



6 INGREDIENTS
TO BEING A
LIONHEART

DEFINING LIONHEART MEN

If you look in the dictionary, a Lionheart is a person of exceptional bravery and courage. Real men are Lionhearts.

What does it take to be a real man? At Faithtree, we have identified 6 essential ingredients that are necessary in the make up of an authentic Christian man. Each one of these factors is kind of like a muscle. They have to be exercised and built up. When they are, you end up with a much stronger man. You end up with a Lionheart.

**1 REAL
MEN
AIM**





REAL MEN AIM

To be a real man, you have to be aiming for it. That means you have to know what the target is, specifically. What tools or people or resources do you need to hit that target? In the Orthodox Church, true manhood isn't a destination. It's actually a path- and even, a journey along that path. And on that journey, you're going to need to let go of a lot of preconceived notions you've learned or believed about true manhood. You can't pull yourself up by the bootstraps. You can't muscle your way through the hard stuff in isolation. You couldn't choose to do it "right", even if you wanted to!

Instead, you identify the target, (which we'll give you a hint, looks a lot like the Perfect God-Man, Jesus Christ), and you get on the path to journey towards Him. That means knowing who He is: by studying, by participating in the life of the Holy Church, by building up the team in your corner- starting with your pastor, your family and those in the community of your church.

A close-up photograph of two men in conversation. The man on the left is wearing a red t-shirt and looking down thoughtfully. The man on the right is wearing a white t-shirt and looking towards the first man. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage and a path.

2 REAL MEN KNOW IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS



IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

Manhood isn't about a bunch of characteristics that someone told us equal "manliness". Instead, in the Orthodox Church, we understand that real manhood is all about being in relationships.

It starts with being a son, just as it began with the Son of God. It's about understanding and recognizing the tension between independence and submission. It's the decision to obey, and also to serve. It goes on to include relationships with our wives, our children, our bosses, and even the people we meet out in the world. The Christian man cannot go it alone. It would be like a king trying to rule a kingdom with no people in it. It simply doesn't work that way.

Becoming men means focusing less on trying to be something, and more on how we relate to others. That means watching the way we speak. That means taking time, giving respect and being honest. It also requires a willingness to be kind, and open, and even sometimes vulnerable. Letting people really know us, especially as husbands and fathers, takes a measure of faith, trust and willingness to be seen.



3 REAL MEN
ARE
INTENTIONAL



3 REAL MEN ARE INTENTIONAL

To be an authentic Christian man, it is imperative that we intentionally identify our priorities. That means making time for what matters: people, study, community, spiritual growth. It won't happen by chance. It won't happen just 'because.' And it certainly won't happen in isolation. Rather, we have to seek out and aggressively pursue the building of this muscle.

It has been said "figure out what you want, and then figure out how to get it". While life might not be that simple, and certainly, the Christian Life is not... intentionally going after Christian manhood is imperative if we are going to walk the path well. That means building a team. That means commitment to the spiritual tools given to us by the Church. That means walking with a Spiritual Father and others. It has to be intentional and done with meaning. Like a Lionheart.



4 REAL MEN SERVE

America Builds
FOR THE NATIONAL MAST

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4 REAL MEN SERVE

If we are striving to be like Christ, and truly want to pursue His model of manhood, we have to study Him, and follow the path He laid out for us. This may be the hardest act of courage and bravery, serving Christ through serving others.

That means taking initiative. As men, we so often fall into the pattern of sitting back and letting life and relationships come to us. We can have a hard time focusing our efforts. We don't always make people a priority.

Christ showed us a different way. If we are truly to be like Him, we have to make time for people. We have to listen to people. We have to pray for, forgive and encourage people. It's hard, but essential.



5 REAL MEN
ACKNOWLEDGE
IT'S HARD



ACKNOWLEDGE IT'S HARD

There are challenges all men face, and for Christian men, these challenges are no different. Shame, lust, anger, and fear, are among the many obstacles that if left unaddressed, can get in the way of real Christian manhood.

Real men recognize this and aren't afraid to do something about it. Whether that means an ongoing conversation with your priest, or even bringing in the right professionals where appropriate, real men want to gain strength and courage from conquering temptations as opposed to succumbing to them.

A photograph of two men in a workshop. On the left, an older man with white hair and a beard, wearing a blue denim shirt, is looking towards the younger man. On the right, a younger man with brown hair and a beard, also in a blue denim shirt, is holding a pencil and looking at a wooden beam. The background is a blurred workshop setting.

6 REAL MEN LEAD



REAL MEN LEAD

Now, does that mean men get to overpower those around them? Does that mean men are more valuable than women? Does it mean that men are the authority in every situation? To all of these questions, the answer is an unequivocal “NO!”

To lead doesn't even mean you're the “boss”. Lots of real men report to women in different arenas of their life. But that doesn't change the simple fact, that real men lead. That means they're first. a. “What's that,” you ask? “They're what?!” They're first! And that means they are the first in sacrifice. They are the first in forgiveness. They are the first to be engaged in the WORD. And certainly, they are they first in love.

Maybe most importantly, real men are participants in the life of the Church. They recognize that without Her, we are all simply incomplete.

BOLD.
BRAVE.
DETERMINED.
MANHOOD.



Engage the men in your church. The Lionheart Sessions, is a four week curriculum designed to engage the men in your parish into the life of the Church. Seasoned Orthodox clergy, theologians and professionals guide men through lessons on: men as servant-leaders, men in relationships, overcoming the obstacles that stand in the way of authentic manhood, and the pursuit of God in community.