

Community Comment / Men

Some would say ~~that~~ the modern women's movement has come into full blossom now that women can compete with men and Even muscle their way into the Army Rangers. Many are predicting that women will soon fight on the front lines with the Marines and perhaps even the Navy SEALs. I will leave it to you to decide whether or not that is real progress... But men, ah men—we've been accused of ruling the roost for too long and doing it badly. Perhaps we have. It sometimes horrifies me to read about the terrible things that men can do to women and children.

But here is ^a ~~the~~ problem with men today as I see it: A lot of men are stumbling their way through life with little or no moral purpose. Some are successful and others are homeless: most are somewhere in between. Whether we are wearing a Brooks Brothers suit or shuffling along Broadway in rags with a shopping cart, I fear that a large percentage of ^{us} men have lost our soul. Many men have fallen into chemical addictions and away from responsible jobs and committed relationships. When I ask Betty Chinn who most of her homeless are, she often says, "White men." Drive by the civic buildings and take a close look: you'll see a lot of well dressed women going to work and a large number of disheveled men going nowhere. I recently spoke to a grandfather in our parish whose granddaughter found herself in the position of having two jobs, at which point her husband said, "She's got two jobs, so why should I work?" Maybe it's time to re-check the so-called privilege of being a male, when a large percentage of males are no longer courageous enough to get married and raise families, no longer the bread winners, no longer feeling like they have much usefulness—and so they don't. It alarms me how many men today are lacking in strong moral convictions, perhaps because they are drowning in a cesspool of prolonged adolescence: many of them still leering at the girls and obsessed with their narrow miss at a sports career, or blaming the ²⁰08 Great Recession for losing their construction job, etc. Meanwhile in our troubled world, millions of refugees are fleeing, families are homeless, children are starving and ISIS is waging a brutal war on innocents, while ~~the~~ ^{American} many men are swirling their beer and watching TV.

Don't get me wrong: I am glad to share leadership with women in the church, government and business; I like competent, strong women. But, I am fearful that the continued climb of women has allowed many men to abdicate their social, moral, and spiritual responsibilities. The purpose of the women's movement was once to make women equal with men. Today, on many levels, women would have to move down in order to be equal. What's gone wrong with men? At the risk of sounding simplistic let me pose an answer: men have lost their spiritual compass.

Come on men, it's time to let go of the macho false self, and find our true self. When that happens, all will benefit: men and women, boys and girls.

This has been Dan Price for Community Comment