

Male and Female He Created them by James Moriello

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Firm Foundation Christian Church, Woonsocket, RI

“So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” (Genesis 1:27; NKJV)

What one believes about the first eleven chapters of Genesis will tell you where they stand. We know that Jesus quoted from them as literal fact, and our text is no exception (Matthew 19:4). Bible believing Christians agree with Jesus on that point. Those who do not hold to a literal interpretation of the early chapters in the Bible are in effect calling Jesus a liar, and can by no means be called bible believing Christians. In the opening chapter of Genesis, we find that creation of all things by God is affirmed. In our text, the creation of men and women in particular is affirmed. Men and women are unique in the sense that we are said to have been created in God’s image. This means that each and every one of us is created by God with a spirit that will exist beyond physical death, and that we have the capacity to love, reason, and to understand morality and ethics. Most importantly, all mankind has the capacity to relate to the Creator God in heaven. Therein lies the rub. That capacity has been interrupted by sin. The only way to restore it is through Christ Jesus, Who Himself said that *“no one comes to the Father except through Me”* (John 14:6). This is what we call salvation: the inability in ourselves to get back to right relationship with our Creator God, which requires that God provide Himself to be the Mediator. *“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all”* (1 Timothy 2:5-6a). Salvation through the blood of Christ is available to all who truly believe in faith in His Work and Promises, regardless of gender or ethnicity (Galatians 3:28). Thus far we have established that male and female alike are created by God in His image, and have the same opportunity to receive the free gift of God’s salvation. Now we will depart into a realm that is controversial in society but crystal clear in the Bible; namely, the distinctions between male and female and the applications that come out of them. This study cannot be fully comprehensive in the time allotted, as many more Scriptures can

be brought to bear on the topics and applications at hand. I will leave you with related Scriptures at the end for further reference. However, this study is intended to be representative in that we will pick up on a broad spectrum of biblical teachings addressed herein in order to understand the main points. We will break our teaching down into four categories. They are: qualities of a Christian man, qualities of a Christian woman, relationships and marriage, and applications for the local church.

We will begin with the qualities of a Christian man. Paul exhorts *“that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience”* (Titus 2:2). By older men, the Apostle is not necessarily speaking of physical age. More to the point, spiritual maturity is in view; *“that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil”* (Hebrews 5:14). You can tell a mature Christian man by his conduct. Such a man exudes peace in the midst of the turbulence of life, has a handle on his temper, is often found in the prayer room, is certain of his position in Christ because he holds the promises of Scripture near and dear, and is earnestly seeking to follow after the example of the Savior. The Holy Writ exhorts *“young men to be sober-minded”* (Titus 2:7). The idea here is that those men who are new in the faith should consider the path that they are on, and make the necessary adjustments in order to pursue the path of the aforementioned mature Christian man. Men, you and your God know which describes you personally. I pray that the Lord of Glory will strengthen you on the journey.

Next, we will look at the biblically defined qualities of a Christian woman. In Titus, we have similar language, and also subtle distinctions. Picking up on the same passage quoted above for the gentlemen, we read: *“the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed”* (Titus 2:3-5). Slander, gossip, and drunkenness are evil sins, and the mature woman of God seeks to avoid them. The mature Christian lady will instead honor God by indulging in behavior that glorifies Jesus Christ and teach others to do

likewise. Leading by example, the godly woman is called to pass on a legacy of faith to women who are seeking the Lord's face also. She is to model such things as loving her husband and her children by committing to their welfare, and displaying appropriate dress and public behavior. The mature spiritual woman will also exhort the younger women unto voluntary submission to their husbands, a subject that we will expound in greater detail momentarily as it relates to both men and women. The reason for all of this behavior is given in the subtext—not to do so is bad Christian testimony. People stumble enough over their own sins; they do not need Christians to add more stumbling blocks (Matthew 18:6-7).

We now turn to the topic of relationships and marriage. All relationships should be guided by love, for operating after the manner of God's love will never steer us wrong. *“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy, love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things”* (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). Purity between the sexes is enjoined. *“It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband”* (1 Corinthians 7:2). Respect for others should be a hallmark of Christian behavior. Respect for the person of those of the opposite sex is the biblical mandate. Any relations outside the boundaries of marriage as defined by God to be a man and a woman is sin (Genesis 2:24). Each one of us is either married, has been married, will be married, or knows someone who is married. Therefore, let us briefly examine *“male and female”* within marriage; the duties of husbands and wives. *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her”* (Ephesians 5:25). That is, married Christian men are to love their wives self sacrificially after the example of the Lord. Jesus placed the agenda of the church which He loves even to the point of death on the cross ahead of any other agenda. Husbands, follow His example in your marriages. *“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord”* (Ephesians 5:22). Respect your husband in conduct by allowing him to be the leader that God has designed him to be, for this honors God. These things sound simple, but it is not always so in reality. Both husband

and wife must first be submitted to Christ for Christian marriage to work (Ephesians 5:21; John 15:5). “*A threefold cord is not quickly broken*” (Ecclesiastes 4:12). What wife will loath the husband who loves her in such a self sacrificial way? What husband will not love a wife who loves and respects him in a way honoring to Christ? Be vigilant of your own conduct. The basis for the first sin was pride and rebellion, and it has been so for every sin since. A prideful and rebellious spirit can cause the husband to become insensitive and unloving. Likewise, a prideful and rebellious spirit can cause the wife to rebel against the husbands God given authority in the home—thereby disrespecting him. Be honest before God, pray for and with your spouse, and make the necessary changes, in order that the Name of Jesus Christ be exalted in your marriage, and your prayers answered (1 Peter 3:7).

Our fourth and final application of our text is its significance for the local church. We will address this because there is much confusion in the church today in this area. Although not essential to salvation, it does affect the growth of Christian men and women. The Word of God may offend you, but His Word is the truth, and we ignore it or explain it away at our own peril. The church should be a macrocosm of the family unit in which the husband is in the place of benevolent authority and the wife in the place of willing humble submission to that authority (Eph 5:22-33). A church that governs itself in a manner inconsistent with God’s design of the family unit is prone to confusion and sets an example contrary to Scripture. After all, the church is the “*household of faith*” (Galatians 6:10), or ‘family of God’ in the sense that we love one another and call each other brothers and sisters in Christ. Elder is the first of two offices in the church (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9). These Scripture passages are the two clearest with regard to the biblical definition of elder. The title Elder is used interchangeably in the Bible with that of Overseer. In today’s culture, we use the title Pastor since, broadly speaking, this is the primary function of the New Testament Elder. Henceforth, we will use that title (Ephesians 4:11-12; Acts 20:28). The Scriptures clearly teach that the Pastor must be male (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6). In 1 Timothy 3:2, we are told that Pastors (remember, office is in view here) are to be (Greek) “*mias gynaikos andra*”, or one woman sort of men (Wuest). This does not require that they be

married, but it does require that they be male, since the word *andros* is only used of the male gender. The Pastor also must be able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2). Further, women are forbidden in Scripture from teaching mixed groups of men and women in a corporate worship setting. *“Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says”* (1 Corinthians 14:34-35). *“Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence”* (1 Timothy 2:11-12). Any woman who does so is either ignorant of the Scripture on the subject or is exercising pride and presumption by opposing God’s order. God will not call a woman into a particular ministry if to do so would contradict His own revealed will on the matter. What is interesting about this in light of our text is the divinely inspired reasoning: *“For Adam was formed first, then Eve”* (1 Timothy 2:13). The argument with regard to gender roles in the church is God’s design in creation of male and female, and has nothing to do with cultural factors. Therefore, this doctrine is for all time, not just for the first century churches. The implication for you men is that you had better be cultivating your relationship with Christ, and know your Bible so you can fulfill your role in this way! A second office of Deacon is mentioned in Scripture, and again, the word used can only refer to males (Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 3:8-12). We do not have this office here at the church because circumstances have not required it. With regard to gender roles, we conclude then that it is an unbiblical model to have female Pastors. Neither is there a biblical mandate for an office of deaconess. The offices of Pastor and Deacon are exclusive to men. This is not the order of men but the order of God. Women can and should serve in all other areas of the church according to their spiritual gifts. Such areas include visitation, teaching other women, teaching children, and using their artistic gifts to further the cause of Christ (Titus 2:3-5). For instance, at Firm Foundation we have clearly identifiable female leaders—one whose primary function is to minister to the women and another whose primary function is to minister to the children. This is in keeping with biblical teaching. Let us never think that our value to the congregation is more or less than another, for we all have been given gifts to use in God’s service (1 Corinthians 12:12-27).

I pray that this message has encouraged and challenged you. *“So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”* May each one strive to become the man or woman that God has created you to be—for you have been lovingly created in order to commune with and glorify Almighty God. May you strive to love others in a way reflective of Christ’s example, and honor God in your marriage and in the household of God! God bless you. AMEN.

Further Reference: **Men:** Psalm 1, 37:23; Job 31:1; **Women:** Proverbs 31;
Marriage: Genesis 2:24; 1 Corinthians 7; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Peter 3:1-7;
Church: 1 Corinthians 12-14

*You may also visit our website www.firmfoundationri.com or request a copy of Concerning the Married and the Unmarried or Biblical Church Leadership, which go into greater detail on their respective subjects.