

INTRODUCTION

THE CRISIS

We are the hollow men
We are the stuffed men
Leaning together
Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!

—T. S. Eliot, *The Hollow Men*

Over seventeen thousand structures and three hundred lives were lost in the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. Lasting two days, the blaze left one hundred thousand residents homeless and reduced the courthouse to ashes. Its exact origin remains uncertain, though most accounts center on a lantern accidentally knocked over. Fanned by strong winds out of the southwest, fueled by wooden construction, and faced with limited water resources, a small flame became one of the most destructive conflagrations in American history.

On that same day, October 8, 1871, another catastrophe struck: The Peshtigo Fire in Wisconsin claimed over twelve hundred lives and scorched more than a million acres of forest. Driven by the same winds that ravaged Chicago, it remains the deadliest wildfire in U.S. history.

Today, different winds are howling.

A cultural firestorm driven by these winds is sweeping across the West, engulfing families, churches, and nations in its path. At its center is the destruction of men—the slow, methodical unmaking of strong, virtuous men. Many have attempted to

extinguish this fire. But we seem to only have questions and not answers. Even *The New York Times* is asking, “Where are the men?”¹

The problem is not new, but it is uniquely perilous. Corresponding with the crisis of men, we face a fertility collapse: Fewer couples are having fewer children or none at all. In the United States, the fertility rate “dropped to an all-time low in 2024 with less than 1.6 kids per woman.”² As it stands now, by 2030, a staggering 45 percent of women aged 25 to 44 will be single.³ Where are the men indeed? A demographic winter looms, billowing across the cultural landscape like a storm over barren plains. The future appears bleak, cold, and sterile. As men have been beaten down and cast out, their holy desire to extend their legacies to future generations has been nearly swept away.

What lies ahead is not conquest, but *collapse*. It is a quiet, voluntary civilizational suicide. We no longer believe in ourselves. We seem to lack the will to chart a course forward. The Christian West never needed to be conquered; it only needed to be hollowed out from within. And one of the chief ways this decline has been brought about is by producing hollow men.

At the heart of this crisis is the loss of the fear of the Lord, the Christian God, the only true God. Without that fear, we

1. Rachel Drucker, “Men, Where Have You Gone? Please Come Back,” Modern Love (blog), *New York Times*, June 20, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/20/style/modern-love-men-where-have-you-gone-please-come-back.html>.

2. PBS News, “The U.S. Fertility Rate Reached a New Low in 2024, CDC Data Shows,” *PBS NewsHour*, July 24, 2025, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/the-u-s-fertility-rate-reached-a-new-low-in-2024-cdc-data-shows>.

3. Morgan Stanley, “Rise of the SHEconomy,” *Morgan Stanley Insights*, September 23, 2019, <https://www.morganstanley.com/ideas/womens-impact-on-the-economy>.

have raised generations of men who are soft and weak—men who refuse to fight and are afraid to offend. When men give up their will to fight, their civilization dies.

What will men do?

Will they retreat into enclaves, hoping to stave off the cold? Is balkanization the only way to survive? Will they give in to the world? Is there a future for men?

Today's culture offers men many ways to cope: virtual reality, numbing medications, easy pornography, and a thousand other distractions. These are the world's answers, but too often they echo within the walls of the church as well.

Churches intend to help. But many times, instead of stopping the conflagration engulfing civilization, they end up fueling the flames. Ministries and messages only serve as a way to cope with the current state of affairs. The gospel is no longer a command but a suggestion to make one's life better. The law of God is rarely preached for fear of offending. Men are being starved in the flock by being fed bioengineered food, something like an impossible gospel that is disguised as wholesome and organic but filled with additives and masking the truth.

Men are in crisis. They are told their maleness is toxic, as if their very nature is poisonous. They have been totally submerged by the cultural currents of feminism, drowning in a sea of "niceness." We are expected to practice tolerance and inclusion in every space we visit. Boys go to school and are expected to behave like girls. They must sit quietly and comply and suppress their desire for competition and combat. Men enter the workplace and are expected to treat women as men. How are they to do this? They should behave in a womanly manner. The basic framework of "protector and provider" seems to be not just unnecessary today, but problematic. Our world has become so anesthetized from the state of nature by our

comforts and conveniences that men have lost their fighting spirit. And it's more than a fighting spirit they have lost. They have lost any sense of purpose. Like a rudderless ship at sea, they are drifting along just hoping to watch the big game this weekend and not upset the old ball and chain.

There are many places we could lay the blame for this. We could talk about feminism and the poison it has unleashed upon homes and our civilization. With the rise of feminism in the nineteenth century, basic human anthropology was called into question. This was not just a problem of second- and third-wave feminism. It was baked into the entire feminist framework.⁴ We could discuss the crushing difficulty of finding a house and a spouse. Homeownership once served as a foundation of stability and a precondition for starting a family. But it has become nearly impossible with high interest rates, increasing levels of debt, and stagnant wages. It is as though the market is deliberately stacked against men. Even if a man is ready to settle down, he will encounter a dating landscape that is often skewed. Women are less interested in marriage and more interested in their careers, travel, and personal fulfillment instead of commitment. Add to this the reality of no-fault divorce, which allows a woman to claim half a husband's salary, and the picture becomes stark. We could place blame upon society itself, which does not honor and celebrate men but lauds their subservience and calls their nature toxic.

It is important to examine the source of our ills, as we will do in this book. But it is even more important to move forward and beyond. Wallowing in what has passed will accomplish nothing. The best we can hope to do is identify where we have

4. For more on this see Zachary Garris, *Masculine Christianity* (Reformation Zion, 2020).

failed in our duty and move forward so as not to repeat the same mistakes.

My central thesis is this: Christian men, stripped of their God-given power by a culture that reduces manhood to ideas and demands endless empathy, must embrace an offensive Christianity that boldly asserts authority and action over passive reflection. Men, particularly Christian men, have become emasculated by considering their responsibility solely in immaterial terms.⁵ In reducing manhood to a set of ideas detached from our bodies, we have cut our proverbial knees out from under us and are incapable of conceiving of a manhood that wields power and asserts itself. Even reading that sentence might cause you to question whether this is a “Christian” book. The reduction of maleness to theory and ideas instead of a kinetic experience of formation and maturity has made us all soft men. In this world of softness, we are called to always display empathy and compassion to all people in every situation, *ad nauseam*. Reflection is permitted. Action is disallowed.

In February 2025, President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the Oval Office with members of the press in the room. The American leaders directly confronted and criticized Zelenskyy, antagonized members of the press, and behaved in a manner that was considered “cruel” and “rude.” One journalist labeled them, and those who voted for them, as “brutal Americans.”⁶ Men should not shy away from such

5. J. Chase Davis, “Christian Men at War,” *American Reformer*, August 23, 2024, <https://americanreformer.org/2024/08/christian-men-at-war>.

6. Anne Applebaum, “The Rise of the Brutal American,” *The Atlantic*, March 5, 2025, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2025/03/trump-and-vance-shattered-europes-illusions-about-america/681925>.

labels, especially when they come from leftist sources. To the feminist, all maleness is brutal. The very nature of men, with their power, aggression, and assertiveness, is considered not just uncouth but backward and harmful to others. Male instincts to protect, to lead, and even to fight in their own self-interest are cast as oppressive. In short, men are brutal. But brutality, in this sense, is the feminist's shorthand for the essence of male energy and authority. Any act of decisiveness, any expression of raw strength, and any assertion of hierarchy is condemned as socially unacceptable. When it comes to their private lives, men are taught to suppress or hide their natural instincts, lest they offend or intimidate others. The culture demands that men be safe, soft, and accommodating (and sterile). In doing so, men become stripped of the very qualities that make them capable of protection, achievement, and leadership. To be a man, expressing those natural qualities that men possess, is odorous in our world, offending the sensibilities of feminists.

Our world is terrified of an offensive Christianity. What do we mean when we say "offensive"? Anytime someone goes on the offense, the person or tribe in the defensive position will reasonably consider it an offensive action. They will try to stop it. Our world is offended by truth, which should not be surprising. The gospel of Jesus Christ will be both a stench to the dying and an aroma of life to those whom God saves (2 Cor. 2:15–16).

Whether it is praying silently outside an abortion mill in England or speaking the truth openly on a college campus, such actions are considered to be offensive by many in our world. And in one sense they are right. Christians who take the light of the gospel into the public will offend people. Not only that, but Christians should not worry about being considered offensive by those who are lost for simply speaking the truth. Christ is, after all, the rock of offense (1 Peter 2:8). There

are times when Christians should avoid causing unnecessary offense (1 Cor. 10:32–33). But in a world filled with “safe spaces” and “hate speech laws,” we must soberly assess the situation we face. Any and all declarations regarding the truth of Christ and His lordship will be considered offensive. That should not bother us.

This is doubly true for men, who by their very nature are offensive creatures today. Men take ground, assert themselves, establish families, and build legacies. Sometimes men will platform women to say the things that they know to be true because they realize that if they say them, it will be offensive simply because they are men. That is shameful, and it is why we need an “offensive Christianity” for our times.

We need a Christianity that does not try to avoid unpleasantness or shy away from making people uncomfortable. We don’t need Christianity to become more empathetic. By default, any version of Christianity that does not embrace “empathy” as the be-all and end-all of human existence in our time will be considered offensive. This is not offense for its own sake but a Christianity that does not apologize for the God-given strength, courage, and aggression of men. Our culture is awash in chaos and moral decay—transgender ideology, abortion, and a world that mocks the Creator. Men have been taught to suppress their natural instincts, but nature cannot be denied. Suppression only builds pressure, and pressure inevitably blows back. This blowback, the assertion of male strength and courage, is unavoidable. And if it is to be righteous, it must be guided by Christ—disciplined, purposeful, and aimed at virtue rather than sin. In these days of weakness and fragility, a brutal age is rising, and it is an offensive Christianity we must embrace.

Contemplate the courage and vigor of our forefathers who braved oceans and plains and conquered the West. Venturing out onto vast oceans of danger and indifference, they sailed to carry forward their way of life. Asserting themselves against the wild and unpredictable, they imposed their will against forces of darkness and hostility. Those great men who came before us and fought the Muslim invaders on the field of battle in the Crusades didn't just have the enemy in mind; they fought for what they loved, a particular way of life rooted in a love for God and love for others. As G. K. Chesterton insightfully noted, "The true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him."⁷ These men were unbothered by notions of tolerance and inclusion. They gave no heed to proverbial 'Karens' who pointed out their every flaw and complained endlessly about their shortcomings. There was no human resources department to which they had to answer. These men would be considered "brutal" by many, only because they were men fully alive in God, men who knew their cause was righteous. Their actions are offensive today because they contradict the feminist social dogma that has inundated our world. That does not mean they were simply savage or operated without compassion. Their compassion was rightly ordered and their actions flowed from their love for God and others.

These men seem distant to us today. They took risks, forsook their lives, even took the lives of others, and did it all under the banner of Christianity. It is as though they possessed an entirely different nature. But what if we are not so far apart?

7. G. K. Chesterton, "War and Politics," The Society of G. K. Chesterton, accessed October 29, 2025, <https://www.chesterton.org/quotations/war-and-politics>.

CHAPTER 1

FLESH AND BLOOD

For man is not a body alone or a soul alone but
consists of both soul and body.

—Augustine, *City of God*

In his famous documentary *What Is a Woman?* Matt Walsh provides an answer to the question in the title: “an adult human female.”¹ While this is correct in purely biological terms, most people sense that something is missing. Defining ourselves only by biology fails to capture the fullness of human identity. We are not just bodies; we are also souls. And while women suffer in particular ways from the fallout of feminism, men are often ignored. Is a man merely a biological creature, a body in distinction from a woman? Is there more to us than this?

Some might be content with defining a man as “an adult human male,” but we should not settle for such midwifery. We need to understand the design of men and what men are created for. We must understand the telos or purpose of men. Without a clear understanding of the end in mind, any recapitulation of maleness will crash upon the rocks. There is a clear purpose that echoes down through the centuries for men. A common hunger drives all men—in short, it is glory.

1. Matt Walsh, *What Is a Woman?*, directed by Justin Folk (Nashville, TN: The Daily Wire, 2022), <https://www.dailywire.com/videos/what-is-a-woman>.

THE BODY OF MEN

God gave us bodies. They are gifts from Him. And they are not just gifts to steward but creations with purpose. God is the Designer and Creator, carefully fashioning something fit for His intentions. In the garden, He took dust from the ground and formed a man (Gen. 2:7). This creature, this man, was material in creation. It was not filled with vitality yet, but only potential vitality, meaning that this creature wasn't a spirit, but a physical thing formed by God Himself. It had the form of a man but something more was required. It needed life, something that would animate this body and give it the capacity for greatness—full of potential, will, and agency.

God breathed the breath of life into the nostrils of this man. Thus, Adam was formed, a man from the dust of the ground full of vigor, will, agency, rational thought, and desire. It was not by accident; it was not chance. It was the purposeful creation of the living God. The body and the soul were formed together by God—the body first, the breath second.

The first human to be created was man. This has profound implications. Even Paul references the creation order as a fixed standard for hierarchy (1 Tim. 2:13). Everything in our world, and even our churches, seems ashamed of this reality. Man was made first. Jesus Christ was a man. The purposes of God in humanity are carried forward by men. Of course, without the woman, there is no future. The church itself is discussed in feminine terms, as a bride adorned for her husband, Christ (Eph. 5:25–27). But we must not have any qualms regarding the reality that men were made first and God's purposes in the world flow through men. Man is not a deformed version of a woman. Or to say it another way, men are not defunct women. It is not as if the goal for men is to become more womanly.

They should not aspire to inhabit the nature of women. They should aspire to be men fully alive for God-pursuing glory.

YOUR BODY IS NOT A MISTAKE

Our bodies are not mistakes. God gave you a body. You exist, reading this book, with eyes or ears, using your brain to comprehend the words written down or spoken. The existence of man is not merely an immaterial concern but a deeply material one. You don't hear that from many pulpits today. Rather, we are absolutely inundated with preaching that is not just androgynous but anti-material. A spiritual androgyny that posits that men and women are basically the same, and that the end goal is not glory but equality, is doomed from the start. It cannot fathom that the inherent differences between men and women are good and right. The goal in such spiritual androgyny is the erasure of distinction. It is imagined that our maleness is an impediment to true spirituality. Unlike true spirituality, which has a goal of the pursuit of glory, the telos seems to be an obliteration of material reality. This is what we mean by anti-material. It is not focused on mastery and excellence and discipline over the body but considers the body to be inherently problematic.

Christianity neglects the reality of the body at its own peril. It is a peculiar thing, since the physical reality of our bodies is central to our beliefs. The Son of God took on human flesh to secure redemption. We worship a risen, embodied Lord. Christ has a body. And our eternal destiny is embodied. We will dwell in eternity with bodies. Glory is not disembodied. This body God has formed men with has incredible potential and purpose. We have the capacity for great deeds of heroism and violence, the ability to conquer cities and lay waste to enemies, and the desire for rulership and reproduction. We

aspire to magnanimity and grandeur, kindness, love, charity, and heroism, all with our bodies.

Men were made for more than consumption. We were made for more than comfort and convenience. Life is not just a slow death, watching the next show on a screen alone in the dark. There is a beating heart in every man that longs to not just fulfill his duties, but to aspire for glory in whatever domain God has placed us in. Men hunger for eternal glory (Eccl. 3:11).

In the garden, all that potential given to Adam was aimed and directed at bringing glory to God. We are like arrows pointed at the bullseye of God's glory. Man was designed to reflect God's glory in the world, a vice-regent of His lordship, created to rule. Adam was designed to accomplish this by obeying God fully and fulfilling his design to work and keep the garden. The body of man was made for fitness, vitality, and strength. To work and keep the garden would have involved labor and movement. Knit biologically by God with the "very good" design of a very particular biological makeup, man is full of life and vigor. There is something that animates man, a force that drives him. He is driven by an ambition to glorify God in his body. This body that could push and pull, fashion and fix, move and make, was crafted by God to accomplish incredible things.

Man eats; he is commanded to. God provided a feast for man in the garden and intended for man to reproduce the blueprint of the garden elsewhere. Eating itself is a design of God. The delight one takes in the natural order and the simple pleasure of blueberries, bread, or bacon is a gift from the Lord.

Man sleeps; he rests. He lies unconscious, vulnerable, and dependent on God. He rises to continue the purpose of obeying God and making the earth look more like the garden. The male body was designed with contingency in mind. For

hours at a time, man lies seemingly dead, completely unaware of his surroundings unless disturbed by an outside force. This inherent vulnerability can be guarded and mitigated against, but God designed the body to rest in such a way as to communicate man's utter inability to ultimately defend himself.

In his body, Adam was completely contingent and dependent on God, his Creator. Do not miss this. Adam's very existence was not his own. He could not make himself. He did not give himself breath. He did not uphold his life. Adam did not self-actualize or wish himself into existence. He was born bound to God, with an unchosen bond tethering him to his source of glory, that ultimate bond being the creature of a Creator. There was no disembodied "Adam" waiting around for God to give him a body. Man comes into being as God breathes life into the body.

God is Lord of man. Man's entire existence is dependent on God. Consider what *contingency* means. It means something exists at the pleasure of something else. Just as my truck remains motionless in the driveway unless I start it, man's very existence is contingent on God forming man. Man, being formed out of the dust of the earth, is like a tree growing and reaching to the heavens. But the tree's ability to grow is contingent on external conditions. Man being "planted" in the garden is contingent on the conditions of God's favor and blessing. Man's potential for growth is designed but also dependent. Such was life under the covenant of works.

The life of Adam was not self-originating and neither is ours. God sustains and upholds every aspect of our existence (Heb. 1:3). Without God, man would cease to be. And in our world obsessed with the "death of God," it is no wonder that we have a bunch of aimless men wandering the earth. It is like they have ceased to be. They are hollow, lacking drive and