

# 6 Traits That Measure Authentic Manhood

For many years I've admired the current King of Jordan, King Abdullah II, for his principled, authentic manhood and fair hand. His tiny nation sits surrounded by war, hate, fear and catastrophe.

The kingdom he rules has been and remains in the most perilous of situations. Yet his voice is of a great peacemaker, calm and reasonable. Then recently, he did something that impressed me beyond measure.

Responding to a terrible act upon his kingdom, the king decided force must be used to protect his people and send a message of strength. But instead of just ordering young men and women into harm's way by command, he led them by physical example. He climbed aboard a Jordanian fighter jet and engaged in the battle himself. Rare is the leader that not only leads with great diplomatic skill and fairness, but also has the intestinal fortitude and skill to fly a jet into combat.

In calculating authentic manhood, it requires us to take a look into the entire picture of our lives. We cannot just cherry pick the portions that make us look good. The goal is to keep pushing toward completeness. Here is a look at the composition of authentic manhood and how it can be achieved:

## **Emotional Balance**

It is important for a man to be in control of his emotions. We are made to be leaders, and that requires delicate emotional balance. Different aspects of our lives demand different emotional capabilities. This is where many men lose their way.

Some scenarios call for us to be hard-nosed and unwavering, which is the stereotype of male emotion. But our family life

and parenting calls for us to be far more dynamic. We need to be able to reason logically, compromise, give empathy, display compassion and be vulnerable enough to love deeply.

## **Intellectual Relevance**

A man should never stop learning. Life is a continuous state of education and, when we succumb to the ideal that we've learned all we need to know, we become intellectually stagnant. We should train our mindset to not only enjoy learning new things, but to relish it. Pick up a book, learn a new skill, experience other cultures ... always keep expanding your capabilities and viewpoint. It will take you far in life.

## **Responsibility and Loyalty**

A common thread of great men is their adherence to responsibility and their determined loyalty. We are in a culture that has bred multiple generations of the "me first" mindset. The ramifications of that are startling and have taken large tolls on marriage, the family and the entire social fabric of the culture. It goes against every single God-given principle of life. We were created to serve and love each other. It's necessary and needed.

## **Honor and Dignity**

The things we do in the dark eventually catch up to us. Liars, cheats, thieves and such live in dark shadows far away from honor and dignity. Some of them look successful from their ways, but behind them is a long trail of the misery. Do you truly want to be an authentic man? It starts with honor and dignity. I'll leave it with the wisdom of Socrates who said, "The greatest way to live with honor in this world is to be what we pretend to be."

**Gary Abernathy** writes from the unique perspective of being primary caretaker of his two daughters, he has shared his experience and heartfelt encouragement for many years with

*Family First.*