



Series: Created | Sermon #4

Text: Genesis 2.4-25

Sermon Title: The Man God Created

Speaking of commitment...today we are talking about manhood. We are continuing our series through the opening chapters of Genesis called “Created.” The idea of the series is to see what God says we are created for. What our purpose is. Because knowing your purpose is like having a clear set of lenses to see the world through. Decisions big and small become clearer because you evaluate them in light of whether or not they help you accomplish your purpose. And we said in this series we are going to differentiate between purpose...what you are created for...and passions...which are things we get excited about. Big for men because a lot of time men get really passionate about things yet have no idea what they are supposed to do in life. No idea of purpose.

A man without a purpose becomes a man without a spine. He lacks conviction and courage because he doesn't know what he's created for! He lacks compassion for others because his heart is dull and misguided. Too many men are driving through life like they are deep in an unfamiliar city and their GPS died. No idea where they are & no idea how to get where they are supposed to go. Too proud to ask for help. So they drive around aimlessly, and sometimes with a car full of people.

My hope today for you, men, is to give you a map for manhood. To help you see the path you are created to walk on and the destination it will lead you towards. Because our vision for manhood today needs help. **I believe God has created you in his image to reflect his GLORY to the world around you.** “But the glory of God that is supposed to be revealed in men has been misplaced and forgotten. It's been buried beneath broken relationships, overworked lives, and an unwillingness to face reality.”¹

For the next two weeks we are looking at Genesis chapter 2. This is the account of God creating man and woman. So this week, we will talk about what men are created for because they come up first in the passage. And next week, we'll talk about women.

MEN...hear me out: GOD HAS CREATED YOU FOR A GLORIOUS, INSPIRING purpose. That when you grab it,

¹ Darrin Patrick, *The Dude's Guide to Manhood*. (Thomas Nelson Nashville, TN 2014) xx.

you and those around you will FLOURISH. Today is not a beat-down. Today is a call-up. And yes, women you need to hear this. All of this. This is who your male friends are called to be. It's who to look for in a spouse. It's who to help your husband become. It's the man to raise your boys to become. It's the man to raise your girls to look for. I'll say also: *There's no way I'll do everything I want to do. So let me plug our FIRST EVER Mercy Men's Retreat on the Weekend of Nov 16-18. It's gonna crush.*

Outline:

What God created men FOR, why men aren't that way, & how we get back on track.

[7] Then the Lord God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being.

There is a wordplay Moses is doing here. The word man is "adam" and the word dust is "adama." The man is literally named the dust of the earth. Dusty. Why does God create man from dust of the earth and not from....anything better? He didn't take the horn of a Rhino and create man. Or the Tooth of a Cheetah. That would have been super cool. Nope. Boring ole Dirt. Reminding us even in our very physical make-up, our lives are not about us but a testament to the one who created us.

Then He breathed the breath of life in man. He doesn't do that with anything else in creation. Which gives man a unique standing among creation. He is in the image of God, animated by the breath of God. He is God's representative on the earth! **So men please listen**

before you are given an assignment you are given an identity. You are God's representative to the rest of creation. Women so are you. This is for all mankind.

So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female. -- Genesis 1:27 (CSB)

Before he gives you an assignment, God gives you great value. And as that identity develops in scripture God calls these image bearers his children. Goes back to what we said earlier in the series...That before this moment in creation, God was a father loving his son Jesus for eternity. God's love for you isn't like the affection a creator has for something he created. *I've written a few books and I feel proud of them...but its not love. But I have 4 children...I LOVE THEM!!! Nothing compares to the love of a father for his children. God created it that way.*

You know psychologists say the three things a son most needs to hear from his dad to grow up with a healthy self-image? "I love you, I'm proud of you, and you are good at _____." Such simple things. It's a father telling a son he values & approves of him. And THAT'S WHAT GOD, THE TRUE FATHER YOUR EARTHLY FATHER REPRESENTS, He gives you that value & approval in CHRIST!

You don't get to choose this value. It's been given to you. You WILL get to choose what you do with it. But brothers you are made in the image of a wonderful God. AND the purpose of your design is to Show God to the

World! Man was created to glorify God. SO, THE QUESTION IS: IF YOUR LIFE IS ALL SOMEONE HAS TO GO BY, WHAT WOULD THEY CONCLUDE ABOUT GOD!? You are God's representative to the world. What is your life saying about him? Ok let's keep going and we'll get more specific to your purpose.

15 The Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it.

Ok here is the first indication of an assignment. God put's man in a garden that he said was "good." Right? It was good. And yet, man was supposed to work on it. It was good, but it still needed work. It wasn't perfect yet. Think about it like this, when you see my wife here at church, she's all dressed up & hair did and she's perfect. Exquisite. Now when I see her when she first wakes up in the morning? She's good. All the raw materials of beauty are there. Just some cultivating that needs to be done (*that is the most dangerous illustration I've ever done*).

God placed all the good raw materials there in the garden and then put man on assignment. Here's the assignment and one we have today: Man was created with responsibilities.

Man was created to work! And his work was to cultivate God's creation. To develop the raw materials for the glory of God and to the benefit of others. Its' like the difference between a security guard and a stock broker. I leave \$1k with a security guard for 10 years, I expect

\$1k back from him. I leave \$1k with a stock broker, I expect much more 10 years later. I expect him to cultivate the resources I gave him. That's his responsibility.

The farmer takes raw materials and cultivates them into produce. The architect takes raw materials and cultivates them into buildings we live in. The artist takes raw materials and cultivates them into beautiful pictures and pieces of music that we enjoy. The lawyer takes raw principles of fairness and justice and cultivates laws that benefit society.

THIS IS GOD'S PLAN! We take his raw materials and cultivate them in a way that glorifies him and benefits the world around us. Again this is both men and women because we will see God gave man a woman to help him work. She's working too. But I'll get there. **Men, you were created to work for the glory of God and the benefit of others.**

This means God is present in the world through your job. Your vocation. Your job that you think is ordinary actually carries great spiritual significance. Maybe some of you need to rethink your job as a gift given to develop creation in a way that glorifies God and benefits other humans. And you need to have the posture of serving others in that job, not just making profit.² The American dream...which is uniquely toxic in Charlotte... says make good grades so you can get into a

² The framework of this "created to cultivate" section & a couple of the comments comes from J.D. Greear's message "What makes our work Christian" preached on 6.12.2011 at the Summit Church.

good college so you can get a good job one day that will make good money so you can build wealth and prosper until you retire to a lake house and play golf. The American Dream is really the American Distraction. And if you make the accumulation of wealth your purpose in life (it's fine to make money, not to worship it) you will be a miserable cranky old person because your life was about YOU. You were created with the responsibility to work for the glory of God and the benefit of others. And when you give your life to that PURPOSE, you will find happiness and contentment regardless of whether you have a blue-collar or white collar job, one career or 7. When you see your work connected to God's creation mandate, THAT is when you will start to get satisfaction and enjoyment out of it. Keep going...

16 And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die."

God gives man a blessing and then a restriction. The blessing is to eat from the trees of the garden. And this is massively important because too often people think God is only out to RESTRICT man from enjoying himself. When in fact God creates man with the ability to enjoy things. Get this...God created with his word and his word created an abundance of blessing for the man to ENJOY! And this is a truth that somehow gets forgotten or obscured: **You will always find better and more lasting enjoyment INSIDE of God's design than outside of it.**

Then God tells man not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because he'd die. God puts a limit on man..why? So the man, for his own good, would remain in willful submission to God. That man would not go away from God for knowledge of good and evil, but would trust God for wisdom. See the temptation Adam faced, the temptation we all face, was to seek out right and wrong apart from God's words. Here's what I want you to see:

Man was created to follow God's plan. In fact before man was told to be a leader he was told to be a follower. And you will never...Guys listen to me: **YOU WILL NEVER BE A SPIRITUAL LEADER until you are a SPIRITUAL FOLLOWER.** Obviously!! How in the world can you lead someone else...your wife, your kids...how can you lead them to someone **YOU DON'T FOLLOW?** You can't! We'll come back to this. Women: I'll summarize how important this is in dating the way my friend Julius said it: **If his abs are fantastic, but his bible is still in plastic, leave him alone.**

[18] Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him."

[19] The Lord God formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird of the sky, and brought each to the man to see what he would call it. And whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. [20] The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the sky, and to every wild animal; but for the man no helper was found corresponding to him. [21] So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he

slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place.

Shout out to Mercy Kids who covered this 2 weekends ago. My 5 yr old and I were in the car the other day... which as I've said is where all deep theology happens... and Haddie said "Dad, did it hurt when God took that rib out?" I said no, he was asleep. She said "Yeah. Did it wake him up!?" No, he stayed asleep. Did he get a new one? No. But I have all 24 of mine just like you. OH, ok.

[22] Then the Lord God made the rib he had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man.

Women, we are going to get into your role next week ok? So I can't do all that right now. Gotta stick with the guy's role. She is taken from him, made of the same STUFF man is made of. Which is how they are both in the image of God. Because she is made of the same stuff he is. And then like the father of the bride, God brings her to the man. Friends verses 22-25 are showing you the first wedding. The father brings the bride to her groom.

23 And the man said: This one, at last, is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called "woman," for she was taken from man.

The first recorded words of the human race. AT LAST! At last because God had brought all the animals in front of him & no helper but now...one like him. Literally she is "like opposite." She will be called woman "isha" because she was taken from man "ish." They

compliment each other. Now that man has a job, & is under God's authority...NOW he is ready for his wife. And she isn't taken from his head to rule him, or from his feet for him to stand on...She's taken from his side to be with him, to be under his arm in intimate fellowship. And now Moses steps in and comments on this:

24 This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh.

Last Two parts to the manhood picture are here: Man is created to commit. Simple truth. You are created to be one who gives himself fully to another. Obviously Moses is commenting on marriage here. Apparently back in Hebrew times there was a problem with Men trying to get married who were still too attached to their mamas. And Moses says as a boy sure its fine to be bonded to your parents. BUT, when you get married...You have to bond...the literal word is STICK to your wife. Guys: free advice from a man who took years of marriage to learn this hard but very clear mandate from God: **Your wife should never have to compete with your mom.**

And maybe you are going to have to set your pride down & ask her: do you feel like I prioritize my parents over you? And you don't need to argue, you need to listen.

But listen marriage is just one place where a man commits himself. Throughout scripture you see men of God committing themselves to God, to God's people, and to God's mission. Jonathan commits himself to David. John commits himself to Jesus. Jesus commits himself to us. The early church commits itself to one

another and to the advancement of the gospel. I've read the bible several times and never once does God tell a man to keep his options open when it comes to God, his people, & his mission.

Second: Man is created to lead his family to know & follow God. The command about the tree...God gave it to the man before the woman got there. It was his job to communicate it to her. The task to work and cultivate...it was his job to pass that along. Man was to introduce her to what it was like to know and follow God! This remains his duty today. To introduce them to God.

Did you know that if a child is the first person in a household to become a Christian, there is a 3.5 percent probability everyone else in the household will follow? If the mother is the first to become a Christian, there is a 17 percent probability everyone else in the household will follow.

But if the father is first, there is a 93 percent probability everyone else in the household will follow.³

When the apostle Paul talks about marriage he points back to this verse and adds a really super important layer to it.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her ...³¹ *For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.* ³² This mystery is profound, but I am talking about Christ and the church. -- Ephesians 5:28-32 (CSB)

Paul is saying yes men and women you are image bearers. And marriage is a specific image of GOD'S LOVE FOR US. Men, you are to represent Christ in that image! Which means you leave mom and dad...just like Christ left the father and came down for his bride...the church. And then you commit to your bride just like Christ did. And you lead her to know God...just like Christ did. And you do that by sacrificing yourself for her...just like Christ did.

This is why I say in weddings, many of you when I did your wedding I said this: Men you wear a crown but it is a crown of thorns. Intentional, sacrificial leadership. That is what God calls men to. And listen, when we follow that road map. An image bearer created to follow God, to cultivate his creation and lead others to know God...we will flourish as men.

25 Both the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame. -- Genesis 2:4-25 (CSB)

This is marriage. Completely exposed & completely approved. Fully known by each other and fully loved.

IF this is what men are created for, Why aren't men this way? Time for a sneak peek into Genesis 3. Where everything goes wrong. We'll hit it FULLY in 2 weeks but every problem with men are rooted in Genesis 3.

³ Statistics from Focus on the Family Publishing, "Promise Keepers at Work."

The serpent, the most cunning of the wild animals, comes in and says to Adam's wife..."Did God really say 'You can't eat from any tree in the garden?'" Genesis 3.1 He's setting her up of course. She doesn't see it. She says no. we can eat, just not out of that one tree... or we will die. And the serpent says "[4] No! you will not die, [5] in fact God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God..." So the woman is deceived and she eats it. And read this...[6] So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. IMPORTANT: the guy was right there. Gonna be a big deal in a minute.

Well, next thing they hear is God walking in the garden. Seems like this must have been a regular thing. Them taking evening walks with God. They knew the sound. And they ran and hid. So God called to the MAN and said where are you? The man says we are hiding because we are naked. And God says " [11] who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from? [12] the man replied "The woman you gave to be with me - she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate."

This is the record of the first sin. And its important because it's the doorway through which sin entered the world. And sin, just like God promised, would bring death. But even more, it corrupted man & woman and the world around them.

1. God created man to glorify God, but sin conditions him to reject God. Adam rejected God and chose his own way. And it led to destruction for his family.

2. God created man with responsibilities, but sin conditions him to pass the buck. When god holds Adam responsible, he blame shifts. literally blames everyone else in the universe but himself. This is a huge problem for men today. Men are so afraid of failure that we refuse to own anything. We blame shift. Even our sin... Guys will say "I fell into porn again." As if porn is a covered pit you didn't see as you were walking along. No, you went looking. Your sin is YOUR SIN. You don't "fall" into sin, you choose sin. Your sin is your sin. You can't understand the gospel until you own your sin. Christ didn't come to rescue you from someone else's sin. He came to save you from yours.

3. God created man to follow God's plan, but sin conditions him to reject God's plan. The great lie that the serpent told them was "has God really said?" He questioned God's authority and then he rejected it.. And in that moment Adam didn't trust that God knew better than he did. Men, Pride is our GIANT blindspot. You don't know better than God.

4. God created man for courageous commitment, but sin conditions him to fear failure. We were meant to be brothers, friends, husbands, fathers who commit ourselves to God, God's people, and God's mission. Fellas we gotta stop keeping our options open and Commit OUR LIVES to God's glory. The number one problem in the Christian dating scene...Courage. men who don't have the courage to ASK a girl out. And so your sisters in Christ don't know what to think. Guys, if

you ask her out and she turns you down, she will still respect you.

5. God created man to lead his wife to know & follow God, but sin conditions him to ignore God. Sin doesn't want God's words in our minds and hearts. And so what happened with Adam happens with us. We ignore his word. Men we are created to lead our families and many Christian men say "I don't know how." But then they tell me the shooting % of the hornets back-up point guard. The reason you ignore God isn't because you "aren't a reader." That's garbage. It's because you don't want him telling you what to do. That's the mindset of sin. YOU KNOW BETTER THAN GOD. It's pride. And I promise you pride will blind you until it kills you. You can't lead your wife or your family to a God that You don't know.

That's our sin. It's tough to hear I know. And if Courtney were up here she'd tell you I surely have fallen short in all 5 of these God given callings. So where do we get the strength, the power, to be the men God has called us to be?

From The Second Adam. 18 So then, as through one trespass there is condemnation for everyone, so also through one righteous act there is justification leading to life for everyone. 19 For just as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so also through the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. -- Romans 5:18-19 (CSB)

When we were dead because of our sin, Christ came in and made us alive. He was the man who gave up the glory of heaven to come rescue us. He accepted the responsibility God put on him even when it cost him his life. He not only knew God's plan, he WAS God's plan. He was the very word itself. He committed himself to his people. His whole self. He held nothing back. He didn't look around for better options. He committed 100% to a bunch of messed up sinners like you and me. He LED HIS BRIDE, the Church, back to God!! And he still leads it today!

Men, Your Manhood map is CHRIST. He's your example, but more importantly he's your source of strength to draw from.

Men we come back to this core truth so much it's becoming a motto around here: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness." Therefore, I will most gladly boast all the more about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may reside in me. -- 2 Corinthians 12:9 (CSB)

Your weakness is your greatest strength. Your only hope in manhood is not standing strong; it's kneeling at the foot of the cross. I know its counter-intuitive but when you stop trusting in your own strength...and admit your sin...admit you can't do it all...THEN you will find the strength of Christ. The Courage of Christ to face down the fear of failure. The compassion of Christ to commit to God's people and to serve a lost and dying world. So run to Christ!

3 Steps out of today:

- You **MUST** believe the gospel. You **ARE LOST & HOPELESS** without it. You do not have the promise of heaven and you have no way out of your sin. Believe the gospel **TODAY**.
- You need to devour the word of God. I mean devour it. Get to know the Christ who redeemed you. Get to know the God who created you. You will never lead others to a God you do not know.
- Get in community with other men. You need other men to show you what manhood looks like. Again Men's retreat is a good step for sure cause we are going to push you to be in a group there. But you need brothers in arms who will remind you that God loves you.

Brothers, The Lord is **WITH YOU!** God said to Joshua “Be **STRONG AND COURAGEOUS...Do not be dismayed**” Why? Because the Lord your God is **WITH YOU** wherever you go. Jesus Says to you that in the tasks he's called you to...**HE IS WITH YOU!**