

The Secret: Creating One's Reality

The Secret's "Law of Attraction" is simply recycled Eastern/New Age philosophy in materialistic garb that appeals to our self-indulgent desires. Former Probe staffer Russ Wise examines the teachings of Rhonda Byrne and her stable of "Master Teachers" to show how they contradict with God's word, and reality.

The Secret has existed throughout the history of mankind. It had been discovered, coveted, suppressed, hidden, lost and recovered. It has been hunted down, stolen, and bought for vast sums of money. Now for the first time in history, *The Secret* is being revealed to the world . . .

"Fragments of a Great Secret have been found in the oral traditions, in literature, in religions and philosophies throughout the centuries. For the first time, all the pieces of *The Secret* come together in an incredible revelation that will be life-transforming for all who experience it."[\[1\]](#)



Knowledge of *The Secret* will bring the knower great wealth, health, joy and for those who persist, their soul mate: everything you have ever wanted. *The Secret* reveals the perennial wisdom of the great teachers and avatars of history: the Law of Attraction. According to Rhonda Byrne, author of *The Secret*, that "secret" (the Law of Attraction) is simply the principle that like attracts like. This Law of Attraction means that when we think positive things or possibly bad things we, as a result, draw those things to ourselves. Another way of putting it is that when we think negatively we will become more negative because we have allowed the negative to be drawn to us.

Rhonda Byrne, a 55 year-old Australian, discovered *The Secret* during a time of great upheaval in her family. Her father, Roland, died in 2004, her business was near bankruptcy, and her relationships were indeed bankrupt. The stress of life was bearing down on her and she found herself in a place where she was receptive to most anything. That "anything" came in the form of a book given her by her daughter Hailey. The book, *The Science of Getting Rich*,[{2}](#) was the beginning of a transformation that would lead Rhonda down the corridors of fame and wealth.

Rhonda declared that "It lit a fire in me; it was exactly the opposite of the way I thought life worked." The rekindled fire within her set her on a quest that ultimately led her to devour much of the occultic literature of our day and then to sit at the feet of many of those "teachers" who deliver its message.

Her discovery of these "great truths" led her to employ her production company to produce a film that would bring this much-sought-after "truth" to the world. The result was *The Secret*, now available in multiple languages.[{3}](#) As of this writing the DVD (only available online) has sold over 1.1 million copies since its release in March 2006. The book was only written after the film had been widely received around the globe. It was released in November 2006 and has of this date (spring 2007) sold over 1.2 million copies. *The Bodhi Tree*, a well known metaphysical bookshop in West Hollywood, reports that *The Secret* has been "its biggest selling item in the 30-year history of our store."[{4}](#) Not bad results for a first time author!

"If *The Secret* had a plot, it might go something like 'Tony Robbins uncovers the Judas Gospel and learns to use the Force.'" [{5}](#) The film is regularly screened at New Age venues including metaphysical group meetings, Unity Churches, and the homes of believers. *The Secret* was well-received on *Oprah*[{6}](#) and it has been touted on *Larry King Live* as well as similar

shows. The prominent discussion of *The Secret* in the media has given the film major cultural traction.

A *Time* article by Jeffrey Ressler states the *The Secret* is the mixing of ancient philosophy found in the conspiratorial escapades of *The Da Vinci Code* and the psychic science (read science fiction) of the cult hit *What the Bleep Do We Know?*[\[7\]](#)

According to the author and creator, Rhonda Byrne, *The Secret* is “a philosophy that literally can change your life and help you take control of your destiny!”[\[8\]](#) Now, if true, that would be like winning the lottery. Ms. Byrne continues, “If you follow its philosophy, you can create the life you want . . .” Ms. Byrne asserts that the Law of Attraction is “the most powerful law in the universe,” and that it is working all the time. “What we do is we attract into our lives the things we want, and that is based on what we’re thinking and feeling.” She says that when we engage our feelings it becomes especially potent. Our emotions super-charge the outcomes we desire! She continues, “It is based on this principle that we are actually creating our own circumstances by the very choices we make in life.”[\[9\]](#)

In an interview with Quantumtouch, the interviewer Julie makes a point regarding the global impact of the film. Ms. Byrne responds by saying that *The Secret* is contained in all the ancient wisdom, no matter what philosophy. It is buried within every one.[\[10\]](#) On the surface this statement sounds quite innocent, but her actual meaning goes much deeper. The idea that this “wisdom is buried within everyone” is an indicator that this belief is about our true divine nature.

One of the Master Teachers of *The Secret*, John Demartini, expounds by saying, “We have a magnificent inner calling, vision, mission, power inside us that we are not honoring and harnessing. This movie brings it to the forefront that we can [harness that power].”[\[11\]](#) The premise of this idea is that “we all have a divine essence within us, and we just need to

get in touch with it. In other words, as panentheists^{12} teach, God is in all of creation, including all human beings, and once a person becomes aware of this, there are no limits to what he can achieve.”^{13}

Master Teachings

The Secret is revealed through some of the most high-profile individuals of our day. They include such notables as Jack Canfield, author of the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series of books. Jack is a thirty-year veteran of metaphysics and helps individuals achieve their personal goals by helping them understand the Law of Attraction.

Another teacher is Neale Donald Walsch, known for this book trilogy *Conversations with God*.^{14} He, too, is a student of metaphysics and teaches that man is divine. John Gray is best known for his popular book *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*. These teachers speak with one voice. Their message is brief, yet simple: *You create your circumstances; if you live in lack it is your fault; you are an expression of divinity; in fact, you are God*. Another of *The Secret* teachers is Fred Alan Wolf, a physicist. He makes a profound statement on [The Secret web site](#): “You! I want to tell you something. You are God in disguise.”

Of the twenty-four *Secret Teachers*, perhaps the most troubling is Rev. Michael Bernard Beckwith. He is the pastor of *Agape International Spiritual Centre* in California. His message is that we are co-creators with God and that our abilities are unlimited. Our potential is divine in nature. Dr. Beckwith is troubling, in my view, because he represents a pseudo-Christianity. He has the greatest ability to be used to deceive those whom God has touched by His Gospel. The Christian who is unable to rightly discern God’s Word will fall prey to such false teaching as found in *The Secret*.

“Truths” That One Cannot Deny

So what is it that *The Secret* teaches that would be harmful to the Christian? In her section on acknowledgements Ms. Byrne names names and she lists several that stand out as instructive. One name, in particular, is Charles Fillmore, the founder of *Unity School of Christianity*[{15}](#) along with his wife Myrtle. Unity is a classic New Age belief system that teaches the divinity of man. Eric Butterworth, a former Unity minister, in his book *Discover the Power Within You*, underscores the New Age premise that Jesus taught the divinity of mankind. Butterworth is of interest because Oprah Winfrey proclaims he is her spiritual mentor.[{16}](#)

Perhaps the most revealing of the occult connection between Rhonda Byrne and her stable of Master Teachers is Ester Hicks who channels a non-physical being named Abraham.[{17}](#) Hicks is but one thread in the occult pattern that emerges in teachings of *The Secret*. Hicks' story is similar to that of Helen Schucman, the channel of [A Course in Miracles](#).[{18}](#)

The premise, *whatever we think about and thank about, we bring about* is central to understanding the Law of Attraction. In Christian circles this concept is known as “name it and claim it,” where the individual simply professes a desire and then claims that God will provide it. This is a Christianized form of an occult “truth.” Ms. Byrne and her Master Teachers are more than willing to use scripture to make their point. They ask us to turn to Matthew 21:22 and Mark 11:24 where Jesus tells His disciples, “Whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.” A common mistake made by those who jump on the metaphysical bandwagon is that they often overlook the whole counsel of scripture. It is instructive that Ms. Byrne did not ask her readers to consider James 4:3 where the writer says, “You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.”

The question the Christian should be asking himself at this

point is this: How does one *ask* correctly? Verse 4 offers us a glimpse of God's truth. "Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." James then draws our attention to verse 10 where it says, "Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you." The implication here is not for us to command God to act because of our asking or believing, but to allow Him to exalt us because of our humility. This teaching would not fit very well within the context of Rhonda Byrne's *The Secret*.

A central teaching of The Law of Attraction is that *nothing can come into your experience unless you summon it through persistent thoughts.*{19} Another of the Master Teachers, Dr. Joe Vitale, believes that "Everything that surrounds you right now in your life, including the things you're complaining about, you've attracted." {20} According to Ms. Byrne, our feelings are our greatest tool to help us create the positive things in our lives. She says, "Your thoughts are the primary cause of everything." She continues by stating, "Your thoughts determine your frequency, and your feelings tell you immediately what frequency you are on." {21}

Ms. Byrne says that we are "the most powerful transmission tower in the Universe. In simple terms, all energy vibrates at a frequency. Being energy, you also vibrate at a frequency, and what determines your frequency at any time is whatever you are thinking and feeling. All the things you want are made of energy, and they are vibrating too. *Everything* is energy." {22} Another way of stating this "truth" is to say that *as you focus on what you want, you are changing the vibration of the atoms of that thing, and you are causing it to vibrate to You.* I know this is a mind-blowing concept, but there's more! Ms. Byrne states that one of the most magnificent teachings of *The Secret* is that "You are energy, and cannot be created or destroyed. Energy just changes form. And that means You! The true essence of You, the pure energy of You, has always been

and always will be. You can never not be.”{23}

“When you are feeling good thoughts, it is communication back from the Universe saying, ‘You are thinking good thoughts.’ Likewise, when you are feeling bad, you are receiving communication back from the Universe saying, ‘You are thinking bad thoughts.’”{24} Our feelings about something turbo-charge our outcome. In other words, we can purposely use our *feelings* to transmit an even more powerful frequency, by adding *feeling* to what we are wanting.{25} Michael Bernard Beckwith clarifies this concept by stating, “You can begin right now to feel healthy. You can begin to feel prosperous. You can begin to feel love that’s surrounding you, even if it’s not there. And what will happen is the universe will correspond to the nature of your song. The universe will correspond to the nature of that inner feeling and manifest, because that’s the way you feel.” In other words, don’t allow your perceived reality to convince you otherwise, but step out and create your new reality by simply saying it is so and the Universe (God) will bring it about. Essentially, we are seeking a god to do our bidding as we command.

Marci Shimoff, another of the Master Teachers, makes this observation: “Once you begin to understand and truly master your thoughts and feelings, that’s when you see how you create your own reality. That’s where your freedom is, that’s where all your power is.”{26} The Bible offers a different exhortation to the Christian at this juncture. We read in 2 Corinthians 10:5 that we are to destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. Our purpose is not to use our thought life to enhance ourselves, but to bring our thought lives into obedience and submit ourselves to a holy God. This thought is totally absent from *The Secret*!

Shimoff adds that we should consider if the Universe is a friendly place for us to hang out. Ms. Byrne says that knowing the Law of Attraction, we would have to say that the Universe

is, indeed, a most friendly place where we can create our own reality. *The Secret* (and New Age thought in general) encourages its adherents to practice affirmation as a way to channel one's thought life to a place where it will benefit the individual. Ms. Byrne suggests the following affirmation: "This is a magnificent Universe. The Universe is bringing all good things to me. The Universe is conspiring for me in all things. The Universe is supporting me in everything I do. The Universe meets all my needs immediately." [\[27\]](#)

Lisa Nichols, also a Master Teacher, informs us that the first step to achieving our desires is to *ask*. "Make a command of the Universe. Let the Universe know what you want. The Universe responds to your thoughts." [\[28\]](#) It seems that if one were to "command" God (the Universe) to produce all that he desired and wanted, he might prefer a different outcome. In my view, the secret to living the Christian life is to desire the things that God desires for us rather than making a command to fulfill one's lusts. Dr. Joe Vitale offers this quip: "This is really fun. It's like having the Universe as your catalogue. It is You placing your order with the Universe. It's really that easy." [\[29\]](#)

Nichols continues by stating that the second step in achieving all that we want is to *believe*. "Believe that it is already yours. Have what I love to call unwavering faith. Believing in the unseen." In the moment you ask, and *believe* and *know* you already have it in the unseen, the entire Universe shifts to bring it into the seen. In other words, God/The Universe immediately tunes to your frequency and then because of the Law of Attraction, he is obligated to supply all your wants. Vitale makes another head-scratching comment when he states, "The Universe will start to rearrange itself to make it happen for you. You don't need to know how it's going to come about. You don't need to know how the Universe will arrange itself." [\[30\]](#) Just simply believe!

The third step according to Nichols is to *receive* that which

we have commanded. Nichols states that an important part of our receiving is for us to *feel* wonderful about it. Beckwith comments, “This is a feeling Universe. If you just intellectually believe something, but you have no corresponding feeling underneath that, you don’t necessarily have enough power to manifest what you want in your life. You have to feel it.” I can understand that! I recognize that I have limited power. What power I may have is only that which God allows me through the Holy Spirit to do His good will—*not mine*. I also recognize that no matter how wonderful I “feel,” my feeling about something is not what is going to make it right in God’s sight. It is only when I apply His will to the matter that I see appropriate results.

The premise that mankind and the impersonal Universe are interconnected is widely taught within occultic, New Age, literature. They teach that all-is-One. Man is an integral part of *The Supreme Mind* and he is seen as being one with it, to the point that he *is* the source of the Universe.[\[31\]](#)

The Universe and The Higher Self

The concept of an impersonal energy or force that is the “Universe” is not a new thought. It has been around for a long time and has been recognized in numerous belief systems that do not reflect God’s truth.

Gary Zukav teaches that we should trust the Universe because it is working toward our best and most appropriate end. He adds that if we do trust the Universe it will provide all that we desire: “Let your higher self complete its task.[\[32\]](#) In other words, allow the Universe (God) to complete its work in you as you come to fully realize that your “Higher Self” is the Divine Teacher.

Wayne Dyer helps clarify the role that the Higher Self plays in our understanding of who we truly are. In his text *Your Sacred Self*, he makes this observation: “When you consult your

higher self, you learn that you are a part of the same divine essence that connects all of us to the source of spirit. There is one God, one source with many different manifestations.”{33} Dyer says that we relate to others in “terms of the divineness that is flowing through them, which is a manifestation of the energy supporting the physical world. On the path of the sacred way, you experience that force flowing through you and others.”{34} He declares that we short-circuit the manifestation of our Higher Selves (the divine spirit within) when we practice a toxic lifestyle. A toxic lifestyle would be one that denied man’s personal divinity. Dyer goes on to say, “To allow your highest self to triumph in this conflict between purity and toxicity, you must let go of any idea that at your core you are evil or a sinner.”{35}

To sum it up Ms. Byrne makes this observation: “So whichever way you look at it, the result is still the same. We are One. We are all connected, and we are all part of the One Energy Field, or the One Supreme Mind, or the One Consciousness, or the One Creative Source. Call it whatever you want, but we are all One.”{36} The message of *The Secret* is plain for all to see: “You are God in a physical body. You are Spirit in the flesh. You are Eternal Life expressing itself as you. You are a cosmic being. You are all power. You are magnificence. You are the creator, and you are creating the creation of You on this planet.”{37}

The Higher Self and Guidance

Rhonda Byrne and her *Secret* Teachers have played their metaphysical hand close to their vest. However, they have allowed their secret teaching to come through on occasion. Ultimately, yielding your life to the Universe and discovering your Higher Self implies that you must at some point submit to its deepest presence.

Ms. Byrne confides that “To love yourself fully, you must

focus on a new dimension of You. You must focus on the presence inside of You. Take a moment and sit still. Focus on feeling the life presence inside you. As you focus on the presence within, it will begin to reveal itself to You. It is a feeling of pure love and bliss, and it is perfection. That presence is the *real* You.”{38}

Ms. Byrne offers her viewer and reader a sure-fire avenue to connecting with the “Presence” within. She states without reservation that all teachers in her film and in her book use meditation to quiet their minds so they can be in full harmony with the Universe. She says every teacher uses meditation as a daily practice. She then adds that “it wasn’t until I discovered *The Secret* that I realized how powerful meditation can be.”{39}

To hear the Master Teachers of *The Secret* tell it, one would think that discovering one’s Higher Self or inner teacher is the high point of spiritual or self discovery. In her book *The Possible Human*, Jean Houston makes this observation regarding the Presence. Ms. Houston is guiding her students through an exercise and she tells them that

“In the room is a Master Teacher of the skill—this person or being is your Master Teacher, and in the time that follows this teacher will give you deep and potent instructions to help you improve your skill. The Master Teacher may speak in words or not. Teachings may present themselves as feelings. However this being works with you, the learning on your part will be effective and deep. Once you become familiar with your Master Teacher and begin to trust and act on the advice and knowledge that is imparted, you will find it increasingly easy to have access to this kind of deep learning . . .”

Houston fully discloses the true nature of this inner Presence that Ms. Byrne alludes to. Apparently unable to contain her enthusiasm, she further states,

“The Master Teacher is a potent reminder of our inner ‘allies’ and may often provide much more teaching and wisdom than we had intended when we set out on this journey. And the exercise may also lead you to the discovery that the inner realms have their own subtle machinations for guiding you . . . we must also listen to them, for they have urgent messages to send us. If we cooperate with them—that is, with our own deepest knowing—we begin to notice an astounding change in our lives.”{40}

If this is confusing, allow me to sum it up this way. When you enter the realm of spiritual discovery through meditative practices or some other psycho-spiritual methodology you will at some point find yourself face to face with a demon masquerading as your inner guide or Master Teacher. It is instructive to note that this inner guide or spirit guide will at some point in time bring you an urgent message from the “other side.” The subtle deception that lies in wait for its innocent prey is not discriminating. It will consume whomever it finds to seduce.

Spiritual Discernment

Earlier I mentioned that I believe Michael Bernard Beckwith to be a troubling figure in the unfolding of *The Secret* and its Law of Attraction. Rhonda Byrne became the “Big Get” for many in the world of television and the media. Oprah Winfrey was no different. After Ms. Byrne appeared on Oprah she realized her dreams as her film and book sales went through the roof. After her segment on Oprah *The Secret* was officially out and the book instantly became *the* bestseller literally overnight.

Michael Bernard Beckwith appeared with Ms. Byrne on Oprah and became an instant celebrity. His second Oprah appearance included the taking of questions from audience members. One of particular note was a lady named Maureen. Her question centered around her being a Christian. Maureen stated that her

family puts their faith in God, and that it seemed to her that *The Secret* teaches that we should put our faith in ourselves. "And so," she said, "I was wondering, is God anywhere in this?"

Here is what Beckwith had to say to Maureen: "The Secret involves the laws of the universe and they, in turn, describe the nature of how God works. [Jesus] said, 'Pray believing that ye have, that ye may receive.' That's *The Secret* in a nutshell. Pray believing and feeling and sensing that you already have it, and then you're available to receive it."

The disturbing part of his answer came when he offered this thoughtful conclusion to Maureen's question: "*The Secret* isn't about contradicting religion—it supports it. It actually goes underneath the culture and explains to you the sacred laws that these wonderful teachers have brought to us," he said. According to Beckwith, *The Secret* is about supporting the great spiritual traditions in a more modern form. "It really is just putting Christianity, Judaism, all the great teachings into a current vernacular."

He smoothed the rippling waters created by her question, and by side-stepping her real concern he offered her a decoy. His implication was that the archaic teachings and misinterpretations of the Bible can no longer be held as the standard of truth, but this new generation of believers is looking for ways to better connect with spiritual truth.

Sadly, there are a multitude of Maureens in the greater Christian church who may be easily persuaded by the decoys of spiritual heresy. It was interesting to see Oprah turn in her chair and catch Maureen's eye and declare that she is a Christian, thereby implying that the teachings of *The Secret* as delivered by Beckwith are rock solid Christian principles.[{41}](#)

The greater "spiritual traditions" referred to by Beckwith are

no less than the perennial philosophy and ancient wisdom taught by proponents of New Age thought and organizations like the Rosicrucians and other occult groups. The Rosicrucians teach that members will “achieve a gradual inner awakening, leading to a permanent awareness of the unity of all creation and your personal relationship with the ‘oneness’ of the universe.”{42}

Lost in Commonsenseville!?

Deception always comes packaged in a veneer of truth. Otherwise it would not be acceptable! *The Secret* is no different. There are several aspects of the teaching that would be good and right to exhibit in one’s life. Here are some examples:

1. *We should be grateful.* Christians should be grateful in all things. The scriptures use the word “contentment.” Philippians 4:11 tells us that we are to be content in whatever state we find ourselves. In regards to the teaching of *The Secret* I found this verse particularly interesting. The verse begins, “Not that I complain of want . . .” My reading of *The Secret* reveals just that. My wants and desires must be brought into manifestation because I simply *ask*. Ms. Byrne makes this observation: “It is impossible to bring more into your life if you are feeling ungrateful about what you have. Why? Because the thoughts and feelings you emit as you feel ungrateful are all negative emotions.” The following verses (4:12-13) in Philippians offer us a glimpse into the meaning of the real secret to life: “I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance, and want. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.” In contrast, the teaching of *The Secret* is that by expressing gratitude we increase our opportunity to receive more.{43}

2. *We should give thanks.* Above all, the Christian should be thankful because of what Jesus did for him on the cross.

However, there are those who are less than thankful. Romans 1:20 tells us that we have no excuse of not knowing that God exists because of His creation. Verse 21 says, "Although they knew God they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools . . ."

Colossians 3:15-17 offers new believers this exhortation:

"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts . . . And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

Michael Bernard Beckwith says that we are to sing our own song. The scripture seems clear that our song is to glorify God rather than ourselves. Beckwith comments, "You can begin to feel the love that's surrounding you, even if its not there. And what will happen is the universe will correspond to the nature of your song." [{44}](#) In other words the Universe—God—will comply with the commands in "our song."

3. *We should give liberally.* It is without question that the Christian should be a generous giver because he has been given so much. 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 offers this truth:

"The point is this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work."

On the other hand, *The Secret* teaches that "giving is a powerful action to bring more money into your life, because when you are giving you are saying, 'I have plenty.'" [{45}](#) The

principle here, for those who follow the teachings of the Law of Attraction, is to be positive in your actions and thereby send the correct frequency or vibration into the Universe so you can get more. In my view, the biblical standard is far more pleasing to a holy God.

4. *We should focus on the good in others.* The Christian is to consider others better than himself and not become jaded. Philippians 2:3 offers this counsel:

Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Here once again, *The Secret* or the Law of Attraction is contrary to the teachings of Jesus. Marci Shimoff makes this revealing statement: "But for relationships to really work, we need to focus on what we appreciate about the other person, not what we're complaining about."[\[46\]](#) On the surface this admonition sounds really great; however, as we have seen before in the Law of Attraction, the actor's actions are really all about getting what he wants. Shimoff continues her comment, "When we're complaining about those things we're only getting more of those things." The dynamics of inter-personal relationships do seem to agree with Shimoff's premise: if we're less than adorable we're going to get that reflected back to us by others. I agree that this may likely be the case. But our doing so as a follower of *The Secret* is to multiply our chances at *getting* what we want rather than looking after the interests of others.

5. *We should praise and bless our enemies.* The scripture clearly teaches that the Christian is to bless others.[\[47\]](#) The Christian who hears this idea from the stable of teachers under Rhonda Byrne will likely believe that *The Secret* is in alignment with God's Word. But not so fast! According to Lisa Nichols, we are to recognize the beauty in those things around

us and then “bless and praise them.” Ms. Byrne offers this understanding of blessing: “Lisa’s wise words, to ‘praise and bless’ the things around you, are worth their weight in gold. When you are blessing or praising you are on the highest frequency of love. In the Bible, the Hebrews used the act of blessing to bring forth health, wealth, and happiness.” In other words, we should confer our blessing so we might gain prosperity! Another head-shaking comment follows the above statement: “Praising and blessing dissolves all negativity, so praise and bless your enemies.”[\[48\]](#) Blessing is an important part of the Christian life. We are blessed to be a blessing. Psalm 128:1 and 4 say, “Blessed is every one who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways! Lo, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord.” The Psalmist draws our attention to another truth that *The Secret* chooses to ignore. Ms. Byrne’s worldview and that of all likeminded teachers discounts the precept that one should *fear the Lord*. In their view, the “Lord”, the Universe, is not to be feared, but to be commanded to act on their behalf and bring them the riches they desire.

Finding Our Way in Commonsenseville

In the Law of Attraction and *The Secret* it is difficult to discern the occultic trappings when our focus is on such commonsense teachings as seen above. However, for the discerning it becomes clear that the perceived “truths” taught as *The Secret* are in reality false teachings for the Christian. They do not line up with God’s Word. They are out of focus and agreement.

The Secret is the latest in a series of examples that are used by the enemy of truth to nullify God’s authoritative Word. A previous film that made its way into the minds of many unsuspecting viewers was *What the Bleep!?*, a 2004 film dealing with much of the same material as *The Secret*. There have been numerous books touted by Oprah Winfrey and others who sing the praises of the same world view.[\[49\]](#)

Romans 12:1-2 offers us God's truth in light of the emotional feelings encouraged in *The Secret*. Paul exhorts his brothers,

I appeal to you therefore by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Note that Paul did not say that we should consult our feelings about the matter, but that our spiritual worship is to present our bodies as a sacrifice to the Lord. The message of *The Secret* is not selflessness, but selfishness and self indulgence.

The discerning Christian must not only become aware of such cultural shifts as noted above, but he must be well-informed of the underlying falsity of such views—to judge rightly using the scripture as his guiding light. Our adversary is not asleep at the switch. He is looking for those whom he may devour by his cunning deception. The challenge for the Christian is to remain true to the scripture and faithful to the end. Our life's purpose is to glorify our Father. Jesus clarified this truth by saying, "By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples."[\[50\]](#) Then Jesus added,

And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you sent. I glorified thee on earth, having accomplished the work which thou gave me to do; and now, Father glorify thou me in thy own presence with the glory which I had with thee before the world was made.[\[51\]](#)

We have seen by the above information that the purpose of the Christian life is to glorify God—not one's self. It is not about garnering the wealth of the world, or to live in perfect

health. Our true motivation in all that we do is to honor our Creator and to point others to the mercies and goodness of a loving Father.

Author's Comment:

This article is dedicated to Maureen who appeared on Oprah 2/16/2007, and the other Maureens who desire to know if the message of *The Secret* is one that they might incorporate into their Christian lives. My prayer is that this article will help them discern God's truth and then apply it in their lives. Proverbs 4:23

Notes

1. www.thesecret.tv/home-synopsis.html
2. Wattles, Wallace, *The Science of Getting Rich*, 1910. For a complete manuscript see: blog.marcacetta.com/blog/files/the_science_of_getting_rich.pdf
3. Language translations: German, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Japanese, Chinese.
4. www.time.com/time/arts/article/0,8599,1573136,00.html
5. Karin Klein, Self Help Gone Nutty, *LA Times*, Feb. 13, 2007 tinyurl.com/2bldwp
6. From the Oprah.com website: "*One Week Later: The Reaction to 'The Secret'*". . . One week later...the reaction to The Secret! Your emails poured in and Oprah.com went off the charts! The secret to making more money, losing weight, falling in love, landing your dream job...and you want more! The questions, the successes and the lives changed. Stories you have to hear! A follow-up to the show everybody is talking about! Talk about this show." <http://tinyurl.com/39jkxf>
7. What the Bleep!?, www.whatthebleep.com/whatthebleep/ The movie is greatly influenced by the teachings of J. Z. Knight (Ramtha). The three producers of the film were involved with The Ramtha School of Enlightenment and Ms. Knight had creative control over the film. In reality the film was nothing more

than an infomercial for Ms. Knight and her school.

www.ramtha.com/default.asp

8. The Secret comes to Oprah, 2/8/2007,

blog.marcacchetta.com/blog/2007/02/the_secret_come.html#more

9. Ibid.

10. www.Quantumtouch.groupee.net

11. www.newsobserver.com/105/story/538825.html

12. This universal arrangement is not *pantheism* (all is God), but panentheism, (God *in* all things and beings) a term devised by Karl C. F. Krause (1781-1832) to describe his thought. It is best known for its use by Charles Hartshorne and recently by Matthew Fox. Panentheism says that all is in God, somewhat as if God were the ocean and we were fish. If one considers what is in God's body to be part of God, then we can say that God is all there is and then some. The universe is God's body, but God's awareness or personality is greater than the sum of all the parts of the universe. All the parts have some degree of freedom in co-creating with God. At the start of its momentary career as a subject, an experience is God-as the divine initial aim. As the experience carries on its choosing process, it is a freely aiming reality that is not strictly God, since it departs from God's purpose to some degree. Yet everything is within God. www.websyte.com/alan/pan.htm

13. www.lighthouse trailsresearch.com Napoleon Hill made the statement, "Whatever your mind can conceive and can believe, it can achieve" popular in his book *Think and Grow Rich*.

14. See our article on Neale Donald Walsch:

<http://christianinformation.org/article.asp?artID=63>

15. See our article on Unity:

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16. Eric Butterworth, *Discover the Power Within You*, (New York, Harper & Row 1968). Also see our article on Oprah:

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17. See: Acknowledgments – Inspirational Teachings, Byrne, Rhonda, *The Secret*, p. xv.

www.abraham-hicks.com/teachings_brief.php,

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18. Helen Schucman, *A Course in Miracles*. Article, Kenneth Wapnick, *Awaken From the Dream*, (Roscoe, N. Y., Foundation for A.C.I.M. 1987) p. 2. Note the hyperlink in the text to our article on *A Course in Miracles*.
19. Rhonda Byrne, *The Secret*, (New York, Atria Books 2006; Hillsboro, OR, Beyond Words Publishing 2006) p. 28.
20. Ibid., p. 27.
21. Ibid., p. 31.
22. Ibid., p. 156.
23. Ibid., p. 159. See also James Redfield, *The Celestine Prophecy*, (New York, Warner Books 1993) p. 42. "In other words, the basic stuff of the universe, at its core, is looking like a kind of pure energy that is malleable to human intention and expectation in a way that defies our old mechanistic model of the universe—as though our expectation itself causes our energy to flow out into the world and affect other energy systems."
24. Ibid., p. 33. Betty Eadie, *Embraced by the Light* (Placerville, CA, Gold Leaf Press 1992), p. 57-58. Also see our article on Ms. Eadie: tinyurl.com/34kxv8
25. Byrne, p. 35; Redfield, p. 153.
26. Byrne, p. 39.
27. Ibid., p. 40.
28. Ibid., p. 47.
29. Ibid., p. 48.
30. Ibid., p. 51.
31. Ibid., p. 160.
32. Gary Zukav, *The Seat of The Soul* (New York, A Fireside Book, 1990), p. 240.
33. Wayne Dyer, *The Sacred Self* (New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 1995), p. 237; Redfield, p. 148, "Our higher self, our evolutionary identity."
34. Ibid., p. 237.
35. Ibid., p. 287.
36. Byrne, p. 162; Fritjof Capra, *The Tao of Physics* (Boulder, Colorado, Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1975), p. 130-131, 307.

37. Byrne, p. 164.
38. Ibid., p. 173.
39. Ibid., p. 23. Also see our article on Meditation, christianinformation.org/article.asp?artID=78. See also Psalm 1:2, Joshua 1:8.
40. Jean Houston, *The Possible Human* (Boston, J.P. Tarcher, Inc., 1982), p. 178-180; Zukav, pp. 217, 237; Willis Harman, *Higher Creativity* (Los Angeles, Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc., 1984), pp.108-109.
41. See our article on Oprah, christianinformation.org/article.asp?artID=103.
42. AMROC website: "On the Spiritual Level: Achieve a gradual inner awakening, leading to a permanent awareness of the unity of all creation and your personal relationship with the "oneness" of the universe. This leads to an integration of all aspects of your being. From this spiritual foundation, from your connection with the greater whole, everything else flows. The Rosicrucian studies aid you in developing a workable and practical philosophy of life and the inner peace that comes from understanding the nature of the universe and your relationship to it.
www.rosicrucian.org/about/mastery/mastery04potential.html.
<https://www.theseecret.org/mastery/benefit.html>
43. Byrne, p. 74, 77.
44. Ibid., p. 35.
45. Ibid., p. 107-108.
46. Ibid., p. 121.
47. Luke 6:28.
48. Byrne, p. 152.
49. See our article on Oprah: christianinformation.org/article.asp?artID=103.
50. John 15:8.
51. John 17:3-5.

“Help Me Figure Out Why My Relationship Hurts!”

I checked out the article where you and that guy were making comparisons between [Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus](#), and the Bible. That discussion really interested me because I am reading *Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus*, and I began thinking as I was reading it and I developed a theory... First I thought about older people (ages 55 and up). I have seen so many of those older couples still holding hands and being very loving together. I found my self asking what is so different in relationships today and relationships in the fifties and earlier? Why do so many relationships fail today and not in those yester years? I came to the conclusion that Christianity must have been the key. Not only does the Bible provide instruction for healthy relationships, it also provides people (believers) with a feeling of fulfillment. Never before have I ever really understood the real reason for the verse “Do not be unequally yoked.” It causes a real strain on relationships, and I have been through many unmeaningful and heartbreaking relationships. I was wondering since you have read the whole book *Men are From Mars and Women are from Venus* if you could help me with my most recent relationship problem.

I have a great boyfriend—he is very beautiful on the outside and inside, he is considerate in fulfilling my needs, buying me gifts, and taking on his fair share of the cooking and cleaning responsibilities. I really love him for that. I know that he likes me or else he wouldn't be with me and he says that when I ask him how he feels about me. Actually he says you know how I feel about you why else would I be with you, and if I say how I feel about you too much it won't mean as

much. How should I go about telling him that it means the world to me every time I hear (which is totally not enough and I feel unfulfilled because of it) him say how much he cares about me and I really need some reassurance right now about his feelings or I will have to leave him because I am very fragile right now and every day I grow more and more insecure in how I feel as to where I am in our relationship. I am even starting to question if he really wants me to go with him when he asks me if I would like to go out with him and a friend for lunch. Then he gets mad and says I wouldn't ask you if I didn't want you to come. I constantly wish he would just give me some reassurance, any kind, because I feel myself hurting soooo much, and I know he is hurting too because he doesn't like to see me sad. I think that he has a really hard time expressing how he feels towards me because he has been single for 30 years now (he has had long relationships that end badly) and like MAFMWAFV says that men start to love people and they pull away so they can find their own self because they are afraid they will lose their sense of independence. Do you think that he is really struggling with something like that or what do you think I should do to solve my problem? I really sincerely love him and I don't want him to slip away because I don't understand or know something that I should. When I am done my formatted and fully (to the best of my knowledge and understanding) completed correlation between the Bible and MAFMWAFV I will send you a copy. I know you probably get about a million emails a day so if you can't answer mine I want you to know that I feel a little better just having gotten all of this off of my chest. Thank You Sue!

Wow, sounds like you have your emotional plate full. Question: are you living with your boyfriend? (Otherwise, why would you mention "his fair share of the cooking and cleaning responsibilities"?) If you are, no wonder you're so insecure! Tell me, what are you getting out of this relationship? It sounds like you're giving him the benefits of having a wife without requiring that he give you the commitment of a

husband.

That's a big reason why God wants us to be married before setting up house. It sets us up for major pain to give ourselves away without a foundation of trust.

Trust is everything, and trust is closely tied to commitment. If I were you, I would pull waaaaaay back and stop giving yourself away without a commitment. If he loves you, he will pursue you and marry you. If he's just "enjoying the milk without buying the cow," (to use an old expression), then if you leave and he doesn't pursue you then you will know he is using you. Even if he's fond of you, he's using you. With your permission. (Ouch!) Which is not a way to demonstrate self-respect.

I would also suggest that you read Gary Chapman's book "The 5 Love Languages," and ask him to read it or listen to it on tape. Sounds like your love language is verbal affirmation, and he needs to know that you need to HEAR verbal appreciation and affirmations of love to feel loved. I cannot tell you how disrespectful it sounds to hear the excuse "If I tell you all the time how I feel about you it won't mean as much." Ask him why he eats all the time instead of only at Thanksgiving. I mean, eating all the time diminishes the meaning of eating, right? Wrong! It nourishes his body, just as hearing "I love you and I appreciate you" nourishes your heart and your relationship.

I hope these observations help. I am concerned for you because it sounds like you're the one paying emotionally in this relationship, and you're treating yourself poorly. I like what psychologist [Dr. Phil](#) says: "We teach people how to treat us." Sounds to me like you're teaching your boyfriend that it's OK to get what he wants from you without any reciprocal commitment on his part. Doesn't sound fair—or healthy—to me! And for SURE it isn't what God commands in scripture, which is a way to protect and provide for women's fragility and need

for security.

You might also want to read Dr. Laura's (Schlessinger) *The 10 Stupid Things Women Do to Mess Up Their Lives*. It's a good read because it is consistent with biblical values. . . such as the value of marriage and purity and commitment and servant leadership.

I hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

Ten Lies of Feminism: A Christian Perspective

Sue Bohlin examines how this prevalent view of women measures up from a biblical perspective.

This essay examines the ten lies of feminism that Dr. Toni Grant suggests in her book *Being a Woman*.[{1}](#)

At its inception, the feminist movement, accompanied by the sexual revolution, made a series of enticing, exciting promises to women. These promises sounded good, so good that many women deserted their men and their children or rejected the entire notion of marriage and family, in pursuit of "themselves" and a career. These pursuits, which emphasized self-sufficiency and individualism, were supposed to enhance a woman's quality of life and improve her options, as well as her relations with men. Now, a decade or so later, women have had to face the fact that, in many ways, feminism and liberation made promises that could not be delivered.[{2}](#)

Lie #1: Women Can Have It All

The first lie is that women can have it all. We were fed an illusion that women, being the superior sex, have an inexhaustible supply of physical and emotional energy that enable us to juggle a career, family, friendships and volunteer service. Proponents of feminism declared that not only *can* women do what men do, but we *ought* to do what men do. Since men can't do what women can do—have babies—this put a double burden on women. It wasn't enough that women were already exhausted from the never-ending tasks of child-rearing and homemaking; we were told that women needed to be in the work force as well, contributing to the family financially.

Scripture presents a different picture for men and women. The Bible appears to make a distinction between each gender's primary energies. The commands to women are generally in the realm of our relationships, which is consistent with the way God made women to be primarily relational, being naturally sensitive to others and usually valuing people above things. Scripture never forbids women to be gainfully employed; in fact, the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31 is engaged in several part-time business ventures, in real estate and manufacturing. Nonetheless, it is the excellent care of her husband, her children, her home and her community that inspires the praise she is due. Titus 2 instructs older women to mentor younger women, and teach them to care for their husbands and children and homemaking responsibilities. The God-given strengths of a woman were given to bring glory to God through her womanly differences

Lie #2: Men and Women are Fundamentally the Same

Apart from some minor biological differences, feminism strongly suggested that males and females are fundamentally the same. Culture, it announced, was responsible for turning

human blank slates into truck-wielding boys and doll-toting girls. This lie has been very effective at changing the culture. My husband Ray and I offer a seminar at Probe's *Mind Games* conferences called "Guys Are From Mars, Girls Are From Venus," where we go over the major differences between the sexes. Men, for instance, tend to be more goal-oriented and competitive, where women are more relational and cooperative. Men are active; women are verbal. This is intuitively obvious to the adults in our audience, but it is often new news to high school and college students. We find adults nodding with smiles of recognition, some of them nudging each other in the ribs. In the younger members of the audience, though, we see "the lights come on" in their eyes as they are exposed to something that is obvious and they probably already knew was true, but feminism's worldview had been feeding them a lie. They have been so immersed in this cultural myth that they had accepted it without question. One young man came up to me after a session and said he totally disagreed with me, that there are no real differences between males and females. I asked him if he treated his guy friends the same way he treated his girl friends, and he said, "Of course!" I asked, "And this doesn't cause you any problems?" He said no. With a smile, I suggested he come talk to me in ten years after he'd had a chance to experience real life!

The truth is that God created significant differences between males and females. We can see evidence of this in the fact that Scripture gives different commands for husbands and wives, which are rooted in the differing needs and divinely-appointed roles of men and women.

Lie #3: Desirability is Enhanced by Achievement

The third lie of feminism is that the more a woman achieves, the more attractive and desirable she becomes to men. The importance of achievement to a man's sense of self—an element

of masculinity that is, we believe, God-given—was projected onto women. Feminism declared that achieving something, making a mark in the world, was the only measure of success that merited the respect of others. Women who believed this myth found themselves competing with men. Now, competition is appropriate in the business and professional world, but it's disastrous in relationships.

Men do respect and admire accomplished women, just as they do men, but personal relationships operate under a different set of standards. Men most appreciate a woman's unique feminine attributes: love, sensitivity, her abilities to relate. Women have been shocked to discover that their hard-won accomplishments haven't resulted in great relationships with men. Sometimes, being overeducated hampers a woman's ability to relate to men. Men's egos are notoriously fragile, and they are by nature competitive. It's threatening to many men when a woman achieves more, or accomplishes more, or knows more than they do. Feminism didn't warn women of the double standard in relationships: that achievement can and does reap benefits in our careers, but be a stumbling block in our relationships.

The question naturally arises, then, Is it bad for a woman to have a higher degree of education than the man in a relationship? Is it troublesome when a woman is smarter than the man? Should a woman "dumb down" in order to get or keep her man? In the words of the apostle Paul, "May it never be!" A woman living up to the potential of her God-given gifts brings glory to God; it would be an insult to our gracious God to pretend those gifts aren't there. The answer is for women to understand that many men feel threatened and insecure about this area of potential competition, and maintain an attitude of humility and sensitivity about one's strengths; as Romans exhorts us, "Honor[ing] one another above yourselves" (12:10).

Not surprisingly, God already knew about the disparity between the sexes on the issue of achievement. Throughout the Bible, men are called to trust God as they achieve whatever God has

called them to do. It's important for men to experience personal significance by making a mark on the world. But God calls women to trust Him in a different area: in our relationships. A woman's value is usually not in providing history-changing leadership and making great, bold moves, but in loving and supporting those around us, changing the world by touching hearts. Once in a while, a woman does make her mark on a national or global scale: consider the biblical judge Deborah, Golda Meir, Margaret Thatcher, and Indira Gandhi. But women like these are the exception, not the rule. And we don't have to feel guilty for not being "exceptional."

Lie #4: The Myth of One's "Unrealized Potential"

Lie number four says that all of us—but especially women—have tremendous potential that simply *must* be realized. To feminism's way of thinking, just being average isn't acceptable: you must be *great*.

This causes two problems. First, women are deceived into thinking they are one of the elite, the few, the special. Reality, though, is that most women are ordinary, one of the many. All of us are uniquely gifted by God, but few women are given visible, high-profile leadership roles, which tend to be the only ones that feminism deems valuable. We run into trouble when we're operating under a set of beliefs that don't coincide with reality!

Consequently, many women are operating under unrealistically high expectations of themselves. When life doesn't deliver on their hopes, whether they be making class valedictorian, beauty pageant winner, company president, or neurosurgeon, women are set up for major disappointment. Just being a cog in the wheel of your own small world isn't enough.

This brings us to the second problem. A lot of women beat themselves up for not accomplishing greatness. Instead of

investing their life's energies in doing well those things they *can* do, they grieve what and who they are *not*. Just being good, or being good at what they do, isn't enough if they're not the *best*.

Romans 12:3 tells us, "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought." Rather than worrying about our unrealized potential for some sort of nebulous greatness, we ought to be concerned about being faithful and obedient in the things God has given us to do, trusting Him for the ultimate results. And we ought to not worry about being ordinary as if there were some stigma to it. Scripture says that God is pleased to use ordinary people, because that's how He gets the most glory. (See 1 Corinthians 1:26-31.) There is honor in being an ordinary person in the hand of an extraordinary God.

Lie #5: Sexual Sameness

The fifth lie of feminism is that men and women are the same sexually. This lie comes to us courtesy of the same evil source that brought us the lies of the sexual revolution.

The truth is that women can't separate sex from love as easily as men can. For women, sex needs to be an expression of love and commitment. Without these qualities, sex is demeaning, nothing more than hormones going crazy.

The cost of sex is far greater for women than for men. Sex outside of a committed, loving relationship—I'm talking about marriage here—often results in unplanned pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and profound heartbreak. Every time a woman gives her body away to a man, she gives a part of her heart as well. Sexual "freedom" has brought new degrees of heartache to millions of women. The lie of sexual equality has produced widespread promiscuity and epidemic disease. No wonder so many women are struggling with self-esteem!

God's commands concerning sex take into account the fact that

men and women are not the same sexually or any other way. He tells us to exercise self-control before marriage, saving all sexual expression for the constraints of a marriage relationship, and then to keep the marriage bed pure once we are married. When we follow these guidelines, we discover that God's laws provide protection for women: the security of a committed relationship, freedom from sexual health worries, and a stable environment for any children produced in the union. This high standard also protects men by providing a safe channel for their sexual energies. Both chaste single men, and faithful husbands, are kept safe from sexual diseases, unwanted pregnancies with women other than their wives, and the guilt of sexual sin.

Lie #6: The Denial of Maternity

Many women postponed marriage and childbearing to pursue their own personal development and career goals. This perspective denies the reality of a woman's reproductive system and the limitations of time. Childbearing is easier in a woman's 20s and 30s than in her 40s. Plus, there is a physical cost; science has borne out the liabilities that older women incur for themselves and their babies. Midlife women are more prone to have problems getting pregnant, staying pregnant, and then experiencing difficult deliveries. The risk of conceiving a child with Down's Syndrome is considerably higher in older mothers.^{3} Fertility treatment doesn't work as well for women over 40.^{4}

There is also a spiritual dimension to denying maternity. When women refuse their God-ordained roles and responsibilities, they open themselves to spiritual deception and temptations. 1 Timothy 2:15 is an intriguing verse: "But women will be saved through childbearing." One compelling translation for this verse is, "Women will be *kept safe* through childbearing," where Paul uses the word for *childbearing* as a sort of shorthand for the woman's involvement in the domestic

sphere—having her “focus on the family,” so to speak.(5) When a married woman’s priorities are marriage, family and the home, she is kept safe—protected—from the consequences of delaying motherhood and the temptations that beleaguer a woman trying to fill a man’s role. For example, I know one married woman who chose to pursue a full-time career in commercial real estate, to the detriment of her family. She confessed that she found herself constantly battling the temptation to lust on two fronts: sexual lust for the men in her office and her clients, and lust for the recognition and material things that marked success in that field. Another friend chose her career over having any children at all, and discovered that like the men in her field, she could not separate her sense of self from her job, and it ultimately cost her her marriage and her life as she knew it. The problem isn’t having a career: the problem is when a woman gets her priorities out of balance.

Lie #7: To Be Feminine Is To Be Weak

In the attempt to blur gender distinctions, feminists declared war on the concept of gender-related characteristics. The qualities that marked feminine women—softness, sweetness, kindness, the ability to relate well—were judged as silly, stupid and weak. Only what characterized men—characteristics like firmness, aggressiveness, competitiveness—were deemed valuable.

But when women try to take on male qualities, the end result is a distortion that is neither feminine nor masculine. A woman is perceived as shrill, not spirited. What is expected and acceptable aggression in a man is perceived as unwelcome brashness in a woman. When women try to be tough, it is often taken as unpleasantness. Unfortunately, there really is a strong stereotype about “what women should be like” that merits being torn down. A lot of men are threatened by strong women with opinions and agendas of their own, and treat them

with undeserved disrespect. But it is not true that traditionally masculine characteristics are the only ones that count.

There really is a double standard operating, because the characteristics that constitute masculinity and femininity are separate and different, and they are not interchangeable. To be feminine is a special kind of strength. It's a different, appealing kind of power that allows a woman to influence her world in a way quite distinct from the way a man influences the world. It pleased the Lord to create woman to complement man, not to compete with him or be a more rounded copy of him. 1 Corinthians 11:7 says that man is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. Femininity isn't weakness; it's the glorious, splendid crown on humanity.

Lie #8: Doing is Better Than Being

In his book *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*[\[6\]](#), John Gray pointed out that men get their sense of self from achievement, and women get their sense of self from relationships. Feminism declared that the male orientation of *what you do* was the only one that mattered; *who you are*, and how important you are to the people in your world, didn't count for as much.

This lie said that active is good, passive is bad. Traditional feminine behaviors of being passive and receptive were denounced as demeaning to women and ineffective in the world. Only being the initiator counted, not being the responder. "To listen, to be there, to receive the other with an open heart and mind—this has always been one of the most vital roles of woman. Most women do this quite naturally, but many have come to feel uneasy in this role. Instead, they work frantically on assertiveness, aggression, personal expression, and power, madly suppressing their feminine instincts of love and relatedness."[\[7\]](#)

Women's roles in the family, the church, and the world are a combination of being a responder and an initiator. As a responder, a wife honors her husband through loving submission, and a woman serves the church through the exercise of her spiritual gifts. As an initiator and leader, a woman teaches her children and uses her abilities in the world, such as the woman of Proverbs 31. God's plan is for us to live a balanced life—sometimes active, sometimes passive; sometimes the initiator, sometimes the responder; at all times, submitting both who we are and what we do to the Lordship of Christ.

Lie #9: The Myth of Self-Sufficiency

The ninth lie is the myth of self-sufficiency. Remember the famous feminist slogan that appeared on everything from bumper stickers to t-shirts to notepads? "A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle." The message was clear: women don't need men, who are inferior anyway. The world would be a better place if women ran it: no wars, no greed, no power plays, just glorious cooperation and peace.

The next step after "women don't need men" was logical: women don't need anybody. We can take care of ourselves. Helen Reddy's hit song "I Am Woman" became feminism's theme song, with the memorable chorus, "If I have to, I can do anything / I am strong / I am invincible / I am woman!"

Of course, if women don't need anybody except themselves, they certainly don't need God. Particularly a masculine, patriarchal God who makes rules they don't like and insists that He alone is God. But the need to worship is deeply ingrained in us, so feminist thought gave rise to goddess worship. The goddess was just a female image to focus on; in actuality, goddess worship is worship of oneself.[\[8\]](#)

The lie of self-sufficiency is the same lie that Satan has been deceiving us with since the Garden of Eden: What do you

need God for? We grieve the Lord's heart when we believe this lie. Jeremiah 2:13 says, "My people have committed two sins: they have forsaken Me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water." God made us for Himself; believing the lie of self-sufficiency isn't only futile, it's a slap in God's face.

Lie #10: Women Would Enjoy the Feminization of Men

The tenth lie of feminism is that women would enjoy the feminization of men. Feminists believed that the only way to achieve equality of the sexes was to do away with *role* distinctions. Then they decided that that wasn't enough: society had to do away with *gender* distinctions, or at the very least blur the lines. Women embraced more masculine values, and men were encouraged to embrace more feminine characteristics. That was supposed to fix the problem. It didn't.

As men tried to be "good guys" and accommodate feminists' demands, the culture saw a new type of man emerge: sensitive, nurturing, warmly compassionate, yielding. The only problem was that this "soft man" wasn't what women wanted. Women pushed men to be like women, and when they complied, nobody respected them. Women, it turns out, want to be the soft ones—and we want men to be strong and firm and courageous; we want a manly man. When men start taking on feminine characteristics, they're just wimpy and unmasculine, not pleasing themselves or the women who demanded the change. There is a good reason that books and movies with strong, masculine heroes continue to appeal to such a large audience. Both men and women respond to men who fulfill God's design for male leadership, protection, and strength.

Underlying the women's liberation movement is an angry, unsubmitive attitude that is fueled by the lies of deception.

It's good to know what the lies are, but it's also important to know what God's word says, so we can combat the lies with the power of His truth.

Notes

1. Toni Grant, *Being a Woman: Fulfilling Your Femininity and Finding Love*. New York: Random House, 1988.
2. Ibid, 3.
3. March of Dimes, "Pregnancy After 35," www.marchofdimes.com/professionals/14332_1155.asp.
4. Jodi Panayotov, "IVF & Older Women – How Successful is IVF After 40?" ezinearticles.com/?IVF-and-Older-Women-How-Successful-is-IVF-After-40?&id=636335.
5. Andreas Kostenberger, "Saved Through Childbearing?" (*CBMW [The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood] News*, Sept. 1997), p. 3.
6. John Gray, *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*. New York: HarperCollins, 1992.
7. Grant, 9.
8. Mary Kassian, *The Feminist Gospel* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1992), p. 159.

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Men Are From Mars, Women Are

From Venus

How Men and Women Differ

[Sue] Counselor John Gray made a ton of money—and found a ton of grateful fans—in writing his best-selling book *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*[\[1\]](#). This book explored the intrinsic differences between men and women in a way that has helped millions of people understand why relationships between the two sexes can be so frustrating!

[Ray] In this essay we'll be examining some of the insights from this book, then looking at what the Bible says about how God wants men and women to relate to each other. It's no surprise that since God created us to be different, He knew all about those differences thousands of years ago when He gave very specific instructions for each gender!

[Sue] The whimsical premise of *Men Are From Mars* is that many years ago, all men lived on Mars, and all women lived on Venus. Once they got together, they respected and enjoyed their differences—until one day when everybody woke up completely forgetting that they had once come from different planets. And ever since, men mistakenly expect women to think and communicate and react the way men do, and women expect men to think and communicate and react the way women do. These unrealistic expectations cause frustration. But when we understand the God-given differences between male and female, we have more realistic expectations of the other sex, and our frustration level drops.

[Ray] Speaking of which, we do realize that it can be very frustrating for some people when gender differences are painted in such broad strokes, since there's such a large spectrum of what women are like and what men are like. Both men and women come in different shapes and sizes but by and

large, we feel that most will identify with these characteristics.

[Sue] With that said, let's look at some of the differences between men and women.

[Ray] Men get our sense of self from achievement. We tend to be task-oriented, and being self-reliant is very important to us. You put those two together, and you get people who hate to ask for directions or for help. I'll wander in a store for 15 minutes trying to find something on my own because accomplishing the task of getting a certain item isn't going to be satisfying unless I can do it on my own. For us, asking for help is an admission of failure; we see it as a weakness.

[Sue] Women get our sense of self from relationships. Where men are task-oriented, we are relational-oriented. Our connections to other people are the most important thing to us. Instead of prizing self-reliance, we tend to be interdependent, enjoying the connectedness to other people, especially other women. For us, both asking for help and offering it is a compliment; we're saying, "Let me build a bridge between us. I value you, and it'll bind us."

[Ray] Men usually focus on a goal. We want to get to the bottom line, to the end of something.

[Sue] But women tend to enjoy the process. Not that reaching a goal isn't important, but we like getting there too. That's why driving vacations are so very different for men and women; the guys want to get to their destinations and beat their best time with the fewest stops, and we sort of treasure the time to talk and look and maybe stop at the outlet malls along the way!

Gender Differences, Continued

[Sue] We believe these admittedly broad-brushed differences are rooted in God-created traits. In fact, some Christian

authors like Gary Smalley and Stu Weber have addressed them in their books as well.{2} Ray, why don't you continue with the next point about men—something that's bound to be real surprising?

[Ray] Well, yes, men are competitive. Big shock, huh? Whether we're on the basketball court or on the highway, we just naturally want to win, to be out front. Many of us are driven to prove ourselves, to prove that we're competent, and it comes out in a competitive spirit.

[Sue] And it's not that girls aren't competitive, because of course we are; it's just that we tend to be more cooperative than competitive. When girls are playing and one gets hurt, the game will often stop and even be forgotten while everyone gathers around and comforts the one who went down. It's that relational part of us coming out.

[Ray] Men are often more logical and analytical than women.

[Sue] And we tend to be more intuitive than men. This isn't some sort of mystic claim; there was a study at Stanford University that discovered women catch subliminal messages faster and more accurately than men.{3} Voila—intuition.

[Ray] This difference is evident in brain activity. Men's brains tend to show activity in one hemisphere at a time . . .

[Sue] . . .Where women's brains will show the two hemispheres communicating with each other, back and forth, constantly. That means that often, men and women can arrive at the exact same conclusion, using completely different means to get there. Our thinking has been accused of being convoluted, but it works!

[Ray] Men are linear. We can usually focus on just one thing at a time. That's why you've learned not to try to talk to me while I'm reading the paper. I really struggle to read and listen at the same time.

[Sue] Yes, I've learned to get your attention and ask if I can talk to you so it'll be an actual conversation and not a monologue! God made us women to be multi-taskers, able to juggle many things at once. It's a requirement for mothering, I've discovered. Many times I'd be cooking dinner and helping the kids with homework and answering the phone and keeping an ear on the radio, all at the same time.

[Ray] Men tend to be compartmentalized, like a chest of drawers: work in one drawer, relationships in another drawer, sports in a third drawer, and so on. All the various parts of our lives can be split off from each other.

[Sue] Whereas women are more like a ball of yarn where everything's connected to everything else. That's why a woman can't get romantic when there's some unresolved anger or frustration with her husband, and he doesn't see what the two things have to do with each other.

[Ray] One more; men are action-oriented. When we feel hostile, our first instinct is to release it physically. And when we're upset, the way for us to feel better is to actively solve the problem.

[Sue] Women are verbal. (Another big surprise, huh?) Our hostility is released with words rather than fists. And when we're upset, the way for us to feel better is by talking about our problem with other people.

More Gender Differences

[Ray] When men are under stress, we generally distract ourselves with various activities to relax. That's why you see so many men head for the nearest basketball hoop or bury themselves in the paper or TV. But there's another aspect of the way we handle severe stress that can be particularly frustrating to women who don't understand the way we are: a man withdraws into his "cave." We need to be apart from

everybody else while we figure out our problems alone. Remember, a man is very self-reliant and competitive, and to ask for help is weakness, so he will first want to solve the problem by himself.

[Sue] We women handle stress in the exact opposite way, which of course is going to pose major problems until we understand this difference! When we're stressed, we get more involved with other people. We want to talk about what's upsetting us, because we process information and feelings by putting them into words. But merely talking is only half of it; we talk in order to be heard and understood. Having a good listener on the other end is extremely important. No wonder there is such misunderstanding when people are under stress: as a friend of ours put it, "Men head for their cave, and women head for the back door!"

[Ray] John Gray gave some great advice when he said that when a man's going into his cave, he can give powerful assurance to the woman in his life by telling her, "I'll be back."

[Sue] Works for me! What's next?

[Ray] A man's primary need is for respect. There are a lot of elements involved in respect, which he needs both from his peers and from the significant women in his life: trust, acceptance, appreciation, admiration, approval, and encouragement. A man needs to know he's respected. He also needs to be needed. That's why it's so devastating to a man when he loses his job. He gets his sense of self from achievement, and he needs to be needed, so when the means to achieve and provide for his family is taken away, it's emotionally catastrophic.

[Sue] It's good for us women to know that, so we can be grace-givers in a time of awful trauma. I think that just as a man is devastated by the loss of his job, a woman is devastated by the loss of a close relationship; both losses reflect the God-

given differences between us. Just as a man needs to be respected, we primarily need to be cherished. Cherishing means giving tender care, understanding, respect, devotion, validation, and reassurance. We need to know others think we're special. And just as a man needs to be needed, we need to be protected. That's why security is so important to us. A man needs to be able to provide, and a woman needs to feel provided for.

[Ray] One final difference. For men, words are simply for conveying facts and information.

[Sue] But for women, words mean much more. Not just to convey information, but to explore and discover our thoughts and feelings, to help us feel better when we're upset, and it's the only way we have to create intimacy. To a woman, words are like breathing!

Women's Needs and Issues

[Ray] We have been examining how God created men and women to be different. So it's not surprising to find how many of our uniquenesses and needs are addressed by God's commands and precepts in the Bible.

[Sue] In this section we'll consider women's needs and issues, and look at how God's commands fit perfectly with the observations we've made. In the next section, we'll look at men's needs.

As I said above, our primary need as women is to be cherished—to be shown TLC, understanding, respect, devotion, validation, and reassurance.

[Ray] And in Ephesians 5:25, we read God's command that addresses this need: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her." When we think about the way Christ loves the church, we see a sacrificial love, a tender love, and a love that is committed

to acting in the church's best interests at our Savior's own expense. God doesn't just want men to love their wives like they love sports—He wants us to love our wives in a way that makes them feel cherished and very special. He wants us to love our wives with a sacrificial love that puts her needs and desires above our own.

1 Peter 3:7 gives further instruction along this line: "You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way." The Greek literally reads, "Dwell with them according to knowledge." The only way to live with your wife in an understanding way is to seek to know her. And when a husband listens and responds to what his wife shares—remembering that women are created to be verbal—she will feel cherished and understood and loved.

The last part of 1 Peter 3:7 continues, "live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman." This isn't a slam on women. When we read this verse, we ought to think along the lines of a fine china cup. It's definitely weaker than a tin cup, but that's because it's so fragile, delicate, and far more valuable. When we serve dinner on our china, we're very careful in handling it, and extremely protective of washing and drying it. We treat our china with tenderness and gentleness because of its fragility and value. That's how we cherish it. And that's how a man is to treat his wife—not roughly or carelessly, but with tenderness and gentleness, because God made women to be treated with special care.

[Sue] The flip side of needing to be cherished is our need for security. We need to be protected and provided for. Even when a wife works, she wants to know that her husband is the main provider, or at least truly wants to be and is working to that end. The burden of being forced to provide for our families is bigger than we should have to bear.

[Ray] God created that need for security within women. That's

why He puts such a high value on the provisional aspect of a man's character. 1 Timothy 5:8 says, "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." God wants us men to be diligent workers and providers. He created us to bear the burden of providing; women are to be protected from that burden whenever possible.

Men's Needs and Issues

[Ray] Men's primary need is for respect and support—to receive trust, acceptance, appreciation, admiration, approval and encouragement.

[Sue] I think God intends for wives to meet that need by submitting to our husbands, as we are commanded to do in Ephesians 5:22 and 1 Peter 3:1. Submission doesn't mean giving in or being an overworked doormat; it's a gift of our will. It means submitting to God first, then demonstrating that submission by choosing to serve and respect and be our husband's Number One supporter. Even when a man is more of a jerk than a Superman, he needs the respect of his wife, even if she has to ask the Lord for His perspective on what areas of his life are worthy of respect!

It's interesting to me that in Ephesians 5, at the beginning of the passage on marriage, Paul exhorts women to submit to their husbands as unto the Lord, and then closes this section by saying, "And let the wife see to it that she respect her husband." (v. 33) Submission and respect aren't the same thing, but they're both necessary to meet a man's God-given needs. In the middle of this "marriage sandwich," so to speak, is the awesome command to men to love their wives sacrificially and tenderly, as Christ loves the church. What I see is that submission and respect is a natural response to that kind of love.

[Ray] Another aspect of men's constitution is that we're

action-oriented, whereas women are verbal.

[Sue] Yes, and that's why I'm very intrigued by the wisdom of Peter's admonishment to women, where he says,

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, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. (1 Peter 3:1-2)

To men, words are cheap—and if they're coming from a woman, all too plentiful! What impresses a man is what a person does, not what they say. So here the Holy Spirit inspired Peter to basically tell us to shut up and live holy lives, which is the only language that's going to have a true impact on a man.

[Ray] Another characteristic of men is that we tend to be self-oriented, as opposed to women who are more relational.

[Sue] It's interesting to me that Paul exhorts men to love their wives as they love themselves and their own bodies (Ephesians 5:28,33). And he does this without condemning them for that self-orientation; he just uses it as a point of reference to demonstrate how powerfully men are to love their wives. From what I've observed at the health club about the way some men love their bodies, God wants men to indulge their wives with some major pampering!

[Ray] One last comment. While men and women may be constitutionally different by design, we do share one important and serious flaw: our sin nature. Both genders are prideful and selfish. And that is one reason we find commands to both men and women to serve the other sex. But in the midst of our service, we can certainly enjoy the differences God planted!

Notes

1. Gray, John. *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992.
2. Smalley, Gary. *Hidden Keys to a Loving Lasting Marriage*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1984. Weber, Stu. *Tender Warrior*. Sisters, Ore.:Multnomah Books, 1993.
3. Smalley, *Hidden Keys*, p. 17.

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