

## Real Men

What is a “real man”? I don’t mean the Hollywood image of the profane, beer drinking, skirt chasing womanizer. The answer depends on where you go for your answers. Let us look in the Bible at the characteristics of godly men.

Real men fulfill their responsibilities. Primarily I have in mind those who are married but single men also have their responsibilities. In the home men are to love their wives and not be bitter toward them, see Colossians 3.19. Ephesians 5 goes further and says men are to love their wives as their own bodies. One does not neglect their body without there being dire consequences to their own health. So in the home, if he neglects to love wife there is dire consequences. Many a marriage has fallen apart without the man realizing there was a problem in the home. He is to treat his wife as the “weaker vessel” (1 Peter 3.7). Notice the passage does not say inferior or one of less value but one that needs protecting and attention.

Men are to fulfill their spiritual responsibilities. **"And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."** (Joshua 24:15) Joshua’s leadership started in the home “as for me and my house” and extended to the nation of Israel. As a husband/father what kind of spiritual leadership are you providing. Are you reading your Bible? Do you spend time in prayer? Are you talking to your family about the word of God? Those spiritual responsibilities extend to the church. Many of the qualifications given for elders involve their role in the home. **"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; 3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; 4 one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence."** (1 Timothy 3:2). Ideally, a man who does a good job with his family will then be qualified to provide such leadership in the church. They will be Bible Class

teachers, preachers, song leaders, and helping the church grow.

Real men have compassion toward others. "Jesus wept" (John 11:35). This was not the only time Jesus was moved by the things He witnessed. He had compassion towards the multitudes as they followed Him. He mourned over the upcoming destruction of Jerusalem. **"O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" (Matthew 23:37)** Other godly men were moved to tears as they saw people turn from God. Men of God care about others and want others to be saved.

Real men repent of their sins. They are not perfect as each husband/father/son will make mistakes in their lives. In fact, some of the godly men in the Bible committed terrible sins. King David committed adultery with Bathsheba and then had her husband, Uriah, killed. When confronted with his sins David responded like a real man of God. **"So, David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die." (2 Samuel 12:13.)** There were consequences to his sins but David faced up to what he had done. Saul of Tarsus persecuted Christians and when confronted by Jesus on the Road to Damascus he had to choose whether to repent and follow Jesus or continue on his road to hell. Real men listen to God and do whatever it takes to get right with Him.

Real men practice self-control/self-discipline. This is not in vogue much today as our society tends to do whatever it wants but a real man realizes he must control himself. He does not act as Ahab in the Old Testament when disappointed with Naboth not selling his vineyard to the King. **"So, Ahab went into his house sullen and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no food." (1 Kings 21:4).** Life contains many trials, failures, and disappointments and how we respond is important. Some men act as Ahab and throw a fit, others will get mad and quit. But a real man will

control his anger or disappointment and go forward.

Finally, real men live for God. They are not self-centered jerks caring only about themselves but they understand their purpose in life. The Apostle Paul understood this, **"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."** (Galatians 2:20). They have their priorities right as they place God first, and their families second. They live with eternity in mind and want to help others go to heaven. This requires them to be brave and live by their convictions.

In short real men are men of virtue and integrity. -- Dennis Tucker