

Maximizing
Your Manhood
for Christ

*The Dynamics for Being a Man
and Succeeding At IT!*

By - Dr. Edward Watke Jr.

Christ as Savior of the Church provided solutions to the needs and problems of its members, so is the man to be toward his family. Solutions to family needs and problems are to be initiated by the man.

May you be the man God wants you to be!

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Table of Contents

Becoming a Man of Tenderness and Strength, pg. 2
The Openhearted Man, pg. 9
The Husband's Part In Building a Blessed Marriage, pg. 15
Where Are You Going? Setting Goals. pg. 25
A Man of Worth, Value, and Mature Character, pg. 30

Becoming Men of “Tenderness and Strength”

Who is to blame for the family breakdown? There are so many causes, but I believe we men must accept most of the blame. Some men who claim to be the head of their homes simply have done a poor job, and other men have altogether disdained the responsibility that God has given them. The inevitable result is family disintegration. The very foundations of our society are crumbling today because our homes are deteriorating.

A British psychiatrist said he thought at one time the problem with American homes was that domineering women were trying to take over their husbands' role. Later he came to the conclusion that it was not simply a matter of women grasping for power, but their desire to take over before men ruined civilization. We may not agree with his opinion, but we must concede that something is tragically amiss in the American home.

I. GOD CALLS THE MAN TO RESPONSIBILITY:

A. Responsibility is ours!

- We find in the both the Old and New Testament that God gave man authority to rule his domain. (Gen. 2:15-19; Eph. 5:23; 6:1-4)
- Apparently many men are not aware that they remain responsible for their families whether or not they exercise authority in their homes.

B. Failure in carrying out our responsibility will bring sad results!

When men are not leading biblically, and in a God honoring way. They can expect many bad things to happen.

- Children become disobedient and disrespectful.
- Wives are anxious and frustrated, burdened with endless care.
- Finances are often tangled or chaotic.
- Daily schedules are hectic and family communication is a joke.
- When the ruling wife avoids these problems through sheer managerial skills she fosters other maladies for the future.

What will the domineering wife say when her husband no longer shows any interest in major family decisions that have been removed from his hands? Or shows little interest even in the wife who has demonstrated her self-sufficiency so thoroughly?

And what will the wife do when her children show confusion over their roles as male and female, husband and wife, father or mother? Will some of the children end up in sexual deviance because of the problems? Likely.

If mothers would understand that much of their importance lies in building up the father-image for the child, they would achieve the deep satisfaction of children who turn out well.

A veteran judge urged a simple principle for reducing juvenile delinquency: “Put father back at the head of the family.”

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

C. Men are accountable as leaders in the world.

- When a business fails, the head of the company is held responsible, not the man on the assembly line. Most of these are men.
- As heads in our homes, we husbands, and fathers are responsible for its condition, whether good, bad, or indifferent.

*Husbands were made by God to rule their homes,
so, how is the project doing, men?*

II. BE DETERMINED TO BECOME A MAN OF STRENGTH!

A. A man of strength is a committed man.

(Prov. 3:1-8; 4:1-4, 10-13; 6:20-23)

He is *committed* to three things:

1. to provide for his family.
2. to protect his family from anything destructive, to their *minds, bodies, and spirits*.
3. to lead his family in the direction of the will of God. (Psa. 37:23; Eph. 6:6)

B. The man of strength is a man of conviction!

(Eph. 6:10-14; Prov. 7:1-4)

1. He stands firm in what he believes to be right.
2. He studies the Bible and knows not only what he believes, but why he believes it.
3. He knows his faith well enough to teach it to his family. (Prov. 4:1-4)
4. He finds out what his **responsibility is** and then sets out to fulfill it, to act upon it.
5. He knows he must grow if he wants his family to do so. (Eph. 6:10-14) He is aware that his children **MUST get their convictions from him.**

C. A man of strength is a man of courage!

(Deut. 31:6-8; Josh. 1:7-9)

1. Many sons and daughters do not observe **decisive, forceful** fathers in the home -- forceful in love, leading in the fear of the Lord!
2. Children who ask their father's advice should receive an answer though it may be unwanted. (See Psa. 32:8.)

"To be popular is easy; to be right, when right is unpopular, is noble."

3. There are times when a father must say, "This is not what we are going to do."

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

4. The man who fears upsetting the *applecart* has already upset his family through his indecision.

Wrong decisions are sometimes better than making none at all ... or being unwilling to lead.

D. The man of strength is a man of character!

(Phil. 2:15; Rev. 17:14; II Pet. 2:9; Gal. 5:22-26)

1. He is a man of integrity, one who can be *trusted*.
2. He will do what he says, for he is a man of *moral character*.
3. He is a man of moral purity; keeping himself for *one woman*.
4. He is a man of honesty; a sterling character is one whose son will say, "*I hope I can be that kind of father.*"
5. His daughter will say, "*I hope I marry that kind of man.*"

Strength like steel implies trustworthiness and responsibility of the man of sterling character.

6. A man of character will also be ***masculine***, not effeminate.
 - God made the distinction between men and women very clear: (Gen. 1:27)
 - He didn't want men and women to look, act, and dress alike, with the intention of minimizing the differences.
 - If we are honest, we will admit we prefer feminine women. To be masculine means to speak like a man, **move** like a man, to think like a man, and to **act** like a man.

That is the way God made man to be!

E. A man of strength will be constructive!

(Rom. 12:3-10; 15:1-2)

1. He tries to build up others, especially the members of his family.
2. He spends time with his wife and children.
3. He is a builder wherever he goes -- home, church, society -- for he is a great constructor.
4. Too many fathers are destroying their homes -- with "bad" tempers, hurtful attitudes, critical (cutting) words, and harshness.

A hardheaded, hard nosed, self-willed father who is determined to do everything his way and who has no time for his children, is cold, like granite, not tempered steel.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

F. A man of strength will have confidence in God.

(II Tim. 1:12; Phil. 1:6; I Jh. 3:21-22; Heb. 10:35)

1. This does not mean cockiness, but a man of confidence that the Heavenly Father is His God and his **sovereign** LORD.
2. He trusts in the PROVIDENCE of His Father, as the ONE who is Protector, Guide, Provider, Counselor, etc. (Isa 9:6-7; Isa. 41:10)
3. This man is confident of God's presence and leadership in his life. He is self-confident only because Christ dwells in him and he in Christ Jesus, through whom he can do **anything** God wants him to do. (Eph. 6:10)
4. He is confident in his family's love.
5. A man of strength knows where he is going and that God will help him get there. He expects each member of his family to find God's will for their lives and he helps them seek after God's will. (Eph. 5:17; Col. 4:12; Eph. 6:6)

G. The man of strength will manifest a life under control.

(I Cor. 9:24-27; Rom. 6:13-14)

1. It's pivotal point is obedience to God! Under God's control, he brings his MIND in tune with God's thoughts. (Phil. 4:8; Rom. 8:5-7)
2. His EMOTIONS are under control, to feel what God would have him feel. (II Tim. 1:7; I Jh. 4:17-19)
3. His BODY is under control, yielded as a living sacrifice to God. (Rom. 12:1-2; 8:11-13)

We owe our families a healthy father and husband, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically. Only because of some debilitating disease would the man be unable to fulfill these things.

A man of *strength like steel* takes steps and avoids certain actions to keep himself in top condition.

He realizes that his family needs to depend upon him; he is not willing to cause his family suffering by his self-indulgence and willfulness.

III. DETERMINE TO BECOME A MAN OF TENDERNESS!

A man who is like steel has many strong qualities, but steel is not comfortable and caressable. While we desperately need the qualities of strong, stable steel, we also need to manifest the qualities of **velvet** or a man of tenderness. *A man who lacks these qualities is hardly fit to live with.*

In human relationships we need responsiveness and sensitivity; we must be a man of **velvet or a man of tenderness**. (Eph. 4:32)

A. To be a man of tenderness is to be caring!

(Phil. 2:1-4; 20-21; 28-30)

Care is not shown just by providing an income for the family.

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1. We might provide a spacious house; stylish clothes, sporty cars, but none of these say -- "I care about you."
2. Saying, "*I care!*" means giving yourself to them, because giving yourself says, "*I have **concern** for you.*"
3. Our families need to know that we truly care.
 - Care is a loving touch.
 - It is a whisper of something sweet.
 - It is a word of encouragement, a ministering spirit on our part. (Matt. 20:28)

Genuine care is expressed in a multitude of ways.

B. A man of tenderness is a considerate person.

1. He takes the time to find out the needs of others.
2. One of the surest ways to show that you are considerate is to take a few minutes each night to ask your son or daughter, "How are you doing? Tell me that what's been happening today." ... *Then listen!* Let your children **know** you consider their feelings!
 - Develop sensitivity.
 - Develop genuine concern.

You know that something is wrong when your wife is not saying anything. The same is true of your children. When your child comes home from school, knocking, shoving, and carrying on before going to his room - - - what has gone on? What is happening in that life? Does scolding make it better?

3. Remember your child has hurts!
4. Nothing stabilizes a child like knowing that his father cares what happens to him. *The man who is velvet in character takes time to listen with the **heart**.*

C. A third trait of a man of tenderness is that he is cooperation!

1. A man's quality of steel does not mean the man is to domineer; the velvet of cooperation balances the steel of authority.
 - No woman wants to snuggle up to a rock, and no child wants to play with a cold stone for very long.
 - A rock is abrasive, but velvet soothes and relaxes. A woman may admire the strength of steel, but she loves the feel of **velvet**, or tenderness.
3. A cooperative man is gentle and good-- natured.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

He bends over backwards to get along -- remember that a rock cannot bend -- it breaks. ***Many families have at their head heartless stone instead of a man of velvet and steel.*** Such a man knows that family life cannot be all grit and valor, and he knows when to yield and smile.

Every smart man allows himself to be manipulated for innocent purposes. If you are so hard that you refuse to bend, you are missing some of the finest joys of life. Every child likes to think he has gotten the best of father once in a while.

4. Every sweetheart, mother, son, or daughter needs to have his or her earnest desire fulfilled occasionally.
5. The cooperative man makes concessions, never against principle, but simply to please. He understands the difference between cooperation and compromise.

D. A man of tenderness is a communicator!

Most men can communicate better with other men on their jobs than with their wives. Perhaps this problem arises from the fact that men know the language of the realms of his business, but is not practiced in the language of relationships, so he remains quiet.

1. Communication is not just talking it is also concentrated listening. (Prov. 18:13; 15:28; James 1:19-20)
2. A man of velvet gets across, "I can be reached at all times, I care about what you think."
 - A family needs a father and husband whose ears are open.
 - He may not understand everything or take everything seriously, but at least he has a listening heart.

E. A man of tenderness also has the conduct of a gentleman. (I Pet. 3:7-10)

1. Many men do and say things that are very unbecoming to gentlemen.
2. Maybe your actions mirror the general lack of courtesy which mars our whole society.
3. He looks upon his wife as someone very special and he is very careful what he even allows her to do.

Our concept of womanhood and manhood and the differences between the two is becoming very distorted.

F. The man of tenderness will show compassion.

(Rom. 14:17; Eph. 4:32- 5:2)

1. He will be a person of patience and tenderness.
2. He will not be afraid to cry. Consider Jesus!

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

3. He will manifest a yielded heart and not allow himself to become hard of heart. (Heb. 3, 4)
 - a. *“Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years”* (Heb. 3:7-9).
 - They err in their heart. (vs. 10)
 - They have not known my ways.
 - b. *“But exhort one another daily, ... lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin”* (Heb. 3:13).

The Openhearted Man!

Have you heard about the loving husband who cleaned the house every Saturday morning while his wife slept in? For ten years he exerted his labor of love, and never mentioned his selfless service. Imagine the husband's consternation when his wife finally exploded: *"If you think I'm such a terrible housekeeper, why don't you clean the house every day?"*

This story is probably fictitious, but it's not far from some real-life situations. It illustrates the importance of good communication between husband and wife. Industry spends millions of dollars annually to help employees communicate more effectively, but little is being done to alleviate the problem in the home.

Most counselors have traced incompatibility in many areas of home life to lack of good communication.

I. REASONS WHY WE HAVE COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS!

- To talk and listen with understanding is the simplest definition of communication.
- Listening is not passive; it is concentrated outreach with ears and mind and heart to understand what another person is saying.

A. Because most communication is on a very shallow level.

1. It never reaches the depths that God intended for honest sharing with others.
2. We readily cloak our feelings with glib words, underlying meanings sometimes slip out through our glances, our gestures, and our posture. Feelings cannot be entirely suppressed.
3. We fail to share what we feel. Someone has said that communication between husband and wife is an exploration of the depths of each other's feelings, an experience and adventure in each other's emotions.

B. Because communication can be very confusing!

A cartoon read: *"I know you believe you understand what you think I said, but I'm not sure you realize that what you heard is not what I meant."*

That may sound like both parties are confused. When you talk to someone, you may convey several of these six things at once:

1. what you think you are saying,
2. what you meant to say,
3. what you actually said,
4. what the other person heard,
5. what the other person says about what you said,
6. what you think the other person said about what you said.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

C. Because we may give conflicting messages:

1. Others understand one thing from our eyes,
2. another message may have come through our gestures,
3. and yet another message came from our words.

When the message is not consistent in all forms, confusion or misunderstanding results.

When you say something to your wife, you think she heard it, but her mind was dealing with more than your actual words.

4. Sometimes we say things casually and expect the listener to understand exactly what we meant.
5. We take for granted that what we said, what we meant, and what we felt is understood.

D. Because of our own perspective and failures.

1. Often the reason for our misunderstanding is that we filter speech through our own feelings and perspectives, bringing about a misconception of what the other person truly said.
2. Sometimes we do not hear what is said because we are busy preparing our **rebuttal** to the incoming message.
3. Sometimes our problem is inability to put our feelings into words.
4. Acquiring verbal skill takes work.
A person may say, *"I know how I feel, but I don't know how to express it."*

After years of counseling, I am convinced that a prominent cause of broken marriages is the suppression of true feelings.

5. Estranged couples have never learned to express and accept the innermost feelings of their hearts.
6. For fear of hurting the partner or exposing a personal weakness, feelings are submerged until a crisis forces an explosion that shatters the relationship.
7. The sudden shock unnerves everyone, but the caused had existed all along.

II. REASONS WHY COMMUNICATION LACKS DEPTH!

We will look at five levels on which we communicate. I like to think of them as *circles rather than levels*. Most marriages never pass the third level of communication: they are willing to talk about *places, things, and ideas*, but shrink back from personal involvement.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

Little contact of spirit with spirit is ever made.

A. The outer circle of cliches:

1. We ask, *“How are you doing? Glad to see you. Looking fine. Hope you are feeling well. How’s your family?”*
2. Most of the time we are saying nothing, and do not even desire an answer.
3. At this level you neither learn anything nor feel anything.

B. The second level of communication is repetition of facts.

1. *“Did you hear that? The news today is pretty grim! Wow, the weather was sure bad today!”*
2. This level conveys publicly known information about events.
3. This takes up much of the talk in homes, maybe out of the 37 minutes a day of conversation, which surveys say is normal, most of it is this kind of trivia.

C. The third level evidences willingness to express your own judgment or ideas.

1. *“His statement was very critical.”*
2. *“I won’t vote for that.”*

D. Deeper yet (# 4) is the frank expression of your inner heart! (I Jh 1:7; James 5:16)

1. *“To be honest, honey, I feel a little hurt.”*
2. *“Dear, please share with me your deepest thoughts, desires, and longings. What do you wish we would change?”*

E. This innermost circle of communication (# 5) bares the heart with no ulterior motives!

4. It seeks complete peace with a conscience at peace.
5. It has nothing to hide, but both hearts are totally open for they both work at being totally transparent. No hidden agendas --- No hidden attitudes!

III. REASONS WHY WE HURT OTHERS!

The Bible says, *“If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man.”*
None of us is perfect, but it always helps to aim high. Consider James chapter three!

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

A. We don't understand the great power of words.

1. We are reminded throughout Scriptures of the tremendous power of our words. Job complained to his friends, "*How long will you vex my soul and break me in pieces with words?*" (Job 19:2) How many wives and husbands have felt that like?
2. How many of us have understand the depth of meaning in Proverbs 18:21? "*Death and life are in the power of the tongue.*"
3. All through Scripture we see that what we say builds or destroys people. This is especially true with two people living together intimately.

B. We don't understand that marriage is the thrill of sharing of two hearts and lives.

1. God's major purpose in marriage is companionship. (Mal. 2:11-16)
2. By giving Adam and Eve to one another, God was meeting the problem of loneliness. Yet most married people are lonely under their own roof! How sad!
3. For Adam and Eve to have real companionship they had to share their deep, true feelings toward each other.
4. A breakdown in communication disrupts the flow of life. Often the result in marriage is seen in clamming up, or blowing up.
Devastation and heartache is the result.

IV. HELPS AND HINDRANCES TO GOOD COMMUNICATION!

A. Things that hinder the sharing of our hearts and lives!

1. BUSYNESS threatens good communication. When the pace of life gets hectic, the finer things of life often get trampled. We must slow down, quit living for *things* and live to minister to others. (Consider Mark 4 and Luke 8... the soil of the heart.)
2. INDIFFERENCE is so often the culprit. Men can so easily be insensitive to the needs of their families because they don't really hear them. In many cases our families do not know how to communicate with us. We don't respond well, and they don't know how to get our attention, or to reach our hearts.
3. IRRITATION closes the door to good communication! *Emotional irritation puts fuzziness in the transmitter and static in the receiver.* Ask the Lord in prayer what you should say. Seek to answer as Christ would answer. Spend time in prayer before you answer. Study to answer! You'll save a lot of heartache. (Prov. 16:32; 25:28; 18:13; 15:28; James 1:19-20)

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

4. Preoccupation with the wrong PRIORITIES in life will bring us many problems. Most of us can only do one thing at a time -- be sure to give time to communicate with your wife. (I Pet. 3:7)
5. Seeking only "SAFE" subjects can be a LOSS! Do you subconsciously avoid conversational areas that have produced fireworks in the past? These things can only be cleared up as we determine to communicate and solve problems. (Consider the four rules for good communication.)
6. A strong streak of personal INDEPENDENCE is a hindrance for some couples. Selfishness seriously impairs the sharing that God intended for marriage. **Two remain two instead of becoming one.**
7. CHILDREN are often a hindrance to building good communication, unity of heart and oneness. Parents may be living for the child. The spouse must be first.

Children are not secure because you love them; they are secure because you love one another!

8. PRIDE is a chief hindrance, if not the foundation of all sin. It is **pride** that causes us to clam up, or to blow up. (James 4:6-10; I Pet. 5:5-6)

Because of maintaining our, so called, rights, we allow our hurt pride to control us!

9. HYPOCRISY is another hindrance. We may call it dignity, or sophistication, not letting our real feelings show.

It is possible you have avoided this modern masking of self, but most of us find ourselves at times pretending to be better than we are. This easily extends into family life, covering our real selves. Though our intention is good the effect is **alienation. To be free we need to be completely honest.**

B. Things that will build our intimacy, sharing and joys.

1. Speak CLEARLY! Along with this "say what you mean and mean what you say." This is partly a matter of enunciation and partly a matter of taking time to see that your message is heard.
 - Respect and consideration are shown by careful speech.
 - Show honor and appreciation, then the attention of the listener will be given.
2. Speak GENTLY until your message gets through. We men too readily **retreat** or we **sulk** when the conversational weather gets turbulent. (Eph. 4:32)
3. Strive to UNDERSTAND your wife more than you seek to be understood by her. This **outgoing effort** will generate big dividends as your wife responds to you with her heart of acceptance and love.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

4. SHARE times together! Take time to talk and to observe one another's interests. Sharing activities opens new insights and deeper appreciation. (Phil. 2:3-4)
5. Take time to unhurriedly PRAY together. **Nothing will bring you closer.** As you learn to pray together you will be drawn together. During prayer you will sense one another's heart of concern, humility, spiritual aspirations, and divine love will draw you closer to one another.
6. Develop MUTUAL interests! This may require a sacrifice of preferred pastimes, but the resulting companionship will strengthen the sense of oneness and awareness of how to meet each other's needs.
 - a. God gave a husband and wife to each other to make them more than they could be singly.
 - b. The completion of each cannot take place until they learn to share their mutual being and work for the good of the other.
 - c. The personal areas that are kept private have no opportunity for growth. **Why not try God's plan?**

Conclusions:

1. Marriage, love, and communication cannot be separated from God without destroying them or making them far less than God meant them to be. (Matt 6:33)

2. Maybe our problem is:

- a. deeply rooted bitterness,
- b. feigned love,
- c. a spirit of resentment and hostility toward life itself,
- d. a spirit of revenge, scorn, and a showing of the attitudes of contempt?

These all are poisons of the soul that God and your mate can help dispel -- if you seek help and are willing to change.

3. Men we need to be open to God's leading, His Word and His will.
 - a. We must be transparent before Him that He may lead in our lives. (I Jh 1:7)
 - b. We must open our hearts to the search-light of His Word and allow the Holy Spirit to prompt us, deal with us, and build our lives. (Psa. 19)
 - c. We need to see our inner selves as God sees us and then quickly and thoroughly confess our failings, shortcomings and sin. (Psa 32, 51)
4. We must allow our wives to come into the inner recesses of our hearts and lives and thus together build mutual intimacy, victory in the Lord, and wholeness.

***Let us not allow continued defeat, failure and waywardness
in our communication with our wives and families.***

The Husband's Part In Building A Blessed Marriage!

Tonight almost everyone in the world will go to a place he calls "home." The very basis of life is built upon the home. Rich, poor, black, white, cottage, or mansion--we all have a place to call home. There are many problems facing the home today. None are so great that the needs cannot be met. It depends largely upon leadership in the home.

Many problems face America, but none are so terrible as the breakdown of the American home, especially the Christian home. We should fear disloyalty, contention, strife, and disintegration at the level of the home more than we fear any political enemy. God will judge America because of moral deterioration.

The greatest force against the deterioration of America is strong homes. The person with the greatest responsibility for the success of the home is the husband.

God has given us His divine blue-print for marriage. His plan, will, and purpose cannot be improved upon!

What does God say to the husband?

I. HE IS TO BUILD A RELATIONSHIP OF LOVE.

A. Christ maintains a relationship of love to us!

1. The pattern of love in the home is the pattern of Christ and the church.
2. Christ used His relationship to the saved, His bride as an example of the love of a husband in the home.
3. How holy! What a responsibility! What a pattern to follow and imitate.

B. The husband is to love "even as" Christ loves!

1. Christ took the initiative in love. (I Jh. 4:19)
 - a. He *first loved us*, although we did not deserve it.
 - b. He first gave Himself a *living sacrifice* (John 10:11, 14-18).
 - c. The husband must take the responsibility of giving love first, rather than allowing anger, hardness, and indifference in his heart. (Col. 3:19)
2. Christ's love was a ministering love, a self-devoted love, as He laid down His very life for the church. (Eph. 5:25b)

C. Christ had a purpose in His love. (Eph. 5:25-27)

1. Christ purposes to edify, to cleanse, to prepare the church for Heaven. He initiates this ministry to our lives and we must respond to that ministry.
2. Similarly, the husband is an initiator and the wife is basically a responder.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

She can only respond to what the husband is -- just as a laborer can only respond to what his foreman is like.

3. The man's love must spring from what he CAN do for her, rather than what she is to him or can do for him.
4. He must treat his wife in such a way as to present "back to himself" a lovely wife based upon how he treats her. *Consider the following:*
 - b. The husband must be a source of grace and strength to his wife. (I Pet. 3:7)
 - c. He must be a serving leader, to bless, encourage, and edify.
4. His love is a giving love as Christ unendingly gives, gives, and gives again to meet our need, (caring, purifying, interceding, etc.).

D. Christ's love is an exclusive love, specifically for His own, the bride, the church.

1. So the husband should manifest a very special love, rejoicing in his wife with a precious love.
2. A love that is enduring and is unselfish.

E. Christ's love is a ministering love, (Eph. 5: 28,29)

1. The husband is to love his wife like his own body ; as he ministers to himself, he is to minister to her.
2. He is to nourish his wife as Christ nourishes the church. To **nourish** is to "support, direct, minister in every way possible."
3. He is to cherish his wife as Christ cherishes the church. To **cherish** is "to consider very valuable, to protect, to adore and to make her the queen of his home."

F. Christ's love is an unconditional love.

1. His love ought not be just affection or fondness for, but a love that is given freely to the unworthy.
2. His love is given to the unloving, the undeserving; a love that edifies. Illustration of unconditional love. (See study on training children.)

G. Christ's love is a divine love -- "a g a p e" love. (John 15:9; I Cor. 13:1-8)

1. This love is a spiritual, selfless, sanctifying love.
2. This love is an enduring, indestructive love.
3. This love is given as an act of the will, and flows from the giver having nothing to do with the worthiness of the recipient.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

4. This love is a love from the giver, freely given, or can be fully withheld. It has nothing to do with recipient, but is given out of obedience to commands.

H. The husband is to build a godly quality of love. (I Cor. 13:1-8)

1. This kind of love does not assert itself, is not puffed up.
2. A love that does not seek after its own selfish purposes.
3. A love that believeth all things, endureth all things, and hopeth all things.

II. HE IS TO GIVE LEADERSHIP THROUGH LOVE, Eph. 5:23; I Cor. 11:3

- The word *husband* means “*house-band*,” one who “*binds*” his home together.
- He is responsible to bind the home together, to support, to cherish and build it.
- He is to bind the marriage together with his ministry spiritually, mentally, materially, and physically -- meeting the needs of his wife and family.

A. The POSITION of leadership (Eph. 5:23; I Cor. 11:3, I Pet. 3:1,6,7)

1. The husband is “*head of the wife, even as Christ is head of the church.*”
2. This is by divine appointment, by divine decree.
3. A woman ought to be glad about this for it relieves her of much primary duty.
4. A husband’s ought not be proud about this, but ought to have humility and meekness rather than boldness or harshness.
5. Such leadership is not of superiority or advantage, but of great **responsibility**.

B. The ACTIVITY of headship

1. Directional duties (Psa. 32:8; I Cor. 11:3)

What was Christ’s relationship to the Father?

Chain of command:

God, the Father
Christ, the Son
the husband
the wife

- He came to “**do** the Father’s will.” (Jh 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29)
- He came to “**speak** the Father’s words.” (Jh 8:28; 7:16-17; 17:8)
- He came to “**glorify** the Father.” (Jh 17:4)
- He came to “**manifest** the Father.” (Jh 14:8-9; 17:26)

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

- a. The husband is there to apply all the above.
- b. The husband ought to meditate on what this means in his leadership.
2. PROVISIONAL duties (I Pet. 3:7-12; I Pet. 3:5-6; I Tim. 5:8)

“He that does not provide for his own is worse than an infidel.”

Just as Christ gives every provision necessary for His own -- for the bride, the church -- so should the husband provide for his own. (See Rom. 8:32.)

3. SPIRITUAL duties
 - a. Be the prayer warrior of the family. (Eph. 6:18; Luke 11; Acts 12:5)
 - b. Teach his family to pray, how to pray and the blessing of prayer.
 - c. To pray Biblical prayers. (Phil. 1:9-11; Col. 1:9-11; Eph. 1:16-21)

The best praying we will ever do is to pray back to the Lord His promises, and requests, and the examples of Paul and others and the things for which they prayed. ***We should make the requests as given in the above portions the fuel for our prayer life for our family.***

- As the chief intercessor, and leader in devotional life
- To bring about spiritual growth

C. The fulfillment of leadership!

1. The husband ought to be:
 - Provider • Protector • Priest • Prophet
 - Pal and • Partner
2. The husband must have:
 1. A SERVANT'S heart! (Matt. 20:28; Col. 3:23)
 2. A HUMBLE heart! (James 4:6-10; Psa. 51:17; 34:18)

*To be all that God wants a man to be is a tremendous challenge, but it is also a glorious privilege to become a **godly lover** and **servant leader**!*

D. In ourselves we cannot perform these many commands given to the husband! It will depend upon the following!

1. Total dependence upon God's promises. (II Pet. 1:3-11; I Thess. 5:24)
2. It will depend upon *progressive sanctification* on our part. (Eph. 4:17-32)
3. It will depend upon our “*putting on -- and putting off*” those things that we must deal with daily. (Col. 3:8-14)

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

4. As a foundation it depends upon a surrendered will, a controlled heart, and a mind filled with truth! (Rom. 14:9; 6:13; 12:1-2; Prov. 4:10-13, 23; Phil. 4:8; Matt. 12:35)

Consider more:

The home is more than a house where people eat, sleep, and talk. The Christian home is a little society -- an organization, a business, and a part of the spiritual body of Christ.

1. It is far more complex than most people realize.
2. The average man marries to enjoy himself, not realizing that he has taken on an awesome responsibility to lead his wife and his household.
3. He has become the guide of a small organization, a social organism, which our Lord Jesus calls a family.

Today we see much frustration and confusion in our homes. One reason is that the man, who should be head of the home, has never recognized his responsibility as leader. I hear married men say, *"I'm just not a leader."* -- *as if that took care of it all!* Husband, if you are not a leader you are not fulfilling your destiny because God requires leadership from a husband.

4. Today's families are foundering in frustration, confusion, and emptiness.
5. Such families have vague goals and little sense of direction.
6. This could well be the reason their rebellious children cannot wait to leave home.
7. These children are unhappy because they see no real purpose or meaning in their homes.

The father is primarily responsible for this situation, not the mother, or the children.

III. HE IS THE HEAD OF A TEAM: (I Cor.11:3; Eph. 5:23)

Try to name one project requiring careful decisions by a team of people that has been successful without a designated or recognized leader. All the way from playground competition to political campaigns, wrangling smother's action and individuality destroys unity unless one leader is recognized. Why do we expect the complex enterprise of marriage to be any different?

Can you imagine a football game where everyone was determined to be a quarterback on a given evening? Or a cafe where all who worked there arrived determined to do the cooking, or all served or all were insistent upon running the cash register? It would never work. No, all must fulfill their given roles for things to work smoothly.

A. What headship does not mean:

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

1. We are not talking about equality or inequality, superiority or superiority in the family.
2. We are not talking about a man being more capable or more intelligent in a practical way than the wife is.
3. And it is not a matter of one being more superior and therefore has “*special rights.*”

B. Some aspects of what it does mean:

1. The family has a God-ordained structure to achieve as its goal.
 - a. This structure allocates authority, just as in a business venture.
 - b. Spouses are to relate like a president and vice-president of a company.
2. In considering Ephesians 5:23-24 and I Peter 3:1-6 it is inconsistent for the wife to claim independence and authority over her husband.

If we say that the Bible is wrong in placing the man in authority over the women, then we must say Christ is not the appointed leader of the Church, nor is God the Father necessarily the leader of the triune Godhead in its functioning. Consider I Corinthians 11:3.

- a. Despite their different roles in the divine hierarchy, the Father and Son are equal, BUT...
 - b. As Christ was submitted to the Father, the husband must be to Christ, and the wife to her husband.
3. Consider Christ’s example: (Jh. 14:9; 10:30)
 - a. Jesus asked obedience from his disciples but He welcomed their questions and honored their feelings.
 - b. He set a standard of perfection before them, but He assured them of forgiveness and continued love in failure.

IV. WILL HE BE... A DEAD-BEAT OR A DICTATOR?

Our image of dad as the authority figure in the family has suffered many distortions. Among these is the man..... **who:**

A. IF he is a DEADBEAT!

1. He wants to boss his family, but doesn’t want the many responsibilities that accompany the position.
2. He may be very **indifferent** or **insensitive** to the needs of his family and is inclined to shy away from hard decisions.
3. His remoteness and indecisiveness create insecurity in his wife and children.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

4. They never know what they can count on, and their idea of an authority is lots of talk and little action.

B. IF he is a DICTATOR:

1. He rules like a dictator -- an autocratic leader who permits no **questioning** of his decrees.
2. He is predominately a **controller**. He must control every thing or he is not happy.
3. His word is the first and the **last**. He rules supreme but not in the hearts and thoughts of his browbeaten family.
4. He boasts about running his family -- but everyone knows he only gets outward conformity.
5. Behind his back, family members are ignoring him just as he ignores their feelings. When a man is genuine head of his family, he doesn't have to prove anything to anyone; he is quietly obeying God and enjoying the results of submission to the family's needs and to the Lord as supreme in his life.
6. A dictatorial father may be a --
 - a. disciplinarian who knows no leniency, who rules by the word of his law.
 - b. He will find no claim for such authority from God.
 - c. In comparison (Eph. 5:23) Christ Jesus was patient, gentle, and loving. (We are to rule our families as Christ ruled the Church.) His measures were firm, but He always acted in love.

C. The EFFECTS, facts, and HURTS of being a DICTATOR.

1. The man who wants to make all the decisions without discussion or counsel from others - -
 - a. misses one of his greatest opportunities for guiding his children to maturity and
 - b. his wife to contented partnership.

Participation in decision-making gives younger members of the family a feeling of self-worth and confidence, essential qualities for becoming responsible and productive adults. ***Are you too busy, too indifferent, and too preoccupied?***

2. The autocratic father resists his family's opinions and ideas. . .
 - a. because he lacks deep inner - confidence in himself, in the Lord and His Word.
 - b. His poor self - image is threatened by any suggestions that he then construes as criticism.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

- c. He has a shattered sense of self-worth and he blindly extends the destruction to his children.

D. What is the TRUTH about the matter?

1. Each person must be recognized as worthy, distinctive persons whose gifts and talents are God given.
2. The members of the household must be understood and accepted as they are. (Rom. 15:7)
3. The Christ-like head of the home coordinates the varied abilities and weaknesses of those in the home into a diverse unit helping each other and serving God.

Blessed is the wife that can live in a happy, secure home under the leadership of a husband who looks to God. She will relish being an essential part of that family in giving of herself. There the children can grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4)

V. MANAGEMENT POLICIES OF A GODLY DAD: (Eph. 6:1-4, Col. 3:21)

The husband as chief priest in the home, has a personal ministry to meet the needs of his family. (Deut. 4:9-10, 40; 11:18-22; 31:11-13; Psa. 78:1-8)

Here are then special, practical things a godly leader in a home will seek to do:

- A. First, he sees himself as the family leader,** as God declares.
- B. In consultation with his family,** he will determine the policies by which the household operates: how much money to spend, how late the children can stay out, standards of courtesy and modesty, discipline, and a host of things.
- C. The godly leader will assume** responsibility for his decisions or the lack of them, not blaming others for his mistakes.
- D. He will delegate authority for carrying out policies,** allowing his wife and children to have part according to their needs, talents, and abilities. (But he will not abdicate his leadership role.)
- E. He will guide his family** in setting individual and family goals, starting where they are now in experience and understanding.
 1. He will establish financial goals, spiritual goals,
 2. social goals, and material (financial, etc.) goals.
- F. A godly man will teach his children** practical principles for everyday living that will accelerate their progress and spare them future grief.
- G. He will be accessible to his family.** Children often misbehave to gain attention. They need loving and attentive counsel.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

When the man of the house is too busy to attend to his household, they will feel that he does not care.

- H. The godly father will forgive mistakes** -- till 70 times seven even though he will lovingly and firmly teach along the way.
- I. The responsible leader will lead his family** in regular prayer and Bible reading to nurture spiritual life and relate all the family concerns to God.
- J. The godly father and husband will learn** to depend more and more upon the Holy Spirit for his daily guidance and power. (Eph. 5:18-21)

Using Solomon's famous description of a praise-worthy wife in Proverbs 31 as a guide, here is contemporary paraphrase of a tribute to God's leader in the home:

Who can find a faithful husband, for his price is far above that of a Cadillac or even a Rolls Royce.

The heart of his wife doth safely trust in him whether he is on a business trip, or comes home late from the office.

He tries to do the best for her and his family as long as he lives.

He learns to use the tools of his trade and isn't afraid of a hard day's work.

He is knowledgeable about world affairs and uses this for his family's enrichment.

He rises early in the morning for his devotions and asks for wisdom for his daily tasks.

He considers investments carefully and buys a home, property, or business with an eye toward the future.

He watches his health and gets the sort of exercise he needs in order to stay physically fit.

His work is of good quality even if he has to put in extra hours to make it that way.

He doesn't neglect his home or the Biblical discipline of his children.

He is concerned about social issues and tries to help those who are in need.

He isn't afraid of difficult times because he has learned to trust in God and has done what he could to provide for his family.

He nourishes himself and his family both spiritually and physically.

His wife is well-thought-of in their community because he never belittles her.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

He has a hobby that is relaxing and worthwhile.

*His conversation is wise and uplifting. In fact he makes
it a rule of his life to speaking kindly.*

He is interested in all things that concern his family and is not lazy nor indifferent.

*His children love him and admire him, and his wife is proud of him
and says, "Many men have succeeded in this world,
but you are the best of them all. If I had it to do over again I would still
marry you."*

*Flattery is deceitful, and good looks are only on the surface, but a man
who loves and fears God shall be truly praised.*

***This sort of man deserves to be treated like a king, for his life proves that
what he believes is real.***

The Man and His Personal Life!

MAXIMIZING OUR "GOALS" FOR GOD!

EXACTLY, "WHERE" ARE YOU GOING?

Introduction:

Someone has written, "No horse gets anywhere till he's harnessed, no steam or gas drives anything until it's confined, no Niagara ever turned anything into light or power until it's tunneled and put through the turbines, no life ever grows great until focused, dedicated and disciplined."

We need to become one-eyed men. That's what Jesus was saying when he said, "When thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light" (See Luke 11:34). Most of us men do not have single-mindedness which would aid us to fulfill God-given goals.

The Word of God has a lot to say about goals, directly and probably mainly indirectly. It was the lack of goals, in keeping with the will of God, that caused Israel to waste a whole generation in the wilderness.

(Assignment -- memorize Philippians 3:13,14.)

Consider Paul

1. Paul was a highly-motivated person with God-honoring personal goals which made him the person that he was.
2. He spoke of "*I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.*" (See Acts 26:19.)
3. In Philippians 3:13, 14 he spoke of "*this one thing I do and I press toward the mark.*"

Biblical Example Concerning Goal Setting

ABRAHAM: a model man! (See Romans 4:13-25; Hebrews 11:8-19; James 2:21-23.)

1. He had a goal of being obedient. (See Genesis 12:4,5)
2. He had a goal of being faithful in worship.
(See Genesis 12:7,8; 13:3,4.) He build an altar before he set up his tent.
3. He had a goal of being faithful in intercession. (See Genesis 18:23-33.)
4. He had a goal of being faithful in child-rearing. (See Genesis 18:19.)

I. THE ESTABLISHING OF GOALS.

- > Your key for personal success is to establish goals for your life.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

> We need to distinguish between goals and purpose.

Purpose is the long-range direction for your life, which you also need, and must be set through Biblical commands and principles. Goals are more clearly defined and are concrete, measurable, and related to a definite period.

A. Find Out What GOD Wants Of Your Life.

1. Find out what God wants from and in your life above everything else.

Remember that when we seek God with all our hearts, fully trust Him, and want to fulfill His will, God will give us the desires of our hearts. (See Psalm 34:5,6.) To me this means when I love God as I ought, He will move upon my heartstrings to exercise my desires. My desires will become His desires; therefore, as I pray I can anticipate that God will be at work in me to the fulfillment of those desires. And each desire will be in line with His goals for me.

2. Find out what you want to do in life above everything else.

But even in that be sure that you do not lean unto your own understanding and that in all your ways you acknowledge Him. (See Proverbs 3:5,6.)

3. Determine your goals as you search out that these are also His goals.

We need to be men who believe God for goals set before us that are pleasing to God. We must embrace Biblical goals or we will languish in life and aimlessly move through the years.

B. Set a Schedule for the Fulfillment of the Goal.

1. To me, it is obvious that Godly leadership, spoken of in the Word of God, often had time tables for the goals which God had set before His men.

2. I cannot visualize Paul without goals, and a time table which carried him through the missionary journeys to the end that churches would be established.

3. I cannot picture David without some goals based upon God's will for His life.

4. I cannot picture Daniel without some goals as he purposed in his heart to do God's will about a number of matters.

If we are to fulfill goals we must stay on the path and not go rabbit-chasing. It is not enough to talk about goals; we must get at it. Start out this very moment. Remember that a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. We must begin with anticipation of God's power and direction, and the persistence to fulfill the goal. Too often we do plan to memorize the Word of God, to witness, to serve the Lord, to tithe, and to do a host of other things. But all we do is plan; and we set no timetable for the execution of the goals.

C. Develop Intensity of Purpose.

1. A dynamic for fulfilling goals is to have intensity of purpose, the strength of discipline that's involved in an athletic team.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

C. Consider Four Suggestions For Success..

1. **Pay the Price.** Results are directly proportionate to the effort we put forth. We must understand emotionally that as we sow we will also reap. (See Galatians 6:6-9.)
2. **Practice imagination.** Can you see yourself by the power and grace of God, by the leadership of the Holy Spirit, achieving the God-given goal you've attempted for GOD'S GLORY?
3. **Practice Courage.** Expect to exercise the kind of courage God spoke of and promised to Joshua. (See Joshua 1: 7-9.)
Refuse to believe that there are any circumstances sufficient to cause you to fail, for where God guides He will also supply the courage to persevere.
4. **Acts upon the goals.** God wants to place on your mind and heart certain goals for His glory that are in keeping with the talents and abilities He has given you.
It is not enough to know the goal intellectually and to sense it emotionally, for it will only come to fruition by volition. Achievement demands immediate, dynamic action.

Some Personal Goals by God's Grace:

Immediate:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Long-range:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

III. THE BENEFIT OF GOALS

When we are determined to be in God's will, fulfilling His plan for our lives, we will naturally become goal conscious. It will be our natural desire and concern to be aware of the goals God has for us.

A. We Will Have Personal Happiness.

1. Probably one of most outstanding benefits of setting and fulfilling goals is personal happiness.
2. Life is too short to be unhappy. You will never be truly happy until you are achieving a worthy, challenging goal.
3. Remember that it cannot be selfish nor can it be evil (or be tainted with sin) and still bring personal joy.
4. Worthy goals will benefit your family, if you are married. They will benefit the church, community, society, and yes, even the nation.

You see, God planned that your abilities are very closely related to your God-given, pure and holy desires. If you desire little you will exercise little of your capacity. If they are from God these desires are manifested in all areas of our lives, including our employment, relationships, and service to the King of Kings.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

5. We must act now toward setting long-range goals.

You can only become dynamically successful for the Lord as you set Biblical, God-honoring and God-given goals and work toward them. This is where joy comes in, for we know that we are fulfilling eternal values. But before we can do something, we must first be something, that is, we must become in Christ what we ought to be by His power and grace.

B. We will have personal fulfillment.

Paul could say *"I kept the faith, I finished the course and there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness...."* (See II Timothy 4:7,8.)

I wonder, if at the end of the journey we can look back upon life and see that we were in God's will and did His bidding and fulfilled the goals which He outlined for us?

1. The sense of personal fulfillment can be very great and is something that God wills we should experience.
2. The opposite -- loss and ruin from the lack of completing God-given goals -- is too often the experience of so many.
3. The Christian who has lived a selfish life will find that the end brings tremendous grief, trauma, frustration, and anguish of soul. The cry will probably be, "If only I had done God's will, if only I had sought His eternal goals, if only I had lived differently."

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Set one goal at a time. Be sure that it is Biblical and challenging.
2. Don't settle for something less than your best. Seek God's best and not some secondary goal.
3. Think about it all the time; that is, write it down so that it becomes a part of you. Build mind-pictures of the joy of fulfilling that goal for the Lord. Use the five senses to bring your total personality to bear upon it.
4. Drive it into your subconscious mind. God made our subconscious minds to work for us; remember that it takes orders. It is fantastically creative for it never rests.
5. Write out immediate goals and long-range goals for a ten year period and then five-and then two-year goals. Have monthly checkups. Have God's plan and then work the plan God has given.
6. Consider some specific areas where you are determined to set goals -- for your personal life, devotional life, family life, financial needs and concerns, and other important areas of life that are meaningful to you.

A MAN OF WORTH, VALUE, and MATURE CHARACTER

Introduction:

There is a very interesting phenomenon occurring in twentieth century America. From birth to late teens, a child's overwhelming perception of authority figures is that they are nearly 100% female, with an occasional male making a generally ineffectual appearance.

1. In the hospital it is the female nurses who are responsible for almost every aspect of child care.
2. At home, mother is usually the dominant authority figure. In our public grade schools 90% of the teachers are women.
3. The first police person a child meets is more than likely a female crossing guard.
4. At the grocery store, in the restaurants, in vacation Bible school or Sunday School, etc., who does the child see for the most part?

Does the man in the average church realize the importance of the *father in the child's life*? **Dads need to become very visible in the child's life.**

And what has happened to the world's men? Many unsaved men wear clothing or items that used to be totally feminine. Others are "macho men" who act irresponsibly with their wives and children, or indulge in sexual "freedom" or do their "own thing."

Sad, but for many men there is little, if any, clear-cut commitment to anything. In contrast, God desires that we who are saved men exhibit godly manhood. What is manhood? **What does it mean to be a man for God?**

Manhood and Christlikeness ought to be synonymous. Man has conquered the mountains, the oceans, and even outer space. But the greatest achievement of all is when man conquers himself. *"Better is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."* (See Proverbs 16:32.)

Manhood and Christlikeness should be synonymous!

Consider these questions:

1. How can we become men of worth, of value and of character?
2. Can we look at our lives and say, "I am mature in Christ. I have grown into a person of character for God's glory"?
3. And then, truly, what is maturity anyway?
4. Do we recognize the characteristics of what it means to be a mature man?

Memory verse -- II Corinthians 7:1

I. YOU CAN MAKE A DECISION TO BE A MAN OF MATURITY.

- > Maturity is not synonymous with age, gray hair, or how long we have been saved; it is a process that should continue until death.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

> Defining maturity: “*Being fully developed in character, in thinking and in reactions based on Biblical standards*”

A. The Meaning of Maturity

1. Basically, I think, that maturity depends more on self - discipline than on any other thing.
2. Maturity is manifested to the extent that our person is self-controlled in every area and all aspects of our lives.
3. This can only take place as we are Spirit-controlled. The fruit of the Spirit is temperance, or self-control. (See Galatians 2:22-23.)
4. Maturity is not based upon what we desire, but what God desires. We will be men of worth, value, and character as we become disciplined persons.

B. The Characteristics of Maturity

A man who is mature is a person who is under control or self-disciplined. But there is something more.

1. The aim of self-discipline is to have a discipline character that goes beyond the minimum demands of specific disciplines and permeates the whole life.
2. A mature man is disciplined not in just a few areas for the sake of appearance, but is disciplined in the inner man by the power of the Holy Spirit and by the application of the Word of God.
3. The outward, godly life which people see will be the result of the inner dynamic of self-discipline at the center of that life. Therefore, the heart or emotions, as well as the intellect and will, are moved upon by God.
4. In a general sense, **self-discipline is the ability to regulate conduct by precept and judgment rather than by feelings, desire, pressure from others, or social custom.**
 - a. *It is basically the ability to subordinate the life to Christ and the Word.*
 - b. It is possible for any man to be a sincere and regenerated (born again) follower of Jesus and yet remain undisciplined in many areas of life. In fact, that is probably the norm and not the abnormal, much to our shame as men.

II. YOU CAN BECOME A MAN WHO WALKS IN BIBLICAL LOVE.

(Study John 13:34,35; 14:21-23; 15:10; Ephesians 5:1, 2.)

A. It Will be a Pure Love.

1. God's commands are absolute. But to a large degree our modern age mistakes lust for love; it relegates love to a glandular function -- a reaction to the angle of a neckline or the height of a skirt. The world's idea of love is far removed from God's definition of *real love*.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

2. According to God, love is not basically a feeling. Sometimes it doesn't even feel good. Sometimes it demands sacrifice that is not easy, but real love is always good.
3. Love centers in the will. That is why love can be commanded and why God commands us to love. Biblical, God-like love (agape) is the obligation of marriage and the privilege in marriage.

To a great extent today the unsaved American male, flees from commandments. **Or rebels.** Some will say, "*I can't love any more. I just can't feel anything.*" That is not true. **Giving love is the act of the will.**

But the spirit of the age is the spirit of rejection toward authority. This spirit has also infiltrated the church. How sad when men especially are rebellious to God's will and plan.

B. It Will be a Godly Love.

1. How does God love? We MUST love that which God loves and hate what God hates. And by the way, what does God hate? (See Prov. 6:16-19.)
2. Maybe we don't consider I Corinthians 13:1-8 often enough. What are the characteristics of godly love? Are we living them?

C. It Will be a Ministering Love.

1. God's love is a giving love. True love will serve, giving all for the sake of the one loved. It will be an unconditional love that gives based not on the merit, abilities, or the service of another, but freely and fully gives.
2. We can become persons of worth, value and character as we allow the love of God to control us, fill us, and overflow through our lives to others on a daily basis. (See Romans 5:5.) Is this true in your life as a man?
3. There are those who need you to keep yourself in the love of God. (See Jude 20, 21.) We will build maturity as we are controlled by the discipline of God's love.

III. YOU MUST BECOME A MAN WHO QUICKLY REPENTS.

Consider:

1. God commands all men everywhere to repent. (See Acts 17:30.)
2. God would impress a preacher to command men to repent. A man of worth, value and character is one who not only repents and accepts Christ as Savior, but who walks a walk of repentance **after** being saved.
3. We don't just invite men to repent, to be converted, and to put faith in Christ, we are to command men to repent, to be converted, and to put faith in Christ. There is a key difference between a command and an invitation.
4. If I give you an invitation, you have an option. You can either receive it or reject it. But if I command you, you have no option. You either obey or rebel.

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

- 5 God did not get Moses up on the mountain and give him a list of "**Ten Suggestions.**" God gave commandments.
- 5 In our making the gospel more readily acceptable, we have been taught to "invite" people to accept Jesus. Given the option, most reject it. It is not "try Jesus." We are commanded to come to Him for salvation. The lost must obey the gospel. (If you doubt this then please study Romans 10:16,17; Hebrews 5:9; II Thessalonians 1: 7,8.)

A. We Need to Repent of Worldly Wisdom.

(Study James 3:13-18.)

1. This wisdom is a walk in our own thoughts, our own private deliberations and decisions based upon what we think.
2. It is a worldly wisdom on the part of men who, though saved, think according to what pleases them and fulfills their desires and wishes.
3. Such wisdom is the manifestation of carnality that controls many a saved man.
4. This so-called wisdom brings confusion, envy, and every kind of evil work.

Men, we need to be set free from worldly, carnal wisdom that brings all kinds of difficulty to those around us and under our care.

What a contrast this worldly wisdom is to God's wisdom that is "pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, without" (Note James 3:17) When we walk in God's wisdom we will experience a growth in righteousness that can only take place when we sow peace, for godly living can only blossom in the atmosphere of peace sown by those who make peace.

**Righteousness cannot be developed in an atmosphere of turmoil.
(Consider James 3:18.)**

B. We Need to Repent of Our Disobedience.

1. We are commanded to obey. God maximizes a man's personality, talent, and characters when he obeys God.
2. God will maximize your manhood and use you in a mighty way when you are determined to sell out to God in total obedience.
3. Satan in contrast is a usurper. He comes only to steal, kill, and destroy.
4. Satan and sin will rob you of your personality. Satan will steal your character as he seeks to produce disobedience in your life. God will maximize it. While Satan plunders, God **empowers** and **ennobles**.
(See Romans 14:17-19.)
5. Scripture is very clear about the need of having **sorrow unto repentance**.

The failing member of the Corinthian Church was disobedient. This brought God's judgment and the church's chastening. Often disobedience brings confusion, pain, and suffering. It dispels all peace -- the peace of individuals close to the failing person

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

and the peace of the church. The man needed to repent of his sin and disobedience. (Study I Corinthians 5:1-13.)

6. Remember, **godly sorrow is necessary for repentance**. Human sorrow is usually manifested because we are sorry that we are caught, but godly sorrow is for the cause -- sin itself. (Note II Corinthians 7:8-13; Psalm 32:1-5; Psalm 51.)

CONCLUSIONS:

1. God commands confession. It is only as we confess our lack of maturity, of love or of repentance that we will get right and be right with God. We must confess to be rid our sin and confess in order to put on righteousness. (See Proverbs 26:13.)
2. Unconfessed sin is unforgiven sin. We need forgiveness and cleansing. (I Jh. 1:7,9)
3. Read and study I John 1:4-2:2. Notice that the emphasis is upon fellowship. Christ dealt with the problem of sin for us that we might have fellowship with him and with one another. It is not enough for men to repent, but we need cleansing from the sin so that we do not continue in the sin. **Oh, to be freed from the habitual pattern of sin.**
4. If you have never been willing to accept responsibility for your sins against your family, your wife, your own life or against others (or you find it hard to admit sin and wrong) you can never know true godly manhood.
5. Forgiveness is a release. When God forgives us, He releases us from that sin forever. Never will He remember it against us again. What a joy to know that! (Isa. 43:25)
6. We need to be willing to deal with sin, to be honest about sin, and determine to become mature, **victorious** men in Christ. God help you to build true manhood!

Application and Guiding Questions For Personal Study!

1. Why does maturity depend so much upon self discipline?
2. Would you agree that what a person loves shows his character?
3. What are some things God hates? Make a study of this by looking up the word hate in a concordance. (See Proverbs 6.)
4. Why does God expect the Christian to repent? What does repentance mean to you?

Marks of Maturity!

MAXIMIZING YOUR MANHOOD FOR CHRIST

- 1. Dependability** -- using all my energies to do what others depend upon me to do.
I Cor. 15:58
- 2. Determination** -- Josh. 24:24 *“The Lord our God we will serve and His voice we will obey.”*
- 3. Control of the tongue** -- James chapter 3, (1:26; 3:2) *“If any man offend not the same is a perfect man.”*
- 4. Orderliness** -- I Cor. 14:33, 40 For our God is not the author of confusion. . . we are to do all things decently and in order.
- 5. Decisiveness** -- James 1:5-8, Not changeable, double-minded, without consistency and convictions.
- 6. Loyalty** -- Prov. 28:20; Rev. 2:10, We are to be faithful unto death, for a faithful man abounds with blessings.
- 7. Cooperation** -- Phil. 2:1-3; 4:3; Rom. 12:10, We are to be *like-minded... having the same love, being kindly affectioned, in honor preferring one another.*
- 8. Faith** -- James 2:26; for faith without works is dead. *“I will show thee my faith by my works.”* (vs. 18)

The Foundation For Personal Maturity is Spiritual Maturity

- 1. It begins with being born again.** (See I Pet. 1:18-19, 23; John 1:12-13.)
- 2. Important daily decisions must follow:**
 - Search the Scriptures, daily, and pray. (Acts 17:11)
 - Memorize the Word of God. (Psa. 119:9-11)
 - Live by the Word of God; make decisions on the basis of what God says. (Eph. 5:17; 6:6; Col. 4:12; Psa. 37:23)
 - Confess sin and forsake sin. (confess sin daily for restored fellowship)
I Jh 1:9)
 - Practice His presence. Remind yourself often that He is near. (Heb. 13:5-6)
 - True maturity will show in every aspect of our lives. We will want to be totally under the Lord’s control. (Rom. 8:16-18)