

Bible Gender Roles – Part 1

James Smyda

October 30, 2014

Brethren, today in the U.S., we find ourselves in the situation that I think most of us just a few decades ago would have considered out of the question, something outside the realm of possibility. And, that is that the United States Supreme Court made a ruling to legalize same-sex marriage throughout all fifty states. Prior to this ruling, same-sex marriage was already legalized in at least thirty-five different states and this ruling simply forces the remaining states to go along with this same decision.

Now, not only does this validate homosexuality from a legal perspective throughout the entire nation essentially making it equivalent with normal heterosexual marriage, another thing that this does is completely remove the concept of gender from the definition of marriage. Historically, we have always defined marriage in terms of gender. Our definition of marriage was *one man and one woman coming together in a marriage covenant to start a family*. But not only did we define marriage itself in terms of gender, we also defined the roles that each party would play within this partnership in terms of gender as well.

Today we find ourselves in a culture that treats gender as if it were an unimportant subject, as it is basically just a social construct that's very fluid. In other words, masculinity and femininity are not inherent parts of God's creation of how He designed men and women to be inherently different but mutually complementary to each other. It's looked at as just social constructs that we have socialized men and women to be, and, again, is much more of a fluid subject that we see that illustrated in the transgender issues that we see in today's culture.

If you've watched the news at all over the last month or so, you've probably seen the stories of Bruce Jenner. Here is an individual who is 65 years old who has lived as a man all this time and has decided now he wants to be a woman. He's taken surgical means and other hormonal treatments to try to transform himself into a woman. Obviously, the underlying belief in all of this being that gender is this fluid subject that is not an inherent part of God's creation.

And it's important for us to realize in the Church of God here—I think when we all look at this subject as church members, when we see the same-sex marriage and transgender issues, we immediately recognize that as sin. I'm sure for most of us the term "abomination" comes to mind because that's how the Bible describes homosexuality, but it's important to realize that this is just the tip of an iceberg.

In fact, what we're seeing today in the news is just the end result of a cultural movement that has been going on in this country for the last forty to fifty years and this is just the end result of that movement. The purpose of that movement has been a direct attack

on biblical gender roles basically to remove this concept from our culture. This is what has been happening here.

So, what I'd like to do today is to start off a sermon series on the subject of Biblical gender roles. As you can imagine, this is a very large subject. It's certainly not something we're going to cover in a single sermon in one hour. But what I'd like to do today is just start this off by defining the problem, getting a view of the magnitude of the problem here and understanding the cultural dynamics that have led up to this point and how we might have been affected by this cultural movement.

Again, there is an important lesson we can learn from probably the most famous biblical story that we all think of when we think of this particular subject. I'm sure a lot of us, when you were watching the news and you saw the Supreme Court's ruling, probably one of the thoughts that came to your minds is that the U.S. is now becoming a modern day Sodom and Gomorrah. That's certainly what I thought and I'm sure most of you probably had similar thoughts as well.

If we look at the story of Lot and his family in Sodom and how they were affected, we can learn an important lesson here. For time's sake I'm just going to summarize a lot of this, but if we look at not only the story in Genesis but how the Bible refers back to this story in other sections of the Bible, it doesn't give us any reason to think that Lot or his family in any way were involved in or approved of homosexuality. In fact, when the mob comes to the door demanding the angels to be sent out to them because they want to homosexually rape them, Lot's response is "You're behaving wickedly." He obviously objects to this.

But let's look at what Lot's next words were and how his family behaved because these things tell us a very important lesson. The very next thing that Lot says is "Here, take my daughters. Do with them as you wish." What lady would want to be one of Lot's daughters in this situation? I certainly wouldn't. I wouldn't want to be treated that way. Obviously, Lot's thinking has become very perverted by the environment he's been living in by virtue of the fact that he would even make this offer.

Not only that, but if we look at when his family is fleeing out of Sodom, they are told, "Don't turn back. Just turn your back on this. Run from this. God is destroying this place." But what does Lot's wife do? His wife turns around and she's looking back. And she's not just glancing behind her to see the view behind her. She's longing for the culture that she's leaving and what she's going to miss with this place being destroyed. Obviously, she doesn't see it as the evil that God does and the wracked with sin culture that he wanted just completely obliterated. And Lot's wife is turned into a pillar of salt as a result.

But then we also have to notice what happened with Lot's daughters after they are safely out of the city. Next what happens is his daughters both plot to get their father drunk on successive evenings and have sex with him so that they can get pregnant and have children. Think of this story in a modern day context. This is good material for

“The Jerry Springer Show,” just to put it humorously in the reality of our modern day culture. If we think about this, obviously one lesson we can learn from this—again we have no reason to believe that Lot and his family in any way participated in or approved of homosexuality, but we can see that they were deeply affected by the culture that they lived in. And the Bible tells us this is exactly what happened to them.

Turn over to 2 Peter 2 and we’re going to break into a context here in verse 6. It says:

2 Peter 2:6. *and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly;*
7) and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked
8) (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds) — (NKJV)

What this is telling us—again, we have no reason to think in any way that Lot or his family approved of homosexuality—but it’s telling us that by living in that culture and the messages it threw at him on a day-to-day basis deeply affected him and his family. Again, if we just look at the examples I just went through of their behavior, it’s very obvious this profoundly affected them.

Again, this is something that we need to learn from because I think the average church member today sees these issues of same-sex marriage, transgender, and others immediately as sin and something we don’t want any part of. But how much has the culture that has led up to this point, affected us that we may not be aware of? That’s what we need to understand today.

As I mentioned what we’re seeing today here is the end result of a cultural movement that for the last forty to fifty years has done everything it can to remove the concept of biblical gender roles from our culture and basically to even demonize anyone who would even talk about it has labeled it as sexist. This started back in the 1960s and going forward. To understand the magnitude of the problem, let’s just take a look at what else has happened in our culture since then.

It’s also important to realize how fundamental gender roles are to the success of marriage and the family. We can understand that by simply looking at the emphasis the New Testament places upon gender roles, because think about this. Imagine that you’re God and you have created mankind. You create this concept of marriage basically to be the pillar foundation of our society, of how families are created. And you write an instruction manual to tell people how to have a happy life and you cover just the most important information. If you look at the subject of marriage and how it is covered throughout the New Testament, what is the subject you see mentioned again and again and again every time marriage is talked about? It is biblical gender roles. It’s the role of a husband, the role of a wife, how they are distinctively different, how they should treat each other, and how they mutually complement one another. Obviously, God thought it

was fundamentally important to the success of marriage simply by its emphasis in the New Testament when the subject of marriage is talked about.

Let's look at the impact this has had upon our culture now that we've tried to take this whole concept of biblical gender roles out of the equation. As I mentioned, this really comes from the 1960s and 1970s and moves forward. If we look simply at divorce statistics, they tell us an interesting story.

If you have paid attention at all to our culture and how we've talked about divorce statistics in our common culture, I'm sure you've heard the statistic thrown out that about 50 percent of first marriages end in divorce in America. The way that this number is arrived at is by taking the total number of marriages in America in a single year and the total number of divorces in America in a single year and comparing those numbers to each other. If you do that, you will find that the divorces are about 50 percent, if not more, when you compare the numbers that way. And that has been demonstrated for a number of years going forward. Now, others will argue that is not the best or most accurate way to measure that statistic but that you really need to look at it more in terms of the total population; in other words, in terms of the total number of divorces per 1,000 people in the population, which is another way that this is typically measured.

Regardless of how you measured it, if you chart it out over the last century, you will see a very interesting story that very much ties into what I'm talking about today. Again, the concept of divorce has always existed. There's always been some percentage of divorce as you go back over history; but starting in the 1960s and into the 1970s, you see this huge spike on the graph. Basically it starts climbing up. It climbs through the '60s and '70s into the '80s towards the '90s. Then you'll see it start to flatten out as it moves forward and even over time maybe drops a little bit.

And it's also important to realize how that is typically measured. It's normally done, again, in terms of the number of divorces per 1,000 people in the population. If you're going to measure it that way, it's also important to take into consideration what is happening with the marriage rate. Because, if your marriage rate is dropping and you have fewer marriages, then that is obviously going to skew your overall numbers and make the graph look differently. And that's exactly what has happened.

Now to explain this, I'd like to quote from an article I pulled off of the Pew Research Center's website. It's pewsocialtrends.org. It's an article posted on September 24, 2014, titled "Record Share of Americans Have Never Married" by Wendy Wang and Kim Parker. Now what I'm going to do is I'm just extracting a couple of paragraphs out of this article so I'm certainly not planning on reading the entire article. But the first paragraph says:

After decades of declining marriage rates and changes in family structure, the share of American adults who have never been married is at an historic high. In 2012, one-in-five adults ages 25 and older (about 42 million people) had never been married, according to a new Pew Research Center analysis of census data.

In 1960, only about one-in-ten adults (9%) in that age range had never been married....

So notice what we're saying here is that in 1960, it was about 9 percent. In 2013, it was over 20 percent. So we're saying the number of adults that have never married has more than doubled in this timeframe. Again, that lets you see when you're graphing this out, if your marriage rate is significantly dropping, that's why the graph on the divorces is coming down because they're comparing it to the total population. It's giving you a little bit of a skewed picture.

What is important to realize here is that over this same timeframe, when we've taken gender roles and tried to erase these from our culture, what has happened? We have a skyrocketing divorce rate and a dropping marriage rate. It's basically tearing the concept of marriage apart in our country. That's what's happening.

An even more alarming statistic to look at is the number of children born in America across the board. This is the entire nation regardless of what demographic of people you're looking at—the total number of children being born in America where marriage is not in the equation at the time of their birth. To illustrate this, I'm going to quote from an article on childtrends.org. It's entitled "Births to Unmarried Women," and again I'm only extracting a single paragraph from this article. It says:

The proportion of births to unmarried women has increased greatly in recent decades, rising from five percent in 1960 to 32 percent in 1995. After some stability in the mid-1990s, there was a gradual rise from 1997 through 2008, from 32 to 41 percent. The rate appears to have stabilized again, and was at 41 percent in 2013.

Now think about what this statistic is telling us here. We're approaching half of children born in America today that at the time they are born marriage is not in the equation for their parents. What that means in a lot of cases here is we're probably dealing with a father not in the home or not as actively involved in the children's lives.

Now if you look at the issue of fatherlessness and again correlate that with other social issues—I don't have time to go through all the statistics illustrating this—fatherlessness (when there is not a father actively involved in the home and with the kids) heavily correlates with all manner of social problems, with poverty, with crime, with drug addiction. It heavily correlates with all these issues.

Now let me give the disclaimer. I'm not trying to say that every child that grows up in a single parent home is going to turn out to be a criminal or a drug addict. I'm not saying that. What I'm saying is if you correlate those two issues, there is obviously a relationship here. So when you're getting to the point of close to half of the children in your society are born where marriage is not in the equation, you're looking at societal breakdown on the way. That's basically what's happening.

Now to also understand the impact of this, as I mentioned before we have a dropping marriage rate. Let me also read you another paragraph I pulled also off the Pew Research Center's website. It's from the same article I was quoting before. It says:

Recent survey data from the Pew Research Center finds a public that is deeply divided over the role marriage plays in society. Survey respondents were asked which of the following statements came closer to their own views: Society is better off if people make marriage and having children a priority, or society is just as well off if people have priorities other than marriage and children. Some 46% of adults chose the first statement, while 50% chose the second.

Notice what this is saying. It's saying that we have a growing number of people in America where marriage is not even really considered important. And to understand what some of that is about, let's also look at some of the perceptions of your young adults crowd, of the twenties and thirties crowd, those who are in that age demographic where they are dating, looking for a spouse, looking to get married, and start their lives. What I'm going to do is read to you some quotes that you might call "criticisms" where both are looking across the aisle at each other.

And also let me give you a disclaimer up front that some of the quotes I'm about to read are pretty critical of one another. It's not my purpose to condemn or demonize either side. What I want you to hear in this is that the fundamental theme of the criticisms on each side is "You're abandoning the role that makes you attractive, that we would be seeking." They've kind of abandoned that and that's what they're complaining about. That's what I want you to see in this.

This first article comes from the Wall Street Journal's website; it's wsj.com. It's entitled "Where Have the Good Men Gone?" It's by Kay S. Hymowitz and it was posted on February 19, 2011. Again, I'm just pulling a couple of paragraphs out of this article. It says:

Not so long ago, the average American man in his 20s had achieved most of the milestones of adulthood: a high-school diploma, financial independence, marriage and children. Today, most men in their 20s hang out in a novel sort of limbo, a hybrid state of semi-hormonal adolescence and responsible self-reliance. This "pre-adulthood" has much to recommend it, especially for the college-educated. But it's time to state what has become obvious to legions of frustrated young women: It doesn't bring out the best in men.

"We are sick of hooking up with guys," writes the comedian Julie Klausner.....What Ms. Klausner means by "guys" is males who are not boys or men but something in between. "Guys talk about 'Star Wars' like it's not a movie made for people half their age; a guy's idea of a perfect night is a hang around the PlayStation with his band mates, or a trip to Vegas with his college friends.... They are more like the kids we babysat than the dads who drove us home."

Now, again, I realize that this is critical and, no, I'm not condemning the movie Star Wars, but what I want you to hear in this is basically what they're complaining about. Historically, young men of this age were preparing to be husbands, fathers and masculine leaders, but they're saying they have kind of abandoned this. They're just overgrown teenagers and they're not the men we would want as masculine leaders, as husbands and fathers, the guys we would seek after. Basically what they're saying is "you have abandoned the traditional gender role." That's what they're saying. That's the core of their complaint.

Well, there is a similar complaint coming from the other side of the aisle. Now this article is from FoxNews.com. It's entitled "The War on Men" by Suzanne Venker and it was published November 26, 2012. Again, I'm just extracting several paragraphs from a larger article. It says:

The battle of the sexes is alive and well. According to Pew Research Center, the share of women ages eighteen to thirty-four that say having a successful marriage is one of the most important things in their lives rose nine percentage points since 1997 – from 28 percent to 37 percent. For men, the opposite occurred. The share voicing this opinion dropped, from 35 percent to 29 percent.

Believe it or not, modern women want to get married. Trouble is, men don't.....

As the author of three books on the American family and its intersection with pop culture, I've spent thirteen years examining social agendas as they pertain to sex, parenting, and gender roles. During this time, I've spoken with hundreds, if not thousands, of men and women. And in doing so, I've accidentally stumbled upon a subculture of men who've told me, in no uncertain terms, that they're never getting married. When I ask them why, the answer is always the same.

Women aren't women anymore.

To say gender relations have changed dramatically is an understatement. Ever since the sexual revolution, there has been a profound overhaul in the way men and women interact. Men haven't changed much – they had no revolution that demanded it – but women have changed dramatically.

In a nutshell, women are angry. They're also defensive, though often unknowingly. That's because they've been raised to think of men as the enemy.

Now again, let me give a disclaimer. I'm not trying to just bash women or the young men. What I want you to hear, though, is on both sides of the aisle they're saying, "You're abandoning the role that makes you attractive, what we would want to see." The women are saying "The young men are not masculine leaders. They're not the guys we would want to be husbands and fathers and to lead a family." A lot of the young men are saying, "Women aren't women anymore. You're not feminine and

nurturing. You're more critical and emasculating and attacking." So both are saying, "You've abandoned your traditional role." That's what they're saying.

So, how did we get into this mess? How did society change this radically over the last several decades? This is the result of a social movement that started back in the 1960s. It's the Feminist Movement.

It's important first of all to understand that the way this movement tries to market itself in many ways and what it's really about are profoundly different because oftentimes what you hear as the justification of what feminism is about and why we need it is because it's about equality. It's about equal rights and fairness for women. Again, that appeals to a basic fair-minded person because who wouldn't be in favor of equal rights and fairness? That just sounds very positive but you have to understand what the ideology behind this is very much about.

If we look back to a starting point of what is considered Second Wave Feminism, it's oftentimes accredited to Betty Freidan who wrote The Feminine Mystique in 1963. Now again, with social movements it's hard to pinpoint a single timeframe because things change gradually over time but that's oftentimes looked to as the starting point. It's important to realize the ideology behind this movement.

It's the total rejection of the idea that God created men and women inherently differently down to the chromosomal level where our brains function differently; we're emotionally different; we're designed to fulfill different roles but to be complementary to each other. Their idea is that "Those are all social constructs that don't really exist. In fact, it's inherently oppressive." That's their ideal because they see these roles as inherently oppressive, and not only that, but marriage and the family (what we typically refer to as the nuclear family), they see that as inherently oppressive.

So their objective has been not only to erase gender roles from our culture but the absolute destruction of the family. I know that sounds very dramatic, but let me read to you several quotes from early feminist leaders so you can understand this is exactly what they said their objective was. And again to illustrate this, I'm just going to read to you several quotes from prominent feminist leaders of the '60s and '70s when this movement really kicked off. This first quote comes from a document called "The Declaration of Feminism" from November 1971. It says:

Marriage has existed for the benefit of men; and has been a legally sanctioned method of control over women ... We must work to destroy it. The end of the institution of marriage is a necessary condition for the liberation of women. Therefore it is important for us to encourage women to leave their husbands and not to live individually with men ... All of history must be re-written in terms of oppression of women. We must go back to ancient female religions like witchcraft." (from "The Declaration of Feminism" November, 1971)

Notice as I go through these quotes (I have a couple more I'm going to read), there is a theme here. Basically, you're going to see that marriage and the family is the enemy. Those are inherently evil sexist structures. Men are the oppressors; women are the downtrodden victims. And, therefore, the obvious answer to this is women need to rise up and be more masculine because being in a feminine role is more oppressive. And masculinity is inherently toxic; so we have to feminize men for the safety of mankind. That's the ideology behind this movement and how they brainwash our culture.

To continue backing this up, this second quote is from Sheila Cronan. It's from a publication called Radical Feminism in an article entitled "Marriage". It's from 1970.

Since marriage constitutes slavery for women, it is clear that the women's movement must concentrate on attacking this institution. Freedom for women cannot be won without the abolition of marriage.

Notice it's very directly stated what their objective is.

This next quote is from Andrea Dorkin. It's from a speech she gave at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on September 26, 1975. It's a speech entitled "The Root Cause."

Only when manhood is dead—and it will perish when ravaged femininity no longer sustains it--only then will we know what it is to be free.

Now notice masculinity is viewed as inherently pathological and must be destroyed as part of their ideology.

This next quote is from Linda Gordon. It's from publication entitled "WOMEN: A Journal of Liberation" in an article entitled "Functions of the Family" from fall of 1969.

The nuclear family must be destroyed, and people must find better ways of living together.... Whatever its ultimate meaning, the break-up of families now is an objectively revolutionary process.... Families have supported oppression by separating people into small, isolated units, unable to join together to fight for common interests.

As you can see, the ideology is a very anti-family, anti-traditional values and tradition gender roles. In fact gender roles are seen not only as an artificial construct (You might say, "Something we've artificially injected into society."), but they're seen as inherently oppressive and something that must be erased from our society, again for the liberation of women because having these roles automatically is inherently oppressive to women. That's the objective.

As we know, God designed men and women inherently differently, even on a genetic level. We think differently. We're emotionally wired differently because we're designed for very different roles and to be complementary to each other. God said that "It's not

good that man should be alone.” We need one another; we complete one another. That’s part of God’s design.

But if you’re going to try to fight against this, you’re basically fighting nature. So now you need a logic to be able to brainwash people, to convince them to fight against nature. Basically the underlying logic that they have infused very deeply into our culture consists of the following basic principles.

- Women are always victims, always oppressed, and put down.
- Taking the feminine role in any way is inherently going to result in victimization and oppression.
- To be liberated from that oppression, women need to take on the masculine role and compete with men so that they are not oppressed.

Also then, they view:

- Masculinity is inherently toxic and pathological.
- Men must be socialized to be more feminine.

Don’t we always hear that men need to be in touch with their feminine side in our culture? That’s what that message is about. We have to feminize men for the safety of mankind. What I want you to see is just how deeply this whole message is entrenched in our culture because there are a lot of myths that have been developed basically to brainwash us into pursuing this whole logic.

To start off with I’m going to quote from a book called The Flipside of Feminism by Suzanne Venker. It’s a book that gives you a good overview of the Feminist Movement and what it’s about it. This quote is from page 13.

For the past several decades, it has been widely accepted that women in America usually, if not always, get the short end of the stick. According to feminists, women, like blacks, have been oppressed for centuries. We’re told not enough progress has been made and that society still hasn’t leveled the playing field. This philosophy is so embedded in our culture that Americans don’t question it. We don’t even label it “feminist” to think this way; it’s just commonplace to believe women suffer discrimination. Turn on the television, flip through a magazine, or search America’s airwaves, and you’ll be deluged with stories about women who wonder how their needs can best be met, how they can balance their lives better, or how they can deal with the myriad of problems and dangers they face. Women’s grievances dominate the conversation.

But grievances are like crabgrass: The more heat they get, the more it spreads. And that is precisely what has happened with modern women. Feminist organizations even promote the growth of grievances by consciousness-raising sessions, where feminists exchange tales of how badly some man treated them and what government’s role should be as compensation.”

Again, if you pay attention to our culture, that is deeply embedded and we get that message all the time. Now please understand that I'm not trying to say there haven't been legitimate ways that women have suffered in America. We live in an evil unjust society and I'm not claiming that there has ever been a time in our history where we ever had it exactly right and we practiced gender roles the way God intended. That's never been the case. The way I like to sum up the human condition is: We see the middle of the road as we jump from one ditch to the other. We're always off balance in one way or another.

Again, if you look from the 1960s forward you can see this radical transformation that has taken place in our views on this subject, which has created the mess that we're in. Again, look at this overall theme of women are always the victims; men are always the oppressors, and how this is embedded in our culture. There are a number of ways that I'll even call myths that are put forward to substantiate and to ingrain this thought process in us. Sometimes these are cherry-picked facts—in other words, just cherry-picking some facts and only telling one side of the story. Sometimes it's taking a real problem and greatly exaggerating it. Sometimes it's just absolute manufactured nonsense.

Let me give you an example of absolute manufactured nonsense. If you go on YouTube and look at any particular videos put forward by those who see themselves as feminists which explain to you why we need feminism and the cause that it's fighting for. One of the first things you will probably hear out of their mouths is the gender wage gap. You will hear this all the time. Especially in an election year, you will hear Democratic politicians putting this forward as to why you need to vote for them because they're going to straighten out this injustice. This is deeply ingrained in our culture and it absolutely defies common sense. Forgive me if I get very dogmatic about this but I work in the human resources field and have for the last fifteen years. I make job offers on a weekly basis so I'm real familiar with this whole issue. This subject is just absolute manufactured nonsense.

Here is how it is typically put across. You will hear the figure stated like this: "Women in America on average make 20 to 25 percent less than men do." Now that statement, in and of itself, is true if you actually understand how those numbers are tabulated. Here's how it drops into absolute nonsense. Then they turn around and say, "This is because of sexism and discrimination. This is great unfairness because women deserve equal pay for equal work"—which appeals to anyone's sense of fairness. Who doesn't deserve equal pay for equal work? We would all be in favor of that. The problem being, when these numbers are tabulated, the concept of equal work is never even taken into consideration. The way that these numbers are tabulated is you take all the salaries of men and you drop them into one bucket in America and you take all the salaries of women and you drop those into another bucket in America. Then you average these two numbers and compare them with each other. If you do the math like that, yes, you're going to find that men, on average, make 20 to 25 percent more than women.

But again, we haven't taken the concept of equal work even into consideration. To do that, you have to start asking some questions. You have to ask: Are they doing the same jobs? Working in the same fields? Playing the same role? Having the same qualifications, the same education, credentials (whatever is important in that field to do be considered credible)? Same years of experience? Are they working the same number of hours?

Once you start adjusting for all of these issues, what you are going to find is there isn't a significant difference. You may find small amounts of differences. In many cases, you're going to find a small difference and that's in women's favor. This is because there is oftentimes a hypersensitivity to this issue among HR because it's quoted so often and because lawsuits can result from this. So employers try to be hyper-conservative not to allow this to happen.

The bottom line is (and I don't have time to go through all of the intellectual details of this) that men and women make different choices, go into different fields, have different priorities in terms of how they look at the world of work. If you want a kind of an analytical breakdown of the details of this issue, all you need to do is go onto Google, Google the names Warren Farrell or Thomas Sowell. They are both PhDs who have extensively looked at this subject. They have written articles and I know Warren Farrell has even written a book about it. Warren Farrell actually used to be on the Board of the National Organization of Women. He was a second-wave feminist activist until he tried to use math to substantiate a lot of these ideas and found out the opposite was true. So, he actually wrote a book about it.

Just to give you an easy demonstration of the concept. It's been well demonstrated in America over the last several decades what U.S. companies will do if they feel they can substantially reduce their labor costs. I'm sure you've heard in the last couple of decades of a lot of companies taking jobs overseas, of your call centers winding up in India, manufacturing winding up in South America or China or places of that nature. One of the main reasons that is happening is because of reduced labor costs. Employers can get workers to work there a lot cheaper than they can pay Americans.

So, we know what American companies will do if they can substantially lower their labor costs. If it were true across the board as a general rule that you could get women in America to work for the exact same job as a man and pay her 25 percent less, it's common sense to know what would happen. Guys like me who do recruiting would be highly encouraged to "Let's just focus on hiring women." And you try to exclusively hire women and avoid hiring men because why would you want to pay 25 percent more to do the same job? Because companies are primarily concerned about profit, it just doesn't make any sense.

The idea behind this whole concept is it sells the victim argument. And it embeds in our culture that women always get the short end of the stick. They're always oppressed, always put down. And there is this systemic oppression always trying to hold women

down. That's why you're always hearing about empowerment. Have you ever noticed that we constantly hear about empowering women in our culture? Think about it. If you're in a perpetual state of oppression and victimization, you're in a perpetual need for empowerment to lift you out of it. That's why everything that is marketed to women these days is "It's empowering. It's empowering," because we've always got to empower the downtrodden victim. And that's the basic concept of our culture.

Even some of the most ridiculous ideas in the world are put across as empowerment. Think about it. Especially in our universities where they say, "Be sexually promiscuous. Be like men. Take part in the hookup culture. It's empowering. If you get pregnant, have an abortion. It's empowering." These are ridiculous ideas that are destructive to people but how are they marketed? As empowering.

If you think about the logic of this argument, this is not a new argument. This has been going on for 6,000 years. Here's why I say this. Think about how Satan approached Eve in the Garden of Eden. What was the sales pitch? The sales pitch was "God's holding you down. He's cheating you out of equality because He knows if you take of this fruit, you'll be as smart as He is. You'll be equal with Him and He's trying to hold you down and cheat you out of that. Here, eat this fruit. It's empowering." That was the sales pitch. That's been working for thousands of years. Satan is evil; he's not stupid. He knew how to appeal to human nature. A victim argument tends to sell.

Again, not only have we characterized women as always being the victims, we tend to characterize masculinity as pathological, as inherently evil. So, therefore we need to feminize men for the safety of mankind. One of the ways our culture has done that is through the subject of domestic violence.

Now before I even go down this road, let me make a very clear disclaimer right up front. I am discussing this subject. I am not justifying or advocating violence by anyone at any point under any circumstances. Let's be very clear about that. Nor am I minimizing those who have been on the receiving end of suffering of domestic violence. I want to make that very clear up front.

But the way our culture puts across this subject paints a very one-sided picture and I think the average American has bought into this and doesn't even realize that they are getting a much skewed view of the subject. Think about how the subject of domestic violence is typically characterized in our culture. There is a phrase that we've synonymized this subject with—violence against women. The very terminology tells you that this is a one-sided subject. This is a gender-based issue. It's a problem that men perpetrate against women. Men are always the perpetrators; women are always the victims. That is simply not true.

The way you typically see this portrayed in movies, in TV shows, and all throughout our culture is a very stereotypical scenario. It's the overbearing aggressive domineering male and the passive female who just needs to get up the guts to leave this guy and get out of the situation. Now, again, I am not denying that scenario happens. I have seen

cases in that regard. Just for the record, I have advised women in situations like that the best thing they can do is to get out of that situation because it is just going to keep continuing like that. So, I'm not in any way denying that.

What I'm saying is: If you think that scenario is basically the only way that domestic violence happens and the way we can characterize this problem, that is not even close to accurate. To back this up, let me quote from an article I pulled off of TIME Magazine's website. It's entitled "The Surprising Truth about Women and Violence" from June 25, 2014 and it's authored by Cathy Young. Again, in the interest of full disclosure, I'm just pulling selected paragraphs out of this article. I'm not reading the entire article to you. It says:

Traditional stereotypes have led to double standards that often cause women's violence—especially against men—to be trivialized.

The arrest of an Olympic gold medalist on charges of domestic violence would normally be an occasion for a soul-searching conversation about machismo in sports, toxic masculinity and violence against women. But not when the alleged offender is a woman: 32-year-old Hope Solo, goalkeeper of the U.S. women's soccer team, who is facing charges of assaulting her sister and 17-year-old nephew in a drunken, violent outburst. While the outcome of the case is far from clear, this is an occasion for conversation about a rarely acknowledged fact: family violence is not necessarily a gender issue, and women are not always its innocent victims.

Research showing that women are often aggressors in domestic violence has been causing controversy for almost 40 years, ever since the 1975 National Family Violence Survey by sociologists Murray Straus and Richard Gelles of the Family Research Laboratory at the University of New Hampshire found that women were just as likely as men to report hitting a spouse and men were just as likely as women to report getting hit. The researchers initially assumed that, at least in cases of mutual violence, the women were defending themselves or retaliating. But when subsequent surveys asked who struck first, it turned out that women were as likely as men to initiate violence—a finding confirmed by more than 200 studies of intimate violence. In a 2010 review essay in the journal *Partner Abuse*, Straus concludes that women's motives for domestic violence are often similar to men's, ranging from anger to coercive control.

Violence by women causes less harm due to obvious differences in size and strength, but it is by no means harmless. Women may use weapons, from knives to household objects—including highly dangerous ones such as boiling water—to neutralize their disadvantage, and men may be held back by cultural prohibitions on using force toward a woman even in self-defense. In his 2010 review, Straus concludes that in various studies, men account for 12% to 40% of those injured in heterosexual couple violence. Men also make up about 30% of intimate homicide victims—not counting cases in which women kill in self-defense. And

women are at least as likely as men to kill their children—more so if one counts killings of newborns—and account for more than half of child maltreatment perpetrators.

Traditional stereotypes both of female weakness and female innocence have led to double standards that often cause women's violence—especially against men—to be trivialized, excused, or even ... treated as humorous. Today, simplistic feminist assumptions about male power and female oppression effectively perpetuate those stereotypes. It is time to see women as fully human—which includes the dark side of humanity.

What we need to understand here is domestic violence is not a gender-based issue. Again, what always gets focused on is violence against women and you can understand some of why the logic of that is, but what we've done is basically program people to think of this as only a one-sided issue. What logic does this tell us? If it's solely a gender-based issue where men are always the oppressors and women are always the victims, the underlying logic this tells us is that masculinity must be a part of the problem. That's why at the beginning of this article I mentioned this is normally a discussion about toxic masculinity because that's viewed as the problem. Therefore, we need to socialize men differently to solve this problem.

I know oftentimes we don't hear about the reverse side of this—again, women being violent against men—but there are a number of issues as to why that is.

Again, please understand as I discuss this I am not advocating violence by anybody. I simply want you to understand some of the social dynamics because in our culture oftentimes you don't hear men talk about this as much. Think about the reality of the situation a man is in if he's on the receiving end of this subject of domestic violence. He's inherently in a double bind. If a woman is being violent against him and he just takes it and he's pushed around by it, how does our culture look at him? "He's a wuss. He's getting pushed around by a girl." And that's how he's judged.

If, then, he defends himself and strikes back, now what situation is he in? "He struck a woman. He's a wife-beater. He's an abuser." He's going to lose in this situation either way.

Let me state again, I'm not advocating violence by any one at any point. I just want you to understand some of the social dynamics of why you don't hear about this as much because oftentimes men won't talk about this due to the issues involved here.

It's also been demonstrated in our culture and oftentimes this has been shown by these shows that do the hidden camera type thing where they will set up a scenario with actors and then they will film how the bystanders react to the set up situation. With some of these, what they've done is set up this scenario where you have a man and a woman and one of them is acting aggressively to the other—slapping the other one around, being violent. What they found is not surprising at all because oftentimes if

people walk upon a situation to find a woman slapping a man around, the immediate assumption oftentimes is “She’s defending herself” or “He did something and he’s getting what he deserves.” In other words, “He has done something to agitate the situation and she’s had enough so she’s giving it to him.” Literally, in some of the cases, you could see the bystanders cheering her on as she’s hitting him. Again, it’s assumed in this case that he has done something to precipitate the situation; he’s getting what he deserves.

Now, reverse the situation and they have proven this as well where they have a scenario where bystanders walk up to find a man hitting a woman. It’s automatically assumed that there is no justification for this to happen. In fact, it’s not even acceptable to ask the question, “Could this have been an exchange that she started? Could she have contributed to the situation?” That’s considered “blaming the victim” and you’re not even allowed to ask that question.

Again, if we reverse this scenario around and a man is being slapped around by a woman, not only is it acceptable to ask the question, it’s assumed most often to be the fact that a man must have done something to her. So you can see our logic has been much skewed on the subject. Rather than judging by the fruits of behavior and getting down to what has really occurred between the two people, we’re viewing domestic violence through a political filter.

This has happened so much to the fact that if you look at our culture—and I’m going to leave some of the details out of this because some would be very gruesome. But I could give you examples of very gruesome acts of violence that women have perpetrated against men which were later brought upon daytime national television on women’s talk shows where a panel of women brought up the details, even told what gruesomely happened, laughed about it, joked about it, pondered “What did the man do that he would deserve this.” The studio audience laughs about and everyone is having a big time over it.

Whereas if you had reversed the situation, that would have been explosive because that would have been violence against women and totally unacceptable. That’s what our culture has done. We have programmed people to think so one-sidedly that even in spite of the facts that are blatantly in front of us, we still want to see that men are the perpetrators, women are the victims, and that’s always the case. Because, again, that’s our society’s justification for reversing gender roles.

Another myth in our culture that is used to substantiate this same idea is the idea of “rape culture.” You’ll probably hear this statistic a lot. The only version of this that has any form of legitimacy—I say “form of legitimacy” and I’ll explain in a minute why it’s bogus. Oftentimes you hear that 1 in 5 women on college campuses today is a rape victim. On other occasions you’ll hear that quoted as it applies to the population in general. Both are completely false.

Now, let me also state here up front that I am not minimizing. I am not a rape apologist. I am not minimizing the crime of rape. I have counseled victims, both male and female, of rapes. I understand the trauma that causes, but I think it's important to be honest with statistics in the picture you're putting across.

Again, if you compare the one in five figure to actual reported crime statistics, you'll find a huge disparity. Where I'm going to pull this from is the U.S. Department of Justice website. They have a special report entitled "Rape and Sexual Assault Victimization among College Aged Females 1995 to 2013." They are crunching data over an eighteen year period and what they are defining as "college aged women" is the age group of 18 to 24 years old. As the report tells you, if you look at actual reports of what legal issues have been filed because of a rape allegation, the numbers of this age demographic are higher than any other age demographic of women.

However, if you break down the numbers to compare them-- they were reported a little differently, but if you do a conversion so you have a 1 in x-number comparison—it breaks down to 1 in every 164. It's hugely different than this 1 in 5 figure. This is, again, the same demographic population they're referring to.

It can certainly be argued that rape by the nature of the crime oftentimes goes unreported and that is certainly true. There are a number of cases where, just due to what the victim suffers, they don't go through the additional trauma of reporting it and going through the legal process. But, if we play with this number just to account for that and for argument's sake double it to account for unreported ones, we get 1 in 82. If we quadruple it, we get 1 in 41. We can't get anywhere near 1 in 5.

So how do they come up with this 1 in 5 figure? If you understand how these studies are done, it's much, much skewed data and gives you an inaccurate picture. These were basically studies done at universities based upon surveys that were sent out where the respondents were answering questions about sexuality. One of the most important things to understand is how a person was classified as to whether they were a rape victim or not was not based upon the lady in question saying, "I was raped." Instead, that was a determination made by those performing the study. What they had done is ask several questions in regard to sexual activity that was engaged in after partaking in drugs or alcohol.

It's also important to understand that we're not referring to the scenario where someone is given Rohypnol against their knowledge and is predatorily drugged. That's a totally different situation; that is obviously rape. This is a situation where we're talking about normal young adult behavior where they're out drinking in excess and wind up engaging in sexual activity. When I say normal, I say normal for our culture. I'm not advocating that behavior. Again, with that age demographic in our culture today, excessive drinking and partying is kind of the norm for them.

If you think of this survey and what is included as rape is a scenario where the man and a woman are both at a party and both are drinking too much. They, then, both later

decide to engage in sex. The survey took any woman who responded by saying she had done this and counted her as a rape victim.

Think about not only is this very inaccurate in terms of how it will skew the data of your study, but think about the logic behind this. What this is saying is: If a man goes out, drinks too much, then decides to engage in sex afterwards, he is still responsible for his actions. In fact, he can still be called a rapist. Whereas if a woman drinks too much, engages in sex, she's not responsible for any of her actions. She's completely a victim. You can see a much skewed logic here because this ideology of the man is always the predator and the woman is always the victim has bled into this situation. But it's also created a much skewed logic in how we look at things because this type of statistic is now used to put across this idea of rape culture. What is happening now on our college campuses is oftentimes during freshman orientation men are lectured about rape culture—"Don't rape and you have to teach your friends not to rape." This logic puts across the idea that every man is inherently a violent evil rapist just looking for the opportunity to find a victim. Think about what the logic of this tells men about masculinity and the distrust it inherently creates in women in their logic of looking at men. This just tears the sexes apart and it creates a very inaccurate picture.

Not only have we taught the idea that masculinity is inherently sexist in this regard or inherently violent, this has resulted in a philosophy now throughout our educational system that we need to socialize boys differently. In other words, we need to teach them to be more feminine. It's like what you always hear from pop psychology these days. Men need to be more in touch with their feminine side. The constant message is we need to feminize men because masculine men are inherently a problem. That's what is being taught.

To illustrate this let me quote from a book entitled Men on Strike – Why Men Are Boycotting Marriage, Fatherhood, and the American Dream – and Why It Matters. It's written by Dr. Helen Smith, a psychologist. This is a quote from page 70. I'm just pulling one paragraph out here. Let me also explain that Dr. Smith is going to refer an individual named Sommers here. She's referring to Christina Hoff Sommers who is the author of the book The War on Boys. She is also a former college professor.

According to Sommers, "gender experts at Harvard, Wellesley, and Tufts, and in the major women's organizations, believe that boys and men in our society will remain sexist (and potentially dangerous) unless socialized away from conventional maleness....The belief that boys are being wrongly 'masculinized' is inspiring a movement to "construct boyhood" in ways that will render boys less competitive, more emotionally expressive, more nurturing – more, in short, like girls."

They are trying to get across this idea that if we don't socialize men differently, teach them to be more feminine, then that's going to be a danger to society. Is it any surprise now that one of the complaints coming from the young twenties and thirties aged girls is that "Men aren't men anymore"? "Where have all the real men gone?" We've taught

them from the time they got into school they needed to be more like girls. We've taught them that they shouldn't be masculine. They shouldn't pursue this role. We've even taught them it's inherently bad, sexist, and oppressive.

Not only that, we've taught them through our entertainment that being a man equates with being stupid, with being incompetent, and being dumb. If you think about paying attention to our entertainment, it has greatly brainwashed us to the exact opposite of biblical gender roles. Again, we'll get into this farther in the series of what the Bible actually teaches us about gender roles, but, in general, we see in the family structure, as God has laid it out for us, the husband and father is supposed to be the leader of the family. And that doesn't mean just being a dictator; it means being a loving servant as Christ loved the Church. That's the example used. Still, the husband is the person designated to be in the leadership role. Yet, our culture constantly reinforces to us that husbands and father are buffoons and idiots and incompetent. Why would you want to look to someone as your leader who is stupid and incompetent? This naturally programs us that you wouldn't because the last person you want to be your leader is a bumbling idiot.

Think about our entertainment. If you look at shows over the last several decades, in most of our sitcoms, what is the husband and father like? He is the butt of all the jokes. He's a blithering idiot. He's Al Bundy. He's stupid, incompetent and it's always the funny part of the show of how he messes everything up. Then you have this strong female character that has to come behind him and save the day and straighten everything out. Even the kids are smarter than the dad is because he's just a bumbling idiot in every regard.

Not only that but we also see modeled the behavior of the wife is not only the strong one in the relationship, she is oftentimes very critical and emasculating of him, very much micromanaging his every move and constantly cutting him down and emasculating him for his incompetence. This basically programs us from the time that we are young that these are the types of roles we should aspire to. What we've done is take the biblical structure, tear it apart, and turn it upside down.

Just to give you an overview of this, I really like this quote from Suzanne Venker and how she summed up this whole part of our culture. She says, "Father Knows Best has been replaced by Dad's An Idiot." If you think about entertainment prior to this whole social movement, what did we see in shows? We had shows like Father Knows Best. You saw a situation where what was modeled in front of you in your entertainment was a father who was a patriarch, a loving leader of the family who guided the family, and fulfilled that masculine role. Today we see the exact opposite. The role of father is always denigrated, put down, made fun of because the man is always stupid.

This is not only in our entertainment; this is even in our children's stories. We indoctrinate children from the time that they are young with these very ideas. Let me illustrate this by quoting from an article that I pulled off World Net Daily's website. It's

entitled “Why Father’s Day is really about Mothers.” It’s by Patrice Lewis and was posted on June 20, 2015. It says:

When our daughters were very young, they loved the Berenstain Bears series of children’s books. We would check them out of the library by the armful. But as we read more and more of the series, a theme started to emerge. When she was about 5 years old, our daughter articulated it quite well: Why does Mama Bear always think Papa is dumb?

It was true. In story after story, Mama was always right; and good honest hardworking Papa was a monumental dunce. I seized on our daughter’s question to explain Papa Bear’s good qualities, and how Mama Bear shouldn’t treat him the way she did. I recall it was one of our first discussions on the valuable role that dads play in a child’s life.

It’s not just the Berenstain Bears, of course. Popular culture has been bashing dads for decades. Very rarely do you see the man of the house portrayed as competent, authoritative and wise. A study of 12 recent TV sitcoms shows dads as bumbling and incapable.

“[C]hildren and youth watch a lot of television, and the ways fathers are depicted can both influence how they will think about themselves as future parents and reinforce what they already believe about family roles,” “We are likely to watch things that match with what we think.”

For feminists, empowering women is all about emasculating men, which they do with alacrity except on Father’s Day, the one day a year when dads are abruptly portrayed as flawless and benevolent and are condescendingly offered ties, wallets and bathrobes. Somehow that one day of accolades is supposed to erase 364 days of bashing. Then on Monday morning, it’s back to normal. Gee, honey, that tie looks stupid with that shirt.

Girls are steeped in this populist attitude toward men and internalize it during their formative years. Then they grow into women who think, well duh, all men are stupid, bumbling and incompetent ... therefore either a) when I get married I’ll treat my husband that way; or b) I won’t get married at all (fish and bicycles, doncha know) and have babies on my own. Who needs a man?

As it turns out, all kids need a man – preferably their father, either by birth or adoption.

If you have noticed throughout our culture another message we get is that men are irrelevant. Not to pick on her, but think of Jennifer Aniston’s quote recently in the last few years. “I don’t need to fiddle with a man to have a baby.” The whole thought was “Hey, if I can get pregnant from a sperm bank, the father doesn’t really serve any role in raising the child.” The idea is that what a man contributes to the family as a husband

and father to the development of the children is unimportant. We don't really need that role anymore. That's what the constant denigration of that role has accomplished and brainwashed into people these days.

However, again, all you have to do is look at statistics of fatherlessness and the impact that has to see that is absolutely untrue. You can heavily correlate fatherlessness (when the father is not actively involved in the home) with all manner of social problems. Again, it greatly increases your risk of poverty, of crime, of drug addiction, of all manner of social problems if that family structure is messed up. Yet, we have a culture today that basically teaches us it's unimportant and irrelevant.

It's not hard to see why people would think that. If you're constantly told that this half of the equation is stupid, incompetent, irrelevant, pathological, and they cause all the problems; isn't it easy then to think, "We don't need that. If that's the problem, we can just eliminate it." That is basically what has happened in our culture.

The way we brought this transformation about is a two-pronged message. Again, the whole idea is fighting nature because God inherently designed us as men and women, again, very differently. Not just in our anatomy, in the proportion of hormones in our bodies, but down to the chromosomal level. It's screamingly obvious that we are designed very differently for different roles and different purposes.

Yet, what does our culture want us to believe? These roles are exactly the same, completely interchangeable in every way, and everything about masculinity and femininity are simply social constructs we've artificially pushed into the equation. We're fighting nature; that's the reality of what is happening here. And again, to do that you have to brainwash people.

What this brainwashing has done is teach that masculinity is pathological. We have to feminize men for the safety of mankind. And women are always the victims. So, therefore, everything associated with the male leadership role is inherently sexist, inherently pathological and we have to feminize all of that to take it down. Then we associate everything with the normal female role as inherently oppressive and will lead to victimization. Who would want to be a victim? So now we motivate both sides to abandon their roles.

And what do we have now? We have four to five decades of this and we have a society coming apart. It's not just as simple as "Yes, we validated homosexual marriage." And realize that validation is a natural offshoot of this whole movement. If you look back at even the Equal Rights Amendment that was proposed during the '70s and '80s in the U.S. that was marketed the same way that the Feminist Movement has been—"This is about equal rights for women." Now in reality what it was about was taking the concept of gender out of our laws. What that would have done if that had passed was open up this Pandora's Box of same-sex marriage much earlier because now it would have been illegal to discriminate in regards to gender. It would have also made it unacceptable to exclude women from the draft of being sent on the frontlines to die in war because,

again, that would have been distinguishing upon gender and that would have taken the issue out of it. You have to realize that's what this movement has really been about and there's been a very deep brainwashing of our culture that has gone on for multiple decades.

That's what I think we in the Church of God really need to realize here because, in our case, I think we readily see homosexuality as something we immediately recognize as sin. We see that as an abomination. We want no part of it. And that's good that we do, because the Bible describes that as an abomination. Yet we need to realize the culture that has led up to this point. The culture in the name of equality.

Just as another side point, whenever you see an ideology in our society today marketed under "Equality, equality, equality", red flags should go up and you should be very leery because that is the sales pitch for not only feminism, for multiculturalism, for socialism, for all manner of satanic philosophies. Equality is the sales pitch because that just appeals to our sense of fairness and it sounds good, but if you start looking under the surface, that's not the case. And that's what has been marketed to our whole culture.

Again, I wanted to start this series by looking at this subject because I think this has been so steeped into our culture that it has bled into our thinking in the Church of God as well. And we can be just like Lot—seeing and hearing the lawless deeds of the culture around us can affect our thinking and how we look at subjects. Even in the Church of God at times when we talk about biblical gender roles and the roles that God has defined for us, we've been programmed for decades "That's sexist. That's sexist." So we tend to want to resist it.

So, I wanted to start off this series, before we even go farther into looking at what the Bible says, understanding the dynamics of the programming we have received throughout the last 40 to 50 years. And if you're younger than 40, that means it has been your entire life that you've been receiving all of this. Realize how deeply that has been ingrained in us so that we can fight that. Let's learn from the lesson of Lot. There is no reason to suggest that Lot approved of or was involved in homosexuality in any way, shape, or form. He directly calls it as being "wicked." Yet look at his family. Look at how deeply affected they were and how perverted their thinking was by the culture around them. We are in the same situation where day-to-day we are seeing and hearing the lawless culture around us influencing our thinking. I wanted us to be able to see how deeply this has been ingrained and how it has affected us so that we can be aware of that as we go forward and look more at what God has to say about these subjects.

This is just the first of a multiple part series on this subject, so tune in next time for [Biblical Gender Roles – Part 2](#).