

They Shall Become One

Introduction:

A couple are legally married on their wedding day, and then have the opportunity to spend the rest of their lives, learning how to become “one flesh.” This term is initially used by God concerning His first couple, Adam and Eve: “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh” (Gen.2:24).

Derek Prince once commented that

restoration of a culture will be marked by restoration of marriage as a source of joy and a cause for celebration...this renewal must be heralded as divine renewal has always been, by ‘the voice of bride and bridegroom.’ The church cannot experience a full or valid renewal unless it once again embraces the Biblical pattern of marriage.¹

The issue of “one flesh” should be of great significance to every couple, as they seek to live their lives harmoniously. Two becoming one requires understanding on the part of both; understanding of God’s plan, of themselves, and of each other. This book seeks to assist in this process.

¹ “Charisma,” August 1986. Quoted in Mary Pride, “All the Way Home,” 1989, p.3.

The Biblical Husband (I)

The roots of every cultural crisis rest in personal crises. The failure of a culture is the failure of the men in it. A society cannot be vital and possessed of an on-going vigour if the men therein are marked by a loss of faith, a retreat from responsibility, and an unwillingness to cope with personal problems. A culture loses its will to live and to conquer if its members manifest a spirit of retreat and surrender... Not surprisingly, our world-wide cultural crisis is rooted in the failure of men.¹

Human responsibility is something which was pre-supposed in Genesis 1 and 2. God's command to our first parents to "*rule and have dominion,*" necessitated responsibility on their part. Responsibility is something we either accept, or reject.

We may not like it or want it, but it will not go away. Responsibility as a husband and father, requires time, work, inconvenience, and sometimes suffering. We always have to ask ourselves the old questions: "*If not you, who?*" and "*if not now, when?*" The correlative promises however, are that "*power flows to those that take responsibility,*" (Gary North) and that "*where responsibility rests, authority lies.*" The best example of these two statements in history, is Jesus Christ. He took ultimate responsibility for our sins, gave up His life, and now is called "the heir of all things" (Heb.1:2).

A friend of mine once told me about a family incident in the 1960's. He lived in New Zealand, as one of three children. His parents were Christians, but they'd been having some serious marital problems. One day, his Mum had been cooking scrambled eggs in the kitchen, and she was very upset with her husband about something. Her husband came into the room, at which point she picked up the frying-pan of scrambled eggs, and, inverting the frying-pan (and its contents), threw the whole thing on the floor at his feet.

Now for many men (perhaps most men), this would be an act that they could not endure, without losing their temper. What did he do? He bent down, turned over the frying-pan, calmly put everything back into it, and gave it back to her. I admire his self-control, but more than that, his sense of responsibility in the situation. He did save his marriage.

Many Biblical leaders came on the scene after a disaster, when other people had made a mess of things. Nehemiah was one. He said to his friends,

You see the bad situation we are in, that Jerusalem is desolate and its gates burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the gates of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach. I told them how the hand of my God had been favourable to me, and also about the king's words which he had spoken to me. Then they said, "Let us arise and build." So they put their hands to the good work (Neh.2:17-18).

Because of his profound sense of responsibility he was ready to rebuild, after a disaster others had precipitated.

¹ Rousas Rushdoony, "Roots of Reconstruction," 1991, p.168-9.

It's not much fun having to rebuild after someone else's mistakes, but at least it can only get better from now on. There will be nobody else to blame for what happens in the future. Sometimes, the wrecker has been ourselves. It was us, who "*messed up.*" I've done that.

The good thing about this, is that "*failure is not final,*" and that if you or I are prepared to humble our hearts, get our hands dirty and sort out the affairs, as messy and painful as this may be, there should be a good outcome. Every man has the challenge of being either part of the problem, or part of the solution.

Having authority (which is always God's plan for His people), requires the taking of responsibility now. In the home, it begins in loving and serving our wife and children, and forgetting our pride, which God said He hates anyway. If we will do this as godly husbands and fathers, we will get blessed and rewarded. It starts with me, and you.

Will you be part of this?

The Biblical Husband (II)

“...the one who is the greatest amongst you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant...I am among you as the one who serves” (Luke 22:26, 27). “...through love serve one another” (Gal.5:13).

We believers must realise how different Jesus was, to ungodly leaders. He knew who He was, where He was from, what He was here for, and where He was going. Should we be any different? These are fundamental issues for all husbands and fathers, in their responsibility for others.

Furthermore, Jesus knew He had nothing to prove in His relationship with His family, the crowds, the religious leaders, Herod and Pilate, or even His disciples. He was secure in His relationship with His Father. So, on the night He was to be betrayed, Jesus got up from His meal, took a towel, poured water into a basin, and didn't consider it beneath Himself to wash the feet of the disciples, including Judas (Jn.13:1-5).

Security is vital for every Christian. A secure relationship with our Heavenly Father, means we don't have to prove anything to others. Father knows all things, and He knows all about me! And we can be sure that He has chosen us for a specific plan (Gen.18:17-19; Jn.15:16), which includes (but is not limited to) our family responsibilities.

So, what is a husband's first responsibility? Like all people in authority, he is to be a servant/leader; He is to serve those he leads. All those whom God has placed in authority whatever the sphere, are required to have a servant's attitude. This was the attitude of Jesus Christ, and is to be the attitude of His followers. (See I Kings 12:7; Phil.2:5-8.)

The basis of any man's rule over the creatures and the resources of the earth, is his humility and his willing obedience to a sovereign and all-knowing God. Authority requires humility (Gary North).

Husbands, what's your attitude like, to your family? Our inward motivations are always revealed in the little things of life. Ask your wife what you can do for her, today! Does she need any jobs done, around the house?

Yes, you are her leader; but your leadership will have real effectiveness, if you view yourself as firstly her servant. Do something for her, you've never done before. God wants to give us grace, to serve our families. That's His way!

The Biblical Husband (III)

Introduction:

The Christian man seeking to order his life in a Biblical way, must not neglect the life and example of men of God in history. If Jesus Christ is “the same, yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb.13:8), then the Bible is a timeless document. We are commanded to “look to Abraham your father...” (Isa.51:2). Abraham has much to teach us, as we consider his example, in 4 specific categories:

I. His God:

The dominant factor in Abraham’s life, was his covenant relationship with God. He understood that God was a covenant keeping God, who from the beginning (Gen.12:1-3, 7), had chosen him (Gen.18:19) and made promises to Him about his future, and his family. Abraham knew the Lord, obeyed the Lord (Gen.12:4), called on the Lord (Gen.12:8; 13: 4; 21:33), and made sacrifices to the Lord. He even paid tithes to Melchizedek (Gen.14:18-20), who was a priest of God, “made like the Son of God” (Heb.7:3). It seems that Abraham wanted God to “have first place in everything” (Col.1:18).

If people were to comment on you today, would they say that the dominant factor, in your life, was your relationship with God through Jesus Christ? This is God’s plan for each of us. From this, our lives can begin to have significance.

II. His Work:

“Man’s work is fundamental to his very being.”² Abraham successfully supervised and led a large number of multi-skilled men (Gen.12:5; 14:14). At this time in Canaan, protection from violence and criminals was a local responsibility; people had to be ready for anything, in what could be a dangerous place. Furthermore, Abraham knew the value of local allies (Gen.14:13, 24). Community preparedness for self-defence was essential. Abraham had won these men to his cause, for when his nephew Lot was captured in battle (Gen.14:12), Abraham took 318 “trained men, born in his house,” divided them into fighting parties by night, went after Lot’s captors and set him free, along with his families and goods.

Abraham’s relationship with his men and their families, illustrates the diversification of labour, and the interdependence of individuals in a free capitalist economy. They would not risk their lives in battle, for someone who was merely an eight hours a day employer.³

Abraham built wells (Gen.21:30; 26:18) for he understood the asset value of water in a dry land, especially as he had flocks and herds, and the welfare of hundreds and possibly thousands of people to consider. He shows us, that “physical resources are useless without capital and skills to develop them, or without access to markets.”⁴ He built up assets in gold, silver and livestock (Gen.13:2) through commercial activities which are not stipulated in scripture. He was a long-term planner, and these assets would be important in years to come

² Gary North, “The Dominion Mandate,” 1987, p.85.

³ “[Abram’s action] was based on...covenantal, familial responsibilities. It is in fact, an example of the kinsman-redeemer/avenger-of-blood principle. Abram was Lot’s next of kin, and it was his lawful responsibility to rescue him if he could. Because kidnapping is a capital crime (Ex.21:16), Abram could lawfully kill men in Chedorlaomer’s army, in his rescue of his kinsman.” James Jordan, in Gary North, (Ed.) “Tactics of Resistance,” 1983, p.56.

⁴ P. T. Bauer, quoted in North, *ibid*, p.159.

(Gen.23:14-20; 24:22, 52-53; 49:29-32). He made the best of his abilities to understand markets, and to manage men, money and livestock in his era. Abraham it seems, believed in the Biblical virtue of diligence; that “the hand of the diligent makes rich” (Prov.10:4).

Furthermore, Abraham illustrates, that

*social progress comes about with the accumulation and development of wealth. Wealth comes, in a free economy, as a product of work and thrift-in short, of character. Capital is often accumulated by inheritance, a God-given right which is strongly stressed in the Bible. According to Proverbs 13:22, ‘a good man leaves an inheritance to his childrens’ children, and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.’ Inheritance makes possible the accumulation not only of wealth within a family but of social power.*⁵

Clearly, Abraham shows us, that “prosperity in the long-run is the blessing of God to those who are faithful to His laws.”⁶

Yes, a man’s work is important to him, and it is to God, being an aspect of God’s calling for us all. God’s purpose for us, is for us to submit our work to Him and His law, so that His blessing may come, within our families. That is His promise, as we operate in obedience to Him.

⁵ Rousas Rushdoony, “The Politics of Guilt and Pity,” 1995, p.236-237.

⁶ North, *ibid.*, p.158-9.

The Biblical Husband (IV)

III. His Character:

Abraham would have known from the oral history and traditions of his era, that the earth had been destroyed in Noah's day, through wickedness. Sodom was known to be a wicked place (Gen.13:13), and so when the king of Sodom sought Abraham's agreement in the dispersal of people and goods, Abraham would have none of it (Gen.14:17-24). God's judgment on Sodom which was soon to come (Gen.19), was partially because of her pride (Ezek.16:49).

From Abraham's perspective, God was his provider, and he would rather be "humble in spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud" (Prov.16:19). Furthermore, while he was required at this time to deal briefly with the king of Sodom, he did not want to be "bound together with unbelievers" (II Cor.6:14), knowing the corruption that would inevitably ensue in such a relationship.

Abraham had an exemplary character. He insisted on paying for Sarah's burial plot, when he clearly had opportunity to receive it as a gift, out of the local's respect for him as a "mighty prince" (Gen.23).

Abraham was not about to have word go out that he had accepted a donation of this magnitude. This was not conventional hospitality to Abraham; this was an implicit assertion of authority over Abraham...he paid to maintain his visible independence.⁷

As it turned out, not only was he buried here with Sarah, but also Isaac and Rebekah, along with Jacob and Leah (Gen.49:29-32; 50:12-13). His plans and attention to detail for the long-term assisted his son and grand-son.

The patriarchs were men who moved forward as pilgrims and sojourners. They did not exalt the past or present but looked forward to the promises of God concerning the possession of Canaan by their descendents, and ultimately, to the possession of all the earth by their heirs in faith. They rejoiced that death would gather them to their fathers in God's heaven, wherein they would be beyond sin and death. Their faith made them recognise that the present orders must go, because God's order must replace them.⁸

Do people consider your character to be exemplary? How we deal with people and money, always reveals what is in our hearts. God's call, is to moral blamelessness, in all areas.

IV. His Children:

All of God's promises to Abraham involved his descendents. Abraham believed these, even when in human terms, they seemed impossible to fulfil (Gen.15:5-6). Not only did God promise Abraham that his descendents would possess the land (Gen.15:18-21), but God indicated that Abraham would fulfil a significant role: that he would "command his children after him to keep

⁷ Gary North, "Hierarchy and Dominion," 2102, p.21.

⁸ Rousas Rushdoony, "Salvation and Godly Rule," 1983, p.148.

the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him” (Gen.18:19).

Abraham realised that he had a most significant responsibility: education and discipleship within his household (which clearly numbered hundreds of people), knowing that it was a critical aspect of caring for his descendents, and seeing the promises of God come to pass.

But Abraham considered that successful discipleship alone, in Isaac’s context, wasn’t sufficient. Abraham had to finish the job as a godly father, and as much as he was able in human terms, he had to secure the future for him. So, he took specific steps to provide Isaac with a wife.⁹

Abraham commanded his servant not to “*take a wife for my son from among the daughters of the Canaanites,*” but sent his servant with gifts to procure a wife, from “*my country and my relatives*” (Gen. 24:3-4). Isaac’s godly marriage to Rebekah was immensely important to Abraham: it meant that in human terms he had done all he could, to ensure *covenantal continuation*, for his descendents.

Significantly, when Isaac married Rebekah, he brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent, who had earlier died (Gen.24:67). The couple of the new generation now assumed family pre-eminence.

Conclusion:

As Christians, we are members of the New Covenant, through the blood of Jesus Christ. There are promises of covenantal continuation for our children (see for instance, Ps.25:12-13; Ps.112; Prov.20:7), but they are never automatic. Like Abraham, we have requirements upon us as husbands and fathers, beginning with their godly education and discipleship, if the promises of God for them, are to be fulfilled.

As God gave Abraham grace, may He give us grace, to help us in this glorious task!

⁹ See Andrew McColl, “The Significance of the Godly Family,” 2009, Appendix 3: “The Importance of the Dowry.”

Biblical Husband (V)

Introduction:

There is some evidence that Job lived in Abraham's era. Abraham was called a "mighty prince" by his compatriots (Gen.23: 6), but the Bible calls Job "*the greatest of all the men of the east*" (Job 1:3). Like the Genesis patriarchs, and Boaz (who of course, lived much later), Job was godly, wealthy, capitalistic and entrepreneurial.

Job as a Father:

Job was initially the father of 10 children. He offered sacrifices for his sons, in case they had sinned against God (Job 1:4-5).

When Job offered a sacrifice for his children, he was claiming the benefits of the sacrifice on their behalf. That is a picture of intercession: claiming the benefits of a sacrifice on behalf of those for whom you are praying. Our sacrifice at this point in history, of course, is the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Intercession for our children, then, involves claiming the benefits of Christ's death on their behalf...every father is responsible before God, therefore, to maintain day-to-day intercession for his whole household.¹⁰

Job in his Community:

The Book of Job shows that his family was a powerful institution, within his larger community. He could certainly have employed over 500 servants in various agricultural, transport, communication and business pursuits (Job 1:3; 42:12). Job's life shows us that

Capitalisation is the product of work and thrift, and the accumulation of wealth and the wise use of accumulated wealth. This accumulated wealth is invested in effect in progress, because it is made available for the development of natural resources and the marketing of goods and produce. The thrift which leads to the savings or accumulation of wealth, to capitalisation, is a product of character.¹¹

In Job's era, civil government was a much different proposition. It was completely local. Consequently, there were no professional police, and only sometimes, armed forces. No public servants, no bureaucracy, and commonly, no taxation.¹² Everything was private, and therefore voluntary.

That does not mean that anarchy was an automatic consequence. Local alliances and other arrangements were entered into to deal with challenges that arose. Yes, there were problems (as always), but people had to sort out their local and family problems by conciliation, or if necessary by force, as Abraham was compelled to do, in his rescue of Lot (Gen.14:13-16). Individuals it seems, had a far greater sense of their community responsibilities.

¹⁰ Derek Prince, "Husbands & Fathers," 2000, p.71-2.

¹¹ Rousas Rushdoony, "Chalcedon Report," April 1967.

¹² At Federation in Australia in 1901, there was no income tax. In the U.S., income tax was only introduced in 1913.

Communities therefore, were compelled to be close-knit; families knew each other, and relied on each other, a lot more than today. Furthermore, local people had to take responsibility for the needy, or they would perish. This was God's plan. Charity was largely a family responsibility, and almost every community member had a charitable and social role, of one form or another.

This is the background to the Book of Job. Job 29 and 31 are some of the most challenging statements about Christian charity in the scriptures.

Job 29 shows that Job a) was respected in the community (v.7-10), b) He delivered the poor and needy (v.12), c) he was blessed in gratitude by the needy, and made the widow's heart to sing (v.13), d) he was a father to the needy, and also a private investigator (v.16), e) a law enforcer (v.17), and f) he was revered in his local community (v.21-25).

Job 31 tells us that he a) fed the poor, and helped the widow (v.16), b) he shared with the orphan (v.17), c) he was a father to the orphans (v.18), d) he clothed the needy (v.19), and e) provided lodging for the alien and stranger (v.32). Furthermore, his employees never complained that they went without meat (v.31).

In terms of charity, there isn't much left out, is there? Job was a remarkable man, but his community too may have been remarkable, in its practical, efficient and *decentralised* care for needy people.

The account of Job's community life, represents a challenge to all of us. When he was restored by the Lord, it is significant that

His blessings consisted of the restoration of his wealth beyond what he had possessed before (42:12), as well as the birth of ten children (42:13). As a final gift, he was granted a long life (42:16-17). In short, he was given the capital he needed to begin once again to exercise dominion over the earth as a godly family man: tools, children and time.¹³

Like Job, we know that the future of our communities lies with us. There are no others who have been called to be "the light of the world" (Mat.5:14). Will you join with me, in being ready and willing to take up the cause of the legitimate needy, in our communities? ¹⁴

¹³ Gary North, "The Dominion Mandate," 1987, p.164.

¹⁴ See Andrew McColl, "The Significance of the Godly Family," 2009, ch.8, "The Family and Welfare."

The Biblical Husband (VI)

Ps. 112:

“Praise the Lord! How blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commandments. His descendants will be mighty on earth; the generation of the upright will be blessed.”

Only two requirements of a godly man, are listed here in the first verse: that he *“fears the Lord,”* and that he *“greatly delights in His commandments.”* On these two conditions, the promises of the psalm are founded.

I regret that I have heard hardly any teaching from the pulpit on the fear of the Lord, in thirty seven years of being a believer. But the fear of the Lord as a godly attribute, is a recurring theme found right throughout scripture, including the New Testament.

We are told that *“he who walks in his uprightness fears the Lord”* (Prov.14:2), that we are to *“live in the fear of the Lord always”* (Prov.23:17), and that *“the reward of humility and the fear of the Lord, are riches, honour and life”* (Prov.22:4). Have you made *“the fear of the Lord,”* one of your life’s priorities, and the priority of your children?

The second requirement, *“greatly delighting in His commandments,”* is also a recurring theme. If we put God and His Word first, then everything else of God’s plan, will follow. We are commanded to *“delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart”* (Ps.37:4).

Furthermore, the man of whom it is said, his *“delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law, he meditates day and night...will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers”* (Ps.1:2-3).

Joshua’s conquest of the promised land, was preceded by a God-given stipulation: Joshua would need to *“be careful to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded you...this book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night...for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have success”* (Joshua 1:7-8).

What is the critical, common component, between Psalm 1, and Joshua 1? *Day and night meditation in God’s Word.* This is an obligation for us. Is this a picture of your attitude to the Bible? One preacher said, *“You only love God, as much as you love His Word.”*

For a Christian father, this is most significant. The promises of Psalm 112, are to *“the man,”* and his *“descendants.”* The generational linkage found in scripture is very important, for two reasons:

a) There is a Biblical relationship between a godly man, and the well-being of his subsequent generation. Proverbs 20:7 says, *“a righteous man who walks in his integrity-how blessed are his sons after him,”* while Proverbs 11:21 teaches us that *“...the descendants of the righteous will be delivered.”*

b) Secondly,

there is a continuing relationship in the Bible between seed and subduing. Genesis 1:28 commanded mankind to be fruitful and multiply (seed) and to subdue the earth. After the Fall of man, God's covenantal promise to Eve involved her seed: hers would bruise the head of the serpent (Gen.3:15). Abraham received two promises, the promise of a land (Gen.12:1) which would be given to his seed (Gen.12:7). It is Jesus Christ, the "seed born of a woman," who is the recipient of, and fulfilment of, the promises...we are His seed; we are therefore to subdue the earth.¹

Psalm 112 typifies one of the paradoxes of the gospel: the man who is "gracious" (v.4), who is "compassionate" (v.4), who "lends" (v. 5), and who "gives freely to the poor" (v.9), is the very man, whose "heart is upheld" (v.8), who "will not fear" (v.8), who "will never be shaken" (v.6), and who "will be remembered forever" (v.6).

This illustrates what Jesus taught us in Luke 6:38: "Give, and it will be given unto you. They will pour into your lap a good measure-pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

Along with this, for the man of Psalm 112, "his horn will be exalted in honour," speaking of his authority (v.9), "his righteousness endures forever" (v.9), and "his descendents will be mighty on earth" (v.2).

I hope and pray that Christian fathers today, will do what this Psalm encourages; that they will "fear the Lord," and will "greatly delight in His commandments." This, and only this, can lead to the fulfilment of God's glorious plan, for us, and for our children.

Will you take God's Word at face value, as you join with me in living out Psalm 112, so that blessing can come, to successive generations of our families?

¹ Gary North, "The Dominion Covenant," 1987, p.172-3.

The Biblical Father (VII)

Adam and Eve made a religious decision. For Adam, who was standing with Eve throughout the discussion, as Genesis 3:6 makes clear, it involved the decision not to exercise marital leadership, not to step in and interrupt the proceedings.; his wife made the initial decision, and he followed her lead.¹⁵

We cannot simply blame women for the feminism of our modern era. It has been a logical response to male irresponsibility, but it has not helped women, as it has led them further and further away from their original calling. Furthermore, it has led to the emasculation of men as well. As much as we are able we have to ignore this kind of evil pressure, knowing where it is from, and obey God's Word as husbands.

In I Timothy 3:4-5 Paul discusses the qualifications for a man who wants to be a leader in the church. The most important area, writes Paul, is the condition of the man's home. He must be one who "manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity." He is expected to exercise authority and to have his children respectful, obedient and under his control.

The Greek word translated "manage" means literally "to stand in front of." It contains various related ideas, including "to rule," "to protect" and "to control." Essentially the word means that the father stands at the head of his home. He puts himself between his family and all the pressures and dangers of life. He also goes in front of them and sets an example of godly living.¹⁶

Jesus Christ never permitted Himself to be pressured into an orientation around the needs of people. That wasn't Father's plan. Rather, He was oriented around the commands of His Heavenly Father. We see this when He went to the pool at Bethesda (Jn.5:1-15). Though there were a multitude of people there "who were sick, blind, lame and withered" (v.3), Jesus healed just one of them (v.9), and immediately left (v.13).

Some would ask, "didn't Jesus care about all those needy people who were there?" Jesus cared most about completing the tasks which His Father had given Him, as an obedient Son. He wasn't need oriented: He was command oriented. The needs of people were not paramount in His mind, because Jesus wasn't a religious social worker.

Jesus said, "the Father Himself who sent Me has given me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me" (Jn.12:49-50). He also said, "I do exactly as the Father commanded Me" (Jn.14:31).

This should teach us something about the nature of godly leadership and the commands of the kingdom of God. God expects fathers as His faithful representatives, to utilise commands

¹⁵ Gary North, "The Dominion Covenant," 1987, p.102.

¹⁶ Derek Prince, "Husbands & Fathers," 2000, p.86.

in their family structure. He said concerning Abraham, “I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord, by doing righteousness and justice...” (Gen.18:19). This is a father’s responsibility before God, and is something we will give an account for.

Does this authorise a father to behave like a parade-ground sergeant-major? No. He must exhibit understanding, tenderness and care. But certainly the word *command* is a strong one; almost military. But whoever heard of a kingdom, without authority, order and rules? Abraham’s “*household*” numbered hundreds, perhaps thousands of people (see Gen.14:14). His must have been a household of order, obedience and discipline if he could at short notice, go off with 318 of his men, divide them into groups at night, and rescue Lot. What authorises me, to think that my household should be any different?

Abraham’s leadership can be compared with that of Lot. Lot was a godly man, but where he led his family with its appeal of financial gain but moral corruption, ended up destroying his family. What can we learn from this?

Family leadership must be *moral*. There must be moral and ethical justification for the choices a father makes.

Some wives and mothers may say, “Are you talking about the man being a dictator?” No. There are some situations, however, in which the man is responsible to say, “in order to please God and have His blessing, this is the way we’re going to do things in our home. We are not going to do this, but we are going to do that.”¹⁷

The New Testament father must ensure he is not a tyrant, abusing those under him. The only valid way to do this is to be in a church, in submission to the leadership of that church. The Bible commands us in the context of the Church to “*be subject to one another in the fear of Christ*” (Eph.5:21). To refuse to do this is not only folly; it is also blasphemous. It is refusing to submit to the institution God has ordained to be the most authoritative in the world, whatever its present failings.

No man is fit to be in authority, unless he is under authority as well. To refuse to come under the authority of others is to be a despot. A man who is under the authority of his church leadership provides his wife and children with an appeals mechanism, so that his decisions can be referred to others. Jesus Christ was and is eternally submissive to His Heavenly Father, and the remarkable paradox of the kingdom of God which we must all observe, is that He now has “all authority...in heaven and on earth” (Mat.28:18). Thus every man should always be willing to submit to godly Church leadership who care for him and his family.

Fathers lead by what they do and say: by example. This is a tremendously important issue in the scriptures. Paul was bold enough to say to the Philippians, “the things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you” (Phil.4:9). He could also say to the Corinthians, “be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ” (I Cor.11:1).

¹⁷ Prince, p.89.

I grew up on a farm in NSW, and my father died when I was fifteen. I have a great deal of respect for the sort of man he was. We had two small orchards on our farm, and every year the fruit-trees were pruned in the winter. One day a few years before he died, I was working with him in the orchard, where we were picking up the many prunings and loading them onto the back of a tractor. It had been raining, and the orchard ground was muddy.

Two strangers pulled up in a car, got out, and proceeded to trudge across the orchard to speak to us. They were both wearing blue suits and dress shoes, which didn't seem to me to be the most suitable attire for that place, but I guess that didn't matter too much. One of them was carrying a blue folder.

When they got to us, my father said to them, "Are you fellows from an insurance company?" I can't remember whether they shook their heads, or said "No," but their response was certainly in the negative. My father then, gently reached across and took the folder out of the hands of the rather sheepish man holding it, turned it around (so that it faced my Dad), and opened it up. At the top of the facing page, was a heading: *New Zealand Insurance Company*.

My father "suffered fools badly." He angrily commanded them, "Get off my place," and pointed to their vehicle. They turned on their muddy heels and trudged away. I learned that day: a) Don't mess with Dad, and b), Don't give liars the time of day.

No father can expect to see the blessing of God in his family, if he will not effectively lead that family, as Abraham did. God give us grace so we can change, and obey.

The Biblical Father (VIII)

Introduction:

The Bible tells us to “*be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him...*” (I Pet.5:8-9). The Christian husband must be able to defend what God has given him, and the weapons listed for the Christian’s spiritual protection in Eph.6:10-17, are almost all defensive ones. Adam’s original error in the Garden, was the sin of omission. Because of his error, Eve was *defenceless*.

*The picture of Jesus in the gospels is not a meek teacher of non-violence...To be sure, Jesus is supremely kind and gentle. But the Jesus pictured in the gospels is much more a warrior than a benign guru.*¹⁸

How must a man protect his family?

Firstly, he must begin with himself. The Bible warns us, to “pay close attention to yourself and your teaching...” (I Tim.4:16). There is no sense in a father having great plans for the protection of his household, spiritual or otherwise, if he neglects his own preservation. Thus we are to “watch over our heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life” (Prov.4:23). This means first of all, that we must guard ourselves against a wandering mind, a fantasising mind, a lustful mind, or a covetous mind.

The helmet of salvation is a critical component in the Christian’s armour; the mind can be a battleground. But the promise of God is that “the steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in You” (Isa.26:3). If the leader of the family is right with God and walking in his integrity, he can then lead the way in defending his family.

Secondly, a husband must protect his wife from abusive, overbearing or interfering family and friends. A newly married couple do not need unsolicited advice from well-meaning people, including family members. The Biblical command is that a man should “leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife” (Gen.2:24). While honouring their parents, the new couple should live independently of them after marriage.

Jacob is a case in point. Laban was clearly abusive of his son in law Jacob. Under God’s direction (Gen.31:1-3), Jacob fled to protect himself and his family from Laban, who sought to enslave and abuse him.¹⁹

Thirdly, a man must protect his wife from evil attack. The tragic example of Nicholas (the last Czar of Russia) and Alexandra, should be a warning to every husband. The Russian armies had suffered successive defeats at the hands of the Germans early in World War I. Nicholas, a quiet, shy man, uncomfortable with leadership and with no experience or aptitude for the military, decided nevertheless to go off to the distant front to personally lead the fight in 1915. He left his wife Alexandra, burdened with the fragile health of their

¹⁸ Gary Demar, “The Reduction of Christianity,” 1990, p.211.

¹⁹ *God’s deliverance of His bride from Egyptian “rape” is the theme of Exodus. (Ex. 1:16, 22. Compare the previous exoduses of Abraham from Egypt and Philistia, and of Isaac from Philistia: In each case, the bride was under attack; Gen. 12, 20, 26.)* James Jordan, “Covenant Sequence in Leviticus and Deuteronomy,” 1989, p.12.

son Alexis (who would have inherited the throne, but was a haemophiliac), along with the rapidly deteriorating state of their nation.

But Alexandra and Nicholas had been heavily influenced for years by the mystic monk, Gregory Rasputin. They believed Rasputin possessed the supernatural ability to save Alexis' life.

The Tsar's sister wrote in her diary that she was disturbed by the *attitude of Alix [Alexandra] and the children to that sinister Gregory (whom they consider to be almost a saint...). He's always there, goes into the nursery, visits Olga [aged 20] and Tatiana [18] while they are getting ready for bed, sits there talking to them and caressing them...it's quite unbelievable and beyond understanding.*²⁰

Rasputin was already infamous at the Russian court for his womanising. Nicholas' negligence as a husband, in failing to protect his wife and family from the evil, immoral and destructive influence of Rasputin (along with the associated gossip and innuendo), was one of the many factors that contributed to the demise of his regime, and the subsequent murder of his whole family by the Communists.²¹

Nicholas failed to put the welfare of his wife and family before the apparent needs of the nation, and ended up losing his throne, his family and his life. The Bible warns us, "like a trampled spring and a polluted well is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked" (Prov.25:26).

Fourth, every husband must ensure his family is protected physically. Both Abraham (Gen.12:10-20; 20:1-14) and Isaac (Gen.26:6-11) were obligated to utilise deception for self-protection, in disguising their relationship with their wives when living in a hostile culture, and the scripture offers no criticism of this.

Abimelech's payment of "sheep and oxen and male and female servants" to Abraham (Gen.20:14) as a form of restitution when he had taken Sarah as his wife indicated acknowledgment of his own error in his actions. His payment to Abraham of "a thousand pieces of silver" (Gen.20:16) for his unwitting transgression is remarkably similar to what God required as restitution for a seduced virgin: "...he shall pay money equal to the dowry for virgins" (Ex.22:17).

Sometime later, God remarkably assisted the Hebrew mid-wives who honoured Him in their deception of Pharaoh as they protected the Hebrew baby boys (Ex.1:15-21), while Joseph protected his family by fleeing (see Mat.2). God remarkably assisted him in the process with dreams and angelic visitations so that he escaped Herod, intent on killing the baby Jesus.

What should happen if criminals seek to attack an individual or a family? The Bible is not a pacifist document, and firearms and other means of family protection are perfectly

²⁰ Quoted in C. Clay, "King, Kaiser, Czar," 2006, p.290.

²¹ Alexandra on one occasion wrote to Nicholas addressing his indecisiveness, saying, "How I wish I could pour my will into your veins." He signed his reply to her, "...your poor little weak-willed Hubby." (Quoted in E. Crankshaw, "The Shadow of the Winter Palace," 1976, p.362.)

legitimate.²² The Sermon on the Mount must be seen in context; it was given at a time when Israel was under the judgment of God, and Roman occupation. This gives us the context of Jesus' command, "do not resist an evil person" (Mat.5:39). He does not expect parents to stand by and watch evil people harm their family.

When Nehemiah was troubled by the threats of those who conspired against Jerusalem, he said to the men of Jerusalem, "...do not be afraid of them; remember the Lord who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives and your houses" (Neh. 2:14).

*"If you were a male believer around the time of Moses and Joshua, your job was to fight."*²³ If an unprotected woman is threatened at home by a male intruder, a firearm in her hands (which she has become competent to use) suddenly tips the scales heavily in her favour, and the Bible teaches (Ex.22:2-3) that anybody may use any necessary force to protect themselves or their family.

Some will say, "Well, we'll trust God for the protection of the family." I agree. But trusting God does not preclude taking preparatory action for this vital task. Oliver Cromwell, a leading Puritan during the English Revolution, was reputed to have instructed his men as they went into battle, "Trust God, and keep your powder dry."

Fifth, attacks on a wife can be in the form of *discouragement, depression, or unbelief*. "What's going to become of us?" a wife may say. She needs to be encouraged with what God has spoken. The scripture requires that a newly married man be exempted from military duties for a year, so that he could be at home to *encourage* his wife (Deut.24:5). An encouraged wife who knows Jesus Christ, and knows that her husband loves and cherishes her, will be more able to function in her God-given role. "When Biblical law is read thoughtfully and carefully, it is plain that a wall of protection is built around women."²⁴

Sixth, a man must protect his wife from internal family challenges, such as unruly sons. They must understand that it is a Biblical command to "*Honour thy Mother*," just as much as the scripture requires that they *Honour thy Father*" (Ex.20:12), and that there are promises attached to this form of honour, by God.

Young men without sufficient training (especially in their teen years), can be arrogant, rude and foolhardy. Fathers would do well to point out and teach that the Fifth Commandment requires that children honour their father *and* mother. Furthermore, the parental relationship verses of Proverbs (and there are many, such as Prov.20:20; 23:22; 30:17) reinforce this. Fathers must require their sons whatever age they are to honour their mother, if they want to stay in the home.

Seventh, a husband must protect his wife from rude, intimidating people. This can be in the form of telephone sales people, or it can be people coming to the front door, who want to sell something, who endeavour to manipulate or bully. This is evil, and no wife should

²² "The same God who was incarnate in Jesus Christ ordered the Hebrews to annihilate the Canaanites. Any discussion by God-fearing people of the legitimacy of warfare from a Biblical standpoint must begin with a consideration *and moral acceptance* of Deut.7:1-6." Gary North, "Moses and Pharaoh," 1986, p.134.

²³ Gary Thomas, "Sacred Marriage," 2000, p.39.

²⁴ Douglas Wilson, "Fidelity," 1999, p.86.

have to put up with that nonsense. Sometimes, retail staff must be reminded of the need for good manners, and of legitimate discounts or deals that they must take into consideration in their service of customers.

Once when Sue had returned from shopping, she found she had been overcharged for an item, but couldn't prove it, and so was reluctant to do anything about it. I rang the store and they were happy to provide a refund. Women may do this, but if their husband will take the lead, it will help them.

Eighth, a father must defend his daughters from interlopers and fornicators.²⁵ A Christian father of a teenage daughter I knew many years ago, unwisely permitted her to attend a party, unprotected. A young man deliberately got her drunk so he could sleep with her, and she fell pregnant. If she had not attended that party without her family, or if a responsible person had been appointed to *chaperone* her, things would have been different. (Realistically, she should never have been there.)

Males have testosterone, which is fine and God-given, but we know that if the sexual drives are not appropriately harnessed, evil can ensue. Jacob discovered to his lasting grief what can happen to an unprotected daughter, if she is exposed to ungodly men (Gen.34), just as did David (II Sam.13). The attack, abuse, seduction and rape of women has been a sad fact of human history since the book of Genesis. Why do we need a repeat of the lesson with our daughters today? Voddie Baucham is right: "*there is an epidemic of unprotected women in our society.*"

Prudence dictates protection of daughters, in the company of trustworthy people who will protect them. They are a trust to fathers, from God. Fathers must take every precaution, with a view to presenting their daughter to their future husband, as a chaste virgin.

A father (with his wife) needs to help his daughters in how they dress. Some young women are absolutely ignorant about the impact of what they wear on males. For some fathers it is embarrassing to discuss this issue, because they are indirectly revealing what can be a weakness to them, also. Nevertheless, it must be dealt with, for their daughters' sake. Fathers don't want their daughters to be "dressed as a harlot" (Prov.7:10).

Explain to them, what this means, and how men are aroused visually. Explain how girls can be dressed attractively but modestly, not drawing attention to their bodies. Immodesty will attract some men, but the wrong kind, and for the wrong reasons. Evil men may be *wicked* in relation to sexual intent, and Christian men may be *weak*, struggling with their temptations. Whatever the situation, daughters need to be aware of these issues, in relation to how they dress. As one author has recently noted, "never in the history of fashion has so little material been raised so high to reveal so much that needs to be covered so badly."²⁶

Ninth, a father (and his wife) must defend their children, through intercession. The example of Job is important in this. When his children were enjoying feast times together, Job would offer sacrifices on their behalf, in case they had sinned:

²⁵ See Appendix 3, "The Importance of the Dowry," in A. McColl, "The Significance of the Godly Family," 2009.

²⁶ Unknown author, quoted in R. Spinney, "Too Much, Too Little, Too Tight," in "Modest Apparel," 2012.

When Job offered a sacrifice for his children, he was claiming the benefits of the sacrifice on their behalf. That is a picture of intercession: claiming the benefits of a sacrifice on behalf of those for whom you are praying. Our sacrifice at this point in history, of course, is the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Intercession for our children, then, involves claiming the benefits of Christ's death on their behalf...every father is responsible before God, therefore, to maintain day-to-day intercession for his whole household.²⁷

It is easy for Christian parents to assure each other, "We'll pray for the children, if they get into some difficulties." But why not be praying for them, beforehand? What is the most sensible: the safety rail being erected at the top of the pass, or an ambulance being sent to the bottom? I am not suggesting that prayer will prevent our children getting into difficulties, for some difficulties are necessary for their growth. But praying parents may prevent their children facing challenges that may lead them into sin, and that is never pleasing to God.

Conclusion:

What God has given us in our families, the devil will try to "steal, kill and destroy" (Jn.10:10). That is his nature. We must be prepared as godly warriors to jealously and fiercely defend what God has given to us, knowing to whom we will give an account. May God give us grace for this essential task!

²⁷ Derek Prince, "Husbands & Fathers," 2000, p.71-2.

The Biblical Husband (IX)

But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever (I Tim.5:8).

Pastors should teach the Biblical principles of financial success: self-discipline, thrift, hard work, customer service, thrift, future-orientation, saving for retirement, thrift, profitability, low or zero debt, thrift, long hours, family sacrifice, reduced lifestyle, and thrift.²⁸

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, 'do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; your reward shall be very great' (Gen.15:1).

One of the terms which is repeated frequently in relation to Jesus and His activities in the Gospel of Mark, is “*immediately*.” In the first five chapters of Mark, “*immediately*” is used 21 times. (In the King James version, this is translated “*straightway*.”) Clearly, Jesus was a very hard working person.

A husband’s willingness to provide for his family, is one of his main responsibilities before God. He must operate out of the same certainty, that Abraham had: that God is his provider. This leads him to a position of faith and confidence, so that he can face the challenge of being the human vessel, God wants to use for this role.

By engaging in specific labour, [Adam] had begun to extend his control over the creation, thereby beginning the historical fulfilment of his own nature. He was asserting his legitimate, subordinate sovereignty over the creation. Only after he had demonstrated skills in his calling was he provided with a wife. The husband’s calling is therefore basic to marriage. It is supposed to be antecedent to marriage.²⁹

Our most important capacity for providing as fathers, comes through *work*. A man’s relationship to his work is a subject which God treats very seriously. God commands the sluggard to consider the example of the ant, which “having no chief, officer or ruler, prepares her food in the summer and gathers her provision in the harvest” (Prov.6:7-8). God reiterates this in Prov.30:24-25, when we are told that though they are small, because ants prepare their food in the summer, they are “*exceedingly wise*.” Thus, the ant:

- a) Is instinctively self-motivated, and willingly works unsupervised.
- b) Is future oriented.
- c) Capitalises on the seasons of provision to prepare and gather.

Matthew Henry’s commentary (written in 1710) on this passage is helpful:

Provident we must be in our worldly affairs, not with an anxious care, but with a prudent foresight; lay up for winter, for straits and wants that may happen, and for old age; much more in the affairs of our souls. We must provide meat and food, that which is substantial and will stand us instead, and which we shall most need. In the enjoyment of the means of grace provide for the want of them...we must take pains,

²⁸ Gary North, “Inherit the Earth,” 1987, p.152.

²⁹ Gary North, “The Dominion Covenant,” 1987, p.90.

and labour in our business, yea, though we labour under inconveniences. Even in summer, when the weather is hot, the ant is busy in gathering food and laying it up, and does not indulge her ease, nor take her pleasure...the ants help one another; if one have a grain of corn too big for her to carry home, her neighbours will come to her assistance...the greater helps we have for working out our salvation the more inexcusable shall we be if we neglect it.³⁰

The Christian person must realise that hostility to work is not Christian. It is pagan in origin, going back to the time of the Romans.

One of the signal failures of the Roman Empire had been in the field of economics...no doubt their many conquests...and their contempt for productive labour, ranging from what we would call the highest professions down through business to the poorest agricultural and industrial employment, had much to do with their failure...the Roman attitudes to work and leisure form an important ingredient in the downfall of the Empire.³¹

The slothful person refuses to work, and “gets nothing” (Prov.13:4), but God’s promise to the “skillful man,” is that he will “stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men” (Prov.22:29).

Abraham and his men dug wells, and Isaac dug many wells also (see Gen.26). This was an integral component of their culture and lifestyle. They had the welfare of hundreds of people to consider, their “household” (Gen.14:14), along with their flocks and herds, (Gen.13:1-2; 26:12-14) in what could be a barren landscape. Along with Abraham and Isaac, Jacob (Gen.30:43), Job (Job 1:3; 42:12), and Boaz (Ruth 2:1) were godly, rich, capitalistic and entrepreneurial.

Riches, Biblically speaking, are a perfectly legitimate outcome of diligence and the blessing of God. If riches are obtained legitimately, they can be a mark of God’s approval (see Prov.10:4, 22; 22:4). One hundred years ago, my grandfather’s generation (who were farmers), when commencing to plough with their horses in the morning began in the dark; they had to find the furrow in the paddock, by lighting a match. They had a work ethic which I respect.

How can a Christian Man improve his work Prospects, and Output?

The Christian man has to ask himself the questions:

“What am I good at?

What do I like doing?

What do I feel God has called me to?”

The answer to these questions can be a guide to the sort of employment God may direct us into, which can help us be better providers.

The most obvious opportunity, is through education, and the gaining of qualifications. I completed an Arts degree externally after 6 years of study in 1997, while I was working full-time as an abattoir labourer, in Dubbo, NSW. This qualification, along with a Diploma of Education, permitted me to enter professional employment as a teacher, in 1998. That was a

³⁰ Matthew Henry’s Commentary, (1710), Vol.III, p.822.

³¹ Ian Hodge, “Making Sense of Your Dollars,” 1995, p.6.

relatively cheap degree. I paid cash for my courses each year before starting (saving 20%), and studied from home.

The second opportunity (which is similar), is through the gaining of extra skills, especially through working with others, in their work. This is the best way to learn anything. This is the nature of an apprenticeship, which is an ancient means of gaining a skill. As someone has commented, “the purpose of Christian education is ...to enlarge the scope and extent of man’s power under God.”³²

Thirdly, the Christian man needs to grow in diligence. Diligence relates to one’s effectiveness, and applying oneself to the task, in an efficient, responsible and time-effective manner. Why shouldn’t believers be the best possible employees? Happy to be on the job, productive and working hard. This means that every aspect of half-heartedness should be eliminated, for work is a God-given calling for us all to enthusiastically embrace, as a vital aspect of God’s plan for His people, to “rule and have dominion” (Gen.1:26-28).

Lastly, in terms of being an effective provider, the Christian husband needs to be aware that life is subject to unforeseen shocks. Do you know what tomorrow will bring? No one does. Job, though a godly man, found that life (despite his prayers), can unravel in a way he hadn’t even considered (Job 1:18-22). So, a godly husband should set aside monies for the future, and needs to make provision for his family, should he be killed or incapacitated.

*Churches should see to it that the wife of every head of household has sufficient low-cost “term” life insurance written on her husband’s life, to protect her and the children...[She should be established as] the owner of the policy.*³³

Conclusion:

Being the provider for the family under God is a challenging task, but that’s the nature of the kingdom of God. In 34 years of marriage, I’ve had a multitude of jobs in four states of Australia, in both professional and non-professional work. God has challenged, helped and blessed me, and He wants to do the same for every family provider, as we look to Him, and put our trust in Him. Ask Him to guide you, and give you wisdom and understanding to develop this aspect of His high calling for your life.

³² Rousas Rushdoony, “The Philosophy of the Christian Curriculum,” 1985, p.33.

³³ Gary North, “Inherit the Earth,” 1987, p.149.

The Biblical Husband (X)

The Disciplinarian:

(This is only a brief paper, on a subject that properly treated, requires a book. I suggest Michael and Debi Pearl's book, "To Train Up a Child.")

1. The discipline of children is commanded in scripture (see Prov.13:1; 22:15; 23:13).
2. Discipline has to begin with parents, with their self-discipline. Otherwise it will degenerate into hypocrisy and abuse. Don't expect your child to be self-disciplined if you aren't.
3. Understand what the Bible says about rebellion and disobedience (I Sam.15:22-23). That is the critical issue. The Christian parent in obedience to God, wants something more, than outwardly nice children.
4. Rebellion has been in every man since Adam. Don't ignore it, or deal with it half-heartedly. David hadn't dealt with Adonijah as a child (I Kings 1:5-6), and the end of his life was ugly:

Adonijah wasn't submissive,
Adonijah was ambitious,
Adonijah couldn't wait, and
Adonijah died violently (I Kings 2:19-25).

All of this was tragic and could have been avoided, if David had disciplined him as a child. This shows us that:

Life is not about what a child wants.
Life is not about what a parent wants.
Life wasn't about what a disciple wanted (Mat.16:21-28).
Life wasn't even about what Jesus wanted (Mat.26:39).
Life is about doing what God wants (Ps.40:8).

5. The goal of discipline?

The child learns to listen (Ps.81:11-14).
The child learns to obey.
The child learns self-discipline.

If a child learns to listen, honour and obey your voice, he will do the same to Jesus Christ. That is the goal of the exercise. You will have served him (and the Lord) well.

6. Parents shouldn't have to repeat themselves, when instructions are given. Also, avoid raising a voice with a child. Otherwise, you are training a child to only respond to you when you shout.

7. If a little child cries or complains after given an instruction, he is making a rebellious statement: "I don't like this, and I'm telling you, and everybody." That is rebellion, even if he outwardly does as he is told.

"If a child shows the least displeasure in response to a command or duty, it should be addressed as disobedience. If a child sticks out his lip, you should focus your training on

his bad attitude."³⁴ The goal is that a child learns to "*do all things without grumbling or complaining*" (Phil.2:14). A person's mouth tends to reveal what is in his heart. If he grumbles and complains at your instructions, he will grumble and complain at God's.

When Administering Corporal Punishment:

- a) Make sure it's private.
- b) Make sure you are calm.
- c) Make sure the child understands why he is being punished.

Children, when they know they are about to be punished, may put on a tantrum, or suddenly shed lots of tears (ostensibly of remorse), or scream, or say, "*It's not fair!*" or "*I hate you!*" These (and many others) are manipulative tools, which a naive parent can be tricked or intimidated by. Tears may seem to be ones of penitence; they are probably ones of regret that he has been caught, and to say that he is sorry.

Why is he "*sorry?*" Because he is getting a smack, and is hoping to come up with a good religious formula that might get him out of trouble.

He knows he's done wrong.

He knows you are planning to punish him.

He thinks, "I'll put on a theatrical scene, to try and bluff my way out of this."

Any rebellious behaviour initiated to avoid punishment, should receive a quiet warning: "If you don't obey, I'll give you an extra smack." "*A spanking is made effective, not by its severity, but by its certainty...your calm dignity will set the stage to make it more effective.*"³⁵

- d) Instruct the child to bend over and hold onto his ankles.
- e) Administer the punishment: as they get older, make it more strokes, or harder, or both. "*Select your instrument according to the child's size.*"³⁶
- f) Give him some time (perhaps 30 seconds), to stop crying. Don't let rebellion or anger come in to any part of this.
- g) Instruct him to hug you (this is a command, not an option), and say "*Thanks Dad, I needed that,*" and then to confess his sin to God, and ask for His forgiveness.
- h) Instruct him to ask you to forgive him. He has offended God, but he has also offended you.
- i) Hug him and pray for him, and tell him you love him.

Discipline is the forerunner of discipleship. Ultimately, he should be self-disciplined.

³⁴ Michael and Debi Pearl, "Train up a Child," 1996, p.83.

³⁵ *ibid.*, p.46.

³⁶ *ibid.*, p.47.

The Biblical Husband (XI)

The Encourager:

When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at home one year and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken (Deut.24:5 KJV).

Marriage has numerous subordinate purposes: the lawful extension of the race, mutual comfort, personal development of its members, the provision of cultural stability, social welfare functions (including education), sexual fulfillment, and capital accumulation. Nevertheless, the Genesis account gives us the central focus of marriage: the division of labour. Eve was provided as “an helpmeet” for Adam, meaning an assistant specially designed to complement his skills.³⁷

A wife has a God-given calling to assist her husband in his calling. For her to be classified today as “just a housewife,” is a reflection of how the Biblical doctrine of the family, and of individual callings within the family, have been neglected. If she is to fulfil her calling, especially in the face of social indifference or hostility, she will need her husband’s assistance and encouragement.

The first place for a husband to turn for encouragement for his wife, is to God’s Word. Scriptures such as Isa.35:3-4, 42:1-4; 62:5; 63:1; Eph.5:25-29 and I Pet.3:7 illustrate the role every husband can have, in encouraging his wife.

Firstly, she needs to be encouraged in her role of complementing. If she functioned independently of him she would not be doing God’s will, and would not be fulfilled. But with him, she is a vital part of the family’s leadership. The family “jig-saw” is incomplete without her.

Many women today think, “If I’m a helper, I’m inferior.” That is a mistake. In the Body of Christ no one is superior or inferior to anyone else. Each of us is given a place and function. What God requires of us is faithfulness in the particular place and function He has assigned us.

In John 14:16-17 Jesus speaks of the provision He will make for His disciples after He leaves them: “I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper...the Spirit of Truth.” So Jesus describes the Holy Spirit as Helper, but does that mean the Holy Spirit is inferior? On the contrary, He is God! In the same way, a wife who fulfils her God-given role as helper, is in no way inferior on that account.³⁸

Secondly, she needs to be encouraged that her husband trusts in her (Prov.31:11), that he depends on her, and that he knows that “*she does him good*” (Prov.31:12).

³⁷ Gary North, “The Dominion Covenant,” 1987, p.91.

³⁸ Derek Prince, “Husbands and Fathers,” 2000, p.35.

Thirdly, she needs to know that she is appreciated by him for the kind of quality person that she is, and for what she does. She needs to be reminded that “her gain is good” for her family (Prov.31:18), and that her husband thinks she is a particularly choice woman (Prov.31:29).

A wife will also be encouraged, if her husband will take the time and effort, to make her life and tasks easier. So, she will need (amongst other things), a good washing machine, vacuum cleaner, oven, suitable kitchen utensils, and other tools for her tasks. Her working areas, in particular the kitchen and laundry, need to be pleasing to her. She will appreciate having a car that she likes to drive, and whatever else makes her task of helping her husband to “rule and have dominion,” easy to complete.

She will also be encouraged if her husband and children, assist her in her tasks. This may mean assisting with shopping, unpacking groceries, doing dishes, cooking, vacuuming, cleaning windows, and other household and family tasks. Women, like men, don’t want to go through life, just doing “jobs, jobs, jobs.” It is important that a wife sees her husband relieving her from time to time, and the children being trained to do likewise.

Few people today, encourage wives in their God-given role: complementing their husband. A woman who knows she is loved and cherished, will respond to, and appreciate encouragement. It will make all the difference to her, and help her to fulfil her calling as a “husband-helper.”

As the leader and provider of the home, this is our task. Let me challenge you to rise to this challenge with joy, so that your wife shall be “like a fruitful vine within your house!” (Ps.128:3)

The Biblical Husband (XII)

Living in Self-Sacrifice

I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep (Jn.10:11).

One of the earliest incidents of God making covenant in scripture, is in Genesis 15.³⁹ The chapter is essentially a conversation between Abram and God, and God dominates the dialogue. God makes covenant with Abram, but His Words are interrupted by what must have been for Abram, an astonishing incident: “*there appeared a smoking oven and a flaming torch...*” which passed between the pieces of animal, which Abram had previously prepared at God’s command.

This was a *self-maledictory oath*: firstly God, in passing between the pieces of slain animal, ratifies or completes the covenant with Abram. Abram is essentially a by-stander. Secondly, God says in effect, “*whatever I call you to go through Abram, I will have done before you.*” Thirdly, the slain animals cut in half served as a warning to Abram, to ensure he kept covenant with God, otherwise he would finish up like them!

These aspects clearly illustrated in the Abrahamic covenant, are also involved in the Last Supper, and the crucifixion. At the Upper Room, Jesus verbally makes covenant with the disciples, assuring them of His faithful plans for them (Jn.13-16), and tells them that “*I have overcome the world*” (Jn.16:33). Finally, the covenant that God was making through Jesus Christ was ratified with a total personal involvement, as it was with Abram.

Basic to every covenant is an oath, a blood oath (Ex.24:6-8), whereby each party pledged themselves ready to die for the other, or to die if they violated the covenant law...Christ’s death can only be understood in terms of the covenant. God’s people had broken His covenant, and the penalty was death. Christ came, as very God, to manifest God’s faithfulness to His own. Christ, as very man, took upon Himself the covenant sentence of death for His remnant. The unbelieving covenant people perished, and the redeemed remnant became the nucleus of a continuing covenant of the people of God’s calling and choosing.⁴⁰

God, in the person of Jesus Christ our Mediator, completes His *self-maledictory oath*, with all of His disciples in eternity when He said, “*It is finished*” (Jn.19:30), and was executed between heaven and earth. He Who now is Lord of all, proved Himself to be firstly, the greatest Servant of all. “*Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end*” (Jn.13:1).

All believers are called to be “*imitators of God*” (Eph.5:1). In marriage we find ourselves in the supreme place of challenge. Marriage is always a test for husbands and wives, but as husbands, as God’s representatives, we have the first responsibility to be self-sacrificing, “*just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her*” (Eph.5:25).

³⁹ *The covenant is a personal-structural bond which joins the three Persons of God in a community of life, and in which man was created to participate. On the cross, Jesus Christ descended into hell as a substitute for His people, and as a result, His people are reunited into the covenant. We call this work of Christ’s redemption. Redemption is the doorway back to the garden of Eden, back to the covenant fellowship of God.* James Jordan , “The Law of the Covenant,” 1984, p.5.

⁴⁰Rousas Rushdoony, “Roots of Reconstruction,” 1991, p.48-49.

To be a Christian is to be a self-volunteering servant...we are called to act in such a way that we put others above ourselves. We are expressly forbidden from exalting ourselves for the sole purpose of furthering our own comfort or fame. Otto Piper nails the marriage relationship potential to create a servant heart in us when he describes marriage as "a reciprocal willingness of two persons to assume responsibility for each other."⁴¹

Many years ago a single man commented to me, that if he were married, he would refuse to do work in the kitchen, for that was "womens' work." Whatever we may think of that, Jesus Himself did not consider it beneath his dignity to do the work normally done by a slave (Jn.13:1-5).

For each couple, this will have different manifestations. In our case, I know that after preparing the evening meal, Sue is grateful if I will wash up the dishes, with our sons. This *relieves* her of work. Many other things too, such as tasks around the home, which make her job as a homemaker easier, it is important to do. Cutting the grass, cleaning out gutters, cleaning and looking after the car, and any heavy lifting work.

No doubt if she had to, she could do many of these tasks, but it is easier for her, if the load can at least be shared. But more than that, it is important that self-sacrifice on the husband's part is evident, and he should be the first to exhibit it. Why? Because our Lord has indicated that "if anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Mat.16:24). This is the true nature of discipleship. The fact that a job is menial, or tedious, or has no status (such as cleaning toilets) is a very reason why husbands should be prepared to do it.

The two words nourish and cherish [from Eph.5:28-29] suggest an attitude of intimate concern that includes attention to what might appear to be small details. A husband should be concerned about his wife's health, her appearance, the way she does her hair, the perfume she uses. Everything that concerns her should concern him. She should always have the confidence that to her husband she is the most important person in the world. Let me assure you, husbands: If you sow into your wife this way, you will reap an abundant harvest!⁴²

In order to love and cherish his wife, a husband needs to know what his wife would appreciate. Firstly, she needs to know that she is loved. It's good for a husband to say to his wife, "I love you," but actions do speak louder than words. Eph.1:7-8 and Jn.3:16 show us that one who loves, gives to the object of his love. Does your wife feel that you are giving to her?

My wife tells me for instance, that she would really like a meal cooked for her, on occasions. This is especially the case if she has had a busy day out. It *relieves* her of a task at the end of a long day. Jesus had an attitude of self-sacrifice (Phil.2:7; Ro.12:1), and He indicated that He would serve and wait upon those who would be ready for His return (Luke 12:37). If Jesus is willing to do this kind of work then so should godly husbands, firstly for their wives.

If a husband is at work, and calls his wife during the day, to tell her that he loves her, appreciates her, and is thinking of her, that is important to many women. Some women appreciate their husband purchasing a bottle of massage oil for them, and rubbing their back, shoulders and feet.

⁴¹ Gary Thomas, "Sacred Marriage," 2000, p.180.

⁴² Derek Prince, "Husbands and Fathers," 2000, p.91-2.

The important thing is that the husband finds out what things she likes, and applies himself to the opportunity of caring for, and giving to his wife. The issue is not so much *what* is done by the husband, but with what *attitude* he does it (Phil.2:5-7).

*To become a servant is to become radically strong spiritually. It means you are free from the petty demands and grievances that ruin so many lives and turn so many hearts into bitter cauldrons of disappointment, self-absorption and self-pity.*⁴³

There are many other opportunities: gifts of chocolate or flowers, special soap, bubble baths, going out for coffee, a special romantic dinner, or a well considered wedding anniversary; perhaps going away for a few days at a resort. Depending on the woman, these can be suitable.

There are also things *not* to do. If I have been doing something in the kitchen, bathroom or laundry, my wife likes me to leave it how I found it, with the articles in the place where she had left them. This is the place of her work. She will not appreciate it, if I just put things anywhere. My perception of order may not be the same as hers.

If she is out of the house and I need to hang out some washing, she wants them hung out *her* way. Does it really matter? Well, it matters to her. She wants the windows cleaned *her* way, because *my* way may have its shortcomings. Paul's command to "be subject to one another in the fear of God" (Eph.5:21) has its application in the home and family too for every husband, for his wife is a "fellow heir of the grace of life..." (I Pet.3:7).

If I'm out and will be late home, consideration for Sue dictates that I let her know, so she can plan the evening meal around the change in my expected arrival time.

It's important for us husbands to obey the command to "live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman" (I Pet.3:7), because as well as being loved and cherished, women want and need to be understood. And for many men, including me, that hasn't always been easy.

There's another aspect to this. The devil wanted Jesus to believe that He could have a throne and glory, *without a cross* (Mat.4:8-9). From a self-centred perspective, the cross is never appealing, but it is a fundamental of the kingdom of God. It is in marriage that couples are confronted with God's requirements of humility and sacrifice; in fact, true discipleship always has its roots in self-sacrifice (Mat.16:24-25), and for the Christian husband, it begins in his relationship with his wife.

In all these things, a husband can "*pull rank*" and say, "*I'm the husband: I'm in charge-just get used to doing this my way.*" Earlier in our marriage, I was tempted to do that; it seemed to be an easy solution when there is a difference of opinion. But actually, that's the way of a weakling; of an insecure person, who doesn't realise that his wife too has dignity, and much to contribute.

Pulling rank rejects the "one flesh" description of marriage in Genesis 2. It's the way of a husband that doesn't know the appropriate limits of his authority and ability, isn't prepared to treat his wife with consideration, and doesn't realise or care that much more can be accomplished, when he and his wife are actually in unity. Authoritarian leaders will never be loved by their followers.

⁴³ Thomas, p.191.

One male writer has said that

*If I really wanted to see God transform me from the inside out, I'd need to concentrate on changing myself rather than changing my spouse. In fact, you might even say, the more difficult my spouse proved to be, the more opportunity I'd have to grow. Just as physical exercise needs to be somewhat strenuous, so "relational exercise" may need to be a bit vigorous to truly stress-test the heart.*⁴⁴

Self-sacrifice goes against the grain of human behaviour. I know that from my own reluctance and reactions. But if we are to be faithful to the Lord in our families, it is essential as husbands that we grow in this aspect, so that we can, beginning with our wives, "through love serve one another" (Gal.5:13).

⁴⁴ Thomas, *ibid*, p.23.

The Biblical Husband (XIII)

*Adam was created a king. He was to subdue the earth and have dominion over it. His kingship, however, was not absolute; Adam was a subordinate ruler, a king (prince) under God. He was a king only because God created him as such and ordered him to rule. God's plan was for His image to rule the world under His law and oversight. As long as Adam was faithful to his commission, he was able to have dominion over the earth.*⁴⁵

Christians must understand what the new birth (Jn. 3:3) is all about. Yes, it means that we are able to go to heaven when we die, but to limit it to this, is to truncate and limit the gospel. To be regenerated through the power of the Holy Spirit, means that as the disciples of Christ, He has promised us that “you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (Jn.8:31-32). God Himself has embarked on a restorative purpose in us, which means that we now have the capacity to “rule and have dominion” (Gen.1:26-28). This was the very thing Adam and Eve were created for.

*Man was called to dominion; he was called to establish his reign over the world under God. By his fall, man introduced the reign of death into the world; sin in him reigns unto death, both in time and eternity if he remains in the fall. Christ, however, by His grace and the gift of righteousness enables man to reign in life, i.e., in this life or world, and “to reign through righteousness unto eternal life,” i.e., in the life to come. The fall means the reign of sin and death over man. Christ's redemption means man's reign in time and in eternity. Very plainly, salvation means reigning. The rebellious slave is established in kingship. We are “more than conquerors” (Ro.8:37) in Christ, because we are also kings.*⁴⁶

I have noted elsewhere that the patriarchs were all godly, capitalistic, entrepreneurial and wealthy. The Bible says that Job was “the greatest of all the men of the East” (Job 1:3), and Abraham was described by a local acquaintance as a “mighty prince” (Gen.23:6). Of Isaac, the Bible says that “the Lord blessed him, and he became rich, and continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy; for he had possessions of flocks and herds and a great household, so that the Philistines envied him” (Gen.26:13-14).

As Jacob and his household travelled towards Bethel, “there was a great terror upon the cities which were around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob” (Gen.35:5). Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Though I am Pharaoh, yet without your permission no one shall raise his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt” (Gen.41:44). Later, the Bible describes Boaz as “a man of great wealth” (Ruth 2:1).

These texts should indicate to us the logical outcome of the restorative and exalting power of God in the life of the believer. Am I suggesting that all believers will be rich? No. Jesus said that “you always have the poor with you...” (Jn.12:8). But Paul could write to the Corinthians, that “You are already filled, you have become rich, you have become kings without us, and indeed, I wish that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you” (I Cor.4:8).

⁴⁵ David Chilton, “Paradise Restored,” 1999, p.67.

⁴⁶ Rousas Rushdoony, “Salvation and Godly Rule,” 1983, p.487.

The Reformation of the sixteenth century rightly emphasised the priesthood of all believers, but did not emphasise the believer's kingly role. But the Bible teaches this. It says that Jesus Christ "hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father..." (Rev.1:6 KJV), and later states that He "hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev.5:10 KJV). Thus believers are to have authority and power in the world God has placed us in. Of course, this authority and power is to be used in a way that is pleasing to Him.

A godly man will wish to use what he has, wisely. Job claimed that he "dwelt as a king amongst the troops" (Job 29:25), but Job (chapters 29 and 31) illustrates Job's great care for the poor and needy in his local community. In this context, Sidney Myer, an entrepreneurial Christian, was one who realised he had the capacity to do good with the wealth God had given him, in early twentieth century Australia.

Among the array of gifts which Sidney Myer made over these years one, in particular, commanded particular public attention, and did much to consolidate the community's view of Myer as a compassionate man who understood and cared for ordinary people, and was willing to meet and help them on their own terms. On Christmas Day, 1930, with the full impact of the depression starting to be felt, Sidney Myer invited 10,000 destitute citizens to join him for Christmas dinner in Melbourne's Exhibition Building. At the event with free public transport provided, 11,500 attended. The meal commenced at ten o'clock in the morning, and with several relays, lasted until late in the afternoon. Sidney Myer received all the guests, and, with other staff from the store, waited on them. Each child received a box of toys.

However, in making this acknowledgment of the plight of so many citizens, Sidney Myer appears to have been sensitive to the pitfalls of offering short-term gestures, in a situation of continuing long term social distress. Indeed, he explained to those who attended his Christmas dinner that he was not offering charity, but that they were his honoured guests.⁴⁷

Myer understood something of the capacity of a godly man, to use social influence and power constructively. Rushdoony has noted that

Power is inescapable in any social order: it can either be concentrated in the state, or it can be allowed to flourish wherever ability makes it possible among the people. This decentralized wealth means also decentralised and independent power. Instead of a concentration of power in the state, there is instead a decentralization of power which moves in terms of varying and independent goals.... in a free economy, property is freed from the restrictions of the state because it is under the restrictions of the family and of a religiously oriented community...The security of a man in his property, and in his inheritance, means a stability in the social order which is productive of progress.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Source: Wikipedia

⁴⁸ Rousas Rushdoony, "The Politics of Guilt and Pity," 1995, p.237.

Conclusion:

The restoration of the Christian man from sin and the fall, is to have profound implications for the individual, his family, his church and the community he is a part of. He has been restored to purpose, dignity and meaning-to ruling and reigning with Christ, with the capacity to be a significant person in the community. May your future as a king in Christ's service, be significant with Him!

The Biblical Husband (XIV)

Conclusion

Our cultural crisis rests in the retreat of males from the responsibilities and duties of manhood. The crisis is past deferment. The time has come for men to ground themselves in the whole counsel of God, to be responsible, mature and venturesome. There can be no resolution of our world crisis without a resolution of the crisis in male responsibility.

Rousas Rushdoony, 1987.

We have seen that God has given husbands and fathers many responsibilities in His Word. Many men will ignore those responsibilities (a common trait), but have to face the consequences both in this life, and the next. To ignore God's Word is the essence of irresponsibility and sin, because only God can accurately inform us about our duties, and how to carry them out in a way that pleases Him: *He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Mic.6:8)*

This brief series has been a basic outline of the responsibilities of men, recorded in scripture. My prayer is that you will develop your life in obedience to Jesus Christ, that you will grasp the privilege and responsibility of marriage, of children, of membership in the Church and the community at large, which desperately needs the leadership and contributions of Christian men.

One of my favourite quotes (from Gary North), is that *Power flows to those that take responsibility*. This can be you, but it requires your obedience to God and His Word. On the Day of Judgment, there will be no one there, but you and our Lord.

In closing with a scripture, I hope you can make it yours, so that at the end of your earthly days when men are standing around a grave lowering your body into the ground, your life will have been an example before them, of this text:

Praise the Lord! How blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commandments. His descendents will be mighty on earth; the generation of the upright will be blessed. Wealth and riches are in his house, and his righteousness endures forever (Ps.112:1-3).

Andrew McColl, 2013