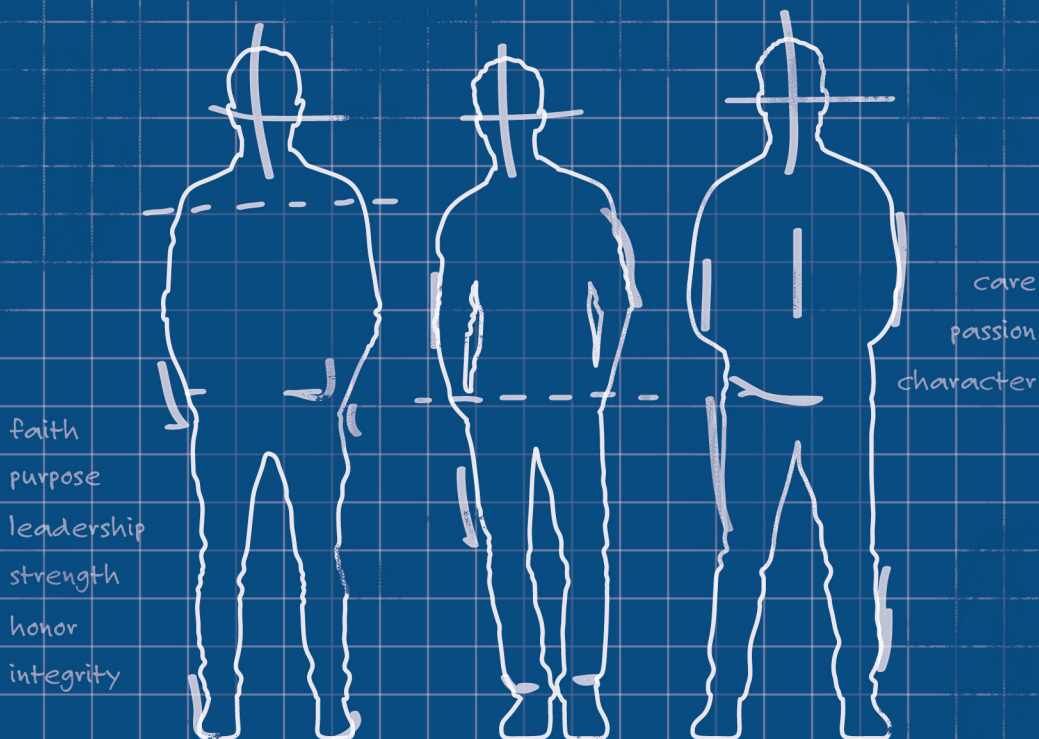


# BEING GOD'S MAN

MANHOOD DOESN'T HAPPEN BY ACCIDENT.



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BEING  
**GOD'S MAN**

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## THE BIBLE IS GOD'S TRUTH

We believe that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant Word of God. The included Bible verses are used in the following ways: to include direct quotes from scripture, to support a specific point, to provide an example from Biblical history, to provide a Biblical foundation for what is being discussed and to stimulate your thinking about a concept. The Bible is infallible—our human understanding of it is not. Every effort has been made to interpret the Bible accurately. We recommend that you look up each verse, read it and consider how it applies to what you are reading and to your manhood journey.

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# INTRODUCTION

[ WHAT YOU'RE SIGNING UP FOR ]

Our world suffers from a lack of manly leaders. Violence, greed and apathy invade every part of our culture, causing unchecked and sometimes unfixable destruction. The true definition of a man has been exchanged for the immature male's desire to ignore life's challenges and pursue a life of ease. He isolates himself from others and wastes his days on mindless and destructive habits, such as video games, sexual fantasies and drugs.

But God has a different plan. Even though every one of us struggles with immature thoughts, feelings and behaviors, you don't have to let them define you. God can empower you to face life's challenges. As *His* man, your identity is founded on Christ, not on the pain and negativity in the world. You'll find true meaning and purpose when you develop a character and identity structure that reflects who God is in every life circumstance. Seeking Him while resisting your negative impulses will help you reach your full potential. It's time to leave your immature male state behind and create the successful life experience God wants for you.

That's not to say this journey will be easy. Real manhood is not a once-and-done achievement—it's an ongoing attitude and state of being. It requires recognizing that you are responsible for living intentionally and following God's guidance. Once you accept this responsibility, you begin the continual process of confronting

the negative aspects of yourself, practicing self-control and establishing new thought patterns and behaviors. And it doesn't stop once you've finished this book. Life will throw numerous challenges at you every day. You have to be ready to handle them like God's man.

This book will show you how to overcome the obstacles ahead. Each chapter focuses on a specific manhood attribute that will stretch you to think, feel and act in ways you never have before. You'll learn strategies for making smarter goals, managing the sin inside you, processing your various emotions and developing your relationships. Working through the discussion questions at the end of every chapter will help you better understand the ideas presented and practice applying them to your life.

But you don't have to go through this journey alone. A strong man of God can achieve a lot on his own, but we all need others to support us as we go after goals and to help us be accountable by confronting our harmful tendencies. This book was designed to help you develop life-changing relationships with other men. Although you can read it alone, it will be much more effective when you study it with your father, a mentor, a group of men or even just a friend. When you discuss the manhood concepts in this book with others, you'll be better able to remember and internalize them, which will increase your ability to apply them to every aspect of your life. Discuss what you're discovering with someone today—you'll find you get so much more out of this journey if you do.

Other men aren't the only ones who can walk with you while you go through the process of developing your manhood. God will be there too as you submit to His will for your life. Life is difficult, and you must develop all of your God-given capabilities to succeed. God has called you to take part in an adventure through which you

will discover your full potential and reflect His love to the world. Your life will gain meaning as you walk with God daily and experience His comfort, confrontation and guidance. Through your relationship with Him, God will empower you to be a role model, family member, friend, coworker, cultural warrior and spiritual leader to others. In short, you'll never be bored—discovering the depths of who you are in Christ will amaze you!

Let's face it—the world needs heroes, and being God's man is a heroic act. God has appointed you to be His hero wherever you are. He will help you on this journey as you seek Him with all your heart. May God bless you as we work together toward being God's men.

## THE TIME IS NOW

[ MANHOOD BASICS ]

If you're reading this, that means you want to be God's man. Congratulations! You've taken responsibility for your own manhood journey, a journey that will gradually transform your life. You have a long road ahead of you. In order to achieve your great potential, you will have to leave your comfort zone and put in a lot of effort. But just as you need to exercise to make your muscles stronger, you can only become more powerful on the inside by working through the life challenges we discuss.

Perfection is not expected, nor is it possible. What *is* expected is increased personal growth as you take control of your future. God created us to be sophisticated, effective and complex creatures. We honor Him by rejecting complacency and pushing ourselves further than we think we can go. Your journey to manhood begins when you make the decision to be a man of action and turn your will and daily decision making over to God.

Being God's man is not an easy or simple task. Life will continually test you, but the more you understand about yourself and the world and the more you integrate God's way of thinking into your life, the greater confidence and success you'll have in confronting the unknown challenges ahead. Some days will be harder than others, threatening your resolve to keep going. You must learn to persevere and build up the tenacity that will help you keep



working toward manhood on days you want to quit. You will reach your achievements when you fully rely on God to motivate and guide you to become your best. He will help you develop strategies to adapt to the tougher issues of life as long as you continually work toward the ultimate goal—honoring and glorifying God by acting with nobility and reflecting His love through serving others. And that begins right here, right now.

Some of you may have previously read *Bull*, a book designed to bring fathers and sons together as they encourage each other in their quest for manhood. If you haven't read *Bull*, it's okay! *Being God's Man* will review the biggest concepts from that book, taking them to an even deeper level. Among achieving your potential and valuing yourself like God does, *Bull* emphasizes the importance of actively developing supportive relationships. True satisfaction is measured by the nature of a man's relationships with both God and others.

Sadly, most males in our culture live in some form of isolation. Although they have friends, they rarely talk about serious issues with them. When they get together, they tend to choose activities that discourage conversation. And even when they do talk, they stick to superficial topics such as sports or work.

One of the most important necessities for achieving manhood is having positive, life-affirming relationships. After all, God is a God of relationships, and He wants to have a relationship with us. One way we build up this spiritual relationship is by exercising our relational skills with other people. God's identity is founded on the word *love*, and He constantly gives us opportunities to show His love to others. Listening to those around us and sharing our viewpoints develops our ability to connect with something beyond ourselves. When we follow God's guidance and choose to be a positive influence to everyone we meet, God will strengthen our

impact beyond what we could ever imagine.

Every man needs others in his life to provide him with the encouragement and support he needs to do the right thing in a world that often pressures him to do wrong. Just as God calls you to be that man for those around you, you must let others be that man for you. We live in a culture that tells men that feelings are a sign of weakness. As a result, many men struggle with being emotionally vulnerable. That's why spending time with other men and focusing on life's issues are courageous acts. Being God's man requires dropping our usual defensiveness and being open to new learning. It may not feel natural, and you may resist it, but the payoff is incredibly rewarding.

You may be able to lie to yourself, but once you start to talk regularly with other men, you won't be able to deceive them for very long. Close friends will see through your attempts to pose and will challenge you to be honest. They'll help you hold yourself accountable, both for achieving your goals and limiting your negative choices. Without regular feedback, we are doomed to repeat the same mistakes and waste our life. Opening up about your fears and goals will help you process your feelings and allow other men to support, confront and comfort you anytime you need it—even when you don't realize you do. When you come together as a manhood team, you'll be able to sharpen each other into the men God created you to be (Proverbs 27:17).

Developing your relational skills and being up-front with others will help you leave your passivity behind and learn to live with intention, both in your personal relationships and in your daily life. By stepping out from behind your social mask and connecting with others, you'll be able to push each other to be your best. Having tough, manly discussions with people you trust will give you the confidence and strength to manage other types of difficult

conversations, such as discussing boundaries with peers, getting feedback from employers, asking teachers for help, reaching out to strangers and forming new friendships. These conversations shouldn't be avoided, even when it means confronting our differences and leaving our comfort zones. By developing your ability to communicate about significant issues, you will strengthen your leadership skills, no matter where life takes you.

Being God's man means living with honor, which happens as we practice peace and respect toward others. One of the first relationships you'll need to start practicing honor in is the one with your parents. Whether or not you live with them or have a strong bond, they are and will continue to have an impact in your life, even if they've already passed away.

The Old Testament in the Bible ends with Malachi 4:6, a verse that stresses the importance of "peace between parents and their children" and "peace between children and their parents." Honoring your parents doesn't mean always agreeing with them—if you did that, you'd just end up imitating their imperfections as well as their strengths. Honoring your parents simply means respecting their role in your life and thoughtfully considering their guidance and viewpoints.

Part of maturing into manhood includes taking an honest look at who your parents are and their effect on your life, no matter how old you are. Though you should assess your mother as well, it is especially vital as a male that you assess your father. *Bull* concludes with a chapter titled "The Talk," which encourages fathers and sons (or mentors and young men) to discuss their relationship. Using the survey at the back of the book, the father honestly evaluates how well he has integrated the manhood principles into his life. In turn, the son shares his own perception of the success or failure of his father's actions. "The Talk" was designed to give

fathers and sons a structure through which they can have a tough but necessary conversation about their relationship.<sup>1</sup>

If you ever have the privilege of communicating with your father in this way, you will gain a greater understanding of who he is as a man and develop a closer bond with him. This process will teach you how to internalize and build on the positive aspects of his legacy and how to overcome the negative ones, which will then allow you to begin to clarify the legacy *you* want to leave behind. It will help you grow up, avoid repeating your father's past mistakes and begin your journey toward fulfilling God's plan for your life.

For those of you who are still young, this conversation may look a little different because you and your dad are not yet peers. He will have authority over you for as long as you need him to take care of you. However, "The Talk" will allow you to begin gradually shifting the responsibility for your well-being from your dad to you. It may seem daunting at first, but as you grow in your manhood, responsible living will become more and more natural to you.

Think about your expectations for your father. The high standards you have for him are the same ones you should hold yourself to. Right now, at the beginning of your manhood journey, you may not always be able to meet them, and that's okay. Keep working toward them, and seek guidance from others who are strong in character and successful in manhood. Sometimes they may have good life lessons to share with you. Other times their thoughts and opinions may be totally wrong. What you decide to do with the guidance they offer is your choice as a man. The outcome of your life no longer belongs to what your father or others have told you. Your failures and successes are yours alone, and only you are responsible for the man you will become.

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1 If you'd like to start your manhood journey by having "The Talk" with your father/mentor, you can find the Father/Son Survey at [k21.men/bull](http://k21.men/bull).

As you progress on your manhood journey, continually reach out to God to give you strength and guidance as well. He wants you to succeed, and He's given you spiritual disciplines—such as reading the Bible, praying and attending church—that will help you become a man of God.

However, these disciplines on their own are useless if you don't follow them up by applying the guidance they give you to your everyday life. In the nitty-gritty of your daily decision making, you need to include God's point of view. Reading God's Word daily will show you direct messages from Him that you can apply to your everyday life. Focused prayer will invite God to be a part of both your triumphs and your hardships.

As you pray, you must learn to listen for God's response—He is there, eager to be involved in both the big and small events of your day. Asking God for His intervention and presence in the lives of those you care about will empower you to find ways to positively influence them. Confessing your sin and accepting God's forgiveness keeps you focused on what's ahead of you instead of what's behind (Philippians 3:13). Remembering that you are a child of God and humbly asking for His help will give you the strength to be true to who God created you to be. As the apostle Paul says in Romans 12:2, "Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect."

The world needs you to contribute your unique perspective, gifts, energy and guidance. Did I just say guidance? You bet I did! As you develop your manhood, you will start to see the bad in the world, and your newfound sense of responsibility will motivate you to initiate positive change. Proverbs 20:27 states, "The spirit of a person is the lamp of the LORD. It lights up what is deep down

inside them.” You are an essential part of God’s plan to make the world a better place. God created you have a major impact wherever you are. If you let Him, He will show you how to step up and contribute to the lives of each person you meet.

You can change the world—but first you have to change yourself. Prepare your heart by pursuing a life that reflects who God has called you to be. Whether you’re studying this book as part of a men’s group or with your father or mentor, get ready to discover how truly significant and valued you are. Keep reading—you’ll see all you can achieve as God’s man.

## MANHOOD DISCUSSION

In this chapter, we discussed the importance of having meaningful conversations with other men. You’ll find a set of discussion questions at the end of each chapter to help you think more deeply about the principles and ideas presented and how they relate to your life. Even if a question doesn’t directly apply to you, think about it from the perspective of your past or future self. Challenge yourself to start developing your relational skills by sharing your thoughts on each question with your father, mentor or men’s group.

- 1 How do you think our culture affects your understanding of what a man is? In what ways does it pressure you to compromise your standards? What new capabilities will you need to develop to become who God wants you to be?
- 2 What are your responsibilities in your family? How do you contribute to or influence the lives of your family members?

- 3 Praying, reading the Bible and attending church are a few examples of spiritual disciplines. How often do you exercise these spiritual disciplines in your daily life? How can they help you stay focused on your manhood walk?
- 4 Discuss how Proverbs 20:11 applies to the importance of acting in honorable ways that are consistent with who God created us to be.

*Even small children are known by their actions.  
So is their conduct really pure and right?*

THIS IS A SAMPLE. SOME PAGES HAVE BEEN OMITTED.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

[ AND THE MISSION ]



Dr. Roy Smith has worked for more than 35 years as a psychologist and counselor to men and their families. He began Pennsylvania Counseling Services ([pacounseling.com](http://pacounseling.com)) out of his home, which now offers a variety of services in 10 counties in south central Pennsylvania. Years of witnessing peo-

ple struggle with life issues led Roy to develop LiveUp Resources ([liveupresources.com](http://liveupresources.com)), a ministry that produces books and video series to help guide men, women and youth toward their God-given potential and to contribute to the overarching goal of positively changing our culture. Roy has written several books in the area of men's issues, including *Bull*, *Basic Warrior Training*, *Manhood Journey* (Volumes 1-5), *Why Not Try To Hit The Real Target—Men and You're Not Dead Yet*. He recently began writing *The Campfire Gang* series to teach young boys Biblical leadership and character-building skills through an engaging storyline. Roy has a master of divinity degree and a master's and a doctorate degree in clinical psychology. He is also an ordained minister with the Evangelical Church Alliance. He is married to Jan, who is also a psychologist. They have two children, a son-in-law and two grandsons.

## OUR WORLD SUFFERS

from the effects of violence, apathy and a lack of values. The definition of a true man has been compromised. The challenges of his everyday reality are avoided and ignored. It's up to you to stop this cycle.

STEP UP. BE GOD'S MAN.

→ **CHANGE THE WORLD.**

Manhood isn't meant to be a solitary journey. Grab your friend, mentor, father or a small group and read this book together. The discussion questions at the end of each chapter will help you understand these manhood concepts on an even deeper level and grow closer to your brothers along the way.

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