

3 Keys to Raising Your Standards as a Man

“You have competition every day because you’ve set such high standards for yourself that you have to go out every day and live up to that.” –Michael Jordan

How do you raise your standards in a world that does everything it can to motivate you into lowering them? If you are anything like me, you have had victories and you have crashed and burned; however, I always want to do better for myself and for my family. That’s why we’re here.

The standards that society sets is always a fluid thing and depends on the mood and leadership at any given time. A man can’t look to society for his standards.

In basketball, Michael Jordan refused to settle for anything less than excellence. We should apply the same standards as men to our entire life. In that spirit, here are three keys to raise your standards as a man:

1. Law of nature. C.S. Lewis makes the argument in his book *Mere Christianity* that there is an unwritten and universally understood law of nature regarding our standard of behavior. That there, of course, are differences in the small things but that we can trace back to a basic moral code in all previous civilizations. His point is that this instinct is born within us and provided by a Higher Authority. Ignoring this provided instinct of what is right and what is wrong leads man to disastrous consequences.

“And out of that hopeless attempt has come nearly all that we call human history—money, poverty, ambition, war, prostitution, classes, empires, slavery—the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy.” –C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*.

Take a deep examination of where the lines of your own sense of this law of nature are drawn. We all need to reach much higher.

2. External influences. What standards are we setting in our personal and professional relationships? The world has a lot to say about all of these things. And if challenged, it will do whatever it takes to get us to fall in line. We absolutely must question what is influencing the standards we are setting.

For instance, in Nazi Germany, a citizen was told to adhere to the standards of that time and no debate was allowed. Obviously, that led to the total destruction of the nation and the loss of human life. The method of achieving that society was through propaganda. Again, we can't look there for our standards. We all need to reach much higher.

3. The standard-setter. "In revolutions authority remains with the greatest scoundrels." –Georges Jacques Danton.

I submit that society is always in a state of revolution. We, in America, have been in a constant state of revolution since our inception. Born from the desire to escape the traps of those scoundrels before, America was conceptualized as man's first chance to rule himself, guided by a rigid standard of rights not given to him by man, but by God. That's in the bill of rights.

The distinction of God-given rights is highly important and widely overlooked. It prevents any human from having the authority to ever remove them. Before the ink was dry, men (scoundrels) began plotting to take back that authority. It goes right back to the point C.S. Lewis was making. We instinctively know that a higher authority sets the standards of what we are to be and that is where we must look—nowhere else.

We all need to reach much higher.

Are you interested in justifications or do you believe in reconciliations? Which one ultimately redeems us? Huddle up with your kids and ask them to tell how you could lead better.

© 2014 All Pro Dad. All Rights Reserved. Family First, All Pro Dad, iMOM, and Family Minute with Mark Merrill are registered trademarks. Used with permission.