

IS CHRISTIANITY UNFAIR TO WOMEN?

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A BBC discussion programme raised this issue and most contributors were women who declared that they were theologians and/or feminists.

A previous discussion in which all the contributors were female including doctors, psychiatrists and social workers all stated emphatically that pre-menstrual tension was exclusively the fault of men and male dominance.

One such female theologian in this new programme said that the Scriptures are male-orientated written exclusively by men for men. That is a bad start to any discussion. The Scriptures were and are both God breathed and God given and to start a debate with a falsehood does not augur well.

This theologian also said that the Scriptures looked upon women just as baby machines. That is also untrue. Take the final chapter of Proverbs where some of the many qualities of women are set out. There are many passages of Scriptures which talk about women such as their beauty, devoutness, fidelity, liberality, love, ministry, their rights and so on.

This woman said about the Song of Songs that it was sexual eroticism and that Solomon was a dirty old man and a voyeur. Many can see her point of view. The text supports that view.

What was not amply said was the Jesus was pro-women. He had women followers and, at the death and resurrection, it was women who were faithful and loyal.

It was claimed that Paul was not keen on women; they were not allowed to speak in church and had to keep their heads covered and that they were secondary to their husbands. The covering of heads was observed throughout the Middle East and Asia and therefore to blame Christianity is untenable. This is not a matter of equality; it is that women were being protected from lecherous men and from lesbians. In our days, low tops and short skirts are an attraction. In those days, beautiful hair was a turn on.

It also has to do with headship. Woman was made from man and Eve was created to be man's helper and a helper that was equal.

Eve was taken from man's side and not his head so that she could rule. She was not taken from his feet so she was not to be trodden down or oppressed. Sin entered the world because of Eve. She was lead astray and was not going to obey her husband. Is this unfair on Eve? No, because Adam listened to Eve and he should have said No. He chose to disobey God and choose to follow his wife. In this, our first parents said, "We know better than God!" God blamed Adam. The New Testament says, For because of one man, Adam, sin entered the world.... and this is Romans 5.12 and the words of Paul who feminists and female theologians say that was not keen on women.

God is the head of Christ and Christ is the head of man and man is the head of woman. In other words, the man takes the responsibility for his wife's mistakes and Adam did for Eve. That is not being unfair to women, is it?

That women are allegedly secondary to their husband is dealt with in Ephesians 5. Wives are to submit to their husbands for the reasons given that the man takes responsibility for his wife's conduct but read on. It says Husbands, love your wives just as Christ has loved you. 1 Peter 3 verse 7 tells us that a husband is to give honour to his wife. That does not mean that she is secondary.

Women complain about this verse because it refers to women as the weaker sex. Peter is not demeaning

women. They are generally physically weaker. Peter is not saying that they are inferior. Generally speaking men are tougher, stronger and used to heavy manual work. In the world of athletics they are stronger than women as the following examples show

	Men's record	Women's record
100 metres	9.58 seconds	10.49 seconds
400 metres	43.18 seconds	47.60 seconds
1000 Metres	2 minutes 11.96 seconds	2 minutes 28.98 seconds

It must also be remembered that in Biblical days men honoured their women by providing for them and considered their comfort.

The women in this BBC programme were not using Scriptures correctly.

They quoted Galatians 3. 28 which states that there is no difference between men and women which they claimed eliminated headship and male authority. But this verse refers to salvation and those who have put on Christ. It means that all can obtain salvation. Someone said the word headship does not appear in the Bible which was a weak observation because headship is shown in the definition of being the head.

It was said that idolaters are always referred to as adulterers and with a feminine definition such as playing the harlot. Complaints were made that a Jewish man would probably not shake hands with a woman and that Jewish men prayed that they were glad that they were not a woman. Again, this was taken out of context. This is also observed in the Muslim faith when a kiss, handshake or an embrace could be misinterpreted and we know that in some Christian churches of the Pentecostal and charismatic persuasions such physical contact has led to infidelity, affairs and divorce.

What the contributors failed to mention was that Jewish women pray to thank God that they are women.

That women are secondary is untrue and these female theologians are not only biased but unaware of facts.

If a Jewish woman is married to a Gentile and has a child that child is Jewish. If a Jewish man has a Gentile bride then any child of theirs is not Jewish. Jewishness is passed on from a Jewish mother. Women have the pre-eminence.

Much was made of Leviticus 12 and when a woman has a male child and is said to be unclean for 33 days and if she has a female child she is unclean for 66 days. The women on this show said that unclean meant dirty and impure and that was an insult to women. Why didn't these women consult a Hebrew dictionary? The word for unclean is not dirty or unclean but separated. Consult the Amplified Bible. A woman was separated to allow her to heal from the pangs of childbirth and to prepare a sacrifice of thanksgiving for the safe delivery of her child.

It also has to do with the matter of blood. A male child would be circumcised on the eighth day and that would involve blood. Circumcision was a holy requirement and for hygienic reasons. If a female child was born there was no circumcision but that girl would grow up to eventually menstruate which involves blood.

The blood was very significant to Jews as it spoke of the deliverance from Egypt and bondage. It is

also clear that Hebrew women gladly followed these purification instructions. There is no record of objection. In Victorian times in England, most women were happy with their circumstances and the claim that religion tried to prevent them from having the vote is untrue.

In fact to this day, there are female Jews and even Samaritan Jews who enjoy menstruation because at these times of the month their husbands do all the housework and cooking and these Jewish women love it.

It was also not mentioned in this programme that the old covenant of which Leviticus 12 is part has been done away with in Christ. Consult the end of Hebrews 8. Why didn't these female contributors refer to this? Did they know about it?

Women not speaking in church refers to teaching or public ministry. There is some speculation as to what this means but the headship question comes to the fore. The Lord ordained men to be teachers and evangelists and there must be a good reason for this. And Paul takes it up as well. The Roman Catholic Church honours this and the New Testament states that a bishop, or an elder, must be the husband of one wife and therefore a bishop or elder must be male.

The whole concept of women priests and bishops in the Church of England caused many divisions and, for the record, most of the objectors were female. What does that tell us?

However, in today's climate, about 66% approve of women priests.

The question is asked, Why do so-called Christians go against the Bible? The argument is made that it is old fashioned, out of date and no longer relevant for our time.

I have difficulty with those assumptions. If the Bible is out of date then salvation is as are the Ten Commandments. How can we be selective as to choose what is out of date and therefore irrelevant?

In simple terms, men and women are equal but they have different roles.

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