

Sermon Notes: August 22, 2021

Lectionary Readings

Focus:

Divine Masculinity (paired with August 15th notes on the Divine Feminine)

Last week, I talked about the Divine Feminine. Now, I want to talk about the Divine Masculine. It is super easy to make fun of the masculine. Beer, Bros, and chest beating are all fodder for trashing men and ‘manly’ behavior.

Sometimes I enjoy poking fun at myself and guys in general too. School is on my mind right now, so midway in the notes, I will ponder the divine masculine that blesses young people who are going back to school. Finally, I’ll talk about the apostle Paul, Ephesians 6, and his take on the divine masculine.

Part 1- Be Manly There is a Boston Tik Tok comedian called Harmon who does 10 seconds clips of “man humor” that always has the same punchline....’be a man.’ For example, “if you’re changing your oil, never use a funnel...get it all over the engine...be a man.” I know it is not as funny written, so try <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMdoWUyQL/>. I have laughed until I cried on a few. He ridicules machismo, while at the same time looking the grizzled part.

False bravado and posturing are the perverse caricature of masculinity. God embodies the best of the masculine and feminine. You might take issue with me: Men stink, some say. Patriarchy, toxic masculinity, oppression, and the like is not something to accept. You’re not wrong to be concerned, but as spiritually sensitive people, can we still embrace the holy masculine?

What are the best parts of your masculine self and feminine self? (hes, shes, and theys have both.) In part, masculine energy is directional. It gives itself for others to achieve *their* goal. It is a holy “doing.” Feminine energy is cyclical with care and assurance. It focuses on holy “being” in communion with others. Traits of the Divine Masculine are active, firm, loyal, adventurous, while the Divine Feminine are intuitive, healing, gentle, and expressive.

At our best we each carry a finely tuned balance of the two. We are content to “be” in the feminine, and we can bushwhack out to “do” the masculine. If either side is broken or warped, we can plead, shout down, cower, placate, and / or bully, darkening our reflection of the divine in the process.

Part 2 - School. My kids are on my mind. How might my divine masculine be a blessing them? Kahlil Gibran wrote a famous poem about children that might be the highest masculine ideal that I can think of:

Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life’s longing for itself. They come through you but not from you, and though they are with you, yet they belong not to you. You may give them your love but not your thoughts, for they have their own thoughts. You may house their bodies but not their souls, for their

souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams. You may strive to be like them but seek not to make them like you. For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday. You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth. The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far. Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness; For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He also loves the bow that is stable.

Masculine love is the bow that springs us ever higher to our goals. That balanced with the feminine of just being with our kids is a powerful combination for our children to thrive.

Part 3 - Ephesians and Paul Paul was not comfortable with his divine feminine. Yes, he skewed a bit misogynistic. But he had his finger on the pulse of the call of holy masculinity. Not being a balanced person, he could pick fights with the wrong people at the wrong time. That aside, read Ephesians 6 as a *component* of God calling us to the divine masculine. The most masculine attributes are empowering and self-forgetting. The warrior in battle who willingly sacrifices his (or her) life to save his fellow warrior is the self-forgetting masculine. I fear being repetitive, but masculine spirituality is not just for males, it's for everyone.

Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

I don't believe this is an exaltation of Paul's individual, heroic power. He understands the divine call for all people to take the warrior approach to engaging this present darkness. As a former assassin, he was aware of the dark side of masculinity that corrupts, destroys, and subjugates.

Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

So, my dear ones, let's pray for the full revelation of God. God is fully masculine, fully feminine and at the same time beyond all. God is male, God is female, God is neither, God is everything. **Todd**