

GOD and WOMEN - 1

Perhaps it wouldn't happen in our homes. It probably wouldn't happen while we are outside working on our gardens or while shopping. However, it might happen in church that someone would ask us, "What does the Bible say about the equality of men and women?"

How would we answer? It might be tempting for us to give them a simple answer such as "God loves everyone. Therefore, God loves women and girls as much as men and boys." That might be enough to satisfy the questioner.

However, it's not enough to answer the question and assume that is the end of the matter. Women are mistreated in colleges, the military, churches, workplaces and in their homes. The recent statistics published in The San Jose Mercury News detailing the numbers of sexual assaults in colleges in the Bay area don't begin to describe the suffering involved for those women. Adding to the toll of suffering are those trapped in a web of human trafficking, prostitution and other forms of sexual slavery. The suffering that both the statistics as well as anecdotal reports about what women endure is certainly beyond my ability to fully comprehend but not my ability to critique and condemn.

One focus of my critique is the way that the Bible is grossly misused to justify the how so many of us men disrespect and abuse women. Anyone who reads the first three chapters of the Bible has an opportunity to recognize the basis for treating women as equal to men.

However, when I was young, the predominant practice among the men I knew was to talk about the Bible without reading it.

Older men told me that since Eve was created from one of Adam's ribs that she was obviously less important than him. These men completely missed the point that it was God who made the first human, and that it was God who fashioned the second human (Woman). In that story in [Genesis 2](#) the man was simply a passive instrument for God's creation of Woman. God made the first human out of the dust of the earth and the second out of the bone made from that dust. How does that give men the right to dominate much less abuse women?

The second misinterpretation about the creation story in [Genesis 3](#) is that it was Eve who caused Adam to sin! Really? It's time we men gave up on this nonsense! Do we men really believe that Adam was the prototype for a dominant male hierarchy and yet couldn't help himself when Eve offered him the fruit?

Men need to change our attitudes about women and girls. We need to learn, particularly by example, from our parents and others that women are people of God as much as men. That learning needs to carryover to school, the workplace, the church and wherever else we are. It begins with asking God for the grace to anticipate and recognize the love of God in each woman as in each man.

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