

Jesus' Model of Manhood-He Provides Even from the Cross

Happy Father's Day! Over and over in the scripture, fathers are commanded to provide a good example for their Children. Timothy 2:11-12 calls this to mind when he says **"For you know how, like a father with his children, 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."** We encourage our families to walk in a manner worthy of God, worth of the calling that we have as believers. We encourage them to love God, and teach our children to love God. In Deuteronomy 6:5-7, we read **You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.**

We're going to be looking at Jesus' Godly example at the hardest time in His life—when He was hanging on the cross. Despite all of the suffering, Jesus was focused on the redemption for you and me that He had to accomplish, and providing salvation for us. He provided the model of manhood, & provision for both natural and spiritual family.

Jesus Provides Righteousness

As horrible as all the crucifixion was, the worst happened as Jesus, as Peter 2:24 puts it **24 and He Himself brought our sins in His body up on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness; by His wounds you were healed.** Because God cannot look upon sin, he had to turn away from His Son in the moment He lay your sins and mine on Jesus. In that moment, He was made to be sin for us Who knew no sin. He carried our sins and died so that we might live for righteousness and die to sin. 2 Cor 5:21 puts it like this: **21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin in our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.** He bore our sins, so we wouldn't have to. He became sin, who knew no sin, so we might become His righteousness. Jesus provided what only He could provide at the cross—perfect righteousness in exchange for our sins, yours and mine. God can look at we who have accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior, and see the Righteousness of Jesus, and smile, because our sins have been put on Jesus as He turned away from Him that day.

As Fathers, can we provide perfect righteousness, as Jesus did? No. But, we can provide an example of living our lives righteously; rightly in God's eyes, by obedience to His Word. We can provide a Godly example to teach them right from wrong, to teach them to obey God. We can't make them sinless, but we can help them sin LESS. And maybe they can learn to avoid some of the mistakes that we've made. But, we as MEN have to let God Lead us first, and follow God's commandments, trusting Him to guide us by the power of His Holy Spirit. Righteousness is not a problem that we as Men can just "figure out" or "solve the problem". If we try to do that, we become self-righteous. We must seek the Lord with our Hear! Jeremiah had promised them in 29:13 **You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.** Heart, not mind. Jeremiah didn't say—figure out a way to obey all the commandments, perfectly, because God knows we can't. God sees our heart, and works to sculpt it, through the power of the Holy Spirit into a heart like Jesus'; a heart of obedience and submission. 1 Tim 1:5 **The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.** As we allow God to change our heart, and mold, and conform us into the image of Christ, we will automatically from our heart begin to do His will.

Jesus Lay Down His Life.

As men, we can have a plan in our head about how to accomplish what we want to. But, sometimes we forget to factor in that other people have wants and desires too. When we become arrogant, or conceited, or vain, or selfish, we cannot imagine that we are serving God. That's not the example that Jesus gave. Jesus is God, yet when He was on earth, He was the humblest, most meek of men. And He is our example. As Phil 2:3-8 tells **4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, as He**

already existed in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself by taking the form of a bond-servant and being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death: death on a cross. Jesus never said “Make Yourself Happy”, “Be Your Best You”, “Live Your Best Life Now”, “Be True to Yourself”, “Carpe Diem-Seize the Day” Instead of seeking our happiness and fulfillment on our own, Jesus gave us a description of what the working of the Holy Spirit in us is trying to produce in our heart. In the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-5 Jesus began the beatitudes with humility. He said **“Oh How Happy are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven, Oh how happy are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth, ...**God’s changes in us result in a change in character that should come from the inside out. Seeking our fulfillment within ourselves will only lead to misery. Instead, we must seek our fulfillment in Him, and follow His example of humility and meekness.

It’s our responsibility to give our families the same self-sacrificial love as Jesus did, and as a priest for our household, wash them with the water of the word. Jesus modeled submission to the Father, always doing the father’s will, no matter how difficult.

Jesus modeled providing for his family

Even while Jesus was hanging on the cross, his thoughts were on providing for his family. In John 19:26-27 we read **26 So when Jesus saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He *said to His mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” 27 Then He *said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own household.** Mary was most certainly a widow at this point in her life and also an older woman. Jesus was providing for his mother by making sure that a Christian disciple would care for his mom while He was gone. Jesus’ brothers did not become believers until after His resurrection (John 7:5), and were not present at His crucifixion. As the oldest son in His family, Jesus had a cultural obligation to care for His mother, and He passed that obligation on to one of His closest friends, and His disciple. The beauty of these verses is the loving care that Jesus took, in the most agonizing hours of His life to provide for his mother, as well as to further demonstrate the love that John had for Jesus in caring for Jesus’ mother for the rest of her life. Jesus is clearly teaching us the importance of caring for family, and especially for those family that are widows and the elderly, regardless of circumstances. We need to model this care for our family, when they are in need. Later, James, the half-brother of Jesus, would call such care for widows “pure religion.” **“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world”** (James 1:27).

Jesus provided an example to the Church on the cross

Although the Church wouldn’t even be born until 53 days later, Jesus was already looking ahead, preparing and providing at the cross. Just after Jesus died, in Luke 23:47 we read **47 Now when the centurion saw what had happened, he began praising God, saying, “This man was in fact innocent.”** Jesus met him where he was—a man of action, at the cross. This centurion had just witnessed the most bravery in the face of death he’d ever seen. And when he sees the true witness of Jesus in His greatest trial, and after witnessing all this struggle, sees Jesus at the end commend His Spirit to His Heavenly Father, with sincerity and innocence when facing death, the true witness, the sincere devotion to God melts this man’s heart and he began praising God, saying, **“This man was in fact innocent.”**

Jesus provided an example to the unbelieving crowds.

Continuing in Luke 23:48, we read **48 And all the crowds who came together for this spectacle, after watching what had happened, began to return home, beating their chests.**

Many thousands would see Jesus hanging dead upon the cross. They had looked on the whole tragedy as a sight, a spectacle, but they got much more than they bargained for. Beating one’s chest is an ancient symbol of sincere, deep sorrow over one’s sinfulness, and contrition. Remember in Luke, we hear the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, **“But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift**

up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'" (Luke 18:13)

There are lots of other examples in the Old Testament.

The Jewish leaders and Pilate had drawn the crowds into the decision on Jesus' death, but ultimately, they had been the ones who had cried for his crucifixion. The multitude, after seeing the horror of the crucifixion of this innocent man very quickly began to feel revulsion at themselves, and regret, now useless, and waves of sorrow pour over them, which caused them to smite their breasts. In this way, it foreshadowed the same kind of sorrow that will someday overtake the whole Jewish people, as they **"they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourn for his only son"** (Zechariah 12:10). Now the people could see and sorrow over all that happened. I tend to think that there was some true repentance involved by some of them, because it's interesting that many of this same multitude would have come back to Jerusalem for Pentecost, since it was one of the feasts that God had commanded that Israel return to Jerusalem for 53 days later. They probably couldn't wait to hear what the disciples had to say on Pentecost. And then in Acts 2 36-38, we see the fruit of this preparation by the Lord for the birth of the Church, as Peter preaches **Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified."**

37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what are we to do?" **38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** About 3,000 souls came to believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior that day. Why so many? I think that many were prepared by the witness of Jesus, and His provision from the cross!

Jesus was pierced in the heart, and His body broken so that we would understand His great love for us, and what He provided for us on the cross. The heart is the seat of all desires and it's our desire to do our own will that separates us most from the will of God needs to be beat into submission. Let us, as Fathers submit to God, knowing that it is our sin too that put Jesus on the cross. Jesus died for your sins, and mine. And, as we follow Jesus, let us provide for those who are in need, especially in our own families. Spiritual need, Physical need, Practical need, Emotional need, whatever the need is, just as Jesus did. And let us witness of the great love of Jesus for us, that He died for us and provided for us on that cross. May we always remember to ask God to renew our hearts and our love for Him, and love for our families.