

Real Men in God's Hands

SMZBT Men's Ministry Newsletter



Edition No 1

A Real Man of God

By Billy D. Byrd, SMZBT Men's Ministry Leader

What is the definition of a real man of God? I ask myself that often as I seek to strengthen my relationship with God. I take a personal inventory of my walk with God. Then I ask myself- How can I improve? Do I live a Christian Lifestyle? But wait! I still have not answered the first question. What is the definition of a real man of God? Ok. How does this



sound, “**A Real Man of God is spiritually strong and makes his family a priority.**” That sounds simple to me, but there has to be more to it than that. You're right. It is more to it. In order for men to be men of God we must first understand the importance of making our families a priority. God has ordained us to be the head of our households. (1Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23) We understand how to prioritize our family life by becoming spiritually strong. How do we become spiritually strong? I am glad you asked me that question. To become spiritually mature, we must work on our spiritual disciplines or habits. Here are my seven spiritual habits that I challenge you to master with me. Men of Valor we can do this! Man Up! Get your Spiritual Weight Up!

1. **Pray.** Constant prayer means we are in consistent conversations with God. The more you pray the more you get to know God. Patrick Morley says” Prayer is the conversation that turns our salvation into a personal communication with God.” Pray and meditate daily! (Luke 18:1)
2. **Read the Bible.** This sounds simple and easy, but this is a challenge for me. I struggle with consistency. I do know from experience that reading Proverbs in the morning and Psalms at night daily will help you make better decisions and strengthen your relationship with God. (2 Timothy 2:15)
3. **Worship.** Give God consistent praise and worship. I know. It feels uncomfortable lifting your hands to God in public. Start by getting in your private quiet space and lifting your hands to God. Then in church raise your hands for at least 7 seconds each service you attend. (The seven seconds challenge. You will be the winner.) I know God will honor your praise. (John 4:23-24)
4. **Counsel.** Seek Godly wise counsel in all you do. Make good priority decisions and moral decisions. Seek God's will for all things.(Proverbs 15:22)
5. **Fellowship.** Men I need you. We need each other. Fellowship is important. God made us all with different talents and gifts. Together we are strong. Divided we are weak. (Proverbs 27:17)
6. **Stewardship.** We must be wise stewards over all we have because everything we have is God given. Stewardship is three-fold. Bless God with your monetary treasure, your time and your talent. Do not allow yourself to take on large debts. (Proverbs 22: 26-27)
7. **Evangelism.** When you begin to have a personal relationship with God it is a special feeling unlike anything you have ever encountered. Share that feeling with others. Bless others with your testimony. (Matthew 28: 19-20)

Men these are some spiritual exercises we can do together to become spiritually strong. The more we workout, the stronger we get, the closer we walk with God. For more on this subject refer to the book, “*A Man's Guide to the Spiritual Disciplines*” by Patrick Morley.

Heavenly Father, I pray that these spiritual disciplines will help men get closer to you. I pray that men will walk and fellowship with you Lord each and every day. Help us to be Real Men of God becoming spiritually strong and making our families a priority. In Jesus name. -- Amen

High Standards...or Just Being Picky?

By Daree Allen

I recently watched Tyler Perry's movie, "Daddy's Little Girls," which depicted an ex-felon who worked odd jobs and became a single father of three young girls after their caregiver, his mother-in-law, died. He falls for a childless lawyer who is the daughter of one the law firm's partners. She has an Ivy League education, picky standards, and no man. Thus, she settles for fruitless blind dates and does not regard most men as suitable dating prospects because of their speech (Ebonics), pastimes (hours playing video games for example), less education than her, and employment status (blue-collar job, if any).

Many single women can identify with the frustrations explored by the lawyer and her friends in the film, but it would be untrue and unfair to label all men in this way. Some women lament to their friends that all the good men are "married, gay, or dead." Of course this is also an untrue statement. Some black women also have a problem with brothers who date outside their race. Are these high standards, or are these women just being too picky? As a divorced mother of a young daughter, I have my ideas about the kind of man that I would want in my life, but I don't share the same background as the lawyer in the film.

My ex-husband was a person that some women (like the lawyer) might not find desirable—he wasn't well educated, and when we met, we were both making about \$7 an hour. I was an undergrad at a local university and he was a high school dropout. We were both saved, and we loved each other, had similar spiritual beliefs, ideas, and dreams, so we figured that was good enough.

Years went by and he continued to make the same wage, while I graduated, got a corporate job and quickly excelled, watching my salary climb along the way. I also ran a professional organization in the Washington DC area as a Vice President and then as President of the association. While President, I had my daughter and completed my Master's degree. The whole while, we had our ups and downs, but his line of work was not the factor in our separation and later divorce. It was his pattern of quitting jobs on a whim, without discussing it with me first or having another job lined up.

A man that does not support his family is worse than an unbeliever (see 1 Timothy 5:8) and a man that does not work, does not eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10). Did I have a role to play in the demise of my marriage? Of course. It takes two, and I have a big mouth. I was younger, headstrong, and lacked respect for my husband. I have since learned that if your man feels that he has lost the respect of the woman he loves, then he no longer feels like a man. Now I've wised up a bit and choose to use my words to build up a person instead of tear them down. A quarrelsome woman is hard to live with (see Proverbs 21:9)!

Getting back to standards—standards are good. I do have standards about the kind of man I may spend time with in the future, when I'm ready to resume dating. To me, characteristics such as integrity and honesty hold as much weight as looks. And we all should have some measure of excellence that we are striving toward, in our work, in our craft, and in our relationships. If you think back to your own experience, some traits stand out more appealing than others. But we need to use God's standards when choosing a mate, and not just rely on what looks good to us (see Judges 14:3 and 14:7).

Some standards we can look for are detailed for us in various respects throughout the Bible—don't get hung up on the titles mentioned, but look at the qualities listed (see Proverbs 31, Ephesians 5, 1 Timothy 3 and 5, and 2 Timothy 2). Your mate should be strong in areas where you are weak, and vice versa. Look for someone who compliments you—don't look for someone to complete you. We are complete in Christ!

A woman Voice...A woman's influence

"Likewise, wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, so that if any do not obey the word, they may also be won without the word by the conduct of their wives, having witnessed your chaste behavior in the fear of God." -- 1 Peter 3:1-2

SMZBT MEN'S MINISTRY FISHING TRIP

"The One That Didn't Get Away"

By Cleveland Rogers

Thanks to Pastor Barber and Men's Ministry Leadership Team for allowing this event to take place. We are also thankful for the many sponsors, Men Ministry members, parents and the kids who took part in this fellowship opportunity. I also give thanks to God our Father who blessed this event with his covering and a perfect fishing day.

The fishing trip was planned under the leadership of Billy Byrd our Ministry Leader back in April 2007. Jesse Busby and I agreed to do whatever the Lord required us to do to assist our Leader. The fishing expedition was agreed on to take place on Saturday, June 23, 2007. Billy appointed me to plan this event with Pastor Barber's permission.



The committee immediately commenced making phone calls to local fishing companies and was very disappointed that most of the companies were too small to handle the anticipated size group of approximately 30- 35 people. We prayed and asked the Lord to assist us if it was in his Will. By His grace, Lynn Haven Seafood Market was introduced to us and we selected this company.

The committee received our Pastor's permission and kicked off the event with word of mouth, big screen and printed communications announcing the Fishing Expedition. The church announcements were made and in late May there were only four people who had paid to register for the trip. I became worried and had thoughts of cancellations. This fishing trip was slipping away in my thoughts. Minister Leader Byrd told me to pray as he would and God's Will would be done. We also enlisted other's to pray. God answered our prayers in two



parts. Part I, sponsorships poured in from heaven to the extent that we had more sponsors than kids. Part II, after Pastor Barber announced in the Sunday services on the 17th of June that kids could go for free, the permission slips started flowing and the telephone calls surged in with requests.

The Fishing Trip was on and this "The One That Didn't Get Away" commenced on time. We departed SMZBT at 06:45 with 41 persons. We were all full of anxiety, because most of the people had never fished before, and 99% had never fished from a boat. The kids were nervously laughing en route to Lynn Haven Fishing Boat Docks.

The adults enjoyed conversations and fellowship with each other with the anticipation of not knowing what to expect. We all had the great ideal of catching the big one. We all laughed and imagine our big catch all the way there.



Upon arrival we disembarked from the bus and took a group photo while Cleveland took care of the Administration

requirements. We off loaded our supplies and Billy, Jessie, Will and Rick Tab led the group to the boat. The men were nervous, the kids were anxious for this trip while boarding.

The boat launched at 08:00 and we were ready. Everyone was giving some safety instructions and told about the trip. The deck hands brought out the reels and bait. Will, Bill Langley, Rick Tabb and other men helped the kids bait and toss the line over the side. They were happy and excited. What a great feeling I thought to myself. These kids were great ambassadors of our church. The first fish was caught around 09:00 by one of the kids. Several kids took photos; Julian, James Fiend, James Motley, Malcolm and Kale Thomas and several more.



We all had a wonderful time and arrived back at the pier around 12:30. We arrived back at the Temple about 1:30 pm, happy but exhausted. All the kids slept on the way back to the Temple. I must admit those turkey and ham sandwiches Auntie Linda and the Willing workers made for the trip were delicious and well needed. The Fishing Trip was a GREAT SUCCESS...thanks to all who assisted. We look forward to more fellowship and involving our Temple family in more events.



THE SCORECARD

The statistics concerning church men and their families is bleak. For every 10 men in church...

- 4 will get divorced, affecting 1 million children a year
 - 5 will have a major problem with pornography
 - 6 will only make the monthly minimum on their credit cards
 - 8 will find their jobs unsatisfying
 - 9 will have kids leave church before their senior year in high school
 - 10 will struggle to balance work and family
- Statistics provided by the Gathering of Men.*



***Iron Sharpens Iron
2007 in Review***

