

SHOES IN CHURCH

I showered and shaved,
I adjusted my tie.
I got there and sat in a pew
just in time.
Bowling my head in prayer,
as I closed my eyes
I saw the shoe of a man next to me
touching my own. I sighed.
With plenty of room on either side
I thought, "Why must our soles touch?"
It bothered me, his shoe touching
mine, but it didn't bother him much.
A prayer began: "Our Father"
and I thought "This man has no pride.
They're dusty, worn, and scratched.
Even worse, there are holes
on the side!"
"Thank You for your blessings"
the prayer went on.
The shoe man said a quiet "Amen".
I tried to focus on the prayer, but my
thoughts were on his shoes again.
Aren't we supposed to look our best
when walking through that door?
"Well, this certainly isn't it,
I thought, glancing toward the floor.
Then the prayer was ended and
the songs of praise began.
The shoe man was certainly loud,
sounding blessed as he sang.
His voice lifted up the rafters,
his hands were raised high.

The Lord could surely hear the shoe
man's voice from the sky.
It was time for offering and
what I threw in was steep.
I watched as the shoe man reached
into his pockets so deep.
I saw what was pulled out,
what the shoe man put in.
Then I heard a soft "clink"
as when silver hits tin.
The sermon really bored me to tears,
and that's no lie.
It was the same for the shoe man,
for tears fell from his eyes.
At the end of the service
as is the custom here,
We must greet new visitors,
and show them all good cheer.
But I felt moved somehow and wanted
to meet the shoe man.
So after the closing prayer,
I reached over and shook his hand.
He was old and his skin was dark
and his hair was truly a mess.
But I thanked him for coming,
for being our guest.
He said, "My name's Charlie,
I'm glad to meet you, my friend."
There were tears in his eyes,
but he had a large, wide grin.
"Let me explain," he said,
wiping tears from his eyes.

"I've been coming here for months
and you're the first to say 'hi'.
I know my appearance
is not like all the rest.
But I really do try to always
look my best.
I always clean and polish my shoes
before my long walk.
But by the time I get here,
they're dusty and dirty like chalk."
My heart filled with pain, and
I swallowed to hide my tears.
As he continued to apologize
for daring to sit so near.
He said, "When I get here,
I know I must look a sight.
But I thought if I could touch you,
then maybe our souls might unite."
I was silent for a moment,
knowing whatever was said
Would pale in comparison.
I spoke from my heart not my head.
"Oh, you've touched me," I said,
"And taught me in part;
That the best of any man
is what is found in his heart."
The rest, I thought, this shoe man
would never know.
Like just how thankful I really am
that his dirty old shoe
touched my soul.
Author Unknown

24 WAYS TO PREPARE YOUR YOUNG MAN TO BE A GENTLEMAN

Boys will be boys.

For sure. But he can learn to be a gentleman as well. A gentleman in the right sense – not in a sissy, unreasonable manner – but a kind, respectful and godly young man.

It's not that we'd ask our son to sit with his hands folded or keep him from running, building or exploring. No way. **But we do hope he'll learn to be wise, to consider others, and to remember that he's a son of the King.**

A true gentleman.

1. **Fear The Lord.** It's the beginning of knowledge. Prov. 1:7
2. **Listen carefully.** A wise man listens intently and learns much. Prov. 1:5
3. **Pay attention to your father's instruction.** You'll be glad you did. Prov. 1:8
4. **And don't forget your mother's teaching.** She has wisdom to offer. Prov. 1:8b
5. **Control your temper.** "He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty. And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city" (Prov. 16:32).
6. **Keep your word.** A gentleman follows through on what he says he will do.
7. **Don't hang out with the ungodly.** Bad company corrupts good morals. I Cor. 15:33.
8. **Invest in strong, loyal friendships.** The kind of friend who "sticks closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24).
9. **Do what needs to be done.** Without being told. Don't wait to be asked when you know what you should do.
10. **Look sharp.** Not sloppy or slovenly – simply neat and clean will do.
11. **Trust in The Lord.** And don't rely on your own understanding. Prov. 3:5
12. **Don't chafe at correction.** Consider it an opportunity to learn and grow. Prov. 3:11.
13. **Be known as a hard worker.** Learn to enjoy your job and take on whatever must be tackled. Prov. 6:6.
14. **Walk in purity.** Avert your eyes and run from immorality. There is power in purity.
15. **Be polite.** "Courtesy is as much a mark of a gentleman as courage." – Theodore Roosevelt
16. **Work out.** Keep in shape. A young man should be strong and fit for whatever he might be called upon to carry out.
17. **Watch over those who are younger or weaker than you.** Never be too big for the small.
18. **Serve others.** To humbly serve is a very manly quality. Don't let anyone ever tell you differently. Follow Christ's example. (Phil. 2).
19. **Look after the ladies.** Step back to let her in the door first. Offer to carry heavy items for her. Protect and defend her.
20. **Make study a life-long habit.** Commit to learning as much as you can about as many subjects as you can. Read books, research, observe and ask questions.
21. **Show respect for those who are older than you.** Look them in the eye and shake their hand. Listen to what they have to say.
22. **Flee from sin.** Get out of there immediately when you encounter temptation. (I Tim. 6:11).
23. **Be bold.** As a lion. A righteous man doesn't need be shy about what's right. Prov. 28:1.
24. **Love God's Word.** Blessed is the man...whose delight is in the law of The Lord. Psalm 1.

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He is Qualified

by Dr. Raymond Barber

No one is more qualified to teach us the art of living. He lived in eternity before the morning stars sang together. He will live forever (Rev. 1:18).

No one is more qualified to teach us how to sacrifice. He sacrificed His all for us, even to the laying down of His life to die a shameful, sacrificial death on the cross (Phil. 2:8).

No one is more qualified to show us the way to God. He himself is the way (John 14:6).

No one is more qualified to bring peace to the troubled soul. He gives us His peace (John 14:27).

No one is more qualified to calm our fears. His word to us is "fear not" (Luke 12:32).

No one is more qualified to give us assurance. He assured us of His preserving power (John 10:27-29).

No one is more qualified to keep us safe. He prayed for our safety (John 17:15), and God answered His prayer.

No one is more qualified to assure us of our final settlement in Heaven. He promised to return for us and take us Home to be with Him forever (John 14:1-3).