

Echoes of the Fall: A Biblical Survey of Attacks on Biblical Masculinity and Femininity

Tonight's theme: Exhortation to Biblical living for men and women in contrast to lies.

I. What is the problem?

II. How did we get here?

III. What is our Biblical response?

I. What is the problem?

Two competing “scripts” for manhood.

1. A good man is:

Honor duty, integrity, sacrifice, ethical, provider, protector, etc.

2. A “real” man is:

Tough, strong, don’t show weakness, win, competitive, brash, vices, etc.

3. American Psychological Association - <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2019/01/ce-corner>

4. “The phrase toxic masculinity...has become a catchall explanation for male sexism, dominance, aggression, and violence” #MeToo #ChurchToo

5. Camilla Paglia - “When an educated culture routinely denigrates masculinity and manhood, then women will be perpetually stuck with *boys*, who have no incentive to mature or to honor their commitments.”

II. How did we get here?

A.) The Fall

1. Broken vertical relationship with God and horizontal relationship between man and woman. → aggressive and passive distortions. Genesis 3
2. Negative Grecian views on femininity sadly influenced some prominent theologians.

B.) Early 1700s = the Interdependent colonial house hold.

1. “Because work was conducted in the home, both parents were able to be involved in economically productive work while raising their children. Fathering was not a separate activity that a man came home to after clocking out from work” p. 72

C.) Late 1700s through the 1800s = The Industrial Revolution

1. Husbands/Fathers now leave home to work, and mechanization leaves housewives without their colonial era opportunities for economic production.
2. Tension between capitalist market demands (greed) and family life.
3. Secularization and the scientific revolution create a “double-minded” culture.



H. W. PIERCE, Del. Engraved according to the Act of Congress in the year 1842, by H. W. Pierce, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.

A NEW ENGLAND KITCHEN.
A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

Splits in American society/culture

VALUES

Subjective

Personal preferences

PRIVATE LIFE

Family, Church

Personal relationships

SACRED

Church, Worship

Spiritual Practices

FACTS

Objective Truths

Empiricism

PUBLIC LIFE

State, Corporations

Academia

SECULAR

World, work

Everyday life

II. How did we get here?

D.) Mid 1700s to the 1800s = Romantic movement and rise of liberal theology

1.) “...romantic movement, when people began to place a greater value on emotion. Moral theorists began to argue that morality was based not on reason, but on feelings like social sympathy. Adam Smith titled his book on morality *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759)” p. 112

2.) Liberal theology, Friedrich Schleiermacher redefined religion as a “feeling of absolute dependance”.

3.) Moralizing femininity

4.) De-moralizing masculinity

THE BIBLE AND TEMPERANCE.



LITH. & PUB. BY H. CURRIER.

133 NASSAU ST. COR. OF SPRUCE N. Y.

William White, a mechanic and single man, having had a small sum of money left him, calls upon his friend and fellow-workman, Henry Brown, a respectable mechanic, married to a steady industrious wife, persuades him to go with him, and make a merry night of it. Brown's wife and daughter seem to say, pointing to the tea-table, "How much better it would be to take a cup of tea with them!" However, he is so weak as not to like to refuse his friend, and goes out with him.

II. How did we get here?

E.) Boyhood Adrift

- 1.) Industrial Revolution made it harder for fathers to be present with and raise their sons.
- 2.) Boys figuring out what it means to be a man on their own.
→ Resentment of motherly, feminine authority

F.) Man's Inner barbarian

G.) "Muscular" Christianity and Fundamentalism

1. Reaction to Victorian sentimentalism, moralized femininity, and liberal theology.
2. Setting up some of our caricatured complementarian marriage dynamics today.

III. What is our Biblical response?

A. Men and women are made in God's image (Gen 1:27)

1. Arrogance of stereotypes. Biblical women and men are capable of and called to all God's characteristics and virtues.

B. Cultural mandate

Genesis 1: 28 - "And God blessed them. And God said to **them**, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it..."

→ Men and women need each other to fulfill our mission. p. 30

III. What is our Biblical response?

C. God's good marriage design.

1. One flesh union between husband and wife. Genesis 2:24

2. Husbands charged to understand and serve. 1 Peter 3:7, Ephesians 5:25

→ Sociological support shows importance of husband's emotional work
“...everything husbands do to build their relationship with their wives - express affection, be aware of their needs, take their views into account, bond over shared interests, and share quality time together.”

→ Sociologist Brad Wilcox nominal vs. committed.

→ Biblical Submission

III. What is our Biblical response?

C. God's good marriage design.

3. The reality of two sinners in marriage. "A healthy couple recognizes that working on a difficult marriage can even be a source of spiritual growth" p. 231

Psychologist John Gottman → The health of a marriage depends primarily on the husband. when husbands do not accept influence from their wives, there is an 81% chance the marriage will fall apart. P. 231

→ Husband's have a large ability to positively affect their marriage.

4. Not married yet?

Men and women orienting their lives towards Godliness

III. What is our Biblical response?

D. God's appointed role for husbands/fathers and wives/mothers.

“...a godly husband takes the lead and says like Jesus “Follow me.”...To lead means to be out in front living a life that is worthy of emulating” p. 55

Jesus exemplifying servant leadership and strength under control.

Wife as “ezer” (helper) - paraphrased as “**life saver alongside**”.

E. Faithful, Godly living upends cultural stereotypes.

1. “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” 2 Cor. 12:9

2. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever, loses his life for my sake will find it - Matt. 10:39

3. Other examples.

III. What is our Biblical response?

F. New Heart, New Life for every son and daughter of the Father

Romans 12:1-2 - I appeal to you therefore, brothers,^a by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.^b Do not be conformed to this world,^c but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect

Galatians 5:16-26 → Put off the works of the flesh, and pursue the fruit of the Spirit.

Ephesians 4:17-32 → v. 23 “be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness”.

Creation, Fall, Redemption, Sanctification (already and not yet), Glorification