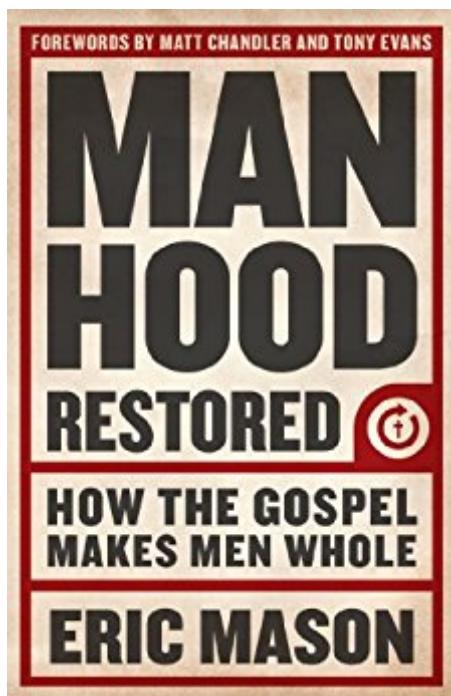


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Manhood Restored: How The Gospel Makes Men Whole



Synopsis

The earthly crisis within manhood will be there until Jesus returns, but in Christ men are pointed toward the gospel as the vision for renewal. *Manhood Restored* by exciting new pastoral voice Eric Mason combines theological depth with practical insights, putting men in step with a gospel-centered manhood that will enrich every facet of their lives. Mason begins with *The Scope of Manhood* -- looking first at why God created man, at the divine differences between man and woman, and what should drive the purpose of a man during his time on earth. A section on *The Problems in Manhood* analyzes the false icons that lead to cultural caricatures of men -- the businessman, the thug, the playboy, the athlete, etc. Mason then makes a connection to the cross-cultural fatherhood crisis, looking at the things men do to fill the void when their relationship with dad or God is not there. Finally, *The Redemption of Manhood* sets Jesus as the true standard of biblical manhood, looking to his perfect example to redeem and restore a man's life in the areas of sexuality, home, and work.

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Customer Reviews

Sometimes to get the jest of a book you start at the end. That is where we will begin with Eric Mason's excellent book *Manhood Restored*. Eric Mason writes: My hope is that this book acts not only as a wake-up call and catalyst for men to take a hard look at their own lives, but that it would also become a tool for fathers to shepherd their boys into gospel-driven men (Mason, 187). Amen Pastor Eric! That little quote speaks to my heart. I have a little man. His name is Asher, and he is two. My hope is that he will grow up in a gospel-rich environment, where he is always pointed directly to His savior Jesus Christ and His Father in heaven. That means I need to be the man he needs to see embodying gospel wholeness. May I serve as both a foil to Christ with my imperfections and as a representative image bearer of Him as well. *Manhood Restored* is written to direct our attention to the great deprivation of our time. Mason refers to this as daddy deprivation. It is the concept that young men have grown up without the presence of their fathers. Worse yet, those men are now fathering children with no idea of what manhood really is. The author sends out an urgent call to end daddy deprivation by biblically restoring manhood. In order to restore manhood, Mason begins his convincing argument by setting out to present the problem of daddy deprivation as accomplished in chapters one and two. Then he provides the scope of what embodies manhood. He does this by covering first a theology of manhood in chapter three. He follows this well articulated theology by covering five core venues that require manhood restoration. They are as follows: Worldview (Chapter 4), Sexuality (Chapter 5), Vision (Chapter 6), Family (Chapter 7) and Church (Chapter 8).

I wonder if Mason would ever consider rewriting this book. He's obviously an intelligent, culturally-aware person, but this book has the feel of a first-draft. There are many places where it seems like he is doing what I call page-filling. This happens when an author is thinking about writing a book while he's typing and not about communicating points. What was often so frustrating for me is that there were many great headings, but his treatment of them often left much to be desired. For example, there was one heading titled "The Driven Jesus." After reading the title, I was expecting Mason to talk about how looking to Jesus helps us to achieve balance between pursuing meaning through work and the other endeavors of life without being self-absorbed and arrogant. Instead, he spends a third of the section talking about how certain hip hop stars have been driven to do a lot of work and become wealthy and successful. He dismisses this kind of drive for success as "often misdirected and focused [sic]" (57), but the way he had just described it made it seem as though he admired that type of success; if he did not feel that way, he certainly led his readers in that

direction. To compound this issue, he did not go into any detail explaining how such pursuits could be misdirected or wrongly focused. He then went on to bifurcate spiritual and non-spiritual pursuits. I know Mason doesn't expect everyone to become a pastor or a missionary, but his call for God honoring pursuits was very vague and imprecise. I was stunned that such a well titled section could contain so much fluff and so little poignancy. And this type of thing was not isolated to this one area. The title, chapter names, and many of the heading in this book are excellent, but they were not executed well.

Eric Mason writes a much needed corrective for our current fatherless epidemic. We live in an age where you have a 50/50 chance of having or not having a father. Eric addresses this from within his context and with the gospel. What I loved. First, Mason says, "We need fathers, and we're only going to be fathers to our children when we see that true fatherhood is rooted and defined in God the Father" (p. 3 see pp. 9-10). Understanding this is crucial for rooting out our current fatherhood epidemic. We cannot know what a true father is without knowing who God is. God is the reality that all fathers strive for. Imperfectly, but within the gospel, our fathering is pleasing to God. Second, one lesson I've learned over the last year is that you have to listen to diverse voices to learn from them. Sounds easy enough but often we don't invest. Mason writes from an urban perspective. The analogies, word pictures, and examples are mostly urban. We need more diversity in our theological canon. Diversity heard creates solidarity as brothers in Christ. Different contexts but united together in Christ. Third, I love the balance within the book. Maybe balance isn't the right word. It's a root to branch approach. Everything Mason writes is rooted in the Trinitarian gospel and it's fleshed out in practical application. He takes the truth of the gospel which soars but grounds the truth of manhood in that gospel story. Just a few examples, "In the gospel, Jesus is restoring our vision of manhood" (p. 187). "If a father relates to his children only based on the chores they are supposed to do, that child would grow up with a warped sense of love, accomplishment and self-worth.

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