

Articles

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Equal in Creation MALE AND FEMALE CREATED TO CO-LABOR WITH GOD

By Fuchsia Pickett



THE CHURCH HAS LONG MISUNDERSTOOD GOD'S DIVINE PLAN FOR THE GENDERS. HE NEVER INTENDED FOR MAN TO RULE OVER WOMAN.

In my more than 50 years of ministry, I have discovered that because people often study their Bibles through the eyes of their own prejudices, customs and traditions, they tend to read *into* the Scriptures what they have been taught instead of reading *out of* them what the Holy Spirit meant when He inspired His servants to write them. This practice leads to much deception in the church. Nowhere is the deception more apparent than in the misunderstanding about God's divine order for the genders.

Many Christians believe that God created man to rule over woman. They cite as proof God's words to Eve after she ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: "Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you" (Gen. 3:16, NKJV). But in making this statement, God was not revealing His divine order for the woman. He was imposing on her the consequences of her fall. He was telling us how a *fallen* man and woman were going to relate to each other.

Results of the fall of man can never be construed as God's divine order for him. God told Adam he was going to eat by the sweat of his brow (see Gen. 3:19), but that was a consequence of sin rather than God's divine intention for him. God had purposed that Adam and Eve eat of the vegetation in the beautiful garden He had prepared for them and that they have dominion over every living thing.

PRIEST OF THE HOME? Another misconception prevalent in the church is that the man is the priest of the home. But this is not a scriptural concept either. The Scriptures declare that we--male and female--are *all* priests: "You at a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, holy nation" (I Pet. 2:9).

The New Living translation of the Bible translates royal priesthood as "a kingdom of priests." There is no distinction here between male and female.

REVEALED FAITH: Some of us have difficulty accepting the truth about God's design for the genders because we have not "come to faith." When we read the Scriptures, we don't *come in faith* with an open heart and mind to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying. Paul explains, Before faith [comes], we [are] kept under the law *up unto the faith* which should afterwards be revealed" (Gal. 3:23, emphasis added).

We can't understand the Word until we have "revealed faith" because tradition, prejudice, culture, denominationalism, pseudo-masculinity and other bondages of the carnal mind hinder us. After revealed faith comes, we are no longer under the law but walk in the grace Jesus brought to us through redemption. Paul tells us, "After that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For [we] are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (vv. 25-26, KJV).

He declares that when we come to faith we will see "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for [we] are all one in Christ Jesus" (v. 28). Faith comprehends God's intentions in creating mankind. But the fall of man has so damaged us that we are unaware of the purpose for which God created man. We the are oblivious to the divine order He intended for man and woman to enjoy.

Until faith comes to our hearts we cannot expect an illumination o the Word of God that gives us understanding of the purposes of God. The Scriptures teach that the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14, NKJV). No wonder the church, which has not yet come into a proper relationship with the Holy Spirit, is living without a true understanding of God's divine order for mankind!

A basic misunderstanding arises from our definition of "man." The word we translate from the Hebrew as "man"

actually has no gender; it is more accurately translated mankind." In mankind--in Adam--was both "male" and "female." Thus when God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (Gen. 2:18, KJV), He was announcing His plans to do "surgery" to separate mankind into two sexes.

After God made the woman, He brought her "unto the man" (Gen. 2:22); He didn't put her *under* him. His purpose was for them to be one.

God ordained that the woman should be a "help meet" for the man. One of the definitions of the Hebrew word for "help meet" is "reflection." That is a beautiful picture of God's divine intention in creating mankind to walk together as one in fellowship with God.

IN ADAM'S IMAGE: Unfortunately, it is not the picture we normally see--because of our fallen nature. When God was about to create Adam, He said, "Let Us make man in Our image according to Our likeness" (Gen. 1:26, NKJV). Then He created him; male and female He created them" (v. 27). So Adam was created in God's image.

But the Bible tells us that after the fall of man, Adam "begot a son in *his own* likeness, after *his* image" (Gen. 5:3, emphasis added). This means that Adam's descendants--including us--were born not in the image of God, their heavenly Father, but rather in the image of Adam. We were born with his nature, not God's.

God's eternal plan for us was not thwarted, however, for He had anticipated Adam's failure before the foundation of the world and had prepared a Savior for mankind. John assures us: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). That word "destroy" is the Greek word *louso*, which means "to loose, to undo, outdo and overdo." So Jesus came to undo, outdo and overdo everything the devil has ever done.

When we accept Christ, who is called the "last Adam," as our Savior, we are restored to the image of God. Restoration is a wonderful reality that promises we will become all God ordained for us to become in His eternal purpose and will experience what mankind would have known if the first pair had walked on with Him and not fallen.

God knew we couldn't change ourselves back into His image, so He designed the costly plan of redemption through the blood of his own Son, Jesus. Jesus was the express image of the Father, sent to live in us by the power of the Holy Spirit until that image takes over our inner natures--our spirits and souls. He begins to change us from glory to glory. When He fills our beings, as He wanted to do before man ever fell, we are going to go home in His image, complete and mature;

By the action of Calvary, we are being changed into Christ's image so male and female can walk together in their own realms of authority. God puts both genders back into Christ, not as male and female, but as mankind, walking with God. Husband and wife, male and female preacher, man and woman leader will walk in the cool of the day with Jesus, who is talking to us, fellowshiping with us, giving us authority and changing us into His image. In the "last Adam," God is restoring what we would have had if Adam had not fallen in the beginning.

RETURNING TO DIVINE ORDER: God ordained that man and woman should walk with Him and be as one, and He would meet the innermost needs of both of them. Divine order is higher than the plight of fallen man. It is far more liberating to men and women than having to live under the doctrine of the curse of a fallen Adam and a fallen Eve.

As God delivers His church from the bondages of tradition and culture--and from fallen man's doctrine of divine order--we will see men and women function together to build godly homes and to fulfill God's purpose for the building of His church. When redemption cleanses us from the desire to rule, man and woman will not be threatened by each other, but will welcome each other's godly counsel.

The Bible gives many examples of women who provided godly leadership. Deborah was appointed by God as a judge, prophetess and general in the army. She was able to tell Barak what God had said to her, and Barak then declared he would not go to battle without her (see Judges. 4:4-8).

I believe in these last days of God's outpouring of His Spirit, many Baraks will say to their Deborahs that they will not go to battle without them. I believe it is the timing of God to restore man and woman back to divine order both in the home and in the kingdom of God. It is the hour for man and woman to come to faith, to stop living under fallen doctrine and to start living according to divine order--male and female walking together as one in Christ, each with his or her own delegated authority.