



A CHALLENGE TO MEN

1. That all of your life—in whatever calling—be devoted to the glory of God.
2. That the promises of Christ be trusted so fully that peace and joy and strength fill your soul to overflowing.
3. That this fullness of God overflow in daily acts of love so that people might see your good deeds and give glory to your Father in Heaven.
4. That you be men of the Book, who love and study and obey the Bible in every area of its teaching; that meditation on Biblical truth be the source of hope and faith; that you continue to grow in understanding through all the chapters of your life, never thinking that study and growth are only for others.
5. That you be men of prayer, so that the Word of God will be opened to you, so the power of faith and holiness will descend upon you; that your spiritual influence may increase at home and at church and in the world.
6. That you be men who have a deep grasp of the sovereign grace of God which under-girds all these spiritual processes; and that you be deep thinkers about the doctrines of grace, and even deeper lovers of these things.
7. That you be totally committed to ministry, whatever your specific calling; that you not fritter away your time on excessive sports and recreation or unimportant hobbies or aimless diddling in the garage; but that you redeem the time for Christ and his Kingdom.
8. That, if you are single, you exploit your singleness to the full in devotion to God (the way Jesus and Paul and Mary Slessor and Amy Carmichael did) and not be paralyzed by the desire to be married.
9. That, if you are married, you love your wife the way Christ loved the church and gave himself for her; that you be a humble, self-denying, up-building, happy spiritual leader; that you consistently grow in grace and knowledge so as never to quench the aspirations of your wife for spiritual advancement; that you cultivate tenderness and strength, a pattern of initiative and a listening ear; and that you accept the responsibility of provision and protection in the family, however you and your wife share the labor.
10. That, if you have children, you accept primary responsibility, in partnership with your wife (or as a single parent), to raise up children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord—children who hope in the triumph of God; that you establish a pattern of teaching and discipline that is not solely dependent on the church or school to impart Bible knowledge and spiritual values to the children; and that you give your children the time and attention and affection that communicates the true nature of our Father in Heaven.
11. That you not assume advancement and peer approval in your gainful employment are the highest values in life; but that you ponder the eternal significance of faithful fatherhood and time spent with your wife; that you repeatedly consider the new possibilities at each stage of your life for maximizing your energies for the glory of God in ministry; that you pose the question often: Is our family molded by the culture, or do we embody the values of the Kingdom of God? That you lead the family in making choices not on the basis of secular trends or upward lifestyle

expectations, but on the basis of what will strengthen the faith of the family and advance the cause of Christ.

12. That you step back and (with your wife, if you are married) plan the various forms of your life's ministry in chapters. Chapters are divided by various things—age, strength, singleness, marriage, employment, children at home, children in college, grandchildren, retirement, etc. No chapter has all the joys. Finite life is a series of tradeoffs. Finding God's will and living for the glory of Christ to the full in every chapter is what makes it a success, not whether it reads like somebody else's chapter or whether it has in it what only another chapter will bring.

13. That you develop a wartime mentality and lifestyle; that you never forget that life is short, that billions of people hang in the balance of heaven and hell every day, that the love of money is spiritual suicide, that the goals of upward mobility (nicer clothes, cars, houses, vacations, food, hobbies) are a poor and dangerous substitute for the goals of living for Christ with all your might and maximizing your joy in ministry to people's needs.

14. That in all your relationships with women (not just in marriage) you seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in applying the Biblical vision of manhood and womanhood; that you develop a style and demeanor that expresses your God-given responsibility for humble strength and leadership, and for self-sacrificing provision and protection; that you think creatively and with cultural sensitivity (just as she must do) in shaping the style and setting the tone of your interaction with women.

15. That you see the Biblical guidelines for what is appropriate and inappropriate for men and women not as license for domination or bossy passivity, but as a call to servant leadership that thinks in terms of responsibilities not rights; that you see these principles as wise and gracious prescriptions for how to discover the true freedom of God's ideal of complementarity; that you encourage the fruitful engagement of women in the countless ministry roles that are Biblically appropriate and deeply needed. For example:

Opportunities for Ministry

Ministries to the handicapped

Hearing impaired

Blind

Lame

Retarded

Ministries to the sick

Nursing

Physician

Hospice care-cancer, AIDS, etc.

Community health

Ministries to the socially estranged

Emotionally impaired

Recovering alcoholics

Recovering drug-users

Escaping prostitutes

Abused children, women

Runaways, problem children

Orphans

Prison ministries

Women's prisons

Families of prisoners

Rehabilitation to society

Ministries to youth

Teaching

Sponsoring

Open houses and recreation

Outings and trips

Counseling

Academic assistance

Sports ministries

Neighborhood teams

Church teams

Therapeutic counseling

Independent

Church-based

Institutional

Audiovisual ministries

- Composition
- Design
- Production
- Distribution

Writing ministries

- Free-lance
- Curriculum development
- Fiction
- Non-fiction
- Editing
- Institutional communications
- Journalistic skills for publications

Teaching ministries

- Sunday school: children, youth, students, women
- Grade school
- High school
- College

Music ministries

- Composition
- Training
- Performance
- Voice
- Choir
- Instrumentalist

Evangelistic ministries

- Personal witnessing
- Para-church groups
- Home Bible studies
- Outreach to children
- Visitation teams
- Counseling at meetings
- Telephone counseling

Radio and television ministries

- Technical assistance
- Writing
- Announcing
- Producing

Theater and drama ministries

- Acting
- Directing
- Writing
- Scheduling

Social ministries

- Literacy
- Pro-life
- Pro-decency
- Housing
- Safety
- Beautification
- Drug rehabilitation

Pastoral care assistance

- Visitation
- Newcomer welcoming and assistance
- Hospitality
- Food and clothing and transportation

Prayer ministries

- Praying
- Mobilizing for prayer events
- Helping with small groups of prayer
- Coordinating prayer chains
- Promoting prayer days and weeks and vigils

Missions

- All of the above across cultures

Support ministries

- Countless “secular” jobs that under-gird other ministries

The awesome significance of motherhood

Making a home as a full-time wife

Written by John Piper from “A Vision of Biblical Complementarity: Manhood and Womanhood Defined According to the Bible,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, eds. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991), 54-59. The entire book is available on line at <http://www.cbmw.org/rbmw/rbmw.pdf>.