

WHERE ARE THE CHRISTIAN MEN?

—by Charl van Wyk

“Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.” Proverbs 27:17

As they grow up, boys need Godly men to show them the way. Men who will take particular interest in them and their direction in life, men who will spend time with them, teach them from God’s Word, exhorting and encouraging them.

If a boy cannot find such direction in his father, he will need another Godly man to step up to the plate and disciple him. If not, he might just go looking for such support from the local gang leader or paedophile, who is more than willing to ‘help out’.

The risk of not having a Godly example can destroy your life

I’ll never forget a young man who came for an interview with our ministry. I could

child’s bed. You also won’t find the fathers dropping off their sons at a drug rehabilitation centre. Someone is doing these jobs, but it’s not the men. The mothers and grandmothers are usually doing all these so-called ‘unmanly’ chores.

How are you spending your time?

Our boys, and their neighbourhood friends, need Godly men to make a difference in their lives. Yes, I know we are very busy making money to give our boys a ‘better life’. Or perhaps we’re more ‘spiritual’, trying to win other boys (far from our homes) to Christ, through our wonderful ministries that take up all our time.

I was sitting and chatting with a great friend, a dynamic pastor and missionary

So often it is not the men taking sick children to the doctor, or offering lifts home from school. They aren’t changing nappies because it is not considered ‘manly’.

see this boy needed help and direction in life. He was very excited about working full-time with us. I asked him to discuss the opportunity, and procure the support, of his local church pastor before he joined us.

We never heard from him again; but later read in a news article that he had been murdered while working at a gay men’s club in Sea Point, Cape Town.

This incident, like so many others, leaves us asking: “Where are the men?” “How could this young man go so baldy astray?”

Well, they are not teaching young boys in Sunday school, nor are they at their daughter’s violin recitals, or the fathers’ prayer meeting at their children’s school. You won’t find them in the local hospital sleeping in a chair next to their

in his day, but now slowing down with age. With tears in his eyes, he told me how he had spent most of his life trying to ‘save’ everyone else’s children and almost lost his own.

So, what does a Godly man do? And how does he make a difference to his family?

Many think that being ‘spiritual’ is somehow related to spending time in meditation or contemplation during which your inner life is developed.

One man used an expletive as he explained to me how we don’t need theology today, but rather people need to be spiritual. Surely, Biblical spirituality is practical in nature, like controlling your tongue, providing for your family, and »

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looking after widows and orphans?

The best way we can disciple or mentor boys is to point them in the direction of righteousness in Jesus Christ. We can only attain this through His great work, His sacrifice for our sins on the Cross, and His Resurrection. What wonderful news! We can then enjoy the evidence of His amazing Grace through obedience to His Word in our daily lives.

You have a responsibility

To prepare the next generation of boys to be Godly leaders in their homes and society, we need to be selfless and prac-

take them hiking in the mountains, camping, or fishing with friends. We need to take time to share wisdom, skills and talents the Lord has blessed us with.

This is why even the presence of my sons and I interacting with children from the informal settlement at a sport ministry, is a great Gospel investment. My friends run the ministry and we support their efforts. We get the blessing of contributing simply by being great and supportive followers.

But, there is more. What about the nappies that need changing? Homework that needs to be done? Laundry? Shop-

Boys need Christian fathers who will stand on the field and cheer on their soccer game; girls need dads who will watch their ballet performances.

tise servanthood. We need to get active and reject passivity, get involved, rather than remaining uncommitted. We need to take initiative, rather than settling for the soft and destructive seductions of indifference.

We need to realise that we, as men chosen by Christ to study His Word and follow Him, have a responsibility to these boys. And the Righteous Judge will hold us accountable for how we perform this responsibility.

The gift of being selfless

Boys need Christian men who will stand on the side and cheer at the soccer game,

ping? Changing the lightbulbs?

Leave a lasting legacy

Ask yourself: "What will your children remember about you?" Will you be the father who worked so hard that his children never saw him, or will they remember the great times of discipleship in person? Sorry, I have to stop writing now, I have a ballet class to attend. And it is not my sons' class! ■

CHARL VAN WYK is a missionary of Frontline Fellowship, involved in Africa Christian Action ministry as well as an author and radio presenter. For more information visit: www.frontline.org.za



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