

Vision for Manhood

Reading & Sharing

We need a vision for manhood, a standard worth aiming for.

PROVERBS 29:18 *Amplified (AMP)*

Where there is no vision [no revelation of God and His word], the people are unrestrained; But happy *and* blessed is he who keeps the law [of God].

We need good models for manhood. Not buffoons or fools.
Who live for others not just for their own glory or wealth.

Who have been your role models for manhood?
Why are they your role models?

Jesus

Jesus was the one man who lived without sin and yet was tempted in every way.

When we consider what sort of men we should be, his example is the obvious starting point.

1 PETER 2:21 *New International Version (NIV)*

To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

But Jesus was never a husband, or a father, and we know little of his life as a son to Mary and Joseph.

Fortunately, the Bible has a more general way to help us follow him.

Four Faces of Manhood

The four faces of manhood is a mental model in the Bible, to help us understand how Jesus' life can apply to us.

They come from the four Gospels and give us contrasting and complementary views of Jesus. They are compared to the four faces of the angelic creatures seen in the books of Ezekiel and Revelations.

EZEKIEL 1:10 *New International Version (NIV)*

Their faces looked like this: Each of the four had the face of a human being, and on the right side each had the face of a lion, and on the left the face of an ox; each also had the face of an eagle.

Lion



Book of Matthew

King

Ox



Book of Mark

Servant

Man



Book of Luke

Son of Man

Eagle



Book of John

Son of God

We can match these characteristics to our own lives and see what sort of example we must follow.

Lion – King

Men are called to lead in their homes, to stand strong and defend those under their care.

Good kings guide and are like lions in their fierce defense of their people.

As lions, we are called to stand as heads and protectors of our family.

Ox – Servant

Servants follow their masters' instructions and get things done.

Men are called to serve their families, to put others first. Jesus came to serve and so must we.

Being willing to serve at home, to put the bins out, share the housework, help the kids with homework.

Sacrificing our own needs and wants when necessary for our family, our church and our community.

Man – Son of Man

We're called to be husbands, fathers, brothers and sons – in relationship with others and emotionally connected.

Connection leads to compassion.

Compassion leads us to prayer.

While called to overcome our sinful nature, don't forget that we are as much in need of forgiveness as anyone else.

This aspect of manhood is a reminder to be compassionate to others and seek God's help through prayer.

Eagle – Son of God

The gospel of John speaks of Jesus as the Son of God, the spiritual side of manhood. In the Bible eagles speak of swiftness and power, symbolizing the Holy Spirit and this gospel talks about being born again, of the Spirit.

This aspect of manhood is being filled with the Holy Spirit. Then we can discern spiritually, act lovingly and be confident we are being led by God.

Discussion Starters

It is time to discuss what we have covered so far. Try one or more of these discussion starters.

Which of the four faces of manhood **appeals** the most to you and why?

Which of the four faces of manhood do you **struggle** with the most and why?

Name and praise someone who you feel **represents well** one of the four faces of manhood.

At Home Work

There is some work for you to do before the next meeting:

- Read and meditate on the scriptures below.
- Use the four faces of manhood to guide you this week:
 1. Lion – lead and defend
 2. Ox – serve others
 3. Man – have compassion and be prayerful
 4. Eagle – be spiritual and Holy Spirit filled
- Talk about the four faces of manhood with someone else this week

Prayer

At the end of each topic we leave a space for prayer. It is important to remember that we are asking God to show us what we should do with this truth.

Scripture References

Jesus Our Example

There are several times when we are told to follow Jesus as our example.

1 PETER 2:21 *New International Version (NIV)*

To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

EPHESIANS 5:1 *New International Version (NIV)*

Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children

1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 *New International Version (NIV)*

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

We can know that he understands our struggles as he has lived a life among us.

HEBREWS 4:14-16 *New International Version (NIV)*

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Lion/King

The titles of Messiah (Hebrew) and Christ (Greek) both mean "Anointed One" and Jesus was anointed by God, as David was. Jesus was of the line of David the king.

MATTHEW 1:1 *New International Version (NIV)*

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:

Jesus himself pointed out that the Messiah must be more than just the son of David, he is also the Lord of David.

MATTHEW 22:41-45 *New International Version (NIV)*

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, "What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?"

"The son of David," they replied.

He said to them, "How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him 'Lord'? For he says,

"The Lord said to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.'"

If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?”

Interestingly Jesus never claims kingship, but he was recognised as such by his actions. When the Roman governor asked whether he was king, he avoided confirming it, but the governor recognised royalty when he saw it.

MATTHEW 27:11 *New International Version (NIV)*

Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

“You have said so,” Jesus replied.

Our position as lions/kings in our lives is also something not to be claimed, but to be recognised through how we act and live our lives.

Ox/Servant

MARK 10:42-45 *New International Version (NIV)*

Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

We also see that Jesus in the gospel of Mark is sent to the desert, Mathew and Luke talk of him being led by the Holy Spirit, but Mark again portrays him as the servant that follows instructions.

MARK 1:12 *New International Version (NIV)*

At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness,

The gospel of Mark ends with the disciples taking up the ministry of service that Jesus had given them. The ministry we all become part of when we are saved, promoting the gospel into all the world.

MARK 16:19-20 *New International Version (NIV)*

After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:18-20 *New International Version - UK (NIVUK)*

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of

reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: be reconciled to God.

Man/Son of Man

As the son of man Jesus shows us how to live with compassion and generosity towards others. Whether it be through sharing our possessions;

LUKE 12:32-34 *New International Version (NIV)*

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Or bringing healing and help to those less fortunate through acts of service.

LUKE 13:15-16 *New International Version (NIV)*

The Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Doesn't each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?”

Or praying for those we love who are sick, or have needs we cannot meet ourselves:

JOHN 17:11-12 *New International Version - UK (NIVUK)*

I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

Jesus also admonishes us to be men who pray without ceasing until we have an answer to our faith.

LUKE 18:6-8 *New International Version (NIV)*

And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?”

Eagle/Son of God

JOHN 3:3-8 *New International Version (NIV)*

Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”

“How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!”

Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

It is the spiritual and physical sacrifice that Christ made for us which enables us to love him, and others.

JOHN 15:9-17 *New International Version (NIV)*

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other.”

As eagles, we are called to be spiritual leaders and to honor Jesus, the Son of God.

JOHN 5:19-23 *New International Version (NIV)*

Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed. For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.”

The Holy Spirit is what connects us to God’s love and what leads us to honor and obey Jesus’ words. The power to soar higher in life comes from God, and it is only by being connected to Him that we can do so in a healthy and sustainable way.