

MANHOOD RITES & BLESSINGS

A FRESH APPROACH TO 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

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. These blessings may coincide with 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.

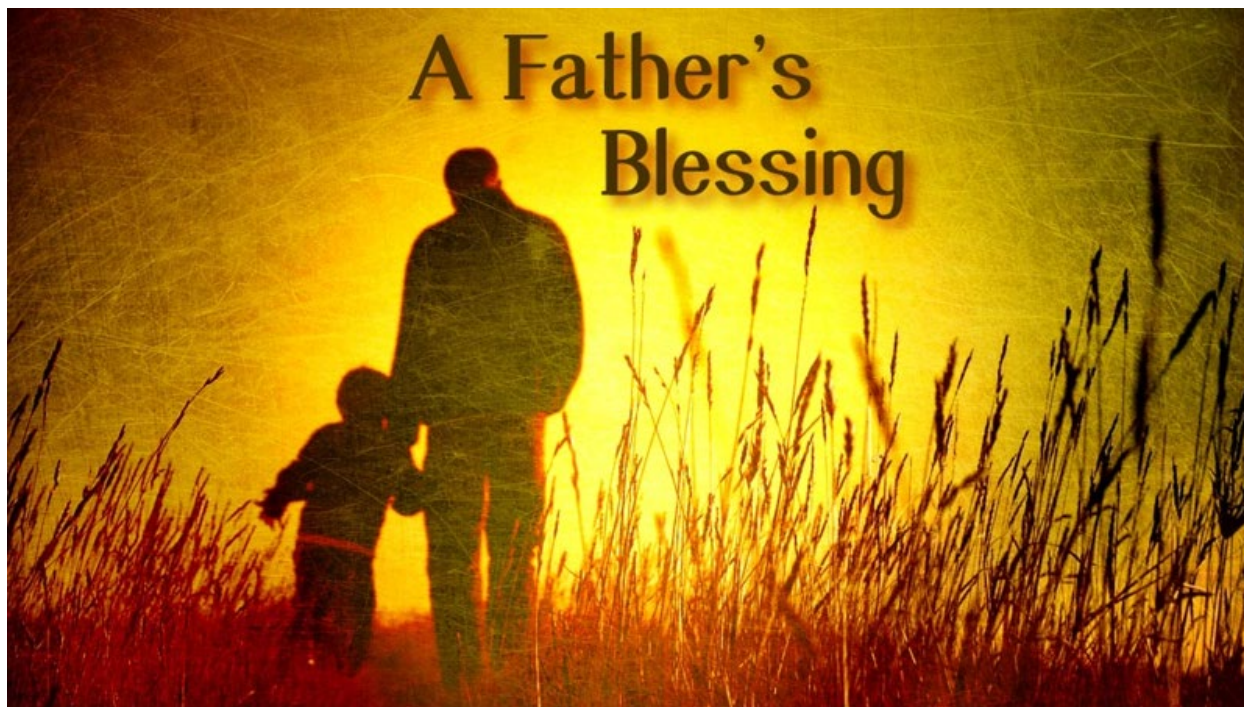
Stage of Development	Checklist of Skills and Experiences You Provide <i>Do some research and fill this in!!!</i>	Father's Blessing	Rite of Passage
1. Baby Stage (0-1.5)		Baby Dedication	
2. Toddler Stage (1.5-2)		First Prayer	
3. Preschool Stage (3-5)		Riding Bike	
4. Early School Stage (6-8)		1 st Grade	Preparation for School Summer before 1 st grade
5. Late Elementary Stage (9-11)		Summer Camp	
6. Early Adolescent Stage (12-14)		6 th grade	Preparation for Puberty Summer before 6 th grade
7. Middle Adolescent Stage (15-17)		12 th grade	Preparation for Independence Summer before 12 th 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

A Father's Role in Enhancing Healthy Child Development Through Purposeful Outdoor Experiences

*Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development (columns 1-6) Wikipedia
Miller's Correlation of Purposeful Outdoor Experiences (column 7-8)*

1 Approximate Age	2 Virtues	3 Psychosocial crisis[3]	4 Significant relationship	5 Existential question[4]	6 Examples[4]	7 Purposeful Outdoor Experiences	8 Father's Role
Infancy Under 2 years	Hope	Trust vs. Mistrust	Mother	Can I trust the world?	Feeding, abandonment	Gardens, Parks, Back Yard, Walks with child on shoulders/backpack, outside at night to reduce fears, encourage sensory awareness of nature. NO SCREEN TIME	Model Trust Firm yet gentle, feeling of warmth, unconditional love, lots of touch, comforting, spend time! Guard against mother's fears which can undermine trust.
Toddlerhood 2-4 years	Will	Autonomy vs. Shame/Doubt	Parents	Is it okay to be me?	Toilet training, clothing themselves	Indoor Campouts, digging in dirt, Outside at Night, joy of nature! VERY LIMITED SCREEN TIME NO VIDEO GAMES	Directed Independence Spiritual Leadership, wrestling, laughing, playing, calm power, comfort crying child, spend one on one time!
Early childhood 5-8 years ^[5]	Purpose	Initiative vs. Guilt	Family	Is it okay for me to do, move, and act?	Exploring, using tools or making art	Building Forts/Treehouses, Gardening, Pets, Hiking, Backyard Campouts, Fire and Tool Safety, Riding Bikes, Fishing, Nature Study, swimming LIMITED SCREEN TIME NO VIDEO GAMES "RITE OF PASSAGE" @ 7	Encourage Initiative Build confidence through building things, using non-powered hand tools, camping equipment, danger vs. safety, character traits emphasized as they are almost fully developed by age 7... spend one on one time!
Middle Childhood 9-12 years ^[6]	Competence	Industry vs. Inferiority	Neighbors, School	Can I make it in the world of people and things?	School, sports	Best Experienced in School or Teams Yard Work, House Cleaning, Baby Sitting, Paid Jobs, Scouting, Camping, Backpacking, Mt. Biking, Canoeing, Fishing, Summer Camp, Outdoor School, Object Lessons, water sports LIMITED SCREEN TIME VERY LIMITED VIDEO GAMES "RITE OF PASSAGE" @ 12	Empower Industry Spend increasing amounts of one on one time, encourage entrepreneurial ideas, building life skills, debriefing the day, initiate difficult conversations about sex, learn all you can about fatherhood, help them achieve their goals, do hard things with them, let them see you sweat, apologize as needed, don't provoke to anger! Affirm and bless

							them as they enter puberty.
Adolescence 13–19 years ^[2]	Fidelity	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Peers, Role Model	Who am I? Who can I be?	Social relationships	Best Experienced in Small Social Groups Road Trip, Mountain Climbing, Hunting, Survival, Driving Off Road, ATV, Sailing, Kayaking, Canoeing, Surfing, Trail Running, Sabbath, Meditation, Photography, Solitude, Cookouts, Extreme Races, Aviation MONITORED SCREEN TIME MONITOREDVIDEO GAMES “RITE OF PASSAGE” @ 16	Strengthen Identity This is prime time for dads... one on one time especially! Model spiritual leadership in the home and personal devotional life... this is crucial! You can't fake this! Bring wisdom, calmness, and openness during the roller coaster teen years. Give freedom with boundaries. Affirm good qualities and carefully address weaknesses. Encourage other adult role models to be in your child's life, prepare them for their passage to adulthood



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.

"The Blessing" is a simple yet beautiful ceremony that your son will never forget. The Blessing should consist of the following components:

1. The Gift - a symbolic and personalized gift from you to your son
2. The Blessing - a carefully crafted pronouncement of blessing to your son
3. The Prayer - a prayer of blessing from God through you to your son

The Gift

Your symbolic gift should be age-appropriate, specific to your son's interests, and have eternal implications. It should be something of such a great value that he will always treasure it for the remainder of his life. An engraved knife would be a great gift for a 12-year-old son.

The Blessing

The blessing should communicate 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:

Preparing for The Blessing

Prayerfully and thoughtfully write out "THE BLESSING" for your son. Don't be in a rush. Also, write out your prayer of blessing that you will pray over him at the close of the ceremony. Plan a place and time to perform this blessing. A natural setting is best, especially late in the day, maybe after a special meal. The more special you make it the more of an impression it will make on your son.

Giving the Blessing

In the majestic setting of a wilderness canyon give the gift, pronounce "THE BLESSING", and conclude with your prayer of blessing over your son. Don't be nervous about this at all. God will give you the words and the spirit to do a great job. Over the years your son will reflect on this experience and remember it as one of the most significant things you ever did with him.

Living the Blessing

In the days that follow continue to speak words of affirmation and demonstrate unconditional love to your son. 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 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. Character qualities such as honesty, integrity, and perseverance are some examples that you might consider. At this time you might want to also mention some character traits that are areas of growth. But speak of these in a hopeful way, as an area where God will give him victory and strength.



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

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.

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

What is a Rite?

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?

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*?

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*?

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

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 50th Day

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

Coming of Age Rite of Passage Calendar:

- Phase I: Manhood Boot Camp 6 weeks (Days 1-41)
- Phase II: Blessing Ceremony 1-day (Day 42)
- Phase III: Wilderness Challenge 7-days (Days 43-49)
- Phase IV: Rite of Passage Ceremony 1-day (Day 50)

References:

- [*Age of Opportunity*](#) by Paul David Tripp
- *National Fatherhood Initiative*, <https://www.fatherhood.org/>
- [*King Me*](#) by Steve Farrar
- [*Life on the Edge*](#) by Dr. James Dobson
- *Manhood Journey*, <https://www.manhoodjourney.org/>
- *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



Marty Miller

Blueprint for Men, President

Marty is a lover of God, a lover of nature, and a lover of people. These three loves have defined all that Marty has pursued in life.

Marty was born in Nebraska but grew up primarily in Florida and Tennessee where he developed his love for nature and love for the mountains. Throughout his life he has continued to enjoy outdoor pursuits that range from scuba diving in Indonesia to winter mountaineering in the Tetons. Marty is a well-recognized outdoor professional with skills and certifications that include Wilderness First Responder, Swift Water Rescue, and Avalanche Safety. Due to his intimate connection with the outdoor world Marty is gifted at discovering and sharing spiritual object lessons from nature.

Marty has a bachelor's degree in biology and master's degree in outdoor education and through the years has served as elementary school principal, multi-grade teacher, middle school science teacher, high school science teacher, nature center director, outdoor school director, university professor, and outdoor leadership program director.

After a long a successful career in education Marty transitioned into full-time ministry by creating *Blueprint for Men*. Through outdoor retreats, small group support, leadership training, and curriculum development, Marty is helping men to step up and become the men God designed them to be! Since the inception of this ministry, Marty and his ministry network have been instrumental at starting scores of men's discipleship groups throughout the country.

Last, but not least, Marty and his treasured wife Gale, live in Collegedale, Tennessee where they are both involved in full-time ministry. They are the proud parents of two adult children and four grandchildren. Life is good!

Marty is available to inspire your men at church or in the wilderness! You can contact him by email marty@blueprintformen.com or phone 423-322-8491.



What is Blueprint for Men?

Blueprint for Men is a Christ-centered, relationship-based men's ministry that educates, equips, and empowers men to live the way God intended. A life of true meaning, fulfillment, and purpose.

Through a wide variety of resources and programs we seek to educate and encourage men who dare to step up and become the men God intended them to be... better husbands, better fathers, and better disciples of Christ!

The time is now for men to step-up and become the men of spiritual integrity that God designed them to be. Join us as we create a movement of authentic godly men!

Blueprint for Men, Inc. is a 501©(3) non-profit men's ministry funded by generous supporters like you. If you would like to become a financial partner or discover more information about this important ministry visit our website. Thanks!