

STRAIGHT TALK FOR MEN

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THE BATTLE TO SAVE MEN

By Melvin L. Latimer

Throughout the course of history there have been countless battles and wars fought.

Battles for land, battles for wealth, battles for power, battles for equality, religious battles, political battles but the greatest battle that has ever been fought is the battle to save mankind.

For over 2,000 years there has been a battle waged between the forces of darkness and the Almighty God for the battle for men's souls.

The soul of man is the greatest commodity the world has ever known. God loved man so much he gave his only Son for this cause (the battle).

There are approximately 108 million men in America over the age of 15. Sixty six million of these men don't know the Lord Jesus Christ and only 6 million are actively engaged in discipleship (about 1 in 18 men).

Most of the root cause and damage in society is widely contributed to and by men and their failures. 91% of drunk drivers – men; 90% of parental abuse – men; 80% of suicide deaths – men; Boys between the ages 10-18 are 4 to 5 times more likely to commit suicide than girls – future men; Men are increasingly isolated from their homes due to work or divorce; Over 60% of high school drop-outs are boys – future men; 80% serious drug addictions – men; 80% of America's homeless and 35% of those are Vietnam Veterans – men; Men are 43 times more likely than women to be admitted to psychiatric hospitals and 25 times as likely to end up in prison, nearly 80% of all homicide victims – men; 50% of domestic homicides committed against – men and life expectancy for men is 7 years less than the life expectancy for a women.

God help save men!

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Up to 70% of men seek out pornography.
Adultery is out of control

Men are addicted to everything from money to secret thought lives to the comfortable secluded environments they work so hard to create.

Most men will give the best years of their lives to ideas that never had any possibility of making them happy.

Most men only know enough about God to be disappointed in Him

They are tired, restless, confused, lonely, hurt and empty. Is it any wonder why America is mired in the moral decay of divorce, adultery, pornography, abortion, and 100 other problems?

The family is disintegrating. We've become a nation of spiritual widows and practical orphans. Who will turn the hearts of fathers toward their children? Who will teach men to love and honor their wives? Who will awaken men to see that comfort is not abundance – that bigger barns are not what we need in times like these? Who will call men to a radical surrender to Christ?

HOW DO WE REACH MEN

Disciplining men is not a top priority in any denomination based upon their actual allocations of financial and intellectual resources.

Disciplining men is our greatest strategic for reaching men. It is an under-managed area that can offer a greater return on labor and capital allocated to this priority.

Hugh O. MacClellan, one of America's leading Christian philanthropists, said recently, "The greatest need we have in America is to reach our men."

The church desperately needs what disciplined men have to offer. Men who love and follow Jesus become leaders, don't divorce their wives, and don't neglect their children. They donate more money, volunteer for more service, make a bigger kingdom impact in the community, and they invite more visitors to the church. In short, reaching our men is a battle plan for success.

WHAT DO MEN WANT

There are 98,000,000 men in America eighteen years of age and older. What do they want? How are they doing?

Pascal said, "All men seek happiness. Thus is without exception. This is the motive of every action of every man, even those who hang themselves." Only a fool wouldn't want to be happy.

First, we want something we can give our lives to- a mission or cause. This is the need to be significant, to make a difference, that our lives will count, that it will matter we lived. No man wants to be a shooting star that streaks across the sky one night, and then disappears.

Second, we want someone to share it with. This the need to love and be loved, to be part of a community, to find acceptance.

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Third, we want a “system” that offers a reasonable explanation for why 1 and 2 are so difficult. Frederick Taylor, the father of Scientific Management, said, “Your system is perfectly designed to produce the result you are getting.” What he meant was that if you manufacture cars and every third car rolls off the assembly line missing a front right fender, your system is perfectly designed to produce that result. Belief systems also “perfectly” produce predictable results.

HOW ARE MEN DOING

No man fails on purpose. No man wakes up and thinks to himself, “Well, I wonder what I can do today to tick off my wife, neglect my kids, let my boss down, and ruin my life?”

Most men wake up wanting to make an honest living and be loving husbands, good dads, contributing citizens, and, if religious, solid churchmen.

Of course, men often fail, but I don’t think anyone would suggest they fail on purpose. So why do men fail?

Regrettably, 63,000,000 men make no profession of Christ. It’s regrettable because Christianity is a “system” that is perfectly designed to produce abundant and eternal life, though not without troubles. Secular systems often end in ruin-usually at a great cost not only to the man but also his family.

50% of children from broken homes have not seen their father in over a year.

One of every three births is to an unmarried mother. Fatherlessness is the single most important factor in a boy’s

likelihood to commit a crime. The U.S. leads the world in fatherless families. The average American Christian male is in a “structural hurry.” Structured obligations keep him on the cell phone in the car that used to be his sanctuary. (One man told me he speeds to work to “save time.”) The average American Christian male has made an idol of something that competes with his full surrender to the Lordship of Christ. Men are addicted to everything from money to secret thought lives to comfortable little secluded environments they spend all their waking hours to create.

Why are many Christian men so frustrated? It is exactly because God has set eternity in our hearts, and we have a built-in sense that life does have meaning, and our frustration is that we have not yet found it. We don’t have enough religion to make us happy when we look in the mirror, but we have enough to remind us how unhappy we have become.

THE ANSWER TO SAVE MEN

First, we need to take Paul’s advice in 1 Timothy 2”1-6, Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

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Second, we must follow the example of Jesus in Matthew 28: 18-20, And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations -- teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always even to the end of the age.

All a man's needs can be (and can only be) satisfied in the Gospel of Jesus. He is the cause, He is the someone, and He is the "system" which explains the meaning and purpose of life.

The Gospel of Jesus is the only system that has ever been able to offer an adequate and redemptive explanation for why life is so messy. In the Gospel we find everything a man could want to be happy.

But men are often stubborn. They want to give "the world" a try. That's why God has graciously made every system apart from Christianity end in the feeling of "meaninglessness" – that life is futile.

He does this so that we all will eventually see the futility of any system apart from Christ.

Not all men will humble themselves and turn to God, but observation and experience tell us that all men will see their systems fail them.

God will not force a man to serve him, but he will make it impossible for him to be happy unless he does.

(Note: Portions of this article was adapted from an article written for the May/June 2002 issue of New Man Magazine and from Man In the Mirror Newsletter Number 85 and 88)