

Genesis week 10  
Genesis 1:26-28, 31; 2:6-8; 15-25  
In His Image pt 7  
Femininity and the Image of God pt 2

INTRO:

<https://albertmohler.com/2023/08/07/briefing-8-7-23>

Richard Dawkins, one of the four horsemen of the New Atheism, took a try at defining the term “woman.” He wrote an article for the New Statesman, a rather left publication in Great Britain. He answered the question, what is a woman? And here you had a research scientist who, after all, is committed to what had previously been known as biology, who wrote in that article what he thought was obvious. He said when answering the question, what is a woman? "A woman is an adult human female free of Y chromosomes." In other words, XX in chromosomal structure, not XY.

There were strong reactions, not from the scientific community but from the ideological community committed to the current moral and sexual revolution i.e., the reigning cultural religious movement of our age.

The scientism of previous generations has given way to the personal preferences of demanding and receiving affirmation. For years Dawkins was the darling of the secular humanists. In fact, he was named the Humanist of the Year by the American Humanist Society in 1996. After his article in the Statesman, the group rescinded his award.

I would not agree with Dawkins on much, but at least when it comes to biology, we can agree on the difference between male and female.

As we seek to maintain a biblical view of creation on This side of Eden and the Cross, let's consider what scripture tells us about male and female based on the scriptural teaching that both were created in the image of God.

Genesis 1:

26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male (zakar) and female (neqebah) He created them  
2:22 The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.

23 The man 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.”

24 For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

Jesus confirms this in Mark 10:6 6 But from the beginning of creation, God made them male (arsen) and female. (thelus) 7 For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother

8 AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH; so they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

**WOMAN WAS CREATED TO BE A HELPER SUITABLE TO HIM**

“Ezer” (HELPER) is a word that elsewhere refers to God Himself as a help to His people.(Ex 18:4, Deut

33:7, 26, 29; Ps 33:20, Ps 115:9-11, 124:8, 140:5) It is not a word with a negative meaning. **Even if they have different roles, there is no inequality in terms of their 'being' as they are both image bearers. Adam and Eve were equal in terms of their standing before God as image bearers.** While we may see some of the differences as trivial, they should not be ignored without damaging the theology of the text. (Kassian; Schaeffer)

The Greek translation of the Hebrew word is, 'boethos' = 'help provided by someone strong'  
Suitable = 'kenegdo' She corresponds to him and is like him, someone uniquely designed to come alongside another as a companion – neither behind as a follower nor beneath as an inferior.

Suitable for what?

**She is suitable for Creational Math –  $1+1= 1$  The two become ONE FLESH – a deep sharing of two lives into one through mutual consent and covenant – spiritual, emotional, relational, physical, and financial. She is suitable for a relationship as a fellow image bearer, for procreation, and for reigning over the created order. She is a counterpart to him, parallel yet different.**

The phrase "suitable helper" does not imply that a woman, by virtue of her gender, is inferior to man. With that in mind we can look at what many see as a bad word, "Submission."

Is this a bad word that dishonors God and us as believers? NO. God initiates the design of structures of leadership.

God is the source of the idea of authority. Without some sort of leadership structure, the world would be in chaos. WHAT DO WE CALL SOMETHING WITH TWO OR MORE HEADS? .....A monster.

Biblical equality in essence and the reality of hierarchy are compatible concepts in Scripture. JUST LOOK AT the relationship of Jesus the Son and God the Father. Jesus came to do the will of the Father. Submission does not imply inferior worth but a difference in the position that one holds.

Submission is a biblical word that is applied in a mutual way among believers. Paul describes the Spirit filled life and ends with "be subject to one another in the fear of Christ." V. 21

Then he turns to the specific relationship of marriage and instructs husbands and wives. They live out this subjection to one another and to God in different ways. **The husband shows submission by taking his cues from Christ with loving sacrificial leadership and authority. "Love your wife as Christ loves the church.**

**The wife displays submission through obedience using the church as a model in relationship to Christ.**

If this pushes us out of our comfort Zone, that's ok. Jesus was out of His comfort zone on the cross. If the Bible only commanded us to do things we can naturally do, then we wouldn't need a Savior or the Holy Spirit.

The concept of the leadership of the man is rooted back in the Genesis narrative. He is created first and the woman is taken from him. Adam recognized the unity between himself and the female because he called her 'isha' because she was taken from 'ish' / man. But note that he has a God given role of naming her, which happens again in Gen 3:9 when he names her "Eve" – mother of all living.

In the OT, the act of naming indicates a role of leadership. If God had intended for them to have the same role, He could have named the woman, just as He had named the man. This distinction doesn't belittle the woman or her role. It merely reflects a difference between the roles that God had assigned to them. The man was the leader in the relationship and the woman was the strong suitable partner.

The familiar passage of Eph 5 is one text that deals with the idea of submission, but there is also one from 1 Peter 3.

1 In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, 2 as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. 3 Your adornment must not be merely external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; 4 but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.

God says through Peter, that wives should 'likewise submit' to your own husband. This follows a passage where he talks about the suffering of Christ who entrusted himself to God who judges righteously. Submitting to one another in any context must follow a prior submission to God Himself. For it to reflect a heart of faith, it is not grim resignation to what God says, but an assent from the heart and the will.

Jesus modeled this submission even as he suffered as part of the eternal plan of salvation. Jesus willingly followed the Father's plan and gave His life for us. Peter is not saying that women should submit to ungodly husbands even as Christ submitted to ungodly men. Christ submitted to the Father, and a wife's submission is also to God, but not to sinful behavior of her husband. As a suitable helper she is called to bring her strength to move toward the Oneness that would bring glory to God.

The Greek word for submit means to 'arrange yourself under in an orderly manner'. It is a willful act that has a bigger vision than a begrudging white knuckle submission.

Submission is NOT blindly going along with anything a leader might say or demand. The apostles refused to obey the leaders who demanded that they disobey God's command to proclaim the Gospel.

Submission recognizes that someone else has tie-breaking authority. After all the input is given and a decision must be made, one person often has tie-breaking authority. Submission means honoring that decision. If one has reason to believe that the decision was not right, depending on the context, one can appeal while maintaining a posture of submission.

The description of the woman here is one with a gentle and quiet spirit.

"Gentle = meek" i.e. power that is under control. The same word used in the Beatitude "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth" and the description of Jesus the king riding into Jerusalem on a donkey (Matt 21).

This speaks of an inner strength that can't be destroyed when it is rooted in God

The feminine soul whose identity is rooted in being an image bearer doesn't need to live for the approval of others. That soul is abiding in Christ who gives her the spiritual capital to be a strong woman under control.

A 'quiet gentle spirit' does NOT refer to a certain personality type. It refers to a posture of the heart that is displayed by courageous respectful behavior.

So how does a biblically feminine wife respond to a husband who tries to use his leadership to have her do something that God forbids? She does so submissively, telling him "NO", with a gentle and quiet spirit.

One final scripture reference that comes to mind when talking about Biblical womanhood is Prov 31. A virtuous / excellent woman of valor

The same word is used to describe Ruth 3:11, " a virtuous woman"

\*\* NOTE – this sort of poem that celebrates the life and work of a woman was RARE in the ANE. Paul Johnson, in his book HEROES, notes that the Hebrews stood out in the ANE because they made so much of and profited so much from the contribution of their women.

A strong, industrious, caring, nurturing, tasteful, trustworthy woman. She is not just an efficient manager;

she is a godly woman who fears the Lord and gives instruction and an example of love for God. (31:26; she speaks with wisdom and kindness)

The heart of her husband trusts in her.

Typically, scripture tells us to trust only in God, so this is high praise.

In closing, I will share some thoughts from Jim Ramos from Men in the Arena.

A quick imperfect look at ways that men and women are different.

“OH, IT’S JUST A bunch of stereotypes.”

There is a reason we call them stereotypes. Because, generally speaking, they are true!

[https://podcast.meninthearena.org/gods-design-for-man-5-core-differences-between-men-and-women-equipping-men-in-ten-ep-690/?mc\\_cid=a4f7d5e6e7&mc\\_eid=d86cf08110](https://podcast.meninthearena.org/gods-design-for-man-5-core-differences-between-men-and-women-equipping-men-in-ten-ep-690/?mc_cid=a4f7d5e6e7&mc_eid=d86cf08110)

**The Protector: A People to Defend**

**Women are nurturers – A people to care for**

Men and women have Bodies built for different work

Old skeletons reveal the gender based on bone size and shape in certain aspects of the body.

His body is made to function as a wall for those he loves.

Her body is designed to nurture life.

**The Provider: A Tribe to Lead** – safety and shelter – manage household – “a wall the house’ 1 Tim

**Woman – nurturing educator to maintain a household**

**The Adventurer/ Explorer: A Dream to Pursue**

**A Nester – creating a place of welcome and stability.**

**The Sacrificer: A Hill to Die On**

**The Advisor** - sees things ahead of time/ intuition “the longer I’m married the more the voice of the Holy Spirit sounds like my wife.”

The bigger question is, “Why?” Because God has made men that way—to gladly die on a hill he cares deeply about.

**The Conqueror: A Line to Cross or problem to solve.**

**The Processor – multi-tasking to get things done- a different approach to a solution.**

As we close, we do need to be reminded about the idea of submission.

While the word and concept of submission is not popular in the world and often in the church, **our salvation is based on the submission and obedience of Christ. THE TABLE before us represents how Jesus humbled himself to the point of death even death on a cross.**

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