

“The Making of a Real Dad!”

Joshua 1:1-9

Intro. – You know the saying, “Many a truth is spoken in jest,” well this past week I heard/read an individual jokingly say, “I’m getting my TV a father’s day gift since it raised me.”

Staunch advocate for the family, James Dobson in *Christianity Today* cited Cornell U. study showing fathers of preschool children on average spend 37.7 seconds a day in real contact with their kids. In contrast, study indicated that children watch TV approx. 54 hours a week.

I’m going to conduct a little poll this morning to take this a step further. Some would say, “Leaders/Dads are born” while other would say, “Leaders/Dads are made, not born.” What do you think? I’m not guaranteeing you will have your mind made up one way or the other just by listening to this message; however, a more thorough study of God’s Word will reveal the truth..

First, our text mentions Moses. Moses was born at the right time to the right family. By faith, his family preserved him in face of the command of Pharaoh that all male Hebrews be cast into the Nile River. It can be said from the beginning of his life Moses was born and trained to be a real leader, a real dad.

Another aspect of Moses’ life reveals his qualifications as a leader. His 40 years of chasing sheep in the same wilderness into which God would have him lead Israel.

There is yet another sense in which Moses was made a leader/dad. Reluctant at first to receive the task of God, Moses was finally persuaded to accept his role.

In all, three matters led to Moses being the leader/dad that he was: 1) his birth; 2) circumstances of his life; and 3) his acceptance of the leadership role given to him.

With this in mind, God made clear in His Word He has a role for every man and woman. I believe the role of men is distinct/completely different than the role God has given to women. It is absolutely essential that each man heed this God given role. I also believe this has everything to do with the making of real men/dads.

Make no mistake there is a concerted effort to mesh the roles of men and women. Such has already led to serious consequences. Yes, I’m suggesting there is at present a concerted effort to feminize men and de-feminize women. The results are already evident. Who would have thought that a constitutional amendment would be necessary to preserve the divine institution of marriage in the United States?

Purpose: to learn the God given role of fatherhood in view of Joshua

When Moses ascended Mount Pisgah, Joshua knew in his heart that the task of leading millions into the Promised Land would soon be his. By looking at his life we will have a solid basis to understand what all is involved with the making of a real dad. Only by knowing these Bible stories will we be able to apply them:

I THE SENSE OF INADEQUACY

A. Joshua Filled Big Shoes

1. No other man on face earth like Moses. How do you suppose this made Joshua feel?
2. Moses couldn’t enter the Promised Land for his sin. How do you suppose this affected Joshua?
3. Joshua had moments of “feeling” totally inadequate for the job – Much like every dad present has experienced and will experience in being a dad...

B. We Must Fill Big Shoes

1. We must glory in our inadequacies – Paul knew then and concluded that when he was weak in himself, he was strongest in Christ – 2 Corinthians 12:10 *“That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”*
2. We must recognize the time element, because in this sense, leaders/dads are born.
 - a. Moses, Joshua, Paul leaders for their time... You are a leader/dad for your time...
 - b. note: had God wanted you to be contemporary of Joshua’s time, you would have been. God has matched us to this time because He has called us to task for these times!

- c. Illus. – Corporal well versed in one area was called upon to give a lecture in this field to a group of commissioned officers (Lieutenants, Captains and Colonels). He sized up his audience and saw every man present was higher in rank than himself. Began by saying, “There are others better qualified than myself to speak to you on this matter, but none are present.”
- 3. Moses stuttered and Joshua was 40 years past his prime in life; yet, God’s timing was impeccable!
- 4. Yes, there were feelings of inadequacy, but the promise of God overcame that inadequacy in Moses and Joshua. That same promise remains today.

II THE COMMAND TO BE STRONG

- the commandments given to Joshua served as commandments you and I must heed as well
 - why was Joshua (you and I) called upon to *be strong and courageous*?
- A. Called Upon to be a Leader (v 6)
- 1. Joshua had reiterated to him that he was specifically being called upon to be leader of Israel...
 - 2. You are specifically called upon to be leader in your marriage and in your home... be a man! Not a macho man... A real man...
- B. God Has Revealed His Will (vv 7-8)
- 1. He made His will known to Joshua...
 - 2. He has made His will known to each of us – includes gender roles...
 - 3. Too many are living their lives as if it were a crap shoot – especially Christians...:
 - Proverbs 3:5-6 *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”*
- C. God’s Presence is Greater Than Satan’s Terror
- 1. Two first graders were overheard as they left Bible School class, “Do you really believe all that stuff about the devil?” “No, I think it’s like Santa Claus. It’s really your dad.”
 - 2. Note that God’s strength goes beyond discouragement, defeat and terror of Satan
 - Hebrews 13:5 *“...because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’”*

III THE CHOICE TO LEAD

- A. Think of the Choices Faced
- 1. Joshua was faced with the matter of being God’s leader or not...
 - 2. Each man present here has the choice – be God’s man... leader... dad...
- B. Think of What Did Happen
- 1. When Esther heeded Mordecai’s challenge, functioned in her role, a nation was literally saved.
 - 2. When a king named Josiah listened to the reading of God’s Word, he led himself and an entire nation in repentance before God...
 - 3. When Moses finally did as God called...
 - 4. When Joshua did take courage and took the Promised Land...
- C. Think What Can Happen
- 1. What would have happened had most of the kings of Israel taken their role seriously and were as true to God in that role as was Joshua?
 - 2. What would happen if leadership of this nation were to take seriously their roles and were true first and foremost to God?
 - Illus. – Patrick Stewart (Capt. Jean Luc Picard) Star Trek the Next Generation use to often say “Make it so Number One...” You and I need to “make it so” under power of God’s Spirit...
 - 3. If every man present would take seriously their God given roles as MEN, this church would more than impact this community and area... marriages... jobs... you name it...

Conclusion: James Dobson recently said, “Our very survival as a nation will depend on the presence or absence of masculine leadership in the home.”

Jack Hyles (preacher at 1st Baptist Church, Hammond, IN) “You can name anything you want to name, but I am opposed to anything in the world that de-emphasizes the line of difference between the sexes. I believe that ladies ought to be feminine, sweet, lovely and charming. I believe men ought to be strong, masculine and decisive. I’m opposed to anything that makes a man & a woman act alike, look alike, dress alike, or talk alike.”

Harvard Professor Dr. Harvey Mansfield, “...Women 50 years ago wanted their men to be fearless, chivalrous, honorable and self-confident... Their heroes were ultra-manly Hollywood stars such as Humphrey Bogart and John Wayne... I can date the demise of manliness to the beginning of the rise of feminism in the Sixties... Forty years later, for the first time in history, we have a gender neutral society. Your sex – male or female – is irrelevant and doesn’t give you rights or duties or tell you your place in society. It has heralded a cataclysmic change... the simple truth is that manliness and femininity balance each other. We need a change in our thinking so that both men and women can lead fulfilled lives.”

Here is a secular teacher in an Ivy League College making more sense than most preachers in the pulpits across our land today. My point is simply this. What is it going to take? Is this what it’s going to take until you recognize God’s roles for men and women are to be taken seriously? We need dad’s being real dads so their sons/daughters can grow up fulfilling the roles God has given as Christian gentlemen or as Christian ladies.

Shortly before his death, under the inspiration of God, Joshua wrote (24:14-15) “*Now fear the Lord and serve Him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.*”