

Wesley Chapel Men's Bible Class First Annual Banquet May 12, 1961
Manhood in the Twentieth Century

I am always lost as to what I should say when I speak in an esteemed audience such as this. Since we are all members of bible classes it would probably be inappropriate if I did not deal with some theme of a biblical nature. In keeping with pulpit pyrotechnics I have a subject: Manhood in the Twentieth Century. But I have found it impossible to choose a proper scriptural text. I thought of, Genesis 1:27, "So God created man in his own image. . ." But this reflects little credit upon God. I thought of I Cor. 13:11, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." But this has not generally been true of most men. I thought of Psalm 103:15, "As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth." How well has man flourished?

"Man is a wonderful fellow-- learning from the other animals the way he does. He studies the hawk and the vulture, and flies through the air carrying atomic bombs. He learns from the crab with its shell and grasping claws, and from the skunk with its tear gas. He considers the ways of the squirrel, and becomes a hoarder; the ways of the pig, and becomes a glutton; the ways of the snake in the grass and goes in for espionage and underground subversion. He observes the caterpillar and hippopotamus, the shark and the crocodile, the mole and the hedgehog, and makes himself terrible on land and sea, and underneath both. About the only creature left in nature from which man ~~learns nothing~~ learns nothing, is the dove, the symbol of peace and love."

I should watch myself less I wax morbid. You ^{know} there, would be no problem if I were talking to a women's bible class. They know everything; of course they understand nothing. Suffice it to say that I approach this subject without a scriptural text and maybe one of you good brothers will think of one when I have finished. In fact, maybe that is the reason I have not chosen one: the fear that you bible scholars might choose a

better one or understand mine better than I. Of course, you probably understand better than I whatever I talk about.

But this is not the occasion to ~~disparage~~ belittle men. I am suppose to be amusing and I ~~suppose~~ presume I should praise ~~my~~ manhood. I have none of the ~~talents~~ talents of the entertainer and I find little about man in general that ~~deserves~~ deserves praise, and many men whom I have known personally have given me many reasons for damning them. But please do not think me a pessimist. In every man there are two hemispheres of light and dark, two worlds discrete, two countries of his soul's adventure. We must ^{surge} surge for the light hemisphere. Man is capable of greatness. The Twentieth Century demands it.

Most of us are inclined to ~~measure~~ measure our achievements by what other people haven't done. There is too much to be done to rest upon our laurels. If you would not be forgotten as soon as you are dead, either write things worth reading, or do things worth writing about. Every man is of importance to himself. But will he or we mean anything in the infinite scheme of things?

Man and his littleness perish, erased like an error and cancelled;
 Man and his greatness survive, lost in the greatness of God.

The Twentieth Century requires a re-interpretation of the ~~dis~~ destiny and role of man. The world is being remade by man and it will be impossible for him to live by theories and beliefs outmoded by time, disproved by ~~experience~~ experience.

Give examples:

There must be sensitivity to the plight of others.

There must be a sense of responsibility for personal duties. Keep obligations.

There must be a boldness to face the future.

All that is necessary for the ~~triumph~~ triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.