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What Does It Mean to Be a Man?

This generation has discarded the basic idea of manhood that has dominated civilization for thousands of years. What are the results?

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What is manhood? In a society of same-sex “marriages” and transgender bathrooms, the answer to this question has never been more confusing. This generation has challenged, castigated and changed virtually everything that has defined manhood throughout human history.

Consider Some Facts

In 1960, about two thirds of American men at age 30 had finished school, left their parents’ home, become financially independent, gotten married, and had a child. By 2000, that number was cut in half. In 1970, 80 percent of 25-to-29-year-old American men were married. Now that number has also been cut in half. In 1950, one in 20 men of prime working age was not working. Today, it’s about 1 in 6.

Today, about 60 percent of 18-to-24-year-old males live with their parents. Among 25-to-34-year-olds, it’s still about 20 percent—almost double the rate among women the same age.

In secondary education, boys are outnumbered by girls in student government, honor societies, debating clubs and school newspapers. They are outperformed on tests of artistic and musical ability. The typical boy is a year and a half behind girls in reading and writing skills. Boys are more likely to be held back or suspended from school. More boys drop out. More boys are on Ritalin, and more get involved in crime, alcohol and illegal drugs.

Women are pursuing higher education in far greater numbers than men. Every year 170,000 more women than men earn bachelor’s degrees. They expect higher earnings and better professional advancement than young men do. And although the average man earns 10 percent more, the average 20-something woman earns more than the average 20-something man.

Women are even avoiding serious relationships so as not to derail their career goals. When they decide they want to marry, they are finding fewer men who have developed their minds, bodies and skills. Their choice is to either “marry down” or not to marry at all.

More single women than single men are buying their own homes. More and more are having children on their own. Many think marriage would be nice, but they find it unnecessary. They can take care of themselves, after all, and don’t need another dependent, another mouth to feed.

These developments are a reversal of the relationship between males and females that has existed for virtually all of human

history.

Feminists may celebrate, but more and more people are recognizing that this trend comes with some steep costs that we are only starting to see.

A Relic

For millennia, men have been providers: providers of defense, security, shelter, food and the means for other heavy necessities of life for women, who themselves provided the finer necessities of the relationship. As pioneering, farming and other occupations gave way to wage-earning jobs, men did the smithing, ranching, mining, felling, milling, building, clerking and other work outside the home—the work of providers. This integral role in life propelled males through their childhoods, their educations, their careers and their lives.

Now, this model is mocked. Two-income families are the norm, with neither husband nor wife fulfilling their historic role. Feminists encourage women to stand on their own, shunning dependency on men and becoming laborers, wage-earners, managers, executives and even soldiers.

Women have proved to be spectacularly capable, and men have gotten the clear message, *You are no longer needed*.

It's a proven, demonstrable aftereffect: In areas where they compete, women's success tends to discourage men. You can attribute this to chauvinism, sexist indoctrination or whatever you would like, but it is real, and it is powerful. Once men see women providing for themselves, they lose interest in doing so. This effect is apparent throughout the workforce. As women enter a profession, men lose interest in it. Thus, men are abandoning more and more jobs, and women are rushing in even faster to fill the void. Women's options for employment keep expanding as men surrender them.

The upshot of all this is "the emergence of an American matriarchy, where the *younger men especially are unmoored*, and closer than at any other time in history to being obsolete—at least by most traditional measures of social utility. And the women are left picking up the pieces" (Hanna Rosin, *The End of Men*; emphasis added).

Unmoored. Obsolete. These are painfully accurate terms for far too many of today's aimless, indifferent men. This is the void that now exists where the sense of duty to provide used to be.

This is what happens when you cut society from its moorings. But there is more.

Retreat

Lacking any apparent responsibility, men have devoted themselves to their own pleasure. It is a self-perpetuating cycle: A man with less motivation to provide devotes more time to senseless pursuits, which renders him *even less* capable of fulfilling his role. And the instant he turns away from his masculine responsibilities, a black hole of vice and wastage sucks him in.

Video game addiction is about four times more common among boys than girls. The average American boy spends 13 hours a week absorbed in video games, compared to five hours for the average girl. Half of college students admit that video games preempt their studies "some" or "a lot." By the time the average American youth reaches drinking age, he will have devoted 10,000 hours to gaming—enough time to have earned two bachelor's degrees.

Those 10,000 hours are spent viewing and interacting with either superfluous characters or with outright sexualized, violent or ghoulish worlds. Millions of young people are immersing themselves in realistic games that encourage them to become killers, sadists, mutilators and monsters that use every conceivable weapon for murder, torture, dismemberment, decapitation, impalement, ethnic cleansing and rape.

When they turn away from the video games, millions of boys and men turn to pornography. Explicit sexual media are now mainstream, pervasive, socially accepted, devilishly easy to get, and intensely addictive. The demand is monstrous: For every two feature films made in America, the country produces 45 full-length commercial pornography films. The average high school boy watches *two hours of pornography a week*. Researchers conducting a study in July 2011 on pornography and prostitution had so much difficulty finding nonusers that they had to *loosen their definition* in order to muster 100 men for a control group.

These perverted images and warped concepts filling men's minds have devastating effects on men's relationships and mental health. Video games and pornography tend to become a substitute for normal face-to-face interactions, which makes users more isolated, socially awkward, and susceptible to depression. They have also been shown to suppress the willingness to take risks and to navigate the intricacies of real-world relationships, education and employment.

These influences are crushing manhood. One specific proof: Academics have uncovered a correlation between pornography viewing and an increase in a man's willingness to move back in with his parents. Risk-averse men who cannot handle life's complexities are deeply disadvantaged if not crippled in ever being able to support a family and assume other responsibilities of manhood.

When Dad's Not Around

Feminists applaud the breakdown of long-held traditions in male-female relations. But look what has taken their place: academically and financially thriving women with no one to marry, juvenile men huddling in caves of self-indulgence, and children who think this is normal and then grow up and break down their relationships even further. Is this what feminists want?

The loss of breadwinning men in favor of perpetual adolescents has produced a swarm of other problems that result when men disengage from family and from society. Yes, women are succeeding financially and professionally—but families are fragmenting, and society is morally and spiritually disintegrating.

The role of fathers has shrunk dramatically. More and more children are growing up without fathers at all. And the science is in: Fatherlessness causes severe problems. Nearly half of children who live with their single mother live in poverty. Children who have limited interaction with fathers have higher rates of behavioral problems; these show up as early as age 1. Children without a positive father relationship are more negative about school and their teachers. Fatherless boys are far more likely to commit crime, take illegal drugs, smoke cigarettes and abuse alcohol. Males with an absentee father are nearly three times likelier to carry a gun and engage in drug deals than those who have a father at home. Fatherless girls are much more likely to fornicate; teenage pregnancy for girls who grow up without a father is four times higher than among those with a father in the home. And fatherless girls who marry are far likelier to file for divorce as adults.

Anyone who looks at these real-world results and applauds them is insane. Anyone assessing them honestly sees that this revolution has been a disaster. The loss of strong manliness is a *plague* on our society.

Believe it or not, this exact calamity was *prophesied* in your Bible thousands of years ago.

Where Are the Real Men?

Isaiah 3 is primarily about the end time, which other passages prove is the era we are living in right now. It specifically focuses on “Jerusalem” and “Judah,” biblical language for the modern descendants of ancient Israel, including America and Britain. Look around! Isaiah described exactly what we see before our eyes: nations where strong male leadership has virtually disappeared.

Notice: “For, behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah ... The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, The captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator” (Isaiah 3:1-3). On the whole, mighty, heroic, discerning, farsighted, wise, honest, skilled, articulate, spiritual male leadership is gone.

This prophecy reveals the true, *but hidden*, cause: God has *removed* strong men as a *curse* on our nations—because of our sins.

When strong men are not here to lead, others fill the void: “As for my people *children* are their oppressors, and *women* rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths” (verse 12). Some say more work needs to be done to secure women’s rights. God says women and children *already* lead society!

The *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary* shows that verse 12 can also refer to men who *act like children* and who *rule like women*. Do you see any leaders today who are immature, effeminate and worse?

Reaping What We Have Sown

The problems associated with the disappearance of strong male leadership are everywhere in America and other English-speaking nations.

Modern education is increasingly sacrificing intellectual excellence on the altar of anti-masculine liberal ideology. Students are embracing ridiculous utopianist notions that absolve them of personal accountability. Like spoiled children, they blame their personal failings on a supposedly unfair and unjust world rather than growing up and taking responsibility for themselves.

The loss of masculine wisdom, righteousness, honor and virility has hollowed out the strength of the world’s most powerful militaries and economies. America’s military is plagued by lack of willpower. Political correctness has become the priority over effectiveness and victories. Sex integration has gone so far that women are now purposefully sent into combat situations. Many strong warriors and military leaders have left the forces in disgust at the changing policies.

Our governments are plagued with immaturity and selfishness. Vicious divisions prevail, and politicians increasingly express heedless criticism, blind bias, unabashed arrogance, and naked hatred for their opponents. Politicians approach their responsibilities like spiteful children. In America, the political atmosphere has become so hostile and the government is so paralyzed by division that it is killing the government’s ability to manage crises—our leadership is incapable of acting wisely and decisively on important security, defense, foreign-policy, economic and social concerns. Meanwhile, law and order are

giving way to social breakdown, racial hatred and criminal activity.

This weakness domestically is undercutting America's global leadership role. Like Great Britain before it, the power that has been used to benefit the world for decades is being squandered through poor decision-making and leadership. Tyrants are filling the void. America's weakness is enabling the rise of Iran and radical Islam, a belligerent Russia, an ascendant China, and other dangerous and unpredictable powers. The instability seizing today's world can be directly traced back to America's retreat—which is a result of the disappearance of godly men.

Disappearing masculinity, which many view as a minor cultural or societal issue, has *real-world consequences* for you, your family, your finances, your health, your future and even your very security!

Decades of godless living are taking their toll. We are reaping what we have sown.

The Path to True Manhood

Feminists say they want equality for women. But how many of them actually want weak men? No woman applauds a man for being addicted to video games or pornography. What is honorable and worthy of admiration is the man with self-mastery, who refrains from being entrapped by such sins. We yearn for the man with self-control, with temperance, with strong moral character.

A strong man is a blessing to his wife and children. He provides more than money—he provides security, attentive engagement, successful leadership, firm guidance, emotional stability and real love.

Society, often without realizing it, cries out for masculinity of substance: strong character, untarnished fidelity, exemplary behavior, empathetic yet decisive leadership. Deep down, we yearn for men with spines.

Society still appreciates such men, yet it teaches and pressures males to do the opposite. To grow into a real man, you must be strong enough to follow a different path.

Where is that path? How do you walk it? What is true masculinity? By now it should be clear that you aren't going to find the answer on cable television, in the news media, bookstores, legislatures or universities. To know what manhood really should be, you need to look into the Holy Bible and consult the *Creator* of manhood.

Learn *God's* definition of manhood. Learn what your God-given duties are in your home, with your family, in your job, toward your neighbors and toward society. Understand what masculinity truly is—a definition that does not change from day to day, from year to year, or even from generation to generation.

You are living in a society that has launched a *revolution* and successfully overthrown biblical manhood. Most men have joined in or allowed themselves to be silently led along. You now have a choice: Will you be different? Will you live your life as a man according to the pressures of society—or according to the clear commands of God?

Seeing the full picture of the masculine duty God has vested in you is awesome and inspiring. It can also be intimidating, even overwhelming. But take heart. Maturing as a godly man is a lifelong endeavor, and it is never too early or too late to start. *Every* man struggles. *Every* man can grow in biblical manhood. You have everything to gain from studying this subject.

Your job as a man is perhaps the most challenging job God gives you! The Bible shows that you hold an *office*: the office of a son, the office of a brother, the office of a husband, the office of a father, the office of a *man*.

Any man who wants to live up to *God's* definition of manhood has real work to do. He must devote his energies to swimming upstream against society. He must make it his unwavering aim to grow—against pressure—in those qualities that will arm him for the rigors of true manhood. He must eschew the pastimes that weaken men. He must avoid the addictions that eat away at men's minds, blacken their consciences, and destroy their confidence. He must stoke the flames of ambition in his life. He must aim high, and equip himself to become an able leader of a strong, capable woman, and a builder of family and society.

This is what God wants. This is how we were created. This is literally what we were born to do, men: Grow up, achieve, mature and embrace the role that our masculine minds and bodies were designed for.

This is the elusive solution—hiding in plain sight if your Bible is open—to our manless society. It's not about getting back to the traditions of yesteryear. It's about embracing how we were created. Discover it, live it, and you will be embarking on a life full of growth, challenge, fulfillment and happiness built on knowing what it really means to be a man. ■

