Four Pillars of Biblical Manhood
By Richard (Dick) Dungan

**History:** 1996 while traveling to do my first ever ‘Father and Son “Rite of Passage” retreat’ for a church in eastern Iowa, the Holy Spirit dropped these ‘pillars’ into my spirit. I knew immediately that what I was hearing from the Lord was of significance, yet no understanding of why or their purpose.

I wrote each one down as received on a yellow note pad and after seeking the Lord in prayer, with no response, I proceeded to put what I had written back into my briefcase and returned to the study of my notes in preparation for the upcoming retreat.

Upon returning to my office, I simply put the notes containing ‘the pillars’ into a file labeled ‘Four Pillars’. Fast forward now to 2014, at which time I had been mentoring several men in the process of learning how to “hear God’s voice in the quiet place,” so that they could recognize His voice in the noisy places of everyday life!

During preparation for one of our ‘mentoring group’ retreats, I heard the Holy Spirit say “It’s time! Now is the time!” As I listened and dialogued with the Lord, He clarified that it was time to pull out “The Pillar” file that had been tucked away securely among teaching files for almost 8 years.

This was the beginning of an amazing adventure in which I’ve been blessed by watching many fathers shepherd, teach and invest in their sons so that each one would become established in their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ while recognizing their responsibilities as young men of God.

**Purpose:** Raise up a generation of young men who would encounter the Lord Jesus Christ in a very real and personal way, becoming grounded in their faith and established in the Word of God. That each young man would grow in their awareness and understanding of the responsibility and stewardship of biblical manhood.

**Process:** Beginning with boys ages nine or ten (pre-puberty) and walking them through a four-year process during which the ‘four pillars’ are taught and caught through quality times of teaching, playing, praying and encountering experiences with their fathers, their peers and the community of Godly men.
Introduction to Four Pillars of Biblical Manhood

I. **Pursue** the *Word of God* as the *source of life*!

The Living Word is Jesus Christ! We were created to have a relationship with God!

- John 1:1-5
  
  Key: vs. 4 “In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.”

- I John 1:1-4
  
  Key: vs. 1 “concerning the Word of Life – 2 “and the Life was manifested . . .”

- John 17:1-6
  
  Key: vs. 3 “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

- I Cor. 15:45-49
  
  Key: vs. 49b “‘let us also’ bear the image of the heavenly”

  Ref – vs. 45b the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit
Relationship and life is discovered and found in the written Word of God, the Bible.

- **Psalms 119:**

  25b “Revive me according to Your word.”

  28b “Strengthen me according to Your word.”

  50 “This is my comfort in my affliction, That Your word has revived me.”

  67 “Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word.”

  116 “Sustain me according to Your word, that I may live;”

  130 “The unfolding of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.”

  147 “I rise before dawn and cry for help; I wait for Your words.”

  148 “My eyes anticipate the night watches, That I may meditate on Your word.”

  154 “Plead my cause and redeem me Revive me according to Your word.”

  162 “I rejoice at Your word, As one who finds great spoil.”
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Application Exercise

Pillar #1  Pursue the Word of God as the source of life!

Scripture Memory: Psalm 119:11

“Your word I have hidden in my heart that I might not sin against You.”

Reference: Psalm 19:7-1
Psalm 119:105, 130

The practical process of hiding the Word of God in one’s heart is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Scripture</th>
<th>Venues</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hear</td>
<td>Romans 10:17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read</td>
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<td>Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorize</td>
<td>Psalm 119:9, 11</td>
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<td>Meditate</td>
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Application Questions:
1. What is my primary source for hiding the Word of God in my heart? Is it enough?

2. List three activities that hinder my ability to hide the Word in my heart.
   a.
   b.
   c.

3. What one thing am I willing to give up in order to become a man of the word?
II. Choose the fear of the Lord as the foundation of Godliness!

- Proverbs 8:13 says: “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way and perverted mouth, I hate.”

Because God is a righteous God, He hates evil. Evil represents the exact opposite of the character of God.

A closer look at Scripture reveals why the Fear of the Lord is the foundation of Godliness.

- Proverbs 1:7 – the beginning of knowledge
- Proverbs 9:10 – the beginning of wisdom
- Proverbs 10:27 – prolongs life
- Proverbs 14:26 – establishes confidence
- Proverbs 14:27 – is a fountain of life
- Proverbs 19:23 – leads to life

If we do not choose the Fear of the Lord we will be ensnared in the fear of man.

- Proverbs 29:25 “The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe.
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Application Exercise

Pillar # II  Choose the fear of the Lord as the foundation of Godliness.

Scripture Memory: Proverbs 8:13

“*The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate.*”

Reference: Proverbs 1:7, 29
Proverbs 9:10
Proverbs 10:27
Proverbs 14:27
Proverbs 19:23

**Application Questions:**
1. Describe the four characteristics of evil. (i.e., What is pride? What is arrogance? etc.)

2. Is there evidence of evil in my life? If so, describe it. What am I going to do about it?

3. What is the opposite of the fear of the Lord and what warning do we find in scripture? (Proverbs 29:25)

4. Ask the Lord to birth a hatred for evil in your own heart as well as in the world.
For discussion groups:

Read Proverbs 1:20 through 2:7

Discussion questions:

1) What kinds of people refuse to choose the fear of the Lord? (vs. 22)

2) What happens to them? (vs. 28, 31 & 32)

3) What is required for us to discern or understand the Fear of the Lord? (Chap 2:1-4)
III. **Seek** the **wisdom of God** for the **sake of righteousness and justice**.

- Psalm 89:14 “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your Throne; mercy and truth go before Your face.”

- Proverbs 8:35 “For whoever finds me (wisdom) finds life, and obtains favor from the Lord.”

- Proverbs 4:1-9 (Read entire text)

- I Cor. 1:17-18

  The apostle Paul tells us that human wisdom empties the cross of its power! (NIV for clearest translation)

  Vs. 17 “For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel – not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.”

- N.T. teaching on Godly wisdom is found in James 3:13-18

  Vs 17 “But wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

- Proverbs 18:4 Amp “The words of a [discreet and wise] man’s mouth are like deep waters [plenteous and difficult to fathom], and the fountain of skillful and godly wisdom is like a gushing stream [sparkling, fresh, pure, and life-giving].”
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Application Exercise

Pillar # III  Seek the wisdom of God for the sake of righteousness and justice.

Scripture Memory:  Proverbs 8:35

“For whoever finds me (wisdom) finds life, and obtains favor from the Lord.”

Reference:  Proverbs 2:1-11a
I Corinthians 1:17 (NIV)
Proverbs 4:1-7

Application Questions:
1. What are the benefits of wisdom?

2. How would you describe:
   Wisdom:
   Understanding:
   Discernment:
   Discretion:

3. Why is it important to seek wisdom for the sake of righteousness and justice?  (Psalm 89:14)

Proverbs 18:4 (Amplified)
“The words of a [discreet and wise] man’s mouth are like deep waters [plenteous and difficult to fathom], and the fountain of skillful and godly wisdom is like a gushing stream [sparkling, fresh, pure, and life-giving].”
IV. **Walk** in **integrity** as a **living testimony before the Lord, the church and the world.**

- Psalm 41:12 “As for me, You uphold me in my integrity, and set me before Your face forever.”

  *Integrity is defined* as a commitment to maintain my motives and actions consistent with God’s character and my promises.

- Proverbs 10:9 “He who walks in **integrity** walks securely, But he who perverts his ways will be found out.”

  Integrity is developed in our life through the consistent victory over temptation – refusing to succumb to the world, the flesh and the devil.

- Psalm 15:1-5

- **Three characteristics of integrity**
  - Sound: purified by fire, impurities removed
  - Incorruptible: cannot be bought or persuaded away from what is right.
  - Complete: is not lacking, wholeness, has found true identity.
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Application Exercise

Pillar # IV  Walk in integrity as a living testimony before the Lord, the church and the world.

Scripture Memory:  Psalm 41:12

“As for me, You uphold me in my integrity, and set me before Your face forever.”

Reference:  Psalm 15

Application Questions:
1. Using Psalm 15, describe what it would look like to be a man of integrity in today’s world.

2. Read the following verses and describe the benefits of walking in integrity:
   a. Proverbs 10:9
   b. Proverbs 11:3
   c. Psalm 25:21
   d. Psalm 41:12

3. Am I experiencing these benefits in my life today?  If so, how?  If not, why not?