

Winning the Toxic War on Men

Saturday, November 18, 2023 08:00 AM CT • 54:00

Host: David Wheaton 00:08

Winning the Toxic War on Men. Owen Strachan, author of, *The War on Men* joins us today right here on The Christian Worldview Radio Program where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host. We are able to reach believers and non believers with that mission through the radio station, website, or podcast platform in which you are listening today because of the support of listeners like you, so thank you. You can connect with us by visiting our website, TheChristianWorldview.org, calling toll free 1-888-646-2233 or by writing to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

Maybe you've seen the t-shirt that proclaims, "Smash the patriarchy." Or you've heard the gender studies professors say, "Masculinity is toxic" or "the future is female." This is the spirit of our age, that manhood as prescribed and exemplified in Scripture is oppressive and the cause of conflict and injustice in the world. We have moved light years beyond portraying men as goofs and buffoons in television programs and commercials. Now, men are actually the enemy. Whether it's the prevalence of homes without fathers, men who live to consume and amuse themselves, rather than provide and protect, or males who look and act in feminine way. All point to a subversion of God's design for men. It's not surprising that the clear Biblical prohibition against female pastors in churches is a domino tottering across Evangelicalism.

Owen Strachan is our guest today on The Christian Worldview Radio Program. He is provost and research professor of theology at Grace Bible Theological Seminary and the author of an excellent new book titled, *The War on Men: Why Society Hates Them and Why We Need Them*. We will discuss how we got to the point of scorning Biblical masculinity, and fundamentally, what Biblical masculinity actually looks like. This is a program for men and boys, of course, but it's just as much of a topic for women and mothers to understand so they can discern the right men for marriage and raise their boys to be biblical men.

Before we get to the interview, I just want to read a couple portions of this book because it is very impactful in many areas. The first comes from the introduction. I'll read more as we get into the interview. But this particular quote stood out where Owen Strachan says, "Broadly speaking, our culture now actively champions the inverse of nature. The reversal of what is good in terms of hairstyles and broader physical presentation, many men now look like women, and many women look like men. Cursing the "binary," both sexes embrace the blur of androgyny. As an illustration, he

writes, we find ourselves increasingly surrounded by, "man buns," and that skittle hair trend, as on many campuses, one finds young women and men, sporting blunt, chopped hair, dyed orange, or green, or purple, a nose ring, or other piercings in their ears or other places. To a troubling degree, universities and increasingly high schools, seem to have become parallel gender universes, where the twoness of man and woman has been replaced with a spectrum of fluid flexibility. In our time, defined manhood is bad and defined womanhood is bad. Bodily clarity is out. Bodily confusion is in. Androgyny has replaced the binary. This is not accidental, he says. This is intentional." I think we've all observed that has become far more prevalent in our society. Then he gets into what the goal behind this is on page 30 of the book, where he quotes a man named Philip Reef, who's a cultural critic who says this. "The chief institutional instrument of repressive authority is the family. (Obviously not a Christian here). As a political revolution must overthrow the power of the state, moral revolution must overthrow the power of the family, all families. A revolution must sweep out the family and it's ruler, the father, no less cleanly than the old political gangs and their leaders. However radical the revolution, so long as the family persists, authority will creep back." That from cultural critic Philip Reef.

Owen goes on to say just one or two more sentences. "Wherever attacks in the natural family appear, assaults on fatherhood follow. In fact, fatherhood is the central target of such attempts to destroy God created order. If the father is the head of the natural family, then all one needs to do to topple that structure is undermined and ultimately removed fathers from their role as authority figures in the home. It's like pushing the single domino that knocks down the whole stack." That's exactly what we're seeing in our society today with regard to men and fathers. Now, I recently spoke with Owen. He had literally just stepped off the platform of speaking at a conference on manhood to about 500 people. So you're going to hear the din of a conference in the background, sort of like a man on the street interview.

Owen, thank you for taking the time to come on the program today. We've titled the program, Winning the Toxic War on Men, in light of your book, The War on Men. It's an excellent book. Congratulations on writing something that is so relevant and important and needed right now. I want to start out by reading, literally the opening words of the book in the introduction where you write, "Masculinity is toxic. Just three words long, this poisonous little sentence captures the spirit of our age, painting with broad strokes traditional manhood and strong manhood are problematic, deeply problematic. Risk taking, aggressiveness, compartmentalizing to focus on tasks, enduring hardship without emoting, being stoic, conflict, war, manliness in general, all this is bad, essentially. Whether religious or not, if you are drawn to most anything in the previous sentence, especially if you're a man, you are very likely a part of the problem that ails society. In the most succinct form, you're participating in the culture of toxic masculinity. In general terms, elite American culture today despises manhood. This is especially true of what I call strong manhood of the spiritual and

traditional kind. Too often, when men show strength, even virtuously, leftist voices shame them. Such men are toxic.

Skipping forward a few sentences. Then comes the dreaded label. You're acting out your toxicity. The only tolerated response to this charge is embracing it. But Mark this well, when you fall prey to the culture and tell people you're toxic, you sign a living death warrant. You enter the therapeutic matrix, a dystopian place, you will never truly leave. There is no gospel in this worldview. There is no redemption. There is no forgiveness. There is no Christ. There is only you as a man, owning your privilege and renouncing your power. But not just this, you will renounce any notion of manhood itself. The new paganism will tolerate no hard and fast notions of the sexes. All will bow to this unrealism." Owen, that's quite an opening statement in the book. Describe the arc of how this war on men has progressed over the decades, specifically here in America.

Guest: Owen Strachan 08:49

Thank you, David. Thank you for having me. I love the title of this episode. Yes, I think we have been in a multi decade slide with regard to manhood where now, men are truly in crisis in one societal metric after another. There are very few people who even want to help them, or think that men deserve to be helped. In fact, probably the most awful part of this entire assault on manhood is that people think it is a good thing. It's literally a movement of justice to overcome the patriarchy. What that means in individualized form, is that flesh and blood men lose. You see, it's one thing to talk about people in the abstract as a group, it's another thing for an actual husband or a boy or a group of boys to suffer and flail and commit suicide and things like that. But we're in a society that for several decades has been mainstreaming a number of very evil ideologies.

You think of what wokeness has done. Wokeness has convinced many people today that because men are leaders in different sectors of our world, like the home and the church according to the Bible, that means that men have an unjust advantage over women. So wokeness is teaching us today, that anywhere men lead women, that's evil and bad and unjust. You think about what feminism has done. Feminist theologians have argued for decades, again, that men need to lose. The nuclear family needs to be destroyed. If men are in leadership then women are being oppressed. Those are just a couple of the movements that in the last 60 years of western history, have had a massive effect on American society. It's all well and good, again, to talk about this at the level of societal trends, but when you start looking at the carnage on the ground, in terms of how actual flesh and blood men are struggling, you recognize this is a crisis.

Host: David Wheaton 10:43

It absolutely is. Owen Strachan is with us today on The Christian Worldview. He is the author of the book we're discussing, *The War on Men*. Let me say it's an excellent book, and this is why we're offering it to you. We'll tell you how you can get it today by getting in contact with us.

I want to talk about the religious underside of this war Owen. In your introduction you say, "The new paganism, this new paganism, is a vision of the world that sees all that exists as one. There is no creator. There is only the divinized human person, and we may do sexually and otherwise whatever we wish. The new paganism that dominates our age is not communal. The new paganism is strikingly Imperial. When you embrace this evil ideology, you will not be left to your own devices. No, the regime will come for you, and swiftly." Explain what you mean by that paragraph, as it seems like it's an opposing religion to biblical Christianity.

Guest: Owen Strachan 11:45

What has happened today is that because of the spread of paganism, people don't think there is such a thing as God made manhood and God made womanhood. That means that then there are no roles that men are supposed to play and women are supposed to play. That in turn means that there should not even be different spaces in the most practical form for men and women. So a pagan worldview says, we're basically all the same. A pagan worldview denies the Creator creature set up in the Bible, where God is creator, and He makes creatures, but those creatures aren't all the same. Men and women are gloriously not the same. They're distinct from one another. They're both image bearers, both elements of humanity. But yet, the woman is distinct from the man in a way that causes the man to celebrate that. So that's what happens when you know the biblical vision. You actually are freed up to celebrate biblical manhood and biblical womanhood and not hate each of those realities. But you think of where paganism has taken us. Let me just say one outworking of this.

Now young men are literally going into girls changing rooms and girls restrooms and they're naked and girls are naked. This is because we're being told that there is no such thing as strong and clear manhood and womanhood. In fact, people can have a new category, a new identity, they can be transgender. Well, that's a pagan idea, not a biblical one. And then on the playing field after everybody's changed, sorry to be a little bit direct here on the program, but then when everybody has changed, and they go out to the sporting field, then men can compete against girls and batter them. This has been happening in competitions. Young men are honestly doing tremendous damage physically, to young women.

So our society is collapsing. It's collapsing because of different influences. But one of the biggest influences is the idea that there are no differences between men and women. That's what paganism teaches. That is not what Christianity teaches. Christianity teaches men to honor and protect and reverence women.

Host: David Wheaton 13:41

Owen Strachan, the author of *The War on Men* is our guest today here on *The Christian Worldview*, as we talk about winning this toxic war on men. We'll get to that coming up in the interview. We're trying to set the stage for what the culture is like now, how it views men. It hasn't just affected the culture, Owen, it's come squarely into the church as well. Again, I'm going to quote from the introduction because there are a lot of good things right at the beginning of this book.

You say, "Christians must be thoroughly and wholistically re educated in this cultural revolution against men. They must give up their stubborn belief in men being appointed as the teachers and elders and preachers of the church as those made first by God and thus fashion for leadership by divine design. It is the church after all, that historically stands as the last bulwark against ungodly evil.

But if the church itself can be transformed, then the pagan revolution will move yet faster." We've seen this going on within the Southern Baptist Convention, many other denominations as well. Talk about this war on men that's taking place not just on the outside, Owen, but on the inside within the church.

Guest: Owen Strachan 14:50

The church is where we are supposed to breathe the pure oxygen of God's design and not just say, God's design is right. This is what we should live as and let's legalistically live this out. No, we're supposed to say, God's design is right. God's design is good. It's good for us. We actually flourish, whether single or married when we embrace biblical womanhood if we're a woman, and we actually flourish, and live well, if we embrace biblical manhood as a man. So this is where ground zero is to be found. This is the last bulwark, this is the last castle. But if Satan can get his fingers into the church, and if Satan can convince people that we should accommodate the culture, and we should take our marching orders from the culture, then man, I don't know what else to say. There is no last castle remaining. This is why Christians have to recognize we have to love our neighbor. We're not here to hate our neighbor. We're not here to hate gender advocates, and gender theorists and woke people and these kinds of folks, but we are supposed to stand against their lies.

Loving your neighbor does not mean doing whatever your neighbor wants you to do. Loving your neighbor does not mean believing whatever your neighbor wants you to believe. Loving your neighbor means loving the person, but actually standing against ungodly systems and ideologies and lies. That's what I don't think Christians understand today. There are a good number of churches out there who encourage Christians to be nice and kind. That's great. Those are good things to teach. But actually, you've only done a part of your work as a pastor or a church if you train Christians that way. You have to train them as well, to stand against what is evil.

You have to train them to be like John the Baptist in Matthew 14, who spoke against sexual sin. So loving your neighbor, again, does not mean doing what your neighbor wants, or believing what your neighbor believes. But I think a lot of people are buying that bargain. And that's meaning that Satan is making inroads in our world.

Host: David Wheaton 16:43

Owen Strachan, the author of, *The War on Men*, is our guest today here on *The Christian Worldview*. I'm just going to read what Pastor John MacArthur said about Owens book, *The War on Men*.

Vigilance, steadfastness, and strength are identified as masculine virtues in First Corinthians 16:13. Radical Feminism and postmodern gender theory argue that those qualities and other typically masculine traits are inherently oppressive, overbearing, onerous, or in other ways toxic. Government, education and the entertainment industry relentlessly promote that point of view. Indeed, the deliberate methodical demonization of masculinity is one of the main reasons we are now witnessing the speedy collapse of Western society.

Then he goes on to say, Owen Strachan shows why the current assault on masculinity has been so corrosive on human relationships at every level of our culture. He has been at the forefront of this battle for more than a decade, and he makes a compelling biblical and rational case for the recovery of and respect for a biblical view of manhood, showing in the process, why this is such a vitally urgent matter, especially for Christians.

That's what Pastor John MacArthur had to say about this book we are featuring today, *The War on Men*, by our guest, Owen Strachan. We think it is such an important book for families to have, not just men and boys, but for the whole family. We are reading it together as a family right now. We're offering it for donation of any amount to *The Christian Worldview*, It's a hardcover, 256 pages and normally retails for \$29.99. And again, donation of any amount to *The Christian Worldview*. You can get in contact with us the usual ways, which will be given during this first break of the day. You are listening to *The Christian Worldview Radio Program*, I'm David Wheaton.

Featured Resource: Knowing the Spirit 18:31

When Jesus is laying out the Holy Spirit's job description in John 16, and He says, "it's to your advantage that I go," think about that for just a second. Jesus, the Christ, tells His disciples, it's actually advantageous that I go. They are thinking, What? We don't want you to go. Who could be better for us? What does He then explain?

That was pastor Costi Hinn who was raised in and then saved from the distortions of the Holy Spirit that are so prevalent today. Costi's new book, *Knowing the Spirit: Who He Is, What He Does, and How He Can Transform Your Christian Life*, graciously clarifies truth from error and is available for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. To order this 261 page, softcover book that retails for \$19.99, go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call toll free 1-888-646-2233, or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

Featured Children's Resources 19:33

Scripture commands that children ought to be brought up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Offering Biblically sound resources for children is one of our top ministry priorities. At our store at the ChristianWorldview.org, you will find carefully selected children's Bibles and books along with video and audio resources. Check out the Bible Infographics for Kids books, Little Pilgrims Progress, and the popular Adam Raccoon set. Theo is a 15 episode video series addressing key doctrines of the faith that is a must see for children and adults.

Satan and the world are bent on capturing the heart and mind of your child. Instead, get sound resources that will train them up in the way they should go. Browse and order at TheChristianWorldview.org or give us a call for recommendations at 1-888-646-2233. That's 1-888-646-2233 or TheChristianWorldview.org.

Host: David Wheaton 20:40

Welcome back to The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit our website, TheChristianWorldview.org where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter, order resources for adults and children and support the ministry. Our topic today is, *Winning the Toxic War on Men*. Our guest is Owen Strachan. He is the provost and research professor of theology at Grace Bible Theological Seminary. He's also the author of the excellent book we're discussing, *The War on Men*.

Owen, you also write where this is coming from. You say, "For a sizable number, the traditional path to maturity and joy is gone. We can observe numerous troubling trends in a range of categories. In terms of patterns for example, marriage is delayed. We've seen that. Family building is delayed, vocational fulfillment is stifled. Much of what gives life meaning and substance is on hold. In this vacuum, synthetic experiences abound. Instead of a real wife, young men consume pornographic videos with imaginary partners. Instead of a real family, young men spend copious amounts of times with their friend group, their "family." Instead of embracing maturity, young men prolong their adolescence, chasing pretend adventures on big screen TVs and computers. Instead of building a vocation, young men either evade work or bounce from job to job." So the question is, Owen, Who or what is to blame for not transmitting the character values of manhood early on?

Guest: Owen Strachan 22:12

I think there's a number of folks and institutions who share in the blame here honestly, David. I think it starts, honestly, with courageous pastors, who teach the truth about these things and seek to play their part in shepherding young men since we're talking about manhood and helping them understand what true biblical manhood is. True biblical manhood not being one thing, but being many things. But then yes, I think because we have worldly churches, we end up with worldly families.

That means that a lot of fathers and mothers are not training their boys or their girls, but we're talking about manhood, in distinctive Christian ways. We've largely lost the honor and the nobility and the glory of biblical manhood. Many young men are not trained to be a leader, a protector, and a provider in a Christ like way, all driven by the power of the gospel. That then creates the actual end product of young men who, yes, they may be raised in a Christian context, but they don't know how they're distinct from the world. They don't know that they're actually supposed to be distinct from the world and yet be a gospel light in it. They don't know how to be a man. So we've largely lost the script, at least in a lot of sectors, not every sector, for what being a biblical man is.

I'm in this though, David, just to say a last word here, not to just curse the darkness. I'm in this to light a candle and say, Okay, we're not doing well. Church isn't doing well. Families aren't doing well. But here's the good news. We can change, we can grow, we can turn this around, God will work, God will help us. That's a huge part of what I'm trying to say in this book, *The War on Men*.

Host: David Wheaton 23:50

And you absolutely do. You start the book in talking about what the problem is and then you get to the solution. We're going to get to that in just a minute here coming up. In the church today, Owen, you get the sense that the highest virtue for a Christian man, he's encouraged to be meek and mild, and nice and winsome. You mentioned this previously today, because that's the way Jesus was, after all. He was meek and mild and nice and he was winsome.

That isn't the way Christ actually was, truthfully, according to Scripture. But how can we as Christians better recognize this pseudo characterization of manhood that is so prominent within evangelicalism today that the highest virtue is to be nice and mild and resist that pull to conform not only to society, but within the church?

Guest: Owen Strachan 24:42

That's a great question, David. We are definitely called to bear all the fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22-23. That means that men need to cultivate fruit like gentleness and kindness and tenderness,

and more that we can talk about and that's essential. We cannot portray for example, gentleness as effeminate. Gentleness is not effeminate. Gentleness, by the way, also is not a man losing his strength or pretending he's not a man, pretending he's a woman. No, no, no. Gentleness is a man having strength under control.

So there are situations where a man needs to very much exercise strength in the most direct sense. If his little girl is at Target, and a hulking man tries to go in the girls restroom after her, a godly man, absolutely says, You are not going in there and puts himself in between that man and his daughter. So there's the strength coming out. But that same man, when his daughter is having a hard day and is crying, can put his strength under control, he doesn't lose his strength, but he can comfort her, he can tenderly talk to her and help her. That's not being effeminate, either. That's being a man under control. That's what we need. But in all of this, we've just got to recognize that the highest virtue for a man in the Bible is not being nice, as you said.

That's the lie of, air quotes, "winsome Christianity." What a man is actually called to be is whatever is needed in a given situation. So biblical men have to be kind and tender and gentle, a good amount of the time. They have to be loving, they have to be self controlled, they have to be disciplined. Biblical men also have to very much be convictional. Biblical men have to say, no, to a lot in this world. Biblical men have to stand for what is true. Biblical men have to say hard things when people don't want hard things to be said. So in sum, a lot to say here, but it is simply not the case, as you said, that the sum total of the Bibles call to men is be nice. That is just not true.

Host: David Wheaton 26:44

Owen Strachan is with us today on The Christian Worldview. He's the author of, The War on Men. Owen, there is something inside of men, even unregenerate men that because God made them this way that they want manliness, they want to be masculine, they may not be able to define it or even know what that looks like, but there on the internet and social media, you'll see people, and you write about these men in the book. People like Jordan Peterson, Andrew Tate. These aren't believers, and they have huge followings of men. How are those in what's called the manosphere online, those who are influencers, how are they contributing toward manhood or distracting or diminishing from manhood?

Guest: Owen Strachan 27:30

Fundamentally, we've got to recognize that a lot of young men are drawn to an Andrew Tate. Some of them because of sin, some of them because of what Tate celebrates in the flesh. Some of why those men are drawn to a Tate or others on Instagram, is because he's giving them a form of strength. As you alluded to, and as I say in this book, men are born wired by God to want to be strong. You think about what a little four year old boy does when he comes up to you and he says,

Dad, feel my arm or grandpa feel my arm. He wants to show you that he's strong, even though his little bicep is not strong. So that speaks to the innate wiring of a boy. That instinct can definitely go bad.

Let's not misunderstand, but that instinct is not inherently an evil instinct. What the gospel does is not take that instinct out of boys and out of men and say, Don't be strong, be weak. What the gospel does is it says to boys and men, be strong in a godly way. Be strong by the power of God. Be strong in the Spirit. Here's where things get a little bit paradoxical David, because biblical strength actually looks at the outset, like being humble, and being a confessor of sin, and repenting of your sin. That's when you're being strong, when you are actually humbling yourself before God. Then God genuinely makes you strong and gives you strength. So we can't miss these different elements. We're not calling men to be strong like the world is calling them to be strong. We're calling men to be distinctly Christ like in their strength.

Host: David Wheaton 29:10

You talked about some of the examples today that men are looking to be like. Jordan Peterson, Andrew Tate, others and so forth. But you spend two chapters in the book going back to Old Testament men, New Testament men. Just pick a couple as you were writing this book and studying scripture that really spoke to you who are either positive examples to emulate as far as being a man or things that we should look at them and say, that's something to avoid.

Guest: Owen Strachan 29:40

Yes, I love that question, too. Let me say a quick word about Peterson because I didn't mention him in that last answer. I honor the courage Jordan Peterson has showed in the public square in the last five years or so. He is definitely, though not a believer that I know of, a courageous and principled man and that's a huge part of why he has amassed such a huge following. Even though I can't agree with all elements of his current worldview, I recognize that he has been a father in public. He has said, No! That's where so many young people have seen in him virtue and courage, because he said, No, I will not be forced to say transgender pronouns by the government. No, I am not a toxic patriarchal list on that famous Channel Five interview with Kathy Newman. He has been willing to say, No, where so many men won't say anything, frankly, and he's done it in a controlled way. He's a dapper guy. He looks cool and all these sorts of things. Anyway, that's a quick word about Peterson.

In terms of the Bible, I am tremendously and I do mean tremendously inspired by David. Maybe because David apparently was short, and I am a short guy. So there you go. But that's a little joke. But David showed such tremendous courage in the face of such tremendous evil. I think Christians in recent years have almost a little bit mocked the story of David. They think that's a little Bible fairy

tale that you think is really neat. I think the opposite, David. David is an incredible figure. He's supposed to inspire us.

Even as David himself in terms of where his life goes, he's a follower of God, he's a man after God's own heart, but he's not the Savior we need, at all. The Bible shows us that very clearly, that David is a strong man for God's glory that we should look up to and learn from, but David himself needs a Savior who will come from David's own line.

A second man to mention biblically is Samson. Samson is so naturally gifted, he's so strong, he's so powerful. He really has the kind of existence that the fallen male mind craves. He can get anything he wants. When he wants to kill bad guys, he can kill bad guys by the bushel. He can go and get beautiful women, again, basically anytime he wants. He's favored of God. He's raised under a Nazirite vow. But Samson is such a tremendous cautionary tale to us. He shows us that the fleshly masculine life is not just a not fulfilling life, but it's a horrible life in that it leads you to destruction. You don't follow God as you could. You don't honor God as He intends. Samson is so gifted, but Samson is so cautionary.

Host: David Wheaton 32:20

Yes, that's well said because the examples in scripture really show us some positive things to follow, but also some things to avoid. It doesn't hide their sins. Those are for our good to learn those lessons. Owen Strachan with us today here on The Christian Worldview, the author of the excellent book, The War on Men. We are offering it today to listeners for a donation of any amount. You can get in contact with us the usual ways. We'll be giving our contact information throughout the program today.

One of the chapters I really liked in the book, Owen, is chapter three, on the foundations of strong manhood. You specifically talk about several moments here, but specifically for this question, it has to do with work. You say, Men are made for work. They are not made for idleness or passivity. Men are not made to get out of doing anything meaningful by any means necessary. No, they are called to work and are constituted for it. By this I mean that men's very biology fits with the divine mandate. He is a worker made for action, made for stewarding Eden. Beyond this he is made to provide for his family. Eve is not the one placed first in Eden to work it. She will play a great role in taking dominion of the earth, but it is Adam who has the call to work and thus to provide for his family. Men do not naturally crave a listless life. They want a big mission. They want work to do. Men desire this because God made them to want it.

Nor did God give Adam a single plant to attend. He gave him an entire garden forest to steward and shepherd. This was a mission of dominion. Exhilarating, expansive, exciting. This is what every man after Adam wants also. Men do not want something small to live for. They can be indoctrinated that way or lose their sense of meaning, but fundamentally, men yearn for something big to do. They want a mission that will consume them, even if their part in that work is not the lead role.

Why is this issue of work so important for men? How has this changed in our society? Because it seems like there's a mentality now, where you're running into men that it's almost not a big stigma to stay at home and collect unemployment or not to not work at certain times of the season, or how can I make as much money for as little effort as possible? Talk about the importance of work and how the mentality around it has changed for men.

Guest: Owen Strachan 34:47

Fundamentally, the identity of a godly man is intended by God to be very closely connected to work. In Genesis 2:15 God says to Adam, that he has to work and guard the Garden of Eden. That tells us in an unfallen world, Adam was supposed to do a whole lot of work. Adam was supposed to tend a garden forest. That's not a bad thing. Work doesn't come in after the fall, work is before it. So work for a man is going to be a huge, huge part of where he finds identity and fulfillment and joy and meaning. It's not that he finds that outside of God, but he recognizes that he's serving God and honoring God, and God has given him this good work to do for His glory.

There's so much to say. But we've got to absolutely punch back against the darkness today, David, We've got to raise our boys to know and taste the goodness of work. To have fulfillment in working. Yes, boys struggle with laziness and passivity, as we all do. But we can raise boys in homes that value work, and not just through fathers who shout at their son to get to work, do something. No, that's not really a good strategy. Nor does it honor God. Instead, we need to be men who model the goodness of work, who enjoy what is good, at least that we can find in our work. Then yes, with a light in our eyes, and spring in our step, say, Hey, son, we're going to go do some work. Then you shepherd your boy through that. He complains sometimes. He wants to go do something fun. He wants to get on his tablet, or whatever it is, but we've got to help boys work through this call to work. What will happen over time, by the way, is that boys will get a taste for it. At least a lot of boys, as God works in their heart and they get saved and they grow in their faith. A lot of boys will want work, and they won't want to be like this passive consumeristic plastic society.

The temptation today, David, beyond work, is to live what I call a plastic life, where you risk nothing. You don't go to a real church. You don't marry a real woman. You use porn. You don't risk anything in a real sense, and your life is plastic. That's not what God has called men to. God has called men to a real flesh and blood life. That life is going to be hard. That life is going to challenge you. There's

going to be sin exposed. There's going to be trials. There's going to be pain, but there's also going to be a whole lot of joy and glory to God as you live that out by the power of God's grace.

Host: David Wheaton 37:15

Very well said. Owen Strachan, the author of, *The War on Men* is our guest today here on *The Christian Worldview*. Pastor Steve Lawson wrote about this book, *The War on Men*, "Biblical manhood is under vicious assault as never before. Radical Feminism is rampant, while passive masculinity is spreading like a malignant tumor. This book by Owen Strachan, *The War on Men*, takes significant and decisive steps to point us back in the right direction. Not only does Strachan make the right diagnosis, he prescribes the medicine for the cure."

Again, that was from Pastor Steven Lawson of OnePassion Ministries. We would like to get this book into your hands, which takes principles and examples from scripture and applies it to the topic of biblical masculinity and manhood. The book is hardcover with dust jacket, 256 pages and retails for \$29.99. You can order it for a limited time for a donation of any amount to *The Christian Worldview*. Just get in contact with us through our website, by calling us toll free or by sending us a note through the mail. All our contact information will be given during this upcoming break here on *The Christian Worldview Radio Program*. I'm David Wheaton.

Featured Resource: The Essential Church 38:31

God's truth is enduringly true throughout all the generations. It transcends culture. The church is always going to be an embattled people. If it's swimming with the tide, it's not being the Church of Jesus Christ. Look to the past, learn from the past, because the whole world lies in the pull of the evil one.

That was from the just released documentary, *The Essential Church*, which chronicles how three churches followed God's command to gather during the pandemic rather than comply with arbitrary government mandates. Normal retail is \$12.99 plus shipping for this two hour film. For a limited time, you can order the DVD for a donation of any amount to *The Christian Worldview*. Order at TheChristianWorldview.org or call toll free 1-888-646-2233 or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

Featured Resource: Knowing the Spirit 39:30

When Jesus is laying out the Holy Spirit's job description in John 16, and He says, "it's to your advantage that I go," think about that for just a second. Jesus, the Christ, tells His disciples, it's actually advantageous that I go. They are thinking, What? We don't want you to go. Who could be better for us? What does He then explain?

That was pastor Costi Hinn who was raised in and then saved from the distortions of the Holy Spirit that are so prevalent today. Costi's new book, *Knowing the Spirit: Who He Is, What He Does, and How He Can Transform Your Christian Life*, graciously clarifies truth from error and is available for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. To order this 261 page, softcover book that retails for \$19.99, go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call toll free 1-888-646-2233, or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

Host: David Wheaton 40:38

Welcome back to the Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit our website, [The Christian worldview.org](http://TheChristianWorldview.org) where you can subscribe to our free weekly email and annual print letter, order resources for adults and children and support the ministry. Our topic today is, *Winning the Toxic War on Men*. Our guest is Owen Strachan. He is the provost and research professor of theology at Grace Bible Theological Seminary, and also the author of the excellent book we're discussing, *The War on Men*.

Owen, in your last answer you mentioned Adam and Eve. I found it very interesting. I had never thought about this. As a matter of fact, I'd assumed the opposite in reading scripture. On page 67 of your book, *The War on Men*, you say, "To be precise, Adam was present as Eve talked with Satan, but for all purposes, he abandoned his duties. He did not speak, he did not act in any virtuous way, he did nothing except follow his wife's lead. He should have refuted the serpent's lies and protected his wife from them, but he did no such thing. God made Adam to be a strong man, but Adam simply disappeared in the face of this evil. Now that's not a follow up on your answer about work, but it's a follow up on a husband's or a man's tendency to stand back, let the wife make the decision and just not take leadership. Talk about that how Adam was present when Eve sinned, but was just silent and standing there.

Guest: Owen Strachan 42:11

It's one of the, I almost said one of the great tragedies of our world, but it's I guess in a sense, the great tragedy in human terms of our world, that Adam in a real historical garden, facing a real historical snake, Satan, in the form of a snake that is, did not stand up to the serpent and did not keep the charge of God in that passage I mentioned earlier in Genesis 2:15, to guard the garden.

This is why, David, it's very important in theological terms, I'm a theologian by day, manhood advocate by night, but it's very important to understand that Adam had a charge to keep that garden and that entails that Eden was not perfect. Eden was not a paradise in the sense that it could not be entered by evil and ruined. Eden was unfallen, it was a wonderful place, and it was a paradise, but God had already warned Adam in Genesis 2:15 of a threat that would come. He didn't name it. He didn't say a snake is coming, but he told Adam to guard the garden. That tells us that

Adam failed in that charge, because we read in the early verses of Genesis 3, that the man was with her and he took the fruit and he ate as Eve had this dialogue with the serpent.

So the whole dialogue with the serpent, that should not have happened. That dialogue should have been between Adam and the serpent. Adam should have said, You wicked lying serpent, don't you dare attack my wife. By the way, here's a boot on your skull. But instead, Adam did no such thing. Here, you and I find ourselves in late 2023 in a world gone mad, battling our own sin internally, and everyone listening to this in the very same state. Thankfully, the grace of God is stronger than sin and God overrules that situation. Nonetheless, it has very tragic consequences that call us today to fight for our wives, fight for our marriages, fight for our homes and recognize that Satan lurks around the corners and wants to destroy our homes too, and wants us as men, lastly, not to be the leaders that we are called to be.

Host: David Wheaton 44:17

This is, I think, perhaps the most important issue as we think about manhood as the example of Jesus Christ. We're to become like Christ. That is the goal of the Christian life. You say on page 95 of your book, *The War on Men*, Jesus of course, is the example for every believer regardless of their gender. Not only men can learn from his life, teaching and ministry, every Christian can, should, and must.

Having noted this, we must also hasten to add that Jesus was not androgynous. He was and is male. His masculinity does not close him off from women seeking to be like Him. The gospels of the New Testament show us that women flocked to Jesus and loved Him dearly, but nonetheless, Jesus still models manhood for men. He shows them the peak and epitome of it. He gives us both an example to follow and the saving power to do so. So the question is, How should men look to Christ to take away the perfect example of masculinity?

Guest: Owen Strachan 45:17

Jesus is every Christians Lord and Savior. Everyone is called to learn from the life and godliness of Jesus. But there is a sense, as you read in that quote from my book, *The War on Men*, in which men are supposed to in particular say, because of a text like Ephesians 5:22-33 is the exegetical charter. I am called, for example, in the context of marriage to love my wife like Jesus loved the church and dying for the church. That tells us that the Bible is not shy about calling men specifically, in different places, in a few ways, to be like Jesus. That means that if I'm supposed to love my wife like Christ loved the church, I've got to be a man who is tough, as we see in John 2 for example, where Jesus makes a whip of cords and scourges the temple in a righteous way.

But I'm also called to be a man who is tender. A lot of men, when they hear a call to manhood, they like the tough part. They want to be Clint Eastwood or someone like that in the face of evil. That's not a bad instinct, but the part that can be harder, at least for some of us to cultivate is the tender side. That's where we don't want to just say, yes, yes, I love my wife. Yes, I love her. I put a ring on her finger 10, 20, 30, 40 years ago, we're good. You know, we got our stuff, but whatever.

No! That means that we're called not to be some kind of subservient, effeminate man, but we are called to be a man who genuinely seeks First Peter 3:1-7. To understand our wife, to be kind to her, to be gentle with her, to point her to truth, to wash her in the water of the Word, Ephesians 5. There's a lot for a man to do out of the overflow of Jesus, but that's a huge part. I think when we're looking at Jesus as men, we're constantly tracking Him and saying, How can I be like Jesus as a man?

Host: David Wheaton 45:22

That certainly needs to be our life objective, to strive to become more like Christ. As we conclude today, Owen, what is your parting exhortation for all who are listening, whether men, women, or children, young men, with regard to biblical masculinity and manhood. I pray that father's will model that blend of toughness and tenderness that we talked about.

GUEST: Owen Strachan 47:36

I pray that mothers will not baby their sons, but will genuinely love their sons, but very much teach their sons in terms of day to day instruction and that sort of thing, and teach their sons to be godly men. Both of the sexes, both the father and the mother have a vital role to play here. It's not just that boys need a supportive and teaching father who lives this all out. They do need that. That's essential, but it's also that they need a mother who loves them as a woman, who they learn to interact with well, and who then encourages them to be a man of God.

All that begins though, David, not to make this into a marriage counseling podcast time, but all that is based in a man who really does strive, a father I'm talking about, to love his wife well. I guess I would say at the end of our conversation, there are a lot of homes that are in flames today. There are a lot of men who are not in a great place as a husband and father. I could say a lot about that, we both could. I would try to say to men, hey, there is hope. There is hope for you, but hope is found in confession and repentance and the ways of God.

Don't buy the cultural lie that you are toxic as a man. Don't buy that, if you do have some challenges with conflict or sin patterns or bitterness or whatever it may be in your marriage, don't buy that that's destroyed, and you're an idiot, and there's no hope for the two of you. Go to a godly leader at your church, talk to a godly couple at your church, get a biblical counselor, work through this stuff. David,

I say this because that's really what we most need. We most need strong homes not populated by perfect parents. There are no such options available. But populated by real sinners who have found the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and who now do the much harder thing than burning each other down. They talk things through. They ask for forgiveness, they grant forgiveness, they communicate well, and then they live out those roles that we've been sketching here. That's really what boys desperately need. They need a healthy home, they need a loving father, they need a loving mother, but they also very much need to see repentance and confession and humility modeled.

Host: David Wheaton 50:14

Well said. Thank you for concluding our interview today that way, Owen. Thank you so much for coming on The Christian Worldview, but even more for taking the time to study the Word, to think through this issue of men and to write this book. It's been most helpful for me personally, reading it. I really hope that it impacts many who are listening today who take the opportunity to order this book and try to apply it to their lives. Thank you again, Owen. All of God's best and Grace to you and your family.

Guest: Owen Strachan 50:43

Thank you, brother. Appreciate the interview.

Host: David Wheaton 50:45

If you joined us late, that was Owen Strachan, our guest today, the provost and research professor of theology at Grace Bible Theological Seminary and the author of the book we have been discussing, *The War on Men*. Just a few summary bullet points here as we close the program today. What are the qualities of a God honoring man? The first is the all important prerequisite, you must believe in and become like Jesus Christ. When you are born again, as Jesus commanded in John chapter 3. God gives you the Holy Spirit to guide and to help you be a biblical man. Otherwise, without being a true believer and receiving the Holy Spirit, its manhood driven by the flesh, which will end up in one of the ditches of unrestrained hypermasculinity, or sinful passivity.

If you haven't been born again, please give us a call, or go to our website and click on the page, "What must I do to be saved?" You must repent and believe in who Jesus Christ is and what He did for you on the cross. After that, other qualities of a God honoring man are leadership and protecting those God has put in your life, being alert and discerning, having conviction and courage through your speech and your action, having a strong work ethic, which goes to having a purpose in providing for those in your life, and also exhibiting self control and love. Yes, love.

That passage we referenced earlier in the program, 1 Corinthians 16:13-14 says, *"Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love."* This biblical love

means seeking God's best for another person. One more reminder that you can order Owen's book, *The War on Men* for a donation of any amount to The Christian Worldview. This is a book for men and women to understand what biblical manhood is. To order, our contact information is given immediately following today's program.

Thank you for joining us today. Until next time, Think biblically, live accordingly, and stand firm! The mission of The Christian Worldview is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.

We hope today's broadcast encouraged you toward that end. To hear a replay of today's program, order a transcript or find out, "What must I do to be saved?" Go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call toll free 1-888-646-2233. The Christian Worldview is a listener supported nonprofit radio ministry furnished by the Overcomer Foundation.

To make a donation, become a Christian Worldview Partner, order resources, subscribe to our free newsletter or contact us, visit TheChristianWorldview.org, call 1-888-646-2233, or write to Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331. That's Box 401 Excelsior, Minnesota 55331. Thanks for listening to The Christian Worldview.