

## How God really views men?

On Mother's Day of this year, just a few weeks ago, I preached a message called "*How God really views women.*" And since it's "Father's Day" today, I thought I'd give equal opportunity today to address the topic of how God really views men.

In my Mother's Day message, I talked about some of the God created differences between men and women. For instance: God formed man, He fashioned woman; How the Scriptures talk about a woman being more delicate, more fragile. These differences aren't to be viewed as "good/bad" but just different. We were designed by God for different roles and responsibilities.

Women were created to Mother (and that's not just in the physical sense). They are more in tune with their emotions and empathetic, they are natural nurturers, they can multi-task, etc. Men were created to Father; they are natural protectors; they are more logical and linear in their thinking; they tend to be single focused and more determined (that's the nice way of saying hard-headed...).

Missing piece (the purpose of the Law, was to show that we can't keep it and need a Savior; God creating man before woman, I believe was for a similar reason: to show man his need for woman. This is not just a husband/wife thing. This is a man/woman thing (both were made in the image of God ("**Male and female He created them...**" **Genesis 1:27** ). Can you imagine a planet full of just men?!

We need each other and we need what each other carry, in the natural and in the Spirit.

There are unique roles for both sexes that we are called to fulfill. As men, we are called to be Fathers, brothers and sons. Each one of these unique roles has unique challenges, but we are called to excellence in each of these areas, again, both in the natural and in the spiritual.

The Apostle Paul calls us "up" to be focused, to be vigilant, to be intentional in our spiritual walk and spiritual growth:

***"Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong."* -1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 16:13**

Patriarchal culture within the church has not been helpful (#unleashed book by Rick Sizemore) in men navigating their place and roles within the church body. Because of this, most men have felt undue pressure to be "the leader" and it caused men to "shrink back" from the responsibility that God DOES want them to walk in. They carry 'false burdens' or stress out to the point of striving (in the flesh, works) too hard to become (remember: we do not DO to become, we do out of our already God given identity) or they completely give up and withdraw in isolation and get worked over by the enemy.

One of the major purposes that Jesus had in coming to the earth was to reveal God (YHWH) as “Father.” The Nation of Israel had lost sight of relationship and settled into the ruts of religion. Knowing God intimately as Father, the way that Jesus did, is the Father’s desire. Christianity is not a religion; it is a relationship.

Church is not a place, or an event, nor an organization. The primary major identity of the Church as God designed it is Family. Learning to love and demonstrating that love is the primary purpose of the Church.

Most of us don’t make disciples, because we’ve never been disciplined. Most of us don’t know how to father (in the natural, or in the spiritual) or don’t know how to father well, because we’ve never really been fathered.

When you minister in prisons, you never start out by referring to God as Father. Why? Because most of the guys in prison either didn’t have one, or they had a bad one. As sons, we often inherit a lot of baggage from our earthly dads, both in the natural and in the spiritual.

If we are going to learn how to father in a way that produces good fruit and passes along a spiritual legacy and inheritance to our children, we are going to have to learn from a good father (Father) and have it modeled for us.

You’re never too old to be fathered. Well, unless your like... 90. But even then, you can be fathered by Father God.

Father God wants to have an intimate love relationship with us. Men often struggle in this area. We somehow see this as “less than masculine.” Intimacy requires vulnerability. Love requires transparency. We struggle showing emotion or sharing our hurts, fears and sins, because we often want to show this tough exterior. The world has defined what it means to be a man, and sadly many of us have bought it hook, line and sinker.

Not only do we struggle with the more emotional and intimate side of our relationship with God the Father, but many of us struggle with the discipline side of our relationship as well.

Whether it’s growing up without discipline or growing up with too much or too harsh discipline (punishment). The word discipline even sometimes is a trigger word, because we’ve defined it through our experience and not according to the Word of God.

**Hebrews 12:4-13 “You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons,**

**“MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD,  
NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM;  
FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES,  
AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.”**

It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom *his* father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us* for *our* good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet, so that *the limb* which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.”

Discipline is the proving ground for our sonship. We are first and foremost sons because we’ve been *chosen*, but we show ourselves sons by being *proven*, in the fires of discipline. The reality is that some of our discipline comes directly from the Lord, but there are times when He uses others to bring discipline into our lives. This is the process of discipleship. Same root word. It’s hard at times to receive discipline from someone else. Unless you’ve been trained by it and understand the good fruit that comes from it. David understood it:

**Psalm 141:5a “Let the righteous smite me in kindness and reprove me; It is oil upon the head; Do not let my head refuse it...”**

**Proverbs 27:6 “Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.” (cf. Proverbs 20:30)**

God the Father disciplines us because He loves us. This is commonly known as tough love. At times it’s *really tough*, but it is love none the less.

God desires to raise up spiritual fathers and mothers within His Body as well as help us become amazing and effective parents in the natural. We have a plethora of teachers and tutors in the Body at large, but sadly not many fathers and mothers. We are living in an increasing fatherless world with each successive generation. Will you answer the call to be a spiritual father to the next generation? It will require learning how to father by *being fathered* and submitting to the discipline process.

As brothers, we are admonished by the Scriptures to look out for each other, help each other, encourage each other and look out FOR each other:

**“Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” And he said, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” -Genesis 4:9**

To answer Cain’s question: YES, YOU ARE!

***“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.” -Proverbs 17:17***

***“Iron sharpens iron, So, one man sharpens another.” -Proverbs 27:17***

God made men for war and He is calling us to be a “band of brothers” that train together, and fight for each other (not *with* each other)!

Fathers, brothers, sons... will you answer the call today?

This church has had amazing examples of men who led well, who fathered well, who were good brothers and sons. I can just think of my own life and all the great examples growing up in this church: Obviously, you hear me talk about Bill Goode all the time, but I had others here in this church who were great mentors, friends, brothers and co-laborers in the Kingdom:

Sonny Hill, Brady Collins, Graham Zimmerman, Carter Effler, Ray Compton, T.G. Gearheart, Jerry Krebbs, Bill Lacy, Nick Pappas, and many others who were great examples and role models.

Let's continue the legacy of great men here: **MEN'S BREAKFAST / PRAY OVER THE MEN**