

Daily Meditations with Matthew Fox 11/23/21
Political Incarnations of the Toxic Masculine

Good morning.

I was struck this morning when I clicked my internet news. In it there was this article in fatal why Republicans can't stop talking about masculinity.

Now I've read about masculinity, but that doesn't make me a Republican. I guess. What I'm trying to demonstrate is that there is another approach to masculinity. But I think it underscores the importance of what we're meditating on: that masculinity is now being used as a political issue.

And of course, it shows on so many levels of society, philosophy or ideology: How do we understand the masculine. and is it true that there's both a toxic masculine and healthy masculine?

As I proposed, I think it was in yesterday's daily meditation, we really ought to meditate on men and women, too, whom we admire, and try to understand and even name, the masculine side to their characters.

Now, this interview with this fellow who wrote the book on Jesus and John Wayne --kind of funny title -- De Mez, where he is laying out the issue that you find in the evangelical and the right-wing Christianity in politics, and he cites a comment by one of these very vocal power, political types.

A comment in response to Karl Rittenhouse's trial, where he said, and I quote, "We need a strong man who can step up and defend America, defend Christian America." So is part of this Christian nationalism. That is, is very much in the forefront of a lot of our politics these days.

By it I mean, of course, our understanding of the masculine. And the same author of points out that there was a religion research survey that came out recently in which we found that 60% of white evangelicals believe the election was stolen in 2020. And of those 39% believe that violence might be necessary to save the country.

So that's what we're talking about here about a call to put a political call to go to action, wrapping it in a Christian language, if you will.

And that's what's at stake here. So I think that offering alternatives to our understanding of masculinity, beginning with the theme that I've been stressing for the last few days, the relationship between masculinity and virtue, and then we should have a debate on what are those virtues that are most admirable and useful in our time, and help young people, especially young men to realize that that's what it means to come of age, to take responsibility for our own values for the character that we want to give birth to.

And that this is a project for all of us as part of education, and learning in the broadest sense of the word.

Yes, our educational systems should participate in this learning. But of course, our communities, our families, our media, and our politicians, I mean, everyone who's supposed supposedly offering models for young people ought to have this in mind as we act and talk and interact with one another.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.