

# Biblical Masculinity

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[ 0 : 00 ] If you have a Bible, I encourage you to open up to Genesis chapter 3 this morning.

! Last week we were in chapters 1 and a little bit in chapter 2. This morning we're going to be in Genesis chapter 3. We started a short series last week.

It's just going to run for a few weeks. A short series looking at how God has made us male and female. And so last week we just sort of did an overview.

Looking at two realities. One, that we are all made in the image of God. Which means we have the same worth, the same value. It also means when it comes to salvation and redemption, we are all saved in the same way through faith in Christ and His atoning work for us on the cross.

But we also saw the truth that that does not mean that we all have the same roles in this world. That God in the beginning made us male and female. And there are real substantive differences in terms of the roles that we occupy in life as men and women.

[ 1 : 14 ] Though we are all created equally in God's image and all saved by the work of Christ. So this morning our goal is to take a look at biblical masculinity or biblical manhood and try to better understand what that is.

And then next week we'll turn our attention to ask what is biblical femininity or biblical womanhood. And then we'll spend one more week in this series after that trying to understand in more concrete ways, looking at some of the specific commands of the New Testament, trying to understand how we are to live out maleness and femaleness, both in the home and in the church, and then beyond those things in the broader world.

So this morning though, we're going to begin in Genesis chapter 3. So if you would stand to your feet and we are going to be reading, beginning in verse 14, going down through verse 19.

This takes place after the fall as God comes in judgment upon the serpent, the woman, and then the man. Verse 14. The Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field.

On your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring, he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

[ 2 : 42 ] To the woman he said, I will surely multiply your pain and childbearing. In pain you shall bring forth children. Your desires shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.

And to Adam he said, Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, you shall not eat of it. Cursed is the ground because of you. In pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life.

Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken.

For you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Father, we thank you for inspiring Moses to record these words for us, so that we might see the reality of what it means to be men and women, but also the ruin that was brought upon us, even in our maleness and femaleness in the world.

Help us to better understand what it means to be biblical men, biblical women. We ask these things in Christ's name.

[ 4 : 01 ] Amen. You guys can take a seat. So for Allie's birthday, not last year, but the year before, I finally made good on a promise that I had been making year after year, and that is that I finally signed us up for some dance classes.

And that's a big deal for me, because I can't dance at all. I mean at all. Prior to those dance classes, I think maybe the last time that I danced was at our wedding, and at our wedding, I had not advanced beyond the middle school turn in a circle slowly.

I was still at that level, okay? I cannot dance. And we went to the classes, we went to a few classes, signed up for all the sort of beginner classes, and they taught us a few dances, and had us dance to the music, and all of those sorts of things.

And I don't think that I improved one bit throughout the entire experience. I really don't. And then when they showed us the cost to continue the lessons, we both looked at each other and thought, that's throwing money away.

There's no way that we're going to continue to do that. For us, though, as we think about biblical manhood and biblical womanhood, there is an analogy with dancing in that we have specific commands.

[ 5 : 18 ] The teacher taught me specific steps to take and when to take them. We have commands regarding how men are supposed to behave and how women are supposed to behave.

We have those commands that are like the steps in a dance. And in order to dance well, you need to know those commands, and you need to be able to put them together in order and follow them. But you can rigidly follow those commands and look pretty silly. I'm proof of that. I memorized the steps. I did the practicing. Yet what I did did not look like dancing.

I moved like the tin man before he gets a can of oil. That's how I moved. And I knew the moves. I knew the steps. But it did not look like a dance.

Because you not only need the commands, you also need to be able to hear and move in accordance with the music as it plays. That's what I'm unable to do.

[ 6 : 16 ] With my lack of rhythm and my crazy movements, I'm unable to follow the music. And that's also true of biblical masculinity and biblical femininity.

We have specific commands in the Bible. It's important that we know them and understand them. But behind those commands, there are broader principles that exist and that are at work that make up the music of what it is to be a man or a woman, at least biblically.

The music plays and we need to be able to hear that and move in accordance with it. Otherwise, all of our attempts to obey the commands will end in failure. It will either end in legalism that moves far beyond what the commands say, or it will just lead to us trying and failing to obey what the commands are.

And so my goal this morning is to try to help you to hear that music. Specifically, I want you to hear the music that stands behind biblical masculinity, biblical manhood.

And so I want to offer you this morning not so much a definition as much as a description of biblical masculinity. And then we'll try to see how that is derived from scripture itself.

[ 7 : 40 ] So I'm going to put this up on the screen. If you want to write this down, feel free. I did not invent this. I borrowed this from John Piper. But I want to share it with you because I think that it's a really helpful description of biblical manhood or biblical masculinity.

He says, at the heart of biblical masculinity is a sense of benevolent responsibility to lead, protect, and provide for women in ways appropriate to a man's differing relationships.

I'm going to read that again and then we're going to break it down. At the heart of biblical masculinity is a sense of benevolent responsibility to lead, protect, and provide for women in ways appropriate to a man's differing relationships.

Now the first thing that I want you to see about this description is that it is intentionally a description of biblical masculinity that is set against or is shown in the light of biblical femininity.

In other words, all of the descriptions here, they are not telling us everything that it means to be a male human being. The focus is upon the things that set men apart as men.

[ 9 : 00 ] So that there are a number of things that we would say must be true about a man for him to be a godly man that are not mentioned at all in this description. Because there are things that are true for all men and all women, all followers of Jesus that apply equally across the genders.

And my focus this morning is not upon the things that ought to be true about men and women in the body of Christ. My focus is upon those things that are most closely associated in Scripture with biblical masculinity.

And so you'll notice in that description that there are three terms that stand out that we're going to focus on this morning and that is to lead, protect, and provide.

Now before I can say anything about those I do need to say something about some of the other terms in this description. And first of all I want you to look at the very beginning of it.

It says at the heart of biblical masculinity. In other words this statement is not trying to summarize everything that we might say about what it means to be a godly man or everything about what it means to be masculine in the biblical sense.

[ 10 : 20 ] That's not the point. It's not trying to do that. There might be other things that we would want to emphasize in certain contexts.! This is just getting at the heart of biblical masculinity.

And then it's important to note that it begins by saying that there is a sense of benevolent responsibility. Each of those words is important. There is a sense of benevolent responsibility. The word sense indicates that this is not about what you actually accomplish. This is that if you are a Christian man you ought to have a sense a feeling and a desire to do these things.

The truth is is that there are plenty of circumstances in which men are unable to do some of these things. Consider the consider a man who is injured in a car accident and he's a quadriplegic and he can no longer work that means he can't really provide for his family.

If someone breaks into the home he can't protect his family does that mean that he cannot possibly pursue biblical masculinity? No, because it's not so much about the things that we do or are able to do it's about a sense of responsibility that we understand and we know and we have a sense and we have a desire whatever our limitations might be in certain circumstances we want to be able to do this.

[ 11 : 52 ] We have a sense that this is the responsibility of men in the church in the home and even in some ways in the world at large that we have a responsibility and that responsibility though is tempered by the word benevolent that biblical masculinity always moves and works out of good desires always aims at the good of the other that kindness undergirds all of these things if you lose the word benevolent here then you could very easily move in the direction of what our culture has come to call toxic masculinity you could very easily move in the direction in which we have seen over and over throughout human history and we can look around the world and see in many cultures today you can see a kind of masculinity that is overbearing that is controlling that is abusive in many many ways it's important for us to understand that we are describing the heart of biblical masculinity which is a sense and a desire to pursue these things but it's also moved and motivated by a desire to achieve the good of the other and to act in ways that are kind and loving toward the others without without all of those added in we could very easily twist and turn these three key words to lead and to protect and to provide we could easily twist those and pursue something that ends up looking unbiblical at nearly every level and we don't want to do that in fact

I think it's those abuses that have led many people to reject what the Bible has to say about these three key responsibilities that men have it's abuses it's a failure to act out of a sense of benevolent responsibility and a desire instead to act authoritatively to insist on what my rights are and what someone else owes to me it's that kind of sense and desire that leads to all sorts of abuse so men we have to pursue these things we have to aim for these things and desire these things for the good of our wives of our daughters of our sisters in Christ for their good and never ever in ways that would harm them so now we need to see these three responsibilities though leading protecting and providing we need to see them in scripture itself so let's begin with leading we read the passage here a moment ago and you might think why why would you go in order to learn about biblical patterns why would you go to

God's judgment in Genesis chapter 3 why why enter this discussion here this morning at a place where sin has already corrupted things why enter it at a place where where sin has already misled both Adam and Eve why are we entering there and the reason is because God's judgment reflects the ways in which Adam and Eve failed at the beginning of this chapter and we saw last week as we considered what it means to be male and female we saw patterns that are set up in Genesis chapter 2 and then violated at the beginning of Genesis chapter 3 and now as God comes in judgment he targets their failures to live according to the design that he had given to them so consider leadership when God addresses Adam in verse 17 the first thing that he says is because you have listened to the voice of your wife now we could read that in such a way as to say that Adam is being judged because he had the gumption to let

Eve have a say in something to let her voice her opinion on something but that's not the point of the text at all for Adam to have listened to his wife means that he turned temporarily the reins of leadership over to her the word listen often has the connotation of listening in the sense of obeying and following so the Shema in Deuteronomy chapter 6 begins with this same word hear O Israel the Lord our God the Lord is one you shall love the Lord your God that initial here is more than just

listen to these words it is hear and respond obediently and I think it has that same kind of nuance right here and I think that mainly because there's one other place where we see something very similar to that this in the book of Genesis and it's in Genesis chapter 16 you can turn there if you'd like in Genesis chapter 16 we have Abraham and

Sarah his wife facing the difficult reality that though God has promised them children they've not yet had any children and listen to this that Sarah comes in verse 2 and says to Abraham behold now the Lord has prevented me from bearing children go into my servant it may be that I shall obtain children by her she's encouraging him to engage in an extramarital relationship so that Abraham might have a child that she could claim as her own and if you know the story this does not work out yes a child is conceived but it creates all sorts of problems for Abraham and not only for Abraham but for all of his descendants and what do we read we read next and Abraham listened to the voice of Sarah that Abraham listening to her voice was not giving her a chance to speak her mind and taking in the godly wisdom that she might have to offer him every man would be wise to listen to the voice of his wife when she's offering him godly wisdom it would be foolish of us to think that we are the only ones who possess wisdom of any kind that's not what

[18:41] Adam is being censured for Adam is being corrected not because he heard her out but because he let her have the lead because she proposed something that he knew God had commanded them not to do and yet he went ahead with it God says because you listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you you shall not eat of it because you failed at this key point I gave you the command you passed that command on to her it was your responsibility to lead and you gave that responsibility up men every time we fail to lead every time that we fail whether it's in the church or in our homes or even in broader context when we fail to lead in a godly way when we hand over our responsibility to others disaster follows it may be slow to follow it may take some time to see the full repercussions of our failures but make no mistake if we do not lead in godly ways but we hand that over to others there will be consequences now of course people love to point out the exceptions to these general rules in order to set aside these general principles and rules so for instance you will often hear people say but what about

Deborah wasn't Deborah a powerful female leader in fact taking the place of Barak who was the commander and didn't she achieve great success didn't she lead armies in battle yes all of that happened yes but the man was warned when he handed over leadership by none other than Deborah herself that the glory would go to a woman and not to a man that it would be to his shame that he had done this oh god will still save god will still rescue there are so many children who have been reared in godly ways because their mothers were willing to take upon the spiritual leadership in their home because they had to and God has done good things through all of that but for the men who handed that over disaster looms in front of them the exceptions do not disprove the general rules or the principles they never do not for any of these principles that husbands are told to lead leadership is limited in terms of eldership and pastors to men in the church and when we forfeit that responsibility when we avoid that responsibility disaster follows our job as men is to try to lead in ways that point others around us especially the women around us that point them toward Christ and give them all of the assistance that they need to pursue Christ that is the goal in Ephesians 5 when Paul draws out the analogy between the marriage of Christ and the church with the!

the church indicating leadership but he commands the men to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her that she might be holy that Christ's goal as he pursues and leads his bride is to lead her toward holiness and the task of every husband is to lead his wife in the direction of holiness the task of the men who occupy the role of elder within the church is to lead those who are under their charge in the direction of holiness!

That's always the goal of godly leadership and godly men will aim to help others around them pursue holiness and Christ likeness but not only are we supposed to lead Adam also failed to protect Eve a serpent entered into the garden an animal that later on in the Torah is declared to be an unclean animal an animal that did not belong in the garden and as we saw last week Adam is not absent during all of the conversation that takes place between Eve and the serpent he's present there all along he's just simply silent because he's not only failing in his role of leadership he fails to protect her he fails to stand between the serpent and his wife he fails to remind her of the commandment he fails to remind her of the dangers she's forced to do that all on her own as he stands by his task was to protect and he failed and

[ 24 : 32 ] I would say that when many marriages fall apart at the heart of it is a continued ongoing failure of the husband to protect his wife that we have a natural role of protector so consider Peter when Peter writes in his letters to husbands he tells husbands that they are to live with their wives in an understanding way that is they are to have some sensitivity toward their unique feminine characteristics and he gives two reasons for that one is because she is a co-heir with him of the grace of life which means that she is saved just like you were saved husband and she has the same eternal inheritance awaiting her equal worth and value and salvation in the same way that's one ground but the other is he is to live with her in an understanding way because she occupies the role of the weaker vessel and the point is not that she is intellectually inferior to him she's not the point is not that she's emotionally weaker than him she is not the point is that there is an obvious difference between men and women in that men on the whole are physically stronger and we are physically stronger because we have a role of protecting that belongs to us by our very nature by

God's creative design that's our role and again people will point to the exceptions in order to try to disprove this general principle yes you can find women who are stronger than the average and you can find men who are weaker than the average woman but if you took the strongest 1,000 people in the world they would all be men probably if you took the strongest million people in the world they would all be men if you went into any gym where you have a lot of people present you could probably take the 10 or 20 or 30 strongest!

there are no women that are strong there are but by design in general this is true and it's not accidental it's because God has assigned it to men to be protective particularly towards women and towards the vulnerable and to others that fall in the category of being weaker than them that is the task that is the responsibility that is given to men and yet I have seen many many times in marriages where rather than be the protector the husband has become the threat I've told countless men as I've sat and counseled them in troubled marriages stop raising your voice at your wife stop never do it never raise your voice you're a man you're bigger you're stronger it's an automatic threat stop doing it never raise your voice at your wife you're a man it's unnecessary if you need to press your strength and prove your strength and you've failed to be strong in the ways that you're supposed to be strong never do it marriages falter when men fail to be protectors churches fall apart when men are absent and refuse to lead and we see it happen over and over and over again there are patterns historically that you can pick out among denominations patterns okay again they're just patterns there are exceptions but the patterns tend to be that churches and denominations begin to question some of these issues of male female roles within the church and their questioning of those causes them to try to find ways around some of the commands that we'll be considering in a couple of weeks in the

New Testament having to adopt an interpretive approach to the Bible and specifically to the New Testament that allows them to set aside clear statements about male leadership in the church Paul says I do not prevent a woman to exercise authority over a man it's not complicated it's not unclear he appeals to Genesis 1 through 3 to make his point so you have to find a way around that and before long once you've gotten comfortable finding your way around certain commands often times there's drift within a church or denomination toward not even trying anymore to find your way around the command just saying ah that doesn't apply that has nothing to do with us or better yet Paul was just wrong about that and there goes the doctrine of the inerrancy of scripture as a church or denomination moves from biblical faithfulness to trust in the

Bible to a progressive type of belief system that doesn't even really need the Bible or pay heed to the Bible to form its worldview a key stop along the way is to deny and move away from what the Bible has to say about what it means to be men and women we see this happen in church after church but it often happens not because the women rise up in rebellion I'm unaware of that happening in any major denomination it happens because the men stop showing up they're not there anymore and someone has to take on a leadership role someone has to keep things going when men fail to lead and protect it leads to disaster the third thing though that's mentioned in this description and that is really what

[ 31 : 32 ] God focuses upon in his judgment of Adam and that is that there is a sense in which men are to provide for women to provide for take a look at the majority of what God says to Adam he judges Adam at the very point at which Adam would be able to work and provide he says cursed is the ground because of you in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you and you shall eat the plants of the field by the sweat of your face you shall

eat bread till you return to the ground Adam's work Adam's labor becomes toil work is not bad the curse is not the introduction of work into man's life

Adam was put into the garden to work and to keep it but it was a joyful work of worship that Adam was given in the beginning in a garden that happily yielded abundant fruit and now he's thrown out into the fields where he has to till the ground he has to plow it thorns and thistles constantly weeds constantly wanting to come up out of the ground and choke out the plants that he's trying to get to yield a crop no longer can he just pluck the fruit from the trees that are in abundance around him but he will work to grow grain to make bread his work has become toil his responsibility to provide has now come under assault has been made much more difficult why because of his failure in the garden because

God gave a specific command about what they were allowed to eat out of the things that God had provided for them and what they were not allowed to eat and Adam sat by silently while according to Paul his wife was deceived Adam sat by silently and then he joined her and the fall the consequences of sin do not enter into the world when Eve takes a bite of the forbidden fruit consistently in the New Testament sin enters into the world in a way that it affects all of creation and it brings death into the world when Adam partakes of the fruit because he had a job in the garden lead protect provide for and when he failed at that it brought consequences not just to Adam but to Eve to all of creation to all of their descendants

Paul says that death entered into the world through one man condemnation came because of the actions of the one man Adam his responsibility meant that he was to protect and guard from these consequences and he failed and to the degree that we fail as men to protect our families our fellow church members and even more broadly others in society to the degree that we fail there will be consequences we all sense and know that it is true that the men around us have this responsibility to protect nobody expects the woman to step in front of the man when a robber approaches them in an alley way nobody expects the wife to get out of the bed when there's a strange noise in the middle of the night no one expects!

that because we know we understand it's wired into us by God's design but just as much as we know that this music this melody of masculinity is playing so we also like to just dance to our own tune do our own thing make up our own way figure out how we want to do life on our terms and nowhere is that more obvious than in the area of what it means biblically to be a man or to be a woman and our rebellion against these God ordained patterns will always come with consequences the good news of the gospel though is that though Adam failed there is another Adam it was another Adam who came into the world another representative

[ 36 : 52 ] Adam representing all of those in him all humanity Christ representing all those who would by faith be in Christ Christ comes as another Adam so that no matter the extent of our failures failures as image bearers failures as men failures as women no matter the extent of our failures one has come into the world and he lived his life perfectly as a man he was the perfect man pure masculinity on display in Jesus which is a reminder to us that biblical masculinity is often not what we imagine it to be Jesus at least in his human life never married the church is his only bride never had physical children his defense of the week was to lay down his life in their place not to wield his strength to defeat everyone around him he wept over the city of

Jerusalem and yet here he is pure manhood in the flesh manhood is often not what we imagine it to be Christ puts on display what it means for us to be men and Christ came into the world so that he might right all the ways in which we have done it wrongly all the way back to Adam Adam brought death and condemnation into the world Christ brings life and justification in Adam we are declared guilty in Christ we are declared righteous in Adam we inherit a sinful nature in Christ we inherit new life so that now our desires can be righted you cannot pursue biblical masculinity biblical femininity you cannot pursue that with any degree of success if you are outside of

Christ you cannot you must have put your faith in him you must be pursuing! Him and in your pursuit of him his word will slowly transform not only who you are as a man or who you are as a woman but will transform you into one who is conformed to his image more and more our ultimate goal is not to be manly men our ultimate goal is to be like Christ men pursue Christ wholeheartedly pursue likeness to Jesus and you will find biblical masculinity you will find it women encourage your husbands in their pursuit of Christ don't belittle them for their failures but encourage them in their pursuit of

Christ and they will become over time the husband that you have always wanted to have let's pray