

To Work and Keep

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[0 : 00] Well, this is week one of our men's Sunday school class, at least in the two plus years that I've been here. This is the first time that we've done a men's Sunday school class, and I'm excited to be doing this together.

We're going to be in here, Lord willing, through November, and what we'll be doing is considering what it means to be a man. And even more specifically, what God says about what it means to be a man. We live in a time where confusion abounds about the most basic realities of manhood. Satan is doing all that he can to muddy the waters and to create confusion and chaos about truly those basic realities, those basic truths.

And I think it can be argued that the starting point, or at least one of the starting points for all of this chaos, is a listening problem.

People do not want to hear and believe what God says. God's revealed word has been cast aside, and all submission to God as he's revealed himself in his word. That too has been cast aside.

And in the place of God's clear, revealed word, innumerable questions are being raised as though there are no objective answers to those questions. Well, there are. There absolutely are answers, and we find them right here in God's word, if we'd simply listen to what God has to say.

[1 : 34] So that's our aim in this study. That's what we want to do in this study over the next three months. We want to listen to, we want to believe, we want to embrace all that God says about manhood.

Humbling ourselves under the authority of God's word. Not casting off his authority, but submitting ourselves to it. Now, our men's ministry this year has had a theme. You saw it as you came in today.

Designed to lead. Leading with the heart of Christ. Men leading with the heart of Christ. Now, we've tried to keep that theme at the forefront of our meetings together as men, and so we want to bring it into this Sunday school class as well, considering this is a class that is specifically for us as men. Men who are designed by God to lead, and to lead with the heart of Christ. That's a foundational truth. It is God's good design that we as men are to lead.

That is an integral part of what it means to be a man. And so I trust that we'll see this theme come to the forefront often as we work our way through this study.

[2 : 46] That over the next several months, we'll lay this very solid foundation together so that we can know and confidently live out our calling to be men who were designed to lead, and to lead with the heart of Christ.

Now, we have a book that we're going to be using to guide us in our study together. It's called The Masculine Mandate. Pastor John told me that he's taught even from this book in the church here, though maybe it was a different looking cover.

I think this is a revised edition. But it's 13 chapters, and we have technically 13 weeks till the end of November, but Stan and Vicki Serbatovich will be with us one of those weeks.

So every week outside of this morning, we'll be looking at one chapter from the book. This morning, we'll cover two. So to begin our study together, let's do something that I kind of enjoy doing.

We've definitely done this together on Wednesday night. Let's do a little word association. When we hear the word masculine, what comes to our mind?

[3 : 53] Macho. Football. Hulk Hogan. Hunting.

Right now, we're staying in the realm of like neutral. These aren't necessarily maybe biblical ideas. They're not sinful ideas or wrong ideas. I think they can convey truths that are biblical.

There's a strength that we've spoken of already. There's a provision element to hunting. What else? Self-sacrifice.

Protecting. Everybody's like, all right, now we've got to go with like biblical ideas. Got to land there because Pastor Collins said something about it. Good. Good. Any like misconceptions that perhaps are conveyed with a word?

Abuse of authority. Domineering. Pride. Don't show emotion.

[5 : 00] Don't show emotion. We're going to talk more about that. Superiority in the back.

Self-sufficiency. Yes. Including independent of God.

Good. Those are all words that I think for better or for worse or just right in the middle, Hulk Hogan, that we do think of that perhaps society says is what masculinity is or society says is what's wrong with masculinity.

Or as we heard some others, what the Bible says is true of what it means to be a man. Well, if we want to know what God has to say about what it means to be a man, we need to first go to God's word.

That's where we need to go to know what God has to say. And there's one place that often is the best place to start in lots of studies. It's a place that we could go to if we were considering many important truths from God's word.

And that's to the very beginning in the Garden of Eden. So if you have your Bibles, you can turn with me to Genesis chapter 1. Well, chapter 2 is really where we'll be this morning.

[6 : 09] And as you're turning there, can you think of any times when someone in God's word makes reference to the Garden of Eden? Genesis 1, Genesis 2, Genesis 3.

In defending a truth or teaching a truth. Can you think of anywhere in God's word where they ground whatever they're saying in creation? Yeah, that's very, very recent for some of us right there.

1 Corinthians 11, as Paul is teaching on head coverings. He is grounding that in creation. The roles of men and women. The nature of what it means to be a man.

What it means to be a woman. Good. 1 Timothy 2. Adam was first formed and Eve. Yes, 1 Timothy 2. Adam was formed first and then Eve.

Also, grounding the same teaching of the roles of men and women in creation. Mark. 1 Timothy 2. 1 Timothy 2.

[7 : 16] 1 Timothy 2. 1 Timothy 2. 1 Timothy 2. 1 Timothy 2. 1 Timothy 2. 1 Timothy 2. 1 Timothy 2. four essential things about man. Who man is, where man is, what man is, and how man is to fulfill his calling. So we're going to work through each of these categories, and we're going to start with first who man is. And we see this in Genesis 2-7 that we as men are spiritual creatures.

So let me read that one out, that verse. Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

So this verse helps us to see the formation of man, and it was very unique. Man was made very distinct from all of creation that came before him. And we see this uniqueness in two ways. First, we see that God didn't make any other creature with this hands-on kind of approach. How did God make all things before man? His Word. He spoke. God said by the Word of His mouth. He said, and it was so. He said, and it was so. That's the pattern for all of creation until man. But then with man, God took what He had created by the Word of His mouth, the dust of the ground, and He took that dust, and He formed man. He molded man with the dust of the ground. And so we see that man was made in our body is a unique formation. But we also see something else. The second way that the formation of man is unique is that God breathed into man the breath of life. We see that God didn't speak and bring us to life.

We actually don't even see that He did this with animals or with any other living creature where they were kind of there, and then He brought about life. It just says He made them by the Word of His mouth. Well, here we see man's body made, and then we see something of God bringing life to us. He brings us to life uniquely, breathing the breath of life into us. So two elements of man's creation that show that man is unique. Now, woman made from the rib of man is also unique. We are spiritual creatures along with women bearing God's image made in His likeness. So this first point is less of a distinction between men and women. We'll make lots of good distinctions between men and women. That's less of the point here, and it is more a distinction between humanity and all of the rest of creation. Though we'll see as we study there is an importance to how God made man and then how God made woman. So we were made in a special way by God. We are intended to relate to God in a special way. We are spiritual creatures made to know God, made to glorify God. Well, now let's consider where God put us, and we see this in the next verse, verse 8. And the Lord

God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there He put the man whom He had formed. Richard Phillips draws our attention in the book to another very popular book that was written in the early 2000s, and you might have heard of it. It is called *Wild at Heart* by John Eldridge. Now this was a top seller. Lots of men were reading it and studying it, and Eldridge in his book argued that men by nature are wild at heart, hence the title of the book. They were made for adventure. It was a response, I think, to a valid problem that men are losing an appreciation for masculinity, and yet the entire premise of the book, this idea of being wild at heart, was founded on a very unbiblical idea. You see, Eldridge argued that because man was made outside of the garden, then our true domain is actually outside of there, that we need to get out of the garden to really find ourselves. He would argue in the book that men need to have adventure quests, and this is in the wilderness, he would say. So he says we're to be in the wilderness. That's where we'll find our true identity. Okay, you've heard all of that. What's wrong with this idea?

[12:29] Nailed it. God put man in the garden. We're ignoring God's activity. What did God do? What did God say? I said it at the beginning that we want to submit ourselves under God's Word, so when we read God's Word and verse 8 says God put Adam in the garden, well, that means something. That matters.

God's in charge, and God put Adam there. What else? What else is wrong with this way of thinking that says, you know what? Actually, the wilderness is where we want to get to.

Yes, yes. So the consequence for sin was to be banished from the garden, and it was to then go into the wilderness. That is then where Adam and Eve had to go to as a consequence for their sin. We think of the wilderness, and we, yes, there are absolutely ways in which God brings good things from Israel's time in the wilderness. We think of testing them and shaping them, and it's a time of trial, and good comes out of that. Yet, was that where Israel was supposed to land? Was that the final end point? No, in the wilderness, that is something of Satan's domain, the domain that God allows for him to have. When Jesus went into the wilderness, it was like he was on Satan's territory. We think of sin in the wilderness. When the Israelites would do sacrifices, Leviticus speaks of the scapegoat that's sent off into the wilderness, bearing the sins of the people, going off into the desolate places. So the wilderness would have negative connotations. Think of the very end of, oh, yeah, Bruce.

God gives out a wilderness. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yes, yes, and we're going to talk all about that very soon, but that's so true, and the wilderness is more of a place of disorder and disarray. Absolutely. Think about the end of the Bible. How do we end in the wilderness? Where do we end? City. Garden City. It's the Garden of Eden, but even better. The Tree of Life is there again. It's leaves for healing. We see the river flowing from the throne, which reminds us of the Garden of Eden. We think of all of the jewels and the beauty of it that also was present in the Garden of Eden. So we're now in a garden city, a place, as Bruce was pointing out, a place of order, a place that was to be maintained and to look beautiful and wonderful.

[15:17] That's where we're trying to get to, not on an adventure quest to find ourselves, but in the Garden City. So God put us in the garden, and Adam and Eve were driven out of the garden into the wilderness, and so we need to see that indeed it is God who is in authority. It is God who has put man in the garden, and it is God who has put us in our particular place in life that we might tend to that. Now let's consider what we are, and this is the third category that Phillips gives to us, what we are. Now we see in the Garden of Eden that Adam was to be both Lord and servant in the garden. Now hearing those words, what do you think? What do you think it would mean for Adam to be Lord in the garden? Not the Lord, not God, but a Lord. Ruler. Steward. To have authority. What scriptures might come to mind perhaps from

Genesis 1 or 2 that would teach us something of that lordship that he was to have? Yeah. Yes. To subdue and to exercise dominion. Genesis 1, I think verse 28.

Given the job to name the animals, showing his authority over. The animals aren't in charge. The animals aren't deciding how we're going to run the garden. No, Adam's in charge in the garden. He's literally naming the animals, putting his name on them. In the same way that we as parents name our children, and that shows something of our God-given authority over them. They're not naming themselves and telling his mom and dad, this is what I want to be called, but we get to place a name on them.

Good. How about servant? Where do we perhaps see the the servanthood of Adam in the garden? He serves God's purposes. Yes. Yeah. He serves God's purposes. So who gives the commands in

the garden to Adam?

God does. God's the one who tells him not to eat of the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam didn't make the rule and say, you know what, this is the one tree we're not going to eat from here. It was God did. And so we see this beautiful balance that, yes, Adam, man, has been given authority. Man has authority in the garden of Eden, like one who is a lord, and yet he himself is under the authority of the lord, submitted to him, being a faithful servant of God. And as we'll see in this study, what does that mean? Well, now Adam, man, us, we are to serve those that God has put us in authority over. And so we'll see all of that work itself out. So Adam is the leader. He's exercising authority and dominion. Yet at the same time, Adam was a servant. He was submitted to God's authority, given authority by God, and yet living under God's authority. So he was called to be fruitful and to multiply, called to work and to keep the garden, called to be God's representative on earth, given authority, but at the same time, under authority as well. Richard Phillips says, [18:50] Adam was to be lord and keeper of God's created realm, bringing glory to the creator as he sought to bear the image of God in servant faithfulness. So as men, this responsibility has been given to us. We are called to be lords and servants. That's what God says we are. That's what God has called us to be. But the natural question that arises from this is, well, how then do we fulfill this calling that God has given to us to be lords and servants? And that brings us to the fourth and the final category that we'll address this morning. So we've seen the who, the where, what, and now the how.

We see it again in Genesis chapter 2, verse 15. The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. So two very crucial verbs that we find here in this verse, to work and to keep. Now, Richard Phillips believes that these verbs are so important that the remainder of his book, the masculine mandate, is given to unpacking these two verbs. So we're going to be on kind of a high level view. We've been there already. That's kind of where we're staying this morning. This is our introduction to the study. And we're going to see how these two verbs work themselves out in very particular ways as we consider what it means to be a man. So Richard Phillips is convinced, and I think he presents a convincing argument that if we understand what it means to work and to keep, then we will understand what it means to live out the mandate of scripture that God has given to us as men. If we want to know what God calls us to, then we need to understand what does it mean to work and to keep.

So to work, let's define that first. To work is to labor to make things grow. Think nurturing, cultivating, tending, building up, guiding, ruling. That is to work, to labor to make things grow. And to keep is to protect, protect, protect, and to sustain the progress that's already been achieved. So think guard. Think keep safe, watch over, care for, and maintain. Now based on those definitions, Phillips ties these verbs back to the titles of Lord and servant. So to work is to fulfill the role of servant, and to keep is to fulfill the work of Lord. Phillips says these two words serve as a summary of the Bible's mandate for masculine behavior. We are to devote ourselves to working, and building, and keeping, and protecting everything placed into our charge. So this is what we're going to unpack in the time that remains together this morning. What does it mean to work, and what does it mean to keep? Now Genesis 2:15 isn't the only place in God's word where these two words show up. They are used to describe the responsibility of Adam. We've seen that here, but they're also used to describe the responsibility of the priests in the Old Testament. In various places in the book of Numbers, Moses uses the Hebrew terms for to work and to keep in talking about what the priests were to do. Both the ESV and the NIV translate the Hebrew terms a little differently, but they're there, and they are being used to describe the priestly responsibility. So listen to Numbers 3 verses 7 to 8. This is the NIV that I'm reading from.

They shall keep guard over him and over the whole congregation before the tent of meeting as they minister at the tabernacle. They shall guard all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and keep guard over the people of Israel as they minister at the tabernacle. Pretty clear where we hear the word keep. It's the same Hebrew word that's found in Genesis 2. They're to keep guard. They are to guard all of the furnishings. They're to keep guard again. We didn't hear the word work. It's translated a little differently, but could you maybe surmise what word it was that's the word for work? Did you catch it?

Minister. Yes. The very end there. Now they shall keep guard over the people of Israel as they minister at the tabernacle. Interestingly, the ESV translates so we do get the word keep, but we don't get the word work. The NIV translates so we get the word work, but we don't get the word

keep. So I want to read the NIV also to bring it all together. They are to perform duties for him and for the whole community at the tent of meeting by doing the work of the tabernacle. They are to take care of all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, fulfilling the obligations of the Israelites by doing the work of the tabernacle. So Adam, he was to work and to keep. The priests, they were to work and to keep.

[24 : 11] And we as men, we are called to work and to keep. So let's talk about this word work. The word that's translated as work in Genesis 2.15 is the Hebrew term *avad*. It's a very common word in the Old Testament.

And it is translated a number of ways, even as we've seen in Numbers chapter 3. Sometimes to work is to serve. It's translated as *serve*, or it's translated as *labor* or *cultivate*. Now it can even mean to perform acts of worship. In Genesis 2, there is certainly an agricultural sense to the word. Now Adam was called by God to cultivate the garden. He was called to make it so that it would grow and flourish, that it might be fruitful. Isn't it interesting that God had called Adam and Eve that themselves, they were to be fruitful and multiply? And now here, Adam is in the garden, and part of his calling is to make the garden to be fruitful itself. That was God's command given to Adam and Eve in chapter 1, verse 28, be fruitful and multiply. And here we see something of that as God calls Adam to work the garden.

Now I'm not much of a gardener. Pastor John is. Every year he has a beautiful, wonderfully large garden. Stan is a gardener. I'm sure we have many gardeners here. I need your help, gardeners, because I can list a few things that you might do to work the garden, but I'm sure there's much more.

Roger, you can help as well. What are some things that come to mind when you consider what does it mean for a gardener to work? What do you do if you want to make your garden to be fruitful? Cultivate the soil. Cultivate the soil. That's step one. Is that right? Cultivate that soil. Water it. Yeah. Enrich it.

[26 : 13] How do we, what do we do to enrich it? Just here. Add cow manure. Okay. Good to know. Sow. Say it again. Sow. Sow. Sow the seed. Yes. Got to do that. I did know that much.

I figured you got to do that. Pull out the weeds. Yes. Keep animals out. Yes. Nurture. Yeah. Pick up the rocks. Pick up the rocks. Yeah. Good. We're thinking, and this is good, we're thinking very much in terms of like a, like a vegetable garden or, you know, something that we would put out that, you know, put in rows, perhaps plant the seeds. What other kinds of gardens are there though?

Roger would know. Didn't you do that as a living for a while? Maintained a beautiful garden? Yeah. In those kinds of gardens, what else might we need to be doing?

Plan. Plan. Yeah. To make it beautiful, we should have a design in mind. I think of like, I've never been, but I think of like the gardens of Versailles. I mean, that's like as immaculate and beautiful as it gets.

[27 : 36] Perhaps we should also think Garden of Eden, not just like we're planting vegetables, but think like the magnificence of Versailles, but even better, God made this garden. But yeah, so we need to trim back bushes.

Keep the walkways from getting overgrown. Keep them trimmed up. I do use a trimmer for my grass. So I'm a gardener. Yeah, good. We do all of those things. And isn't there great satisfaction in seeing that garden then thrive, or even perhaps just seeing your yard to thrive as you do all of those things to maintain it?

We take pleasure in that. There's a beauty. It's well-ordered. It's maintained. A garden doesn't just happen. It requires a gardener to tend to it, to work it.

Whether it's that vegetable garden in our backyard, or maybe something more spectacular, like a large, wealthy estate. Now, of course, this isn't to say that every man is called to be a gardener as his job, that that's like the most masculine job you could do. You've got to be a gardener, because that's what Adam was in Genesis 2.

Richard Phillips says, Rather, we are called to work whatever field God has given us. We are to invest our time, our energies, our ideas, and our passions in bringing good things into being.

[29 : 06] A faithful man, then, is one who has devoted himself to cultivating, building, and growing. Now, in that quote, Phillips said things.

We are to bring good things into being. What would be some examples of good things that we should bring into being, that we should be seeking to cultivate, seeking to work at?

Yeah, sitting next to the man who can do such things. See you on Tuesday. Truly. Yeah. What else?

Medicine. Yeah. Doctors. Doctors. Very human body. Yes. Engineers that design structures and things. When I was probably eight or nine years old, my grandfather on my mom's side, he was an engineer, and he worked for, in agriculture.

And I still remember going with him at a young age to see this invention that he had designed in order to make watering fruit and nut trees more efficient.

[30 : 23] Northern California had tons and tons of orchards with fruit and nut trees. And he had designed, I forget the design, but he had designed something that actually made that better.

And I remember going and witnessing that being kind of test, not tested, but what's it called? Were you like, you know, the ribbon cutting ceremony? They got to do it for the first time.

And it was like, whoa, this is awesome. And I still remember, even as a kid, I wasn't thinking like, wow, this is what God made Adam to do in the garden. I didn't think like that.

But I do remember thinking, this is really special. And I remember this good, right kind of just pride. Not pride in the sinful way, but just like, I'm taking pleasure in seeing that my grandfather made something that is improving the efficiency of watering trees.

And I knew the goodness of that. I saw that. So even as a kid, we can recognize something of what it means to work. Any other examples that come to mind? I think we could think of some others.

[31 : 25] Say it again. Frying chicken. Yeah, that's right. We're all like talking about our jobs or the jobs of the man sitting next to us.

But that's true in our work. Whatever it is that we do to make a living, we are seeking to do that well, to improve upon it. Think about a business. You want to see that business grow and thrive.

You don't want to see it go downhill. You don't even want to see it just maintain. You want to see it become more fruitful. Jim. Yeah. Yeah. Amen.

Mm-hmm. Yeah. Good. How about outside of, like, the workplace? Are there other good things that we should be seeking to build?

Yeah. We're going to get into people in just two seconds. But things. Things. Think about just maintaining my home.

[32 : 27] Seeking to make it a welcoming, warm place and trying to improve upon it as best as I'm able. Say it again. Writing. Yes.

Good. Seeking from experience. Seeking to write. There's a productivity and there's a cultivation. And we're improving the lives even of others as they get to read and appreciate our writing.

Well, we have now touched on not just things. That's not all that we're to be working at. We should be investing in people as well. Richard Phillips says, So as husbands, as fathers, as grandfathers, as neighbors, as employers, as employees in our community, in our church, we have people that we've been called to invest in.

Now, we often think of women as being the nurturers. And I think there's definitely truth to that. God has especially endowed women with that quality.

Think about how Jesus wept over Jerusalem. What did he say? Matthew 23, 37. Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it.

[33 : 50] How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings? And you are not willing. I know a hen is not a woman.

And we have to be clear about that. A hen is not a woman. But we are talking about the nurturing qualities that are normally associated with mothers. And Jesus is talking about that.

Or when Paul was writing to the Thessalonian church, he described how he and Silvanus and Timothy had come to the Thessalonians, and they were gentle among them, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children.

And then he goes on to say how they were affectionately desirous of the Thessalonians. That too. Nurturing language. And we're quick to think of women. And it's kind of ironic that two men are talking in ways that are nurturing and using women or mothers as the example.

But this call for us as men to work is a reminder that we need to nurture as well. Richard Phillips talks about how men are often thought to be, and perhaps even encouraged to be, strong and silent.

[35 : 06] What could be bad, though, if we take that maybe to an extreme? What do we mean? What's the negative connotation of being strong and silent?

Domineering. I think, Donnie, you said earlier, did you say emotionless? No. Somebody said emotionless. What did you say earlier, Donnie? Something along those lines.

I thought, say again. He did say that. Sam says what? I don't know what's going on here. Yeah. Whatever you said, Donnie, made me think strong and silent.

We're going to talk about that soon. I thought it was emotionless. Yeah. Spiritually disengaged. Strong and silent. We're aloof. We're distant. That's the potential extreme of that.

Now, there is a sense in which men should be strong. Men should not let their emotions control them. There is a goodness to being strong and silent in certain contexts when we need to take action. But we also have to be careful that we don't forget that there's a sense in which we are to be nurturers.

[36 : 13] Think about how Paul tells us as men to love our wives in Ephesians 5. What are we to be doing with them? Nourishing and cherishing our wives.

That's definitely nurturing language. 1 Peter 3. Living with them in an understanding way. That's nurturing our wives.

The same is true of our children. Now, how damaging is it when fathers are relationally absent? Or even worse, perhaps physically absent from their children's lives.

As Philip says, It is the male arm around the shoulder or pat on the back that God allows to have the quickest access to the heart of a child. So we really do need to be careful that we don't become unbalanced.

We may be working to bring good things into being, like tending to a struggling business and making it thrive. But in doing that, we don't want to then neglect the people in whose lives we're to be working as well.

[37 : 13] Tending to their hearts that they might thrive. And though it's far less common, there is a sense in which you could do the opposite. You could fail to do the good work God has given you to do in your job because perhaps you're not going to work enough.

Though again, far less often the case. But there is a need for both good things that God has given to us to work. Okay, let's speak now briefly about to keep in the time that remains.

God has made us as men to keep. He's called us as men to do that. We see it in Genesis 2.15.

Now the word there, the Hebrew term is shamar. And it can be translated as to watch, to guard, to protect, to take under custody, or to exercise care.

This is a word that God often associates with himself. He is our protector. He guards us. He watches over us. He keeps us.

What psalm immediately comes to mind when we hear that? Psalm 121. A beautiful psalm that speaks repeatedly of God keeping us.

[38 : 19] And this is what it means for him to be our help. We hear at the beginning of the psalm that he's our help. Well, what does that mean then for him to be our help? How does that work itself out? He keeps us. Over and over we read, The Lord is your keeper.

The Lord will keep you from all evil. He will keep your life. He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. That's the same word that's found in Genesis 2.15.

To keep the garden. So Adam was to keep watch over. Adam was to guard. When we think about gardening today, that's an important part of it. John, I think you made mention of something of protecting against animals in the garden.

That is absolutely a part of keeping the garden. We maybe have shiny ribbons, scarecrows, mesh wire fence. Say it again.

Say it again. Shotguns. Shotguns. Guns. Yes. Lots of you guys I know with like BB guns. Get out there. Shoot them. Yep. So we have to protect it.

[39 : 19] We have to watch over it. And so it was of Adam in the garden. That was his duty. Now have you considered that responsibility in light of Satan's temptation?

Adam knew the command that God had given not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And yet Adam failed to protect Eve, to keep her from that temptation.

And if we even back things up further, I think there's an argument for saying that he failed to protect the garden from Satan's entrance into it in the first place. At minimum, he should have kept Eve from listening to Satan.

But he did none of that. He went right along with Eve and rebelled against God. For she took of the fruit and ate. And she also gave some to her husband who was with her.

And he ate. Not a hint of protection there. Not even the slightest attempt to guard his wife. What a sobering responsibility it is for us to keep.

[40 : 23] So we too have it. We're not to only wield the plow, as Philip says. We're also to bear the sword. We don't have time to talk for me to ask it.

But here's some ways that we are to keep the things and the people who have been entrusted to us. We're to protect our wives and our children. We're to do that from physical harm.

We think home invaders. I think often when my kids go outside, they're like a stray dog that's around. We had a dog that got out last week or yesterday or this weekend. It was about that big. We were okay.

But I need to be on guard for my children. We need to protect our wives and our children from spiritual harm. Teaching them the truth. When error or immorality somehow finds its way into our home, it's my job to guard them.

We need to protect our church from harm, both physical and spiritual. Protect our homes. Protect our nation. All of that is something of what it means to keep.

[41 : 22] And we're going to see much more of it in the weeks to come. So much packed into this one verse in Genesis 2.15. The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

And we're going to continue to circle back to this verse in our study. It tells us so much about ourselves, of who we are, of where we are, and of what we are. Richard Phillips says this, and this is how we'll close.

If we want to be the men God is calling us to be, men who are rightly admired and respected by those we love, men who faithfully fulfill our duty before God, then we will make as our motto and watchword the masculine mandate that we as men have received from God.

We will work and keep. Amen.