

Women's Rights Affirmed

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Women's Rights Denied (Gen. 3:16; 1Cor. 14:34; 1Tim. 2:12; 1Pet. 3:6).

Women's Rights Affirmed (Jgs. 4:4, 14-15; 5:7; Ac. 2:18; 21:9).

As Almighty God is not a respecter of persons (Ac. 10:34; Dt. 10:17), He does not regard women as being inferior to men. However, as this study will show, God does punish acts of rebellion against His word, and these lessons are to be remembered from generation to generation. Also, God has established order in both His spirit realm and physical realm. Therefore, if God chooses to place someone in a leadership role in any of His realms, He is entitled to do so, despite objections from those who think they know better, or would like to accuse God of being unfair.

The first example, used by some people to discredit God's word regarding women's rights, is actually dealing with Eve's sin and the resulting punishment,

To the woman He (God) said: 'I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for (toward) your husband. And he shall rule over you' (Gen. 3:16; Ed. notes in parentheses; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

Although many people view this last scripture in its most literal interpretation, there is a deeper spiritual meaning behind it. As the term "woman" is often used in scripture to describe a system of religious belief, both righteous or unrighteous (Rev. 12:13- 17 cf. 17:4-6; see study: A Contentious Woman and a Harlot), the woman being punished for her sin in Genesis 3:16 symbolizes those who are corrected by God, and restored in their relationship with Him, through various sorrows and trials. Once restored these "women" come under the leadership of their husband, who is Jesus Christ,

No one can come to me (Christ) unless the Father who sent me (Almighty God) draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day (Jn. 6:44; cf. 6:65; Ed. notes in parentheses).

For I (Paul) am jealous (see study: Envy and Jealousy) for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ (your future husband) (2Cor. 11:2; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah – ³²not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I (Christ) took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord (Jer. 31:31-32; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Eve was a type of all sinners. She was punished for her trespass, and part of that punishment involved being removed from her position in the spirit-realm, and taking on a flesh and blood form that would experience pain and sorrow, both physically and emotionally (see study: Which Rib Did Eve Come From?). Like her husband Adam, she would eventually die as God had warned (Gen. 2:17). Because of his sin, Adam was now responsible to provide for the physical needs of the family that would come from him, and he would face various hardships in a world influenced by Satan and the fallen host (Gen. 3:17-19; see study: Thorns and Thistles). Adam could no longer take a “hands off approach” as he had done when he took no action to protect Eve from Satan’s temptation,

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for her (Eph. 5:25; Col. 3:19).

Therefore, both Adam and Eve had tasks to fulfill that would be difficult and God gave the responsibility for leading the family unit to the man. The argument could easily be made that God placed a heavier burden on the man, and yet society today seems to think that the woman’s role is somehow unfair. The man was now responsible for leading his family, providing, protecting, and teaching both by word and example. This is the point that the apostle Paul was making in the next scripture that some try to portray as trampling on women’s rights,

Let women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak (i.e. teach in a church setting); but they are to be submissive, as the law also says.³⁵ And if they want to learn something (of a religious nature), let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church (1Cor. 14:34-35; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Paul was emphasizing the order God had established in the family unit, and it was extended to church activities as well,

Let all things be done decently and in order (1Cor. 14:40).

Paul reaffirmed that God established the order within the human family and therefore any attempt to undermine it would eventually cause serious problems, as we are witnessing in society today,

Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.¹² And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.¹³ For Adam was formed first then Eve (1Tim. 2:11-13).

Human nature, under the influence of the Adversary, works to undermine God’s authority in whatever form it may take, including the God-ordained role of a man and woman in the family,

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be (Rom. 8:7).

Long ago God predicted that man, under Satan’s influence, would work to change the order within the family unit,

As for My people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O My people! Those who lead you cause you to err (lead you astray), and destroy the way of your paths (Isa. 3:12; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Paul confirmed that the world would experience more and more disruption, to the order that God had ordained in the family, just prior to Christ's return,

But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: ²For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good (2Tim. 3:1-3; emphasis added).

Unless the God-ordained role of a father and mother is restored, the collective societies of this world will eventually break down,

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. ⁶And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse (SHD 2764; utter destruction; Mal. 4:5-6; emphasis added).

Mankind rarely makes the connection between "cause and effect" until it is too late. The description above is the result of a society that has worked to undermine the structure and order that God established following the sin of Adam and Eve. Women were created by God to have different talents and abilities that would contribute to a successful family and the same principle applies to men (cf. Pro. 31:10-31). Once a woman's and man's role is changed, society will eventually break down. The message in many countries today is that if women fulfill their God-ordained responsibilities, they are somehow second class citizens. In reality, this is propaganda from the Adversary of mankind. God's inspired response is very different from today's propaganda,

Likewise you wives, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word (from the wife), may be won by the conduct of their wives, ²when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear (i.e. respect). ³Do not let your beauty be that outward adorning of arranging the hair, of wearing gold, or of putting on fine apparel; ⁴but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. ⁵For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, ⁶as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror (1Pet. 3:1-6; cf. Lk. 10:41).

Abigail was a woman who lived by God's word and she endured a husband who acted like an oaf. She pictured all women who trust that God will assist them in fulfilling their role within the family unit, even under very difficult conditions. Her faith and obedience was rewarded in due course,

The name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail. And she was a woman of good understanding and beautiful appearance; but the man was harsh and evil in his doings ... (1Sam. 25:3a; emphasis added).

Now one of the young men (Nabal's servants) told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, 'Look, David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master (Nabal); and he reviled them' (1Sam. 25:14; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Now therefore, know and consider what you (Abigail) will do, for harm is determined against our master (Nabal) and against all his household. For he is such a scoundrel that one cannot speak to him. ¹⁸ Then Abigail made haste and took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep already dressed, five seahs of roasted grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and loaded them on donkeys (1Sam. 25:17-18; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

So David received from her (Abigail's) hand what she had brought him, and said to her, 'Go up in peace to your house. See, I have heeded your voice (cf. 1Sam. 25:23-34) and respected your person (Heb. 5375; supported or assisted Abigail's position; 1Sam. 25:35).

Had Abigail not acted quickly, David would have wiped out all Nabal's sons,

Now David had said, 'Surely in vain I have protected all that this fellow (Nabal) has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belongs to him. And he has repaid me evil for good. ²² May God do so, and more also, to the enemies of David, if I leave one male of all who belong to him by morning light (1Sam. 25:21-22; Ed. note in parenthesis).

It would have been sad indeed, if Abigail had to endure more stress and foolish behavior from her husband after all she had done for him. Thankfully, God responded to Abigail's obedience and rewarded her more than she could ever have imagined,

So it was, in the morning, when the wine had gone from Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became like a stone. ³⁸ Then it happened, after about ten days, that the Lord struck Nabal, and he died (1Sam. 25:37-38).

And when the servants of David had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her saying, 'David sent us to you, to ask you to become his wife.' ⁴¹ Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, 'Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.' ⁴² So Abigail rose in haste and rode on a donkey, attended by five of her maidens; and she followed the messengers of David, and became his wife (1Sam. 25:40-42).

The obedience and humility of Abigail was also a hallmark of God's prophetesses Deborah (Jgs. 4:4, 14-15; 5:7), Miriam, Huldah, Noadiah, and Anna (cf. Ac. 2:18; 21:9). None of these women felt they needed "equal rights," or special recognition, in order to perform the tasks they were given. Instead, they realized their God-given responsibility to serve others, just as every woman is ordained to do within her own family. It is unfortunate that serving others is looked upon so negatively by some people, especially as Jesus Christ set the example for all of mankind whether they are male or female,

Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life (in service) for his friends (Jn. 15:13; Ed. note in parenthesis).

By this we know love, because he (Christ) laid down his life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren (1Jn. 3:16; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Women have different God-ordained responsibilities and therefore their role is different from men. Men also have God-ordained responsibilities, which are different from those

of women. Consequently, neither men nor women can be equal because their role in the family unit is not the same. It is only the Adversary that creates an environment of competition where one role is viewed as being better or more desirable than another. This wrong focus takes attention away from where it needs to be and the family unit, as well as society as a whole, suffers as a result (see study: The Role of Women in the Church). God has given every woman and every man the “right” to choose whether to obey His word or not, including the different roles that God gave to each. In this sense, everyone has exactly the same rights,

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28; emphasis added).

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor.11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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