

4 Irreplaceable Gifts to Give Your Son Before He Becomes a Man

My wife, Kristen, and I have the great privilege and responsibility of raising four boys (ages 8-12). All four will live under our roof for at least five more years. Some days those five years will feel like an eternity, but I know in the end, it will seem like they flew by in the blink of an eye.

When I think about the fact that I have less than six years with our twins, I want to make the most of the time we have together. I want to be intentional in how we spend that time and as a loving dad, I want to use that time to strengthen our father-son relationship. Here are four specific gifts I will give them as their dad.

1. A written record of how much I love them.

I often tell them that they're loved by their mom and dad. I hope I show I love them by my actions. But there are many different options you can choose on how to give your kids a written reminder of your love. Maybe you can record some thoughts in a journal or on the inside cover of some books you've read together. The form you choose doesn't matter. The function does.

If you're a man of faith, here are a couple of things I do that you might want to try. I write them a letter every year on their birthday where I recap the year, share some highs and lows, and some things I've prayed for them in the past year. I also have a wide-margin Bible for each of my sons where I record prayers for them in the margin.

2. The knowledge that they can come to me about anything and at any time.

I want my boys to know when they grow up that their dad still provides a safe place for them. This means that when they face challenges in school, work, relationships, marriage and parenting, they can come to me and share. I want to be someone who doesn't have to be the first to speak and fix them, but instead, will be someone who tries to listen and understand.

When they face significant decisions in life, opportunities in their career, challenges in their home life or achievements to celebrate, I hope they'll see me as one of the first people they'll share with or seek counsel from.

3. Memories of great shared experiences

When my boys leave the home, I want them to be able to look back at 18 years filled with fun, unique shared experiences with their dad. I want them to have memories of both small, day-to-day moments and big, impact-producing experiences.

I hope they remember that we spent both quality time and quantity time together. That's why I make sure to plan times when we do puzzles and play games, shoot hoops in the driveway, take family vacations and spend time away together on father-son weekends.

4. A right understanding of how to care for and value women.

I hope my boys leave our home with a right view of women. All women are to be valued and respected. We don't use them for our selfish pleasure or self-validation. This starts with me. I better model this well by the ways I treat my wife and other women.

The time is limited and the opportunity is great. Let's make the most of the time we have with our children so that they can leave our homes someday with the right gifts from their dad.

What gifts do you want to make sure your son receives before

he becomes a man? {eoa}

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