**What does it mean to be a man?**

President Spencer W. Kimball “Christ loved the church and its people so much that he voluntarily endured persecution for them, suffered humiliating indignities for them, stoically withstood pain and physical abuse for them, and finally gave his precious life for them.“When the husband is ready to treat his household in that manner, not only the wife but all the [family](http://www.mormon.org/values/family) will respond to his leadership” ([“Home, the Place to Save Society,”](https://www.lds.org/ensign/1975/01/home-the-place-to-save-society?lang=eng&para=p50-p51#p50) *Ensign,* Jan. 1975, 5).

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) “The Apostle Paul points out that ‘the husband is the head of the wife, *even as* Christ is the head of the church’ ([Ephesians 5:23](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/nt/eph/5.23?lang=eng#p22); italics added). That is the model we are to follow in our role of presiding in the home. We do not find the Savior leading the Church with a harsh or unkind hand. We do not find the Savior treating His Church with disrespect or neglect. We do not find the Savior using force or coercion to accomplish His purposes. Nowhere do we find the Savior doing anything but that which edifies, uplifts, comforts, and exalts the Church. … He is the model we must follow as we take the spiritual lead in our families” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Ezra Taft Benson* [2014], [196](https://www.lds.org/manual/teachings-of-presidents-of-the-church-ezra-taft-benson/chapter-15-the-sacred-callings-of-fathers-and-mothers?lang=eng&para=p28#p28)).

President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95 We reiterate what was stated by President David O. McKay: “No other success [in life] can compensate for failure in the home” (David O. McKay quoting J. E. McCulloch, “Home: the Savior of Civilization,” in Conference Report, Apr. 1935, p. 116) and President Harold B. Lee: “The most important of the Lord’s work you and I will ever do will be within the walls of our own homes” (Harold B. Lee, Stand Ye in Holy Places, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974, p. 255). Effective family leadership, brethren, requires both quantity and quality time. The teaching and governance of the family must not be left to your wife alone, to society, to school, or even the Church. A man who holds the priesthood accepts his wife as a partner in the leadership of the home and family with full knowledge of and full participation in all decisions relating thereto. Of necessity there must be in the Church and in the home a presiding officer (see [D&C 107:21](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/dc-testament/dc/107.21?lang=eng#p20)). By divine appointment, the responsibility to preside in the home rests upon the priesthood holder (see [Moses 4:22](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/pgp/moses/4.22?lang=eng#p21)). The Lord intended that the wife be a helpmeet for man (meet means equal)—that is, a companion equal and necessary in full partnership. Presiding in righteousness necessitates a shared responsibility between husband and wife; together you act with knowledge and participation in all family matters. For a man to operate independent of or without regard to the feelings and counsel of his wife in governing the family is to exercise unrighteous dominion. Keep yourselves above any domineering or unworthy behavior in the tender, intimate relationship between husband and wife. Because marriage is ordained of God, the intimate relationship between husbands and wives is good and honorable in the eyes of God. He has commanded that they be one flesh and that they multiply and replenish the earth (see [Moses 2:28](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/pgp/moses/2.28?lang=eng#p27); [Moses 3:24](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/pgp/moses/3.24?lang=eng#p23)). You are to love your wife as Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it (see [Eph. 5:25–31](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/nt/eph/5.25-31?lang=eng#p24)). Tenderness and respect—never selfishness—must be the guiding principles in the intimate relationship between husband and wife. Each partner must be considerate and sensitive to the other’s needs and desires. Any domineering, indecent, or uncontrolled behavior in the intimate relationship between husband and wife is condemned by the Lord. ([“Being a Righteous Husband and Father,”](https://www.lds.org/ensign/1994/11/being-a-righteous-husband-and-father?lang=eng&para=p18#p18) *Ensign,* Nov. 1994, 50–51).

Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1973: “Fatherhood is leadership, the most important kind of leadership. It has always been so; it always will be so. Father, with the assistance and counsel and encouragement of your eternal companion, you preside in the home. It is not a matter of whether you are most worthy or best qualified, but it is a matter of law and [divine] appointment” ([“Father, Consider Your Ways,”](https://www.lds.org/ensign/2002/06/father-consider-your-ways?lang=eng&para=p21#p21) *Ensign,* June 2002, 16).

Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008): “Work for an education. Get all the training that you can. The world will largely pay you what it thinks you are worth. … It is your primary obligation to provide for your family” ([“Living Worthy of the Girl You Will Someday Marry,”](https://www.lds.org/ensign/1998/05/living-worthy-of-the-girl-you-will-someday-marry?lang=eng&para=p26#p26) *Ensign,* May 1998, 50).

President Howard W. Hunter “A righteous father protects his children with his time and presence in their social, educational, and spiritual activities and responsibilities” ([“Being a Righteous Husband and Father,”](https://www.lds.org/ensign/1994/11/being-a-righteous-husband-and-father?lang=eng&para=p25#p25) *Ensign,* Nov. 1994, 51).

Elder Richard G. Scott If you are a young man of appropriate age and are not married, don’t waste time in idle pursuits. Get on with life and focus on getting married. Don’t just coast through this period of life. Young men, serve a worthy mission. Then make your highest priority finding a worthy, eternal companion. When you find you are developing an interest in a young woman, show her that you are an exceptional person that she would find interesting to know better. Take her to places that are worthwhile. Show some ingenuity. If you want to have a wonderful wife, you need to have her see you as a wonderful man and prospective husband.If you have found someone, you can form an extraordinarily wonderful courtship and marriage and be very, very happy eternally by staying within the bounds of worthiness the Lord has established. If you are married, are you faithful to your spouse mentally as well as physically? Are you loyal to your marriage covenants by never engaging in conversation with another person that you wouldn’t want your spouse to overhear? Are you kind and supportive of your spouse and children? Brethren, do you lead out in family activities such as scripture study, family prayer, and family home evening, or does your wife fill in the gap your lack of attention leaves in the home? Do you tell your wife often how very much you love her? It will bring her great happiness. I’ve heard men tell me when I say that, “Oh, she knows.” You need to tell her. A woman grows and is greatly blessed by that reassurance. Express [gratitude](https://www.lds.org/topics/gratitude/) for what your spouse does for you. Express that love and gratitude often. That will make life far richer and more pleasant and purposeful. Don’t withhold those natural expressions of love. And it works a lot better if you are holding her close while you tell her. ([“The Eternal Blessings of Marriage,”](https://www.lds.org/liahona/2011/05/sunday-afternoon-session/the-eternal-blessings-of-marriage?lang=eng&para=p17,p31#p17) *Ensign* or *Liahona,* May 2011, 95–97).

Elder D. Todd Christofferson “We who hold the priesthood of God cannot afford to drift. We have work to do (see [Moroni 9:6](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/moro/9.6?lang=eng#p5)). We must arise from the dust of self-indulgence and be men! It is a wonderful aspiration for a boy to become a man—strong and capable; someone who can build and create things, run things; someone who makes a difference in the world. It is a wonderful aspiration for those of us who are older to make the vision of true manhood a reality in our lives and be models for those who look to us for an example. In large measure, true manhood is defined in our relationship to women.

The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles “The family is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. … By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley, “The girl you marry will take a terrible chance on you. … [You] will largely determine the remainder of her life. …“Work for an education. Get all the training that you can. The world will largely pay you what it thinks you are worth. Paul did not mince words when he wrote to Timothy, ‘But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel’ ([1 Tim. 5:8](https://www.lds.org/scriptures/nt/1-tim/5.8?lang=eng#p7)).” (CR April 1998)

Elder James E. Faust “Modern sociological studies powerfully reaffirm the essential influence of a caring father in the life of a child—boy or girl. In the past twenty years, as homes and families have struggled to stay intact, sociological studies reveal this alarming fact: much of the crime and many of the behavioral disorders in the United States come from homes where the father has abandoned the children. In many societies the world over, child poverty, crime, drug abuse, and family decay can be traced to conditions where the father gives no male nurturing. Sociologically, it is now painfully apparent that fathers are not optional family baggage. We need to honor the position of the father as the primary provider for physical and spiritual support. I state this with no reluctance because the Lord has revealed that this obligation is placed upon husbands. It is useless to debate which parent is most important. No one would doubt that a mother’s influence is paramount with newborns and in the first years of a child’s life. The father’s influence increases as the child grows older. However, each parent is necessary at various times in a child’s development. Both fathers and mothers do many intrinsically different things for their children. Both mothers and fathers are equipped to nurture children, but their approaches are different. Mothers seem to take a dominant role in preparing children to live within their families (present and future). Fathers seem best equipped to prepare children to function in the environment outside the family. One authority states: “Studies show that fathers have a special role to play in building a child’s self-respect. They are important, too, in ways we really don’t understand, in developing internal limits and controls in children.” He continues, “Research also shows that fathers are critical in establishment of gender in children. Interestingly, fatherly involvement produces stronger sexual identity and character in both boys and girls. It is well established that the masculinity of sons and the femininity of daughters are each greater when fathers are active in family life.” (Karl Zinsmeister, “Do Children Need Fathers?” Crisis, Oct. 1992.) (James E. Faust CR April 1994)

D&C 121:36 That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness.

37 That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man.

38 Behold, ere he is aware, he is left unto himself, to kick against the pricks, to persecute the saints, and to fight against God.

39 We have learned by sad experience that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion.

40 Hence many are called, but few are chosen.

41 No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

42 By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—

43 Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy;

44 That he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death.

45 Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.

46 The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever.