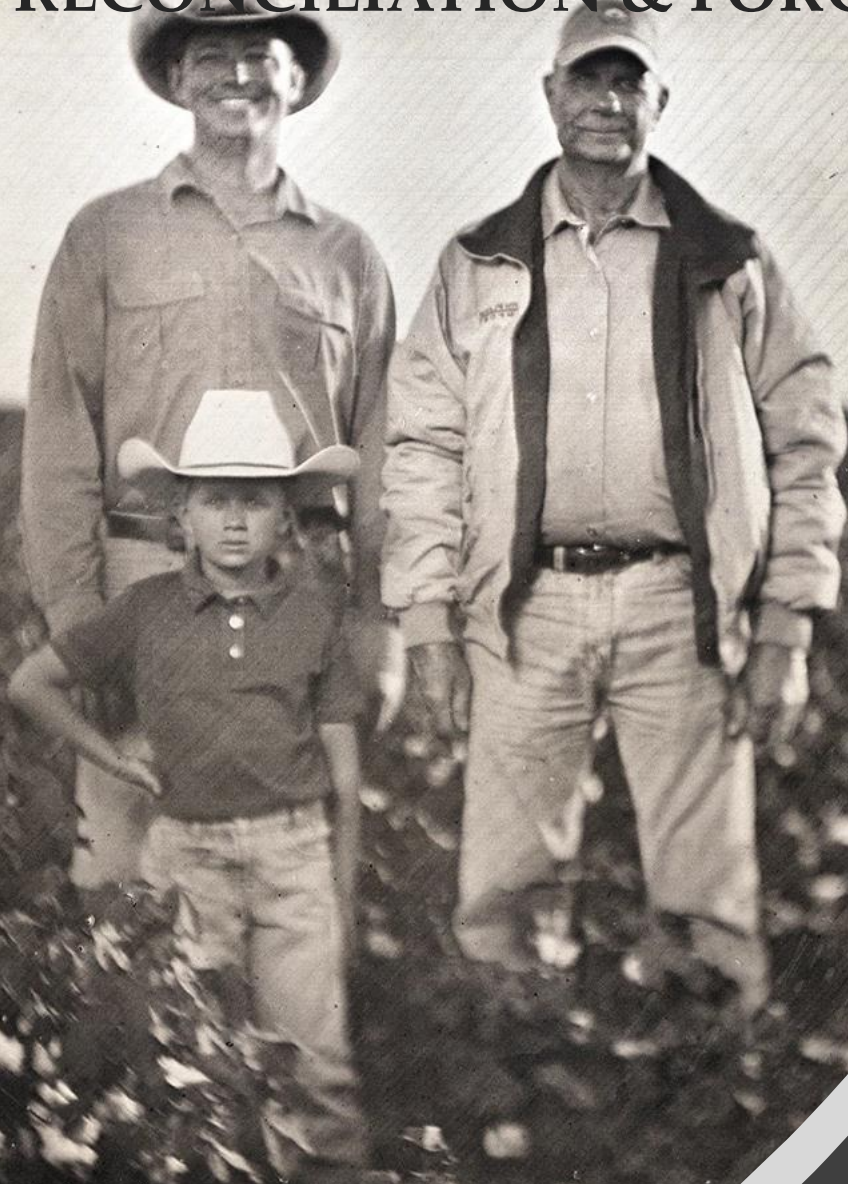


THE POWER OF A FATHER

The Power of a Father:

## WELCOME HOME – RECONCILIATION & FORGIVENESS!



## 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

## – RECONCILIATION & FORGIVENESS – Genesis 33:1-20

1. **DESIRE FOR PEACE** → Jacob was scared. Unknown to him, Esau was coming in peace. The 400 men accompanying him were simply attendants, not an army bent on wiping out Jacob and his family.
2. **PICTURE OF FORGIVENESS** → The moment Esau recognized Jacob, he ran to meet him (33:4). For Jacob to meet Esau face-to-face and experience his forgiveness was “like seeing the face of God” (33:10).
3. Live in Reality = From Jacob’s life, we learn some powerful principles to guide us.
  1. **Make Amends** → We need to seek forgiveness from those we’ve sinned against.
  2. **Reconciled** → We should seek to be reconciled with those who have sinned against us.
  3. **Restore** → We should seek to restore people who are trapped in sin (Gal. 6:1, 2).

## The Power of a Father – WELCOME HOME – Genesis 35:1-15.

1. **INTIMACY WITH GOD** → When Jacob and his household arrived in Bethel, in many respects he had come full circle. It was here he first met God personally, and now he was back to fulfill his vow. He immediately “built an altar, and he called the place El Bethel” – which means God of Bethel.
2. **RECONCILIATION** → Jacob was reunited with his father, Isaac who was now 180. Shortly after Jacob had returned home, Isaac “breathed his last and died.” Two brothers who were at each other’s throats now joined together to lay their ancient father to rest.
3. Live in Reality = From Jacob’s life, we learn some powerful principles to guide us.
  1. **SURRENDER** → Fortunately, most of our decisions that are not based on complete surrender to God’s will do not result in disaster. However, “partial obedience” of any kind will eventually lead to some very difficult experiences and heartbreaking situations. There will be consequences. There is only one safe and secure place: in the center of God’s “good, pleasing, and perfect will” (Romans 12:1,2).

# The Power of a Father – FACING THE FATHER WOUND– Psalm 68:5

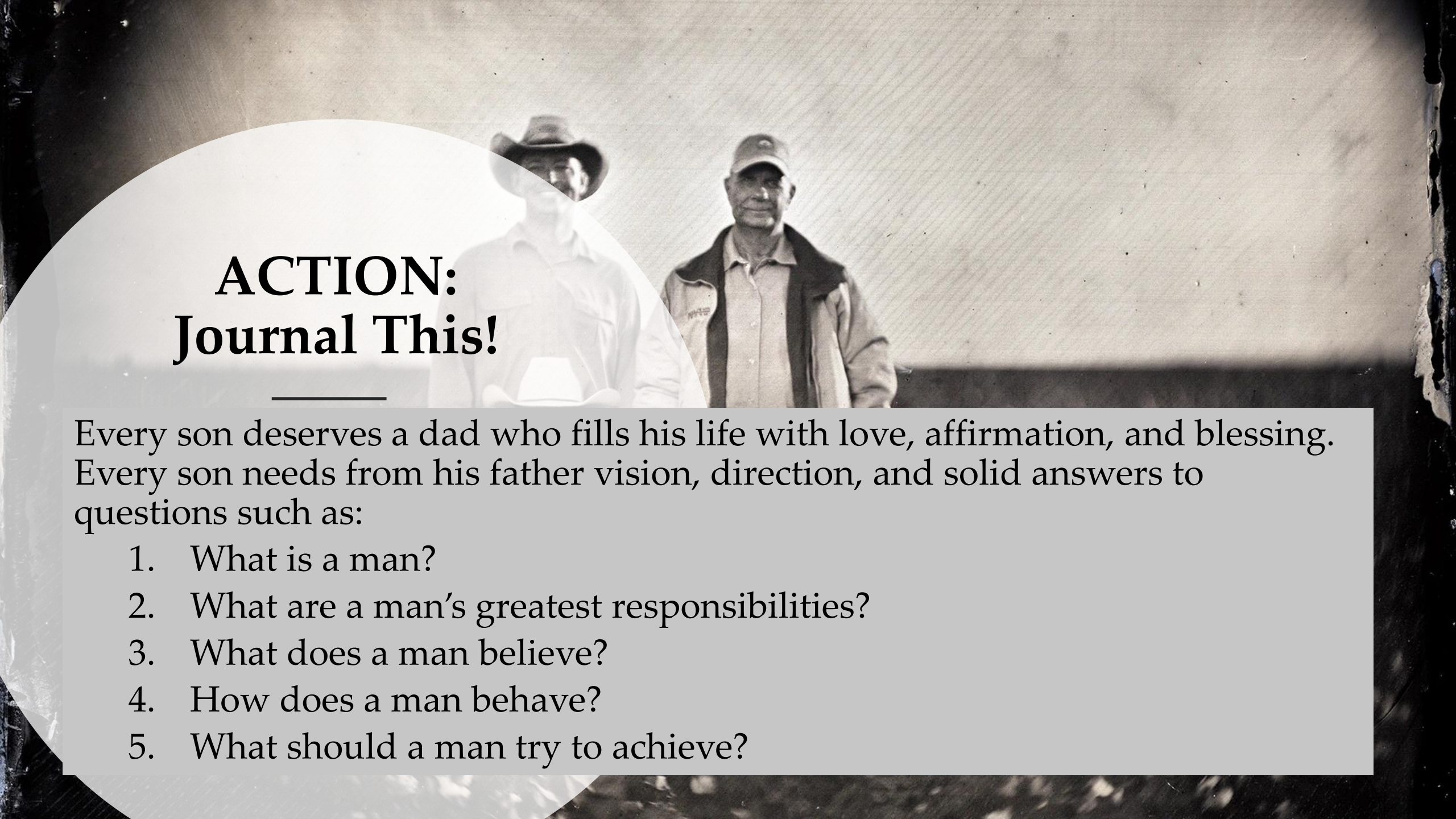
Resource: The Sacred Romance—Drawing Closer to the Heart of God by John Eldredge

## Chapter 3 – The Message of the Arrows

1. **FACING YOUR ARROWS** → To allow our hearts to heal, we must face our Arrows. You must stop and take time to thoughtfully, honestly, and tenderly answer these questions: How have you handled the affliction that has pierce your heart? How did the ARROWS come to you? Where did they land? Are they still there? What have you done as a result?
2. **ARROWS FROM YOUR YOUTH** → What hurt you? Most of the defining Arrows of our lives strike when we are young. For it is then that our hearts are most vulnerable and we are least guarded, least able to deal with the pain. Write down a word or sentence that captures for you the significant Arrows from your youth. Psalm 51:6.
3. **THE MESSAGE** → What was the Message of each Arrow? It's not so much the pain you've experienced, but what you've learned from it. What did the Arrow say about you? About God? About others? About life in general? Can you hear those messages still playing in your life today?
4. **HOW WE RESPOND** → There are two basic ways we handle the Arrows. First, we just deaden our heart. Secondly, we divide life into two parts. On the outside, all is duty and survival. But in secret, we find something to give us a taste of intimacy and adventure we were made for. Where do you go for a taste of intimacy or a taste of adventure these days?
5. **THE VOW** → How do you respond or react? Commitments form never to be in that position again, never to know that sort of pain again. The result is an approach to life that we often call our personality. The commitments are something like vows — *"I will never try that again."*

# The Power of a Father – FACING THE FATHER WOUND.

6. **A WAY TOWARD HEALING** → The way you handled the Arrows do not have to be the end of the story. You do not have to be ruled by it all. Jesus quoted Isaiah 61:1-3 when he stepped onto the stage.
7. **RENOUNCE THE VOW** → The only thing more tragic than the tragedy that happens to us is the way we handle it—the choices we make, the person we become, the life we live (or don't live). See Luke 17:31-33. The things we do to protect and preserve our hearts usually end up hurting us more. We must renounce our vows. Ephesians 4:26, 27. Unresolved emotional wounds create spiritual strongholds in our hearts.
8. **GRIEVE THE WOUND** → It is so important for us to grieve our losses. It is the only honest thing to do. For in grieving we admit the truth: We lost something very dear, and it hurt so much. Tears are healing. They help to open and cleanse the wound. Matthew 5:4.
9. **REJECT THE MESSAGE** → We must reject the lie that has so long defined us. Because of the wound, because the message was delivered by an Arrow, it sinks in deep and feels authoritative. But the fact is, nearly every message of every Arrow is untrue. You are loved. You are not alone. God does care.
10. **IMAGINE A GOOD FATHER** → Imagining what a “good father” would say and do, and then trying to live our life accordingly in all our relationships can help heal. Take the wound to our Heavenly Father by examining how we have projected our earthly father onto our Heavenly Father. We must be willing to forgive. Forgiveness isn't about forgetting about the pain your father has caused, but it's letting go of resentment or frustration that steals your freedom and peace.



## **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?