



MOTHERS AND SONS

I. What is the “Mother Wound”?

Two Results:

- A. Sons become overly passive (feminized) in regard to women. (1 Kings 21)
- B. Sons become overly dominant (hostile) in regard to women. (Genesis 3)

Key Principle: The “Mother Wound” is an unhealthy emotional intimacy with mother that causes the son to either be threatened by the influence of women later or to over identify with that influence.

II. Characteristics of the Mother Wound

- A. This wound is not blatant, but subtle
- B. It is not a wound of abuse, neglect, or absenteeism, but a wound that looks like love and care
- C. It is not a wound of inattention but over attention
- D. It can look like love but it feels like control
- E. It is so powerful that it can shape and/or warp the masculine psyche

III. Causes of the Mother Wound

- A. It begins with an absent or distant father or an absence of men in general.

B. It is perpetuated by:

1. Ignorant moms.
2. Needy, hurting moms.
3. Unwilling to release moms.
4. Fill in the gap moms.

IV. Helping Sons Make the Break From Mom

Jesus and Mary: A Biblical Example

Luke 2:41-50

John 2:1-4

Matthew 12:46-50

John 19:25-27

- A. Don't do things for him that he can and should do for himself
- B. Expect him to be responsible
- C. Require him to treat you like a lady not an old shoe
- D. Encourage special times for him and his father to be together
- E. Make a covenant with him that you will treat his wife with respect

Discussion Questions:

1. Our Reflection Assignment last week: What one thing did you work on this week to begin changing your thoughts and actions regarding sex? How did it go?
2. Have you observed any examples of a “feminized male”? How does this trend negatively affect God’s design for the family?
3. When you look at the development of the relationship between Jesus and Mary, what adjustments did Mary have to make to allow Jesus the freedom to fulfill his masculine destiny? What can we learn from Mary’s example in handling the separation process emotionally and practically?
4. What are some practical responsibilities that moms could expect of and teach their sons?
5. How can a wife encourage her husband to pass along his masculine identity to his son(s)?

Reflection Assignment:

If you are not a mother, what have you learned about the men in your life, and the importance of their mothers?

If you are the mother of daughters, what do you need to teach them from this lesson?

If you are the mother of a son, what can you begin doing now to help your son become the man God intends him to be? What challenges will you face?

Passage to Ponder this week: Titus 2:3-5

Week Twenty Summary...

A few weeks ago, we developed this Biblical Definition of a Woman:

A Real Woman...

- *Rejects Worldly Temptations for Significance*
- *Embraces God's Design for Relationships*
- *Nurtures the Next Generation*
- *Expects a Greater Reward...God's Reward*

This definition carries a number of challenges for those of us who are mothers, especially mothers of sons. For one thing, we tend to measure our worth (or significance) based on “how our kids are doing.” We face tremendous pressure to *make sure* our kids do well. We have the idea that this is what it means to “Nurture the Next Generation.” Surely, if we love, nourish, and care for our kids well enough we can make sure they will turn out well. On the other hand, through this study of Biblical Womanhood, we’re hearing about the dangers of using our nurturing capacity to control others. For example, if we take care of our boys “too well,” do we teach them to be dependent *on us*? And, “Embracing God’s Design for Relationships” means we want our sons to be courageous leaders, who reject passivity and accept responsibility. Does a mother’s desire and tendency to nurture interfere with her son becoming a Biblical Man? The answer is that it *can*. In our Journeymen Biblical Manhood class, this issue is called being “overly bonded to Mother.” The danger is even greater in families where the father is absent either physically, or emotionally. Boys who are raised mainly under the supervision of women without positive male influences can develop two different negative patterns of behavior: They may become overly passive in regard to women—dominated by their own emotions and those of the women around them. Or they may become domineering and hostile toward women—resisting strong women in their lives by “pushing back” and becoming defensive or angry.

A number of factors contribute to moms fostering the “overly bonded to Mother” atmosphere.

- Some of us, finding our identity in “being the mom”, have great difficulty letting go of our sons and encouraging their independence from us.
- Some of us, needy and hurting from a bad marriage or lack of a husband, unintentionally recruit our sons as surrogate husbands (not sexually, but emotionally).

- Some of us, sensing our son's need for masculine influence, try to fill the gap. We attempt to act as both Dad and Mom, but find in the process we can't do either well.
- None of us would deliberately trip up our sons on their path toward manhood. When we do so, ignorance is a factor.

But ignorance is easily corrected! Once we are aware of the danger, there are a number of choices we can make aimed at raising our sons into the next generation of leaders:

- Don't do things for him that he can or should do for himself.
- Expect him to be responsible. (When we expect the best, we often get it.)
- Require him to treat his mother like a lady (not an old shoe).
- Encourage special times for him and his father (or a male mentor) to be together.
- Make a covenant with him that you will treat his wife with respect.