

God's Pattern



for Christian Manhood

Except the Lord build the house, they labor
in vain that build it. Psalm 127:1a

Preface

Men, we live in a time when the pattern for Christian manhood has been seriously obscured by the forces of the world and by neglect in the church. Consider what it would be like to try to build a house with no blueprint or one that had been damaged so much that many of the images and dimensions could not be read. Think about what the resulting structure might look like. Or suppose someone endeavored to build the house after having looked over the blueprints a couple of times, but refused to refer to it frequently as the house was constructed. How would the end result appear?

Most men today, even Christian men, are trying to live their lives without referring to the pattern that God has provided for living life and maintaining relationships. Some are doing this out of ignorance that the pattern exists. Some do so out of carelessness. And some live their life knowing that the pattern is there, but don't see the relationship between their neglect of God's pattern and the result that will come out of their neglect years down the road.

My goal during these lessons is to help us take a serious look at how God made us and how we as fallen but saved men can live effectively in a broken world. I encourage you to attend as many of the sessions as you can and to take seriously the questions and assignments given for further reflection throughout the week. You will only be impacted to the degree that you take these things seriously and work through them yourself in light of your own situation and stage of life.

I want to provide as much opportunity as possible for further discussion and dialogue about these topics and so I encourage you to keep in touch with me via email, Facebook, or the Faithful Men blog at faithfulmen.blogspot.com.

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God's Pattern for Christian Manhood

Session 1 – Introduction and Outline

(This edition contains answers and notes to the original in italics)

Introduction

There are two things that drive this series of lessons:

1. The Bible is clear that *faithful* men are supposed to *teach* younger men. (See 2 Timothy 2:2 and Titus 2:6)
2. God has clearly given us a pattern of manhood that is different from what even many Christians know or practice and we want to help you understand that pattern and more closely match your life to it.
3. Beware! Over and over you are going to have to ask yourself, “Do I really want to live my life God’s way or do I want to ignore Him and do my own thing?”

A Man's Role in God's Created Order (Genesis 1-3)

1. We are God's image bearers reflecting His glory.

God's Image Originally

Man is made in the *image* of God. (1:26)

This implies a *Relationship* and requires *Obedience*

We need to remember that God is the Creator and we are *creatures* made out of the *dust* of the ground. (Genesis 2:7)

God's Image in us After the Fall

Sin has affected every area of life.

Relationship and obedience now require effort.

We are born *Dead* in trespasses and sins and are in need of *Salvation*.

Pursuit of Godliness is an effort that requires personal *Discipline*.

Image of God – Read 1:26, 27 then 2:4-7. Think about it – made out of dust yet made in the image of God. Even I Cor 11:7 written to us after the fall tells us that men are the image (icon) and glory (doxa) of God.

A couple of important points bear keeping in mind as we move forward.

1. *I'm proceeding on the assumption that the Bible is true and that these are true stories. If I asked you if you believed they were true you would say yes, but it really needs to hit you that this is the truth about why things are the way we are and what we are to do about it.*

2. *We men tend to whine and moan wishing things were different. It's the way it is and we are to come up to the challenge of living like Godly men in a fallen world.*

3. *God gives us the explanation and tells us what he wants us to do – believe and do. We don't like to think of ourselves as disobedient, but we are. When God gives us something to do or believe, we often just ignore it hoping that this is not the same as disobedience. But it is disobedience. It's like looking God in the face and saying, "no". My goal is to help you face the reality of that choice.*

2. We have been given dominion.

Man's Dominion Originally

Man has been given the responsibility to have *Dominion* and is to *Subdue*. (1:26-28)

This means he is to have *Leadership and Authority*.

He is *Responsible* and must *Manage* what God has placed under him.

Work is an essential, God-given responsibility. *Even before the fall Gen 2:5, 15*

Man's Dominion After the Fall

Responsibility for subduing and managing is made more *Difficult*.

Work becomes toil because we shall eat with *Sorrow* and by the *Sweat* of our face. (Gen 3:17-19)

This will be so *All the Days* of our *Life* until we return to *Dust*. ***Sobering thought!***

Things wear out and don't last. This fact requires us to store up, plan and manage well.

Our desires don't match what God has provided and so we have to work and struggle to move from *selfishness* and *discontent* to *selflessness* and *contentment*.

In spite of this, our responsibility and authority continue. See Psalm 8

3. We are to be family men.

Family Mandate Before the Fall

Commanded to be *Fruitful* and *Multiply* (1:28)

This implies *Marriage* and *Family*

Everything God did was good except it was NOT good that man should be *alone*.

Not marrying is an exception that requires special gift and grace.

Family Mandate After the Fall

Relationships become more difficult because we have become *Sinned* and *Selfish*.

1. The man bore the responsibility for what happened at the fall. (Genesis 3:9; Romans 5:14; I Cor 15:22) *Read these verses*
2. Woman's portion of the curse is that her desire would be toward her husband. (See also Genesis 4:7)
3. Man was given headship over the wife. (Gen 3:16)
4. God accuses man of *listening to* the voice of his wife. (Gen 3:17)
5. They each *Blamed* someone else. (Gen 3:12, 13)
6. The curse and sin spread to our children.

In spite of this, God expects us to overcome these obstacles by the means He has prescribed and be faithful husbands, fathers and leaders in our homes. This takes focus, work and discipline to achieve.

Sin has made all human relationships more difficult. James 4:1,2 explains the selfishness that precedes fights and wars.

In spite of this, we as men are given responsibility to lead faithfully and lovingly in our homes. We are to love our neighbors and be kind to all. It's a tall order.

Some of the questions we hope to answer in this series:

Image of God

1. What does God want from me, a man made in His image but fallen?
2. What does it mean to have dominion?
3. What disciplines do I need to bring into my life so that I can best glorify God and display His image?
4. How can I be or prepare to be the kind of leader/example that God wants me to be?
5. What are the spiritual marks of a boy becoming a man?

Dominion

6. What is a vocation and how does it differ from a job?
7. What distractions do I have in my life and how can I reduce or eliminate them?
8. What should I do to properly prepare for my vocation?
9. How can I find out what God's will is for my vocation?

10. What are some biblical principles for handling money?

Marriage and Family

11. How can I deal with sexual temptation?
12. What does it mean to love ones wife like Christ loved the church?
13. What pitfalls should I be aware of in being a godly husband?
14. If I'm not married yet, how can I best prepare for my role as husband?
15. How do the husband's and wife's role differ and how can I fulfill mine and how can I make it possible for my wife to fulfill hers?
16. What does it mean to bring up a child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?
17. If I'm not married or don't have children, what can I do now to prepare to be a good and godly father?

What am I supposed to do with what I've learned today?

Seriously ask yourself the following questions.

Am I serious about doing whatever God's Word tells me to do, no matter how much it costs or how hard it is to do?

Do I really want to be the kind of man God wants me to be?

One thing you could do would be to turn these questions into prayers. "God help me want to be the kind of man you want me to be."

Meditate on the following Scriptures throughout the week.

2 Timothy 2:2

Titus 2:6

2 Corinthians 3:18 *Memorize this verse*

1 Peter 2:9

Do the following things before next Sunday.

Actually do the above two things.

God's Pattern for Christian Manhood

Session 2 – How should I reflect God's glory? (Part 1)

We were created in the image and likeness of God. (Genesis 1:26) We were made out of mere dirt in a form that would reflect God's likeness. Think about that! That is why He made us. The fall, of course, messed up that likeness. God's image is still there but there are many blotches on the image. It's our responsibility to pursue Godliness so that the world will see what He is like. (2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Peter 2:9)

God also wanted a relationship with us. There had been a loving relationship among the members of the trinity in eternity past and that relationship and fellowship was intended to extend to mankind. After the fall, when God came to walk and talk with Adam as He normally did, Adam hid himself. There is a separation between God and us because of our sin. (Isaiah 59:2)

Our challenge as men is that in the middle of a world marred by sin and with personalities wounded by sin, we are still to reflect God's glory and have a relationship with God and with other human beings.

What Does God Want from Me? (Deuteronomy 6)

Deuteronomy 6:5 You shall *love* the Lord your God with all your *heart*, with all your *soul* and with all your *strength*. (NKJV)

Jesus added “and with all your *mind* and your *neighbor as yourself*. (Matthew 22:37-39)

Deuteronomy 6:6 These words which I command you today shall be in your *heart*.

We learn several things from these passages of Scripture.

1. Loving God is a *Command*. That means it's not just an emotional warm feeling. It is something we are to do. It requires action. List some ways to actively demonstrate love for God.

2. Loving God involves your whole *Being*.
 - Heart is your emotional being.
 - Soul is your psychological being.
 - Strength is all your energy combined.
 - Mind is the thinking part of you.

In Matthew 22:37, Jesus repeated the word “All” three times when giving this commandment. How can we pursue a love of God in a way that involves ALL our being?

Look at Deut 5:10; John 14:15; John 14:21 and Luke 6:46. What do these verses say about evidence of our love for God?

Love is always associated with obedience. We can't love God if we're not willing to be obedient.

Since obedience is a big part of loving God, how can we pursue obedience with our whole being?

Make it the focus of our lives and stop making excuses as to why we don't want to do things God's way. Any other thoughts?

3. Loving your neighbor has as its standard the level of love you have for yourself.

Think about the ways that you show love to yourself. What sorts of things do you do for yourself and in your own interest? Can you think of one other person for whom you take similar care to love like you do yourself? If your answer is none, what does this say about your level of obedience?

Make sure I'm healthy, keep up my property and cars. Make sure I'm well fed. Make sure I have time to relax.

The problem is we don't do these things for those around us as much as we do them for ourselves. Even when we're willing to help others, it never is to the degree in which we help ourselves.

4. These commands eliminate judging and self righteousness because the standard is so high.
5. These commands are to be in our heart. This means they are central to our life. Proverbs 4:23 tells us that out of the heart flow the issues of life.
6. How often and in what activities of life are God's ways supposed to be the focus of our conversation? (Deuteronomy 6:7)
As we get up in the morning, as we go through our day and as we head toward bed at night, God, His ways and commands are to be part of our lives and thought process.

What else does God want from me? (Micah 6:8)

God wants us to do *justly*, love *mercy* and walk *humbly* with our God.

Take some time to think through each of these qualities and ask yourself, "How am I doing as a Christian man in showing these characteristics in my life at home, school or work."

What else does God want from me? (Hebrews 12:1-14)

1. Lay aside *every weight* and besetting *sins*. (vs 1)
2. Run with *patience* the race that is *set* before us. (vs 1)
3. Keep your eyes on *Jesus* (vs 2)
4. Endure *discipline* (vs 7)

5. Strengthen *hands* which hang down. (vs 12)
6. Make *straight* path for your feet. (vs 13)
7. Pursue *peace* with everyone (vs 14)
8. Pursue *holiness* without which no one will see the Lord (vs 14)

Notice that each of these statements is a command to do something, a step to take.

We don't have the space or time to comment on each one of these, but consider a couple of things. First, the steps are things you can do – and are expected to do. Second, the race in verse 1 is not the race of your choosing, but is the race that is set before you. Third, we are not to be limp and weak-kneed. We are to be men who stand up with strong hands and strong legs as we endure the discipline God has designed to make us more God-like. Finally we are to pursue holiness. Pursue is a strong word that men would understand. It is to chase after, to try to catch. Sometimes negatively it means to harass or persecute. It is the incessant push to obtain something the way men do in battle or an athletic event.

My hope and prayer as we continue this study is that you will see that your first responsibility as a Christian man is to develop a persistent, focused goal of loving God and neighbor with every part of your being. To do so you will lay aside the things that hinder and pursue the goal of being like Christ.

What am I supposed to do with what I've learned today?

Seriously ask yourself the following questions.

What steps can I take to increase my love for God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength?

How can I follow the challenge of Deuteronomy 6:8, 9 to keep God's commandments a focus in my life and home?

How well do I respond to the discipline God brings into my life?

How can I be more obedient in loving others the same way I love myself?

Meditate on the following Scriptures throughout the week.

Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14 *Notice how Solomon sums up the whole purpose.*

Hebrews 12:1-14

Do the following things before next Sunday.

Finish filling out and think about the parts of the lesson we didn't get to in class.

Go through the list of 8 actions from Hebrews 12 give yourself a school-type letter grade for each one.

Pick the one you got the lowest grade on and list some things you could do to improve.

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Session 3 – How should I reflect God's glory? (Part 2)

Intro:

We're laying a foundation –similar to the house on the front cover. We need a foundation.

God took dust, made people in His image.

We then rebelled against our maker and received His judgment and condemnation.

God determined to use His grace and power to save people from their sins and to call out a people for His name. Acts 15:14. In doing so He is preparing a bride for His son.

For all eternity we will be praising the one who would stoop to save a creature of dust and turn him into royalty, a son of God and co-heir with Christ.

Right now there is a man in heaven, in his glorified body sitting at the right hand of God.

We've looked at the fact that what God wants from us men is whole hearted love. The kind of love that's purposeful and faithful. He also wants us to love our fellow men the same way we love ourselves.

Because of the fall, loving God and our neighbor this way requires diligence and discipline. In addition, fulfilling the other roles given to us as Christian men requires putting away childish things, laying aside distractions and pursuing personal spiritual disciplines that will enable us to be all that we should be for God and our families.

What Does God Want from Me? (I Corinthians 13:11; Hebrews 12:1; 2 Timothy 2:15)

1. Paul says in I Corinthians 13:11 that when he became a man he put away *childish things*.

Dr. Albert Mohler, President of the Southern Baptist Seminary, has compiled a list of 15 marks that distinguish a boy from a man. This list is included at the very end of these notes as Appendix A.

www.AlbertMohler.com

See also www.therebolution.com and reference "Do Hard Things" by Brett and Alex Harris.

The myth of adolescence. Adolescence is a relatively recent phenomenon that basically coincides with the development of the consolidated high school concept. Basically, prior to the early 1900's boys were considered men and did men's work when they were strong enough. This occurred usually in the early teen years. Now we

have developed a period of adolescence that allows boys to escape the necessity of being men sometimes well into their twenties.

This extra time has allowed boys to become engaged with toys and other distractions that keep them occupied and delaying further their focus on being men. Some men never put away their childish things. (We'll talk more about distractions in another lesson.) The church should resist this system and should encourage their boys to take on more and more spiritually mature responsibility.

2. The writer to the Hebrews in 12:1 tells us that we should lay aside every weight that hinders us in our race.
3. The Scripture gives us several disciplines or habits that should be a part of our life that will help us in becoming more like Christ in our lives. Remember, we were made in the image of God and we are to reflect that image in our lives. Because of the fall this has been made much more difficult. All of you are familiar with these, but I think we need to be impressed again with the fact that this is what it takes. It's not all that complicated.

It's important to take these things seriously, not only for your own sake, but you younger guys will be leaders of your home sooner than you think.

God in His grace has given us everything we need for life and godliness. 2 Peter 1:3

How are we to recapture the image and glory of God that we are supposed to have? By gazing at Christ in the Word. 2 Cor 3:18

- a. Scripture Reading and Study
2 Timothy 2:15; John 5:39; Acts 17:11
- b. Memorization and Meditation
Psalm 1; Joshua 1:8
- c. Prayer
1 Timothy 2:8 Men pray
1 Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing
Luke 18:1 Pray and not faint
- d. Discipleship
Witnessing to the Gospel
Matthew 28:20; Mark 16:15
We are to *Preach* the Gospel and *Teach* others to observe what Christ has taught.
Faithful men are to *teach* others (2 Timothy 2:2)
We are specifically to teach our *children*.
(Deut 6:7; Joel 1:3; Psalm 145:4)
- e. Meet together for *teaching, worship, fellowship, and prayers*. (Acts 2:42)

This is to be done *more* as we see the day approaching (Hebrews 10:25)

What am I supposed to do with what I've learned today?

Seriously ask yourself the following questions.

What are some of the childish things (i.e. toys and interests) that I hang on to that maybe I need to put away?

What are some of the weights (we're not talking about sins here) that hinder our running the race? (See also 2 Timothy 2:4)

Meditate on the following Scriptures throughout the week.

Matthew 21:22; John 16:24; I John 5:14, 15

Do the following things before next Sunday.

List some things that young men could do in the life of the church that would move them toward a more mature role?

Set up a schedule for yourself to read and ponder one section of Dr. Mohler's marks of manhood each week. (See Appendix A)

Make a chain reference in your Bible with the following prayer passages:

Matt 18:19 Praying in agreement	John 15:7 Pray while abiding
Matt 7:7 Pray persistently	John 16:24 Pray in Jesus' Name
Matt 21:22 Pray believing	1 John 5:14, 15 Pray in God's will

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Sessions 4, 5 – Your Vocation and The Will of God

We need to remind ourselves of two or three things that we learned in the introductory lesson. The first is that work was given before the fall. God has always intended that we should have something to do. Genesis 2:5 and 2:15 speak of tilling, tending and keeping. After the fall, work was to become toil, and sweat would be the norm as we labor to get enough to eat and support ourselves. In addition, things began to decay and wear out. That means there is continual work, maintenance and planning to keep things in repair. The last thing to remember is that God says this will continue this way until we return to the dust we are made out of. What time frame does Psalm 104:23 assume for man's work day? What time frame does Exodus 20:9 give for a man's typical work week?

We learned in the intro that man is to have dominion and to subdue the earth. We are to lead, manage, manipulate our environment for God's glory. Psalm 8:3-9

1. God is opposed to laziness and sloth. What time frame does Psalm 104:23 assume for man's work day? What time frame does Exodus 20:9 give for a man's typical work week?

Proverbs 10:4 What happens to the slacker? *Becomes poor; diligence makes rich*
Proverbs 12:24-27 What position will the diligent man be in? *position of leadership*
Proverbs 18:9 Being slothful is equivalent to being what? *A destroyer*
Proverbs 20:4 What will happen to the lazy man? *Won't have enough to eat*
Proverbs 26:13-16 The lazy man is always making *Excuses*.
Ephesians 4:28 We are to work with our own hands.
I Thess 4:11 What does God want us to do with our hands? *Work quietly*

Look at 2 Thess 3:6-12

Paul challenged them to follow his example of conduct. (vs 7) *Should not be disorderly but follow his example*

What did Paul do (vs 8) to show he was not disorderly? *Worked hard*

He taught them that if someone doesn't work, he shouldn't *Eat*.

What were the disorderly people doing? (vs 11) *not working but being a busy-body*

What were these people exhorted to do? (vs 12) *work in quietness and eat own food*

What were the people commanded to do regarding those who were lazy (disorderly – vs 6)? *Separate from them*

2. It is clear from the book of Genesis that the work required for providing for the family is primarily the man's responsibility. When announcing the curse to the woman, He told her that her curse would involve child bearing and submission to her husband.

The man's curse on the other hand was specifically related to his work outside the house in his fields. See Genesis 3:16 and 17. See also I Timothy 5:8

I know that some of you are in a situation where it isn't possible right now for you to have the primary responsibility of supporting your family. Your wife must play a significant role in this in order to survive financially. I would urge you to try not to let this become a permanent situation but to continue looking and pursuing job opportunities that will allow you to be the supporter of your family.

3. God gifts people in different ways. See Genesis 4:19-22

Jabel's calling was *farming*

Jubal's gift was *music*

Tubal-Cane was good at *metal working*

God ordained work. Since we are created in God's image we have the ability to create and bring order to things by naming, making, analyzing, and studying them. What was Adam's first task in Genesis 2:19, 20?

This should not be minimized. Children begin to grasp their world by naming and describing things.

4. The word "vocation" means calling. *Read Exodus 35*

It is not just a job, it is God's calling in life. God calls some men into full time Christian ministry, but He does not call all men to that vocation. God honors work of all legitimate kinds and someone is no less called of God when he is a carpenter than when he is a pastor. The question is, "How do I find out what I should do with my life and what should I do to prepare?"¹

- a. Planning – Begin by planning for the future. Whatever stage in life you are in, planning is essential. It is seldom God's will for us to sit by and wait for something.

This requires you to be proactive and purposeful. Some people live their lives like the little ball in the pinball machine. They just react and get kicked and launched from one event to another with no plan or order. This is not the way God would have us live.

Proverbs 16:3 How are plans established? *Committing works to the Lord*

Proverbs 20:18 What is essential in planning? *Counsel*

Proverbs 21:5 What character quality leads to success and what leads to poverty? *Diligent planning as opposed to being hasty. But be careful of being a slacker.*

Proverbs 16:9 God directs steps when a man has *planned his way.*

¹ Taken loosely from Manly Dominion by Mark Chanski

God does not speak to us with a voice or emotional feelings. He speaks through His Word, through the working of His Spirit in our lives and through providence. We must plan according to the principles of Scripture and we must take hold of the opportunities that providence provides. (See Genesis 24:27, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Ecclesiastes 9:10) *See also Ruth 2:3 She happened on the field of Boaz. Happened? By chance? We know it wasn't by chance, but yet to her it was. She was out there seeking to do what was right and all the time God was leading her.*

- b. Discover your God-given gifts and develop them. This is something that requires initiative on your part. Are you a teen? You should be taking steps to plan out your future and seriously work through your giftedness.

Everyone is gifted differently. In Matthew 25:15-18 each man had been given a different amount, but what did God want of each one? *Faithfulness*

According to Romans 12:6 what are we supposed to do with our gifts? *Use them*

What does Proverbs 22:29 tell you about a man's work that will lead him to success? *Excels in his work*

As you plan, study, and become skilled, remember that you are preparing to do work that will support you and your family in the culture in which we live, not in some pretend world that is not real. So don't say, "I wish I lived in a different area." Or "I wish I had abilities like Joe."

Don't prepare for jobs that don't exist and don't hold on to child-like dreams of wealth or fame that aren't realistic. Plan to be in a vocation where you can support your wife and family so that she can fulfill her God-given mission in life to minister to the children and others.

- c. Seek wise counsel
Proverbs 11:14
Proverbs 12:15
Proverbs 15:22

Don't be afraid to ask for counsel and advice. In fact, seek it diligently. Don't be afraid of what you might hear. Then consider that advice and counsel seriously when making a decision. If someone offers you advice you didn't ask for, don't just dismiss it. Assume you have a blind spot and think seriously about what they said.

- d. Pray
James 1:5 If any lack wisdom let him ask of God.

e. Make a Decision

Make a rational, well-thought decision. This doesn't have to be the final decision for a life-long vocation. This can be a decision for the next step such as what classes to take this semester or what college to go to.

Indecision and procrastination are not values God approves. In the Bible, the only time people were to wait was when God told them explicitly to wait. Otherwise moving forward in faith and obedience was required. Once the decision is made, move forward with it and begin to plan the next step.

If you are in a career or other situation in life that you are wrestling with, remember that most situations have come about because of decisions you have made. (*Granted, there are plenty of things that happen in life that we had no choice in, but many things were our choosing.*) At some point in life you chose to take or not take certain classes. You chose to go on to college or not. You chose to apply for one job or another. My point is, rather than grumbling about your situation in life, follow the steps in this lesson and make careful decisions moving forward.

What am I supposed to do with what I've learned today?

Seriously ask yourself the following questions.

Teens and Young Unmarried men: Am I giving my best effort in all school subjects to prepare for whatever God might have for me?

What do I like to do?

What am I good at?

If I pursue the vocation I am currently thinking about, will I be able to support a wife and family?

Married Men: Am I in the vocation God has called me to?

Am I able to support my wife and family adequately so that my wife can fulfill her God-given responsibilities?

If the answer to the above questions is no, is it feasible to retrain and take on a new vocation at this point? If not, work on contentment and work hard where you are.

Meditate on the following Scriptures throughout the week.

Go back and reread and meditate on the passages from Proverbs listed in this lesson.

Do the following things before next Sunday.

1. Go back through this lesson and fill in all missing questions.
2. If you are young man still in school or college, make a list of your talents and interests. Make another list of potential careers that would use those gifts. Get advice from your dad and other older men as to how your interests might work into a vocation where God can be glorified.

3. Refer to steps 4a, b, c, and d and set a plan to work through each step if you are seeking to find God's leading in your vocational plans.
4. Read one of Dr. Mohler's marks of manhood.

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Session 6 Fiscal Responsibility

One of the things that happened because of the fall is work became toil and filled with obstacles. The ground brought forth weeds, things began to break down and needed repair and rebuilding. Because of the scarcity of stuff, money soon was invented to allow trade to take place. God has much to say to us as men regarding how we manage money and things.

Whole courses can be taught on this subject, so we are going to just touch on some biblical and practical topics that might help you down the road.

God has made us stewards of His resources. See Matthew 25

1. God expects diligence in our work rather than sloth.
Proverbs 6:9-11 Watch out for a pattern of slothfulness.
Proverbs 10:4, 5 Make sure your hands are diligent.
Proverbs 24:30-34 Keep your property in good repair.
2 Thessalonians 3:10 If someone doesn't work then he should not eat.
2. God expects us to save for the future.
Proverbs 6:8 Gather your food in the summere
Genesis 41:35, 36 What advice did Joseph give to Pharoah about the upcoming plagues?
Saving requires frugality.
Watch for sales.
Buy in quantity.
Plan your buying, don't buy anything on impulse.
Take care of your stuff!
3. Budgeting – Budgeting is a form of planning.
Here are 6 steps for an effective budget.
 1. Plan your giving first
 2. Keep a record of where your money is going.
 3. Determine percentage of income needed for fixed payments such as mortgage, insurance, etc.
 4. Figure out annual electricity, automobile and heating costs
 5. Determine reasonable food and clothing budgets.
 6. Set aside either in actuality or in a computer spreadsheet the amount to be allocated from each week's paycheck to each category.

Remember, as much as you would like it to be otherwise, you don't have more than you have and you shouldn't spend what you don't have.

4. God expects us to give to His work

I Corinthians 16:2 Our giving is supposed to be Regular and in Proportion to how God has Prospered us.

Deuteronomy 14:22 In the Old Testament the standard was 10 percent.

Malachi 3:8-10 Failure to give God His due was considered Robbery.

Matthew 23:23 In this passage Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for omitting weightier matters of the law, but at the same time agrees that they should have continued Tithe.

5. God expects us to Share

2 Corinthians 8:14 God wants our Abundance to supply someone else's Lack because at some other time the situation may be reversed.

Ephesians 4:28 What is the reason given here for why we should work?
So that we would share.

I Timothy 6:18 We need to be willing to Share.

Hebrews 13:16 We are not to forget to do Good and to Share.

Seriously ask yourself the following questions.

Teens and college students:

Am I diligent or lazy?

Do I keep my room clean?

Do I do the chores given to me with thoroughness and completeness?

Do I do my schoolwork completely and to the best of my ability.

Am I careful with money?

Do I see myself as a manager of God's money rather than having my own money?

Am I satisfied with non-namebrand clothing?

Do I take good care of my clothes, "toys", etc.

Do I buy new clothes even though the older ones still fit and are in good shape?

Do I budget and save my allowance or part time income?

Am I saving for the future?

Have I shown God that I can be trusted with what He gives me?

Adults with regular jobs and supporting families:

Do I know where all my money goes?

Do I have a budget in place?

Am I tithing regularly?

Am I saving for the future?

Am I careful in maintaining my possessions so they last?

Meditate on the following Scriptures throughout the week.

Malachi 3:8-10

Proverbs 24:30-34

Do the following things before next Sunday.

1. Begin keeping a record of every expenditure you make. Do this for a month. (If you know how to use a spreadsheet, do it that way.)
2. Make a commitment to give a regular percentage of your gross income to the Lord. If you can't make it 10%, start with a lesser percentage, but give it regularly and make a commitment to increase it by 1% each quarter.'
3. Make a commitment to develop a budget. Put some deadlines in place as to when you will complete each step listed above.
4. Read another of Dr. Mohler's marks of manhood.

God's Pattern for Christian Manhood

Session 6 Leadership

God has given men the responsibility for leadership both in the church and in the home. This is not something that is culturally determined, but is something that is ordained by God. Because our culture has done such a good job in brain washing us into believing certain things, it almost seems insensitive or old-fashioned to insist on male leadership. When it comes down to this issue as with many others we get to the point where we need to ask ourselves whether we really agree that the Bible is the Word of God and is authoritative in our lives.

Whatever your age, yes even teenage guys, you should be preparing yourself actively for leadership so that when you are a husband and father or an adult church member, you will be able to take the leadership that God wants you to have.

I. Man was given the headship and leadership responsibility.

Why is a woman not allowed to teach or have authority over a man?

Adam was _____ (I Tim 2:13)

Adam was not _____ (I Tim 2:14)

Consider this: Who did God come looking for after Adam and Eve sinned?

Man was given the headship in the home. (Eph 5:22, 23)

The fall of course has made this more difficult. Part of the curse was that Eve's desire was going to be toward her husband. That sounds like a good thing, but the same terminology is used in Gen 4:7. What was desiring Esau and what was he to do in response?

II. Here are some steps you should take to prepare yourself or improve your leadership capability..

1. Make it your goal to work on the topics we've already covered.

- a. Do you love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength?
- b. Do you love your neighbor as yourself?
- c. Are you developing your spiritual disciplines of Bible study and meditation, prayer and discipleship?
- d. Are you actively taking steps to discover and develop your God-given gifts for use in your vocation and church?
- e. Are you taking steps to prepare for or do the work that God has called you to do with all of your might as unto the Lord?
- f. Are you a good manager of the money God has allowed you to have?

2. Develop the following biblical characteristics in your life.

a. In Titus 2:6, what quality are older men told to teach younger men?

b. In Titus 2:2, older men (that's what you all should be aspiring to be) should be

and sound in _____, _____ and _____

c. In I Timothy 3:2-7 we have the qualifications for an Elder and in verses 8-12 we have the qualifications of Deacons. Now I realize that not every man is aspiring to be a Deacon or Elder, but if these are characteristics that God is looking for in these men, shouldn't we all want to be like this to the highest degree possible? So let's look at the 19 distinct qualities that we should be working on in our lives.

1. Blameless
2. Husband of one wife
3. Temperate
4. sober-minded
5. Of good behavior
6. Hospitable
7. Able to teach
8. Not given to wine
9. Not violent
10. Not greedy for money
11. Gentle
12. Not quarrelsome
13. Not covetous
14. Rules own house well with children in subjection
15. Have a good testimony outside the church
16. Reverent
17. Not double-tongued
18. Holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience
19. Blameless

d. Other characteristics you should work on.

1. Work with your own _____ (I Thess 4:11)
2. Be d _____ (Proverbs 13:4)
- 3.

3. Develop good communication skills

To be a good leader you have to know how to communicate well.

Be able to listen James 1:19; Prov 25:11, proverbs 10:19 multitude of words sin not lacking; Prov 19:27 watch words, calm spirit.; ecc 5:2, 3; 18:13 he who answers a matter before he hears it....

Speak clearly, look people in the eye.

Don't be thinking of what you are going to say while they are speaking.

Don't always be trying to one-up what someone else is saying.

Humble leadership. Very difficult.

I Peter 5:3; Matt 20:25,26;

Phil 2:4 Look on others point of view

Proverbs 18:13, 17 Hear both sides

Love does not seeks its own I Cor 13:

God's Pattern for Christian Manhood

Session 7 Personal Purity

No aspect of life is probably more difficult for men than that of sexual purity. The temptation to go where we shouldn't go, look at what we shouldn't look at and listen to what we shouldn't listen to in order to satisfy our interest and curiosity about sex is very strong. God has much to say in His Word about this topic.

God made us as sexual beings. Sex was His idea and when used within His plan and boundaries glorifies God and brings good to our lives. Within God's plan sex is not vulgar, dirty or sinful.

God has prescribed marriage between a man and a woman as the proper relationship for sexual intimacy.

Within this series of lessons we have been faced with the fact that we must look at what God says in His Word and then face the decision as to whether we are going to believe Him or not. In the area of sexuality, the culture makes it very difficult because we are bombarded with sexual messages everywhere we turn. These messages do not support God's point of view. Little by little we become more accustomed to the world's way and God's way seems more and more out of touch.

Therefore, I believe the best thing for us to do is to immerse ourselves in what the Bible teaches us about this subject.

In spite of all the sexual input, Christian men are amazingly silent on sexuality and temptation. It sends the signal to younger men that no one else is facing the same problem. Young men who are struggling or have questions feel like they are strange, unspiritual or perverted. As a teen, I never suspected that the deacons ever had a sexual thought.

Sexuality and Marriage are of God for our good and His glory.

The fact that sex is part of the display of God's glory is hardly ever considered.

1. God made man and woman for each other and pronounced the relationship good.

Male and female He created them – Genesis 1:27

He told them to be fruitful and multiply – Genesis 1:28

God saw everything He had made was *very good* Genesis 1:31

The thing that wasn't good would be for man to be *alone* Genesis 2:18

There was no solution to this problem other than the creation of woman which God then brought to Adam.

God commanded them to be fruitful and multiply.

2. It's God's plan that marriage and the marriage bed be honored and undefiled.

Hebrews 13:4

3. God devotes a whole book of the Bible to love and marriage – Song of Solomon.
God is not embarrassed or shy about this topic.
4. God does not leave us helpless in the face of His commands concerning sexuality. He has given marriage as the relationship which is meant to provide for sexuality and protect us from sexual temptation.

I Corinthians 7: 1 – 9

Verse 1 – It is not good for a man to *touch* a woman. The word means “to hold on to”. It is not good to have the kind of physical contact with a woman that is reserved for husband and wife.

This brings up the issue of defrauding. Defrauding is the act of making the other person think or feel that more is coming when there is no intention of going that far. See also I Thess 4:1-7

Verse 2 – Because of the reality of sexual immorality, each person is to have his/her **own** spouse.

Verse 3-6 Teaches us that even for a person who is married, Satan can tempt us because of our lack of self control and therefore a husband and wife should not deprive each other of physical intimacy.

5. A godly Christian marriage glorifies God in that it is a picture of Christ and His bride, the church. We’ll discuss this more in later lessons.

Sexual activity outside of God’s prescribed plan for marriage is sin.

The Bible uses several different terms for sexual sin and it may be helpful to see what these terms are in different translations so that as we study these passages, you will be able to see what is being spoken about.

KJV	NKJV	ESV	Definition	References
Fornication (the Greek word here is pornea. Recognize it?)	Sexual immorality	Sexual immorality	Sexual sin of a general kind not limited to a specific behavior.	Mark 7:20 ff 2 Cor 12:21 Gal 5:19 Eph 5:3 Col 3:5
Adultery	Adultery	Adultery	Having sex with someone other than your spouse	Mark 7:20 Galatians 5:19
Lasciviousness Wantonness	Lewdness	Sensuality	Unrestrained in moral attitudes and behaviors	Mark 7:20 Romans 13:13 2 Cor 12:21

				Gal 5:19 Eph 4:19 1 Peter 4:3
Concupiscence	Lust	Lust	Strong desire, longing, covetousness	Col 3:5 1 Peter 4:3
Uncleanness	Impurity	Impurity	Sexual impurity Unclean <i>Everyone knows what a dirty joke is.</i>	2 Cor 12:21 Gal 5:19 Eph 4:19 Eph 5:3 Col 3:5
Revelings	Orgies	Revelry	Drinking parties, carousing, Orgies	Romans 13:13 Gal 5:19 I Peter 4:3
Coarse jesting	Crude joking	Coarse jesting	Crude and vulgar joking	Eph 5:3

Pornography is probably the most addicting and soul-damaging of sexual sins. The Greek word used for sexual immorality was *pornea*. Add the ending *graphy* to it which means image or writing and you have sexual immorality in images or in writing. As we study the Scriptural teaching on sexual sins and God’s way to victory, keep in mind that we are including pornography in this discussion.

1. According to Jesus, what is the source of these sorts of sins? Mark 7:20

Jesus said that these sins come out of the heart of man. TV and Internet provide the temptation, but even before these were invented, temptation and sin were still there.

We need to recognize and take responsibility for the fact that our hearts are sinful and deceitful. That’s why we need a savior.

James tells us that we shouldn’t think our temptations come from God. He tells us that we are tempted when we are drawn away of our own lusts and enticed.

James 1:14 -15

Stop blaming other situations and factors. Take responsibility for your own sin.

According to Galatians 5:19 these sins are the works of the flesh. They come from our flesh, our own natural self.

The world and Satan use this natural tendency to draw them out and trap us.

Jeremiah 17:9 says that the heart is deceitful above all things, who can know it?

In 1 Corinthians 10:12 Paul explains how the people in the Old Testament fell through disbelief and then warns us to be careful because when we think we stand, we may fall.

With a deceitful heart as the source of these sins, it is foolishness to think we can trust ourselves. People of high standing and seeming great intelligence are falling prey to sexual temptation and sin and ruining their reputations and careers along with it. What makes us think we can put ourselves in situations where the temptations are great and accountability is limited? We need to have the attitude expressed in Philippians 3:3 which is that we “have no confidence in the flesh.” It’s good to have a certain amount of distrust in our ability to deal with such a strong enemy.

2. Sexual sin is sin against both our body and soul.

These sins are at war with us. Will we fight back or assume a complacent position? Even if we don’t fight back, they will still war against us and ultimately destroy us.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 He who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body! The seriousness of this is based on the fact that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Also Peter tells us to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against our soul. 1 Peter 2:11

The question comes down to whether we believe this or not and then whether we will respond accordingly.

Take a good hard look at Proverbs 6:25 – 7 Notice the damage the sexual immorality causes. **Make a list of the negative consequences.**

When we take a sneak peak at porn, we are taking death into our souls. Our problem is that we don’t really believe this or we don’t care. If either of those is true, we need to take a careful look at our salvation and examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith.

3. These sins are among the reasons why the wrath of God is coming upon mankind.

Ephesians 5:3-7 (See also Colossians 3:5-7) Notice the references to these sins in this passage.

Notice the condemnation in verse 5 of a person whose lifestyle is described by these sins. What does it say about such a person?

What some people don’t realize is that these sins themselves are the wrath of God on display. With your Bible open to Romans 1:18 ff, answer the following questions:

Vs 18 Is the wrath of God present or future in this verse?

Vs 24 What did God do in his wrath? He gave them up to what?

Vs 26 God gave them up still further as part of His wrath. This time into ...?

Vs 28 – 32 Then look at the list as God gives them up still further.

This is the wrath of God in action.

The battle is strong and must be waged on many fronts.

1. Must recognize that by God's grace, sin and the devil are defeated, even if it doesn't feel that way.

Hebrews 2:14 Colossians 2:14, 15

Satan is defeated. Sometimes we're more excited about the fact that our football team's opponent was defeated than that our mortal enemy has been defeated!

2. Need to have our bodies in subjection.

1 Cor 9:27 Paul says he disciplines his body and brings it into subjection. That means he controlled his body and not the other way around.

In Romans 6:12ff Paul says that we should not allow sin to reign in our mortal body that we should obey its lusts. He then goes on to say that we should not present our members to sin to be used as weapons against us.

God will not allow us to be attempted above what we are able. 1 Corinthians 10:6ff That means with God's Spirit in us, we are able to have victory. Sin shall not have dominion over you.

3. Remind yourself of the number 3 point in the previous section. These activities are why the wrath of God is coming. Do you want to be associated with the sins that are bringing God's judgment on the lost?

4. As a result of making a resolve to have our bodies under control, we need to control especially two aspects of our body.

Mind – because renewing the mind renews the heart. Proverbs 23:7 tells us that as a man thinks, so is he. So it's important to renew the mind and control what we think.

Romans 12:2 We are to be transformed by the renewing of the mind. This can only happen by spending time in the Word.

Philippians 4:8 Make a list of the sort of thing we are to think about. Then compare your thought life to this list.

The things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, good report, virtuous and praiseworthy.

1 Peter 4:1 says to arm ourselves with this mind. We are going to discuss this more a little later, but it's important to realize that this is a mind thing and our minds have to be armed for battle.

2 Corinthians 10:5 tells us to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. There's a project for you!

Ephesians 5:12 tells us that it is shameful to speak of those things which are done in secret. That tells me we should avoid reading and viewing information about people's personal lives, especially their affairs or other sordid areas of life. This should be the case whether the stories are real or fiction. These incidents give our minds material to think about that it's best to avoid.

Eyes –

What did Job say he had done? Job 31:1

Job made a covenant with his eyes that he would not look on a woman.

Then David, in Psalm 101:3, says that he made a pledge to set no wicked thing before his eyes. That is a good example for us to follow. For most of us, temptation is strongest through the eyes. Therefore we have to purpose to avoid situations where temptation would be a problem for us.

Our eyes are a problem. Sometimes we can't help what we see the first time, but the trouble comes in taking the second look.

You need to decide whether you are serious about this or not. You know the kind of things that you see or think about that stirs your lusts and you need to take an honest look at ways to limit those influences in your life.

Here are some possible areas:

TV and videos. Do you need to consider limiting your viewing time as well as content. *Many Christians I know won't watch things that are unsuitable for their children. Good advice.*

Being careful not to be in areas where immodesty is prevalent – beaches and water parks for example.

Magazines. Many men can't safely browse People magazine for example. Areas of stores where video covers, magazine covers or immodest clothing is displayed.

Internet – Make sure everyone can see what you're doing. Have access to your children's accounts and history.

Make sure you can access your children's facebook accounts and other activities they involve themselves in on the Internet. We all have a deceitful heart.

I think being careful especially in these two areas fulfills what Paul tells us in Romans 13:14 where he says not to make provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts. To make provision for something means to lay up food and supplies such as in the

case where provision is made for the winter months. Paul is telling us not to make things accessible that would feed our lusts. We are to starve them.

With this in mind, many men need to reduce the time they are alone with their thoughts. Some find they need to keep busy with strenuous tasks until the day is done. Many men find that taking faster and cooler showers helps them avoid temptation.

5. Flee! 2 Timothy 2:22 tells us to flee youthful lusts. Sometimes God calls on us to stand and resist, but in this case the command is to flee. Flee by putting into practice the things discussed in the previous section and flee to Christ and His Word. When a person flees, he is doing so usually out of fright. These are a class of sins that can take you down so flee! They are against your body and they make war on the soul.

Sometimes we wonder what the will of God is for our lives. 1 Thessalonians 4:3 tells that His will is that we abstain from sexual immorality. Stay away and don't get involved!

One way to flee is to get rid of the TV or Internet if necessary. Remember Jesus said to cut off our right hand if needed to keep us from going to hell. Matthew 5:30

6. Recognize and live by the truth of 2 Corinthians 5:17. We are new creations. The old has passed away and all things have become new.

Consider these passages. I'll just give them to you with a few comments and leave it to you to dig into them.

Romans 13:11-14 It's time to wake up; the day is at hand. Since the day is at hand, we are to get rid of the dark, the old life, and put on the armor of light. Then take note of the whole list of things which need to be abandoned. Finally put on the Lord Jesus Christ and don't make any provision for the flesh.

Notice the step of putting on Christ. This is a command. We need to make it a conscious action to ask god to help us put on Christ. We need to consciously put off the old and put on the new by faith.

1 Peter 4:1-4 In effect, since Christ suffered for us and we are in Him, we should have the same mind He had and put the past behind us. We "no longer should live the rest of our time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God." We have spent enough time in the old ways. It's time to move forward for Christ.

Someone who has died is free of the temptation of sin. Peter's argument here as well as Paul's in Romans is that since we died with Christ, we should consider ourselves dead to sin. Our death has arrived, we are on the other side of it being raised with Christ and therefore we should reject sin's attempts to have control.

Ephesians 4:17-24 We should no longer walk like the pagans. They have given themselves over to these sexual life-styles, but it is not that way for us as

Christians. We need to put off that kind of life and be renewed in the spirit of our minds. We are to put on the new man which is created in true righteousness and holiness.

2 Corinthians 6:9-11 Paul asks us if we realize that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of heaven. Then he gives us a list of the kind of life-styles that will not make it to heaven. Then comes the word that this is what you were. God's salvation changes us from what we were to something new.

Sometimes people focus on the fact of God's grace in the area of forgiveness and they sin frequently but claim God's forgiveness just as frequently. Their behavior is very little different than that of unsaved people. God tells us in Titus 2 that the grace of God teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live righteously and godly in this present world. If someone isn't being taught those things but just continues on in his old ways, there is a question as to whether he actually has the grace of God in his life or not. This is a very serious issue each one of us should face in our own lives. Jesus said that not everyone who called Him Lord was saved.

Probably the most important thing to do is to immerse yourself in Scripture considering the passages listed here and meditate on them thoroughly and regularly.

NOTE THE PARAGRAPH ON GRACE 2 Paragraphs back.

7. Focus on grace, not law. I don't have the time or space to draw this all out for you, but Scripture teaches us that law actually gives sin its power. See Romans 7:7-12 and read it very carefully. See also 1 Corinthians 15:56 as well as Colossians 2:21-23. In the latter passage it speaks of human commandments. The things we have been talking about are God's commandments. However, we sometimes create our own set of commandments thinking that these will protect us, but notice that they are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

Romans 2:4 tells us that it is the goodness of God that leads to repentance. Titus 2:12 tells us that it is God's grace that teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live righteously. So focus on those things

Habits are formed by repeatedly behaving in a certain way. You can create good, righteous habits by making moment by moment decisions to do the right thing. You may not be able to make a commitment to never look at pornography again, but you can make a decision not to look at this moment.

Enlist the help of another person who will help you be accountable. If you can't find that accountability in your spouse or dad, there are men here at church who would be willing to help. It takes courage to ask, but as we've learned it is virtually a life and death decision on several levels.

Seriously ask yourself the following questions.

1. Am I spending time in the Word to renew my mind?
2. Have I made a covenant with my eyes and mind not to look at and take in that which is sexually sinful?
3. Do I need someone to help me in this area?

Meditate on the following Scriptures throughout the week.

Ephesians 2:1-10

Meditate on Romans 6-8 over the next several weeks.

Do the following things before next Sunday.

1. Reread the notes and Scripture passages discussed in this lesson.
2. Take steps to guard your eyes and mind and flee when necessary.
3. Fathers – make a commitment to help your sons with this early in their lives.
4. Contact someone for help if needed.

God's Pattern for Christian Manhood

Session 8 Biblical Roles of Men and Women

A discussion of the biblical roles of men and women is somewhat controversial these days because of the pressure put on us by the philosophy of the world. Just as in any other attempt to follow God's ideal, the world system, the flesh and the devil all work against it.

1. God has given the man the headship in the home and leadership of the church.
Ephesians 5:23 tells us that Christ is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church.
 - a. The husband is the one primarily responsible for supplying the family needs – food, clothing, shelter, etc.
Notice the areas where God applied the curse after the fall:
What was the curse on Eve? Genesis 3:16 *Related to child bearing*
And on Adam? Genesis 3:17 *Related to work in the field outside the home*
 - b. This is a federal headship. That means that the man answers for the household.
Notice who God looked for after Adam and Eve fell. Genesis 3:9
God holds the man accountable for what happens in the home. He is the representative of the family and is the one who has to answer to God.
 - c. The husband is the spiritual leader or priest of the home.
Look at Job's example. Job 1:5 *Prayed for his children*
Abram Genesis 12:7; Gen 13:4, 18 *Erected altars to the Lord*
Noah Genesis 8:20 *Erected altars*
God's command in Ephesians 6:4 *Fathers, do not provoke...*
God's dealings with the family is always through the man.
 - d. There should be preparation for this role. This preparation should happen in childhood and then especially in the teen years so that when a man is grown he will be able to assume these responsibilities. This is why the main thing to be taught to young men according to Titus 2:6 is to be sober minded – that is self controlled and focused. This begins to wean him away from childish things.
 - e. The role of leadership in the church is given to men.
I Timothy 2:11, 12 *The woman was to learn in silence and is not to be in the role of teaching the men.*
I Corinthians 14:34, 35 *Women are to have a silent role and even if they have a question, they are to ask their husband at home. This keeps the roles right. If they were to go to some other man such as pastor or teacher, they would be coming out from under the leadership of their husband and would be showing disrespect for that leadership.*

f. Man's leadership role is to be carried out with a servant spirit. Consider the following examples of Christ. John 13:12-17; Luke 22:26, 27; Phil 2:5-8 *Jesus washed the disciples' feet. Christ said He came as one who serves, even though He is the Lord of all. We are to have the same mind that Jesus had when he humbled himself to come here and take the role of a servant, even going to death for us.*

2. The wife's role is home centered and supportive. (I'm giving considerable space to the wife's role because it is our responsibility as the spiritual leaders to help our wife and the other women of the church achieve the goal of ministry that God has graciously given to them for all of our good and God's glory.)

a. The woman was created as a helper, suitable for Adam. Genesis 2:20
See also I Corinthians 11:9 She is there to support and help him in his calling.
That presumes he knows what his calling is.

The man needs to have a vision for what his calling in life is. God has given him a wife to support that calling and to help him in it.

b. Titus 2:4-5 gives a list of roles and attitudes that young women are to be taught.
Among these is "keeper at home". The word literally means "homeworker". First Timothy 5:14 advises young women to marry, bear children and manage the house.

c. In I Timothy 5:10 there is a description of the characteristics that women should have if they would be worthy of being supported by the church in their widowhood. What are those things?

She is to be the wife of one man and to be well reported for her good works, charity, taking care of elderly, orphans, etc.

Your role as husband then is to make sure that your wife has the time and resources to carry on this kind of role. She should be supporting you in your calling. She should be caring for your children and the needs of the household. Following that she should be involved in hospitality and ministering to other women and children and those in need such as the poor, shut-ins, etc.

From this you can see that if the woman is to fulfill her responsibility, she needs time and energy. That is why it is primarily your responsibility to meet the basic needs of support, protection and maintenance of your home and property.

d. In comparison then to the world's standards, a Christian woman has different goals as to her demeanor, presentation and role. As a Christian husband, your responsibility (as we shall examine more closely next week) is to help her achieve these goals so that you can present to yourself a more glorious bride as time goes by.

Examine the following passages to see God's design for a Christian woman.

See I Timothy 2:9-11; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Peter 3:2-4 (Compare this to the description of the woman warned against in Proverbs 7:11);

Women are to be adorned modestly, not putting emphasis on outward apparel, hair styles, jewelry, etc. She should have a gentle and quiet spirit. It's her quiet life style that may even win her husband without her saying a word.

3. With these things in mind, how should you be preparing for marriage or how should you prepare your sons or daughters for marriage?
 - a. Teach them the roles and responsibilities they will have as a man or woman. For sons, go through some of the things we've already discussed in these lessons as to how to be a godly man, a man who is diligent and not lazy, a man who knows how to manage his possessions and money, and a man who knows the meaning and purpose of sex and has self control. For daughters, teach them the corresponding principles.
 - b. Teach your sons what characteristics to look for in a prospective wife. Teach your daughters that this is the kind of person they need to become. Teach your daughters what to look for in a godly husband. Work diligently to overcome the standards imposed on them by the world.

The mother of the king in Proverbs 31 is telling her son what kind of woman to look for in a wife.

4. When it's time for "dating" or "courtship", make sure there is strong fatherly influence in the process. Consider adopting the philosophy that the purpose of "dating" is to find a spouse. If they're not at an age or station in life where it's reasonable to get married, then probably they shouldn't be dating. (See Chapters 29-31 in Manly Dominion by Mark Chanski)

What am I supposed to do with what I've learned today?

Seriously ask yourself the following questions.

Am I fulfilling and preparing to fulfill my role as head of my home and leader in the church?

Am I actively training my sons and daughters for the role they will fulfill?

If not, do I have a plan to get there from here?

Meditate on the following Scriptures throughout the week.

Titus 2: 1-8

I Timothy 2 and 3

1 Peter 3:1-7

Do the following things before next Sunday.

Read or reread the list of 13 marks of a man by Albert Mohler

Pinpoint one area where your life is out of synch with God's standards for you in terms of your role. Make a plan to take a few first steps to rectify the situation.

Resources (Disclaimer: Neither I nor Faith Baptist church necessarily endorse everything taught by these people or organizations. "Search the Scriptures daily to see whether these things are true.")

Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

www.cbmw.org

Desiring God Ministries

http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/topicindex/49_Biblical_Manhood_and_Womanhood/

Google resources on Biblical Manhood by Voddie Baucham

Also look for Biblical Manhood sermons by Paul Washer

God's Pattern for Christian Manhood

Session 9 Loving Your Wife (Ephesians 5)

This is a very important lesson for those of you who are single as well as those who are married. Singles have the opportunity to think about God's purposes in advance and choose wisely according to God's expectations.

1. In what way should we love our wife? (Ephesians 5:25)

In the same way the Christ *loved* the *church*.

Other than what is described in this chapter, in what ways would you say that Christ loved the church? List some ideas here.

2. Ephesians 5 gives several characteristics that are an example of how a husband should love his wife.

He *gave* himself for her (vs 25)

For the purpose of *sanctifying* and *cleansing* her.

What did He intend to use to do this? *The Word*

What is the ultimate purpose? (vs 27)

That He might present her to himself a glorious bride without spot or wrinkle.

Verse 28 tells us that this is the way a husband is to love his wife.

The bottom line is that he is to love her as he loves himself because in actuality when he is loving her, he is loving himself because the two are one.

How does a man love himself? (vs 29) He *nourishes* and *cherishes himself*. And this is the way the Lord loves the church and this is the way we are to love our wife.

3. Let's take some time to think through the practical implications of what we've just learned.

a. How can we give our self to our wife? What does that mean?

Sacrifice – time, energy, comfort, our own interests.

b. What does it mean to sanctify someone? How can we do that to our wife?

Set apart – God does for Himself

We – our wives for God and for ourself. She is our own special possession not to be shared with another.

c. What does it mean to cleanse her with the Word?

Compare John 15:2, 3 Word is power of God for salvation; it is living and powerful.

It cleanses, heals, renews the mind, etc. The word is the tool of God in our hands to help our wife avoid fear, give comfort, assurance, relieve stress, etc. It is our job to use the word to help her become ever more beautiful.

d. What does this mean about our ability to use the Word if we are need to be able to use it in the life of our wife?

We need to be capable users of the word. We should be growing ourselves to that we become more proficient.

e. If I'm not there yet, what do I have to do to get there?

Seek help from others who have more experience. Pay attention in church and Sunday School. Study the Bible on your own, listen to Biblically sound CD's.

f. What kind of person should we be trying to help our wife become? (vs 27) And what does that mean?

Glorious and without spot or wrinkle.

g. And according to verse 27 Christ did this to present his church to himself and similarly we are to do what we do for our wives to present them to ourselves in the same way.

Love your wife as you do yourself with the same care and attention.

h. Bottom line? You are responsible for what kind of wife you have down the road.

4. There are two additional issues related to loving our wife in a biblical manner. In Colossians 3:19 we are told to love our wife and not to be bitter against them. Nowhere is the wife directly told not to be bitter against her husband. I take this to mean that men are more prone to bitterness than women.

There is a tendency for men to believe that women should think like they do. Men and women think differently about virtually everything. When a man doesn't understand his wife's thinking and behavior, he can become bitter. This passage is a warning to make sure we are alert to the root of bitterness that may grow. Hebrews 12:14, 15 tells us to seek peace with everyone and to be careful about a root of bitterness growing. This would be especially true in the marriage relationship.

5. The other issue is found in I Peter 3:7. We are told here to dwell with our wife in an understanding manner, giving honor as the weaker vessel.

There are a couple of important points here:

a. We are to live in an understanding manner. That takes initiative and effort. It also takes **listening!**

Need to learn to understand the characteristics of women generally and our wife in particular. We aren't right just because it is a man's way of thinking. They don't want to be viewed as merely an object of their husband's sexual passion.

b. The wife is to receive honor. That is why we open the doors for her, wait for her to go first, and serve her in any way we can.

c. The wife is the weaker vessel. This is not a slam against women. It is the truth of God. Many women seem to be confident, able to lead, and secure. God says we are to learn to understand them and appreciate the fact that they are the weaker vessel.

Many women, to provide for and protect their families take charge when they detect an indifference or carelessness on the part of their husband. This increases their care, burden and worry. They may seem strong but God says they are the weaker vessel and we are to honor them accordingly.

What am I supposed to do with what I've learned today?

Seriously ask yourself the following questions.

Am I ministering the Word to my wife in a cleansing way?

Am I preparing myself in the Word so that I can meet her spiritual needs?

Do I sense any bitterness growing in my spirit toward my wife?

Meditate on the following Scriptures throughout the week.

Ephesians 5

Do the following things before next Sunday.

Make plans to begin a regular Bible study with your wife. Get some input from her for topic suggestions if you'd like. Before next Sunday decide on the topic and begin studying a little in advance on your own. In your own mind set a time when you're going to begin doing this study with your wife.

God's Pattern for Christian Manhood

Session 10 Raising Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord

Ephesians 6:4 “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”

I want to look at the last part of this verse and ask three questions;

Why is this important to God?

What does it mean, what's involved, what does it look like?

What are the results?

First then, **Why is this important to God?**

Look up Genesis 18:16-19

In verse 19, God says He knew Abraham for a reason. What was that reason?

That they may keep the way of the Lord and do righteousness and justice.

In Malachi 2:15 divorce is the topic. He says he made the husband and wife one. Then he asks, “Why one?” What's the answer to that question?

God is seeking a Godly seed or offspring.

What does it mean to bring up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

Bring Up

Bring up means “to nourish”. Think about plants. In order to nourish a plant you need to know

1. Conditions for healthy growth.
2. Be familiar with that *particular* kind of plant.
3. Provide what's needed on a daily basis.

This responsibility with children is given by God to the Fathers. See Ephesians 6:4. Fathers then delegate to the mother. It is the father's responsibility to know each child, what they need and how they can best be nourished. He then prescribes the care that will be needed.

The Bible teaches us that the word is nourishment. There is the milk of the Word and the meat of the Word. A father needs to know what each child needs from the Word. *Hebrews 5:12ff and I Peter 2:2*

Know your children, what they are thinking and where they are in their development. This takes insightful questions and thoughtful listening regularly.

Nurture

Nurture means child training, chastisement and discipline.

See Luke 23:16. The same word for what Pilate did to Jesus – “chastise”.
See Hebrews 12:6 This is what God the Father does to us – “chastens”.
See 1 Corinthians 11:32 We are *chastened* by the Lord so we won’t be condemned with the world.

The idea of nurture involves the discipline we apply to the lives of our children.

Prov 13:24 He who spares the rod hates his son

Prov 22:15 The rod drives out foolishness

Prov 23:13 do not withhold correction

Admonition

Admonition means to “put in mind”. This is training by *teaching* whereas nurture is more training by *discipline*.

There is another word – **remonstrate**. Remonstrate means to protest or demonstrate opposition. This is **not** the same thing as admonish.

Look at example of Eli in I Samuel 2:23-25. Eli remonstrated his sons, but it didn’t work. Look at God’s assessment in I Samuel 3:13

God expected Eli to use effective means to curb his sons’ rebellion.

The Word of God was written for our admonition (I Corinthians 10:11) and so our admonition ought to rely heavily on Scripture.

Consider Deuteronomy 6:6

God’s Word should first of all be in our *hearts*. How does that take place?

Then we are to *Teach* it *Diligently* to our children.

Conversations involving the Word are to take place all the time. Reminders are to be everywhere. Encourage your wife in role to decorate your home in such a way that there are Scriptural reminders here and there that remind each one in the family of God’s grace and Lordship.

In the process of training our children, we need to listen to our children. See Proverbs 18:13. Not listening is one of the chief ways of provoking your children to wrath which today’s passage warns against.

Of the Lord

We are to nourish them in the sphere and context of God’s discipline and admonition. We are God’s agents. It is not self-serving as some would suggest to teach our children to obey us. We teach them to obey us not because we are selfish. We teach our children to obey us because God says that this is the first commandment with promise that it may go well with them. Children need to be taught and God has given us that responsibility.

Result

Look at Proverbs 3:1-6. Here you have an example of a father passing on Godly wisdom to his son. What is the expected result in verse 4?

Find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and men.

Scripture tells us of two other men who increased in favor with God and man? Who are they? I Samuel 2:26; Luke 2:40, 51, 52

Favor is the same word as grace. A child who is growing in favor with God means he is growing in God's grace. That should be one goal. The other part of the goal is a child who finds the right kind of favor with men.

Hebrews 12:11 Tells us the result of effective discipline in those who have been trained by it. What is that result?

We will be partakers of God's holiness

Yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

God's Pattern for Christian Manhood

Session 11 Reading and the Importance of Managing Distractions

All of us have heard of ADD, Attention Deficit Disorder. We can argue about whether it is a real condition or not, but there is no question that more and more people are unable to focus or pay attention for long periods of time.

Reading and meditation are two skills that require the ability to “attend” to the task at hand for extended time periods. These are skills and practices that God requires of us as Christians.

We as men, since God has called us to lead, must be sure we are able to attend to these things and then in our position of leadership in our homes we need to be prepared to set a tone that will help our children avoid the pitfalls of attention deficit.

- I. The Word and reading are central to the Christian faith.
 - A. God has chosen to act through *words*.
 1. God used his words to *create*. (Genesis 1:3ff)
And then He was able to see what He had made with words.
 2. Jesus spoke and the sea was calm (Mark 4:39)
 3. God the Son is called the *word* (John 1:1ff)
 - a. God has spoken in *son (that's the language He used – Son)* (Heb 1:1,2)
 - B. God has given us His Word written
 1. All Scripture is given by *inspiration* (2 Timothy 3:16)
 - a. The Greek word for “scripture” in this verse is “graphe” meaning *writing*
 - b. Holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21)
 - c. The Lord gave the word and great was the company of those that published it. (Psalm 68:11)
 2. Word of God is *living* and *powerful* (Hebrews 4:12)
 - C. Reading is commanded, encouraged and expected
 1. The king was to write himself a copy and read it every day. (Deut 17:19)
 2. Law was to be read every 7 years in the public meeting. (Deut 31:11-13)
 - a. *men, women, children, and strangers* were to be in attendance
 - b. That they may *Hear, Learn, and Do*
 3. Example of Ezra in Nehemiah 8
 - a. People *stood* as they listened (Neh 8:5,7)
 - b. Word was read *distinctly*.
 - c. They were given the *meaning* and made to *understand* the reading.
 - d. They read from *morning* until *midday* (8:3; for one-fourth of the day the next day Nehemiah 9:3)
 4. Jesus said, “Have you not *read*...” at least 6 times in Matthew
 - D. Meditation is an essential component of the Word
 1. Meditation is chewing over the Scriptures in our minds, focusing on it, thinking about what it means in context and to our selves. Looking at it from multiple angles

2. *Success* and *prosperity* (in the spiritual sense) are promised for consistent meditation. (Joshua 1:8)
 3. Life, fruitfulness and prosperity promised (Psalm 1:2)
 4. Meditation improves *understanding* (Ps 49:3)
 5. Example of David (Psalm 119:15, 23, 27, 48, 78, 97, 99, 148)
 6. Timothy was urged to meditate on these things and give himself completely to them. (I Timothy 4:15)
 7. We are to meditate on the things that are true, noble, etc. (Phil 4:8)
 8. God is writing a book of remembrance about those who meditate on His Name.
(Mal 3:16)
- E. What this means in our time
1. The word, reading and meditation are essential components of the Christian life.
 2. God lifts up the Word above all other forms of communication
 - a. 2 Peter 1:19-21 tells us that Scripture was a more sure word than the display on the mount of transfiguration
This is important because what Peter experienced on the mountain was fantastic. Many would have considered that an object lesson to exceed all dramatic proportions. However, we have a more sure word of prophecy – the Scripture! Don't get sidetracked by alternative means of communication or experiences you or others may have had.
 - b. God had magnified His word above His Name (Psalm 138:2)
 3. We should lift up the word and not diminish it in any way and we should make sure it is not diminished in the lives of our children.
 - a. Skill in reading must be taught and encouraged
 - b. Reading with natural understanding must be practiced.
 - c. Undistracted time must be allotted for this.
 - d. This applies to ourselves and not just to our children.
 - (i) They will imitate what they see in us.

II. What You Can (and Should) Do to Minimize Distractions

- A. The word “distraction” means pulled apart. It occurs when we try to divide our focus between two or more things.

We have probably more distractions in our day that people have ever had before.

Distraction is different than busy-ness. We are pulled in different directions by children while we are trying to watch the news, read the crawl on the bottom and check to see if anyone has emailed us or left a Facebook message on our cell phone.

- B. Take steps in your own life and for your family to minimize distractions and increase attention.

1. For young children, reduce the number of toys they have available and require them to focus on one toy for longer stretches of time.

If they have a lot of toys available, they will jump from one to another. This is not good for them as they cannot gain focus.

2. Do not buy them fad items or everything they want even if you can afford it.

Buying them every meaningless trinket leads them to think they deserve everything. Someday it will be computers, iphones and cars.

3. Reduce the amount of TV or other media inputs.

Do not use TV or videos as babysitters

68% of 8-18 yo have Tv in their room and watch 1.5 more hours/day than others

54% have DVD or VCR in their rooms

63% homes TV usually on during meal times

53% 7-12th graders have no rules regarding TV viewing

51% TVs on most of the time

66% toddlers and infants watch 2 hrs/day

Average older child 3-4 hours/day

4. Spend time reading as a family – silently but all in the same room.

5. Read regularly to young children or have your wife do so. Have older children read to younger children. Sometimes do this and require everyone else to listen in.

6. Read scripture out loud as a family. Not necessarily in unison, but one person reading and the rest following along. Go back and ask questions about what was read.

7. Make sure your children learn to read well.

8. Memorize Scripture together as a family and teach them the principle of meditating on it.

9. For young children be careful of programs that promote short attention spans.

10. Listen to good music in the evening rather than having the TV on.

11. Train yourself and the rest of your family not to read the paper, watch TV and check cell phone messages all at the same time.

12. Reduce cell phone access to young people.

a. If they need one so that you can communicate with them, have them turn it in when they get home.

b. Do not allow them to take it to bed with them.

47% say social life would end without cell phone

2nd to clothing, cell phone tells most about social status and popularity.

Average teen sends 80 text messages/day

Physicians/psychologists concerned about anxiety; distraction; falling grades; repetitive stress injury and sleep deprivation

*Sleep: Preteens need 10 hours; **teens 9 hours***

Average teen gets 7.4 hours. This is a significant health risk related to brain development and body hormonal chemistry.

13. If you allow your children to have Facebook or Myspace pages, make sure you are one of their friends and limit the amount of time they are allowed to access it.

God's Pattern for Christian Manhood

Session 11 Husband's Role of Priest

There is a sense in which the husband and father is to be the priest of the home. We realize that in this time in God's economy every believer is a priest. But the husband/father has several priestly functions.

Worship Leader

(Importance of priest understanding because human too. Example Christ Hebrews 4:15, 16)

Example of Job

Leading Your Children to Christ

God puts a high priority on reaching the children

Example of Jesus

God uses parents to reach and teach their children

Hannah – Samuel I Samuel 1:11; 22: 24

Mary and Joseph – Jesus Luke 2:27-42

Methods for reaching (preparing) the heart of your child.

Ultimately, God changes the heart. This is not something man can do.

A. Watch out for unbiblical methods that address behavior and not the heart.

1. Books and media from the world
2. Psychology from the world – be careful of worldly diagnoses
3. Erratic parental behavior – sudden fits of emotion
4. Behavior modification – rewarding “random” good behavior.

B. Biblical Methods—the central focus is to teach your children the principle of their sinfulness, its consequences, and the redemption offered through faith in Christ.

1. Establish a rich relationship with your child through meaningful and deliberate communication (I Thes 5:14)

2. Use God's Word and the principles in it . (Ephesians 6:1, II Timothy 3:16, Deut 6)

3. Make Christianity relevant to their whole life

4. Use discipline to teach them their sinfulness (Jer 17:9)

5. Use the “rod” in a Biblical manner (Prov 29:15; Prov 9:10; Prov 10:13; Prov 13:24; Hebrews 12:11)

a. Must be done wisely and carefully

b. Must be meted out consistently and lovingly

- restored
- c. Punishment needs to be swift and the relationship needs to be restored
 - d. Be careful of your motives
 - e. Watch for blatant disobedience as well as “heart’ disobedience
6. Train the conscience (Romans 2:14-16; Prov 4:23; Prov 7:25; Prov 23:7; Prov 16:9; Prov 22:15)
7. Offer many and varied opportunities for Biblical teaching and growth
Know the Gospel and use it in our own life and in the life of your home.

Praying for Your Children

Teaching Your Children

Whole Armor

Mealtime

Special need for father son relationship – don’t set expectations too high and show disappointment.

Provide good atmosphere – music, books, good preaching, Bible study helps, etc.

Importance of renewing the mind and avoiding the philosophies of the world. Romans 12:2; Col 2:8; I Tim 6:20, 21

Training & discipline

Catechism

Discipleship

Priorities – Time Management

I. Distinguish among urgent, important and unimportant activities.

Why is this important?

Psalm 103:15, 16

Ephesians 5:16

Not every activity in life is equally important. Some things present themselves as urgent while still being unimportant. We often get caught in those “urgent” things. By urgent, we mean things that present themselves for immediate action even though they might not be important. Phone calls, personal contacts, emails and text messages all have the capability of seeming to be urgent.

List several important things that you are currently not doing, that if you were to begin doing, would have a significant impact on your walk with God, your family and your life in general.

Usually the only place to free up time for these things is to stop doing things that are unimportant.

To find out what is truly important we need to turn to God’s Word. From Scripture we learn that God does all things for His glory. He created the universe and all things in it for his pleasure. Rev. 4:11

We need to see this one thing – God’s Glory – as the ultimate in importance. We were created for His glory and for his pleasure. Everything must be viewed in the light of this idea.

From Scripture, we can also see other things that God has established which He considers important in achieving His ultimate purpose.

Look up the following Scripture verses and list the things that seem to be of utmost importance to God.

1. _____ Hebrews 11:6

2. _____ Matthew 22:37

a. _____ John 14:15

- b. _____ Matthew 6:33
- 3. _____ Matthew 22:39
- 4. _____ Mark 16:15
- 5. _____ Matthew 28:19a
 - a. _____ Matthew 28:19b
 - b. _____ Matthew 28:20a

What is at the bottom of God's list? Luke 12:15

_____ and _____ are more important than _____

Why are these five things so important?

God's ultimate goal is to show to the angels, demons and the lost world the wonders of His majesty and grace. (Ephesians 2:7; 3:10) I Peter 2:29

In order to do this, He established a plan whereby sinful and fallen people could be redeemed from their fallen condition and be made new creatures and sons of God. As children of God, their priorities would be the same as God's priorities and His glories would be demonstrated to the world. They would exhibit characteristics exactly opposite of those which brought the wrath of God on us in the first place. As a result, others would be brought to faith in Christ and the process would be repeated and God's glory would be spread and demonstrated throughout the earth.
(see diagram on discipleship in appendix.)

II. **Keep your eye on the outcome**

Look at each of the following passages, and list the outcome that God is seeking.

Ephesians 4:11-16

Ephesians 2:7

Philippians 2:15

Matthew 5:16

Colossians 1:28-29

I Peter 2:9 - 15

II Corinthians 2:14-16

John 13:35 and John 17:20-23

II Timothy 3:14-17

We've seen that God's goal is to have a people of faith who love the Lord with every fiber of their being. They demonstrate their love for the Lord through obedience and seeking His kingdom as their first priority. They show the world that God sent Christ by demonstrating their love for their fellow Christians. They further show God's character by loving their neighbors in the same way they love themselves. They spread the good news of the Gospel of Christ to everyone and use their gifts to teach and train those who come to Christ. The result is more and more people radiating the image of God to the world.

III. Define Your Personal Mission

We have discussed the fact that since time is short and the days are evil, we need to be sure that in our personal life and in our church life, we are spending our time on the things that are actually important. It is easy to get involved in things that appear to be urgent but are not all that important.

We have also seen that God has given us three avenues for spurring on growth in Christians' lives. These are the family, church and personal disciplines.

In this section we will discuss ways to help us clarify and state our mission in terms that get at these important issues. Most of us have a mission we are using whether or not we realize it. Most of the time, the center of that mission is not where it should be. We are trying to fulfill a mission that is not equal to the mission for which God created us.

In order to help you to define and clarify the mission God has given you, we are going to work through three parallel tracks at the same time. The first is an exercise that will help you focus on the five priorities that we discovered from God's Word. We will do this using the Role Chart. While you are thinking through this, we will be studying two key issues that will remind us of the fact that our decisions do matter and that we need to focus on the things we can actually have an impact on.

We'll summarize these three tracks as:

1. Role Chart
2. Be Proactive
3. Focus Your Efforts

1. Role Chart

In the back of this book you will find a chart that consists of six columns and several rows. At the top of the first column is the word “Role” . At the top of each of the other columns there is one of the priority areas that we have discovered in our study.

Down the left side of the chart list the various roles that you have in life. Include such things as “Individual”, “Christian”, “Husband”, “Mother”, “Employee”, etc.

You should fill this in before you read any further.

The next thing you should do is to fill in as many of the boxes as you can with the ways that the particular priority relates to the particular role. The purpose is to focus your attention on how the priorities God has given relate to the various areas of your life.

Now a couple of examples are in order. Under the category of Love the Lord, we discussed the fact that we are to love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength. That implies obedience and seeking first the kingdom of God. How does loving God that way relate to my being a husband? First of all it means that in my role as husband I need to be obedient to God’s command about loving my wife, being sensitive to her as the weaker vessel and treating her as Christ does the church. I need to be sure that I let her know in words and by example that I love the Lord with my entire being.

I would take those ideas and summarize them in the box where the husband role intersects the Loving God column.

Take some time each day to think this through and begin filling it in over the next week or two.

2. Be Proactive

The first thing we need to do is to define the term “proactive” and distinguish our sense of the word from that which the world has. Being proactive is the opposite of being reactive. The idea is that you can make choices regarding your activities, behavior, attitudes and reactions. It is the realization that your decisions have consequences and you are prepared to accept those consequences. Most of us spend most of our time in the reaction mode rather than the proactive mode. We’ll discuss this more later.

The thinking of many modern Christians has taken on the feeling of discouraged resignation. “Let go and let God.” is a phrase that encourages this sense. I just sort of sit

and wait for God to do something. If He doesn't move me, I'm not going to move. What I decide to do isn't important and doesn't matter. When God decides to change me, I'll change.

This idea affects our planning as well. We tend to wait for some sign from heaven to show us what God's perfect will is. We are looking for the "handwriting on the wall" or some other sign.

What we want to discuss in this section is that our deeds and choices matter. Remember, we are not talking about the powers of the natural man to control his fate. We are talking about Christians, indwelt by the Spirit of God making decisions and moving forward for God.

First then, I would encourage you to listen to your self-talk (or even your actual talk for that matter). Look for language that says you are reacting rather than acting. Some common expressions are: "I just can't help it."; "He makes me so angry."; "I had to..."; "I didn't have the time to..."; "If only they would have...".

Such words are saying that you can do nothing about your actions or feelings. Other people control whether you are angry or not. Time controlled what you did in a day. You had no choice but to do such and such.

God puts a lot of weight and responsibility on us for our decisions and choices. Look up each of the following verses and think through the verse in the context of this discussion. I have put some key comments next to most of the verses to give you a start.

Philippians 4:8 We can control what we think about

Joshua 24:15 God holds us responsible for our choices

I Corinthians 10:13 Temptations are not overwhelming.

James 1:22 What we do

Philippians 2:12 We are responsible for the fruit of our salvation

John 4:14 We have an abundant supply of the Spirit of God

Genesis 24:27 He asked for an indication of God's will, but did he wait at home?

I Corinthians 9:26 Fighting

II Peter 1:5, 10 Give diligence

Compare Caleb (Deut 1:36) and Saul (I Sam 15:23)

What do these additional verses add to the discussion?

Deuteronomy 28:45-47; Jeremiah 39:18; Ezekiel 28:6; Luke 19:17

It is important to realize that forgiveness and even love are commands rather than feelings. Certainly there are emotions attached to these, but God expects action and rewards action. Our lives are not to be based on our feelings and we certainly are not to pretend that we can't act.

It is a sobering thought to remember that God rewards people (both saved and unsaved) for their deeds. Because we have emphasized (and rightly so) salvation by faith alone, we have also de-emphasized (and wrongly so) the importance of our deeds.

II Corinthians 5:10 says: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things **done** in the body, according to what he has **done** whether good or bad.”

Romans 2: 6ff “who will render to each one according to his **deeds**.: eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory.... But to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, ...but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good.

See also Hebrews 13:21; Titus 2:12-14; Philippians 2:13

Jesus said in Matthew 16:26-27 “And how do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul in the process? Is anything worth more than your soul? For I, the Son of Man, will come in the glory of my Father with his angels and will judge all people according to their deeds.”

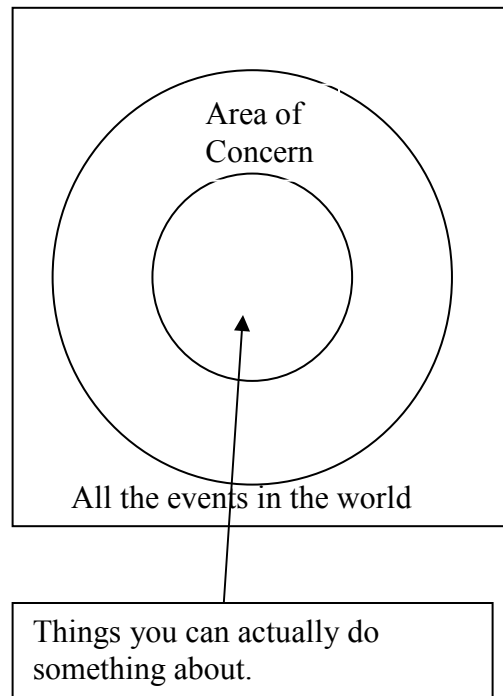
If God judges us and holds us accountable for our deeds and if He has told us that He has provided for the lack of goodness and power that we have in our natural selves by providing us with a new nature and the very presence of the Holy Spirit, then we need to begin acting on what we know is right. We must make decisions in the proactive sense rather than cowering back with a reactive mentality.

God’s will is worked out in our lives as we faithfully trust and obey Him.

3. Target Your Efforts

We usually focus most of our time and mental and emotional energy on things we can do nothing about. My dad used to quote a saying that went something like this: “Lord, give me the strength to change the things I can. Give me the grace to accept the things I cannot change. Give me the wisdom to know the difference.”

There are many things we can do nothing about. Take a look at this diagram:



In Philippians 3:13, Paul says, “This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,”

There is nothing that can be done about the past. Yes, the consequences of the past continue into the present, but past events cannot be undone. Paul says he is forgetting those things. He is actively forgetting them and focusing on what is ahead. We need to do the same.

In Matthew 6:25-34, Jesus basically tells us that there are things we can’t do anything about. We can’t control what tomorrow will bring, we can’t control how tall we are or how long we live. He promises to meet all of our actual needs and we are to trust Him with that. He concludes by telling us to seek His kingdom and His righteousness. These are things we can do on a daily basis. He tells us not to worry about tomorrow because each day has enough trouble of its own. In spite of these admonitions, we persist in focusing our time and attention on the past and on the future when neither one is under our control. (Check out Luke 12 also)

In Philippians 4:8, Paul tells us to think on things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, good, virtuous and praiseworthy. This is something we can do. We might not be able to control what other people do or say, but we can control what we think about. Then, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. These things are within our control.

Read through Hebrews 12 sometime this week. Notice the things we are asked to do:

Verse 1	Lay aside every weight and the sin that besets us Run the race with patience
Verse 2	Look to Jesus
Verse 5	Do not despise the Lord's chastening Do not be discouraged
Verse 12	Strengthen the hands and knees (In other words straighten up!)
Verse 13	Set a straight path (Look to the future and make right choices)
Verse 14	Pursue peace and holiness

We can make the right choices and our choices matter. We can make the decision to focus on making choices in the areas where we have control.

Here is the question. "Are you going to continue being reactive? Are you going to continue pretending that you don't have the power to do the right thing and to make choices that count?"

Your choice and decision on this question will reap consequences. God is going to judge each of us – not on what we say or what doctrines we agree to (although those are important too) but on what we **do**.

Go back now and revisit your role chart. Have you filled in as many of the boxes as you can?

We further learned that there are three primary venues where this takes place: personal disciplines, the family and the church.

Look at the results of your role chart. Begin to think about it now in terms of these three venues. You can either develop three separate charts, or use different colored pens or just in your thought process think in terms of the three venues. In other words, I need to look at my "Loving the Lord" in relationship to my being a husband from three dimensions. How do my own personal disciplines impact this? How does it relate to my family life? How does church life impact it?

Hopefully by now you have taken the time to fill in most of your role chart. You will probably discover that there are areas where you focus most of your attention. I'm calling these the **hot spots**. These will help you in a couple of ways. First, this will help you to focus on the areas that you naturally consider to be most important. These may give you an indication of the mission God has for you at this stage of your life.

Second, the hot spots indirectly show you areas where you may need to focus more of your energy. We already agreed that the column headings represent areas of importance to God. The hot spots show you areas that you already recognize as important. The non-

hot-spots are items that God considers important but perhaps you have not focused on as much as you should.

4. Spiritual Gifts

There is not enough time in this study to focus our attention on Spiritual Gifts. However, I strongly encourage you to take a look at the Spiritual Gifts listed in I Corinthians 12:4 ff. And Romans 12:3 ff. In these passages, God lays out the fact that He has gifted each Christian. You have one or more spiritual gifts which God has given to you for your use in the Body.

Prayerfully evaluate your life in light of these gifts. Ask God to show you which gift(s) He has given you. Think through comments people have made to you over the years. Do these comments give you any indication as to how God is using you? If so, this may help you in clarifying your mission.

Your Mission

Begin to write out your mission. Take into consideration all that has been said about what things are important, the focus areas of the role chart and your spiritual gifts. Mission statements by their very nature are rather general. You won't be able to cover every area of your life in detail. They should give the general sense of the reason God has placed you on this earth. It should be specific enough to be individualized to your situation and the time and place where you live.

Here are some sample mission statements. Some are better than others.

My mission is to glorify God by being an example of Godliness to my family, my church and my community.

My mission is to seek God's kingdom first in all areas of life – my home, my church and my work.

My mission is to glorify God by being an example of Godliness in every area of my life and by helping others to understand the principles of God's Word.

I. Set your goals accordingly

Now that you have taken the time to think through and pray about your mission, you should begin to set some goals.

1. Make them measurable

The question to ask yourself is, "How will I know when I accomplish the goal?"

If your goal is for example, “Become a more spiritual Christian.”, there is no way to measure it. I’m not suggesting that this is not a worthwhile goal to pursue. It is more a result of other goals that you could choose that would be measurable. For example you could set a goal to spend 15 minutes a day in prayer. Or you could have a goal to include the reading of one hymn in each day’s devotional time.

2. Make both long and short term goals

A long term goal might be to read the books on a certain book list over the next five years. Another example might be to have each of your neighbors in your home over the next couple of years.

Short term goals are goals that could be reached within a month to a year.

3. Subdivide them into bite-sized pieces

Once you’ve thought through your goals, subdivide them into smaller pieces. If your goal is to read certain books, decide which one you will start with and make it a goal to read a chapter this week.

4. Make sure your goals fit the criteria we have been studying in this class.

- a. Make sure the goal distinguishes between the important and the unimportant.
- b. Make sure it is designed to achieve the outcome of glorifying God by helping you become a mature Christ-like person or by assisting others in becoming mature Christ-like individuals.
- c. Make sure the goals reflect God’s priorities of faith, love for God, love for neighbor, spreading the Gospel and discipling others.
- d. Make sure the goals enhance your personal disciplines and provide for your ministry in the home and church.
- e. Make sure the goals recognize the fact that God holds you responsible to DO.
- f. Make sure they ignore things that you can’t do anything about and focus on the areas that you can do something about.

Remember that a person’s life does not consist of the things he possesses.

Remember that we are to be doers of the Word and not hearers only.

Each individual needs to set goals that relate to where they are in life and where they are in their relationship to the Lord. However, it might help you to get started if I recommend some areas to begin.

- Take a look at your personal spiritual disciplines. They consist of Praise/Worship; Bible (reading, study, memorization, meditation); Prayer; Personal Obedience, Personal Witnessing.

Make goals to strengthen the areas that are weak and make goals to begin those that are missing.

- Second, if you are a parent of children still at home, set goals related to that area of your life. If you gain everything and lose your own children you will not consider life to have been worth living when it is all over.

Have your children been born again? If not, what are your plans for sharing the gospel with them in a consistent manner? How much time do you spend praying for them and their salvation? Make a goal related to that.

What are your plans for teaching them God's Word? Are you acquainted with the resources that will help you do that? If not, make it a goal to talk to someone about resources and methods. If you are, make goals as to how you are going to proceed. Remember to look at long term goals and then short term goals.

What books will you encourage your children to read? If you don't know, who will you ask?

Do you provide an environment where good music is played and enjoyed? Children should be exposed to good classical music. The singing of hymns and listening to them should be a part of your home life. Children should be familiar with the great hymns of the faith. Make sure the texts are consistent with and faithfully teach the Word of God.

Is there an atmosphere that emphasizes missions and a sense of mission in your home? Are they familiar with great missionaries of the past? Do they know their stories? Is there a focus on current missions and the struggles to bring the gospel to people all over the world?

- If you are married (with or without children), take a good look at your marriage and set some goals with respect to that. Make sure you know the Biblical responsibilities and roles which God has given you as a husband or wife. Are you fulfilling those roles?

As the husband, are you developing your own spiritual life and then the spiritual life of your wife? What is your plan?

- Identify key people in your life. Who are the people that you have frequent contact with? Are they believers? If not, how are you going to get the gospel to them? If so, how are you going to help them grow in their faith.

You don't have the relationship with every person that will allow you to be their spiritual adviser. You have to earn that right by being a friend and involving yourself in active listening and caring for them as a friend. Set some goals related to these individuals and your contact with them. Use the "Reaching My World" sheet for

listing people God has put into your world. List those who are lost on the left side and those whom you could influence for growth on the right side. Look at the “Links in Discipleship” on page 27. List the people who have a direct responsibility to disciple you in the top section. List the people whom you disciple in the bottom section.

- Finally, when you listen to sermons and teaching from God’s Word, there should be adjustments to your life. You should consciously add or modify your goals according to the truth you receive.

There will be goals related to things we don’t often think of as Spiritual. Healthy eating, exercise and maintaining a clean and pleasant home and surroundings should be included. There are plenty of Proverbs that speak to the comparison between foolish and wise living in very practical ways.

II. Plan on purpose – make active, conscious decisions

Now comes the difficult part. If you have followed along throughout this study and have faithfully worked through all of the steps, you should have a mission statement written and several long term and short term goals written out. If you haven’t done these things, the rest of the process won’t be very successful. I strongly encourage you to go back and take the necessary time to work through the process.

Life has a way of grabbing us by the collar and moving us along. Unless we take the proactive step of stopping and thinking through what we are doing and where we are going, we will just be carried along.

Here then are some suggestions for planning on purpose.

Choose a set time each week to go over the next week’s schedule. You might choose Sunday afternoon or evening. You might choose Saturday morning or evening. Whatever time works best for you, set it aside and make it a priority.

Get out your planner or to-do list. Also get out your mission statement and goals. Spend some time in the Word and in prayer, asking God to guide you as you think through the events of the week. Pray over your mission statement and your goals, asking God to show you how best to fulfill His will in your life this week.

A large portion of the time may already be spoken for. If you are employed, you probably have specific times and hours that you are expected to work. A certain amount of time is used for meals and other basic daily activities. Set up a page that shows the hours for a typical week day. Mark off the time that you are away at work. Mark off the time scheduled for sleeping.

Read through your goals and plug as many of them into time slots as you can. If you don’t schedule by time, create a “to-do” list. Break down your goals into steps and include some of the steps in your list. As you go through the week there will be a

tendency to replace these planned activities with things that seem urgent but may be unimportant. Make a conscious decision not to let that happen.

The next week when you sit down to plan for the following week, take a few minutes and evaluate how the previous week has gone. Were you successful in following your plan? What kind of things came up that got you off track? Are there ways to avoid these problems in the future? Did you get involved in things that were urgent but unimportant? How are you going to keep this from happening again?

There are some activities that are necessary and important that need to be done even though you don't have a goal associated with them. I'm thinking of such things as mowing the lawn, washing windows and other similar chores. The book of Proverbs teaches us that laziness results in weed infested property and broken down fences. Proverbs 24:30-34.

The truth of the matter is that there is not enough time in the week to make progress on your goals, work at your job, do the normal and extra chores that come up, accomplish the normal routines of life, etc. It can't all be done. You will be required to make choices. When you choose to work on the spiritual needs of your children, there may be some windows that don't get washed. Usually however, it isn't chore responsibilities that use up the time. It is usually the TV or some other similar activity that is the time hog.

You may not be able to make steps toward every goal every week. Some weeks you won't be able to read that chapter in the book. But don't put that off every week otherwise the book will never get read.

Balance your goals week by week. Some weeks spend more time on one goal and another week spend time on another goal. Obviously some goals are so important that progress must be made every week.

Ask God to give you strength to put your plan into action. Recognize that you have chosen to accomplish these goals because it will bring glory to God and increase His Kingdom.

The more you begin to think this way, the more second nature it will become. There will be times when you sit down in your chair and you would normally grab a magazine to skim for no real reason other than it is there. Once you begin to think more in terms of your goals, you will realize that you could grab the book that you have in progress and read several pages of it rather than the magazine.

Some of you are thinking that this is an awful lot of work and seems like it takes the fun and spontaneity out of life. There needs to be time for relaxation and spontaneity in life. Most people though don't suffer from too little relaxation or spontaneity. Most people spend their time reacting to circumstances with no plan or purpose behind what they do. The purpose of these lessons has been to help us to realize that the days are evil and life

is short. We are to redeem the time for the glory of God. It is Him we live for, not ourselves.

I trust that these principles have been helpful to you and that you will find that you can serve the Lord better having put some of these ideas into practice.

Appendix

