

A letter from Pastor Eric

Surprise, I'm a dad now. Bringing home a six pound baby has caused me to start thinking more about what it means to grow up. More importantly, what does it look like for my son to grow up and become a godly man. I guess it is things like this and transitions in life that help us rethink what's really important. For the past two weeks my brain has been spinning as I enter fatherhood and take on this new stage of life. These thoughts have helped me consider what to do this fall in our small group and student ministry. Summer is over, school has started and I'm totally excited to get back into meeting together so here is the scoop of what's going on:

What we are doing: God's Design for Biblical Manhood & Womanhood

This fall we are going to look at what the Bible has to say about Biblical Manhood and Biblical Womanhood. We all know there is a huge difference between boys and girls... but the key is learning why God created us different. We are different in how we look, act, think, speak, relate, and dream. Think about it, first there were animals and Adam, but that didn't work out because Adam was lonely. So God created the first woman, Eve. We simply take for granted the idea of having a mom and dad, having a brother and sister, having both male and female. But that's not how the world began. To make man complete, God didn't give Adam an x-box or football, no instead God created something much more special. God created woman. The Bible tells us God made mankind in his own image and thus God uniquely designed both men and women for a specific purpose. Genesis says that God created male and female... and having both man and women is very good!

Why we are doing: Biblical Manhood & Womanhood Small Group

Having a son made me realize there is so much that I get to teach my boy as he grows up. I can't wait for fishing trips, camping, little league baseball, and playing with blocks... how long till Haddon can mow my yard? For me having a boy who will grow up and become a man is both awesome and challenging. Here's the deal, it's actually really easy to learn how to play catch or ride a bike. Anyone can learn how to use a miter saw and turn a wrench, but as you and I both know it can be really hard to grow up as a godly man and godly woman. But guess what? There is good news because the Bible is filled with amazing advice for how to be a godly man and godly woman. This isn't just tips on how to be cool or ways to be cute... this is God telling us how to live. I think God knows something about how we should live... he created us right? He designed us! He made us!

When it comes down to it, the world has no clue what it means to be a real man or real woman. It's not about how fast your car can go or how thick your beard can be. It's not about how you are such a great cook or how fashionable you can be. The world's view of masculinity and femininity is not what God has said or intended.

Some cultures have something called "Rites of Passage" where a boy or girl have to go through a ceremony and publically do something before they are considered an adult. You have probably heard of the dudes in Africa who go out at night and kill a tiger before they can come home, become a man, and join the tribe. Think about it, what makes you become an adult? Is it getting your driver's license or turning a certain age? Is it getting out of high school or going off to college or having a job to pay the bills and living on your own? Our culture doesn't have a rites of passage where adolescence stops and adulthood begins.

This fall we will be talking about God's Design for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. Our Small Group will be a lot of fun, it will be challenging, very practical, and it is going to make you think! My goal is for each of you to consider what the Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13 and what it means to put away childish things. I hope to see you at my house for our first small group coming up in about a week.

Eric Carlson