

The Emasculated Man of God

By Doug Hamilton

There is a Greek New Testament word called ἀποκόπτω (*apokoptō*) and means to cut down/cut off. The word occurs six times in the New Testament, with one of the times being used to refer to the cutting away of the rope from a ship. Here is the first use of that word.

- Acts 27:32 Then the soldiers cut away (ἀποκόπτω) the ropes of the *ship's* boat and let it fall away.

Four other times it is used in the New Testament refers to the cutting away from the human body. Two are used in Mark 9 and two in John 18, referring to the removal of the hand, the foot and and of the ears of a man named Malchus at the hand of Peter.

- Mark 9:43 “If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off (ἀποκόπτω); it is better for you to enter life crippled, than, having your two hands, to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire...”
- Mark 9:45 “If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off (ἀποκόπτω); it is better for you to enter life lame, than, having your two feet, to be cast into hell,
- John 18:10 Simon Peter then, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off (ἀποκόπτω) his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus.

It is in the last use of the word from the six times it is used in the New Testament that I would like to pay particular attention to. It is found in chapter five of the Letter to the Galatians. The church in Galatia had joyfully accepted the presentation of the Gospel of Jesus when the Apostle of Paul passed through that region of the world. It wasn't long after he departed that Judaizers crept in and started teaching circumcision as essential to their salvation. Some of them actually were misrepresenting Paul by saying this is what he was teaching. It was here in the letter to the Galatians that Paul wrote with strong emotion against their wicked and misleading teaching of circumcision. He said the following:

- Galatians 5:11-12 But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. ¹² I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate (ἀποκόπτω) themselves! (ESV)

Paul was basically saying that if the Judaizers were going to continue with their pro-circumcision attitude of disruption, they might as well go all the way with the knife and completely emasculate (ἀποκόπτω: cut off) all remnants of their manhood. It was mentioned in other passages like the following:

- It was what royalty would do to their eunuchs that guarded their harems (Mt 19:12) so as to not have a conflict of interest.
- It was strictly commanded in the Law that any male that had undergone such a procedure whether accidental or intentionally would be permanently barred from the assembly of the LORD (Dt 23:1).

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From a physical standpoint, the term Emasculation is a very accurate expression, for the “masculine” is being removed from the male. The mere fact that this is in the introduction of the sermon should cause all men of understanding to have a moment of cringing.

It is with that in mind that I would like to transfer the thought from the literal use to a figurative. Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary provides a simple definition, referring to it as “to unman” the male. Figuratively speaking it can apply to the “unmanning” of the qualities that God desires to be in the men among his people.

Men, the mere thought of the removal of your godly characteristics from your spiritual life should cause all of us to have a “group cringe”. Yet this is a reality for many in the religious world today. The devil, prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2), the ruler of this world (John 12:31), has blinded the eyes of many men (2 Cor 4:3) by teaching through political correctness, lies and worldly wisdom for us NOT to be the men of God that we are called to be. The forces of this world are begging us as “Men of God” to be self-EMASCULATED through subtle stripping of the desired spiritual goals that God must have in our lives. Hence the title of the sermon this morning is “*The Emasculated Christian Man*”.

Cited from a Study: *The Truth About Men & Church: On the Importance of Fathers to Churchgoing* –by Robbie Lowe

Citing “*The demographic characteristics of the linguistic and religious groups in Switzerland*” by Werner Haug and Phillipe Warner of Federal Statistical Office, Neuchatel, Switzerland, the following patterns were observed:

- In 1994 the Swiss carried out an extra survey during their national census. It was actually a regular part of information gathering that they have when they carry out the census. They were asked to determine whether a person’s religion carried through to the next generation, and if so, why, or why not.
- Summary of Data:
 - “It is the religious practice of the father of the family that, above all, determines the future attendance at or absence from church of the children.”
 - “If both the father and mother attend regularly, 33% of their children will end up as regular churchgoers, and 41% will end up attending irregularly. A quarter of the children will end up not practicing at all.”
 - “If the father is non-practicing and mother regular, only 2% of the children will become regular worshippers, and 37% will attend irregularly. Over 60% of their children will be lost completely to the church.”
 - “What happens if the father is regular but the mother is irregular or non-practicing? Extraordinarily, the percentage of children becoming regular goes up from 33% to 38% with the irregular mother and 44% with the non-practicing , as if loyalty to the father’s commitment grows in proportion to the mother’s laxity, indifference or hostility.”
 - “Even when the father is an irregular attender there are some extraordinary effects. An irregular father and a non-practicing mother will yield 25% of their children as regular attenders in their future life and a further 23% as irregulars. This is twelve times the yield where the roles are reversed.”

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- “In short, if a father does not go to church, no matter how faithful his wife’s devotions, only one child in 50 will become a regular worshipper. If a father does go regularly, regardless of the practice of the mother, between two-thirds and three-quarters of their children will become churchgoers (regular or irregular).”
- “You cannot buck the biology of the created order. Father’s influence, from the determination of a child’s sex by the implantation of the seed to the funerary rites surrounding his passing, is out of all proportion to his allotted, and severely diminished role, in the Western liberal society... **Sociologically and demographically the current trends are severely against the church’s mission if fatherhood is in decline.**”
- There is an important role of the mother in the nurturing of the child, but it diminishes as the child transitions from toddler to teen. Quoting the same study, “...when the child begins to move into that period of differentiation from the home and engagement with the world ‘out there’. He (and she) looks increasingly to the father for his role model. Where the father is indifferent, inadequate, or just plain absent, that task of differentiation and engagement is much larger. When children see that church is a ‘women and children’ thing, they will respond accordingly –by not going to church, or going much less.”

We are living in very difficult times to be man of God. He deeply desires us to be “men of God” that can make a great difference in the lives of many.

- Failed marriages have taken the father out of the life of the children in ways that are very unhealthy to the next generation. The religious world in the American churches have by default accepted fatherlessness as a norm, putting forth gender-free Bibles, a female God instead of the Holy Father, emasculated clergy, fatherless flocks and fatherless families that are following the “single-parent family church models” in the form of women preachers and women elders.
- We as men have allowed a combination of laziness, distraction, neglect and influence from the politically-correct world to knock on our door and threaten to us as a church in a direction that we need not go. Unless we as a church take serious the salvation that God has given us and live up to the innate responsibilities that it entails, we could very well likely end up with a totally different outcome than what God has planned.

What it does **not** mean to be a man?

- Being a man does not mean you like to fish and hunt.
- Being a man does not mean you talk tough and act tough.
- Being a man does not mean you watch action movies and play action video games.
- Being a man does not mean you like to play and watch the sports.
- Being a man does not mean you hang out at the club with the guys and have a cold one.
- Being a man does not mean you are the strongest one in the gym.
- Being a man does not mean that you are a dictator of your family.

What is a real man? It is being a man through the eyes of God.

Paul writing to the Corinthians:

- 1 Corinthians 13:11 When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things.

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- 1 Corinthians 16:13 Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.

Paul writing to Timothy:

- 1 Timothy 6:11 But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance *and* gentleness.
- 2 Timothy 3:16–17 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Being a Man of God encompasses our passion to be God's man just as He designed us to be. For a good three-point outline of what Lord expects of the Man of God, let us turn to 1 Timothy chapter 3.

1 Timothy 3:2-10 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. ⁴ *He must be* one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity ⁵ (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), ⁶ *and* not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. ⁷ And he must have a good reputation with those outside *the church*, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

This is the most referenced section of scripture that is cited when a congregation chooses the eldership that will stand before them. These are high standards that God wants in the men that lead the church in the way she should go. It is within these qualities that we find three primary categories in which the Lord expects all men who aspire to be “real men of God” to attain.

1. Being a man of God means being the leader in the family.

A. The Emasculated Man neglects leadership in his marriage.

I. Being the “*the husband of one wife*” literally means to be a “*one woman man*”. A true man of God is one that works hard at keeping his marriage together. When the knot is tied, his focus is on making sure there is no other woman in mind. Marriage can be the most blessed agreement between two human beings in this life; it can also be one of the most difficult.

II. He assumes the primary leadership of the marriage. In any group of two there can only be one leader and one follower. From the beginning of creation, Adam was to be the leader of his marriage, but he yielded to his wife's leadership at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 3:6). The Emasculated Man passes the mantle of leadership by default over to his wife (1 Tim 2:14-15).

III. The Emasculated Man on the other hand does not work it out in the end, for he has chosen a life of distraction.

i. He never misses a football game, but quickly passes on marriage counseling.

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- ii. He will not take the time to talk to his wife, but will not miss a poker night.
- iii. He will not take the lead in making sure she grows spiritually, mentally and emotionally, but will invest time in his worldly endeavors.

B. The Emasculated Man neglects leadership of his children.

- I. Being a leader of the family means that the man is *keeping his children under control with all dignity*. He does not have to overpower them, but does it with poise. *He does not provoke them to wrath, but raises them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord* (Eph 6:4).
- II. A real man of God manages his house well in that he leads his children in a way that the faith is regenerated in the hearts of his descendents. He is seeking a generational blessing from God by directly placing his children in the arms of Jesus (Dt 5:10).
- III. The Emasculated Man does not consistently bring his children to Bible classes or church services, but will find excuses not to go.
 - i. The Emasculated Man does not pray with them at night, but is off with his hobbies day after day until the times just tick away.
 - ii. The Emasculated Man does not guide them through the tough situations of life like dating, college choice or peer pressure, but leaves them to fend for themselves as the world devours his offspring (1 Pet 5:7).
 - iii. The Emasculated Man is not willing to lead his children and because of that fact, he should not be a leader in the church because he will gain followers on his way out.

2. Being a man of God means being a leader in your church.

- A. The Man of God will oversee for the care of his spiritual family. That is what the term “overseer” means: overseeing his flock.
 - i. He demonstrates the qualities of being calm in his approach to the church family.
 - ii. He has proven over and over again to give good advice in the midst of crisis.
 - iii. Those around him have generated a level of spiritual respect of him for his spiritual guidance.
 - iv. He opens his home, heart, mind and wallet to the church family.
- B. The Emasculated man is not concerned with the things of the church.
 - i. He has not taken the time to study the word of God, but is instead proficient in the ways of the world.
 - ii. He has chosen the easy path of conforming to the world instead of conforming to the Christ (Romans 12:2).
 - iii. He puts himself first and the church family somewhere below that.

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- iv. His hobbies and toys come before a dedicated calendar and checkbook for the working of the kingdom.
- v. Instead of hospital visits, fellowship meals and lending a helping hand to a hurting brother, he finds a way be distracted by the call of the world. By the end of the day he has grown further in distance to the greatest family on earth.

3. Being a man of God means being a leader in your community.

- A. The man of God reaches out to his fellow man in the community.
 - i. As the verse says, "...he must have a good reputation with those outside *the church*"
 - ii. His neighbors know that he is a trustworthy man that does not fall into sin.
 - iii. They know that he is striving to live a humble and pure life.
 - iv. They do not have to be told that his religion is important to him because they can see it in the way that he lives it.
 - v. A man of God "loves his enemy" and does good by him in God's eyes (Mt 5:44).
- B. The Emasculated man does not share these qualities of the man of God.
 - i. He demonstrates a quick temper rather than the compassion of Jesus.
 - ii. Even though the emasculated man might come to worship on Sunday, by Monday they could be living in fornication.
 - iii. He might talk nice to his neighbors on the street, but they later hear him yelling at his family.
 - iv. The emasculated man is the one that takes things from work and can't be trusted by his colleagues.
 - v. Because he did not show his good works, nobody from his circle will ever glorify his Father in heaven.

In summary:

Jesus said in Matthew 5:13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty *again*? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men."

If the men of the church will just be the men of God that He has called us to be, we could ensure effectiveness in the lives of our families, our churches and our own communities. If at anytime we fail to live up to the life that God desires for men, we relinquish our roles as leaders and will lose all our influence over the ones that we love.