

# Introduction

*Made for Manhood* was written in response to a pressing need for an effective, biblical guide toward Christian maturity for boys and young men. Over recent times, it has become clear that the book has made an impact fathers and single men as well. And we are encouraged to know that mothers and wives have also gained a greater appreciation and understanding of what makes their sons and husbands so very different, so...*masculine*.

It has been our observation that the concept of true, biblical masculinity has been nearly lost in our culture. To be sure, it is not wholly lost; many of us are acquainted with numerous men who know what it means to be a real man, one who is complete in Christ. But for a variety of reasons, a full, accurate expression of biblical masculinity is the exception, rather than the norm, within most American families, and sadly, many churches.

It has been well documented that our country has suffered the brunt of an all-out assault on biblical masculinity (and for that matter, any semblance of defined manhood) for over a generation. In many segments of our culture, the attack has been so severe and thorough that the forces behind the onslaught have blurred the concept of manhood altogether. The Church has largely held its ground, affirming the distinction between man and woman, but too often it has veiled the full meaning of the distinction with teachings laden with political correctness. The result: a population of young males who suspects that manhood involves more than gender but doesn't really know what to conclude about the concept, let alone confidently express it.

In fairness, certain church leaders have declared their own wars on political correctness, but too many times the pendulum has swung—hence the various sects that have emerged suggesting that manhood involves either an effeminate, back seat approach to leadership, or conversely, the imposition of unnecessary control.

*Made for Manhood* aims to bring an empowering, doctrinally sound balance to the matter of being a mature, Christian man. It may help the reader to understand our primary core convictions and intentions in relation to generating a narrative that we hope is both effective and engaging.

## Our Core Convictions and Intentions for the Reader

- ***We believe that complete maturity can only be realized through Jesus Christ.*** We believe in His Deity, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, His bodily resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.

We also believe that God has fully revealed Himself to us through Jesus Christ and that we can know Him by way of the Bible. There are over 250 Scripture references throughout *Made for Manhood* to assist the reader in a fuller understanding of the content.

- ***We believe that the godly fellowship of fathers and sons with other like-minded fathers and sons is one of the most desirable ways to grow in the Christian faith.*** For this reason, the text highly esteems fatherhood and the relationship between fathers and sons (or appropriate mentors for fatherless boys). Likewise, it identifies biblical, communal brotherhood as a vital part of being the Church.

We have partnered with Teleo Scouts, an optional, parent-led program in which like-minded men join with their sons for the purpose of mutual adventure and godly learning. *Teleo* is a Greek word which signifies well-roundedness, maturity, and completion. For this reason, the reader will see the phrase *Completion in Christ* throughout much of our printed literature. For those interested, guidelines for forming a Teleo Scouts group are found at the end of the book.

- ***We believe that it is healthy and essential for boys and men to have occasional opportunities to learn, play, and work with each other in settings where males are the sole participants.*** It is for this reason that *Made for Manhood* is used by Teleo Scouts. In addition to the chapter lessons, fathers and sons engage in a variety of activities that they plan together.

Likewise, *Made for Manhood* may be used in certain youth or men's settings. Of course, the text can also be used for independent study. Regardless of whether or not you become part of Teleo Scouts or another group, we encourage men to frequently fellowship with like-minded Christians of the same gender.

- ***We believe that the potential of godly young men knows few bounds.*** *Made for Manhood* encourages and empowers the reader to be all he can be in Christ. We embrace the philosophy that the Christian life is an adventurous journey. While it is full of trials, it is nevertheless one full of expectant success by way of a wonderful and omnipotent God who has great things in store for His children.

We also embrace the philosophy that “doing right” is a privilege, rather than a chore, and that it can be natural for one to consistently submit to the leadership of Christ. We resist the notion that the Christian walk is a burdensome, nearly impossible thing. On the contrary, “...His commandments are not burdensome” (1 John 5:3). Hence, the narrative expresses the Christian journey as an exciting one, whereby abundant life is expected.

In this regard, we “talk up” to the reader, rather than down. That being said, the narrative is pointed, challenging, and quite frank in cases where it needs to be.

- ***We believe that mature men are ones who are properly informed.*** *Made for Manhood* aims to cover a wide variety of subjects. In doing so, it offers a forthright presentation of its contents. It is our impression that too many programs and teachings disregard or downplay certain biblical principles, and thus shortchange their recipients. The narrative does not mince words; it tells the reader “as it is” in a graceful yet forthright manner. Attempts are frequently made to incorporate humorous elements into subject matter without compromising the content.

Although the narrative is direct and thorough, it does not attempt to impose a legalistic list of prohibitions that the Bible does not explicitly address. And while the text celebrates the law of liberty in Christ, it does not do so to excess. In the end, the reader is left with clear, moral direction which emphasizes the golden rule of love.

- ***We believe that the development of godly young men is essential to a healthy society.*** We believe that God created mankind to be communal, and that any society void of godly, masculine influence will eventually self destruct. God intended men to be effectively influential, rather than be the unfortunate victims of ungodly influence. For this reason, the narrative in *Made for Manhood* encourages the reader to assertively engage with his culture, rather than withdraw from it.
- ***We believe God ordained men to be the leaders of the family unit.*** Therefore, young men should be encouraged and taught to be prepared for this important responsibility. *Made for Manhood* explains the biblical precedence for familial leadership and equips the reader to be successful

in his calling as both husband and father. An emphasis is placed on an assertive, confident, and loving expression of leadership as modeled by Jesus Christ.

- ***We believe that parents are ordained by God to be the primary educators in their children's lives.*** We believe children are a blessing from the Lord and that the responsibility of childrearing rests upon fathers and mothers. Parents should exercise caution when delegating portions of this responsibility to others, and in fact should refrain from doing so when the risk of danger is obvious.

We strongly encourage frequent parental input for readers who are in their teens or younger. When the text is used as a curriculum lesson for Teleo Scouts, parents should review the content with their sons as they see fit before a meeting time. Occasionally, certain content in the narrative directly suggests to younger readers to seek their parents' input.

- ***We believe God ordained the institution of marriage to be between one man and his wife, and that young men should be properly prepared and encouraged for this important relationship.*** Central to this conviction is the importance of instructing about dangers associated with the conventional dating system. In its place, *Made for Manhood* teaches conservative, godly principles which empower young men to make wise decisions.

The narrative throughout the text highly esteems godly womanhood. Among other things, it equips the reader with the ability to identify a godly woman, whom we fondly refer to as “God’s crowning achievement.”

We hope that *Made for Manhood* will be a blessing to you on your way to *completion in Christ!*

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