

Raising Boys to be Godly Men in a Confused and Conflicted Culture.

Introduction.¹

A. CREATION.

God's Good Order.

Genesis 1+2.

- **Genesis 1 v26-28 Man & Woman of Equal Value.**
- **Genesis 2 v15-25 Equal beings –different roles.**

a) the woman's equality – she was made from the man, and was the only one capable of being his companion.

b) the woman's different role – she was made for the man, to be his *strong* helper (for such is the meaning of the word).

B. FALL.

Conflict and Confusion.

“...what we are as men and women is not natural or God-given but constructed socially.”²

“In the war against boys, as in all wars, the first casualty is truth.”³

Genesis 3

- **God's Order challenged and restored.**

The Results of the Fall.

A. Confusion about Masculinity.

The American Heritage Dictionary's definition of Masculinity is:⁴

'1. The quality or condition of being masculine.

2. Something traditionally considered to be characteristic of a male.'

At the turn of the century Teddy Roosevelt stated that a man, **'...must not be a coward or a weakling, a bully, a shirk or a prig....He must work hard and play hard. He must be clean-minded and clean-lived, and able to hold his own under all circumstances and against all-comers.'**⁵

¹ Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: liberating Christianity from its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton: Crossway 2005)

² Rowena Chapman & Jonathan Rutherford (eds.) *Male Order: Unwrapping Masculinity* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1988), 195.

³ Christina Hoff Summers, *The War Against Boys* (New York: Touchstone 2000), 16.

⁴ From <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Masculinity>. Accessed 08.01.07.

⁵ Cited in James Jones, *Alfred C Kinsey: A Life* (New York: Norton 1997),52

it is masculinity per se or the fact of being a man that is seen as the source of the problem.

“This book tells how it has become fashionable to attribute pathology to millions of healthy male children. It is a story of how we are turning against boys and forgetting a simple truth: that the energy, competitiveness, and corporal daring of normal, decent males is responsible for much of what is right in the world.”⁶

B. Conflict with Males: The Impact of Feminism.

1). Equality.

Equality	Inequality
Fairness	Unfairness
Inclusiveness	Exclusiveness
Sameness	Difference
Balance	Imbalance
Justice	Injustice

2. Hostility.

- **“To be male is to be a kind of idiot.”⁷**
- **“Crime and coercion are sustained by men.”⁸**
- **“Men are from another planet, sent here by spaceships to copulate with female earthlings and propagate the species- a task for which science has rendered them all but redundant.”⁹**
- **“How can we make a hard & fast distinction between ‘normal’ & ‘criminal’ when both are located along the same spectrum that we call ‘man’?”¹⁰**

**“gender violence prevention”
“patriarchal universe of discourse”.¹¹**

C. Conflict with God’s Community: Therapeutic Individualism.

Essentially it says:

- The individual self is the source and judge real knowledge and behaviour
- That self-fulfillment is the highest goal in life
- That personal feelings are the ultimate court of appeal in any dispute
- Religious satisfaction is centred around personal comfort and self-realization

⁶ Hoff Summers, *War Against Boys*, 14.

⁷ Germaine Greer, *The Whole Woman*, (London: Doubleday 1999)

⁸ B. Campbell, *Goliath*, (Metheun, 1993)

⁹ R di Manno, *Alberta Report*, (11th January 1999)

¹⁰ R Miles, *Rites of Man*, (Grafton Books 1992)

¹¹ Quoted in Hoff Summers, *War Against Boys*, 61.

“Its assumptions and commitments infuse very level of the educational system; practices of courtship, marriage, family life, and divorce; some public social programs; key cultural elements of the economy, such as the advertising industry and the mass media, entertainment, and recreation; the health care sector and public health system; very many elements of religion; and, increasingly, the justice system and government itself.”¹²

D. Confusion and Conflict: The Impact on and of Schooling.¹³

The impact of these changes upon boys at school has been marked:

- boys are more than 50 percent more likely to repeat elementary school grades than girls
- a third are more likely to drop out of high school
- they are twice as likely to have a "learning disability"
- at college three out of five students are female
- **“Boys have become increasingly disengaged. Only 65 percent earned high school diplomas in the class of 2003, compared with 72 percent of girls, education researcher Jay Greene recently documented.”**¹⁴
- William Pollack in his book *Real Boys* contends that, **“Many school systems [have] to a large extent have ‘pathologized what is simply normal for boys.’”**¹⁵
- Another educationist wrote, **“...boys’ aggressive and rationalist nature [has been] redefined by educators as a behavioural disorder.”**¹⁶

E. Conflict: Men are a Danger to Society.

The view of men is largely:

1. That they are fundamentally lazy, irresponsible or violent and given half a chance will abandon their children.
2. Male characteristics such as competition, aggression and hiding their feelings coupled with men’s obsession with work are the root of all societal problems.
3. Men are always the violent victimisers and women the poor victims. So when women behave badly it is often put down to them behaving like men: the clear inference is that bad behaviour is a male rather than a female characteristic.

F. More Confusion: The ‘Save the Male’ Campaign.

Susan Faludi states, **“Being a feminist opens your eyes to the ways men, like women, are imprisoned in cultural stereotypes.”**¹⁷

¹² Christian Smith with Melinda Lundquist Denton, *Soul Searching: the Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 174-175

¹³ Space forbids discussing the impact for young men of the equally important areas of an economy with high unemployment or homes without fathers. Numerous commentators note the detrimental affect of both, especially the need for fathers. William Pollack writes, “Research shows, ... that while mothers tend to soothe their children and shield them from too much stimulation, the average father is inclined to arouse the emotions and stimulate a boy, playing with him zestfully and ‘jazzing’ him up. ... That roughhousing between father and son that may make mom cringe is actually the rudimentary beginning of a boy’s management of his aggression and his ability to substitute emotional mastery and mutual cooperation for violent interaction.” From <http://www.quotesea.com/Quote.aspx?q=Researchshowsthatwhilemotherstendto> Accessed 04.04.09.

¹⁴ Gerry Garibaldi online http://www.city-journal.org/html/16_3_schools_boys.html Accessed 11.09.06.

¹⁵ William Pollack, *Real Boys* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1998)

¹⁶ Gerry Garibaldi in *How the Schools Shortchange Boys* on http://www.city-journal.org/html/16_3_schools_boys.html Accessed 11.09.06.

Gloria Steinem's solution is simple enough, "**We badly need to raise boys like we raise girls.**"¹⁸

Barney Brawer, director of the Boys' Project at Tufts University, told Education Week: "**We've deconstructed the old version of manhood, but we've not [yet] constructed a new version.**"¹⁹

Susie Orbach tells boys that they need to be "**emotionally literate**"²⁰
One feminist complained that, "**One of the most overlooked arenas of *violence training* within schools may be the environment that surrounds athletics and sport.**"²¹

Marvin Olasky:

"What New Age facilitators don't realise is that friendship grows fastest when boys are working side by side with the common goal of winning, not sitting in a circle sharing their feelings."²²

G. Confusion: Two Inadequate Responses by Young Men.

a.) Effeminate Masculinity.

b.) Counterfeit Masculinity.²³

Conclusion.

One feminist (Rosalind Coward) writes of her sons' generation "**thrashing around in a new world in which they feel demoralised, the second sex.**"²⁴

C. REDEMPTION.

Restoring God's Order.

"When a father washes diapers and performs some other mean task for his child, and someone ridicules him as an effeminate fool, [he should remember that] God with all his angels and creatures is smiling."²⁵

A. Some Introductory Thoughts.

a) Brain sex.

b) Teaching boys to become men is a work of Faith.

'Unbelief squashes; faith teaches.'²⁶

¹⁷ Susan Faludi interviewed on the Mother Jones website: <http://www.motherjones.com/arts/qa/1999/09/faludi.html>
Accessed 10.01.07.

¹⁸ Quoted in Christian Hoff Summers, *War Against Boys*, 44

¹⁹ Quoted in Christian Hoff Summers, *War Against Boys*, 15

²⁰ Quoted in Phillips, *Sex-Change Society*.

²¹ Feminist writers quoted in Hoff Summers, *War Against Boys*, 48. Italics mine.

²² In a review of Hoff Summers (unsourced).

²³ See for example Robert Bly, *Iron John: A Book about Men* (Rider & Co., 2001)

²⁴ Quoted in Melanie Phillips, *Sex-Change Society* (London: Social Market Foundation, 1999)

²⁵ Martin Luther quoted in Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 329

²⁶ Douglas Wilson, *Future Men* (Moscow, Idaho: Canon Press 2001), 10.

c.) The 'myth' of the teenager.²⁷

Al Mohler recently wrote, "We now face the phenomenon of perpetual boyhood on the part of many males. Refusing to grow up, these young men function as boys well into their twenties- - some even into their thirties and beyond. An extended male adolescence marks the lifestyles, expectations, and behaviour of far too many young males, whose masculine identity is embraced awkwardly, if at all."²⁸

d) A further word on Education.

homo sapiens (i.e. thinking man)
homo adorans (worshipping man)

B. Biblical Characteristics of Masculinity.

a) A Definition.

'[Masculinity is] the collection of all those characteristics which flow from delighting in and sacrificing bodily strength for goodness.'²⁹

'Biblical masculinity is a willing control of strength for the glory of God and the good of others.'

What is wisdom?

Proverbs 2:1- 8.

Vs. 1- 4

Vs. 5 - 7:

- a) it is God's gift (**v.6a**)
- b) He is the source of knowledge and understanding (**v. 6b**)
- c) it is the knowledge of God (**v. 5b**)
- d) it is founded on the fear of God (**v. 5a**)

What to Teach Young Men to prepare them for Manhood.

1. Using Proverbs: A Programme for Parents.³⁰

Week 1. Attitudes: Teachability.

3 types of ungodly characters.

Cf. **Pr. 1:22**

1. The Simple.

(Pr. 1:10 -enticed)

2. The Mockers. (Pr.9:7 -9, 12b)

3. The Fools. (Pr. 1:7b)

²⁷ A helpful book which challenges this is Alex and Brett Harris, *Do Hard Things: A teenage rebellion against low expectations* (Portland: Multnomah, 2008)

²⁸Quote found on page 1 of an article which appeared on Albert Mohler's Weblog as a 2-part series April 21-22
<http://www.crosswalk.com/news/weblogs/mohler/?cal=go&month=2&year=2005>

²⁹ Wilson, *Future Men*, 11

³⁰ This and the sections that follow are largely based on Wilson, *Future Men*.

Pr. 1:7- 8

Pr. 4:1-9:

- v.1
- v. 2
- vs. 7-9
- v. 4
- v.8
- vs. 3-4
- vs. 5-6

Pr. 23: 12- 16

Week 2. Actions: Respect for Family.

Pr. 1:8

Pr. 15:20; 19:26; 20:20; 23:22; 28:24; 29:15; 30:17

Pr. 31:1.

Key themes to emerge are:

-
-
-
-
-

Week 3. Women and Sex.

A. Pr. 5.

- warning about:
 - v.3
 - vs. 9-10
 - vs. 11-14
 - v.23
- v.21
- vs. 15-20

B. Pr. 7: 4-24.

vs. 16- 21

Pr. 6: 26 & 29:3

Week 4. Life Skills –Money.

Pr. 22:4

Pr. 28:6

Pr. 22:1

Pr. 11:25- 26

Pr. 22:9

Pr. 28:27

Pr. 25:14

Pr. 13:22

Pr. 6:1- 3

Pr. 19:10

If one passage was to be used then consider **Pr. 28:19- 22**.

Key themes to emerge are:

- **vs. 19**
- **v.20 'eager to get rich'**
- **v.21 'piece of bread'**
- **v.22 'stingy man'**

Week 5. Life Skills –Hard Work.

Pr. 10:4b; 10:5a; 12:27b; 13:4b; 14:23.

Pr. 6: 6- 11.

Things to note are:

vs. 6

vs. 7- 8

vs. 9- 11

Pr. 23:4

Week 6. The Perfect Man –Jesus.

Matt. 7:24- 27.

- Submitted to His Father's will –a main emphasis in John's gospel.
- Focussed on His life –calling –cf. **Jn. 6:38** for starters.
- Respect for Family –**Lk. 2:41- 51 esp. v.51.**
- Sexually pure –**Heb. 4:15.**
- Hard working –**Mark 6:3a.**
- Non-materialistic –**Mt. 8:20.**

2. Teaching Doctrine: a Skeleton Programme for Sunday Schools.³¹

1. The Sovereignty of God.

Pr. 16:1; 16:7; 16:9; 16:33; 19:21; 21:1.

2. The Omniscience of God (He sees all things).

Pr. 5:21; 15:3; 21:2.

The result of living fully in the light of these will be:

- Complete trust and confidence in God.
- A humble spirit.
- An uncomplaining spirit.
- Patience in the face of adversity.
- A transparent and consistent life seeking God's approval and smile.

³¹ This is introductory. Get Bruce Ware's new book for more detailed help.

3. Particular Temptations for Men.³²

a) Excuse making.

Genesis 3

“True masculinity accepts responsibility, [full stop] while false masculinity will try to accept responsibility only for success.”³³

b) Self-reliance.

c) Laziness.

1. Ignorance.

Pr. 18:13a

2. No continuity. Pr. 12:27a

3. Excuse making. Pr. 22:13

Pr. 20:4

4. Foolishness. Pr. 26:13- 17

5. It irritates. Pr. 10:26

6. Deceit. Pr. 21:5- 6

4. Some Key Practical Matters.

Another passage that could be studied is **Titus 2:6- 8.**

1. Dependability.
2. Respect for all-especially women and young women. If laying down his life for his wife is essential for the husband (**Eph.5:25**) then that sacrificial way of thinking will not suddenly begin in marriage.
Care of all women will be necessary.
Young men need to view Christina young women as sisters.
3. Self-control in speech, enjoyment of appetites, leisure and money.
4. A hard working approach to everything he does.
5. A willingness to fight to defend the weak. A fighting mindset is part of living the life of faith.

5. Further Resources.

Two online resources can be found at:

http://www.frame-poythress.org/poythress_articles/1999How.htm

<http://www.therebolution.com/blog/2006/09/the-marks-of-manhood-by-albert-mohler/>

³² These will often be corruptions of their God given role.

³³ Wilson, *Future Men*, 22

Helpful Books.

To understand the issues.

Cultural Background:

- Nancy Pearcey, Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from its Cultural Captivity. Wheaton: Crossway, 2005.
- Christian Smith with Melinda Lundquist Denton, Soul Searching. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Christina Hoff Summers, The War Against Boys. New York: Touchstone, 2000.

General Reading for parents and Sunday School teachers:

- James Dobson, Bringing Up Boys. Illinois: Tyndale Publishers, 2001
- Douglas Wilson, Future Men. Idaho: Canon Press, 2001.
- Mark Chanski, Manly Dominion (in a passive-purple four-ball world). New York: Calvary Press, 2004.
- Steve Farrar, Point Man. Portland: Multnomah, 2003.

Books boys and young men should read.

- Traditional stories with values of bravery and self- sacrifice.
- Alex and Brett Harris, Do Hard Things. Portland: Multnomah, 2008.
- Stephen Arterburn & Fred Stoeker, Every Young Man's Battle: Strategies for Victory in the Real world of Sexual Temptation. Colorado Springs: Waterbrook Press, 2002.
- Joshua Harris, I Kissed Dating Goodbye. Portland: Multnomah, 2002.
- Joshua Harris, Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello to Courtship. Portland: Multnomah, 2006.
- Joshua Harris, Not even a Hint. Portland: Multnomah, 2003.
- Joshua Harris, Sex is not the Problem (lust is). Portland: Multnomah, 2003.

Commentaries on Proverbs.

- Derek Kidner, Proverbs. (The Tyndale Old Testament Commentary). Downers Grove: IVP, 2008.
- Tremper Longman 111, How to Read Proverbs. Downers Grove: IVP, 2002.
- Tremper Longman 111, Proverbs. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006.