

Biblical Manhood in a Modern World: God's Design for Men, Marriage, and Family

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[0:00] Good day everyone, welcome tonight. Biblical manhood is the topic so it should be an interesting study.! What men should be for God in a modern world.

We've got the notes there so we can share those online with others that I want to join later. David's last words to his son Solomon are here in 1 Kings 2 verse 2 I go the way of all the earth. Be thou strong therefore and show thyself a man.

Show thyself a man. Biblical truths about marriage and the home create a happy strong family and society. But Satan has declared war on the family and his strategy is to neutralise the man.

So that's the focus tonight. I know last week we looked at biblical womanhood. Now we're looking at the obvious counterpart, biblical manhood. In today's world we see this war going on, this war on the biblical family.

And really there's a masculinity crisis, a crisis of male identity. And you see that in different ways. For example, prolonged adolescence. It's like some men just don't seem to grow up.

[1:15] Societal confusion. People don't know what a man is anymore. I mean, they don't know what a woman is, they don't know what a man is. It's a crazy world. And there's this cultural assault really on traditional roles.

There's wokeness, transgenderism, a lot of effeminacy. It's like biblical manhood is something that is missing now. And you've got this really demasculating culture that we live in.

And so we've got to be counter-cultural. And look at what's God's standard, the God-ordained standard. What does the Bible say about men? And in the world today, when you see perhaps a man who's strong, there's a risk that they're going to be labelled as toxic masculinity.

As if, you know, a strong man is something toxic. Now, it can be, but really the problem is not masculinity but sin. It's not manhood that's the problem.

The issue is sin. And as Bible believers, we hold that the Bible is sufficient to define truth, including manhood. What is a man?

[2:24] Across cultures, it doesn't matter what culture it is, because it's been the same since Adam. And another problem of today, as we kind of touched on last week, is really the spiritual confusion of a feminised church.

It's not effective to men. There's studies that have found that when women move in, especially to lead, that men tend to move out. Now, we're a bit outnumbered. There's only one lady here tonight, so you're a bit outnumbered, sister, but you can see here tonight.

A lot of men are interested in biblical truth. That's a good thing. That's a good thing. Whereas some churches, it's like the men are totally outnumbered by the women, because the men move out.

When it tends to be run by a woman, the men tend to move out of that church. But it's good, really, obviously you need the balance, men and women in a church. But we need to restore men to their biblical place in God's order of administration, ministry and authority, like we touched on last week. And the good thing is when men move in, then men move in. And the women follow, hopefully too. As far as biblical authority and leadership and headship in the church, it's primarily for men.

[3:37] So we did talk about that last time, so I won't labour it tonight. But we heard how leadership is primarily for men in the divine order. It's not a denigration of women or an elevation of men.

It's just a biblical statement of spiritual function. So just as men are not equipped mentally, emotionally or physically to bear and rear the family or be homemakers, without that being a

denigration of men's being and function, likewise in the church.

It's not a denigration of women when it's the men that take that role. It's just the natural and obvious function of men to take the lead. And it's really vital to the health, balance and well-being of the whole body, when every part is playing its part and functioning as it's meant to.

And so really preaching too. It's good if that's an adult masculine orientation. Because men need to be spoken to straight down the line. Talk honestly. That's a bloke thing, isn't it?

We talk honestly, man to man, man to man. So moving on, what does the Bible teach us then about masculinity? What does it mean to be a man according to God's design?

[4:48] That's what we need to go back to, don't we? Go back to the original design, God's design. Follow the maker's instructions rather than society's cultural norms which have been distorted and they're shifting all the time as well.

A really good scripture to capture, really an introduction tonight, is 1 Corinthians 16 from verse 13 through 14 where it reads, Watch ye stand fast in the faith.

Quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity. Now, of course, there is an archaic word there. Quit you like men is the word like when you could think of how you should acquit yourself.

In other words, prove yourself, show yourself. It's talking about showing yourself. Act like you're a man is what it's saying. Be strong. And we're going to unpack that verse a little later, but it kind of captures a whole lot of truth just in that one verse.

Really five things there which we'll get to. It's saying here, discharge your obligations like men. Men like to be challenged. And there's a challenge here for us men that we need to rise to that challenge.

[5:55] And that's a good thing. That's a manly thing. That's a good thing. That's what real men do. They rise to the challenge. And the blight of the ages, really, is men failing to be men. Instead of shouldering responsibility and accepting the buck, the buck stops with us, sticking at the job, many have blamed circumstances, their wives, their in-laws, their bad luck or anything else that will serve as an excuse.

And really that's right back in the garden. Adam tried to pass the buck, as we'll talk about, that basically tried to blame Eve for everything, whereas really the buck stops with the man.

And the essence of the fall of man is really what Adam did, seeing what appears to be the easy option and taking it. But God is looking for men.

We see that there in Ezekiel 22, verse 30. It says, So here's the prophet Ezekiel, and God's telling him, I was looking for a man, a man who will have the courage to stand.

And the word there where it says they should make up the hedge, a hedge symbolises protection. You think about a hedge around a property, it's a protection. It's a barrier.

[7:22] And spiritually, we could think about the hedge. It represents prayer, obedience, righteousness. And that's protecting of a nation, of a family, from judgment, from a people, from judgment.

God was looking here in Ezekiel 22, looking for a man, a faithful man. In other words, a man who would pray, a man who would guide and lead the people back to him.

But he could not find one man. So it's a real reproach there in Ezekiel's day. Here's how someone's put it as a bit of a poem about the world today is looking for men.

So I'm page two there. The world today is looking for men. Men who are not for sale. Men who are honest, sound from centre to circumference. True to the heart's core.

Men with conscience are steady as a needle to the pole. Men who will stand for the right if the heavens totter and the earth reels. Men who can tell the truth and look the world right in the eye.

[8:21] Men who neither brag nor run. Men who neither flag nor flinch. Men who can have courage without shouting it. Men in whom the courage of everlasting life runs still, deep and strong.

Men who know their message and tell it. Men who know their place and fill it. Men who know their business and attend to it. Men who will not lie, shirk or dodge. Men who are not too lazy to work nor too proud to be poor.

Men who are willing to eat what they have earned and to wear what they have paid for. Men who are not ashamed to say no with emphasis. Not ashamed to say I can't afford it.

God is looking for men. He wants those who can unite together around a common faith, who can join hands in a common task and have come to the kingdom for such a time as this.

God give us men. So there's a lot of truth there about how men should take the lead, should stand up and be counselled. We've got need of men. Men who love the Lord more than gold and pleasures.

[9:20] Men of great convictions. Men committed to honouring our Lord. So let's have a look at this truth through a few different sections now.

The first one, God's design. What is God's design for manhood? And we know, as we talked about, for the woman, it's God's design that matters, doesn't it?

And man is created in God's image. Genesis 1, 26, and God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion.

Man reflects God's glory uniquely as male, with inherent value equal to woman, but distinct in role. So Genesis 5, verse 2, it says, Male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.

Interesting that Eve was called Adam as well. He called both of them their name Adam. Interesting thought, isn't it? And so man has that role of protection, of purpose, of provision, especially for women and children.

[10:27] And a man is not a man because of what he does, but rather who he is. Often you think of your identity as a man, or, you know, what do you do, is kind of a general thing, isn't it?

But it's not so much what we do, our identity, our job, but it's who we are. That's what matters, our character. And so we see that God said, Let us make man in our image, the triune Godhead.

So our manhood is not tied to how macho we are, but to the image of God in which we are made. Do not allow the world to mould you into its image of a real man, but let God mould you into his image.

That's what we want, isn't it? And we think, of course, the perfect man, our Lord, isn't it? Our Lord Jesus, the ultimate model, strong, sacrificial, and servant-hearted.

So there's distinct roles in creation. We see Genesis 2, 15, and the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

[11:26] Interesting, men are cultivators. They're wired to work, to protect, to make things grow. And a man's work defines him and brings fulfilment. Interesting, God gave man work before giving him a woman.

So there's a role there. It's before the fall, man had a job to do. There's nothing wrong with having work to do. And God placed man in the garden there to work it, to cultivate it, to protect, to teach. And in Proverbs 6, we read about the ant. It tells us, go to the ant, thou sluggard. You know, have a look at the ant. It's a good example, a good model for us. The ant works diligently without an overseer.

But we see that laziness leads to poverty. The Bible teaches complementarianism with the man and the woman. They're equal in worth, but they've got complementary roles.

So they both had a purpose. They both had something that was theirs to do, to be. And so there's nothing to denigrate a woman. They're complementary roles.

[12:30] They've both got a place to fill, a role to fulfil. We see modern society kind of denigrates marriage, doesn't it? It delays marriage. And it treats marriage as a burden to avoid.

Yet God shows a priority for that, a priority of family right at the beginning, Genesis 2. And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone.

I will make him and help me for him. It's the first time God declares something not good. Everything was good. Indeed, very good. But then we see that for the man to be alone was not a good thing.

See that God's plan for marriage, God helping us to have a marriage. In any partnership, someone has to be responsible for the decisions, the directions that are taken.

God's model is the man who accepts that ultimate responsibility. What are man's responsibilities to the wife? To provide, to protect, to love her, and importantly, to lead her somewhere.

[13:37] The question is where? And so there's that eternal aspect here. Are they leading the wife to eternal oblivion or to a grand eternal destiny? The wife will usually follow if the man knows where he's going.

The man is to take responsibility for their mutual growth as persons and their spiritual welfare. So there's a sense where there's an eternal concept there, an eternal aspect. Of course, every one, every individual in a marriage has got to make their own personal decision for salvation.

But hopefully the man will lead in a good way in that regard. And so we see the eternal purpose behind God making man and woman. And we see that man's an eternal being.

He's built for relationships and called to glorify God forever. So, of course, not everyone gets married. There's a truth that someone could be single and still glorify God as a single man.

God helping, he will marry, but not necessarily. But relationships can be like fellowship relationships too. It's a good thing for a man to have those relationships that will be good for him.

[14:45] Man is an eternal being. He's built for relationships and called to glorify God forever. Men are called to a wholehearted devotion. Mark 12.30, it talks about how we should love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

And men are called to be God-pleasers, not man-pleasers. So, it's good if we can cultivate that desire to please God. Like David prayed, create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Psalms 51, verse 10. We can seek out God's wisdom, biblical wisdom, and align our thoughts with his through scripture. And that our eyes can be fixed on the eternal, not the temporary world.

So, in all our ways, acknowledging him, he'll direct our paths. And we see the words of 1 John 2. written to young men. I have written unto you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and you've overcome the wicked one.

There's a lot of truth there too, isn't there? The word of God abiding in you. So, we're seeing God's design. And the next section, we see the fall, the fall of man. And this is where sin brought that distortion of manhood, of really humanity.

[16:00] And we see Adam's failure there, Genesis 3. Of course, the account of the fall. And what happened? Adam stood by passively as Eve was deceived.

Adam abdicated his responsibility to lead and protect. And then we see these words here in Genesis 3, verse 12, where you see the spinelessness of Adam and the blame shifting here. That he blames the woman. And the man said, the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

So, it's almost like he's trying to blame Eve. The woman you gave me, she gave me the fruit, and I did eat. So, it's her fault. It's kind of the attitude you could read between the lines there.

And it's really like this evading responsibility of the man. So, really, it shows the weakness of Adam here. And men need to step up in faith and leadership, in the family, in society, in the church, to stand up, to rise up, to study up, to build up, to train up, to show up.

[17:12] Modern men can fall into this passivity or indulgence or just avoiding responsibility, just like Adam did right back then. So, what's some characteristics of biblical manhood?

We could think of some biblical character traits. And Micah 6, verse 8, is a great verse that captures a whole lot as well. We see Micah 6, verse 8, it reads, He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.

There's a great three-point sermon there. So, do right, be kind and true, and keep humble. A lot of truth there, isn't there, about character, doing what's right, doing what's just, doing what's kind, keeping humble.

Paul exhorts young Timothy with words here in 1 Timothy 6, verse 11. He says, But thou, O man of God, flee these things, talking about sin, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

In other words, pursue righteousness. Run after that. Chase that. Back to that scripture we read before, 1 Corinthians 16, you could break it down into five commands to men. 1 Corinthians 16, from verse 13.

[18:30] First one we say, watch ye. So, it's a call there for men to be watchful. We should be alert. We should have our eyes wide open against temptation about what's happening in the culture.

It talks about an active vigilance and alertness, like in a military sense. We should avoid getting distracted or, you know, switching off.

We should be very watchful and alert. And what are some of the ways we can be watchful? We can watch our heart. The Bible says, keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life. Guard your heart. It determines your life's course. We see with David that he failed with Bathsheba. He saw her and he lusted after her.

And the Bible says we should guard the heart. And when you think about it, the gates to the heart are the eyes and the ears. Guard your eye gate and your ear gate.

[19:29] Monitor what you consume. Because the unguarded heart can fall prey. It's important that we guard our spiritual, moral, ethical and sexual purity.

Another way we should watch is watch out for the enemy. 1 Peter 5 it talks about be sober, be vigilant. Again, watching. Because your adversary the devil is a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.

Whom resist steadfast in the faith. So again, another way to be watching, watch out for the enemy. He's on the war path and we should be watchful to resist the enemy's attacks.

And of course we watch for our Lord focusing onto Jesus, looking unto him, looking unto our Lord for power and provision and trusting in him to be our guide.

Next one it says, watch ye, then it says, stand firm in the faith. You can see the words to Joshua there where the Lord said to Joshua in Joshua 1 verse 9, be strong and of good courage.

[20:33] Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. Wherever you're going to go, God's going to be there with you, he says. Can we have that kind of unwavering conviction that will stand firm in the faith, that will choose decision over emotion, will choose faithfulness?

It's a military term here too. To stand firm, hold your ground, resisting retreat. As a soldier refuses to lose the territory they've gained despite the enemy pushback.

It's this picture of enduring battle without retreating. And Ephesians 6, there's a lot of military terminology there. It says stand four times.

We think for one example of a Bible hero, his name was Shammah, and it says that the people fled from the Philistines, but Shammah, it says, he stood in the midst of the ground and he defended it and slew the Philistines and the Lord brought a great victory.

So Shammah was one of David's mighty men and he demonstrated this bravery to hold his ground, refuse to retreat. And so he was willing to stand alone against overwhelming odds and the Lord brought a great victory.

[21:51] Okay, the next thing it says is quit you like men. As I say, acquit yourself like a man to act like a man. It's a unique term, only used once here in the New Testament. It means play the part of a man.

And when you think about it, it's very easy. I know even for myself that as men, we can waste a lot of time on trivial pursuits.

You know, there's times that you can easily waste time on trivial things like whether it be video games, you name it, all kinds of things that we can just waste time. And it's really, in a way, it's a bit childish too.

And it's almost like a boy thing. Yeah, we can all still be little boys at heart, but there's times when we've got to actually realise, hey, that's acting like a boy instead of a man.

And I know there's a time in my life where I got rid of a lot of my childhood things. And it's almost like a turning point in my life. And Paul says, when I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

[22:59] Now, of course, we can still have hobbies and interests and recreational things. But it's also with some, their time is just consumed with that. And it's almost acting like a, it's acting immature.

It can be. And we've seen in Corinth at the time that there was a lot of immorality in the place as well. And that was quite a challenge for, for the Corinthians as well.

It's true that this saying here at the bottom there, you were born a male, but you must become a man. It's like, you've got to realise, hey, I'm actually going to be a man. I'm going to put away the childish things.

It's good to see a young man here who's joined the man here tonight. It's a good thing for us to kind of have that point in our life where, hey, actually I'm a man now.

Or even if I'm only a young man, it's a good thing. So God bless you, brother, there too. So God calls man to be manly, doesn't he? And we see the world, it's almost like they're just boys with toys, some of these men around today just acting the fool and wasting their lives off times, it seems.

[24:08] But God's order is that we be a man created in God's image. And when the time comes, we have a family lovingly leading them for God's glory. And as again, modern culture would kind of look down on a man who's acting manly and call it toxic masculinity where it's really they're just embracing their God-given identity.

Hey, I'm a man, so I'll talk like a man, I'll walk like a man, I'll be like a man. And God's design is for us men to be manly, to be courageous protectors, God helping us.

You know, when there's some trouble we'll stand up and we won't just take a video of the fight, we'll actually intervene and try to do something to stop it, that kind of thing. That's what a man should do, isn't it?

And it goes on in that 1 Corinthians 16, it says, be strong, be strong. Ephesians 6.10 tells us, finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

And the whole section there about strength of the spiritual armour, we're called to be strong men, to be physically, emotionally, spiritually resilient, to go the hard yards and to go the distance.

[25:17] And then it reads, let all your things be done with charity. In other words, do everything in love. It's an interesting thought, isn't it, with those five that it adds love as something that, hey, don't forget love because men can be maybe all of the macho things and not have the love.

Got to have the love part too. And we see that in the family sense, husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it. There's this Christ-like love that should be guiding really all of our actions.

Do all of the things, all your things. Do all your things with charity, with love. So be tough, yet tender. Be a builder, but not a bully.

Have strength with sensitivity. There's a balance there, isn't there? So raise your voice when needed. Could be weep when appropriate too. And it could be that, you know, just be raw and real. That's part of being a man too, isn't it? So next section, some God-given roles of a man. Here's what it says about what the man should be and we could name many others probably.

[26:19] Really, we've only just captured bits and pieces because the whole book's about, really about men and women and we could take many examples and different verses about men's roles, but this is just some as a bit of a list.

So a God-given role for a man is to be a man of God. That we pursue God's righteousness. He showed the young man what to do, so do it. A man should be a leader, taking that place of authority in the family setting, for example.

A man should be a provider, providing for his own, meeting the family's needs, working diligently. A man should be a protector, that they guard their family.

A husband, loving sacrificially. And really, your wife's greatest need is a godly husband. Be a husband. Be a father that disciplines and disciples your children.

And then be a builder. Again, the first job the man had was to keep the garden, to look after it. And we're a cultivator. We should be cultivating growth in our home, church and community.

[27:27] So we should be builders. Man, we should be builders. I know some of you like to wield the hammer and the nail and do stuff. And that's just natural. That's a God-given thing, isn't it?

Really, that's the man's natural inclination. That's a God-given thing, to be a builder. Next section, the crisis of modern masculinity.

We touched on it before. Really, masculinity, biblical manhood, it's under attack. In modern culture, they don't like men being strong. It's almost like men have got to be kind of giving way all the time to feminism and egalitarianism, which means equality.

There's this focus on equality that is kind of putting men down and really quite hindering men. And then on the other side of the coin, you've got someone like Andrew Tate. There's hyper-masculinity where there's just immorality over biblical responsibility.

Of course, that's really not of God, very clearly not of God. Because men are meant to be masculine, but not to be immoral or to be irresponsible.

[28:38] Look at the topsy-turvy values of our world today. And the moral lines are getting blurred all the time. And really, for men to be a man's man, to have that heterosexuality, for one thing, that's all getting attacked today, isn't it, by this world today where everything's topsy-turvy and there's a breakdown of moral values, of biblical values.

We see fatherlessness and all the damage that does. We see prolonged adolescence where some men are, quote, boys who shave. So they've grown up but they still act like boys.

And so they're still boys with their toys. And it's like they've never really realised, hey, we should be growing up and we should be manly men. We should be mature.

And you see, as a church, do we just accommodate all of this rubbish, this mess, or do we actually say, hey, no, we should go to God's design. We should be really the priests, the prophets and the kings of our sphere where God's place does.

We should take that biblical role. Another important truth is that as men, we should avoid temptation. And Proverbs 4 captures a lot there how we should guard our heart, our mouth, our ears, our eyes and our path.

[29:59] See that there? Keep thy heart with all diligence. So we talked about that before, the heart is the centre. And then some just leave it there but then it goes on. But put away from thee a froward mouth or a perverse mouth, perverse lips put far from thee.

So don't listen to it and don't speak it. And then let thine eyes look right on, let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Then it says, ponder the path of thy feet, let all thy ways be established.

Turn not to the right hand nor to the left, remove thy foot from evil. So it captures all of those areas where actually let's look out for all those dimensions of our life to guard ourselves from temptation.

Another example of some Bible heroes was the men of Issachar. They were men with this awareness. It says, the children of Issachar, they were men who had an understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do.

So you see of these men that they had this insight, they had this discernment about the world that they lived in, whether it be cultural, political, spiritual, and they determined the best course of action to take.

[31:04] So they knew what was happening and they knew what they ought to do. They sensed God's will and they took action. And it's like that for us too. We've got this world to navigate.

We've got to understand the setting that we're in in this, you know, latter days that we live and the way the world is and try to navigate that in a spiritual way, in a scriptural way, with wisdom and courage to be as the children of Issachar, to have that discernment, that understanding.

Some practical aspects now, to become the man that God wants us to be. And we can hear all of these things and maybe take it as a concept, as theory, but no, we should be doers of the word, not hearers only.

Let's think of some practical ways we can put this into action, to apply it, to adorn the doctrine of God, our Saviour, in all things. He tells us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

And it goes on looking for Christ's coming. We see that we've got this eternal perspective. Hey, we've got to live in this world and we see those three things, soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

[32:18] But we're looking for the world to come too, so there's an eternal aspect too. What are you investing in? This world will burn.

Sometimes we just get too tied down rather than making the eternal perspective, what really matters.

Another aspect is spiritual leadership as well. And the Bible tells us about this concept of generational failure where a generation not knowing God is the fault of the previous one. We think, hey, I know I've got children and grandchildren and you think, is there another generation that's coming after nine that know not the Lord?

There's a sense where we've got this multi-generational kind of responsibility in a way, isn't it? We want to tell our children and our grandchildren, God helping us, that they'll trust the Lord too. And we want to advance God's kingdom.

So we want to tell the next generation we're pouring out our life, God helping us that when we're dead and gone, that our children will still be following the Lord and keeping up that truth for their generations to come.

[33:24] It's like Joshua said, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. He made that decision as the head of his house, the head of his household. He says, as for me and my family, this is what we're going to do.

We're going to serve the Lord. He made that decision and we see in Deuteronomy 6 verse 7, again, of the Father that we should teach our children diligently the things that God took to them about the things of God in your house when you lie down, when you get up, this and that.

He says, whatever you're doing, whatever you're about, he says, teach this to your children diligently. God helping us when we get the opportunity to have those conversations with our children and grandchildren, even if they've grown older, we can still maybe have that impact. God helping us to reach them, to win them. Because really, the ultimate is to see others saved, isn't it? I know there's a heart amongst us to go witnessing, to go reaching out and really, it's the ultimate, the ultimate high, really, is to see another soul trust Christ, isn't it?

Like it's been said that the only thing that you can take into eternity is another soul that you've led to Christ. So, I mean, in a way, it's quite a big truth that one, isn't it?

[34:37] If we can lead other souls to Christ, so give that your energy and your love and care for souls, it's very important. Even souls you might not like, who knows, you might have an impact reaching them for Christ and that's really, that's an eternal dimension that is precious, isn't it?

Another aspect is character development. What does the Bible say about the man of God? We should have integrity. The integrity of the upright shall guide them.

We should have self-control. He that has no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls. So, learn to master your feelings, your desires.

Humility. It says, humble yourselves therefore unto the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time. It's obeying God over yourself that God has the priority, what he wants.

And then we see righteousness. God wants us to be instruments of righteousness. So, it's got that picture of, hey, that we're his instruments. We're the, the way that he reaches his world.

[35:44] It's through you and me. We're his instruments. Instruments of righteousness unto God. In other words, as someone's commented here, men who will not play with sin, men of clean mouths, hands and hearts, who abhor evil, in other words, hate evil, and cleave to the good, despise the works of the flesh, men who are so claimed by Calvary that the cross is an experience in their lives, men who love with the impelling of the indwelling spirit, so constraining it to go and tell others, and men who, in Christian warfare, are not chocolate soldiers.

There's some big poem, I should have quoted it, actually, by a man, C.T. Studd, a famous missionary, talking about the chocolate soldier. So, you know how you get Freddo frogs, you know, a chocolate in the form of a frog, you can get a chocolate in the form of a soldier, and of course, such a soldier will just melt, as the picture of, hey, we shouldn't be chocolate soldiers that just melt when the heat's on, but will be real soldiers that will go through.

And then we see faithfulness is another aspect too. Most men will proclaim everyone his own goodness, but a faithful man who can find. Faithfulness is a very precious quality too.

Moving on to other responsibilities, we think of family responsibilities. It tells us there, the Lord said to a man, set your house in order. There's a time where, hey, you've got to actually do some stock taking here.

Take stock. Hey, how's my house, my family? Set your house in order. And so, God helping us will have a strong love for our wife, a provision and care for our family.

[37:28] And we'll learn how to discipline our children in love, all of those things. Of course, we think about fatherhood. That's really something that's missing today, isn't it? Where many families are growing up without a father.

And fathers are meant to be modelling godliness and leadership. They're meant to be instructing and guiding their children. Discipline as an act of love.

Loving and compassionate and being a godly example too. But yet, today we see vanishing fathers. It's like a whole generation of fathers who are not stepping up.

They're weak. They're compromising. Or they surrender to their children. They lack the courage to lead. And then you've got others at the other extreme, maybe bullying or rough.

So it's neither of these extremes as being responsible, is it? Where we're just passive, not caring for our children, or on the other extreme, maybe overbearing. Just finding that godly example, that godly fatherhood.

[38:30] Like our Lord, he's full of love and compassion. He's the ultimate father, isn't he? Perfect father. Another aspect is community engagement. Proverbs 27, 17, it says, Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

I know it's been great to see Don and others stepping up and helping with the men's activities in the church. Iron sharpening iron is a good thing for men to get together. Even if we might bump up to each other now and again in a good way.

Yeah, we can have some good manly conversations and we can learn from each other, we can grow together, we can help each other and that's a good thing.

Like we said before, it's not good for a man to be alone. Sometimes loneliness amongst men is a big problem but the Bible wants us to have that godly fellowship, get around some godly men, that's a good thing.

And men saw others too, Timothy 2 verse 2, Paul says to Timothy, he says, the things you've heard from me, he says, commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also.

[39:36] There's this sense where hey, we can teach the younger ones in the faith and if we're younger in the faith we can be taught so we can actually all have that chain reaction of learning, of growing together and then committing to others, committing that to faithful men and then when we're dead and gone they'll be passing that on to others too.

So there's that flow on. It's a good thing to pass on the word to disciple the next generation.

Important that as men of God that we know that we have got victory in Christ.

The Bible talks about how there's a way of escape when we're tempted. God will provide a way of escape that we can bear it, the temptation. Psalm 119 says, wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

We can cleanse our way by God's word. It says in Psalm 4 verse 3, know that the Lord has set apart him that is godly for himself. There's a sense where we set apart. We've actually been specially granted God's blessing to be that sets apart people that, hey, we are different from the world that doesn't know the Saviour because we're godly, because God has set us apart for himself.

And then John 17, our Lord says, you're in the world but not of the world. That's an amazing thought, isn't it? Sure enough, we're in the world. We've got to get through life just like anybody else who doesn't know the Lord.

[40:58] We're in the world but we're not of the world. We don't have to have the worldly kind of thinking or the worldly mindset, the worldly worldview. What are some biblical examples of manhood?

We could name many people. Here's just a list of some. Enoch was marked as one who walked with God. Noah obeyed God in that corrupt world that he lived. Abraham was called a friend of God,

a man of faith.

We see Moses, he was faithful. We know that he chose to suffer affliction with God's people rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. David, for all his faults, at least he was called a man after God's own heart.

And he's an example to us of how to get through when he failed. He got back on his feet. He repented. He sought after God. Joseph, he refused the temptations that were against him.

Caleb, he followed the Lord fully, it says of him. And then Joshua is one who's never stopped by obstacles. We know he just kept going, didn't he? The wall of Jericho didn't stop him.

[42:04] Crossing the Jordan didn't stop him. He just kept going for God. And then we see, for example, Job, he kept going, he had persistence despite the calamities of his life.

Elijah, he didn't falter. Even when he was outnumbered, he kept persevering. We see Daniel, who would not defile himself. We see Jehoshaphat prepared his heart to seek God.

Barnabas, a good man, full of the Holy Ghost and faith. Nehemiah, he refused to compromise. They tried to get him to stop working on the wall. He said, should such a man as I flee, I'm not going to stop.

I'm going to refuse to compromise. That was Nehemiah. We see Gideon, he was caught a mighty man of valor, even though he was fearful and weak. And God reduced his army as well to test him even more.

But Gideon obeyed and he trusted God. And God gave him victory. And then we see Jacob, who was renamed Israel, he wrestled with God all night.

[43:06] And God called him Israel, which means God prevails. So we see that encounter, that transformation of Jacob. And of course, the ultimate role model really, as we said before, is Christ, isn't it?

Our Lord. He's the ultimate, the perfect man. To be the very best example to aspire to be is to be like Christ, isn't it? Our mentor, really, our ultimate Lord in sacrifice and love.

He was gentle, yet he was fierce at times too. There was times where he obviously cast the money changers out of the temple. He was very strong with the corrupt religious crowd of his time.

So, an ultimate example of manhood. Think again, just to cover again, just the worldly ways, the worldly metrics. In other words, how does the world measure manhood?

Manhood isn't wealth or trophies. It's not physical feats. It's not, you know, being some great sports person or some masterful man in the worldly scheme of things.

[44:09] It says in Mark 8, 36, well, what shall it profit a man if you gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Now, how does God measure a man? It's in those eternal dimensions, isn't it?

You know, we see in 1 John 2, 17, the world's going to pass away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. When you think about it in the scheme of things, there's a vanity to worldly pursuits, isn't there?

This world's going to pass away. All of the lust, the desires, the pleasures of this world, but what's going to last forever? The one who does the will of God. So, instead of investing in a world that will burn, rather we ought to find and do the will of God.

That's what matters. That's what counts. Another thing about the man of God is that they should embrace hardship. Don't let the tough times deter you. Don't let tough things put you off.

When you want to do something for God and you get discouragements and knockbacks and you get setbacks and hurts and it feels like it's too hard, it's all the more reason to keep going, to endure hardness as a good soldier and just keep on wrestling through the pain like Jacob did in Genesis 32.

[45:21] And lead with purpose too. Think, hey, I've got a purpose that's beyond all of this humanity and this run-of-the-mill day by day. It says there in Ephesians 2.10 that we are his workmanship.

You're a masterpiece created by the Master. You are his workmanship, it says, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. So, he's shaping you. Just let him create you for good works.

Let him shape you and seek God for your purpose. Every one of us has a purpose and we've just got to find what he wants for us to do and to do that which he puts on our heart to do and take responsibility.

It says in Galatians 6 it talks about let a man carry his own burden. So, take that responsibility that you've got and keep on going. Stand alone when you have to like Eleazar there in 2 Samuel 23:9-10.

Just keep on going. You've got a purpose. It's your purpose. Keep on doing it and trust God to help you even when these tough things happen because we're to expect it.

[46:24] Endure hardness and it says that those who want to live godly in Christ Jesus they shall suffer persecution. We can expect it. So, don't let that put you off.

It's all a more reason to, okay, I must be doing something right. I'm getting persecuted. So, hopefully. Okay, next section coming to the last kind of bit of it here now and really in conclusion there's a call here to every one of us men a call to that biblical manhood to be that man of God. It's a calling from God for us to lead, to protect, to provide, to love, to show Christ's strength and his humility and it's rejecting both of those extremes of passivity where we just, you know, the kind of norm of life being in it.

You know, she'll be right, kind of laid back, doing nothing pretty much while then being really like an over-the-top macho, like a misogynist kind of on the other end of the scale.

God doesn't want either of those things but he wants us to be having a godly masculinity which is conformed to God's image. That's what it is meant to be, isn't it?

[47:37] That we conform to Christ's image and so embrace that, that manhood that's godly. It's in Christ and man up to your God-ordained roles. We've seen again 1 Corinthians 16, it captures it all there really, doesn't it?

There's a lot there. We could just maybe try to capture that verse in your mind. It's a good one to try to memorise and even in hard times, it's got to stand fast, stand fast in the faith.

That's why we're men, we're meant to be strong and God helping us as much as humanly we are inclined to be weak. I know it's easy to take the easy path, isn't it?

And to not be strong, keep on keeping on and know that God's going to finish what he started in you too. This is a really good verse to take heart into. That being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

So we know we're all still a work in progress. We're still a work on the potter's wheel, aren't we? He's still shaping us. We're still early days sometimes and we feel like we've got a lot of rough edges.

[48:46] He's still working us on that potter's wheel but he's going to finish it. He's going to finish the work. He's going to perform it. He's going to complete it in that sense where, yeah, in eternity it'll all be a finished work.

In the meantime, we've all got some rough edges. Here's a good summary of some kind of points to take home today. To answer the call to his lordship over your life.

Put yourself at God's disposal. Just lay yourself on the altar as a living sacrifice. All your strengths and talents. Find and discover God's will, his ways for your life.

Pursue that. Chase after it. Righteousness. Pursue excellence too in every area of life. Don't settle for second best. Aim to be and do the best you can.

Even if you feel that that's not really good enough. Be your best. That's what matters, isn't it? And then servanthood. Learn to serve others. Have that determination for Christ.

[49:44] That zeal for his cause. And no matter what, no matter what opposition or hardship, heartache or persecution, we will face that, men.

It's a constant. Opposition, hardship, heartache, persecution. Hey, we were made for this. We're men. We're a man of God.

And we're going to stand, we're going to keep on standing, we're going to maintain a fighting spirit. Right to the very end. Hey, it's not quitting time yet. One day it will be when we see his face. But we've just got to keep on fighting.

The good fight of the faith. The world would say of a man's man, it's based about how they look or what they own or this or that about what they've achieved.

But no, a mature man of God is all of these things. So we've got a couple of slides here. A man of faith. A man of God's word. A man stable and secure.

[50:42] A spiritual head of his house. Faithful to his spouse. A man whose children respect him. A man who leads his family towards eternal life. A man known for honesty.

A man who seeks wisdom from God. A man compassionate to others. A man in control of his behaviour. A man accountable to family, community and God. Of course we can all fail on all of those things from time to time but God helping us we can aspire to be that mature man who's working in all of those dimensions.

And here's just some quotes that I picked up from some well-known people. Some not necessarily saying that I would agree with them on every aspect but there's some good quotes here.

In the notes there's the fuller quote where it says Luther says this The true man of God is not puffed up by his own righteousness but humbled by the grace that lifts him from the mire of sin.

We're saved but hey it's nothing about me and my righteousness. He's taken me out of the mire of sin. It's his work of grace. That's where the praise is isn't it? And then we see Bunyan who wrote Pilgrim's Progress.

[51:52] He says The man of God walks a narrow road with snares on either side yet he presses on for the city of God shines brighter than the shadows of this world.

We're on that pilgrim walk to that city of God the heavenly city. We see Spurgeon says The man of God is a watchman on the walls sounding the trumpet when the enemy draws near and weeping when the people heed him not.

Hey not everyone's going to hear you out not everyone's going to give you a fair hearing but you're that watchman on the wall. Just keep sounding the trumpet and do what you have to do. Bonhoeffer said The man of God does not flee from the cross but takes it up knowing that in losing his life for Christ he finds it.

Jonathan Edwards The man of God is one whose heart is set aflame by divine truth and whose life is a testimony to the power of that fire. Our hearts are set aflame that's the testimony of God isn't it that we have.

Athanasius says The man of God stands firm when the world bends for he knows the word became flesh to uphold him. This world's going to bend it's constantly bending it's very bent it's warped and twisted often these days isn't it but the man of God doesn't bend he stands firm and then we see this fellow Gregory of Nazianus he says The man of God is a vessel of clay frail and fleeting yet filled with the treasure of heaven's light Ambrose of Milan says The man of God does not seek the riches of earth but the wealth of souls one for eternity think of eternity think of eternal values of eternal souls we see Wycliffe he says The man of God holds fast to the scriptures for they are the lantern to his feet and the sword in his hand and then John Knox says The man of God trembles at sin thunders at iniquity and trusts in naught but the mercy of the almighty we can trust in God's mercy can't we and we see all these renowned folk from history they're standing fast standing up for the scriptures standing up in a world a world that's bending they're holding fast and pressing on it talks about that we should count our days and apply our heart to wisdom think about how how can we be such a man man here tonight how can we have that heart to want to be more a manly man a real man a man of God a man of faith to stand up and be counted to stand firm and to have that resolve that hungering and thirsting for righteousness to pursue to chase after to follow after righteousness hopefully there's some inspiration here in some of these notes you can go over them in more detail to think about how can I put some of this into practice in my life and God helping me in whatever context of life you're at in this time you can always find ways to take some of these truths and make them live so hopefully it's given you some food for thought tonight of course the most important thing really which I ought to have included really is of course we can miss out the fact that to be a man of God you've got to get saved first so that's obviously critical that as in tonight we're addressing really men who know the Lord but if per chance anyone that might be watching this later you're not a Christian yet well you can't be a man of God unless you get saved first so that you trust in the Lord for your salvation that you trust Jesus to be your saviour and to pay for your sin you ask his forgiveness for your sin and you've trusted that he's forgiven you because of his blood that was shed for your sin and you've trusted him as your saviour and then it's really it's a whole new walk isn't it it's a whole new way of living we're a new creation in Christ old things have passed away and all things have become new so let's be encouraged to be those men of faith let's pray

[55:51] Lord we thank you here tonight for the men that are here and the woman that is here and our fellowship together Lord thank you Lord for the provision of some refreshments here and we thank you for the kindness and generosity of those who have brought it Lord we thank you for these truths that we heard about from your word Lord that they won't just be theory but that we'll put it into practice help us Lord to put this truth into action in our shoe leather as we walk out our ways in this world that you'll direct our steps as we trust in you help us Lord to follow the example of those godly men who've gone before us in the scriptures and through history but most of all yourself Lord Jesus that we would follow in your steps that we walk in your steps and follow your way we praise you Lord for all these things help us Lord to not be discouraged if we might have fallen short in any of these aspects but to find ways that we can refresh our faith and walk more closely in your ways

Lord help us to find your Holy Spirit's power to make the changes we need to make to be more so the men of God that you've called us to be in Jesus name we pray Amen