



## COURAGEOUS, THE MOVIE (A Review)

By Wayne D. Stocks

February 13, 2012

I have been meaning to see the movie *Courageous* for months now. I appreciate what the people at Sherwood Baptist Church have done with previous movies, and I was anxious to see a movie about the importance of fatherhood from a biblical perspective. I finally got a chance to sit down and watch it last weekend, and I was not disappointed.

More than just a movie, this film is a call to action for men in our society. Every father, every single man and every boy ought to watch this movie! But, this movie isn't just for dads and prospective dads. Anyone who works with kids should seek out this movie as it is a gripping portrayal of the impact of fatherlessness on the kids we deal with week in and week out. Whether you work with children of divorce, in children's ministry at your church, at a school or even just spend time with a friend's kids, this movie will encourage you to be courageous in helping kids and setting a being a good role model for them.



The focus of the movie is on dads and the role they need to play in the lives of their children, but there is an important subcontext throughout the movie and that has to do with filling the gap of fatherlessness for kids whose fathers are not present or involved in their lives. Whether it is children born to single mothers, children whose fathers have deserted them following a divorce or children whose fathers have passed away, we all have a responsibility to step up and be the hands and feet of Jesus to these fatherless kids. Rather than shying away from the responsibility of caring for these kids, the church in general, and men in particular, must stand up and take the responsibility.

### The Plot

This movie is really well done with twists and turns that you won't expect. Accordingly, I want to do this review without giving away too much of the movie and thereby spoiling it for those who have not yet had a chance to see it. So, rather than summarize the entire movie myself, and potentially give away some of the plot, here is a synopsis of the movie from the [Courageous website](#):

*"Four men, one calling: To serve and protect. As law enforcement officers, Adam Mitchell, Nathan Hayes, David Thomson, and Shane Fuller are confident and focused. Yet at the end of the day, they face a challenge that none of them are truly prepared to tackle: fatherhood.*

*While they consistently give their best on the job, good enough seems to be all they can muster as dads. But they're quickly discovering that their standard is missing the mark.*





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*When tragedy hits home, these men are left wrestling with their hopes, their fears, their faith, and their fathering. Can a newfound urgency help these dads draw closer to God ... and to their children?*

*Filled with action-packed police drama, COURAGEOUS is the fourth film from Sherwood Pictures, the moviemaking ministry of Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Georgia. Viewers will once again find themselves laughing, crying, and cheering as they are challenged and inspired by everyday heroes who long to be the kinds of dads that make a lifelong impact on their children.*

*Protecting the streets is second nature to these men. Raising their children in a God-honoring way? That's courageous."*

### **The Resolution**

Part of the renewed commitment made by the men in this film involves signing a formal resolution on acting like men as prescribed in the Bible, and agreeing to hold one another accountable for following through. Unwilling to be just "good enough" parents, they resolve to do it right based on the Word of God. I was moved by the resolution, and the need for it in our society. Based squarely in scripture, this resolution is one that all Dads should read through and make in their own lives. I have recreated it here for your reference:

*I do solemnly resolve before God to take full responsibility for myself, my wife, and my children.*

*I WILL love them, protect them, serve them, and teach them the Word of God as the spiritual leader of my home.*

*I WILL be faithful to my wife, to love and honor her, and be willing to lay down my life for her as Jesus Christ did for me.*

*I WILL bless my children and teach them to love God with all of their hearts, all of their minds, and all of their strength.*

*I WILL train them to honor authority and live responsibly.*

*I WILL confront evil, pursue justice, and love mercy.*

*I WILL pray for others and treat them with kindness, respect, and compassion.*

*I WILL work diligently to provide for the needs of my family.*

*I WILL forgive those who have wronged me and reconcile with those I have wronged.*

*I WILL learn from my mistakes, repent of my sins, and walk with integrity as a man answerable to God.*





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*I WILL seek to honor God, be faithful to His church, obey His Word, and do His will.*

*I WILL courageously work with the strength God provides to fulfill this resolution for the rest of my life and for His glory. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*

### The Speech

Equally inspiring as the resolution presented in the movie is a speech given by the main character at the very end of the movie. I don't believe it gives too much of the movie away, so I am also including the words to the speech here. If this doesn't get you out of your seat and resolved to be a better man, a better father and a better husband, nothing will. I encourage you to read carefully through the whole thing.

*I've seen firsthand the deep hurt and devastation that fatherlessness brings in a child's life. Prisons are full of men and women who loved recklessly after being abandoned by their fathers, wounded by the men who should have loved them the most. Many now follow the same pattern of irresponsibility that their fathers did. While so many mothers have sacrificed to help their children survive. They were never intended to carry the weight alone. We thank God for them.*

*Research is proving that a child also desperately needs a daddy. There's no way around this fact! I believe that God desires every father to courageously step up and do whatever it takes to be involved in the lives of his children. More than just being there or providing for them he's to walk with them through their lives and be a visual representation of the character of God, their Father in Heaven. A father should love his children and seek to win their hearts. He should protect them, discipline them, and teach them about God. He should model how to walk with integrity and treat others with respect and should call out his children to become responsible men and women who live their lives for what matters in eternity.*

*Some men will hear this and mock it or ignore it. But I tell you as a father, you are accountable to God for the position of influence he has given you. You cannot fall asleep at the wheel only to wake up one day and realize that your job or hobbies have no eternal value, but the souls of your children do! Some men will hear this and agree with it, but have no resolve to live it out. Instead, they will live for themselves and waste the opportunity to leave a godly legacy for the next generation. But there are some men who, regardless of the mistakes we've made in the past, regardless of what our fathers did not do for us, will give the strength of our arms and the rest of our days to loving God and to teach our children to do the same and whenever possible to love and mentor others who have no fathers in their lives, but who desperately need help and direction. And, we are inviting any man whose heart is willing and courageous to join us in this resolution.*





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*God's Word shows us that God desires for every father to courageous step up and do whatever it takes to be involved in the lives of his children. More than just being there for them or providing for them, he is to walk with them through their young lives and be a visual representation of the character of God, their Father in heaven. Who will accept the responsibility of providing and protecting my family? Who will ask God to break the chain of destructive patterns in my family? Who will pray for, and bless my children to boldly pursue whatever God calls them to do?*

*In my home, the decision has already been made. You don't have to ask who will guide my family because, by God's grace, I will. You don't have to ask who will teach my son to follow Christ because I will.*

*So where are you, men of courage? Where are you, fathers who fear the Lord?*

*It's time to rise up and answer the call God has given you and say,*

*I will! I will! I will!*

### **What does this have to do with children of divorce and Divorce Ministry 4 Kids?**

Statistically, the rates of fatherlessness are soaring in this country. We believe that those rates are grossly understated because they do not count fathers who are technically present by physical proximity but actually absent in terms of fathering their children. A large part of this problem relates to the high divorce rate in our country and children born to single mothers. A large number of fathers rarely or never see their children within one year following their divorce.

The need a child has for a father is well documented and fairly widely accepted. When a biological father is not available or willing to be a father, we believe that it is the role of the church, both corporately and individually, to stand in that gap. We serve a God who calls himself a Father to the Fatherless (Psalm 68:5). As His ambassadors here on earth, it is our role, our responsibility, to act on His behalf in that capacity. Yes, it is time for fathers to be courageous and stand up for their families and for their kids, but it is also time that we, the church, have the courage to stand up for these kids who have no father and point them towards their Heavenly Father.

*Sing to God, sing praises to his name; lift up a song to him who rides through the deserts; his name is the LORD; exult before him! Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation. God settles the solitary in a home; he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious dwell in a parched land. (Psalm 68:4-6 ESV)*

