

Rite of Passage

There was an African tradition called the **Rite of Passage**. This ancient, tribal ceremony was in place for both male and female children. **Defined**, it was the safe, guided transition; that ushered a child from early adolescence into adulthood. When a child reached puberty, they were moved into apprenticeship with adults who taught them a trade and helped them develop a moral code of ethics centered around family and community.

The elders taught the children principles of critical thinking and assisted them with defining a healthy, moral-based value system; along with invaluable lessons, and priceless experiences that would aid them throughout the entire course of their lives. This training often took place in camps away from the family and when camp was not a viable option; the ritual was emulated within the confines of the household. The outcome of this ceremony was to ensure that children were properly guided and provided with the necessary life skills to equip them for adulthood.

Though we don't engage in the ancestral Rite of Passage, we can indeed draw parallels as illustrations for a more God-focused process.

The **Rite of Passage** was analyzed into a 3 stage process:

1. Separation

The adolescent was taken away from his/her familiar environment and placed into a very different and sometimes foreign routine. They were forced to adjust to their new surroundings. It was a loss of identity — often abrupt in nature — that ruptured ties to family, self and community. It often involved alienation or even movement across boundaries.

“Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” ~ Proverbs 22:6

2. Transition

The time allotted for the adolescent to learn appropriate behavior in preparation for adulthood. It was the in-between time where the adolescent no longer had his/her old identity, but had not yet developed their new identity.

3. Incorporation

The final stage, where the transitioned adolescents — now adults moved from isolation and were re-inserted into the community with a new identity. They were now equipped with spiritual, moral, traditional, cultural and societal values taught and instilled during their Rite of Passage. The process was ever evolving as those adults later participated with their children as parents and eventually became elders themselves.

Role of Parents and Elders

The parental role in the Rite of Passage was critical. It was the parent's responsibility to (1) Believe in the process; (2) Agree to the process; (3) Participate in the process; and (4) Model the process.

As parents, we are mandated to separate our children from the influences of the world, so they can become influencers of the people-set they are assigned to in the world. We must be intentional, deliberate, purposed and committed to our children and the youth in our immediate sphere of influence.

Contact

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Jacob's Rite of Passage

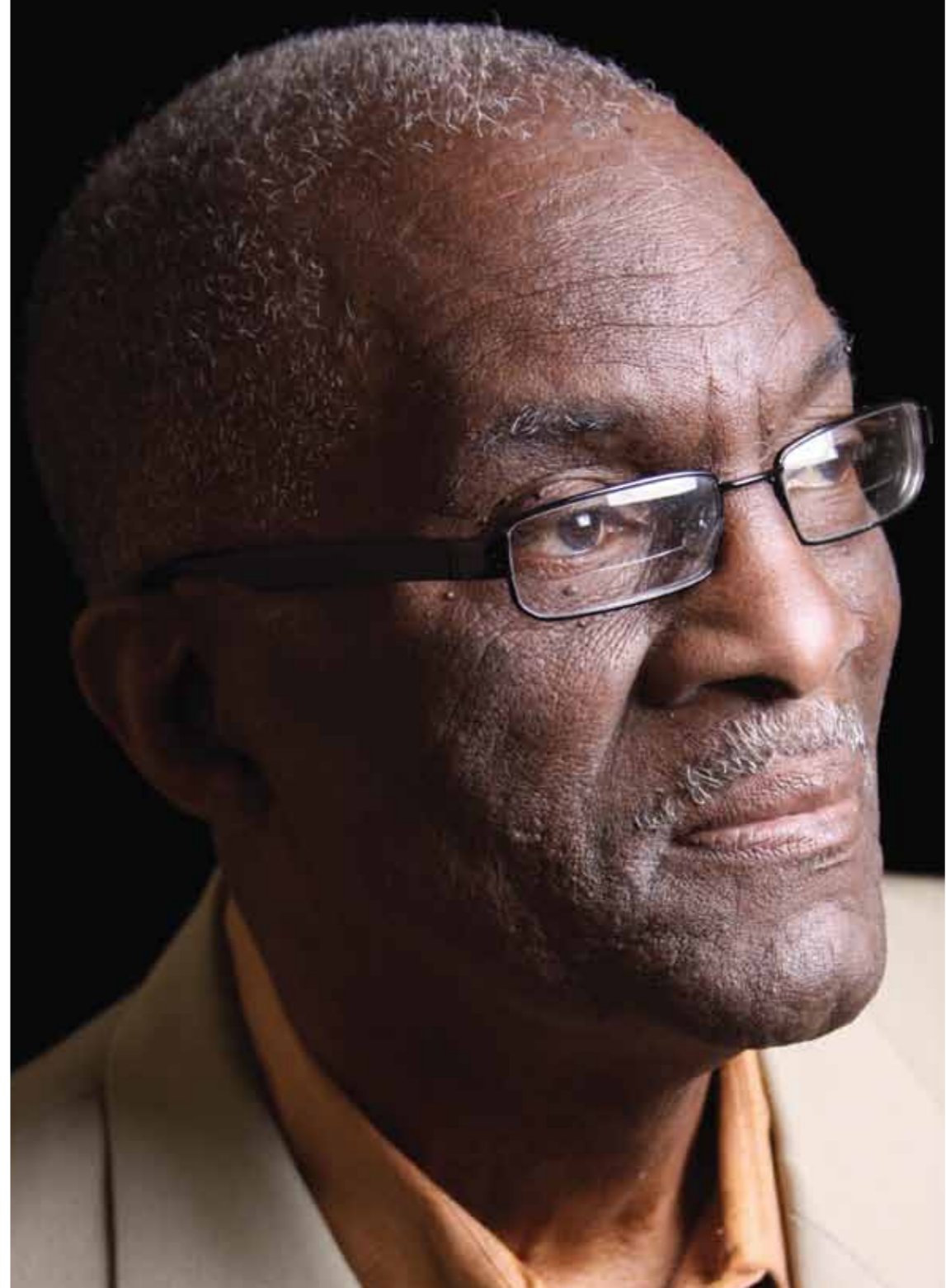
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Biography

Clarence V. Matthews was born and raised in Fayetteville, North Carolina, where he completed his elementary; as well as a portion of his high school education. He relocated to New Jersey in 1955 where he completed his high school curriculum and received his diploma at Dickinson High School in Jersey City.

Clarence was married for 31 years before becoming a widower, and is the father of five children. He worked in various capacities in the warehousing, merchandising and manufacturing industries for a span of well over 22 years. He was also licensed as a real estate sales associate for well over 30 years; and is currently employed with the Jersey City Board of Education. Clarence is a devoted, 47-year, active member of Monumental Baptist Church located in Jersey City, New Jersey. He has served on the Trustee Board and as the Black History Instructor for just over 18 years.

Clarence began writing as the Black History Instructor, who took the initiative to write and produce black history plays for the church's annual Black History program. He then transitioned his writing from screenplay to novel and developed a 3-part series known as *Jacob's*

Author's Inspiration

Heartfelt concern for family and community coupled with his desire to be an effective and influencing male presence in the home, church and community, fueled Clarence Matthews' adamant ambitions to educate himself and others as it relates to our African heritage. He believes wholeheartedly that if we obtain knowledge of *who* we are, *where* and *what* we come from, than we can leverage that knowledge and apply it across various genres of life; fostering growth and fulfillment personally, spiritually and economically.

“What we don't confront – by default – we agree to.”

Rite of Passage. This trilogy chronicles the life of a young man raised in the South and takes the reader through the three segments – youth, teen and adult – of the life of Jacob Pete Manor.

In March 2010, the first novel, “Young Jacob” was released and Clarence was introduced as a “new” author. During the promotion of this new release, a rising awareness of the plight of the family surfaced and the “GET RITE” campaign emerged, “*Do the RITE Thing, Make The RITE Moves, Convey The RITE Message.*” The overall theme is, “*It still takes a village to raise a child. It's time to reclaim the village.*”

The second novel, Teen Jacob, was released in February 2011 and takes the reader into the teen experiences of the main character. The finale' to the trilogy, The Man Jacob was released in May 2012 and our character has transitioned into “manhood.”

Though written as fiction, the real life lessons of God, family, and community emerge from the pages of this story line.

Clarence anticipates that his author entrepreneurial venture will inspire and motivate others to live out their dreams and aspirations.

Jacob's Rite of Passage is the author's way of sharing the unique; often unshared; and unspoken journey of a male child from boyhood to manhood. Jacob's curiosity about life – the successes and the failures, the ups and the downs, the whys and the why nots, the good and the not-so-good, the seeking and the finding – and life's ultimate lessons; though some costly, helped a young man discover the true meaning of “manhood.”

Press Release

New Jersey Author gives valuable lessons on family values & his personal journey from childhood to manhood in the trilogy entitled, “Jacob's Rite of Passage.”

Clarence Matthews, Author & Historian paints a vivid picture of African-American family life that dates from post slavery to the Great Depression.

Jersey City, New Jersey – the media gives a clear snap shot of the decline of functional families, hence communities – in the north & the south. Without the influence of a father in the home or a positive male figure – the question becomes ‘*Who will train up the child?*’ In “*Jacob's Rite of Passage,*” Clarence Matthews gives an account of a mama's boy who journeys through life under the guidance of his older brother and discovers: betrayal, abandonment, sexual encounters, racism, and misconceptions of manhood. A *Rite of Passage* is defined as a safe, guided transition ushering a child from early stages of adolescence to adulthood.

“*Today's parents are so focused on giving their children what they want, that they fail to give them what they need,*” said Clarence Matthews. “*What they need is love, direction and discipline.*”

Young men need to know their history and be properly mentored in their roles as men and leaders, so they impact **positively** their immediate spheres of influence – home, church and community.

Clarence felt the urgency to pen the book due to the major disconnect that has taken place in families and communities. It is his hope to shed light on, raise awareness and bring accountability to the members of the village as a whole. His perception of the condition of the village (community) has fostered a campaign entitled, “**GET RITE,**” with three points of focus: (1) Do the RITE thing (2) Make the RITE move and (3) Convey the RITE message.

“*Jacob's Rite of Passage*” volume one is priced at \$8.95; volume two is priced at \$12.95; volume three is priced at \$11.95. All three are available for purchase online at www.jacobsriteofpassage.com and via deeClare Publishing, LLC, Indianapolis, 888-350-9721.

Jacob's Rite of Passage

The Great Depression. The South. A difficult time and place for an African-American boy, Jacob Pete Manor, as he embarks upon his personal journey – his Rite of Passage. Fourth and final child, born to a family of sharecroppers from the rural area of Fayetteville, North Carolina, Jacob uncovers pertinent life truths that involve mother-son over-bonding, betrayal, abandonment, sexual explorations, misconceptions of “*manhood,*” and other crucial challenges and milestones which ultimately lead Jacob to becoming the man God destined him to be.



Vol. 1: Young Jacob is the first of the trilogy that chronicles this journey. It's through the eyes of Jacob that we will unravel life within these pages; his exploration, his discovery, his personal Rite of Passage.



Vol. 2: Teen Jacob resumes with our main character transitioning into adolescence. He celebrates his 13th birthday and though equipped with knowledge of worldly matters exceeding that of other boys his age, he still lacks the maturity to navigate through the onslaught of the more complex life issues. Our ambitious and unsuspecting adolescent is challenged with the external stigmas of the time, as well as his own internal struggles.



Vol. 3: The Man Jacob concludes with our main character, Jacob Peter Manor in his final stage of transition — manhood. transitioning into adolescence. Manhood no longer dictated or determined by the “misconceptions.” Manhood not defined by external influences, validations or sexual encounters, but manhood accompanied by an honest and mature assessment of the inward parts and a thorough review of the past and present, in search of purpose for the future.

“Today's parents are so focused on giving their children what they want, that they fail to give them what they need.”