

"THE MASCULINITY OF CHRIST"

MY STORY OF REDEMPTION

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I'm sure your question to the title of this article is "What does the masculinity of Christ have to do with Christmas?"...
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"Change happens when the pain of staying the same is greater than the pain of change"
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A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF A DISCIPLESHIP COUNSELOR AT LMT

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- Bruce Hogarth, *President.*
- Connie Cobb
- Larry Watkins
- Ginny Johnson

Office Administration

- Teresa Hogarth

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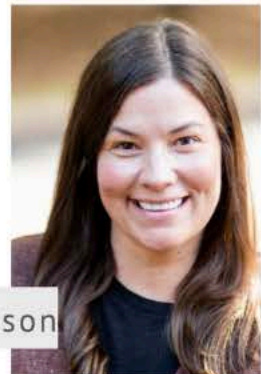
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“What a year 2021 has been! Can I just say how incredibly thankful I am God is allowing me to be a part of this! I'm walking alongside others as they encounter Him. I'm watching Him transform His beloved before my very eyes. I'm witnessing Him change their lives. All the while He continues to do the same in mine. Everyone I have the pleasure of journeying with is such a gift to me. Our God is a miracle worker. And He never stops working.

My prayer is Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3. That we...may have power, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, to know this love that surpasses knowledge— and be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. I am BLESSED to experience Him do His thing. Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.



Ginny Johnson

THE MASCULINITY OF CHRIST

In Contrast to The Effeminate Male

By: Bruce Hogarth

I'm sure your question to the title of this article is "What does the masculinity of Christ have to do with Christmas?" Please read to the end and see if it does indeed relate and has application for us today.

One (of many) of the principal attacks against God and His design of creation has been the subtle, and now open assault against the highest of God's creation, "humanity." More specifically the offensive against the Male and masculinity. (Also, the Female and Femininity. But that will be for another time.) It is outright rebellion against who God is and His divine design. This obviously directly impacts the biblical design for the family unit. What we are witnessing today is the devastation of the home and subsequently, the destabilization of society.

There is much being written concerning "toxic masculinity" and the opposing end of the spectrum, the loss of masculinity. An amazing number of analyses and writings are being done by researchers who do not have a biblical world view, even by atheists concerning the impact of the loss of masculinity or "crisis of masculinity."

God communicates to us in I Corinthians 6:9 "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, ..." God uses a word "effeminate" separate and different from the word homosexuals.

The LGBTQ+ culture is just one of the many manifestations and consequence of a much deeper issue that goes back to Adam, Eve, and their sin. Especially Adam.

**EFFEMINACY IS NOT
A SEXUAL ORIENTATION
BUT A WAY OF LIFE.**

The word "effeminate" or effeminacy "is best defined by St. Thomas a Kempis.

...the unwillingness to put aside one's pleasure, in order to pursue what is arduous, difficult. An addiction to pleasure.

Dictionaries define effeminate as "considered feminine, as softness or delicacy. Characterized by softness, delicacy, weakness, or lack of vigor. Vigor is defined as "active strength or force of body or mind; capacity for exertion, physically, intellectually, or morally; force; energy."

Effeminate is being "nice." Many years ago, if you called a man "NICE" it would be an insult. For Nice meant one was "timid, faint-hearted" to "dainty, delicate."

Effeminacy is blaming others and not taking full responsibility for one's own life and decisions. It is being a victim. In Genesis 4, Adam blamed God and Eve for his decision. Adam chose the abdication of leadership with his wife Eve. Why? Because Adam chose the soft, easiest path of least resistance. It was the result of choosing self-pleasure over what is TRUTH. The curse of Adam upon humanity happened when he chose what was pleasing and desirable to self, not choosing obedience to Truth and Reason. God said this is the Truth, "you eat from the tree you shall die."

Effeminate is a lack of integrity. Integrity is being honest and having strong moral principles and making the conscious decision to live by them, even if it is arduous and difficult.

Effeminate is an addiction to pleasure rather than what is intellectually understood to be Truth. It is the forfeiture of intellectual reason to subdue our lower human passions and appetites and be dictated to by our emotions and feelings. Making the willful decision to choose pleasure, what is easy and soft instead of what is Truth. Or, as Paul wrote in Ephesians 2 "...lived (living) in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind,..."

THE MASCULINE CHRIST

Contrast the first Adam who was effeminate to the last Adam, Jesus Christ. One of the most captivating thoughts about Christ, his birth and life here on earth was how he lived his life.

Jesus' life was and is an example of true "Masculinity." His persistent, perseverant, purposeful single mindedness to live by reason and intellectual adherence to Truth. An obedience to Truth. No matter how "arduous," difficult or cost... "...even death on the cross."

Standards of manliness or masculinity vary across different cultures and historical periods. Traits traditionally viewed as masculine include strength, (strength that is more than physical. It is a commitment to what is righteous and moral. As seen by ones' character.) courage, interdependence, leadership, and assertiveness vs passivity. (See definition for Vigor.)

I BELIEVE IF ONE DOES NOT HAVE SOMETHING WORTH DYING FOR, ONE DOES NOT HAVE A LIFE THAT HAS MEANING OR IS WORTH LIVING.

Christ knew of the rejection, even by his family. The betrayal of close and intimate friends. The abandonment of others in his darkest hours. He knew of the public humiliation that awaited him. He knew of the deep emotional and physical pain that awaited him. He knew it would be hard, arduous, bloody, but Christ chose to live by truth and reason over the lower human passions of self-pleasure. For the love of the Father he chose obedience over self-pleasure.

God through the prophet Isaiah spoke of Christ's Passion.

I OFFERED MY BACK TO THOSE WHO STRUCK ME, AND MY CHEEKS TO THOSE WHO TORE OUT MY BEARD. I DID NOT HIDE MY FACE FROM SCORN AND SPITTLE. BECAUSE THE LORD GOD HELPS ME, I HAVE NOT BEEN DISGRACED; THEREFORE, I HAVE SET MY FACE LIKE FLINT, AND I KNOW THAT I WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME.
ISAIAH 50:6,7

Listen to the One whose birth we celebrate, as he describes His life.

Jesus explained, **"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work".** John 4:34

"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." John 6:38

"He who sent Me is with Me. He has not left Me alone, because I always do what pleases Him." John 8:29

"I can do nothing by Myself; I judge only as I hear. And My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." John 5:30

My spiritual dad used to say, "for Christ, the crucifixion happened in the garden of Gethsemane before the cross on Golgotha's hill."

What was the crucifixion in Gethsemane? It was the surrender of His will to avoid the pain, agony and torment...“arduous”. **Where Christ by reason not feeling, rejected being effeminate and chose what is arduous and difficult. Christ chose Masculinity.** It was the “dying to self.” Choosing God’s Truth and reason above his own human desire of immediate self-gratification.

Three times in the garden of Gethsemane, He asked his Father, “is there another way? Would it be possible to not have to drink of this cup of suffering and agony? **This arduous, difficult way with its consequences.** His crucifixion.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off every encumbrance and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with endurance the race set out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame,

and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.... Hebrews 12:2,3

“Oh you redeemed ones, on whose behalf this strong resolve was made—you who have been bought by the precious blood of this steadfast, resolute Redeemer—come and think awhile of Him, that your hearts may burn within you and that your faces may be set like flints to live and die for Him who lived and died for you!”
— C.H. Spurgeon

And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Galatians 5:24-25 ESV

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ this year, may He be our example and His Spirit the empowerment as you choose masculinity.

My Story of Redemption

by: Rachel

Disclaimer: Name has been changed to maintaining client confidentiality.

I started working with Life Ministries Today after two break-ups. One of which was a wonderful, Christian man who I knew we were great together. I was 34 years old and unable to commit to a man, and I had developed a pattern in my dating life and choices that I could not pinpoint. Nor understand how to break. I knew what I wanted for my future, but something was preventing me from getting there. I had stumbled onto the quote “Change happens when the pain of staying the same is greater than the pain of change”, and I knew that was the point I had reached. I desperately wanted to change.

Bruce Hogarth had counseled my mother 15 years prior, my younger brother 6 years prior, and I figured, if he could help them so drastically, I better give this a try.

With the guidance of Holy Spirit, Bruce and I were able to unlock my shame-based core identity, target long-held lies and beliefs about myself through people and instances in my past, and move forward in rewiring my thinking with Truth about who I am and was created to be by God. Bruce is very straight forward, and asks his clients not to give Sunday School, sugarcoated answers. I respond very well to direct, blunt wisdom and guidance.

“
Change happens when the pain of staying the same is greater than the pain of change
”

The other beautiful thing about this process is that I learned I am not alone or unique in my struggles. With Bruce having counseled many many individuals and couples, and with him throwing in examples from his own life, I was able to see we all have issues because we are all human. And beautifully broken.

I met with Bruce individually for two years, and now, I am meeting with him with the man I married in March of this year! Bruce even officiated our wedding. Talk about coming full circle.

By the way, my husband is the same man I broke up with that steered me to meeting with Bruce in the first place. While that shame-based core identity will always be with me, the freedom I have now is I can identify it when it is leading me the wrong way and replace the thoughts with who God says I am. I no longer let that label determine my life or choices. It’s a journey for sure, but one that is more than worth it. Thank you, thank you Life Ministries Today!

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OUR MISSION

To walk alongside individuals, couples and families through the process that encourages them to know and experience freedom in Christ as proclaimed in *Jonh 10:10*

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