

# Our Manhood Plan



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*Print Your Name Here*

**Remembered by his friends and family as**

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## **Meditation**

When we come to the end of our lives on earth, we will take no material thing with us. We will not take one cent in our cold, dead hands. The only things that we may take are the things we have given away. If we have helped others, we may take that with us; if we have given of our time, money and talents for the God's people, we may take that with us. Looking back over our lives, what are we proud of? Not what we have gained for ourselves, but what few "unconditional" good deeds we have done. Those are the things that really matter in the long run. What will I take with me when I go?

"Hallowed be Thy Name." What does that mean to us? Here [name] is used in the sense of "spirit." The words mean praise to God for His spirit in the world, making us better. We should be especially grateful for God's spirit, which gives us the strength to overcome all that is based in our lives. His spirit is powerful. It can help us to live a conquering, abundant life. So we praise and thank Him for His spirit in our lives and in the lives of others.

**Please give this meditation careful consideration before proceeding...**

Men are programmed from young boys that our productive and important time is spent working. We find that to have a satisfied customer in our work, we need to know the customer and know what they want.

Following are the four most important letters we could ever memorize as men.

**C**= Companionship

**S**= Security

**S**= Significance

**E**= Emotional Responsiveness

Many men will find themselves on or going to the back nine of their marriages. Following is a retreat guide entitled "*Getting Away to Get It Together*". Planning and then doing this with your spouse will prove to be extremely valuable.

**Guidelines:**

1. This must be un-pressured time consisting of 2 nights and a portion of three days.
2. It must be just you and your spouse. No other couples no matter how good of friends you may be.
3. Put yourself and your marriage on the *offensive* not the *defensive*. The goal is to stop "*re-acting*" and start "*acting*" on a plan for your future together.
4. The environment must stimulate relaxation...No Work! For peace of mind, make sure the kids can reach you easily by phone.
5. Here's the exercise...
  - List the top 25 "good" things that have happened in your marriage.
6. Return home with the intention of building memories so you can leave your children with a positive legacy.

Let's turn the page and begin your "*Manhood Plan*".

## A S S E S S M E N T

Starting now and for the next six months, rate yourself from 1—10 in each category, 1 being the lowest.

|     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Months 1 to 6 |  |  |  |  |  |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1.  | A servant-leader includes his wife in envisioning the future.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |               |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2.  | A servant-leader accepts spiritual responsibility for his family. <i>(Taking leadership of prayer is important.)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |               |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3.  | A servant-leader is willing to say “I’m sorry “ and “forgive me” to his family.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |               |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4.  | A servant-leader discusses household responsibilities with his wife and makes sure they are fairly distributed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |               |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5.  | A servant-leader seeks the consultation of his wife on all types of decisions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |               |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6.  | A servant-leader follows through with commitments he has made to his wife.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |               |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7.  | A servant-leader anticipates the different stages his marriage will pass through. <i>(This is a critical reason for solid accountability. <b>Every marriage is a series of marriages.</b> Men should think of it as a round of golf. Just because you may be shooting your worst round after nine holes doesn’t mean you can’t make a come-back.)</i>                                                                                                                                  |               |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8.  | A servant-leader anticipates the different stages his children will pass through and he must change with them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While they are little he is the <i>director</i>.</li> <li>• When they reach their teens he is the <i>coach</i>.</li> <li>• In the college years he is the <i>consultant</i>.<br/><i>(Let’s not forget the tuition payer. Ha! Ha!)</i></li> <li>• When they move out to the work world he becomes their <i>peer</i>.</li> </ul> |               |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9.  | A servant-leader frequently tells his wife what he likes about her.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |               |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10. | A servant-leader provides financially for his family’s <i>basic needs</i> , “the fixed expenses.” <i>We have moved from a nation of “needs” to “wants”. This is a major reason for the debt epidemic we face as individuals today. Too many marriages today are materialistic adventures. Men, it’s “OK” to say “No” to all the excess. This is a major trigger that makes men retreat inward.</i>                                                                                     |               |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11. | A servant-leader deals with distractions so he can talk with his wife and family.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |               |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12. | A servant-leader prays with his wife on a regular basis.<br><i>(Note: This is the most difficult area a vulnerability for men.)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |               |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13. | A servant-leader initiates meaningful family traditions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |               |  |  |  |  |  |

|     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 14. | A servant-leader initiates fun outings for the family on a regular basis. <i>(Keeping laughter in the home is important.)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15. | A servant-leader takes time to give his children practical instruction about life, which in turn gives them confidence with their peers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16. | A servant-leader manages the schedule of the home and anticipates any pressure points. <i>(This is the area that is destroying families today along with the excess.)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17. | A servant-leader keeps his family financially sound and out of harmful debt.<br><b><i>(IMP: In Appendix 1 you will find an input form where you can list the information on your current debts. If you mail this form to the address on the form, you will receive a confidential debt elimination program designed by Larry Burkett. Send it "Att: Bill" to insure no one else will open the envelope.)</i></b>                                                                                                                  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18. | A servant-leader makes sure he and his wife have an updated will and/or trust(s) and have arranged a well-conceived plan for their plan in case of death.<br><b><i>(IMP: In Appendix 2 you will find a helpful guide for a well-conceived plan. If you mail any or all of the forms needing calculations to the address on the form, you will receive a confidential report and suggestions. Send it "Att: Bill" to insure no one else will open the envelope.) Many future prayer requests can be avoided planning now.)</i></b> |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19. | A servant-leader lets his wife and children into the interior of his life. <i>(Don't be afraid to share your funny stories and even your failures as long as they don't put the children on the hook where they feel they now need to care for you.)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20. | A servant-leader honors his wife often in public.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21. | A servant-leader explains sex to each child in a way that gives them a wholesome perspective.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 22. | A servant-leader encourages his wife to grow as an individual.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 23. | A servant-leader takes the lead in establishing with his wife sound, biblically-supportable family values. <i>This should be written out and state how you view alcohol, sex, pornography, musical restrictions, honesty, humility, etc. As a dad, show how you have demonstrated each.</i><br><b><i>IMP: There is so much emphasis today on the "absent" dad. How about the "go with the flow dad"? We <u>must</u> be strategic husbands and dads.</i></b>                                                                       |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 24. | A servant-leader joins a small group of men who are committed to improving their skills as a man, husband, and father.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 25. | A servant-leader provides time for his wife to pursue her own personal interests.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  |  |  |  |  |  |

The "conventional" man moves from his work to his kingdom. The "authentic" man trains to play life's pentathlon...

- God
- Godly self-development
- Spouse
- Children
- Work

**In that order!**

**NOTES:**

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

# **SAM PLE: COLLEGE STUDENT PERSONAL MANHOOD PLAN**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

My goal is to become an authentic man and to model that for those God brings into my life. In order to do that, I must establish biblical priorities that will promote spiritual growth. My personal walk with Jesus Christ will be consistent only if I have a daily quiet time and a regular study of the Scriptures. Only through the Scriptures and constant prayer for my decisions will Jesus stay the central focus of my life. As I grow, His Spirit will conform my character to the image of Christ and create a man who initiates, taking responsibility and courageously leading both men and women. He will call me and equip me to be the head of my home and to reject my naturally passive nature. This is the abundant life He has promised and will lead me to the greater reward—His reward.

## **PERSONAL GOALS**

### **Things to Address from My Past**

- To establish clear biblical boundaries between my mother and myself before I leave for college.

### **Short-Term Issues for This Year**

- Take on a position of responsibility and leadership during my freshman year at college.
- Be aggressive in initiating dating opportunities and leading them by setting the spiritual tone, being creative in our activities and treating my dates as a gentleman should.
- Find and become part of a spiritually focused group by the end of my first semester.
- Pray for and find a male mentor who can encourage me and challenge my spiritual growth.
- Make my studies a priority and establish at least a 3.0 GPA in my freshman year.
- Take a stand for my faith on the campus, both in my dorm and the classroom.
- Regularly spend time in the Word and in prayer to fuel my spiritual growth.

### **Long-Term Issues for My life**

- To become a servant-leader and a sensitive, godly man (Mark 10:45).
  - To be a man of humility, strong convictions, and integrity (Phil. 2:1-8).
  - To love God and follow Him and become knowledgeable of the Scriptures (2 Tim. 2:15).
  - For my life, convictions, and witness to change the lives of those around me (1 Thess. 1:2-10).
  - When I die, to know that I have fought the good fight and finished the race (2 Tim. 4:7).
- Also, to know that I have peace about leaving this world to receive God's greater reward.

# PERSONAL MANHOOD PLAN

## A LOOK BACK THE FOUNDATION OF MANHOOD

### **Unfinished Business and How I'll Deal with It**

Three wounds still need to be addressed in my life—father wound, mentor wound, and depravity wound. Fortunately, none of these wounds are crippling or even standing in the way of my happiness and pursuit of God's will in my life. However, Men's Fraternity has convinced me that to truly be a man of God, I do not need to have any unresolved issues from my past.

While I didn't disrespect or dishonor Dad outwardly to any great extent while growing up, I did in my heart. I still feel remorse over this. However, Dad and I have grown closer this past year than perhaps we have ever been, due in large part to Men's Fraternity. But I really yearn to know Dad better. I plan to take these specific short-term steps to address this wound: by mid-summer I will help at the store one Saturday; later in the summer, I will go fishing with Dad and/or plan an overnight trip.

With regard to a mentor, I will continue to pray and actively seek a mentor.

Many past sins still hold me in bondage. This summer I will read Neil Anderson's *Bondage Breaker* with my accountability group.

## A LOOK AT NOW: MY PRESENT PURSUIT OF MANHOOD

I can honestly say that my relationship with Christ is my number one priority. I don't ever want that to change. Developing a closer relationship with God and being transformed in the image of Christ are the driving forces of my life. That focus has resulted in many victories in my pursuit of being an authentic biblical man. Currently, I am successful as a man in the areas of sexual purity, being a man of my word, seeking God's direction through prayer prior to any major decisions, spending time studying God's Word, developing a few close friendships, and serving through my church.

I feel I am struggling as a man in being a good steward of my finances, allowing emotions to cloud my judgment too often, and failing to recognize or remain focused on God's reward and eternal things.

I believe God gives singles unique and special opportunities for service with regard to time, finances, and relationships. Not having a wife or children frees me up to invest in the lives of others and the church to a larger degree. And more importantly, I have more free time to spend with God in the Word and prayer. I do not take full advantage of these opportunities.

My top spiritual priorities at this time are: remain sexually pure and treat with respect and honor those women with whom I am friends and date (Ps. 119:9-16); encourage other believers (Heb. 10:24-25); exhibit godly characteristics in the workplace—cheerfulness, honesty, integrity, and hard work; maintain a good balance between service and spending one-to-one time with God.

## **A LOOK AHEAD: MY PURSUIT OF REAL MANHOOD OVER A LIFETIME**

My number one priority is to discover my spiritual gifts and spiritual mission. I have identified my spiritual gifts as exhortation/encouragement, leadership/administration, and help/service. Potential gifts include shepherding and apostleship/missionary. I have looked forward to and taken advantage of opportunities in the church to serve. I want to look for opportunities that require these gifts and find an environment where they can flourish. I believe that through various kinds of service, prayer, and input from fellow believers, God will reveal His spiritual mission for my life.

### ***Mission Statement***

To seek to know God better every day of my life. To maintain and develop a deeper, more intimate relationship with Christ. To use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's will for my life.

**Physical:** Maintain and improve on my physical conditioning to keep my mind alert and enable my body to react to a variety of demands.

**Relational:** Develop a few close relationships with men to hold one another accountable in all areas of our lives. Treat the women I date with respect and honor.

**Financial:** Be a strong steward of my finances. Begin to plan for the future years when earning potential lessens. Give generously.

# SAMPLE: YOUNG MARRIED PERSONAL MANHOOD PLAN

## AS A MAN/ SON

I want to have honored my father and mother throughout their lives by: constant verbal and written confirmation of my love for them; consistently seeking their advice and counsel; seeking my father's written and verbal blessing; presenting them with a written tribute (Ex. 20:12).

*Specific goals:* Write my parents a tribute and have it printed and framed for presentation at Christmas. Take my father on a golf weekend and use the opportunity to confirm my love and appreciation for all his sacrifices on my behalf.

## AS A MAN/ HUSBAND

I want to have experienced a lifelong, intimate, and fulfilling relationship with my wife. I want her to have felt secure in my love for her, honored for her role as a wife and mother, fulfilled emotionally and romantically, encouraged spiritually, and lovingly led by a man committed to servant-leadership (1 Pet. 3:7; Eph. 5:25-29).

*Specific goals:* To pray together every night before bed. To date my wife at least every other week. To plan a weekend getaway once a year to evaluate, plan, and discuss our relationship. To study her wants, desires, and needs by keeping a written record of them for frequent reference. To take the initiative in decision making, spiritual leadership, and child discipline.

## AS A MAN/ FATHER

I want each of my children to know, embrace, and clearly understand our family values (Prov. 22:6).

*Specific goals:* Complete a final draft of our family values in three months. Present a framed family-values document to my family for Christmas.

I want my children to understand biblical manhood and womanhood and to have celebrated that with me through significant ceremonies (Deut. 6:6-9).

*Specific goals:* Create a series of unique ceremonies for each child prior to their 10<sup>th</sup> birthday and choose another couple or couples to join us in this process.

I want to have modeled and built into my children's lives the following character traits: integrity, purity, faith, and confidence (Deut. 6:6-9; Ps. 15).

*Specific goals:* Develop a plan for teaching and modeling these character traits by the end of the year (book lists, videos, designed dilemmas).

## **AS A MAN/ MENTOR**

I want to have discovered and utilized my spiritual gifts to serve and glorify God and to impact others to do the same (Eph. 4:12; 1 Pet. 4:10-11).

*Specific goals:* Take one person through a one-to-one evangelism program or mentor one younger man each year. Serve in a Christ-centered organization (in some capacity) each year. Serve in my church (children's ministry, small-group leadership, etc.) each year.

## **AS A MAN/ PROFESSIONAL**

I want to have honored Jesus Christ in my work life through an unwavering commitment to integrity, honesty, hard work, and respect for others (Col. 3:23-24).

## **AS A MAN/ CITIZEN**

I want to have made a positive impact in my community by having addressed key social issues and by having served my community in areas where I have felt called by God.

*Specific goals:* Continue serving on the board of our town's transient mission and continue teaching and discipling men in the mission's rehabilitation program.

# SAMPLE: M I D L J F E MARRIED PERSONAL MANHOOD PLAN

## LOOKING BACK

I feel satisfied with my past and the relationship I have with my parents and siblings. I need to try to continue to set an example for them as a Christian and help them through the end of their lives.

## LOOKING AT NOW

In light of the definition of manhood, I feel comfortable that I reject passivity except in the area of leading my family in spiritual study time. I try to spend time each night with my sons doing a short Bible study. I will be more regular in my spending time with each son doing a Bible study at night before they go to sleep. I will also do a better job of letting them know about the quiet time I spend each morning in order to be a better example to them.

I have no problem accepting responsibility for my actions and those of my family. I will provide for my family financially. I will provide them a safe refuge from the world and will accept the responsibility for being the spiritual leader of my household.

I have courageously led by succeeding in my business and by providing better than my wife and I expected was possible when we first got married. We have been blessed far beyond what we thought we ever would be. I will use these blessings to further God's work and kingdom by giving of my time to the church in some capacity of service with youth and by temporarily leading my small group while my regular leader is absent.

### As a Father

I will take my older son to a Promise Keepers event this year. I will listen to the Dobson tapes with my younger son this summer and spend a weekend away with him. I will try not to exasperate my sons as they grow up by being overly controlling but rather try to nurture, support, and encourage them as they mature (Eph. 6:4). I will put together a plan of how I will celebrate the different passages of life for my sons. I will have it in writing by the start of school next year. I will teach my sons the value of using my talents to serve God and that He is the source of all the blessings we have received (Deut. 8:17-18).

### As a Husband

I will regularly pray with my wife in the morning and at night before bed. I will spend time alone with my wife on a weekly basis to nurture our marriage.

### As a Man

I will join a gym and begin a regular exercise program to take better care of myself physically.

By being one of God's children, I will have come to expect a greater reward. I will not measure this reward only by financial blessings but also by recognizing the wonderful rewards God has given me in my wife, children, church, job, friends, and personal health.

## **A LOOK AHEAD**

I would like to be known as a man who loves his God, his family, and his work. I want to be known as someone who made others feel loved and welcome. I want to be known as someone who made a difference in his work and brought value every day to those he worked with—someone who was different because he served someone higher than himself first, others second, and only then himself.

I want to be able to encourage others to trust God with their lives and would like to be able to do full-time service to God in some capacity once my children are grown and on their own.

I would like to live below our means in order to live without worrying about finances but rather spend that energy serving my family, church, and others.

I would like my wife to think of me as a tiger for my family in the eyes of the world and a mushball in love with her and my boys.

## **BY THE END**

I will consider myself fulfilled as a man if, by the end of my life, I have a wife who feels loved, protected, and led by me. I want to have been her refuge (Eph. 5:25).

I want to have raised godly children who look at life as a blessing from God and see their mission as serving God as well as their families. I would like them to measure their success not only by finances but also through all the other ways God rewards us.

## **SAM PLE: M ATU RE/ VETERAN PERSONAL MANHOOD PLAN**

### **LOOKING BACK**

At 72 years old I can say with absolute certainty that all of my wounds have been addressed. My father was an alcoholic in the total meaning of the word. He died a peaceful death when I was 42, and we were completely reconciled. He loved all of our children. My family remembers the funny times with him, and we freely discuss his lifestyle and ours. My mother died when I was 43, and we all have very happy, loving memories of her. I am an only child. My wife's parents and siblings seemed more like family to me. I greatly admired her father, and he admired me. Her mother regarded me as a son, and in our early married life both of them added great stability to my own new little family. All my personal or career wounds have long since been eased, and I remember them no more.

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

I am retired, and we are comfortable, content with what we have—blessed beyond belief! We have three married sons and three daughters-in-law, each born again, each with a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We have four grandchildren, three having accepted Christ and the little one on course. My family all love one another and me and their mother. They tell us so, and they write us so. Do I worry? Hardly. My wife is God's gift to me. Like any husband, at times during these 47 years, I've had to remind her I was a gift to her, but she has been my helpmate, supporter, encourager, exhorter, and lover.

What sort of old man do I want to be? Well, I looked ahead, and I am he. My family is raised and gone from home, each with their own family, blessed spiritually and financially. God gave me and us wonderful spiritual opportunities to serve. We are small-group leaders, and I am deeply committed to mentoring five young men. What a challenge every day—what gratification from all of it. My days are spent researching the Bible so that I may be worthy of the trust these groups put in me. I don't try to conform these saints to my life but want each of them to develop a deeper relationship with God—every day. I want to be a role model and a servant-leader. There is no question of my being passive. I am keeping myself physically fit. My prayer is that when God calls me home, I am standing up doing something, not lying down waiting.

My life is living proof that God can and will use anyone surrendered to Him. I hope I am remembered as someone who cared for others and was a true friend. I hope no one says, "Well, he had such great potential." Every day I think of something I might have done better, and every day I get the opportunity to do so when I look for it. I desire and plan to finish well.

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