

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 3-30-14 AM NOTES
"MALE AND FEMALE: CLEARING THE CONFUSION IN A GENDER-NEUTRAL CULTURE"
VARIOUS SCRIPTURES
#4 in Series, "Male and Female: Clearing the Confusion"

"I think it is important to state clearly that we do, in fact, reject the straight-forward commands of Scripture, and appeal instead to another authority when we declare that same-sex unions can be holy and good. And what exactly is that authority? We appeal explicitly to the weight of our own experience and the experience thousands of others have witnessed to, which tells us that to claim our own sexual orientation is in fact to accept the way in which God has created us." —Luke Timothy Johnson

"Our culture is in deep trouble, and at the heart of its trouble is its loss of a vision for manhood. If it is difficult for you and me as adult males, to maintain our masculine balance in this gender-neutral culture, imagine what it must be like for our sons, who are growing up in an increasingly feminized world." —Stu Weber

"We live in a feminist and effeminate culture. Because of this, at best, as a people we are uneasy with masculinity, and with increasing regularity, whenever [masculinity] manages to appear somehow, we call for someone to do something about it." —Douglas Wilson

"I find myself in the sometimes quite uncomfortable position of having to belabor the obvious, and hold up examples of femininity to women who almost feel apologetic for being feminine or being womanly. I would remind you that *femininity* is not a curse. It is not even a triviality. It is a gift, a divine gift, to be accepted with both hands, and to thank God for. Because remember, it was His idea." —Elizabeth Elliot

Galatians 3:28 (ESV) "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

I. Biblical Masculinity

"Manhood was once seen as an opportunity for achievement, but now it seems like a problem to overcome." —Garrison Keillor

"I am convinced that the primary cause of this national crisis is the feminization of the American male. When I say "feminized," I am not talking about sexual preference. I'm trying to describe a misunderstanding of manhood that has produced a nation of 'sissified' men who abdicate their role as leaders, thus forcing women to fill the vacuum." —Tony Evans

A. Basic Characteristics of Biblical Masculinity as a Man Relates to Women

"At the heart of mature masculinity is a sense of benevolent responsibility to lead, provide for and protect women in ways appropriate to a man's differing relationships." —John Piper and Wayne Grudem

B. What Is a Boy's Parents to Do?

1. Point Him to Biblical Examples

Joshua 24:15 (NKJV) "And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Isaiah 53:2 (NASB) "For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no *stately* form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him."

2. Teach Him to Submit to Authority

Matthew 28:18b (NKJV) “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”

3. Teach Him to Take Responsibility and Reject Passivity
4. Teach Him Manners, Especially Manners That Relate to His Treatment of Females
5. Teach Him to Protect Himself

Romans 12:19 (NKJV) “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,*’ says the Lord.”

6. Teach Him How to Do Manly Things

II. Biblical Femininity

“To me, a lady is not frilly, flouncy, flippant, frivolous and fluff-brained, but she is gentle. She is gracious. She is godly and she is giving...The more womanly we are, the more manly men will be, and the more God is glorified. As I say to you women, ‘Be women. Be only women. Be real women in obedience to God.’”
—Elizabeth Elliot

A. Basic Characteristics of Biblical Femininity as a Woman Relates to Men

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B. What Is a Girl’s Parents to Do?

1. Hold up Biblical Examples Before Her

“This passage denies that a woman’s place is *in* the home. It affirms that her *priority* is the home.”
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Proverbs 31:28 (NKJV) “Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband *also*, and he praises her.”

2. Teach Her Modesty
3. Teach Her That Inner Beauty Is the Best Kind of Beauty
4. Teach and Model for Her the Biblical Roles in Marriage
5. Teach Her What It Means to Be Feminine

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One of the goals of the National Organization of Women (NOW) is to work toward, “an end to all distinctions based on sex”. NOW has a membership that represents less than .1% of the population of the United States and yet their message calling for a gender neutral society and feminist values has deeply penetrated our culture because it is a cause taken up by much of the media. This “anything goes” mindset that now has become the view of a large percentage of Americans is even espoused by many in the church. Luke Timothy Johnson is a New Testament professor at Emory University, a theological school of the United Methodist Church. The mission of the school is to train church leaders “grounded in the Christian faith and shaped by Wesleyan tradition of evangelical piety, ecumenical openness, and social concern.” Luke Timothy Johnson evidently hasn’t read the mission statement lately. Explaining why he supports same sex marriage, Johnson said, “I think it is important to state clearly that we do, in fact, reject the straight-forward commands of Scripture, and appeal instead to another authority when we declare that same-sex unions can be holy and good. And what exactly is that authority? We appeal explicitly to the weight of our own experience and the experience thousands of others have witnessed to, which tells us that to claim our own sexual orientation is in fact to accept the way in which God has created us.” [Article in *The Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, Spring 2008, page 5].

Here is what is happening all around us. To be brutally blunt, we are raising a generation of girly men and manly girls. Popular Christian author Stu Weber speaking to men described the problem like this: “Our culture is in deep trouble, and at the heart of its trouble is its loss of a vision for manhood. If it is difficult for you and me as adult males, to maintain our masculine balance in this gender-neutral culture, imagine what it must be like for our sons, who are growing up in an increasingly feminized world.” Author Doug Wilson says essentially the same thing. “We live in a feminist and effeminate culture. Because of this, at best, as a people we are uneasy with masculinity, and with increasing regularity, whenever [masculinity] manages to appear somehow, we call for someone to do something about it.” [*Future Men*]. Femininity is being as vigorously attacked as is masculinity. Elizabeth Elliot said, “I find myself in the sometimes quite uncomfortable position of having to belabor the obvious, and hold up examples of femininity to women who almost feel apologetic for being feminine or being womanly. I would remind you that *femininity* is not a curse. It is not even a triviality. It is a gift, a divine gift, to be accepted with both hands, and to thank God for. Because remember, it was His idea.” [Quoted in *Think Biblically*, John MacArthur et. al. page 169].

One of the verses used by the architects of the gender neutral movement who want to try to find biblical justification for their very unbiblical views is **Galatians 3:28 (ESV)** “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” We will examine this verse in depth in our verse by verse study of Galatians that begins the week after Easter, but let me point out some obvious things as to why this verse is not a justifying of a gender neutral approach to life. First, it would contradict other Scripture and the Bible does not contradict itself. Second, this verse is not talking about roles or responsibility; this verse is talking about the value or worth of those who are in union with Christ. Many Jews that attached themselves to the church did not believe that the Greeks (Gentiles) could become a part of the church without becoming a Jew first. Paul’s point in Galatians 3:28 is that all who have baptized into Christ are a part of the one body of Christ and thus equal in worth and equally members of the body of Christ. Just as Jews and Gentiles could be saved, just as slaves and free people could be saved, both men and women are equally saved. This verse has absolutely nothing to do with roles in the home, church, or with masculinity and femininity.

Not only does the gender neutral approach violate Scripture, it violates science. Men and women are different, physically different in way more than the obvious ways. Not only are we physically different, we are emotionally and cognitively different. Men generally have larger windpipes and a 30% greater

lung capacity than women. Men's hearts are larger than women's hearts and can thus pump more blood. Males have a 10% higher red blood cell count which give them greater oxygen carrying capability. The hormones in male and female are found in quite different concentrations. In addition, there are differences in the peripheral nervous system that allows women to have greater sensory perception. They have more acute senses of hearing, smell and taste. We could talk for an hour on how our emotions operate and how we process information differently. We are gender distinct, not gender neutral.

What I want to do in this message is to look at biblical masculinity and biblical femininity and see why it is so important that we recognize and celebrate the differences and give glory to God for His plan for women and men.

I. Biblical Masculinity

Garrison Keilor known for his story telling on PBS's *Prairie Home Companion* is quoted as saying, "Manhood was once seen as an opportunity for achievement, but now it seems like a problem to overcome." Bible teacher Tony Evans also laments the loss of biblical masculinity, but places more blame on the men themselves than organizations like the National Organization of Women. After lamenting the sorry state of the family, Evans said, "I am convinced that the primary cause of this national crisis is the feminization of the American male. When I say "feminized" I am not talking about sexual preference. I'm trying to describe a misunderstanding of manhood that has produced a nation of "sissified" men who abdicate their role as leaders, thus forcing women to fill the vacuum." [Tony Evans, *Portrait of a Real Man*, page 1].

A. Basic Characteristics of Biblical Masculinity as A Man Relates to Women

The best definition of biblical masculinity is from John Piper and Wayne Grudem who co-wrote and edited the classic book on this Subject, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*. Here is their definition of masculinity: **"At the heart of mature masculinity is a sense of benevolent responsibility to lead, provide for and protect women in ways appropriate to a man's differing relationships."** I think that there is more to masculinity than this definition covers, but it is a good place to start. To lead provide, and protect involves courage and chivalry. Let's focus on this definition. Every part of that definition is important. Let's look at some key words. The word, "mature" means that his sense of responsibility is in line with what the Bible would affirm is appropriate ways of showing responsibility in the areas mentioned in the definition. In other words he has a correct concept of what is for the woman's good. In the second message we looked at what it means for a husband to lead, provide, and protect his wife, but masculinity is broader than just a man's wife. What is appropriate for leading and protecting and providing will look different for women in different relationships in his life. The common denominator is that it will not be a demand to be served, but to lead by serving the needs of the woman. To a woman that is a stranger, it may simply mean holding the door open for her as she enters a building. It will not be a leading of authority over another woman. It is a serving kind of leading. A man's leading would look different for a female co-worker than it would his wife. It might look different in some cultures than in others. Let me give you an extreme example of masculinity that showed leadership and protection and provision of women who were strangers. This type of masculinity is quickly vanishing. In 1852 the H. M. S. Birkenhead was traveling to South Africa when hit a ledge and started sinking. There were 750 men, women and children on board. With only about 20 minutes until the ship would sink, the decision was made by the men to place all the women and children aboard the few lifeboats available. The men would remain behind and face the circling sharks. Hundreds of men drowned or were eaten alive in full view of their children, but not one single woman or child died that day. That the kind of leadership, provision, and protection I am speaking of.

When the Titanic sank in 1912, the real story (not the movie version) was that the cry went out, "Women and children first". The men on board, with very few exceptions, yielded their seats on the lifeboats to the women and children. The men knew that they would surely die in the icy waters when the ship went down. In the end, 9 men died for every woman that died. The first Lady of the United States, Mrs. Taft, honored that spirit of manhood by raising money for a monument that would carry the

inscription: "To the brave men who gave their lives that women and children might be saved". Mrs. Taft explained what she did this way: "I am grateful to do this in gratitude to the chivalry of American manhood." What do you think would happen today if a ship was sinking with men, women, and children aboard? The gender neutral programmed males would not be saying, "Women and children first", I suspect it would most likely be, "Every person for him or herself".

B. What Is a Boy's Parents to Do?

Allow me to give you some practical guidelines for developing biblical masculinity in boys.

1. Point Him to Biblical Examples

We could learn a lot about biblical masculinity from many heroes of the Bible. Joshua exemplified biblical masculinity when he took leadership in **Joshua 24:15 (NKJV)** "And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." There was David who as a teenager killed a lion and a bear and in the confrontation with the giant, Goliath, he ran to the battle, not away from the giant. In the New Testament, we see the Apostle Paul who constantly ran to the battle, not away from it. Even after being stoned, he went back into the same town where he was stoned. What an example of a fearless risk-taking man of God who illustrates biblical manhood.

The greatest example of masculinity is the Lord Jesus Himself. Being perfect in all His ways, Jesus is the highest example of biblical masculinity. While Jesus was fully God, he was also fully man. Growing up as a carpenter or stone mason (the word can mean either), Jesus was no emaciated washed out pathetic man that is pictured in many artists renderings of Him. He was a hard worker. He worked in the hot sun and likely had leathery skin. Isaiah looked into the future and commented on His physical appearance in **Isaiah 53:2 (NASB)** "For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no *stately* form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him." He was God, but he was fully man. He had no fear. He faced demonic spirits and always triumphed. He faced hostile Jewish leaders who wanted Him dead and wouldn't give an inch to them. We see the respect He had for women and the tenderness with which He treated His mother as he hung in agony on the cross.

Here in Christ Jesus we see the essence of biblical masculinity. He was kind and tender, fearless, the epitome of self sacrifice, a man with a servant spirit who performed the slave labor of washing the disciples' feet, kind compassionate, and yet unyielding to evil. Oh what a man!

2. Teach Him to Submit to Authority

All authority resides in Christ. **Matthew 28:18b (NKJV)** Jesus said, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." Everyone who is or will be in authority is and will be under authority. The best way to prepare your son to be the head of his home when he is married is to train him to submit to the authorities in his life while he is a boy. He must learn through discipline to be under his parents authority, to be under the authority of teachers and administrators at school and to submit to authority at church. The one under authority will be effective when the time comes for him to be in a position of authority.

3. Teach Him to Take Responsibility and Reject Passivity

With our modern invention of "adolescence" which covers people even in college, there is pressure to just float along, have fun, and just do what you have to do to get by. Boys in our culture are taught to put off taking responsibility till later in life. That is a partial explanation for the problem we have with 30 year olds addicted to video games. Passivity is very unmanly! Leaders are aggressive and take responsibility. Boys need to learn at a young age that some fun and games are acceptable, but life isn't about fun and games. Grow up! At least by teenager years (if not before) help him get an age appropriate job where he is given responsibility and where he is rewarded for being aggressive instead of passive.

4. Teach Him Manners, Especially Manners that relate to His Treatment of Females

Teach him to open doors for females including his sisters. Teach him table manners how to speak politely to all adults and especially women. Teach him how to shake hands while looking the person in the eye.

5. Teach Him to Protect Himself

I taught my 3 boys how to fight. Wait before you get all torn up. I taught them that they would be in big trouble if they were ever the aggressor or if they took vengeance on someone. **Romans 12:19 (NKJV)** “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,*’ says the Lord.” I taught them how to deal with bullies and told them if they ever got in trouble at school for defending themselves they would not be at trouble at home.

6. Teach Him How to do Manly Things

Randy Stinson in his book, *A Biblical Guide to Manhood* lists 25 things that a dad should teach his son. Here are a few. * Read good books (readers are leaders) * Individual, two person, or a team sport * Jump start a car * How to use basic tools (hammer, saw, screwdriver, etc.) * How to manage money * How to serve others * How to handle a loss (life is full of disappointments; don’t allow them to define you). You can add your own.

I have left out many things such as spiritual disciplines because we have covered them before. These are things to help him develop his maleness and not get confused as to his sexual identity. What about single mothers? We need some men in the church to step up and spend time with boys who don’t have a Father who is active in their life.

II. Biblical Femininity

Ronda Chervin in her book, *Feminine, Free and Faithful* gives a list of what people commonly consider “positive feminine traits” and “negative feminine traits”. Some of the positive feminine traits are responsive, compassionate, empathetic, enduring, gentle, warm, tender, hospitable, receptive, diplomatic, considerate, polite, supportive, intuitive, wise, perceptive, sensitive, spiritual, sincere, vulnerable (in the sense of emotionally open), obedient, trusting, graceful, sweet, expressive, charming, delicate, quiet, faithful, pure. Some of what are considered the negative traits are weak, passive, slavish, weepy, wishy-washy, seductive, flirtatious, vain, chatter-box, silly, sentimental, naïve, moody, petty, catty, prudish, manipulative, complaining, nagging, pouty, smothering, and spiteful. I think most of the behaviors described in these lists would line up under biblical principals of godly and ungodly attitudes and behaviors.

In my opinion, one of the best authors on the subject of biblical femininity is Elizabeth Elliot. I quoted her earlier, but allow me to give a little more insight from her on femininity. “To me, a lady is not frilly, flouncy, flippant, frivolous and fluff-brained, but she is gentle. She is gracious. She is godly and she is giving... The more womanly we are, the more manly men will be, and the more God is glorified. As I say to you women, ‘Be women. Be only women. Be real women in obedience to God.’” [Elizabeth Elliot quoted in *Think Biblically*, by John MacArthur, page 169-170].

Feminism has done a good job of convincing most women in our culture that biblical femininity is stifling and repressive way to live. The opposite is actually true. The blurring of the lines between what it means to be male and what it means to be female has led to the belief that sexuality (male and female) is not fundamental to our nature and that all forms of sexuality are acceptable and pretty much arbitrary. In fact it is looked upon as a kind of abuse to teach little girls to be feminine and little boys to be masculine. While there were and are some areas that women are being discriminated against, the “solution” has gone too far and has sought to wipe out biblical femininity and has now made homosexuality normal and even sort of cool. As a culture, we are reaping what we have sown for discarding biblical masculinity and femininity.

A. Basic Characteristics of Biblical Femininity as a Woman Relates to Men

Let’s look at Piper and Grudem’s definition of femininity. “**At the heart of mature femininity is a freeing disposition to affirm, receive and nurture strength and leadership from worthy men in ways appropriate to a woman’s differing relationships.**” Notice in Piper and Grudem’s definition that femininity is a disposition rather than a strict set of behaviors and rules. There are so many different relationships in a woman’s life that a set of rules aren’t effective. Certainly you have to teach girls some rules, but maturity will see a shift from rules to what is called a disposition in our definition. By

disposition, we mean an inclination or tendency to act in a particular way. An example would be when a woman is married to an ungodly man. He may demand that she do something that is unbiblical and she has to refuse, but her disposition is to affirm him and to submit in every area except those areas that would require her to disobey God. In the other areas of authority in addition to the home (especially the church), her disposition is to submit when doing so would not be morally wrong or harming her reputation or testimony. Notice that the qualifying word here is “worthy”. That would not include ungodly, carnal men who have ulterior motives.

B. What’s a Girl’s Parents to Do?

Allow me to give you some actions to take with your girls. This list is certainly not exhaustive and I am sure many of you godly mothers could come up with a list way better than mine.

1. Hold Up Biblical Examples Before Her

Probably the example you should hold up most prominently when it comes to what a godly woman looks like is the ideal woman of Proverbs 31:10-31. The first Mother’s day that I was pastor here I preached an expository message on this passage and many of the wives and mothers were infuriated with me. The most common comment was something like, “Thanks a lot! You have ruined my mother’s day because who could ever live up that woman?” The answer is no one because this is meant to give a picture of the ideal woman and there are no ideal women just like there are no ideal men. What we find in Proverbs 31 is a picture of true biblical femininity, and it blows apart most people’s view of what true femininity looks like. This woman is a teacher of her children, an accomplished business woman who runs a successful home based business. She keeps the home going and makes her husband look good. A good summary statement is from Doug Wilson, “This passage denies that a woman’s place is *in* the home. It affirms that her *priority* is the home.” [JBMW, Fall 2009, Page 32]. This woman is not downtrodden, oppressed, or unfulfilled. She is not an unhappy doormat her husband walks on. She is confident but not arrogant, organized but not obsessive, inwardly beautiful, but not flaunting it. Mothers, become a Proverbs 31 scholar and teach these ideals to your daughters. Look at the result of this kind of femininity: **Proverbs 31:28 (NKJV)** “Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband *also*, and he praises her”.

2. Teach Her Modesty

What is modest is not determined by culture. Immodesty is a huge problem even in the church. Adult women – PLEASE SET THE EXAMPLE and Mothers, modesty ought not to be a suggestion (and I understand what a battle this can be).

3. Teach Her That Inner Beauty Is the Best Kind of Beauty

Inner beauty is the only kind that lasts. Outward beauty is fleeting. You will get old and there is only so much you can do. Inner beauty can keep becoming more beautiful as the years pass.

4. Teach and Model for Her the Biblical Roles in Marriage

Even if you are not married, teach them diligently to her.

5. Teach Her What It Means to Be Feminine

CONCLUSION

Masculinity and femininity are not a part of the curse of sin. They are God’s perfect plan. It is sin that has distorted masculinity and femininity. Those who have experienced the Gospel and have victory over sin and the indwelling enabling Holy Spirit must model for the rest of humanity that God’s plan is always best. Our response to a culture that is reaping what has been sown is not, “I told you so”. Our response is to give them the Gospel and do all that is possible to raise masculine boys and feminine women.