

# Calling the Church Back to the Men

For years we have called men back to church. The time has come to call the church back to the men! I was raised in a liberal denomination, saved via a para-church organization, and finally made my way into a Bible-believing church. Having observed first-hand a vast spectrum of Christianity, I feel it is fair to say that a lot of men simply are not at ease in church for a number of reasons. Not only are they apprehensive, many men hate going to church!

**Churches that focus on “Comfort” will not attract strong men.** “Easy religion” churches tend to attract quiet, introspective, non-aggressive gentlemen. This is largely due to the fact that feminine virtues are esteemed and masculine virtues are despised. Sweet, nurturing, nice, hand-holding, close-knit community support groups do not appeal to strong men. Of course people need comfort, especially the feeble-minded. A steady diet of pulpit Roloids may make you feel better, but it lacks any healing power!

**Churches that “Condemn” men for being the way God made them will not attract strong men.** You should not have to check your manhood, humanity, or your initiative at the door when you come to the house of God! Men are charged to “subdue the earth.” God issued a dominion mandate from the beginning. Men are created with a desire to achieve goals and accomplish things in life. This is a God-given drive which is an asset to be encouraged and developed. Focused aggressiveness in a positive direction is a good thing. Yet, the “humility police” will quickly attack any renegade, go-getters and use select scriptures to quell them into a state of submissive compliance.

Using guilt motivation to keep the troops at bay repels men. Browbeating and pulpit henpecking, when used as a control technique, will NOT develop churches that win and build men. You can’t discourage and demoralize men by blaming them for being the way God made them and expect them to be excited about church. Neither are men going to be inspired by packing clothes to send to Mexico, serving hot chocolate, or helping with car washes. Liberal churches have done these things for years and the men disappeared from their services long ago. Discrediting masculine qualities polarizes men.

**Churches that “Challenge” men will attract men.** Men do not follow programs. They are drawn to visionary leaders who inspire them to a great Cause. The relentless debunking of masculine traits smacks of a ladies’ home Bible study, as opposed to an army with a mission. God’s church is not a religious club that meets for the sake of meeting. We are called to a mission and we are called to bear fruit.

Continually confronting men with the things they are not doing discourages them. Instead of continually reminding them of their failures, men need to hear more “You can and here’s how!” type messages. Identifying problems without offering solutions is not

biblical preaching. Of course there is a place for the “corrective bite,” but this must be balanced with an inspiring challenge to fulfill one’s God-given purpose.

In the beginning God made them male and female. Men and women are different by design. Gender inversion has escalated over the last century. Unhappily, it has been the churches (initially the mainline churches) that pioneered the emasculation of men. The popular notion of a Christian man is an unassuming, androgynous eunuch. The image conveyed is more like Mr. Rogers than David standing over a headless Goliath with a bloody sword in his hand!

Virtually every painting of Jesus looks like a limp-wristed, poppy picker who would not hurt a fly. But the Son of God was tough enough to cast the money changers out of the temple. How is it that the Man Jesus, Who founded the church with twelve men and captivated scores of men with a Kingdom Cause, is now routinely associated with weakness as opposed to strength?

I think many men genuinely want to walk with God, and we must come to grips with the God-given distinctions imposed by the Creator if we want to reach them. Men like rousing, marching songs. They have a difficult time with all these breathy, love ballad choruses. By the way, have you noticed a scarcity of manly “music men” in churches? Maybe this has a bearing on the low percentage of men in most church choirs? I have no doubt more men would join in the song service if the type of songs were more appealing to male sensibilities.

Most men have shorter attention spans than women and find it difficult to sit for long periods. This is especially true if they are forced to listen to prolonged and disjointed ramblings. Sometimes you say more when you say less!

Let’s face it, scores of churches are geared for women, children, and old men. Your structure determines your function. You will get what you go after. If you gear your services for women, you will get women. If you gear your services for children, you will get children. But if you gear your services for men, you will get men, women, and children. A successful businessman commented, “Your system is perfectly designed to get the results you are getting.” If you want different results, you may need to reevaluate and overhaul your system.

We are overdue to call the church back to the men. Thank the Lord for many congregations that are aggressively going after men. Praise the Lord for a growing number of thoughtful pastors who are trying innovative approaches in evangelizing and ministering to men. Cursing the darkness alone solves nothing. Let’s light some torches by gearing up to reach men for Christ!

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