

ACT LIKE MEN

40 DAYS TO BIBLICAL MANHOOD

JAMES MACDONALD

Questions for Reflection

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HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM *ACT LIKE MEN*

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

You will notice a space to write some things down. Keep this book in a private place so you won't fear others reading what you write. If you can't be sure, use a separate journal. I will be encouraging you to get another man you respect to read this book at the same time. Possibly you can meet to discuss your answers. The important purpose of the questions is to open up your mind to what you have been reading, ensure you understand it, and begin thinking about the changes needed to see that soul-craving more fully satisfied in your life. The value of doing these studies alongside another guy is that it will increase the probability of getting through the process.

ACT LIKE MEN

1

ACTING LIKE MEN

1. What can you do today and this week to be a better servant-leader to your family?

2. In what ways might recent actions have appeared selfish, and what can you do today to correct that?

3. Do you agree that a man keeping his word and refusing to make excuses is a good summary of manhood? Why?

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A QUALITY MAN

1. Which is the tougher issue for me, fear or anger? Why?

2. When was the last time I used fear or anger to deflect a deeper hurt?

3. Who is most negatively impacted by my unresolved hurt and what should I do about it?

4. Who do I need to forgive and for what? Why have I not acted on this sooner?

3

**NOT A
QUALITY MAN**

1. Who is the most honorable man you know? Why do you hold that opinion of him?

2. Describe a time in your life you deeply regret when you honored yourself or someone you were called to lead above honoring God.

3. How does honoring our family above the Lord actually put them at risk?

4. Describe a time in your life you honored God above yourself. How did you feel about that decision subsequently? How do you view that decision now?

5. What quality masculine choice can you make today to better reflect what it means to “act like a man”?

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***AND THE
GOLD GOES TO . . .***

1. What area of pride have you most shielded from total honesty?

2. Why do you think we find it so hard to be honest with ourselves?

3. When have you been most honest about your own sin? What brought you to that point?

4. What is the biggest lie you have told yourself about yourself and for how long?

5. Who is the most honest and humble man you have known? How might you begin to emulate him?

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***“WHAT ARE YOU
LOOKING AT?”***

1. What behavior characterizes the worst men you know?

2. In what ways have you battled, at least on an attitude level, the very same things?

3. Why is it essential that we hold ourselves to a higher standard than what we see around us?

4. What good results from the practice of being harder on ourselves than others?

5. Why do Christians seem to struggle more than nonbelievers with judging others?

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TRULY—AS GOOD AS IT GETS

1. How does the truth that your heavenly Father is perfect impact you today?

2. Do you find God's perfection motivating to your growth or overwhelming? Why?

3. Imagine if a light were shone on your character—what leaks would be revealed?

4. List those areas most needing attention as you pursue quality manhood.

5. Name a specific action you can take today to advance your pursuit of quality manhood.

ACT LIKE MEN

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DISNEYLAND QUALITY

1. Where have you seen quality manhood displayed in your everyday life?
2. What specifically do you note in that man's example that you can emulate?
3. What is harder for you, right actions or right timing? Why?
4. In what ways is our challenge easier or harder than the life Jesus lived?
5. Describe a pastor or spiritual leader you have watched as a quality man.

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***LET YOUR PARTNER
TAKE THE LEAD***

1. Describe two or three specific ways God has been working on your life through His Word.

2. What are some of your personal observations of the Holy Spirit at work in those around you?

3. If someone called you a quality man, what do you think they would be referring to the most? In what ways might they suggest you can improve?

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***KEEP YOUR
HEAD UP***

1. Why is it so hard for men to stay focused on what matters most?

2. What is your biggest distraction from the priority of watching out for your family?

3. What are the biggest threats currently to God's best for your family and what can you do today to neutralize those threats?

4. How might reviewing your God-given role with family members help you do your job more effectively?

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SNAP OUT OF IT!

1. In all honesty, what has been the greatest urgency of your life in each decade—or every five years—since adolescence? Jot them down.

2. Describe the greatest moment of urgency in your life. How did you respond? Why?

3. What is it about our home life that seems to inoculate our urgency?

4. What can you do today to express your passion for your family and for God's agenda without alarming or overwhelming them?

**MAN—DO
I FEEL STUPID!**

1. What personal pattern of current behavior could rightly be labeled “wrong direction”?
2. Where will you end up if that pattern persists unbroken?
3. What blessing would flow to your life immediately if you repented of that sin and confessed it to a brother for accountability going forward?
4. Why have you waited so long to make this decision?
5. What prevents you now from turning to God in sincere repentance while you still can and while you still care?

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***YOU'RE ONLY LYING
TO YOURSELF***

1. Do you find it hard to sit under your pastor without comparing him in a negative light to someone else?

2. Do you seek to be open-minded about Christians who prioritize different things about following Jesus than you do?

3. How do you think your actual holiness compares to the men who lead your church? Do you think you are better or worse at modeling Christlike behavior?

4. Jesus says that love for God and others is the summation of the Scriptures. In what ways are you growing in love that is apparent to those around you?

5. What could you do today to encourage your pastor or another leader in your church and help them carry the heavy load of shepherding Christ's church?

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***HEADED FOR THE DITCH
ON A SUNNY DAY***

1. Why is it essential that keeping a watch on your own life comes first?

2. What lies of the Enemy have you fallen prey to that need exposure to God's light?

3. In what ways has isolation from others made it tougher for you as a man?

4. Note the list above for any lies that have taken root in you. What can you do today to tear down strongholds of deception in your life?

5. Who do you know who needs this truth, and will you share it with him today?

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NEVER GIVE UP

1. Have you seen Mark Driscoll's sermon on generational obedience on the Act Like Men site? Check it out.
2. How many generations in your family have followed Christ before and after you?
3. How does your place in your family's generations of faith affect your viewpoint?
4. What is the hardest thing you have waited on God for and are you still praying?
5. God rejoices at the salvation of the lost. In what does your life evidence this joy?

***JESUS WAS
FIRED UP***

1. About what do you feel the greatest urgency? How does the Lord view that priority?

2. Can you think of a time you wasted big energy on stuff that didn't matter?

3. What do you struggle to ignore that steals your focus and quenches your fire?

4. What is your favorite biblical account of Jesus' intensity? Why?

5. When have you best expressed urgency about things that matter and, looking back, how did you feel about that?

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***WATCHFUL HOME
IMPROVEMENT***

1. Would you say your discipline style is a repetition of how you were raised, the intentional opposite of your parents, or something else?

2. How are you and your spouse working out your differences in discipline style? Do the kids see a united or divided front?

3. Which of the four discipline tools described above fits most closely to the growth phase of each of your children? How are you using those tools?

4. How can you as a dad step up to greater involvement in your children's training?

5. What's the clearest point of discipline between you and your heavenly Father right now?

***URGENTLY
UNCLEAR***

1. If you had to explain *the faith* to a friend or to one of your children, how would you begin, and what would you include?

2. When you think of *the faith* as you understand it at this point, what do you find difficult to stand for?

3. What does standing firm look like in your life right now and where could God and other men help you improve?

A CRAVING FOR CLARITY

1. What are three locations/relationships where you realize you must intentionally stand firm in the faith? How is that going?

2. In what areas (start with the five gospel words) do you sense the need for greater clarity? Where and how are you going to get it?

3. Who are your role models for standing firm in the faith? How are you organizing your life to spend time with those men?

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CLARITY IN CRISIS

1. Do you agree with Solomon's assessment that life, though beautiful, is ultimately futile without an eternal purpose? Why or why not?

2. To what degree do you find yourself aiming at certain temporal things you hope will bring life special meaning? How is that going?

3. In what ways is Jesus Christ at the center of all you do? How does He bring clarity to your priorities?

PAUL'S CLARITY

1. What crisis has God allowed in your life at this time?

2. What issues is He giving you clarity about that you have struggled to see?

3. What action would God want you to take based on the clarity He is giving?

4. How does that action reflect a **“standing firm in the faith”**?

5. Will you commit to talking to a brother in Christ today about your clarity and intended action, asking him to pray and support your decision?

CLARITY IN CONFLICT

1. What examples from your life illustrate the point that what's right can be done in ways that are wrong?
2. Which of Saul's four tactics of excuse create the biggest problem for you? What are you going to do about it?
3. As a result of mistakes, what have you learned about the difference between gut reactions and wise responses?
4. How do you practice repentance (see 1 John 1:9)?
5. How do you keep God's forgiveness separate from consequences?

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***CLARITY—THE FATHER
PERSONIFIES IT***

1. In what area of your life today might you be going forward without the clarity you need to be sure of the desired outcome?

2. What have been the consequences you have experienced for living with a foggy uncertainty?

3. What makes it hardest for you to press for clarity where it is lacking?

4. How can you **“stand firm in the faith”** so that urgency does not rule over clarity?

5. Is there someone at home, work, or church you need to call today to arrange a conversation to gain greater clarity?

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***THE CLARITY
OF CHRIST***

1. What story from the life of Christ do you most admire for His demonstrated clarity in the midst of confusion?

2. Why is it essential that we achieve the clarity of acting for the sake of others and not ourselves?

3. In what situation have you acted courageously to advance God's purposes, and what was the outcome?

4. In what situation have you lacked the needed clarity and applied urgency in a way that made things worse?

5. Who in your life is most in need of your courage as a man, and would you be willing to talk to him today and offer yourself to help in any way that is needed?

***THIS IS
NOT A TEST***

1. How would you describe the current role of the Holy Spirit in your life?

2. When was the last time you sensed God's Spirit issuing a warning to you about a decision or action you were considering? What did you do?

3. What is holding you back from more consistent yielding to the Holy Spirit in daily living?

4. Is there, in you, a strong and growing dissatisfaction with the level of your own relationship with God? If so, use the following prayer to create a plan for the next week.

***THE BATTLE
TO BE STRONG***

1. Do you agree that as men, we admire great strength in others and aspire to it ourselves? In what ways?

2. When have you most needed strength and felt most humbled by where you lacked it?

3. How do you respond to the knowledge that unbroken patterns of sin in all areas including sexuality are indicative of a man who is not truly following Christ?

4. What are your earliest memories of sexual temptation, and how did you handle them?

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***THE STRENGTH
OF AUTHENTICITY***

1. In what area in your life would you be most embarrassed for your friends and family to have full knowledge of your thoughts and actions?

2. In what part of your life are you most like Christ and why do you believe you have victory there versus other areas?

3. Is there anyone you can be completely candid with—who knows the deepest you with all your struggles—without judgment or condemnation?

4. Describe a time when you have forfeited God's strength through divided priorities and compromise of what really matters most to you. What did you do to resolve this and did it happen again?

5. Have you been able to be completely candid in answering these questions? Do you fear someone finding what you might write and have held back for that reason?

THE SAMSON SYNDROME

1. Who have you trusted with the knowledge of your own early exposure to sensuality and ensuing struggles?

2. Why do you think Satan goes to such lengths to scatter sensual crumbs in a young man's pathway that lead him in the wrong direction?

3. How much of your personal sexual history has affected your relationship with God? How do you deal with the fact that God knows it all?

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THE THORNY WAY

1. What is the area of greatest weakness in your life?

2. When did you last confess this weakness to the Lord, seeking His strength?

3. Is it difficult for you to admit your struggles to yourself and others? Why?

BEFORE THE FALL

1. How do you react to the awareness that Satan wants to devour you?

2. Is sexual temptation your greatest exposure to failure or is it something else?

3. What step in David's failure is the most needed warning for your life? Why?

4. Do you have a healthy fear of moral failure? When does it become unhealthy?

5. Where in your life is there "slippage" and what will you do to correct this?

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OUR STRONG GOD

1. Do you agree that unconfessed sin forfeits God's strength in our lives? Why or why not?

2. What sin have you covered rather than confess? Confess it now.

3. What temptation threatens your authenticity that needs radical removal?

BACK TO REPENTANCE

1. What is the connection between authenticity and strength? How did Samson lose it, and why didn't Jesus?
2. Describe the time in your life you experienced personal repentance most deeply. What have been the long-term results?
3. What prevents you from turning to God and asking Him to give you true repentance wherever it is needed right now?

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***LETTING YOUR
PARTNER LEAD***

1. How do you sense the ministry of the Holy Spirit in your life, convicting you of right and wrong and your accountability to God?

2. What advantages do you see in the ministry of the Holy Spirit that would lead you to welcome and prayerfully invite a fuller experience of His work?

3. What wrong in action or attitude may have grieved or even quenched the Holy Spirit that you could repent of?

***DOING IT
ALL IN LOVE?***

1. What events in your past present a challenge of shame or regrets when you think about practicing love now?

2. When you think about the ways a man can authentically love, what things come to mind?

3. Who has been your best model for loving in a manly way? Why?

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LOVE HAS A LOT TO DO WITH IT

1. Describe the best guy friendship you have ever had and what made it so.
2. When was the last time you had a heart-to-heart, mutually disclosing trusted conversation with a friend without fear of fallout or freak out?
3. What makes it hardest for you to find and maintain life-giving friendships?

***TWO OR MORE
ARE MORE***

1. Name your three closest friends and a time they called you out and held you accountable.

2. When was a time you felt most alone and how did it negatively impact what you were facing?

3. What man do you know personally who best exemplifies the importance of mutual community?

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THE MAN FROM TARUS

1. Describe your honest reaction to the challenge of greater self-disclosure in your friendships.
2. What do you see as the benefits of “getting real,” and what are your fears in doing so?
3. What has happened in your life to move you away from friendship as entertainment and toward friendship as meaningful community?

TOGETHER

1. Describe the time in your life when loving community with other men peaked.
2. Which is a bigger issue for you—confidentiality or mutuality?
3. Are there disappointments or hurts that must be forgiven for you to reengage in community?

***TRINITY
EXPRESSES COMMUNITY***

1. Write out your thoughts about this teaching on community within the Godhead.
2. If heaven is the ultimate and eternal communion of the saints with each other and God, how should that affect our view of community today?
3. When was a time you felt most joy in knowing and being known by a friend?

***UNDER ORDERS
TO LOVE***

1. In what ways has your life shown the effects of love deficiency?

2. Who is most in need of God's love expressed through you today and what will you do about that?

3. Will you take some extra time and journal something similar to what you have just read? Call it My Journey toward Love. Be as honest and open as you can, and choose a friend to share your story with.

STRENGTH TO LOVE

1. Describe your own experience with “juggling,” and what it’s like when things crash.

2. What word most fairly summarizes your Christian life: exhausted, defeated, or empowered? And why? Where have you known victory you would attribute to the Holy Spirit living the life of Christ through you?

3. In what ways has this study most impacted your life, and what do you believe God is leading you to do in response?