



FLIGHT PLAN

YOUR MISSION TO BECOME A MAN

Discussion Guide

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CHAPTER 01

PREPARE FOR TAKEOFF

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What issues do you think will be difficult for you in the next few years?
2. What kind of man do you want to be when you are grown up?*

 - a. Why did you pick those things, traits, or roles? What is important about them?
 - b. What do you think it will take to become that kind of person?

3. How would you define manhood?***
4. Where do you go for advice when you are not sure what to do?***
5. Why did God give us the Bible? What do you think is the purpose of the Bible?***
(Check 2 Timothy 3:14-17)
6. How can you seek God's plan as you work through this book together?
7. What do you hope to learn by reading this book?
8. If you could have one question answered about the road ahead for you, what would it be?***

*Your son may have written about this question in an optional online journaling prompt

**Your son answered this question in the book

ACTIVITY



EXPLORE YOUR FAMILY HERITAGE

Along with your son, explore the heritage of the men in your family (grandfathers, great-grandfathers, uncles, etc.). Find an old photo album or items left behind by one of these family members. Ask him what his favorite stories about those men are. Talk about what you'd want to imitate in those men, and what you want to avoid or learn from. For example, what challenges did they overcome? Did they demonstrate kindness and help others? Were they quick to laugh? What are you proudest about in your family?



CHAPTER 02

THE SIX MYTHS OF MANHOOD

Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.

1 SAMUEL 16:7



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When you are lonely, uncertain, or afraid, do you have someone to talk to? If so, who is that person? If not, who do you wish you could talk to?
 - a. Dads—this is the chance for you to take an opportunity to learn who your son trusts. Sharing something that makes you lonely, uncertain, or afraid can show humility and help to earn your son’s trust. Don’t try to force trust—it can take time to build.
2. What accomplishments or activities do you use to describe yourself? Look back at the difference between success and greatness—what would it look like to be truly great in that activity?***
 - a. Think of some of the things you admire in your son. Feel free to share those with him.
 - b. As your son talks about how he describes himself, gently point him back to what real manhood is.
3. Is there something you really want to try, but you’re afraid of what other people will think?***
 - a. What was something you wanted to try when you were younger but were too afraid to? Share with your son.
4. What is the coolest adventure for a boy your age you’ve ever heard about?***
 - a. Share a memory of an adventure you went on as a kid.
5. Beside your body, how do you think you are different from a girl your age? How are your mom and dad different?
6. How do you become a man? At what point does it happen?***
7. Which myth of manhood are you most likely to believe?*
8. How do you know what myth isn’t true? For this question, we recommend helping your son look up Bible passages related to this myth.

*Your son may have written about this question in an optional online journaling prompt

**Your son answered this question in the book

ACTIVITIES



REAL MEN IN MOVIES

To help your son discern true manhood from the myths of manhood, take some time together to watch a movie featuring a male hero. Afterwards, talk about whether your son thinks the hero is a true man. Was the hero shaped by myths about manhood, like not showing emotion or giving up adventures? Help him think about what parts of the hero are manly and honorable.

As you help your son enjoy these conversations, we’d encourage you to make this a special one-on-one time. Maybe go see a movie in theaters and grab ice cream during your conversation later, or have a guys’ movie night at home with snacks and a later-than-normal bedtime.

REAL-WORLD MYTHS

When you are with your son, keep your eyes out for ads marketed to men or talking about men. Next time you and your son are watching TV, listening to radio, scrolling past an online ad, or driving past a billboard, ask him if the ad says anything about what it means to be a man. Has the ad repeated any myths about manhood? Is the ad pointing to anything true about what it means to be a man?



CHAPTER 03

THE SEVEN VIRTUES

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and
this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by
works, so that no one can boast.

EPHESIANS 2:8-9



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. True Friend:** When is the last time you shared something that's hard for you or important to you with a friend? Is there anything you think you should with a friend that you haven't shared yet? What do you think is stopping you?
 - a. Dads—Share about someone who you would consider to be a true friend in your life. How long have you been friends? How long did it take to develop that friendship? How has your friendship been valuable or helpful? (You'll talk about this more in the next chapter.)
- 2. Humble Hero:** Think about somebody you really look up to. What makes that person a hero?*
- 3. Servant Leader:** How is a servant leader different from other leaders? Can you think of an example of a servant leader?
- 4. Pacesetter:** At your school or in your community, what problems do you see? What seems wrong or unfair? What can you do about it?*
- 5. Bold Adventurer:** What is a really adventurous thing for a middle-school boy to do? What is a really adventurous thing for a high-school boy to do? What about for a dad?
- 6. Noble Knight:** Who do you know that really needs protection this week? What can you do to provide that protection?
- 7. Faithful Follower:** Have you asked God for a new heart? Why or why not?
- 8. Which virtue or virtues do you think comes easily to you? Is there a virtue that is especially challenging for you?***
 - a. Dads—are there any virtues that you think your son excels at? Encourage the good you see in him! Take some time to thoughtfully call out specific ways your son shows or has shown one of the virtues.

*Your son may have written about this question in an optional online journaling prompt

**Your son answered this question in the book

ACTIVITY



THE MANLY HALL OF FAME

Find a modern day example of a man who is an example of each of the seven virtues of manhood. Create a Hall of Fame of the virtues.



CHAPTER 04

FINDING YOUR TRUE FRIENDS

A friend loves at all times,
and a brother is born for a time of adversity.

PROVERBS 17:17



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Think about the guys you are closest to. Are they true friends or shallow friends? **
2. Why do you have the friends that you do? What do you look for in a friend? **
 - a. Dads—Do you have a good friend as an adult who you might not have naturally been friends with in school? Talk about that friendship with your son.
3. Are any of your classmates or friends from a different background? What person from a different background can you try to build a friendship with? What can you do to build it?
4. What act of service and kindness could you do for a friend this week?
 - a. Dads—What’s a meaningful act of kindness you’ve either received or given? How did you or the recipient respond?
5. Do you talk with your friends about deep and important and emotional issues or do you keep that hidden? Are there issues or struggles that you are hiding from your friends?
 - a. Dads—Have you ever had a moment when being vulnerable and honest enabled somebody to help you or speak truth to you?
6. Do you have a friend right now with whom you need to have a difficult but loving conversation?
7. Do you have any friends right now who are leading you away from becoming a godly man? Do you need to let go of any friendships?
8. Are your friends and activities keeping you too busy to have alone time with God? If so, what adjustments might you need to make to create that time?

**Your son answered this question in the book



THE MAN YOU WANT TO BE

Take a piece of a paper and ask your son to brainstorm a bunch of character qualities he would like to have. Help him find Bible passages that might have examples about what's important.

Here are a few passages to start with:

- Romans 12:9-21 (a summary of Christian living)
- Galatians 5:22-23 (the fruit of the Spirit)
- Ephesians 4:1-3 (humility, gentleness, and patience)
- Ephesians 4:31-32 (kindness, compassion, and forgiveness)
- Philippians 2:1-4 (putting others first)
- Colossians 3:12-17 (another summary of following Christ)

Then take a new page and ask him to make a list of the 5 traits that are most important to him. Encourage him to humbly consider himself. What traits can he see developing in himself? In what areas does he need to grow? What are steps he can take towards living out these traits?



CHAPTER 05

RESISTING PEER PRESSURE

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is— his good, pleasing and perfect will.

ROMANS 12:2



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you could read people's thoughts about you, would you? Why or why not? **
2. What types of peer pressure have you already faced? **
 - a. Dads—Think about a time you experienced peer pressure, either recently or in school. Talk about the consequences. Did you wish you would've done something differently?
3. Do you have a friend who will stand up with you and hold you accountable for making good decisions? If you don't have a person like that in place already, who would be a good person to ask?
 - a. Dads—Do you have an accountability partner? If you do, how has that relationship been helpful to you? Was it difficult to set up that relationship?
4. Think about the guys you spend your time with. Is what is cool with your friends cool with God?
5. Are you doing anything now to renew your mind—to see the world the way God sees it? What can you do this week to renew your mind? **
6. Have you faced situations when you had to choose between loyalty to a friend and loyalty to the group? What did you do?
7. Have you created an image of yourself for others to see that is not the real you? If so, what is that image, and why did you do it?
 - a. Dads—Is this something that you struggle with? Lead in vulnerability here. How do you want people to see you that may not be a true image of yourself? What does it mean to be yourself? **

**Your son answered this question in the book

ACTIVITIES



PLANNING FOR PEER PRESSURE

With your son, imagine different situations where your son will be faced with peer pressure. Ask him how he would make decisions in each of those situations. What specifically could he say? What could he do instead of giving in to peer pressure? Work with your son to brainstorm a list of fun things to do as another option when he is faced with peer pressure.

MOVIE NIGHT

Many popular movies address some aspect of peer pressure, like *Finding Nemo*, *Wonder*, and *The Sandlot*. With your son, watch one of these movies (or another movie that addresses peer pressure), and use it as a springboard to discussing choices and peer pressure.



CHAPTER 06

THE DANGERS OF ALCOHOL
AND DRUGS

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead,
be filled with the Spirit

EPHESIANS 5:18

You have put more joy in my heart
than they have when their grain and wine abound.

PSALM 4:7 (ESV)



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What kind of man do you want to grow up into? Do you think drinking as a teenager will help you become this man, or will it sabotage you? *
 - a. Dads—Do you have any experience with underage drinking or drugs? Depending on the story, it could be helpful to share with your son.
2. Have you already been in situations where there were opportunities for drinking, smoking, or using drugs? What did you do?
3. If you have not yet been in situation where there is drinking, what age do you think this will first happen?
 - a. Dads—when we ask this question, we find that many boys think this won't happen until their early twenties. You may want to talk to your son about teen drinking or tell him about when you were first offered alcohol.
4. What are the differences between your parents having a beer or glass of wine and you drinking one? **
5. Why do you think teenage boys drink, smoke, and use other drugs?
6. Imagine you are invited to a party where there will probably be alcohol. What are some excuses you could use to avoid the temptations that will be at that party?
7. What can you be doing to have noble, helpful adventures so you aren't looking for fake adventures with alcohol and other drugs? **
8. When you feel lonely, disappointed, or stressed, what do you do? Do you have a healthy way to address those feelings that will make you less likely to respond with drinking or drugs?

*Your son may have written about this question in an optional online journaling prompt

**Your son answered this question in the book

ACTIVITIES



OUR FAMILY BACKGROUND

Talk with your son about your own experiences with alcohol and drugs. Share with him if there was behavior in your teens that you regret and, if so, what kind of consequences you experienced.

Explain to your son why you do or do not drink. What do you think of as excessive drinking, and why? If there is alcoholism in your family, discuss how that shapes how you (and someday your son) approach alcohol. Invite your son's questions about drinking and alcohol.

GAME PLAN

Take some time to talk through the ideas your son had for things to say when being invited to a party with drinking or being offered a drink. Help them craft responses or shift the blame onto you if you think that'd be helpful to them. Be sure to set up a plan if they need to get out of a risky party situation. (For example, how should they contact you to pick them up from a party?)

REAL ADVENTURES

If possible, look for a way you can help your son have a real adventure. Take time this weekend to go hiking or canoeing, build something, explore a museum, or do something else together.



CHAPTER 07

RELATIONSHIPS AND DATING

Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;
but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

PROVERBS 31:30



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you have feelings of attraction for girls yet?
2. When you think about girls, what goes through your mind?*
3. Do you and your guy friends talk about girls? If so, how do you talk about them?
4. How does God say we should think about or talk about girls?*
5. What kind of girl would you want to date? What would she be like?***
 - a. Dads—Talk to your son about some of the things that you love about your wife. This can be a good way to show your son how he should talk about girls.
6. Why is it important to date someone who loves Jesus?
7. What are some of your responsibilities as the guy on a date or in a relationship?
8. When do you think someone is old enough or mature enough to start dating? Do you think teenage boys should be ready to date? Why or why not?

*Your son may have written about this question in an optional online journaling prompt

**Your son answered this question in the book

ACTIVITY



SHARING YOUR STORY

Describe your first date with your wife—what went well and what would you have done differently.



CHAPTER 08

UNDERSTANDING PUBERTY

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is God's purpose and plan for sex?***
2. If an unmarried couple is in love and has been dating for a long time, what is wrong with having sex? What are the dangers and downsides of sex outside of marriage?***
3. If you are with a girl you aren't married to, what physical actions are pleasing to God?
4. Have you made a commitment to save yourself sexually for your future wife? Why or why not?
5. What do you think the situation would be in which you would be most likely to have sex? How can you avoid that situation?
6. Think about the last time you had an angry outburst? What do you think was really going on with your emotions?***
7. What should you do when you feel angry?***
 - a. Dads—What do you do when you feel angry? Do you have any strategies that help?

***Your son answered this question in the book

ACTIVITY



ANY QUESTIONS?

Invite your son to ask you any other questions he has about puberty or sex. Remind your son that you went through this too and that you'd rather talk through this honestly with him than have him try to figure things out on his own.

If he has questions, aim to answer them as honestly as possible without introducing any tempting ideas or images. Maybe even share some stories of your experiences (humorous or serious) to get the conversation rolling.

Why Is This So Awkward?

For most fathers, discussions about puberty and sex can be awkward. Many dads tell us that their parents never talked with them about these topics when they were boys.

But boys want to hear about the changes they will experience from their fathers. Dads need to start the conversation and give sons the opportunity to listen, learn, and ask questions. All boys have questions, but it may take some time before you and your son are comfortable discussing those questions. Stay the course and remember that this is all part of God's plan.



CHAPTER 09

PURITY AND PORN

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

COLOSSIANS 3:2-5



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you already faced the temptation to look at explicit images?*
2. If you have been tempted, where were you when you were tempted? What steps are you going to take to protect yourself from that situation in the future?*
3. If you haven't been tempted yet, what steps are you going to take to protect yourself from tempting situations?*
4. Do you have a friend or mentor who will hold you accountable in your effort to be pure? If not, who would be someone you could ask?*
5. What can you do to train your mind to think about things that are pure, noble, and excellent?*

*Your son answered this question in the book

ACTIVITY



JUST RELAX

There is a lot of new and awkward stuff in this chapter and the previous chapter, and your son will probably feel a little uncomfortable as he thinks through it and talks about it with you. To make sure he knows you're still there for him, do something normal and fun together— maybe tossing a ball around, working on a project, or going on a bike ride. Don't force that time together to be a context for talking about puberty or sex. Just spend time hanging out with your son and letting him know you love him.



CHAPTER 10

SCREENS, STORIES, AND SONGS

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

PHILIPPIANS 4:8



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some shows or YouTube channels that you are currently watching?*
2. Would any of those shows be good for us to watch together?
3. What are some of your favorite songs to listen to these days? What do you like about them?***
4. How much time do you think you spend on screens per day? How much time do you think I spend on screens each day?
 - a. You may want to suggest to your son that you each keep a log for a week to find out how much time you are both spending looking at screens.
5. How do you know when you have had enough screen time?
6. What are some activities you would like to do that do not involve screens?
7. What are your favorite video games?
 - a. Ask your son to give you a tour of the games he is playing.
8. Are there people that you communicate with online that you have never met in person?

*Your son may have written about this question in an optional online journaling prompt

**Your son answered this question in the book

ACTIVITY



LEARNING TO TALK ON THE PHONE

Many boys do not have much experience talking on the phone. Consider asking your son to make a call for you—maybe have him place a pizza order over the phone or call his grandparents. Coach him through the experience.



CHAPTER 11

LOVING YOUR FAMILY

“Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise—“so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

EPHESIANS 6:2-3



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the differences between a good friendship and a good relationship with a parent?
2. Is there anything I'm doing that makes you feel stressed out or hurt?
3. What do you wish that I understood better?
4. Do you feel like you can talk to me if something's wrong?
5. What do you think is more important to me—my job or my relationship with you?
6. What can you do this week that would help your mom and show her you love her?
7. How have you been getting along with each of your siblings recently?
 - a. Do you need to apologize to or forgive anybody?
 - b. Are there things you keep fighting about?
 - c. Are there ways they hurt your feelings that you should talk about?
 - d. What's one thing you can do this week to love each of your siblings?
8. Are you doing anything on a regular basis in your family to demonstrate responsibility and maturity? If not, what could you do this week?

ACTIVITY



FAMILY MOTTO

Get out a big piece of paper and brainstorm things your family is known for and things your family aims for. Circle the 2-4 things that are most important to you, and then combine them into a family motto.

A single sentence can't include everything, but it gets at what the main purpose is in your family. It serve a compass to guide your decisions and day-to-day life. For example, in one household from our school, the family motto is, "Take Initiative for the Good of Others." It's simple and easy to remember, but living it out can shape every part of our lives.

MORE RESOURCES



For Kids of Divorced Parents

Children of divorced parents face some unique tensions and issues:

- They can feel embarrassment, shame, confusion, and sometimes anger or loneliness.
- They have to deal with the grief of not getting to spend as much time with one parent, and they often feel a loss of security that the family provided.
- They often feel divided loyalties between their mom and dad, and they can feel pulled between the two of them, between two households, or between their old family and a new blended family with step-siblings or half-siblings.
- They need to learn how to share things with new siblings, including the time and attention of a parent.
- They have to adjust to new rules and personalities. In blended families, they can feel like they have to choose between loving their dad or step-dad, or between their mom or step-mom.
- They have to still figure out how to honor and obey their parents—and forgive them. It’s a lot of tough things to deal with during the already-challenging season of adolescence.

As you help your son process these tensions, here are a few questions to ask your son:

1. Do you feel like you are getting to spend enough time with me?
2. Have you ever feel like I have put you in an awkward position?
3. How can I do better at showing you I love you?

Greatness in Your Family

In his book *Raising Kids for True Greatness*, Dr. Tim Kimmel lists ten ways you can be a great member of your family:

1. Everybody helps everybody always, in whatever ways are needed
2. Be upbeat, positive, and encouraging
3. Remember, “please” and “thank you” are not just good manners—they’re the calling cards of a grateful heart
4. Have a lot of fun, just not at the expense of anyone else
5. Each week, do your best to eat as many meals as possible together as a family
6. Respect one another’s space and stuff
7. Guard family traditions, and do your best to celebrate all birthdays, holidays, and major milestones
8. Guard the morals and integrity of everyone around you
9. Be quick to rally around a family member who is down, whether it’s a result of sickness, injury, failure, rejection, or discouragement
10. Assume that the Lord Jesus is a participant in every detail of your family

How could you lead your family toward these goals this week?



CHAPTER 12

WHY SCHOOL MATTERS

For the LORD gives wisdom;
from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

PROVERBS 2:6



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Are there any subjects in school that have felt boring recently? What can you do about that?
2. What has been the most difficult thing about school recently? Are there any ways I can help?
3. What subject or topic really excites you? What can you do to dig in and learn more about it?*
4. Does how you do in school really impact your future?
5. What are some good reasons to study? What are some not-so-good reasons?***
6. When you sit down to do your homework, what motivates you? What reasons to study are you usually thinking about?***
7. Are you stressed at school?***
8. How many hours have you slept for each of the last seven nights? Are you sleeping enough? If not, what changes do you need to make, or what discipline do you need to develop?

*Your son may have written about this question in an optional online journaling prompt

**Your son answered this question in the book

ACTIVITIES



DRAFTING GOALS

Help your son to brainstorm a list of goals for the next few weeks at school. Encourage him to think about both academic goals (like getting an A on a test next week) and character goals (like talking respectfully about a teacher that his friends like to make fun of) .

Then help him brainstorm some goals for this school year. Finally, work together on goals for the rest of his academic career. Does he want to get into a really good college or become the captain of his sports team or get a certain kind of job?

READING LIST

What is your son reading for school? Talk to him about the books he is reading—especially any books that he finds interesting or that have given him a lot of questions. When you can, make an effort to read at least the first chapter or two of the book so that you discuss it with him.



CHAPTER 13

TARGETING TRUE SUCCESS

What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ

PHILIPPIANS 3:8



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some things that make you really happy? Are they things you can control and count on? **
2. What do you think the difference is between happiness and joy? If you could just have one, which one would you want and why? **
3. How does the world define success? How does God define success? How do they compare? **
4. What are some of the good things about having money? **
5. What are some of the dangers of having money? **
6. What is a way you messed up or failed recently? **
 - a. How did that feel?
 - b. Do you think God was teaching you anything through that? **
7. What do you think you are living for right now? (If you're not sure, look at how you spend your time, energy, and money.) **
8. What steps can you take to help your goals line up with God's goals? **

*Your son may have written about this question in an optional online journaling prompt

**Your son answered this question in the book

ACTIVITY



REAL SUCCESS

Make a list of people who the world says are successful. Make a second list of people that you would view as successful from a biblical perspective. What are the differences?



CHAPTER 14

CLEARED FOR TAKE OFF

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free.
But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh;
rather, serve one another humbly in love.

GALATIANS 5:13



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the hardest thing about being your age?
2. What worries you about the teenage years up ahead?
3. Is there anything I can do to be a better dad to you? Is there anything you need or want from me as your dad?
4. What do you think it means to be a man?*
5. Did reading this book change that definition for you? If so, what changed?*
6. What other topic would it be helpful to you for us to discuss?

*Your son may have written about this question in an optional online journaling prompt

ACTIVITIES



PICK A LIFE SKILL

Brainstorm a list of what you want your son to be able to do before he leaves your house for college. Then pick one of those skills and teach it to your son this week.

FLIGHT PLAN GRADUATION CELEBRATION

Write a letter for your son that you can read to him or give to him. You may want to tell him how proud you are of him, what you like about him, and/or your hopes for his future. It would also be a nice surprise for your son if the letter were on nice paper—it will probably be something he will treasure for a long time. Consider going on an adventure with your son—maybe a camping trip, a visit to an amusement park or water park, or a trip to another city. On your adventure, take time to share the letter with him. Try to plan meaningful conversations with him—try to be rested before your trip; plan out questions you can ask him during meals, hikes, or drives; and listen carefully to what he has to say.