

5 Principles to Help You 'Man Up'

When I was a boy, my dad used to tell me that when he wasn't around the house, I had to "be the man." That sounded really important, so I loved it when he spoke those words.

But things never really changed ... I didn't get to make the rules. What my dad was really saying was, "Behave for your mother and watch out for your siblings." The truth is that manhood is a lot more than just bossing somebody around.

The world has espoused some odd definitions of manhood ... like, "Men get in touch with your sensitive side," and "real men don't eat quiche." Hopefully neither of these statements declares your manhood. So what do I mean by "Man Up"?

Man Up speaks of taking responsibility for yourself. Stop making excuses for things that are not the way they should be. Your past can only cripple you as much as you let it. It is time to be strong ... now!

Man Up speaks of movement. Your future trajectory is upward. Your manliness should be directed toward a positive goal. You need to believe in the best God has to offer you. He has called you to be something unique and that purpose will fulfill everything that your heart desires to be.

Man Up also requires that you help others become better men as well. You will find great reward by lifting up another man toward their divine purpose. Here are a few principles to help us "Man Up":

1. Prioritize the relationships in your life. We are not thermometers; we are thermostats. We set the temperature and others reflect what we set. If the relationships in our life are not healthy it is because we are setting an unhealthy

tone. Although men can be highly task oriented, we often fall short in prioritizing the task of making sure all of the relationships in our life are healthy. The important people in our lives will let us know when they are no longer a priority. We should listen to them and make adjustments immediately.

“Whoever does not care for his own relatives, especially his own family members, has turned against the faith and is worse than someone who does not believe in God” (1 Timothy 5:8, NCV).

2. Rest in the mercy and grace of God. I strongly believe in personal and practical holiness. I believe that every man, woman, and child can live according to the way God calls and commands us to live. But when we mess up it is comforting to know that the mercy and grace of God is available.

I have met far too many men who allowed condemnation and morbid introspection to keep them in a place of perpetual defeat. It is time to embrace God’s mercy which judicially forgives us, and encounter His grace which empowers us to overcome whatever we have done wrong.

“That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants—not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham, for he is the father of us all” (Romans 4:16, RSV).

3. Reach out. As men we often try to figure things out on our own and solve problems in a vacuum but we must reach out to other men. Every one of us should pray that God would show us a mentor – someone we can learn from and through whom we can process life’s challenges. This may be someone you physically meet or someone who mentors you through books or CDs. It is important to be diligent to find someone who can help sharpen us.

“In other words that while I am among you we may be mutually

encouraged by one another's faith, yours and mine"(Romans 1:12, WNT).

4. Prioritize personal development. One of the worst things we can do as men is accept life the way it is and not earnestly strive to better ourselves. I encourage you to sit down today and map out 2 or 3 things you'll do every day that can help develop you personally. Maybe something like reading 10 pages of a self-development book every day. Or walking 30 minutes daily. Or reading 3 chapters of the Bible each day. Determining what is needed to become a better person is not going to happen without intentional effort.

"Until we all reach the unity of faith and knowledge of God's Son. God's goal is for us to become mature adults—to be fully grown, measured by the standard of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13, CEB).

5. Change your attitude. This may sound like a cliché but it is so true. Remember, our attitude, not our aptitude, determines our altitude. To go up externally we first must go up internally. We must cultivate an optimistic, faith-filled attitude. Our attitude is usually revealed by our feelings—negative feelings of unforgiveness, offense, bitterness and defeat—these are evidence that our thoughts and attitude are not optimistic. We should instead embrace an attitude of gratitude.

We may need to look in unlikely places for the silver lining in the cloud. For some, it will take an act of God to see the glass half full rather than half empty.

"Those who keep sowing in the field of their old nature, in order to meet its demands, will eventually reap ruin; but those who keep sowing in the field of the Spirit will reap from the Spirit everlasting life" (Galatians 6:8, CJB).

Yes, we may have heard some or all of these principles before, but our wills must embrace these, not just our ears. So

finally, just do it! Man Up!!

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