

Warrior #2
The Warrior Father
6/19/16

- The pressing question that comes up over and over in Christian theology is, “Why did God create man first?” To women, the answer is clear: “God looked at man and thought, I can do better than that. So He created woman!”
 - Obviously, men have a different perspective and answer. A man might say that God created men first because He didn’t want any advice.
 - God certainly didn’t need any advice when creating men and women differently, although, if he had asked, I’m sure the woman would have given him advice. ☺

- Last week, we started a new series geared especially toward men on being a warrior of God, like Jesus was a warrior. We showed how Jesus has been gravely misrepresented by the modern church. He has been shown too much as weak, rather than meek or having strength that is under control. He has been shown as only loving, kind – to the point of being passive.
 - He is all of those things, but much more. He is also a Warrior God. Our theme verse for this series, Zephaniah 3:17, tells us this when it says, “*The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves.*”
 - Nearly every book in the Bible speaks of God’s strength and his warring activity against evil as he declares war for the hearts of his people.

- So, we’ve been talking about becoming the powerful warriors God created us to be. All of us can be warriors, but this resonates more with men because men were designed by God for strength, for power and with a yearning to be good, but dangerous at the same time.
 - Last week, we asked the question if Jesus was more like William Wallace, the Scottish knight from Braveheart, or Mother Teresa. He was both. Jesus is not one dimensional or even two or three or four dimensional. He is all-consuming dimensional!
 - Yet, most men will resonate more with being like William Wallace because that is how you were designed and created.

- Let me illustrate this: at Josiah’s school, they offer various after school activities for the kids at a small fee. Two times this past year, they offered karate. Since he fancies himself a ninja, of course Josiah wanted to get signed up! Although, he stated that he already knew how to do karate – you know, being a ninja already and all.
 - The second time, they had a graduation of sorts for the kids who completed both sessions. They went to the Ichiban karate school here in Wakefield and

- put on a special program for the parents. Wil attended while I stayed home with Stephen.
- The kids showed off the skills they learned. Then, each one got to break a board with one of the kicks they learned. You can only imagine the excitement of Josiah as he burst into the house afterwards to tell me about breaking the board. Here is the board.
- Now, ladies, what we may not understand is that every man (6 or 85) is thinking one thing... “I could break that board. In fact, I could break a board much thicker than that! I wonder how thick of a board I could break if Josiah could break that one!”
 - The WARRIOR inside of a man never dies. Whether that man is 6’5/ over 200 lbs. or 5’/ 130 lbs. the WARRIOR is churning within.
 - We celebrate that in this series. And, today, we celebrate our warrior fathers! Like we talked about last week, I’m convinced that the failure to celebrate and encourage the development of godly warriors is the missing element from our culture.
 - Further, I believe the depreciation of morals in our country directly correlates with the absence of Godly men in the home. Without godly men, who is going to fight for the morals of our country? Women are strong, but we need our men!
 - We celebrate because wanting to be a warrior is not a bad thing. God designed that in all men and I think it especially peaks to new levels when a man becomes a father. When a good man looks at the tiny, innocent life that they are responsible for, something clicks and a new level of warrior arises.
 - Unfortunately, not all men or fathers are living within their design. It doesn’t take acute observational skills to see that not every man is the WARRIOR God wants him to be. We see it all around us today. God created them to be warriors, but they have decided to go their own way and become misdirected.
 - Because of this, some men are what might be called “Frustrated Warriors.” Deep inside, they are still built to be a warrior, but they are far from what they were called to be which would bring them fulfillment and instead, they are frustrated.
 - Frustrated Warriors will fall into one of two extremes.
 - First, a frustrated warrior may become passive. The first Frustrated Warrior we find goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden – Adam.
 - Like all warriors, Adam was created to lead & protect the first family. But when his moment to rise up came, he went passive.
 - We all know the first sin: Eve disobeyed and ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. But, the second sin was that Adam stood there, passively allowing it all to happen!

- He was created to and he was supposed to rise up and say, “No, honey, God has something different/better for us. Let’s leave that sin alone and go after God with our whole heart.” But, he wimped out!
- Genesis 3:6b gives us the account. It says, *“Then she (Eve) gave some to her husband (Adam), who was with her, and he ate it, too.”*
 - Did you see where Adam was? Right beside her the whole time! He heard the snake speak to his wife, he saw his wife be convinced to sin and even watched his wife reach up and take the forbidden fruit. He sat passively by & watched his family go to pot.
 - But God made him to be a WARRIOR. He was supposed to come charging in, pull his sword or stick or something, and cut off the head of the SERPENT.
 - But he went passive.
- Men, this is going on in families all over the world and all over our community. Could it be happening to you? Have you forgotten the warrior you are to be and have gone passive?
 - You may say, “Oh, not me, Pastor Angela.” But, let’s take a real and honest look.
 - Because passivity is kind of like when you walk into a dark room and you can’t see. When you stay there long enough your pupils dilate and you become acclimated to it. You don’t even notice how dark it is where you are until the lights are turned on.
 - I’m here to shine the light of God’s WORD back on this subject.
- Father and men of God, You are a WARRIOR and you’re meant to charge in and beat back sin’s offense away from your home! You are meant to take control and lead your family away from anything that is causing them to stray from the heart of God. You were not created to stand there, feeling powerless to do something. You hold the power!
 - Do you know one of the greatest factors in whether children come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior? It’s if their FATHER knows Jesus as their Lord and Savior. The father’s influence carries the most weight.
 - Do you know how many women have come to church, even to this church, without their husbands and because they don’t have the support of their husbands, they stop coming. It’s because the influence of men carries weight.
 - The problem is that many men aren’t leading! Some of them are just sitting idly by, watching things happen around them, not using the influence they have. That’s passivity.
- Second, a frustrated warrior may become abusive. Because a man is built to have drive and explosive power, if he is not accomplishing something, he becomes frustrated.

- One of the ways that frustration comes out is abuse. Instead of being passive, this man will take the lead, but he will do it by manipulation, aggression, intimidation and belittling. This abuse may be physical, verbal, emotional, or even spiritual, but it's all abuse.
 - We see an example of an Abusive Warrior in Cain. He became frustrated because he was doing the wrong thing. He was giving less than his best to the Lord and instead kept it for himself. When his sacrifice did not please God, instead of repenting and turning back to God, in his frustration, he became abusive.
 - He abandoned the passion to please God and became consumed with the desire to defeat his brother. You remember this story is *Genesis 4 which then turns into crisis in verses 8 which says, "Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him."*
- How do men become abusive to their families? They follow the same cycle as Cain. They become frustrated with their lives. And, instead of taking a good hard look at themselves, they begin to blame.
- First, they blame God, just like Cain. They start to say, "This is not the life I wanted. I'm not happy." Any time we start to hate the life God gave us, we are on a slippery slope of frustration that could lead to abuse.
 - Next, the blame turns on someone else. Cain blamed his brother for being a goody-goody. Abusive men start to believe that "It must be someone else's fault why my life is not what I want - wife, children, boss"
 - This frustration can easily turn to abuse that is either outright aggressive or passively aggressive. Men, either way, the damage is just as severe. And either way can turn abusive.
- So, these are 2 dangerous extremes: Passivity and abuse. Both keep you from being a true warrior of God.
- So, what do you do if you see yourself here? Well, you've got to first humble yourself which is to get your strength under control to do some repenting.
 - You've got to repent and confess in a two-fold process.
 - First, you've got to confess to God. You've got to ask for forgiveness. 1 John 1:9 tells us to confess our sins to God and he will forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
 - Next, you've got to ask for forgiveness from those you offended in order to provide healing for you and for them. That requires you to swallow your pride, especially when you might have to ask for forgiveness from you wife or children.
 - But, a true warrior is strong enough to say "I'm sorry." A true warrior asks for forgiveness without giving excuses or being defensive. Being able to do that shows true, godly strength.

- Confession and repentance will lead the frustrated warrior back to where God designed him to be – a godly warrior, a warrior father. And, a godly warrior is neither passive or abusive.
 - o Rather, the godly warrior becomes consumed with passion for his godly purpose. A godly warrior is a passionate warrior.
 - o Jesus is the obvious example. He knew exactly what He was here for. He was here to seek and save the lost. He did that by binding the broken hearted, giving sight to the blind, proclaiming freedom to the captive, giving abundant life by sacrificing his own life.
 - o Jesus said, *“This is who I am. I’m here to do the Father’s work. Nothing else.”*

- So, everything he did, he did with his purpose in mind. Including two times when he cleared the temple. Jesus came upon the house of God one day and His inner WARRIOR rose up at what He saw.
 - o Evil men had turned His house into a house of profit. They were literally robbing people in the temple, selling them animals to sacrifice at exorbitant prices, not changing their money fairly.
 - o So, Jesus, consumed with passion did something that all warriors dream of doing – he took powerful action.
 - o John 2:15-17 *“So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ To those who sold doves he said, “Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a market!” ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it is written: “Zeal for your house will consume me.”*

- Here, we see that Jesus did not become a Frustrated Warrior. He did not throw up His hands and quit, thinking that he could not do anything anyway. Neither did He become abusive. There is no indication of physical violence. He stayed on mission. He drew a line in the sand and said, “No More!”
 - o Gentlemen, there is a WARRIOR inside of you that was created with a cause to fight for. Some of you need to say, “No More,” to the way the enemy is advancing in your life/home.
 - o You need to draw your line in the sand and say, “I’m not going to settle for this anymore! I’m going to use my God-given power and leadership and influence and I’m going to fight for my family, I’m going to fight for my community, I’m going to fight for what is right!”
 - o There well might be some things that have entered your house that are no of God and you need to do something about it because it is the enemy advancing. You have got to be consumed with passion for God’s purpose for you as a warrior, that you will say “No more!” to some things.

- And, probably one of the most important purposes that God has for the passionate warrior is that they have someone to protect. Jesus said, “Greater love has no one than to lay down his life for his friends.”

- Men, there is nothing higher than to sacrifice your life for family or friends. In the OT, we see Nehemiah using this fact to rally his troops for battle.
 - Nehemiah 4:14 says *“Don’t be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.”*
 - Guys, there are at least 3 areas where you must fight for your family to provide the protection God empowers you to offer.
- First, the warrior protects physically.
 - You were created a little bigger, little stronger not just to lift heavy boxes, but to also protect physically.
 - How many men say, “No question, I’d give my life for my family in a heartbeat”? I don’t doubt you 1 minute. That’s how God made you.
 - One night this past week around 4a, Mollie, our dog, started barking. She isn’t a barker unless she hears someone outside. So, Wil and I got up. I told him she is looking at the door and barking. Wil immediately went downstairs to check things out. We didn’t have to talk about it. He is the protector. He went. He’s the first line of defense.
- Secondly, The Warrior protects spiritually. Now, I know that many men have dreams of rushing in like William Wallace and protecting their families from attack in the middle of the night. But the truth is, most will never face that kind of danger.
 - But, listen men, EVERY DAY, the Enemy will attack spiritually. He is attacking you, he is attacking your wife, he is attacking your children. It’s not a physical attack. He is attacking by temptations, by lies, by questioning the goodness and truth of God.
 - You have to stand in the truth of God’s Word and fight for your family spiritually. The best position for a spiritual fight is on your knees in prayer!
 - In order for you to protect your family spiritually, you better be standing firm in the Word of God yourself! You better be seeking the face of God and his strength through prayer and submission to His ways and His will. You can never protect your family spiritually if you can’t protect yourself spiritually. You can’t protect your family spiritually if you have fallen spiritually. ARE YOU BEING THE SPIRITUAL EXAMPLE YOUR FAMILY NEEDS TO SEE?
- Finally, The Warrior protects emotionally. Now, there are certain emotional attacks from the outside that you cannot control. I wish I could protect my boys from the emotional pain of life that I know is going to come. I can’t. You can’t.
 - But, father warriors, you can protect them emotionally by making it clear to them that you love them and will lay down your life for them. In this case, laying down your life means that you lay down everything else and make them your priority.

- SHOW YOUR FAMILY THAT THEY ARE #1. The only thing above your family is God.
- You know, one of the reasons that churches or even organizations are more willing to hire men over women is because they fear that women will put their family, their children over their career. It was a concern I know was expressed when hiring me and beyond. Men in our country have been socialized with this expectation that career and work comes first and that by putting work above family is the way that you care for your family by providing for them.
 - To that, I say “the devil is a liar!” Any man who puts their career or any male pastor who puts their ministry or church over their family is dead-dog wrong! And, I would have no problem telling any man in ministry or any church that they are wrong if family comes after ministry and church.
- Providing for your family is not limited to monetary provision. Emotionally providing for them and protecting them is even more important.
 - Men, you protect your family emotionally when you protect the innocence of your children when they are young. You protect your family emotionally when you protect the honor and virtue of your children when they get older and you speak God’s truth on purity into their lives and are involved in their dating lives. You protect your family emotionally when you make spending quality time with your wife a priority.
 - Basically, you protect your family emotionally when you prove your commitment to them. Are you 100% committed to your children? This means that you are 100% to your kids’ mother. Your children will know their home is stable when they sense your marriage is a place of love and peace.
- Gentlemen, not only do you have someone to protect, but you have another God-given purpose. The Passionate Warrior has a Kingdom to Advance.
 - Last week, we looked at one of our theme verses, Matthew 11:12 which says, *“And from the time John the Baptist began preaching until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing, and violent people are attacking it.”*
- Here’s the deal, as warriors, men you will advance one kingdom or another. There is no passive kingdom advancement. You will either try to build God’s kingdom or you will try to build your own. When you try to build your own, you are directly or indirectly attacking the advancement of the kingdom of God.
 - Most men, most warriors today are building their own kingdom. They are trying to do it through money, success, promotion, image, cars, boats, clothes, houses, land...
 - But, deep down, there is something missing. There’s something missing because you aren’t fulfilling the purpose created deep within you.

- You were empowered by God as a Warrior to advance His kingdom, not yours. You were empowered to advance God's kingdom, not indirectly work against it. You work against it when you are trying to advance your own rather than his.
 - How do you advance the kingdom of God? If you aren't a pastor, you are working a regular job like a regular person. Still you are a warrior!
 - Scripture tells us that whatever we do, do it unto the glory of God. You advance the kingdom of God daily as you are an example of excellence and integrity in all you do. Then, your testimony speaks!
 - And, another way you advance the kingdom of God is by protecting your family in all of those ways we just talked about. Your protection of your family shows them the kingdom of God and advances the kingdom as your family is more likely to choose God's kingdom over the kingdom of the world because of your influence and protection.

- And so, the decision this Father's Day is what kind of warrior are you going to be? Are you going to be a frustrated warrior or a passionate warrior? Are you going to advance your kingdom or God's kingdom? Who are you going to protect?
 - These aren't just questions for fathers, but for all men. And, they aren't just for all men, but for us all. Yet, men, you are uniquely and specifically created to be warriors. What kind of warrior do you want to be?

- Maybe you have struggled being a godly warrior. Maybe you have found yourself passive or abusive because of frustration. Or, maybe you are trying to be a godly warrior, but you find yourself listening to many competing voices.
 - If you desire to be a passionate father warrior of God, then you must stay on your post! You've got to fight to be a godly warrior, advancing the kingdom of God. The Warrior at greatest risk is the warrior who abandons his post.
 - This truth is proven in the saddest chapter in the life of a great man – King David.

- 2 Samuel 11:1 says, *"In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army."*
 - David wasn't where he was supposed to be – he should have been at war like the other kings. He saw something he wasn't supposed to see – when he saw it, he should have walked away, not kept looking! He did something he wasn't supposed to do – he sinned.
 - Everything he worked for his whole life was gone in a minute. All because he abandoned his post and tried to be a warrior on his own rather than being a warrior of God.
 - Men, get back where you are supposed to be! You are to be on the battlefield for your family and your God! Get back to your post and stay there! Keep your eyes on your Commander! God has a warrior plan for you!

- No matter where you are in your warrior status, God has a plan for you. Abandoning your post doesn't mean that God will abandon you or that he's through with you. God wasn't through with David.
 - He sent the prophet Nathan to tell him, "You've sinned against God. You must repent." Maybe for someone here today, I'm your Nathan.
 - It's time for you to get back into the game. It's time to be a warrior. It's time to be a father warrior.
 - You've been thinking, "I'll serve God when things settle down. I'll spend more time with my kids when we are financially more stable. I'll become a giver...I'll lead devotions...I'll join a LIFE group...I'll be more faithful later..." You have abandoned your post, leaving yourself and your family vulnerable. Get back to your post now!

- When David was confronted with abandoning his post through his sin, the first thing he did was to repent immediately. Then, he got back to doing the purposes of a godly warrior. Because of that, the latter part of his reign was stronger than the first part.
 - Maybe there are fathers here who would love to see the rest of their time here on earth be better than the first part. Maybe you see how you abandoned your post at times and see now the effects of that in your family and in your life. You can still do something! You can still fight for your family. You can still set the example of godliness and it can still make a difference.
 - Warriors of God – fight for the purposes of God and see the victory that he will bring. See that his promises are true! I said it last week and I will say it again – Men, see that we need you – your family, the church, this community needs you! We need warriors and father warriors of God!
 - You were made to be courageous. You were made to lead the way. You were made to advance the kingdom of God for this generation and beyond. Rise up, godly father warriors, rise up!