

The Journey to Biblical Manhood

Challenge One: Manhood

Session Two: What Is Biblical Manhood, and How Do We Get It?

Unedited Transcript

Patrick Morley

Good morning, men. If you would please turn in your Bibles to John 10:10. So, the series is the Journey to Biblical Manhood. Let's begin this morning with a shout out, and we're going to welcome Godly Warrior Men led by Mark Lambie. They're six men from 18 to 40 years of age. They're doing the video Bible study on Saturday mornings at 10 o'clock at the leader's house, because they want to have more than just a casual relationship with the Heavenly Father. They're part of Glad Tidings Church in Omaha, Nebraska, and so both here and then online I wonder if you would join me in giving a warm and a rousing welcome to the Godly Warrior Men.

One, two, three, hurrah. Welcome, guys. We are really honored to have you with us. Oh, I pushed the wrong button here, let's see. Stopwatch. So, we are in this series, the Journey to Biblical Manhood. 12 challenges, the first challenge the first three weeks. Brett opened it up last week with the big idea that the Bible guides me to the truth every time. And then I wanted to show you something that we talked about here when we had our 30th anniversary, that we were going to put a plaque up at the new building honoring the table leaders. I realize that you can't read the text, so I'll read it for you. But this is a plaque that is put on a boulder, and the boulder is now put at the new building, the new headquarters for Man in the Mirror, and it says, "In honor of the Man in the Mirror Bible study table leaders" ... I have to get a little closer to read it myself. "Thank you for 30 years of investing in the lives of men from '86 to 2016." 2 Timothy 2:2 is the verse. So to all you men who are leaders, who have been leaders, some of you probably are out there online leading somewhere else now. We wanted to have you see this for yourselves, and hopefully each of you will be able to come by the building and see it if you haven't seen it already.

All right. The first challenge in this Journey to Biblical Manhood is the challenge of manhood, the essentials of manhood. We are doing some faith and life objectives, we're giving each of you a card. Last week, the first of the challenges, Brett talked about I will understand how the Bible guides me in each of the basic areas of my life, that was the head part. This week I'm going to focus on the heart part, and then we'll do the hands part next week. The heart part is I hope to desire God and Biblical manhood more than the things that distract me from Christ. And so we're going to drill down on that a little bit today. The topic for today, the subject, the title, What is Biblical Manhood and How Do We Get It? What is Biblical Manhood, and How Do We Get It?

You know, I've just been so intrigued recently with the idea of these two competing visions, but I had a thought this morning. I said, you know, there is a Biblical manhood vision that's clearly articulated in the Bible. We do it every week here, we look at how God makes men, we look at how to be a man alive, we look at men reaching men, we look at all these different things. I realized that the problem is not so much that there's a vision for Biblical manhood and then a vision for cultural manhood, or a tepid lukewarm vision of manhood. You know what the real problem is? Is that there is no vision in culture for manhood. That vision for manhood, even from a non-Christian perspective, that broke up decades ago. And so men today, unless they have a vision for a Biblical manhood, they're stuck with no vision for manhood at all. And so we're going to take a look today at what is Biblical manhood and how do we get it, and the starting point here is that we all want the same things. Every man wants the same things.

Now, how we go about getting them, this is what's different, but all men want to feel like they're loved. All men want to feel like they're lovable. All men want to understand, to be understood. All men want to have a sense of happiness and peace. We all want the same things. Whatever vision of manhood that anybody is pursuing, it's because they want these things. And so whether it is a bucket list or the wallpaper on your computer. You know, whatever it is that you put as the wallpaper on your computer, it's not that. That's not the thing that you want, you know, the beach scene with the azure blue water and the white sand. That's not really what you want. If your bucket list, if you want to climb the Himalayas or something, that's not really what you're looking for. What we all are really looking for is not that physical thing, but the vision or the way we imagine that that thing is going to make us feel. We want to feel love.

Why do men look at pornography? Well, one of the reasons is is that they have an idea of how they think that thing is going to make them feel. It's going to make them, this is going to make me happy. This is going ... you get the idea. Yeah, don't want to pursue that too far I guess. In this world, we know that there are forces that distract us, that lure us away from this idea of Biblical manhood. There is a self-centered kind of manhood, and the reasons for this is illustrated here in John 10:10, our opening verse for the day. There are lots of verses that say the same or similar things. Let's look at John 10:10. Jesus is speaking, and he says, "The thief." Now, the thief here, we most commonly refer to the thief as meaning the Devil, and it most certainly does mean the Devil. But Jesus doesn't actually say the Devil here, and so Jesus uses the same Greek word thief to refer to himself two times in Revelations. All right, so let's not press this too far that the thief is the Devil. Yes, but it's the Devil and it's all of his lieutenants. It's all of his corporals. It's all of his ... it's everything. It's the world, the flesh, the Devil. It's anything that is a anti-Biblical manhood. That's really what we're talking about here.

The thief, it is after all a metaphor that he's using. The thief comes only to do what? To steal, to kill. The thief wants to kill you, and to destroy, to destroy you. So all of the things that you think you want that are captured on the wallpaper of your computer, there is a force in the world and an actual person, the Devil, who wants to steal that from you, who wants to destroy that, who actually wants to kill the vision that you have, even you yourself. And then Jesus goes on and he says, "I have come however that they may have life," Zoe, Z-O-E, "and have it to the full." In other words, this is the abundant life. This is what we all want. This is what we're after when we pick a certain something and put it as the wallpaper on our computer, or when we construct a bucket list. This is what we want. We want to have life, we want to have it to the full, we want to be fully alive in our manhood. These are the two visions.

These are two visions of two very different journeys that actually will take us to two very different destinations, we all know this. We all know this. The one ends in cosmic loneliness. You know, a man feels lonely, he feels alone, and so he pursues all of these other ways to find satisfaction, to find

significance, and then they ultimately betray him, and at the worst possible moment after he's given the best years of his life to a vision of manhood that never had the possibility of satisfying the deepest hungers of his heart. And so one day he wakes up and he realized, you know, not only am I alone in the world, I'm alone in the universe. I am all alone. Cosmic loneliness. It's a moment of ultimate despair. But then there's the other journey, and that's the one that the thief is trying to take care of, our opponent, but we also have an ally. By the way, Proverbs 14:12, one of your verses today says this. It says, "There is a way" ... oh gosh, just slipped right out of my mind. I mean, I've had this memorized for 30 years and I repeat it all the time. It's also in Proverbs 16. What is it? "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death." Death, cosmic loneliness, separation from God. It is horrible, it's horrible.

And I tell you another problem, another problem, there's so many problems here. We need to get some solutions and some hope and happiness, right? But, it doesn't just happen to non-Christian guys. This happens to Christian men who are trying to have their cake and eat it too, who are not pursuing Biblical manhood, they're just pursuing the best manhood that they can. All right. So two journeys, one ends in cosmic loneliness, second journey that ends in this abundant life. So, for the Christian guys now, just for the Christian guys now, some of you might be here as seekers, but for those of you who are believers, what's the difference between whether you pursue Biblical manhood or this other kind of manhood that ends up being tepid and lukewarm and self-centered? Cultural manhood. Biblical manhood, cultural manhood. What's the difference?

The difference is where you place the authority for your life. Do you have a fixed, immovable, intractable, moral authority to which you have submitted yourself? That's the difference, because the man who is doing what seems right in his own eyes, because culture doesn't give him a real vision for manhood, so he's just out pursuing manhood the best he can. He's doing what seems right in his own eyes. He's taking his cues from where? From music? From movies? From coaches and teachers and pastors and actors? And so there's this kind of hodge-podge vision of manhood. But he's basically, today men are basically having to come up with this vision on their own, unless they have a Godly father. Unless they have a Godly father who understands Biblical manhood, who has brought himself under the authority of Scripture and is living his life one way. That's one of my credos, one life, one way.

You know, I don't want to be a different person in public than I am in private. And so why would you want to, but you could take my computer, I think I've mentioned this before, my computer. I don't care, anybody can look at my computer that wants to, because there's absolutely, you will never find anything on my computer that is different in private than I'm trying to portray myself in public. Now, I've worked hard at that, and some of you are working hard at that, and it's not easy necessarily, but it is now. It should be encouraging to you that after four decades of somebody walking with God, that it actually works, you know. I mean, it would be a little disappointing if I was up here and I say, "Well, I'm still struggling with all these things that I was struggling with back in the day." No, because the Journey to Biblical Manhood actually brings you to an abundant life, it does. It does.

Wow, there are a lot of things I want to say to you today, but the bottom line is this. Without the Bible, every path that doesn't seem obviously evil will seem okay. There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death. But with the Bible, there is a robust, promising, satisfying kind of manhood. And the solution, the way we get this, the big idea for the day ... whoops, I guess I should say we've been talking about the battle for men's souls. The big idea for the day, this is how we get to the Biblical manhood. I don't just read my Bible. I let my Bible read me, you see. I don't just read my Bible, I let my Bible read me. If you want to have ... last week was the head, this week is the heart. If you want to have a heart for God, if you want to desire God, it's to marinate. I love laying out on a float and just

thinking about, between the paragraphs of the Bible. I love just letting my mind ooze through the words, and just letting this osmosis take place. I don't just read it and walk away, and you don't either, hopefully. You know, the idea's not just to read the Bible, it's to let the Bible also read us, speak to us.

Brett talked about, last time about how every time he comes to the Bible, no matter how many times he comes to the Bible, it always says something new to him. That's because he's letting the Bible read him. Okay, so let's talk about, a little bit about a vision for Biblical manhood. Wow. I'm already so far behind where I wanted to be. All right, so basically, the vision for manhood is the difference between surrender and control. The vision for cultural manhood is that I want to be in charge. I control you! I control me! I control my circumstances. That's it. It's control. The vision for cultural manhood is to be in control of your environment, of other people, of yourself, to be in charge. The master [inaudible] of faith, "that's the way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death" ... versus surrender. By the way, we contrast things because when you contrast something, it throws it into sharper relief, so surrender should be contrasted with control. Surrender is that Jesus in John 14:6, another one of our verses for the day, He says, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father except through me." So Jesus has this vision of Biblical manhood.

Who is the most perfect example of Biblical manhood who's ever walked the face of the planet? That would be Jesus Christ. And so the vision for Biblical manhood is the vision to have Jesus as our, not only our savior, not only our Lord, but our exemplar that we would imitate the pattern that he's laid down for us. He is the vision for Biblical manhood, and the way we embrace that is we surrender our lives to Him. We surrender our lives to Him. How do we do that? What's the best way to do that? It's to not only read our Bibles, it's to let our Bibles read us. Every word of scripture inspired by God. Psalm 119:9-11, "How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your Word." "I have laid up your Word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." I let my Bible read me too.

Finally, let's look at some practices that can help you distinguish opportunity from distraction. At the end, we're going to do in this series what Brett started last week. We're going to do a shorter message up front, and then we're going to have you do discussion time, and then we're going to come back and I'm going to give you like Brett did a pop quiz. We'll ask those three questions from the front, and then I'm going to have a couple of you give some of the answers that you came up with from your tables. What are the practices that can help us distinguish opportunity from distraction? You know, if you're a businessman, a salesman, you know that one of the biggest difficulty you have is figuring out what's an opportunity and what's a distraction. You know, you've been praying about this thing for months, who knows, maybe years, that you would have this opportunity to get involved with this particular ministry, and then finally, finally the opportunity opens up. And then what happens? You get offered a job for 20% more money than you've ever made before, to go somewhere else and not do the thing. Is that an opportunity or a distraction?

That's one of the most difficult things I've found in my whole life, is just how do you distinguish between opportunity and distraction? And so there's some practices that Jesus has given us, Jesus our exemplar, the one who is our vision of the Biblical manhood. These would all come under the umbrella, if you will, of becoming a disciple, or becoming the disciple-making disciple. I'm going to give you four practices. The first is that Jesus said in Luke 14:26 and 7, he said, "If you do not deny yourself and take up your cross and follow me, you cannot be my" what? Disciple. And so the first practice, I'm going to use the words of a journey of daily surrender. A journey of daily surrender. It's to come humbly each day to the foot of the cross, and negotiate the terms of what I have to do to make that full, total, complete

surrender to the lordship of Jesus Christ today. One way to do that is through our prayer of life. I'm sure I've said it before, if I haven't, I'll say it now.

But I start each day, Father, I come to meet with and abide with you, and I pray that you would meet with and abide with me. Lord Jesus, I come to meet with you and abide with you, and I pray that you would meet and abide with me. Your much love ... first of all, the Father, your much loved, I say your much loved son, and with Jesus I say your much loved friend and servant. And then Holy Spirit, I come to meet with and abide with you and I pray that you would meet with and abide with me, your much loved disciple and vessel. So, I am God's much loved son, His friend, His servant, His disciple, His vessel. And then I say, Lord Jesus, today I do make a full, total, complete surrender of my life to your lordship in my life. I pray that prayer virtually every day, I pray that prayer. That brings me into the presence of the Almighty, and brings me into a state of at least expressing the desire to lead a surrendered life. Why do I need to do that? Because within an hour, within a half hour of making that prayer, the thief comes to steal, to kill and to destroy.

There is a battle for men's souls that's taking place. It's not just out there, it's my soul, and it's every day. Now, at this point, Satan is like a little flea, you know, just you flick him off. You know, greater is he who is in you than he who is in the world, and so you can just flick him off. I mean, you know, not that way, flick him off this way, you know. And then, secondly is a journey of love. A new command I give you that you love one another. All men will know you are my what? Disciples. If you what? Love one another. So, a journey of love, loving God, loving people. Galatians 5:14, the law is summed up in a single command, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Third is a journey of service. John 15:8, "This is to My Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be My" what? My disciples. And then fourth would be a journey of growing and abiding in the truth, like Brett was talking about last time. John 8:31 and 32, "If you abide in me and my words abide in you, then you really are my" what? Disciples. "And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Set you free from what? Doing what seems right in your own eyes. From the journey to cosmic loneliness.

So there are four practices for you. You know, I have the men who come regularly here, guys online, visitors here or whatever. If you're here regularly, you know this, but I have the ministry home repairs, and God has shown me in the last few weeks that even though I have an inordinate number of home repairs, I do use each of those opportunities, except I rebelled one time, and that was like two weeks ago. I did, I rebelled. I had two plumbers come to the house, and I said, "God, I'm not doing this anymore. I'm not reaching out to these guys," and I didn't. Anyway, and then the Lord convicted me and I'm back on path with lots of more home repairs. But anyway, so I've got this ministry of home repairs, but the Lord showed me, He said, you know, He said, "I am well able to replace all the money that you're having to spend on home repairs. You just be faithful. You just be faithful."

And so I said I didn't minister to the plumbers, I did do a little something because I could tell one of them was a master plumber, and I said to the other one, I said, "You're in training, aren't you? You're an apprentice." And he said, "Yes sir, I am." And I said, "Well, I just want you to know that you have picked a noble vocation. Plumbing makes the world spin a little smoother. Without plumbing, the world will tilt on its axis." And he's 26, 27, you should've seen his face light up. Nobody had ever given him a vision of what Biblical manhood in work might look like.

It was amazing. It was amazing, and that's what got me thinking, you know, I think part of the problem is is that for a lot of men today, there is no vision for manhood. You and I, we have the vision for Biblical manhood. Jesus Christ is the vision for Biblical manhood, and the way we embrace this Biblical manhood, how we win the battle for our souls, how we practice these habits that can help us distinguish opportunity from distraction, is captured in the big idea. I don't just read my Bible, I let my Bible read me.

Take a few minutes, go ahead and discuss the questions at your table, and as Brett, I love the way Brett puts it, he's a New Englander, he gets away with saying things I can't as a southerner. But remember what he said, he said, "Politics, sports, whatever else," he said, "talk about those at 8 o'clock at your breakfast group, but right now, let's talk about these questions." And so if you do that, then I'll come back when we have about five minutes left.

Okay, let's gather ourselves back. And so the first question, what are the forces at work in a culture that lure us towards a tepid lukewarm self-centered manhood? And from a couple of different tables, give an answer. Somebody over this side. Have an answer? Nobody on this side has an answer? Over here.

John:

Yeah, so we talked about political correctness, especially in the corporate culture.

Pat Morley:

Ah, political correctness in the corporate culture.

John:

And involving the women's movement, not to be sexist, but how the culture has changed [crosstalk 00:31:07] how many of us men struggle with changes that have brought about, especially in the corporate world today. They have to debate if you're wrong or if the things you've done for 40 years are incorrect, and you have to change if you want to stay in that job.

Pat Morley:

Okay. That's – boy that about – all right, well that wraps that one up. So, could everybody hear John? Okay, good, good. Why don't, let's all ... would it be comfortable to stand and give the answers? You don't have to, but if you would. And then how about on this side. Who has a better answer than that? Yeah.

Speaker 3:

I'm embarrassed to stand.

Pat Morley:

What's your answer?

Speaker 3:

Okay. Family breakdowns because of video games, social media, and an incessant interest in sports at all different levels, which are wrecking our families every week, whose kids are playing a little AAU stuff all over the country, and so that's three factors why we are struggling with manhood.

Pat Morley:

All right, there you go. That's good, good answers, okay. Now, number two, question number two. Our scriptures today describe two very different journeys, and what are the forces at work that are leading us or beckoning us toward a Biblical manhood? This side. Over here, Keith.

Keith:

It's the Holy Spirit, is the one that we need to surrender to.

Pat Morley:

Oh, okay. You're just trying to ruin it for everybody else, so nobody else can have a shot at an answer. That works. Okay, how about over here? Yes, go.

Speaker 5:

Yeah, I'd say that the emptiness so many people feel that, especially if you're getting a little older, you wonder what is there to come. And so, and like you said, the Spirit, there's a force in us, no matter who, believe it or not, that beckons us to God.

Pat Morley:

Okay, so as you get older, you're feeling it. You're feeling the need to not-

Speaker 5:

Not necessarily – but you're looking for a better answer, that the Spirit's in you saying, "This is the answer."

Pat Morley:

All right. So, one of the forces at work is the Holy Spirit. One of the forces at work is as you said as we get older. You know, I'll talk about this next week a little bit, but there is a body of work out there that does say that when men get to the age of about 35, something happens. There's a switch that gets flipped inside of them. I'm actually going to write a book about it, but we'll talk a little bit more about it next week. Over here.

Speaker 6:

Well, I saw a commercial just the other day. A group of men, all in suits running in the field, and all of a sudden all of them stick their head in the ground. Now, it reminded me of the ostrich. But it also reminded me of what manhood is today. We're hiding and we're sticking our butts out [inaudible 00:34:18].

Pat Morley:

All right, so how is that a force that beckons us toward Biblical manhood?

Speaker 6:

Well, because we've got to get our heads out of the ground.

Pat Morley:

All right, get your head out of – yeah, well. All right. Anybody else have anything on that one? Okay. Okay, last, last word on this one.

Speaker 7:

When you're on that journey with the Holy Spirit, there will be confirmations.

Pat Morley:

Okay, all right. When you're on the journey, there will be confirmations, absolutely. Great, great, great answers. Okay, number three. Which of the practices mentioned today would most help you accelerate toward Biblical manhood or some other practice? All right. For you, this is like the application question. This is not like I'm speaking for the world on behalf of all men, this is I'm speaking for myself on behalf of myself, okay. This side. Who'd like to take a shot?

Speaker 8:

Doing what we're doing right now, this big part.

Pat Morley:

Doing what we're doing right now, which is?

Speaker 8:

Which is getting together with other men and even couples if you really wanted to have Bible study and really talking about things that matter and bringing God into the daily life.

Pat Morley:

All right. Good. What else? Aubrey.

Aubrey:

Growing and abiding in the truth I think for me is important, you know, the thing you were talking about about just having scripture in your mind, maybe doing scripture memory or just focusing more on Bible study personally.

Pat Morley:

All right, all right. More focus on Bible study. Hey, the Bible study thing, it's so interesting. As I've mentioned, some of you would remember this, well, hopefully some of you remember. But anyway, when I read through the Bible each year, my goal is not to read the Bible every day. My goal is to read the Bible through cover to cover in the year, so I don't worry if I miss a day here or there. You know, just like, am I reading the Bible this morning? No, I'm here at the Bible study reading the Bible in a different way, but I'm not reading the daily reads. And so the upshot of that is that if you want to read the Bible, it's like anything else. It's the tortoise and the hare. It is important to do a little bit on a regular basis. If you're going to read through the Bible in a year and you skip two weeks and you look at what's happened by not doing it for two weeks, it's overwhelming isn't it? So just do a little bit every day or almost every day. Yeah, that's the biggest thing on the Bible reading. That in terms of the big idea today, I don't just read my Bible, I let my Bible read me. Yeah, just to be in it a little bit almost every day.

Okay, over here. Yes, Daniel.

Daniel:

This is a personal question. For me, I think something that would help me lead back towards the Biblical manhood is actually spending time in the morning, starting my day off right in the Word, and then like you said for the big idea of the day, not just reading my Bible, because you can read and pass through it. But if you're meditating in it, if you're taking hold of it, thinking about it throughout the day, then that sets me up to have my mind focus on the Word.

Pat Morley:

And that's the last word. All right, let's pray. All right. Dearest Father in Heaven. Lord, first of all, we slow down here just to humble ourselves before your goodness, your greatness. Lord, we are here because we are absolutely committed to Biblical manhood. We pray Father that over the course of this whole series, that you would just continue to open up our minds, but not only just to give us the head knowledge, but to give us this heart, this desire for a Biblical manhood that would be so all-consuming to us that it would literally take over our lives, Lord, and it would also be enough to keep away the opponent who would steal to kill and destroy. We ask this in Jesus' name, who is our example of Biblical manhood, amen.