THE 5 MARKS OF A MAN IN PROVERBS

FROM BOYHOOD TO MANHOOD

(Identify 5 powerful scriptures in Proverbs that identify the importance of masculinity.)

Proverbs has a remarkably strong vision of masculinity. It does not define a man primarily by physical strength, dominance, or status, but by responsibility, discipline, courage, integrity, and the ability to govern himself and positively influence others.

Here are five powerful passages that form a biblical theology of masculinity:

1. Proverbs 20:7 — Masculinity is demonstrated through integrity.

“A righteous man who walks in his integrity—How blessed are his sons after him.” — NASB 1995

Biblical masculinity is generational. A man does not merely ask, “What kind of life am I living?” He asks, “What kind of inheritance is my life creating?” His character becomes a covering and example for those who follow him. Proverbs connects the integrity of the father with the blessing of the children.

Principle: A man’s greatest legacy is not what he leaves tohis children, but what he leaves in his children.

2. Proverbs 16:32 — Masculinity requires self-mastery.

“He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.” — NASB 1995

This radically redefines strength. The Bible says conquering yourself requires greater strength than conquering a city. A man may command employees, lead organizations, build businesses, or influence thousands and still fail to govern his appetites, anger, tongue, sexuality, ego, or emotions.

Principle: Before a man is qualified to exercise authority over anything else, he must learn to exercise authority over himself.

3. Proverbs 27:17 — Masculinity develops in relationship with other men.

“Iron sharpens iron, So one man sharpens another.” — NASB 1995

Men need men. Biblical masculinity was never designed to develop entirely in isolation. Fathers sharpen sons. Older men sharpen younger men. Friends challenge friends. Mentors correct protégés. Healthy masculine relationships provide challenge, correction, accountability, wisdom, and encouragement.

Notice that sharpening involves friction. A man who refuses correction eventually becomes dull.

Principle: Men become sharper when they allow trustworthy men to challenge their weaknesses and strengthen their character.

4. Proverbs 24:5–6 — Masculinity combines strength with wisdom.

“A wise man is strong, And a man of knowledge increases power. For by wise guidance you will wage war, And in abundance of counselors there is victory.” — NASB 1995

Proverbs does not reject strength; it redefines and directs it. Masculine strength without wisdom can become destructive. Wisdom teaches a man when to fight, what to fight for, how to fight, and when not to fight.

This is particularly important for husbands, fathers, pastors, and leaders. Masculinity is not merely possessing power—it is knowing how to steward power for the protection and advancement of others.

Principle: A mature man does not merely possess strength; he possesses the wisdom to know where that strength belongs.

5. Proverbs 22:29 — Masculinity embraces competence and responsibility.

“Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before obscure men.” — NASB 1995

Proverbs expects a man to develop his capacity. He should learn, practice, improve, work, build, and become competent. Masculinity carries an impulse toward responsibility, productivity, mastery, and contribution.

The goal is not simply employment. It is stewardship of one's God-given abilities.

Principle: A boy waits to be taken care of; a developing man learns to become capable of carrying responsibility.

A powerful five-part definition emerges

These Proverbs give you an excellent framework for teaching young men:

A MAN OF INTEGRITY — Proverbs 20:7 –

(His character can be trusted.)

A MAN OF SELF-MASTERY — Proverbs 16:32(His passions are governed.)

A MAN OF BROTHERHOOD — Proverbs 27:17(His relationships sharpen him.)

A MAN OF WISDOM AND STRENGTH — Proverbs 24:5–6(His power is properly directed.)

A MAN OF COMPETENCE — Proverbs 22:29(His abilities are developed.)

Put into one sentence:

Biblical masculinity is the development of a man whose character can be trusted, whose passions can be governed, whose relationships make him sharper, whose strength is directed by wisdom, and whose abilities equip him to carry responsibility.