

## Biblical Manhood

There are a lot of different narratives right now in our culture on what it means to be a man. We can look at athletes or someone who looks strong and fit. People like Dwayne the Rock Johnson or Lebron James. We look at them and we say that's a man. We also have the spectrum of men like Andrew Tate or Sneako, who portray this type of masculinity that belittles women and everything is spoken in absolutes and comes off as confidence. But there is something about this idea that speaks to the man inside me, confidence, strength, toughness, but at the same time there is something off about this. There is also the other side of the spectrum, we see men as academics, scholars, or artists. Because they are not seen as necessarily strong or confident, does that mean these categories are not men? As Christians, we know that either side of this spectrum is not what defines a man. So what is a biblical man, thankfully we have the example given to us in the Bible of the perfect man, Jesus. That is our goal for this Alpha Project and our goal of our Christian journey is to become more like Jesus.

Are you serious about what you do or what you are? Are you becoming more like Jesus?

We are called to act like men. (1 Corinthians 16:13-14). Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, let all that you do be done in love.

- 1) Be watchful (discipline, self control, alert)
  - a) Like watchmen on the walls

In medieval times or biblical times, watchmen played a huge role in the cities they were employed by. They alerted the leaders and citizens inside the walls of traders coming in with goods, as well as, warning them of enemies coming to attack. Their job was to see farther and sooner than anyone else. They played a key role in the safety and security of the city.

"I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning.

- Psalm 130:5-6

The psalmist likens his posture towards the LORD to a watchman eagerly awaiting the morning, which marked the end of his shift, the unknown and uncertainty of the night.

In the same way, Paul is exhorting the men reading this passage, to be watchful, to be alert, to stay on guard. Why? Because Paul knows the pull of culture is strong. The letters of Corinthians were written to a church that was at the epicenter of culture and was falling victim to the influence of the society around them and losing the teaching of the Bible. Paul is challenging them to be ready, to be alert. We live in an age of no discipline. As a society, we are more addicted, lazy, and unmotivated than ever. Research shows that more than 30% of all American adults are experiencing symptoms of anxiety and or depression, and I do believe that it is largely tied to our technology and social media. Being disciplined is not just spiritual but it is holistic. Many of the issues Paul addressed within the Corinthian church were physical things. Who are you listening to?

You are being confused by whose your allegiance to is the most important. Flee sexual immorality, even the food you put into your body. Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, you are not your own you were bought with a price. And I want to spend some time on this section. We live in a hyper-sexualized culture. You cannot get away from it. It's in the movies, shows, music, billboards, everything is promoting sex in our culture. As young men, we can't help but be drawn to it or be numb to it. That is how we are wired.

We were made as sexual beings. We were made to find the opposite sex attractive. We all get that little rush when we talk about girls or who likes who. But Paul introduces a new idea that pushes against the culture in Corinth, that you should be disciplined and deny the flesh. If we are hungry that is just our appetite that we need to satisfy, if feeling horny falls under the same category, then we just need to whet that appetite. But Paul tells us in chapter 6:13, "The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body." Your body is not for you to use for your pleasure and comfort, but it is meant to bring glory and honor to the Creator.

Peter says, 1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

Sin is crouching at the doorstep. Be sober-minded. Be watchful. Ps 119:9, "How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding according to your word." Many of the men here including myself have been influenced and are fighting to be watchful by joining the Freedom Fight. I want to share a helpful tool regarding battling against pornography.

- b) B – Breathe Deeply (Getting more oxygen to the brakes of the brain)
- c) R – Remember the Truth (Romans 12:2 Renewing the mind)
- d) A & C- Accountability Call (2 Timothy 2:22 Fleeing lust "with others")
- e) E – Escape the Situation (1 Corinthians 6:18 Flee immorality)

Be watchful. Be alert. What are you putting into your mind? What are you allowing to shape you?

2) Stand firm in the faith (Godliness, pursuit of God's will)

Do you remember the story of the three little pigs? One pig built his house out of hay. Another out of hay. And finally one built his house out of bricks. The moral of the story is that perseverance and patience pay off. The third pig took the time to create the cement, lay the bricks, and build a house that could withstand a storm or in this case the Big Bad Wolf. Jesus tells a similar parable in the Bible, Matthew 7:24-27. The wise man built his house on solid foundations, while the foolish man built his house on sand.

It is not a matter of if the storms hit, it is a matter of when. This is the same for our Christian walk. Jesus does not promise us a life of comfort and luxury. He promises us in John 16 that, "I have said these things to you that you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

What does that mean to stand firm in the faith? It means to hold fast. To have a strong foundation. To have conviction that is grounded in God's Word. This does not mean to be stubborn or be right all the time, but it means to hold our ground when it comes to the Scriptures. If we are going to be godly men, do we know God's Word? Are we reading, meditating, studying, and memorizing God's Word? If we do not spend time knowing what God's Word says, we will not be able to stand firm in the faith. How can we be obedient to God's Word if do not know what it says?

How to build convictions? Starts with identifying where you need to build convictions. Find Scriptures that back up this conviction. Locate the areas of weakness (sand). Seek Godly counsel and accountability.

Know God's Word and build strong convictions.

3) Act like men (Biblical manhood)

- a) This section is not just something thrown on a coffee mug or t shirt but a call to act maturely. Act like a man, not like a child. It is likened to acting strongly and courageously like in the book of Joshua.
- b) A biblical man is strong and courageous, not out of his own strength but because God is with Him.
- c) Reliance and dependence on God
- d) A biblical man is one who radically depends on God.
- e) Examples Moses. He had a stuttering problem. Joshua. Was afraid. David. Failed miserably, committed adultery and murder. Yet everyone of them looked to God as their deliverance.
- f) Spiritual maturity is not independence but dependence on God.

- g) Treating women 1 Tim 5:2
  - i) Proverbs 31:30
  - ii) Do not treat them like one of your friends, speak to them like one of the boys.
  - iii) God's will is that you demonstrate the utmost respect and you afford them dignity.
  - iv) We live in a culture where we have killed beauty, dignity, respect, manners, courtesy, and chivalry. And we are part of the problem.
  - v) It is part of our job to restore beauty.
- h) To be a biblical man means you are going to stick out and even be ridiculed. But my challenge to you is to think about how you can treat the girls here at AP as Paul talks about women in 1 Timothy 5:2. How can we afford them dignity and respect?
- 4) Let all that you do be done in love (Sacrifice)

This is what makes biblical masculinity so unique. The distinguishing mark of masculinity is not in appearance or strong opinions, but in love.

Love is the distinguishing mark of manhood. 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 defines love for us in this way, "Love is patient and kind, love does not envy, or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. "

Love is selfless. It puts others before yourself. "even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Matt 20:28 Put other's needs ahead of our own. Phil 2:3-4, "3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." This is straight forward, Paul writes in Philippians to elevate others interests more than your own. Finally, look to Jesus as the ultimate example of being a servant. Philippians 2:6-8, "6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

Love is radical it transcends overflowing even to our enemies. Matt 5:38-42

This love must be so different, it looks crazy to the world. Jesus flips the entire worldly definition of love on its head. Matt 5:43-48

Love is truthful. Ephesians 4:15, "15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ". The goal of truth is love. It is not about just teaching or educating someone, that is the means of truth, but is it loving?

Paul Washer says in his Biblical Manhood, that Manhood is something that is taught. Manhood is something that is learned by imitation. But unfortunately for many of us, not all of us had men in our lives to teach us what Biblical manhood looks like. Paul the Apostle says in 1 Cor 11:1, "Imitate me as I imitate Christ." Follow me because I am following Jesus. Obviously Paul was not perfect and neither are we, but Paul is striving to live a life worth emulating. I strive to do that, when the guys I disciple see how I live, I want them to not see more of me, but to see more of Jesus. Let's pray.

What is your image of a "man"?

Where do you need to be watchful?

Where do you need to build conviction?

Are you a biblical man (adult) why? How can you get there?

Guy/girl friendships