

## Biblical Femininity

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25; 3:20

### 1. Preamble

- a. Where are we at in our series?
- b. Luther quote
- c. Send questions to 94000 (GCFquestions)

### 2. Introduction

- a. The year 2022 signaled the start of a bizarre controversy.
  - i. It centered around a simple question—what is a woman?
  - ii. I say bizarre because up until the last few seconds of human history, everyone knew what a woman was.
- b. In March of 2022, U.S. Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson refused to define what it means to be a woman, responding, “I’m not a biologist.”
- c. Recently, a man, serving as the Assistant Secretary of Health, was nominated as one of USA Today’s “Women of the Year.”
- d. Another male who identifies as a woman recently took first place in a female swimming competition. He was praised by the media.
- e. Furthermore, many of the female role models in pop culture act more like men than women. They are physically strong, loud, violent warriors, aggressive, and in charge. Is this what it means to be a woman?
- f. All of this raises the question—what is a woman? Or what does it mean to be feminine?
  - i. Why does this matter?
  - ii. It matters because little girls need direction.
  - iii. Furthermore, when anyone can identify as a woman, it erodes the wonderful uniqueness of biblical womanhood.
  - iv. Finally, when male and female live out their God given design everyone flourishes. When they don’t everyone suffers.
  - v. Fortunately, the Bible is crystal clear on this issue.
- g. So, what does the Bible say about womanhood or femininity?
  - i. To answer this question, we are going to examine four headings.
    1. Assumptions
    2. Biology
    3. Uniqueness
    4. Application

### **1. Assumptions**

- a. Like last week, I’m making several assumptions that I want to state upfront.
- b. I’m assuming that the Bible is the inspired word of God.

- i. 2 Timothy 3:16-17
  - ii. Therefore, whatever the Bible says, no matter how unpopular it is, it is true.
  - iii. Furthermore, the Bible's teaching on this subject is not only true, but it also leads to human flourishing.
- c. I'm assuming that Male and female are equal in value, worth, and dignity.
  - i. **Genesis 1:27 (ESV) – 27** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
- d. I'm assuming that Male and female are different in function.
  - i. Genesis 1-2
    - 1. God created men to lead, provide, and protect (last week's sermon)
    - 2. God created women to be creators, helpers, and lovers, with a gentle and quiet spirit.
    - 3. Both roles are supremely important...
  - ii. These differences are very good.
 

"It I set the sun beside the moon,  
 And if I set the land beside the sea,  
 And if I set the flower beside the fruit,  
 And if I set the town beside the country  
 And if I set the man beside the woman  
 I suppose some fool would talk about one being better." (G.K. Chesterton)
- e. I'm assuming that there are only two genders and one's gender corresponds to one's biological plumbing.
  - i. I will prove this from the Bible and biology in a few weeks.
- f. I'm assuming that not every woman is going to express her femininity in the exact same way. More on this later...
- g. I'm also assuming that God created male and female physically different, and that is good. Which leads us to the second point...
- h. *First, Assumptions...*

## 2. Biology

- a. What are some of the physical differences between men and woman?
  - i. As I list these differences, we should be asking the question, what do these differences indicate about God's role for men and women???
  - ii. **They are different hormonally-**
    - 1. "Men have more (10-20 times) testosterone than women—the aggression hormone that equips them psychologically for their role in the family. It makes men, on average, physically stronger, more competitive, and more risk-taking." (Pearcy, 31)

2. "The female body produces a large quantity of a hormone called oxytocin, which promotes bonding and affiliation and enhances maternal instinct." (Kassian, 69)
3. Don't forget, we are discussing tendencies/averages.

**iii. They have different brains-**

1. "The male brain is larger than the female brain, but woman have four times as many neurons connecting the right and left sides. Men tend to process better in the left hemisphere of the brain while woman tend to process equally well between the two hemispheres. This difference explains why men generally have better spatial and mathematical abilities and approach problem-solving from a task-oriented perspective, while women are generally more perceptive, more attuned to feelings, better at communication, and more creative." (Kassian, 69)

**iv. They have different bodies-**

1. Every cell in a man's body contains an XY chromosome, but every cell in a female's body contains an XX chromosome (no amount of drugs or surgeries can change this fact).
2. The average American male is 5-9, female is 5-4.
3. Men grow facial hair, women can't.
4. Women menstruate and men can't.
5. Men can't have babies, women can.
6. They have different "private parts."
7. Men have broader shoulders and narrower hips.
8. They have different metabolisms. Man burn fat much faster and easier than woman.

**v. They have different levels of strength-**

1. The average male has anywhere from 60 to 90 percent more upper body strength than the average female...
2. "Men have 50% greater total muscle mass, based on weight than do woman. A woman who is the same size as her male counterpart is generally only 80 percent as strong." (Kassian, 69)
3. Indicators-
  - a. God designed men with more strength to protect woman, provide for the family, and do the heavy lifting.

**vi. They have different strengths and weaknesses-**

1. "A woman's body is much more efficient at storing energy (fat) to give her reserves for pregnancy and lactation. Men have larger hearts and lungs and greater amounts of red blood cells. When a man is jogging at about 50 percent of his capacity, a woman will need to work at over 70 percent of her capacity to keep up." (Kassian, 69)

2. Females hear and smell better.
3. Females struggle with depression almost twice as much as men. However, because of the aggression latent in testosterone, North American men are twice as likely to commit suicide.
4. Women tolerate pain better and live longer.
5. Women have stronger social skills.
6. Women are much better at reading the emotions of others.
7. Men have superior vision.
8. The female brain is better at multi-tasking, the male brain excels at focusing on one thing. (Farley, 14)

**vii. They (ordinarily) have different goals and interests-**

1. Charles Murray sums up the research of biologists, neuroscientists, and psychologists' since 2005 with this simple sentence.<sup>1</sup> "On average, women worldwide are more attracted to vocations centered on *people* and men to vocations centered on *things*."<sup>2</sup> Simon Baron-Cohen, a gender specialist at the University of Cambridge, gives it a different but parallel twist. "The female brain is predominantly hard-wired for *empathy*. The male brain is predominantly hard-wired for understanding and building systems."<sup>3</sup>
2. When researchers give 18-month-old children a choice of toys, before they are old enough to even know whether they are male or female, the little boys overwhelmingly choose trucks and weapons. The little girls choose dolls.<sup>4</sup>

viii. Summary men and women are different, and this is by God's design.

b. Illustration

- i. When we ignore the differences, we get into trouble.
- ii. Cutting down tree
- iii. Trying to cut through the roots with a shovel.
- iv. A Sawzall was needed...
- v. When we ignore the designer's design, we get into trouble.

c. Application

- i. Instead of being ashamed of the differences, we should rejoice in them.
- ii. Our culture loves to celebrate diversity, but when it comes to male and female differences no one wants to celebrate diversity—not even for a second.

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<sup>1</sup> See Charles Murray, *Human Diversity*, (New York: Twelve, 2020) chapters 1-5

<sup>2</sup> Charles Murray, *Human Diversity*, (New York: 12 Publishing, 2020) loc 1350, Kindle

<sup>3</sup> Simon Baron-Cohen, *The Essential Difference*, (London: Penguin, 2003) pg. 1

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Leonard Sax, *Why Gender Matters*, (New York: Broadway Books), Chapter one.

- d. Transition
  - i. *Since men and women are designed differently, it is obvious that they were designed for unique roles, which brings us to our next point.*
- e. *Assumptions*
- f. *Biology*

### 3. Uniqueness

- a. Introduction
  - i. If men and women are different by design, how should they function uniquely, according to their design?
  - ii. The Bible describes several ways that women are different than men. Let's look at four attributes that are uniquely feminine.
- b. **Women uniquely glorify God as creators of life.**
  - i. Genesis texts...
    - 1. **Genesis 1:28 (ESV) – 28** And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."
    - 2. **Genesis 3:20 (ESV) – 20** The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.
  - ii. Bottom line, men can't create babies and women can! One author says it like this-
    - 1. "On a physical level, women are designed to have babies, and this is so terribly obvious it's almost embarrassing. Everything about us is meant for mothering, from being sexually attractive to men in the first place, to being able to conceive, to the ability to weave together another little human inside of us without even trying, to the breasts that feed the baby, to all the mothering instincts that are hard-wired into us." (Merkle, 109)
    - 2. This is an amazing privilege...
      - a. God is the creator of life!
      - b. Women, you image God when you create life in your womb.
      - c. Yes, men are necessary, but they do about 1% of the work!
      - d. Women's bodies have been designed with the ability to receive, carry, and bear young. Wow!
      - e. Mothers, you are creating little image bearers that will live for eternity.
    - 3. Application:
      - a. Along with this comes nurturing children...
      - b. As I mentioned earlier, women are designed by God not only to make babies but to nurture babies.
      - c. It is very feminine to love and nurture babies.
        - i. Johanna and Torri, watching babies for ladies in d-groups.

- d. Men, it is very masculine to provide for and protect babies.
  - i. Dale Lavoie working at Maddie's place...
- e. This does not exclude single ladies or ladies who can't have children.
  - i. Single ladies and childless wives can express their femininity by nurturing other people's children (they can babysit, teach SS, serve in the nursery, volunteer at path of life, sponsor a needy child, invest in nieces and nephews, adopt, and do so much more...)

4. *Women uniquely glorify God as creators of life...*

**c. Women uniquely glorify God as helpers.**

i. Texts

1. **Genesis 2:18 (ESV) – 18** Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."
2. **Genesis 2:20 (ESV) – 20** The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.
3. **1 Corinthians 11:3 (ESV) – 3** But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.
4. **1 Corinthians 11:8–9 (ESV) – 8** For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. **9** Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

ii. What does it mean to help?

1. Helping is glorious.
2. We are all called to help others.
3. But the wife is uniquely called to help her husband.
4. But this does not imply weakness or inferiority.
5. "Contrary to what some have suggested, 'helper' is not a demeaning term that indicates a lesser status, or the type of help that assists in a trivial way. The Hebrew word (ezer) is a powerful one. It's most often used with reference to the Lord being our helper (Pss. 33:20; 72:12). An 'ezer' provides help that is absolutely and utterly indispensable." (Kassian, 85)

iii. What does Eve help Adam with?

1. Many things, but two activities are primary in Genesis 1-2.
  - a. She helps him bear children.
  - b. She helps him fulfill the cultural mandate.
2. Speaking of the cultural mandate...
  - a. "Eve was not given to Adam simply because by himself he couldn't have babies. She was there to help with the enormous task of taming the planet, and another man wouldn't have been the right answer." (Merkle, 107)

- b. Both male and female are called to work (work before the fall). Part of being a godly woman is working really hard with your husband to rule and subdue creation for God's glory.
- c. "The Victorian ideal of a tender, swooning, delicate woman who is incapable getting her lily-white hands dirty is a rebellious ideal, forgetting what it was Eve was created for. God did not create women to lounge around in picturesque poses, occasionally embroidering a handkerchief." (Merkle, 102)

iv. Application

1. Ladies that are married, how are you helping your husband with his vocation?
  - a. Eve was designed to help her husband, and you are designed to help your husband.
  - b. Wives how can you specifically help your husband in his calling???
  - c. This may depend on your season of life...
    - i. When kids are young...
    - ii. When kids are in school...
    - iii. When kids are out of the house...
  - d. If you are wondering whether to pursue a specific endeavor, you must ask this question? How is this helping my husband? Or my people?
2. Torri Spurgetis and Katie Parker helping their husbands get through Law school and medical school.
3. Jen Farley helping her family (her people, by working full time at Logos).
4. Suzie Pearson helping her husband by working with him full time in the fall and winter months...
5. Helping is hard work (husband and wife should both go to bed tired every night).
6. Helping sometimes means disagreeing...
  - a. One scholar writes,
  - b. But a truly feminine demeanor does not prohibit acting on the occasional need to strongly disagree with a man or with one's husband. Femininity does not deny or exclude intelligence, rationality, and an ability to make a convincing argument. In a marriage relationship, a strong wife is an asset to her husband. She can give him insightful feedback, expand his horizons to matters he may not have considered, and lovingly rebuke him when he is sinning. (Alex Chediak)

- v. *Women uniquely glorify God as creators of life.*
- vi. *Women uniquely glorify God as helpers.*

#### d. Women uniquely glorify God as lovers of home.

- i. We see hints of this in Genesis 1-3.
  1. Adam is called outside of the garden to work and till the ground.
  2. Eve is seen inside the garden nurturing children.
- ii. We see this more explicitly in Proverbs.
  1. In Proverbs 31, the godly wife is praised for her excellent skill in managing the affairs of her home.
    2. **Proverbs 31:27 (ESV) — 27** She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.
- iii. We see this even more explicitly taught in the NT.
  1. **Titus 2:4-5 (ESV) — 4** and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, **5** to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.
  2. **1 Timothy 5:14 (ESV) — 14** So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander.
- iv. Homemaking is a very worthy profession that requires great skill. It involves-
  1. Preparing healthy and delicious cuisine
  2. Managing doctors and dentist appointments, music lessons, school projects, kids homework, and kids athletics, etc...
  3. It involves educating (formally or informally)
  4. It involves beautifying the home.
  5. It involves dressing one's children well (often on a budget...)
  6. It involves robust/sacrificial hospitality...
  7. A mom at home with small children is a part time nurse, chef, financial planner, accountant, interior decorator, party planner, teacher/principal, p.e. teacher, fashion coordinator, and so much more...
- v. Qualifiers...
  1. With labor saving devices woman don't need to be in the home as much...
  2. Certain seasons of life don't require a wife and mother to be in the home much...
  3. You may be guilty of sloth if you are in your home all the time when your children are gone... (constant self-care).
- vi. Objections...
  1. Are you saying that woman can't work outside the home? No....
    - a. No, the Proverbs 31 woman is clearly conducting commerce outside of the home... and she is good at it.
    - b. Furthermore, there are different seasons of life...
    - c. But...
    - d. Is this career or job going to help my husband?



- e. Is this career or job going to enhance my love of home?
  - f. Is this career or job going to enable me to serve in feminine ways?
2. Are you saying that woman should not pursue higher education? No that is not what I'm saying! Although, we have been accused of this...
    - a. I met my wife in college!
    - b. The issue is an issue of orientation. Are you orientated towards the home and your children.
    - c. Is your orientation towards helping your husband?
  3. The Bible contains principals on this subject, but not as many rules...
    - a. With that said... the Bible's clear teaching can die the death of ten thousand qualifications.
- vii. Application
1. I'm incredibly grateful for my omniscient wife...
  2. Husbands, have you thanked your wife recently?

- viii. *Women uniquely glorify God-*
1. *As creators of life*
  2. *Helpers*
  3. *Lovers of the home*
  4. *And...*

**e. Women uniquely glorify God with a gentle and quiet spirit.**

i. Biblical texts

1. **1 Peter 3:3-5 (ESV) — 3** Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— **4** but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. **5** For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands,

ii. Exposition

1. Peter is not forbidding braided hair and jewelry, otherwise he would be simultaneously forbidding clothing (3c). He is forbidding vainly drawing attention to oneself.
2. A gentle and quiet spirit is very precious in God's sight.
3. What does it mean to have a gentle and quiet spirit?
  - a. The adjective for gentle in the original text is closely associated with the word meekness. Someone who is meek does not insist on their own way. They do not insist on always being right and they do not insist on defending themselves. This is because someone who is gentle or meek has rock solid confidence in God's goodness and Grace to provide for them, take care of them, and defend their cause.
  - b. Meekness and gentleness are not weaknesses they are strengths.
  - c. The meekest person to every live, Jesus, was also the strongest person to ever live.

- d. Meekness enables one to submit to someone else because the meek person trusts God. This is why Peter says that this internal beauty is very precious in the sight of God.
4. A gentle and quiet spirit does not mean that you need to be quiet and shy. It means that you trust God so much that you are willing to submit to your husband with a glad and joyful heart trusting that God will take care of you.
- iii. Sadly, the world tells woman to be the exact opposite.
    1. Tough
    2. Hard
    3. Strong
    4. Always fighting...
    5. Be aggressive and assertive.
    6. One thinks of Ronda Rousey
  - iv. Application:
    1. Ladies, would others (husband and children) describe you as someone with a gentle and quiet spirit?
    2. Again, this does not mean that you are quiet, or shy, or a wallflower.
    3. You can be very outgoing, funny, and confident and still have a gentle and quiet spirit.
    4. A gentle and quiet spirit defers to others and is submissive.
  - v. Are you saying that woman can't ride motorcycles, lift weights, fix cars, shoot guns, and use power tools? No!
    1. Women can do all these things.
    2. Femininity is a disposition.
    3. But you need to do these things in feminine ways.
- f. *We have covered a lot; how does all of this apply? This brings us to the last point...*
- i. *Assumptions*
  - ii. *Biology*
  - iii. *Uniqueness*

#### 4. Application:

- a. If you are a woman
  - i. Give thanks that God made you a woman...
  - ii. You are equal with men, and you can do things that they can't!
  - iii. Embrace and celebrate your femininity in all the different situations you find yourself in (wife, mother, nurse, doctor, sister, daughter, etc...)
- b. If you are a mother...
  - i. Encourage your daughters to act like women.
  - ii. Dress like women
  - iii. Play sports in feminine ways...
  - iv. Pursue womanly things...
  - v. Work hard at your calling! Don't settle, don't be lazy, work hard at making your home beautiful, etc...

- vi. Rejoice in your high and noble calling.
  - 1. Moms, you get to mold and shape little human beings made in God's image that will live forever in heaven or hell. Is there anything more important??? Hardly!

c. If you are a single woman?

- i. Find ways to cultivate a love for children.
- ii. A love for home...
- iii. Being a helper...
- iv. A gentle and quiet spirit...

d. If you are a man

- i. Celebrate the fact that woman have different strengths than you...
- ii. Find ways to show honor to the woman as the weaker vessel and as coheirs with you in the grace of life... (1 Peter 3:1-7).
- iii. Encourage your wife and thank her often!!! Give her time by herself.

e. If you are a single man...

- i. Don't settle.
- ii. Look for a woman who understands and fully embraces a biblical vision for femininity...
- iii. If you want her to be a wife and a mother and she wants to be the CEO of a fortune 500 company, you are going to have serious marriage issues.

5. Conclusion:

- a. "In 1990, Time Magazine devoted an entire special issue to the subject of women... One section featured profiles of "10 tough Minded women" who have combined "talent and drive" to become 'successful" in their careers: The police chief of a major metropolitan police force, a baseball team owner, a rap artist, an AIDS activist, a rock climber, a bishop in mainline denomination, a fashion tycoon, a saxophonist, an Indian chief, and a choreographer...
- b. Conspicuous by its absence throughout the issue was any recognition given to women who have succeeded in ways not tied to careers—women who have successfully stayed married to the same man or who have succeeded to bring up children who are making a positive contribution to society. Not surprisingly no bouquets were handed out to women for being reverent and temperate or modest and chaste or gentle and quiet, for loving their husbands and children, for keeping a clean, well-ordered home, for caring for elderly parents, for providing hospitality, for acts of kindness, service, and mercy, or for demonstrating compassion for the poor and needy—the kind of success that, according to the Word of God, is what women should aspire to attain (1 Tim. 5:10; Titus 2:3-5)." (Nancy Leigh Demoss, BWITH, 13-14)
- c. Wives and mothers, Time magazine may not honor you, but God almighty, maker of heaven and earth honors you, for fully embracing your role.
- d. God sees all your sacrifices, and he will reward you someday. Let's pray...