

From Boys to Men

In January, Pastor Brady taught on manhood and womanhood as part of the “Battle of the Sexes” series. This series was particularly impactful to me as it applies to encouraging young girls and boys to be the women and men that God intends for them to be. Today, I want to share a story with you all that has encouraged me about the impact that investing in children can have on their lives.

We do more life-applicable activities with the sixth through eighth grade students as they will soon be moving on to high school and adulthood. While we were teaching the story of Adam and Eve and how He created us uniquely and with a purpose, we divided the group into boys and girls to briefly discuss manhood and womanhood from a biblical perspective. Dominican men unfortunately have the negative reputation of leaving their families and responsibilities, so I was so excited to encourage the boys to become godly men.

While teaching the boys, there were many distractions. With a few minutes left in the school day, I decided to stop where I was in the lesson. Feeling discouraged and frustrated that I didn’t get to teach what I had planned, I finished what I was saying and dismissed the boys. Then God showed up and reminded me that His plans are always so much better than mine!

While the other boys left, a seventh-grader named Inoel stayed in his seat and said, “If you want to keep talking, I’ll keep listening.” Shocked and thankful, I sat down. Two other boys, Junior and Roify, decided to stay as well. As I sat in a classroom with all of the other boys leaving the room, I thought to myself, “This is it! THIS is biblical manhood!” These three boys decided to stay when



everyone else left, and I pray they were encouraged to be the men God has called them to be. They all agreed that they don't have great examples of good men in their lives and that they hope to be them one day. We talked about the importance of encouraging others, using their strength to defend instead of putting others down, working hard in their personal walk and in their career, and being a loving husband and father one day. I expressed that all of these things are only possible through a relationship with the Lord and ending by praying for them.

About a week later, Juani and I were taking our whiteboard back to the house at the end of the school day. Inoel caught up to us and insisted on carrying it. He called to Roify to help him, and I took a quick picture to remember this moment. I am not certain that this was a direct result of our conversation, but I like to think so. I was so proud to see them step up and help like the godly men that God is growing them to be!

These boys remind me that there is always hope for the people of La Represa and the world. No child or adult is too distracted, too "wordly," or too far gone to find redemption in Christ alone. In past years, two of the three boys struggled with discipline issues at school, and now they are eagerly listening to God's Word and being good examples for their classmates. They are not perfect, but they are learning more about God's grace and what it means to trust Him. Please



join us in praying that Inoel, Junior, and Roify would choose to follow the Lord and grow into the men He has called them to be. Pray for godly men to mentor them and help them grow into strong leaders in their families and the community. Finally, pray that this program would open the door for more Christ-centered conversations that lead these boys and many other children and families to salvation that comes from Christ alone.