



Battle of the Sexes- Session 1- Manhood
Genesis 2-3; Ephesians 2:1-7; 5:15-16

Facilitator's Tip: You may see a series of questions that are together. The purpose of these questions is sometimes to build upon one another, or they may be distinct and share a common theme. The purpose with any question is to have participants reflect and respond. Be sure to evaluate how the questions fit into the discussion that occurs as you facilitate the discussion.

Introduction

At New Vision, one of our values is that we seek to challenge men. We believe that God has given a specific role to men within the church and families that if left behind can have major implications and cause confusion.

From your personal experience, who are TV or Movie characters that have been pictures of being a man? What are some of the common characteristics? How are they different? How has the picture of being a man changed across generations from 50 years ago, 25 years ago, 10 years ago?

We live in a world where the roles of men have become so blurred that it's hard to understand exactly what it is that men of God are supposed to look like. Work-a-holic dads and divorce have made the problem worse. In our culture, the idea of a biblical man is foreign to us. We do not see them. We would have a hard time even recognizing one. Even when we see athletes or celebrities acknowledge God, we question whether or not they're genuine or whether it's for the right reasons. It also doesn't help that the same people who often speak about God, walk in total worldliness and sin. It makes it very confusing.

Transition: Today our focus as we kickoff our Battle of the Sexes study is to define biblical manhood. We will see its origins after the fall and then the call that men have to embrace how Scripture defines being a man and for women to understand the proper expectations that men are to pursue.

1. Origins of Biblical Manhood

From reading the creation account in Scripture; we can begin to see the context for manhood as defined in its original intent and then how, through the implication of sin, man is to live in relationship with God.

First, it's important to see the significance of man.

Have a volunteer to read Genesis 2:7-8.

- 7 Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.**
- 8 The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed.**

Going back to the call of God to make man in his own image (Genesis 1:26-27); there is the attention and care that is demonstrated in the making of the first human. This description continues the anthropomorphic language of the verse; the man receives his life force from the breath of the Creator himself, hovering over him. "*Breathed* is warmly personal, with the face-to-face intimacy of a kiss and the significance that this was giving as well as making; and self-giving at that." Although both animal (7:22) and human life share in this gift of life (2:7), human life enjoys a unique relationship with God. The correspondence between man and his Maker is expressed both by the language of "image" (1:26–27) and by the metaphor of a shared "breath."¹

Based on what you have read or heard from today's study, how would you define an image bearer? What impact does it make in your life to know that you bear the image of God? How does your self-worth change understanding that your life has a purpose just as Adam and Eve's? How does a proper understanding of God values you impact being a man or woman today?

Then there is the responsibility of man.

Have a volunteer to read Genesis 2:15-17.

- 15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.**
- 16 The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely;**
- 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."**

In the garden God gives the man a purposeful existence that includes overseeing his environment. Work is a God-given assignment and not a cursed condition. Also, as God had given the natural world and all life-forms boundaries, human life too is instructed to live within

¹ Mathews, K. A. (1996). [Genesis 1-11:26](#) (Vol. 1A, p. 196). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

prescribed boundaries. But freedom has no meaning without prohibition; the boundary for Adam is but one tree. This prohibition, however, is stated in the strongest terms, as was the provision.

What may be modern examples of keeping our responsibilities? How does the call to not eat from the tree, a call for purity? What are some specific ways that have seen men and women help each other to remain pure?

Then there is the fall of man.

Have a volunteer to read Genesis 3:6-7; 9-12; 17-21.

6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

9 Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?”

10 He said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.”

11 And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”

12 The man said, “The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.”

17 Then to Adam He said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’;

Cursed is the ground because of you;

In toil you will eat of it

All the days of your life.

18 “Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you;

And you will eat the plants of the field;

19 By the sweat of your face

You will eat bread,

Till you return to the ground,

Because from it you were taken;

For you are dust,

And to dust you shall return.”

20 Now the man called his wife’s name ^aEve, because she was the mother of all *the* living.

21 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.

What is the attitude, leadership, character of Adam as a man? Where does he fail? Have you ever had an occasion where you knew what the right thing to do was, but failed to do so? What was it? What did you do instead?

The results are told in the same rapid-fire fashion as the transgression, paralleling the actions of the woman in v. 6: (1) eyes open, (2) realize their nakedness, (3) sew fig leaves, and (4) make coverings. What they “saw” is that they are “naked,” what is “pleasing to the eye” causes displeasure with their own nakedness and the need to cover it with “fig leaves,” and the “wisdom” gained only enables the making of “coverings.”

Who does Adam blame for his sin in Genesis 3:12? (Eve- who then blames the serpent) Have you ever tried to blame something you had done on someone else and not accept responsibility? What was it?

How do men respond in times of shame? How do you see the value of accountability in this account? For women: how can you help restore a husband that is trying to recover from shame?

Transition: From the moment of the fall, all of the world has been marred with the effects of sin. From that, manhood has taken on the ideals of a culture of sin versus how God views His creation. Therefore, instead of trying to restore manhood (and womanhood) on our own, we have a Redeemer and Restorer that came in Jesus Christ as a way for us to fulfill our purpose.

2. The Call to Manhood.

Have a volunteer to read Ephesians 2:1-7

- 1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,**
- 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.**
- 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.**
- 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,**
- 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),**
- 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,**
- 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.**

In verses 1-3, in the context of our discussion; the impact of Adam’s failure to remember his significance, accept his responsibility, which led to the fall; has implicated us to be spiritually dead. Paul’s point in this passage is that there was a time where we were all once spiritually dead and were objects of God’s wrath.

Why do so many men today remain in darkness and embrace disobedience instead of Christ? In what ways have you seen New Vision seek to challenge men?

And the good news that comes through receiving the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is called the Second Adam in Romans (2:4-7), and in reflection of God's mercy, is that God has provided salvation for us by grace through faith (2:8-9).

What does it mean that a man may be basing his masculinity on that of the first Adam and living in his shadow? How would your life be different to live like the second Adam and following his light?

3. Embracing Manhood.

Have a volunteer to read Ephesians 5: 15-16.

**15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise,
16 ^amaking the most of your time, because the days are evil.²**

The world in which we live is filled with dangers and deceptions. It is not always easy to live an enlightened life even when we want to. We can get tripped up or ambushed by events and people without even being aware of the danger. We must be very careful to live our life rooted in wisdom, using our time wisely. Not to do so would be foolish. The will of the Lord is that we live carefully, cautiously, always matching our lifestyle with the teachings of Scripture.³

The decision that comes before every man is whether they are going to live as a conventional man that goes in the shadow of Adam or the Christ man that lives in the light of the second Adam- Jesus Christ (Romans 5:12-21).

A conventional man that takes the life of others, rejects their significance, and does not embrace their responsibility. They act based on personal instinct, human reason, or human reaction alone. They are self-made, self-willed, and self-centered.

A Christ man is one that rejects passivity, accepts responsibility, lead courageously, and they invest eternally. They do not look at the Bible as a set of rules. They look at the call of Scripture as a way for them to express being "alive in Christ."

What may be areas that you need to reject passivity? In what areas do you need to accept responsibility? Are you leading courageously? Are you investing eternally?

² [New American Standard Bible: 1995 update](#). (1995). (Eph 5:15–16). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

³ Anders, M. (1999). [Galatians-Colossians](#) (Vol. 8, pp. 171–172). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Reflect on this statement: “For me to stop living as a man in the shadows, I need to _____.”

How would your life change if you were to embrace biblical manhood? How would your family change? For single men: how would your dating life change? For single women: how has this discussion impacted what you value or look for in a future mate?

Application

For men move from boyhood tendencies to biblical manhood there are some great points of application that can help us to grow in embracing what God has called us to do:

1. Know your identity: (Galatians 4:6-7) you are a child of God, adopted by Christ for his Kingdom. You must shed the extra weight of all the lies Satan throws your way (you can't do it, you are too much of a sinner, you have failed, nobody will listen to you, you're a loser, you've made too many mistakes in the past, it's not worth it)

2. Know your weaponry: (Ephesians 6:10-18) the Word, prayer, the Holy Spirit has already won the battle

3. Remember past victories and rest in the future ones: (1 Samuel 17:34-36) the greatest victory was the day Christ called you out of darkness and into his marvelous light. If you can't remember that moment or season God delivered you, pray about it. If you can't remember seeing God's victory in your life, pray about it.

4. Practice fierce dependency: (John 15:1-17) on Christ and on other men (like an army unit)

5. Stay in the fight: (2 Timothy 4:6-8) as a man, you are designed for battle. You are in the fight every single day. You are battling for your purity, your future marriage, your future children, the Kingdom of God, the sanctity and purity of the women around you, the name of Jesus against the world, Satan, and your own flesh. Approach every day as a battle.

6. Pour courage into other men: (1 Samuel 23:15-17) Jonathan poured into David, who pours it into his men. Who have you poured your life into?