



Jabari S. Price • Michael J. Holoman • O. Gerard Droze

The
MAKINGS
of a MAN

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The Makings of a Man
Second Edition

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Dedication

*To my two special parents, James and Mary Price.
This book is dedicated to the spirit of my father and
the memory of my mother. Thanks for all you did
for me.*

– **Jabari Price**

*To Mary Elizabeth Holoman, the lady who wouldn't
accept anything less than a man in her life. Thanks
for the motivation to continue to look within myself
and be better.*

– **Michael Holoman**

*To my father, Charles Gerald Droze, Jr. Thank you
for being my first and greatest example of what a
man should be. I'll always cherish the lessons you
taught me.*

– **O. Gerard Droze**

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Chapter 1

Society's Image of a Man

Somewhere in the rugged Midwest, a dry, gritty wind blows across the plains. The sun sinks low on the horizon causing the sky to turn a bluish-red tint. Animals make their way across the land to their nighttime retreats. In this barren, desolate land, the sounds of a gentle breeze are met with the crackling of an open fire. In a terrain that is the very definition of empty, stands a man alone. With at least a week's worth of stubble and a rugged jaw line so perfectly square you could level your kitchen table with it, is a man's man. Alone, draped in a red and grey flannel shirt tattered by the wind of the plains, and wearing a cowboy hat tilted down to cover his steely gaze, he takes a puff from his

cigarette. This is one of the popular definitions of manhood portrayed by the mass media --The Marlboro Man. He is rough in physical build and tough enough to survive in a desolate land. Without needing assistance from anyone, this man has come to represent what many people in today's society think of as "manly".

If the rugged cowboy imagery doesn't work for you, replace it with a male from your favorite form of media or entertainment. If you like rap music, replace The Marlboro Man with today's most popular rap artist. If you like "reality" television (I use reality in quotations, because very rarely is it representative of anything real), replace him with the most admired male reality star. If you like movies, replace him with the most well known

action hero. Line up these male examples and you will see that everything that makes them manly in the eyes of our society at large is superficial. It is all about the “show” and not content of character. Nothing that any of those entertainers or characters is famous for includes characteristics that should be the core of what a man really is.

Let’s further explore this theory. How does the action hero in our favorite movies communicate with the villain? How many times have you seen the hero walk up to the villain and say, “Let’s sit down and talk this over. I’m sure we can resolve our differences without resorting to violence?” Here, let us help you with the math; Zero times! That NEVER happens! The number one rule of the manly man in an action film is “Shoot first, ask

questions last”! Why sit down and talk? It’s all about being tough and tough men don’t have feelings or the need to talk about them. We’re problem solvers and we work alone. By blowing up the building with an explosion that’s loud enough to deafen anyone it doesn’t kill, we’ve solved the problem.

How often does the popular male reality star pause to consider the consequences of his actions before he gets into a fistfight with another co-star? Not too often does that happen. Usually, something is said that one guy takes offense to. The guy who takes offense then runs up on the guy who made the comment, gets about two inches from his face and starts yelling. The next thing you know, two shirtless guys with too much liquid courage (read:

alcohol) in their systems start brawling right there on a nationally televised program for the entire world to see. Could the guy who was offended have just left it alone and let it slide? No! If he had sat there and thought about the value of addressing a sideways comment versus letting it go, the rest of the guys would have looked at him like he was a punk. Thinking does not get you the oh so valuable “street cred” that so many males in our society desire. Thoughtfulness has no place. Snap, irrational reactions are of more value with this image of a man.

Look at the popular rap artists in today’s music videos. Look at the imagery and listen to the lyrics. We see them surrounded by throngs of scantily clad women, driving the latest cars, and

living in the most lavish mansions. We hear them talk about how they did it “their way”, how they looked up to the “pushers and hustlers” and how they’ve sold more drugs than Pablo Escobar, “Freeway” Ricky Ross, and Frank Lucas COMBINED.

Now we have never met someone, be it male or female, that didn’t like nice things. There is nothing wrong with enjoying the luxuries of life, but what does the combination of these images and lyrics say to an easily impressionable mind? They’ve got the women, the cars, and the houses by doing it “their way”, imitating pushers and hustlers, and selling drugs. They follow less than credible leaders and encourage others to do the same. Is this the type of leadership after which we should model

our lives? The prevalent theme in movies, television, radio, and magazines often presents manhood as being aggressive, lacking in verbal communication, self-centered and materialistic, with an insatiable sex drive. He's muscle bound, well-dressed, flooded with cash, and not afraid to let everyone within the sound of his voice and the sight of his being know.

In reality, manhood is much more than these things and, quite often, it consists more of decisions and actions than physical appearance and material wealth. So if those examples aren't what a man is, what should a man be? We should understand first that a man is not simply an adult male over the age of 21. Just as age does not guarantee maturity, it does not guarantee that you are a man either. Many

people will say that if an 18-year-old male can go off to die for his country, he is a man or, if a 21-year-old male can buy alcohol, he's a man. These ages are set for the purpose of establishing law. The law says you can get a driver's license at 16. The law says you can buy beer at 21. The law says you can become president at 35. However, using arbitrary ages to determine when someone becomes a man is as pointless as declaring someone a winner because they merely finished the game. Just as there is plenty of strategy, practice, and execution that go into winning a game, there's experience, maturity, and wisdom that go into becoming a man that can't be gained by simply reaching a certain age. Be it in mass media or our personal lives, we all know an

adult male that's not carrying his weight, but is called a man simply by virtue of his age.

Manhood is achieved by understanding and handling the responsibilities of a man. Supporting your family both financially and emotionally, being a spiritual leader, providing a vision for the future, encouraging positive growth, having social maturity, and physically protecting those you cherish are just some of the things that we as men are responsible for. A man also understands the importance of communication and planning. He thinks before he acts, and conveys his ideas in a way that clearly details his intentions. He leads by his actions and not solely by his words. He also surrounds himself with like-minded men who will hold him accountable for his actions.

He comprehends the fact that no man is an island and he is not capable of nor required to go through this life alone. He understands that his every thought, word, and deed holds consequences and can impact more than his own life. A man is aware that obstacles will come in his life as well. Whether they come as a result of his own decisions and actions or the result of circumstances beyond his control, a man knows how to address the issue and rise above it all while carrying himself with dignity. Even if he doesn't know exactly how to resolve the issue, he recognizes the signs and qualities in other men that will help him, and seeks their counsel to find a resolution.

Look at the adult male examples in your everyday life. Watch TV, listen to the radio, check

out the videos online, notice the guys you work with, observe your family members. You are sure to find examples on both sides of the fence and you probably already know who is who. Now is the time to make a decision. Which side of the fence do you want to be on? Should we follow the popular examples set forth by society that encourage the superficial portrayal of men or will we make a conscious decision to forge a path towards true manhood?

Going against the grain will be difficult at times. There will be people who will call you soft, a punk, gay, or weak because they do not realize that you have higher standards and aspirations than what is generally accepted by society. There comes a time when we have to take a stand and make a

change in our lives. I Corinthians 13:11 says,
*“When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought
like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became
a man, I put childish ways behind me.”* Are you
going to be a man, or a 40-year-old boy? Let’s step
up to the plate, accept the role of man, and leave the
childish things behind.