

A Godly Man's Duties At Home

Geoffrey R. Kirkland
Christ Fellowship Bible Church

Biblical manhood is under great attack today. The world in which we live assaults the biblical portrait of Godly manhood. In fact, many even *in the church* have little clarity regarding godliness and concerning a godly man's duties at home.

This essay presents 5 biblical, non-negotiable duties to which God calls every Godly man.

1. Study God, Hunger for Scripture & Obey it.

Man of God, redeemed by Christ's blood, protected by the Spirit, make your life's pursuit the relentless passion for God and for His glory. Strive earnestly to know your God. Hunger for Scripture. Feed and feast upon it. Imbibe and memorize it. Then, O man of God, obey what God says.

2. Love your wife, serve her, lead her & fulfill her.

Jesus loves you, O Christian man, with an intense, fervent, jealous, sanctifying love. You must love your wife in this same way. How has Christ loved you? So you must turn to show that to your wife. Serve her as Christ served you. Lead her as Christ leads you. Fulfill her as Christ satisfies you. This is your foremost responsibility on the earth. You, married man of God, cherish the greatest earthly gift God has given you – your precious bride!

3. Disciple your children toward Christ & His gospel.

If God has graced you with children, then you, precious brother, are their pastor. Not the youth leader, not their discipler, not their friends, and certainly not Instagram. You lead them in the Word! You point them to Christ! You ravish them with the grandeur and glory of the gospel! Persuade them to believe in Christ, turning from sin, and bearing fruits in keeping with repentance! Disciple them regularly. Bible open, prayers offered, applying biblical truth, and diligently counseling and pastoring their souls, you, O man of God, must regularly lead your kids (all of them) to Calvary!

4. Lead everyone in consistent family worship.

Whether you are newlyweds, empty nesters, a Father with older children in high school, or a young father with a toddler at home, your role is the same: God calls you to be the pastor of the little flock at home that God has entrusted to you. Bring them to the Throne of Grace daily by praying for them and with them and in their presence. Call upon God for their souls as they hear you cry to your God. Open your Bible and lead them through the breadth of Scripture and explain God's truth to them diligently. Sing God's praises as a family by instilling good hymns into their hearts and minds. Gently, tenderly, and happily lead your family in worship since you are the spiritual leader of the home. For the glory of God and for the souls of your children and for the sake of your children's children, lead your family regularly, corporately, diligently, and heartfully in family worship!

5. Provide for the family yet guard from materialism.

As the head, you must care for the pressing needs of the family. But make sure that what you (and your family) believes are needs are in fact bonafide essentials and not cultural cravings and status symbols. Provide food, shelter, health, and proper needs that are necessary, but be careful, O man of God, that you do not pour too many material possessions upon your family so as to tempt them to love the things of this world rather than setting their eyes upon Christ and the things above. All things on earth will pass away. They may not be sinful but they are temporal. So pray that God would grant you and your family neither poverty nor riches and that God would feed you with the food that is your portion (Prov 30.8). Provide physically for the essentials but always remember to make the emphasis on the greatest spiritual needs that can never pass away – the gospel & the Scriptures.

If we're honest, we must confess that, in our day, so often things are completely reversed...

5. In general, the man may work a lot, make a lot (or attempt to) of money and get the wife & kids what they want to make them happy (materialism abounds).

The temptations for this cannot be counted. From the TV commercials, to ads, to coveting, to seeing what is the latest trend, fad, fashion, or gadget, so often men work hard and provide much for their families. The problem, however, is that the man does not provide what is most sorely needed – godly guidance, spiritual shepherding, and soul-care for his wife and family. He works hard and brings home money so the family can live comfortably, accrue many goods, and thus be distracted by the things of this world. The temptation is so important that Christ spoke of it frequently. Guard!

4. In general, while neglecting daily family worship, the dad drives the family to church most sundays and this counts for his spiritual leadership.

And, as vitally important as it is to lead well in the area of gathering the entire family and going to corporate worship, this is not sufficient. Church is good! Preaching is good! Fellowship is profitable! But it's not enough. God commands fathers to teach God's words diligently to his children and talk of them when they sit in the house and when they walk by the way and when they lie down and when they rise up (Deut 6.7). Many dads do not lead in regular, ongoing, daily, diligent family worship. Instead, they may think that because they gather the family (or a part thereof) and take them to church that they've done their spiritual duty for the week and they are in the clear until next Sunday rolls around.

3. In general, the father may take a kid out here or there and talk about God, purity, youth group, school, friends, relationships.

If an opportunity allows or if a need arises, the father may be reactive and take a child out for a special occasion of talking about something that has come up pertaining to a relationship, purity, truthfulness, and friendships. Rare is it that a father proactively and excitedly gathers his children and takes them out on special "discipleship outings" to instruct them in the Word and show how the Bible relates to every aspect of their lives! Sadly this is not commonplace and when the occasions do arise when a father asks a child to go out somewhere, the child may feel as though he did something wrong and dad is about to scold him for this or that! How sad this is!

2. In general, the husband, schedule permitting, may take the wife out on a periodic date together.

Of course men are busy! All men of God have things going on. Calendars fill up quickly. That's why we have our smartphones to take wherever we are so we can not forget that appointment or this meeting or that luncheon. Work is busy. Travels consume our days. Sports and entertainments abound. Friends and get togethers are always knocking at our doors. And then, if there's time, and if a husband feels like it and is on good terms with his wife, he may take her out on a date together. Far from being a preeminent priority in his schedule, this is demoted to the lower part of the priority list. If there's time, if she's available, if we can get a babysitter, if there is (absolutely) nothing else going on, then we *still might* go out. Sadly, in our day, children have become central in the home. It must never be this way! But to our demise, marriages stay together, but they, in all honesty and in many cases, just survive rather than thrive.

1. After all has been said and done, if time remains, then the man invests himself in the study, meditation, memorization & prayerful response to the Word of God.

After all this has been done with work, sports, entertainments, children, parenting, the wife, and other things that need to get done and other tasks that occupy our hearts and minds, then God gets the remaining part of our energies. Sadly, this does not account for much since men are tired at night after a hard day's work. Little Bible study happens on his own and very little shepherding happens as the husband ministers the Word to his wife. His prayer closet has become overgrown with thorns because he has become too tired in the mornings to rise early and pray because the demands at the office kept him late the night before or the baseball game kept him out too late. So God waits to meet with this man, but sadly, many men do not enthusiastically, hungrily, and worshipfully long to meet with God.

Conclusion:

O man of God, please hear this: there is hope! You are not hopeless and helpless. But you must understand that the emphasis in God's plan FOCUSES ON and CENTERS on and PRIORITIZES the instruction of biblical truth to the family. But tragically, you must see how culture has utterly flipped God's

family plan upside down as the focus is on SELF and on the WANTS and PLEASURES of the family while relegating biblical instruction to the least place of priority.

This essay intends not to be a guilt trip for anyone. It strives to show God's plan for the family and how contrary God's plan is with that of the world. If a husband in the home just sits in neutral, without any Godly pursuits, then he will not follow God's instructions for him as a man in the home. Men must actively pursue Godliness. Men must strive to fulfill the godly duties in the home. God commands men to love their wives. God reminds men to wash them in the word and to nourish and cherish them.

By the grace of God, with the help of the Spirit, as you involve yourself in a sound Bible-teaching church, and as you surround yourself with Godly men and women who have like-minded passions and goals to glorify God, you will be able to fulfill your duties in the home as a godly man. You will not be perfect. You will still fail. But be humble. Repent quickly. Keep short accounts with God and short accounts with your wife and children. When you sin, confess it verbally, specifically, honestly. Don't mince your words and don't put the blame on others. Own it, confess it, mortify it, reconcile, and turn from its wicked ways. Replace those sinful tendencies and lazy patterns in your life with godly virtues and Christlike habits. God will honor it. Christ will bless it. The Spirit will energize and bring much fruit to it. Trust in Him! Men, by the grace of God, you can fulfill your duties in the home!