



The Unwanted Virtuous Man

Written October 5, 1999

Question: Dear Sir: A few weeks ago you wrote about the “Golden Era of Virtuous Bahamian Men.” It was good to know that there are some Bahamian men who are noble and wise. However, I am observing that perhaps the majority of Bahamians really do not want virtuous men. If this is true, why is it so?

Answer: Dear Questioner: Your observation seems to be correct. Although more Bahamian men are freeing themselves from the clutches of traditionalism, yet too many are refusing to change. Similarly, society seems to glorify the adulterous, drug pusher, womanizer, aggressive male.

Who is a virtuous man? For the purpose of this article, I describe the virtuous man as:

- (1) A man who keeps his zipper up when ordinary men would pull theirs down.
- (2) A man who keeps his brain clean of mind-altering drugs.
- (3) A man who can wait until he says “I do” while others say “what’s the heck, let’s show it all now – now is the hour.”
- (4) A man who does not cheat on his wife.
- (5) A man who is not afraid to cry.
- (6) A man who can say I am sorry to the child he hurts.
- (7) A man who does not allow tradition, society, or friends to determine his way of life, or the way he treats women, children, or his male friends.
- (8) A man who is not afraid of being called a whimper or sissy, even when his friends may laugh at him.
- (9) A man who values himself more than how others may commonly think of him.
- (10) A man who is open and honest at all times, a man of personal integrity.
- (11) A man who values and respects womanhood.

Do we really want such virtuous Bahamian men? Philosophically, we do. On the other hand, our traditions and language say no. How do I know that we do not want the virtuous Bahamian man? Here are a few reasons:

- (1) Men who “go against the grain” and “do not fit in” to what is considered to be “normal behavior” by their peers are usually not promoted on the job. It does not matter if they are the most productive employees, or if they are always on time and respectful to their superiors. If they do not play the “political games” or join in the social roudaux, they are out of the “good old boys club” and their life are forever limited. (So they think)
- (2) Men who have lots of children for multiple partners are considered “real men.” In fact, we often find ways of excusing the inordinate sexual behavior of our Bahamian men. A woman who goes around and flirts with men will most likely be called a “bitch” or “whore.” But a man who can sweet-talk a woman, have sex with whomever he chooses

is “a cool brother.”

- (3) If a single male executive gets a woman pregnant, we celebrate. We buy cigars and chocolates for the “good old boys club.” When a single female executive gets pregnant, we fire her or cry “shame, shame.” Virtuous men get nobody pregnant so they cannot join in the celebration. Most times they would empathize with the hurting females.
- (4) Traditional fathers are free to spend all the time they want after work with the “good old boys club.” They drink beers and smoke cigars together. They play late-night dominoes. These so-called “faithful” fathers and husbands are free to flirt with other women. They feel that their wives have no right to ask where they’ve been or what they were doing when they come home after midnight each night. The “true dad” who goes straight home from work, plays with his children, talks with his wife, is considered to be a “misfit.” In fact most men feel uncomfortable around him.

Certainly, these are only few of the many ways I can think of that indicate that the Bahamian society might not be ready for the “golden era of virtuous Bahamian men.” But we must get ready for this new bread of noble men because the future of our nation depends on them. Too long have we rewarded the morally starved, the mediocre, the power-crazed man, the pervert, and the unfaithful.

There are at least two outstanding ways of recognizing the virtuous Bahamian man from the traditional Bahamian man. The virtuous man is firstly spiritually astute. He is in a genuine search for his Creator, Jesus, the One man who was sexually pure all His life, eternally prayerfully connected to His Father, and deeply engrossed in the written word --- the Bible. The traditional Bahamian man laughs at his fellow males who go up to the altar to surrender all to Jesus, and would not be found reading the Bible even if the lights are out. Check out our many churches today. Who are mostly filling the pews?

Secondly, the virtuous Bahamian man is developing himself educationally. He believes that reading builds a person, and education is the door to truth and life. He happily seeks ways to expand his knowledge through either formal post-high school education or on the job professional development. On the other hand, the traditional Bahamian man says that education is for “weak men” or “sissies.”

Our nation is hurting for the need of men who can make a difference, men who are not afraid of being laughed at. On the other hand, the loud voice of traditionalism seems to be masking the pain of indifference. Since change is so painful, the chances that the numbers of virtuous Bahamian men will increase can only depend on the strength and the stick-to-it-tive-ness of the few who are noble and pure.

Again I ask, do we really want the virtuous Bahamian man? Would we allow him to be himself? Would we allow him to live freely outside the “box” of rigid traditionalism? Are we willing to change our concept of what it is to be a man? What type of man will take us successfully into the new millennium? Is it the traditional Bahamian man or is it the virtuous Bahamian male? Think on these things. To add a little more heat to the discussion, men take the Bible and read Proverbs 31:10-31 and while reading change the gender of the passage from feminine to masculine. See how it makes you feel. Next week my article is entitled “The Unwanted Virtuous Woman,” Reading it might change your life.

Send your questions, comments, and request for counseling to P.O. Box N-896, or call at 393 2818 or email to bbrennen@batelnet.bs