

## Is There a Man in the House?

By Dave Clark

Today in America we face a critical and desperate situation. Sixty percent of all the children born in our community will spend at least part of their first 18 years of life without a father in their lives. A few more statistics might shake your world a little:

- \*The United States leads the Western civilized world in fatherlessness
- \*Nearly 40% of children in father-absent homes have not seen their dad during the past year
- \*More than half of all fatherless children have never been in their dad's home

There are many more statistics that I share but I felt these were enough to make a point. Too many men who remain with their families are passive, disengaged, uninvolved. As a result, many young men do not know what it means to be a man. They experience neither a father's discipline nor his tender care and nurture. They have no role model of what a real man does, how he acts and how he relates to the opposite sex.

To be honest with you, those of us in the Christian community are partly to blame. As I travel across the United States, I find that pastors don't talk about Fatherhood in the pulpit (except on Father's Day), and most think forming some men's group is their answer to "calling men" forward into their roles as a father. Nice effort but not enough. I guess they haven't figured out that when men are instructed and challenged and changed into the formation of the Heavenly Father then so much of our issues in the family are resolved. This starts with the senior pastor teaching and leading by example. How can we talk about Family and Marriage when the men have not figured out their roles as a husband and father? Oh, well, another issue. My point is that we have the truth, but we've been far too quiet. We haven't equipped men or women to understand how God designed the sexes to function and complete one another. We've not countered the feminists who have completely redefined the role of women but emasculated men in the process. Television programs actually make fun of men.

Without being simplistic, let me recommend three things you can do. First, (whether you like it or not or want to accept it) is to pray. As a father, pray for yourself- yes, that is acceptable and not selfish. Pray that you will be a real man in the biblical sense-a man who humbly and sacrificially leads and loves your family.

Second, shape your own definition and conviction of what a real man is. And third, provide your sons and daughters with a clear understanding of sexual identity. This is

more than sex education. We need to train our children about their responsibilities of men and women and how they are to relate to one another.

Talk to your sons and daughters about what being a man means. Help your sons become men who honor commitments, persevere, and serve their families. Help your daughters understand what a real man is and what they should expect from them and what a real man is and what he does. There is a small suggestion. I find many of us had a poor example of fatherhood. We may not have a healthy perspective of what a good model is to look like and act. In that case let me recommend a great book and one we use across the world in training fathers: "The Seven Secrets of Successful Fathers" by Ken Canfield. I know like many of you, I don't want to go to all the trouble of finding it and buying it. Email me at [dave@thefatherscry.org](mailto:dave@thefatherscry.org) and maybe I can help you. In all things, listen, listen and love, love.