

MEN THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

It's tough being a man - especially in a culture that is not sure what manhood means.

Many men wonder: "What do women want?
 "What do people expect of me?
 "What do my children need?"

Leader. Protector. Friend. Lover.

Men are expected to fill a wide variety of roles. It can be extremely difficult to achieve a healthy balance. God has provided a powerful blueprint for balanced manhood and my prayer for this weekend is that He will use me as His mouthpiece to teach what is on His heart concerning this very important matter.

In a world that is hurting badly, people are searching for answers and solutions to all their problems. I have counselled many hurting and wounded people over the past ten years and have discovered that the greatest wound comes from a broken father relationship.

We have weak churches because we have weak families; we have weak families because we have weak marriages; we have weak marriages because we have weak husbands and fathers; we have weak husbands and fathers because nobody has ever trained them!

May God use this weekend to heal and restore those that missed out on having a dad that could teach you what it means to be a man.

KICK-OFF QUESTIONS:

- 1. Why did you come this weekend?**
- 2. What really matters to you?**
- 3. What do you want to accomplish with your life?**
- 4. When your tombstone is carved, what words do you hope to appear on it?**

A: WHAT MAKES A MAN?

First, foremost and above all else, it is VISION.

A vision for something larger than himself.

A vision for something out there.

A vision of a place to go.

A cause to give oneself for.

Call it a sense of destiny.

Call it a hill to climb.

A mountain to conquer.

A continent to cross.

A man must visualize ahead of time. Project. Think forward. Lift his eyes and chart the course ahead. Anticipate what the months and years may bring.

This is the very essence of his leadership. This is the "**King**" in every man --- --- always looking ahead, watching out for his people, providing direction and order.

Men so often misplace their vision. They focus mainly on houses, cars, bank accounts and job titles, thinking that this brings about status and security, when in fact there is no status or security without relationships.

Matters of character, heart, spirit, integrity, justice, humility is where men ought to be majoring in their provision.

Men, your families are all looking to you, they're depending on you to set the course, to determine the direction, to set the pace.

The measure of a man is the spiritual and emotional health of his family. A real provider has a vision for a marriage that bonds deeply, for sons with character as strong as trees, and for daughters with confidence and deep inner beauty. Without that vision and leadership a family struggles, gropes and may lose it's way.

Men and Women.

Men have a God-given tendency to look up and out and discern objects in the hazy distance.

Women have a tendency to read the "fine print" of relationships. A woman is simply a better reader. She has better focus on people and situations at hand. She can read right away what's happening in the spirit, in a tone of voice, in a facial expression. Women place more emphasis on detail and on security.

Men need to use their God-given capacity for distance vision to encourage and give hope and security to their families. When they cannot or will not, the people under their roofs suffer loss.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Men, when was the last time you developed a five-year plan for your family?**
- 2. Have you dreamed of it yourself?**
- 3. Have you shared it with your wife?**
- 4. Refined it together?**
- 5. Communicated it to the kids?**

B: THE FOUR PILLARS OF MANHOOD.

A MAN AND HIS GODLY ROOTS.

Four life rhythms trob in the veins of every male: KING

WARRIOR

MENTOR

FRIEND

To the degree that they are balanced, the image is clear and they reflect the light of the One in whose image they are made.

To the degree that they are abused, the image is destorted, the man withers and those around him experience pain.

KING.

Man was made to have dominian.

The heart of the king is a provisionary heart.

He looks ahead, watches over and provides order, mercy, justice.

He is authority.

He is leader.

He stands "under orders" from Higher Authority.

WARRIOR.

God closes His Book on a white horse, in a blood-spattered robe, with a sword in His mouth and a rod of iron in His hand.

The Book ends with a roar, not a wimper.

The heart of a warrior is a protective heart.

The warrior shields, defends, stands between and guards.

Men stand tallest when they are protecting and defending.

A warrior is one who possesses high moral standards and holds to high principals.

He is willing to live by them, stand for them, spend himself in them, and if necessary die for them.

MENTOR.

This function is commanded in the Bible in the form of "teaching them to observe" and "disciplining"

The heart of a mentor is a teaching heart.

He models, explains and trains.

Men are supposed to be able to teach life.

He is supposed to know things.

FRIEND.

The heart of a friend is a loving heart.

It is a care-giving heart.

Compassionate.

Commitment-maker.

Promise-keeper.

Masculinity means Initiation.

*Hebrew word for man: "Ish" - piercer.

*The term for woman is: "Isha" - pierced one.

At his core a man is an initiator - a piercer, one who penetrates, moves forward, advances, leads.

At the core of masculinity is initiation - the provision of direction, security, stability and connection.

Like a compass without a needle is not a compass, a man without initiative is not a man.

Initiation is the bottom line of masculinity:

*It means caring for and developing your mate, your children and yourself.

*It means taking the lead in apologizing, the lead in seeking forgiveness, the lead in vulnerability.

C: STAYING POWER: A MAN'S GREATEST STRENGTH.

To make and keep promises.

Refusing to turn from his commitment.

It is this staying power that makes and marks a man.

Not bungy jumping, playing rugby, etc.

Certainly not leaving your wives.

Not abandoning your families.

The curse of our day is not so much the Aids epidemic as it is men who don't know what a man is and who cut and run from their wives and families.

Newsweek journal reports:

#Through most of the 70's and 80's, a million children a year watched their parents split up;

#over fifty million kids are growing up in homes without a father;

#70% of men in prison grew up without a father.

Our world is falling apart for lack of kings, warriors, mentors and lovers.

For lack of men who will stay.

Who will keep their word. Keeping your word is critical.

The calling of every man is to offer stability to a world full of chaos.

We live in a "hope so" world. There are few certainties in this life.

We "hope"

~that our marriages will work out

~that we will find fulfillment

~that our children will turn out okay

~that we'll be able to keep a decent job.

A real man brings certainty to his world by the power of a promise.
Promise-making and keeping is at the heart of godliness.
At the heart of God - at the core of His nature - is the making and keeping of promises.
All the Scripture hangs on a promise - a series of covenants.

Out of the whole world two people, man and woman, chose each other. There will always be someone else more beautiful, intelligent, wealthy, witty, competent, sensitive or sensual.
But the power of that choice, that promise should keep them together with no question of finding a "better mate".
The toxin of comparison should be utterly neutralized and washed away by the sacred anti-toxin of promise.
At the heart of staying-power is SACRIFICE----- giving one's self up for the good of another.

Our example: THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

When He could have turned away from the cross, He stayed on course all the way to Calvary.
When He could have come down from the cross and side-stepped the suffering, He stayed.
He persevered and "stayed under" all the way until that moment came when He could cry out, "It is finished".

Why did He do that?

So that through His resurrection power alive in your lives, you can become the kind of man He called you to be.
You can hang in there and face anything life or death or hell has to throw at you-----because He did it all before you.

D: UNDER ORDERS: A MAN AND HIS LEADERSHIP.

God, Who is the Ultimate Authority, chose to describe a man's role in the home as "head".

The orders have already been delivered, once and for all, to men --- husbands and fathers.

You are **COMMANDED** to lead; it is not optional!

God has given instructions regarding those under authority:

- ~ submit to Christ
- ~ be subject to
- ~ obey
- ~ respect.

Men have been given a certain amount of authority but first and foremost, they are men under authority.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Men, are you coming under Christ's authority?**
- 2. Are you loving our wife as yourself?**
- 3. Are you being harsh or inconsiderate with her?**
- 4. Are you submitting to the authority of your local church leaders?**
- 5. Are you willing to submit yourselves to fellow Christians?**

Before one can lead, he must learn to follow.

Men, you need to make sure you are obeying as well, and that you are providing a climate where obedience can flourish.

HUSBAND means - "manager"
- "steward"
- "caretaker".

To be a husband is to be responsible.

HEAD means - director
- chief
- headmaster
- principal
- foremost.

The man is created first.

Male leadership is part of the original plan.
Adam didn't apply for the job.
He wasn't interviewed for the position.
God just wanted it that way.

The responsibility.

The man is held responsible for the couple's sins.
Eve ate of the fruit first.
Adam followed.
But it is for Adam's sin that the race is condemned.

THE WORD: "-----the judgement arose from one transgression----"
Rom 5: 12,16.

The man, as head, is responsible for all that his little family does or fails to do.

The woman in relationship to the man:

1. She was made for the man.
2. She was made from the man.
3. She was brought to the man.
4. She was named by the man.

Men, as husbands you have been given a trust, a stewardship, a responsibility, a duty to husband or manage or care for the gifts of your wife.

**NB: If you abuse that trust, you fail at the very heart of your manhood.
A woman was made to be provided for, protected and cared for.**

What is the solution?

Manly love.

It is leadership with the emphasis upon responsibility, duty and sacrifice. Not rank or dominion.

(If you insist on being the leader, you usually aren't.)

THE WORD: "Husbands, love your wives as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her" Eph 5: 25.

Harsh dominance is not the way of Christ.

Note the linkage: Headship is linked to saviourship.

The heart of saviourship is SACRIFICE.

KEY TO SAVIOURSHIP = SERVING.

What are a woman's needs?

1. Her need for affection, that is TENDERNESS.
2. Conversation - sharing of the heart.
3. Honesty and openness - no secrets between us.
4. Security - physical and financial provision.
5. Relational commitment - she must know she is a priority.

HONOUR, NOURISH, CHERISH.

IT IS AN ACTION PLAN.

QUESTIONS:

1. What "language" does your wife speak?
2. What difficulties have you experienced trying to understand it?
3. What progress have you made learning it?
4. How do you understand Peter's meaning when he says your wife is a "weaker vessel?"

THE INCREDIBLE POWER OF FATHERING.

The most powerful word in the English language - DAD.

It spans generations: present or absent
positive or negative.

The power of a father is incredible. Like no other person a father possesses a special power to mold another's life, shape it, give it form.

Concepts of character flow from this man's life.

Esteem. Principles. Identity. Anchor-points.

Quote:

"I see many men walkin around in midlife with a sense of yearning for things they can't get from their wives and can't get from their jobs and can't pull down from inside themselves. I am convinced that what men are missing is a sense of their own identity - a very primitive and very deep sense of validation that passes from father to son - one generation to the next."

FATHER POWER WORKS IN CYCLES.

FATHER POWER INFLUENCES AND SHAPES GENERATIONS.

Your father power can be used in a positive way (Ps 78: 5,6). The law of the fourth generation. When father power is used according to God's order, the results are seen in the following generations. The wise father who applies these principles leaves an inheritance to his descendants that is truly blessed by the Lord.

A poem by a child that was raped by her father from the age of five for a period of nine years:

My Daddy.

?? I don't want to be an adult
?? Adults do cruel things to children
?? I sure don't want to be a child
?? Children pay for their parents' sin.
?? What's it like to really be a child
?? To run and jump and play?
?? I wonder how many children like me
?? Asked God to keep their Daddy away?
?? My Daddy hurt me over and over again
?? Doing things that Daddies aren't supposed to do
?? He gave me treats and told me not to tell
?? And at first I thought that he loved me too
?? I'm told I have another Father
?? One who lives up in the sky
?? And I'm supposed to trust this man
?? Who didn't protect me and I don't know why."

FATHER POWER CAN BE USED NEGATIVELY.

Father power that is ignored or abused will result in much heartache and hurt.

1. A man can harm his descendants (Ex. 34:7).
2. A man can harm his nation (Mal. 4: 5-6).

FATHER POWER MUST BE CONTROLLED.

a. Positive father power requires open communication lines to function effectively:

1. With the Heavenly Father.

It is impossible to be a father to your own until you have first

- become a son of the Father.
 - 2. **With your earthly father.**
Have you got unfinished business with your father?
 - 3. **With succeeding fathers.**
See your sons as future child raisers.
- b. Positive father power requires a commitment. It will assume one of three forms:
- 1. Some will continue in a cycle.
 - 2. Some will start a cycle.
 - 3. Some will break an old cycle.

"When a child is down, only a dad can help. **The Word calls it Father Power.**

Statement:

When the father is an active believer there is about a 75% likelihood that the children will also become active believers.

But, if only the mother is a believer this likelihood is dramatically reduced to 15%.

How we long for our fathers!

How powerfully we are affected by our fathers: present or absent
negative or positive.

If my own father doesn't think I'm worthwhile, I must be worthless.

If my own father can't accept me, then I am unacceptable.

If my own father cannot love me, then I must be totally unlovable.

If I'm truly worthless and unacceptable and unlovable, then God couldn't really love me.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. **Think back through your own memories: Dad's hairy arms
Dad's body odour.
Boys become men by watching men, by standing close to men.**
- 2. **What "video" played for you while growing up?**
- 3. **What do you think of when you hear the word "dad"?**

4. How has your relationship with your own dad affected the way you live today?

YOUR OWN CHILDREN.

God gave fatherhood to the man.

You are responsible for the development of your children.

God did not leave it to your wife.

THE WORD: O.T. Gen 17: 18,19: Ps 78: 5,6.

N.T. Eph 6:4.

A Few Practical Pointers-----for Positive Father power.

1. Pursue the ultimate father: live for eternity instead of the weekends.
Think larger than yourself.
2. Model and teach respect for authority.
3. Help your family see the big picture.
4. Commit solidly to family unity.
5. Be positive in building family member's confidence.

QUESTION:

Is promise-keeping an important part of you own practice of fathering?

THE WORD: "Behold - children are a gift of the Lord; the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; they shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate."
Ps 127: 3-5.

LETTING GO.

Your children are not intended to stay bunched in the four walls of their childhood home.

The home is a vehicle to fashion and straighten and balance the children. But when the moment comes -----young men - and young women - were made to experience flight.

Flight to target and maximum impact on that target.

Our children were designed by their Creator to make an impact on the world.

To live for a reason.

To speed toward a goal.

To accomplish a purpose.

Letting go is a God-given responsibility as important as love in the parent-child relationship.

Without release, children cannot grow.

With it, they gain the confidence and independence to seek and reach their potential in life.

Give your children roots and wings.

For God's sake, for their sake, for your sake, for the world's sake, for the Kingdom's sake, LET THEM GO!

Letting go takes an act of the will because it contradicts so much of what we are and because it involves significant pain.

Letting go, however, is a process, not an act.

It's a life long mindset, not an impulsive decision.

The goal is to release a child to adulthood and full responsibility for his or her own well-being under God according to His purposes.

You are letting them grow up.

Release your SONS to become provisionaries - **kings, warriors, mentors, friends** - men who stay and stay and stay.

Release your DAUGHTERS to be what God fashioned a woman to be: **strong in companionship ability, nurturing skills and the development of other human beings. A helpmate suitable.**

We are to produce kids who can emotionally leave home, kids who can come to love somebody else more than they love their parents.

They must also be released to full responsibility for their own well-being.

That includes responsibility

- ~for their own living space
- ~for their own bills
- ~for their own health
- ~for their own insurance
- ~for their own relationships
- ~for their own walk with God.

May God grant you the strength to draw your bows to the full and the wisdom to release your arrows with practical skill.

As time draws to a close on this darkened planet, surely every arrow must count!

QUESTIONS:

- 1. When your parents released you, did you know it?**
- 2. Were there strings attached?**

E: REAL MEN STAND TOGETHER

Real men are willing to die for their wives and children yet there is something inside them that longs for someone to die with---- someone to die beside - another man with a heart like your own.

Friendship requires honesty.

Friendship requires trust.

Friendship requires vulnerability.

Men who have neglected intimate friendships with other men have far greater difficulty handling the mid-life turmoil and are devastated at retirement without a network of friends or support.

Today's image of the independent man is that he has few if any emotional needs. Therefore they manufacture non-emotional reasons for being together.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Are you giving yourself to anyone?**
- 2. Are you opening up to anyone?**
- 3. How would you describe your own friendship with other men: casual, close, intimate, non-existent?**

The core of all meaningful relationships, particularly man-to-man, are shared values.

They don't necessarily have the same skills or talents or interests or hobbies.

At the value levels of your lives, you are walking together step for step.

Wives, children, Kingdom, vision of ministry, etc.

With shared values, you are willing to stand together for something much larger than yourself.

That's the core of friendship.

It's much bigger than golf or rugby. Much wider and deeper than trout fishing or shooting game.

LEVELS OF COMMUNICATION.

1. The clichè level:

How are you? without really waiting for an answer.

The degree of transparency is practically nil.

Keeps people strangers.

2. The fact level:

Sharing what you know.

The degree of transparency is a little more real.

It still keeps people at arms-length.

It doesn't let them in.

3. Opinion level:

Sharing what you think.

Starting to share a little bit of yourself but still keeping people at a "safe" distance.

Cannot build relationships on opinions.

4. Emotional and transparent levels:

Actually sharing who you are.

As the degree of transparency increases so the number of people with whom you share is much smaller.

The levels of trust and commitment and bonding makes for much deeper and stronger relationships.

Emotional communication means conveying hopes and fears and dislikes and aspirations and disappointments and sorrows.

It's giving away who you are.

It's giving away a part of yourself.