

“Men’s Day”
By Brother Parrish Lee
Sunday, June 29th, 2014

One of these days—you know all that clapping that y’all do? The Bible says, “Clap your hands, all ye people,” (Psalms 47:1) you know that? And, you know, when He told us to look to the beasts of the field, look to nature... You ever go out there and hear the trees—just take a listen to them. You hear them, and they’re doing this (clapping his hands). Actually, they’re doing *this* (clapping his hands above his head). High praise. You know, that’s what’s really going to fill heaven. If you don’t like—if you happen to be a person that don’t like praising God, really, His presence in and out and all around you, and every place you go, there’s God, God, God. If you really don’t like that, don’t go to Heaven. Don’t go to heaven. We will see that He alone is worthy to be praised. The Bible says that every eye shall see Him (Revelation 1:7), and that the veil shall be removed. I *love* talking about Heaven. I *love* talking about it. It’s amazing! That ain’t the message, but it could be.

Giving honor to God, our Savior, our Master, our Redeemer, the One who, without which, there would be nothing that is. The Lover of our souls. The precious God, the One who is benevolent, merciful, and graceful. Giving honor to Him. Giving honor to our founding pastor and his family, and our pastor and his family, for their work and their labor, and giving honor to all of those who have gone on before us. All those who have gone on before us, knowing that as God calls to labor, that he has an effective purpose for it. For us, that purpose has been seeing people saved and encouraged. Last of all, but not the least of all, giving honor to all of you, bringing your heart and your souls, and saying, “You know what, Lord, you found me where I am, and I have needs. Whatever day, whatever hour, I do. Make me, God, so that I won’t be a doubter, so that I will be a believer. Lead, me, guide me, show me the way. When I fall, and I will fall, don’t answer me there, just lift me up, God, dust me off, and bring me closer to You, God.”

Well, we know that this month has been the month of sound doctrine. Our Scripture theme for the month has been:

Titus 2:1 *But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:*

Yes, this is the end of the month, and there are a lot of things going on, but it all comes down to us worshipping and receiving from Him who is the giver of all good and perfect gifts. Our Scripture thought for the day:

Genesis 2:15-18 *And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him*

If we could bow our heads for just a minute. Lord, at this time, we come before You with praises on our lips and thankfulness in our hearts saying that we just present ourselves to You, thanking You for all that You have done for us, even up until this very moment. God, as it is time for the message of this particular service, we pray, as You have said in Your Word, as You have guaranteed, that Your Word would not return unto You void, but that it would accomplish, that which You sent it to do, and make it so, in our hearts and lives that we might grow and be enriched and emboldened, God, that we might be better Christians for You, that we might be better servants for You, that our sons and daughters

might be able to hear and follow all the things that you have given to us. We pray, and claim in Jesus' name, and everyone said amen. Amen.

So, we know that today—we've said that today is several things. For one, it's the last day of the month. Our theme for the month, of course, as we've said before, being Sound Doctrine for the month. We began the month of this—first of all, we began, the first service, of course, was on prayer. That being one of the things we need to have incorporated in our lives for sound doctrine. The second service—Bob Heitzler preached the message—was on Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God. Another important, essential point that we need to have in the sound doctrine of our life, and that's seek ye first the kingdom of God. The next Sunday was Father's Day, and the message that day was, No Greater love, presented by Brother Chris Ulrich, and the fact of the matter is that there is no greater love than that which God gives. The message last week was, of course, on The Joy of the Lord Is Our Strength. The prayer is—this is really the prayer, saints—that we would be able to have things that would be able to minister to us. Who wants to go to a place—especially a place of worship—if it's not going to do nothing for you? I've been to places where there was a message, and I couldn't remember a thing before I got out the door, if I could stay awake the whole time. If I could. I've been to those type of services that really didn't do a whole lot for me. So, you can easily understand why, the flow that we've had for the year. Starting off, in the first month of the year, as our Pastor has said to us, It Starts With love. Then, that was the first theme that we had in our hearts and our lives. For if we could start setting that right, then truly good things could start to follow. Then, after it starts with love, then, in month number two, February, we are an heir of the promise. We are heirs of His promise. We know that if it starts with love, and we are heirs of His promise, then the next place we wanted to go was the House of God. That whole thing, how that works out in our lives—So, it starts with love, followed by heirs of His promise, followed by the house of God, followed by The Way, the Truth, and the Life. The flow should be able to be seen here. Because we've got things going on in the house of God, knowing that we are part of that, being an heir of God, because we started this whole thing—well, actually, God started this whole thing with love. Knowing that he is the way, the truth, and the life, we follow that simply with us being New Creatures. Us, learning the way, the truth, and the life, then we become new creatures, followed by what we have today, our theme for this month, which is, of course, Sound Doctrine. And, if anybody wants to know, the theme for next month actually is A Month of Encouragement. A month of encouragement. Sound doctrine and then a month of encouragement. How important it is, for us in our Christian lives. So, hopefully, the essence of the message, the way the Spirit moves to bless us all, as a church family, that God could be glorified, and we all could be benefitted thereby to be better enriched in our lives, as we strive to live closer and closer to the Lord Jesus Christ.

As our sister read from the Book of Genesis, chapter two, starting off in verse fifteen, we see where the Bible says that the Lord took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it... We see that, first of all, after that God breathed in him and he became a living soul, separating him from everything else, God gave the man purpose. He gave us purpose. It didn't stop with Adam; God is still giving us purposes, today. After he gave the man purpose—put him in the garden—it goes on in verses sixteen and seventeen and says He commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. So we see that, right after God gave him purpose, God gave him direction. He told him, not just what He wanted him to do, but then He told him how he wanted him to do it. So, God gave purpose, and God gave direction. You know, how many have ever done something—had a task, had a job, had something enormous—maybe you were doing something around the house, tearing something out, or maybe you were cleaning something up in it was a bigger task than you thought and you really wished, "You know what? I could use some help! I could really use some help!" Maybe you're working on the car and you get to the pace where you're saying to yourself, "It's okay, up to a certain point, but after that, I need some help.. Either lifting or

turning or twisting... I just can't get to it, plus, I want to know if I'm doing this thing right." I've been there. I've been there. I'm sure I'm alone, right? So, the point is, after He gave him purpose, and then he gave him direction, God gave him help. So, God gave them man—this is Adam we're talking about—He gave him purpose, He gave him direction, and then He gave him help. I can only imagine that when Adam saw his help, he said, "Yeah, that's what I'm talking about."

I was talking to a friend of mine, and he said, "You know, I don't think I know what it is, but I think I've finally got it." He said, "You know..." He's a married man; I'm not going to tell who it is, because he might get into a little trouble, but he said, "I think I've figured this one out. You know..." he said, "You know, I work all week, and when I get home, maybe want to prop my feet up, maybe watch some TV, just want to take it easy, on a Saturday or something, I just want to lay around all day, and my wife, she gets so angry." He said, "I think I've finally figured it out." I thought, "Well, this ought to be interesting I wonder what he's going to say." He said, "You know, it goes all the way back to Genesis." He said, "You know, when God made big Adam, and he was doing all this stuff, and he made Eve a help meet for him," he said, "I'm sure that the Lord told Eve, 'You know what? You're beautiful, and gorgeous, and awesome, and wonderful and I'm going to take you to meet somebody, and this guy's got it going on. He's a hard worker. You know what he did? he named all the animals; he takes care of the whole Garden of Eden.' And I'm sure he said, 'Oh, Eve.'" And Eve said, 'Really?' and He said, 'And he's a dependable guy. He always shows up.' Eve said, 'Really? That's sounds like somebody I'd quite love to meet.' God said, 'You know what? he's got everything in order. He's not slothful, he takes care of business.' Eve said, 'All right. Lord, I'm ready.' So, as they went around the turn to get over there to see him, the first thing that Eve would have seen about this man that she was looking for was shortly after the rib incident, and Adam was still asleep. Yeah. And Eve must have said, 'I thought you said he was a hard worker. We've got stuff to do, and he's—GET UP!!!'" I don't know, because it's my understanding, I think a lot of women also work, and they probably get tired and they want to take it easy, too, but, that was what the brother said to me, and I'm not going to tell you names, because I don't want to get in trouble, and I don't want you to get in trouble. That was just a little ice-breaker there; I thought I'd throw that in.

Anyway, so we see that first God has given man purpose, and then he gave him the how-to-do, the direction, and then He gave him help. And, you know, as we talk about today being Men's Day, The world has given us a very corrupt image of what men are, what men are supposed to be. If you look at some of the movies that are out, you would think that man have to be an overgrown, muscle-bound, buffoon always aggressively going after everything, always quick to start or get into a fight. I can climb a building, or I can carry a howitzer all by myself. I can go to war, and I can kill all those people, because I am the man. That's just movies. If you look at the entertainment industry and music industry, you'd think that men are supposed to wear their pants around their knees, walk around half-naked, shout obscenities out of their mouths, treat women bad, and that's stupid. I'm just being honest. If you look at the modeling magazines—Men's Health, Men's Life, Men's This, Men's That—you'll see that men are supposed to be all suave and just walk around with your shirt open, and that makes you a man. Wearing this special cologne that's supposed to make women forget their mind, and get over next to you because, "That's the man." If you look at our politics nowadays, you would think that men are supposed to grandstand, and get up there and say a whole bunch of nice-sounding things; promise you that they're going to do things for you, and secretly get behind closed doors and make sure that they get a bigger piece of the pie than everybody else and stick you with the tab. I'm just being honest. But that ain't what God had called men to be. There's several things that God said that men are supposed to be.

Luke 18:1 *And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint*

Men are supposed to pray. Why don't we put that on a billboard? Why don't we put that on TV, late night TV, instead of making some crazy joke, making mockery of people and all that goofy stuff?

1 Timothy 2:8 *I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.*

Men ought to pray everywhere. That don't mean you walk around looking religious; that means you walk around carrying that in you heart. You have it in your mind that if there's a need going on, that you can say it in your life, because you've got that connection. "Lord, I come to Thee." "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." Men ought always to pray. You know, we had a powerful, beautiful, wonderful prayer meeting, not this last Friday, but the Friday before last. Some of our brothers were in that meeting, and they talked about it last week, but I'll tell you, any brother that was there will tell you, we let things out, we approached the throne of God. Amen? Oh, come on, if you're a man and you were there, then you *know* God moved! Amen? Call it out, call it out. Prayer is so hard to find in the world.

We went to one of Jesse's family's relatives—Kirk, and myself, and Sister Zelda, you were there. She called, and she said, "I had cancer really bad. I don't know what's going to happen, but I need some intervention because the doctors told me that it don't look good." Did we show up in suits and ties? not necessarily; I don't remember what we were wearing. Did we show up with a jokes on our lips? absolutely not. Did she want some money? NO!! She just wanted God to move. We showed up—we had never met the lady before—but the need was there and we showed up with our open hearts. Everybody knew why we were there. We didn't come there to just entertain. We came over here to pray and to seek the face of Almighty God; that's why we're here. We're not leaving until we get through. She texted me this morning, she said, "I'm back in the Waukegan area, and I'm facing more challenges. I need you guys to come and pray again." She could have called anybody; could've called anybody, but she called people that she had felt and had seen that their prayers had been answered. Men ought always to pray. What would it be like, saints, Sunday morning, Saturday night, Friday night, Monday, Wednesday if Christian men would just say, "It's time to pray." Yeah, there's times we go into our closets, and there's times when we get together, raise up holy hands and approach the throne. Prayer.

When I was in Egypt, I saw some—God saved me from being Muslim—when I was in the military, I had the opportunity to visit Egypt, and when I went there, it was Friday. That doesn't mean a whole lot to Christian people, but, Friday at 1:00 o'clock, that's their holy prayer time, for Muslim people. I was like, "No big deal," because I had seen the way we do it when I was Muslim over here, I don't know what's going to happen over there. The guy went up into the tower—I forget what the tower is called—and he began to shout the call for prayer. As he began to shout the call for prayer, the shops closed down, the cars pulled over to the side of the street—every bit of activity that wasn't related to going into the temple and praying stopped, because it's time to pray. And that's the Muslims. What would it be like if Christians said, "No more of this. We're going to lock arm in arm, heart in heart, mind in mind—we don't care how long it takes to break through; we know the true God that answers prayer." I look for it all the time, brethren; I look for it all the time. I can't get enough. Anybody who's ever been in a prayer meeting where God was moving and blessing, it just makes you hungry for more. Knowing that we can come before God and we don't deserve to be there, but only His grace and His mercy allows us to come to His feet. The feet of the Holy God.

What else ought men to do?

John 4:20 *Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.*

Men ought to worship. Men ought to worship? You're doggone straight men ought to worship. Men ought to worship the holy and wise, one true God. You know, men ought to come before God and say, "I must decrease and you must increase." () To be able to stand and to say, "I've got a lot of things going on in my life. Things that need some answers, God, but before I take another step, I'm first going to come to You. Now, God, first, I'm not going to ask You for nothing, but I'm going to praise You for who You are. Listen, if You never give me anything else, Lord, You have been mighty, mighty, mighty good to me. I don't care what the devil says, I tell him, 'Get behind me! My God is good! And if God does not give me what I ask for, it is for my good that He does not.'" Yes, men ought to worship. What else ought men to do?

Hebrews 12:12 *Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;*

Men have to realize that life is like a roller coaster: sometimes you're headed up, and sometimes you're at the top, and sometimes you're coming down, and you're coming down with a quickness, and sometimes you're on the bottom. Men have to realize, in this roller-coaster of a life, when I'm at the top, I need to strengthen somebody who might not be up. Maybe somebody's down and it's my turn to go help them. You know why? because tomorrow, I'm going to be down. Something's going to happen to me, and I'm going to need somebody to reach down and say, "I'm going to lift up your feeble knees because you're my brother, and, tomorrow, I'm going to need you to help me." Yes, to lift up the feeble knees. You know, there's a reason why a lot of people don't ask for help a lot; you know, they kind of push things off. Yeah, there's that whole 'independent' thing, yeah, there's that. But, some people, when they help somebody else out, they always want a little pat on the back. But, when we expend the honesty that's in our life, the sincerity, then we realize that the Lord gives us so much, and if we have received so much, freely we have to give. To whom much is given, much is required. I've been there, where I've received help, and somebody lorded it over me. I need to put your name up there, too, just in small letters, but still up there, where I'm thankful to you, too, for all that you've done. I'm thanking God, but, thank you, too. God, look at how much you stand out. As if that was the epitome of everything. I see that, I see that, but that's not what God called us to do. God didn't call us to lord over people, in fact, in one place He talks about shake out the lap (Nehemiah 5:3) if that's what you're going to be; I'll shake it right out. You want to step in the middle of this? Anyway, we need to chase that kind of spirit completely out. Chase it out. Call it out, and cast it out. What else men ought to do?

Ephesians 5:28 *So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.*

I am not married, and, for this, I'm going to defer to our fellowship leader, Andy, as he would come and speak about what men ought to do.

ANDY: I've been married about fourteen years now, and it's not one thing that I take lightly. A question to ask: Where do we learn to be husbands; where do we learn how to treat our wives? We look out, Parrish brought it up already, we look at Hollywood, we look at different cultures, we look at different countries, different religions, and I've seen influences in many men in different places; men in the church and men out of the church. How they treat their families; how they think their wives should treat them, and how that relationship should go. And I looked at all that, and I'm thinking, "Wow, there's a lot to that. But, then I look at—I've got to dig into the Scriptures, and see, what does the Bible say about how we treat our wives?" Parrish took a Scripture, and I'm going to go back to Ephesians, but I'm going to go back to verse 22—and this is the part that men like: "Wives, submit yourselves unto

your own husbands, as unto the Lord. (23) For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.” We like to stop there, but it goes on a little: “(26) That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, (27) That he might present it to himself...” Let me back up a little: “(25) Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church...” I want to put a phrase out here: Love is a choice. Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep My commandments.” (John 14:15) It’s a choice. When it comes to just loving God, and serving Him and doing what’s right, that’s a choice. Sometimes my emotions get caught up and I say, “Why can’t I get this right? Why does this bug me? Why can’t I be joyous all the time?” and thinking there’s something wrong with me. No, love is a choice; it’s not all about emotion. It fits with our families, our children and our wives. Love is a choice. The first part, we talk about falling in love. That’s not the love that we’re talking about here. Falling in love is a very important part of that relationship, and it’s a wonderful part of it, but that’s not the love we’re talking about here. Fourteen years later, I have things that I do because of love. As a Christian, Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep My commandments.” I keep His commandments because I love Him. It’s not just a feeling. I’m going to read on: “(28) So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.” There’s a powerful thing, there. If you love your wife, you love yourself, because no man hates himself. If you don’t take care of your wife, there’s going to be problems. This is Bible; this isn’t me trying to put forth my own ideas. It says, “(29) For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: (30) For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. (31) For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. (32) This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. (33) Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.” Once again, I’ll go back to the cultures we live in: We look at cultures where they make their women wear a veil, that they’re not allowed to go out in public, and we look at different things and we say, “Oh, I’m the man; I’ve got to be in charge.” I find that the more I try to be in charge, the less in charge I can be sometimes. But, I find that when I love my wife, when I love my children, when I do things out of love, then that comes back. I find that I do not need to be forceful to make things happen; I find that the more I try that, the more that does not work. I’ve seen men that try to say, “Woman, you’re my wife; you’re going to do this.” I’ve seen it in many cultures. In some cultures, that works, because that’s their culture. You can’t just look at that culture, whatever it is, and say, that’s how my wife’s going to be. I can’t say, my mom and my dad lived this way, that’s the way it’s going to be for me. I just have to model after Christ. It says, “...as Christ loved the church.” We want to stop at the point where He died on the cross; well, I should be willing to die. It goes beyond that. What does Christ do for us today? He still here for us, today. We still have an avenue to God through prayer. He’s still providing for us on a daily basis. He still loves us on a daily basis. He still gives to us on a daily basis. It doesn’t stop there, and that’s how we should treat our wives. Love is a choice.

Amen. So, men ought to love their wives. What else ought men to do? Men ought to lead.

1 Peter 5:3 *Neither being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*

It's so easy to get in trouble at this point. Not as lords over people. So, if I'm not over people, how can I lead? He clarifies that: By being ensamples of the flock—or to the flock. Being ensamples to the flock; but what is an ‘ensample?’ It’s a sample of the end; we call that an example. Being an example to the flock; being able to lead by example. Leading by example. So, you mean, when anybody looks at my life, they should be able to see how to be a good Christian. I should be an example of that. I should be an example of a God-fearing man. I should be an example of a good brother. Yes, being examples to the flock—by being examples to the flock, and to everybody else. Men should lead by

example. Did you ever notice that if you get too many people and they want to get their way, you're going to have a mess. What is it they say? too many cooks spoil the broth? Too many chiefs and not enough Indians; you ever hear that? Yeah, it's crazy; it's crazy; the whole world will tell you that kind of stuff is crazy. If they would just open to the Book of First Peter, chapter 5, verse 3, they'd see, "Hey, it's right there!" What else ought men to do?

Ephesians 6:4 *And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

Again, the only thing I can speak about is what the Bible says. I don't have kids, you know, and I think I might have an answer or two in my flesh—no, I don't. But, in the Word, by nurturing and admonition, not of us, but of the Lord. Being able to show love... What else ought men to do?

John 20:22 *And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:*

Men ought to be able to receive the Holy Ghost, wherever they are. Men, learn to be not just a priest but learn to be a high priest. Don't just bring people to the door of the Temple—a lot of good things happen in the door of the Temple: we have some good fellowship, we have some good moments, we have some blending, we have some nice people, we ain't got a lot of craziness, normally, at the door of the Temple, but don't stop there. A lot of good things happen in the courts, but don't stop at the courts of praise; don't stop at the courts of wondrous, and anointing, and blessings. Don't stop at the Holy Place—and the Holy Place is awesome; the Holy Place is the preparation and you are approaching God! But don't stop there; don't stop at the Holy Place. Actually enter in, like the High Priest, to the most holy place, where there is communion and audience with God; where you give and receive what God can give and God can receive. The most holy place. And, lastly, the last Sunday of last month, we had a beautiful example of how the women in the Women's Court, they surrounded the place and they would fill it with praise. They had their rejoicing, and, yes, believe it or not, they had their dancing, and they had a whole leader thing where they prepared this whole area—anybody coming into the Temple had to go through there to get to the next part of the gate where they would approach the whole Holy area. It was a wonderful example; I pray that we all got a blessing from that, but that wasn't the only blessing that happened in the Temple. If you read in the Old Testament, they would go before the warriors, when they were about to go into battle, and they would go down there and they would start singing, and they would start breaking the heart of the enemy. "Oh, good gracious! Miriam's on it again!" It's hard to fight against that kind of praise, because the people that hear it, they're more emboldened to do it, and the enemies that hear it, they're like, "Man! We've got to go against *that!*". So, the ladies would do a praise. As they would fill the arena of the court with the praise of their lips, and dancing before God... The exuberance of the rejoicing there—it was a blessed time, but it did not stop there. The men had a certain job to do. There were the Levites, and the Levites were the teachers of the people, and they were to give the thanks unto God. When people would turn around and see the Levites praising, and the women singing, they would be drawn. "This is the place where we ought to have some praises." (at this point, some of the women in the church began singing praises unto God, and some of the men, representing the Levites and priests, began shouting praises.) Can we give the Lord a praise? Thank you, my sisters. Thank you, my Levites. Thank you, my priests. And this would go on until the breaking of the day. When God would answer, nothing else was important. When he would drop His Spirit down, and the nations all around... Can you imagine a million people showing up, and God putting on a sign for all of them? Amen. Amen. Happy Men's Day. Give the Lord a praise.