

A Few Good Men

Selected Scriptures

Introduction: Dad Jokes

- Dad talking to his son about getting a haircut before he gets his driver's license
- What's the difference between a man's wallet before and after kids? There are pictures where the money used to be.
- What did the baby corn say to the mama corn? Where's popcorn?
- Dad's may tell the corniest jokes sometimes, but a dad, a father who is involved deeply in their children's lives is a very precious and important person in a child's life.
 - The number of children living with two parents has dropped since 1968, while the percentage living with their mother only has doubled.
 - **In 1968, 85% of children under 18 lived with two parents (regardless of marital status); by 2020, 70% did, according to the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS).**
 - **Children living with a mother only is the second most common U.S. living arrangement, a number that has doubled since 1968. – 21% according to the 2020 census figures.**
- Dads who stay in the family and are faithful to their wives is becoming more and more a rare commodity in our culture. The majority of men incarcerated did not have a father figure in his home.
 - **63% of youth suicides are from fatherless homes (U.S. Dept. Of Health/Census) – 5 times the average.**
 - **90% of all homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes – 32 times the average.**
 - **85% of all children who show behavior disorders come from fatherless homes – 20 times the average. (Center for Disease Control)**
 - **71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes – 9 times the average. (National Principals Association Report)**
 - **Positive information about fathers being in the home**
 - **Children with Fathers who are involved are 40% less likely to repeat a grade in school.**
 - **Children with Fathers who are involved are 70% less likely to drop out of school.**
 - **Children with Fathers who are involved are more likely to get A's in school.**
 - **Children with Fathers who are involved are more likely to enjoy school and engage in extracurricular activities.**

- **God is looking for fathers and men who will stand up for God and live lives that are blameless and righteous.**

Scripture Reading

2 Timothy 1:3-7

3 I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. 4 As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. 5 I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. 6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, 7 for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control

Purpose: Every man who is a Christ follower must be willing to stand for God in our current culture.

Transition: I want to look at five character qualities that I believe father's need to have and exhibit to stand strong in their faith and to be the leader of his wife and kids God wants him to be.

Honest – Proverbs 12:17; 19:1

- Honest with God

Psalm 19:14

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer

- Men of God own their sin and shortcomings. They humble themselves before God in repentance
- They seek to live a blameless life.
 - No one in this life can live a perfect life. Christians aren't perfect; just forgiven – bumper sticker
 - But when we mess up, we make things right with God and our fellow man.

Proverbs 12:17

Whoever speaks the truth gives honest evidence, but a false witness utters deceit

Proverbs 19:1

Better is a poor person who walks in his integrity than one who is crooked in speech and is a fool

- Honest about God

- Are we honest with others about our relationship with God?
- I am not saying stand up at the break table at work and preach but when it comes up, where do you stand?

Illustration: Tampa Bay Rays and Pride Month Celebration

But not all the Rays' players wanted to participate, and the team allowed them that choice, the Times said. Among the players who didn't wear the rainbow colors were pitchers Jason Adam, Jalen Beeks, Brooks Raley, Jeffrey Springs, and Ryan Thompson, the paper added.

The article pointed out

Team officials chose Adam to speak for the group who refused to wear the rainbow colors on their uniform and hat, and he told the Times the decision was based on religious beliefs.

“A lot of it comes down to faith, to like a faith-based decision,” Adam said, according to the paper. “So it’s a hard decision. Because ultimately we all said what we want is them to know that all are welcome and loved here. But when we put it on our bodies, I think a lot of guys decided that it’s just a lifestyle that maybe — not that they look down on anybody or think differently — it’s just that maybe we don’t want to encourage it if we believe in Jesus, who’s encouraged us to live a lifestyle that would abstain from that behavior, just like [Jesus] encourages me as a heterosexual male to abstain from sex outside of the confines of marriage. It’s no different. It’s not judgmental. It’s not looking down. It’s just what we believe the lifestyle he’s encouraged us to live, for our good, not to withhold. But again, we love these men and women, we care about them, and we want them to feel safe and welcome here.”

Ryan Thompson said in a TV interview “Those of us who decided not to wear the patch or hat spent a couple weeks in prayer and a deep dive into Scripture on the subject at hand to come to the decision that we did.”

WFLA - TV said Thompson added, “if I believe the Bible is infallible and that everlasting life is attainable, yet I bow down to public opinion in the name of tolerance, is that love? I don’t think so.”

- **Honest about what God says**

Isaiah 66:2

All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word

- Men, do you tremble at God’s Word?

- In 586 B.C., Jerusalem was captured by the Babylonians. The Temple was looted and then destroyed by fire. The Jews were exiled.
- About 70 years later, the Jewish captives returned to Jerusalem from Babylon. According to the Bible, Ezra recovered a copy of the Torah (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) and read it aloud to the whole nation.
- From then on, the Jewish scribes solidified the following process for creating copies of the Torah and eventually other books in the Old Testament.
 - They could only use clean animal skins, both to write on, and even to bind manuscripts.
 - Each column of writing could have no less than forty-eight, and no more than sixty lines.
 - The ink must be black, and of a special recipe.
 - They must verbalize each word aloud while they were writing.
 - They must wipe the pen and wash their entire bodies before writing the word "Jehovah," every time they wrote it.
- Do you take God at His Word, as He says it and attempt to apply and align your life with the teachings found in His Word?
- Make that commitment today. If you commit to being honest with God, honest about who God is and what He said, you are on the road to living a no regrets life.

Application: Live a no regrets life

Transition: A second characteristic we men need to exhibit and ladies who are Christ followers as well is to be;

Bold – Acts 4:29 – 31; 28:31

- Speak the truth in love at all times

Ephesians 4:15

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ

Proverbs 27:6

Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.

- Speak the truth and be willing to accept the results

Acts 4:29-31 – Peter speaking

29 And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, 30 while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” 31 And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

- We need to declare God’s truths and our convictions about those truths when the time comes to share them.
- Men, are we open to God’s call and leading in our lives?
- Are we willing to speak up for Him in public when the opportunity comes?

Illustration: Indianapolis Colts starting safety has decided to retire after three seasons in the NFL. His motivation? To become a preacher of the Gospel because God has called him to do that.

"With much prayer and deliberation, I have elected to officially retire from the NFL as I endeavor to devote the remainder of my life to the further advancement of the Gospel of Jesus Christ," Willis wrote in part. "I thank all of my family, friends, and those who have supported me on this journey thus far, and I look forward to your continued support through the next phase of my life. I am both humbled and excited to pursue the holy call that God has for my life which brings me much joy and purpose ..."

"We're thankful and appreciative of Khari's contributions to the Colts both on and off the field over the last three seasons," Reich said in a statement, according to ESPN. "Khari's character, leadership, and professionalism will be missed in our locker room as will his play on Sundays. I admire and respect his decision to transition into the next stage of his life and ministry and my prayers will always be with him."

Responses

- **"God isn't real, this is crazy," one commenter said in reaction to the news.**
- **"Giving up a proven career that makes you millions of dollars for a magic man in the sky who doesn't exist is a strange choice but alrighty then," another user declared.**
- **"It's pretty selfish for the being you worship to essentially strip you of your childhood, teenage and college years to train and give it your all to the sport of football, for you to reach the pinnacle of the sport, the NFL, and then say, 'Nah, go teach others about me instead...'" another commenter opined.**
- **"Bruh if my god ever told me to quit on making millions of dollars to be a priest instead I would straight up tell him to kick rocks," another commenter revealed. "Nah man there's plenty of other 'gods' bruh I**

wish I had this opportunity. Just get a different god and keep gettin that bag."

- We need to have the boldness of the disciples, early church believers and the Apostle Paul
- God says "Fear not" more than any other phrase in all of scripture
- Now is the time to go big or go home. Now is the time to be all in for God and make Him famous.
- **Go big or go home** is apparently it was a marketing term for Porker Pipes in the 90's - they made exhaust systems for Harleys in Southern California - "Go big or go home" was on their packaging

Application: Go **big** or go **home**

Transition: The third characteristic to be reminded of today is to be;

Courageous – 2 Timothy 1:7; I John 4:18; Galatians 2:20; Proverbs 1:7; I Thessalonians 2:4; 4:1

- Do we walk in victory over the world today, men?

Illustration: Each year on June 18th, the great Battle of Waterloo is recalled in what is now Belgium. On that day in 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte's French army was defeated by a multi-national force commanded by the Duke of Wellington. Since then, the phrase, "to meet your Waterloo," has come to mean "to be defeated by someone who is too strong for you or by a problem that is too difficult for you." When it comes to our spiritual lives, some people feel that ultimate failure is inevitable and it's only a matter of time until each of us will "meet our Waterloo."

I John 5:4

For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

- Live with **abandon** for God

Matthew 19:28-30

28 Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and the last first

- Give God your life with your hands open, palm side up
- Give God the blank check to your life

- Don't try to rationalize or bargain with what God says but do as He says with an absolute unwavering trust that He has our best interests in mind at all times.
- Live in victory and confidence. When you fall, confess your sin, get back on the horse and keep riding.
- Live with the fear of the Lord alone

I Thessalonians 2:4

But just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts

- As I have often said, play to an audience of one. No matter the cost.

Application: Live for God and let the chips fall where they may

Transition: Fourth character quality we need to possess and develop is being a;

Servant Leader

- The motto of a good husband and good father is to learn to work with and develop a team by submitting to one another

Ephesians 5:21

Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Romans 12:3

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

- Remember that no one is better than you and you are not better than anyone else.
- Humility begins in the heart – Proverbs 23:7a (KJV)

Proverbs 23:7a

For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he

- It is about keeping your promises to your wife and kids
- It is taking the time and having the patience to teach your boys and girls (along with their mom) helpful skills for the future. My dad was poor at this.
- Teach boys how to be men, spiritually, emotionally, physically, in recreational opportunities, work ethic, and how to be a responsible man and women in public in the future. Moms, teach girls how to be girls. Be intentional in working with the kids in your family to learn that their gender orientation is found in who we are in Christ. How God created us in our

mother's womb and our gender was revealed at birth. We are all on a quest to know how God made us and for His purposes while on earth.

- These may change as the seasons of life change
- Parents of adult children serve best as counselors and advisors when asked for their advice by their kids. Unsolicited advice is not well received by our adult children.

- Humility is evidenced in the home – I Peter 3:7; Ephesians 6:4

Ephesians 6:4

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord

- While you have kids at home father's, let them see power under control, (that is what humility is), your meekness
- Put yourself in your kids' shoes. Try to look at life at they do. It will help you know how to teach them convictions, skills and obedience to God's Word at the age level and intellectual level they can understand. We need to be creative in this and meet kids where they are with the truths of scripture.

Application: Be man enough to admit you are wrong at times and ask for forgiveness

Transition: All of these character qualities are important but this one stands out probably the most. Be an

Encourager / Coach – I Chronicles 16:9

- Be a Barnabas – Acts 4:36

I Thessalonians 2:11 - 12

11 For you know how, like a father with his children, 12 we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory

- Be encouraging, comforting, and urging your children and grandchildren in their faith and be sure it is their faith, their biblical worldview
- Be there to affirm and cheer your kids on at their events. The time goes by so fast for having kids and grandkids. Cherish those opportunities.
- Find the good in your kids and grandkids and commend them for it.
- Be a Paul- I Timothy 1:1; 18-19

Philippians 2:22

But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel.

- Be a mentor to your son and daughter. Teach them what manhood and womanhood look like and how to do it.
 - How to treat people with dignity of the opposite sex
 - Help with school work, school projects, practicing for sports, just having fun with them. Let them know dad is fun
 - Teach them work ethic and taking responsibility for themselves
 - Teach them how to fear the Lord and honor Him by serving in the church.
- Treat your wife well so as you model your love for your wife and Christ modeled His love for us by giving His life, your children and grandchildren will pick up on that. More is caught than taught. Lead by example.

Application: Be your family's biggest fan and cheerleader

Transition: God needs strong men to lead their homes and to be leaders in church and the community while standing for God.

Key Thought: God is looking for a few good men to fight the good fight and finish well

A Few Good Men – Bill Gaither

Verse One - What this dying world could use is a willing Man of God

Who dares to go against the grain and works without applause

A man who'll raise the shield of Faith, protecting what is pure

Whose love is tough and gentle; a man whose word is sure

God doesn't need an Orator who knows what just to say

He doesn't need authorities to reason Him away

He doesn't need an army to guarantee a win

He just needs a few good men

Chorus - Men full of compassion, who laugh and love and cry

Men who'll face Eternity and aren't afraid to die

Men who'll fight for freedom and honor once again

He just needs a few good men – Bill Gaither

Questions to Ponder This Week

- 1. Do you fear God more than man when it comes to making the Gospel and your convictions known?**
- 2. Can you say that you are living with abandon for God today?**

3. Are you humble enough to admit to your spouse, family or friend that you were wrong and ask for forgiveness?