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Where Are
The Real Men

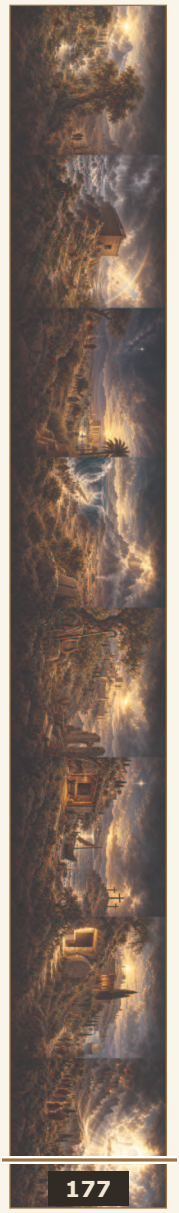
"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path."

PSALM 119:105



JOHN WEAVER

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE



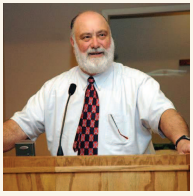
Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:13

Biblical manhood is a question of character rather than age, appearance, or physical strength. John Weaver considers the difference between human expectations and the standard supplied by Scripture. These messages examine integrity, responsibility, and faithful conduct, asking what it means for a man to live under the authority of God's Word.

"By real men, I mean men of honor, character, and integrity—men who give their word, keep their word, and stay true to it regardless of the consequences and the situation."

JOHN WEAVER



John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.

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Edited from the sermon corpus of John Weaver.

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CHAPTER 1

Where Are The Real Men

Part One of Three

Introduction: The Question of Real Men

John chapter 1, verse 6, says, “There was a man sent from God whose name was John.” Verse 23 records John's answer to those who questioned who he was: “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah.” We will come back and fill in a few verses as well. The title of today's message, the beginning of a three-part series, is “Where Are the Real Men?”

A few months back, I preached a message entitled “Where Are the Real Women?” I had many responses to that message, and all of them were favorable. But each response also ended with another question: “When are you going to preach a sermon on where are the real men?” I was really very surprised, because that question was asked not only by single women, but also by married women and some men. This series is the response to that question.

When we are talking about a man, we must understand that there is a vast difference between the biblical definition of manhood and the humanistic definition of manhood. In fact, biblicism and humanism have absolutely nothing in common; they are direct opposites.

The Decline of Character and the Need for Men

Manhood is not determined by age. It is not determined by muscles or abilities. In fact, I believe there is a vast difference today in the character and integrity of those men who lived even a hundred years ago and those who are alive today. Character has certainly fallen by the wayside in every area.

If you would ever stop and think about this, even back during the Great Depression, there were many people who were out of work and had absolutely nothing. Yet even the hobos, when they would come up to a house and knock on the door, would first ask, “Is there some work that we can do for a sandwich or a bowl of soup?” At least they were willing to work. The interesting thing is a book Alice and I came across years ago.

The title of it is, "We Had Everything But Money." It contains stories from the Great Depression: how people survived, made their money, got along on little food, and made what little food they had stretch. Wonderful stories. But today we have sired a generation and a society of people who have had everything given to them. They know nothing really and truly about work. They know nothing about sacrifice. They know nothing about frugality.

Everything has been handed to them, basically on a silver platter. If they do not get what they want, their attitude is, "We'll take it because we deserve it and it should be ours." The truth of the matter is that we need men today—men with understanding, and men who will demonstrate what biblical manhood is.

Josiah Gilbert Holland wrote this: "God give us men. A time like this demands strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready hands. Men whom the lust of office does not kill. Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy. Men who possess opinions and a will, men who have honor, men who will not lie, men who can stand

before a demagogue and damn his treacherous flatteries without winking, tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog, in public duty and in private thinking, for while the rabble with their thumb-worn creeds, their large professions and their little deeds, mingle in selfish strife, low freedom weeps, wrong rules the land, and waiting justice weeps."

God Seeks a Man: Ezekiel 22:30

Certainly, you can see how appropriate that is for us today. We need men. We need biblical men. We need godly men.

In Ezekiel chapter 22, verse 30, God Himself is speaking: "And I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none." God said, "I sought for a man among them." God seeks for men. The Hebrew word here is ish, which designates a man and not a woman. It distinguishes a man from a woman. God is seeking for a man to stand, a man to intercede, a man to pray, a man who will do that which is right and holy and obey.

He is looking for someone in this passage who will confront evil, wickedness, and corruption and will not back down. You find many men like that in the Bible. Moses was a man who stood in the gap, so to speak, along with Abraham, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Samuel, just to name a few. These men all stood in the gap and basically defended their land. But look again at verse 30, because God said, "I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none." So God is looking for a man that will stay off his hand of judgment and destruction. But the interesting thing is, He said, "I sought for a man among them."

So the question is, who is the them? Who is God seeking a man from among? The answer is that He is seeking for a man among the priests, the prophets, the princes, and the people. In Ezekiel 22, beginning there with verse 24, God says, "There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey, they have devoured souls, they have taken the treasure and precious things, they have made her many widows in the midst thereof. Her priests have violated my law, have profaned mine holy

things, have put no difference between the holy and the profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain."

"And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken. The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy. Yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully. And I sought for a man among them." Who's the them? The prophets, the priests, the princes, the people.

Then he said, "...that should make up the hedge and stand in the gap before me, that I should not destroy it, but I found none." None among the people, princes, prophets, or priests were able to stand before the Lord and intercede for the land, that He would not judge and destroy it.

John the Baptist: A Man Sent from God

It is very rich and such a blessing when you come to John 1:6, where God looked at John the Baptist and said, "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John." John was a real man in the sense that he confronted evil, corruption, and wickedness, and did not pull any punches. He confronted the leading religious leaders of his day, as well as the political leaders. He looked at the Pharisees and said, "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" He also called them a bunch of vipers, much like our Lord did when He said, "Woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" John the Baptist was not pulling any punches.

John certainly was not Christ. He was certainly not an angel, but he was a man. Remember what John 1:6 says: "There was a man sent by God whose name was John." In other words, John was sent with a specific mission and purpose. John 1:7 says, "The same came for a witness, to bear witness of that Light, that all men through him might be saved."

John was sent by God for a purpose; he had a specific mission. Real men do indeed have a purpose and a real mission, and that purpose and mission is to serve and honor the Lord Jesus Christ. Real men do have a purpose.

There are many truths that can be brought to light based upon John 1. First, note that John was a solitary man. He said in verse 23, “I am the voice of one.” He gave this answer to the Jews who had sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who art thou?” Verse 19 records, “And this is the record of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?”

Characteristic 1: A Solitary Man

And he confessed and denied not, but confessed, "I am not the Christ, I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then, art thou Elijah, or Elias?" And he saith, "I am not." Then they asked, "Art thou that prophet?" And he answered, "No." What prophet are they referring to? That would refer back to Deuteronomy 18, where Moses said, "A prophet like unto me shall the Lord thy God raise up from among thee." So it is another way of saying the Messiah again. They asked him, "Art thou that prophet, that special anointed one?" He says, "No." Verse 22: "Then said they unto him, Who art thou that we may give an answer to them that sent us? What sayest thou of thyself?" And then he gave this answer: "I'm the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah."

Now, note what John could have said when they came from Jerusalem and asked, "Who are you?" John could have rightly looked at them and said, "What's wrong with you? Don't you know who I am? I'm the subject of Old Testament prophecy. I was supernaturally conceived. God directly intervened for me to be born. Moreover, I was filled with the Holy Spirit from my mother's womb. I was sent to be the forerunner of Jesus Christ. Don't you know who I am?" He could have answered that way truthfully and accurately, but he didn't. "Who art thou?" "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness."

John, at this point in time, was the only one standing and crying out. He was standing alone, and he was not ashamed to be alone. He

was unmoved by peer pressure or peer approval. He was not ashamed to stand out in the crowd. He stood because it was necessary, and he stood alone. In fact, he was alone.

It is easy for someone to stand for what is right as long as family and friends are around us, with large support groups, great encouragement, and great help. There is no problem there. When you have all your family and friends in the great support group, there is no price to pay for standing. But when you are alone and no one else is going to stand with you, that is when you have a price to pay. John stood alone and stood for that which is right in an age of error, heresy, sin, and compromise. He proclaimed the truth when no one else would proclaim it. That is why he answered, "I am the voice of one." No one else was crying out, demanding repentance.

No one else said, "Repent of your sins and believe." No one else said, "Repent of your sins and obey." He was alone—a solitary man with a solitary voice. All the prominent religious leaders of his day were against him, and all the political leaders of his day were against him. That is how he lost his head. When he looked at King Herod and said, "What? It's not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife," it ultimately got his head chopped off.

Here he was standing against a corrupt religious establishment, as well as a corrupt political establishment. A real man does not need a multitude or an army behind him in order to do that which is right. He is willing to stand, and willing to stand alone if necessary, because he is a man of honor, character, and integrity. A man who will not stand for something will fall for anything, and that is certainly true. Unhappily, so many people today do not have character; consequently, they fall very easily and readily.

Character is what a man is in the dark. You tell me what you would do if you knew that no one else would ever find out about it, and I'll tell you exactly what you are. You say, "If I knew that no one would ever find out about it, I'd go down to that bank and get every bit of the money out of it I could carry." Well, you're a thief. "If I knew no one would ever find out about it, I'd run off old sister so-and-so or brother so-and-so." Well, you're an adulterer. "If I knew nobody would ever find out about it, I'd really take care of old

so-and-so because I despise him." Well, you're a murderer. Character is not what you are around everybody else.

Character really and truly is what you are when you're alone. Everybody has a front, a face, a facade. There are people who will smile at you and praise you and compliment you, and then, as you turn to walk away, they stab a knife in your back. But you tell me what you would do if you knew that no one else would ever find out about it, and I will tell you exactly what you are, because it is when we are alone, no one can see us, no one can hear us, and no one can read our minds. It is what we are. Will we resist sin alone? Will we refuse wicked thoughts alone? Will we do that which is right when no one else is around? So character is what a man is in the dark. The second truth is this: The test of your character is what it takes to stop you. So many people think, "They're going to really have to persecute me and prosecute me in order to stop me."

That's usually not true, especially in this day and time. When you stop and think about professing Christians who quit serving Christ, leave church, and never come back because somebody makes them mad, hurts their feelings, or fails to give them the praise, congratulations, or recognition they think they deserve, it does not take someone with a machine gun standing there saying, "Deny Christ." All you have to do is say something they don't like and hurt their feelings, and they'll pick up their marbles and go home. So little character. The test of our character is basically what it takes to stop us.

But here's another truth we must understand: circumstances never make or break a man; they simply reveal him. What you are under pressure is really and truly what you are. When one caves in under pressure, it demonstrates that he is weak. The pressure did not make him weak; he was already weak. The pressure simply revealed him. It is like a battle. When the enemy starts firing and a man starts running, you say, "Wow, he's a coward. The battle made him a coward." No, the battle did not make him a coward. He was already a coward in his heart. The battle revealed him.

On the other hand, if he takes his weapon, charges headlong into the enemy, defends his people, destroys the enemy, and saves his comrades, someone says, "The battle made him a hero." No, he was

already a hero in his heart. The battle revealed him. Our character will be displayed under pressure, test, and trial. Those tests and trials reveal to us and to others exactly what we are.

John's attitude was this: If no one else will stand for what's right, I'll stand. If no one else will speak out against wickedness, I'll speak out. If no one else will obey, I will obey. John did not need a crowd or a bunch of friends. He was willing to do that which was right alone. He was a solitary man.

Paul said, “At my first answer, no man stood with me, but all men forsook me. I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.” Isn’t that astounding? He said, “At my first answer, no man stood with me,” and then he went on to say, “But all men forsook me.” There is a clear implication in this verse: we are chargeable, accountable, and responsible to stand with men who are standing for truth, honor, integrity, and that which is right in the eyes of God. Just like John, Paul was willing to stand even if he had to stand alone. When you talk about manhood from the Bible, and when God looked at John the Baptist and said, “There was a man,” you have to understand that a real man is a man who will stand for what is right, even if he has to stand alone.

The second characteristic of a real man appears in John 1:23. John gave the answer and said, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness.” John was in the wilderness. He was not in the bars, the saloons, or the dance halls. He was not in the ecumenical councils.

Characteristic 2: A Separated Man

He was willing to stand and stand alone, but he was also willing to separate himself from sin and wickedness. Have you ever stopped to think about this? If a man is going to devote himself to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to his wife and family, he is going to have his hands full simply doing that. Why would you want to get into anything, recreation-wise or any-wise, that would distract you from your mission or purpose? Remember, the Bible says, “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness.” In other words, he had a purpose. Nothing was going to deter him from fulfilling that purpose and mission.

The truth of the matter is that serving the Lord and raising a family is a full-time job in and of itself. Why, then, would anyone get involved in any activity, organization, recreation, or anything that would destroy that purpose in life?

The Bible tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:22 to abstain from all appearance of evil. It is not merely that we are to abstain from evil; we are to abstain from all appearance of evil. Romans 13:14 says, "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lust thereof." When someone begins to play with sin, play with the world, dabble with and tempt the flesh, it will not be long before he is swallowed up in wickedness.

We have to learn how to apply separation. Romans 1:1 says, "Paul, an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God." Separation is not just from that which is wicked and wrong; it is also to that which is right and holy. There must be separation not only from sin, but from the world and from the flesh as well.

We must understand that the world is not our friend. The flesh is not our friend. Sin certainly is not our friend. In 1 John 2:15–17, God says, "Love not the world." He is not talking about the created world, but the world system—everything in the world that is opposed to Him. He continues, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Think about that: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." He tells us why: "For all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. These are not of the Father, but of the world. And the world, and the lust thereof, passeth away. But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

The world is going to pass away. Not only is the world against us, but our flesh—the principle of sin within us—is probably our greatest enemy, because it cries to be satisfied, pleased, and fulfilled. That is why Paul said, "Make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lust thereof." Do not plan on something you know will lead you to that which is wicked and wrong.

Peter said it a little differently, but it is the same principle. In 1 Peter 2:11, he said, “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, that ye abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.” Why would we engage in something and desire something that is going to war against us, fight against us, and seek to destroy us? If we love the world, we are not separated unto the Father. If we love our flesh, we are not separated unto the Father.

Like Moses, we have to choose, and we have to choose wisely. Hold John 1, but look in your Bibles to Hebrews 11, beginning with verse 24. The Bible says, “By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter.”

Let us consider the implication. If he was Pharaoh’s daughter, if he was the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, that means he was in line to be the ruler of Egypt. He could become a Pharaoh. But by faith, when he was come to years, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. Note what he chose: “Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.”

Why would he choose affliction rather than pleasure? Pharaoh could have had whatever he wanted and done whatever he wanted. Egypt at that time was one of the leading and richest nations in the world. But Moses chose to suffer because he was “esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.” Therefore, “by faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.”

He esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. So how much do we value the Lord Jesus Christ? How much do we value His Word? How much do we value His truth?

Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. Compare Moses with Demas. Demas worked with the Apostle Paul, and yet the Bible says in 2 Timothy chapter 4 and verse 10, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." The

phrase "having loved" comes from the Greek word agapao, which is a spiritual love. In other words, he loved this age, his present world, over and above the Lord Jesus Christ.

Loving the world is an act of idolatry. That is why John said, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." When a man spiritually places the world and its pleasures above God, it is nothing less than idolatry. We may walk pleasing unto the Lord, as we have been commanded to do; we may walk pleasing unto the world; or we may walk pleasing unto the flesh. But we cannot do all three at the same time. We must either please the Father and not please the world and not please our flesh, because if we please the flesh or the world, we will not please the Father.

So John said, "I'm the voice of one," a solitary man, "crying in the wilderness," a separated man. He was separated from everything contrary to God unto the gospel and the truth of God. But go back to John chapter 1 and verse 23, because there is a third thing in that verse. He said, "I'm the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah."

Characteristic 3: A Straightening Man

The Greek word for straight is euthyno, and it means to make straight, to make level, to make plain. It speaks of someone steering a ship or driving a chariot. If you drove that chariot, you wanted to drive it straight. It is like our adage when somebody starts to drive off: “Keep it between the ditches.” In other words, drive straight.

So he says, “Make straight the way of the Lord.” Do not convolute the way of the Lord. Do not let it become circuitous or convoluted in any way whatsoever. Why? Because our Lord shows us the straight and narrow way. It is His way.

According to the Scripture, it is the highway of holiness. It is the way of obedience. John was preaching repentance unto obedience. So often, instead of making straight the way of the Lord, we block it, barricade it, and convolute it. We make that which is simple, plain, and straight into something circuitous and problematic, and it turns out to be a dilemma.

Our problem is basically our pride. Our problem is our rebellion. Our problem is our disobedience. Consider an illustration. Turn to Matthew chapter 5 and Matthew chapter 18, and hold both passages. Each one of us has experienced broken fellowship with someone. It may be a fellow believer or a family member. There have been arguments, disagreements, hurt feelings, scarred pride, and broken fellowship. What should we do in such an instance?

Look first at Matthew chapter 5, verses 23 and 24. Our Lord gives us this direction: "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way. First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

Let us put this where it can be easily understood. Suppose Steve has something against me. I do not know what it is, but he has something against me. I have nothing against him; I am not upset with him, angry with him, or mad at him. Nevertheless, he has something against me.

I come to worship God, and I come to pray. He says, "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave thy gift before the altar and go thy way. First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

Now remember, I do not have a thing against him, but I remember that he said something that indicated there was a problem. Here is my question: Whose responsibility is it to resolve the problem and work it out? It is mine. It is mine.

Look in your Bibles at Matthew 18, beginning with verse 15: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." We are not going to deal with verses 16 and 17 right now. That would only follow if the first step failed.

But look at verse 15 again: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee." In this instance, who now is hurt? Who now is upset? Who now is offended? It is me. Do you realize it is possible to hurt someone, to upset someone, or to offend someone—using that word biblically—without even knowing it? How many times have you said

things and someone misunderstood or took them the wrong way? That is very easily done.

Steve could say something, and when I heard it I could think, "What? Why would he say something like that? I bet he is trying to cut me down." You see what I am saying? Steve could be absolutely, totally, perfectly innocent and not mean a thing by it.

Now, in this instance, I have somewhat against him, and he does not have anything against me. Whose responsibility is it to get it worked out? It is mine. So it does not matter whether he has aught against me or I have aught against him; it is still my responsibility, really and truly. If both parties know that there is a problem, we should be meeting halfway to get the thing resolved and worked out.

Problems do not go away. Problems do not vanish. Problems do not disappear. Unless problems are straightened out, corrected, and resolved in a biblical manner, they are only going to get worse.

Now look at Ephesians 4:26-27: "Be ye angry, and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devil." Without preaching an entire message on verse 26, God says, "Be ye angry, and sin not."

There is a righteous anger, and there is an unrighteous anger. Righteous anger is directed at sin in order to resolve the situation. Unrighteous anger is usually directed at other people, or sometimes even ourselves. But he says, "Be angry and sin not." There is a way to be righteously angry and not sin. Note what he said: "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

If I have aught against Steve, or Steve aught against me, and I know about it, how soon should I get it settled? Before the sun goes down. What about verse 27? "Neither give place to the devil." If I do not get the problem resolved, if I do not straighten it out, I am giving place to the devil.

When problems are not straightened out, they turn your life into bitterness, resentment, ill will, perpetual anger, and hatred. Bitter, vindictive people running around under the umbrella of Christianity have violated this scripture. They refuse to straighten things out in a biblical manner.

When John was asked who he was, he said, “I am the voice of one.” I am a solitary man crying in the wilderness. I am a separated man. “Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah.” I am a straightening man. We need to learn as men to straighten things out in our lives and, to the best of our ability, in the lives of our wives and children, for the honor and glory of God. Straighten things out with anyone with whom there is a disagreement or problem, to the best of your ability.

All you can do is be obedient. What if that person will not repent? What if that person does not want to hear me? You have tried. You have done what God commanded. That is their sin and their problem, not yours.

A Saving Man

Characteristic 4: A Saving Man

John was not only a solitary man, a separated man, and a straightening man; he was a saving man. In John 1:29, we read, “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” Then, in verses 35 through 37: “Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples. And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he said, Behold the Lamb of God. And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.”

Let me clarify something. When I say that John was a saving man, I am not saying that John could save anyone. John certainly could not save himself, and he could not save anyone else. Neither can I, neither can you. But what he could do was point them to the One who could save, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. That is what he was doing. He was giving witness to the light and pointing out the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. The saving man is the man who points others to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Here is the astounding thing. John did not have to beg, plead, cajole, demand, harass, harangue, or command. He simply spoke, and people followed the Lord Jesus Christ. “Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples, and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God. And the two disciples

heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." Why? His life was pure. His word was true. His witness was clear. He spoke with truth and with power.

That is exactly what we need in our lives. But we can never be the saving man without being the straightening man, the separated man, and the solitary man. Do men follow Jesus Christ when you speak? Do men follow the Word of God when you speak, or do they follow the world or sin? Is your life holy? Are you obedient in your own life? Are you involved with the world, loving the world? Does your conversation build up Jesus Christ, or does it merely edify yourself? Are you willing to decrease, that Jesus Christ might increase?

In John chapter 3, verse 26, after our Lord was baptized by John and began to preach, He drew away many of John's disciples and many others: "And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. You yourselves bear witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom. But the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. This my joy therefore is fulfilled."

Illustration: General Robert E. Lee

Watch: "He must increase and I must decrease." So the question has to be asked: Are we willing to decrease in order that Jesus Christ might increase?

I preached a message years ago titled "The Message Christian Manhood," using these four points. This message is different, but I used one illustration in that message that I want to use today. I want to point out a real example of Christian manhood outside the Bible. There are many, but this one to me is the epitome. Regardless of what the politically correct crowd states, what revisionist historians write, or what the mainstream media reports, the truth is that one of the humblest, most godly, most consistent Christian men that ever lived was General Robert E. Lee. People in England, including Lord Wolseley and General Wolseley, admired Lee greatly. Even after Lee

died, the North tried to claim him because he was such a godly individual. I could give you illustration after illustration, but I want to give you one that shows the character, integrity, compassion, and honor of General Robert E. Lee.

These are the words of a wounded Yankee soldier wounded at Gettysburg concerning General Lee: “I'd been a most bitter anti-South man and fought and cursed the Confederates greatly and desperately. I could see nothing good in any of them. The last day of the fight, I was badly wounded. A ball shattered my left leg. I lay on the ground not far from Cemetery Ridge, and as General Lee ordered his retreat, he and his officers rode near me.”

As they came along, I recognized him. Though faint from exposure and loss of blood, I raised my hands, looked Lee in the face, and shouted as loudly as I could, “Hoorah for the Union. Hoorah for the Union.” The general heard me, looked, stopped his horse, dismounted, and came toward me. I confess that at first I thought he meant to kill me. But as he came up, he looked down at me with such a sad expression on his face that all fear left me, and I wondered what he was about.

He extended his hand to me, grasping mine firmly, looking right into my eyes, and said, “My son, I hope you will soon be well.” The Yankee soldier said, “If I live a thousand years, I shall never forget the expression on General Lee’s face. There he was, defeated, retiring from a field that had cost him and his cause almost their last hope. And yet he stopped to say words like these to a wounded soldier of the opposition who had taunted him as he passed by. As soon as the general left me, I cried myself to sleep there on that bloody ground.”

Can you imagine that? Someone with enough character and self-control to go to a taunting enemy and say, “My son, I hope you’ll soon be well.”

Conclusion: The Call for Real Men

Real men have character, honor, and integrity. They can stand in the face of opposition and, if needed, stand alone. Real men would rather suffer than sin. Like Moses, they choose the affliction of God's

people rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Real men order their lives according to the Word of God and straighten things out with biblical principles. Real men point others to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The next few messages will show that real men and real manhood are not defined by physique, muscles, or age but by character, integrity, and honor. If we want what our forefathers had, we have to build upon the foundation upon which they built. The favorite hymn of General Robert E. Lee was "How Firm a Foundation": "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word." We need real men who can withstand the onslaughts of Satan, the world, and the flesh, and stand solidly for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Father, we bow to Thee. We thank You for Your grace and Your mercy and Your life that You have given to us through Jesus Christ. We pray for the character, integrity, and honor found only in Jesus Christ and only in obedience to His Word. Lord, give us real men and make real men of us. Help us, Lord, to be holy, godly, and obedient. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

Where Are The Real Men

Part Two of Three

Introduction and Review

Let us open our Bibles to 1 Corinthians 16:13. For those who were not here last Sunday, I began a brief, three-part series entitled “Where Are the Real Men.” Some months ago, I preached a message entitled “Where Are the Real Women,” and women as well as men asked when I would preach this series. I intended to address it in one message, but I found that I could not. Today, we will consider the second part of “Where Are the Real Men.”

First Corinthians 16:13 is a simple, straightforward verse: “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.” I have expounded this passage in another message, so I will not necessarily expound all of it today. However, I do want to take up the principle in the words, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith.” Notice this: I am going to comment on it.

He says, "Quit you like men, be strong." Real men are few and far between. By real men, I mean men of honor, character, and

integrity—men who give their word, keep their word, and stay true to it regardless of the consequences and the situation.

One characteristic of a godly man is found in Psalm 15:4: "He sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not." Here is a man who gives his word for his bond; when he discovers that keeping it will hurt him, he keeps it anyhow. At one time, written contracts were unnecessary. Men gave their word, shook hands, the deal was clenched, and it was done because they were men of honor, character, and integrity.

Today, however, there are very few men like that. In last week's message, I quoted Joshua Gilbert Holland, and I want to give that again by way of review.

He wrote this: "God give us men. A time like this demands strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready hands. Men whom the lust of office does not kill. Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy. Men who possess opinions and a will. Men who have honor. Men who will not lie. Men who can stand before demagogue and damn his treacherous flatteries without winking, tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog in public duty and in private thinking, for while the rabble with their thumb-worn creeds, their large professions and their little deeds, mingle in selfish strife, low freedom weeps, wrong rules the land, and waiting justice sleeps."

Certainly, he is dead on and correct there. Everything that he said is true, and everything is certainly needed today.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. God used John the Baptist, and when they asked who he was, he said, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah." He was, first of all, a solitary man: he was the voice of one. Secondly, he was a separated man: he was crying out in the wilderness. Thirdly, he was a straightening man: he said, "Make straight."

In other words, real men straighten things out. They do not let problems linger. They try to resolve them in a biblical manner. Fourthly, he was a saving man—not that he could save anything or anyone of himself, but because, when he spoke, men followed Jesus

Christ. He was able to point them to the One who was indeed able to save.

Manhood Not Defined by Age or Physique

One of our greatest failures in modern society is that we have tried to equate manhood either with age or physique. Maturity does not necessarily come with age. I have seen plenty of grown people who acted like little children, and plenty of grown folks who acted like little teenagers. Neither does wisdom necessarily come with age. Elihu said in Job chapter 32, verse 9, "Great men are not always wise." Listen to this: "Neither do the aged understand judgment." Great men are not always wise, and men do not always understand judgment. That is for sure. Moreover, with age you often gain knowledge, but it is usually knowledge in evil and wickedness. Jeremiah chapter 4, verse 22, says, "For my people are foolish, and they have not known me. They are sottish children, and they have none understanding. They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge."

God said, “For my people are foolish, they have not known me, they are sottish children.” The Hebrew word for “sottish” literally means to have done foolishness, to turn into foolishness, to make foolish, or to play the fool. Thus, he says, “For my people are foolish, they have not known me, they are playing the fool.” They have no understanding; they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no understanding at all. The reason they were sottish children, wise to do evil, and rebellious was that, as he said, “They have not known me.”

Israel was in an outward covenant with God. Although they were in an external, outward covenant, they certainly were not in an internal, personal covenant. That is why Romans 9:5 says, “They are not all Israel who are of Israel.” These people were in an external covenant, but did not have a personal, intimate relationship with him.

Therefore, they were sinful, wicked, and rebellious. That truth is applicable today. Many church members are in an external or outward covenant in the sense that they belong to a particular church. I have been in church buildings where church creeds,

statements, and covenants were displayed on the wall. When people join, they agree to that covenant. Yet they are not necessarily in a personal, intimate, covenantal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Consequently, they are foolish.

They have no understanding; they continue to sin and commit wickedness. So being in an external, outward covenant does not save anyone, and it certainly does not make anyone wise to do good.

Real Men Love Jesus

There is a bumper sticker that I saw many years ago, and I am sure it is still around today. It simply said, “Real men love Jesus.” I believe that is absolutely true. But understand something: when I say that real men love Jesus Christ, I am not saying that an unsaved man cannot be moral, civil, kind, and generous. I am saying that with every good characteristic and attribute you find in him, there will always be something missing: a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Only the Lord Jesus Christ is able to make a man whole and complete. Only He can make a man willing to be a man in every area of his life, regardless of the situation and circumstances.

Let me give you an illustration by Lazarus Long. He was talking about men, and here is what he said: “First of all, a man should be able to change a diaper.” I have done that one time, so I fulfilled that part, Francis. I tell you what, I can put my hands in a deer, pull out blood, guts, and everything.

It doesn't bother me at all. But the one time I was left alone with our first child, and I had to change that dirty diaper, and I got the dry heaves and gagged, I thought, never ever again will I do this. I'm so thankful the Lord made women, I can assure you. But let me finish this. But I did it one time, okay? But it was a necessity. Alright, here we go. It says a man should be able to change a diaper, plan an invasion, butcher a hog, con a ship, that is control the movements of a ship, design a building, write a sonnet, balance accounts, build a wall, set a bone, comfort the dying, take orders, give orders, cooperate, act alone, solve equations, analyze

a new problem, pitch manure, program a computer, cook a tasty meal, fight efficiently, and die gallantly. Isn't that amazing? And

while I agree with the basic premise of everything that Lazarus Long has said, I've got to ask this question. What in the world is it that will enable a man to be able to do all of these things? And the answer has to come back: It is a man who has been converted and brought into a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ who wants to do everything for the honor and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is impossible for a man to fight efficiently and die gallantly without the Lord Jesus Christ. That is certainly true. In fact, there was a Confederate officer by the name of Captain Dabney Carr Harrison. This Confederate officer, Captain Harrison, was a Christian, of course, but he was also a pastor, a professor, a chaplain, and a soldier. He was the captain of Company K.

His men respected him greatly and said to him one day, “You should be better and braver than the rest of us.” After he had exhibited some fearlessness in battle, he asked, “Why so?” They said, “You have everything settled for eternity. You have nothing to fear after death.” He replied, “Well, gentlemen, you’re right. Everything is settled for eternity, and I have nothing to fear.” He exemplified that fearlessness at Fort Donaldson. He had four bullets pass through his hat, one grazed his temple, and the fifth entered his lung, from which he eventually died shortly thereafter.

Before he died on February the 16th, 1862, on Sunday, he wrote in his diary, "I die content and happy, trusting in the merits of my Savior, Jesus Christ, committing my wife and my children to their father and mine." Soon thereafter, he dropped off into a very deep sleep. His friends and family were around him, and all of a sudden he seemed startled from that sleep. He sat erect in his bed and shouted, "Company K, you have no captain now. Never give up. Never surrender." Someone gently laid him back in bed, and he died shortly thereafter. Here was a man who died very gallantly. He fought very efficiently. But you cannot do that apart from the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is an interesting book that some of you may have read called "Death Beds of Great Men." It tells about Voltaire, the noted French infidel. He had gathered all his friends around so they could watch how a great infidel dies. Lying back on his bed, just before taking his last breath, he sat straight up with a look of horror in his

eyes. Screaming in horror, he shouted to the top of his lungs, "There is a God!" and fell back dead.

No, he did not die very gallantly. You cannot do these things apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. There may be a false bravado, but there is no real gallantry except through Jesus Christ.

Look back at verse 13 and pay close attention to this: “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.”

The Christian as a Soldier

The word for “men” in the Greek is a very special word. It is “andridzomai,” and it literally means to make like a man, to make brave, to show oneself a man, and to be brave.

It should be obvious that everything around verse 13 is couched in military terminology. “Watch ye,” that is a military command. “Stand fast,” that is a military command. “Quit you like men,” that is a military command. “Be strong,” that is a military command. Over and over, each of these statements or commands comes from the military.

As you read through the Bible, you will find that the Christian life is often compared to that of a soldier or a warrior. Hold 1 Corinthians 16, but look in your Bibles to 2 Timothy chapter 2, verses 2 and 3. Notice, please, verses 3 and 4. Here is what the Bible says: “Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” Notice it: “Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” The word “hardness” relates to hardships.

Soldiers endure afflictions, trouble, tribulations, and even wounds. They are often without food, water, or medication. So Paul says, “Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” If we are going to be good soldiers, we are not going to entangle ourselves with the affairs of this life; that is, we are not going to become overly involved. Why? Because we want to please Him who has chosen us to be good soldiers.

Interestingly, when you read through the Bible and find this picture of a Christian as a soldier and warrior, you have to

understand that pacifism is unbiblical. A pacifistic attitude means that you are not willing to fight. You are not going to fight. In fact, that is what the Pacific Ocean stands for—peaceful. Years ago, I was preaching in Indiana and dealing with Romans 13 and several other passages like this.

When I finished, a young man came up to me with his wife and children. He said, "I just wanted you to know I disagree with something you said." I said, "Well, that's wonderful. What is it that you disagree with? Maybe you're right. Maybe I'm wrong. What is it?" He said, "I don't think you should ever fight under any circumstances."

"Really?" I said. "Let me ask you a question. If someone broke into your house attempting to rape your wife or murder your children, what would you do?" He said, "I'd go off in another room and pray about it." I said, "Sir, I have one thing to say to you: I'm thankful I'm not your wife or your child." If that is your attitude, fine—but no, no, no.

Look in 1 Timothy 6:12: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." How can you be a pacifist and not fight the good fight of faith? Obviously, there is spiritual fighting, moral fighting, mental fighting, emotional fighting, and physical fighting as well. Paul tells Timothy to fight the good fight of faith. Moreover, in Ephesians 6:10–18, Paul gives us the armor God has provided. Why would God provide armor if He did not expect us to fight? Obviously, the Bible teaches that there is such a thing as a fighting spirit. Now let me explain something. When I say that in the Bible—

There is a fighting spirit, but that does not mean one has to be cantankerous, onerous, belligerent, or have a bullying attitude. That is not what I mean by a fighting spirit. People like that are wicked and wrong. By a fighting spirit, I mean that one is able, willing, and determined to do that which is right and holy under every circumstance and situation. Nothing is going to deter him. Nothing is going to stop him. He has a fighting spirit.

Now, look in your Bibles to 1 Timothy 3. This passage relates particularly to elders or pastors. Without reading all of it, I want to deal with one verse. In 1 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 3, speaking of the pastor, he is not to be given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient, not a brawler, not covetous. When it says he is not to be given to wine, it means he is not to use wine as an excuse: “Well, I didn’t do this because I had too much to drink. I didn’t do this because I had an extra glass of wine and I forgot.” In other words, none unknown. That is out.

He says, “Not given to wine,” and then, “no striker.” “Striker” refers to one who is pugnacious. A pugnacious individual is someone ready to fight at the drop of a hat, and willing to drop the hat just so he can fight. Then he says, “no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient, not a brawler.” A brawler is someone who actually goes around looking for a fight. He is a bruiser, a fighter; all he wants to do is fight.

I have known men, and still know men, for whom that was their passion before they were converted. They just loved to fight. I have one friend who, before he was converted, used to visit bars regularly. He would drink something every now and then, but he did not go to a bar to drink; he went to a bar to fight. He loved fighting, and he would always pick on the biggest man in the bar—always. I am simply saying, this is what the word “brawler” means: someone who is always looking for a fight.

Now, I want you to look, if you would, in 2 Timothy chapter 2. Here's another thing. 2 Timothy chapter 2. Look at verse 24. Again, we're talking about the pastor. The Bible says, "And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient." And then here's why in verse 25, "...in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God, peradventure, will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." Now, note if you would, "...and the servant of the Lord must not strive."

Now the word "strive" refers to a contentious, angry, and quarrelsome spirit. One who strives is someone who is looking for an argument. He is looking for a contest. He is someone who thinks that I have the upper hand, I have the knowledge, I have the position, and I want to engage someone in this contest just so that I can win. I

know many pastors like that. You see, the problem is this. While some of them will say what they're really trying to do is contend for the faith, what they're trying to do is to pick an argument, pick a fight, get a contest going so that they can show their wisdom, their knowledge, so that they can dominate. And if you do not submit to them and if you do not agree with them, they get angry so quickly and cut you off and it's over with.

But the Bible says, "not a striver." Now it's interesting that although the Bible says the pastor is not to be a striker, not to be a brawler, not one that strives, yet the Apostle Paul tells us that we are to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to fight the good fight of faith. So evidently it is possible to have a fighting spirit without being quarrelsome and contentious, and belligerent, and bullying, and hateful, and ugly, and angry.

Now, may I remind you of some of the message that I preached last week about John the Baptist. Because John the Baptist certainly had a fighting spirit. Because when those Sadducees and Pharisees and Herodians came to his baptism, he called them a generation of vipers. He said, "O generation of vipers, who have warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" So he called out the religious denominations, the religious leaders. He called out the political leaders.

Biblical Warfare and a Fighting Spirit

That is why he said to Herod, to his face, “It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife.” We are so different today from a man of one hundred years ago. We have become emasculated, feminized, subsidized, and horrified into inaction and into displaying any courage whatsoever. We are fearful, unbelieving, cowardly, timorous, chicken-hearted, gutless, pusillanimous, spineless, lily-livered, quaking jellyfish with no backbone, and we refuse to stand for anything. That is modern-day males.

Do not try to tell me that all fighting is wrong. It is not. Do not try to tell me that all war is wrong. It is not. Certainly, there is unbiblical warfare and unbiblical fighting. But in Psalm 94 and verse 16, God asks, “Who will rise up for me against the workers of iniquity? Who

will stand up for me against the evildoers?" Who is going to rise up? Who is going to stand? Amos 5:15 says, "Hate the evil and love the good and establish justice in the gate."

In Exodus 15:3, the sovereign, holy, righteous God of the universe is called a man of war: "The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name." It was by war that God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt. Deuteronomy 4:34 says, "Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes." He brought them out by war.

One could spend hours going through the Bible and looking at the doctrine of war. God has used war constantly. It was through war that Abraham brought Lot back, delivered him, and conquered the enemy; that God delivered Israel from Egypt; that Canaan land was conquered; and that David conquered all the enemies round about. It will be by war that our Lord Jesus Christ is totally, completely victorious and successful. Revelation 19:11 says, "And I saw heaven open, listen, and behold a white horse, and him that sat upon him is called faithful and true, and"

"In righteousness doth he judge and make war." Jesus Christ makes war. Our God is a man of war. There is some fighting that is unbiblical, and there is some war that is unbiblical. But fighting and war are not necessarily unbiblical in and of themselves. If we fight, if we have a fighting spirit, if we war, if we are warriors, if we are soldiers, we must do so in accordance with the Word of God, with the rules, standards, and principles that God has laid down.

Let me say this very plainly: we need a fighting spirit. It was a fighting spirit that conquered the wilderness. It was a fighting spirit that civilized the heathen. It was a fighting spirit that built civilization. It was a fighting spirit that established institutions of learning, orphanages, and hospitals. If you do not believe this, read the biographies of men like George Muller, George Whitfield, David Livingstone, William Carey, Adoniram Judson, and a host of others. These were fighting men. They were men of determination, men of

grit, and men of courage. They were not going to give in, they were not going to give up, and they were not going to give out.

When you look around today, there are very few men who would be able to conquer a frontier. There are very few men who would be able to change the course of society. There are very few men who would be able to lead an army. There are very few men even able to control their own homes, to lead their wives and their children. Men today have ceased to be men because we have abdicated our responsibilities, our obligations, and our duties. We have allowed our wives to run our homes, women to run our churches, and women and children to run our government. Women control practically every aspect of society today.

The Abdication of Male Leadership

It is where Israel was. It is where we are. Look at Isaiah 3 and verse 12. God says, “As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err,” and destroy the way of thy paths. That is women in this context. The condition described there is where Israel was, and it is where we are.

Verse 12 is in the context of judgment. To show you that, look in your Bibles, beginning with verse 1 in Isaiah 3: “For behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water.” Now what else is he going to take away? “The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, the captain of fifty, and the honorable man, and the counselor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator, and I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.” Now let me just stop right there. I'm not against women. Please understand that. My wife is a woman. My mother was a woman. My daughters are women. There may be aged men and women in Congress, but they are children.

They have no understanding of biblical principles. They have no understanding of constitutional principles. He said, “And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.” Usually, it is the children who rule in the home. “And the people

shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbor. The child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honorable."

"When a man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father, saying, Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and let this ruin be under thy hand. And that day shall he swear, saying, I will not be a healer, for in my house is neither bread nor clothing. Make me not a ruler of the people, for Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen, because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory."

"The show of their countenance doth witness against them, and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul, for they have rewarded evil unto themselves. Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hand shall be given unto him."

"As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths." This passage in verse 12 deals with judgment. When you have a society or a church where women and children are ruling over the men, it is the judgment of God. Why does that happen? Because men refuse to be men. They refuse to fulfill their duties, their roles, and their responsibilities.

I could point this out because I have been there and done this all my life, but if you will observe the black communities, the black communities are a matriarchal society. If you want something done from a black family, you speak to the woman because she is in charge. It is what it amounts to. It has gotten like that in the white community as well, because men have ceased to be men.

Now let me show you. Turn with me to 1 Corinthians 11. I am going to show you some principles. Mark them down in your Bibles as well as in your mind and heart. Here is God's orderly way, what God has designed, and God's hierarchy. "But I would have you to know that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God."

God's Orderly Hierarchy

So let me put it to you like this: Here is God, here is Christ, here is man, and here is woman. The head of the woman is the man, the head of the man is Christ, and the head of Christ is God the Father.

We understand that. Look at verses 4 and 5: “Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head.” Who is the head of man? Christ. Verse 5 says, “But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head.” Who is that? Her husband. “For that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.”

In Bible times, if you were a prostitute, you shaved your head. So he said, if it is a shame, do not dishonor your head. Ladies, your husband is your head, and men, Jesus Christ is your head. That is what the Bible says.

A man may dishonor his head, who is the Lord Jesus Christ, and a woman may dishonor her head, who is her husband. We dishonor our heads when we deviate from God’s orderly way. A rebellious and recalcitrant woman dishonors her husband. A rebellious and recalcitrant husband dishonors Jesus Christ. A rebellious and recalcitrant child dishonors his parents, who are his head.

Now look in 1 Timothy chapter 3, verse 15. This is the theme of 1 Timothy: how to behave yourself in the house of God. He said, “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and the ground of truth.” Paul wrote this passage to Timothy, who was a pastor, so that everybody there would know how to behave themselves in church, in the house of God. We need to know how to behave ourselves in church. Now look in 1 Timothy chapter 2. Let us begin with verse 8 and read through verse 15. I will cover some of this more next week. Look now at 1 Timothy chapter 2, verse 8.

"I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. In like manner also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety,

not with broidered hair or gold or pearls or costly array, but which becometh women professing godliness with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding, she shall be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith and charity with holiness and sobriety."

Here are some questions. He said in verse 11, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection." Then he said, "But I suffer not a woman to teach nor usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." Remember 1 Timothy 3:15: how to behave yourself in the house of God. How can a woman pastor, teach, or lead in the church when she is to be in silence? How can she be in subjection if she is leading men? How can she teach, preach, or lead without usurping authority over men? It is impossible.

Now we are talking about the church of Jesus Christ. That does not mean that I cannot listen to Effie in her home or in my home and listen to the things that she could teach me. I could listen to her all day long. She is at least two weeks older than I am; I am sure she knows a little more than I do about some things. She could teach me. I am not too stupid to listen to someone who knows what they are talking about. But there is a big difference between my listening to her in her home, in my home, or somewhere else, and listening to her in church. A big difference. So he says no.

Paul gives three reasons why women should not have positions of authority in church. The very first is the creation order. In verse 13: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve." That is the creation order. If you go back to 1 Corinthians 11, the Bible tells you very pointedly that the man was not created for the woman, but the woman was created for the man. God created Adam first. That is why the man should lead. The man is God's first creation. God created the man to lead, and He created the woman to follow. It is just that simple.

When the roles were reversed in the Garden of Eden, we had the fall.

The second reason is given in verse 14: "For Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." Women were not to rule in the church or have authority in the church, not only because of the creation order, but because the woman was deceived.

It is true that sin came into the world by man, because God had entered into the covenant with Adam. Although Eve did sin first, Paul points out in verse 15 that the woman's role is in the home, in obedience, in holiness, in childbearing, living in faith and sobriety. The word "sobriety" has absolutely nothing to do with drinking alcohol. It refers to soundness of mind and self-control. Therefore, according to 1 Timothy, a woman who wants to rule in the church, run the church, rule in the home, and run the home is normally out of control. She's out of her mind. That's what the Bible says. She is to live with sobriety.

First Corinthians 14:34-35 says, "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak. But they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church."

Why would God say this? Because he wants the man to be the head of the house. The man has the responsibility to study, to learn, and to teach his wife and children. Men have come to me and said, "My wife asked me this question, I don't know the answer." I said, "Well, I'll tell you the answer. And you tell your wife."

Alice has asked me things in times past, and I would have to say, "I don't know. But I'll find out." I can do the research and the study, then come back and tell her the answer. All the Lord is saying is, "Look, men, you are to be the leaders in your home." It is your responsibility to teach and lead your wives, and to teach and lead your children.

So, here are some questions. In light of these, where are the men that are willing to fight? Where are the men that are willing to stand and exercise courage and determination in order to get our churches, our homes, our society, and our governments under biblical control? Where are the men that are willing to be the heads of their homes?

Where are the men that are willing to lead, to love, and to care for their wives and their children? Where are the men that are willing to take the time to learn so that they can educate their wives and their children? Where are the men that are ready, willing, and able to fight for that which is right and holy?

Practical Applications for Men

Where is our warrior spirit? Where is our soldierly spirit? Look in your Bibles one more time to Ephesians chapter 5, beginning with verse 22. Most of you know this passage, but look at it in this light. The Bible says, “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.” Why should a wife submit herself to her husband? “For the husband is the head of the wife,” there it is again, “even as Christ is the head of the church and he's the savior of the body. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it.”

The wife, in her marital role, is to picture the church and the church’s submission to her head, Jesus Christ. The husband, in the marital role, is to picture the love of Jesus Christ for his bride in sacrificing himself for her.

Skip down to verse 33. After he tells you all of this, he says, “Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself. And the wife see that she reverence her husband.” So where are the men who will love their wives as Christ loved the church? Where are the men who will love their wives as they love themselves? Where are the men who will love their wives in such a way that it will be easy and desirable for the wife to submit to them? Where are the men who will live and love in such a way that it will be easy for the wife to reverence her husband? Where are the real men? Where are the men ready to defend their wives, children, families, and homes? Where are the men ready to fight, provide, and produce holy, godly, and obedient families? In Nehemiah chapter 4 and verse 14, when the enemy was about to attack, here is what Nehemiah said.

He gave this command concerning the enemies: “Be not ye afraid of them. Remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight

for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses." Fight. You have to have a fighting spirit.

If you as a man would fight physically for the defense of your wife and children, why would you not fight spiritually for them? Do not send them to church. Take them to church. Do not tell them to pray. Teach them to pray, and pray with them. Do not tell them to read the Bible. Read the Bible with them. Do not wait for someone else to teach them the Word of God. You teach them the Word of God. That is why, as we read earlier in 1 Corinthians 14:35, if the woman wants to know anything, let her ask the husband. It is his responsibility to know and to learn. If he does not have the answer, he can get the answer and teach his wife and children.

Here is another one. Listen to me carefully: Do not give your children to Moloch. Do not give your children to governmental indoctrination. I do not care how many times you call it a public school. It is not a public school; it is a governmental indoctrination center.

I just watched again last night—I see it every week—some parents standing up. This lady happened to be, I think, in New York, standing before the school board. I could not help but agree with her; she called the school board members liars and traitors. She was attacking critical race theory, the LGBT program, and all this other stuff they were teaching. My fault was this lady: Why in the world do you have your children in that school anyhow? Get them out!

I have news for you folks. I may not be the brightest individual in the world, but I know enough to teach my children, my grandchildren, and my great-grandchildren. And I will be honest with you: What we have done today in the public school system is sire a generation of functional illiterates. They cannot read, reason, think, or count.

Years ago, I went to a hardware store to buy something. Here was this young man with a big graduation ring on his hand. I bought some little something; I do not know what it was.

I gave him a $20 bill, and he gave me my change, along with two dollars too much. I looked at it and said, "Son, that's not right." He said, "Oh, I'm sorry," and handed me two more dollars. I said, "No,

you don't understand. You gave me two bucks too much to begin with." He couldn't even count. He could not make change.

Some years ago in California, a young man sued the state of California and the public school system because they graduated him from high school and he couldn't even read. I just read where one young man graduated, I think, in the top one-third of his class. He couldn't read; he couldn't do anything. Finally, they started him back somewhere in the ninth grade, I think.

You can teach your children biblical principles. You can teach them what's right, teach them to work, and teach them what they need in life. I'm not saying that you're never going to need algebra or geometry. You may need them sometime, depending on what you're going to do. But the truth is, most people can function, live, and work and never use some of the subjects crammed down their throats in a public school anyhow.

I had rather have my child grow up with common sense, common decency, and biblical knowledge and principles than have forty PhDs hanging out his ear from some institute that does not teach anything. Don't give your kids to Moloch.

Remember that any trash can float downstream. It takes something with a backbone to go against the current. We cannot just give in, and we cannot give up. We have to learn to think, plan, prepare, and be real men.

Men, your wives and children need a role model, and it should be you. Your young man should say, "I want to be just like my daddy." Your young daughter ought to say, "I want to marry a man just like Daddy." Be a real man.

We will never take back our society, our churches, or our government until we take back our homes. You have to have a starting point, and that starting point has to be the home. In today's society and political correctness, they're trying to destroy the home, the man, the head, and the family. Don't let it happen. Be a real man. Do what is right and holy and godly, and be a man of your word.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we bow to Thee. We thank You for Your Word. We thank You for Your truth. And we ask that

You would build us up in the most holy faith. Help us to be holy and godly. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 3

Where Are The Real Men

Part Three of Three

Introduction: The Scarcity of Real Men

This is the third message on "Where Are the Real Men." In 1 Chronicles chapter 22, David gives his son Solomon this counsel: "Now my son, the Lord be with thee, and prosper thee, and build the house of the Lord thy God, as he said of thee. Only the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the Lord thy God. Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfill the statutes and judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel. Be strong and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed."

It should be obvious, if you have been listening to the two previous messages, that there is a vast difference between the standards of the world and biblical standards as to what designates manhood. If we follow the biblical standards, which we should, then in reality there are very few real men today. There are very few men who really understand biblical principles and really know how to act toward their wives, toward their children, and toward society in

general. In fact, the sad truth is that there are many men today who cannot function outside of their own little, tiny sphere.

John Taylor Gatto said this, talking about America: “This was once a land where every sane person knew how to build a shelter, grow food, and entertain one another. Now we have been rendered permanent children. It's the architects of forced schooling who are responsible for this.” When you stop and think about it, he is right. There was a time when every sane person in this land knew indeed how to build a shelter, how to garden, how to receive people, and how to help people.

Things have certainly changed in the last seventy-five years, particularly in the last hundred years. Forced government education has deteriorated and dumbed down our children to a great degree. It has tried to put everyone on an equal standing, level everybody out, and bring everyone down to the absolute lowest level so that no one will feel left out or left behind. Our children are not being taught what they really need to live, work, and survive. That is bad enough, certainly. But on top of that, there is something else to consider: the government has been giving what you and I would call subsidies and welfare, and those things basically end up teaching indolence, laziness, and dependence upon others instead of depending upon yourself.

It is impossible to grow men where everyone wishes to be in perpetual childhood. It is impossible to grow men when everyone wishes to play and no one wishes to work. It is impossible to have men when spiritual and biblical truths are not only unknown but neglected, ignored, and refused. It is impossible to have real men where the word of God is not expounded, explained, and applied.

A Real Man Is Dependent upon the Lord God

I think we need the counsel that David has given Solomon in this passage. Now there are three things I want to share with you today from this simple text. I want to show you what a real man is based upon this text. First of all, I want you to notice that a real man is dependent upon the Lord God. If you look in verse 11, David says to Solomon, "Now my son, the Lord be with thee and prosper thee." The first thing that should be noted is very simply this: we need our

Lord and His blessings to live, to work, and to have our existence in Him and under Him. David prayed for Solomon, and he asked this simple prayer: "the Lord God be with thee and prosper thee."

Certainly, if we are going to do anything for God's honor and glory, we need His blessing, His power, and His presence. Moses, the man of God, said in Psalm 90:17, “And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.” Note what he said: “the work of our hands establish thou it.” If God does not establish the work of our hands, it is not going to be established; it is not going to stand. If God does not establish our work, our home, our ministry, and our life, all is to no avail. Anything that man does can be undone by man, but anything that God does cannot be undone.

The Scripture says it is indeed forever. One of our greatest failings in modern-day Christendom is that we have done many things—not only in our homes, our lives, and our churches—in the arm of the flesh, depending upon the arm of the flesh.

The Curse of Trusting in the Flesh

Here is very plainly stated the curse of the Lord and the blessing of the Lord. Note, first of all, how the curse is placed upon us. Jeremiah 17:5 says, “Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.” Here, then, is a special curse upon anyone who trusts solely in man and makes flesh his arm. “For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.” Now here is the opposite: “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.”

“For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” Here is the blessing of God upon the individual that trusts in Him, and the curse of God upon the individual that trusts in the arm of the flesh.

It is impossible to do the work of God, whatever it is or wherever it is, successfully in the arm of the flesh. It is impossible to raise a family correctly, love a wife biblically, teach children truthfully, work a job faithfully, and preach powerfully without the blessing and power of God. It is not almost impossible. It is impossible.

We may say that we can do this and that, but once again we come under the curse of God in Jeremiah 17 and verse 5. That has gotten us into a lot of problems in this day and time. We have depended upon anything and everything except the power of God.

Biblical Examples of Divine Empowerment

When you stop and think about Samson, do you realize that Samson was simply an ordinary man? He was not some muscle-bound bodybuilder or some giant. That is what confused the Philistines so much. They could not figure out where his mighty power came from because he was just a normal man. A normal man is not going to take the gates of a city on his own shoulders, walk off, and drag them up a hill somewhere. A normal man is not going to be able to pick up the jawbone of an ass and slay a thousand Philistines.

But Samson did all that and a whole lot more. The secret was that the power of God was upon him. When you read through the Bible and look at many of the heroes or mighty men mentioned there, you will always find a phrase similar to this: “and the spirit of the Lord God came upon him,” or “the Lord God moved upon him.”

When you read in 2 Samuel chapter 23 of all the mighty men David had, some of the feats these men performed were absolutely unbelievable. When you can lift up a spear and kill three hundred men in one battle, that is quite extraordinary. Some of these men did even greater deeds. Yet after all these deeds are described, you will always find this phrase: “and the Lord wrought a great victory that day.”

If it was men like Shammah and some of these others who were doing the fighting, how is it that the Lord brought a great victory? The answer is that God was enabling and empowering those men to stand and fight. He turned them into a lean, mean, fighting machine,

so to speak. Without Him, they could not have done those things. A real man is basically dependent upon God.

This is why, in Zechariah chapter 4 and verse 6, the Bible says, “Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” Everything is to be done in the power of the Holy Spirit of God. Real men truly depend upon God; they do not depend upon the arm of the flesh. They depend upon His mercy, His grace, and His power. That is why the Apostle Paul said in Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

I read recently about a cop who came upon a scene with a car turned over and a woman inside, screaming. She was pinned and could not get out. The man ran up, picked up the car by himself, set it aright, and rescued her. How did that one man do it? You can say adrenaline, or use whatever explanation you want. But if God had not given him the ability and power, that car would not have been righted, and the woman probably would have died.

Real men depend upon the Lord. Consequently, they are not proud, arrogant, haughty, high-minded individuals. They realize that without the Lord they are absolutely helpless and can do absolutely nothing. Remember what our Lord said in John 15:5? “Without me ye can do” how much? “Nothing. Without me ye can do nothing.” Let me show you the opposite of men who trust in themselves.

There was an English poet by the name of William Ernest Henley. He lived from 1849 to 1903 and is well remembered only for one poem, titled "Invictus," which is Latin for unconquered. When I was reading about Henley, I was dumbfounded by what I read. First, he wrote this poem when he was twenty-seven years of age. Secondly, he had tuberculosis in the bone. I had always thought tuberculosis was simply in the lungs, but it was in the bone and caused him great and exceeding pain, so much so that one of his legs had to be amputated. Henley died at the age of fifty-three. Since he was an atheist, the only strength he could find was that which he drew from himself; hence, he took the stoic attitude and thought his sufferings were nothing more than blind chance. So he wrote this poem, "Invictus."

Listen to it. You can hear the despair—not just the despair, but the haughtiness, the arrogance, and the defiance: "Out of the night that covers me, black as the pit from pole to pole, I thank whatever gods may be for my unconquerable soul. In the fell clutch of circumstance, I have not winced nor cried aloud. Under the bludgeonings of chance, my head is bloody but unbowed.

"Beyond this place of wrath and tears, looms but the horrors of the shade, and yet the menace of the years find and shall find me unafraid. It matters not how straight the gate, how charged with punishments the scroll. I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul."

I can assure you he knows better now. But Dorothy Day, in the twentieth century, responded to Henley's manifesto. She took his words, rewrote them, and titled her poem "Conquered." Here is what she wrote: "Out of the light that dazzles me, bright as the sun from pole to pole, I thank the God I know to be, for Christ, the conqueror of my soul. Since His the sway of circumstance, I would not wince or cry aloud. Under the rule which men call chance, my head with joy is humbly bowed. Beyond this place of sin and tears, that life with Him and His the aid that spite the menace of the years keeps and will keep me unafraid."

"I have no fear how straight the gate. He cleared from punishment the scroll. Christ is the master of my fate. Christ is the captain of my soul." I don't know about you, but I'd much rather be conquered by Christ than just trust in my flesh. The truth of the matter is this: it does not matter how much strength, power, or muscle a man has. It will all deteriorate and fade away, because man is finite and God is infinite. I'd much rather have God's infinite grace and mercy and God's infinite power than my puny little power and ability. A real man understands that he has to be dependent upon God.

A Real Man Is Dependent upon the Word of God

That's why David said, "Now my son, the Lord be with thee, and prosper thee." Look in verse 12, because here's the second thing. Not only is a real man dependent upon God, but secondly, a real man is dependent upon the word of God. Let's read verse 11 and then verse 12. David says, "Now my son, the Lord be with thee, and prosper

thee, and build the house of the Lord thy God, as he said of thee. Only the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel."

Now watch that: "Only the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding." If I were to ask the question, what is wisdom? There are many verses you could think of, and I'm sure many of you would think of Proverbs 1 and verse 7: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction." Notice something in that verse. Fearing the Lord, we have wisdom, knowledge, and instruction. There is a connection between wisdom, knowledge, and instruction and God's law word.

Look back at verse 12: "Only the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the Lord thy God." Listen to Psalm 111 and verse 10: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments." The fear of the Lord was what? It was wisdom, knowledge, and instruction. Now the fear of the Lord is wisdom, knowledge, instruction, and obedience. Everything is tied to God and His Word.

Here is another aspect of wisdom and understanding. Job 28:28 says, “And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.” Isn’t that amazing? “The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.” If you go back to Proverbs 1:7 and Psalm 111:10, you will find that the fear of the Lord deals with wisdom, knowledge, instruction, and obedience. Once you tie those together, along with obedience, there is departing from evil.

When one knows the Lord, he knows His Word, for God and His Word cannot be separated. When one knows what is right, he automatically knows what is wrong. When one knows what is truth, he automatically knows that which is error and untruth. When one fears the Lord, the Lord gives him not only grace and mercy, but sense to be obedient. Because you cannot apply instruction and knowledge and wisdom and repentance without obedience.

Proverbs 9:10 says, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.” Isn’t that

something? Job 28:28 says, “to depart from evil is understanding.” Proverbs 9:10 says, “the knowledge of the holy is understanding.” When you know what is holy, you know that which is unholy. When you have been taught and you are wise, instructed, and have knowledge, you are not going to cross God. You are not going to disobey Him. You are not going to stand and defy Him.

Now I want to show you something. Go back to 1 Chronicles momentarily, and turn to Ezra 7. If you go to 1 Chronicles, then 2 Chronicles, the next book is Ezra. Look in Ezra chapter 7.

There is a reason for this, because I am going to show you what wisdom really and truly is. Look in Ezra chapter 7 and verse 25. Ezra was a ready scribe in the law of Moses. Here is what the king says to Ezra as he goes back to Jerusalem to teach the people: “And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not.”

Isn’t that interesting? “And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand.” Is it the wisdom of God in your heart? Isn’t it in your head? How could it be in his hand? What do you think he had in his hand? A scroll—the Word of God written. So he called it the wisdom that is in his hand.

If you want to see that in the New Testament, turn to Luke chapter 11 and look at verse 49. Our Lord makes a statement as He quotes from the Old Testament. In verse 47, He says, “Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres. Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute.”

Now go back to verse 49: “Therefore also said the wisdom of God.” What is our Lord doing? He is quoting from the Old Testament. And what does He refer to the Old Testament as? The wisdom of God.

What is the wisdom of God? It is indeed the Word of God. If you want to be filled with wisdom, you must be filled with the Word of God and with the principles clearly taught in the Word of God.

Psalm 138:2 says, “I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.” God is going to honor His Word. If His Word ever fails, He fails. The Word of God is called the wisdom of God because God authored it, and God is wisdom personified. If you and I are going to have the wisdom of God, we must know His Word. Therefore, His Word should be preeminent in our lives.

You must remember what God said in Isaiah 55: “My Word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”

The real man is not only dependent upon God, for he realizes that God is omnipotent. The real man is also dependent upon the Word of God because he realizes that it is wisdom. Jesus Christ is wisdom incarnate, but the Bible is wisdom written. That is why Job, Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes are known as wisdom writings. But all of the Bible is the wisdom of God.

A Real Man Is Obedient to the Word of God

A real man is dependent upon God. A real man is dependent upon God's Word. A real man is obedient to the Word of God. In 1 Chronicles 22:11-13, David said, “Now my son, the Lord be with thee, and prosper thou, and build the house of the Lord thy God, as he said of thee. Only the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the Lord thy God. Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfill the statutes and judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.” In verse 13 he said, “Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfill the statutes and judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel.”

This truth should be very simple and evident. The whole point of being dependent upon God and upon His Word is that we may be obedient to His Word. He promises then that He is going to bless us.

Real men obey, because real men are men of character, integrity, and honesty. There is a good illustration of this in the book of Job,

chapter 1 and verse 1: "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil." When the Bible says that Job was perfect, that does not mean that Job was not a sinner. It has no reference whatsoever to what some call sinless perfection.

The word perfect means that he was a mature individual, an individual of moral character. He was moral, upright, and ethically pure. Here was a man named Job who was perfect, upright, and one that eschewed evil. The word eschewed is important because it shows what a man who fears God really does. If you are mature and upright in the faith, you will be like Job. When the Bible says that he eschewed evil, it is from the Hebrew word sur, which means to turn away from, to remove from, to avoid, and to spit out. Here was a moral and upright man who could not stomach evil. He spat it out.

I had all of my daughters, and I would take them out to the persimmon tree, pick a green persimmon, and say, "I want you to take a bite of this." They would ask, "Why, Daddy? Is it good?" I would answer, "No, sweetheart, it is not good." Then I would tell them that everyone should understand and know what a green persimmon tastes like. If you have never bitten into one, I challenge you to do so. Your mouth will pucker up. You cannot stand it; you are going to spit it out.

That is exactly what the Bible says an upright man does to evil. He cannot stomach it or swallow it. He spits it out. He cannot stand it, and he gets away from it. That is why the Bible said Job was mature and upright. He simply spit out evil. It is impossible to obey God and remain in sin. It is impossible to be obedient and disobedient at the same time. We are either obedient or disobedient.

SCRIPTURE READING - Joshua 1:7-9 (KJV)

> What did David tell Solomon? He said, “Then,” that is, once you rely upon the Lord and upon His Word, then, if you are obedient, “then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfill the statutes and the judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel.”
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> God gave Joshua the same truth: “Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the

> law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

So the true believer is dependent upon God and His Word.

The true believer is one who obeys. The real man is the one who obeys. The truth of the matter is this. We are not perfect, but we want to be. I want to be. We're not sinless, but I want to be. In other words, I want to be as holy and as godly and as obedient as I can by the grace of God so that I might honor the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, your goal should be obedience. Your goal should be holiness. Your goal should be growth in grace.

Now, let me show you something. We're talking about a real man. I want you to turn in your Bibles to 1 Timothy 2. I'm going to read this verse, and I'm going to remind you of something that I covered last week. I just want you to see this. Look, if you would, please, in 1 Timothy 2 and verse 8.

Men Must Lead in Prayer

We're going to come back to this. Paul writes Timothy and he says, "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." Now, if you'll remember, I told you last week that the theme of 1 Timothy is how to behave yourself in the house of God. You found that in verse 15 of chapter 3. Look at it again. 1 Timothy 3 verse 15, Paul says, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." Now when you come back to 1 Timothy chapter 2, he tells you about men in the house of God, he tells you about women in the house of God. Interestingly, he said that men ought to pray

everywhere. Now it is true that men ought to pray everywhere. They ought to pray all seasons, all times, under all circumstances. But let me point something out according to the theme of 1 Timothy.

It should be men and men only that lead in prayer in church. Because remember, this is how we ought to behave ourselves in the church, the house of the living God. So he tells you, now I'm not going to read all this, we covered this last week. How can a woman lead in prayer if she is to be silenced in the church? How can a woman lead in prayer without usurping authority over the men? She can't.

Go back to verse 8. He said, “I will therefore that men pray every where.” The interesting thing is that the word “men” in verse 8 is a special Greek word. The general word used is anthropos, or anthropoi in the plural. Anthropos is where we get anthropology, the study of mankind. Anthropoi would refer to men and women; it is simply people. But in 1 Timothy 2:8, the word is not anthropoi. It is aner.

We would spell it A-N-E-R. It means a man, a husband, a sir, a fella. This word distinguishes a man from a boy and a man from a woman. So he is saying that in the church, the men are to lead in prayer. Where are the men leading in prayer in our churches? Why are some churches asking women to lead in prayer?

I remember being in a little country church years ago. Even then, I had already pastored for thirty or forty years. I was visiting, and there were not many other men there whom I knew. The pastor got up and said, “I’m gonna call on sister so-and-so to lead us in prayer.” I thought, What? There I sat, and there sat other men. Why in the world would he do that? Are there no men in that church?

Examples of Men Who Prayed Boldly

He may have been totally ignorant of this, but the problem is that most men have abdicated their role and position of leadership. They have abdicated so much that many are now even afraid to pray publicly.

Let me give you an illustration. One man I have always admired, after studying his life, is Stonewall Jackson. If you would really like

to be blessed, read Robert L. Dabney's book, "The Life and Times and Campaigns of General Stonewall Jackson." Stonewall Jackson was an amazing man, noted not only for his Christianity but also for his eminent prayer life. His pastor, Dr. White, encouraged his men to lead in devotions and prayer in church. Stonewall had never prayed publicly. Dr. White told him to do so, and Stonewall replied, "You are my pastor and the spiritual guide of the church. And if you think it is my duty, then I shall waive my reluctance and make the effort to lead in prayer, however painful it may be."

After a while, Pastor White did indeed call on Stonewall Jackson to lead in prayer publicly in church. Jackson obeyed, but with such difficulty and embarrassment that he could not get his words out; he fumbled and made mistakes. He embarrassed not only himself but the church. Eventually, Jackson realized that Pastor White had not called on him in a while, and he confronted his pastor. The pastor admitted that he had stopped calling on him to spare him embarrassment and humiliation. Here is what Stonewall said:

"Yes, but my comfort or discomfort is not the question. If it is my duty to lead my brethren in prayer, then I must persevere in it until I learn to do it aright. And I wish you, sir, to discard all consideration for my feelings in this matter."

Dr. White did so, calling on Jackson over and over until Jackson became eminent in praying. He is known for his prayers, both privately and publicly.

Of course, when you understand 1 Timothy 2:8, it is not that women cannot pray. They should pray personally and privately, in their homes, with their children, and under many circumstances. The only thing 1 Timothy 2:8 forbids is women praying publicly in church. But note what verse 8 says: "I will therefore that men pray every where." A real man is not embarrassed to pray. He is not embarrassed to pray publicly or privately, in church, in the grocery store, on the street, or in the bank. It does not matter.

I have a message I have not preached yet, and I will give you one illustration from it. The message deals with the conversion of General Nathan Bedford Forrest. Forrest was not a Christian during the war; he became one afterward. Even during the war, however, he

had more moral standards than many professing Christians of that day and of our day as well.

General Forrest began attending Court Avenue Presbyterian Church, where the Reverend George Stainback was pastor. Stainback was a real expositor of the Word of God and a preacher of the Gospel, and General Forrest came under conviction. One day, while walking on the street, Forrest met Raleigh White, one of the men formerly under his command. “Raleigh, it’s you.” “Yes, General Forrest, it’s me.” “Well, Raleigh, I thought you’d gone to South America, or some other place.” “No,” Raleigh said, “I’ve never went there. After the war, I was converted to Jesus Christ.”

He said, “I was led to Christ by my wife.” He said, “I was in business. But the call of God came upon me, and he said, ‘I just could not stand it.’” He left his business and began pastoring a Baptist church in Texas at that time. General Forrest was impressed with Raleigh White’s testimony and asked him if he would pray for him. Raleigh White said, “Well, of course.” He took General Forrest by the hand, walked into the bank lobby, and both knelt on their knees while Raleigh prayed for General Forrest.

Can you imagine that happening today? People coming in and out, hearing two men on their knees in the lobby of the bank praying. You say, “Well, I would never do that.” Perhaps God in His providence will put you in a bank somewhere, sometime, when there is an armed robbery going on, and you might learn to pray in a bank—and even to pray out loud. I am simply saying, men, real men, are not ashamed to pray because they know who the Lord is and they know the power of prayer.

In 1 Timothy, chapter 2, verse 8, Paul said, “I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” Our prayers must be with holy hands. The Greek word is hosios and refers to one who is free from wickedness, pure, and holy. You remember Psalm 66, verse 18, where David said, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” Obviously, if we pray, we must pray with holy hands. If we hold iniquity and sin in our hearts, God will not hear us.

Praying with Holy Hands, Without Wrath or Doubting

But that is not all. The word wrath refers to anger, vengeance, and indignation. It is impossible to pray aright if one has an unforgiving, hateful, vindictive attitude—absolutely impossible. Our Lord said in Matthew, chapter 6, verse 15, "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Bitterness, anger, vindictiveness, and hatefulness are sin. All of those things are sin. How in the world can you pray aright if you have wrath in your life?

Doubting is hesitation. It is disputing with oneself, either concerning your petitions, disputing with God, or disputing about the promises of His Word. One of the very first requirements for prayer is found in Hebrews 11 and verse 6: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must first believe that he is, and secondly that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." How can you pray in faith if you are doubting your petition, the Word of God, or God Himself? It is impossible. Therefore, we are to pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and without doubting.

James 1, verse 5, gives a similar passage: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering," that is, no doubting and no vacillating. "For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

When we are to lift up holy hands without wrath and without doubting, it means clearly that we must have pure lives, with no known sin harbored in our minds and hearts, and without doubting the veracity of God or His Word. A real man is not only dependent upon God and the Word of God; he is obedient, and he wants to be obedient. You cannot have dependence upon God and dependence upon His Word without obedience in your life.

Matthew Henry said of 1 Timothy 2 and verse 8: "Under the gospel, prayer is not to be confined to any one particular house of prayer, but men must pray everywhere. We must pray in our

churches, in our closets, in our families, at our meals, pray while we're on our journeys, pray in the solemn assemblies, whether more public or private. We must pray in love without wrath or malice or anger towards any person. We must pray in faith without doubting and without disputing."

A real man wants to do that because he wants to be obedient in every area of his life. We do not get to pick and choose. Whatever God says is true, is true.

Conclusion: Where Are the Real Men?

Let me tie this together with a couple of applications. As in the two previous messages, real men work, fight, prepare, and pray. Real men fulfill their duties, obligations, and responsibilities as unto the Lord, for His honor and His glory. What does the Bible say? "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all to the glory of God."

It does not matter whether you are digging a ditch, preaching, or building a house. Whatever you do, do all to the honor and glory of God.

So that brings me back to the title of these messages: Where are the real men? Where are the men who can build a marriage, a home, and a family? Where are the men who can build children and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? Where are the men who can lead in churches and communities? Where are the men who can lead a nation in honesty, integrity, and character? Where indeed are the men willing to stand against wickedness and ungodliness, challenge the darkness, and say, "Thus saith the Lord God"? Where are the men willing to sacrifice their reputation, sacred honor, and goods in order to honor God and stand for what is right?

You say, "Man, you're asking too much." I think I remember correctly that there were fifty-six men at one time who signed a document declaring that they included even their sacred honor in the Declaration of Independence. Where are the men today? We have put our stamp of approval on everything but real biblical manhood, truth and righteousness, character, integrity, and honesty. Where are the real men?

If God does not intervene, before this year is over, I would imagine there will be some real separation. I know He's going to separate the wheat from the chaff; I understand that. But I think He's going to separate the men from the snowflakes too. I really believe that. It is time to man up, do that which is right and holy, confront evil, wickedness, and ungodliness, and take our stand in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We must depend upon Him, His power, and His words, and trust Him to make that Word effective in every area of our lives. Where are the real men?

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we bow to You this day. We thank You for Your Word. Lord, we pray that You would indeed be pleased to give us men—stalwart men of character, courage, integrity, honesty, and principle. Give us men who are unashamed to stand and fight, and unashamed to pray and acknowledge Thee. Give us men who will serve Thee effectively with reverence and godly fear. In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask and pray. Amen.

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