

HOW TO PASS THE BATON SO IT MAKES IT TO THE FOURTH GENERATION

Post-Fathers Day Message – 6/22/03
by Pete Bertolero

I. SKIPPING AND TRIPPING BLESSINGS AND CURSES

A. The Co-Responsibilities in the Relay Race of Life

1. 800 yard relay race involving 4 runners who trained hard for the competition, each one relying on the other to win the race. The race isn't won on speed alone, or skill alone, or personal strength and endurance alone, but can be won or lost in the way the baton is passed by the last runner, and reached for and taken by the next runner.
2. How many records were on their way to being broken and relay races won, as the first runner successfully passes the baton to the second runner, who in turn runs his best time and successfully hands off the baton to the third runner, as the crowd cheers and the clock shows they are clearly in the lead and going to break the all time relay race record, when, coming around the track, running the race of his life, at the precise moment of handoff, the third and fourth runner botched the hand off and the baton is dropped, and the race is lost. This can likewise be the case when it comes to passing a godly legacy down our family line 3 and four generations and more.
3. Last week we looked at examples in the OT of those men who failed to pass the baton (David, Hezekiah, Samuel, Josiah, Eli the high priest) and perhaps the greatest father in the bible Jonadab, and his descendants the Recabites, who passed on successfully, a godly heritage and legacy to his children. Jeremiah 35:19 records -

“Therefore, this is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: ‘Jonadab son of Recab will never fail to have a man serve me.’”¹

4. The priest Phinehas in Numbers 25 as a close second as well:

¹⁰The LORD said to Moses, ¹¹“Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, has turned my anger away from the Israelites; for he was as zealous as I am for my honor among them, so that in my zeal I did not put an end to them. ¹²Therefore tell him I am making my covenant of peace with him. ¹³He and his descendants will have a covenant of a lasting priesthood, because he was

¹ Jeremiah 35:19

zealous for the honor of his God and made atonement for the Israelites.”

5. There is a **tripwire** mechanism when it comes to generational blessings and curses (both are passed on in the form of legacies)
6. By walking in the godly ways of your ancestors, you **set into motion** in your life and the life of our children the blessings God promised to them; by walking in the sins of your ancestors, you also **set into motion** all the consequences that were not totally reaped by them in their life time, that have hung like a tewly fog over your family line waiting to be tripped and reaped by those descendants who chose to commit the same wickedness they committed. You can either choose to perpetuate the ever-increasing blessing of God in your life and posterity by walking according to the faith of your forefathers, or invoke the curses of God by walking according to the sins of your ancestors
 - a. Deuteronomy 30:15-20
 - b. Matthew 23:29-36
7. Blessings and curses can not only be tripped, **but skipped and tripped later down the line!** In other words, in one family line there can rest both a blessed legacy and a cursed legacy, and either one is just waiting to be **tripped** by that descendent who inherits it by walking according to the ways of the ancestor that passed it.
8. In the case of **King Josiah**, for example, he was next in line to reap the curses brought upon his family line by his immediate ancestors, who were some of the worst most wicked men in the Bible: Manasseh, who was his grandfather, and Amon, his father. It was said of his grandfather - Manasseh - that he

“...shed so much innocent blood that he filled Jerusalem from end to end – besides the sin he caused Judah to commit, so that they did evil in the eyes of the Lord.”²

9. It was said of his father – Amon that

“He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, as his father Manasseh had done. He walked in all the ways of his father; he worshipped the idols his father had

² 2 Kings 21:16

worshipped, and bowed down to them. He forsook the Lord, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the ways of the Lord.”³

10. As a result, God placed on Manasseh and his people a curse of judgment in verses 12-15 in which He promised that
 - a. He would bring such a disaster on Jerusalem and Judah that the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle
 - b. He will wipe Jerusalem clean as one wipes a dish, and turn it upside down, forsaking them and handing them over to their enemies and to be plundered by their foes
 - c. Note: even when God’s judgment is provoked and His wrath aroused, along with the pronouncement of judgment always comes a promise of restoration on the descendants of the wicked who choose to repent and follow after the ways of the Lord
11. Yet Josiah did not choose to walk in and thus wear the cursed legacy brought about by the sins of his grandfather and father before him, but chose to walk in the ways of a godly ancestor that predated them. It was said of him that he

*“...did what was right in the eyes of the Lord **and walked in all the ways of his father David**, not turning to the right or to the left.”*

12. Now notice that he is not said to have followed the ways of Hezekiah – his great grandfather of just 3 generations back, or even of his great, great, great grandfather 5 generations back, both of whom did what good and right in the eyes of the Lord, but Josiah reached all the way back to his ancestral Patriarch, David, Son of Jesse, for his legacy!

David – reigned 40 years
Solomon – reigned 40 years
Rehoboam – 41 year reign
Abijam (Abijha) --three year reign
Asa—41 year reign
Jehosopat--reigns 25 years—
Athaliah-- reigned six years
Joash (Jehoash) 40 year reign.
Amaziah—29 years

³ 2 Kings 21:20-22

Azariah (Uzziah), reigned 52 years.
Jotham--does right, reigning 16 years
Ahaz-- reigns 16 years
Hezekiah—does right, 29 year reign.
Manasseh-- reigns 55 years
Amon--reigns two years

13. Josiah, by choosing to do what was right in the eyes of the Lord and walking in all the ways of his ancient ancestor David, **skipped** backward 15 generations spanning 476 years and **tripped** the blessings of God upon the house of David, avoiding the inevitable generational consequences and curses upon his people for their sins, pronounced on them when his grand father Manasseh and his father Amon, led them into idolatry. But God warned him that after him, the next generation would reap it –

¹¹When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his robes. ¹²He gave these orders to Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Acbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the secretary and Asaiah the king's attendant: ¹³"Go and inquire of the LORD for me and for the people and for all Judah about what is written in this book that has been found. Great is the LORD'S anger that burns against us because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book; they have not acted in accordance with all that is written there concerning us."⁴

¹⁵She said to them, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Tell the man who sent you to me, ¹⁶"This is what the LORD says: I am going to bring disaster on this place and its people, according to everything written in the book the king of Judah has read. ¹⁷Because they have forsaken me and burned incense to other gods and provoked me to anger by all the idols their hands have made, my anger will burn against this place and will not be quenched.' ¹⁸Tell the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, 'This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says concerning the words you heard: ¹⁹Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I have spoken against this place and its people, that they would become accursed and laid waste, and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you, declares the LORD. ²⁰Therefore I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be buried in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster I am going to bring on this place."⁵

²⁶Nevertheless, the LORD did not turn away from the heat of his fierce anger, which burned against Judah because of all that Manasseh had done to provoke him to anger. ²⁷So the LORD said, "I will remove Judah also from my

⁴ 2 Kings 22:11-20

⁵ Ibid

presence as I removed Israel, and I will reject Jerusalem, the city I chose, and this temple, about which I said, 'There shall my Name be.'"⁶

³Surely these things happened to Judah according to the LORD'S command, in order to remove them from his presence because of the sins of Manasseh and all he had done, ⁴including the shedding of innocent blood. For he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD was not willing to forgive.⁷

14. My point is that by making a choice to confess and repent (Josiah exemplified this by tearing his robes when he saw in the word the judgment that was over his people) of not only personal sins but the sins of ones ancestors, and choosing to walk right in the eyes of the Lord, **judgment and cursing can be skipped, and mercy and blessings can be tripped** (and this is what the Bible means when speaking about all the promises and blessings believers have: "In Christ." – Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
15. The late Noel and Phyl Gibson wrote about a sociologist by the name of E.E. Winship, who published a study of two well known American families who lived in the ninetieth century: The Max Jukes family and the Jonathan Edwards family.⁸ The former is an example of the law of legacy in terms of its negative aspects, i.e. - consequences and curses. The latter is an example of the positive aspects of the same law of legacy, or generational blessings (Deuteronomy 28: 1-14).

- **Max Jukes** was an Atheist who married a godless woman. Some 560 descendants were traced back to max Jukes. Look at the legacy Jukes passed to his children. Of these 560 descendents:

310 died in poverty

150 became criminals, 7 of which were murderers

100 alcoholics

More than half of these women was prostitutes

In all, Jukes descendants cost the U.S. Government One and one quarter million 19th century dollars!

⁶ 2 Kings 23:26-27

⁷ 24:3-4

⁸ p.112-114

- **Jonathan Edwards** was a contemporary of Mr. Jukes. He was a committed Christian, and one of the greatest theologians ever to come out of the U.S., if not the greatest. Rev. Edwards married a godly young lady who also was a committed Christian, and together they labored to make sure they not only left their own children a godly legacy, but that they did so in such a way that they, in turn, passed the baton, etc.... **Some 1,394 of Edwards descendants were traced.** Of these:

295 graduated from college, from where 13 became college presidents

65 became college professors

3 were elected U.S. senators

3 were state governors

Others were sent out as ministers to foreign countries

30 were judges

100 were lawyers

1 was a dean of an outstanding law school

56 were practicing physicians

1 was a dean of a medical school

75 became officers in the Army and Navy

100 were well-known missionaries, preachers, and prominent authors.

80 held some form of public office, 3 of who were mayors of large cities

1 was a controller of the U.S. Treasury Department

1 was a vice president of the U.S.

In all, not one of Jonathan Edwards 1,394 descendants was a liability to the U.S. Government.

II. THE FATHER'S PART IN HANDING OFF THE BATON

A. Traditions Are the Key

1. Building and maintaining a strong sense of identity comes by passing on those traditions that engender a biblical worldview of oneself.
2. Too many, however, in this society, are too quick to break from their heritage in the name of individualism
3. The diversity of America's "melting pot" society has come with a price and that price has been the gradual loss of identity and that sense of connectedness, which can only come from being a part of something that has been handed down to you from generation to generation.
4. In many cases in the real life stories of friends and family around us, the deep roots of heritage have been replaced

with the shallow individualism. This is due not only to personal choice, but also because of the cultural value American society places on rugged individualism.

5. The downside of this philosophy is that in the name of personal freedom, we have enslaved ourselves to an endless pursuit of personal identity.
6. The problem is, we have a tendency to scorn and reject the very thing that can connect us to the past and connect us to the future, and that very thing is TRADITIONS
7. One of my favorite plays and videos is Fiddler on the Roof. Many people have wondered who the Fiddler on the roof was? Some thought him to be God. Others thought him to be the Jewish community in the Ukraine where the story was supposed to take place.
8. The "Fiddler" was portrayed on a pointed Roof. He was thus in a very precarious position. While playing his fiddle, he'd have to be careful not to fall off either side of the pointed roof. Only with great balance can he play.
9. I think the Fiddler on the Roof represents two things: the heritage of faith and culture – the baton if you will, that the Jewish father made every effort to pass on in an ever secularized and changing and hostile environment; and he stood for the balance tradition brought to the life of a minority community. It held them together and gave them identity and meaning.
10. In "Fiddler on the Roof", Tevye lives life like he is also a fiddler on the roof. He is a good man who tries to live the best life he can for God. But is constantly pulled off to one side or the other. On one side of the roof is the traditions he and the village have grown with while the other side lies his three eldest daughters who are constantly trying to get him to lay aside his traditions in order to make room for their individualism. When Tevye is faced with an issue he often states both sides of the story – “On the one hand...but on the other hand” as if he is standing on the point of a roof, looking at one side and then the other to find the most balanced way. The temptation is great to give in and ignore the legacy handed to him. If he leans too far to one or the other side, everything will crash, which is what happens in the movie. At one point Tevye feels if he bends any more he'll break. Yet the film resonated with the anti-establishment movement of the 60's and 70's.
11. The emotional responses to the movie and play are different depending on whether you are a father or a son/daughter. Fathers are responsible for passing the baton and holding the family together, and so feel great anxiety from the tension of the plot. Sons and daughters

feel great affirmation from the plot because they can identify with the strong spirit of individualism and self expression, and even a bit of rebellion and anti-authoritarianism that the American culture makes every effort to pass on to them on a daily basis. The whole relay race is in constant danger that someone in the family line is going to botch the passing of the baton. Either some future father will fail to pass it, or some future son/daughter will fail to reach for it and grab it.

12. Traditions, by their very nature, should be unchangeable so as to root a person into the soil of their family and ancestors even though the world around them is running at an ever quickening pace. Without them, people will constantly be searching for who they are.

13. Otis Ledbetter and Kurt Bruner, in their book Your Heritage defined Tradition as the practice of handing down stories, beliefs, and customs from one generation to another in order to establish and reinforce a strong sense of identity.

B. There are six principle ways to ensure the baton gets passed, and continues to be passed to the third and fourth generations.

#1: Pass on a Spiritual Legacy

1. Lets deal first off with **the first three ways** that a godly heritage is passed down. These three come from a very good book and one that needs to become a part of every Arma Patria's library arsenal. The book is entitled - *Your Heritage: How to Be Intentional about the Legacy You Leave*, and its authors are J. Otis Ledbetter and Kurt Bruner. They outline these first three general ways of passing the baton by including them in their definition of the word *Heritage*. They write that a heritage –

“...is the spiritual, emotional and social legacy that is passed from parent to child...good or bad.”⁹

2. We must make sure we hand off our Christian heritage to our children by first making it our number one priority to insure that our Christian faith makes it across the generational line of demarcation. If you want to know what a person looks like who has had everything they

⁹ J. Otis Ledbetter and Kurt D. Bruner. *Your Heritage: How to Be Intentional about the Legacy You Leave*. ChariotVictor Publishing, A Division of Cook Communications, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. 1998. P. 27

could ever want passed down to them yet lacks the spiritual component of their heritage, read the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes. Life “under the sun” (rather than “under heaven”) is nothing more than living life in the here and now. King Solomon found such a life “without meaning” “profitless” “a chasing and grasping after the wind.” Every person born on this earth comes into existence with an inborn personal need to know and love God, and be delivered and forgiven of their sins. Their sin debt must be paid before they can experience peace with God and the peace of God.

3. A spiritual legacy is defined as -

“...the process whereby parents model and reinforce the unseen realities of the spiritual life.”¹⁰

4. We must make every effort to insure that our children nurture their spirits and build their world-view on the word of God. Their worldview must be a biblical one. They need to see the world around them through biblical lenses. Their speech needs to be seasoned with biblical words and phrases. They need to be able to think theologically, and have a Christian mindset. They need to be well versed in the biblical heroes of the faith, and derive life lessons from the way these men and women modeled the life of courageous faith. When these things become neglected, you can be absolutely certain your children will soon begin backsliding at varying speeds down a slippery slope of spiritual apathy. To ensure they get the baton and know how to pass it demands from you, their father, a lifelong dedication to vigilance, boundary setting and keeping, and threshold watching. The price of freedom is eternal vigilance. Remember what the 2nd verse of Deuteronomy 6 said? God gave us His written commands, decrees, and laws -

²so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the LORD your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life.

5. God then goes on in Deuteronomy 6 to outline how we are to go about doing this:

¹⁰ Ibid, the authors quotation of Noah Webster’s An American Dictionary of the English Language (1828). p. 41

- 1) The first two things we are to do concerns our own spiritual condition
 - first, we are to - ***⁵Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.***
 - Second, we are to take them to heart - ***⁶These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.***

- 2) Once we have prioritized our own spiritual walk, God tells us
 - *⁷Impress them on your children.*
 - *Talk about them when you sit at home*
 - *and when you walk along the road*
 - *when you lie down*
 - *and when you get up.*
 - *⁸Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.*
 - *⁹Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates [the reason for my Christmas book – GreenTree, and why we observe the Christian year, and observe special seasons and festivals, and utilize symbols and rites of passage, etc]*
 - *¹²be careful that **you** [He’s talking to you, dads] do not forget the LORD, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.*
 - *¹⁴Do not follow other gods [He’s talking to you, dads], the gods of the peoples around [He continues to address you, dads, when He says-*
 - *¹⁷Be sure to keep the commands of the LORD your God and the stipulations and decrees he has given you.*
 - *¹⁸Do what is right and good in the LORD’S sight, so that it may go well with you and you may go in and take over the good land that the LORD promised on oath to your forefathers, ¹⁹thrusting out all your enemies before you, as the LORD said.*
 - *²⁰In the future, **when your son asks you, “What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the LORD our God has commanded you?” ²¹tell him:***

- 1) *“We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.*
- 2) *22Before our eyes the LORD sent miraculous signs and wonders—great and terrible—upon Egypt and Pharaoh and his whole household.*
- 3) *23But he brought us out from there to bring us in and give us the land that he promised on oath to our forefathers.*
- 4) *24The LORD commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the LORD our God, so that we might always prosper and be kept alive, as is the case today.*
- 5) *25And if we are careful to obey all this law before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness. [our righteous legacy]”*

6. Remember the illustrations I used last week of my wife’s wedding gown and the dirty rags as symbols of honorable and dishonorable legacies? The reason why there are so many dropped batons; the reason why some parents choose to not pass on their heritage to their children, and the reason why some children choose not to walk in the godly heritage passed on to them by their parents is that it takes a lot of work both to pass it and to walk in it in such a way that it passes on. Sin is easy. The wicked are lazy because evil is easier to walk in and think about and pass on than goodness and righteousness is. The devil is a lazy vagabond. It takes work to build and continue a godly heritage. And the moment that labor ceases, the fallen-ness and sinfulness and belief systems of this world begin taking background. God put forth an effort to bring about creation. He spoke into the dark and silent void, and so must we if our faith is going to pass on to our future descendants.

7. A.W. Tozer wrote –

“Every farmer knows the hunger of the wilderness, that hunger which no modern farm machinery, no improved agricultural methods can ever quite destroy. No matter how well prepared the soil, how well kept the fences, how carefully painted the buildings, let the owner neglect for a while his prized and valued acres, and they will revert again to the wild, and be swallowed up by the jungle or the wasteland. The bias

of nature is toward the wilderness, never toward the fruitful field.¹¹

8. We need to constantly nurture a Biblical world view and virtuous, Christian lifestyle in the sons and daughters of the Church, if there is going to be any hope for lust crazed, hedonistic society. Dr. Albert Siegel describes the cold, hard reality awaiting a society whose children have not received a spiritual legacy, when he writes –

“When it comes to rearing children, every society is only twenty years away from barbarism. Twenty years is all we have to accomplish the task of civilizing the infants who are born into our midst each year. These savages know nothing of our language, our culture, our religion, our values, our customs of interpersonal relations. The infant is totally ignorant about communism, fascism, democracy, civil liberties, the rights of the minority as contrasted with the prerogatives of the majority, respect, decency, honesty, customs, conventions, and manners. The barbarian needs to be tamed if civilization is to survive.”¹²

9. C.S Lewis wrote about the need to keep fanning the flames of our eternal destiny as a way of countering those desires and those worldly things that seek to keep us worldly minded, when he wrote

“If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most notable explanation is that I was made for another world...Probably earthly pleasures were never made to satisfy it, but only to arouse it, to suggest the real thing. If that is so, I must take care, on the one hand, never to despise or be unthankful for these blessings, and on the other, never to mistake them for something else of which they are only a kind of copy, or echo, or mirage. I must keep alive in myself the desire for my true country, which I shall not find until after death; I must never allow it to be snowed under or turned aside; I must make it the main object of life to press on to that other country and to help others do the same.”¹³

10. This is what the objective of Green Martyrdom is: separation from the world through a life of spiritual discipline; it is what Jonadab sought to do when he commanded his descendents to not plant vineyards or build permanent houses, etc...We are aliens, pilgrims,

¹¹ A.W. Tozer. The Root of the Righteous. (Chicago:Moody, 1955), p. 61 as quoted in Your Heritage, p.48

¹² Ibid, 48

¹³ Ibid, p. 28

transients. We must constantly be looking for that “other country”, and teaching our children to do the same.

11. Dads, do you know the way to heaven? Do you have the assurance that you have eternal life and that Christ has redeemed you from the curse of the law and that you have a saving relationship with Jesus Christ? Have you made absolutely sure that if your life were required of you today, that you would one day see your children “there”?
12. Dads, how many times a day do you mention the name of Jesus? How often do your children see you on your knees in prayer?
13. When was the last time you led a discussion at the dinner table about the Bible, or God, or Prophetic events?
14. When was the last time you asked your children hard questions about their sexuality, music tastes, etc...?
15. Are you watching the thresh-hold, dad? Are you checking to make sure your sons/daughters are being passed your baton? Because every day somebody else is trying to pass them theirs. Evolutionists; secular humanists; hedonists’ cultists... What have you done to ensure that no one in your future family tree will be named Muhammad? If you haven’t already, you must take more proactive measures to pass on your Christian faith to your sons and daughters. This is the number one priority of a Christian parent. Start putting traditions in place that celebrate the person and work of Christ in your yearly calendar. Be intentional, creative and purposeful.
16. Example: Father who didn’t believe in wearing his faith on his shirt sleeve...

#2: Passing On An Emotional Legacy

1. The second thing that needs to be done in order to pass on a godly legacy is to create an “**enduring sense of security and emotional stability, nurtured in an environment of safety and love.**”¹⁴ An emotional legacy creates an environment of love and protection which increases our children’s odds of survival in a hostile and unsympathetic world. In such a family, children develop healthy emotions that will help them

¹⁴ Ibid, 60

respond to and work through in positive ways the traumas and difficulties of life.

2. Gary Smalley and John Trent wrote a book entitled THE BLESSING, in which they wrote that the two necessary ingredients in passing on blessing to one's children (among others) was physical affection and verbal affirmation. Indeed, these two things are so necessary in developing healthy emotions in our kids that they seem to cover a multitude of Parental goofs.
3. In families where there are healthy displays of physical affection between mom and dad, and between parents and children, and between siblings, and where there is plenty of verbal affirmation and blessing, there a strong emotional legacy is passed down. Though as parents we can't keep trouble from coming near our children, raising them in a positive, emotional environment is tantamount to building a strong internal armor that will enable them to absorb emotional blows and disappointments and face and deal with the tough challenges that will face them in the future with confidence and optimism.
4. Every family should give off it's own familiar fragrance. The Family Fragrance are those smells that trigger the memories of our children when they are away from home that bring to their mind those things we are seeking to pass on to them. But it takes more than smells and odors. It also takes other things accompanying them to cause them to pass on our traditions and legacies.

A Affection – (do your children enjoy touching you? Are open demonstrations of affection characteristic of your family? Physical affection is another way to talk about “meaningful touch.”

R Respect – Billy Graham once said that a child who is allowed to be disrespectful to their parents will not have true respect for anyone. There are two kinds of respect we need to reinforce at home:

- 1) **entitled respect** (that which is due a person because of their position or title; in other words, their position, or rank, or title, entitles them your respect- ie – government officials; military soldiers, spiritual authorities, etc – 1 Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:7; children should learn this by first having it modeled to them by their parents; as an adult you

never denigrate or disrespect an entitled official; your parents, or your spouse; or the elderly, or religious leaders)

2) and **earned respect** which comes from what we do. The word “Earn” comes from “earnest” and “yearn” in which the primary meaning is to strive with effort to advance or stretch forward. This kind of respect has been earned through something laudable, through labor, service, performance, advancement. Respect that is fostered by parents example and taught as a value in the home, will dramatically affect all three areas of the heritage your passing down – spiritually, emotionally and socially. **Spiritually**, it will give a child a sense of true value about himself because of his attitude toward his creator; **emotionally** it will give a strong sense of security; and **socially** it will establish a strong foundation for treating others.

O Order – Lots of physical affection is a good thing, and so is treating others with respect, but if the home is disorganized, cluttered, messy, dirty, chaotic, then the family fragrance will not be pleasant but will stink. Where there is a mess, uncleanness, and disarray, there is chaos and a lack of security and peace. Not only that, but a sense of personal shame on the child and the parents that blocks the demonstration of hospitality and get-togethers with others. The home environment should be one of a prevailing calm and a safe place that is emotionally restful. A messy home is one in which the head of the household is out of control. An ordered, tranquil environment is impossible to maintain if someone is not in control. In order to maintain order in the home, the three R's have to be in play:

Rules- without clearly defined rules anarchy will soon prevail. Everyone in the home must understand that certain things are expected to be done, and certain things will not be tolerated. There needs to be clear boundaries, if there is going to be the feeling of safety, security and self-confidence. When making rules follow these three guidelines: make the list short; major on the majors not the minors; be consistent.

Roles – Everyone in the family has a role to fill and a part to play, but if they are not intentionally identified and clarified, then everyone will either be forced into a role that may not be appropriate for them, or force somebody else to do the same. Each role comes with it's own set of responsibilities that have to be consistently carried out, and these have to be reinforced by mom and dad.

Rights – Every family has certain minimum rights, like the right of every family member to be listened to, voice their opinion, and express concerns, as long as these are done in respectful tone. This is why family conference tables are so important...

M Merriment – Laughter doeth good like a medicine, says the Proverbs. Home should be a place where there is lots of laughter and play and fun. Dads are to be the ushers in of joy. Times of intentional hilarity need to be orchestrated and experienced. Lighten up. Don't take yourself and everything else so seriously. Practical jokes should abound.

A Affirmation – verbal affirmation and praise are chief identity builders for your child. Both are forms of encouragement. Coaching them to be all that they can be and to set and make their goals, are another form of encouragement. And so is being your child's major support group (Verbal blessings in our home).

#3: Passing On A Social Legacy

1. How our children relate to others when they are grown will likely reflect the way similar social issues were dealt with at home. Our sons will learn how to treat their wives by the way they watch their dad treat their mother. Our daughters will likewise learn how to treat their husbands (and be treated by them) from what they observe in their mom and dad's relationship. This will be true on all fronts, in their dealings with neighbors, teachers, bad drivers, authority figures, etc...
2. From you, their parents, they will learn lessons about honor and respect, reverence and courtesy, love and service, compassion and care, humility and social involvement. A social legacy involves passing onto your child insights "and

strong social skills for cultivating healthy, stable relationships.”¹⁵

3. Ledbetter and Bruner write –

“Those who learn to relate well to others have an edge in the game of life. Those who don’t are doomed to mediocrity at best, and failure at worst.”¹⁶

#4: Passing On A Clearly Defined Vision Of Manhood

1. Fourthly, and more specific to the training of young boys to men, I agree with Robert Lewis that there has to be a clearly defined vision for Biblical manhood. I have used his four factors for becoming a man in my church because they so encompass the knighthood ideals so well. I did, however, add a fifth one, which Lewis covers in his book but not as one of the four factors (transcendent cause). The 5 factors that undergird and clearly define the vision of authentic Christian manhood are:

#1. Reject Passivity (encourage your children to take the initiative)

#2. Accept Responsibility (you need to allow your children to grow up and handle their responsibilities, and master new challenges without rescuing them every time; what they start, make them finish without help or rescuing; the wheelbarrow incident)

#3. Lead Courageously (don’t expect others to be self-motivated; lead them; call them to commitment)

#4. Compete for a Heavenly Reward

#5. Embrace a Transcendent Cause

2. Once a Father internalizes these principles that make up the vision for authentic Biblical Manhood, he must begin outlining how he will pass these values to his children. We have already talked at length about the need for a father to embrace the process of knighthood and the need to incorporate a knight’s code of conduct in his own actions and behavior. Like everything else we intend to continue to be passed on, these 5 factors need to modeled, caught and taught in the moment, as life happens.

#5: Incorporate Ceremony, Rites of Passage, Symbols and Heraldry

1. The fifth principle that will help ensure your philosophy of Biblical manhood is passed down it to your future descendents, is to incorporate Rites of Passage, which include

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 78

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 79

the use of Heraldry, symbols, meaningful jewelry, formal ceremony, creeds and crests, and a celebratory feast. These are important mostly because they help the individual remember the time, place and people involved in the rite of passage. They also have a sealing influence on both the individual going through them, as well as the participants who witness the event. Again, Deuteronomy 6 agrees with this concept.

2. Such ceremonies are common in our church, and I have to tell you, they are the highlights of my ministry. I have witnessed on many occasions, a tangible physical change come over a teenager on their rite of passage ceremony, where boys are presented with an actual fighting sword of their choice, and girls - some other significant piece of jewelry appropriate as a symbol for the sealing of the occasion and its emphasis. As the charges and Troths of the Rite of Passage are read, and they answer in the affirmative each charge, a look of determination comes over these kids. With their eyes set, they obviously take such moments seriously because they have paid a price for the right to be acknowledged. They have embraced the proverbial truth "humility comes before honor."¹⁷ On almost every occasion, since starting the process of knighthood in my church many years ago, I have seen our philosophy of bringing our children to early maturity take place. It is amazing the depth of devotion and the severity of faith and discipline that these kids have.
3. Such rites of passage are needed today to mark the passages of time between childhood, through adolescence and into adulthood. And these ceremonies must be done in such a way that they will never be forgotten. Keep in mind that ceremonies and rites of passage are supposed to be costly and well planned if they are to be both memorable and valued. The costliness of them points to both the value of the person being honored, and the seriousness of what is being conferred and bestowed upon them.
4. Each family will of course, have to determine what they can afford to spend on each occasion, but with the view that the cost involved attaches value to the person and calls attention to the honor due them for their accomplishments. To not take the necessary time to adequately plan on such important events, nor to budget beforehand in order to meet the expenses of the event, is to inadvertently say to your youth that he/she and it, the ceremony and rite of passage, aren't very valuable to you. In the back of this book we itemize each of our

¹⁷ Proverbs 15:33b

symbols and titles, as well as give some sample charges and troths, creeds, and other ideas.

5. The signet ring and the hoop and coronet as lasting symbols that outline one's legacy and pass it on

#6: Be Part of a Fraternity of Like-Minded Men

1. Every man needs to align himself with a band of brothers, a fraternity or community of godly men.
2. Listen dads, if your boy is to become a real man, and your girl a real lady, you are going to have to enlist the help of a community of men and their wives.
3. It's one thing for our children to hear their dad talk about a weighty subject; it's another thing for them to hear the same subject shared among a group of like-minded Christian men and women.
4. A synergism of values and depth takes place amongst a comradery of Christian men.
5. A community of men expands the spiritual and moral resources of our children.
6. There is great security and assurance in knowing my sons can seek out other Christian men in this church and share their struggles and successes and hear from them the same godly counsel they would hear from me. This comes about when people are willing to align themselves with shared values, vision, and practices.
7. Many of us as families have been bonded together through the mystical power of ceremony and rites of passage and taking part in mentoring each others children.
8. You cannot build a godly enduring legacy alone. God never meant it to be done alone. Lets do it together. (our family's coat of arms)
9. By incorporating these six principle ways of passing the baton, including the passing down of spiritual, emotional and social legacies, and of a clear vision for manhood, incorporating the concept of the trial by ordeal, as well as the signing and sealing of all these things in various and sundry rites of passage and the giving of those symbols and regalia appropriate to the honor bestowed, including family crests and signet rings, etc, you will insure that your legacy makes it to your great great-grandchildren.
10. It has been said that the most important gift we can give our children are roots and wings. Roots give them stability and a sense of where they came from and who they are. Wings give

them the freedom to exercise themselves according to what they have learned. If we give them roots but no wings, they will never reach their full potential. If they are given wings but no roots, like Ichthius, they will fly too close to the sun, and plummet back into the lethal waves of spiritual and personal mediocrity. They need both roots and wings to become mature adults. Mature adults, by the way, accept the legacy of their father, and that there is something bigger than themselves that they are a part of; something bigger than themselves that is leading them and guiding them and helping them find meaning in life. They need not ever find themselves questioning who they are or what they are here for. This is why the golden ring that the blue knight is bestowed with, along with his family's crest engraved on it, is such an asset (not to mention the family crest itself) in passing something tangible and meaningful down the family line.

Next week we will conclude this series with one more way to pass on the baton of one's legacy and heritage, by talking about Passing on the Four "C"s of a Well Ordered Life.