

Series: **Proud of Marriage**  
Today's Title: ***"Marriage and Men"***

June 16, 2024 – *Selected passages*

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**Objective:** To help people know the vital role God has given men in marriage, families, and the culture.

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After Karen gives her VBS debrief...

Announce: We have hired Karen as our new Next Gen Kids Director.

Prayer of thanks for VBS – prayer of blessing over Karen as she leads NGK.

Today is sermon #3 of 5 sermons on marriage.

During the month of June – as our culture and even some churches celebrate ‘Pride Month’ – we will be proud of and celebrate what God has created, ordained, and blessed: Marriage.

***Opening prayer***

Men and women are different.

We approach marriage from different perspectives.

We approach life from different perspectives.

We approach problems from different perspectives.

*Generally speaking, when we have a problem, women want someone to share their struggles with – to listen to their problems.*

*Men want to solve the problem.*

*This video helps us see this difference.*

**Video: “It’s Not About the Nail” 1:27**

Today we celebrate Fathers – on Father’s Day.

Here are a few facts about Father’s Day.

- The holiday began as Sonora Dodd wanted to honor her father for having raised six children after the premature death of his wife. Her father's birthday was June 5.
- It started to gather a small national following in 1914 under President Wilson – who had declared Mother's Day a national holiday that same year.
- It wasn't made a national holiday until Richard Nixon established it in 1972. (<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/a-few-quick-facts-about-fathers-day/>)
- It is estimated, for example, that Mother's Day sales outstrip Father's Day by a factor of 10-1.

I want to speak directly to the men today – but ladies, don't check out. I hope what I share today helps you understand and appreciate the men in your life – and the value and importance of men in a general sense.

My goal and hope today is to encourage you men – to build you up – to help you realize how important you are – and when it comes to marriage – I want you to know how important you are to your wife – but also to your kids – and grandkids – and to society as a whole!!!

I will begin with some of the bad news – but only so we can realize we're not alone in our struggles.

But I also want to end by looking at the good news – to leave you encouraged, hopeful, and confident in your manhood / masculinity - and the role God has ordained for your life.

Let's begin by talking about passivity.

What kind of a man are you?

Ladies... what kind of a man is your husband?

What about your son?

In our current day, it seems we have a big increase in what can be called *'the passive man'*.

A quick internet search pulls up all kinds of articles – even from secular sources like psychologytoday.com – that discuss this increase of passive men.

Although we can point to some recent cultural changes which have certainly contributed to this increase:

- The rise of feminism
- The culture's view that masculinity is harmful / toxic.

Although these may have some impact on male passivity, these are not the true cause.

***How do I know?***

Because male passivity has been around for thousands of years.

**The ancient problem of passive men.**

We read about it in the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter of the Bible – with the very first man – Adam – as part of the first sin in the human realm.

**Genesis 3:6**

“So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to

make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, *and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.*”

Adam and his wife, Eve, were charged by God to lead – to:

“Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion...” (Genesis 1:28)

Adam was to lead his wife – to protect her.

But when the moment of temptation came, he was silent – standing with her – but he failed to live up to his calling.

And so has every man since – to varying degrees.

We see other instances of passive men in the Bible.

A military leader named Barak...

**Judges 4:4, 8**

“Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time.

Barak (a military leader) said to her, “If you will go with me, I will go, but if you will not go with me, I will not go.”

And a guy named Gideon – who became a military leader...

**Judges 6:1, 11b-12**

“The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD gave them into the hand of Midian seven years.”

Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress to hide it from the Midianites.

And the angel of the LORD appeared to him and said to him, “The LORD is with you, O mighty man of valor.”

We could make a very long list here of passive men in the Bible...

But the point I want us all to understand is this is not a new problem.

It's been around since the beginning of the human race!

Passivity can cause great harm due to the inaction of a man.

It can keep a man from confessing his sin, from initiating reconciliation, from picking up the phone, from attempting family devotions, from making a difficult decision or taking the hard next step.

*"Sometimes a man who does nothing is as harmful as the man who does the wrong thing."*

So, passivity is one of the ways we see men not living up to the call of God for their life.

But we also see another problem – the other extreme.

### **The ancient problem of overly aggressive men.**

Like passivity – this is not a new problem.

It's been around since the beginning of the human race.

Men who build a life on the other side of the continuum.

*Machoism – Machismo - Bravado*

In our culture – we see the example of this through various celebrities (Vin Diesel), and social media influencers (Andrew Tate).

I won't take the time to look at the various passages, but in the Bible, we see men like this:

Cain

Esau

Samson

Nabal

Absalom

Caesar

Herod

Men who were overly aggressive – inflicting pain and harm on others.

Living for themselves and in pursuit of their pleasures and their thirst for power and prestige.

An overly aggressive man can cause great harm because he has no limits or checks on his actions.

He has a 'ready, shoot, aim' – tendency.

He is reactive, hot tempered, and often gets results, but at a great cost.

Their 'success' often causes more problems as they leave in their wake a trail of pain and abuse.

These are two examples of the problems we see in men today – and throughout human history.

**Both of these** (passivity and overly aggressive) **miss the mark of God's design for men.**

But what does a godly man look like?

What should us men aspire to?

I want to give you 4 things – 4 traits that God has designed for men to fulfill – to be.

**The Biblical man is self-aware.**

The starting point for becoming the man God has created you to be - is knowing who you are.

Knowing your strengths and weaknesses.

I want us to consider King David on this point.

David had many admirable traits – he was a ‘man’s man’.

He was a warrior, a leader, and the ladies liked his appearance.

He was successful in so many endeavors.

But he understood his sin.

He was very self-aware of his sin.

**Psalm 51:1-2**

“Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!”

David was aware of his sin – aware of his need for God’s mercy and forgiveness.

Along with being self-aware, humility should follow.

It requires humility to realize you need mercy.

Humility is needed for you to seek God's forgiveness and grace – or to apologize to another person when you've done something wrong against them – and to ask them for their forgiveness.

**The Biblical man loves others.**

Men... do you love others well?

Or... are you more concerned about image – persona – that you have some tough, rough image you portray.

*Do you think kindness is a weakness?*

One of the primary traits for all followers of Christ is love.

**John 13:34-35**

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.

By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Our love for one another will be undeniable evidence to the unbelieving world – that we belong to Christ.

Men – masculinity and love are not contrary or conflicting things.

True masculinity has love as it's driving force.

We protect – because we love.

We provide – because we love.

We obey God – because we love.

We discipline our kids – because we love.

We lead our family in faith – because we love.

We are concerned about society – because we love.

**The Biblical man loves God more than the world.**

Like all things in life, our manhood / masculinity is no different. These are ultimately a spiritual issue, and we see the Apostle John, in his first letter, addressing men. He addresses older men, “fathers”, and the “young men”. So, his wisdom and instruction here apply to men of all generations.

**1 John 2:14-17**

“I write to you, fathers, because you know Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.”

1. Faith in Christ is essential to every man.

“...you know Him who is from the beginning.”

**John 1:1-2**

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.”

“I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.”

These are clear statements of the faith of these men – both the fathers and the young men.

Faith is the foundation of who God has created and called you to be.

2. Men must not love the world.

“Do not love the world or the things in the world.  
If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

This doesn't mean we can't enjoy the blessings God gives in this life.

But we must be careful not replace God with a love for the flesh – to love things that appeal to our appetites.

### 3. Men must have self-control.

The Apostle John then defines what '*loving the world*' looks like:

vs. 16 – “For all that is in the world--the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions--is not from the Father but is from the world.”

John helps us see 3 areas that men struggle with.

“...the desires of the flesh”

“...the desires of the eyes”

“...pride in possessions”

Isn't this true? I know it's true in my life!!

*Desires of the flesh* - covers a lot of territory.

Power – Position – Admiration from others.

*Desires of the eyes* - probably refers to sexual attraction – but it could refer to coveting what we see others have, etc.

*Pride in possessions* – materialism – wealth – status.

Any 1 of these things can intoxicate us.

A life in pursuit of just 1 of these areas can ruin your life – especially if you attain what you’re desiring!

4. Men must value *eternity* more than *today*.

vs. 17 – “And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.”

Men – we must have a greater desire for eternal blessings than the pleasures and pursuits of this life.

As Jesus said, “...lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...” (Matthew 6:20).

**The Biblical man uses his power to bless.**

Men – you have great power.

Manhood inherently has power.

You have great influence – more than you know.

- **You have the power to make your marriage great.**
- **You have the power to make your kids strong.**
- **You have the power to impact generations to come.**

Let’s talk about marriage...

Men – step fully into the idea of marriage.

Don’t be fooled by the world’s philosophy of ‘sowing your wild oats’ and then get settled down and get married.

- *Who says you can’t get married and sow your wild oats with your wife???!?*

- *Are you believing the lie that marriage is boring, no fun, no passion, no excitement?*

- *Do you believe kids take the fun and joy out of life?*
- *Who told you these lies?*

You have the power to make your marriage great, but it won't be great all by itself – or if you leave this up to your wife to take care of.

**YOU** will determine the greatness of your marriage – by how much work and investment you put into it.

*(I'm not saying your wife is not a factor...)*

**Proverbs 18:22**

“He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD.”

It's up to you – as the husband, father, and leader of the family God has blessed you with – to cultivate it – cherish your wife – enjoy her – encourage her as a person and to grow in her faith.

You have the power to make your marriage amazing!

You also have the power to make your kids strong and to impact generations to follow.

According to the National Fatherhood Initiative

(<https://www.fatherhood.org/father-absence-statistic>) when a father is present and involved, **kids are at a lower risk of:**

- Infant Mortality
- Low Birth Weight
- Emotional and behavioral Problems
- Neglect and Abuse

- Injury
- Obesity
- Poor school performance
- Teen pregnancy
- Incarceration as juveniles
- Alcohol and substance abuse
- Criminal activity
- Suicide

That's the good news – the power you have to make your kids strong – to give them a great future.

It's rests with you!

You hold the key!!!

But in our country, we have some bad news about fathers – the crisis of father-less homes.

According to the 2023 U.S. Census Bureau, in the United States, we currently have about 17.8 million kids – that's about 1 in 4 kids – who live without any father figure in their home – no biological father, no stepfather, no adoptive father. <sup>(1)</sup>

***Look how important you are dad*** – how important it is for you to be devoted to your wife and involved with your kids.

The research shows <sup>(2)</sup> that when a child is raised in a father-absent home, they are affected in the following ways:

- Greater risk of poverty

- More likely to have behavioral problems
- Greater risk of infant mortality
- More likely to go to prison
- More likely to commit crime
- More likely to become pregnant as a teen
- More likely to face abuse and neglect
- More likely to abuse drugs and alcohol
- More likely to suffer obesity
- More likely to drop out of school

Sources: (1) U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). Living arrangements of children under 18 years old: 1960 to present. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau.

(2) National Fatherhood Initiative® 2024. Father Facts: Ninth Edition. Germantown, MD: National Fatherhood Initiative®  
See also: [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org)

You as a man – as a father – as a grandfather – hold so much power and influence in simply who you are and what you are.

***Don't you dare listen to the lies*** of our culture that want to shame you and discredit you for simply being a man!  
***God has created you as a man*** – and He blesses your manhood - and He's given you a purpose to fulfill as a man!

### ***Apply it...***

#### 1. Know your power and influence.

Segments of our society are working to discredit men – to neuter men of their ability and influence. Understand this reality – be self-aware of the potential God has placed in you.

Men – lean fully into how God has made you – and the purposes for which He has made you!

2. Embrace your faith in Christ.

Don't pursue what the world offers with all your might.

Value eternal blessings more than this life.

Work hard – play hard - love hard – enjoy the blessings God gives you.

But realize they are from God – and give Him thanks and use the blessings for His glory and His purposes – not just for your own.

3. Treasure the gift of your wife.

Make sure you're painting a picture of marriage for your kids that is full of color, life, joy, love, and passion.

What example are you modeling for your kids – and what kind of marriage will they have if they follow your example?

**Men - you are vital for your family and the culture.**

*Close in prayer*