

# **A Real Man**

**A collection of devotionals from  
Titus 1:6-9**

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*Introduction*

Everywhere we look, there is a shortage of responsible men.

Women, especially, are looking for men who will lead, but with love and gentleness.

Business, government, education, the military – all seek men of integrity, courage, and initiative.

Churches, too, require men to serve as elders, deacons, teachers, and friends.

In the following pages, you will find the description of what we shall call “Real Men,” penned by a man who exemplified all the highest qualities of manhood – hard work, courage, perseverance, honesty, and above all, love. His successes and his sufferings surely qualified the Apostle Paul to speak on this subject, and he has done so in several places, including the short letter to Titus.

Each of these meditations is purposely short, so that we may spend time pondering the words of the Bible and praying for God to make us into Real Men.

### **Titus 1:6-9 Real Men (1)**

**“If a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination... not self-willed, not quick tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught...”**

In his letter to Titus, the Apostle Paul provides us with a sketch of the kind of man qualified to serve as a leader in the church. We'll survey his description quickly, then examine each quality more closely later.

A real man puts his family first. He remains pure before marriage, and faithful to his wife afterwards. He takes time to love, instruct, and correct his children.

He doesn't insist on his own way. His temper does not flare up at the least provocation. He is not mastered by alcohol (or drugs, or food). He never resorts to violence, especially at home.

Rather than merely pursuing money, he seeks to give to others. He loves what is good, not what he can gain from life. He controls his thoughts and, thus, his emotions.

A real man fulfills all his obligations. He does not forget God, but keeps Him uppermost in his mind. For that purpose, he studies God's word and holds on to it faithfully.

Who can measure up to such a standard? Only Jesus Christ! That is why real men humble themselves before God, confessing their faults, asking forgiveness, and trusting in Christ as their savior, day by day.

May God raise up more men who seek to be like Christ: blameless and holy!

**Titus 1:6      Real Men (2)**

**“If a man is blameless, the husband of one wife...”**

A real man commits himself to only one woman.

Before marriage, he keeps himself sexually pure by avoiding physical intimacy with women. He preserves emotional integrity by not giving his heart fully to anyone other than the woman he finally decides to marry.

After marriage, he remains faithful to his wife. He turns his eyes away from other women and avoids temptations to lust that we find in magazines, movies, television, and the Internet.

He provides her with loving leadership. Putting her needs before his, he sacrifices his time, energy, and attention to care for her. If necessary, he even sacrifices his work. He puts aside the newspaper, turns off the television, shuts down the computer, cancels the game, in order to show love to his wife. He stays up a bit later to listen to her and gets up a bit earlier to pray for her.

A real man leads his wife. His example sets the pace for her, as he demonstrates humility, kindness, self-denial, and love for God and other people. He apologizes first. He takes the initiative in reading the Bible and prayer, by himself and with his family. After listening to her invaluable advice and considering her desires, he makes decisions that seem best for everyone and glorifying to God.

Who is this real man? Jesus Christ! He loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify her (make her holy). For her sake, He sanctified Himself and sacrificed Himself.

Only as we trust in Him, admitting our selfishness, pride, laziness, and lust, and turning to Him for power to change, can we follow in His steps and be the men the women around us long to see.

**Titus 1:6      Real Men (3)**

**“If a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination...”**

A real man loves his children. In relating to them, he imitates God, who is “merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep his anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities... As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him” (Psalm 103:8-9, 13).

Like God the Father, he teaches his children. He tells them about God and how to know and serve Him. He instructs them in what is right and wrong. With his greater experience, he imparts wisdom about how to live in this world.

Just as God provides for us, so a real man happily meets the physical needs of his children. He delights to give them good things. He does not squander his money on entertainment, luxuries, status symbols, gambling, or risky speculation. He works hard at his job and manages his household well, with the help of his wife, so that the family’s needs are met. At all times, however, he trusts in God to provide, knowing that his own skill and strength are limited.

In one way, however, he does not imitate the Lord. God is always just, but we are not. When he is wrong or makes a mistake, bringing unnecessary pain or shame to his children, a real man admits his error and asks forgiveness. He can do that because he feeds his own soul daily upon the manifold grace of God as he reads the Bible and goes to the Father in prayer.

“Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children” (Ephesians 5:1).

**Titus 1:6-9 Real Men (4)**

**“If a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination...”**

A real man loves his children (2).

As we saw before, he teaches them about God. In the words of Paul, he is to “bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). He teaches them the Bible and its application to life. By his own example, he shows them the way to live an honorable life. He applies God’s truth to daily situations, pointing out the relevance of God’s word to everything that we do and all that happens to us. His own reactions to difficulty provide a pattern for his children to follow.

He also administers admonition. When they violate a principle he has taught them, he disciplines his children. Depending upon their age, he uses either physical pain or verbal rebuke or deprivation of privileges – or all three. He thus imitates God the Father. “Whom the Lord loves, He chastens (disciplines)” (Hebrews 12:6, quoting Proverbs 3:12).

Here again, his own response to God’s loving chastisement in his own life will show his children how they should receive rebuke or punishment.

All this takes time. It requires that a man know the Bible and live it out in his everyday walk. A good father must also know his children well enough to be able to match the proper type of training to their individual personalities and situations. Only a man who carefully studies the Scriptures, shares many hours with his children, and constantly prays for them will be able to prepare them for life.

### **Titus 1:6-9 Real Men (5)**

**“For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered...” (1:7)**

Paul continues to describe the qualifications of a church leader (bishop).

He repeats the primary principle: The man must be blameless. This does not mean sinless, but it does imply free from such outward expressions of sin that others consider him unqualified to hold church office.

He is, first, a steward of God. A real man sees himself as God’s servant. God has given him time, strength, intellect, skill, and resources. He must use them well, not as if they belonged to him, but as gifts from the Creator and Lord of life.

Thus, he should not be self-willed. He submits his will – his desires, plans, ambitions, dreams, decisions – to the God who formed him and bestowed life upon him. He trusts in God. He believes that God will not allow any real harm to come to him. He seeks to do God’s will, in God’s way, according to God’s timing.

When others cross his will, he does not see them as his enemies; rather, he considers whether God has sent them to keep him from mistakes. As a result, he will not be quick-tempered. He will not lose his temper when someone disagrees with him or questions him or stands in the way of his agenda.

He will be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger, for he looks to God for protection, provision, and pardon. He knows he makes many mistakes, commits numerous errors, and offends others often. When they bring this to his attention, he hears the voice of God, and criticizes himself, not those around him.

Who can be at all like this? Only the man who trusts in the grace of God given to us freely through Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and rose for our justification.

### Titus 1:6-9 Real Men (6)

**“For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent...”**

“Not given to wine.” The Bible nowhere forbids the drinking of wine. Know, however, that (1) in Biblical times, water was mixed with wine to make it less intoxicating, and (2) excessive drinking is always forbidden.

Today, drugs and alcohol cause untold misery. Driving after drinking causes thousands of highway accidents, resulting in injury and death. Those who drink more than one glass of wine or one beer and those who take drugs impair their health, their judgment, their work, and their relations with others. No real man allows himself to be mastered by anything, including alcohol and drugs.

Alcohol is often implicated in violent behavior. That forms the connection with the following quality of a leader:

A real man will not resort to violence. He will be “peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men” (Titus 3:2). He knows that he himself has many faults and failings. If he is a Christian, he looks back on his previous life with shame, recalling that he was also “once disobedient, foolish, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another” (Titus 3:3).

Thus, when others offend him, he will control his impulse to hit and to hurt. He will remember that “the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward men” has appeared, bringing forgiveness and grace (Titus 3:4), and he will treat others as God has treated him.

Though a man may have to use force to defend his family and public officers may have to employ violence to control, catch, and punish criminals, there is never any excuse for a man to inflict physical harm on his family, friends, neighbors, or colleagues in response to personal insult or injury, real or perceived.

How can a man avoid these twin evils – intoxication and violent rage? Only by relying on the “grace of God that brings salvation..., teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age” (Titus 2:11). That grace is found in Jesus Christ, who chose to endure the violence of the cross in order to bring us God’s mercy.



### **Titus 1:7-8 Real Men (7)**

**“Blameless... not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good...”**

A leader must be blameless. The three qualities we examine today contribute to the definition of blamelessness:

- Not greedy for money. How greedy most of us are! We either want money or the things that money confers: Possessions, power, prestige, pleasure. We want fancy food, a faster computer, a newer car, a bigger house. We crave more power in our organization or our family, more prominence in society. After all, people admire and follow those who earn big salaries.

- Hospitable. Here we have the opposite of greed. A true man seeks to give. He gives his time, his energy, his money, and his house. He opens his doors to the lonely. Those whom others reject find a welcome at his place. He shares his food with those who usually eat alone. Those without a loving home bask in the warmth of his loving family. Even if he is single, he either invites others to his dwelling place or takes them out for a meal. He seeks to give, not to get. He does not set his heart on gain, but on generosity.

- A lover of what is good. His chief goal in life is to pursue what is noble, true, just, righteous, and loving. Entertainment that exalts vice holds no attraction for him, because he takes pleasure in virtue. He looks at the attitude, not the appearance of others – thus, he prefers the company of the meek, the humble, those who earnestly seek God. In short, he loves God, for God alone is truly good. He pursues the kingdom of God above all else.

Who would not gladly follow such a man? Isn't that why countless millions willingly obey Jesus, who came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many?

**Titus 1:8      Real Men (8)**

**“Sober-minded”**

A real man will have a realistic mind.

He will nourish his mind on the word of God. Truth will correct inborn errors, as well as those that come to him from his culture. He will construct a worldview that reflects God’s perspective. He will carefully examine the prejudices of parents and friends in the light of God’s revelation.

Thus, he will not be upset by all that troubles those around him. He knows that this world is passing away, along with all its sinful desires, so he does not grieve unduly over the inevitable losses we suffer in life. His hope is fixed on the coming kingdom of God and the grace that will be brought to all who trust in Christ.

He will not think of himself more highly than he ought to. Aware of his limitations, he will not attempt more than he can accomplish. Conscious of his faults and flaws, he will try to avoid pride and presumption. When others correct or criticize him, he will listen carefully, seeking to discern whether they are at all accurate in their perception of him.

He will enjoy the pleasures that God generously bestows, without setting his heart on them. Nothing will be allowed to master his emotions except a profound sense of God’s holiness, justice, power, and love. Thus, both his sorrows and his joys will be moderated by an awareness of the providence and presence of the Lord in his life. His mind feeds on God’s faithfulness and fills his mouth with thanksgiving.

It goes without saying that such a sober mind requires constant nurture and care. The Bible, Christian books, and the wise counsel of godly elders will be his primary source of information and guidance. A real man takes time to cultivate a realistic mind. The frivolous, vain, and fruitless will find no welcome in his thoughts. He will think, instead, upon “Whatever things are true, ...noble, ...just, ...pure, ...lovely, ...of good report, ...virtue .., anything praiseworthy” (Philippians 4:8).

As a result, the man with a sober mind will be a truly happy man.

**Titus 1:8      Real Men (9)**

**“Sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled.”**

A real man is just. That is, he is “honorable and fair in [his] dealings and actions...; consistent with moral right” (American Heritage Dictionary).

He tells the truth. The whole truth. Nothing but the truth. He does not give evasive answers. He does not mislead. You can trust what he says.

He keeps his promises. When he makes a commitment, he does all he can to fulfill it. When he says he will do something, he does; when he agrees to meet you at a certain place at a certain time, he shows up, or calls to explain why he can't. To do this, he will limit his obligations in order to be able to perform his duty well. In any event, he will not go back on his word.

For a real man, duty comes before pleasure. He endures pain in order to serve others. He gives each person his due, even if he has to sacrifice his own comfort.

As a husband, he loves his wife; as a father, he cares for his children; as a son, he honors his parents; as a sibling or neighbor, he does for others what he would have them do for him. As a worker, he does his job well and honestly. As a citizen, he prays for those in authority, votes, pays taxes, obeys the law, and seeks the good of his community and nation. As a Christian, he serves in the church. It goes without saying that a real man does not lie, steal, or cheat.

Who can measure up to this standard? No one! “There is none righteous [just], no, not one” (Romans 3:10). What then shall we do? Admit our wrongs; ask God for mercy; trust in Christ, the only just man who ever lived. God will consider us just [righteous] by faith in Jesus, who died in our place.

Believers in Christ can then ask Him to transform us into His image, that we might live “soberly, righteously [justly], and godly in this present age” (Titus 2:12).

**Titus 1:8      Real Men (10)**

**“Sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled.”**

A real man is a holy man.

There are two words usually translated “holy” in the New Testament. One (hagios) denotes separation by God for His possession and use. All true believers have been thus consecrated by God’s Spirit and are called “saints,” because the Holy Spirit dwells in them. As a consequence, they must seek to grow in obedience to God as those owned by Him, and thus to be more and more holy in practice.

The word used here (hosios) carries a slightly different meaning: It describes the man whose actions flow from faith in God and reverence towards Him.

As always in the Bible, actions follow attitudes. The heart guides the hand. The mind sets the body in motion. So, the holy man orders his life as if God were always present. He walks with God, imitating God, obeying God, and leaning upon God for strength. God’s own holiness inspires him; God’s love impels him.

A holy man begins his day looking to God in prayer and Bible study. Faced with a multitude of tasks and temptations, he seeks God’s guidance and begs for His governance of all he does. He meditates on God’s word all day long, delighting in it and deriving strength from it. He prays before he speaks or acts. When faced with a difficult decision, he reflects upon God’s truth and asks for wisdom.

A holy man walks in the footsteps of Jesus, who was Himself “holy, harmless, and undefiled” (Hebrews 7:26). When he compares himself with Christ, the holy man – who alone is a real man – humbly confesses his moral failures and casts himself upon the mercy of God, trusting in Jesus as his great High Priest.

**Titus 1:8      Real Men (11)**

**“Hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled...”**

A real man exercises self-control.

He does not allow his passions to rule him. Notice the connection with the qualities mentioned before: He is hospitable, so he seeks to give rather than to get; he puts the needs of others before his own desires. He keeps a clear mind and doesn't succumb to the enticements of the world. His sense of justice keeps him from harming others. Above all, he seeks to please God, not himself.

Thus, he controls his body. He eats to live; he does not live to eat. Aware that he is a steward of his body, he tries to take in enough nourishment without consuming more than he needs. He avoids any food, drink, or substance that will hurt his body or induce an addiction. He takes time for sleep, rest, and exercise.

He does not let his tongue run wild. He is quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger. He considers the needs of those around him before he expresses himself. He stops angry or hurtful words before they leave his mouth.

He has made an agreement with his eyes, not to look at a woman in order to lust after her. He enjoys feminine beauty, but does not allow himself a second glance. When his sexual passions are kindled, he either loves his wife or asks God to tame the beast within him.

He watches over his heart, too. He knows that actions follow emotions, which flow from thoughts. He monitors overall value system; he reigns in his loves and hates, seeking to bring them under God's rule. He presents his mind to God and fights any thought that would lead to sin.

He manages his time like wisely. After seeking direction from God, he sets goals that reflect godly priorities, and then he follows his plan. He allocates his money carefully: He gives to the work of the Gospel, saves for emergencies and long-term needs, spends frugally. He abstains from luxury and debt.

Where can a man get this kind of self-restraint? Only from God! That is why Paul says that self-control is the work of the Holy Spirit, whom God supplies constantly to those who trust in Christ (Galatians 3:5; 5:22-23).

A real man, therefore, relies on the power of Jesus, who alone exercised perfect self-mastery.

**Titus 1:9      Real Men (12)**

**“Holding fast the faithful as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.”**

A real man is a learner, a keeper, and a teacher.

He humbly learns the word of God. Admitting his ignorance, he opens his eyes, ears, and mind to constant instruction in the things of God as revealed in the Bible. Other matters interest him, too, of course, but the Scriptures are his chief delight. He meditates upon the teaching of God day and night. He limits his recreational reading and entertainment in order to spend uninterrupted time studying the Bible, reading good books about the Bible, and listening to faithful Biblical instruction. In fact, he knows more about the Bible than he does about sports, politics, cars, computers, and the stock market!

He doesn't stop there, however. He holds on to what he has heard. He meditates on it, thinks about it, prays over it, and practices it. He asks God to work out in his life the principles of truth that he has learned. Even when skeptics cast doubt on the truth of the Bible, he does not waver in his confidence, for he has investigated the most common objections to the veracity of the Scriptures and has sensible replies to difficult questions.

As a result, he is able to transfer to others what he has received. Even as he continues to learn, he teaches. He communicates sound doctrine to his friends, his spouse, his children, others Christians, and even unbelievers. When ideas contrary to the Bible are voiced within the church, he can refute them with solid arguments based upon Scripture.

There you have him: A real man! With rock-solid faith and a realistic view of himself and his world; reigning in his passions and desires; ruling his life with clear thinking; relying always on the grace of God; relaying to the next generation the word of God. Such a man was Jesus, and he calls us to follow in his steps.

**Titus 1:6-9**

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