

**A MANLY REVOLUTION**  
**SHAPING SONS**  
**1 CORINTHIANS 11:7**

For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man.

It was two-and-a-half decades ago, but the year 1999 was a watershed for gender roles in America... A women's sporting event in Southern California and the violence of two men in suburban Colorado was a source of gender-stereotyping for social commentators.

On the one hand, the US Women's Soccer Team won the World Cup Final that year in a 1-0 game over China in front of 90,000 fans in the Rose Bowl. Brandi Chastain kicked the winning goal in a shootout.

When the ball hit the back of the net, Brandi raced across the field, slid to her knees, and ripped off her jersey. A woman - in a black sports bra - suddenly became a symbol for US triumph and celebration.

Yet in the same year another shootout brought shame to America. Two boys, **Eric Harris** and **Dylan Klebold** walked into Columbine High School and went on a rampage of terror, and murder, and mayhem. Before committing suicide, they murdered 13 people

and wounded 24. Two teenage boys in black trench coats became the consummate symbol of violence.

That same year columnist Sarah Glazer wrote in the *Congressional Quarterly*, "The carnage committed by two boys in Littleton, Colorado has forced the nation to reexamine the nature of boyhood in America." And I hope the gender bias jumps out at you... Why would one incident, as terrible as the Columbine disaster was, cause us "to reexamine the nature of boyhood"?

The High School killers were deeply-troubled sociopaths who lived in a world of violent video games, and idolized Adolf Hitler. They weren't just male.

**Seth Houy**, another male student at Columbine, bravely threw his body over a terrified girl to protect her from flying bullets... Another 15 year-old boy, **Daniel Rohrbough**, sacrificed his own life to hold open a door so his fellow students could escape. Dozens of boys that day were heroic in the face of danger...

But in the eyes of feminists and social engineers the violence of two boys was a reason to demonize all boys. *Masculinity was the problem*. One author wrote, "As they see it, violence is "gendered" and its gender is male. They regard male aggression as the root of most social evils." And this conclusion has only grown stronger in the years since.

Christina Hoff Sommers has written a book entitled, *"The War against Boys."* In it she says this, "We are turning against boys and forgetting a simple truth: that the energy, competitiveness, and corporal daring of normal, decent males is responsible for much of what is right in the world. No one denies aggressive tendencies must be checked and channeled in constructive ways. Boys need discipline, respect, and moral guidance. Boys need love and understanding. They don't need to be pathologized." Sadly her book begins, *"It's a bad time to be a boy in America..."*

Today's educators look at girls who're generally nice, compliant, docile. Then boys who are loud, aggressive, and rambunctious... and they wonder what's wrong with the boys? Why can't boys be more like girls?

Some feminists conclude the problem with boys is that they're boys. We need to change their masculine nature and make them more feminine.

I'm afraid this has become the dominate thinking in our public schools. Competition, and aggression, and exploration, and individualism - *stuff boys like to do and are good at* - are discouraged in our schools. Instead compliance, group cooperation, studiousness - *stuff girls are good at doing* - is what gets emphasized.

No wonder girls do better than boys in school.

In the school year 2016-2017, over 57% of all bachelor degrees awarded in American colleges were earned by women. School has become a *Girl's World*.

Recently City of Atlanta Public Schools eliminated recess from their elementary curriculum.

When the new Cleveland Avenue Grammar School was built - it consisted of a nice brick building, *with no playground*. I don't know if the policy has changed, but my point is, *today's schools don't cater to boys*.

Can you imagine a class of first grade boys cooped up inside for seven straight hours a day? *Even prisoners get an hour out in the prison yard*.

Boys like to run and jump, play in the dirt, and tussle with each other. Psychologist John Rosemond calls boys, *"little aggressive machines."* One father refers to his son as *"all afterburner and no rudder."*

My good friend raised 3 girls and 1 boy. I raised 3 boys and 1 girl. I remember walking into the Chapman house and thinking I was at the library. I whispered, it was so quiet... In contrast, come into my house, and you ducked. You were under fire. Screams, shouts, projectiles flying - crashes, chaos. It was a war zone.

Here's the truth about gender. *Genesis 1:27 tells us, "So God created man in His own image; in the image*

of God He created him; male and female He created them.” God created humans with distinction. He created some people male, and other humans female.

Both are good. Both teach spiritual truths. Both reflect the image of God. Both are equal in value and status. **But equal does not mean same.**

God made men to be men, and women to be women. He hardwired the sexes differently. There is a “he” hormone - it’s called “testosterone.”

The feminist supposition is that human personality is gender-neutral. At the baseline, we’re all androgynous.

Thus, whether we adopt masculine or feminine traits depends on our conditioning, and expectations, and socialization. Feminism believes “Gender is nothing more than a social construct.”

It was sad this past week to read the comments of super model and single mom, Emily Ratajkowski. She said of Sly, her one year-old son, “It’s crazy, he loves trucks. He gets so excited, he loves to play with anything with wheels. This morning, I ordered him a baby doll and a tea set because I’m like, ‘We got to balance this out.’ But also, is this just what he likes naturally?” **For the boy’s sake I hope this mom eventually gets it.** *Yes, this is what he likes naturally!*

Professor Christina Sommers affirms this, she writes, “Developments in neuroscience, psychology, genetics, and endocrinology have all but refuted the social constructionist thesis and point to certain inborn gender differences...Mother Nature is not a feminist.” And let me add...neither is our Father God.

Several years ago Hasbro Toy Company tested a playhouse designed for both boys and girls. But in their tests Hasbro discovered boys and girls interacted with it differently. Girls dressed and kissed the dolls, and played house. Boys catapulted the toy baby carriage off the roof. Hasbro proved its genius. **An executive commented, “Boys and girls are different.”**

The feminist assumption that gender is the sole result of society’s conditioning and nurturing is a myth. God created men to be men. He created the sexes with distinction. Little boys are different than little girls.

Most little girls are modest, and tender, and naturally polite. Whereas, little boys are just the opposite. They like to pee outside, and laugh when they pass gas, and burp unashamedly, and make crude jokes.

When two boys pee outside sometimes they turn it into a competition. *Who can stream the furthest?*

My grandsons like to stand side by side when they pee and shoot over each other’s water streams. We call it, “crossing swords.” *They love to cross swords!*

And here's the mistake that moms can make... *because she's a woman and didn't have a brother... or due to the culture's militant feminist and anti-male bias... or because moms are surprised at the rawness of little boy masculinity... or sadly, because there's no dad around to reassure her...* Moms can assume that there's something wrong with their sons.

The school diagnoses the boy with ADD or ADHD, and the answer for his aggressiveness becomes a prescription. We wrongly medicate his masculinity.

Please, I'm not calling every diagnosis of ADD or ADHD bogus. I'm sure there are cases where the malady is real and needs to be treated medicinally.

I'm just saying before we medicate boys let's rough-house with them, and let them burn off a little pent-up aggression. Let them explore in the woods, and run around the block, and kick a can, and build a fort, and wrestle with some friends, and play some football in the backyard. *And I pray they're blessed enough to do it with a dad.* Let the boy play in the dirt awhile...then if he needs medication by all means prescribe it to him.

Let me get to this morning's Bible text. Though our society has defined little boy masculinity as dysfunctional behavior - God sees it differently.

1 Corinthians 11:7 tells us, "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man." Notice this truth, Eve came from Adam's side. She was the object of his love - the source of his gladness - the woman was the man's pride and joy. Women are the glory of men... Adam though was the glory of God. Made by God's hands, he bears God's image. Masculinity reflects God. The man is God's pride and joy.

And this is how God sees little boys - *as glory* - as His reflection. **This is amazing! Here's a two year old boy - in a soiled, smelly diaper - a finger stuck up his nose - food all over his face. A mother looks at this kid, and shakes her head, "What a mess." But God sees him and says, "What glory!"** God sees in this little boy a willingness to dare, and risk, and try. There is fight and fearlessness in the heart of this boy. He's determined. He has a hunger for truth and justice. He wants to build and defend. He has boundless faith.

This is the spirit God will one day use to command an army, or fight a battle, or defend the fatherless, or run a business, or grow a church, or help the poor. It's God's will to use this dirty little boy to save the world.

I'll never forget the big Calvary CSM church picnic. Before we ate we all gathered together to pray. We were under the pavilion in a huge circle. Our heads

were bowed, when it dawned on me, my son, Zach, and the assistant pastor's son, Brian, were missing in action, *nowhere to be found*. That's when someone pointed behind me, and blurted out, "Look..."

I turned around along with the whole church, and there they both were standing with their diapers around their ankles engaging a peeing contest. If you had made any predictions about their future *that day* it might've included prison. We certainly didn't see a lot of *glory* in that moment.

But fast forward over 35 years. Now it's a different story. Brian is a Georgia Tech grad, an engineer, has served as a deacon in our church, and is now a godly husband and dad... Zach is a pastor - a great Bible teacher. And he's also leading a wonderful family...

Today, these young men are shining brightly for Jesus. They're lovers of God - and a credit to their parents - and a blessing to their church. But at the church picnic that day it was a little tougher to point out the glory. A little boy is glory in the raw... It's rough and needs to be shaped!

And here's the question... *how do we shape sons into men who will reflect God's glory?* Here's the answer... *what does God desire in a man?*

*What does it mean to be a real, manly, masculine man?* On Friday we began our conference by looking

at Ezekiel 22. A man **builds walls** and **stands in the gap**. Ezekiel says God looked for a man, but found no one. But his word set the stage for a man who would come later, Nehemiah, was the ultimate wall builder.

We learn Nehemiah's strategy in **Nehemiah 4:17-18**, "Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon. Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet was beside me." Nehemiah built the walls of Jerusalem with men who in one hand held a *shovel* - and in the other hand they held a *sword*. They **built** walls; then **battled** to protect what they'd built. Nehemiah also had a *trumpet* by his side that he used to sound alerts and signal directions to the workers.

In other words, **Nehemiah's men built, battled, and bugled**. This is how a man builds walls and fills gaps...

**Real men build** - they take **dominion** over their circumstances. Like Jesus they take responsibility for stuff that's not their fault. They **take charge**, and make the world a better place for the people around them.

**Real men battle** - they **defend** what they build. They're not pacifists. They take initiative and **stand up** for the people under their influence.

**Real men bugle** - they **direct** and mentor the next generation. They open their mouth and impart wisdom. They **pass on** a legacy of faith.

And **this is how to shape a son - you teach and encourage him to **take charge**, to **stand up**, to **pass on**...** You orientate him to **build, battle, and bugle**.

And here's what makes our job easy. *There are ways that make it hard, but there's one way that makes it easier* - **our sons already have these tendencies**. They're builders, and warriors, and teachers at heart.

God made them that way. You shape a son - and turn a boy into a man by steering these masculine proclivities in a God-ward direction.

**First**, boys want to define their territory, and **take charge** over their circumstances, and build something of their own - *and this is good*. We need to harness this ambition - then shape it and steer it until it ends up under the power and direction of the Holy Spirit.

As a general rule, boys and **men define themselves by looking outward, at *what they accomplish***. Women **define themselves by *who they nurture***. Put any group of women together, and monitor the chatter. It's as true of business women as it is of homemakers - the subject of their conversation will gravitate toward their families. They want to talk about their kids.

Whereas, the men begin every conversation with the question, "**What do you do?**" Men and boys measure their value by what they achieve.

This is why you encourage a little boy to draw, and color, and play with blocks and Legos. We had 50 shoebox size cardboard blocks painted like bricks that our toddlers used to build forts, cars, houses, castles.

When boys get older - get them outside. Get them a hammer, nails, a handsaw, and some scrap lumber. Let them build a tree hut... Or get them a mini-bike or a go-cart. Teach them to check the oil and adjust an idle.

All along they need chores - jobs around the house. Sometimes pay them. Sometimes don't... *let them know they've got to earn their keep*. Teach them the value of a dollar. These are all precursors for work.

And when they get old enough to get a job...*they need to get a job*. They should pay for the new baseball bat - and the gas they burn... If they want a day at the Amusement Park you can split the cost.

All three of my kids - including my daughter - worked part-time to help pay for their college.

Hand a kid *everything*, and he or she won't appreciate *anything*. "**Kids are like stomachs, they don't need everything you can afford to give them.**"

When Zach was a junior in High School he got a summer job at the golf course. He enjoyed the work.

That's why it surprised me one day when he came home early. I asked him why he'd left work. *He said he quit. He was tired of working.* After probing for a while I decided to find out the real story. I went up to the shop and introduced myself to the superintendent.

I told him I knew he had a job to do, but I had a son to raise... I needed to know why Zach was home early. He told me Zach had driven a cart over an expensive sprinkler head and refused to take responsibility.

I went home and confronted Zach. We talked about doing the right thing. By the day's end he'd apologized to his boss and had his job back. A son needs to learn to work hard, and be on time, and take responsibility.

A couple of years ago, my other two sons Nick and Mack, landed a job with a friend where they had to move a pile of leaves and clippings. They were excited. This job paid big bucks. They were going to be rich.

They didn't realize the debris was laced with poison ivy. They broke out from head to toe. The doctor bills and medicine cost me more than they made.

*And this is what I've discovered...* Your child's job might cost you some time, and money, and effort - but the job is not the point. It's the lessons learned and the experience gained. You're shaping a son into a man.

*A son needs to be taught to take charge and build, but he also needs to be encouraged to stand up and battle - to defend the people under his care.*

A son needs to learn to fight. Boys should be encouraged to protect themselves and the folks around them. Boys should be taught there are principles and people worth fighting for - and sacrificing for - and ultimately even dying for... A boy becomes a man when he learns to fight for what's right.

This is why little boys need to play with toy guns, and swords, and weapons. When my boys were little and we played together - inevitably, either guns were blazing, or swords were flashing, or it was a knife fight.

As parents, don't be afraid to let your little boys act out a fight. When my oldest son, Zach, was a tot he lived in a cowboy hat and cowboy boots. He wore a gun belt with holsters. Two six guns hung by his side.

Every night there were shootouts at the Adams house between Sandy "Bad Bart" Adams and the Singing Cowboy. (snicker) He had a little guitar and in between gunfights he'd sing praise songs. I told him he was like King David - both a warrior and a worshipper.

Kathy got a little concerned about the violence... She thought *I had gone overboard.* One day the subject

came up with an older lady in our church. We were in a small group of people when Mrs. Aleman spoke up.

She said when her boys were kids she never let them play with toy guns, so of course, as soon as they were out on their own they bought real guns.

To make a long story short, her oldest son shot himself and died, when his gun went off accidentally.

*Kathy never said another word.*

There's no sense trying to deprive your boys of toy guns anyway, because boys will make a gun, or a sword, or a knife out of anything...

*A stick in the yard becomes a machine gun.*

*Pinecones end up hand grenades.*

*Rolls of wrapping paper make for great sword fights.*

Again, when I taught my boys to use the restroom we crossed swords. You can't get away from boys and weapons. Boys need to fight. **You shape a son into a man by teaching him how and when and why to fight.**

Have you ever read the OT or Revelation? The Bible is about warfare - physical conflict and combat! It's the triumph of right over wrong, God over Satan.

Jesus comes back to earth riding on a white warhorse. He destroys the dragon and the beast. Your son needs to realize the stakes are high.

One day he may have to take up arms, and fight for his country. Evil people in this world want to harm his family, and spoil his way of life... He'll certainly have to fight his own battles. Life is full of struggles.

If your son becomes a Christian he'll have to fight God's enemies. Hopefully not with a gun - but with prayer, his testimony, the Sword of the Spirit (*the Word of God*), and perseverance - but he'll have to fight.

One night in a hockey game a fight broke out and my son, Mack, was right in the middle throwing punches and socking another kid. I was upset. *Where did I fail? He's got to learn self-control. He needs discipline! He's the pastor's son no less. I suppose I'm a failure.*

After the game we're in the car when I ask him. *"Alright, what in the world happened out there?"* Mack says, *"Dad, I hit the kid because he said something nasty about Mom."* *"Oh, ummm, aaa, well then..."*

*Immediately my attitude changed.* I was proud of my son! He went from an out-of-control, undisciplined kid - to a noble warrior defending his mother's honor.

Sons need to learn to respect a woman.

*Where is the chivalry today?* Men need to honor and respect women. A son willing to fight for his mother's honor and take up for his sister will become a husband who protects his wife and treasures his daughter.

In fact, my advice to single ladies who are dating a guy is watch how he treats his mother and his sister - that's how he'll treat her after she says *I do!*

I'll never forget a fight I got into in High School. A handicapped boy rode our bus. His name was Terry. And everyday a pack of bullies would pick on Terry. I watched it for weeks - tried to ignore it - but I couldn't.

One morning I took the seat next to Terry, and when they picked on me instead - we started brawling. The other guy tore off my shirt, while I bloodied his nose.

But to my knowledge they never picked on Terry again. And I think the Lord was pleased. It's a godly fight to honor women and defend the innocent.

My dad always told me, "Sandy, I don't want to ever hear that you've started a fight. But I also don't want to ever hear that you've run from one either."

And I've had to fight a few battles since. Thankfully, not with my fists or with a gun - but with my love, and faith, and determination, and courage, and prayers...

An old man like me finds the fortitude to fight while he's a young man. This is why we need to teach our sons to fight for what's right - and defend themselves and the people under their influence.

Talk show host, Paul Coughlin, writes, "During the live broadcast of my show some kid in our community will be picked on because of his weight. And a child who attends Sunday School will witness the cruelty. And it will be rare, if at all, that even one shows the courage, bravery, or integrity to stand up for the fat kid. Why? Because popular Christianity does not encourage or even accept that response - kids are encouraged to be nice, sweet, gentle doves instead."

In a fallen world full of wicked men - who like to take advantage of the innocent - we are naïve to think we'll never have to fight. In church we need to encourage our sons to be strong and to have courage.

The final way we shape sons into men is to teach and encourage them to **pass on** to others the truths and wisdom we've passed on to them. A man directs others. Part of being a *man* is to *mentor* another man.

Here's a provocative statement, God made men to tell people what to do. We're made to give advice. In fact, a whole book of the Bible is all about a father's advice to his son. It's the book of Proverbs.

Of course, we won't get far if we come across bossy, but make no mistake about it God has made the man to be the boss. And any boss's priority is to instruct and direct. It's his job to pass along wisdom to his family.

And here is where I can't avoid saying it any longer. It's time to state the obvious. If a boy becomes a man when he mentors another - *who then is suppose to mentor the boy? His father! His dad...*

I read a quote earlier by Christina Sommers. Let me read it again, "*It's a bad time to be a boy in America.*"

And one of the reasons is the sad state of fatherhood in our country. It's a dad's job to shape a son. Yet all too often today, a single mom has to do this job - or an uncle - or a grandpa - or a godly man from church - or perhaps a combination of all the above - **but the person in the best position to do this job is a dad.**

Yet today, 40% of children sleep in a home where their dad does not. In 1960, 8 million American children lived in a home without a father. Today, 3 times as many - 24 million kids - live in fatherless homes.

The statistics are worse among African-American families. In 1960, 23% of black babies were born to single moms. Today, it's a stunning 70%. One-third of *all* birth certificates are blank under the father's name.

Yet never underestimate a father's influence in a child's life. Listen to author Wade Horn, "*My father was a great dad. I didn't always think so, of course. When I was growing up, I thought of him as an overbearing, autocratic, stick-in-the-mud who's main mission in life*

*was to make my miserable. But I have since come to realize he had one great quality. He was there. Someone once said 90% of life is just showing up. My dad showed up...*" That's a dad's greatest compliment.

I believe the single greatest indicator of a kid's success is an active dad. All the social services and government agencies can't replace a father.

Here's the statistics if dad is absent - "63% of youth suicides are committed by kids from fatherless homes. 90% of runaways, 80% of rapists, 71% of High School drop-outs, 75% of kids on drugs or alcohol, and 85% of all youths in prison - come from homes without a dad."

Like the Chinese proverb, "*A broken nest seldom yields whole eggs.*" Here's America's most pressing crisis - *sons without dads* - and very few people want to address the issue. Dads need to mentor their sons.

Deuteronomy 6 is the definitive word on how boys get mentored. Verse 5 states, "*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up...*"

Here's how you mentor a son or grandson... Love God with all you've got and hide God's Word in your

heart... then as you live your life with that boy - as you *work in the yard, and watch TV, and play ball, and drive in the car* - you look for a teachable moment.

A smart dad uses real-life situations to teach spiritual truths... The kid on the baseball team who throws a temper tantrum or acts cocky is an opportunity to talk about why a good attitude is important.

Rejection from a friend your child trusted - becomes the springboard for a lesson on why our security needs to be in God, and not in other people.

Nervousness before a test is fertile ground to teach the power of prayer and a reliance on the Holy Spirit, as well as the importance of studying once in a while.... *These are all opportunities to teach.*

School is always open. Class is always in session. Dad is always on duty. Encourage your son to ask questions. All of life is a lesson.

And too, a father has to win the battles. As your kids grow older they'll have lots of friends, but there's only one man in their life who'll tell the the truth, and that's their dad. A father's role isn't to be popular, it's to be faithful to God and grow healthy and godly kids.

Bill Maher hosted the TV show, *"Politically Incorrect."* Trust me, I agreed with few of Bill's political opinions, but he did make one comment about being a father

that really resonated with me... Once, Bill Maher was asked, *"Were you and your dad good friends?"*

He replied, *"Friends? We're friends now, but while growing up I didn't need him to be my friend, but my dad. This idea of dads getting mushy, and being friends is overblown. Dads are supposed to be the guy who tells you right from wrong."* Bill hit the nail on the head.

Dad, I know you want to be your child's friend one day, but while he or she is under your roof, your role is more important than *"friend."* You're a *"father."*

At times **a dad's place is in his kid's face.**

A dad can't be afraid of the fight. At times we battle *for our kids*. At other times we battle *with our kids*.

If I've learned anything about being a dad it's this... **a father has to win the battles.** Dad, kids will forgive your weakness, but cowardice will send them elsewhere for strength. A dad needs to battle.

It reminds me of a night when my sons and I were walking across the ball field to the car. Out of the blue, my oldest son - 15 and full of testosterone - says to me, *"Dad, take off your glasses and wrestle. I think I can take you."* *"Oh, you think you can take me?"*

I took off my glasses, and handed them to his two stunned brothers. *The older sibling had challenged the status quo. Life as they knew it had been threatened.*

It took me five seconds to have my son in a full nelson, rubbing his nose in the grass. I'd put down the challenge. Restored order! *The world was right again.*

Hey, a family is in big trouble when the patients take over the asylum. Your kids are going to wrestle with you dad. A godly father learns how to pin them in love.

And dad, I have one more suggestion for mentoring your sons. I mentioned this earlier. You need to lead the way in the spiritual, biblical instruction of your boys.

Use the resources that the church provides, but don't just depend on the youth pastor or children's ministry staff to teach your kids... or even your child's mother.

**Dad needs to be his son's primary Bible teacher.**

It reminds me of the little boy who wanted a Bible just like his Mom's. The mother asked her son, "*Why don't you want a Bible like your Dad's?*" He answered her, "*Mom's Bible is more interesting, she is always reading hers. Dad never picks his up.*" *Ouch!*

*Every dad needs to be a lover of God's Word...* And dad, if you don't know the Bible - learn it. In today's world with so many Bible study resources available for free on the internet there's no excuse.

*You sit under great Bible teaching at White Fields Calvary.* Learn from Pastor Garrett then get busy transferring those truths to your kids.

Here's one more startling stat... When a father is an active believer 75% of the time his kids will also be active believers. But when mom is the only active believer in the family the odds decrease to 15%. **That's why I say, "The buck stops with the Buck."**

Listen up! A father fails his son when he abdicates to mom the boy's spiritual training. Dad, you need to be your boy's primary Bible teacher. You want him to view the things of God as masculine rather than feminine.

Let me say it one more time, boys are not a dysfunction - boys are the glory of God.

But they start out *as glory in the raw.* Young boys have to be shaped, and molded, and encouraged. Boys need to become men.

**Blessed is the man who helps to shape a son.**