

## Christian Men: Personal Responsibility

Service and Selflessness

Martin G. Collins

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Men, are you handling your daily burdens and responsibilities in a truly masculine way? Do you selflessly fulfill them with determination and action? Or are you a little to inactive in the things that are truly important in life?

Let us approach this from a physical standpoint first. According to a July 8, 2015 article in the HealthDay News, it states: "It takes just two weeks of physical inactivity for those who are physically fit to lose a significant amount of their muscle strength.

In that relatively short time, young people lose about thirty percent of their muscle strength, leaving them as strong as someone decades older. Meanwhile active older people, who become sedentary for a couple of weeks, lose about twenty-five percent of their strength.

The more muscle a person has, the more they will lose if they are sidelined by an injury, illness, or vacation, the Danish study found."

In a university news release, researcher Andraes Vigelsoe, from the Center for Healthy Aging and the Department of Bio-medical Sciences at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark, said: "Our experiments revealed that inactivity affect the muscular strength of both old and young men equally. Having had one leg immobilized for two weeks, young people lose up to a third of their muscular strength, while older people lose up to one-fourth. A young man who is immobilized for two weeks loses muscular strength equivalent to aging forty to fifty years."

*The Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine* found that total muscle mass declines with age, but young men have about two pounds more muscle mass in each leg than older men do. But after two weeks of not moving it at all, the young men involved in the study, on average, lost seventeen ounces of muscle mass. Older men lost about nine ounces, however, all the men lost physical fitness while their leg was immobilized.

Continuing on with the quote here: "The more muscle mass you have the more you will lose, which means that if you are fit and become injured, you will most likely lose more muscle mass than someone who is unfit, over the same period of time," said Martin Gram, another researcher at the center in a news release."

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Graham also said, “Even though older people lose less muscle and their level of fitness is reduced slightly less than that in young people, the loss of muscle mass is presumably more critical for older people because it is likely to have a greater impact on their general health and quality of life.”

After being immobilized for two weeks, the men who participated in the study trained on a bike. They worked out three to four times a week for six weeks. Although this exercise helped the men regain physical fitness, the researchers found that their muscle strength did not fully recover in that period of time.

Vigelsoe said that “Cycling is not sufficient enough to help people regain lost muscle mass, and reach their formal fitness level. However, cycling is sufficient to help people regain lost muscle mass and reach their former fitness level. If you want to regain your muscular strength following a period of inactivity, you need to include weight training.”

Inactivity is the destructive fungus of millions of young men in the Israeliteish nations today. Honest hard work is an essential element of a man or woman’s success. Laying hold of earnest self-denying work and keeping at it is more rewarding than dozens of hours in front of a computer game being king of a make-believe cyber kingdom.

Physical inactivity among today’s 11-25 year olds will cost the United Kingdom’s economy 53.3 billion pounds which is equal to \$80 billion American dollars, according to a new Streegames/CEBR report published about 6 months ago.

More importantly, nothing will soften your mental and spiritual muscles more than a lack of thinking deeply about your own responsibility for the responsibility and care of others and acting on it.

The only cure for inactivity is a worthwhile goal and truthful work. The only cure for selfishness is self- sacrifice; the only cure for timidity is to plunge into duty before the shudder benumbs you; and the only cure for unbelief is to take God’s challenge to the test every day.

**Malachi 3:8-10** “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house [or spiritual food in my church], and try Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.”

For those of us in God's church those are spiritual blessings that we receive, many of which we do not realize that we do.

Have you men tried God in this? This passage is not only about if you are a thief and a robber who is stealing from God and therefore who will not enter the Kingdom of God. If a man is not giving all his tithes, not only has he robbed God, but God's spiritual nation, His church. That is a very serious character flaw that shows a conscious dodging of personal responsibility.

It is about faith, responsibility, and action. It is a question of whether you believe God enough to try His way of life, to try doing His will in support of His work here on earth in direct opposition to Satan's world of "get."

The Lord God says to try Him. The Hebrew word here for "try" here is *bachan*. It is a primitive root meaning to test, especially metals; generally and figuratively it means to investigate. So, God is saying to investigate; look into what I am saying.

The term "investigate" requires physical and mental action; it is a formal and systematic examination and research. Synonyms for investigation are: examination; inquiry; inspection; exploration; consideration; analysis; appraisal.

Investigate, explore, and analyze if what God promises you, for giving Him back His money which He has put in your trusteeship, is true.

This sermon is not about tithing, it is about personal responsibility, and more specifically, about personal responsibility of men. However, this does apply to women as well, it applies to all of us.

The Bible's relative concentration of male images of power and importance may seem to privilege them unduly, but we must remember that men are given no moral or spiritual advantage over women. In fact, because of their great power, both physically and socially, men commit the greater wrongs because they have greater opportunity to do so. With greater wrongs come greater punishments.

Now men in this society have become so wishy-washy, namby-pamby, and pathetic that they contribute little or nothing to the community or families. This unconcern, indifferent, dispirited, and irresponsibility has influenced tens of millions of men in this nation, and has hurt marriages and future marriages and families.

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While there are many character traits for a man to develop, one of the key ones is the willingness to shoulder burdens and responsibilities. While current culture may bristle and say surely women must do so as well, there is a difference.

In Rabbi Daniel Lapin's Thought Tools article from November 25, 2014 entitled "Action Man," he writes:

Have you noticed how many men seem allergic to something broken? Often a man acquires a new car and the first thing he does is lift the hood to see if anything needs doing. Perhaps he installs a police-radar detector or buys safety valve stem caps for his tires. Here is the secret: for men, engagement means action and action means engagement. For men, connecting with someone or something usually involves action.

For a man to be happy at work, he needs to be recognized for solving problems. The uniformed services attract men partially because they are action oriented. Men meeting one another shake hands, fist bump, slap one another's shoulders or hug boisterously.

Women connect just as powerfully but a delicate kiss precedes the important, non-physical, animated conversation. For women engagement often means talking.

If you still remain in any doubt on this male-female distinction, just watch how much more actively and physically little boys play with their peers than little girls with theirs. Or notice how women in marriage seek more conversation while men would like more physical interaction. Both want to engage with their spouses; each gender goes about it a little differently.

Young men who are perhaps insufficiently active in their business lives sometimes undergo dramatic change upon marriage. God created males in such a way that it is impossible to enjoy ultimate connection with a wife without action on the part of the male. This reality can spread benefits to every part of their lives, particularly financial.

Isaac . . . appears in the opening verses of Genesis 21. Strangely, for the longest time, we do not see him doing anything or even saying anything. Finally, when he is in his thirties, comes the seminal binding of Isaac upon the sacrificial altar.

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At the age of thirty-seven, for the very first time, he speaks [on record in the Bible], asking, "Where is the lamb for the sacrifice?" We find that in Genesis 22:7. Immediately after this comes Sarah's death and burial. There is a greater obligation upon a child to mourn and bury a parent than upon a man to bury his wife, yet Isaac is missing in action.

Next comes selecting a wife for Isaac and, once again, the man of the moment is nowhere to be seen. Abraham arranges all with Eliezer who subsequently finds Rebecca and brings her back. We find that in Genesis 24:1-61.

Finally, Isaac returns from a journey and goes out to the field to pray. He sees Rebecca and springs into action.

Verse 67 tells us the story here.

**Genesis 24:67** Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

Continuing on with the quote here:

Isaac then becomes active, burying his father, Abraham, just as we would expect. He prays for his wife and they have two sons Jacob and Esau. He relocates his family to Gerar, digs wells, and initiates a special blessing to his sons fifty-seven years before his death. He sends Jacob away to Rebecca's family and lives to be 180 years old, whereupon his two sons bury him.

What suddenly caused Isaac to become so active cementing his place as the second of the three forefathers of Israel? The process of becoming a husband and a father changed him. Indeed, Abraham sought out a wife for him but Isaac alone embraced Rebecca, brought her into the tent of his late mother, loved her, and fathered her two sons.

I have often discussed how God built our bodies to reflect our spiritual realities. I have explained about eyes and ears, and taught on the internal asymmetry and external symmetry of our bodies. Now, I will point out how

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God made human males sexually distinct from virtually all other male mammals.

Reproduction is made possible in almost every mammal male—including gorillas and baboons—by means of a rigid bone, called a baculum, which facilitates the mating process.

However, for human males no such material aid exists. Mating depends entirely upon the spiritual desire the man feels for his wife. God wanted human male/female connections to be so much more than biological. If reproduction is the only goal, a rigid bone coming into play is immensely useful.

However, if God's main goal is for authentic connection on every level to take place between a man and woman, then a baculum would detract from the relationship, making it merely physical. God's design of the human male without a baculum ensures that the man is fully invested in the connection. His mind cannot be elsewhere; if it is, there will be no connection. He cannot be distracted or uninterested; if he is, there will be no connection.

Connection and engagement are linked to action. That action only becomes possible if authentic connection exists. (In the case of rape or a prostitute or hook-ups, the sinful connection may be one of anger, scorn or selfishness, but it still takes the man's total and complete attention.) This connection between action and marriage that helps pinpoint Isaac's becoming active, also explains the remarkable correlation between men, their marital status, and the amount of money they make.

In the United States, single men of every background are the poorest demographic in society. Married men tend to be active and engaged and few things are better indicators of wealth creation.

In the biblical world, as we look at the Scriptures, men tend to fill leadership roles, making masculinity more diverse than the more specifically defined roles of females.

Beginning with the creation of Adam, men are usually portrayed as the leader of the two sexes and therefore male characters in the Bible are often written of in more detail, as well as more harshly criticized and judged. Notice how much more extensive Adam's punishment is than Eve's here in Genesis 3.

**Genesis 3:16-19** To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return."

Eve and all women receive a curse that will affect them with regard to pregnancy and childbirth. Adam and all men received the curse that would affect them with regard to their entire life.

From the earliest days of Adam, one of man's God-given jobs is to support women in giving birth. That does not mean merely learning controlled breathing techniques. It means being solid, trustworthy, and mature enough that the woman would feel sufficiently secure, that she will agree to become pregnant and have a child. It also means being willing to end adolescence and shoulder the awesome obligations of being a husband and father.

It means that earning money should be taken seriously as a noble endeavor, in which a man can provide for his family, no matter what credentials, talents, or salary his wife has.

Even though the Bible focuses on things distinctive of men compared to women, the Bible as a whole, maintains the spiritual equality of men and women before God.

**Galatians 3:28** There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Spiritually speaking, we are all one in the church, trying to become as unified as possible under God's direction and Holy Spirit.

They jointly share the things that make up essential humanity as we see in the account of the creation. Man and woman together receive the creation mandate to be fruitful and

multiply and have dominion over creation:

**Genesis 1:27-28** So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them [Husband and wife, both, have this responsibility of dominance over the earth], “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Men and women share the image of God and together they meet each other’s needs for companionship, with women being created so that man would have a human companion and thus be complete. It takes two to be complete in the humanity form.

**Genesis 2:18** And the Lord God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”

**Genesis 2:21-24** And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

The very pairing of man and woman in the assertion, “male and female He created them,” implies that together the two sexes make up humanity. The great manifestation of this essential unity is marriage between a man and a woman only, anything else is an affront to God and an abomination.

I think that is why we are very likely going to see things happening in this nation due to this nation’s quick decline into homosexuality, same sex marriage, etc. We are going to see a speedup in the decline of this nation because of the perversions God’s Word.

If unity exists from the earliest pages of the Bible, so does differentiation. A woman holds a dependent position in the creation story having been created for the man as a helper and as a partner, not a slave.

Man, by contrast, is endowed with a freestanding role having been formed first for God

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alone. God soon states though that it is not good for that man should be alone. The New Testament interprets this order of creation as endowing the male of the species with a role of headship.

**I Corinthians 11:3** But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

**I Corinthians 11:8-9** For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.

The nature of a man's domestic role can be summed up by the idea of headship which is implied in the entire Old Testament social structure, as found in the law and narratives, but becomes obvious in the New Testament where such household authority extends to wife and children.

The New Testament tells believers that how fathers treat their children is a sign of their ability to lead. Although fathers are not to provoke their children to anger, they are also to keep their children under control with all dignity. If they are not able to handle their own household they cannot take on responsibilities of leadership in their household or in the church. Human fatherhood is thus a role that demands leadership and godliness.

Another important role of men is that of the husband. Paul ascribes the two-fold obligation to husbands: 1) they must be head of their wife, and 2) they must love their wife.

**Ephesians 5:25-26** Husbands, love your wives [Why does God have to tell husbands that? Because husbands have a problem with loving their wives.], just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

This shows that Christ takes care of and love the church.

**Ephesians 5:28-29** So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

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Ungodly husbands in the Bible fail in one or both of these obligations, not loving their wives or not being the leader in their household. Sometimes even godly men do not perform the role of husband adequately.

Now in addition to examples of godly husbands, the New Testament gives an ideal portrait of marriage under the lordship of Christ.

**Ephesians 5:23** For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

The marriage relationship is now set in a new context under Christ, with both husband and wife called upon to enact their marital roles on the model of Christ's relationship to the church.

Women are directed to submit to their husbands, and men are commanded to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her. Such love, that men are commanded to give to their wives, should take the form of self sacrifice. A service so complete that men ought to love their wives as their own bodies, "for no man ever hated his own flesh but nourishes and cherishes it."

While men are morally no worse than women, men have a propensity toward certain male vices and even though the generic or the human term "man" applies equally to both sexes, exhortations against certain bad practices call men readily to mind.

Proverbs, for example, contains admonitions to avoid bad company, violence, heavy drinking, and laziness. Many examples of such worthless men or fools occur in the Bible. The Bible details the sins to which men are especially susceptible such as greed, thirst for power, lust, and a tendency toward laziness and dissipation.

That is why I started this sermon on the subject of activity and inactivity, because one of the greatest weaknesses in men is laziness and dissipation, which the Bible calls out quite a few times.

The secret of gaining satisfaction and fulfillment in the important role of manhood is in going above and beyond in serving others.

**Matthew 5:41** And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.  
[that applies in the marriage as well]

In this simple statement there is a key to mastery over a situation. Now let us refer to Jewish history at that time to understand its true meaning. This is a picture from an occupied country.

The word used for “compels” is the verb *aggareuein*. It is a word with a history, it comes from the noun, *aggareus*, which is a Persian word meaning a courier.

The Persians had an amazing postal system. Each road was divided into stages lasting one day. At each stage there was food for the courier, water and fodder for the horses, and fresh horses for the road.

However, if by any chance, there was anything lacking, any private person could be impressed, compelled, into giving food, lodging, courses assistance, and even into carrying the message himself. The word for such compulsion was *aggareuein*.

In the end, the word came to signify any kind of forced impressment into the service of the occupying power. In occupied country, subjects could be compelled to supply food, drink, or to carry baggage. Sometimes the occupying power exercised this right of compulsion in the most tyrannical and unsympathetic way. This threat of compulsion always hung over the subjects. Palestine was an occupied country at the time of Christ.

At any moment a Jew might feel the touch of a Roman spear on his shoulder and know that he was compelled to serve the Romans. It might be in the most menial way and that in fact is what happened to Simon of Cyrene when he was compelled (*aggareuein*) to bear the cross of Jesus.

So then what Jesus is saying is: “Suppose your masters come to you and compel you to be a guide or porter for a mile. Don’t do a mile with bitter and obvious resentment, go two miles with cheerfulness and with a good grace.”

What Jesus is saying is do not be always thinking of your liberty to do as you like; be always thinking of your duty and your privilege to be of service to others. When a task is laid on you, even if the task is unreasonable and hateful, do not do it as a grim duty to be resented, do it as a service to be gladly rendered.

There are always two ways of doing things. Man can do the irreducible minimum and not a stroke more; he can do it in such a way as to make it clear that he hates the whole thing doing the bare minimum of efficiency and no more. Or he can do it with a smile; with courtesy; with a determination, and not only to do what is asked of him but to do it well and graciously.

Albert Hubbard, an American writer, publisher, artist, and philosopher provides this insight: "The highest reward that God gives us for good work is the ability to do better work." That is a biblical principle but just stated in a different way. He can do it, not simply as well as he has to, but far better than anyone has any right to expect him to.

The inefficient workmen, the resentful servant, the ungracious helper have not even begun to have the right idea of the Christian life. The Christian is not concerned to do as he likes, he is concerned only to help even when the demand for help is discourteous, unreasonable, and tyrannical.

So then in Matthew 5:41, under the guise of vivid Eastern pictures, Jesus is laying down three great rules: 1) the Christian will never resent or seek retaliation for any insult, however calculated and however deadly. 2) The Christian will never stand upon his legal rights or on any other rights he may believe himself to possess. (Of course that has to be done in balance.) 3) The Christian will never think of his right to do as he likes, but always of his duty to be of help.

Now the question is: how do we measure up to that? In the instance in Matthew 5:41, Jesus instructed His disciples to be willing to carry a burden twice as far as they were compelled. You recognize the fundamental principle that the only way to take the burden out of work is an abundant willingness to do more than is required.

Going the second mile is the way in which a man lightens his burdens and learns to enjoy his responsibility as a man. A halfhearted effort emits nothing in satisfaction. As one devotes himself to his family, going beyond the call of duty to be as completely responsible as possible, he experiences satisfying fulfillment. Another great principle of truth was given in Luke 9, when Jesus said:

**Luke 9:24** For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.

As one loses himself in the responsibilities that are his, forgetting his personal selfish desires, devoting himself to making a success of the calling God has given him, he finds himself.

Woodrow Wilson, the 28th president of the United States, is credited with this insight: "Every man comes to himself when he is left off being wholly preoccupied with his own powers and interests and with every petty plan that centers in himself, when he has

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cleared his eyes to see the world as it is and his own true place and function in it.”

King David was a man of action who faithfully serve the Lord God. He charged Solomon to obey in the matter of building a temple and to keep the law of the Lord in every way. To do so would bring blessing. Finally, David pointed out to Solomon the extent of David’s preparation.

The king had accumulated one hundred thousand talents of gold, which is about 3,750 tons; one million talents of silver, which is about 37,500 tons. Altogether 41,250 tons or 82 ½ million pounds which was a staggering amount of weight and value. Now notice David's exhortation to Solomon here in I Chronicles 22.

**I Chronicles 22:15-16** “Moreover there are workmen with you in abundance: woodsmen and stone cutters, and all types of skillful men for every kind of work. Of gold and silver and bronze and iron there is no limit. Arise and begin working, and the Lord be with you.”

There was David's instruction to Solomon, “Arise and begin working, and the Lord be with you.” That is what every man, every Christian man has as direction. David’s exhortations to the leaders of Israel to seek the Lord entails active obedience to the divine command, “Arise and build the sanctuary of the Lord God.”

It is also important that a man takes pride in his many manly responsibilities. These duties, he realizes, are his alone, he does not lean on his wife and children or others in his family, nor does he expect society to support him. The job is his and a masculine man takes pride in his God-given responsibility.

If his burdens become heavy he does not run away from them or turn to others for assistance, he looks to himself and God for solutions. He may have to reorganize his life, re-evaluate his situation, and possibly eliminate unnecessary obligations which have been placed upon him.

But he independently solves his problems, as best he can and then carries on. This is what it means to have pride in one’s masculine responsibility. This is not to say that there will not be emergencies when one must turn to others; when it is impossible to independently solve the problems. Only when no other avenue of solution within himself is available does he turn to others for help.

This is not to suggest that asking for help is wrong. There are many times when

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masculine men work together with others to accomplish tasks. It means do not be lazy about doing your own work first for your family, before you ask for help from others.

This begs the question: should a Christian be proud? Pride or boasting is proper only when its focus and source is God.

**I Corinthians 1:31** that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord."

The Old Testament language for pride is used to express God's excellence, exaltation, and majesty. God's sanctuary in Israel was a legitimate source of pride as long as it was God-centered. Likewise the faithful can boast in the Lord and in the cross of Christ.

**Galatians 6:14** But God forbid that I [Paul is speaking here] should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Godly pride is only manifested with love, humility, and sincerity of heart. Notice when the apostle Paul writes of boasting it is always in reference to boasting about the righteousness of others, not of oneself.

**II Corinthians 5:12** For we do not commend ourselves again to you, but give you opportunity to boast on our behalf, that you may have an answer for those who boast in appearance and not in heart.

There is an indication there, "for those who boast in appearance [hypocrisy] not in heart."

**II Corinthians 7:4** Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation.

**II Corinthians 8:24** Therefore show to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love and of our boasting on your behalf.

**Galatians 6:1** Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest

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you also be tempted.

Now to avoid personal responsibilities, while seeking to help another can be to sin. There must be the spirit of meekness as we seek to help others, not thinking that we are better than they are because they need our help.

I have seen this many times over the years where people will go help somebody else and the person really does not want their help, but they do it anyway trying to solve their problems, forcing them to do things their way. That is wrong, especially when you are shirking your own responsibilities and family. Continuing on in Galatians 6:

**Galatians 6:2-3** Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

Something must be laid aside if a believer is to be a burden-bearer, and that is conceit. Conceit is an attitude that breeds intolerance of error in others and causes one to think he is above failure. The remedy for self conceit is found in verse 4,

**Galatians 6:4-5** But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load.

Everyone is told to test his own actions, and this means that rather than comparing himself with others he should step back and take an objective look at himself and his own accomplishments, then he can take pride in himself over what God has done in and through his life.

The Greek word *kauchema* rendered as "pride" in some translations, but in the New King James in verse 4, it is rendered as "rejoicing," means personal exultation, not sinful pride. To be pleased with what you have done; to have that godly pride in what God has enabled you to be able to do.

*The Daily Study Bible* by William Barclay adds some clarity to this passage and I want to add this in here.

Paul knew the problems that arose in any Christian society, even the best of

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men slip up. In verse one the word Paul uses is *paratoma* [translated as “trespass”] does not mean a deliberate sin but rather a slip, as might come to a man on an icy road or a dangerous path.

The danger of those who are really trying to live the Christian life is that they are apt to judge the sins of others hardly. There is an element of hardness in many a good man. There many good people to whom you could not go and sob out a story of failure in defeat, they would be likely unsympathetic.

But Paul says that if a man does make a slip, the real Christian duty is to get him on his feet again. The word he uses for “to correct” is used for executing a repair, or for the work of the surgeon in removing a growth from a man's body, or in setting a broken limb.

The whole atmosphere of the word stresses not the punishment, but rather the cure. The correction is thought of not as a penalty, but as an amendment. He goes on to rebuke conceit and gives a recipe whereby it may be that may well be avoided.

We are to compare our achievement, not with the work of our neighbors, but with what our best would have been. When we do that there can never be any cause for conceit.

Twice in the passage Paul speaks about bearing burdens. There is a kind of burden which comes to a man from the chances and changes of life. It is fulfilling the law of Christ to help everyone who has such a burden to carry. But there is also a burden which a man must bear himself and the word Paul uses is the word for a soldier's pack. There is a duty which none can do for us and a task for which we must be personally responsible”

Now although the apostle Paul speaks of a healthy pride we should have in ourselves and others, the word pride in Scripture is more frequently used to refer to a very negative character trait that can be described as arrogant, conceited, and haughty. This of course we want to avoid and we must be careful to have the right kind of pride.

The real masculine success of a man comes only when he has a close relationship with his Creator. Without that it is impossible for a man to reach the potential God has given him.

There is a natural tendency in men to be selfish, beginning in infancy. We observe this trait in tiny children who will take things away from one another without a twinge of

conscience, or try to have their way in spite of inconveniences to others.

In infants such behaviors are not necessarily “objectionable” because we understand their innocence. Children tend to outgrow some of this self-centeredness quite readily, partly because of the teaching of the parents, but more because of their experience in the world. They soon realize that they must lose their selfishness if they are to get along in the world.

When a nation reaches a point of narcissistic selfishness it implodes upon itself, it disintegrates from within. We can see that very vividly now in this nation. The problem is that most people lose only the amount of selfishness necessary to get along with others and they fail to grow beyond this point. They fail to attain a high degree of self/essness, and that is one that is one of the principle goals of life. Instead their main focus is upon their own lives and what is good for them.

The main point is that selflessness leads to spiritual growth. It is important to understand that our spiritual growth is in direct proportion with our growth in selflessness. If we are growing to be more and more unselfish then we are growing in spirit. However if we retain our self-centered tendencies then we fail to grow in spirit.

What is true selflessness? Selflessness is a willingness to give up one's own comfort or advantage for the benefit of someone else. There must be an element of sacrifice in a truly unselfish act. This means giving up some pleasure, comfort, or material thing of value to you. It means going to some trouble, risk, or inconvenience; going out of your way for the benefit of someone else.

Now there are some acts which are termed unselfish which in reality are not. Such things include the giving away of something you really do not need or want anymore; doing something for someone else which is little, if any, trouble to you; or giving a small donation to the church or poor. These may be acts of kindness, but they are not truly unselfish acts since they do not require sacrifice.

To grow in selflessness it is necessary to lose our self-centered tendencies. We must learn to think less of ourselves, our comforts, and conveniences, and to think more of others. Selflessness takes place with in the spirit in men and is not merely a superficial act of giving.

For example many of the extremely wealthy in the world give billions of dollars to charities and you would think that that would be unselfish act but it is not because they expect to get gain back from it.

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**Romans 12:1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

To a certain extent, man's world is one which encourages and cultivates selfishness and there is constantly before man his responsibility to provide for his family. The demands are ever increasing and not always predictable.

Despite careful planning the need for money is ever pressing with the responsibility resting upon the head of the family. With a greater portion of his time allocated to earning a living, the emphasis in a man's life may be too strongly centered in his effort to acquire things for himself.

The only way this problem can be relieved is to avoid a standard of living which is too high so that a man is somewhat relieved of the strain of earning a living and can cultivate a spirit of selflessness for others.

In this society we are often, and in many ways, pressured to live beyond our means. This nation promotes selfishness and we have to work very hard to get out of that. We are constantly fighting the world in all areas of life.

Another phase of a man's life which encourages selfishness is the fierce competition of the business world. One almost has to adopt a slogan "every man for himself" in order to succeed, with the great pressure and incentive to watch out for what is of one's own interest. It requires a great deal of intellectual integrity to decide what may be selfish or not in business relationships.

The principles of integrity dictate that any business arrangement should be as nearly an equal arrangement as possible, considering costs, risks, and effort that each contributes. It need not be a 50/50 deal, since both parties may not contribute the same, but for that which is contributed the chance for each to profit should be compensated.

Now remember however that a Christian is not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers, even in business, because compromise of integrity is required. Unless the deal is good for both parties it is not good for either. This is not only a principle of integrity, it is a principle of success.

We see consistent and often total failure of leadership by our legislators who feel it is their duty to bring special advantages to the community that they represent, regardless

of the disadvantage other communities might sustain as a result.

For example, instead of pushing for general economic advantages, they push for the continuance of a government project in their area which may not actually be productive enough to justify its existence. At the same time they will oppose a similar project in another area with which they are not greatly concerned.

Such an attitude is obviously hypocritical because one will not apply to himself the same standards or criteria which he would apply to others. It is so easy to give lip service to a principle which is remote from us and expect others to do that which we cannot do ourselves. In this hypocrisy we find the seeds of many of today's social problems.

Now the man who selfishly thinks of ways to enhance his own position can be sorely tempted to use any expedient means to do so, regardless of the legality or ethics involved. So his selfishness has driven him to other evils of character. A construction takes place in his personality, a narrowness of viewpoint, diminishing his power to be effective.

It is ironic that in his selfish drive for material things or advantage, a man sets in motion forces which make him less capable of attaining them than if he cared less about them. So the selfish man adopt traits which lead to failure, whereas the unselfish man applies principles which lead to success in every case.

If a man is to be successful in the leadership of this family, it is essential that he rule with selflessness. If he is not unselfish, if he only considers what is best for him, then his family will come to follow him only out of duty.

But if he is unselfish, always considering what is best for all family members with a willingness to sacrifice for their benefit, they will be able to put their trust in him. So we men have a choice: do we want our families to follow us only out of duty, or do we want them to follow us because they trust us?

A man should also unselfishly give of his time for the benefit of his family. Often a man will reason that in earning a living, he has already fulfilled his obligation to his family and then spends the remainder of his time in his own interests and pleasures. True selflessness means giving, not only of material goods, but of time and energy for the benefit of others.

Let me shift gears a little bit here. There is a war against men today. Society has become so heavily influenced by Satan's efforts to destroy law and order that he has

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been targeting the men of Israelitish nations around the world. Let me illustrate this with a time of war scenario with a clear picture of what is happening to men today.

The world today is going through a satanic design and instigated paradigm shift in order to bring about disunity, especially among the Israelitish nations. Men are facing a full-frontal assault on their rights, health, and culture like never before.

The war on masculinity has never been so brutal but it is not a war being waged only by women—feminists. The attack is coming directly from the top as the establishment desperately attempts to emasculate and disempower men in order to force women to be more dependent on the state, thereby enabling more power and aiding to the centralized growth of big government.

The elite believe that in order to bring about their evil one-world government they must thrust the world into chaos, totally sucking the power out of the common man, so he cannot resist them. Only then can they bring their order out of the chaos.

Here are some of the specific results of the attacks on men: fertility rates are falling in men; exposure to phthalates, which are found in many plastics, is “feminizing” boys by blocking normal male testosterone and causing genital abnormalities, according to scientists.

Positive masculine role models have been denigrated for decades. Young men consuming this propaganda grow up thinking that it is acceptable and even encouraged to aspire to these feminized and emasculated character traits. In doing so they are robbed of their natural masculinity and find it extremely difficult to attract well-rounded women who are rightly disgusted by such behavior.

Radical feminism deliberately confuses gender roles and make two young men apprehensive about exercising their masculinity for fear of being seen as overbearing or aggressive towards women. This is contributed to an entire generation of metro-sexual men who are promiscuous, unwilling to commit to a relationship, and unable to fill a woman's basic needs for healthy companionship, destabilizing society and making it more difficult for women to find suitable long-term partners with whom to have children.

Feminism also advances the doctrine of cultural Marxism, which claims that oppression emerges from patriarchal society and culture, not the state. Governments love cultural Marxism because it absolves them of blame. They put the blame on the male leaders who are not leading, are apathetic and inactive. They are nothing but dandies and lace-hankies.

That is who is leading this nation and we cannot let it affect us in the same way. We are Christian men, not worldly men. Worldly men have become totally perverted.

Dissident feminist, Camille Paglia, wrote a Wall Street Journal piece in which she warned: "What you are seeing is how a civilization commits suicide!" She was referring to how the emancipation of masculine virtues by the establishment threatens to create massive destabilization in society due to less and less men being able to fill traditionally masculine roles in the job market.

Paglia points to schools cutting recess; the effort to deny the biological distinctions between men and women; and the left's characterization of controversial opinions as "hate speech," as examples of how masculinity is being deliberately eroded.

"Masculinity is just becoming something that is imitated from the movies. There is nothing left. There is no room for anything manly right now," warns Paglia, adding that, "young men have no models of manhood."

A totalitarian society can only survive if the male population has been gelded, emasculated, and disenfranchised. With this natural bulwark against tyranny removed, the elite can centralize power and pursue collectivist tyranny unopposed. This is why men and masculinity are under assault on every level.

Increasingly in this evil society it is hard to distinguish between masculine and feminine roles. Elbert Hubbard provides this wisdom, "Know what you want to do, hold the thought firmly, and do every day what should be done and every sunset will see you that much nearer to your goal."

Being a real man has nothing to do with drinking any particular brand of beer, or driving a truck instead of a car. It has to do with using your strength, whether weak or strong, in the service of others. Giving all you have in the service of others is an integral part of being a real Christian man and helped to animate this nation in its early history, and also every other successful society.

Christ's maleness inescapably presents a model for men to emulate. Though His call to follow Him is extended equally to males and females, men should especially take note of Jesus' words in John 15, because men struggle more with loving than women do.

**John 15:13** Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

Your families and the brethren are all certainly part of that general category of “friends.” Of course this sacrificial service, as a definition of a real manliness, is not the only one but a culture is defined, in part, by how it answers the question: what defines a man? One can almost define a culture by the choices its people make in this area.

The end result of ignoring this question in our families, church, and nation is generations of young men who have no motivation to work or to serve; young men who feel no shame in living indefinitely in the parent's home; no shame in taking much and giving little in return.

These young men, many of whom are white men living in suburbs, do not have any concern about being seen as real men. It is not important to them. Why should it be since this present society demonizes and castigates men constantly? That is one outcome.

On the other hand, we are beginning to reap a fearful harvest of young men who do care about being real men and who, receiving no good guidance from the adult community about what that means, are turning instead to gang violence, street racing, or even Isis for affirmation of their masculine identity and for the rights of passage. A perverse version of masculinity.

Affluence may have played some role in the decline of the masculine ideal in North America and Europe. The more difficult to eke out survival in a particular time and place, the more strongly that culture celebrated traditional notions of manhood and masculinity.

As the manhood and masculinity of a nation declines, so does the nation. That may be part of the reason why being a real man matters less to many American boys than might have been the case a few generations earlier.

Finally, it must be understood that men and women have a higher purpose and responsibility. Man was created for fellowship with God. Unlike any of the other creatures, he has a fundamental likeness to God; he is created in the image of God.

The original intent of God, for men, is that he meets and talks with God similar to how he did in the Garden of Eden. It also becomes man's continuing intention, as he repeatedly intervenes, to draw man back to Himself so that he may train and develop us with the righteous character of Jesus Christ.

Jesus has taught us what sacrifice is all about. Ultimately our Lord and Savior Jesus

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Christ was sent for this reason as well. Man is not only to have fellowship with God, he is to glorify Him by what he is and what he does.

**I Corinthians 10:31** Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Finally, our most important function is to glorify God in Christ.

**Ephesians 1:11-12** In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

In verse 12, Paul continues the thought of verse 11 saying that God, through His Spirit, calls God's elect in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of His glory. Paul felt that it was important to emphasize this, which he does again in verse 14.

**Ephesians 1:13-14** In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

All this is to the praise of His glory. In glorifying Jesus Christ, God works through His Spirit in ourselves by leading us to Christ and by producing the righteous character of Jesus in our lives.

"Men arise and begin working and the Lord will be with you!"