



Courage to Lead

Adapted from "Courageous" series by Wayne Murray

Our nation, communities, and homes are in trouble. Men have the answer to the trouble we face. Men are the hope of this community. We are the secret weapon God has in His arsenal to destroy the enemy's plans. God needs men; He wants men. He is calling men to obey His voice to lead a courageous revolution to develop a godly home.

Consider the following illustration of the impact a father has on a home:

Fathers encourage competition, engendering independence. Mothers promote equity, creating a sense of security. Dads emphasize conceptual communication, which helps kids expand their vocabulary and intellectual capacities. Moms major in sympathy, care, and help, thus demonstrating the importance of relationships. Dads tend to see their child in relation to the rest of the world. Moms tend to see the rest of the world in relation to their child. Neither style of parenting is adequate in and of itself. Taken together, they balance each other out and equip the up-and-coming generation with a healthy, well-rounded approach to life.

Where's the evidence for these assertions? Obviously, we can't go into great detail here. This is a vast field of study. But we can offer a few examples of some of the relevant research:

- 82% of studies on father involvement and child well-being published since 1980 found "significant associations between positive father involvement and offspring well-being..."
- In an analysis of over 100 studies on parent-child relationships, it was found that having a loving and nurturing father was as important for a child's happiness, well-being, and social and academic success as having a loving and nurturing mother. Some studies even indicated father-love was a stronger contributor to some important positive child well-being outcomes.

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- According to child psychiatrist Kyle Pruett, a father's more active play style and comparatively slower response to a toddler or infant experiencing frustration serve to promote problem-solving competencies and independence in the child.
- In the words of Dr. Pruett, "positive father care is associated with more pro-social and positive moral behavior in boys and girls." This is borne out by research from the University of Pennsylvania which indicates that children who feel a closeness and warmth with their father are twice as likely to enter college, 75 percent less likely to have a child in their teen years, 80 percent less likely to be incarcerated and half as likely to show various signs of depression.
- In a 26-year-long study, researchers found that the number one factor in developing empathy in children was father involvement. Fathers spending regular time alone with their children translated into children who became compassionate adults.¹

¹ "The Significance of a Father's Influence," Focus on the Family, 2011, <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/family-q-and-a/parenting/the-significance-of-a-fathers-influence> (accessed September 5, 2017).

COURAGE

C1: After you read the introduction, what thoughts do you have in regard to a dad's role in the home?

C2: Describe your dad as you were growing up? Do you consider him a godly, strong man? Why or why not?

C3: Read and answer the following.

1 Corinthians 16:13 (ESV) Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.

- What does "act like men" mean?
- What does it mean to "be strong?"
- What does it mean to be a godly man?

STRENGTH

S1: Read and answer the following.

1 Corinthians 13:11 (ESV)

- What characteristic can you learn from this verse about godly manhood?
- When do you think a boy becomes a man?
- When do you think a girl become a woman?
- Do a study on rites of passage for a Christian child. What did you discover?

S2: Read and answer the following.

Joshua 24:15 (ESV)

- What characteristic do you learn from this verse about godly manhood?
- Who has the ultimate responsibility for their home? Write down what you believe you are responsible for in your home.
- How well are you leading your home? How can you improve?

S3: Read and answer the following.

Ephesians 5:25 (ESV)

- What characteristic do you learn from this verse about godly manhood?
- When you hear that love is not a feeling or emotion, what thoughts go through your mind?

S4: Read and answer the following.

Genesis 28:3-4 (ESV)

- What characteristic do you learn from this verse about godly manhood?
- When you hear that you should “bless” your children, what comes to your mind?

S4: Read and answer the following.

Ecclesiastes 12:1,13 (ESV)

Hebrews 13:17-18 (ESV)

- What characteristic do you learn from these verses about godly manhood?
- What does “living with honor” mean to you?

ENDURANCE

E1: Read and answer the following.

Micah 6:8 (ESV)

- What characteristic do you learn from this verse about godly manhood?
- When you reflect on this generation, what evil or injustice do you see around you?
- How well do you fight for justice? Love mercy? How can you improve?

E2: Read and answer the following.

Colossians 3:12 (ESV)

- What characteristic do you learn from this verse about godly manhood?
- What thoughts do you have about men who show compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and faithfulness?
- How well do you live out this verse? How can you improve?

E3: Read and answer the following.

Proverbs 13:4; 14:23 (ESV)

- What characteristic do you learn from this verse about godly manhood?
- What should you provide for your family? How well do you provide for your family? How can you improve?

E4: Read and answer the following.

Matthew 5:23-24 (ESV)

- What characteristic do you learn from this verse about godly manhood?
- Who is the person(s) who has wronged you that you need to forgive and reconcile with? When will you?

E5: In the next thirty days, find three men and discuss this lesson. What did you discover from this discussion? What steps can you resolve to do in the next ninety days to improve your courage to lead yourself and your family?