheet is meant to help you to take some time to think this through. In fact, we would encourage you to write your thoughts down in a letter and present them to him with the gift. He will cherish it for sure. But don't use the letter as a substitution for talking to him. Remember that your words don't matter as much your sincere attempt to say them. God won't let you fail in this. So enjoy it. Your son needs to hear from the man he wants to be.

## Preparing for THE BLESSING, giving out THE BLESSING, and living out THE BLESSING:

- Step 1 Prayerfully and thoughtfully write out "THE BLESSING" for your son(s) at home
- Step 2 Sabbath morning while our young men are outside being led in activities, fathers will meet in the dining hall for about an hour and a half. During this time we will focus on how we can all become better fathers and bless our sons. We will also spend time praying for and speaking a blessing over one another.
- Step 3 In the majestic setting of a wilderness canyon, and after the Wilderness Experience, you and a small group of other fathers and sons will give "THE BLESSING" to your son(s). At this point you will speak your blessing to him, offering him his symbolic gift which symbolizes his success. Don't sweat this. You don't have to be great with words. This really will mean the WORLD to him.
- Step 4 Before leaving on Sunday we will create a "circle of men" and pray over our sons a final blessing.
- Step 5 Continue to speak words of affirmation and demonstrate unconditional love into the life of your son in the days, months, and years ahead. Your role as a father never ends...it just changes and becomes richer as the years roll by!

## Complete these three statements in a letter to your son.

### 1. I love you because... (fill in the blanks here.)

Sometimes Dads and sons love all of the same things. Sometimes they don't relate too much because of different interests, abilities, etc. However, the fact that God chose to put you two together as a father/son team is something that he might need to hear. So, you might say something to this end:



*"Son, I love you because you are a gift. I am so proud that God chose ME to be your dad! He must think we make a good team and I wouldn't trade you for any other guy in the world. I love you just as you are and nothing you will ever do can change that. "You can let him know how hard it is to be a good father but that you really are trying to do your best.*

*Let him know that you want to be a part of his life. Make sure to say this specifically "I know I may seem busy sometimes or not interested, but I am. You are more important than work or anything else in my life."*

Let him know why you love spending time with him.

## 2. I am proud of you because... (focus on character quality, not achievements)

He needs to hear that you believe in him and the man he is becoming. He needs to know that you see the good in him as he is. Not that you see potential, but that you see in him positive qualities right now. Focus on his character. The world tells them if they are good at sports, school, etc. Tell him about what you see on the inside. We have included in this packet a list of character qualities and scripture references that might give you some ideas. Here are some character qualities that might give you some ideas.



## 3. I see that you are becoming a man...

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Finally, it is time to give him your blessing. This is where you tell him that you see that he is becoming a man and present to him part of his “armor”. You might say something like,



*“We will go through some hard times together. You may not always like me or the decisions I make, but know that everything I do, I do because I love you. On the other side of trouble, I will always be there for you. God is making you into a great man and I see that clearly every day.”*

After these words, you will give him his gift. After the ceremony, you will take him off alone for a few minutes to pray for him. Don't sweat this. It is BIG deal for a boy to have his father pray over him. Just say a simple prayer asking God to help him become a man and bring you to closer together. Just speak from the heart. Then you will close your prayer with a blessing from scripture. Here are some good passages from which to choose.

- Numbers 6:24-26; 1 Thessalonians 5: 23-24; Ephesians 3:17b-19; Philippians 1:9-11



### Example of THE BLESSING:

*Son, first I want you to know tonight that I love you. I love you more than you can ever imagine.*

*The day I first heard your heart beat I knew that I would die for you. I have always loved you and nothing you can do could ever change that. I love you because you are a gift from God. I can't believe he has blessed me so much with such and incredible son. Sometimes I don't know how to say what I feel inside when I see you, but just know that I love you because you are you. You don't have to change to earn that. We are a team no matter what. I also want you to know that I am so proud of you. I see in you so many good qualities. Maybe you don't even realize they are there, but I see them every day! You are diligent and that kind of work ethic will pay off for you big time in your life. I admire that in you. I also love how you are careful with your heart and mind. You show great integrity, which means you try to do the right thing even when no one is looking. I respect you for that. You also show the true marks of a man in the courage you display. I see that sometimes things seem overwhelming for you. I hear you when you tell me that you are nervous about things, but you never let fear control you. It is ok to be afraid, but a young man faces his fear and I have seen you do that. I love that about you. You make me a very proud father.*

*So, it is my honor to stand here with you as your dad. You are becoming a fine young man. I see the progress you have made. I see the warrior in you. I believe in you and the man you are becoming. Sometimes, it may seem like I am too busy or interested in other things besides you. But you need to know that you are always my top priority. When things aren't going well for you, I will always be there for you. I am committed to being the best father I can possibly be, and to helping you become the warrior you were born to be. I love you son. Here is a memento to remember this occasion and THE BLESSING I give to you as my son.*

### Prayer for Your Son:

*Father, thank you for my son. Thank you for putting him in my life. Thanks for working in his life and watching over him. I pray that you bring us closer together, bond us as a team, and help us to overcome the tough things that life will throw at us. And Father, give this boy wisdom and strength for his journey to becoming a man. So I offer him my blessing tonight, through your word in the book of Ephesians tonight: "May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord look down upon you with favor and give you peace." Amen.*

## THE FATHER-SON BLESSING

Dear Dad,

You were hand selected by God to instill in your son a sense of security, confidence, and love that flows from the heart of our Heavenly Father. And by spending this special weekend with him, you are speaking this message loud and clear. You may not be a perfect dad, but you have a good heart and good intentions. This weekend my desire is that you experience a treasured experience with your son that will last a lifetime.

One of this weekend's highlights will occur during the simple yet beautiful ceremony we refer to as "THE BLESSING". During this ceremony you will read a letter you have written for your son to keep and cherish. Then you say a prayer of blessing over him. I know this might sound intimidating to you but please understand that it is worth the effort, and it will mean more than you know to him.

To help you with writing your letter and your prayer of blessing I have provided the following tips. When you read this letter, read it slowly, and look into his eyes. Remember that your words don't matter as much your sincere attempt to say them. God won't let you fail in this. So, enjoy it... even if you get choked up with emotions!

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### I. LETTER OF BLESSING TO YOUR SON

#### **1. I love you because...**

Focus Text: *This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Matthew 3:17*

This section should focus on the heart and could include combined pictures of how God sees him and how you see him, how God loves him and how you love him, etc. You could say something about how your love for him began before he was born but has grown stronger with each passing year. You could mention something about how you find joy in his laughter, the strength of his handshake, the determination he shows, etc. which all speak of his value to you... he really needs to hear this from you. Be specific as possible but also make it very personal!

#### **2. I am proud of you because...**

Focus Text: *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. Luke 2:52*

This section should focus on character quality, not achievements, or physical attributes. Refer to the long list at the end of this document. Try to limit your list to around 4-6 attributes or it will get too long. Quality is always better than quantity!

#### **3. I see that you are on the path to becoming a handsome young man; I am here for you, and want to offer you my blessing for your journey.**

Focus Text: *Delight yourself in the LORD, and he give you the desires of your heart. Psalm 37:4*

This final section should speak to his journey of maturity from a little boy to a strong young man. Whether your son is 8 or 18, your words of affirmation and love will provide him with a strength

and confidence that is beyond words. It is something that he will feel deep within his heart and believe to be true. Your blessing should be a prophecy of a good future where he will experience the fullness of life.

Make sure you sign the letter with an endearing ending!

## II. PRAYER OF BLESSING FOR YOUR SON

*The prayer for your son doesn't need to be written out but it can be. I suggest that you follow an easy format to guide your words such as "The Hand Prayer" that I developed over the past several years. I like it and have found that it works beautifully. This prayer should flow from your Heavenly Father through you to your son. Pray about how you should pray and what you should pray, and God will show you the way! I promise that you will be blessed by giving this prayer of blessing.*

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[The Father's Hand Prayer](#) - watch video (at time 8:30) for tips on this blessing

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### Beginning the Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

You are the one and only Perfect Father. You are the Creator, Sustainer, Savior and King of this world. And my son and I are your children. Thank-you for giving me the honor of being the earthly father of \_\_\_\_\_, my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Father, now as I give this blessing to my beloved son, I ask that your holiness and power flow from you through me at this special moment.

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### 1. The Thumb of Affirmation and True Identity

Give praise and thanks to God for giving you such a wonderful son. Proclaim who God says she is.... and who you say he is. Describe some of his top character qualities.

*This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Matthew 3:17*

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### 2. The Index Finger of Direction and Correction

I see that \_\_\_\_\_ is humble and teachable and takes correction and direction. He shows wisdom, discretion, and maturity. He wants to do the right thing and be obedient. And when he makes mistakes he owns up to them and makes things right.

Pray that he listens respectfully when his mother and I give direction.

*And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. Luke 2:52*

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### 3. The Middle Finger of Challenge and Opposition

He understands that there is a struggle between good and evil in his heart and mind.

When Satan comes against him and tells him he is not strong, not smart, not valuable, etc. he takes these thoughts captive and replaces them with God's word and his true identity in Christ Jesus. He is not controlled by his emotions and keeps negative thoughts and words down with the thumb of encouragement. He faces challenges, opposition, and temptation with courage. Whatever test and trials come his way he knows that you are fighting alongside him to win the battle! He is not alone! Also describe any character traits that need to be strengthened.

*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Matthew 4:1*

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### 4. The Ring Finger of Commitment and Endurance

Commitment, don't quit, God won't quit. You as his dad will never quit on him either! He is strong and will persevere through difficulty and never give up!

*"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you." Deuteronomy 31:6*

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### 5. The Pinky Finger of Strength through Weakness

God promises to provide strength through his weakness so that he may bring glory to God. So, whatever he may be struggling with it will become his strength and his testimony and witness for what God has done in his life.

*Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Matthew 25:21*

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### Closing of the Prayer

This is the final blessing. Speak from the heart, make it real, making sure to declare a bright and joyful future. Let him feel your love and strength flow through these closing lines.

AMEN

## CHARACTER QUALITIES

- **Adaptable**                   Able to adjust without difficulty to new, unfamiliar, and unexpected conditions.
  - Phil 4:6
- **Agreeable**                   Willing or ready to agree or consent.
- **Alertness**                   Ability to know and do the right thing based on what is taking place around me.
  - Mark 14:38
- **Amiability**                Having a kindly or attractive disposition; friendly; pleasing.
  - Micah 6:8
- **Aspiration**                Ardent desire after what is great and good.
  - Phil. 4:8
- **Assured**                    Certain; convinced; not doubting or doubtful.
  - Matt. 7:24; Phil. 4:13
- **Attentiveness**            Paying or giving attention, intent; observant.
  - Prov. 22:17-19; Phil. 2:3-4; Heb. 2:1
- **Availability**              Capable of being used – “always there when you need ‘em”.
  - Acts 20:35; Phil. 2:20-21
- **Boldness**                  Daring; courageous; brave; confident; speaks out.
  - Ps. 138:3; Acts 4:29; Eph. 3:11-12; Phil 1:20
- **Bravery**                    To encounter with courage and fortitude.
  - Ps. 31:3; Ps. 31:24
- **Cautiousness**            Knowing when to do the right thing at the right time.
  - Prov. 19:2
- **Compassion**                Sympathetic emotion created by misfortunes of another, accompanied by a desire to help.
  - Ps. 103:13; Col. 3:12; 1 John 3:17
- **Confidence**                Certain; self-reliant; has assurance.
  - Ps. 71:5; Prov. 14:26; 2 Cor. 3:4-5; Heb. 4:16; Heb. 10:35-36
- **Considerate**                Regard for others' circumstances or feelings.
  - Eph. 4:32; Phil. 2:4; Heb. 10:24-25
- **Contentment**              Satisfaction with what one has and circumstances or feelings.
  - Phil. 4:7, 11; 1 Tim. 6:8
- **Cooperative**              To work together as a group for a common goal.
  - Rom. 12:3-5
- **Courage**                    Ability to encounter danger or difficulties with firmness and without fear.
  - Deut. 31:6; 2 Chron. 15:7; Ps. 27:14; Ps. 31:24
- **Creativity**                 Imaginative; gives rise to new things and ideas.
  - Rom. 12:2
- **Decisiveness**            Able to make a prompt decision when faced with time limits.
  - James 1:5
- **Dedicated**                 Given wholly to a purpose, goal, or thing; devoted.
  - Phil. 3:14; Col. 3:23-24
- **Deference**                Being respectful to others; treating them as persons of great worth.
  - Rom. 14:21
- **Dependability**            Reliability; trustworthy; rest with confidence in.
  - Ps. 15:4; Ps. 62:6, 7; Luke 16:10
- **Desire**                     To wish or long for a person, thing, or goal.

- Determination Firm resolution; settled purpose; a vision that is adhered to at all costs.
  - Luke 22:42; 1 Cor. 9:24; Heb. 12:1-3
- Diligence Steady application; constant effort; to accomplish what is undertaken.
  - Jer. 29:13; Col. 3:23; Heb. 6:11-12
- Discernment Power to discriminate between good and evil; insight from God based on scripture.
  - 1 Sam. 16:7; Ps. 119:65-66; Prov. 17:27
- Discipline State of order maintained by training and strict self-control.
  - Gal. 5:22-23; 1 Tim. 4:7; 2 Tim. 1:7
- Discretion The ability to make sound, tactful judgments.
  - Prov. 22:3
- Earnestness Serious in intention, purpose, or effort, characterized by depth.
  - Prov. 23:23
- Endurance A continuing or bearing-up under pain or distress without yielding.
  - Gal. 6:9; Heb. 12:1
- Enthusiasm A keen and active interest; ardent zeal in pursuit of something.
  - Prov. 15:13; Romans 12:11; 1 Pet. 3:13
- Expressiveness Full of expression, vividly representing the meaning or feeling to be conveyed.
- Fairness Honest; open; frank; impartial or unbiased.
  - Luke 6:31
- Faith Confidence or trust in a person or thing; loyalty to a person, promise, or commitment.
  - 1 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 11:1
- Firm Steadfast and unwavering; showing determination.
  - Eph. 6:14
- Flexibility Capable of adapting or modifying.
  - Col. 3:2
- Forgiveness Inclined to overlook offenses; to cease to feel resentment against.
  - Eph. 4:32
- Fortitude Strength of mind which enables one to encounter danger or bear pain with courage.
  - 1 Chron. 29:20
- Friendly Inclined to approve, help, or support.
  - Ps. 41:1-2; Prov. 17:17; John 15:13
- Generosity Free and unselfish in giving.
  - Prov. 22:9; 2 Cor. 9:6
- Gentleness Kindly; mild, not severe.
  - Matt. 5:5; Gal. 5:22-23; Col. 3:12; 1 Thess. 2:7; 1 Pet. 3:4
- Giving To commit or offer oneself to be used or helpful.
  - Matt. 22:37-39; 2 Cor. 9:7
- Good-natured Natural mildness and kindness of disposition.
  - Col. 4:6
- Goodness Virtue or integrity; kindness.
  - Gal. 5:22
- Gratefulness Thankfulness of kindness shown or benefits received.
  - 1 Cor. 4:7; Eph. 5:20; 1 Thess. 5:18
- Honesty Freedom from deceit or fraud; integrity; honorable intentions, principles and actions.
  - Matt. 5:18
- Honorable Worthy of being honored; motivated by principles of honor; consistent.
  - Matt. 5:6

- Hospitality Cheerfully sharing with others each day; food, shelter; smiles, encouragement, etc.
  - Heb. 13:2
- Humility Not proud or arrogant; modest and submissive to authority.
  - Ps. 10:17; Prov. 22:4; James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:6
- Imaginative Being able to create new things or ideas consistent with reality.
- Initiative Power or ability to take the lead or originate action.
  - 1 Chron. 29:20; Rom. 12:21
- Integrity Unimpaired moral principles; honest; soundness; whole and undivided.
  - Prov. 10:9; Prov. 20:7
- Intent Fixed with earnest attention on some purpose or thought.
- Joyfulness Gladness or delight; causing satisfaction and happiness.
  - Prov. 15:13; Prov. 17:22a; John 15:11; James 1:2-3
- Kindness Good; helpful; friendly.
  - Micah 6:8; Eph. 4:32
- Leadership Ability to lead or guide.
  - Ex. 18:21; Matt. 20:26; Romans 12:1-2
- Listener To give close attention in order to hear; to pay attention to.
  - Prov. 4:1; Mark 4:24; James 1:19
- Love Giving to others' needs without seeking something in return.
  - 1 Cor. 13:3
- Loyalty Faithful to one's obligations, commitments, and leaders.
  - Matt. 25:21; John 15:13; Rom. 12:9-10
- Meekness Mild of temper; gentle; not easily provoked or irritated.
  - Ps. 62:5; Gal. 5:22-23; 1 Cor. 13:4-5
- Obedience Act of complying with rules and standards imposed by one in authority; submission.
  - 1 Kings 8:61; 2 Cor. 10:5
- Open-minded Having a mind open to new arguments or ideas; unprejudiced.
  - Prov. 22:17
- Orderliness Preparing and organizing to minimize confusion and maximize productivity
  - 1 Cor. 14:40
- Patience Bearing pain or trial without complaining; waiting with calmness; not hasty.
  - Prov. 14:29; Prov. 17:27, Rom. 5:3-4; 2 Tim. 4:2
- Perseverance The act or habit of persistence in anything undertaken.
  - Rom. 5:3-4
- Persistence Steady continuance of a course; tenacious or purpose.
  - Hosea 6:3; Eph. 6:14
- Persuasiveness Having the power to influence, move, or prevail; convince toward a course of action.
  - 1 Tim. 4:12; 2 Tim. 2:24
- Pleasing Giving pleasure or satisfaction; agreeable; gratifying.
  - Ps. 104:34; 2 Cor. 5:9
- Practical Mindful of results, usefulness, advantages/disadvantages, procedure; matter-of-fact.
- Punctuality Showing that I value other people and their time.
  - Eccl. 3:1
- Purposefulness Having an objective to be reached or accomplished.

- **Respectfulness** Regard; high consideration and courtesy.
  - 1 Pet. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:17
- **Resoluteness** Having a fixed purpose; determined; steadfast; firm.
  - Prov. 4:25-27; 1 Cor. 15:58; Gal. 6:9-10
- **Resourcefulness** Wise use of that which others might overlook or discard.
  - Luke 16:10
- **Responsibility** Accountable for performance or discharge of duty.
  - Rom. 14:19; Phil. 4:13; 1 Pet. 4:10
- **Reverence** An attitude of deep respect and esteem mingled with affection.
  - Prov. 1:7; Prov. 23:17; 1 Pet. 5:5
- **Security** Freedom from apprehension; confidence of safety; freedom from danger or risk.
  - Ps. 16:8-9; Prov. 10:9; John 6:27
- **Self-control** Control of one's actions or feelings.
  - Gal. 5:22-25
- **Self-starter** One who applies his/her efforts without instruction, urging, or direction.
- **Sensitivity** Having feelings easily excited; readily and acutely affected.
  - Rom. 12:15; Col. 3:12
- **Sincerity** Freedom from hypocrisy; truthfulness; genuineness.
  - Prov. 3:3; James 3:17; Heb. 10:22; 1 Pet. 1:22
- **Steadfast** Fixed, firm, or constant in resolution; not fickle or wavering.
  - Prov. 4:25; Prov. 12:27b; Prov. 21:5; 1 Cor. 15:58
- **Tactful** Skill in doing or saying exactly what is required.
  - Prov. 25:11, Eph 4:15
- **Tenacious** Holding fast or characterized by keeping a firm hold; "stick-to-it-tiveness"; tough.
  - Prov. 4:25, 26-27; Prov. 12:27b; Gal. 6:9
- **Thankful** Expressive of gratitude; grateful; appreciative.
  - Eph. 5:20; 1 Thess. 5:18
- **Thoroughness** Finishing a task that has been started down to the last detail.
  - Prov. 18:5
- **Thriftiness** Controlling my desire to spend more on myself, so that I might have more to help others.
  - Luke 16:11
- **Tolerance** Acceptance of others; realizing that we are all different, and maturing.
  - Phil. 2:2
- **Trustworthy** Worthy of trust or confidence; reliable.
  - Isaiah 6:4; Matt. 25:21; Heb. 2:13
- **Truthfulness** Conformity to fact or reality; honesty by nature.
  - Prov. 10:9; Eph. 4:25
- **Unselfish** Not unduly attached to one's own interests or welfare; generous.
  - Matt. 20:26-28; Phil. 2:3-5
- **Virtue** Moral excellence or goodness; praise-worthy.
  - Prov. 19:20; Phil. 4:8; 1 Pet. 1:5
- **Wisdom** Having sound judgment; common sense; extensive knowledge; discerning.
  - Prov. 1:7; Prov. 9:10; Prov. 15:20a; Eph. 5:15-17; James 3:17



## The Manhood Rite of Passage @ 16 years of age

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### What is a Rite?

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A rite is an established, ceremonial, usually religious, act.

Examples of rites include initiation rites, last rites, and the rite of passage

### What is a Rite of Passage?

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A Rite of Passage is a special event or solemn ceremony that signifies the change of an individual's social status, such as marriage, baptism, coming of age, graduation, or inauguration. It is a ceremony that involves a significant change of status in society which occurs when an individual leaves one group to enter another.

### What is a *Coming of Age Rite of Passage*?

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The *Coming of Age Rite of Passage* signifies the transition from childhood to adulthood. While observed by many people groups and cultures for thousands of years, is largely missing from our modern world. During this presentation we will refer to the *Coming of Age Rite of Passage* as simply the "*Rite of Passage*".

### What are some examples of the *Rite of Passage*?

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Some Rites of Passage still exist today in various cultures, but my favorite is the *Australian Aboriginal Walkabout*. The *Walkabout* is a rite of passage during which males undergo a journey during adolescence, typically ages 10 to 16, where they live in the wilderness for a period up to six months to make the spiritual and traditional transition into manhood.

### The Essential Elements of the Rite of Passage

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The Rite of Passage for the Masai, the Spartans, and the Marines all share the same three essential elements or phases which are listed below...

1. Separation Phase – Preparation for Manhood

The young person is taken from his familiar environment to enter a different and sometimes difficult world. Separation can take many forms such as a distant journey, a struggle in the wilderness, or just a time away from parents. This is the phase where the young person is trained and prepared for the transition phase which includes the test of manhood.

## 2. Transition Phase – Test of Manhood

The initiate must undergo some sort of change, whether it be a trial of arms, a survival challenge, or increasing responsibility. The transition phase is the time where the participant learns the appropriate behavior for the new stage he is entering. Whatever the transition event is, the person is different when he emerges from what he was when he began. This challenge is so great that failure is a very real possibility.

## 3. Incorporation Phase – Celebration of Manhood

Finally, during incorporation, the young man or woman is welcomed back into the larger society, hopefully as a transformed person with a new sense of purpose and mission. This last phase takes place when the young person is formally admitted into the new role, and it often features a ceremony complete with gifts, blessings, and a feast.

### **Why do Christians not have a Rite of Passage?**

Although many cultures and religions have well established rites of passage it is largely missing from the Christian faith. We have rites surrounding important events such as baptisms, weddings, funerals, etc. but nothing for a “Coming of Age” Rite of Passage. The bible does not give details of such an event, but tradition does indicate that the age of twelve is when a boy or girl becomes a young man or woman. It is the age when a boy or girl physically enters puberty, and spiritually becomes accountable for his or her actions. In the Jewish faith this ceremony is known as the Bar Mitzvah or Bat Mitzvah.

### **Would a Rite of Passage help prepare our young men and women for a life of success?**

Absolutely! Rites of passage are typically separated into two categories... sexual and spiritual. A Christian Coming of Age Rite of Passage is a combination of both types of rites and therefore provides an even more powerful meaning to those who experience such a rite. A Rite of Passage will engage fathers in the spiritual, mental/emotional, and physical preparation of their children for the responsibilities of adulthood. Purposeful and powerful Rite of Passage experiences have the potential to increase positive outcomes in the lives of our young men and women plus keep them committed to God and the church.

### **How can a father prepare for a Rite of Passage?**

From the earliest memories a child should be taught the truths of the Bible which should be modeled by both mother and father. A Rite of Passage is a journey over time. It consists of four stages or phases which are prepping, blessing, testing, and then finally the ceremony... the “rite”. The following is a brief overview of a very challenging 7-week rite of passage provided by *Blueprint for Men Outdoors*. Only those who are exceptionally committed should attempt this Rite of Passage... but the greater the effort the greater the reward! The entire 7-week passage will involve a cohort of 4 father-son pairs.



## The Four Steps in The Manhood Rite of Passage (Age 16)

### **Step I: Manhood Boot Camp 6 weeks (Days 1-41)**

*And Jesus increased in wisdom (mind) and stature (body) and in favor (spirit) with God and man. Luke 2:52*

#### Teaching and Training:

##### Mind

- Manhood Principles
- Disciplines and Habits

##### Body

- Life Skills Development
- Health and Fitness

##### Spirit

- Character Development
- Walking with God and Man

### **Step II: Blessing Ceremony 1 day (Day 42)**

*This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Matthew 10:17*

- Personalized EDC (Every Day Carry)
- Affirmations and Prayer of Blessing

### **Step III: Wilderness Challenge 7 days (Days 43-49)**

*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness... Matthew 4:4*

#### "Through the Wilderness"... A 6-Day Wilderness Challenge:

- Schedule
  - Day 1 – Travel Day
  - Day 2 – Trek to Basecamp
  - Day 3 – Climbing Skills
  - Day 4 – The BIG DAY... an 18-hour physical, mental, and spiritual endurance test
  - Day 5 – Solo Day... 18 hours of fasting, meditation, prayer, and reflecting
  - Day 6 – Trek Back to Trailhead
  - Day 7 – Travel Day
- Outcomes
  - Character, skills, disciplines, habits... he is prepared for manhood

### **Step IV: Rite of Passage Ceremony 1 Day (Day 50)**

*This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him. Matthew 17:5*

#### The "Rite" of Passage Ceremony on the 50<sup>th</sup> Day

- Banquet
- Affirmations, Blessings, and Gifts
- Prayer and Anointing
- Circle of Men

### Coming of Age Rite of Passage Calendar:

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• Phase I:	Manhood Boot Camp	6 weeks (Days 1-41)	May 19-Jun 28
• Phase II:	Blessing Ceremony	1-day (Day 42)	June 29
• Phase III:	Wilderness Challenge	7-days (Days 43-49)	June 30-July 6
• Phase IV:	Rite of Passage Ceremony	1-day (Day 50)	July 7

### References:

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- [\*Age of Opportunity\*](#) by Paul David Tripp
- [\*King Me\*](#) by Steve Farrar
- [\*Life on the Edge\*](#) by Dr. James Dobson
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- *Raising a Modern Day Knight*, Robert Lewis
- *Rite of Passage*, Jim McBride
- *Rite of Passage*, First Baptist Church of Arlington, <https://www.fbca.org/riteofpassage>
- [\*Spiritual Milestones\*](#) from <https://www.heritagebuildersglobal.com/>
- *The Blessing*, John Trent