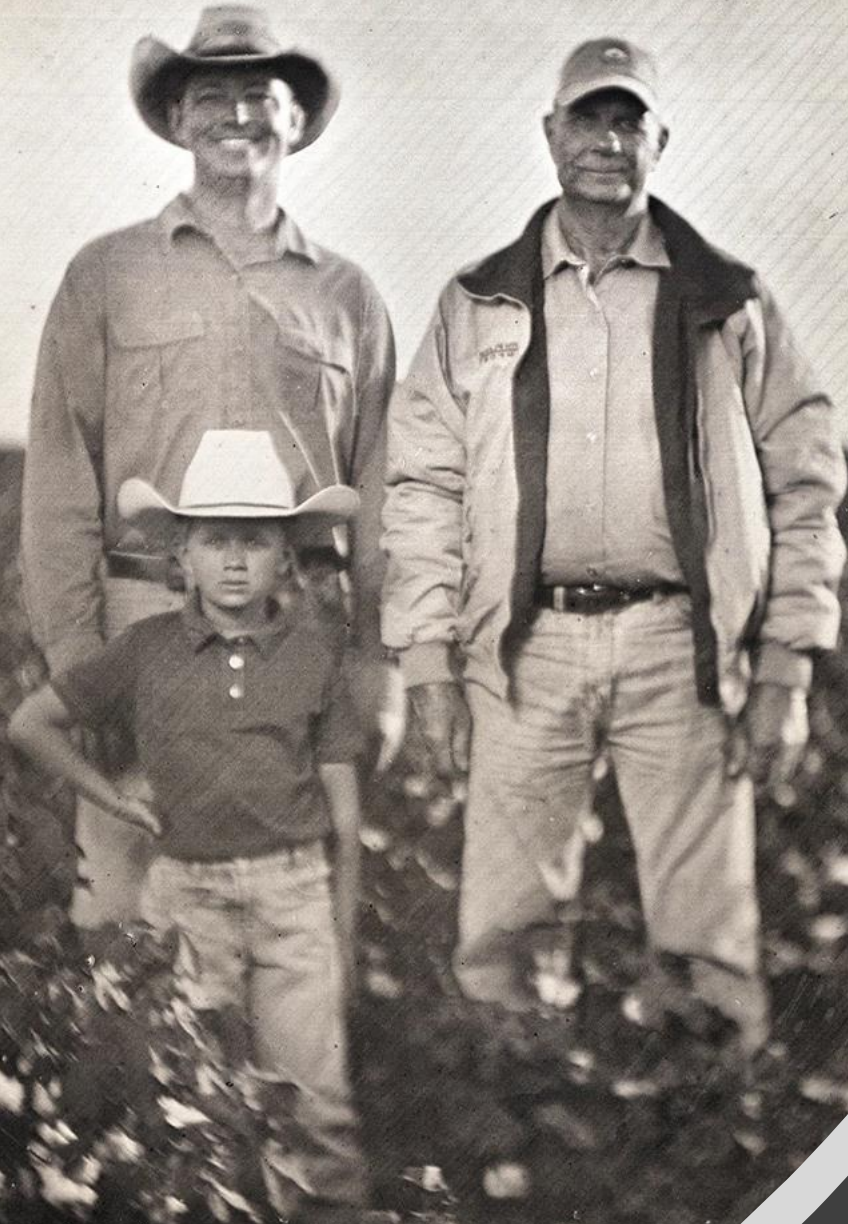


THE POWER OF A FATHER

The Power of a Father:

CEREMONIES MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



## The Power of a Father!

As men, in a culture under attack, we need an understanding of mature masculinity—a vision and direction we can pursue with our sons! We need tools, methods, and ideas to help us become Godly men and from which to equip our sons and our daughters. We need to grow up!

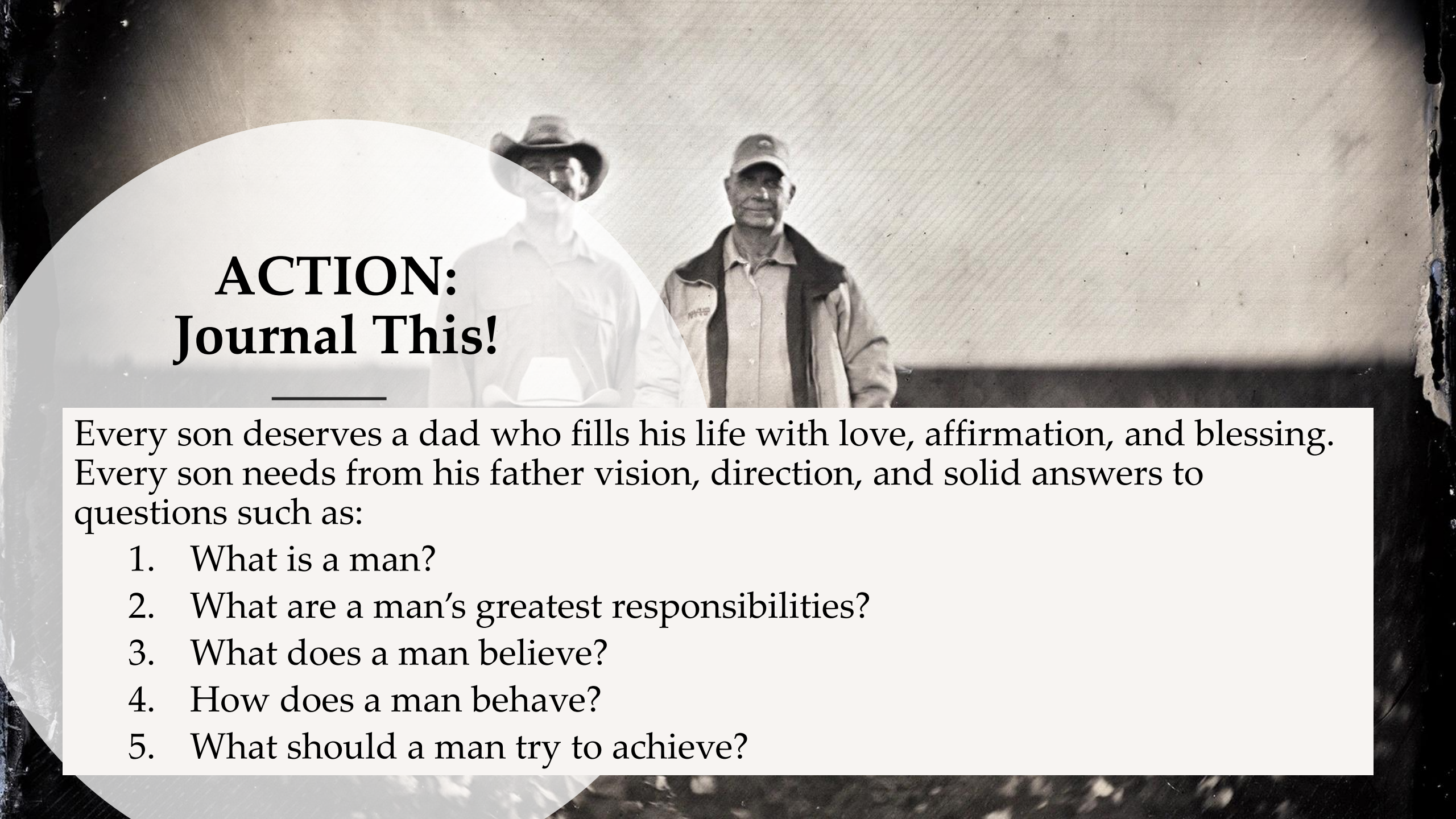
Jacob – the *patriarch of Israel* – the *father of a nation* – is a troubling character in the Old Testament. He is conniving and he is spiritual too. He has moments of strong faith as well as of fear. His family is sometimes in disarray, and yet at the end he is the one who sets it straight. Jacob, whose very name suggests "deceiver," is renamed by God as "Israel" -- "one who has struggled with God." And an entire nation is named after this patriarch -- the nation of Israel. Jacob is a bit too much like us -- with very human strengths and weaknesses, but a man with a striving for spiritual things. From this imperfect man we learn important lessons of faith. Especially, we learn about God's grace. Time to engage—enjoy the Adventure!

# The Power of a Father – FAMILY DRAMA – Genesis 29:28-35 & 30:1-24

1. **FAMILY DYSFUNCTION** → Laban's deception set the stage for the worst kind of favoritism, jealousy, competition, and lack of trust—all of which led to enormous unhappiness, tension, stress, anxiety, and anger. As the curtain falls on the final act, Rachael's sad and final words serve as an epitaph that characterized her married life.
2. Live in Reality (see Ephesians 4:22-24):
  1. **Sexual Sin Consequences** → Jacob's life suffered when he got involved in a polygamous relationship. Being involved sexually with more than one woman in our lives in any form other than marriage is not God's design. God intended that a man have one woman in his life and one woman only—his wife. When we violate God's perfect will in this matter, we will suffer the consequences—and so will our children.
  2. **Beauty Out of Brokenness** → God can create something beautiful out of something that is ugly, sinful, and sad. Leah experienced answers to prayers even though she lived her life in a loveless marriage. Rachel eventually bore two sons that brought her joy in the midst of her feelings of disgrace.

# The Power of a Father – CEREMONIES MAKE A DIFFERENCE

1. **EXPERIENCE IS NEEDED** → Create a ceremony that is an experiential process. Men need to be initiated into the circle of manhood.
2. **SURPRISE IS NEEDED** → Ceremonies produce an unexpected surprise. Imagination is awakened and restored when we are surprised. Wonder is restored. Without wonder we approach life as a project. *“Without wonder the motivational energies for living well get dominated by guilt and anxiety.”* - *The Soul of Spirituality* by David Benner.
3. Key passages in a Boy's Journey:
  1. **Puberty** → that great transition at the start of adolescence when a boy's body wreaks havoc with his mind.
  2. **High School Graduation** → when, for the first time, a young man experiences unbridled freedom.
  3. **College Graduation** → when a man must face the world and begin providing for himself.
  4. **Marriage** → when a man assumes responsibility for a wife and the leadership of his family.



## **ACTION: Journal This!**

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Every son deserves a dad who fills his life with love, affirmation, and blessing. Every son needs from his father vision, direction, and solid answers to questions such as:

1. What is a man?
2. What are a man's greatest responsibilities?
3. What does a man believe?
4. How does a man behave?
5. What should a man try to achieve?