

Seven Essentials of Christian Manhood

Job 29

Preached by Phillip Kayser at DCC on Sunday, October 6th 2024

I. Introduction

Warren Carr, the pastor of a church in North Carolina prepared a questionnaire for his congregation asking them to tell him how much time they thought he ought to spend on a long list of specified tasks that pastors need to be involved in. He added them up and reported back. The members of the congregation were shocked to discover that the average work week indicated by their answers was 82 hours. One answer proposed a schedule of 200 hours – 32 more than there are hours in a week. If he were to live in terms of the expectations of his congregation, he would not survive. In a magazine article titled, “Why Ministers are Breaking Down,” Wesley Shrader tells of a jam-packed day of one minister who “described simply and without a trace of self-pity a 13 1/2- hour work day.” Ministers have a hard time surviving the expectations of others.

And I started with that illustration not because I am going to talk about ministers today but because I think husbands and fathers often suffer from the same tug of war of diverse and sometimes contradictory expectations that people place upon them. And you men *are* pastors of your families - at least if you are married. If you men were to do all the things that men are called to do in the Christian literature on men’s responsibilities, you would literally not have enough hours in a day to achieve it all. And many men feel guilty about this. They feel like they are being called to be *supermen* – and they know they are not, so through repeated failures they sometimes give up trying. Let me assure you that you will never get done all the expectations that everyone has for you. You’ve got to evaluate the expectations of others - including the expectations that I place upon you this morning, and see if what I am going to be preaching to you is Biblically realistic. Even Paul praised the Bereans for checking everything he said against the Scriptures.

A couple years ago I gave you the story of the professor and the jar. The professor took a wide mouth mason jar and put some small rocks into it and asked if the jar was full. A couple nodded their heads and some shook their heads. He then poured in gravel till no more gravel would fit in and asked if it was full. Everyone then go the point and shook their heads. He then poured in sand till he couldn’t fit any more sand in. He then poured in water.

He asked the class what the moral of the illustration was. One student said that it taught us that no matter how busy our schedules may seem to be, you can always fit something more in. The professor laughed and said, “No. That’s not the moral.” The moral of the story is that if you don’t get the big stones in first, you will never get them in. And today I want to look at seven stones that constitute what I consider to be seven essentials of Christian manhood. These are the things you want to model to your boys. These are the things you want your boys to embrace and internalize as they grow up.

But before I dive into Job 29, I want to demonstrate that Job was indeed a model man. Let me read Job 1:1. It says, “There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil.” If there was any man described as an ideal man, Job would be it. He is described as a financial success in verse 3, a family man in verse 5, a spiritual man in the same verse. And verse 8 repeats God’s opinion of Job as being a real man’s man. It says, “Then the LORD said to Satan, ‘Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil.’” So here’s the point: Job 29 is Job’s remembrances of these days that God is describing. It shows Job at his best. If you want a good definition of what a man is all about, what a father is all about, and what a husband is all about, I believe Job is it. God says he was blameless. He was without fault.

So let me dig into the seven big rocks that Job managed to fit into his super-busy life.

II. Practicing the Presence: Job Was Close To God (v. 4b-5a)

First, verses 4-5 describe Job as a man who constantly practiced the presence of God. The other pillars flowed out of His close walk with God. Job was a man who was close to God and who sought to bring his family close to God. I’m going to read verses 2-5 of chapter 29. Job said,

Oh, that I were as in months past, as in the days when God watched over me;
when His lamp shone upon my head, and when by His light I walked through
darkness; Just as I was in the days of my prime, when the friendly counsel of God
was over my tent; when the Almighty was yet with me.

Those four verses describe the close relationship that Job had with God. I love the metaphor of God being like a lamp constantly shining over his head. But I’m just going to focus on one phrase in verse 4. It’s the phrase, “when the friendly counsel of God was over my tent.” Two versions translate that, “When God’s intimate friendship blessed my tent.” Another says, “when God was my home’s familiar guest.” Another has, “When the intimacy of God was over my tent.” However it is translated, the concept of being close to God can be seen, and your relationship to God profoundly affects what kind of man, husband, and father you will be. Developing this close walk with God is probably the most important rock that you could fit into the jar of your life.

You might have some good excuses that take you away from an intimate walk with God. You might say, “Well, my schedule’s way too busy, I have to put in too many hours at work, my children demand so much of my time.” But here’s the cool thing- this concept of intimacy with God is not just an issue of having devotions - as important as those are. Practicing the presence is something that is done all day long, and when you practice it long enough, you discover God walking with you in your dreams. In fact, you can sense this intimacy with God in the very things that so crowd your life. The Scripture doesn’t ask you to *add* God into your busy schedule. Rather, the Scripture calls you to be so close to God that He is part and parcel of everything you do in your schedule.

We see hints of that in this passage. In verse 2 Job says, “as in the days when God watched over me...” Job was walking *coram deo*, a Latin phrase the reformers used which means walking before the face of God. He had a constant sense of God’s watching what he was doing and caring for him no matter what he was doing. Look at verse 3. When he felt in the dark and unsure what to do, he simply looked to God. He says, “When His lamp shone upon my head, and when by His light I walked through the darkness.” This is intimacy *lived out in real life* rather than being a division between life and devotions. All of life became friendship with God. Like Enoch in the book of Genesis, he walked with God. In verse 4 God is part of his tent. In verse 5 God was part of his relationship with his children. In verse 6 God was in his steps.

For those of you who have an incredibly busy schedule, remember that Job must have also had an incredibly busy schedule. Not only did he manage enormous assets, but he had a large family, and he was a judge in the gates. In fact, many people believe that he was an Edomite king, and these friends were looking for his position. But since God was a part of his everyday schedule, he had learned to worship in life and it enabled him to worship in devotions. Friendship with God can’t be developed only in the formal times. God must be part and parcel of what we do. And if you don’t know how, I would refer you to an earlier sermon on practicing the presence, or you can buy the book by Brother Lawrence called *Practicing the Presence*. He was a cook in the Middle Ages who showed very practical steps of how to develop a consciousness of God’s presence with you 24-7. So that’s the first big rock. Model to your boys that God is a part of every aspect of your life, and train them how to be conscious of God’s presence in everything they do. It will transform your boys and give them a wonderful foundation for manhood.

III.A Priest: Job Was A Man Close To His Children (v. 5b)

But this brings us to the second point. Not only was Job a friend of God, he also sought to bring others close to God. He was a priest to his family, and he took his responsibility as priest very seriously. Before I develop that in this chapter, let me read Job 1:5.

So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them [that is, his children], and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, “It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.” This Job did regularly.

This shows that Job had a priestly concern for his children. As you read through this book it becomes apparent that he prayed for his children when they were absent, he prayed for them when they were present. He took the time to consider their needs and discuss their concerns with them. Back to chapter 29 - look at verse 5: It says, “When the Almighty was yet with me, *when my children were around me.*” He invited his children to be part of this intimacy with God. “When the Almighty was yet with me, *when my children were around me.*” God was with him not just in private, but in the context of his time spent with the children.

Many fathers just leave this responsibility to their wives. They have so much sand in the jar of their life that they can't fit this rock in. But that is to abandon one of the most important roles in your life - to be a pastor or priest to your family. That means that it is time to pour everything out of the jar and readjust the priorities of your goals. What will you have gained if you gain every other goal in life but you lose your children? The only way you can multiply yourself in dominion is by having children and passing on a heritage to those children. When you die, your legacy doesn't need to die. But if you are not a priest to your family, your impact will die with you. And this is happening in even homeschooling families all across America. It is the *women* who act as priests and shepherds of the homes, not the men. Now that's not to say that women don't have an important role in this, but they are not substitute for the dad as pastor of the home. There is an aching hole in the heart of many young people because their dads had been absent from this role.

By the way, throughout this book there are hints that Job was also involved in the education his children, sanctified them, disciplined them and acted as a priest. Verse 5 of this chapter simply tells us that he took the time to be around them and include them in his relationship with God.

And again, I'm not saying that a wife doesn't have a huge role to play in drawing the hearts of the children to God. Absolutely she does. But almost any wife will tell you that she doesn't want to do it alone. If the wife is the only disciplinarian; if the wife is the only one that has the kids hearts, it will cast a shadow on the family. And God has ordained that nothing can replace the role that the father has as the pastor of his family. There is something special that God does in the family when this role relationship is present. God ends the Old Testament with the promise that this would be especially true of the New Covenant when the hearts of the fathers would be turned to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. So there is both a promise and a warning. But I love that promise! It's a promise you can claim. We must not neglect our role as priests of the family. Make it a priority to spend at least some time in family devotions and in ministering God's grace to your children one on one. God will richly prosper the seeds that you plant. And if you are a single man, begin to figure out how you are going to do this in the future. Now is the time to develop these habits.

IV. A Steward: Riches Did Not Possess His Heart (v. 6)

The third rock is learning how to become a steward of all that you possess. God had entrusted Job with enormous wealth because he was able to trust Job to be a steward. Another way of saying this was that Job was a man who was not materialistic. Yeah, he had a lot of wealth, but the wealth did not have him. Chapter 1:3 says that Job was the richest man in the East at that time, but those riches did not grip his heart. He speaks of his wealth in poetic language in chapter 29 verse 6. "When my steps were bathed with cream, and the rock poured out rivers of oil for me." In other words, he was what many modern people would call filthy rich, yet God had no problem with that. Scripture is not down on having riches. In fact, God delights in entrusting you with *more* possessions when you are faithful to serve Him with what you have. But why would He trust you with more if you are not a faithful steward?

So Job was wealthy. Yet the passage goes on to show how he had a steward's heart. Wealth was not the be-all and the end all for Job. It was a tool. Look especially at chapter 31:24-25. Job says,

If I have made gold my hope, or said to fine gold, "You are my confidence"; If I have rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because my hand had gained much

[then in verses 26-27 he speaks of another form of idolatry – but look at the conclusion in verse 28]

This also would be an iniquity deserving of judgment, for I would have denied God who is above.

He is saying that making riches our hope is every bit as much a denial of God as the flagrant idolatry of verses 26-27 is. We frown on the latter and yet excuse the former. Materialism is idolatry, pure and simple. But though Job had vast riches, it did not grip his heart. He was not a materialist. It was not the be all and end all of his life. And this can be seen by his reaction when he lost everything in chapter 1. When he lost everything, his wife was so discouraged that she told him to curse God and die. But he refused. In 1:21 it says,

Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground [so there is grief there. God is not telling us to be stoics with no sorrow and no pain when we lose things and when we lose people. But it says, "he fell to the ground"] and worshiped. And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

That's the testimony of a steward: "Lord, if you want me to continue to be poor, that is fine. I want to bless Your heart by how I handle these few things I have left. All I am and all I have belongs to you. And if you want to give me greater wealth Lord, I want to use that too in the greater advancement of your kingdom and in service to my family."

And so the question that I have is this: "Are you stewards of what God has *already* given to you?" In too many of our homes, we abandon what God has called us to be as men because material possessions are so important to us. We excuse our almost total absence from the family by saying that we are providing material things for them, while neglecting things that are far more important. It's true that there are sometimes seasons when God calls us men to be gone. Scripture indicates that the men were separated from their wives at times during war or at sea. It's important to provide for our families. 1 Timothy 5:8 says that if we don't provide for our families we have denied the faith and are worse than unbelievers. So part of being a steward is working hard. So I'm not knocking putting in long hours to provide an income. There are sacrifices to getting a business going. But the pursuit of wealth is not our biggest goal in life. And if pursuing wealth has precluded the other things in this sermon, we are not stewards, and we won't be blessed by the Lord. The pursuit of God and His kingdom is our goal, and it is when we do that, that Jesus says that God adds to us all these things; that God pours out material wealth above what we need because He knows that He can trust us with that wealth.

The only reason Christ made the rich young ruler give away everything that he had was because his riches had become an idol that had come between Christ and him. He was not a steward and Christ had to teach him how to be a steward. So saving up money for our children is not wrong. It is commanded by Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:14. “the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.” But that heritage involves far more than just money. It involves laying up a heritage of education, values, worldview, a family name. If we pass on a heritage of money to our children, but we don’t pass on stewardship values to them as well, that money will actually become a curse to our children. We must learn to be stewards and teach our children to be stewards.

There may be some here who will build a dynasty that will influence America for generations to come, but it won’t be a godly one unless this principle of stewardship is settled. Every dime you spend, every dime you earn, every dime you save, every dime you give away must be done under God’s plan for you. It all belongs to God. We are not stewards until we can say with Job: “The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”

V. A Judge or a justice seeker: Job Had A Godly Balance Between Mercy & Justice (vs. 12-17)

The fourth word that should characterize every father and husband is that we must be judges or justice seekers. Job was a judge under God. He had learned to seek justice. It wasn’t to the exclusion of mercy, any more than women majoring on mercy is to exclusion of justice. It’s an *emphasis* that I am talking about. Scripture portrays women as majoring on mercy and men as majoring on justice, but there needs to be a balance of both in the man.

And I want to look first of all at the issue of justice. One of the reasons why John Wayne, Stallone, Eastwood, Norris, Schwarzenegger, Mel Gibson on the Patriot or playing William Wallace in Braveheart used to be popular is in part a thirst for justice that God has implanted in men, despite the feminizing and wimpification of men in our generation. My wife Kathy doesn’t enjoy those kinds of movies quite as much as the boys and I did. But we men want to see offenders punished and the enemy destroyed. Now we are going to be seeing shortly how those models of justice frequently fall short of the Biblical ideal. But the point is that Job as a man had a thirst for justice, and that was good.

Look at verses 12-17. We see here his involvement in many facets of (first of all) social justice: helping the poor, the fatherless, the victim, the dying, the widows. It says,

Because I delivered the poor who cried out, and the fatherless and he who had no helper. The blessing of a perishing man came upon me, and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy.

We men admire such qualities, but how often are we out there modeling for our children what a real man is? They are not going to get it from culture. If you go to a rescue mission as a volunteer, take your children along. Let them see you engaging in this kind of ministry

and help them to get involved. Take your children with you to picket at the abortion clinic, or at least talk to your children about what you have done. If you stop an attempted robbery, or serve on jury duty, or you go to bat for a person in court, let your family know. Children need to look up to Dad as a champion of justice. Justice was important to Job. Look at verses 14-17.

I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my justice was like a robe and a turban.
I was eyes to the blind, and I was feet to the lame. I was a father to the poor, and I searched out the case that I did not know. I broke the fangs of the wicked, and plucked the victim from his teeth.

The courageous seekers of justice on movies draw something out in us men. But there are three qualifiers to justice that I want to point out here. Verse 16 says, "I searched out the case that I did not know." Job wanted to be fair. He didn't jump to conclusions with his kids and belt the first one that came along. He found out both sides of the story. He didn't paddle them unless he knew for sure that they did it. Someone gave me a quote that I thought was good. It goes, "It's no use for a father to put his foot down if he doesn't have a leg to stand on." There's no justice in that. I remember as a kid getting a spanking from my dorm parent in boarding school when I wasn't guilty. That made me feel bad enough, but when the man found out, his response was, "Well that spanking is good for all the times that I didn't catch you." Now it's true enough that there were plenty of things I could have been punished for, but he had no evidence on me. And so I knew that was a lame excuse and he was diminished in my sight (even to this day) as a model of justice. And if you as fathers let your thirst for justice find expression without careful examination (whether it is speaking against a political figure or disciplining your children), you will be a bad role model. We need to be careful what kinds of critiques that we bring against politicians, or on the other hand, failures to critique those in government who are wicked - like what FEMA is doing in the flooded areas down south in blocking private aid from going to families, confiscating land, etc. Our children need to see not only that we care, but that we do good research.

Now some people get discouraged because they did poorly in the past. We can't always undo the past. But neither do we have to be bound by the past. We can start now by admitting our mistakes to our children and asking them to forgive us. We can be involved in justice through mercy ministries. We can begin to do what we failed to do, and we can teach others to do the same.

But the second qualifier is that when he found injustice - watch out. And that was true not just within the family. It was also true in terms of his role as a civil magistrate. Verse 17 says, "I broke the fangs of the wicked." He was a political judge and king. And he rejoiced in justice. Now this makes many evangelicals squirm. Verse 17 sounds too harsh for our mild mannered churches. People might chalk verse 17 up to barbarism, but I want you to turn to Psalm 58 to see that this is exactly the same language that God has commanded us to use. The New Testament commands us to sing the Psalms, and most of the War Psalms of the Old Testament are quoted in the New Testament, many times on the lips of Jesus. When evangelicals cringe at the strong language of the War Psalms and say that it is sub-Christian to sing those, they do not realize that *they are speaking against Christ Himself since Christ used the War Psalms.*

Anyway, Psalm 58 is a Psalm of David, a man after God's own heart, and we'll just look at a couple examples here. Look at verse 6: "Break their teeth in their mouth O God! Break out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD!" That's the same language as Job used. Look at verses 10-11:

The righteous shall rejoice when he sees the vengeance; He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked, so that men will say, "Surely there is a reward for the righteous; surely He is God who judges in the earth."

Notice the connection between seeing justice in the physical realm and having a sense of security in God's dealings. He says, "so that men will say, 'Surely there is a reward for the righteous; surely He is a God who judges in the earth.'" When children can't see justice in the state, it has the potential of skewing their view of God. When children don't see justice in a parent, it affects their view of God.

Do you rejoice as the Psalmist did when evil men receive their reward, and if not, why not? I believe part of the reason many don't like such language is that masculinity has been stolen from the church. In a seminar by Howard Hendriks I attended several decades ago, he lamented this condition in these words. (And he didn't realize that in large part his school of dispensationalism has been a major contributor to this problem. But he rightly said:) "The church has become a bunch of mild mannered people teaching other mild mannered people how to become more mild mannered." And I think he is right.

Another example: There is a movement in the Church today to do away with all violence on videos. But I would make a distinction between two different kinds of violence. When violence is gratuitous it is wrong. When violence without justice is enjoyed, we are sick. But the Scripture is full of violence. Not all violence is wrong for our children. I put a picture of a boy pretending to sword fight. And that was deliberate. To shield our children from all violence, you would need to shield them from the Bible. There are times when a fight is legitimate, and our boys should be taught to fight. Christian passivism doesn't have a leg to stand on. Hardenbrook (from whom I got some of these ideas) says,

Hostile charges against men's natural inclination to aggressively seek justice involve a play on feminized emotions. They are a sneaky, disarming attempt to strip males of their manhood - to make them feel guilty over something innately masculine. Real men get angry over injustice. Therefore, it is essential that today's men resist guilt for thinking, acting and feeling the way real men think, act and feel.

If you do not get angry over the abortion industry that is ripping little lives apart, then part of your masculinity has already been stolen by our culture. Do you (like Job) have a desire to see the teeth of the lions broken in when they devour the young? Real men have a thirst for justice. And by the way, even the pro-life movement of today almost totally ignores this justice element in its feminine quest for mercy. We don't treat parents and doctors as murderers who are worthy of the death penalty, but they are. Prolife legislation always puts exceptions that won't criminalize the women. I'm sorry, but they are murderers. And if you don't believe that the Prolife movement is hostile to this principle, I challenge you to ask just about any pro-life worker out there whether laws should be passed to give the

death penalty to both abortionists and the mothers seeking an abortion, and see their reaction. Most don't even believe in the death penalty. The men have metaphorically been injected with the wrong hormone. They aren't acting like men.

So we must have an informed justice, secondly a manly justice, and thirdly a justice that rescues; that has action. Look at verse 17. The third qualifier is that this justice is employed for the sake of mercy. The verse that we read said, "I broke the fangs of the wicked, and plucked the victim from his teeth." This is a balance to what we have just said. He broke the fangs of the wicked *in order to pluck the victim from his teeth*. Job was not a violent man. He didn't enjoy fighting for the sake of fighting. A desire for mercy motivated him to justice. Can you see that? Some of the games that have violence I don't like because they are killing just for the sake of killing. But some games are set up to exercise justice for the sake of mercy. So many modern models for justice are either "make my day" types who have no sense of mercy and tenderness or else they go to the other extreme and are like our modern court system they show too much mercy and coddle the criminals and ignore the God-given rights of the victims. Job was not that way. Job was a rescue mission on two feet.

And by the way, let me point out that many Christians have copped out of the duty to seek justice because they are socialists. Ronald Sider spoke of social justice but it was not the Biblical model. Unlike the modern liberals who vote for *you* to give handouts with *your* tax money, who *legislate* and *talk* about mercy, Job was in the trenches using his *own* money, his *own* time, and his *own* efforts to help. Though he was a civil magistrate, there is no reference to his using tax money to feed the poor. He *personally* fed the poor and clothed them with his *own* money. Liberals are not real men; they are pretenders. Real men have a mercy of action, not of legislating *your* mercy. He was there in the hospital when a man was dying. Verse 13 says, "The blessing of the perishing man came upon me." He was there when the widow needed help and the same verse says, "I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." He was not a socialist. He believed that he should be involved personally. I love the story that John Eidsmoe gave of Davy Crocket. When he was visiting a farmer the farmer said that he would no longer vote for him. When Davy asked why, the farmer said because you voted to give relief to a family from the public purse. And when asked what was wrong with that, this politician got a good sermon from the farmer on the difference between true mercy and socialism. And it changed Davy Crocket. The next time a vote came, he told the story, opposed the motion, and instead suggested that they pass the hat and put their own money in to support the person in need, and they would have plenty enough. No one contributed. And yet they were considered somehow merciful. Modern calls for social justice and mercy is a cop out - it's letting *George* do it, but Job was *personally* involved. Verses 12,16: Orphans enjoyed being around him. Verse 15. When there was a blind man crossing the street, he helped him out. When the lame needed a ride, he gave him one. So it was justice for the sake of mercy.

So we see that even in the definition of justice, the second element of this point ("mercy") is also essential to the definition of this man's man, Job. And I ask you men this morning, if we are not tender and merciful with our wives, how can we hope to be so with widows? If we are not tender and merciful with our own kids, how can we be so with orphans? A real man doesn't just show mercy when there is something in it for him. He is someone who gains honor and respect in the community because of a selfless mercy. This has implications for

fathers being involved in the pro-life movement. We have women, but we need more fathers who can be a role model to the selfish boyfriends and husbands at the abortion clinics. And above all, we need to be merciful and tender with our children. But all of this is to say that men must be godly judges.

VI. A Servant-King: Job Achieved Leadership & Popularity Through Service (vs. 7-12 “because”; 21-25)

The fifth word that should describe us is that we men must be servant-kings. Another way of saying this is that we must be engaged in dominion through service. Or as Christ modeled it, we must lead in such a way that it is not beneath our dignity to wash feet. Job achieved leadership through servanthood. There is no question in this passage about the degree of leadership that Job had attained. He was boss, and no one was about to dispute that fact. By the way, just as a side note: I read a scholarly essay on genealogies that convinced me that Job was an Edomite king and that the counselors have been identified both by Scripture and ancient Jewish exegesis as being Edomite nobles who were after Job’s job and trying to get him to step down. Read in that light it puts a totally different twist on his complaints and why even at the end of the book God could say to Eliphaz, “My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has.” Job was responding to insubordination and a grab for his job.

Anyway, verse 7 describes him as a king. Verse 8 says, “The young men saw me and hid, and the aged arose and stood; the princes refrained from talking, and put their hand on their mouth; the voice of nobles was hushed, and their tongue stuck to the roof of their mouth.” He was a leader of leaders. And by the way, that concept of standing before those that we honor ought to still be employed. Though there are still remnants of it in the court room (when the bailiff calls everyone to rise when the judge comes in), it has been almost lost in America. But our children need to learn how to honor elders, how to refrain from talking in situations where we are learning from respected people. Children need to be taught these manners. They are not going to pick them up on their own.

But that’s not the lesson I wanted to draw out here. What I wanted to pull out was that his leadership was not that of a tyrant or bully. He gained his leadership through servanthood. Several verses could be read, but I like the image in verse 25: “I chose the way for them, and sat as chief [There’s the leadership, but notice in the next phrase the way this leadership was expressed. There are two word pictures:] So I dwelt as a king in the army [there’s the first word picture. The second image], as one who comforts mourners.” He wasn’t like a king who let the army do the fighting while he stayed in the palace. He wasn’t a man who bossed everybody around and knew what everybody was doing wrong. He got involved side by side with those he had authority over - like a king leading the charge into the army. He didn’t ask people to do things he wasn’t willing to do. He got his hands dirty with all the rest. Now that didn’t mean he didn’t ever send people off by themselves to do something. There is a place for that. But it did mean that no ministry was beneath his dignity. And it also meant that he was involved with those he led.

The second metaphor is a comforter of mourners. You can't comfort a person by sending your servant. Comfort takes a personal touch. And throughout this chapter you see Job's personal touch as he helped a poor man in verse 12, or ministered to a dying man in verse 13 or was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame in verse 15. He was a servant.

What is your leadership like? Wives will often rebel against leadership because there is no servanthood. Now that's no excuse for their rebellion (and these men rebelled against Job's godly servanthood – so sin can manifest itself even when we are doing the right thing). But men do need to examine their own lives and be willing to be like Christ who washed His disciples' feet, served them and laid down His life for the church. Now God has not called us to be wimps when he calls us to be tender. But on the other hand, some think its OK to be a John Wayne, but John Wayne did not have the heart of Job. No way! I think of his idealizing of pride. You can think of the film, *She Wore A Yellow Ribbon*, and the repeated phrase, "Never apologize, mister, its a sign of weakness." If that is your idea of fatherhood, then you need to repent. John Wayne was an individualist, Job was not. John Wayne tipped his hat to God, Job was familiar with God. There are many models of manhood vying for your attention out there. There is the macho maniac who is insensitive to women and children. There is the superjock who equates masculinity with athletic ability and whose got a bad case of pride. There is the tycoon who thinks the only way he can be a man is if he earns a fortune, and his search for money insulates him from his family's needs. And there is the gender blender who has committed masculine *hare kare* by caving in to everything that his wife demands. He's not a leader. I would encourage you men to be models of manhood in your city. And I would encourage you wives and children to support them in that role. When God brings revival to America, He will use men and women like you to show these scarred and wounded converts what it means to be men and women of God. And for you women you can review the whole series of sermons on Women of Faith. The church desperately needs model men and women to disciple the new converts when God sends revival - which I pray that He will.

The kind of rule that many women rebel against and associate with patriarchy is actually not patriarchy - it is a perverted result of feminism (ironically). It is the final result of rejecting God's plan. And it is no wonder then that it is painful. Hardenbrook says,

Being the kind of fathers men are supposed to be means that they must return to patriarchy. Therefore, men should reject the historically inaccurate assertion, so naively believed by Americans of both sexes, that patriarchal families were oppressive families in which women and children suffered at the cruel hands of despotic men. An objective look at the period of American history when patriarchal families were the norm tells just the opposite story. It plainly demonstrates that spouses and children felt far less oppressed and far more content than their modern counterparts.

Now obviously there were exceptions, but it is our age of *feminism* which has produced the most irresponsible husbands and the most spousal abuse.

VII. A Prophet: Job Was A Well Of Wisdom & Guidance (vs. 15-16, 21-23)

Point VI: Job was a prophet and we need to be prophets both to our families and to our culture. Another way of saying it is that you men need to speak God's Word (the Bible) into all the situations that we find. That means that we must understand the Bible. Job was a well of wisdom. Look at verses 21-23:

Men listened to me and waited, and kept silence for my counsel. After my words they did not speak again, and my speech settled on them as dew. They waited for me as for the rain, and they opened their mouth wide as for the spring rain.

Here is a model for you fathers. When was the last time your family asked your advice, or others came to you for advice? Part of the problem is that people don't seek wisdom any more. But we need to be fathers who are wells of wisdom and who read, read, read. You cannot gain wisdom without study. And don't just read your favorite books. Read because it is your duty. And if you can't read, listen to podcasts and other forms of audio. There are conference audios galore nowadays that can strengthen us as men and women. As a good manager it is critically important that you read books on discipline, education, nurturing, economics, and yes – even women's books. You men should read the best of the women's books. If you don't, you will relinquish your role as head and manager. The Scripture calls you men to wash your wives with the water of the Word. That means that you need to know how the Scripture applies to her. Managers know something about the departments underneath them. The modern church needs men who seek to gain wisdom; who seek to understand how God wants us to guide our families. One of my life verses is 1 Chronicles 12:32: And in the middle of a genealogy it describes "the sons of Issachar who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do." They were just ordinary men, but they were studying their culture and seeking to make a difference. May you be a well of wisdom as you get older. As the patriarch of a family, that is what God calls you to: to honor the wisdom of your father, and to seek to be a father that would grow in wisdom.

VIII. One who enjoys life: Job Enjoyed Life And Enjoyed Bringing Joy To Others (vs. 6,19-20,24-25)

And then finally, Job had learned to enjoy life and enjoyed bringing joy to others. Verses 18-20 talk of satisfaction and joy in life that Job had despite his incredibly busy schedule. If you're too busy to have fun, you're too busy. It says,

Then I said, "I shall die in my nest, and multiply my days as the sand. My root is spread out to the waters, and the dew lies all night on my branch. My glory is fresh within me, and my bow is renewed in my hand.

That is beautiful imagery of a man who had learned to enjoy life. And the basis of his enjoyment was found in God, which brings us full circle back to point I: that Job was a worshiper who lived his entire life coram deo, or "before the face of God." Verse 19 uses the

imagery of a tree finding never-ending refreshment from a river, and the second half of that verse shows the imagery of the dew coming down upon him and watering him. During those times like verse 17 when he was discouraged over injustice in the earth, he found strength to go on in God. During those times when people had sucked him dry in verses 12-16, his cup was refilled from God's waters of life. Riches don't satisfy fully, nor does a family, nor does a good job or friends. Job realized that all of these things could be lost. But there was *one* source of strength that enabled him to keep on keeping on even when the going got tough - it was the streams of life from God. So Job said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."

I urge you fathers to seek God as your ultimate source of joy and satisfaction. The first six points focused on glorifying God in your fatherhood (your duty), but this last one exhorts you to never lose the joy of the Lord which is your strength. That is the only way you will be able to enjoy life. Solomon had everything, but he hated life during his backslidden days when his roots were not in God. But at the end of his life he repented. And Solomon's advice at that point was to fear God and enjoy life - in that order. The catechism says, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." My prayer for you fathers is that you would fulfill your duties as fathers, but enjoy life to the fullest as you do it, and help your family to enjoy life. You need to be a man who knows how to joke and bring laughter to your family. Do fun things together. Have optimism, hope and laughter. Now obviously there is a time for mourning, and Job speaks of that. But Job 29 describes the pattern of life that we should strive for. Don't feel guilty when you have fun together as a family and your work is not all done. Our work will never be all done - never. If I had to wait for that, our family could never have fun. Work before pleasure has to have balance. So enjoy life and help others to enjoy life. Watch a movie, play a game, go out to dinner, play ball, or go on a vacation.

There are other essentials such as providing for your family, but these are the areas which tend to be crowded out, so I have focused on them. And I charge you by God's grace to take seriously your roles as friend, prophet, priest and king; as steward and judge; and above all, as one who has learned to enjoy God and knows how to help his family to enjoy God. And may He receive the glory. Amen.