

3-1-1998

## Theology, News and Notes - Vol. 45, No. 01

Fuller Theological Seminary

James L. Furrow

Jack O. Balswick

Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.fuller.edu/tnn>

 Part of the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Fuller Theological Seminary; Furrow, James L.; Balswick, Jack O.; and Leeuwen, Mary Stewart Van, "Theology, News and Notes - Vol. 45, No. 01" (1998). *Theology News & Notes*. 132.  
<https://digitalcommons.fuller.edu/tnn/132>

This Periodical is brought to you for free and open access by the Fuller Seminary Publications at Digital Commons @ Fuller. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theology News & Notes by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Fuller. For more information, please contact [archives@fuller.edu](mailto:archives@fuller.edu).

# THEOLOGY, NEWS AND NOTES

FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

MARCH 1998



MINISTERING

TO MEN



*Theology, News and Notes* is published for the Fuller Theological Seminary Alumni/ae.

Vol. 45, No. 1 USPS627220

**Editorial Board:**

James H. Morrison, Th.M., Chair  
Colleen Benson, Ph.D.

Frederic W. Bush, Ph.D.

Robert Gallagher, M.A.

Ronald J. Kernaghan, Ph.D.

Robert P. Meye, D.Theol.

William E. Pannell, D.D.

James Rice, M.A.

Marguerite Shuster, Ph.D.

**Managing Editor:** Janice Ryder

**Editor:** Esther S. Brinkley

**Cover Design:** Sam Gantt

**Cover Photos:** PhotoDisc Object Series, Volume 30

A publication of Fuller Theological Seminary, 135 N. Oakland Avenue, Pasadena, California 91182.

Published four times a year in March, June, October, and December.

The editorial content of *Theology, News and Notes* reflects the opinions of the various authors and should not be interpreted as necessarily representing the views of Fuller Theological Seminary.

©1998 by Fuller Theological Seminary and produced in limited quantities for the alumni/ae.

Postmaster: Periodical paid at Pasadena, California. Send change of address to FULLER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, 135 N. Oakland Ave., Pasadena, CA 91182.

# Contents

3

## *Ministering to Men*

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

JAMES L. FURROW

4

## *The Men's Movement*

A SOCIOLOGIST'S OVERVIEW

JACK O. BALSWICK

8

## *Men Behaving Not So Badly*

A BIBLICAL FEMINIST'S RESPONSE

MARY STEWART VAN LEEUWEN

11

## *Healing the Father-Wound*

THE ULTIMATE MEN'S MOVEMENT

GORDON DALBEY

15

## *Machismo a Hombre de Dios*

A HISPANIC PASTOR'S CHALLENGE

ISAAC J. CANALES

17

## *Restoring African-American Fatherhood*

MINISTRY TO INNER-CITY MEN

E. BERNARD FRANKLIN

20

## *An Untapped Spiritual Power*

THE GRANDFATHER IMPACT

JUDSON SWIHART

# Ministering to Men

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

BY JAMES L. FURROW

In the midst of the hundreds of thousands of men gathered last year on the Mall between the Capitol steps and the Washington Monument, one small boy's perceptions of manhood changed. Never in his ten years of life had he seen so many men cry. This experience brought him closer to a different side of masculinity. His story joins those of many others whose lives have been touched by recent gatherings of Christian men. Miles away a local church staff is revising its budget. The resources they had dedicated to men's ministry are being reallocated. Their small-group ministry to men has lost its numbers as men directed their attention to larger regional rallies. Some staff members were pleased to have the additional resources, while others questioned how a once-vital ministry could be out-sourced.

This edition of *Theology News and Notes* explores several issues related to ministering to men. While this journal previously addressed "Women and Ministry" (in March 1995) and "Women in Ministry" (in October 1985), this issue focuses on ministry to men. The role of organizations such as Promise Keepers is undeniable in the dramatic rise of interest in the Christian men's movement. Millions of men have responded to this movement which emphasizes a "godly manhood." While media scrutiny has sought to provide a balanced coverage, a sociological analysis of the movement has received limited attention.

Jack Balswick, professor of sociology and family development

in Fuller's School of Psychology, has written extensively on men's issues for the past three decades. He provides a sociologist's analysis of the Christian men's movement. Two essays follow in response to Balswick's analysis. Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, resident scholar at Eastern College's Center for Christian Women in Leadership,

*The articles in this edition . . . address many issues facing today's church and the men it seeks to serve.*

presents biblical feminist concerns with this movement. Then renowned author and conference speaker Gordon Dalbey reflects on his concern about the need to restore masculine identity through a spirit of sonship and surrender to God.

The second group of articles in this issue responds to three areas related to ministering to men. These include ministry to men in the local church, in the inner city, and in the later stages of life. A popular speaker at men's rallies, Fuller's Isaac Canales, associate professor of theology and Hispanic ministry, motivates pastors with his experiences in ministering to Latino men in the local church. Bernard Franklin, vice president of the National

Center for Fathering, provides an African-American perspective of the plight of urban men who deal with despair and hopelessness. He challenges ministry professionals to work to help restore responsible fatherhood. Judson Swihart, noted author and therapist, describes the important contribution that grandfathers can make in their families and churches, and reveals some important considerations in bringing these men into a more vital ministry.

Taken together, the articles in this edition of *Theology, News and Notes* address many issues facing today's church and the men it seeks to serve. ■

JAMES L. FURROW, Ph.D., Marriage and Family Department chair and assistant professor of marital and family therapy in Fuller's School of Psychology, specializes in parenting and marriage counseling. A member of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy, he has written numerous articles in professional journals and has frequently spoken at nationwide conferences on marriage and family relationships.





# The Men's Movement

## A SOCIOLOGIST'S OVERVIEW

BY JACK O. BALSWICK

Since masculinity and femininity are each defined by the other, it is not surprising that the emergence of the new men's movement follows the modern women's movement. The emergence of the modern men's movement took place in the early 1970s. As the women's movement gained momentum, men who found themselves supportive of feminist goals searched for ways to act out their support.

It has not been easy for men to participate directly in the women's movement. To keep from diluting their political goals, women in the movement believed that the movement needed to be *for* women and *by* women. Men who were sympathetic to women's goals received a loud, clear message: "If you are supportive of the women's movement, the best thing you can do is to find ways to reduce the sexism in men!"

This was evident to me when I participated in a committee forming a women's studies program at the University of Georgia in 1975. As the only male faculty representative, I proposed a gender studies program as an alternative to limiting the emphasis of women studies alone. As a sociologist, I reasoned that if sexism were the problem, then it might make sense to study men too! Research on ethnic and race relations unfortunately emphasized understanding the effect of discrimination on minority groups, rather than on the racist structures of majority groups. While the committee heard my concern, they argued that a genders studies program would not have the political effectiveness of a women's studies program in

bringing change. (Many universities now include the study of men as part of their curricular agenda.)

**THE EARLY MEN'S MOVEMENT**  
The men's movement of the early 1970s began as an expression of

---

*Men began to discover that the traditional masculine values were oppressive to women and repressive to men.*

---

men wanting to support feminist concerns. Their participation effected a personal consciousness-raising. A social science influence pervaded the initial focus upon how men overtly and covertly participated in sexist social structures that discriminated against women. Consequently, men came to realize that they too were in need of "liberation." Women struggled against structures denying them equal participation, and men countered with a restrictive traditional model of masculinity. In *The Forty-nine Percent Majority*, D. David and R. Brannon described the traditional model in four descriptors. These restrictive qualities include an emphasis on competition, achievement-oriented self-affirmation, toughness, and the demonstration of strength through aggression and the

inexpression of emotion. Men were not to show their vulnerability either through tears or through tenderness.

Men began to discover that the traditional masculine values were oppressive to women and repressive to men. Some realized the hazards of the masculine reserve in the form of cardiac, intestinal, and emotional disorders. As a result they began to form a "modern man response." The goal was to create a new male, one which was more "feminine" than the macho one that had long been emulated.

Similar to the leaders of the women's movement of the 1970s, the leaders of the early men's movement were strongly influenced by structuralist theory—the underlying assumption being that males and females are born with a relatively clean slate upon which society "imprints" its definition of masculinity. A social reconstruction was needed to bring change. Debate continues to the present day regarding the genetic versus social origins of gender characteristics.

The men's movement grew slowly during the 1970s, eventually culminating in the emergence of the National Organization for Changing Men. The organization had a number of regional chapters and a regular newsletter called *Brother*, but it failed to capture the attention of the majority of American males. The movement was most effective in reaching men in academic circles. It was instrumental in establishing men's studies programs on several campuses, and in convincing directors of some existing women's studies programs to expand to include women's and men's studies. (I could have used their help at Georgia a decade earlier.) They continued to support the concerns of feminists and raised awareness about the restrictions of a traditional masculine role.

In my estimation, the movement was correct in challenging many aspects of tradi-

tional masculinity, even though the movement as a whole polarized a progressive versus traditional view of masculinity. It failed to find positive qualities in some aspects of traditional masculinity. Rejecting the traditional male's excessive emphasis upon strength, the early men's movement too often led to what Robert Bly referred to as the "soft male."

**THE NEW MEN'S MOVEMENT**  
Bill Moyers introduced America to Robert Bly in a television documentary titled "A Gathering of Men." Bly became an icon for the new men's movement. His publication *Iron John*, in 1990, became the first book about men to reach the Top Ten list of nonfiction bestsellers. It stayed there for 30 weeks. The male mythopoetic movement was associated with a back-to-nature emphasis. "Wild man weekends" provided cathartic events for male emotional cleansing. Interest grew in this expression of a new masculinity which was strangely distant from the early movement of the 1970s.

The new men's movement was not a direct outgrowth of the earlier movement. *The Making of Masculinities: The New Men's Studies*, an edited collection written by men in the early men's movement, did not include one reference to Joseph Campbell, Robert Bly, Robert Moore, or Douglas Gillette—all influential thinkers and spokesmen of the new movement. Likewise, Bly, in *Iron John*, and Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette, in *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover*, mentioned nothing of the work of the early men's movement.

The new men's movement clearly captured the public's attention. Why has this new movement received greater acceptance than the first? Although in part it may be a matter of timing, two factors are important: First, the new men's movement rejects the cultural deter-

minist position of the early movement. Rather than assuming that masculinity is a purely social construct, the leaders in the new movement, say Moore and Gillette, assume that there are "fundamental deep structures of the human self, both masculine and feminine." Second, the new men's movement stepped away from the earlier calls for an androgynous masculinity by

---

*In my estimation, the movement was correct in challenging many aspects of traditional masculinity.*

---

affirming a full range of masculinity, not simply calling for men to develop their *feminine* side.

Feminists have been reticent in responding to the new movement, fearing its formation as a form of feminist backlash. This is due, in part, to a tendency by men to concentrate on their own masculine wounds, while missing how they might be participants in the woundedness of women. The movement's mythological emphasis has concerned others who fear a New Age spirituality. This has been aided by such easily satirized practices as men dancing around a campfire dressed in animal-skin loincloths, attempting to get in touch with their inner masculine selves. It is in this social context that the Christian men's movement has taken shape. The Christian movement has outdistanced and overshadowed its media predecessors, as best seen in the impact of the organization Promise Keepers.

**THE CHRISTIAN MEN'S MOVEMENT**  
In the last decade, Christian writings for men, such as Gordon Dalbey's *Healing the Masculine Soul*, reflected a growing interest in, and a questioning of, masculinity. The sparks that were ignited in men's lives were brought to full blaze with the emergence of the Promise Keepers men's stadium events. Led by university football coach Bill McCartney, the formation of Promise Keepers (PK) followed his vision to see men commit to vital relationships with God, their family, their church, other men, and Christ's Great Commission.

Promise Keepers' exponential growth, from 72 men in attendance in 1990 to over one million in 1996, characterizes the center of the men's movement. The staff for Promise Keepers has grown from 22 to 452 and the budget from \$4 million in 1993 to an estimated \$117 million in 1997. Its impact can be felt in the church, as evidenced in the proliferation of men's literature and interest in male-oriented small groups. PK's message in these men's groups and materials is characterized by the emphasis on a Christian life that is *masculine, reconciling, and committed*.

**Masculinity.** The fact that McCartney was a successful football coach of a nationally ranked college football team gave Promise Keepers instant "masculine security." PK members embraced this stalwart spirituality, adorning T-shirts emblazoned with the phrase "A Man's Man Is a Godly Man." Masculine appeal is a necessity for reaching a broad spectrum of American males. There remains a strong warrior/athlete resonance in the American culture's definition of masculinity. This stands in contrast to the image of the domesticated "churchman," often seen as a meek and mild Christ-figure.

This masculine appeal is not new to evangelistic outreach. Traditional masculine imagery was used in the Jesus Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Jesus was portrayed as a true radical who



challenged the existing authorities of his day. The challenge was for youth to follow a leader who was not mealy-mouthed or wishy-washy, but rather a strong, tough, defiant man who stood by his convictions.

In *Manhood in America*, Michael Kimmel documents a similar attempt in the early 1900s: "The goal of the muscular Christians was to revitalize the image of Jesus and thus remasculinize the church. Jesus was 'no dough-faced, lick-spittle proposition,' proclaimed evangelist Billy Sunday, but 'the greatest scrapper who ever lived.' Look to Jesus, counseled Luther Gulick of the YMCA, for an example of 'magnificent manliness.'" Men's organizations surprisingly similar to Promise Keepers emerged, reports Michael Messner in *Politics of Masculinities*. The Men and Religion Forward movement of 1911 to 1912 "swept the country like a spiritual storm," increasing the number of men coming to church by up to 800 percent in some communities.

**Reconciliation.** From its start, Promise Keepers included a strong emphasis on racial reconciliation. As the head football coach at the University of Colorado, Bill McCartney was noted for emphasizing harmony between white and African-American members of his team. At PK's second event in 1992, the leadership led a group of white Christian leaders in asking for forgiveness from the ethnic leaders who were present. The organization has also emphasized diversity in the staffing of its organization—from the chief of operations to the speakers at stadium events. The theme of racial reconciliation is an integral part of the worship and messages given at these events. With this emphasis, Promise Keepers is unique in contrast to other evangelical ministries that have not given prominence to issues of social justice.

**Commitment.** Finally, perhaps the strongest emphasis in Promise Keepers is for men to be *commit-*

*ted*—especially in their relationships—to Christ, family, and the church. By definition, the organization calls men to integrity in the Christian life. This emphasis is clearly expressed in the ministry's small sharing groups, structured to hold men accountable to their commitments, a repeated theme being that "real men keep their promises." The message implies that failing to follow through on one's commitment to God, to others, and to care for one's family is to be a wimpy Christian.

#### AN EVALUATION OF PROMISE KEEPERS

Careful attention must be given to the Promise Keepers ministry, particularly as it in part embodies the mainstream of today's evangelical men's ministries. The assessments of this ministry come

### *The Christian movement has outdistanced and overshadowed its media predecessors.*

from different points of view. In 1995 *Ms* magazine sent a female reporter incognito as a male to observe a stadium event firsthand. Her evaluation was striking. She concluded that the speakers' emphasis that men should show their feelings and develop supportive relationships with women, children, and other men sounded a lot like feminism.

Messner's observation is less optimistic. He sees the emergence of Promise Keepers as an attempt by Christian males to regain the power and control they lost during the women's movement. His concern focuses on conservative political endorsements, a "remasculinization of Jesus," and the call for men to "retake leadership in their families." The

latter is an oft-quoted excerpt of Tony Evans' remarks at a stadium event. It is offered as a harbinger of the movement's "real social motives." Spokeswomen for a number of feminist organizations, such as the National Organization of Women (NOW), express similar criticisms of Promise Keepers.

I believe that we should be thankful for Promise Keepers and be guardedly optimistic about its ability to contribute to a constructive church-based men's ministry. We should applaud PK's emphasis upon reconciliation as a bold, biblically based response to a societal need. The movement's emphasis upon commitment and integrity is a necessary contrast in an age often characterized by pessimism and cynicism. Further reflection is needed on considering the impact and importance of this movement to men's ministry in the life of the local church.

#### A PROMISE STILL TO KEEP

Promise Keepers' call to racial reconciliation represents a significant step forward in embodying the Body of Christ—that "all are precious in his sight." Yet a call to reconciliation must also account for the wounds of sexism that separate men and women in the Body of Christ. The emphasis on masculine Christianity and the focus on reconciliation is ironic, given the concern of the earlier men's movement with sexism. The leaders of Promise Keepers have remained strangely quiet on the cultural issues of sexism. They espouse strong masculine archetypes and emphasize male responsibility in the home, while institutional sexism has not been formerly addressed—at least with the same rhetoric and tone that has been used for racism.

I long to hear a clearer call in Promise Keepers for individual and collective repentance for overt and covert acts of sexism by men against women. Calls for repentance of racism or sexism are precarious, given such a diverse

constituency. Yet a biblically informed social ethic does not afford one the luxury of picking and choosing one's regrets. Facing sexism may mean that men will need to reevaluate their understanding of a masculine model of leadership in the church and in the home. Absent in publications and silent in the stadiums are clear messages affirming the coleadership of women in the church and mutual submissiveness in marriage. The emphasis on male leadership as servitude in the home is a *better* form of patriarchy than the more stringent authoritarian formulations of traditional masculinity still found in some fundamentalist congregations. Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen's article "Servanthood or Soft Patriarchy?" in the *Journal of Men's Studies*, expresses significant reservation on this point, finding PK's message to be "nothing if not contradictory, in calling for servanthood and soft patriarchy."

Promise Keepers' emphasis on masculine rhetoric and its appeal might inadvertently blind men from seeing gender discrimination as a cultural justice issue. With this risk, it must be recognized that PK does provide a corrective vision for the traditional patriarch, though it is not the clear vision that I would hope from the church on this issue.

Perhaps the wisdom of "going slow" on this issue is necessary. I'm personally convinced that if Promise Keepers goes too far in focusing upon sexism, the cost will be the loss of its broad constituency and, worse, a reification of the traditional masculinity of old. It is easy to criticize an organization for what it does *not* do, rather than affirming it for what it is doing right. There is a potential danger in Promise Keepers, but I personally believe that the organization is trying to walk a balanced line on a most sensitive issue. Let us hope that Christian men will lead the way in repenting of our attitudes and behaviors which have prevented women from being all that God meant for them to be.

**FROM MOVEMENT TO MINISTRY** Christian feminism emerged after much of the ideology of the wider feminist movement was in place. The current men's movement still seems to be in search of a strong ideological guiding force. Does the Christian men's movement have the potential to make a significant contribution to the secular men's movement and to the local

### *The current men's movement still seems to be in search of a strong ideological guiding force.*

church's ministry to men? I think it does, but it will do so only under certain conditions.

First, stadium events are a powerful tool. They have been significant in leading men to a conversion or recommitment to Christ and raising the consciousness of the men in attendance. While many women experience consciousness-raising through small groups and informal networking, men are attracted to the electrifying current generated by enthusiastic masses of men gathered together. The collective power and strength generated at such gatherings allows men to reflect on themselves as males.

Second, we need to realize that consciousness-raising is only the beginning of what needs to take place to sustain a genuine Christian men's movement. Of most importance is what happens when men return home! The Promise Keepers' influence has been like a rush of the Spirit. But what will sustain this movement over time? Integrity is rooted in keeping promises as well as making promises. How will this movement move men toward new relationships with women?

Third, a Christian men's movement will sustain itself only by integrating men's experiences into the fabric of the local church. Promise Keepers is aware of this, and is searching for models for how this can be done. In its October 6, 1997, cover story on PK, *Time* magazine reports that about 20,000 fellowship groups are in existence around the United States. The most fruitful models include the development of small supportive accountability groups within which men continually will be called to be "keepers of promises."

Fourth, the strong emotional appeal and power generated by Promise Keepers' major-event orientation needs to be wed to more serious Christian theological reflection on masculinity and the male role in modern society and the church. Raw male enthusiasm may pack with it a betraying ethic. Perhaps Christian seminars need to share in the leadership here. There is some evidence that this is already being done at several seminaries.

Fifth, it is probably premature to concentrate on males and females coming together at this time. What is needed for this to fruitfully happen is further consciousness-raising on the part of men, a consciousness that will lead to true repentance for our participation in sexism. To the

—Please turn to page 22.

JACK O. BALSWICK, Ph.D., is professor of sociology and family development and director of marriage and family research at Fuller's School of Psychology. He is a popular speaker and author of 10 books, among them *Men at the Crossroads* (InterVarsity, 1992) and *The Inexpressive Male* (Lexington, 1988) and coauthor, with Judith Balswick, of *The Dual-Earner Marriage* (Revell, 1995) and *Families in Pain* (Baker, 1997).





# Men Behaving Not So Badly

A BIBLICAL FEMINIST'S RESPONSE

BY MARY STEWART VAN LEEUWEN

Jack Balswick has done a good job of introducing the general reader to the contemporary North American men's movement, both secular and Christian. He could of course have said much more, given additional space, and I'm sure he does say much more in his classes. For like feminism—and indeed, like Christianity—the men's movement is a multidominational one, with a history of both ecumenical coalitions and doctrinal disputes.

Thus the National Organization for Changing Men represents a sometimes-uneasy alliance between liberal feminist men, who believe that restricted gender roles damage women and men more or less equally, and profeminist men, who insist that male sexism is an additional problem men must face honestly and overcome. At the same time, these two groups are united in criticizing the "men's rights" movement for claiming that men are now the real victims of discrimination in divorce courts, child custody battles, and job competition. They also join in faulting the mythopoetic men's movement, spearheaded by Robert Bly, for what they perceive to be its atavistic glorification of masculine archetypes. Additional strands within the secular men's movement include socialist-feminist men, who hold that patriarchy and capitalism together explain current distortions in gender relations, and gay and black men who reflect on what it means to be members of "marginalized masculinities" in a world where acceptable masculinity is defined by a powerful majority of straight white males.

However, even taken together, these various men's-movement expressions have not even begun to attract the follow-

ing and the resources among men that feminism has attracted among women. One obvious reason is that it is much easier to mount a political movement based on clear evidence of social and economic discrimination (as women have done) than on the vaguer notion that men are "psychologically oppressed" by their gender roles. Even less palatable to baby boomer men who have imbibed the tenets of

---

*The meteoric rise of the Promise Keepers came as a surprise to feminists of both sexes and all political stripes.*

---

pop psychology with their mothers' milk ("I'm OK, you're OK, and sin is reducible to poor communication") is the profeminist men's call to form a movement around recognition of, and struggle against, one's own sexism. In the absence of any belief in grace, how many people would want to sit around and confess their sins to each other? It's too demoralizing.

Hence the meteoric rise of the Promise Keepers came as a surprise to feminists of both sexes and all political stripes. Yet their responses have been anything but uniform. As Jack Balswick has noted, organizations such as NOW and men's studies scholars such as Michael Messner and Kenneth Clatterbaugh view the

humility and emotionalism of Promise Keepers' gatherings as a mere smokescreen for a campaign to reinstate patriarchy in the family (albeit in a kinder, gentler form) and to entrench conservative politics—perhaps even a theocracy—nationally. Robert Bly agrees that there is no place the Promise Keepers can go except into the pocket of the religious right. As he stated in a 1995 interview, "Pat Robertson is waiting."<sup>1</sup>

Other feminists, as Balswick notes, have just the opposite criticism: that Promise Keepers is too focused on individual piety and personal navel-gazing to the exclusion of confessing and reversing institutional sexism, racism, and (for some) capitalism. All this seems to boil down to the message that it would be fine for PK to engage in political activism, as long as it was the activism of the secular and religious left. The vaunted wall of separation between church and state is, it seems, a movable one.

At the same time, a lesbian Jewish reporter from *Ms* magazine, who attended a 1995 Promise Keepers stadium event in Florida disguised as a teenage boy, concluded that although her fellow feminists might scoff at the Promise Keepers' emphasis on personal healing and self-growth, "I don't see how society can change in the ways we want it to if men have no support to start acting less like 'men' and more like caring, loving, ethical and nondominating human beings. . . . [A]part from a few lonely male activists, [feminist] progressives have never been able to mobilize men for this sort of healing and change. The Promise Keepers have stepped into this vacuum."<sup>2</sup>

Nor are all religious historians agreed that Promise Keepers is simply a postmodern replay of the "muscular Christianity" movements of earlier in this century. Historian Gail Bederman, a self-styled secular humanist who has made a detailed study of the 1911-1912 Men and Religion Forward Movement, has observed of its leaders that

*"they never, ever spoke about their wives. They never spoke about domesticity at all. . . . And they never, ever blamed men for failing with their families. . . . [or] conceded that masculinity was anything but masterful, powerful, and in constant control. In contrast [the] very name Promise Keepers refers to the idea that men have broken their promises to their wives and are treating them poorly. Indeed, sense of husbandly failure is evidently the source of much of the emotion at Promise Keepers events. Nothing could be more unlike the Men and Religion Forward Movement."<sup>3</sup>*

In light of these diverse portraits, the average person in the street might be forgiven for asking the real Promise Keepers to please stand up. But right now this may be asking too much, because PK has grown so fast that it's bound to be something of a moving target, even to its own leaders. Moreover, it is a classic evangelical revival movement, which means that its focus is mainly experiential and pragmatic. Its leaders do not try to nail down every theological detail in an attempt to be totally consistent before taking their show on the road.

Thus, as Jack Balswick observed, Promise Keeper leaders have failed to take a strong stance either on male headship or on gender equality in church and home. Their stated reason for doing so is that male headship is not a confessional issue, but one on which evangelicals with equally high views of Scripture differ. So they have not made it part of their statement of faith. By letting their speakers and writers take different stands on this issue, they hope to appeal to as large a constituency as possible across the spectrum of evangelicalism.

The default option of most academics like myself is to be driven slightly crazy by this kind of equivocation. Elsewhere, I have written that I would prefer PK to take a consistent stand, either for or against male headship, because then I would know what I'm dealing with, even if it's a position I disagree with. And yet

from a practical standpoint, I can understand Jack Balswick's "wisdom of going slow" on this issue, even to the point of tolerating some equivocation.

We have perhaps forgotten just how recently evangelicals, especially in the South, have gotten used to the idea of racial equality—an issue on which Promise Keepers, to its credit, does take a strong and consistent stand. Since the current feminist movement postdates the civil rights movement, perhaps there is bound to be some culture lag in evangelicals' appropriation of their respective messages. Without

---

*Despite its mixed messages on gender equality, Promise Keepers as a revival movement may be improving the lives of some women.*

---

taking this into account we may, as Balswick suggests, be risking the possibility of a more oppressively gender-traditionalist backlash.

In the meantime, for many women—especially those who do not have the financial and educational safety net that protects most liberal feminist women—Promise Keepers' "soft patriarchy" may represent a distinct improvement over the male irresponsibility that they and their children have known in the past. PK's leaders do not mince words when pointing out to their audiences the damage that sexual addiction, broken promises, and male hubris have done in the past few decades.<sup>4</sup> In this respect, despite its mixed messages on gender equality, PK as a revival movement may be

improving the lives of some women in the same way that the Pentecostal and evangelical movements have done in Latin America. As one young woman commented to me some 20 years before Promise Keepers was even thought of, "I have no problem submitting to a man who loves me as Christ loves the Church. The problem is to find one."

There are, however, a couple of other Promise Keeper inconsistencies that need to be exposed and *not* glossed over by Christians concerned with gender reconciliation. First, if PK has no formal stand on the biblicality of male headship, then why does Bill McCartney, the organization's founder and CEO, continually imply publicly that it does? In more than one media interview, including one with PBS just prior to PK's October 1997 gathering on the Washington Mall, McCartney quoted the second half of Isaiah 38:19 as a *locus classicus* for the defense of male headship in the family.

Ironically, if you check the context of this verse (which is part of King Hezekiah's dialogue with the prophet Isaiah before Judah's exile to Babylon) you will find that it is not at all a commentary on male authority in families.<sup>5</sup> Yet McCartney publicly invokes this text (among others) in his defense of male headship. It will not suffice to reply that McCartney is speaking merely for himself and not for Promise Keepers as an organization. One cannot that glibly separate the pronouncements of a person from the organization of which he is head, especially when he is being interviewed in that capacity and when he does not make a point of distinguishing his personal from his organizational stance during the interview.

The honest—and consistent—approach would be to answer his interviewers the same way Promise Keeper media representatives have answered journalists (including myself) when pressed on this issue: namely, that PK does not have a formal position on male



headship, since it does not consider this a confessional issue and recognizes that evangelicals with equally high views of Scripture come to different conclusions about the issue. Anything less is at best confusing to the public and at worst devious. Either way it does damage to the credibility of Promise Keepers in particular and to evangelical movements in general.

Second, there is an issue arising from Promise Keepers' practice of having all-male gatherings. I for one have no problem with the selective separation of the sexes for teaching and fellowship purposes. After all, single-sex retreats have a long history in the Christian church. But PK's leaders would not dream of trying to effect racial reconciliation while failing to include men of color among their speakers and writers. Yet they seem to think that they can figure out the shape of ideal gender relations with virtually no input from women (cameo appearances by Promise Keeper leaders' wives being almost the sole exception).

I do not think that this is the result of willful malice on the part of PK leaders. But it may help explain the ironic disconnect that has recently been exposed between Bill McCartney's enthusiastic sponsorship of Promise Keepers and the state of his own family life until recently. In his most recent book, as well as in various media interviews it has been made clear (also by his wife, Lyndi) that while McCartney was busy telling other men how to fix their marriages, his wife was suffering from an eating disorder and contemplating suicide, resentful that her husband had added the workaholicism of Promise Keeper leadership to his workaholicism as a college football coach.

McCartney also seemed to think that it was perfectly adequate for him to confess to his wife in 1993 his sexual infidelity of 20 years earlier just as he was rushing out the door to coach a Fiesta Bowl football game. Like the U.S. Senate Confirmation

Committee that saw nothing wrong (until their female congressional colleagues confronted them otherwise) with their severe males-in-dark-suits grilling of Anita Hill regarding her relationship with Clarence Thomas—some men just don't get it.

The truth of the matter is that, in the absence of any systematic evaluation research (which Promise Keepers could easily have done, given their annual budget) we simply don't

***Promise Keepers does not have a formal position on male headship, since it does not consider this a confessional issue.***

know how PK wives in general are reacting to this movement. Until more of them speak up for themselves, or, better still, until independent evaluation research is done, we cannot be sure that Promise Keepers' program of male reform is good for women, even in the short run.

However, I am happy to note that, as time goes by, there is less talk about traditional gender roles and more sensitivity to institutional sexism in Promise Keeper circles. This is evident in the magazine *New Man*, which, while no longer the official organ of PK, still has a friendly relationship with the organization. A recent issue of the magazine included an account of the positive experience one man had being the primary caretaker of his children for a year, and its Nov.-Dec. 1997 issue theme was "Sexism: What Are the Feminists Trying to Tell Us?" In addition, as this article is being written, Promise Keepers is planning a pastors' rally in January 1998 at

Philadelphia's Apollo Stadium—and this time, women pastors and lay leaders are invited. Indeed, Bill McCartney, who sends mixed messages about PK's stance on male headship in families, recently proclaimed publicly that he has no problem with women as pastors.

Some say this move may in part represent a marketing ploy to expand Promise Keepers' financial support base and boost the sales of PK teaching materials. But it may also mean that PK's ambiguous nod toward male headship is beginning to die the death of a thousand qualifiers, whether for principial or practical reasons. I and many of my biblical feminist colleagues plan to encourage this process further. ■

MARY STEWART VAN LEEUWEN, Ph.D., professor of psychology and philosophy at Eastern College and resident scholar at the college's Center for Christian Women in Leadership, is a social psychologist whose interests include the social sciences, human sexuality, and the interaction of gender with theology and church history. Her most recent coedited books include *Feminism and the Family* (1996) and *The Handbook of Practical Theology* (1998), both by Westminster/John Knox Press.



#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> See Kenneth Clatterbaugh, *Contemporary Perspective on Masculinity: Men, Women and Politics in Modern Society*, 2nd ed. (Westview Press, 1997); or Michael Messner, *Politics of Masculinities: Men in Movements* (Sage, 1997). On the forms of feminism, see Rosemarie P. Tong, *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Westview Press, 1998).

<sup>2</sup> See "Weekend Warriors: The New Men's Movement," Michael S. Kimmel and Michael Kaufman, eds., in *The Politics of Manhood* (Temple University Press, 1995). For a critique, see also *Women Respond to the Men's Movement*, Kay Leigh Hagfen, ed. (HarperCollins, 1992).

—Please turn to page 23.

## Healing the Father-Wound

### THE ULTIMATE MEN'S MOVEMENT

BY GORDON DALBEY

*I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers.*

MALACHI 4:5,6

Early in 1990, in a groundbreaking PBS television special "A Gathering of Men," poet Robert Bly blasted through the gender-muddling of previous decades with a jarring truth. The average man today, he declared, has learned well from his mother to embrace his "soft feminine side" and become tender and receptive. But he hasn't learned to embrace his more deliberate "masculine side," because his father has been emotionally and often physically absent.

Without a father to secure him in his masculine identity, Bly declared, the man abdicates his destiny and looks to the woman, Mom, to define his nature and purpose. Ultimately, therefore, he embraces a false femininity and becomes passive.

This epidemic "father-wound" has been the finest revelation from the secular men's movement of God's momentous work among men today. Tragically, the growing mainstream Christian men's movement has largely ignored it—even though, as the above text indicates, God has displayed its truth clearly in Scripture.

To Balswick's insightful and informative historical framework of the men's movement, therefore, I would add here its foundation. Significantly, the Malachi text is the final passage in the Old Covenant. Its promise—and

warning—frame the very doorway to the New Covenant, the threshold to the coming Messiah. It implies that the brokenness in this world between children and fathers reflects the brokenness between humanity and God. That is, *restoring relationship with the Father is, in fact, the very focus of God's saving power in this world.*

Thus, Jesus came to reconcile humanity to the Father (John

***The father-wound is a wound of absence. Therefore, it's harder to recognize than other wounds and, ultimately, more destructive.***

14:8-13). Nowhere in this world is the impetus for that reconciliation more keenly felt than in relationship with our earthly fathers. The father-wound portrayed in the Malachi text is the difference between what Dad has given you and what Father God wants to give you. Thus, every man bears its sting. No pain strikes more deeply into a man's heart than being abandoned emotionally and/or physically by Dad. For men, the father-wound is a curse unto death. No pain, therefore,

more directly beckons the saving power of Father God.

That's why God's eschatological vision focuses directly on healing it—as in the Malachi text. And that's why the Enemy of God is hell-bent to make us deny not only the father-wound itself, but the fatherhood of God. (I respectfully leave it to women to articulate what the father-wound and its curse mean to a daughter.)

As a man, I know it's no mere theological or psychological construct. It's a crippling reality which, for starters, renders a man inadequate with the woman, distrusting of other men, myopic in his view of God and, therefore, divorced from his destiny.

The father calls forth the masculine in the son. Without this essential input from Dad, the boy can't later see himself as a man. Quickly, fearfully, the gap between the man's inadequacy and who he longs to become fills with shame. His spirit cries out for a father to save him. Without other men to introduce him to the "Father from whom all fatherhood in heaven and on earth receives its true name" (Eph. 3:14), his cry echoes in the darkness. Enter the Father of Lies (John 8:44), who promises to cover this deep shame in men today by urging us into a variety of compulsive/addictive behaviors, from drugs and pornography to workaholicism and religious legalism.

The father-wound is a wound of absence. Therefore, it's harder to recognize than other wounds and, ultimately, more destructive. "I'm still waiting for my father to talk to me about sex and success, money and marriage, religion and raising kids," a *Men's Health* magazine editor confessed after his father died. "The shame of it is, I don't know a man my age who doesn't feel like he's navigating his life without a map."<sup>1</sup>



Several years ago, shortly before my son was born, I spoke to 350 fathers at a men's conference sponsored by a large, well-known church in Southern California. Confessing my fears of inadequacy as a dad, I asked the men this question: "When your first child was born, how many of you had your father reach out to you with support, encouragement, or helpful advice?" Only five hands went up.

Stunned, I resolved to test this statistic as I spoke at other Christian men's conferences around the country. Everywhere, the proportion came out roughly the same: one or two out of a hundred. At another men's retreat of 150 men, I asked, "When you were growing up, did your father ever talk to you helpfully about your sexuality?" Two hands. In my ten years of speaking to men across the country, these proportions have varied little.

Consider afresh the Malachi prophecy: Is it any wonder that, as fathers and in our sexuality, we men often mediate the prophetic curse of destruction? You can kill a living organism, such as a plant, in two ways: You can actively destroy it—cut it down, smash it, beat it up. But there's another way—just leave it alone. Don't water it. Either way, it dies. Abandonment kills.

We men today are displacing the deadly impact of father-abandonment on the world around us—from abortions and sexually transmitted diseases to violence and misogynist music lyrics. Insofar as Christian men shrink from facing the father-wound, we abdicate to the world our sacred calling to proclaim the true Father of all. Hence, the secular men's movement.

Apart from Father God, secular men can respond only out

of their own human-centered vision. In fact, the first men's movement, which Balswick notes sought "to support feminist concerns," was in reality not a men's movement at all, but a boys' movement—that is, unfathered men still abdicating their own agenda to Mom. Bly unmasked this deception in portraying the "soft male":

*They're not interested in harming the earth or starting wars or working for corporations. . . . But something's wrong. Many of these men are unhappy; there's not much energy in them. They are life-preserving, but*

---

*The awful vacuum  
in men's  
unfathered souls  
must be filled  
with something  
authentic, lest we  
destroy ourselves  
and women.*

---

*not exactly life-giving. And why is it you often see these men with strong women who positively radiate energy? . . . The male was able to say, "I can feel your pain and I consider your life as important as mine, and I will take care of you and comfort you." But he could not say what he wanted and stick by it; that was a different matter.<sup>2</sup>*

"We wanted men to get sensitive," a woman friend of mine lamented, herself an accomplished professional, "but we didn't want them to get passive."

The second men's movement which Bly spearheaded exposed a generation of men as boys who overbonded with Mom

and withdrew from manly responsibility because Dad was not present to engage and call forth their masculinity. In the absence of Christian voices, the secular leaders have awakened us to the deadly effects of the father-wound in men today. Their drumming in the woods has announced the first-stage agenda for healing: The man must mourn his father, differentiate from his mother, and bond to the company of men. Indeed, Bly and his counterparts are intelligent enough to know that the awful vacuum in men's unfathered souls must be filled with something authentic, lest we destroy ourselves and women. Since none of us has that "something" to give, it must come from someplace else besides other men.

"What good does it do to get together with other men?" as one man asked who had been talked into attending one of my conferences by his friends. "I mean, if we're all so broken and needy, how can we get something together that none of us has to give?" This man is asking the right questions. Broken, we men can't heal ourselves (Rom. 7:18). Yet in order to bear authentic masculinity, that *something* we need can't come from women. We've tried that and it doesn't work.

Here at last, in the full and terrifying face of our helplessness, stirs the cry which beckons the ultimate men's movement: "Who, then, will save us from this body that's taking us to death?" (Rom. 7:24). In fact, we need supernatural input. Clearly, the next move of healing in and among men requires spiritual power. That's what the drums and the chanting of the secular movement promise. But because these men are not surrendered to Jesus, they cannot know the true Father—and

ultimately can deliver only the counterfeit (John 1:12-13; Luke 10:16).

Here lies the great danger for the men's movement—the fork in the road at which Christian men must begin to take the lead. The leaders of the secular men's movement know that authentic masculinity requires a spiritual life-view. For witness to healing presence and power, they look not to God's acts in human history, but to pagan myths and fairy tales, which can reveal the heart of a man but not the character of the Father who created him.

The wound of father-absence can be acknowledged by simple human honesty and stayed by grieving. But it can be healed unto fulfilling one's destiny only by father-presence, which no human power can provide. Only Jesus can heal the father-wound, because only he can overcome our sin-nature and restore relationship with the true and present Father of us all (John 14:6-14). Only the dignity of sonship can overcome the shame of abandonment (Rom. 8:14-16; Psalm 27:10).

Overwhelmed by the father-wound and its shame, the men of the world can carry the sword of truth no further. In fact, in 1994—just four years after Bly's breakthrough insights—a feature article in *Esquire* magazine declared that the men's movement was dead. "In retrospect," it declared, the movement simply did not "stick" because the self-disclosure and "nakedness of it all" caused too much embarrassment in men.

Our task as Christian men is finally at hand: neither to worship manhood as religiously correct, nor to curse it as politically correct, but to redeem it—that is, to restore manhood to its true and ordained vitality, as only those who know the Creator can. Indeed, men committed to this task will discover that the cel-

ebrated liberal vs. conservative split is a diversion to cover the shame of fatherlessness in both camps.

Men who haven't taken their shame to the cross won't dare recognize this momentous battle for Truth, because they haven't received the Father's resurrection power to win it. Instead, they will hide their wounds, often behind a performance-oriented religious facade.

A men's movement that doesn't begin emptied and surrendered at the cross can only become ingrown and, ultimately, capitulate to false spirituality—thus beckoning the old spirits of

---

*Restoring  
relationship with  
the Father is . . .  
the very focus of  
God's saving power  
in this world.*

---

male idolatry, from misogyny to militarism.

The average man today longs to feel secure in his manhood. But he's afraid to face his sin-nature which sabotages that security, because he's already overwhelmed by shame from having been abandoned by Dad.

When the True abdicates, the False plunders.

Betrayed by relationship, he takes refuge in technique and grasps after control. Desperate for manhood, angry for not getting from Dad what he needed to secure it, he becomes vulnerable to a host of worldly (and even religious) counterfeits which promise to silence the voice of shame, restore his control, and render him a "real man" at last.

If, on the other hand, a man cries out to Jesus and presses

through his pain to the truth, he can pray, "Lord, show me my Dad as you see him." He thereby discovers that Dad had been abandoned himself by his own father, and therefore was simply unable to confirm manhood in his son. He sees that Dad is not the enemy, but rather, a fellow victim.

A boy cries *from* his father's wounds: Dad hurt him, and he cries. A man cries *for* his father's wounds, as an intercessor. This leads him into compassion for Dad and, by grace, forgiveness. And, at last, it leads him into freedom from the generational cycle of destruction to walk in his own true destiny.

The man who doesn't trust Jesus to bear his shame, however, seeks to cover it himself with religion—that is, to compensate for lack of relationship with both Dad and Father God by "doing the right thing." He extols the sanitized, civilian question of manhood, "How do I do it?" It's too fearful to let the abandoned boy ask the authentic, warrior question, like the Apostle, "Who will rescue me from this body that is taking me to death?" (Rom. 7:24).

The problem is not that we men are ignorant. We're dying. Yet most Christian teaching for men today simply tells us what we should do, the terrible consequences of *not* doing it, and perhaps the wonderful benefits of doing it.

It's basic, Old Covenant teaching—an appropriate and essential reminder of God's standard to an unprincipled, pagan society. As such, it's altogether right and necessary—but, like Moses without Jesus, eternally deficient (John 1:17).



Christianity is not, as conservatives insist, a moral code. Nor is it, as liberals insist, an ideology. Christianity is a relationship with the living Father God. This growing wave of men confessing their sin before God might well be seen as "the third men's movement." I thank God for it.

Yet even as we fill stadiums to promise higher standards of behavior, we must press on to appropriate the fullness of what Jesus died to give men, namely, *sonship*. Herein lies the ultimate men's movement, beckoned by this central New Covenant truth: Jesus did not come to tell us what to do, but rather, to show us *who* does it (Rom. 7:21-25; Ezek. 36:24-28; Phil. 2:13; Rom; 12:1,2; Eph. 3:21).

This authentic movement of God in men is prompted not by the shame which makes us strive to do right, but by the grace which allows us to be real. It's sustained not by trying to measure up, but only by confessing that we *can't*. It proceeds not from a determination to do the right thing, but from a longing to know the true Father (Gal. 5:1-6; Rom. 7:18).

A real man is a man who's *real*. Only real men can lead us into this New Covenant manhood—men who have dared face the shame of their own helplessness and surrendered it to Jesus for him alone to bear. The gospel tells us "what is of paramount importance," as radio personality Garrison Keillor declared, namely, "To lead an honest life. To be able to walk to anywhere without fear, without self-consciousness, and without worry that your lies will be discovered."

Today, we men need leaders who aren't afraid that their lies

will be discovered. Not those who exhort us to obey, but who invite us to trust. Not those who command us to do right, but who free us by their own vulnerability to be real. Not those who warn us to be strong, but who promise the Father's strength.

Real manhood is not achieved by striving fearfully after standards of masculinity or principles of manhood, no matter how biblical, godly, or Christlike. It's called forth by the Father (John 1:12,13; 17:25,26).

This ultimate men's movement is today stirring, even trembling, in the hearts of men. But it has yet to break forth from

---

*Real manhood is not achieved by striving fearfully after standards of masculinity or principles of manhood, no matter how biblical, godly, or Christlike.*

---

the churches, largely because we haven't dared to discover that self-discipline, like the many manly character traits we seek, is a fruit of the Spirit—not a natural product of our own efforts, but a supernatural consequence of surrender to the Father (Gal. 5:22).

As Paul proclaimed, "For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received a Spirit of

sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'" (Rom. 8:15). May we be so real. ■

GORDON DALBEY, M.Div., an ordained minister and conference speaker from Santa Barbara, California, is the author of the popular *Healing the Masculine Soul* (Word); *Sons of the Father* (Tyndale); and *Fight Like a Man* (Tyndale). He keynoted the first Promise Keepers stadium event in Boulder, Colorado, in 1992; and California Governor Pete Wilson's 1997 "Fathers, Families, and Communities" conference.



#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Joe Kita, "Our Fathers," *Men's Health* (June 1995).

<sup>2</sup> "The Meaning of Being Male," *L.A. Weekly*, (August 5-11, 1983).

<sup>3</sup> Harry Stein, "The Post-Sensitive Man Is Coming," (May 1994).

<sup>4</sup> *The Wittenburg Door* (December 1985).

## Machismo a Hombre de Dios

### A HISPANIC PASTOR'S CHALLENGE\*

BY ISAAC J. CANALES

I am from a culture that is very *machismo*, the Hispanic culture. My family experience is predominantly male-oriented. I was raised as a pastor's son, and I am now the father to three sons. I am raising men up for the Lord in my home and at the church I pastor.

My challenge is that we need to redirect the attention of men in our society to the Church of Jesus Christ. For a long time the church has lagged in capturing the imagination of men. It's our responsibility to get their attention. Among some cultures today, there's a stereotype that church is only for women. Yet in the New Testament, the women were at the cross and waiting at the tomb while the disciples were somewhere else. Jesus disciplined men and prepared them for leadership, but in the years that followed, many men distanced themselves from the work of God.

Men today long for spiritual direction. They hunger for ethical direction, for family orientation, and for meaning in life. We know that men need a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. But some Christian leaders fall into a top-down leadership style—the temptation to attract men to ourselves as leaders and misuse our influence. John the Baptist illustrates how effective leaders can reach and direct men to Christ. John 1:35-39 illustrates four ideas that are helpful in reaching men in our society. John points his followers away from himself to Jesus Christ. He deflects the attention that they have given him and focuses it on Jesus. He says, "Behold, the Lamb of God."

The word "behold" could be paraphrased "to allow your eyes to rest upon." It means to continue or steadily gaze at the direct object. This suggests contemplation or reflection. The word means to steadily focus attention upon the Lord. As a model for today's local pastor, John shows us how to

---

*We need to redirect the attention of men in our society to the Church of Jesus Christ.*

---

teach men not to look at us, but to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. In my ministry experience, there have been four areas which I try to keep in mind when directing men to Christ and developing them into leaders within the church.

#### RECLAIM MEN FOR CHRIST

As leaders we are to go out to scout and recruit men. In baseball, scouts are sent out to recruit good players. When scouting a high school player, scouts evaluate their candidate's character as well as his natural ability. They develop a vision for the player and imagine how he could contribute. It is not just whether the player can catch the ball. The scout is looking for how this person responds when the ball is dropped. Can he bounce back? Is he resilient? I believe that is how Jesus looked for his disciples. He

saw that John's disciples were full of potential.

We need to go out and look for men. We can find leaders out there in the local park in our town. These men may be coaching a baseball, track, or football team. I enjoy watching men coach my sons. I watch these men who don't know the Lord, and I pray for them that God will lead them to himself. Then I make myself available to them. They are God's creation. It's our task to win them for God.

"Coach Bobby" is a good example. Bobby was a natural leader. He always had parents and kids around him while he coached them about football. He would always show up on the field in shorts, sandals, and dark sunglasses. He was never without his sunglasses. I prayed that God would give me an opportunity to share the gospel with Bobby. He wasn't the best coach, but he loved kids. After practice one day, I told him that I really appreciated that he took the time to coach the kids even though he didn't have a son on the team. He responded, "You know, anything that I can do to help the community! You know, I'm one of the better citizens in the community. And we need to reach out and do everything we can to turn these kids around."

I found out later that he was one of the biggest drug addicts in the entire area. But I had a vision for this man. I could see that coach in church with his arms raised during worship, praising and worshipping the Lord. I saw him becoming a leader, an usher, or a deacon. One day at practice, after he found out I was a pastor, he asked if I minded him coaching my son. I told him that I thought he was doing a good job. Then he asked me to give a prayer at the end of the game. After I prayed, the coach had a tear rolling down from under his sunglasses. I asked him why he



always wore dark glasses, but he evaded my question. He said that I wouldn't want to know his story. Then I invited him to our church. He said the walls would fall down before he made it to church.

The following Sunday, Bobby walked into the service. He watched the entire service behind his dark glasses. He came again that night. After the service, he told me his story—a life filled with drugs, family problems, and unemployment. The only thing he had to hold onto was coaching these kids. Later, after I invited him to a rally where Los Angeles Raider's quarterback Vince Evans gave his testimony, Bobby knelt down on the cement floor of our Fellowship Hall—without his sunglasses—and gave his heart to Jesus Christ. He was reclaimed for the Lord.

My experience with Bobby taught me not to wait for men to surface in our church. We need to go out into the community and bring them into the church. Men will not come to us. We must go to them. John, our example, reclaimed men by pointing them to Jesus.

#### REGAIN MEN FOR CHRIST

I don't think there is a more powerful way to regain men who have left the church than to point them to someone who is following Christ. Some men are totally unchurched, others no longer attend services. They left out of disappointment, bitterness, or hurt.

As men, we love to be active. We like to be on the move, to be challenged. We seek progress—ways to move forward. We need challenge. Jesus' disciples did not simply follow him, they moved forward with great expectations. As they followed him, they expected great things (John 1:37).

One day, my son's track coach came to talk with me. He had envisioned my son as a track athlete. I had a vision as well. I

began to see what this man could do for the Lord. I had a vision of him as a leader among men. He had a deeply religious background. His father had been active in the church all his life. But this coach hadn't been to church in a long while, and his family wasn't committed to God. I felt a burden to regain him for God.

Jesus asked his disciples when they followed him, "What are you looking for?" He didn't say, "Who are you looking for?"

---

*If you're going to  
make yourself  
open to bonding  
moments, you may  
have to take some  
risks.*

---

because Jesus knew that they were looking for leadership. They were looking for the Messiah, someone they could follow. Leadership qualities are best expressed when they result from following another person. There is no one greater to follow than the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus' task as the Master was to teach his disciples by example. He taught them to serve by example. The disciples resisted Jesus' washing their feet because they felt insecure about their manhood. It is only when we feel secure about ourselves that we are able to allow other people to serve us. Jesus was the teacher *par excellence* when it came to teaching men to face their manhood.

Some men are threatened by close relationships, whether with women or other men. We don't want to open up and let someone else know how we feel inside. In my Latino culture, men will hug each other. But sometimes it is just an act. Outside, we try to maintain this macho image. Yet

we know, deep down inside, that we have a desire to share, to be intimate, to be relational. But this won't happen unless we are able to follow Christ in servanthood and humility.

My son's track coach had a church background, but he was afraid of losing his macho image. But after he gave his life to Christ, he became a faithful leader in our church.

#### RETRAIN MEN FOR CHRIST

Retraining men begins when we give them an invitation into our personal life. John 1:39 tells of such an invitation. Jesus said, "Come and see where I live. Come and see *how* I live. Come and see *what* I live. Come and see life." Jesus knew the importance of leadership in terms of retraining men. Retraining men involves teaching them how to bond together in the presence of Christ. In his presence there is affirmation and confirmation. There is no other leader that we can give our complete devotion and attention to. Jesus invites others to "come and see." And his disciples did just that. The text describes how they stayed in his presence. In today's language, they hung out together. They were with him from the sixth hour to late at night—just

—Please turn to page 23.

ISAAC J. CANALES, Ph.D., is director of the Hispanic Church Studies Department and assistant professor of New Testament and Hispanic studies at Fuller Seminary. He also serves as the senior pastor of the Mission Eben-Ezer Family Church in Torrance, California. Dr. Canales frequently speaks at Promise Keepers events, such as the nationwide gathering in Washington, D.C., last year, and is the author of *Multi-Ethnicity* (InterVarsity Press, 1990).



# Restoring African-American Fatherhood

## MINISTRY TO INNER-CITY MEN

BY E. BERNARD FRANKLIN

James, 24, is enrolled in a court diversion program for a drug-related offense. This program includes a fathering class that I conduct, in which I instruct these men to write a letter to their father. James's letter was venomous and violent. Beneath his hostility was the rage and pain of a lost and broken soul.

James was eight years of age when his mother was killed. He witnessed the drive-by shooting and cradled her bleeding body. After she died, James moved in with his father who locked young James in the house while he went to work. James would be left alone with chicken and beer for his meal. Evenings in this household involved drug abuse and sexual promiscuity. When James was 12, his father coerced him to join in these activities.

Today, James is the manager of a fast-food restaurant. He is often sexually involved with his female employees. He is the father of three daughters—each with a different biological mother.

In my ministry, I seek to restore the relationships of men like James to their children. I try to understand the conditions of these men, and how they can be encouraged to become more involved in their children's lives. My work takes me into drug treatment programs, inner-city schools, churches, and juvenile detention facilities. I am learning what needs to happen to restore African-American fatherhood.

The mental, spiritual, and emotional condition of today's inner-city African-American fathers is extremely fragile. These men have low self-esteem and a

great deal of anger. Through generations of frustration, bitterness, and rage, they have grown faint toward their responsibility to themselves and their families. How did they get this way?

#### A HISTORY OF SHACKLES AND SLAVERY

In Na'im Akbar's book, *Chains and Images of Psychological Slavery*, he states: "In order to fully grasp the magnitude of our current problems, we must reopen the

---

*For decades after  
slavery began,  
African-American  
fathers . . .  
attempted to  
marry and raise  
their families the  
same as white  
Americans.*

---

books on the events of slavery. . . . We should seek to enlighten our path of today by better understanding where and how the lights were turned out yesterday."<sup>1</sup>

African historians report that most African families were once relatively stable, secure groups subjected to the mores and folkways of their particular tribe. The women of the tribal or kinship unit were the primary caregivers until the child reached

the age of 8 to 10. At that point women initiated the girls into womanhood and the men took the boys away for their rites of passage. If the child's mother or father were not present, aunts or uncles or other adults assumed the role.

This stability changed with slavery. In order to meet the demands of the slave markets, generally the young, most vigorous African men were captured and shipped to the New World. They were packed into slave ships in inhumane conditions, then brought to American shores in shackles and sold. It was not until about 1840 that the number of female slaves began to equal the number of males.

Often immediately separated from their families, slave fathers struggled against insurmountable barriers. Their wives were often raped by white owners, many of whom later abandoned their babies. Slaves were forbidden to speak their African languages, and teaching them to read and write was illegal. Fighting against these conditions could be punished by death.<sup>2</sup>

Even under these brutal conditions, fathers tried to play a vital role in their family's life and pass on a sense of family commitment. When they were forced to cope with the break-up of their families, some men simply wept, while others cut off their arm or mutilated other body parts to avoid separation.<sup>3</sup>

For decades after slavery began, African-American fathers, influenced by the black church, attempted to marry and raise their families the same as white Americans. They believed they would have acceptance and freedom when slavery ended, but instead they found contempt and discrimination. In the South, belief in "white supremacy" emerged. For generations, separate and unequal conditions existed. The public schools provided for blacks were a travesty. The courts set up one standard of justice for white men and another for "coloreds." Many men were subjected to brutal and



often fatal violence involving lynchings and burnings by the Ku Klux Klan. In spite of this, many former slave families continued to find refuge in the black church. In 1925 more than 6 out of 7 black homes in Harlem still had two parents. Eventually, however, the hostile environment began to take its toll.

In 1965, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Democratic Senator from New York, wrote a report titled "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action." Moynihan advised policy-makers that the government's economic and social welfare programs should be designed to encourage the stability of the black family. He argued that too many black marriages broke up and too many children were born out of wedlock because of the systematic weakening of the black male. His report was rejected and criticized as being racist. Rather than heeding Moynihan's concerns, policy-makers formed a welfare system that worsened the situation. Essentially, the welfare system offered each single mother a contract with the government that ensured her a monthly check if she fulfilled two conditions: She was not to work, and she was not to marry an employed male (often the father of her children). This welfare program undermined black fathers, families and, especially, the children.

#### THE ALARMING CURRENT CONDITIONS

The social condition of many of today's urban African-American men is not simply one of violence, drug abuse, and child neglect. As Na'im Akbar notes, these men have yet to break the "chains and images of psychological slavery." No other group of men in history have faced more subjugation. Today, African-American men have a higher death rate, a lower life expectancy, and a greater incidence of serious disease when compared with men in other racial groups. There are more African-American men in prison than there are on American college campuses, reports

Kunjufu.<sup>4</sup> And, according to the American Council on Education's report in 1996, the number of African-American men enrolled in and graduating from college has steadily declined for the last 20 years. Almost one-third of young black men between the ages of 20 to 29 are on probation, parole, or incarcerated. For this generation, the rates of unemployment, teen fatherhood, educational dropout, and death far exceed those of any other demographic group in history.<sup>5</sup> Unless this trend is reversed, the NAACP has predicted that by the year 2010, 70

---

*Too many black marriages broke up and too many children were born out of wedlock because of the systematic weakening of the black male.*

---

percent of all African-American men will either be dead, in prison, or hopelessly hooked on drugs.

These fathers are increasingly both physically and emotionally absent from their children. The fathers of over two-thirds of the children in African-American neighborhoods will not be present when they go to bed tonight. Research reveals that children raised with little or no contact with their fathers are more likely to drop out of school, join gangs, be sexually active, and become teenage parents. These youth are more likely to use drugs and alcohol, commit crimes, and have lower earnings as adults.

How does the history of African-American families that began with strong, involved

fathers end so tragically with broken, absent fathers? Akbar attributes the social and psychological condition of the African-American community to the psychological damage of slavery and racism: "Slavery 'legally' ended in excess of 100 years ago, but over 300 years experienced in its brutality and unnaturalness constituted a severe psychological and social shock in the minds of African-Americans. This shock was so destructive to natural life processes that the current generation of African-Americans . . . still carry the scars of this experience."<sup>6</sup>

When I meet with men like James, I always ask about their family. They tell stories of parents and grandparents that include rejection, divorce, sexual promiscuity, brokenness, and poverty. Patterns of anger and bitterness have been passed through each generation. You hear it in the men's voices and see it on their faces. Their spirits reek of years of unresolved anger.

When I ask juvenile offenders about their crimes, most of them aimlessly say, "I don't know" or "I was in the wrong place at the wrong time." It is hard to conclude that these boys woke up one day and decided to become murderers. In my estimation, they didn't have a chance. They were conceived and born in anger, past down from years of abuse, and their crimes are the result of years of neglect.

African-American men have been denied an opportunity to speak about the atrocities their forefathers faced. Fear of being harassed by angry mobs silenced their fathers' anger during slavery and the years that followed. Many men have seen their fathers hold onto anger, repress it, or express it in destructive ways. They have not been able to express their own anxiety about being "the last hired and first fired." They lack the ability to express their anger constructively.

The once strong, vibrant African has been reduced to a cold, empty, shallow man whose health is being destroyed by

anger. Men get angry if they are cheated, lied to, hurt, punished, betrayed, or prevented from realizing their desires. They get angry when those they care for are being mistreated. Most black men believe they were born into a hostile world that doesn't care about them. So how do they survive? They're advised to deal with the pain, pull themselves up by their bootstraps, and get on with their lives.

Anger manifests itself in powerfully negative feelings that sometimes override reason. Addictions may compensate for inner turmoil by providing temporary pleasure. The slightest negative word from someone may elicit deep feelings of rejection, suspicion, and mistrust. Many inner-city murders result from these feelings. America may very well be paying the price for the sins of the forefathers who enslaved these men, then begrudgingly set them free and resisted giving them an opportunity to become the men they were intended to be.

#### HEALING THE ALIENATION

Social reforms have not resolved the alienation many urban fathers feel. I believe today's challenge for the church is for all Christians to empathize with these men's condition and to ask God to enable us to be reconcilers to our brothers. Only the cross of Christ fulfills the demands of the law and sets us free from the generational patterns of destruction.

"When those days come, people will no longer say, 'Fathers have eaten sour grapes, and their children's teeth are set on edge'" (Jeremiah 31:29). "A son will not be punished for his father's sins, and a father will not be punished for his son's sins" (Ezekiel 18:19-20). The promises of Jeremiah and Ezekiel wait upon one thing for fulfillment—faith in the cross of Christ.

Many African-American men have few personal relationships with men of faith—black or white. Consequently, they have few to love, encourage, or teach

them. The church should be the source of healing for these men. But many in the church appear more concerned with their own comfort. There are many good folks praying for the urban poor, and conferences with an inner-city focus, but little has come of these efforts. Yet we can't leave this problem only to the black churches. Many good people in these communities cower behind high fences, barred windows, and

---

*Only the cross of Christ . . . sets us free from the generational patterns of destruction.*

---

steel doors. They huddle in their places of worship, hoping they can sing, pray, and preach their problems away. But the reality is that the problems are too large for the neighborhood churches that remain in the inner city.

It is my belief that the "white church" has avoided some of its brotherly obligation. Many in this church have left the inner city for a better lifestyle, instead of using their resources to restore the lives of those trapped in urban poverty. If church and parachurch organizations want to help restore urban fatherhood, their people will need to go and *live* among the people in the inner city. Stadium apologies do not reach the men who really need to hear them.

I believe urban African-American men are searching for truth. I believe they want to experience truth in relationship! But meeting them at their point of need means listening to them, then helping them, not simply addressing them at a rally.

As Christians, we can all commit ourselves to reaching out to these men in friendship. These fathers must be guided into an

intentional relationship with the Father who created us. We need to call for the blood of Jesus Christ to flow back through the family bloodlines of African-American men. We need to help them come to a place where they can forgive the sins of their fathers—both their biological fathers and their white forefathers—so that the chains of Satan's stronghold can be broken.

In working with African-American fathers in the inner city, I am struck by the number and degree of unresolved issues facing them. Mental health counseling has not been a high priority in the black community. Hatred and bitterness accompany the chaos and self-destruction in many troubled urban areas. Planned social reforms and job programs are not enough.

As the Church of Jesus Christ, we must turn the hearts of these fathers toward their children. We will begin by meeting them at the cross. Then and only then can we begin to see the rebuilding of the ancient ruins and the restoration of past generations. Then, as in the words of Isaiah, "You will be called the builder of broken walls and the restorer of streets where people live" (Isaiah 58:12). ■

—Please turn to page 23 for endnotes.

E. BERNARD FRANKLIN, Ph.D., serves as vice president of the National Center for Fathering, based in Shawnee Mission, Kansas. Among "Franklin firsts": He was the first African-American to become student body president of Kansas State University; the youngest person to be appointed to the Kansas State Board of Regents; and the youngest to become chair of the board. A leader in men's issues, he is the former assistant dean of student life at KSU and also served on an advisory board to President Jimmy Carter.





# An Untapped Spiritual Power

## THE GRANDFATHER IMPACT

BY JUDSON SWIHART

*Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, least you forget the things which your eyes have seen . . . but make them known to your sons and your grandsons.*

DEUTERONOMY 4:9

Brad is an outgoing, friendly young man who projects a contagious enthusiasm. As we talked and interacted, I found myself enjoying his indomitable spirit. He is attending a Christian college in preparation for the ministry and can scarcely wait until the day he becomes a pastor.

Did he arrive at this stage because he grew up in a warm Christian family? Unfortunately, no. His story tumbled out as we discussed his life journey that led him to this point. His mother had deserted the family when he was a young boy. She had little contact with him after his parents divorced. His father had a drinking problem and was extremely irresponsible.

Without flinching, he told me, "My father brought me into this world, but my grandparents did all the rest." Brad had a godly grandfather who took time to be with him. He spent leisure time with him, lectured him, took him to church, and taught him about God. His grandfather not only talked about God, he lived his faith. Brad sensed his grandfather's deep commitment to the Lord.

Brad's relationship with his grandfather and his love for him became the soil in which his own faith took root and grew. Now in his early twenties, Brad has committed his life to transmitting that faith to others. The baton of faith has been passed from one generation to another.

### OUR POPULATION IS GRAYING

An interesting sociological change

is going on in today's American culture that has important implications for the church. As we enter the new millennium, the baby boomer generation is turning gray. Not only that, they are going through life transitions

---

*Of those in the population who are 65 or older, 94 percent are grandparents.*

---

that allow them to minister within the church in new and powerful ways.

By the year 2000 many of this generation will be in their fifties. In 1995, 55 million people were 55 or older. By the year 2000, this group will increase by 4 million. By the year 2010, they will number nearly 75 million.<sup>1</sup> The importance of this change is not simply the aging of the population. It means that we will have potentially 75 million people in our churches that have reached a new stage in their developmental life cycle. It also means that we will have many parishioners that have moved into the role of grandparents.

Of course not all of those in this age group are grandparents, but most of them are, or will become grandparents in the future. Of those in the population who are 65 or older, 94 percent are grandparents and 46 percent are great-grandparents.<sup>2</sup>

### GRANDFATHERS POSSESS INCREDIBLE POWER

What is particularly significant is

the developmental changes men go through at this point in their lives. Erickson noted that at mid-adulthood, the developmental task is that of "generativity."<sup>3</sup> This is the desire of a mature adult to transfer some aspect of one's person to another generation. Adults do this to establish or preserve in the new generation something of great personal worth. After studying this issue, I have concluded that generativity not only applies to men in middle life, but also extends to grandfathers in their relationships with their grandchildren. I believe many grandfathers today are actively engaged in the process of generativity.

Although there appears to be few articles or research on generativity in the grandparent-grandchild dyad, psychologist A. Perlin suggested that such a phenomenon does exist, when he stated, "Perhaps the caring for and commitments to succeeding generations . . . extends beyond one's children to embrace one's grandchildren as well."<sup>4</sup> Psychiatrist Arthur Kornhaber, who did considerable research on grandparenting, noted that the grandparent-grandchild relationship is the second most powerful of all relationships.<sup>5</sup>

In some cases, such as Brad's, I would even say that it is the most powerful relationship. With the extremely high divorce rate in our country, and the number of unwed mothers, the grandfather's potentially powerful influence has become an even larger resource in our modern culture. Especially when children have very young mothers, grandfathers can have a strong influence in the lives of their grandchildren.<sup>6</sup>

Not all grandfathers activate the potential they have as a positive influence. Some have not had good grandfather models themselves. Some do not have an interest in their grandchildren. Some have not seen their potential. Some have been too preoccupied with their own life issues. But many have simply not realized that their influence could make such a difference in young lives.

### CAN THE CHURCH REDEEM THIS POTENTIAL?

Why does this relationship have so much power to influence? First, because the relationship between a grandfather and his grandchildren is characterized by an unusual love. The grandfather can interact with, but is free from having to worry about the responsibility of raising the grandchildren. Grandfathers are free just to love them and enjoy them. In the restaurant Dad and Mom are concerned whether little Johnny is spilling his milk, sitting still, fighting with his sister, eating his vegetables, being too loud, or using his spoon to beat on the table. Granddad is not in the least concerned about these matters. He is happy just to be with his grandson.

I think of parents as typifying the "Old Testament" and grandparents as the "New Testament." Parents are concerned about laying down the law while grandparents are the living epitome of grace and mercy. This relationship of grace and unconditional acceptance gives a grandfather incredible power. Grandparents can leave the nitty-gritty, day-to-day matters to the parents and focus on the "inner child" of their grandchildren.<sup>7</sup>

The second reason this relationship is so powerful is that there is built into the human race a spiritual dynamic: "For I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love me and keep my commandments" (Exodus 20:5). The blessings of grandfathers can spiritually impact not only their own grandchildren, but many future generations.

### GRANDFATHERS NEED A CALL

Today's grandfathers need a wake-up call about the potential that they have. The church is in a position to provide that call and challenge grandfathers to actively engage in the process of making a

difference in the lives of children. The challenge to equip men to fulfill this role may come from organized men's groups and classes through which they can become aware of their mission and can continue to grow and strengthen each other.

The challenge to become a godly grandfather (or grandfather image) can be issued through many forms, one of which may be a sermon from the pulpit. In

---

*Grandfathers can have a strong influence in the lives of their grandchildren.*

---

issuing such a call, men need models from Scripture that demonstrate the potential that grandfathers can have upon children.

My favorite grandfather passage in Scripture comes from Genesis 48, a poignant scene in which Joseph takes his two sons to their Grandfather Jacob. We note that this was at Jacob's request. He initiated this interaction because he wanted to give his grandsons a blessing before he died. This is a great model of what grandfathers might be doing in some form today. In Jacob, we see the ultimate in generativity.

The initiative to spiritually bless grandchildren lies in the hands of the grandfather. Jacob praised God that he had been allowed to see his grandchildren. He considered just experiencing his grandchildren a great blessing. Jacob did not show indifference, or apathy, or passivity toward his grandchildren. Jacob's actions toward them changed a whole new generation.

In this beautiful scene, he

hugs and kisses his grandchildren as an expression of his warmth and love. The two little boys stand and watch their father Joseph honor their Grandfather Jacob by bowing before him. Jacob then reminds them of the credit he gives God for seeing him through life and redeeming him from evil. Jacob praises God for his life events. Then Jacob has something of great value he wants to confer on his grandchildren. He confers his name on them. In the Hebrew culture, this meant he was giving them his identity. He was conferring on them who he was and all that he stood for.

Grandfather Jacob then told his grandsons how God was going to continue in them the work he had started in his own life. Jacob had obviously spent considerable time in communion with God about his grandchildren. He knew that while the older children would become part of a great nation, the younger would be even greater.

I doubt that Jacob's grandchildren ever forgot this occasion. No doubt it changed their lives forever. Later, in Numbers 26, we read about the fulfillment of Jacob's promises to his grandsons.

Years later Joseph would also take his grandchildren on his knees and repeat this model (see Exodus 50:23). These passages of Scripture provide an excellent foundation and numerous points of application that can assist today's grandfathers in understanding their great potential for spiritually impacting their grandchildren.

### GRANDFATHERS NEED A FORUM

The second part of what churches can do to mobilize this spiritual power is to put into place a program that allows grandfathers to encourage and teach one another, as steel shaping steel. All mature men have something to contribute and can share their experiences and wisdom with each other. In my work with grandfathers, I find that often they do not know what they have to offer. I find they sometimes



have no vision for what can be accomplished by them in furthering God's Kingdom. Many churches have no plan or organization for mature men. A senior men's group can facilitate discussion to bring clarity to these issues.

Churches need to develop a special group just for men of grandfather age, to provide a forum where they can interact with one another and develop their ability to impact young lives. A curriculum for study could include topics such as building relationships with grandchildren, being a teacher, speaking the truth, becoming a stable force in children's lives, linking grandchildren to their past, emotional bonding, and teaching children how to adjust to their world. These forums could provide roll preparation for those who are or will soon become grandfathers. Such topics offer a way to address some of the major components between the elder and younger generations. Forums can offer ways for grandfathers to pass on their spiritual heritage and their faith to the new generation.

For example, in our church we are blessed with "Grandpa Bob." He is in his seventies, and has 35 grandchildren. Bob thinks about them, includes them in his life, and prays for them constantly. Over the years, he has offered them a scripture memorization program, and nearly all of them have taken him up on it. He assigns verses for them to memorize. He calls those who participate in the program every Saturday morning, so they can repeat their assigned verses to him, word for word. Recently, I watched two of his teenage grandsons excitedly planning a trip with him and his wife, Mary, as their reward for memorizing a hundred verses.

Every church has men who could create a focus group on becoming godly grandparents to the new generation. Grandfathers (as well as grandfather images)

will begin to see the possibilities of their role as another aspect of their life that allows them to minister in new and significant ways.

A lot of influence can come from just being present and being interested in the life of a child. I am convinced that these relationships can be very powerful and can provide incredible spiritual strength to the young generation. Grandfathers can become a new dynamic in the church as it moves

*All mature men  
have something to  
contribute and can  
share their  
experiences and  
wisdom with each  
other.*

into the new millennium.

The grandfathers sitting in the pews of our churches today have the power to spiritually impact the generation that will be leading our country through the twenty-first century. These men need to be called, presented the vision, then challenged and given the tools to make a difference in the lives of young children. ■

JUDSON SWIHART, Ph.D., is the director of Cornerstone Family Counseling Center in Manhattan, Kansas. In addition, he teaches part-time in the area of family studies at Kansas State University. Among the popular books Dr. Swihart has authored or coauthored are: *How Do You Say I Love You?* (InterVarsity, 1977); *Making Up the Difference* (Baker, 1984); and *Counseling in Times of Crisis* (Word, 1987).



#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1995).

<sup>2</sup> Butler, R. and Lewis, M., *Aging and Mental Health* (C.V. Mosby, 1982).

<sup>3</sup> Erickson, Erick, *Insight and Responsibility* (W.W. Norton and Co., 1964).

<sup>4</sup> Perlin, A., "Life Strains and Psychological Distress Among Adults," N. Smelser and E. Erickson, editors, *Themes of Work and Love in Adulthood* (Harvard University Press, 1980).

<sup>5</sup> Kornhaber, A. and Woodward, K., *Grandparents, Grandchildren: The Vital Connection* (Anchor Press, Doubleday, 1984).

<sup>6</sup> Oyserman, D.; Radis, N.; and Benn, R., "Dynamics in a Three Generational Family: Teens, Grandparents, and Babies," in *Developmental Psychology*, Vol. 29, No. 3. (1993).

<sup>7</sup> Kornhaber, Arthur, *Grandparent Power* (Crown Publishers, 1994).

#### The Men's Movement

—From page 7

extent that this has happened in a community, true dialogue can take place. Hopefully, this issue of *Theology, News and Notes*, by noting what has been done up to this point, can give direction and be an impetus for developing the type of thinking and the programs needed to allow men to realize the fuller manhood that God intended. The potential fruits of a vital men's ministry for lasting positive individual, familial, ecclesiastical, and societal change are tremendous! ■

#### REFERENCES

Bly, Robert, *Iron John* (1990).

Dalbey, Gordon, *Healing the Masculine Soul* (Word, 1988).

David, D. and R. Brannon, *The Forty-nine Percent Majority* (Addison-Wesley, 1976).

Kimmel, Michael, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (Free Press, 1996).

Messner, Michael, *Politics of Masculinities: Men in Movements* (Sage, 1997).

Minkowitz, D., "In the Name of the Father," in *Ms* magazine (Nov.-Dec. 1995) Vol. 6, No. 3.

Moore, Robert, and Douglas Gillette, *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover* (Harper, 1990).

Van Leeuwen, Mary Stewart, "Servanthood or Soft Patriarchy? A Christian Feminist Looks at the Promise Keepers Movement," in *The Journal of Men's Studies* (1997) Vol. 5, No. 3.

#### Men Behaving Not So Badly

—From page 10

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Richard Ostling for the "MacNeil-Lehrer Report," August 21, 1995.

<sup>4</sup> Donna Minkowitz, "In the Name of the Father," in *Ms* magazine, Vol. 6, No. 3 (November-December 1995).

<sup>5</sup> Gail Bederman, "Response to Panel on Religion, Sports, and Manhood," American Academy of Religion, New Orleans, Louisiana, 1996. See also "The Women Have Had Charge of the Church Work Long Enough: The Men and Religion Forward Movement of 1911-1912 and the Masculinization of Middle-Class Protestantism," in the *American Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (September 1989).

<sup>6</sup> See Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, "A Bit of Evangelical Evasion," in the *New York Times*, October 4, 1997.

<sup>7</sup> See Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, "Among the Promise Keepers: Mixed Messages on the Mall," in *The Christian Century*, Vol. 114, No. 29 (October 22, 1997).

<sup>8</sup> For example, see Elizabeth E. Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo: Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia* (University of Texas Press, 1995).

<sup>9</sup> See Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, "The Promise Keepers and Proof-Text Poker," in *Sojourners* (January-February 1998).

<sup>10</sup> See John P. Bartkowski, "Debating Patriarchy: Discursive Disputes over Spousal Authority among Evangelical Family Commentators," in the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (September 1997).

<sup>11</sup> See Bill McCartney, *Sold Out: Becoming Man Enough to Make a Difference* (Work, 1997).

<sup>12</sup> For example, see Laurie Goodstein, "A Marriage Gone Bad Struggles for Redemption," in the *New York Times*, October 29, 1997; and "PK Message Strikes Close to Home" (no by-line), in *The Christian Century*, Vol. 114, No. 35 (December 10, 1997).

#### Machismo a Hombre de Dios

—From page 16

hanging out with the Lamb of God, asking him questions, talking with him, enjoying his fellowship, being close to him. Men need that opportunity to fellowship with God. They need the opportunity to fellowship with

each other. And they need to just hang out with their pastors and leaders.

But there are risks involved. I've had guys call me at 3 a.m. "Pastor?" "Yeah, who is this?" "It's Frank." "Where are you?" "I'm up on this crane, driving these crates off the ship. Pastor, you can't believe how happy I am to be a Christian! It's beautiful here in the harbor at night. I'm just praising God with my donut and coffee! And I'm reading the book of Job like you told me to. Hallelujah!" "Hey, Frank! You know it's 3 a.m.?" "Yeah, I work the night shift." "Yeah, Frank, you work the night shift." "Yeah, praise the Lord!"

If you're going to make yourself open for bonding moments, you may have to take some risks. This may mean giving some of your time and energy to give your love to guys who need direction. Some have never had a father, brother, uncle, or a significant role model in their life. Maybe they were fatherless, and they look to you as a father image. There are times when I just listen. And I'm not ashamed to share what I believe about Christ. I'm also not ashamed to turn a round of golf into a counseling time. And being transparent is as important as being a good listener. I've found that it's important to let others know about my difficulties—how God has used my own weaknesses and handicaps to season me as a man and a pastor.

#### RETAIN MEN FOR CHRIST

Retaining requires bonding moments. It means being available, accessible, and dependable. I like the T-shirt that my sons Joshua and David have in their high school baseball team. On the front of the shirt it says, "Carson Colts." And on the back, it says, "Go hard, or go home!" I like to say that to men. "If you are going to walk with God, it has to be so meaningful to you that you give 110 percent to the Lord."

Coach Vincent Lopez, recently voted one of the best coaches in college baseball, sought me out for pastoral

counseling at important times in his life. Each time he took a new coaching position, we would pray together. Before he decided to get married, we prayed. We prayed at each important step in his life. As his pastor, I was accessible. And he has been accessible to me. We need to remain accessible to other men and to encourage them to do their best for God—to "go hard, or go home."

We need to *reclaim* men—to go out and scout them. We need to *regain* men. If they've left the church, to go out and bring them back. We need to *retrain* men—to bond with them and show them a better way. We need to *retain* men—to be available to them and give them a way to serve the Lord. But more than anything, we need to help men become better at what they love to do, which is to lead others. We need to point men to the Lord Jesus Christ. ■

\*Note: This article is excerpted from a lecture given to a gathering of pastors.

#### Restoring African-American Fatherhood

—From page 19

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Akbar, Na'im, *Chains and Images of Psychological Slavery* (New Mind Productions, 1984).

<sup>2</sup> Souljah, S., *No Disrespect* (Vintage Press, 1994).

<sup>3</sup> Genovese, E., *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World Slaves Made* (Vintage Press, 1976).

<sup>4</sup> Kunjufu, J., "The Real Issue About the Male Academy," *Black Issues in Higher Education* (1991).

<sup>5</sup> Dawson, D., *Living to Tell About It: Young Black Men in America Speak Their Piece* (Doubleday, 1996).

<sup>6</sup> Akbar, *Chains and Images*.

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Dalbey, Gordon, *Healing the Masculine Soul* (Word Books, 1988).

Edlin, G., and Golanty, E., *Health and Wellness* (Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 1985).

Martin, S. H., *Shame on You!* (Broadman Press, 1990).

Phillips, Keith, *Out of Ashes* (World Impact Press, 1996).

Rubin, T., *The Angry Book* (Collier Books, 1969).

Smith, E., *37 Things Every Black Needs to Know* (St. Clair Rene Publishing, 1991).



# Upcoming Events

(HELD AT FULLER SEMINARY IN PASADENA UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)

## APRIL

- 3** **JUBILEE CELEBRATION**, Fuller Seminary Southwest, in Phoenix, Arizona, featuring Richard J. Mouw
- 7 and 9** **NEW TESTAMENT COLLOQUIUM**, School of Theology, featuring New Testament scholar C. K. Barrett
- 14** **PROFESSORIAL INAUGURAL LECTURE**, School of Theology, and installation of Cecil M. Robeck, Jr.
- 17 to 18** **JUBILEE CELEBRATION**, Fuller Seminary in Northern California, in Menlo Park, featuring Richard J. Mouw
- 18 to 25** **ANNUAL SPRING FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS**
- 24 to 25** **REGIONAL JUBILEE CELEBRATION** in Grand Rapids, Michigan, featuring Richard J. Mouw
- 27** **REGIONAL JUBILEE CELEBRATION** in Chicago, Illinois, featuring Richard J. Mouw
- 30 to MAY 2** **GLOBAL CHURCH HISTORIOGRAPHY CONSULTATION**, with Andrew Walls (Edinburgh), Lamin Sanneh (Yale), and Wilbert Shenk (Fuller).

## MAY

- 7** **SEMI-ANNUAL DAY OF PRAYER**
- 8** **CHILD ABUSE WORKSHOP**, School of Psychology, featuring child psychologist Tammi Anderson
- 15** **JUBILEE CELEBRATION**, Fuller Seminary in Washington, in Seattle, featuring Richard J. Mouw

