

MASCULINITY

- I. Biblical usage
 - A. The word "masculine" and "masculinity" are not found in the Bible.
 - B. There are, however, many references to men and males, and God's intent for their function, roles and character.

- II. Defining "masculinity"
 - A. Changing cultural concepts of "masculinity" and "femininity" lead to much confusion.
 - B. This study will primarily consider "masculinity" as referring to what it means to be a "male as God intended."

- III. Cultural consideration of "masculinity"
 - A. Physical body
 - 1. Big, burly, "buff," strong, muscle definition, "hunk"
 - 2. Hair length, body hair, beards
 - B. Clothing, apparel - style
 - 1. Business suits, jeans, muscle shirts, shoes, shorts
 - 2. Swim suits, underwear
 - 3. Gold chains, rings, earrings, tattoos
 - C. Activities
 - 1. adventure, challenge - mt. climbing, off-roading, hunting
 - 2. danger, risk-taking, chance of getting hurt, speed (fast cars)
 - 3. competition, out to win or succeed - workaholics
 - 4. push to the limit (Ironman), endure pain (refuse to see doctor), masochistic
 - 5. loud and powerful - motorcycles, cars, guns, explosions
 - 6. violence, destruction - fighting, wrestling, warriors, military (Rambo; John Wayne); contact sports - football, boxing, hockey; 90 per cent of prison population
 - 7. build things, construction, mechanical skills (electronic gadgets)
 - 8. willing to get dirty - mud, dirt, oil and grease, bugs, lizards
 - 9. beer-drinking, cigarette smoking, drug-taking
 - 10. sexual - masturbation, pornography, prostitution, adultery
 - D. Psychological
 - 1. objective, problem-solvers, rationalizing
 - 2. assertive, aggressive - Gung-ho; Go for the gusto; we are driven; "Charger"
 - 3. controlling, autocratic, dictatorial, macho, bossy, possessive
 - 4. performance/achievement oriented, goal-oriented - trying to prove themselves, activism
 - 5. ego-centric, selfish, stubborn, rigid, demanding
 - 6. suppress emotions, emotionally detached, "big boys don't cry" - yet anger and hostility acceptable; uncommunicative
 - 7. touch, strong, brave, courageous, fearless - no "sissy" - hero, star
 - 8. rude, crude, transgress social acceptability - jokes, body noises, animalistic (Uh, uh!), chauvinistic
 - 9. independent, stand-alone; limited male-bonding, friendships - relational deprivation; "Good ol' Boys club", "Promise Keepers"

- E. Contemporary cultural evaluation
 - 1. Modern feminist movement, "Women's Lib."
 - a. Men are to blame for suppressing, oppressing, dominating, exploiting women
 - b. Men should be ashamed, feel guilty - self-hatred, contempt
 - c. Men should be paid back, discriminated against, "enemies"
 - e. Men should be made powerless, demasculinized
 - f. Men should become dependent, servants, passive, emasculated
 - g. Men need sensitivity training to get in touch with emotions
 - 2. Modern masculinity movement, "Men's Lib." - "Promise-Keepers"

IV. Spiritual consideration of "masculinity"

- A. God divided the sexes into male and female, and designed them to have differing roles (Gen. 1,2)
 - 1. Family - head (Gen. 3:16; I Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23)
 - 2. Church - leadership of male elders (I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)
- B. Men and women are spiritually equal before God, however. (Gal. 3:28)
- C. Functional humanity, male or female, requires spiritual exchange (Acts 26:18)
- D. The life of Jesus Christ in a male is the essence of functional masculinity.
- E. Spiritual maturity develops the divine character expression of masculinity
 - Ps. 4:3 - "the Lord has set apart the godly man for Himself"
 - II Pet. 3:18 - "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus"
 - 1. Unashamed relationship with and derivation from God (Rom. 1:16)
 - 2. Righteousness, fairness, justice derived from Christ.
 - 3. Stability, consistency, security in character of Christ
 - 4. Strength in Christ (Phil. 4:13)
 - 5. Wisdom in Christ (I Cor. 1:24,30)
 - 6. Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22,23)
 - 7. Unselfish, loving, concerned, caring, compassionate, sensitive, cherishing, tender
 - 8. Fellowship with other Christians; encouragement
- F. Maritally this will involve
 - 1. Spiritual leadership (Gen. 18:19)
 - 2. Loving one's wife tenderly (Eph. 5:25; Col. 3:19)
 - 3. Provision (I Tim. 5:8)
 - 4. Sexual faithfulness and purity
- G. Parentally this will involve
 - 1. Personal relating - Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21)
 - 2. Discipline (Eph. 6:4; Heb. 12:9,10)
- H. Each Christian man must individually ascertain and discern how God wants to express Himself through him in character and in action, and such will be the God-ordained "masculinity" for that man.
 - 1. No simple definitions or formulas
 - 2. Accomplished only by God's grace

- V. We must avoid descriptions and perspectives of "masculinity" that are merely culturally determined, and continually discern God's perspective of "masculinity," i.e. how God wants to manifest His character and activity in each male.