

Where Are The Men?

Joe Slater

Although He commended the church at Thyatira for some things, Jesus rebuked that congregation because “*you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and beguile My servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat things sacrificed to idols*” (Revelation 2:20). My friend and fellow-preacher, Michael Harmon, from Augusta, KS, correctly pointed out that, while Jezebel was clearly in the wrong, the men of that congregation ought to have taken the lead in putting an end to Jezebel’s ungodly campaign (or prevented it in the first place). Assuming Thyatira had elders, why didn’t they address the matter? If there were no elders, where were the men of the church? Why didn’t they fulfill their God-given role?

Today, the repercussions of the feminist movement are ravaging the church. Whether in the home or the church, male leadership gets two thumbs-down from the cultural elite. Just look at the television – if a show portrays a husband or father at all, he is likely to be an incompetent dolt or else an abusive knucklehead. God’s design, nevertheless, is for male spiritual leadership in both the home and the church. Scripture plainly states that “*the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church*” (Ephesians 5:23). And, fathers are specifically charged to bring up their children “*in the training and admonition of the Lord*” (Ephesians 6:4). The qualifications for elders and deacons (see 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1) can be met only by men. Informed students understand that this is not a put-down of women. The question is, will we men step up to the plate and fulfill our God-given responsibilities?

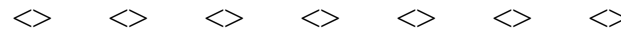
Families suffer when husbands and fathers are not leading their wives and children in God’s way (or

perhaps are not leading them at all). Shame on the man who leaves his wife no choice but to “wear the pants” in the family. Equal shame on the woman who discourages her husband from being the spiritual leader God intended him to be, usurping that function for herself!

Churches suffer when God’s men shirk their duties as spiritual leaders. Christian men at Thyatira would have prevented untold grief had they nipped Jezebel’s vulgar wickedness in the bud. Likewise, the current crop of controversies in the Lord’s church continues for one basic reason: God-ordained men tolerate it instead of carrying out their obligation to stop the mouths of deceivers (Titus 1:10, 11).

Where are the men?

Where are you?



REGARDING FREEDOM IN CHRIST:

Lying on my table is a violin string. It is free. I pull one end of it, and it responds. It is free. But it is not free to do what a violin string is supposed to do: to produce music.

So I take it, fix it in my violin, and tighten it until it is taut. Only then is it free to be a violin string. Only then can it sing.

Rabindranath Tagore (East Indian poet); via *Bulletin Gold*

His Grace Reaches Me

Christians sometimes sell the grace of God short. While we intellectually know that grace is “undeserved,” we tend to limit God’s grace to the more “deserving” sinner. You know, the guy who is trying to do right, but makes “ordinary” mistakes. But, you see, that’s our problem. There is no such thing as a “deserving” sinner.

The guy who walks too close to the mud hole and gets a little mud on the sides of his shoes is just as defiled and unfit for heaven as the guy who wallowed in the mud hole. Yet we sometimes forget this truth. Friends, God’s grace isn’t for those who have most things under control, but just need a little extra help. Rather, His grace is for the helpless, and that includes all men, whether they have just a little mud on their shoes, or are covered from head to toe.

Maybe we need to be reminded of what we sing:

“Just as I am, without one plea

But that Thy blood was shed for me
and that Thou bidd’st me come to Thee

O Lamb of God, I come, I come

Just as I am, and waiting not

To rid my soul of one dark blot.

To Thee, Whose blood can cleanse each spot,

O Lamb of God, I come, I come!”

Instead of limiting God’s grace, let’s lift our voices and give thanks that His grace reaches even me!

--Steve Higginbotham (via *Bulletin Gold*)