

The Christian Husband: God's Job Description for a Man's Most Challenging Assignment by Bob Lepine, Regal Books, Grand Rapids, MI: 2009. (39 Quotes selected by Doug Nichols)

1. Six Stages of Maturity of a Godly Man

In the early 1990s, Robert Hicks studied six Hebrew words for man: *Adam* (a human creature), *zakar* (a male), *gobbor* (a warrior), *enosh* (a weak or feeble man), *ish* (a husband) and *zaken* (an old or bearded man). Hicks concluded that each word embodied the defining characteristics of a man at various stages in his life, moving from basic biology to spiritual wisdom and maturity. Each man's journey, Hicks suggested, will move him from one stage to the next, with the goal of becoming a *zaken*—a man marked by godly wisdom. (Page 23)

2. Man Is Equally Responsible with Woman for the Fall

Pastor and author Robert Lewis has suggested that the essence of masculinity can be found in comparing the failed first Adam with the triumphant second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ. In juxtaposing the two, Lewis offers men a helpful understanding of what he calls "authentic manhood." Real men, according to Lewis, reject passivity, accept responsibility, lead courageously and expect the greater, eternal reward. Lewis rightly asserts that the mantle of leadership laid on men is distorted by the Fall in one of two ways: either a man is a selfish, abusive dictator or, more often he is a passive follower who has surrendered his leadership responsibilities to the women around him. Original sin, Lewis asserts, has less to do with Eve taking the serpent's fruit than it did with the silence of Adam, who was next to his wife when the forbidden fruit was offered (see Gen. 3:6). (Page 24)

3. "What Do You Want My Maleness to Look Like?"

Gilder holds that men of all ages will alter their own sense of masculinity to gain the affection and approval of women. At some level boys will ask the significant women in their lives, "What do you want my maleness to look like?" Then they will conform their behavior to earn the approval of those women. If a woman points a young man toward the biblical model of masculinity, she will end up with a man who can embrace his God-designed sense of masculinity. If, however, she points him away from the biblical model, she leaves him confused about his maleness, and she winds up dissatisfied with the result of her own creation. (Page 28)

4. Men & Women, Coregents of the Earth, To Subdue It

"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our Image, according to Our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle, and

over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them” (Gen. 1:26-27). In His final act before declaring a day of rest, the creator fashioned creatures who, unlike any other created being, would bear His image: a man and a woman who could reason, and could laugh and love and cry, and who could act in obedience to the will of their creator or who could rebel. To show that he had set those two apart, God gave the man and the woman dominion over the rest of His creation, naming them as coregents and calling them to subdue the earth. (Page 34)

5. Men & Women Created Two Distinctly Different Beings

While they shared the imprint of God’s image, the man and the woman were created as two distinctly different beings. The biblical record is clear. He created that *male* and *female*, with what author Mike Mason call “mysterious compelling combination of identity and otherness.” The identity gives the equal standing and equal worth before their creator, the otherness was designed by God so that they would function independently and, in so doing, they would reflect the nature of the Triune God. No matter how much our culture would like to erase those distinctions, there is no getting around the fact that God made men to be men and women to be women. (Page 34-45)

6. Adam Understood His Uniqueness from Eve

Along with his realization that Eve was very much like him, Adam was also aware that God had fashioned her to be different from him. In discovering those differences, he was discovering his own uniqueness as a man. He was beginning to understand how God had crafted him with certain physical, biological and emotional distinctions. His own sense of his manhood began to emerge as he understood the way in which he was different from Eve. (Page 36)

7. God’s Instruction to Younger Women

God reinforced these distinctions by calling the man who fails to provide for his family “worse than an unbeliever” (1 Tim. 5:8). And He instructed younger women “to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husband, so that the word of God will not be dishonored” (Titus 2:4-5). In doing so, God called men and women to the roles He designed them to live. (Page 38)

8. Men Are Designed to Protect Women

We all seem to know intuitively that a man is designed to face danger, be courageously and protect the women around him. Imagine lying in bed late at night and hearing a

noise downstairs. What husband would, in good conscience, nudge his wife and say, “I’m scared. You go?” (Page 40)

9. The God of the Old Testament & the God of the New Testament

The God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament are the same God! There was no transfer of power from one God to the next just before the birth of Christ. God did not have an attitude adjustment during the intertestamental period, where he “mellowed out.” The same God who rained fire on Sodom and who brought a flood that destroyed everyone except Noah and his family is the God who came to earth in human flesh, teaching men to love their enemies and pray for their persecutors. To those who like the portrait of God found in the pages of the New Testament better than the picture they see in the Old Testament, I would suggest that the only way to know the God of love is to begin by fearing Him. The pathway to knowledge of God begins with holy fear. In fact, if a man claims to love God, and he has not first learned what it means to fear him, I would submit that he doesn’t really understand what love is all about. (Page 46)

10. Doctrine of Deep Sin Requires a Real Savior on a Cross

Lutheran theologian Dr. Rod Rosenbladt said, “If your doctrine of sin is not deep as the text of Scripture, you probably do not have a real Savior on the cross.” (Page 49)

11. Matt.7:21-23 & Prov. 9:10

Jesus warned His disciples:

Not everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord” will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to me on that day, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?” And then I will declare to them, “I never knew you, depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness” (Matt. 7:21-23).

If your love for Christ is not firmly founded on the fear of God, you should ask yourself whether your faith is truly saving faith. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the holy One is understanding” (Prov. 9:10) (Page 50)

12. Church Leaders, Be Men, Stand Fast In the Faith

Tucked away at the end of his letter to the church in Corinth, the apostle Paul gave a solemn charge to those men who are leaders of the church.” “Be on the alert,” he writes, “stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.” (1 Cor.16:13-14). In these five simple statements, he calls the men who lead

God's Church to a foundational quality of masculine godliness. He calls them to be men of courage.

In fact some translations of the Bible take the clause "act like men" (*andrizesthe* in Greek) and translate it "be courageous." Earlier, Paul had chastised the Corinthians for acting like babies. "I give you milk to drink, not solid food," he wrote, "for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed now you are not yet able" (3:2). By the end of his epistle, Paul exhorts his readers to act like man. The expression "act like men" is a call to maturity, to conviction and to courage. (Page 50-51)

13. A Call to Courage

In the face of anger, in the face of adversity, a man is to respond in courage. If a husband is going to fulfill his calling to love and lead his wife, he is going to need to draw on his courage and his convictions. He will have to stay alert to spiritual and physical danger. He will have to stand firm in the faith and lovingly lead his wife to stand with him. He will have to be courageous and act like a man. (Page 51)

14. Guy's Job Description, Risk His Life for Women

Frederica Matthews-Green talked about men and courage in an essay that aired on *National Public Radio*. "It's part of the guy job description," she said. "Whenever there's danger. Any man is expected to protect any woman at any cost. This is true no matter who she is; it's not an honor awarded only to his wife or daughter. "We hear plenty of persistent, and sometimes justified, complaining that women get a raw deal in life, that men get all the breaks. But we forget one thing guys do for us, without thinking, over and over again. It's something we expect from them, we may even take it for granted. We expect them to risk their lives." (Page 51)

15. Do a Man's Work in Love

When the Word of God calls us to courage, it anticipated the likelihood that we will abuse that call, so Paul writes, "Let all that you be done in love (1 Cor. 16:14) to remind us that our courage must always be lived out in the power of the Holy Spirit. Courage without love is nothing more than bullying. Leadership without compassion is tyranny. Many of the abuses of masculinity that we have seen throughout the years have come from men who have attempted to "act like men" without doing all that they do in love. (Page 52).

16. Titanic Men Displayed Biblical Principles

Douglas Phillips Comments:

With only a few exceptions, *Titanic's* men willingly gave up their seats on lifeboats for

others, thus exemplifying the Bible verse: “Greater love hath no man than he lay down his life for another.” The most poignant example came from the many incidents in which families were split up. Husbands literally looked into the eyes of their wives and children, whispered tender words, and lowered their families into lifeboats with the full realization they would never see them again. Thus, one of *Titanic*’s greatest ironies is that she became a symbol of duty and faith.

The men aboard the *Titanic* responded to catastrophe with courage and love. The lifeboats were places for women and children. “For 1,000 years this principle has guided Western civilization. Simply stated, that principle is this—the groom dies for the bride, the strong suffer for the weak, and the highest expression of love is to give your life for another. This is the true meaning of biblical patriarchy. The men aboard the *Titanic* recognized their duty because they had been raised in a culture that implicitly embraced such notions. Only by returning to these foundations can we ever hope to live in a society in which men will make the self-conscious decision to die so that their women and children may live.” (Page 53)

17. Duties of God’s Word

God’s Word provides us with divine guidance. “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105). We are like men on a dark path at night trying not to stumble. God’s Word is a light that directs us to safety and steers us away from danger.

God’s Word helps us see our own hearts more clearly. “For the word of God is living and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” (Heb 4:12). Even when we can’t discern the motives in our own wicked hearts, God’s Word can judge for us.

God’s Word equips us for godly living. “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16-17). God uses His Word to teach us, to correct us, to scold us and to make us more like Christ.

God’s Word leads us to eternal life. “But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31). The apostle Paul makes it clear that faith in God comes from hearing God’s Word (see Rom. 10:17). Bible scholars have long agreed that a man can *know that there is a God* on the basis of general revelation (such as observing God’s creation), but no man can *know God* apart from special revelation (the Scriptures). (Page 60)

18. Making a Godly Man

God's Word is powerful! It is living and active! If you will commit yourself to the regular discipline of reading God's Word, and seeking to know the God who is revealed in its pages, He'll use it to make you a godly man. (Page 61)

19. The Promise of the Holy Spirit

As believes in Christ, we are not left alone to wade through pages of Scripture, hoping to make some sense of it all. After announcing to His disciples that He was about to be put to death, Jesus told them He would send them the Holy Spirit as their guide.

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come (John 16:13).

The indwelling Spirit of God is the One who will lead us into all truth as we study the pages of Scripture. (Page 62)

20. How to Study The Bible

One practical and helpful way to the same Bible study and meditation is to read through several chapters of the Bible each day for 30 days. You might begin, for example, with the book of Ephesians. The repetitious reading of those six chapters will yield a number of benefits. First, you will become very familiar with the text as you read it over and over. You'll also find understanding of particular passages as you read through again. By the end of the 30 days, you'll be surprised at how much you've retained from your study and how your understanding of that particular section of the Bible has increased. (Page 65-66)

21. How to Prepare For Godliness

How does a man pursue godliness? According to the Bible, it's a matter of training;

Have nothing to do with godless myths, and old wives' tales; rather, *train yourself to be godly*. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come (1 Tim. 4:7-8 NIV, emphasis added). (Page 71)

22. Training for Godly Work

According to Paul's letter to Timothy, we can train ourselves to be godly in the same way an athlete trains for his event. We can show up for practice, go through the

workouts and apply ourselves to godliness. If we do that, God, by His grace, will transform us into the godly men He wants us to be. (Page 71)

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24. God's Plan Requires Us to "Love One Another"

Throughout the New Testament, we are constantly reminded that God's plan for us requires community. We are told to love one another, to serve one another, and to be devoted to and give preference to one another. We would to examine more than 50 passages in the Epistles alone to understand our responsibilities to "one another" within the community of faith (Page 84-85)

25. Prophet, Priest, King for Christ and Man

John Calvin taught that the office which Christ "received from the Father consists of three parts. For he was appointed ... Prophet, King and Priest." Christ's headship, according to Calvin, involves the perfect fulfillment of the Old Testament types. Christ is, according to the author of Hebrews, our High Priest and eternal King after the order of Melchizedek (see 6:20; 7:1-2), and God's prophet during the last days (see 1:1-2). Further, the messianic title of Christ —"anointed one" —refers to the anointing with holy oil that was, under the law, given to prophets, priests, and Kings.

Today, Christ is the head of His Church by serving as prophet, priest, and King. If a man is to be head of women in the same way Christ is the head of the Church, then as husband, we must understand the prophetic, priestly and kingly role we are to fulfill. (Page 92)

26. Family Worship Guidelines

I in his booklet *Rediscovering the Lost Treasure of Family Worship*, Pastor Jerry Marcellino suggests that husbands lead their wives and their children in a daily worship time that begin with singing, leading to a time of reading or studying God's Word and concluding with prayer. The whole event may only last for 10 minutes (or might go as long 30 minutes) and could occur at end of a meal. A hymn or two (even a tone-deaf husband can invite his wife to join him as they sing along with a CD), a passage from the Bible and a time for family prayer is a daily habit that ought to begin on first morning of the honeymoon! (Page 97)

27. Daniel Risk Death to Worship God

In recalling the story of Daniel, the Puritan pastor Samuel Davis reminds us:

Daniel ran the risk of his life rather than omit this duty of daily worship of God, which some of us omit with hardly any temptation. When the royal edict prohibited him upon penalty of being cast into the lion's den, "he still prayed and gave thanks to God, as he did aforetime." (Page 98)

28. Christ's Priestly Prayer a Model for Priestly Husbands

Still, it is the responsibility of the priest to oversee and to spiritually shepherd his flock. If a man aspires to be a godly husband, he will assume the responsibility for the spiritual condition of his wife. If a husband will love and serve his wife as Christ loves His Church, then the intercessory prayer of Christ in John 17 becomes a model for how a priestly husband can intercede on behalf of his wife. (Page 100)

29. Christian Husbands Not Providing Spiritually For Their Wives

The prophetic call for a husband is a call to provide spiritual nourishment for his wife. Puritan pastor Samuel Davies made the point that Christian husbands have accepted the responsibility of provide for the material needs of their wives as 1 Timothy 5:8 commands them to do. Davies then asked why we are so quick to care for those material needs, which are not eternal, while we ignore the spiritual needs of our wives and our families, which will endure forever. In our era, driven by material gain and workaholism, it's a sobering question. (Page 118)

30. Husbands Are Commanded to Help Wives Be What God Intended Her to Be

We are we to help our wives employ their gifts and abilities in God's service. A husband is given the God-ordained task of helping his wife to be all that God intends for her to be. (Page 135)

31. Start Leading

I have never forgotten what C. S. Lewis wrote in *Mere Christianity* about how we acquire virtues. "Very often," he said, "the only way to get a quality is to start behaving as if you had it already." (Page 139)

32. A Husband Isn't Ultimate Authority in Marriage

Even in the position of authority, a husband is not the ultimate authority. That distinction belongs to God and to His Word. Husbands must look to Him for direction and guidance on how they are to lead their wives. (Page 141)

33. A Provider Makes Strategic Plans for His Marriage

A provider does much more than secure material necessities. He makes strategic plans for his marriage and his home, looking ahead to arrange for spiritual, emotional and social needs as well. (Page 141)

34. Many Churches Have Lost the Absolute Standard of God's Word

Today there are many evangelical churches that have lost confessional moorings and their confidence in the absolute standards of God's Word. It shouldn't surprise you to hear popular idea about a husband's role in marriage coming from books, radio, television and even from church pulpits that aren't rooted in biblical truth. A wise husband will test everything he reads or hears—even this book—against the absolute standard of the Bible. (Page 412)

35. Few Kings Honored Their Unique Calling

The Old Testament records for us the multiplied failures of the kings of Israel and Judah. Dan Allender comments on how few honored their unique calling:

Far too often the king compromised truth in making alliances that violated God's desire. They allowed for worship of the false gods associated with the nations with which they have formed alliances. This leads to grave injustice, perversion, and a loss of freedom and safety. This perversion of power was seldom condemned in the cultus, but it was roundly exposed by the prophetic community. Eventually, God cleansed the subversion of his rule by sending his people into exile. (Page 143)

36. God Provided for Our Rebellion with Christ

Long before we were knit together in our mother's wombs, when all we were was an idea in the mind of God, the Bible teaches that God loved us. Having set apart His people from every tongue and tribe on Earth, God's first act of love toward His new bride was to establish our destiny, choosing to adopt us as His own children. He knew we would be rebellious, disobedient lot, and He made provision for our rebellion in Christ. (Page 150-151)

37. God Chose Us Because of His Glory & Grace

According to Scripture, there is only one reason why God chose us to be His adopted sons. It is because it was “the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace” (Eph.1:56). To put it another way, God chose us as His adopted sons because he wanted to —pure and simple. By choosing us, He was able to put on displays the glory of His grace for all the world to see. (Page 151)

38. Husbands Must Love Their Wives

If a husband is to love his wife “as Christ also loved the church” (Eph. 5:25), he must begin by loving her with the same kind of unconditional acceptance Christ demonstrated in choosing to love us. Husbands must love their wives, not based on subjective factors like appearance or performance, but because they chose to love their wives no matter what. (Page 152)

39. On His wedding day, Man Takes His Unconditional Love and Makes a Covenantal Ceremony.

On his wedding day, a man takes his unconditional love for a woman and makes it in a covenantal ceremony. He stands before God and witnesses and takes a vow to love, honor and cherish his wife, in sickness and in health, for richer, for poorer, for better or for worse, *for as long as they both shall live.* (Page 156)