



MEN --- OLOGY

Howard J. Simon



DEDICATION

This book is affectionately and deservedly dedicated to:

My father, **Harold Simon** (deceased), who taught me the dignity of hard work and family stick-to-it-ness.

My brother, **Steve Simon** (deceased), who mentored me during one of the most important periods of my life.

Fitzmore ‘Styles’ Harris who championed the cause of my commencement to secondary school.

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FOREWORD

I came across a thought-provoking statement on the internet, embedded in a report that suggests that men are the most endangered people group in society. In this book, Dr. Howard Simon rings a bell of alarm on the matter, stating clearly that men are in desperate need of help. But he does not simply highlight the problem, rather, like an inquiring scientist, he presents plausible solutions.

MENOLOGY: LESSONS FOR MEN FROM THE MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART, gets to the heart of the problem and unearths answers. As a searcher for precious gemstones, Howard Simon digs into the subject and presents hope to men caught in the paralysis of uncertainty. The title of this book is curiously uncommon but fitting. Menology is a compound word: The prefix -men refers to the human male gender; and -ology refers to the study of something. Just about any dictionary would define ology as a branch of knowledge.¹

The cries of men are heard and are answered in this book. Is masculinity in crisis? Many may be inclined to answer "Yes."

1. *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, "ology." <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ology>.

The answer may be based on how numerous indicators of physical, psychological, and social well-being are trending negatively for males. Only the futile optimist would disagree. A casual walk on many college campuses would make the curious mind easily observe that the females outnumber the males. But the problem began earlier in high school where girls have been outperforming boys, as several reports have indicated. Men are being left behind in terms of education.

A cursory glance at the drivers of motor vehicles on the roads would reveal that the number of men behind the wheels are decreasing; or better said, the number of women behind the wheels are multiplying. The workforce, a traditional area of masculine domination, is seeing similar trends. Jobs that were traditionally filled by men are now being filled by women, in such areas as engineering, heavy-duty equipment operators, auto mechanics, electricians, construction workers, etc. Take a look at the reporting of international news from Western outlets and observe the decline in the number of male anchors.

To compound the picture, men are the perpetrators of most crimes and the ones most likely to be homicide victims. They are 3.5 times more likely than women to die by suicide, and their life expectancy is 4.9 years shorter than women's, as reported in *Psychology Today* online on June 24, 2020.²

I have listened to radio broadcasts and watched television programs in a number of countries that focused on the truth that society (including the Christian church) is losing its men; and the discussions usually drift into the deep waters of the psychological impact that societal changes are having on men

2. Editor's note: Please review the following articles for updated data. Scott Zimmer, "Sex Differences in Crime," *EBSCO* (2021). <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/sociology/sex-differences-crime>.

who now feel that they are losing the defining traits of masculinity, such as toughness, dominance, and self-reliance.

Are men hopelessly doomed? The author of this book says, “No.” He presents how the church, God’s agency for supplying hope and change in individuals and society at large, can bring optimism and change to men. Dr. Simon argues that the focus needs to be on reaching the heart—the center of thought, emotions, and intuition. There is a God-shaped vacuum in humans that can be filled only by God—Jesus Christ, through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

To that end, this book argues that if God does not intervene, all men will make a mess of their lives. It was the intervention of God in the life of David who became king of ancient Israel, that saved his leadership and his life. It is also said in the first chapter of this book that David was called a man after God’s own heart only because of the transformational power of God working in David’s heart.

The church is one of the remaining agencies in society that lifts up men. The church helps to bring meaning and purpose to their lives. It identifies their role in God’s great scheme to bless humanity. Through the Word, the church appeals to men: “Now then, be strong and brave” (2 Samuel 2:7, NIV). Men are also warned: “Babylon’s warriors have stopped fighting; they remain in their strongholds. Their strength is exhausted; they have become weaklings” (Jeremiah 51:30, NIV). And they are also instructed: “Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong” (1 Corinthians 16:13, NIV).

This book dismisses several misconceptions about what counts toward making a man a “proper man,” or a strong man.

It goes beyond the myths to identifying some means for helping men to become men after God's own heart. Chapter 4 highlights some of those means, which include: mentorship, self-control, listening, friendship, love, trust, and support. The latter chapters of the book address matters of morals, marriage and family, and conclude with the greatness of God.

Young men may benefit from the words of George Washington: "Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation. It is better to be alone than in bad company." The church as a community can help as it engages in transforming lives and providing inspired direction.

Dr. Simon does not suggest that the task is easy, but he reasons that the mission is possible. It's never easy to help people to think differently. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said it this way, "Rarely do we find men who willingly engage in hard, solid thinking. There is an almost universal quest for easy answers and half-baked solutions. Nothing pains some people more than having to think." The Church and other agencies in society that lift up people must help men today to really think.

This publication, *MENOLOGY*, is an excellent resource for men, Church leaders and community leaders who care about answering the cries of men, especially young men. It is an excellent tool for college and university classrooms, churches, community organizations, men's clubs, and women's organizations. Men matter, and women should care too. This book will help you discover authentic, biblical masculinity.

James F. Daniel

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CHAPTER ONE

The Healing of the Heart

There is a distressing and depressing cry that is reverberating across the nations. It is a dreadful cry. It is a painful cry. It is a gloomful cry. It is a heart-wrenching cry. It is a catastrophic cry. It is a terminal cry. It is a fatal cry.

Evidently, this miserable, masculine mourning is a compelling and critical cry for help. Men are in desperate need of help.

Help!

Men are mourning.

Men are groaning.

Help!

Men are falling.

Men are bawling.

Help!

Men are drugging.

Men are mugging.

Help!

Men are running.

Men are gunning.

Help!

Men are drinking.

Men are sinking.

Help!

Men are dashing.

Men are crashing.

Help!

Men are sitting.

Men are hitting.

Help!

Men are flirting.

Men are hurting.

Help!

Men are frowning.

Men are drowning.

Help!

Men are failing.

Men are jailing.

Help!

Men are speeding.

Men are bleeding.

Help!

Men are brutalizing.

Men are degenerating.

Help!

Men are emasculating.

Men are effeminizing.

Help!

Men are spilling.

Men are killing.

Help!

Men are crying.

Men are dying.

Help!

One of the major reasons why men are in such grave need of help, why we meander in the muck of mediocrity, is that our eyes have been blinded to what is most important.

This was Samuel's problem. He was a powerful prophet of God who was so enraptured by external entrapments. So much so that for a season, he missed the providential workings of God. If God had not intervened, Samuel would have anointed Eliab as the future king of Israel instead of David. If God does not intervene, all men will make a mess of their lives. Yet, the only time God can intervene to rescue men from their misery is when men begin to see what God sees or when what is important to God becomes important to men, and what is important to God is our heart. God desperately wants to heal and transform the hearts of men.

God did not choose any of the seven older sons of Jesse. Instead, He overlooked all of them because of their untransformed hearts (see 1 Samuel 16:6–10). God chose David and put him as king over His people because of the quality of his heart or his willingness to allow God to heal his heart (see 1 Samuel 16:11–13; 1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22).

The first heart transplant in history was performed by South African cardiac surgeon, Christian Bernard, on December 3, 1967; but God has been doing spiritual heart transplants for even longer than that. In fact, God is the first cardiac surgeon in history. God Himself says, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26). David received this new heart from God and that is one of the reasons why he was called a man after God's own heart. All men can experience a spiritual heart transplant, as David did,

and become men after God's own heart (see Psalms 26:2; Psalms 34:18).

Contrary to popular opinion, the quality of a man's heart is more important than the quality or the appearance of his body, or the quality of the gadgets he owns, or the quality of the clothing he wears, or the quality of the house in which he lives, or the quality of the car he drives. Conversely, what drives a man is his heart and this is of greater value than what a man drives and all his other possessions: "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it" (Proverbs 4:23).

The natural heart is a wicked, wayward, and wretched thing (see Jeremiah 17:9–10). "What comes out of a person is what defiles them. For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person" (Mark 7:20–23).

David was called a man after God's own heart because of the transformational power of God working in him. Even so, David's natural heart was as wicked as anyone else's that is why he committed adultery with Bathsheba and killed Uriah (see 2 Samuel 11). When David was confronted by God through Nathan, he repented and requested: "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalms 51:10).

God transformed David's heart. The fact that David surrendered his heart to God was the very reason why he was described as a man after God's own heart and the reason

why God rejected Saul and anointed David as his replacement as king of Israel. God put in David's transformed heart, many of the qualities that were lacking in Saul's rebellious heart. Saul's heart was made ugly by pride and arrogance, but God made David's heart beautiful with humility. Saul was distrusting, unrepentant, impatient, and disobedient, but David was trusting, repentant, patient, and obedient. Saul was irreverent, disloyal, a bad witness, unforgiving, and polytheistic, but David was worshipful, loyal, a witness of God, forgiving, and monotheistic.

A Humble Heart

No task was too menial for David. He was a king with a servant's heart. After he was anointed king of Israel, he still performed the roles of a servant boy, a shepherd for his family, a musician, and an amour bearer for King Saul (see 1 Samuel 17:12–17; 1 Samuel 16:14–22). Others might have expressed anger or felt belittled if God denied them the privilege of building Him a temple, but not David (see 1 Chronicles 28:1–3). David was a man of profound humility.

A Trusting Heart

In an atmosphere of doubt and distrust in God, where an entire army was paralyzed by the aggressive assault of the great and gigantic Goliath, David trusted God so completely that he celebrated victory over the giant even before the fighting began (see 1 Samuel 17:45–47). A trusting heart is a heart full of faith and confidence in God. This kind of heart is available to all men who are willing to receive it as a gift from God. Men who are willing to grow in Christ-likeness through the power of God's Word and an intimate

relationship with Christ (see Proverbs 3:5, 6; Romans 10:17; 2 Corinthians 5:17).

A Repentant Heart

David not only sinned greatly against God when he committed adultery and cold-blooded murder, but he also repented greatly and poured out his heart to God after his fall (see Psalm 51). David never allowed himself to become impervious to the penetrative power of God as did his predecessor, Saul, but when he was confronted by Nathan he confessed, “I have sinned” (see 2 Samuel 12:1–14).

A Patient Heart

Like a gargantuan oak tree standing tall and enduring the harsh realities of the weather, David, quietly and unhurriedly waited on God to fulfill His promise to make him king of Israel. David also exercised composed endurance in dealing with other individuals including his own son, Absalom, who committed high treason against the state and disrespected and dishonored his father. David’s patient and calm persona was also evident in his interactions with Shimei who also disrespected and insulted him during a difficult period of David’s life (see 2 Samuel 16).

An Obedient Heart

It is not always easy to obey when the instruction goes against something that we have purposed to do in our hearts. David had purposed in his heart to honor God by building Him a temple, but God stopped him and instructed him not to build the temple. Instead, God selected his son, Solomon, to build the temple. To his credit and illustrious legacy,

David honored God by obeying Him fully in all that He commanded pertaining to the temple.

A Worshipful Heart

Worship was everything to David because God was everything to him. David worshipped God when he was a soldier, a shepherd (see Psalm 23), a musician, a messenger, an armor-bearer, a poet, an author, a nomad, a fugitive, and a king. David regularly communicated with God in prayer especially before making major decisions (see 1 Samuel 23:1–12; 1 Samuel 30:8–15; 2 Samuel 2:1, 2; 2 Samuel 5:17–25; 2 Samuel 21:1).

A Loyal Heart

God is loyal to us even when we are not loyal to Him or even when we are only loyal to ourselves. Similarly, David was loyal to Jonathan when Jonathan could not be loyal to himself or to David. David had promised Jonathan that he would not wipe out his descendants if or when he became king of Israel. True to his promise, David, spared the life of Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, for Jonathan's sake even though Jonathan was dead and would not have known if David had kept his promise.

A Witnessing Heart

Whether it was killing a lion, a bear, or a giant, David did most things for the glory of God. At his core, David saw himself as a witness for God. David had a witnessing heart, his deepest motive many times seemed to be to showcase God's greatness. He served as a witness so that others would learn about God. David acknowledged and affirmed his witnessing heart when he said, "Then I will teach transgressors

your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you” (Psalms 51:13).

A Forgiving Heart

Saul did everything in his power to kill David, nonetheless, David refused to hurt Saul when he was granted at least two opportunities to murder the first king of Israel. Whether David was dealing with Saul’s murderous agenda or Absalom’s rebellion, he forgave freely and generously (see 1 Samuel 24:6; 26:7–12; 2 Samuel 18: 32,33).

A Monotheistic Heart

David was cognizant of his flaws, hence, he acknowledged that he “was sinful at birth” (Psalm 51:5). He was not sinless; he had his shortcomings for sure, but he sought to serve God with his whole heart and did not tolerate idols (see 1 Chronicles 14:12; Psalm 138:1). Idolatry was not one of David’s weaknesses. David said, “I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.” “I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart; I will glorify your name forever” (Psalm 9:1; 86:12).

God wants all men to reflect His heart. But for men to mirror God’s heart, they must give their whole heart to Him and allow Him to transform their heart as He transformed David’s.

Only when men’s hearts have been transformed or healed by God (see Deuteronomy 30:6; 2 Corinthians 5:17), will we be truly able to deal with the many myths associated with manhood.

