

What Does a Real Man Look Like?

I taught this material on May 26, 2012 at one of our men's breakfasts. I have never been asked for a copy of my notes as many times as I was that morning. Since today is Father's Day, I thought it apropos.

My dad called me Sunday night, May 20, 2012, at 8:07 and told me that his father—my grandfather—had died an hour before. I was 36 years old at the time and that was the first time in my life that a relative of mine had died. I did not really know how to react.

My dad was doing something when he called that night that I had only heard him do twice in my entire life. My dad was crying. His heart was broken and he just missed his dad. And he was, in that moment, teaching me one more lesson about being a man.

After thinking about this lesson, I have come to the conclusion that a real man knows how to live (for Jesus), love (his family), lead (himself and those around him), and leave (this earth).

My dad has taught me many things about being a man. When I look around in our society, I feel that we have a lack of men. We have boys who can shave, but we have very few real men.

What does a man look like?

In the Bible, there is no single passage that says, "This is what a man looks like." Men do not have a **Proverbs 31**. However, there are many examples in the Bible, so let us look at a few.

David and Goliath

The first two men are David and Goliath. **1 Samuel 17** records the account of David and Goliath. Usually, Goliath is painted as the ultimate bad guy. Goliath is a Philistine. Goliath is a pagan. Goliath is an enemy of Israel. Goliath is an enemy of Yahweh. Goliath is the bad guy.

Goliath is also the only person in the entire Old Testament referred to as a **champion**. The Hebrew word for champion is *benayim* (bay-NIGH-em). It means a bad dude. It literally means the space between two camps. The champion would emerge and fight the enemy's champion to determine who would win the war. This warfare method spared thousands of lives, but it was very risky.

1 Now the Philistines gathered their armies together to battle . . . 2 And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together . . . 3 The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, with a valley between them.

4 And a champion went out from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath . . .

16 And the Philistine drew near and presented himself forty days, morning and evening.

So, what do we know about Goliath? He was willing to stand in the space between two camps and fight for his country. He was big. He was consistent. He was missing something. Goliath was missing God.

While the Bible does not call him one, David is also a champion in this passage. He also steps into the space between two camps to fight for his country and for God: **45 Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 46 This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. 47 Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD’s, and He will give you into our hands.”**

And God did! We all recognize that David won this fight because of God. Let me put it this way: it takes **God** to be a real man. You might look like a real man without God, but you are as powerless as Goliath trying to do life without God. Goliath’s armor weighed more than David did. He had every earthly advantage, but he was missing God. It takes God to be a real man.

Who was the hero of this story? When David stood up, **God** was the hero of the story

In this passage, David is a type of Christ because just like David, Jesus stood in between two camps (heaven and hell) and went toe to toe with our enemy—and won us the victory. We like to think that we are David in the story, but in reality, we are Saul in the story. We are unable to face our enemy and stand in need of another. We need a champion. We need Jesus. So, let us look at Jesus.

Jesus

From looking at Jesus’ life, we can see several different components of manhood: service, strength, meekness, love, compassion, a desire to seek peace, and ultimate sacrifice (just to name a few). **Luke 13:10-17** illustrates Jesus’ manhood very succinctly, so let us look there for a few minutes.

10 Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath [Jesus was where He was supposed to be, doing what He was supposed to be doing—real men **do** what they are supposed to do]. **11 And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up. 12 But when Jesus saw her** [at this time, men and women were segregated in the synagogue—men in the front, women in the back—Jesus was observant and looking for ways to help with his face to the need], **He called her to Him and said to her, “Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity** [Jesus was bold and direct in His speech].” **13 And He laid His hands on her** [Jesus was not intimidated by the social rules of that day not to speak or touch her, but was moved with compassion], **and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God** [Jesus was powerful].

14 But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, “There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day.” [This ruler knew Scripture, but when to use it]

15 The Lord then answered him and said, “Hypocrite! [Jesus was bold and was not afraid to call a spade a spade—or in this case, an actor an actor] **Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it? 16 So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the**

Sabbath?" [Jesus knew the Scripture and how to apply it. He knew that do good/get good, do bad/get bad is a false theology.] **17 And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him** [Jesus caused joy and rejoicing]. [Who was the hero of this story? When Jesus stood up, **God** was the hero of the story]

The Marks of Manhood (Albert Mohler)

We could continue to look at individual passages of Scripture for marks of manhood, but Albert Mohler put together a list that is a great picture of what a man looks like. We can also call this, "What is she looking for?" (because our wives and/or your future wives want us to be able to do these things—if you do not believe me, just ask her—she will tell you that she does want these things for you and for her) And I will be the first to tell you that I regularly fall short in this list—but God is helping me every day.

1. **Spiritual maturity sufficient to lead a wife and children** // Not that every real man will be married, but every real man should be spiritually mature to lead well. A real man leads his family because he is spiritually led by the Holy Spirit. It matters what we start with. It takes God to be a real man. We cannot be spiritually mature without God. We can look spiritually mature without God, but we cannot be spiritually mature without God. Our wives and kids need to be led by men that are led. That's what we do.
2. **Personal maturity sufficient to be a responsible husband and father** // A real man is a responsible husband and father because he is disciplined. Disciples are disciplined. Boys who can shave are not necessarily yet disciplined. Discipline takes time and lots of practice. Practice discipline every day. You can start with the disciplines of prayer, devotions, fellowship, and tithing. That's what we do.
3. **Economic maturity sufficient to hold an adult job and handle money** // A real man holds a job and knows how to handle his finances. I did not say a man makes a lot of money and invests like Warren Buffett; I said a real man holds a job and knows how to handle his finances. There is a difference. We must be economically mature and not squander our resources on things that will burn in the end. If you struggle in this area, ask for help. There are many great resources available. That's what we do.
4. **Physical maturity sufficient to work and protect a family** // A real man is strong enough to get up and go to work and to defend his family. No one in this room has ever seen me fight, but no one in this room has ever seen my wife or children threatened, either. Our wives and kids want to know they are safe with us. We must be strong enough to protect our families. We have a security rotation at our campuses because we are committed to protecting our families. That's what we do.
5. **Emotional maturity sufficient to marry and fulfill God's purposes** // A real man has his emotional (sexual) life in line with God's ideal—one man and one woman until one of them dies. Emotional (sexual) maturity extends beyond the bedroom—it extends to our thoughts, our eyes, and our computers. Our wives ought to be able to trust us—let us give them something to trust. That's what we do.

6. **Moral maturity sufficient to lead as example of righteousness** // A real man is an example of the right kind of living. I do not mean we do not do anything to avoid sin, I mean we set an example. People at our workplaces should hold us blameless (complete, having integrity; **David Guzik: Sin is vertical, blameless is horizontal**). Our bosses, our co-workers, and our employees should be able to count on us 100% to do the right thing. That's what we do.
7. **Ethical maturity sufficient to make responsible decisions** // A real man makes responsible decisions. Our friends and family should be coming to us for advice because we have set an example of wise decision-making. We should know what to do in hard situations. That's what we do.
8. **Worldview maturity sufficient to understand what is really important** // A real man prioritizes. If we spend our lives chasing after things that we could give up, we will miss things that we cannot afford to give up. Let us be men that others can point to and say, "He has his priorities in order." In case you are wondering, my priorities are: (1) God, (2) Wife, (3) Children, (4) Church, (5) Work, and then everything else. My priorities are written down and rehearsed with others (including my boss) for accountability. That's what we do.
9. **Relational maturity sufficient to understand and respect others** // A real man understands that not everyone is the same. Can we disagree without being disagreeable? There are men in this room that hold passionately differing views on politics, theology, and football. Real men respect another man's views without looking like fools. That's what we do.
10. **Social maturity sufficient to make a contribution to society** // A real man contributes. Our neighborhoods should be glad to have us as residents and neighbors. The people around our churches should be glad that Stuart Heights is in their communities. Are we consumers or producers? That website at the bottom of your handout is one of my contributions. It is not much, but it provides others with a way to know Christ. That's what we do.
11. **Verbal maturity sufficient to communicate and articulate as a man** // A real man communicates clearly. I am not saying that we have to be perfect orators, but stop saying, "like," and, "um," every five seconds. Stop ending every sentence on a high note. Look a man in the eyes, speak up, and state your view. Have some confidence in your tone and set an example. That's what we do.
12. **Character maturity sufficient to demonstrate courage under fire** // A real man is courageous. Let me take a moment to say, "Thank you," to all of our veterans. You have demonstrated courage and we are in your debt. Each of us has opportunities every single day to waffle on being courageous—to take the easy way out or to only go halfway. Go all the way for Jesus. That's what we do.
13. **Biblical maturity sufficient to lead at some level in the church** // A real man is a leader. There are leadership opportunities all over Stuart Heights. If you want to get involved, we can use you. Leaders get tired and need backups and reinforcements. There is a place in the kingdom of God for men. That's what we do.

Conclusions

1. It takes **God** to be a real man
2. When we stand up, God is the **hero** of the story
3. **Maturity** takes time and practice

Paul said in **2 Corinthians 12:2a**: **I know a man in Christ**. Are you a man in Christ? If so, keep it up! If not, step up and do the job because we need more men. I want to be remembered as a man who was a faithful servant with a long obedience in the same direction.