

Biblical Manhood: Fatherlessness

“Look, I am sending you the prophet Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the Lord arrives. His preaching will turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the hearts of children to their fathers. Otherwise I will come and strike the land with a curse.” Malachi 4:5-6 NLT

I love watching documentaries. Several years ago, I saw a short documentary with the title, *Ray Lewis' Greatest Pain*. Now Ray Lewis is perhaps the greatest middle linebacker in NFL history. The first-ballot hall of famer was a 13 time Pro Bowl player and 2 time Super Bowl champion. So when I saw the title to the documentary, I was sure it was going to be a video on a brutal workout or devastating injury that he had to overcome. Instead, it was a documentary on how Ray Lewis grew up without a father. That was his greatest pain, growing up without a father. Ray Lewis had an internal anger from growing up without a dad. He felt an ache inside. Towards the end of the documentary, it was shown that Ray Lewis' father had also grown up without a dad. Because of that, Ray Lewis committed to breaking the cycle and being a dad to his kids and to other fatherless kids.

Nearly half of American children are being raised in a home devoid of a father. Malachi 4:6 calls fatherlessness a curse. Fatherlessness is the social issue that not many are talking about even though we see stats like these:

- 90% of homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes.
- 80% of rapists motivated with displaced anger come from fatherless homes.
- 71% of pregnant teenagers lack a father.
- 63% of youth suicides are from fatherless homes.
- 85% of children who exhibit behavioral disorders come from fatherless homes.
- 90% of adolescent repeat arsonists live with only their mother.
- 71% of high school dropouts come from fatherless homes.
- 85% of youths in prisons grew up in a fatherless home.

So what can we do as men to prevent fatherlessness? First, if you have kids, be a godly father to your kids. The Bible commands fathers, not mothers, in Ephesians 6:4 to raise their kids in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Second, be a father to the fatherless. Titus 2 commands older men to be mentors to younger men. You can help break the cycle of fatherlessness by teaching boys to be men, husbands, and fathers.

P2R (Point 2 Remember): Be a father! Be a father to the fatherless!