



DON'T BE ADAM

A Man of God's Complete Blueprint
for Protecting & Preparing His Family



By
JORDAN OWSA

A MAN OF GOD'S COMPLETE BLUEPRINT FOR
PROTECTING & PREPARING HIS FAMILY

Don't Be Adam.

*The biblical call to lead, protect,
and prepare your family — before life demands it.*

Don't Be Adam

A Man of God's Complete Blueprint for Protecting & Preparing His Family

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Resources for men who take their calling seriously.

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DEDICATED TO

My Dad.

Dad,

You taught me what it means to be a man before I knew what that meant. Not with speeches. Not with lectures. With the way you moved. The way you prepared. The way you thought twenty steps ahead of every situation because you loved us that much.

I remember watching you as a kid — the way you kept extra in the pantry, the way you always had a plan, the way you never panicked because you had already thought about it. I thought that was just who you were. It took me years to understand it was a choice. A decision you made every day to be the man your family could count on.

I am carrying that forward. My kids are growing up in a home where preparation is normal, where thinking ahead is a habit, and where faith and readiness are not in conflict. That is your legacy. You built that in me.

This book is for every man who needs what you gave me. And it is for you. Thank you, Dad.

With love and gratitude,

Jordan

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To the man who lies awake at night carrying the weight of his family on his shoulders and wondering if he's doing enough — you are not weak, and you are not too late. A good man feels that burden because he cares. Start here. One step, one prayer, one decision at a time. You are not walking this road alone.

Jordan Owsa

Iron & Covenant Press

INTRODUCTION

A Letter to the Man Who Knows Something Is Missing.

"The man who is prepared has his battle half fought."

— Miguel de Cervantes

You Already Know.

There is a quiet tension that lives in the chest of a lot of good Christian men. It's not doubt about their faith. It's not failure as a father or husband — at least not in the obvious ways. It's something subtler. A low-level awareness that they should be doing more to protect and prepare their families, and a steady discomfort that they haven't.

You work hard. You love your wife. You show up at church. You pray. But somewhere beneath the daily routine, there's a nagging question that doesn't quite go away:

If something serious happened tomorrow — would I know what to do?

Not a dramatic disaster scenario. Just the real ones. A job loss. A medical emergency. A family crisis. A season where life gets genuinely hard.

Most men, when they're honest, would have to admit: they don't have a plan. Not a real one. And that discomfort? That's not weakness. That's your conscience doing its job.

"Whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin."

James 4:17

This Is Adam's Story. And Yours.

Genesis 3:6 contains one of the most overlooked details in all of Scripture. When the serpent tempted Eve, the text tells us that Adam was with her. He was standing right there. He heard every word. He watched it happen.

And he said nothing.

Bible scholars and theologians have called this the sin of passivity — the failure to speak, to act, to lead in the moment when leadership was needed most. It wasn't a dramatic act of rebellion. It was silence. Presence without protection.

Being there isn't the same as leading. Silence isn't the same as peace. And good intentions don't build a family plan.

The consequences of that moment rippled through Adam's entire family for generations. Not because Eve made a mistake. But because the man who was called to guard the garden wasn't guarding it.

A NOTE ON THIS GUIDE

This is not a survivalist manual. It is not driven by fear, end-times anxiety, or political alarm. It is a practical, faith-grounded framework for Christian husbands and fathers who take seriously what God has entrusted to them.

Seven Areas. One Clear Plan.

This guide is built around seven core areas of family protection and preparedness. Each section gives you practical tools, biblical grounding, and specific action steps. Not theory — things you can actually do.

- 1. The Mindset of a Guardian** — How prepared men think, and what separates them from good men who mean well.
- 2. Spiritual Protection** — Guarding the spiritual health and formation of your household.
- 3. Home & Emergency Preparedness** — Practical systems for the moments life doesn't schedule.
- 4. Financial Protection** — Stewarding what God has entrusted so your family has a foundation.
- 5. Health & Physical Readiness** — The physical role of a prepared man.
- 6. Raising Strong Children** — Building the next generation with intention.
- 7. The 90-Day Action Plan** — A step-by-step framework to build your family preparedness plan.

You don't have to do everything at once. You just have to start. This guide will show you where.

This Is Not About Being Perfect.

A prepared man is not a man who has everything figured out. He is a man who has decided that figuring it out matters — and who has started building, even imperfectly, in the right direction.

Noah didn't build the ark in a weekend. Abraham didn't know the whole route when he left Ur. Joseph didn't design his own path through the pit and the prison. But they moved. They built. They stewarded what they were given and trusted God with what they couldn't control.

Your family doesn't need a perfect man. They need a prepared one.

— A reader, age 44

Every checklist in this guide is a beginning, not a finish line. Every worksheet is a starting point. Use what you can now. Return to what you can't yet. And give yourself permission to be a man in process — because that is exactly what faithful preparation looks like.

Let's begin.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read it once straight through to get the full picture. Then return to each section with the worksheets. The 90-Day Action Plan at the end gives you a structured timeline so nothing stays theoretical.

PART One

THE MINDSET OF A GUARDIAN

Prepared men think differently. Here is how.

A new identity, not just a new to-do list.

The Difference Between a Good Man and a Prepared Man

Most Christian men are good men. They work hard, love their families, serve in their churches, and try to live with integrity. The gap between a good man and a prepared man is not character. It is intention.

A good man hopes things will be okay. A prepared man builds systems so that if things aren't okay, his family is still protected.

A good man cares deeply about his family. A prepared man translates that care into specific, actionable plans.

Caring about something and building for it are two different things. Prepared men do both.

This is not a criticism of good men. Most of us were never taught the difference. Nobody handed us a framework for what family protection actually looks like from a biblical perspective. So we defaulted to good intentions — and good intentions, alone, are not a plan.

THE GUARDIAN IDENTITY

A guardian is not a man defined by fear. He is defined by responsibility. He sees clearly what he has been entrusted with and decides, every day, to protect it. This is who you are building toward.

Five Shifts in How Prepared Men Think

The mindset of a guardian isn't a personality type. It's a set of mental frameworks that anyone can develop with intention.

- 1. They think in seasons, not just today.** A prepared man asks: What does my family need not just this week, but if this season lasts six months?
- 2. They distinguish between urgent and important.** The urgent is always demanding attention. The important — your family's long-term protection — rarely screams. Prepared men build time for the important anyway.
- 3. They act on discomfort instead of suppressing it.** That quiet unease about being unprepared? Prepared men treat it as information and respond. Unprepared men numb it.
- 4. They separate emotion from planning.** Love is the motive. A plan is the mechanism. Prepared men build the mechanism.
- 5. They measure readiness, not just effort.** It's not enough to mean well. Prepared men ask: Are we actually more protected than we were six months ago?

A man of faith prepares because of what he trusts, not because of what he fears.

Biblical Foundations for the Guardian Mindset

Some Christian men feel an unspoken tension around preparedness — as if trusting God and making plans are somehow in conflict. Scripture doesn't share that tension.

Consider what the Bible says directly:

Proverbs 27:12 — "The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty."

Proverbs 21:20 — "In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has."

1 Timothy 5:8 — "Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Luke 14:28 — "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost...?" Jesus himself uses preparation as a metaphor for wise discipleship.

Preparation is not the absence of faith. For a man of God, preparation IS faith in action — the tangible expression of trusting that God has given you a role and taking it seriously.

THE NOAH PRINCIPLE

Noah didn't pray for the flood to stop. He built. For decades, he built something that looked foolish to everyone around him — because God told him to. Faithfulness looked like sawdust and sweat, not just prayer.

Your Threat Assessment: What Are You Actually Protecting Against?

Before building a preparedness plan, a guardian needs clarity on what he is actually protecting against. Not every threat is a catastrophe. Most are mundane — and that's exactly where most families are vulnerable.

The four categories of threats every family faces:

- 1. Financial disruption** — Job loss, unexpected medical bills, economic downturns. This is the #1 crisis most families face, and the least prepared for.
- 2. Health emergencies** — Illness, injury, mental health crises. A man who is physically and mentally compromised cannot protect or lead his family.
- 3. Relationship breakdown** — Marriage under stress, children in crisis. The family unit itself is always under some form of pressure.
- 4. Practical disruption** — Power outages, natural disasters, community-level emergencies. These are real and manageable with modest preparation.

You don't need to prepare for all of these at once. You need to know which ones your family is most exposed to — and build toward those first.

Fear prepares for the dramatic. Wisdom prepares for the likely.

Preparing for the Likely, Not the Loud

The four categories of threats — financial, health, relational, and practical — cover the disruptions most families will actually face. But there is a wider category worth naming: the slow-motion failure of the systems we don't think about until they stop working.

Modern life runs on infrastructure most men never see — the supply chain that fills your grocery store, the bank network that processes your paycheck, the grid that keeps your refrigerator cold. Each of these has been more fragile in the last five years than at any point in the last fifty.

A prepared man doesn't predict which system will fail first. He hardens his family against the realistic ways any of them could fail — and then keeps living his life.

"Chance favors the prepared mind."

— *Louis Pasteur*

"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, 'My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.'"

Psalm 91:1–2

Guardian Mindset Assessment

Answer these questions honestly. There are no right answers — only useful ones. This worksheet is for your eyes only.

CURRENT SENSE OF READINESS (1 = NOT READY, 5 = VERY READY):

THE AREA OF FAMILY LIFE I FEEL LEAST PREPARED FOR:

LAST REAL CONVERSATION WITH MY SPOUSE ABOUT PREPAREDNESS:

ONE GOOD INTENTION I HAVE HAD FOR OVER A YEAR BUT HAVEN'T ACTED ON:

THE COST OF CONTINUING TO PUT THIS OFF — FOR ME AND MY FAMILY:

Building Your Guardian Identity

Complete the following:

IN WHAT AREA DOES MY FAMILY FEEL MOST VULNERABLE RIGHT NOW?

WHAT HAS BEEN MY BIGGEST BARRIER TO BUILDING A PREPAREDNESS PLAN?

ONE ACTION I HAVE AVOIDED THAT I KNOW I SHOULD TAKE:

THE MAN I WANT TO BE — DESCRIBED IN ONE SENTENCE:

WHAT DOES BEING PREPARED MEAN TO ME, BEYOND THE PRACTICAL?

PART Two

SPIRITUAL PROTECTION

Guarding the souls in your home.

The first and most critical form of family protection.

The Spiritual Leader Who Isn't Leading

The most common spiritual failure in Christian households is not outright rebellion. It is abdication. The slow, silent drift where a man is present in the home but absent from its spiritual life.

He goes to church. He would say he believes. But his wife carries the spiritual weight of the household — the prayer, the Scripture, the faith conversations with the kids. He is along for the ride.

Spiritual leadership is not about knowing more than your wife. It is about being the one who consistently points your family toward God.

The research is consistent: when fathers lead spiritually in the home, children are dramatically more likely to remain in faith as adults. When fathers are passive or absent from the spiritual life of the home, the inverse is true.

This is not about performance. It's not about leading a perfect family devotional every night. It is about being the man who initiates — who makes it known, by his actions, that God is the foundation of this house.

THE DEUTERONOMY 6 MANDATE

"These commandments are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." (Deut. 6:6-7) — Spiritual leadership is not a program. It is a posture.

Five Practical Ways to Lead Spiritually at Home

Spiritual leadership does not require a seminary degree. It requires consistency and initiation. Here are five things any man can start doing this week:

- 1. Pray out loud with your family.** Even briefly. Even imperfectly. When a father prays aloud, he models that prayer is real, not performance.
- 2. Know what your children believe.** Not just what they've been taught — what they actually believe. Ask them. Listen without correcting immediately. Know where they are.
- 3. Guard what enters your home.** Streaming content, social media, friendships — these form your family. A guardian is intentional about formation, not just consumption.
- 4. Initiate spiritual conversations.** Not lectures. Conversations. Ask: "What did you think of the sermon?" or "What's something you've been thinking about?" This opens the door.
- 5. Model repentance and reconciliation.** When you fail — and you will — let your family see you take responsibility and seek restoration. This teaches more than any devotional.

Protecting Your Family's Spiritual Ecosystem

Your home has a spiritual culture. It is either one you are building intentionally or one that is forming by default. There is no neutral option.

The spiritual ecosystem of a home is shaped by three forces:

- 1. What is consistently spoken** — the words, tone, values, and beliefs that are repeated. This becomes the air your family breathes.
- 2. What is consistently practiced** — the rhythms, habits, and rituals that form the day. Family dinner, prayer, church attendance, Sabbath rest. These are not legalism — they are formation.
- 3. What is consistently allowed** — the influences, relationships, and content that shape your family from the outside. A guardian is the gatekeeper.

Building a strong spiritual ecosystem doesn't mean sheltering your family from the world. It means making sure the foundation is strong enough that when the world hits — and it will — your family knows what they're standing on.

THE GATEKEEPER ROLE

Ezekiel 3:17 describes the prophet as a watchman for Israel. The image is of someone stationed at the wall, whose job is to see what is coming and warn the people. A father is a watchman for his household.

Family Rhythms That Build Spiritual Strength

These are the rhythms that research and experience consistently show build resilient, faith-grounded families:

- **Weekly church attendance** — Not as performance but as community. Isolation is the enemy of faith formation.
- **Regular family meals together** — More conversations about faith happen around dinner tables than in formal family devotionals.
- **Bedtime prayer with young children** — This simple habit builds a lifetime association between rest and trust in God.
- **Annual family values conversation** — Once a year, name what your family stands for. Write it down. Post it somewhere visible.
- **Serving together** — When families serve others together, it builds shared identity and faith-in-action.
- **One-on-one time between father and each child** — Individual investment communicates value. Children who feel genuinely known by their fathers are more likely to remain in faith.

Guarding Against the Algorithm

Up to this point in the guide, the gatekeeper role has been framed mostly in terms of what enters your home — streaming content, friendships, music, social feeds. But there is a quieter kind of formation happening in most modern homes that a guardian needs to see clearly: the kind that doesn't come from a person at all.

Every smart device in your house is talking to a system that has no soul. Smart meters, voice assistants, smart TVs, app-connected thermostats, networked appliances — most of these report what your family does, hour by hour, to systems run by algorithms designed to optimize for things that have nothing to do with your family's wellbeing.

This is not a fringe concern. The grid, the banking network, and the supply chain a typical family depends on are now largely managed by AI systems that "optimize load balancing" and "protect critical infrastructure" — which, in plain English, means they're built to protect themselves first, not you.

A prepared man doesn't panic about this. But he is intentional. He limits the data his home gives out. He keeps analog backups for the systems his family depends on — a corded phone, a paper address book, cash on hand. And he teaches his children that not every screen is neutral.

A Practical Defense Against an Algorithmic Grid

If the previous chapter struck a nerve — that quiet sense that something is watching, ranking, and shaping your home in ways you didn't consent to — you are not paranoid. You are paying attention.

The good news is that there is a real defense, and it isn't a tinfoil hat. It's the analog principle: anything that doesn't live on the digital network can't be tracked, throttled, or shut off by it. Older tools. Mechanical systems. Local food, local water, local power. The same things our grandparents took for granted.

"Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God."

Psalm 20:7

When Your Family Is in Spiritual Crisis

Every family goes through seasons of spiritual dryness or outright crisis. A child who walks away from faith. A marriage where God feels distant. A season of doubt in your own heart. These are not failures — they are human.

What separates prepared men from unprepared ones is not whether crisis comes. It's what they do with it.

- 1. Don't panic.** Spiritual crisis is almost never the end of the story. Hold steady. Your steadiness gives your family a reference point.
- 2. Don't lecture.** When a child or spouse is in spiritual crisis, they need to feel genuinely heard before they will receive anything from you.
- 3. Stay in community.** The worst time to leave your church or small group is when things are hard. Community is the mechanism God most often uses to restore people.
- 4. Keep praying, even when it feels hollow.** Faith persisted through dryness is different from faith that has never been tested.
- 5. Seek pastoral counsel.** You don't have to solve this alone, and trying to is often counterproductive.

A PROMISE TO HOLD

"He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." — Philippians 1:6. This includes your children. Your work is faithfulness. The outcome belongs to God.

Family Worship Without a Seminary Degree

Most men never lead their family spiritually for one reason: they think they're not qualified. They picture a polished devotional, a perfect lesson, kids sitting still. So they wait — and the waiting becomes years.

Drop that picture. Family worship is not a performance. It is a father turning his household toward God, briefly and consistently, on purpose.

It can be ten minutes. It can happen at the dinner table. It does not require notes, a plan, or an answer to every question your kids will ask.

What it requires is that you start — and that you keep going.

THE TEN-MINUTE TABLE RHYTHM

Read a short passage aloud — a few verses, a psalm, part of a gospel. Ask one question: "What does this tell us about God, or about us?" Let anyone answer. Then pray — short, honest, out loud. That's it. Do it three nights a week and you are leading.

Your children do not need a father with every answer. They need a father who opens the Book and bows his head where they can see him.

Teaching Your Children to Pray

Children learn to pray the way they learn to talk — by hearing it, every day, from someone they love.

So pray out loud in front of them. Not impressive prayers. Honest ones. Thank God for specific things. Admit when you're worried. Ask for help by name. When your kids hear you talk to God as if He's real, they learn that He is.

Give the youngest ones simple handles. Four words cover most of prayer:

- **Thank You** — for something good today.
- **Sorry** — for something they got wrong.
- **Please** — for someone who needs help.
- **Wow** — for who God is.

Pray with them at bedtime, when the day is quiet and their hearts are open. And when they're afraid, don't only comfort them — pray with them, right there in the dark. You are teaching them where to take their fear for the rest of their lives.

A Family Rhythm That Sticks

Spiritual leadership is not built on big moments. It's built on small ones, repeated until they become the shape of your home.

A simple cadence beats sporadic intensity every time. Aim for three layers:

- 1. Daily.** A few minutes at the table or at bedtime — a verse, a question, a prayer. Short and unmissable.
- 2. Weekly.** Worship together as a family. Guard one day, or even one evening, for rest and unhurried time. Have one real conversation with each child about how their heart is doing.
- 3. Seasonally.** Mark the year — Advent, Easter, birthdays — with intention. Once a year, sit down and name what your family stands for, and write it where everyone can see it.

You will miss days. Everyone does. When you do, don't restart the whole thing or carry guilt about it. Just pick it back up at the next meal. Consistency, not perfection, is what forms a soul.

Children rarely remember the lesson. They remember the rhythm — that in this house, God was always part of the day.

Guard Your Own Walk First

You cannot lead your family to a place you refuse to go yourself.

A man can run a flawless family devotional and still be starving in private. Kids can tell the difference. They are watching not the words you say at the table, but the man you are when no one is looking.

So tend your own walk before you manage anyone else's.

- **Feed it.** Read and pray for yourself, not only to prepare something for the family. A leader has to eat too.
- **Guard it.** Deal honestly with the secret things — the screen, the temper, the bitterness. Hidden sin always leaks into the home eventually.
- **Confess it.** Have one man who knows the truth about you. Isolation is where most men quietly fall.

This isn't about being above your family. It's about being real beneath the role. The most powerful thing your children will ever witness is a father who keeps returning to God — honestly, repentantly, for himself.

GUARD YOUR HEART

"Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life." (Proverbs 4:23) What you protect in private is what you will pass on in public.

Spiritual Protection Audit

Rate your current family spiritual health honestly (1 = needs significant work, 5 = strong and consistent):

PRAYER LIFE AS A FAMILY (1–5 AND NOTES):

MY PERSONAL SPIRITUAL CONSISTENCY (1–5 AND NOTES):

SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS WITH MY CHILDREN (1–5 AND NOTES):

WHAT WE WATCH / LISTEN TO IN OUR HOME (1–5 AND NOTES):

CHURCH / COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (1–5 AND NOTES):

ONE SPIRITUAL HABIT I WILL IMPLEMENT THIS WEEK:

ONE THING I WILL STOP ALLOWING INTO OUR HOME:

PART Three

HOME & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

*Practical systems for the moments life doesn't
schedule.*

What every household needs, clearly explained.

The Prepared Home: Starting Where You Are

Emergency preparedness doesn't start with a bunker. It starts with a flashlight that has batteries in it and a first aid kit that isn't expired.

The goal of home preparedness is not to prepare for the end of the world. It is to give your family a buffer — the ability to function for 72 hours to two weeks without external systems — so that when the ordinary disruptions of life hit, you are not in crisis.

Power outages. Ice storms. Job loss. A sudden medical situation. These are not extreme scenarios. They are the situations that hit normal families in normal life. A prepared home handles them without panic.

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

— Benjamin Franklin

THE 72-HOUR BASELINE

FEMA and the Red Cross recommend every household be able to self-sustain for at least 72 hours without external support. This is a modest, achievable starting point — not a ceiling.

The Prepared Home Checklist

Start here. These are the foundational elements of a prepared home. Check off what you have. Circle what you need to address.

- Water:** 1 gallon per person per day, minimum 3-day supply (72 hours). For a family of 4 that's 12 gallons minimum.
- Food:** Non-perishable food for 2 weeks. Canned goods, rice, beans, peanut butter. Foods your family actually eats.
- First Aid Kit:** Fully stocked and not expired. Know how to use what's in it.
- Flashlights & Batteries:** At least 2 per household. Check batteries twice per year.
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio:** For emergencies when power and internet are out.
- Medications:** 30-day supply of any prescription medications in emergency kit.
- Important Documents:** Copies of birth certificates, insurance policies, financial documents in a waterproof container.
- Emergency Contact List:** Printed, not just on your phone. Phones die.
- Cash:** At least \$300 in small bills. ATMs don't work without power.
- Phone charger / power bank:** For extended power outages.
- Fire extinguisher:** In the kitchen. Know how to use it.
- Carbon monoxide and smoke detectors:** Tested and with fresh batteries.
- Family emergency plan:** Everyone in your household knows where to meet if you can't reach each other.

Beyond the Pantry: Food That Lasts Years, Not Weeks

The checklist above gives your family the 72-hour to two-week buffer that handles most ordinary disruptions. But there is a deeper category of preparedness worth understanding — and worth building toward as time and budget allow: food that lasts for years without refrigeration, freezing, or special equipment.

For most of human history, this is how families ate. Smoked meats, fermented vegetables, dried staples, lard-preserved pork, hard tack, cured cheese, dehydrated soups. Almost every culture developed its own answer to the same problem: how do you feed a family through winter, through siege, through the months when nothing grows?

The methods our great-grandparents used didn't require electricity, plastic, or a Costco membership. They required knowledge — knowledge that, in three generations, has almost entirely disappeared from American homes.

Rebuilding that knowledge is one of the highest-leverage things a prepared man can do. A stockpile of canned goods will get your family through a month. A working knowledge of food preservation will carry your family through a year.

Food in Due Season

A full pantry is not hoarding. It is one of the oldest forms of love a man can show — making sure his family still eats when the shelves outside go empty.

Stored food turns a crisis into an inconvenience. Build it in three layers, in order:

- 1. The two-week shelf.** Canned goods, rice, beans, oats, peanut butter, cooking oil, salt — foods your family already eats. Add a few extra to each grocery trip until you have two weeks on hand.
- 2. The three-month pantry.** Bulk staples that keep for a year or more: white rice, dried beans and lentils, pasta, flour, sugar, honey, canned meat. Stored cool, dry, and dark.
- 3. The long-term reserve.** Food preserved the old way — dried, salted, cured, fermented, or home-canned — that lasts for years without refrigeration.

The methods our great-grandparents used are not complicated: drying fruit and meat, salt-curing, water-bath and pressure canning, fermenting vegetables, storing roots in a cool cellar. Learn one method a season and you will never depend entirely on a store again.

Whatever you store, rotate it. First in, first out. Eat from your reserve and replace what you use, so nothing expires and your family already likes what is on the shelf.

"The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing."

Psalm 145:15–16

Your Family Emergency Plan

A plan that only exists in your head is not a plan. It needs to be communicated, rehearsed, and documented so that every member of your family knows what to do — even if you are not there.

Your family emergency plan should cover these five elements:

- 1. Meeting locations** — Two of them. One near your home (a neighbor's house, the end of the block). One farther away in case your neighborhood is affected. Everyone in the family knows both addresses.
- 2. Communication plan** — Who calls whom. What number everyone calls if they can't reach each other. An out-of-state contact that everyone checks in with (often easier to reach than local numbers during a local emergency).
- 3. Evacuation routes** — Know two ways out of your neighborhood. Drive them with your family once. Know where you would go and where you would stay.
- 4. Special needs plan** — Medications, mobility needs, pets. These need to be specifically addressed in advance.
- 5. Roles and responsibilities** — Who grabs the go-bag. Who accounts for each child. Who shuts off the utilities. Pre-decided roles prevent chaos.

The Go-Bag: What Every Family Needs Ready to Move

A go-bag is a pre-packed bag or container that your family can grab and carry if you need to leave your home quickly. It is not a military kit. It is 72 hours of basics.

Essential go-bag contents for a family of 4:

- Water (4L minimum) and water purification tablets or a filter
- 3-day food supply per person — bars, jerky, trail mix, ready-to-eat meals
- First aid kit with manual
- Copies of all important documents in a waterproof bag
- Cash (\$300+ in small bills)
- Phone chargers and a power bank
- Flashlights and extra batteries
- Basic clothing change per person (one layer warm, one change of socks)
- Any prescription medications (30-day supply)
- Multi-tool and basic tools
- Emergency blankets (lightweight, foil)
- List of contacts (printed), insurance info, medication lists

Store the go-bag somewhere everyone knows. Check it every 6 months. Replace expired food and medications annually.

Water Independence: When Storage Isn't Enough

One gallon per person per day for 72 hours is the baseline every household should hit. For most families, that means a dozen jugs in the garage and a few cases of bottled water in the pantry. It's the right place to start.

But water is also the resource that runs out first in a real, extended disruption — and the one your family will need every single day of a months-long event. Storage handles a few days. Storage does not handle a season.

The deeper question is whether your family has a way to produce water without depending on a municipal pipe, a tanker truck, or a hardware-store filter your local supplier has long since sold out of.

The good news is that two of the most reliable answers don't require drilling a well or buying a \$10,000 corporate machine. They use a principle the Israeli military proved in some of the driest battlefields on earth: humidity in the air, even in arid regions, contains drinkable water. Condense it, filter it, store it — and you have a steady, daily, drought-proof supply.

Springs in the Wilderness

You can live for weeks without food. You will not last three days without water. It is the first thing to secure — and the first thing most families forget.

A prepared man covers water in three moves: store it, source it, purify it.

- 1. Store it.** One gallon per person per day, for drinking and basic hygiene. Two weeks for a family of four is about 56 gallons. Use food-grade containers, kept cool and dark, and rotate them twice a year.
- 2. Source it.** Know where water is near you that does not depend on the tap — a rain barrel, a creek or pond, a swimming pool, and the 40-plus gallons already sitting in your water heater.
- 3. Purify it.** Treat any sourced water as unsafe until you make it safe. Boil it one full minute. Or add eight drops of unscented household bleach per gallon and wait thirty minutes. Or run it through a quality gravity filter.

Rain is the easiest water most men overlook. A single barrel under a downspout can capture hundreds of gallons from one good storm — free, and renewable as long as the sky opens.

"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst, I the Lord will answer them; I the God of Israel will not forsake them."

Isaiah 41:17

Home Security: Protecting Your Household

Physical security of your home is a legitimate and biblical concern. A man who won't engage with this topic is not being spiritual — he is being negligent.

The goal is not to turn your home into a fortress. The goal is to make your home a poor target and to have a clear plan if that protection is ever tested.

- 1. Solid exterior doors and deadbolt locks** — Most home invasions happen through unlocked or weak points. This is the most cost-effective security upgrade available.
- 2. Exterior lighting** — Motion-activated lighting is a proven deterrent. Cover your entry points.
- 3. Home alarm system** — Even a monitored system for \$30/month provides substantial deterrence and response capability.
- 4. Neighbor relationships** — Knowing and being known by your neighbors is one of the most powerful safety tools available. Neighbors who know each other notice when something is wrong.
- 5. Self-defense consideration** — This is a matter of personal conviction. Whatever your conclusion, it should be a deliberate decision, not a default. If you own firearms, proper storage and training are non-negotiable.
- 6. Conversation with your family** — Your spouse should know your home security plan. Not in detail that creates fear, but in broad strokes so they feel safe and know what to do.

The Long Blackout: A Threat Worth Naming

Home security is mostly about everyday risks — the unlocked door, the unlit yard, the well-rehearsed plan. But there is a longer-tail risk that a prepared guardian should at least name out loud, even if it never comes: the prolonged grid failure.

A three-day blackout from a winter storm is something every family in the country will face at some point. A two-week regional outage from a hurricane or transformer fire is real but uncommon. A multi-week or multi-month grid failure — from a cyberattack, a cascading equipment failure, or an electromagnetic event — is rare. But the Congressional EMP Commission, FEMA, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission have all studied the scenario and reached the same conclusion: the systems we depend on are more fragile than the public is told.

The prepared response is not to live in fear of this. It is to make sure that if the lights ever stay off for longer than a few days, your family doesn't have to learn what to do from scratch in the cold and the dark.

The principles are the ones we've already covered — heat without gas, light without grid, water that doesn't depend on city pumps, food that doesn't depend on refrigeration, communications that don't depend on cell towers.

Light in the Darkness

When the power goes for more than a few hours, three needs turn urgent fast: staying warm, seeing in the dark, and cooking what you have. Plan all three before you ever need them.

Warmth. Layer up, close off one room, and heat only that. Blankets and body heat go further than you think. If you use an indoor-safe propane heater, crack a window — and never run a generator, grill, or camp stove inside the house.

Light. Flashlights and headlamps beat candles every time — no open flame, no fire risk. Keep a stash of batteries and one or two crank or solar lanterns.

Cooking. A propane or butane camp stove, run outdoors or in an open garage, will boil water and heat meals. Keep a week of fuel on hand.

THE SILENT KILLER

Carbon monoxide has no smell and kills in minutes. Anything that burns fuel — generator, grill, charcoal, camp stove — stays outside, away from doors and windows. Put a battery-powered CO detector in your home before winter. That one rule has saved more lives than any gadget.

The dark is only dangerous to the family that never planned for it.

When the Networks Fail

In almost every real emergency, the cell network is the first thing to buckle. Everyone reaches for their phone at the same moment and the towers jam — or the power that runs them goes down. A prepared family has a plan that doesn't depend on a signal.

Put these pieces in place now, while it's easy:

- 1. One out-of-area contact.** Pick a relative or friend a few states away. When local lines are jammed, a long-distance text often still goes through. Everyone checks in with that one person, who relays messages.
- 2. A printed contact card.** Numbers, addresses, and meeting points on paper — one in each wallet and backpack. Phones die; paper doesn't.
- 3. A way to hear the news.** A battery or hand-crank radio tells you what's happening when the internet is gone.
- 4. Short-range radios.** A cheap pair of two-way radios keeps the family in contact across a neighborhood or worksite when phones won't.

Then rehearse it once. A plan everyone has heard out loud beats a perfect plan that lives only in your head.

When the Taps Stop

It's the part of preparedness nobody wants to talk about, and it's the one that quietly saves the most lives. When water stops flowing, toilets stop flushing — and in a crowded home, poor sanitation spreads sickness faster than any disaster.

Cover the basics before you need them:

- 1. An emergency toilet.** A five-gallon bucket, a snug lid, heavy-duty bags, and something dry to cover waste — kitty litter, sawdust, or peat. Seal each bag and store it well away from where you live and eat.
- 2. Clean hands.** Store soap and hand sanitizer, and use them. Most illness in a crisis spreads from hands to mouth. This single habit prevents more sickness than anything else.
- 3. Separate your water.** Keep washing water apart from drinking water, and never let waste near either.
- 4. Manage trash.** Bag it, seal it, keep it outside. Garbage draws pests, and pests carry disease.

The First Three Days

The first seventy-two hours of any emergency decide how the rest of it goes. It's when people panic, make their worst decisions, and burn through supplies they'll wish they'd kept. A simple sequence keeps your family steady.

- 1. Account for everyone.** Know where each family member is. If you're separated, work the meeting plan — don't improvise.
- 2. Assess what's working.** Power, water, heat, phones. Take one calm minute to learn what you have before you decide anything.
- 3. Secure water and warmth.** These two come first, always. Most everything else can wait a few hours.
- 4. Get the facts.** Turn on the radio. Decide, on real information, whether you stay or go. Most of the time, staying home is safest.
- 5. Set a rhythm.** Ration supplies, assign simple jobs, rest in shifts. Panic sprints; preparation paces itself.
- 6. Check your neighbors.** The family two doors down is your closest help — and you are theirs. Community is the oldest survival tool there is.

Calm is not a personality trait. It's a decision you make in advance, and then practice.

Home Preparedness Action Plan

Complete this worksheet to build your household preparedness roadmap.

ESTIMATED DAYS OUR CURRENT SUPPLIES WOULD LAST (FOOD, WATER):

BIGGEST GAP IN OUR CURRENT HOME PREPAREDNESS:

OUR FAMILY MEETING POINT #1 (NEAR HOME):

OUR FAMILY MEETING POINT #2 (FARTHER AWAY):

OUR OUT-OF-STATE EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME AND NUMBER:

THREE PREPAREDNESS ITEMS TO BUY THIS MONTH (MOST URGENT):

DATE WE WILL REVIEW AND UPDATE OUR EMERGENCY PLAN:

PART Four

FINANCIAL PROTECTION

Stewarding what God has entrusted to you.

From surviving paycheck to paycheck to true family security.

The Financial Reality Most Men Won't Admit

The Federal Reserve reports it year after year: most American families could not cover a \$400 emergency without borrowing or selling something. Sit with that number. Not a \$40,000 catastrophe — four hundred dollars. One transmission. One emergency-room copay. One water heater in January.

For a man with people depending on him, that fragility has a sound. It's the 2 a.m. math — lying awake, running the numbers, hoping nothing breaks before payday. Most men never say it out loud. They carry it behind a steady face at the dinner table, and it quietly eats at them.

This is not a moral failure. It is a structural one — the result of a culture engineered to make you spend everything you earn. But naming it is the beginning of ending it. The discomfort you feel right now isn't condemnation. It's your conscience pointing at the next thing to build.

Stewardship was never about being rich. It is about managing well what God entrusted to you — even when it isn't much. Especially when it isn't much. "In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has" (Proverbs 21:20). The wise man simply refuses to spend it all.

IS YOUR FAMILY FINANCIALLY FRAGILE?

Answer honestly. You carry a credit-card balance month to month. A surprise bill means borrowing. You can't name your exact monthly expenses. There is no account your family could live on if your income stopped this Friday. If two or more are true, start here — not in shame, but in motion. The next four chapters are the ladder out.

The Five Financial Foundations

Five foundations give a family real stability. Build them in this order — each one makes the next possible.

- 1. A budget you actually follow.** Not a theoretical spreadsheet — a plan that gives every dollar a job before the month begins. Track every expense for 30 days first, so you work from the truth, not a guess. A simple frame: 50% needs, 30% wants, 20% saving and debt.
- 2. A starter fund, then 3-6 months.** First get \$1,000 in cash, fast — that alone stops most small crises from becoming debt. Then build toward three to six months of expenses in a separate high-yield savings account: reachable in a day, but not sitting in checking where it vanishes.
- 3. Zero consumer debt.** List every debt smallest to largest. Pay minimums on all, then throw every spare dollar at the smallest until it's gone — then roll that payment onto the next. Each debt you kill frees cash and builds momentum.
- 4. Adequate insurance.** Term life on every income-earner, plus disability, health, and renter's or homeowner's coverage. These aren't expenses — they're the wall that keeps one bad day from erasing everything you've built.
- 5. Retirement and long-term savings.** If your employer offers a match, contribute at least enough to capture all of it — the only guaranteed 100% return you'll ever be offered. Small, steady contributions compound into a foundation for people who don't exist yet.

Building Your Emergency Fund When Money Is Tight

The most common objection to saving is simple: there's nothing left at the end of the month. Often that's true — and just as often it's a cash-flow problem, not an income problem. Here is how men with tight budgets still build a cushion.

- 1. Pay yourself first — automatically.** Set a transfer for the day after payday, before you can touch it. Even \$25 a week is \$1,300 in a year. You can't spend what you never see.
- 2. Cut one expense for 90 days.** Not forever — just a season. One subscription, eating out, a single habit. Send every dollar of it to savings. Ninety days proves you can, and the fund is real by the end.
- 3. Send every windfall straight in.** Tax refund, bonus, overtime, birthday money. Before it evaporates into ordinary spending, move it the same day it lands.
- 4. Create margin — don't just wait for it.** Sell what you don't use. Take a short season of side income aimed only at the fund. A few focused months build what a year of "leftovers" never will.

The goal isn't comfort. It's the quiet steadiness of a man who knows his family can take a hit and keep standing. Discomfort for a season buys security for years — and it buys back your sleep.

Life Insurance: The One Non-Negotiable

If a spouse or children depend on your income and you don't have adequate life insurance, you are gambling with their future. That's not dramatic language — it's actuarial fact. The payout was never about you. It's the difference between your wife keeping the home and selling it in the worst month of her life.

Here is what "adequate" actually means, and how to get it right:

- **Buy term, not whole life.** Term is simple and cheap and covers the exact years your family is most exposed. For most families the right move is term insurance plus investing the difference.
- **Aim for 10-12× your income.** The fuller math: replace your income for the years until your youngest is grown, add the mortgage and future college, then subtract savings already in place.
- **Lock a 20-30 year level term.** A healthy 30-year-old can often get \$500,000 of 20-year term for about \$25-\$35 a month. Rates only climb with age and diagnoses — the cheapest day to buy it is today.
- **Cover both spouses.** The economic value of a stay-at-home parent — the childcare and the thousand jobs they do — is enormous and routinely ignored.
- **Check the beneficiary.** A policy that pays the wrong person is worse than no plan at all. Confirm the name today.

It can cost less than most men spend on coffee. And it buys your family the one thing grief can't: time.

Talking to Your Spouse About Money

Money is the number-one source of conflict in marriage — and it's almost never really about money. It's about fear, control, respect, and the gap between the life you pictured and the one you're living. Handled wrong, it divides a home. Handled right, it becomes one of the deepest forms of partnership you'll ever know.

Approach it as a teammate, not a manager. Here's how to actually do it:

- 1. Hold a monthly money meeting.** Twenty to thirty minutes, same time each month. Open by naming one win. Review the budget, look at next month, and surface problems while they're still small.
- 2. Make it shame-free.** No blame for past mistakes, no lectures. The rule: we sit on the same side of the table, looking at the problem together — not across it at each other.
- 3. Set goals you both can see.** Not "save more." Specific and dated: "emergency fund done by August," "car paid off by spring." Shared targets turn control into teamwork.
- 4. Honor different money personalities.** One of you spends, one saves. Neither is the villain. Build a system that gives the saver security and the spender freedom inside agreed limits.
- 5. Decide big purchases together.** Agree on a number — say \$200 — above which nothing gets bought without a conversation first. It ends the most common money fights before they start.

The Plan for the Day You're Not There

Life insurance answers one question: will there be money? It is the right question, and the last chapters answered it. But money alone does not tell your family what to do. A check does not name who raises your children. It does not tell your wife where the deed is, which accounts exist, or who to call first. The most loving thing a man can do — after providing the means — is to remove the confusion.

Most men avoid this because it forces them to picture their own absence. A guardian does it anyway. Not out of fear, but for the same reason he does everything else in this guide: because the people he loves should never be left guessing. Scripture calls this wisdom — "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children" (Proverbs 13:22). And an inheritance is far more than money. It is order, clarity, and blessing left behind on purpose.

Put these five things in order:

- 1. A will.** This names who raises your children if you and your wife are both gone, and who settles your affairs. Without one, a court decides — strangers making the most important decision about your kids. Every father with children at home needs one, and it does not have to be expensive.
- 2. Current beneficiaries.** Life insurance and retirement accounts pass by beneficiary form, not by your will. Pull every policy and account and confirm the name on it is the right one — not an ex, not a deceased parent, not blank.
- 3. Powers of attorney.** One for finances and one for medical decisions, naming who acts for you if you are alive but unable to. A man in a hospital bed still has a family that needs decisions made.
- 4. A healthcare directive.** Your wishes, written down, so your wife is never forced to guess what you would have wanted in the hardest moment of her life.

- 5. One document binder.** A single fireproof box or folder holding copies of all of the above, plus birth and marriage certificates, property deeds, titles, insurance policies, a list of accounts, and passwords. Then tell your spouse exactly where it is.

THE LETTER WORTH WRITING

Beyond the legal documents, write your family a letter in your own hand. What you believe. What you hope for them. What you would say if you had one more conversation. Seal it in the binder and pray they never need it. Almost no man writes it — and almost every family would give anything to have it.

Financial Protection Snapshot

Complete this snapshot to get an honest picture of your family's current financial protection.

CURRENT MONTHLY TAKE-HOME INCOME:

CURRENT MONTHLY ESSENTIAL EXPENSES (HOUSING, FOOD, UTILITIES, INSURANCE):

CURRENT EMERGENCY FUND BALANCE (\$):

TARGET EMERGENCY FUND (3–6 MONTHS OF EXPENSES = \$):

TOTAL CONSUMER DEBT (CREDIT CARDS, CAR LOANS, PERSONAL LOANS):

CURRENT LIFE INSURANCE COVERAGE AMOUNT (\$):

OUR BIGGEST FINANCIAL VULNERABILITY RIGHT NOW:

ONE FINANCIAL ACTION I WILL TAKE IN THE NEXT 30 DAYS:

PART Five

HEALTH & PHYSICAL READINESS

A man who cannot function cannot lead.

Your physical health is a family protection issue.

Your Health Is Not a Personal Matter

Most men treat their health as a private affair — something they manage, or neglect, on their own, with consequences they assume fall only on themselves. That's a quiet lie. Your body is not just yours. It is the engine your whole family runs on.

When a father goes down — to a heart attack at fifty-five, to diabetes he ignored for a decade, to a depression he never named — the family goes down with him. His income, his leadership, his presence, his protection all ran through a body he treated as optional.

The men who take their health most seriously are rarely the vain ones. They're the ones who understand exactly what's at stake. They eat, move, sleep, and get checked not to look good in a mirror, but to still be standing when their family needs them in twenty years.

So here is the reframe: every workout, every early night, every appointment you actually keep is an act of provision. You are protecting the one asset every other asset depends on.

KNOW YOUR FOUR NUMBERS

Most of what kills men is silent for years. Get these checked and write them down: blood pressure, cholesterol (LDL and HDL), fasting blood glucose or A1C, and resting heart rate. You cannot manage what you refuse to measure — and catching one number early can buy you decades.

The Minimum Viable Health Standard for a Prepared Man

This is not about elite performance or aesthetics. This is the baseline that lets you function, lead, and protect over the long term.

- 1. Annual physical with bloodwork.** Know your numbers: blood pressure, cholesterol, blood glucose, testosterone. You cannot manage what you don't measure. Many critical conditions are silent until they're serious.
- 2. 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week.** This is the CDC minimum for reducing cardiovascular risk, maintaining cognitive function, and managing mood. Walking counts.
- 3. 7-8 hours of sleep per night.** Sleep deprivation is a cognitive impairment. A chronically sleep-deprived man makes worse decisions, manages stress more poorly, and is physically less capable.
- 4. Diet that is 80% whole foods.** You don't have to be perfect. But a diet built primarily on processed food is slowly eroding the physical base you need to function.
- 5. Alcohol at or below low-risk guidelines.** More than 14 drinks per week is clinically defined as heavy use. This matters for cognitive function, liver health, and family stability.
- 6. No tobacco.** There is no safe level. If you smoke or use tobacco, quitting is the single highest-return health action available to you.

Mental Health: The Thing Men Don't Talk About

Men die by suicide at nearly four times the rate of women. We're far less likely to seek treatment, less likely to tell a doctor we're struggling, and far more likely to numb it with alcohol or work until something breaks. We call that toughness. It isn't. It's a trap.

A prepared man guards his mind the way he guards his home — on purpose, before the crisis. Unaddressed depression, anxiety, or buried trauma never stays contained. It leaks into your marriage, your parenting, your patience, your faith. What readiness looks like, practically:

- **One man who knows the real you.** A pastor, counselor, or friend you can tell the truth to — not to perform wellness, but to be genuinely known. Isolation is where men go under.
- **A release valve you use weekly.** Hard exercise, time outdoors, prayer, journaling — a real way to discharge pressure. Stress with no outlet always finds a worse one.
- **Knowledge of your own warning signs.** Short fuse, no sleep, dreading the morning, drinking more. Name your tells now, so you catch the slide before it becomes a fall.
- **A line you won't cross alone.** Decide in advance: if it gets to a certain point, I make the call. Same as a fire plan — you set it before the smoke.

IF IT'S DARK RIGHT NOW

If you're having thoughts of harming yourself, this is not weakness and you are not a burden. In the U.S., call or text 988 — the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline — today, and tell one person you trust. Your family needs you here.

Physical Preparedness: Can Your Body Do What Might Be Required?

This is a question most men never ask — and it matters more than most gear. A prepared man honestly considers whether his body can meet the demands of the very scenarios he's preparing his family for.

This is not special-forces fitness. It's the floor of a functioning protector:

- Can you carry your child quickly, for a distance, if you had to?
- Can you lift and move real weight — furniture, debris, an injured adult?
- Can you walk several miles with a load and not be wrecked the next day?
- Can you function on little sleep for 48–72 hours in a crisis?
- Do you have basic first aid — CPR, wound care, choking response?

You don't need a gym or a barbell to build this. Train the way it will be used: carry heavy things, walk far, move your own bodyweight. Rucking — walking with a loaded pack — trains most of it at once. Add pushups, squats, and carries a few times a week, and you'll be ready for the day no one puts on the calendar.

CPR TRAINING

A CPR certification takes 2–4 hours through the Red Cross or American Heart Association. It may be the most important skill you ever learn — and the one most likely to save someone you love. Put a date on the calendar this month.

When Help Isn't On The Way

CPR, wound care, and choking response are the floor, not the ceiling. There is a wider category of medical knowledge a prepared man should build toward: handling ordinary situations at home in the days or weeks when a clinic visit simply isn't an option.

A storm that closes the roads. A surge that fills the hospital. A pharmacy supply chain that stalls. A long blackout that turns refrigerated insulin into a crisis. None of these are theoretical anymore — Americans have lived through all of them in the last five years.

The question is whether you'd know what to do when the situation is real but not yet life-threatening. Start with the skills that buy the most time:

- **Stop a bleed.** Hard, direct pressure first. Know where a tourniquet goes — and keep one in the house and one in the car.
- **Judge a fever and a wound.** Know the temperature that means "go now," and the signs of spreading infection: red streaks, heat, swelling, pus.
- **Treat dehydration.** Simple oral rehydration — clean water, a pinch of salt, a little sugar — has saved more lives worldwide than almost any medicine.
- **Ride out the ordinary.** Flu, sprains, minor burns, allergic reactions — knowing what's safe to manage at home, and what isn't.

The God Who Heals

Most medical emergencies a family faces are not dramatic. A deep cut. A high fever. An infection. A bad reaction. Caught early, at home, they stay small. Ignored, they become the thing that breaks a hard week wide open.

When a clinic is open, you go. This is for the times it isn't — a storm, a surge, a stretch when help is simply delayed.

Build a real kit. Go beyond the token first-aid box: gauze and tape, antiseptic, butterfly closures, acetaminophen and ibuprofen, an antihistamine, oral rehydration salts, a thermometer, tweezers, gloves, and a 30-day supply of any prescription your family depends on.

Learn three skills. How to stop bleeding with firm, direct pressure. How to spot an infection — spreading redness, heat, fever — and know when it's time to get help. How to treat dehydration before it turns dangerous.

Know your people. Write down each family member's allergies, conditions, medications, and doses. In a crisis you don't want to be remembering — you want to be reading.

*"For I will restore health to you, and your wounds I will heal,
declares the Lord."*

Jeremiah 30:17

Health & Physical Readiness Audit

Take an honest look at where your body is right now and the simple actions that move it forward.

DATE OF MY LAST ANNUAL PHYSICAL:

MY CURRENT BLOOD PRESSURE (IF KNOWN):

AVERAGE HOURS OF SLEEP PER NIGHT:

CURRENT WEEKLY EXERCISE (MINUTES AND TYPE):

HEALTH HABIT I NEED TO ADDRESS MOST URGENTLY:

NAME OF A DOCTOR I WILL SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH:

ONE PHYSICAL SKILL I WILL DEVELOP THIS YEAR (CPR, FIRST AID, ETC.):

ONE MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCE OR PERSON I WILL CONNECT WITH:

PART Six

RAISING STRONG CHILDREN

Building the next generation with intention.

What your children need from you — specifically.

What Your Children Actually Need From You

Decades of developmental research keep landing on one factor as the most consistent predictor of how a child turns out — across nearly every measure: economic, academic, relational, spiritual. It isn't money. It isn't the school district. It's the presence and involvement of a father.

Not a perfect father. Not a wealthy one. An involved one.

Children with engaged fathers show higher academic achievement, better emotional regulation, lower rates of substance abuse and early sexual activity, more resilience under hardship, and far higher rates of keeping their faith into adulthood. The data is almost embarrassing in how one-directional it is.

And here is the freeing part: "involved" is built almost entirely from small, repeatable things. Showing up. Looking up from the phone. Asking the second question. Being in the room — actually in it. Your kids aren't grading you on grand gestures. They are quietly adding up the ordinary minutes.

The most important thing you can give your children is not a better school, a safer neighborhood, or more activities. It is your consistent, engaged presence.

THE RESEARCH IS CLEAR

Studies from Princeton, Harvard, and the National Fatherhood Initiative consistently find father involvement to be the strongest predictor of child wellbeing — stronger than income, neighborhood, or school quality. Your attention is the highest-leverage investment you own.

The Five Things Every Child Needs From Their Father

- 1. To be known.** Not just loved in the abstract — known. Known by name what makes them afraid, what they're proud of, who their friends are, what they dream about. A child who is known by their father feels genuinely secure.
- 2. To be spoken over with truth.** The words a father speaks over his children — in moments of affirmation or disappointment — are disproportionately formative. Speak identity, not just behavior. 'You are brave' matters more than 'good job.'
- 3. To see their father fail and recover.** Children need to see that failure is survivable. When you make a mistake and own it — apologize, repair, learn — you give your children a template for resilience and integrity.
- 4. To be taken seriously.** As they grow, children need to be included in age-appropriate conversations, given real responsibility, and trusted with increasing autonomy. A child who is treated as capable becomes capable.
- 5. To know your faith is real.** Not performed. Real. Your children can tell the difference. A father whose faith shows up in private — in how he responds to stress, to failure, to the ordinary pressures of life — is the most powerful testimony they will ever witness.

Raising Boys Into Men

One of the most pressing needs of our cultural moment is a generation of boys who grow into men who know who they are — men with a clear identity, genuine character, and the courage to live it.

This does not happen automatically. It requires intentional formation by fathers who are themselves grounded in that identity.

What boys need from their fathers specifically:

- **Challenge** — Boys need to be pushed, stretched, and required to do hard things. Comfort is not their friend. Give your son age-appropriate challenges and resist the urge to rescue him from healthy difficulty.
- **Blessing** — Boys are deeply wired for paternal approval. The father's blessing — the explicit, spoken affirmation that 'I see you, I'm proud of you, you are becoming a man' — is one of the most powerful things a father can give.
- **Initiation** — Boys need to be brought into adult male community and given increasing responsibility as they grow. Rites of passage — intentional, marked moments of transition — help boys understand who they are becoming.
- **A model of strength and gentleness together** — The false choice between 'tough' and 'kind' is one the next generation of men needs to be freed from. Model both.

"Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them."

— James Baldwin

Raising Daughters Who Know Their Worth

A daughter's relationship with her father is the first and most formative relationship that shapes how she understands her own worth — and what she will accept from men.

Daughters who are loved, protected, and genuinely known by their fathers enter adulthood with a fundamentally different internal reference point than those who weren't.

What daughters need from their fathers:

- **To be delighted in** — not just provided for or protected, but genuinely enjoyed. A daughter who feels delighted in by her father develops a secure sense of her own value.
- **To have your protection without your control** — She needs to know you will protect her and that you trust her to grow. The difference between these two things matters enormously as she ages.
- **To see how a man treats a woman** — Your marriage is her template. How you love and honor her mother is one of the most formative things in her life.
- **To be spoken to as someone capable** — Not just pretty or sweet. Capable, strong, wise. The identity words you place on your daughter shape the woman she becomes.
- **Your genuine presence at the ordinary things** — Recitals, games, school events. She is watching whether you choose to be there. And she will remember.

Digital Preparedness: Protecting Your Children Online

The digital world your kids live in is not the one you grew up in. Pornography, predators, comparison, and algorithmic outrage aren't edge cases — they are the default, engineered to hold a child's attention against your wishes. This is a frontier you have to guard on purpose.

A prepared father runs a plan, not a panic:

- 1. Delay the smartphone.** The research is strong: the later the first smartphone, the better the outcomes — especially for girls. Aim for the end of 8th grade or later. A basic call-and-text phone meets the real need for years.
- 2. Put real controls in place.** Filter at the router so it covers every device, turn on the built-in screen-time limits, and park all chargers in your room overnight. Bedrooms are not for screens.
- 3. Have the pornography talk early — and again.** Your son will see it; the only question is whether he meets it with your framework first. Keep it calm and ongoing, never one dramatic lecture.
- 4. Walk their world with them.** Know the apps, play the games, follow the accounts. Curiosity beats surveillance — and it keeps the door open.
- 5. Build a no-shame reporting culture.** The whole goal is a child who tells you when something goes wrong online. Reward the telling; never punish the messenger.

THE PHONE AGREEMENT

Before the first device, write a one-page agreement together: the hours it's allowed, the rooms it isn't, the apps that need approval, the rule that you can see it anytime, and the line that gets it taken away. Both of you sign it. A clear contract prevents a hundred fights.

Fatherhood Investment Plan

Map out the specific ways you will invest in each child this season.

MY CHILDREN'S NAMES AND THE ONE THING EACH NEEDS MOST FROM ME RIGHT NOW:

THE LAST MEANINGFUL ONE-ON-ONE TIME I HAD WITH EACH CHILD:

ONE IDENTITY TRUTH I WANT TO CONSISTENTLY SPEAK OVER MY SON(S):

ONE IDENTITY TRUTH I WANT TO CONSISTENTLY SPEAK OVER MY DAUGHTER(S):

OUR CURRENT SCREEN TIME AND DIGITAL PLAN FOR CHILDREN:

ONE FATHERHOOD HABIT I WILL BUILD THIS MONTH:

THE MAN I WANT MY SON TO BECOME (DESCRIBED IN 3 WORDS):

THE WOMAN I WANT MY DAUGHTER TO BECOME (DESCRIBED IN 3 WORDS):

PART Seven

THE 90-DAY ACTION PLAN

From intention to implementation.

A specific, sequenced plan for the next three months.

90 Days. Real Change.

This plan is built around one principle: small, consistent actions over time beat dramatic gestures followed by inaction.

You will not do everything in this guide in 90 days. You will build the foundations — the habits, systems, and decisions that make real change possible.

The plan is divided into three 30-day phases. Each phase has a primary focus and specific weekly actions. Complete the actions, use the tracking tools, and by Day 90 you will have built more family protection than most Christian men build in years.

"Plans are worthless, but planning is everything."

— Dwight D. Eisenhower

ONE RULE

Don't skip weeks. If you miss a week, don't restart the whole plan. Just return to where you left off and keep moving. Consistency matters more than perfection.

Start date: _____

Target completion: _____

Phase One: Foundation Month

In the first 30 days, the goal is clarity and foundation. You are assessing where you are, making a few key decisions, and putting the most basic systems in place.

WEEK 1: ASSESSMENT

- Complete all worksheets in this guide (Parts 1–6)
- Identify your family's top 3 vulnerabilities
- Schedule an annual physical with your doctor
- Have an honest conversation with your spouse about family preparedness goals

WEEK 2: SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

- Implement one new spiritual rhythm at home (family prayer, bedtime prayer, weekly Bible reading)
- Have one one-on-one conversation with each child about faith
- Join or re-engage with a small group, men's group, or Bible study

WEEK 3: FINANCIAL TRIAGE

- Create or update your household budget
- Open a dedicated emergency fund savings account if you don't have one
- Review all insurance coverage — identify gaps
- Get a life insurance quote if you are underinsured

WEEK 4: HOME ASSESSMENT

- Walk through the Prepared Home Checklist (Part Three) and mark what you have
- Buy the three most urgent missing items (water, flashlights, batteries, first aid)
- Document your family emergency plan and share it with your spouse
- Establish two family meeting points and an out-of-state contact

Phase Two: Building Month

In Days 31–60, you are building on the foundation. Habits are forming. Systems are being put in place. The goal this month is momentum.

WEEK 5: DEEPEN SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

- Lead a family devotional or discussion — even briefly, even imperfectly
- Write down the spiritual legacy you want your family to have in 20 years
- Identify one influence in your home that needs to change (content, relationships, habits)

WEEK 6: FINANCIAL BUILDING

- Execute your first automatic savings transfer if you haven't already
- Identify and eliminate or reduce one recurring unnecessary expense
- If you have consumer debt, select a payoff strategy and create a timeline
- Have your monthly money meeting with your spouse

WEEK 7: PHYSICAL READINESS

- If you haven't had a physical in the past year, schedule one this week
- Begin or restart a consistent exercise routine — minimum 3x per week
- Assess your sleep and address one thing affecting sleep quality

WEEK 8: FATHERHOOD & CONNECTION

- Schedule and protect one-on-one time with each child this week
- Have a values conversation with your spouse about the next 6 months
- Sign up for a CPR / first aid class (or complete one online)

Phase Three: Establishing Month

By Day 60, you have made meaningful progress in every area. The goal of Phase Three is to establish what you have started — to turn actions into habits and intentions into systems.

WEEK 9: SYSTEM REVIEW

- Review your emergency fund progress. On track? Adjust if needed.
- Check your emergency supply inventory. What is still missing?
- Revisit your family emergency plan with your spouse. Update anything that has changed.

WEEK 10: SPIRITUAL DEEPENING

- Evaluate which spiritual rhythms have stuck. Double down on what's working.
- Have a deeper one-on-one faith conversation with your oldest child.
- Commit to a men's accountability relationship if you don't have one.

WEEK 11: FINANCIAL MILESTONE

- Calculate your progress toward emergency fund goal
- Review your debt payoff progress
- Consider meeting with a fee-only financial advisor for your specific situation
- Review life insurance and update beneficiaries if needed

WEEK 12: ESTABLISH & LOOK AHEAD

- Name your biggest win from the last 90 days — write it down
- Decide your next 90-day focus area and start date
- Share what you've built with one other man — pass the guide on

Your Progress Tracker

Mark each week as you finish it. Watching the chain grow is its own kind of fuel — don't break it.

PHASE ONE · FOUNDATION (DAYS 1–30)

- Week 1 — Assessment complete
- Week 2 — Spiritual foundation set
- Week 3 — Financial triage done
- Week 4 — Home assessment done

PHASE TWO · BUILDING (DAYS 31–60)

- Week 5 — Spiritual leadership deepened
- Week 6 — Financial building underway
- Week 7 — Physical readiness started
- Week 8 — Fatherhood & connection

PHASE THREE · ESTABLISHING (DAYS 61–90)

- Week 9 — Systems reviewed
- Week 10 — Spiritual rhythms locked in
- Week 11 — Financial milestone hit
- Week 12 — Established & looking ahead

BIGGEST WIN IN THESE 90 DAYS:

What Comes After 90 Days?

If you've worked through this guide honestly and completed the 90-Day Plan, you have built more family protection than most men do in years. But preparation is not a destination — it is a posture.

What prepared men do after the first 90 days:

- 1. They run another 90-day cycle with a deeper focus.** The first pass builds foundations. The second refines them.
- 2. They find accountability.** A man doing this alone is less likely to sustain it than a man with a partner or small group.
- 3. They share what they've built.** Showing another man your family emergency plan, your budget system, your rhythms — is one of the most powerful things you can do for your church community.
- 4. They review annually.** Life changes. Income changes. Children grow. Your plan should be reviewed at least once a year.
- 5. They keep going.** Not because they achieved perfection, but because a prepared man is a commitment, renewed day after day.

A FINAL WORD

You picked up this guide because something in you knew it mattered. That instinct was right. You are building because you love your family, take your calling seriously, and have decided good intentions alone are not enough. That is the beginning of everything.

APPENDIX

QUICK REFERENCE

Checklists & Key Frameworks

All the essential reference tools in one place.

The Prepared Family Master Checklist

Use this page as your ongoing reference. Revisit it every 6 months.

SPIRITUAL PROTECTION

- Weekly church attendance as a family
- Regular prayer with spouse and children
- Father-initiated spiritual conversations
- Annual family values discussion
- Digital content boundaries established

HOME & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- 72-hour water supply (1 gal/person/day)
- 2-week food supply (non-perishable)
- Go-bag assembled and current
- Family emergency plan documented and shared
- Two meeting points established
- Emergency contact list printed
- First aid kit stocked and current
- Carbon monoxide and smoke detectors tested
- Cash reserve (\$300+ in small bills)

The Prepared Family Master Checklist

FINANCIAL PROTECTION

- Working household budget in place
- Emergency fund goal established
- Emergency fund progress on track
- Life insurance: in place and adequate
- Disability insurance reviewed
- Health insurance current and understood
- Consumer debt payoff plan active
- Monthly money meeting with spouse
- Retirement contributions active

HEALTH & PHYSICAL READINESS

- Annual physical scheduled or complete
- Blood pressure, cholesterol, blood glucose known
- 150+ minutes of exercise per week
- 7-8 hours of sleep per night
- CPR certification current
- Basic first aid knowledge

FATHERHOOD

- One-on-one time with each child this month
- Identity affirmations spoken over each child
- Digital safety plan in place
- Children's faith conversations happening

Key Numbers Every Man Should Know

These are the household numbers a prepared man tracks. Fill them in and update every 6 months.

Monthly take-home income: \$ _____

Monthly essential expenses: \$ _____

Emergency fund balance: \$ _____

Emergency fund target (3–6 months expenses): \$ _____

Total consumer debt: \$ _____

Life insurance death benefit: \$ _____

Date of last annual physical: _____

Primary care doctor name and phone: _____

Insurance company name and policy #: _____

Attorney (will / estate planning) name and phone: _____

Financial advisor name and phone: _____

Family Emergency Contact Card

Print this page. Laminate it. Keep one in your go-bag and one in your car.

Father cell phone: _____

Mother cell phone: _____

Out-of-state emergency contact name and phone: _____

Family meeting point #1 (near home): _____

Family meeting point #2 (farther away): _____

Children's school emergency contact: _____

Family doctor name and phone: _____

Nearest hospital: _____

Insurance policy number: _____

Utility emergency shut-off location: _____

Key Scriptures for the Prepared Man

These are the foundational scriptures behind every section of this guide. Memorize the ones that move you.

1 Timothy 5:8 — "Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Proverbs 27:12 — "The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty."

Proverbs 22:3 — "A prudent person foresees danger and takes precautions."

Proverbs 21:20 — "The wise have wealth and luxury, but fools spend whatever they get."

Joshua 24:15 — "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 — "These commandments are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children."

Psalms 127:3 — "Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him."

Luke 14:28 — "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it?"

Philippians 4:6 — "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

A Note From Iron & Covenant Press

We built this guide because we believe the world goes better when men take their calling seriously — not out of fear, not out of performance, but out of genuine love for the people God has placed in their care.

Don't Be Adam is free because we believe every man who needs it should be able to access it. Share it freely. Give it to the man in your small group who needs it. Pass it to your brother, your son, your neighbor.

The men who go through this guide and do the work will build something real. Not perfection — real. Real plans. Real rhythms. Real protection for real families.

Somewhere down the road, on a hard day you can't see yet, your family will reach for something — a reserve, a plan, a steadiness in you — and it will be there because of the quiet work you started now. They may never know what it cost you. That is alright. That is what fathers do.

*The question isn't whether you are a good man. You already are.
The question is whether you are a prepared one.*

That question is answered not by what you intend, but by what you build. Go build.

— **Jordan Owsa**
Iron & Covenant Press

Don't Be Adam

*A Man of God's Complete Blueprint for
Protecting & Preparing His Family*

BY JORDAN OWSA

This guide is for the Christian husband and father who knows, quietly, that he should be doing more to protect and prepare his family — and is finally ready to do something about it.

IRON & COVENANT PRESS

Resources for men who take their calling seriously.

FREE EDITION · SHARE FREELY