

Feminism

Objectives

To expose the truth of a woman's role in God's creation and how feminism is actually a corruption of this role

References

1. http://www.suscopts.org/pdf/conference/2001college_abstract-feminism.pdf
2. The Scandal of Gender: Early Christian Teaching on the Man and the Woman by Patrick Mitchell
3. On Marriage and Family Life by St. John Chrysostom
4. Women- Their Rights and Obligations in social and religious life in the early Church by Fr. Matta El Meskeen

Scriptural Verse

"Your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you" Gen. 3:16

Lesson Outline

- In America, girls are taught that they can do anything a boy can do- ONLY BETTER- this is clearly the fruit of the feminist movement. In order to understand why this attitude exists and evaluate its validity in a godly woman, we need to consider the Biblical role of women.
- Gen 1:26-28 **"Then God said: Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.** So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, **"Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."**
- Characteristics of God in whose "image and likeness" both were made –
(Seemingly masculine): just, powerful, mighty, provider, warrior, judge, defender, shepherd, Father, noble, wise, holy, meek, humble, etc.
(Seemingly feminine): loving, merciful, kind, compassionate, helper, beautiful, loyal, gentle, longsuffering, servant
(seemingly neither gender): creator, all-knowing, omnipresent, sovereign
Can you identify any of these that are unimportant? Are there any we can live without? BOTH are in His likeness, BOTH are blessed, BOTH are given dominion
- Gen 2:18 **"And the LORD God said: *It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.*"**
- The woman is a GIFT from the Lord
- Gen 2:23 **"And Adam said: *This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.*"**
- Unity and oneness exist between Adam and Eve (man and woman)

- So far, we see some TRUTHS emerging - there is order to creation and Adam is created first and is therefore, the leader. Eve is created from Adam's side (neither above, nor below) and is his companion, helper, comparable to him. They are given freedom and responsibility
- Consequence of the fall- Curse. In Gen 3:16, we read **"To the woman He said: 'I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you'."**
- This is the "natural" positioning now, in a corrupted world, but it was not God's desire and the Lord Christ's shed blood, which reconciles and renews all creation, is also powerful to restore the relationship of woman to man. In Col 1:19-20, we read **"For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross."**
- The curse has 2 extremes that are played out in the world today. *Your desire shall be for your husband* (Feminism), *And he shall rule over you* (Dictatorial male leadership/male domination). Both these extremes involve lies and both are misapplications of God's truth
- Male domination works from the basis that women are to be submissive (true) and are inferior to men (false)
- Feminism works from the basis that men and women are inherently equal (true) which follows then that they are interchangeable with men (false) and men, then have no authority over them (false). This actually replaces one form of domination for another
- God does not discriminate! Men and women are inherently equal
If we look in God's word and tradition of the Church, we see women as queens, judges, prophetesses, evangelists, deaconesses, martyrs, and confessors. Jesus treated women no different from men. They were at His birth, baptism, sat in His teachings, traveled with Him, present at His crucifixion and ascension, discovered His absence at the tomb and were present at Pentecost and filled with the Spirit. As a matter of fact, there are only 2 instances where there were no women: 1. institution of the Eucharist and 2. When the disciples received the Holy Spirit and were told those whose sins you remit are remitted (John 20:21-23)
- 1Cor 12:14-21 – **"For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you'; nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you'."**
- Revisit God's characteristics and consider whether they are interchangeable – is one any more important than another – or do they, together, bring fullness and unity?

- Let's be reminded of God's order: Eph 5:22-28 - **“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.”**
- Christ is to the Church what the husband is to the wife
- 1 Cor 11:3 - **“But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman *is* man, and the head of Christ *is* God.”**

Conclusion

While it is certainly acceptable to address injustice, this must be done with the TRUTH only and in light of Christ's blood. To maintain a feminist agenda means taking our eyes off Christ and doubting or dismissing some of His teachings and misunderstanding Christ's redemption.

Because Feminism, as believed and practiced today, stems from the curse and is based on ideas out of line with God's creation and order, its espousal in a disciple of Christ is not fitting.

Activities/Discussion Points

1. Examine and discuss the role of women:

A. In the church – 1 Corinthians 11:3-6, 1 Timothy 2:8-11, 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, 1 Timothy 2:12-15.

B. At home – 1 Peter 3: 1-6