

December 10, 2017

Man (in) Church

Read Genesis 2: 18



I want you to take a minute to appreciate what has just gone on in our reading. Yes, we are learning more about men (Ladies, trust me I understand the futility but let me get through this stuff 😊), but we need to take a moment to reflect on how the Lord just handled the very first of us, the very mold from which the rest of us men were taken. The Lord God gives us a rule, then in the next breath of the text, states the “not-goodness” of us being alone. Now, funny stuff aside, like not trusting us to follow the rules on our own or not being able to do anything right unless we’re showing off (though that almost always turns out bad too), this little bit of info begins to define what it means to be a man. It has nothing to do with ability or smarts or even smell, rather it has to do with relationship. Man (and woman for the matter) was built to be in relationship with not only God but also fellow creatures.

God formed Adam from the ground, to tend the animals and the plants that he had made as well. God wanted Adam, man, to be in relationship with the earth and its host and knowing that man needed more, out of godly goodness, God gave guys girls to help in the tasks of manhood. So here in part 2 of our Man Church talks, we learn that man needs others to be man.

Take a moment to think of the last time you were at a restaurant now. Did you notice where the men were looking? Was it at the person across the table from them, or was it at their phone? Was it at their wife, girlfriend, friends or was it at the TV with the

game on? Were the men talking to their companions or were they talking in their beers about the ills of work and the poor choices of the coaches of their favorite teams?

From Facebook to Twitter we live in a world that claims connection with a worldwide web, but Instagram isolates and Snapchat segregates. Now instead of community and fellowship we hide behind masks of “Social” Media. I am not saying there is not a place for these tools, but they have been the craze that though designed to connect us has in large part separated us from the reality in which we live.

Man was from the get go built to live *in community* with others and work for a common goal. This is exemplified in the marriage relationship. Adam and Eve were to help each other accomplish the goals of tending, harvesting, stewarding and filling the earth with little ones that could grow up and do the same in the name of the Lord who created them. Through sin and its cleverness this goal has been distorted, but men and women still have this opportunity in the church.

The Church is still a place where men can get together and talk and laugh and love and live towards a common goal. In fact, it is the premiere place for this to happen. Men from all walks of life can get together and despite the differences in their day-to-day lives and work toward the spread of the Gospel and the love of Jesus. Women of course can do in the church, but when was the last time they needed a pep talk to get them to set-up, clean-up or come to church to work? It is time for men to start helping their helpers and reclaim their

godly manhood by living in community with one another and working toward a goal *in church*.

John Wayne, James Bond and Chuck Norris might have taught us to go it alone, but our Lord knew from the beginning that would only result in explosions, just like in the movies. So, he built us to work together. And, he gave us the example of Jesus who worked with 12 others and was close to 3 of those, not to mention his close (platonic) relationship with Mary, Martha and Lazarus. Not only this, but Jesus life was lived not only in relationship to others but in order to restore relationship with God and those around us.

Adam was the first man, the mold and the model, but Jesus was the perfect man who broke the mold to give us a new model. Jesus' model of "man" was a model that cried, that worked with others for others, even his enemies. Jesus' model of man was tender and tough, perfect and approachable. Jesus was *the man*. And, he is the man that we men now must aspire to follow after.

So guys, let's reclaim our place in church, in the home, in the workplace and in the world. Not as the macho muscleman Hollywood would have us be, but as the man who lives *for* others, like Jesus did, like Adam was supposed to have. Real men live for the sake of others, sometimes at the expense of themselves (limb, mind or even life), but more importantly to share the love of God you know by your actions and words.

Next time: Men of actions *and* words.

Pastor *Carl Jh*

