



Christian Masculinity and God's Purpose for Men

Grady L. Throneberry PhD

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The truth is that the spiritual failures of men as a group are manifesting themselves in almost all areas of life. One need only peruse the daily news to realize that nearly all crime – murder, rape, burglary, robbery, child and spouse abuse, and drunk driving, as examples – is committed by men. In numerical terms, it is men who dominate politics and the corporate world where moral collapse and scandals of various types erupt almost daily. Few churches can boast of the attendance and participation of their male members. View the sanctuary of nearly any church in America and it is glaringly apparent that men are outnumbered, sometimes two to one, by women. And sadly, the men who are present in church worship are rarely engaged by what is happening. The church must realign itself or reposition itself if it is going to reach men for Christ. The church of today, in terms of appeal to men, is very much unlike the church founded and nurtured by men – Christ and His disciples. Even though Christ clearly appealed to women and discipled women, the early church drew men to itself. The early church had everything that men needed and still need. Christ himself was the strong and determined leader, and the church movement of the time offered men much of what men need – risk, adventure, challenge, and even conflict. But the church of today seems much less masculine in its direction and determination. The church of today has been called “feminized”, a place of safety and nurturing and predictability. The church of today is a place of hugs and tears and tissues. And while this type of church is good and necessary, there must be an integration of masculinity in the overall programs and functions of the church. The challenge for the contemporary church is how to retain the “warm and fuzzy” feeling, the nurturing and safety, while re-masculinizing itself. How can the church effectively disciple men when men have, for the most part, “checked out”? How can the contemporary church reach men with a sense of adventure and risk-taking, a call to arms, and boldness that is an ever-present component of the male spirit? The church that was founded and nurtured by men must be revitalized by men if it is going to survive and reclaim its role in society and culture. The church, to be effective in spreading the Gospel to the nations, must disciple men to be the husbands, fathers, community and church leaders that they should.

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