



A REAL MAN

The Search for God's Definition of Manhood



So be strong, show yourself a man...observe what the Lord your God requires...that you may prosper in all you do.
1 KINGS 2:2,3

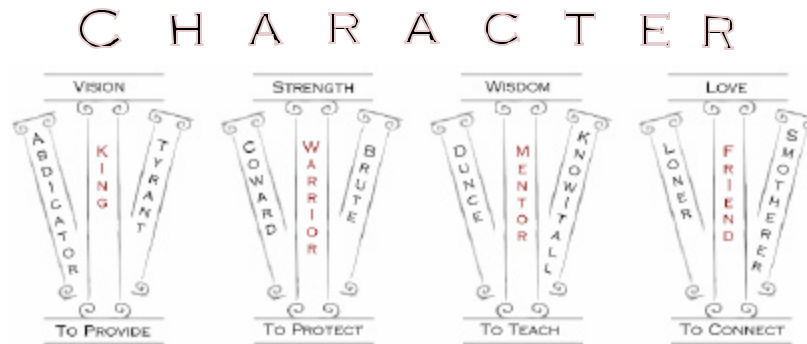
CHARACTER – MORAL EXCELLENCE AND FIRMNESS

It has been said that Character is who you are when no one is looking. Indeed God cares immensely about *who we are*, not simply what we do. God truly desires to do something *in us*, in order to make us suitable vessels to use us in the lives of others.

What are some ways that character is forged in our lives?

- Through the influence in our lives of mentors—parents, coaches, teachers, pastors etc.
- Peer influences
- Media influences
- Through trials and difficult times

How does a man's character affect the roles of **King**, **Warrior**, **Mentor** and **Friend**?



Four Pillars of a Man's Heart (Sisters:OR, Multnomah Books, 1997) 63.

GOD CARES ABOUT CHARACTER

Read Proverbs 6:16-19

List some of the characteristics that God detests:

You may want to highlight that sometimes we forget that God really does detest some things

Read Jeremiah 9:23,24

List some of the characteristics in which God delights:

Kindness, Righteousness, and Justice



THE FORGING OF CHARACTER

In life God uses many things to develop our character. His Word teaches us, he changes our desires, and he helps us resist temptation. There is however a way God forges character in our lives that is sometimes quite difficult and even painful: **TRIALS**

Read John 16:33 and 1 Peter 4:12-16

What do the following verses say about trials in life?

Most of us would like to believe that we can somehow get through life without experiencing tough times. Yet, reality and Scripture prove that at some time, in some way, we will each have to deal with adversity. Elbert Hibbard's comment on tough times rings true, "They're a sure sign that we're alive."

AIA Principles of Athletic Competition page 70

"God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."

—C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, 93

What could Lewis mean by saying pain is *God's megaphone to rouse a deaf world*?

Sometimes God has to get our attention in life and many times we simply will not turn from our stubborn and sinful ways without a difficult circumstance. It is unfortunate but most of us have to learn things the hard way.



Athletes put themselves through painful and agonizing workouts to get into the best possible shape for their sport. The workouts are tolerable because they can look past the workout itself to the goals desired.

Dealing with adversity as a Christian can be much easier if you look past the adversity itself and see the possible results of your trials. This does not mean that your pain will disappear, but it can give you the strength and hope you need in order to persevere.

Read Romans 5:3-5 and James 1:2-4

What results can come from our trials?

Perseverance, character, hope—maturity and completeness—we are works in progress, a masterpiece in the making. Remind them that the God desires us to be thankful for everything. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)





THE NECESSITY FOR PERSEVERANCE IN MANHOOD

King David told his son Solomon to “be strong, show yourself a man” noting that strength is a quality needed in authentic manhood. You see, a man needs to be strong, and he needs to persevere and stick to the task at hand especially when life is hard. Imagine a **King** that leaves the throne at each crisis, a **Warrior** that flees at the first sign of battle, a **Mentor** who cowers back when his son has a difficult question about faith, or a **Friend** that abandons at the first sign of trouble in a relationship. What we have imagined is not much of a man.

TELLING THE STORY OF JOB – A REAL MAN WITH STAYING POWER

- Job is a righteous God fearing man. (Job 1:8)
- God allows Satan to test Job—he takes his family, health, and personal possessions. (Job 1:9-22)
- His wife turned on Him. (Job 2:9,10)
- His friends turned on Him. (Job 4,8,11,15, 32-37)
- Job maintains his innocence. (Job 31)
- Job desires a hearing with God realizing his own sinfulness. (Job 9, 23)
- God questions Job’s finite understanding of the universe and His purposes. (Job 38-41)
- Job repents of his ignorance of God’s purposes in his suffering. (Job 42:1-6)
- God ultimately blesses Job and his family. (Job 42:12-17)

Make sure you stress that Job’s life story has many lessons for us about the purpose and source of human suffering but it is NOT a formula. There is no health and wealth message in the book of Job, only a story of Job’s perseverance and God’s glorious, sovereign plan for Job’s life.

Job is an example for us of a man who exhibited perseverance, even in the most difficult

WANTED – MEN WHO WILL BE THERE FOR THOSE THEY LEAD, PROTECT, TEACH AND LOVE

One-third of American children are not living with their natural fathers.
 Over 15 million kids are growing up in homes without any fathers.
 Seventy percent of men in prison grew up without a father.

Stu Weber *Tender Warrior—God Intention for a Man* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah 1993) 57.

One thing we must say is **THANK GOD FOR MOTHERS**, for without their faithfulness, things would be even worse. But in the same breath, none of us will ever be a mom, but God does call us to be fathers. This is a challenge for you as a man, will you be a man who has staying power or one who runs and leaves?

SOME GOOD ADVICE TO APPLY TO ANY LIFE CIRCUMSTANCE

- When marriage isn’t fun...*stay in it*
- When parenting is over your head...*stay at it.*
- When work is crushing your spirit...*don’t let it beat you.*
- When the local church is overwhelmed with pettiness...*stay by it.*
- When your children let you down...*pick them up.*
- When your wife goes through a six-month mood swing...*live with it.*
- When it’s fourth and fourteen with no time left on the clock...*throw another pass.*



THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE POWER SOURCE FOR GODLY CHARACTER

Read Galatians 5:

16 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. 17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. 19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

The Spirit of God, living in the man of God, will keep the pillars of King, Warrior, Mentor and Friend aright with godly character.

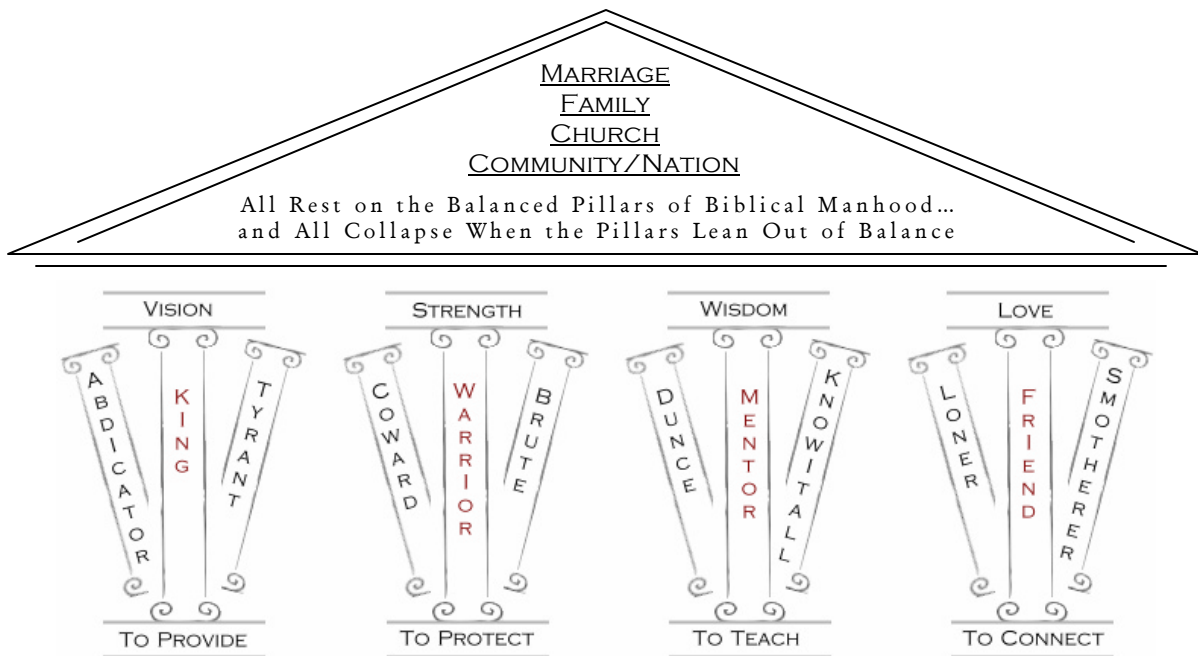


Diagram —Stu Weber *Four Pillars of a Man's Heart* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Books, 1997) 63.

A MAN CAN CRUMBLE

Next week we will look at a condition called PMS —but in this case we will talk about PMS for men; three things in life that can bring a man crashing down.