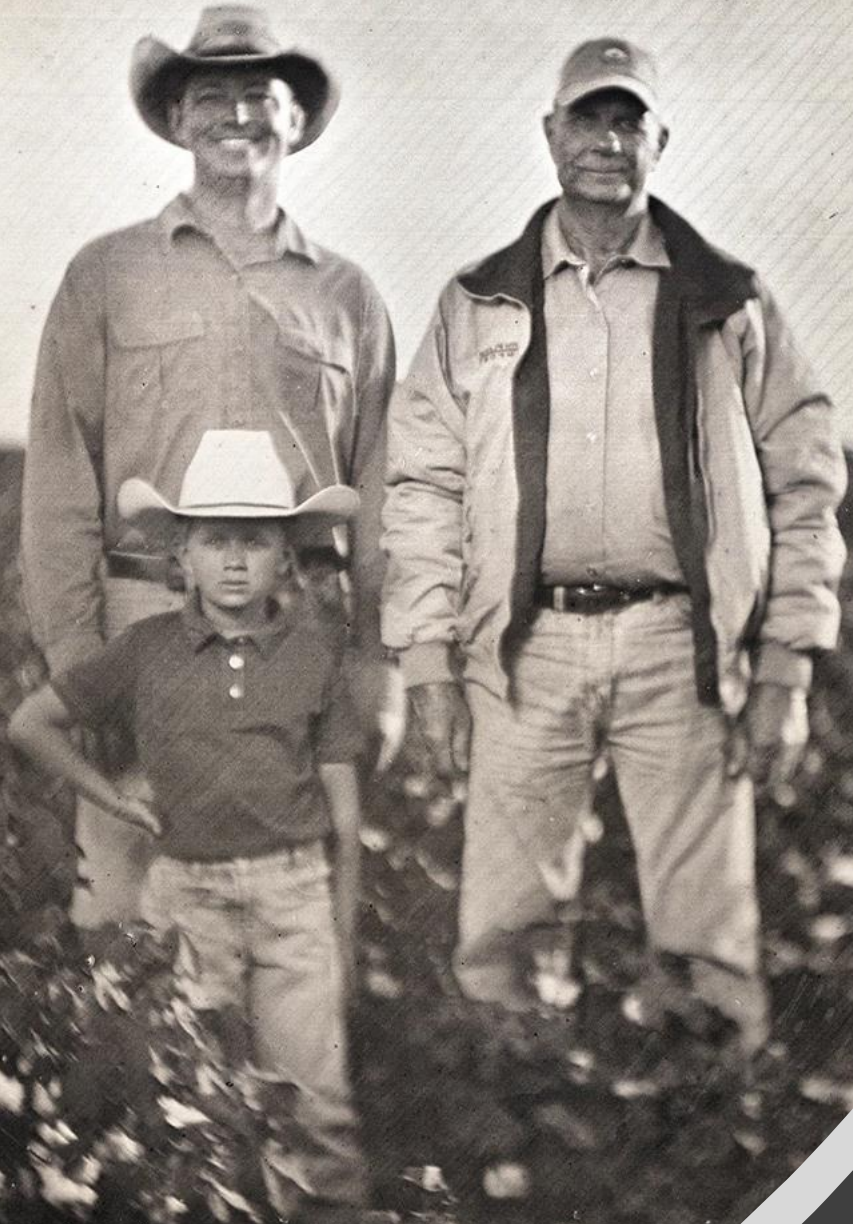


THE POWER OF A FATHER



## The Power of a Father: WRESTLING WITH THE FATHER!



## 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 – WRESTLING WITH THE FATHER – Genesis 32:22-32

1. **FACING THE UNKNOWN** → Jacob knew he had to face Esau, no matter what the consequences. No doubt, unable to sleep, he awakened his family members and ushered them across the river. Learn to rely on Paul's words to the Philippians (Phil. 4:6,7).
2. **A NEW NAME** → It was during the time of weakness, while Jacob was exerting all the human strength he could muster, that God brought him to his knees and changed his name (33:28). Because Jacob had admitted his sins and weaknesses and had yielded his life to God, he and his family would experience God's BLESSING.
3. Live in Reality = From Jacob's life, we learn some powerful principles to guide us.
  1. **CHANGE** → Once we meet God through Jesus Christ, our lives are destined for change. (Eph. 1:4; 2:8-10; Titus 1:1).
  2. **JOURNEY** → God is patient with our growth process. It's a Journey. God understands our human weakness.
  3. **DISCIPLINE** → Our heavenly Father will discipline us in order to conform us to His holy image. We see God's discipline in Jacob's life. It took 20 years for God to bring Jacob to the place of complete humility and commitment to following God's will. (Heb. 12:8).

# 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

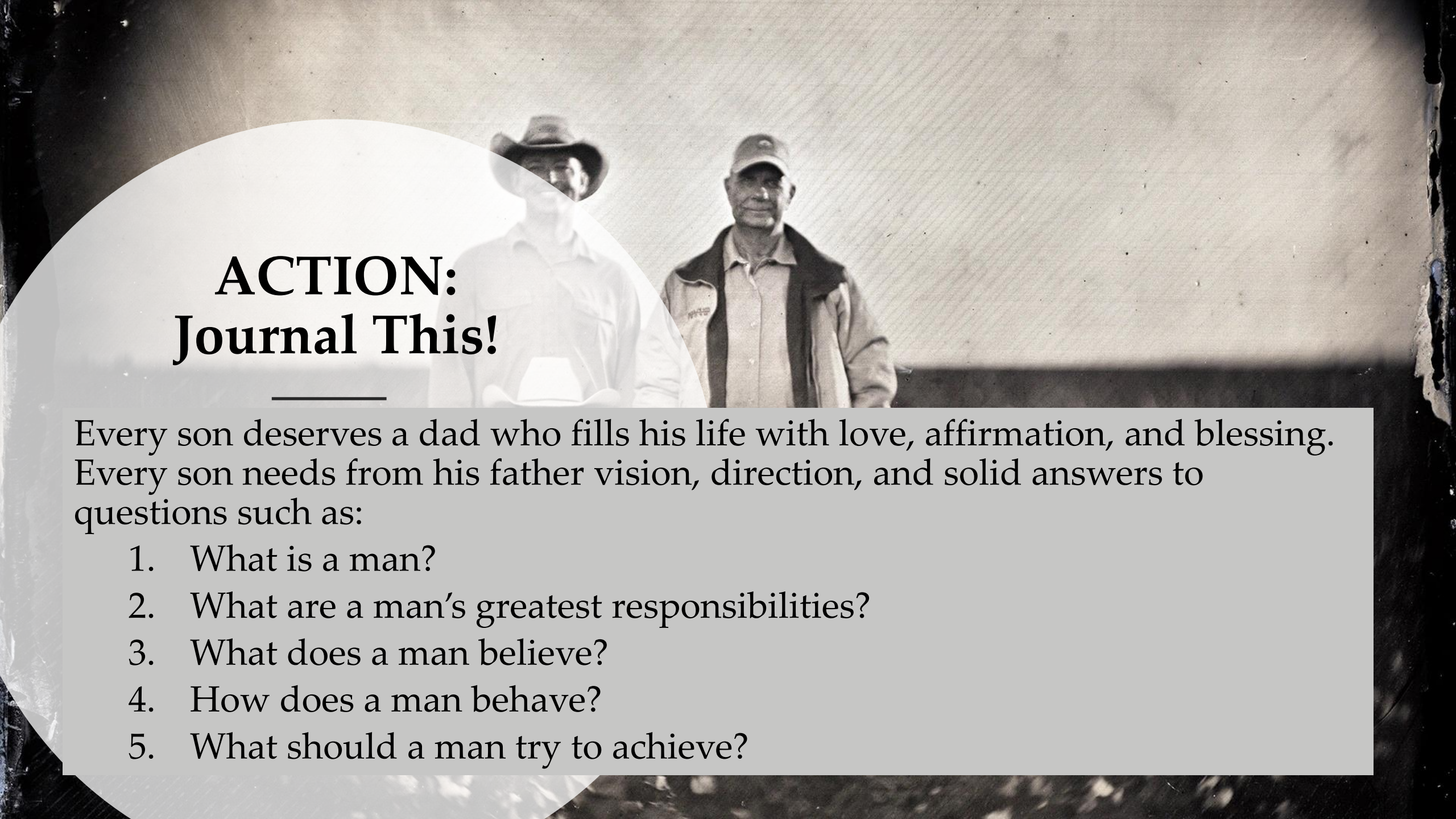
Chapter 3 – The Message of the Arrows.

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 pierced 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?