

The Seasons of a Man's Life

A. Manhood is in a state of confusion today.

1. Some of our confusion about manhood is due to changes in our culture.
"When the **foundations are being destroyed**, what can the righteous do?" Psalm 11:3 (NIV)
2. Some of our confusion about manhood is due to the breakdown of families.
"You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will love only themselves and their money. **They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred.**" 2 Timothy 3:1-2 (NLT)
3. Most of our confusion about manhood is due to our rejection of God's Word.
"**When people do not accept divine guidance, they run wild.**" Proverbs 29:18a (NLT)
"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and **he will show you which path to take.**" Proverbs 3:5-6 (NLT)
4. Confused men create major problems.
"A righteous man hates falsehood, But **a wicked man acts disgustingly and shamefully.**"
Proverbs 13:5 (NASB 1995)
5. Confused men settle for less.
"So I hated life, because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me. **All of it is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.**" Ecclesiastes 2:17 (NIV)

Good News! Christian men don't have to live in confusion or figure out life on their own. We can help each other become strong and godly! "Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. **Enjoy the companionship** of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts." 2 Timothy 2:22 (NLT)

"As iron sharpens iron, so **one man sharpens another.**" Proverbs 27:17 (BSB)

B. Christian men can help each other mature spiritually through all the seasons of life.

"**For everything there is a season**, a time for every activity under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die... God has made everything beautiful for its own time." Ecclesiastes 3:1-2a & 11a (NLT)

1. **Spring** (birth-25) - a season of planting and growth

Boys need a clear vision of what it means to be a godly man. "**Take courage and be a man.** Observe the requirements of the LORD your God, and follow all his ways. Keep the decrees, commands, regulations, and laws written in the law of Moses so that you will be successful in all you do and wherever you go." 1 Kings 2:2b-3 (NLT)

Boys need a manly code of conduct. "Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction; pay attention and gain understanding. **I give you sound learning, so do not forsake my teaching. For I too was a son to my father...** Then he taught me, and he said to me, 'Take hold of my words with all your heart; keep my commands, and you will live.'" Proverbs 4:1-4 (NIV)

Boys need a transcendent cause. "Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."
Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)

2. **Summer** (25-50) - a season of cultivation and maturing

Young men must learn to work. "Even while we were with you, we gave you this command: 'Those unwilling to work will not get to eat.' Yet we hear that some of you are living idle lives, refusing to work and meddling in other people's business. We command such people and urge them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and work to earn their own living." 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12 (NLT)

Young men must learn to set Godly priorities. "So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. **Seek the Kingdom of God above all else**, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need." Matthew 6:31-33 (NLT)

3. **Fall** (50-70) - a season of reaping and harvest

Mature Christian men can make incredible contributions in their homes, churches, and communities as strong, godly role models and leaders. “The glory of the young is their strength; **the gray hair of experience is the splendor of the old.**” Proverbs 20:29 (NLT)

“I left you on the island of Crete so you could complete our work there and appoint elders in each town as I instructed you. An elder must live a blameless life. He must be faithful to his wife, and his children must be believers who don’t have a reputation for being wild or rebellious. A church leader is a manager of God’s household, so he must live a blameless life. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered; he must not be a heavy drinker, violent, or dishonest with money. Rather, he must enjoy having guests in his home, and **he must love what is good. He must live wisely and be just. He must live a devout and disciplined life. He must have a strong belief in the trustworthy message he was taught; then he will be able to encourage others** with wholesome teaching and show those who oppose it where they are wrong.” Titus 1:5-9 (NLT)

4. **Winter** (70-death) - a season of rest and preparation

Godly, older men can greatly impact future generations by mentoring young leaders. “Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, my God, **till I declare your power to the next generation**, your mighty acts to all who are to come.” Psalm 71:18 (NIV)

Godly, older men can leave a powerful legacy. “Now **when David had served God’s purpose in his own generation**, he fell asleep; he was buried with his ancestors...” Acts 13:36 (NIV)

****CAUTION**** The transition periods between seasons can either be times of great personal growth or painful personal set-backs depending upon the choices we make. “Don’t be misled—you cannot mock the justice of God. **You will always harvest what you plant.** Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit.” Galatians 6:7-8 (NLT)

Good News! “The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love... **He does not punish us for all our sins; he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve.** For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. The Lord is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him. For **he knows how weak we are; he remembers we are only dust.**” Psalm 103:8 & 10-14 (NLT)

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Connect Group Discussion Questions:

1. Describe a godly man you know. What makes him godly?
2. What challenges do you see in our culture that make it hard for men to be godly? (Psalm 11:3, Proverbs 29:18, 2 Timothy 3:1-2)
3. Discuss the following statements: Confused men create major problems. (Proverbs 13:5) Confused men settle for less. (Ecclesiastes 2:17) Why do you think that men create many more problems in society than women?
4. How can Christian men help each other be godly? (Proverbs 27:17, 2 Timothy 2:22)
5. Discuss the spiritual seasons of a man’s life:
 - Spring (birth-25). Boys need to be taught a clear vision, a godly code of conduct, and a transcendent cause in order to become godly men. (1 Kings 2:2-3, Proverbs 4:1-4, Matthew 28:19-20)
 - Summer (25-50). Young men must learn to work and set godly priorities. (2 Thessalonians 3:10-12, Matthew 6:31-33)
 - Fall (50-70). Mature Christian men can make incredible contributions in their homes, churches, and communities as strong, godly role models and leaders. (Proverbs 20:29, Titus 1:5-9)
 - Winter (70-death). Godly, older men can greatly impact future generations mentoring young leaders and leaving a godly legacy. (Psalm 71:18, Acts 13:36)
 - The transition periods between seasons can either be times of great personal growth or painful personal set-backs depending upon the choices we make. (Galatians 6:7-8, Psalm 103:8-14)