

“Is Christianity a Male-Dominated Religion?”

What is your view of Christianity as a male dominated religion?

Unfortunately many have this misperception due to abuses of Bible verses made by some Christian leaders or just a misunderstanding of the text. The Bible teaches that men and women are equal in nature but different in their physical makeup and their roles. Men and women are equal in nature and value but complementary to one another in their design. Where the present day feminist movement goes wrong is the teaching that says men and women are essentially the same. The Bible teaches they are equal in nature but different in many ways. Just looking at the physical anatomy of men and women shows they are different.

Of all the world views, only Christianity gives the woman her full God-ordained dignity. Genesis 1:27 states, “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them.” Man and woman each are created in the image of God. In Genesis 2:18 God makes woman as a “helper suitable for him.” The term “helper” means one who will complement the other. In other words, Eve would be a complement to Adam, not an inferior being. 1 Peter 3:7 states, “Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as co-heirs with you of the gracious gift of life...” Women here are co-heirs in Christ with their husbands. They are not inferior, they are equal in nature and fellow heirs in Christ.

What a contrast to Islam, which teaches that only men go to heaven and women are allowed to be beaten by men if they are disobedient. Also remember, when the New Testament writers were writing, the Jewish faith did not look highly on women.

In fact there was a prayer Jewish men prayed: "Lord, thank you that I was not born a Gentile, a dog or a woman." In contrast, the New Testament writers give women their full dignity as co-heirs to the kingdom of God.

Also, Jesus and the apostles are the first to give women such a prominent role and raise their value in society. The first evangelists to proclaim the gospel are women. This is important to realize because the testimony of women was not considered credible in Jewish society at that time, yet Christ appoints them to be the first to proclaim the resurrection. The apostles are shown to be hiding from the authorities while the women go to the tomb. Luke records the prominent role women had in the ministry of Jesus. Paul and Peter constantly call on husbands to treat their wives with respect and honor.

So once we understand the biblical teaching, we can see that Christianity teaches men and women are equal in nature. However, Christianity also fully acknowledges the differences of men and women and teach the differences to be complementary.

I agree that the leadership role of the family and the church fall on the men. However, that in no way means that men do not or should not listen to their wives, nor does it mean women cannot have a prominent role in the church. Husbands are to listen and honor their wives and they are to honor them in the church as well. There are some tough passages that many misuse but when understood correctly, they in no way devalue the role of women.

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