

A REAL MAN THE MAN OF STEEL AND VELVET PART 2

We are continuing our series on "A Real Man". The real man has two sides, one of "Steel" and one of "Velvet". Last week we looked at the qualities of the "Man of Steel".

1. He is a man of commitment. He is committed to providing for and protecting his family and others in need and he is committed to pointing them towards Jesus and the will of God.
2. He is a man of conviction . He studies the Bible and he knows what he believes and why.
3. He is a man of courage. He isn't afraid to take a stand for what's right.
4. He is a man of character.
5. He is a man of confidence. His confidence comes from God.
6. He is a man of control. His mind, body, and emotions are under the control the Holy Spirit.

A strong man of steel without the velvet side can be very difficult to live with. Without ever realizing it, many men blast away at their families. It is like turning ten-inch guns on your families and yanking the firing cord.

The average man fails to realize just how incredibly powerful his everyday actions and attitudes are on those closest to him.

*ILL Imagine Clark Kent waking up one morning and forgetting he is superman. He slaps the snooze button and flattens the alarm clock into a plastic pancake. He slams his coffee cup down on the table and puts a hole clean through it. He yells at the kids, "It's time to go to school" and he ruptures his wife's eardrum. Lois collapses on the kitchen floor. He heads down the hallway and brushes up against Clark Jr. and leaves him on the floor with a cracked collarbone. On the way out the door, he swats the cat out of his favorite chair and leaves the unfortunate creature plastered on the wall.

That may seem unrealistic, but it happens all the time when men fail to realize just how powerful their actions and attitudes are on those closest to them.

So, today we are looking at the other side, the qualities of Velvet

There are obvious differences between steel and velvet. Steel is strong and hard, velvet is soft and tender. A real man has both woven into his character.

TS A real man is...

*1. A man who cares.

He is kind and compassionate and he cares for his family and others.

*In Ephesians 4:32 we are told to "be kind and compassionate to one another"

To show our family that we care, we must do more than simply provide an income, or a nice house, or nice clothes, or a nice car. All those things do not necessarily communicate that we truly care.

Do you know what does say, "I care"? When we give ourselves, that says, "I really care".

ILL. Has your wife ever been talking to you and you didn't hear a word she said because you had your mind on something else?

Have your kids ever come in the room and try to tell you about something that was important to them and you were so wrapped up in something on TV or the internet that you ignored them?

It has happened to all of us. We have all been guilty of not showing that we care.

Giving ourselves to our family and to others says, "I love you".

We show that we care when we give them a hug, or say a word of praise or encouragement.

One of the goals in my life is to praise my family and the people around me more than I criticize them. There was a time in my life when I did the opposite and it had devastating consequences.

Caring is a telephone call when we are away from home or running late, helping with home work, showing interest and getting involved in what interests them. All of these things say, "I care".

There are a lot of ways to show we care. It just takes time and giving ourselves. A man of Steel and Velvet uses his power to shows he cares.

T.S. A real man is...

*2. A man who is considerate.

He is considerate of the needs of others above his own.

*Philippians 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. *5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, NIV!

Do you ever have difficulty considering others needs above your own? The truth is we all do. It is only by the power of Christ living in us that we can overcome our self-centeredness.

Being head of the home does not mean that you get your way all the time. In fact, the opposite is true. Our families and others come first. Being head of the home means being the servant of all.

*Jesus said Mark 9:35 "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."

Did you catch that? The greatest leader in the home is the one that serves the most.

Now if we are to be like Christ meeting the needs of others, then you and I must be willing to take time and make an intentional effort to discover those needs. Many men are willing to help someone if they ask for it, but most are very reluctant to ask the members of their family or others if they have needs.

ILL I was doing a Bible study with a group of men on this subject and made this suggestion. Go home and give your wife and kids a sheet of paper and ask them to write down anything that you can do to be a better husband and father.

One of the guys named Charlie spoke up and said, "I can't do that!" "My wife would give me a list so long I would never finish it." So I have started suggesting that men just ask for three things and give them a small piece of paper.

The reason many women walk out on their marriage is because they are not getting their needs met. The reason many children become demanding and rebellious is because they are not getting their needs met.

When a wife gets her needs met, she is much more likely to stay in the marriage. When children get their needs met, they are much less aggressive and rebellious.

And when we are considerate of our family's needs, they respond more positively to our leadership.

There's nothing in the world that solidifies, anchors, stabilizes, strengthens, and builds up a home, like a husband and father that cares enough to meet the needs of his family.

T.S. A real man is...

*3. A man that communicates.

There are a lot of men who can communicate with other men, but they find it difficult to communicate with their wife and children.

*In James 1:19 we are instructed to "be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry" NIV

Sometimes we get too busy or too distracted to really communicate. Communication doesn't mean just talking. Communication requires uninterrupted, concentrated listening.

You are not going to be able to understand everything and you certainly won't be able to fix everything. Sometimes our family and others just need to express their feelings and know that their leader cares enough to listen. We need a listening heart.

Two of the factors that are critical in communication are our tone of voice and choice of words. The way we communicate can invite conversation or shut it down.

Do you use questions to taunt or to open up communication. Questions like, "Were you born in barn" or "Are you stupid?" only hurts the other person and shuts down communication.

A question like, "Can you help me understand what happened?" invites communication.

Statements that use always or never are usually intended to hurt the other person. For example, "You are always late." "You never stop to think." No one is wrong all the time. Even a broken clock is right twice a day. ☺

Your tone of voice can change the meaning of your words. For example, "That's just wonderful." :) or said sarcastically That's _ just_ wonderful.): The meaning is changed by the tone of voice.

The man of Steel and Velvet communicates on a deep level with all of the members of his family and with others around him.

T.S. A real man ...

*4. Conducts himself like a gentleman

We have lost sight in this country of what it means to be a gentleman and there are far too many men that have ceased to be gentleman. As a result, men show very little consideration for women.

We need to come back to a Biblical understanding of how to treat a woman.

*It say in 1 Peter 3:7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. NIV

When men are mean or discourteous to their wives, God will not answer our prayers or bless their lives.

A gentleman will not hesitate to show deference to a woman by offering to carry a heavy package, or open a door, or take it upon himself to do those tasks that are easier for him to do than for her. He is careful about what he will expect of his wife.

A man of steel and velvet is a gentleman.

T.S. A real man...

*5. Corrects in love

He doesn't scold the members of his family or others around him.

*Colossians 3:21 Fathers, don't scold your children so much that they become discouraged and quit trying. TLB

Whatever correction we do needs to be done without unnecessary harshness. Now let me make this clear. If you love someone, you will always try to point them in the right direction. If someone is doing something that is destructive to themselves or others, you won't just stand by and watch.

But when we step up to give direction, we need to be careful that we don't vent our anger or frustration because that's counterproductive.

Firmness does not have to be coated with harshness. A man of steel and of velvet corrects in love with gentle words that communicate forgiveness.

T.S. A real man is...

*6. A man of compassion.

If you think being a man is being as hard as a rock and never shedding a tear, then you have the wrong idea about what a man is. If you are too hard to cry then you are too hard.

*The Scripture says, "Be kind and compassionate... (Ephesians 4:32 NIV)

God's kind of man is the man who can be as hard as a rock and yet soft enough to cry. That is, he is a humble man. He can be touched by the hurts of others and he is willing to let his compassion show.

* Romans 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. NIV

*ILL. It was during the first Gulf War that we became familiar with General Norman Schwarzkopf. We saw his strength and confidence as he led our armed forces into battle against a ruthless dictator.

We also witnessed his tears of compassion as he unashamedly cried over the pain and suffering of others as he gave reports of dead and wounded from that war. He was not too hard to show his compassion. This made him an even greater leader.

A man of Steel and Velvet is a compassionate man.

The Challenge:

*A real man is as strong as steel and as gentle as velvet. When you put those two together, you have a Christ-like man who is capable of being everything his family, his church, and community needs him to be.

Do you feel totally overwhelmed and inadequate? If you don't, then I have failed to communicate the truth of God's Word. To be this kind of man is not possible in our own power and strength.

The Man of Steel and Velvet is a supernatural man and he lives by the power and presence of the Spirit of Christ in his life. Ask Him to be your Savior and God. Surrender your whole life to Him and He will make you a Man of Steel and Velvet.