

Adult Sunday School January 18, 2020

**Masculinity** - Liz Pfister (Social Development/Psych)

- What it means to be male?
- What it means to be made in the image of God?
- Interconnectedness between masculinity and social justice

**Observations**

- More young people than usual
- People sitting with their demographic
- People don't know how to answer, seem uncomfortable voicing their opinion - why? Are we afraid to say the wrong thing? Be wrong? Insult?

**How do we define men?**

- The expectation to protect
- Boys can be more physical and aggressive than girls
- Stigmas about showing emotions

*The worst thing a man can be is like a woman. What are we telling men about women?*

**The Mask you live in**

- Most destructive words "Be a man"
- Make boys prove masculinity
- Culture doesn't value what we have feminized
- Respect is linked to violence

**The Man Box - Tony Porter**

- Understanding gender roles
- Man Box - to break out of the man box we must first break the man box
- Identities limitations of what men are supposed to be
- What is the collective socialism of men?
- Men are in charge, women are not
- Men are strong, women are weak
- Rethink the notions of manhood
- No an all or nothing concept
- Cycles of Consequences - boys taught to not be vulnerable, not asking for help

We can be part of reforming manhood - change the conversation of what it means to be a man.

- Doesn't know how else to express feelings (only anger)
- Shame prevents the shift - worry that I will not be accepted
- Shame is interconnected to unhealthy masculinity

## **Now what? Questions**

Is the man box innate or just a construct?

Is the root of the culture evolutionary?

Need to address the effects of testosterone and encourage them to use their higher level of thinking?

Should we see some of the qualities in the man-box as positive but construct them differently?

We need to sit in uncomfortable spaces

How do we create a healthy view of masculinity?

We need to recognize masculinity as a spectrum

Can masculinity and femininity be thought of separate from gender so that we can have the traits available to all of us?

How would our world be different if everyone was referred to "they"?