

How You Can Discover the Lord's Voice In New Ways

"The Masculine Journey" is full of training modules. Unfortunately, as others handle (and mishandle) our hearts for many formative years, we find ourselves in need of healing moments as well. Check out this episode of *Exploring More with Michael Thompson* on the Charisma Podcast Network to discover those healing moments.

"The Masculine Journey" has its stages. You don't trust an 8-year old with a chainsaw or to drive a car, but you can and should trust him to bring order to his room, choose whether he wants broccoli or green beans, the red T-shirt or the blue one. Similarly, you trust a 14-year old to get his chores done without being nagged (easier said than done) and don't pick up after him or dress him anymore (although I'm 56, and my wife does a pretty good job of selecting what I can and cannot wear). The older I get, the more I see the "Masculine Journey" which my heart has been on and the need I have to be fathered. With privileges come responsibilities, and growing up is the growing up of both privileges and responsibilities.

The kingdom of God works the same way. God's love is unconditional, but His trust has parameters. He won't give us more than we can handle (1 Cor. 10:13) and with what we do handle, He is committed to giving us more (Matt. 25:21).

For men in particular, provision is an important aspect of how we bear God's image. "Provider" a significant role we try to play. Providing for our families, from "the sweat of our brow," (Gen. 3:19b) is a good thing. It is a place where I can be rocked by God's generosity or shaken to my boots when in need and waiting for God to come through. The enemy loves to use provision to bring God's goodness into question.

There was a moment not too long ago—and there have been several of these moments in my journey—when I was asking God to provide. I prayed, “Father, please, please bring me a check.”

I heard Him answer by asking me a question: “Do you want Me, or do you want a check?” I knew what the Father was getting at. So like a boy who asked for dessert while the peas were still on my plate or to go play when I hadn’t yet picked up my room, I was quiet. But in that awkward silence waiting for what God whispered next, I wasn’t expecting:

“I am the check.”

I smiled, and then prayerfully whispered back, “Yes, You are.”

More than a reminder that God is my provider, it was an important recurring lesson in my training that the Father often likes to answer my questions with a question of His own. Questions are the secret to dialogue, to a glorious ongoing conversation. I believe it is what Paul meant when he wrote, “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17). The only way to do that is dialogue, and to dialogue, we need questions.

Monologue prayer, where I am the one doing all the talking, gets old. When I take my requests and questions to God, the table is set for intimate conversation—if we will slow it down and settle into the important training where God’s instruction settles my heart and reminds me He is with me and for me.

There is a deep correlation between to whom we ask our questions and the hope we have that they will answer. Ultimately, to whom I am asking the questions of life expresses and defines whom I believe and trust is looking out for me. “I am the check.” How kind and good is that?

I hope the person to whom you are asking life’s questions is good, that they have your heart in mind and want to see you grow in wisdom and favor. If they are, then how they answer

will have something to say about what they see in you and in their relationship with you. I've learned over the years that God is after more than merely "providing" for me—He is actually after me.

For more on the "Masculine Journey," I invite you to download this *Free King Me Audio Session*.

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