

How the Christian Church in America is

FAILING

Men

*A **Wake-Up Call***

*that left untended will become a **Requiem***



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Part One Review — The Role of Senior Pastors

To begin this strong message, we looked at sobering statistics of Christian church men.

- 1) **Marriage Infidelity:** 30+% of born-again married men admitted to having affairs.
- 2) **Divorce:** 38% of people in church today have been divorced.
- 3) **Addictions:** 54% of pastors viewed pornography in the last year; 37% admit it is a current struggle. 95% of Christian men looked at porn; 54% do so with regularity. 18% of born-again Christian men admit addiction to porn. It gets worse with millennials: 77% view at least monthly; 36% daily; 32% admit having an addiction.

Conclusions and Questions:

- 1) We don't need a roadmap out of this malaise. We need a battle plan!
- 2) No individual has a greater role and responsibility for the health and development of biblical Christian men than the senior pastor.
- 3) Numbers matter. A challenge was issued to do an analysis of the total number men in their churches, the number engaged in "man communities", and those being disciplined by the pastor.
- 4) Why aren't more senior pastors invested in taking up this mandate to produce an army of biblical Christian men befitting our King and executing His commission?
Five reasons were cited.

- Personal Issues that are not being adequately or appropriately dealt with.
- Not themselves in community with other men.
- Fear of being caught and the consequences.
- Lack of church support for ministry to men.
- Time. Not a good excuse, but the most popular reason.

Now it is time to examine this fail from the point of view of church men like me and my brothers, who too often point the finger elsewhere or simply fail to engage on any level.

Part Two – How Christian Men are Failing the Church

What Would You Do?

Suppose you went to church one Sunday after severe storms brought heavy rains that caused a lot of damage and power outages in your area. The storms have passed, so as usual the church is full of worshippers and attenders. You arrive late and, on your way in, notice the roof of the church appears to be sagging and unstable in a few places.

Fearing it might even collapse, you head straight in and warn those in leadership about the situation. All in the building are asked to leave quickly and orderly. You call on some men to warn those in other areas of the church about the imminent danger. Finally, you enlist other men to come alongside to help put up braces to prevent such a collapse if possible.

Every Christian man I know would take action without pause in a situation like this. My dear brothers, that is the state of too many Christian churches today. This is not an imminent physical collapse—it is much worse. It is a spiritual one. Based on my experience and research, this describes too many Christian churches today when it comes to investing in and building the lives of biblical Christian men who attend.

I hate the word *fail*, and any assignment pointed my way as much as you do. But it is past time to get over that and get real. We need real honesty with ourselves about how, for decades, church men have failed when it comes engaging in God’s mandate to build and equip men for spiritual warfare and actively fulfill our roles as servants in our marriages, as dads, and to the body of Christ.

Two truths stand out as we seek to own, understand, and correct our part of this failure.

- 1) **God is calling us out!** The “man side” of this problem is not new—quite the opposite. Men have, at times throughout our history, failed to step up. It began in the Garden in the first encounter with our fierce enemy, Satan. You should recall Adam took the low road, blaming Eve for his sin. From that, excuse-making and marital conflict were born.

In the sixth century B.C., we read perhaps the most indicting words God ever spoke concerning His men. They find as much application today as they did when the prophet Ezekiel spoke/wrote them.

*"I searched for a man among them who would build up the wall and **stand in the gap before Me** for the land, so that I would not destroy it; but **I found no one.**" (Ezekiel 22: 30 NASB)*

Not one man among the remaining half of the kingdom of Israel was committed enough to stand up and be counted for the Lord against sin. You know the rest of the story. It did not end well. God finally had enough. Like their northern kingdom brethren, He allowed them to be overrun by their enemies—even destroying His temple. Only a fool would think God looks at His men any differently today in light of where we stand (rather sit on our thumbs) in this nation—especially in His church.

- 2) **The Passivity of Christian Men.** Sadly, some Christian men of the church are more bored than bothered by the statistics I shared earlier concerning the dire condition of Christian men in our country. The other tack would be to invite you to raise your head, look outside yourself, and view the carnage firsthand. Some of you have been part of that—and even now you are trying to get your lives back on track.

We know in our hearts these observations and assertions are true in too many churches today—even our own. We just do not want to go there. Like the Wizard of Oz, we prefer to stay behind the curtain. Recall the real wizard turned out to be a very ordinary man with no superpowers—just like you and me. While the following may not be said aloud, some men (and pastors) think things like this,

"Leave me alone. Next, you'll be talking about uncomfortable stuff like transparency and accountability. If no one calls me out, I can stay where I am (behind the curtain) no matter how much it hurts me, my family, or the body of Christ."

Most of us will argue we would never say such things or risk the consequences. But actions—better said, *inactions*—speak volumes. Standing pat is no more an answer than staying behind the curtain.

The greatest “man issue” facing the Christian church today is passivity.

As we did with our senior pastor brothers, let’s ask ourselves two hard questions.

- 1) **Why aren’t you doing some *calling out of your own*?** For Christian men who understand and own these “man issues”, and those laid out in the Part One related to senior pastors, we have an obligation to call on and call out leadership in our churches for Christ’s sake, the sake of our marriages and families, and the overall well-being of the body of Christ. Look where failure to do so has landed us. We are not afraid to call out national leaders. Why we would we draw back in an area so much more important from an eternal perspective?

This obviously must be done with the love and respect leaders deserve, knowing they have a lot of other issues, personally and within the church. But that cannot deter us from the call out and task at hand—building and equipping an army of biblical Christian men. It did not stop Jesus or the Apostle Paul. Healthy biblical churches are built on the firm foundation of Christ our King and His Word. They only remain healthy when we engage and do our part in service to Him and His church.

Solomon said, “*Where there is no vision, the people perish (cast off restraint).*” Every senior pastor should have a vision for the development of the men under his shepherding. As Christian men of the church, we have an obligation to know what that is, share in it, and be part of helping make it happen. It is the old adage—*being part of the solution not the problem*. Do you have any idea if there is a vision or plan for the men of your church?

- 2) **What is preventing you from actively engaging in this process?** Three answers cover most bases for Christian men. **Time. Fear. Pride.**

Time. Picture many church men standing before the Lord, as they give an account of their lives, telling Him they wanted to engage, but there simply were not enough hours in the day. Bad news. The Creator of time is not going to be very sensitive to that excuse. He will restate what He taught here on earth. **One relationship matters above all others—that with our Father God.** All others flow or clog depending on how much time we spend developing our relationship with Him.

We work to build father-son or father-daughter relationships with our kids, but not this one? We find time to slip out to the club and hit a bag of balls, spend hours on fantasy leagues, get a beer with the boys. But no time for God? What's up with that? Here's what's up with that. It is a matter of priorities—wrong ones!

This reality check reveals it is not really a *time* issue—it is a *heart* issue.

Fear. As brave as we want our wives and kids to think we are, men know fear. We experience it in different ways, but at the root of some issues lies the simple fact we are afraid. When it comes to this kind of callout and getting men into community with other men, *fear* often blocks the path.

We fear getting overexposed because we want others to see and know only what we control. Although true, it is a bit comical because we all stand naked before God. If I let someone peek behind the curtain or pull off the mask, my weaknesses may be exposed. That not only scares men, it leads to the third reason...

Pride. The Bible is replete with verses about the untoward effects of this known destroyer of men. "*Pride goes before destruction.*" "*God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.*" There are many others. Despite that, pride of Christian men still gets in the way of humble transparency taught in the Word of God.

There are some prideful Christian men who think being in community with other believing men is for those who have "issues." More bad news. You have issues too—and one of them is pride. You know such men, and perhaps you are one.

Christian men of the church be warned that *pride* among us and our pastors has crippled the body of Christ, rendering it impotent in the work He has called us to carry out: ***be the mouthpieces, hands, and feet of Jesus to bring hope and light into a hopeless and dark world.***

My dear brothers, the good news is this. God redeems our failures, turning them into some of the greatest successes the world and church have ever seen or experience. My prayer is the Holy Spirit will use this wake-up call to do just that—wake up His men to the great need before us: *Build biblical Christian men who will engage in doing our part to accomplish His agenda and purposes while it is still called today.*

Once you have taken some time to digest these challenges to us as Christian men, I hope you will continue to the third, and final, part—

How Christian Women are Failing the Church in America