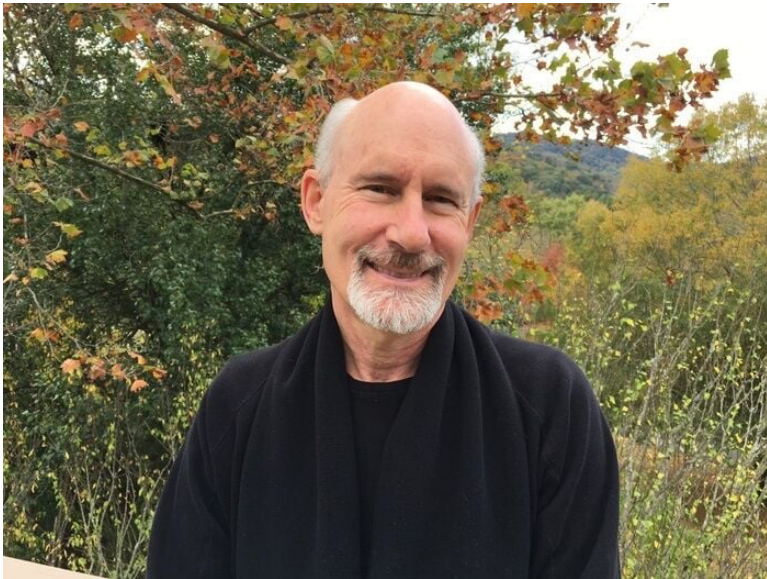


https://www.blackbeltnewsnetwork.com/religion/friendly-freethinker-biblical-manhood-and-masculine-muscular-christianity/article_3571c735-8821-4320-a6c7-8bd9d0eb1f23.html

Friendly Freethinker: “Biblical Manhood” and Masculine, Muscular Christianity

By Chris Highland
Jul 21, 2026



Reading about a gathering of thousands of Christian men in my home state of Washington, I wasn't surprised to hear them proclaiming the need for "biblical" manhood and leadership. ("Where Testosterone and the Bible are the 'New Punk Rock'," The New York Times, June 26, 2026). In a blend of Christianity and masculinity, the event on Father's Day weekend invited faithful Christian men to get involved in politics

at all levels of government. One participant even said he wanted a “biblical dogcatcher.” With a mix of piety and patriotism, the event called men to live a “biblical life.” We ought to seriously think about what this actually means.

One pastor stirred the all-male crowd, preaching: “When God starts speaking, things start shifting, darkness begins trembling, and God’s people start advancing.” As a former Evangelical Christian, what I hear is: “Listen to God’s Authorities—men like me—and follow what we tell you in God’s name. Our kind of muscular and male-led Christianity is marching across the land, to conquer the culture and the country.” Does this sound extreme? It is. I know this way of thinking and believing; I know this worldview from the inside. What it essentially calls for is a complete and final takeover of the government and the country.

Am I overstating? I don’t think so. In their “biblical view,” to be a Christian man is to be a good and true American, and vice versa. The ultimate goal? To make America Christian again (though it never was and wasn’t founded to be). Yes, the country continues to be majority Christian, at least those who self-identify as “Christian.” Yet, as we know, that word means many things to many people (to these male-centered believers, millions of American Christians are not considered “good” Christians, or Christians at all, because they don’t believe or live “biblically”).

What does it really mean to live or believe “biblically”? When I studied the Bible in youthful Evangelical and Charismatic days, we read “God’s Word” literally—every word spoken and inspired by the Holy Spirit. My life and beliefs had to conform to every word of the Book. The challenge was, how could I know what to believe and follow? Was I interpreting the words correctly? Oddly enough, the most fundamental question had to be repeatedly asked: Was I reading the Bible “biblically”? Who could I turn to?

This is where the authority issue became critical. I prayed to be directed to teachers who could tell me if I was reading and interpreting “The Word” correctly. As it turned out, every “biblical authority” I was led to was a man, a White man, and every one of them was an Evangelical Christian. They affirmed my sincere desire to “know the Word” and follow the leading of the Spirit, which consistently meant interpreting the text as these men told me it should be understood. Though I was assured the Spirit of God would guide me, I would always be guided straight to those male authorities.

Consider what many of “God’s Guys” mean by “biblical manhood”:

- Asserting authority over the household, wife and children

-Asserting authority over younger men at church, work and anywhere else

-Asserting authority over local school and library boards, town councils, public school classrooms, etc.

-Asserting authority over legislatures, Congress, etc.

“God’s people advancing” means “faithful men” leading the way to total authority in every sphere of their lives, and our lives.

Strange to say, there isn’t much room for Jesus in this Man’s Gospel. Jesus was too inclusive and peace-loving (kind of “weak and woke”—almost feminine!). Only a manly, muscular Christ (“Lord and King”) will do as a model for the boy-believer today. Forget the “servant Jesus” and definitely ignore the Sermon on the Mount (“blessed are the meek,” “blessed are the peacemakers,” “love your enemies,” “treat others as you wish to be treated,” etc.). Better to force the faith into positions of authority in order to “rule with Christ.”

These “Commanders for Christ” are no doubt aware the Bible was written by men, but they forget that not all the writers were Christians. While these modern day believers pick out verses here and there to support their authority over women and the world, they seem unaware (as I once was) the majority of the text was

written by Jewish people for the community of Israel. Jesus was a Jewish teacher, but the Christian tradition leaned into Paul for its masculine superiority. Those who seize that superiority read the Bible “biblically” through a very narrow lens.

Seeking to live a “biblical” life may hold meaning for an individual believer. What should concern the rest of us is how some see their masculine mission as one of “biblical” domination.

Chris Highland

2026

Chris Highland was a minister and chaplain for many years. He is a writer and teacher in Asheville, NC. www.chighland.com, (chris.highland@gmail.com)