**The Characteristics of a Godly Man**

**Genesis 1:27-28**

 Good morning! Please open your Bible to the first book of Genesis. Today we will be discussing the characteristics of a Godly man in honor of Father’s Day. Before we begin addressing this topic, we first need to set the stage for our discussion. Today we will be looking at the design that God the Father has established for His creation regarding the family as well as the roles He has established for both men and women. This is so important for us as a church family to discuss because if you have been seeing what is happening in the culture today there is a lot of confusion regarding gender as well as the roles that men and women both play in the function of the family. What we will be doing is revisiting what Scripture teaches regarding the establishment of the family, what role the man plays in the family and finally why this design for creation is so important for the well-being of our children as well as humanity as a whole.

 Let us start at the beginning of time with the way that God established the first family. In **Genesis 1 verses 27-28** we read **“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”** In these verses we find the creation of the first two human being to ever live. God created a male and female to be His image bearers who had the responsibility to taking care of the world that He had made. Being made in the image of God means that man and woman have a rational mind. Because of being given this marvelous gift man has the ability to think, reason, make decisions, experience emotions such as love and have relationships with other humans just like the Father, Son and Holy Spirit all relate perfectly in the trinity. After creating man and woman in His image, God them gives them His first command which has many parts to it. Firstly, He commands them to be fruitful and multiply. This command is very important because when we look at God’s creation of man and woman, He created them with the goal of having children so that the world would be filled with His image bearers. In making this first command, God established His design for the family. The standard for the family is for there to be one man, one woman and children if it is His will. Even though this family structure has been designed by God, we find it under attack today. We have been told by many people in the culture that a family can consist of two men and children or two women and children. We have even seen that this alternative design for the family is being taught to our children in some schools. Not only is this being taught in school, but we see this being exposed to the public through the entertainment industry in TV shows and films. It is very difficult nowadays to find any TV show or movie that is not trying to filtrate the culture with this alternative view of the family. I can go even one step further. Many commercials are now showing these alternative views of families and using the goal of advertising to make this a normal part of life. No matter what the media may say, no matter what the entertainment industry says and no matter what advertisers say, the family as established by God is made up of one man and one woman who are to have children or nurture other children if God does not intend for that couple to have children of their own. Fallible man does not and cannot change what Holy God has established.

 Now that we have outlined what the family is according to Scripture, we can move forward with talking about the role of the man in the family. When God established the first marriage, we read in **Genesis 2:24 “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”** So, the first aspect of a man is that God created marriage so that a man might have a helpmate to be with him and be his companion. A man is designed to be the head of the home and is called upon by God to lead in a way similar to the way that Christ has shown His love for His bride, which is the church. For those of you here today who are married and for those of you who may not already be married, but have witnessed a wedding ceremony, the part of the ceremony where the vows are shared really expresses the love and commitment the man and the woman intend to share with each other. This love and commitment are to last as long as both the husband and wife live. So, a godly man is called to love and remain committed to one woman for his entire life.

 What else is commanded for a godly man to do according to Scripture? In addition to being committed to one woman for his entire life, men are commanded to be good husbands for their wives. Let us look at the Epistle of **Ephesians chapter 5 verses 21-33**. Let’s read this together and then discuss what it means to be a good husband according to Scripture. **“Wives, subject yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.**

**Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. So, husbands also ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are parts of His body. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. Nevertheless, as for you individually, each husband is to love his own wife the same as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.** In this passage the Apostle Paul outlines for us what it means for a man to be a good husband. First, he is to love his wife just as Christ loves the Church. We read that Christ loves the church with a sacrificial love because He laid down His life for the church. He did this in order to sanctify her and to make her holy. In the same manner, a husband is commanded to treat his wife just like himself by loving her in a selfless way. How can a husband do this? He can show this love by always honoring his wife and lifting her up rather than tearing her down. A selfless love is elevating others before self and being willing to give up what you want for the betterment of others. When the husband respects the wife and the wife respects the husband, they model for others what the perfect loving relationship is between God the Father, Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit. Marriage serves as the ultimate reflection of God’s love for His creation and also Christ’s love for the church.

 Our third characteristic of a godly man in addition to be committed to one woman and being a good husband is for a man of God to be a good example for children whether they be his own or not. When God established the first family, He commanded Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply and in doing so they would fill the earth with His image bearers. Mankind, being the final creation on the sixth day carries with them the important task of taking care of the earth that God created for them. One very important aspect of caring for creation is raising godly children and caring for them. Men who are blessed with children are commanded in Scripture to raise their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord **(Ephesians 6:4)**. By being a good husband, the father is setting a good example for his children to follow. This has been the design God has established from the beginning, and this was echoed by Moses when he was giving the law to the nation of Israel. We read at the beginning of the book of Joshua what the attitude was as Joshua took over leading the nation after the death of Moses. He said **“But if it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served, which were beyond the Euphrates River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15)**. What Joshua was making clear is that all men choose to follow someone or something. He said that he would serve the Lord only in his house. No matter what the culture around us may be doing or what it might be endorsing, we need to stay committed to the Lord and serve Him first in all things. Therefore, the Father in the home is commissioned to be the spiritual guide for the family and to see to it that the children are being raised to respect God. A godly man loves the law of the Lord and makes certain to teach it to his children.

 But what about those men who are not husbands yet or have not been blessed with children of their own. In what ways can these men honor God if they are single and without children? The same expectations are placed upon all men regardless of their situation. Men are to treat women in their lives with the same respect and dignity as they treat themselves. All women are to be looked upon as sisters in Christ, not as objects of desire. When we gather together in God’s house, we are brothers and sisters in Christ coming together to give the Lord the praise He so rightly deserves. Praising the Lord as brothers and sisters in Christ allows us to focus solely on our Lord and what He has done to make us holy in His sight. So, any man who is not a husband needs to look upon women as fellow sisters, not objects of desire.

 In regards to children, men are very important to the raising of godly children even if they are not the parent of that child. In my experiences as a public-school teacher, I very often interact with young men who have not had the experience of having a father figure in their life or a man in their life that they can get advice from when needed. I see this by the way that they desire attention and by all of the questions they continually ask. A godly man may be asked to serve as a mentor or male influence in the life of a child even though they are not the biological father of that child. I encourage all men to look for these opportunities and if they come up in you not to neglect the chance to leave an impression on a young life when you are asked to share. By helping to care for others in this way we are following the example of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the gospel **of John chapter 1 verses 12-13** the Apostle records these words **“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man, but of God.”** God has given us the right to become His children when we placed our faith in Him. In the same way we need to make ourselves available to all who are seeking a relationship with God. If we can further that relationship through spending time with them or being a stable influence in their lives then that is what we must do. God has adopted all of us to be His children through the sacrifice of His Son, therefore we need to follow that example.

 In conclusion, let me first thank all of the men in this congregation for your friendship, wisdom and tender hearts that you have shared with Katie and myself over these past months together. After having several conversations with many of the men I can say that I feel I have been accepted and treated in a way that honors God. We feel like we have been adopted into this family and we are so truly blessed with all of you being in our lives. Today as we take time to celebrate the men in our lives let us remember that every person is an image bearer of God who needs to be respected as such. As we learned today, a godly man will remain committed to his wife, he will be a good husband and he will also care for the children in his life whether they be his child or not. Let us continue to live in a way that honors our Lord and Savior not only on Father’s Day, but every day in our lives.