

Introduction

This simple book was written specifically for young men of color and parents of young men of color. While I would encourage anyone raising young boys to read it, much of the content is developed from the unique perspective of young men of color residing in the United States. It is an honest attempt on my part to help stem the tide of young men of color failing to reach their true potential. It is written from a Christian perspective.

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'

This is the first and greatest commandment.¹

Everyone must have a plan for their life. This goes double for young men of color because, unfortunately you were born at a time when the global community looks upon you as the wretched of the earth. So let's begin by taking a closer look at this environment, its common traps and pitfalls. While simultaneously suggesting some positive solutions and uncompromising changes necessary for living a blessed life.

The Environment

Youthful folly. As a young man you yearn for self-identity and respect. So countless organizations, groups and gangs are waiting to prey upon your natural need to belong. So be on guard that you don't fall in with the fools who would lead you to believe that victimizing and debasing others is the way to gaining that respect. Their just con men in sheep's clothing looking for someone just naive enough to blindly support their self-serving desires. Always putting you in the line of fire, so in the event something goes wrong you're the fall guy. Your life now possibly forever ruined.

King Solomon², known as the wisest man that ever lived wrote the first nine books of Proverbs specifically to share words of wisdom with young men searching for self-identity and respect. Much the way a father counsels and disciplines his son. Each day open your Bible and set aside time to read Proverbs until it becomes part of your rote memory. Then begin to walk in what you have gleaned from your studies. **Be a leader not a follower.**

Dysfunctional family. You did not choose your parents or your family. No one does. **But you can choose how you build your own family.** So despite what you may or may not have experienced growing up, you are beautifully and wonderfully made. Not because I say so but because God says so.³ He created you in his image and likeness⁴. A likeness modeled for you to perfection in the life of Jesus Christ. **Find yourself a role model like Jesus.** No young man becomes a great man without modeling himself after someone great in character.

He should remind you of the biblical Jesus Christ not the Hollywood prototype. Someone that lives in total reverence and submission to the will of God. That does not mean their infallible. It simply means that God is at the center of everything they do. If you're not familiar with the life of Jesus, then read the Gospels⁵ to familiarize yourself with how he walked with God. If that sounds like your biological father that's awesome. If not, then find another man in your family, church or community that resembles Jesus. Keeping in mind how Jesus handled personal challenges, cared for his loved ones and helped the poor and infirmed.

Self-hatred. Just reading the statistical data on causes of death among young men of color sounds pretty bleak. The data points out that more often than not you will die by the hands of another young man's gun. But the statistics fail to mention how this all came about. It's the result of a historically systematic effort on the part of the United States government to turn you into monsters. So it's important you understand this is a programmed behavior, not a true depiction of who you are. You were created for a greater purpose.

That purpose comes from God. It was set in motion the day you were born. In order to find out the true nature of this purpose will require you to draw nearer to God. Since God is spirit you need to communicate with your spirit through prayer and meditation. If you're not use to praying look up the Lord's Prayer⁵ in your bible and recite it aloud. Each day read a passage from your bible and meditate on its meaning. The more you do it the more it will feel natural.

'Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.'⁶

Police brutality. Barely a week goes by in the news without an occurrence of a young man of color finding himself on the wrong end of a bullet. Some police have become stark raving mad with power. The courts have historically shown themselves unable or unwilling to prosecute them. The system has failed you. But know that the Lord is on your side. In the same way God punished the corrupt prophets of the Old Testament he appointed to serve his people he will deal with them.⁷

While this might not be the swift satisfying punishment you or your family are seeking, understand that judgment belongs to God alone. He is always working behind the scenes on behalf of the good.

“For the one in authority is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God’s servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.”⁸

To the young men of color involved in illegal activity you are wasting your gifts, talents and abilities. In the same way you analyzed, studied, organized and developed a sick plan to terrorize others for your sole benefit, do so for the glory of the Lord. You will be surprised just how much you are

rewarded for your good works.

If you're the parent or guardian of a young man of color, who you are aware of that is actively participating in illegal actions stay the course. He was entrusted to you by God. He put his faith in you to bring him into his purpose. So when he goes astray don't turn from your son. Fall to your knees each night and pray unceasingly until the Lord provides instruction.

Disenfranchised. They cross the street and clutch their purses when you pass by. When you gather in a crowd the call goes out to the police. You're the first suspect when something goes wrong. The last hired and the first fired.

You are hated not for who you are but for whose you are. The enemy has recruited legions of souls to keep you from fulfilling your potential. Potential put in you by God himself. You're involved in a war not of flesh and blood but spirit. The sooner in life you realize this the sooner you will use the spiritual weapons at your disposal to succeed where many before you have failed. The seal of the Lord's favor over your life will tear down all obstruction in his appointed time. This does not mean you will not face trials and persecution, but when you do the Lord will make a way for your safe passage according to his will.

In a recent article posted online by The Washington Post on April 23, 2016, President Barack Obama requested a sit down with some of the leaders of the Black Lives Matter movement but was rebuffed.⁹ Reportedly due to the concerns of leadership fearing it might be interpreted as a form of conciliation. Anytime you're offered the opportunity to bring the government to task, move with haste. Put the obligation on your government to present a comprehensive plan for change concerning the plight of young men of color in this country with measurable progress markers. Never let them dismiss your actions as lacking a reasoned plan and just simply grandstanding.

Final Thoughts

It was never intended for you to fit in. **You were set apart from the foundation of the world.** Jesus admonished you to be in the world but not of it.¹⁰ Indeed the general pull of modern culture is strong and peer pressure can be all consuming but each man was directed from the dawn of civilization to take dominion in the name of God. Until you do everything like you were doing it for the Lord himself you will just be surviving despite what your material accoutrements might delude you to believe.

Parents when you speak about your son in public, speak to his potential. Life and death is in the power of your tongue. Yet in the same way don't shy from disciplining him when necessary. Build him up in spirit first and his mind and body will surely follow. **Set the example.**

To the Future

Dear parents or guardians raising a young man of color stay encouraged in the Lord. To any young man of color reading this pamphlet I pray the Lord's hand upon your heart and mind that you may receive it and bring glory to his name. Lastly but surely not least. If you feel a strong desire in your heart after reading these words to give yourself to the Lord, find yourself a good bible based church and let them lead you into proper submission. Amen

Footnotes

1. Matt. 22:36 NIV
2. According to the [Bible](#), a fabulously wealthy and wise [king of Israel](#) and a son of King [David](#).’
3. Ps. 139:14 NIV
4. Gen. 1:27 NIV
5. The four canonical gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John which are included in the New Testament. The word “gospel” (euangelion in Greek) means “good news.” The New Testament gospels tell the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection and proclaim the good news of God’s victory over the powers of sin and death. Although the four gospels all tell the story of Jesus, each does so in a distinctive way, emphasizing particular aspects of Jesus’ identity and mission. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are often called the “synoptic” gospels. The term “synoptic” is based on a Greek word meaning “common view.” These three gospels recount many of the same miracles and similar sayings and parables. The gospel of John relates many miracles and encounters that are not found in the other gospels, and instead of parables it contains long discourses about Jesus’ identity.
6. Matt. 6:9-13 NIV
7. Prov. 22:6 NIV
8. Rom. 13:4 NIV
9. Greg Jaffe, “Obama counsels Black Lives Matter activists: ‘You can’t just keep on yelling,’” [The Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/04/23/obama-counsels-black-lives-matter-activists-you-cant-just-keep-on-yelling/), https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/04/23/obama-counsels-black-lives-matter-activists-you-cant-just-keep-on-yelling, (April 23, 2016).
10. Rom. 12:2 NIV

Copyrighted Material

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com
The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

EV

Printed in the United States of America

Copyright © 2016, by Craig Freeman

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by an information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Cover Art

Entitled: “Gathering in Judah”

Artist: Craig Freeman

Copyright © 2016, by Craig Freeman