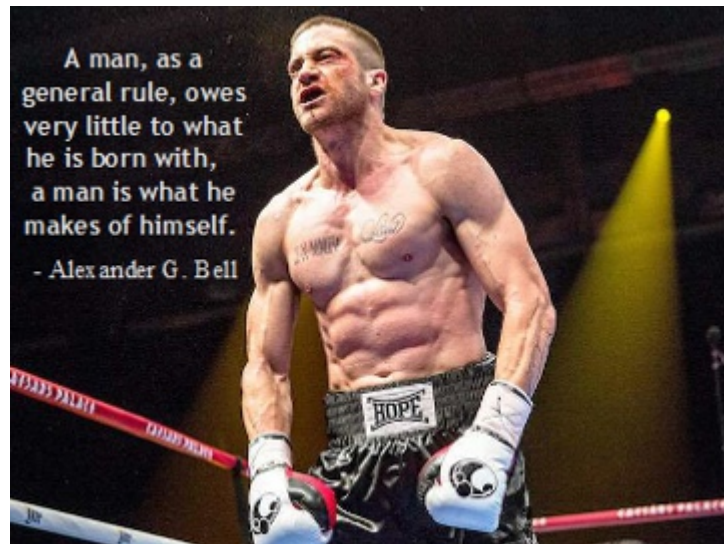


The big question:
**When does a male
become a man?**



Introduction:

Dr. R. Albert Mohler (President of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary) shared his insights as to various levels of maturity that should be achieved in order to achieve real manhood. Based on his insights, we should consider biblical expectations from at least two perspectives. The first, for our own awareness – a type of checklist that we men could use to determine if we have achieved the status of biblical manhood. The second, is as a tool or guide for dads to use as they pursue their actions on teaching their boys on what it means to learn and to then become a real man.

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- 1. Spiritual Maturity**
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What you will find in the following pages are primarily his words but I have modified them slightly to make them more of a quick read. Each of these eleven 'maturities' are intended to give you some good food for thought. If you find this helpful, please know there are more details that you can pursue and leverage on these.

Also know that the words shared over the following pages may not be agreed to by some, that is okay, we'd like to hear your feedback.

Thank you for your consideration of the following and if any of this triggers any comments, please use our **D2B** web site – our **Contact Form** and we'll respond as soon as possible.

There you go - the following challenge is at a minimum, a checklist to see how you are doing in your pursuit of REAL manhood. After that are the follow up words for those dads who want to help teach their sons what it will take to achieve REAL Christian manhood. Review what is shared, determine which aspects you like, take notes, and decide if some follow up actions are required. And remember – some maturity characteristics can be mastered and a level of manhood is achieved but to achieve a REAL Christian manhood, we have to step up even more.

The REAL Men Challenge:

1. Do I have the Spiritual Maturity Sufficient to Lead a Wife and Children?

I understand and accept the Bible's teachings on a man's responsibility to exercise spiritual maturity and spiritual leadership. This starts with a life long pursuit of a Christian beliefs.

Is this on track as it needs to be or do I need to review this further and pursue more efforts on this?

2. Do I have the Economic Maturity to Hold an Adult Job and to Handle Money?

I know how to hold a job, handle money with responsibility and I take care of my family's needs. I also know it is not 'what all I have', but what 'I am becoming' that is most important.

Is this on track as it needs to be or do I need to review this further and pursue more efforts on this?

3. Do I have the Physical Maturity Sufficient to Work and Protect a Family?

I know I must be ready to put my physical strength on the line to protect my family and to fulfill God-assigned responsibilities. My health is one of the keys to my long term happiness and a productive life.

Is this on track as it needs to be or do I need to review this further and pursue more efforts on this?

4. Do I have the Sexual Maturity Sufficient to Marry?

I know that society celebrates sex in every form, and that I must pursue sexual integrity, avoid pornography, as well as all forms of sexual promiscuity and corruption. I understand the dangers of lust and I appreciate the sexual capacity and reproductive abilities that God has enabled in me.

Is this on track as it needs to be or do I need to review this further and pursue more efforts on this?

5. Do I have the Moral Maturity Sufficient to Lead?

I know biblical principles and I challenge myself to pursue them. Am I an example to others, teaching and encouraging moral maturity when possible?
If not, I will pursue.

Is this on track as it needs to be or do I need to review this further and pursue more efforts on this?

6. Do I have the Ethical Maturity Sufficient to Make Responsible Decisions?

I know all men make decisions on a daily basis. The indecisiveness seen in so many men is evidence of stunted manhood. I as a Christian man know that I must understand and live by the ethics I have learned in my faith pursuits (they are not just for when others are watching, they are for all times).

Is this on track as it needs to be or do I need to review this further and pursue more efforts on this?

7. Do I have the Worldview Maturity to Understand what is Really Important?

I know that the absence of biblical worldview thinking is a key mark of spiritual immaturity. Pursuing Bible reading and studies helps me to understand the world and my role in it.

Is this on track as it needs to be or do I need to review this further and pursue more efforts on this?

8. Do I have the Relational Maturity to Understand and to Respect Others?

I know that I must demonstrate emotional strength, consistency, and steadfastness. I must be able to relate to my wife, children, peers, colleagues and others in a way that demonstrates respect, understanding and appropriate empathy.

Is this on track as it needs to be or do I need to review this further and pursue more efforts on this?

9. Do I have the Verbal Maturity to Communicate and Articulate as a Man?

I know that not all men become public speakers but I know that I must be able to frame my words, to speak up when truth is under fire and when belief and conviction must be translated into an effective articulation (I will not wish I had said what I needed, I will speak up).

Is this on track as it needs to be or do I need to review this further and pursue more efforts on this?

10. Do I have the Character Maturity to Demonstrate Courage Under Fire?

I know that in these days, biblical manhood requires great courage. I also know that a man's true confidence is rooted in courage, and courage is evidence of character.

Is this on track as it needs to be or do I need to review this further and pursue more efforts on this?

11. Do I have the Biblical Maturity Sufficient to Lead at Some Level in Church?

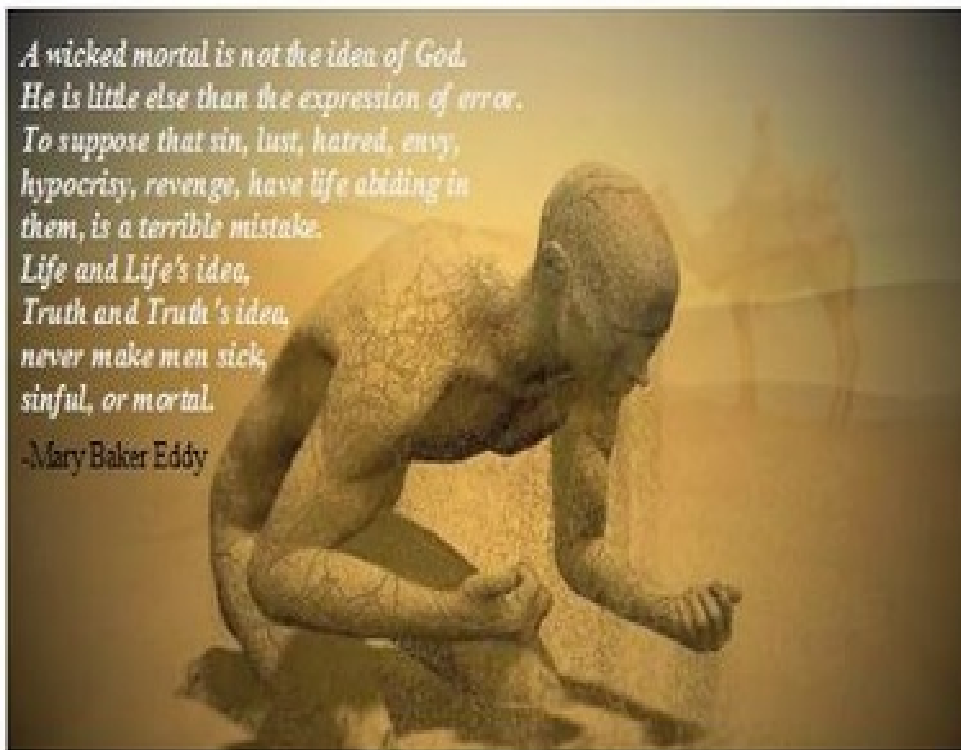
I know that the Biblical Maturity may take some time to acquire. Knowing this I continue my Bible reading and studies as my years unfold so that when there is a need, I am prepared to be one of the leaders in my church.

Is this on track as it needs to be or do I need to review this further and pursue more efforts on this?

Anything else?

If we have not learned and achieved this criteria for being a REAL Christian man, are we now going to pursue actions that help us down this path? The follow on challenge is if we are not teaching our sons to become REAL Christian men, who will?

Why does this matter? Because we assume that most boys want to become a real man – one who is successful, who becomes the type of man that a Christian woman would want to marry and to have children who will trust, respect and obey. We add to that the goal to become one who also contributes to the broader common good. Which brings us back to our challenge – who will teach our sons these?



What is the role of the father in raising their children?

The following is to help give you ideas to consider as you pursue those actions needed to help your sons to achieve REAL Christian manhood.

Considerations for Raising Sons to become REAL Christian Men.

1. Spiritual Maturity Sufficient to Lead a Wife and Children:

Fathers need to help their boys to become aware of their faith and to help train them in pursuit of a growing faith. Their life is a journey and that includes their faith journey (which = we start, we learn, we may have stumbles, we grow and we continue to pursue our faith through all the years of our life).

Our sons need to know more than just stories from the Bible. They need to learn how to read from it and to learn from it.



2. Economic Maturity Sufficient to Hold a Job and Handle Money:

Fathers need to help their boys to enable the skills to get employed, to grow in all jobs pursued and to beware of job hopping. Because jumping from job to job is more a factor of immaturity and is not effective. Helping boys to understand money management, growing skills and pursuing career moves, enables their success (which = manage their finances and to prepare for the future).

Economic Maturity. . .

Do we accept it or reject it?
Do we allow it or resist it?
Do we demand it or dismiss it?
Do we take it in or turn it away?

- Take Ownership
- Take Notes
- Take a Good Look in the Mirror
- Take Time
- Take Measure
- Take Advice
- Take a Chance
- Take Action
- Take Another Look
- Take a Knee
- Step Up or Step Aside

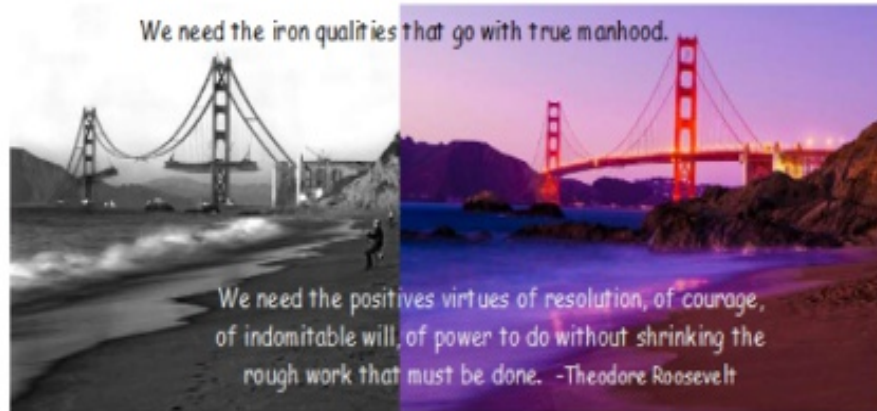
- Take charge.
- Raise your hand.
- Volunteer.
- Visualize success.
- Focus.
- Make a commitment.
- Be responsible.
- Set an example.
- Make something happen.
- Connect the dots.
- See it through.
- Get it done.
- Be accountable.

Our sons need to learn that it is not *'what all I have'* but what *'What am I becoming?'* that is more important.

3. Physical Maturity Sufficient to Work and Protect Loved Ones:

Fathers need to help their boys to channel their developing strength and emerging size into a self-consciousness of responsibility, and the understanding that adult strength is to be combined with adult responsibility and true maturity.

Our sons need to know that developing their physical strength is just as important as their intellect. They must be prepared to Step Up.



4. Sexual Maturity Sufficient to Date (and to eventually Marry):

Fathers need to help their boys to understand, that even as they travel the road of puberty and an awakening sexuality, they are to be accountable to God and the stewardship of this great gift (so that they understand the sexual aspects = that 'even though they could, doesn't mean they should').

Our sons need to know what sexual integrity is (avoiding pornography, sexual promiscuity and corruption).



Love is not affectionate feeling, but a steady wish for the loved person's ultimate good as far as it can be obtained.

C.S. Lewis

5. Moral Maturity Sufficient to Lead:

Fathers need to help their boys to pursue a moral education that addresses a clear understanding of moral standards so that he understands the moral challenges of his day. Leverage the Bible to help teach and to enabled good discussions as to what morals are and why they are important.



They say... "When you have to start compromising yourself and your morals for the people around you, it's probably time to change the people around you." What say you?

Our sons need to know that we all are judged by the company we keep and that by learning biblical principals, we gain insight as to how best to view others.

6. Ethical Maturity Sufficient to Make Responsible Decisions:

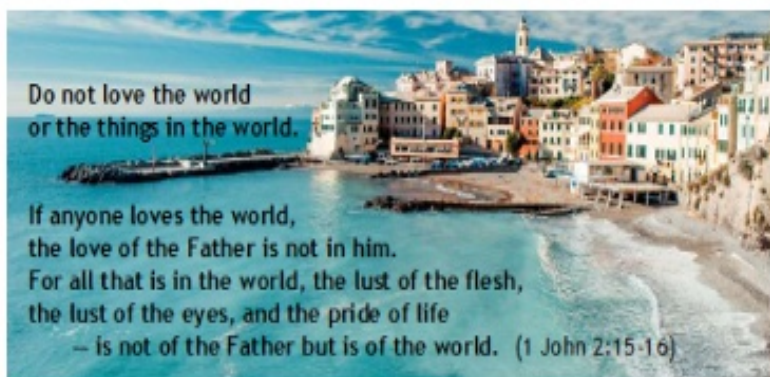
Fathers need to help their boys to learn that ethics are an extension of morals. Learning and applying ethics in their teen years will roll over and grow deeper as they mature and make ethical decisions that they will be glad that they did because they know they will be open to moral scrutiny.

Our sons need to know that effective decision making will help them to achieve their manhood and that choosing right over wrong (in all cases) will benefit them.



7. Worldview Maturity Sufficient to Understand what is Really Important:

Fathers need to help their boys to learn how to defend biblical truth before his peers and in the public domain. Fathers help their sons to acquire the ability to extend Christian thinking based on Christian principles in every area of life.



Our sons need to learn that reading the Bible is one thing and being able to understand it and to apply biblical lessons will help him to understand the broader world.

8. Relational Maturity Sufficient to Understand and to Respect Others:

Fathers need to help their boys to understand and to apply relational maturity characteristics (listening, talking and doing what is needed) as best they can in their teen years.

Our sons need to see in us that emotional strength, consistency, steadfastness and empathy are skills that they need to gain and use.



"When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives means the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand." —Henri Nouwen

9. Verbal Maturity Sufficient to Communicate and Articulate:

Fathers need to help their boys to learn young and to grow their confidence when speaking with their peers and with adults. Learning aspects of appreciation and respect at an early age enables them to grow their communication skills as their teen years unfold.

I praise loudly.
I blame softly.
-Catherine
the Great

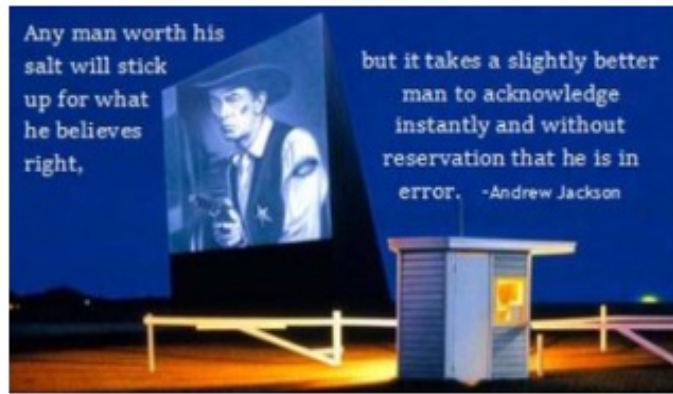


Our sons need to learn how to frame their words so that they can speak with confidence and when needed. There is never a wrong time to say the right thing.

10. Character Maturity Sufficient to Demonstrate Courage Under Fire:

Fathers need to help their boys to learn that it takes courage to maintain personal integrity. To help them to understand that the world devalues the truth, looks down on faith and promises self-fulfillment and happiness through the pursuit of one's own desire. Courage learned enables character to be developed and character established is their foundation for their years ahead.

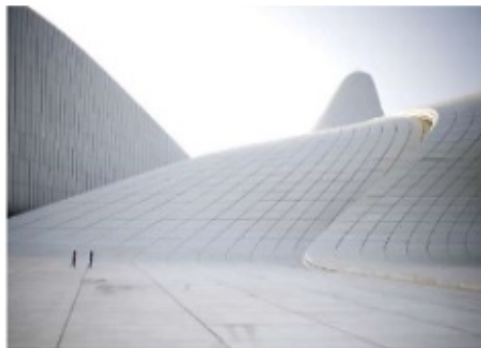
Our sons need us to teach them that confidence is rooted in courage, and that courage can take many forms. With confidence, doing what is needed and not what is wanted is an easier thing to do.



11. Biblical Maturity Sufficient to Lead:

Fathers need to help their boys to know their way around biblical text, to feel at home in the study of God's Word and to enable the foundation for them to look forward to the day when they take their place as a future leader in their local church.

Our sons not only learn from what they see and hear, but also by what they see. When they see us pursuing Bible reading and a growing faith, they will pursue these as well.



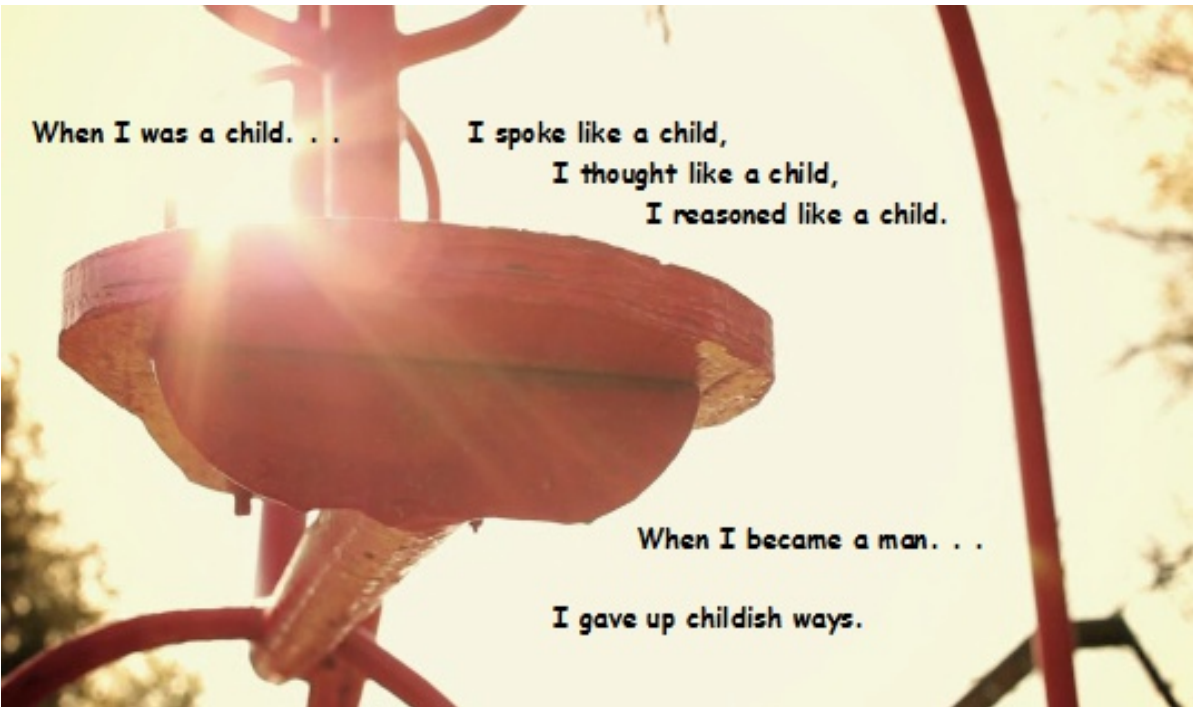
**God made the world round so we would never be able to see too far down the road.
- Isak Dinesen**

What's next?

That depends on you. All the above was provided to give you some good considerations to start with. You need to choose which aspects you agree with or at a minimum, which you want to ponder further so you can determine your next steps.

Don't underestimate, your sons need you – as a father to help them to see the way forward (what we call Stepping Up). There is a time for childhood, for boyhood and then for manhood. We wish you well on your pursuits to help your sons to become REAL Christian men. It is an honorable goal. Thank you and don't forget, if you have any feedback on any of this, please let us know at . . .

<http://decide2be.weebly.com/contact-form.html>



What then say you? And most importantly . . .
What will you do and when?