

BOAZ ADHENGO

MANHOOD



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Masculinities are not equivalent to men; they concern the position of men in a gender order. They are the patterns of practices by which people (*both men and women, but predominantly men*) engage that position. This concept includes not only social and cultural influences but also biological factors. A solely biological focus on the implications of masculinities adheres to biological essentialism, thus reinforcing the belief that our created nature is to be either male or female; yet the concept of masculinity usually proceeds from men's bodies, is inherent in a male body, or expresses something of the male body.

Masculinities are relational and influenced by social and cultural contexts; thus popular culture has the ability to ascribe meaning to cultural lives and practices, to inform hegemonic expressions in society, and to influence identity, bodily experiences and relationships. Popular culture ascribes meaning to a context, mind-set, structure and, especially, humanity.

It has been said that men have power because of their gender, yet their access to that power will differ as based upon individual characteristics such as social class, income, education, ethnicity, sexual orientation or physical strength. To shape meaning is thus a political act involving the exercise of that power to affect people's lives and gender has provided a fundamental way of indicating power relationships, to be a contributing element in social relations; yet in general comprehension, gender is the array of social roles or symbolic functions ascribed to the bodily differences between the sexes in different cultures or societies. Most importantly, gender does not reside within the person but rather in social transactions defined as gendered. In this regard, a single father may as well double up in the role of motherhood.

It is my hope that this book achieves not only the original intent of expositing the long awaited discussions on manhood but greatly to affirm the role of the male mankind as a steward, more so, within the reality of God.

Chapter One

MASCULINITY

In **1 Kings 2:1-3**, we have David's final words to his son Solomon. It says, "*As David's time to die drew near, he charged Solomon his son, saying, I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man. Keep the charge of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His ordinances, and His testimonies, according to what is written in the Law of Moses, that you may succeed in all that you do and wherever you turn.*" If we want to know what true masculinity is about, this passage provides us with a great foundation and abundant insight.

David commands Solomon to "*show yourself a man.*" Show yourself could also be translated "*appear,*" "*come to pass,*" "*be established,*" or "*continue.*" The word translated *man* does indeed imply male as opposed to female. Solomon is to demonstrate characteristics foundational to God's design for masculinity as he takes the throne and succeeds David as king of Israel. It is not that he was not a man before coming to the throne; rather, David's exhortation to his son is to show himself to be what he really is on the inside. He is to live out manhood and Biblical masculinity as he takes on the role of king. This doesn't mean predominantly physically strong, but the meaning is that of an internal strength and fortitude. He is to be resolute in his beliefs, character, and integrity. Solomon is to be firm as to what he represents and in his role of administering justice. He is to do his part to see that God's will is prevailing in the kingdom. He is to courageously stand tall in battle, and he is to be courageous when it comes to standing for truth and the laws of God. Surely, he could have shown himself to be a man before he

had ascended to the throne, and it is David's charge to him that he acts as a man of God while on the throne. Being in power does not make a person a man, but it, like many other times and roles in life, requires that men live as godly men.

If a man doubts his manliness, he needs only to believe what is already true. God created him to be a man and to live as a man by being strong and keeping His Word. Even a man that the world would consider weak, feeble, and the least manly can be stronger than many in the world if he believes God and keeps His commandments; he does not need to take a trip to the wilderness and wait for a voice from heaven to declare to his soul that he is a man. He does not have to wait for his father or some father figure to somehow bestow *manliness* upon him. He doesn't have to prove to himself or to others that he has what it takes to do whatever the world or he himself deems is important and manly. Masculinity is given by God to men, and men must live it out Biblically rather than perverting it and redefining it in a worldly, carnal, and selfish terms.

Men can have covenants, documents, strategies, and pragmatic principles, but without the gospel there is no authentic empowerment to execute what is laid out in them. As apostle Paul articulated in **Ephesians 2:15**, that Christ has created one new man in Himself. A new manliness made up of men and women of different ethnicities and time periods; within this renewal; the males within the new manliness have been restored to God's new eternal intentions

in Jesus Christ. As a part of God's new community, men play a vital role in leading in the home and in the church.

God holds the trademark on creation. More specifically, God holds the trademark on manhood. All of God's creation was brought into being with a sense of care and love, but when He created man He didn't speak him into existence as He did the stars, water, land, and animals; instead God established a new technique in creation. God *formed* man. This term is rich in depth and meaning - *God handmade man by sculpting Him from what He had already created.*

Formed means "*fashioned, shaped, or forged, usually by plan or design.*" The term implies intentionality; forming isn't haphazard. To form is to devise, prepare, i.e., think about future actions with a particular plan of action as an extension of forming an object by artistic, careful design.

Thus, to be in the image of God is an incredible privilege. It means to be like God and to represent God. No other creatures in all of creation, not even the powerful angels, are said to be in the image of God. It is a privilege given only to us as men and women. We are more like God than any other creatures in the universe, for we alone are in the image of God. Any discussion of manhood and womanhood in the Bible must start here. Every time we look at each other or talk to each other as men and women, we should remember that the person we are talking to is a creature of God who is more like God than anything else in the universe, and men and women share that status equally. Therefore we should treat men and women with equal dignity, and we should

think of men and women as having equal value. We are both in the image of God, and we have been so since the very first day that God created us. “*In the image of God he created him; male and female he created them*” (**Genesis 1:27**). Nowhere does the Bible say that men are more in God’s image than women. Men and women share equally in the tremendous privilege of being in the image of God.

The image of God in man as functional holism means that God made human beings, both male and female, to be created and finite representations (*images*) of God’s own nature, that in relationship with Him and each other they might be His representatives (*imaging God*) in carrying out the responsibilities He has given to them. In this sense, we are images of God in order to image God and His purposes in the ordering of our lives and the carrying out of our God-given responsibilities.

The creation of male and female as the image of God indicates the equal value of women with men as being fully human, with equal dignity, worth, and importance. While Genesis 1:26-27 speaks of God creating man in His image, the passage deliberately broadens at the end of verse 27 to say, “*male and female He created them*”. Clearly the intention of the text is to say both that the man and the woman share a common humanity and equal worth before God (*hence, both are man*), and yet they do so not as identical (*hence distinctly male and female*).

Since man was created in God’s image, we would expect man to exist in a loving communion of persons. This is the

second truth we see in the passage from the Book of Genes is: God created man not just as a “*him*” but as a “*them*,” and not just as them of two or more sexes, but in a very specific way: “*male and female [God] created them.*” God created the human person male and female to reflect his love, and made it possible for man and woman to live in a loving communion of persons so strong that their love itself could take on personality. That’s precisely what happens in the loving communion of persons we call marriage, in which, by God’s design, man and woman can *make love* by literally becoming *one flesh* in their offspring, a child. The son or daughter is a fruit of their love; and by the child’s participation in that communion, it becomes a means by which that love can continue to grow and flourish.

So it is not some biological accident that there are men and women. This original differentiation is part of God’s plan from the beginning. God made man and woman equal in dignity and similar in so many respects, but also different and complementary in so many other respects - *at the level of the sexual organs, their minds and personalities, and even in their cells, chromosomes, hormones and so much more.* These differences in particular are caught up mysteriously in the image of God. These complementary divergences, so to speak, are meant to be “*calls to communion,*” to elicit the recognition on the part of both that they need the other in order to become all it means to be human. These differences urge them on inwardly to give of themselves with love, to remedy what the other lacks, and to welcome and receive from the other what they are incapable of being or doing on their own.

These truths about human love in general and masculine love in particular are very beautiful, but for men's lives to shine with their beauty, these insights need to be made practical. What does masculine love look like in practice? What are the virtues that show forth genuine manly love?

Real men are men of integrity, internal strength in Christ, and courage, willing to do what is right and to stand for truth at all times and in all circumstances. When those under his care are in danger, a real man moves to protect them, even being willing to give his own life (*John 15:13*). When he is courting a woman or in a marriage relationship, he honours that woman and treats her in an understanding way, being kind, gentle, and protective of her (*1 Peter 3:7*). He lovingly leads his wife, taking initiative and responsibility for the course and direction of the home, yet all the while listening to her and always seeking to do what is in her best interests (***Ephesians 5:25, 28, Colossians 3:19***). He does his best to understand her and to be to her and for her what she needs. He treats her not as someone lesser but as an equal and fellow heir of eternal life in Jesus Christ (*1 Peter 3:7*). When he is raising children, he trains them in God's Word and does not provoke them to anger (*Ephesians 6:4*). When he is in the workplace, he does his best and works with all of his heart (*Colossians 3:23*). He does his best to provide for the home, and he takes measures to be sure his family would be provided for if the event of his death (*1 Timothy 5:8*). When he is in the church, he is willing to use his gifts to serve others. When he is in a position of leadership, he is confident in Christ to stand for truth and make the right decisions.

When he is in a position of temptation, he resists the devil and stands firm against the flesh (***James 4:7***). When a person is in need, he is generous and merciful to them (***2 Corinthians 9:7, Matthew 5:7***). When others fail him, he is willing to forgive (***Ephesians 4:32***) and does not take revenge (***Romans 12:19***), for he is gentle and tender-hearted (***Galatians 5:22-23***). He studies the Word (***2 Timothy 2:15***), and teaches it when he has opportunity (***2 Timothy 2:2***). He is a man devoted to prayer (***1 Thessalonians 5:17***), and he is a man who loves God with all of his heart, soul, and strength (***Luke 10:27***).

Chapter Two

CONFUSION

In pre-modern times of Africa, biology has contributed largely to the roles of men and women. Males are generally physically stronger than women, so the men were the ones who went out to hunt and provide for the family. Females are biologically equipped to have babies, so they cared for the children. In general, there were no birth control options and no abortion alternatives with which a woman could supersede biology. A man didn't have to reflect on thoughts whether he or his wife would stay home and raise the children. Roles were less complicated because they were predetermined by biology.

In addition, people lived in a more hostile physical environment in which day-to-day living was a struggle for survival. When a man went out to get food for his family, there was no guarantee that he would come back alive. He might be fatally wounded by an animal or die of exposure. Therefore, the woman rejoiced to see him come home again. The basic needs of survival required men and women to develop specific roles and skills, which were passed along to succeeding generations; in this way, although survival was difficult, relationships were comparatively easy because there was no confusion over gender roles. A man and a woman didn't have to wonder whether one was infringing on the other's territory. Her role was to keep the house, cook the food, and care for the children. His job was to hunt or harvest the crops and build a dwelling in order to provide food and shelter for the family. This partnership in survival produced interdependence between men and women that generated a

mutual appreciation. Because they both worked so hard and did their individual parts, they respected one another. It was a natural appreciation. It was natural because their roles were very clear and were accepted as necessary and important.

Life is completely different for men and women nowadays because we are no longer utterly dependent on one another for security and survival. Our roles and strategies have really changed. Biology doesn't determine male-female roles and functions the way it used to. Today, because of the prevalence of *dual careers* and *birth control*, a husband and wife might choose not to have children. Also, because of the widespread idea that fertility is a woman's business alone, the woman will often tell the man when or if they will have a baby. Even if they do have a child, that doesn't necessarily mean that the wife will stay home to take care of the baby all day or every day. Day-care and other childcare options enable her to work at a job outside the home either *part-time* or *full-time*; it used to be much easier for the woman who stayed at home with her children. She had support in this role because every woman in the neighbourhood was at home. Mostly so, in this era of day, people think something is wrong with a woman if she is a homemaker. They think things like: *What's the matter with her? Is she lazy?* or she's not very creative, or she must not be smart enough to have a career, or she needs to get a life. The idea is being promoted in society that only dumb women stay home.

Whether global or local; our world is rapidly changing before our eyes, and the social transformation accompanying it can often be painful. The clash of old and new ideas has left

many men perplexed and frustrated in regard to their identity. How do their new roles (*for example, equal partnership with women*) play out against more traditional ones (*such as breadwinner and protector*)? Men are feeling compelled to redefine their roles as they attempt to adapt to these changing social expectations. This adjustment is disrupting both their professional and personal lives. It is altering their relationships with women. It is transforming family life. The average man is confused about his manhood, masculinity, and sexuality. He doesn't have a clear definition of what a man is supposed to be. Some men have confused their cultural, social, and traditional roles with the definition of manhood. However, this has proven to be one of the major causes of the manhood problem because, as the roles change, so does a man's image of himself.

Males used to acquire their ideas of manhood from observing their fathers or from longstanding cultural traditions. There was a continuity of masculine roles from generation to generation. Things are different now. Hundreds, even thousands, of years of tradition have been set aside in just one or two generations. This shift may have started in *Western and industrialized nations* with the women's movement and other cultural changes yet its influences are being felt in one way or another all over the world.

Today, many men are questioning who they are and what roles they are to play in life. On the surface, they may be following customary life pursuits, such as working, marrying, and having a family. Yet they have an inner

uncertainty about what it means to be a man, a husband, and a father. *What is causing this uncertainty?*

A major reason is that society is sending out conflicting signals about what it means to be a man. Traditional views of masculinity compete side by side with new ideas of manhood in the marketplace of ideas - *each vying for supremacy; independence is a relatively new situation for women, and men are still learning to cope with the change.* In many ways, the woman has taken over not only the man's traditional role of provider, but also that of protector. She has a mace, she has a gun in her purse, and she has a cell phone to call the police instantly. So what does the man do? He says, *am your protector*, and she says, *I don't need you to protect me.* It's a different world. Men don't know what they are supposed to do for women anymore. A woman leaving the home and entering the workplace means that the home is no longer kept by her specifically. The man isn't sure what his job in the home is, and the woman isn't sure what her job in the home is. They are both confused.

Increasingly independent, self-sufficient, contemporary women no longer feel the need for men to provide for and protect them. This is a problem for men. They are trying to get along in a relationship, and they're not sure who is responsible for what. For example, a boy takes a girl out for lunch, and he looks at her and says, *are you going to pay for yours?* Thirty years ago, the man automatically paid. Why? It was the man's job to be the provider. But now if a man takes a woman to dinner, and he finds he doesn't have enough money, she reaches into her purse and says, *I'll make up for*

it. He feels shame, but she's not ashamed, because she has the money. And guess what? She still likes him. She likes him because she feels there aren't too many good men around anyway. Another significant change is that, for the first time in recorded history, men and women look to one another primarily for love and companionship rather than survival and protection. Our priorities as human beings have changed. People are looking for something more in their relationships. Happiness, intimacy, and lasting passion are now requirements for a relationship. Yet understanding how to provide these things often does not come easy for a man.

Because men have linked their identity to their roles, now that the roles have changed, they have left themselves no basis for manhood. Whatever they replace their old idea of masculinity with may or may not be a true or fulfilling role for them. What is more troubling when men don't understand their place in the world is that they will often withdraw from it or use their influence in harmful ways, such as committing crime.

What can men do to regain their footing and identity?

Importantly, they must adopt an entirely new way of thinking. They need to think in terms of purpose rather than roles. The reason they are having problems today is that they have been basing their worth on the wrong thought all along. Roles have never been the true basis of a male's identity and purpose. What men really need to discover is their underlying purpose, which transcends culture and tradition; a God-given identity if they are to fulfil their true purpose. We

must learn what God originally intended for them. To do this, we must go back and rediscover God's original plan for both men and women.

What then is a real man? *Someone who knows the reality of who he is and endeavours to live in that reality.* This knowledge starts with understanding the significance of being created purposefully by God.

God desires that every man find his purpose and fulfil it. If a man wants to know who he is in order to live fully in that reality, he must first understand God's principles of purpose. He has to learn these anchors for living from the Word of God. Otherwise, he will fall into a trap of confusion - *where many of us are right now.*

Proverbs 19:21 is a foundational Scripture in regard to understanding God's purpose: "*Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.*" This crucial truth tells us that we can make all the plans we want to in life, but if we don't make our plans according to the purposes for which God created us, then our plans will be in vain. We won't live up to our full potential, and we will be unfulfilled. We may even pursue goals and engage in practices that are harmful for us.

Every young person comes to a time when he or she leaves childhood and enters adulthood. That period is called adolescence. This is the time in which young people are trying to discover who they are and why they are. This is also often the time when we either lose them or gain them (*lose*

them to a destructive lifestyle and a wasted life or gain them for a positive, fulfilling future). Purpose, therefore, is paramount to a young person's effectiveness and happiness in life.

Did Jesus have an adolescent problem? The answer is, very simply, NO. Why? Because His purpose was reinforced from birth; His earthly mother and father were told why He was born. Somehow I believe that God would love for all parents to know Him so well that they would have an idea of the life purpose of their children.

Chapter Three

PURPOSE

Historically, men have defined their manhood by the various roles they have fulfilled for their families and for society. Now that these roles are in transition, they don't have a solid definition of masculinity to give them a cultural context for life. As a result, many men believe they have lost part of themselves, but they don't have anything concrete with which to replace it. Often, they don't even feel wanted or needed by women any longer. They used to have clear direction about where they were going as men. Now, it's as if they are trapped in a maze, frustrated and unable to move forward purposefully in life. Why is the male's crisis of purpose such a pivotal issue? For one thing, it attacks the core of who men are, leaving them indecisive and foundationally weak. For another, it reflects a breakdown in understanding, communication, and cooperation between men and women that is unnatural and unhealthy.

In the context of this confusion, boys are especially vulnerable. The feminization of society, mixed with confusing cultural signals, has led many boys and young men to be uncertain and unaware of their masculinity and proper role. In a desperate search for a secure male identity, some are attracted to gross distortions. Some embrace a brutalized and arrogant posture while others retreat into insecure manhood, never understanding a man's responsibility to lead. We now face the phenomenon of perpetual boyhood on the part of many males. Refusing to grow up; these young men function as boys well into their twenties - *some even into their thirties and beyond*. An extended male adolescence marks the lifestyles, expectations and behaviour of far too

many young males, whose masculine identity is embraced awkwardly, if at all.

When does a boy become a man? The answer to this must go far beyond biology and chronological age. As defined in the Bible, manhood is a functional reality, demonstrated in a man's fulfilment of responsibility and leadership.

Many cultures have clearly defined rites of passage to manhood. A ritual is observed; a celebration with the community, a mark on the forehead, or the fulfilment of a challenge confirms him. In my *dholouo* speaking tribe, it's an act of removing the six lower canine teeth to portray a gap in significance of maturity; for the Pokot of Turkana, it includes painful incisions done on the face in addition to removing one canine; yet in this modern period, the definition of manhood has been overtly confused across cultures. The feminization of men is displayed in a constant barrage of media imagery. Almost every man represented on television is either a metro-sexual pretty boy or a slovenly buffoon. Every reality show has to have its token effeminate male; it's embarrassing. This assault on authentic masculinity has a very broad impact. Some subcultures are already reeling from the loss of authentic man. Fatherless children are being raised with the insecurities that come from the loss of identity. Women are being left defenceless against the enmity that exists against them. The economic decline caused by the loss of male integrity is immeasurable.

The portrait of young manhood made popular in the media and presented as normal through entertainment is

characterized by economic carelessness, self-centeredness and laziness. A real man knows how to hold a job, handle money with responsibility and take care of the needs of his wife and family. A failure to develop economic maturity means that young men often float from job to job and take years to “*find themselves*” in terms of career and vocation. Once again, an extended adolescence marks a huge segment of today’s young male population. A boy must be taught how to work, how to save, to invest and to spend money with care. He must be taught to respect labour, and to feel the satisfaction that comes from a job well done, and a shilling honestly earned. Too many boys are coddled and entertained, demonstrating a laziness that will be highly detrimental to their future prospects as a husband and father. Slothfulness, laziness and economic carelessness are marks of immaturity. A real man knows how to earn, manage and respect money. A Christian man understands the danger that comes from the love of money and fulfils his responsibility as a Christian steward.

Unless we know why the male is a man, or what man is assigned to do or become, we will live abusive lives. We may abuse our own bodies with addictions such as alcohol, drugs, or food. We may abuse ourselves sexually and experience the degradation of our bodies through STDs or AIDS. The frustrations of unknown purpose may cause us to abuse our wives and misunderstand the true value of the male-female relationship. Yet, to discover purpose, you simply need to look at the original intent. *Why did God create man?*

The identity of authentic manhood runs deep within us. “*The purposes of a man are deep rivers, the man who understands this draws upon them*” (**Proverbs 20:5**, paraphrased).

Within every man are purposes and passions that are uniquely male, yet we are being told that there is nothing inherently special or purposeful about manhood. Women, liberated from dominated positions, have increasingly taken a lead role in society. Hitherto, am not to be taken on the wrong edge that am blaming women for stepping up to exercise their liberty from oppressive or ignorant men who have abused them, or from lazy men who have not provided for them; however, the truth is that radical feminism has violently attacked any semblance of a men’s uniqueness, rather than embracing their own special feminine identity.

We are doomed to repeat the failed patterns of life if we do not discover the truths of authentic manhood. Insecurities will overwhelm us if we do not gain the confidence that comes from purpose. To become an authentic man means that we need to find the original intent of manhood.

The purposes of a man are deep rivers. There are currents that flow in the DNA of every man of who he is and what he is purposed to be; we must have the foundational belief that we were created with the *Intelligent Design* of purpose. Without a Creator, we are meaningless; our existence is flatulence in the wind.

If man is designed and purposed by God, then God defines him. We must start at the beginning to discover His original intent for man. Anything less is the ultimate arrogance.

After the formation of Earth and the gathering of waters, dry land appeared. Before God released the agrarian system of provision, He designed the purpose of the earth. The Psalmist said, "*The earth was made for man.*" God used clay to mould, fashion, and frame the shadow of His image into a piece of living art. Then He breathed into man's nostrils the element of life. Man became a living being.

The very first statement that God spoke over man gives us insight into His original intent, "*Be fruitful and increase.*"

Within your genetic code is the drive to succeed and increase. Within you is the purpose of reproduction. Within you is the increasing desire to grow your numbers. As Solomon said, "*No man is ever satisfied with his income.*" It is diametrically opposed to the original intent of man not to want increase, numerically or economically.

It's not greed to desire increase; it's God's original intention. Greed is born out of covetousness, which is the desire to have another man's possessions at his expense. Greed is born out of a narcissistic attitude that fails to understand God's provision.

God's original intent for man was to dominate the earth, which means we are to steward and care for the earth. I believe that we must properly manage our cultivation of the

earth. We should develop and manage our resources with wisdom and responsibility; however, we must continue to draw upon those resources for our use and for the expansion of mankind. The resources of earth are placed on deposit for our use and increase. “*The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden to work it and care for it.*” Work is not part of the curse. Quite the opposite; it is man’s vocation. Vocation means divine spoken word and suggests an invitation to a feast. You are invited by the Creator to partake of ample supply when you fulfil His original intent through work; yet in all this working it out, man needed help of someone with whom to companion, to partner, to work alongside, and to propagate mankind. God paraded the animals in front of the man for a survey. Although naming the animals, man did not find a suitable helper; nor did God make another man to be his companion.

God drew out of man his equal companion. Man is designed to be cultivated and to be a cultivator. The word husband means one who cultivates. The primary role of a husband to a wife is cultivation. It is the root of the male-female relationship. Male sows the seed of life; female receives the seed and incubates the seed until male reaps the harvest of her womb.

The authentic man recognizes his wife’s strengths and celebrates her ability to supplement his weaknesses. God made woman his helpmate. Men and women have perfectly complementary designs.

Solomon said, “*I went past the field of the sluggard, past the vineyard of the man who lacks judgment; thorns had come up everywhere, the ground was covered with weeds, and the stone wall was in ruins*” (**Proverbs 24:30**).

Husband, after a season of time, if you do not like what your wife looks like or what she is producing, it’s your fault not hers. You need to tend to your own garden better.

Women relate *face-to-face* sharing feelings; men relate *shoulder-to-shoulder* facing challenges. A woman tells you what she feels; a man tells you what he thinks.

You can’t read the Bible without this theme echoing through the pages: “*Scatter upon the earth. Populate it. Dominate it. Subdue it. Go into the entire world!*” This is God’s consistent message to mankind; yet, the recurring theme of man is the opposite. Man always wants to settle, to be comfortable, to not want too much.

I don’t despise the poor, but I hate poverty. I hate what it does to humanity. I hate how insidious it is. I hate the advantage poverty has over people who are created to rise above it. Poverty is an evil that strangles people. It robs them of opportunity, education, clothing, shelter, nourishment, health, joyful living, independence, and family.

Jesus told a story about a man who had prepared for an excursion. As all good entrepreneurs, he called in his management team and assigned each one of them a portfolio to manage and grow. He dispersed his wealth among them

according to their proven abilities. After a season of time, he returned to get an accounting of his resources. The first manager doubled his wealth. The second doubled his wealth. The third employee maintained his wealth.

The entrepreneur's response was an enlightening glimpse into the character of God. The entrepreneur responded to the first two managers in the same manner, "*You have proven yourself, I will reward you openly and acknowledge your success, even sharing in the profits.*" His response to the maintainer was very different. "*You're fired!*"

We are sometimes deceived into thinking that maintenance is honourable. It's not. It's worthy of termination. We are designed for increase. Anything short is simply below our status.

Solomon said, "*He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty*" (**Proverbs 28:19**).

The maintainer argued that his lack of productivity was because of the character of the master rather than the insecurity, fear, and laziness that was within himself. That's exactly the same argument of the one who has a scarcity mentality. He blames God!

As a man, you were created with integrity. God created you in His image. When Adam sinned against his Creator, he perverted his integrity. Adam compromised his walk with God, and mankind became aware of alternate paths - *all of*

which are a lie. The authentic man is a man who leads his family in faith. The strength of his personal relationship with God is an inspiration to his wife and children to carry on in the face of trials and temptations. Although he is not perfect, the life that he leads demonstrates that the deepest desire of his heart is to follow God and accomplish his unique purpose.

“Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible” (Hebrews 11:1-3).

Some men compartmentalize their lives such that business, family, and faith all have their own world, and they don’t intertwine. A man’s life can’t be divided into segments, the word integrity means undivided. It means wholeness or fullness.

Chapter Four

FULFILMENT

You are born a male, but you have to become a man. This means that someone could actually grow up to be just an old male, never living as a real man. There is a distinction between being man and being male, and that each has unique purposes for being.

In *Genesis 1:26–28*, we read,

Then God said, *“Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule [“have dominion”] over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”* So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, *“Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.”*

The first thing we learn from this passage is that man was made in the image of God. When God made man, He essentially drew man out of Himself, so that the essence of man would be just like Him. Since *“God is spirit” (John 4:24)*, He created man as spirit. Spirit is eternal. Man was created as an eternal being, because God is eternal. It is important to recognize that we are not yet talking about male and female. It was mankind that God created in His image. Man is spirit, and spirits have no gender. The Bible never talks about a male or female spirit.

Why did God take man, who is spirit, and put him in two separate physical entities rather than just one? It was because He wanted man to fulfil two distinct purposes. Yet the

Creator of man did not leave us guessing about who the male is supposed to be and what he is designed to do.

Mankind's predicament can be summed up by a statement from the book of **Romans 1:22** "*Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools*". Because the man and woman thought they knew what was best for themselves; they rejected their true reason for being and suffered the loss of many of the benefits and blessings God had given them. Inevitably, they also began to abuse each other's purposes. Men and women cannot function in true harmony and effectiveness outside God's plan.

God is a purposeful Being. He has a purpose for everything He has ever done. He established His purpose before He created what was needed to fulfil it. What He plans is intentional, meaningful, and guaranteed to succeed. God has purposes that He determines beforehand and then carries out. These include plans for humanity as a whole and plans for males and females who carry out humanity's purposes. To bring this to a personal level, this includes plans for you and me. God does not do anything on a whim or without knowing the end result.

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. (Isaiah. 55:10–11)

Do you begin building a house when you dig the foundation? No, you begin building it when the idea is conceived. This means that the finished house is in the unseen. People pass by the property, and they don't see it. However, to you who understand and know what is going to happen, it is already finished. Digging the foundation is the beginning of the implementation of your purpose. So, after you dig the foundation, when somebody asks you, *what are you doing?* Your answer is very definite. You point to the architect's rendering of the house and say, *am building this.*

What we need to understand at this point is that when God created the male and the female, He had already predetermined what they were supposed to be and do. They are not divine experiments. Together, they are an intentional divine project with a predetermined purpose.

God created everything with a purpose in mind, and He also created it with the ability to fulfil its purpose. Everything God has made is the way it is because of why it was created; the why dictates its composition. The purpose of a thing determines its nature, its design, and its features. God's purpose requires two genders working together in cooperation to accomplish a mutual vision. Accordingly, males and females have complementary designs that enable them to fulfil God's purpose together.

Although everyone and everything on earth has a purpose, this does not mean that we are aware of their purposes. When human beings as a race turned their backs on God and His ways, as we learn about in **Genesis 3**, they ended up losing

their knowledge of God's intent for themselves and for the world.

Rejecting God was the equivalent of buying a sophisticated and intricate piece of equipment and then throwing away the user's manual. If you get something to work under those circumstances, it is only by pure chance. The more likely scenario is that you will never get it to function properly. You will also miss out on the many features and functions it has to offer. It will never fulfil its complete purpose.

People abuse things because they just don't know their purposes - or because they disregard those purposes. When males and females don't know God's intentions, they end up abusing each other, even if they don't mean to. If males are going to solve their current identity crisis and fulfil their purpose as men, husbands, and fathers, they must rediscover God's plan for themselves. Otherwise, they will hurt those around them, even if it's unintentional.

You can never be totally and completely satisfied until you find your purpose and then live in it. You cannot do what you're supposed to do until you discover what you are supposed to do. And if you do what you're not supposed to do, you're not going to be fulfilled.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and

approve what God's will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:1-2)

God's ways will transform your spirit, your mind, and your outlook. When you present yourself to God and learn from Him, you will begin to understand His purpose. "*The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple*" (Psalms 19:7).

Becoming what God has purposed for you not only allows you to live effectively, but also to worship your Creator, who has given into your ideas, talents, resources, and energy to fulfil His desires and plans for your life. Proverbs 20:5 says, "*The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.*" That means your purpose is inside you. God has placed it deeply within you. However, in order to draw it out, you need to be assisted by God's wisdom and revelation; because your purpose was born in the mind of God.

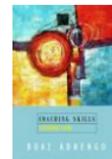
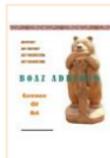
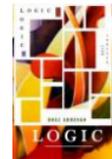
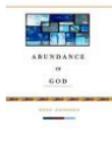
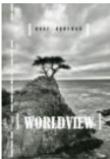
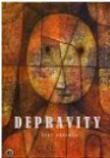
Remember that God created the male with a specific purpose in mind, and He designed him uniquely for that purpose. Therefore, a man possesses inherent characteristics and qualities that are necessary for his functioning and fulfilment as a male. Moreover, when a man identifies, understands, effectively applies, and manifests these qualities in his life and relationships, the female will also experience a fulfilment she has always longed for.

The utmost responsibility that brings fulfillment and spiritual rewards to the male is that of visionary. This is a foundational responsibility because, without it, he can't fulfill the other assignments of leader, teacher, cultivator, protector, and provider. Hitherto, when Joel prophesied about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the last days, he spoke these words from God: *"I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions"* (**Joel 2:28**). Notice what this verse says about males. Old men will receive dreams and young men will see visions from God. It doesn't say that women will see visions. It says that women will prophesy. This means they will speak of the things the men see in the visions. If you look at God's pattern in the Bible, the man is given the vision, but the woman is there to make sure that he accomplishes it. Males and females each have their specific functions.

You aren't fulfilling your purpose as a man until you can hear the voice of God. You aren't fulfilling your purpose as a man until you start speaking and affirming the Word of God in your life. To do this, you need to be inside the same garden environment that Adam was first placed. The male was created to be the spiritual leader and teacher of his family. The Bible says that if a wife has a question about a spiritual matter during church, she should ask her husband about it when they get home (*see 1 Corinthians 14:35*). Why? He is supposed to know the Word; *yet most women know more of the Word than men do.*

A real man doesn't take God's presence in His life for granted. He guards his heart and actions so that he can stay close to God and continually reflect His character and ways. He puts the entire weight of his trust in the Lord because he knows that God is "*able to keep [him] from falling and to present [him] before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy*" (**Jude 24**).

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