

THE BATTLE OF THE SEXES Myth of Reality?

2017

As I walked out the door today for my morning walk, I was grateful for all the blessings God gives me. I was especially thankful for my husband and the role he plays in my life. I find great comfort and safety in his deep love for me that he demonstrates in many ways. As his wife, my role may be different than his but I also love him with all my heart. Since the day we got married, I must say that our love for each other never wavered but it evolved over the years. Oh, the 'fireworks, glitz and glitters' may have faded away at some point – being busy raising kids will do that to a couple! - but our love still remained strong.

As years went by, one by one our three boys left home and we found ourselves back to a 'ménage à deux'. After all those years invested in raising our three boys, we had to reconnect somehow. We rekindled the friendship we had at the beginning. We succeeded in becoming the best of friends and a deeper kind of love for one another blossomed.

We have now been married for forty-six years and I'm very grateful to say that we're still very much in love. Oh, we may have our own little quirks which can prove to be challenging at times, so having a great sense of humor is definitely a plus! Each day is a precious gift God gives us and we never want to take it for granted. So, I can say that everything considered, we make quite a good pair!.. 😊 I wish every couple could say the same thing, but is it too much to wish for in this day and age?..

I was reading recently the following comments from John McArthur¹: *'In our society today, women are being told to be bold, assertive, independent and competitive. To take leadership, exert authority, to be bread winner, to rise to the same function level as men and not take a back seat to anything in that regard. But are women best served by this type of motivation?'* And I am asking myself the same question.

I don't contest that these women's firm stand on this issue may be influenced by the injustice, verbal and physical abuse, admonition, degradation of women by men who abuse their authority and leadership in their home or at work. So, women are fighting back as best as they can, and the result is a culture and society where the word is not as much in 'relationship' but 'individuality'. The consequences are the world as we see it today with many failed marriages, disintegration of families, a general dissatisfaction, restlessness, anxiety, fear and guilt in individuals – both men and women - who look at the whole world through their own eyes screaming for their own rights. But has it always been like that?..

Until the 1900's women had always been confined to the home in the traditional role of a wife and a mother. Every man and woman knew what their respective role was and assumed their responsibilities. The family back then was very different than the one as we know it today, which often consists of 'full-time-career-oriented-working' moms and dads while their kids' favorite pastime is talking, texting or listening to their favorite music on their cell phones, or playing games on their iPads. Sad to say but more often than not, the family today consists of people all living side by side but living in their own little world. We're told that's how it goes nowadays and to accept it. But should we?.. I know some families that don't, and I commend them for that.

I may be wrong but if I'd ask any woman who succeeded in getting promoted to a high level position in the corporate world today on how she got to the top, she'd probably tell me that it wasn't easy. The first probable challenge being to disprove the preconceived idea that may still

exist today that a woman with the same expertise and qualifications can't do the same job as well as or even better than her male counterpart. She would also tell me that she had to invest an incommensurable amount of her personal time and hard work to prove that she was up to the challenge. If she's married, she would also admit that her career very often interfered with her personal and family life.

The stress she puts on herself trying to juggle her numerous responsibilities both at home and at work must be overwhelming at times. I would hope that her motives in pursuing a career were not only for personal achievement, pride, ambition, status or recognition at the expense of her emotional well-being as well as her family's. It would be such a high price to pay...

As the saying goes, '*the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence*'. But is it?.. Men also have a heavy load to carry. Every day they go to work, they need to prove that they're up to their game and can perform well on their job in order to keep it or be promoted. The competition in the workplace is fierce and the stress that ensues could be hard to handle. For the married man also comes the responsibility to protect his family, to provide for the needs of its members, as well as having the pressure of being the best husband and the best father he can be. A woman, especially with young children at home, may think that her husband's workload and responsibilities are small compared to hers and a man may say the same thing about his wife, but until they walk a mile in the other person's shoes, neither of them can really judge.

I must say here that I truly sympathize with the single-moms, the widows and divorcees with children, the moms whose husbands have lost their jobs or for any other reasons are unemployed. The dual role of being the bread-winner and caretaker for their families rests on their shoulders. For the husbands who don't earn enough money to provide for the basic needs for their families, their wives come in and supplement their income either by working full-time or part-time. They don't have the choice of staying home even if they would love to. For these moms I only have a great admiration and I tip my hat to them for their courage, determination and the sacrifices they make to provide for the well-being of their families.

I was born in 1944 near the end of WWII. As a middle child and the only girl in my family, I hung out quite a bit with my two brothers and their friends. Being the only girl in the group, I may have been outnumbered and felt relegated at times, but I've never wished to trade place with them.

As a woman, I can honestly say that most of my life I've always felt good in my own skin. I've never envied the opposite sex except, perhaps, for his physical strength. I've never wanted to usurp his role and never felt the need to prove to myself or to him that I am better than him.

What would be my motives for wanting to be in his shoes, to compete against him, to challenge him at every opportunity I get, and even aim for his job?.. To prove that I'm his equal, not his subordinate?.. To have more power?.. To be recognized in the business world or to attain a higher status in society?.. If these are my motives, I sincerely doubt that it would make me any happier since it would create problems that I hadn't bargained for. Such is life...

While I was growing up, my utmost personal goal in life was to get married, have children and stay at home to raise them. My reason wasn't to perpetuate the stereotype of a stay-at-home mom but because it was truly the desire of my heart. Oh, I could have chosen to stay single or get married and become a nurse, a teacher or whatever other job I wanted to do, but it wouldn't have fulfilled me as this one. However, before I could find the man with whom I would realize my dream, - a prerequisite! - I had to work. I got a degree in secretarial skills and worked for large companies in Montreal. I considered these jobs only as temporary and I was never interested in

pursuing a career. I may add that in those days – 1960's -, no woman would have been offered the position of office manager or president of a company. It would have been unthinkable even if she had the qualifications. Men were the only ones who would be asked to fill these positions.

So, I finally got married to a great and loving man, had three wonderful sons, and the fact that I gave birth to them - which only a woman can do by the way! - is my greatest joy and achievement. However, I can't say that my life as a wife and a mother has always been a walk in the park, and my views on the subject at hand were somewhat shaken when the Feminist Movement started their propaganda in the 1960s and extended well into the 70's.

Their agenda focused on dismantling workplace inequality, such as denial of access to better jobs and salary inequity, via anti-discrimination laws. As such, they sought women's equality on both a political and personal level, which was most probably justified. It wasn't a new phenomenon since in the early 1900's women had already started entering the workforce in larger numbers, demanding better working conditions and wages, seeking higher education and demanding the right to vote.

I don't deny that because of these women, our conditions improved tremendously at different levels. But what I perceived from the Feminist Movement at the time was that my role as a stay-at-home mom had become old-fashioned, insignificant. What I understood from them was *'Get out of your home, moms! A woman's role is not only to give birth, change diapers and feed babies! You can do better than that! Get out there and affirm yourselves! Go get paid for your work!*

At the time, we had two young babies and I was exhausted. My responsibilities as a full-time mom were quite heavy. I realized that even with all the good intentions in the world, the goal I had made for myself to stay home and care for my children was harder than I had anticipated... So, it didn't take much for me to tend a listening ear to the Feminist Movement's claim. I was ready to trade my job for my husband's if only I had the knowledge and qualifications to do it.

However, I understood that even if I would have found work outside the home, I still would have had to take care of our babies, the housework and more after a full day at work. So, the slightest consideration to follow the advice of these feminists was unfathomable. In fact, it wouldn't have helped solve my problem. It would have compounded it instead.

So, after having put aside the woman's liberation call from the Feminist Movement, I was still no further ahead in my search for an inner peace and fulfillment in my life at a time when I needed it the most. After months of searching, God finally revealed Himself to me. I couldn't deny he had touched my heart in a very deep way. It was truly a 'divine revelation' since I couldn't explain how it happened exactly. When I acknowledged that I was a sinner and that Jesus had paid the price for my sins by dying on the cross, I felt humbled and asked for his forgiveness. Immediately, God's plan of redemption by grace was put in motion and no one could have stopped it. I was now in good standing with God. My fellowship with Him had been restored.

At that moment, my perspective on my role as a woman, a wife, a mother and in my life in general took a hundred and eighty degree turn. God became part of my life and that changed everything. I didn't need to conform any longer to the pattern of this world. I simply had to learn from Him and apply his teachings in my life. As a result, I found peace, joy and hope amid a fearful, sad and hopeless world. And that was exciting news! I also found that God is the only One I can truly depend on; he will never leave me or forsake me.²

As society goes nowadays, it seems it's taking giant steps to totally annihilate the role of a man

and a woman as God intended it to be originally, which is for man to be a leader and for woman to be his helpmate.³ Some women categorically refuse to be labelled as such. They think that their role shouldn't be limited to having babies, staying home to raise them and be a helpmate to their husbands. They don't want anything to do with what the Word of God says on this subject. They see it as old-fashioned and demeaning to women. To some degree I can understand their feelings and opinion on this issue. However, I don't see it this way.

Being a mother, a nurturer, a caregiver and a helpmate is an important role that God assigned especially to woman. It shouldn't be relegated in our society. I may also add here that God never said he doesn't love an industrious, enterprising woman⁴ as long as her family comes first and that her work doesn't interfere with the well-being of its members. Why should a woman not be as liberated as these 'women's lib' say they are if she chooses this path for her life?.. William Ross Wallace puts it very well when he wrote in one of his poems, '*For the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world*'. He obviously praised motherhood but for the woman without child, God has also a perfect and important plan for her.

So, is the battle of the sexes a myth or a reality?.. Personally, I say it still exists in certain circles of our society and my concern is mostly directed to the married couples and their families. The children are the ones who oftentimes get the brunt of it. I don't think I'm too far off in saying that rooted deep down in the heart of some women, there's a certain resentment toward men, a desire to master them. The fact that men still personify leadership in our society or in a marriage for that matter may make some women cringe even if they don't always voice it as such. It can be shown either through their actions or attitude toward their husbands or men in general. And when people want to find the cause for these feelings, it's oftentimes associated with emotional or psychological disorder. Psychologists or therapists may have the knowledge and education to deal with psychosomatic symptoms but the problem never seems to be entirely resolved, and they oftentimes turn to prescription drugs to help take care of it.

As for some men, they feel threatened and frustrated by the headstrong women who push their feminist agenda on them. They surely don't like the idea of losing their role as a leader and I can understand their feelings too. So, the tug of war between them continue even if it has somewhat tapered down since the Feminist Movement started their propaganda. Some people say it's a cultural issue, but is it? What is really at the root of all this?

I have to turn to the Word of God and go back to the beginning of time when God created man and woman to find it. Oh, I know this is an unpopular view in this day and age. Some people believe that the story of Adam and Eve is just a tale; it doesn't fit into their mindset so they totally reject it. Or they may think that the Bible and its content is trivial nowadays or inaccurate for that matter. But the Word of God is and will always be true and relevant. God is Almighty and he's the same yesterday, today and forever.⁵

In a nutshell, everything was going well for Adam and Eve in their perfect little paradise. They were content, happy and had a great relationship with God, their Creator. But at some point, they disobeyed Him and because of their action, God banished them from the Garden of Eden. As a result, their relationship with God was broken... And as if that wasn't enough, he said to Eve that he will greatly increase her pains in childbearing and that her desire will be for her husband and that *he will rule over her*⁶ (my italics). And to Adam, he said that through painful toil he will eat his food.⁷ Since then, we all suffer the consequences of their disobedience, and the reason why the world is in such dire straits.

What a gloomy picture I am painting for humanity!.. But there's good news! God in his mercy didn't

kill Adam and Eve even though they deserved it. Why didn't he?... He could have taken Adam and Eve's lives and be done with humanity altogether. But God's sovereignty and power are undisputable and his mercy unfathomable. He chose not to intervene in their freedom of choice. Instead, he was going to offer a plan of redemption by grace which was to lead to Christ.⁸

Oh, I can only hope and pray that more men and women would recognize God's amazing plan for their lives. They would then understand that they both hold the same unique God-given status⁹, but that they each have been given a different but important role; that they were not created to compete but to complement each other. And as a mutual love and respect grow within the couple, they will work together to reach their primary common goal which should be to keep family the fundamental unit in society. As a result, they will make the world a better place. I realize it will be challenging at times, but as they put God first in their lives, he will always be there to help them in their endeavor.

Ultimately though, it will be their decision to make.

¹ Writer, teacher and Pastor of Grace to You Church, CA ² Hebrews 13:5 ³ Genesis 2:7-22 ⁴ Proverbs 31:10-31 ⁵ Hebrews 13:8
⁶ Genesis 3:16 ⁷ Genesis 3:17-19 ⁸ Romans 10:9-13 ⁹ Galatians 3:26-28

© My Walks With God

You may reproduce part of the content of this website for non-commercial purposes only. May not be reproduced or featured on any other websites without permission of My Walks With God. For additional information or to obtain permissions, contact: mywalkswithgod@gmail.com