

## GODLY MANHOOD

Text - Ephesians 5:21-6:4

**Intro:** When you study the Scriptures, you will find that God puts the primary responsibility for having a godly, biblical family on the man. I think that may be why men and husbands and fathers have been under such severe attack in American culture. Very often, in the media, the husband and the father is portrayed as some kind of bumbling, stumbling fool.

We are aware that men are going through all kinds of pressures in our society. Men have tremendous job pressures today. The economy is tight, and there is more pressure than ever upon men to provide for those they love.

Men face tremendous temptations in our society today. There is the temptation of pornography. There is the temptation of alcohol. There is the temptation to cut corners in order to make more money. All these pressures and many more, are against men today.

The Feminist Movement puts pressure on men. Dr. Paige Patterson said that one of the greatest problems in American life today is the feminization of men. There is an effort by some to try to make men like women.

The Feminist Movement tried to sell America on the idea that there was no difference between a man and a woman. But the stubborn facts of biology refuse to go away. Time Magazine, a few years ago, had a featured article on the difference between men and women. It discussed why men and women are different. The result of the article was, they were born that way. Well, duh! Men and women are just different. Their brains are wired differently. For example, for a woman, shopping is a social event. But for a man, he just finds out what he wants, finds a store that has it, runs in, hopes nobody sees him, and runs back out.

Men and women are different! You could see it on the playgrounds around schools. Boys and girls are different. Boys choose sides for their games on the basis of ability. Girls choose sides on the basis of relationships.

When the boys play and somebody gets hurt, they just drag him off the field so he won't interrupt the game. But when a girl gets a boo-boo, they all gather around to encourage and support her. Men and women are just different.

So I want to talk to you about the role of a man in the family. I have been encouraged in recent years, as there has been a renewed emphasis on manhood in America and the responsibility of men. Yet, a lot of guys in American culture have

never been taught. They have never had a role model. They have never had an example in their home. We need some godly men who can help other men become the men they ought to be for the glory of God.

Today, we are going to be talking primarily to the men. We are aware of the fact that we have single parent families here. I don't want what I say to be discouraging to you. I don't want you to be disappointed by it because if you are trying to bring up a family in a single-family household, God is going to help you in a special way. **Psalm 68:5** is a Scripture you can claim if you are a single parent. ***"A father of the fatherless, a judge of the widows is God in His holy habitation."*** That verse is saying that God will help you. We are not trying to say anything that will make single parents feel bad today, but God's ideal for the family is that there be a man and a woman, a husband and a wife. That's God's ideal.

We are going to use some verses of Scripture that are particularly directed toward the husband and wife relationship. But I believe I can extend what we are going to say beyond that relationship to the entire relationship of a man in his family. What is said about the husband's **responsibilities** to the wife can also be said about his **responsibilities** to the family.

### I. LOVE YOUR FAMILY

- You say you didn't have to come to church today to know that. You know you are supposed to love your family. We are sure you do love your family.

We are going to talk to you about what is really involved in loving your family. There are some illustrations given to us in **Ephesians 5** which tell a man how he is to love his family.

- Three times in these verses it tells a man to love his wife. **Verse 25** says, ***"Husbands love your wives."*** **Verse 28** says, ***"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies."*** **Verse 33** says, ***"Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife, even as himself."***
- Then he illustrates it. In **verse 25** he says, ***"Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church."*** Men, love your family like Jesus loved the church.

How did Jesus love the church? The love of Jesus for His church was a selfless, sacrificial love. Jesus loved the church. He loved sinners. He loved you and me so very much that He was willing to sacrifice His very life on the cross of Calvary. That's how much He loves us and that's how much a man is supposed to love his family.

It is a sacrificial kind of love. It is not trying to buy the love of your family by giving them things. It is not a bartering with them for your love, you do this and I'll love you. It is not a conditional love, I will love you if. But it is a sacrificial love.

Love is primarily a verb. Love is not just something you feel. Love is something you do. Love is a decision. You decide to love your wife. You decide to love your children. It is a conscious decision. A sacrificial love!

A lot of men have this whole thing wrong. A lot of men have the idea that to be a real man in the family means that you just have to be a dictator or a tyrant. *“Go get my slippers”* kind of guy! *“Serve me! Do all this for me!”* But when you study the Bible, you find that God commands men to love their families like Jesus loved His church. It is a sacrificing, a giving kind of love.

- Not only does the Bible says that the man is to love his family like Jesus loved the church, but in **verse 28** it says to love as you love your own bodies. Now we men love our bodies. We take care to see that the body is fed. We take care to see that the body is clothed. No man in his right man is going to double up his fist and beat up his own body. The man is to love the members of his family as he loves his own body. He is to nourish it. He is to cherish it. He is to take care of it. That's the way God wants a man to love his family.

- That's the illustrations of it. Now there are some applications of how a man is to love his family. Turn to **1 Peter 3:7**. Remember that what is said about husbands is also said about fathers and the members of the family. We are extending the application. *“Likewise ye husbands (and dads), dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered.”*

- First of all it says you are to *“dwell with them according to knowledge”*. That means that there must be some **comprehension** on the part of the father. It means that the husband and the father is to do his best to understand the members of his families. Every member of your family is distinct. Every child is different. Every single person in the family requires special observation and special care.

I have seen this in our children. They have the same parents and they had the same upbringing, but they are totally different. I see it in my brother and me. We had the same upbringing, but we are different. If you have a dozen children, you will have a dozen different personalities.

That's an amazing thing. They have the same dad and the same mom, and they are as different as day and night. You have to study your wife. You have to study your sons. You have to study your daughters and learn to dwell with them according to knowledge.

You don't discipline all children the same. We had one child you could spank and that child would never drop a tear. That child would just give you that stone cold stare. We had another child that all you had to do was frown and that child was brokenhearted and repentant and cried and carrying on. They are all different. There has to be some **comprehension**. You need to know how to positively relate to the members of your family.

- Then it says, *“Giving honor”* to them. That means *“courtesy”*. Treat every member of your family with courtesy. As a father and husband, you are to treat your family members with courtesy. It's an amazing thing that sometimes

guests that come into the home are treated with more courtesy and politeness than the members of the family. Why would we treat guests in our home better than we treat the members of our home? The father has the responsibility to love his family. So there is to be courtesy.

- Also it says, *“As being heirs together of the grace of life.”* There is to be this sense of grace in the family. Where we understand that God has put us together, and that we are to stand by one another, come what may. We are to comprehend the truth that every member of the family is vitally important and deserves to be loved, nurtured, cared for and honored. Men, love your families!

## II. **LEAD YOUR FAMILY**

- You are the spiritual leader of your family. You are the one who sets the pace in your family. What is involved in a man being the leader of his family? Leadership rides on some other ships.

- One of the ships is what I call **Lordship**. Look at **Eph. 5:20, 22**. Both of these verses speak of the lordship of Jesus Christ. This passage that has to do with family is written in the context of the lordship of Jesus Christ. I want you to listen very carefully. **You cannot exercise authority unless you are under authority**. If a man is going to exercise leadership in his family, he must understand the Bible principle of the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Now, the man has the hardest role in the entire family setting. It is the man's responsibility to yield himself to the lordship of Jesus Christ. That's why every man needs to accept Jesus as his Savior. Not only for his own sake, but also for the sake of his family. That's why every man needs to be totally dedicated to Jesus Christ as Lord of his life. You can't lead your family to the lordship of Jesus Christ unless you are under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

- The second ship is **Partnership**. **Eph. 5:21** says, *“Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”* Family is a partnership between that husband and that wife. It is an amazing thing to me that some men can lead major corporations and yet they can't even run their own family

Let me read you some comments about what one writer said about it that I found helpful. He was talking about so many running companies and yet their families are a disaster. He said, *“The man is active, articulate, energetic, and really successful in his work. But he is inactive, inarticulate, lethargic, and withdrawn at home. They silently retreat behind newspapers, magazines, television, and highballs in the home. Or perhaps, not so silently, retreat in affairs, week night appointments, and weekend arrangements outside the house.”*

The absentee father! Did you know that there are one million children born in America every year out of wedlock? You know that means there are one million unwed mothers every year, but do you also know that means there are that many unwed fathers? Sir, it takes more than your contribution of a

sperm cell to be a father. Of those children born out of wedlock, by the age of 13, they are 60 per cent more apt to be into crime, drugs, and illiteracy.

Marriage is a partnership. God wants children to have not only a mother, but also a father who is committed to the partnership of making that marriage work. It's a partnership.

- The third ship is **Headship**. **Eph. 5:23** says, "**For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church and the Savior of the body.**" Notice that it didn't say the head over the wife; it said the head of the wife. It is not dictatorship. A man is not the dictator in the family. He's the "**headtater**," but not the dictator. That means that the man is the source of protection and provision in his family. You, sir, are responsible to protect and provide for your family. "**But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel,**" **1 Tim. 5:8**.

God bless some of you parents. You provide for your families. You work and bring in the necessary resources. You get in your cars. You deprive yourselves of needed rest and relaxation and bring your sons and daughters here so they can be taught the Word of God and taught to love the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to encourage you to carry on! Some of you men make sure your family is your pew when church time comes.

You are the head of your family. That means you are a source of protection. You should never allow anything to come into your home that would entice your family to sin and fill them with the wrong kinds of things. Don't bring anything in that would be unwholesome.

You are responsible for where your children go. You are responsible for what they do. You are responsible for the priorities in their lives. The spiritual nurture and development of your children is your responsibility dads. It is up to you to get that family in the car and to bring them to Sunday School and preaching. We are talking about Sunday morning, evening and Wednesday night too. We are talking about youth meetings. We are talking about revivals and Bible conference. We are talking about taking advantage of every opportunity help them learn about Jesus Christ and to grow in their relationship with Him.

Some of you are going to reap a bitter harvest one day because you are teaching your children that homework is more important than church on Wednesdays. You are teaching them that their extracurricular activities at school are more important than the Lord. You are teaching them that excelling at sports is more important than excelling in the things of God. You are missing the boat with those children and there will come a day when they will show you just how well they have learned the lessons you have taught them.

- The man is the head of the family also because he is the source of direction and decision for the family. Some of you men need to get a little steel in your backbone and make godly decisions for your sons and your daughters in your family.

### III. LIFT YOUR FAMILY

- Look at **verses 25-27**. It says for husbands to love your own wife "**as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water by the word.**" Watch this. "**That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.**"

See how Christ lifts the church. Men, that's the way you are to lift your family. You are to help them grow in their gifts. Find out how God has gifted your family members and encourage them to develop those gifts and help to be everything God wants them to be.

- You should want your children to be all that God wants them to become. **III. Eph. 6:4** – "**nurture**" – "**The education of the mind and the morals**" – **They are trained in the ways of God; "admonition" – "exhortation" – They are led in the will of God.**

You must help them become what He wants them to be. If God wants them to be a Christian truck driver, that's what you should want them to become. If God wants that daughter to be a homemaker, help her achieve that goal.

Whatever God has planned for your sons and daughters, that's exactly what you should want them to become. Help them to grow in grace. Help them to grow in their gifts. Help them to become the people God saved them to be and to fulfill the purpose for which they were created.

Don't be guilty of living vicariously through your children. Don't force them into activities that do not interest them just because it's what you wanted to do. Help them to become who God designed them to be and help them grow in their walk with Him. That is the intent behind **Pro. 22:6**, which says, "**Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.**"

It is a good thing to help your children get an education. It is a good thing to help them become financially secure. It is a good thing to leave them resources to live on when you leave this world. But, if those things are all you give them, you have failed them! If all you give them is knowledge and wealth, you have let them down. Sir, give them Jesus! Give them a spiritual heritage. Give them godliness and teach them that the things of God are the most important things of all!

- Being a father and family man can be frustrating. It is full of unexpected hazards and dangers. There will be bad decisions and you will get many things wrong along the way. The hard fact is fatherhood and godly manhood can really never be mastered. You don't ever graduate from the School of Fatherhood or Godly Manhood. But it is wonderful and fulfilling on those occasions when you get it right.

If you become the kind of man and the kind of father and the kind of husband God wants you to be and if you lift your family to be everything God wants them to be, one of these days you will reap a good harvest in your

children. You will see them used of God for His glory. You will see them flourish spiritually. There is nothing better than that!

You might just get a letter from that boy. ***“Dad, I want you to know I tested you a lot. Dad, I want you to know I did some things you weren't happy with. I know I gave you some difficulties. But, dad, I want you to know as I look back on it now, I want to thank you for how you raised me.”*** One of these days you may get a phone call from that girl. ***“Dad, I just want you to know that I thank you so much for being a real man in our family.”***

**Conc:** Men, it all starts in the family. If your faith doesn't work at home, it doesn't work it doesn't work anywhere. The family is either like a sand dune or a sculpture. A sand dune has no shape or design to it. It just comes about by whatever environmental forces play upon it. It has no real foundation. Tomorrow's wind will change the shape and the look of the sand dune. But a sculpture has design. There is intention. There is a goal. There is a purpose.

Your family will either be a sand dune swept and blown around the winds of culture and circumstances, or your family will be a sculpture with design and purpose and goal to it. I think it all comes down to what kind of man you decide to be.

Now is the time for obedience to the Word of the Lord.

- Some of you dads and husbands need to get before the Lord and ask Him to help you be the man you should be.
- Some of you have failed to lead your family like you should. Fix that today.
- Some of you wives need to come pray for the man God gave you. Maybe you haven't supported him like you should. Maybe you have hindered him from leading the family.
- Some of you children need to come and pray for your parents. You need to ask God to forgive you for your rebellious attitude. You need to thank God that He has given you a good, godly family.
- Some of you families need to come together and pray. You need to get on God's path and walk in His will for His glory.
- Some of you need to be saved.