

# Did God Intend a **Difference?**

**Honorable  
Men & Women**

Feminism's  
Fatal Flaw

Careers and Motherhood:  
**Maximizing Your Options**

Where Have All the  
Young Men Gone?

**What Guys and Girls  
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Dinosaurs Fit?

# Vive la Différence!

**T**he French have a reputation for appreciating the differences between males and females, and their expression *Vive la différence* is used to celebrate that difference. Even though some supposed experts told us a few years ago that, other than anatomically, there really isn't any significant difference between the sexes, most of us figured out pretty quickly that guys and girls just aren't wired the same. Yes. *There is a difference.*

In general, girls seem more interested in relationships than guys. Guys, in general, seem to be more concerned with competition than girls. And did I mention emotions? Why is it that girls usually seem more willing to let theirs show than guys?

This all makes for situations that are fascinating and often funny at the same time. We're both human, but we sure do act, think and respond differently. If we are willing to laugh at ourselves, there is some great humor based on these distinctions.

## Most of us figure out pretty quickly that guys and girls just aren't wired the same.

But seriously, what about these differences? Should we ignore them? Or minimize them so we can all act the same? Are they right, wrong or just different?

Depending on where we turn for answers, we find people who think that the unisex look—where the sexes are not distinguishable by hair or clothing—is the way society should go. Others suggest that people should be free to live as whichever gender they wish, irrespective of how they were born. A few years ago some social activists mistakenly suggested that the concept of gender differences was just a myth—that boys and girls were simply trained from birth to act differently.

As vertical thinkers—people who strive to think on things from God's perspective (Colossians 3:2)—we want to know what God says about these things. We aren't looking primarily to other people to determine how to think and act. And contrary to much of society today, wherein everyone wants to give and believe his or her own opinion, we aren't trying to form our own opinions apart from God. So let's see what God tells us about gender.

At creation, God made human beings both male and female (Genesis 1:27), and He said that this distinction was "very good" (verse 31). So why would anyone want to erase differences in gender or pretend they don't exist?

Through the pages of the Bible we also find that God created different roles for the sexes and that He intended for us to respect our sexual identity. One way we can respect our gender is in how we dress. In Deuteronomy 22:5 God says, "A woman shall not wear a man's apparel, nor shall a man put on a woman's garment; for whoever does such things is abhorrent to the LORD your God" (New Revised Standard Version).

Surprising to some, the length of our hair also shows respect for our gender and respect to our Creator. You'll read more about this inside. In this issue we hope you'll gain a deeper respect for the differences in the sexes and that you'll live accordingly. *Vive la différence!*



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Opinions abound, but let's see what the Bible has to say about the roles of men and women.

by Doug Horchak

# Did God Intend A Difference?

## **T**he longest battle on earth? Some say it's the *Battle of the Sexes*—and it isn't over yet!

Whether driven by culture, ethnicity, religion or philosophy, people have all kinds of ideas about how men and women are valued and why. Whether in religious circles or our current pop culture, the various views on gender are clearly all over the map!

A look into the Bible reveals that societal norms for the role of men and women have strayed from what God intended from the beginning. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve decided for themselves what was right and wrong instead of obeying God. As a result, they were cut off from God (Genesis 3:22-24).

From then on, mankind devised its own views on everything, including politics, education, religion and the family. Humanity apart from God has been clueless as to how to properly view the roles and relationships of men and women.

## **God's view given a bad name**

But why is this so? Why has mankind so confused the unique roles for which men and women were created? As in many areas of life, it's often the misuse or abuse of a *good thing* that gives something a "bad name." Even Christianity has gotten a bad rap since the majority who have claimed to represent Christianity throughout history have been guilty of pagan compromise, hypocrisy, false teaching and killing, even genocide—all in the name of God!

In like fashion, history shows that men have often treated women (whether in marriage or not) as subordinates or second-class citizens. And so, the intent of God's Word regarding male and female roles in society, family and the Church has also received a bad reputation due to horrible examples of misuse and abuse.

## **Errant theology**

In addition to man's confusion about the roles and differ-

ences of men and women, there are theologians on both sides of the debate who claim the Scriptures support their conclusions. Feminist theologians may think the Bible promotes no distinction of roles in leadership or the family—or that, if it does, this is not relevant today. Conversely, some ultraconservative religious groups believe the Bible says that a woman's role is that of a servant, slave or subordinate.

From God's perspective, men and women were created as a complement to one another (Genesis 2:18). God makes it clear that disrespect, disregard, intimidation and abuse are against His principles governing relationships between men and women—whether in marriage, society or the Church. In creating men and women different, God also made it clear that they had a need for each other. The value and contributions of both are needed for families to be successful and for society to thrive.

### Respect and love are key

What is the foundation for the roles and relationships between people? We find that God instructs us to first consider the needs of others before our own. Both men and women are to respect each other and serve each other

God's Word shows us that women do have meaningful (and sometimes the most valuable) input and advice to give and be heeded!

In marriage, God has men and women fulfilling mutually important but unique roles. Ephesians 5:22-25 instructs men and women on the distinctive godly roles they should strive to fulfill. In this chapter, we see that God revealed the broad context within which men and women can fulfill their roles in a marriage and family in light of the entire plan of God. Wives are to voluntarily submit themselves to their husbands as the head in their marriage. This is not a reference to inferiority—but to a unique role. Paul uses the same Greek word in verse 21 to describe how all Christians are to treat one another.

In Ephesians 5:25 Paul shows that husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the Church. Husbands are to imitate the same self-sacrificing and loving leadership of the Messiah. Christ gave the ultimate sacrifice—His life—for all humanity. In like fashion, the husband should strive for the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:3-5) with an attitude of humility and service to his wife and family.

Both men and women are to model the actions of Jesus Christ and respect and serve each other. The issue isn't about control and power—but cooperation, humility and service.

(Philippians 2:1-4). As Christians, striving to model the actions of Jesus Christ, we have no other option than to hold each other in high esteem. The issue isn't about control and power—but cooperation, humility and service.

In 1 Corinthians 13 the apostle Paul shows what love looks like by describing the giving, sharing and respectful concern people should have for each other. Here, God shows us that true, godly love "bears all things," "does not seek its own" and "thinks no evil." True, godly love never fails. This is the spiritual intent and foundation that relationships (particularly the one between a husband and wife in marriage) should have.

Proverbs 31 reveals a woman and wife of great competence and service to both family and community. This chapter also shows that the husband of such a wife has great confidence, respect and trust in her. He helps provide opportunities for her to use her great talents and become that woman of virtue and great worth.

### Roles in marriage and the Church

In the Church, God has reserved the ecclesiastical role of preaching to men (1 Timothy 2:11-14). He also shows that women have a powerful influence in the family and the Church by their example, by teaching younger women and by nurturing and training children (Titus 2:3-4; 2 Timothy 1:5).

A reading of Ephesians 5 gives us insight into God's original intention for men and women. God explained these roles in terms of a family. Marriage was to be for life, with husband and wife growing together as they raise and nurture their family. These roles are patterned after those that Jesus Christ and the Church fulfill now and will fulfill in God's Kingdom.

The high regard God has for His servants (both male and female) is also evident in the language used throughout Hebrews 11, the "faith chapter." Hebrews 11:35 refers to multiple women of faith, without specifically naming them. There is also a tribute to both unnamed men and women: "of whom the world was not worthy" (verse 38).

### Biblical summary

To summarize, the Bible shows us that:

- God designed men and women with gender-specific differences to equip them for specialized roles as husbands and wives and members of society and the Church.
- God intended for husbands and wives to work together as a team in their respective domains, reflecting the roles He introduced to Adam and Eve.
- God gave authority to the man to be the leader in his

*Continued on page 19*



## The Honorable Role of Men

by David Treybig

**L**idiots. Fools. Self-centered dunces who are unnecessary for families. Sadly, these are the ways men are often described in our modern, Western nations. Why is there such a concerted effort to denigrate men? While individual situations can vary, there are two major reasons why men and boys (boys are included because they grow up to be men) are under attack.

First, husbands have not always pro-

continue to show that the best environment in which a child can grow up is within a happy home where his or her biological parents live together and love each other. This is the environment in which a child feels secure and the one in which he or she has the best opportunity to succeed in life (compare Malachi 2:15).

### Leadership

The role of men includes leadership within the family. God says that the husband is the head—the one who bears the primary responsibility for the state of the family. “For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head

their families. This is a noble and honorable role—one to which godly men aspire and willingly commit their all.

In harmony with God’s instruction that husbands are to be the heads of their families, God further explains that men are to serve as the ones who do the preaching in church services (1 Corinthians 14:34-35). God gives these responsibilities to men not because they are better than women; it is simply the role God has given them in

## Godly husbands will treat their wives and children with affection and provide spiritual leadership.

vided loving leadership within their families. Cheating husbands, dead-beat dads and abusive men have given men in general a bad reputation.

Second, there is a very real spirit called Satan the devil who wants to destroy the role of male leadership within the family. The Bible reveals that God has a family to which He is adding children (Ephesians 3:14-15; John 1:12). Physical families mirror what God is doing spiritually. Satan hates God’s plan and tries to get men and women to reject their respective roles. He subtly trashes what God describes as holy.

The family, with unique God-given roles for husbands and wives, is a very special, holy institution. Studies

of the church” (Ephesians 5:23). This is not superiority but responsibility. And coupled with this responsibility is authority to fulfill God’s directive.

This authority that God gives husbands is not to be abused. Instead, husbands are expected to provide loving leadership. As Ephesians 5:25 explains, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.” Verse 28 adds, “So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.”

Godly husbands will gently treat their wives and children with affection and provide spiritual leadership that will lead to peace and happiness within



this physical life. In the life to come, both men and women will be serving God and others as spirit members of God’s divine family. In other words, there will be no difference between them, in terms of male and female, at that time (Matthew 22:30). Because of this common destiny, men and women are called “heirs together” of the coming Kingdom (1 Peter 3:7).

**David Treybig** is managing editor of *Vertical Thought* and pastors United Church of God congregations in Tampa and St. Petersburg, Florida.

## Symbols of Submission

**L**iving in harmony with the roles God has given us is an honorable choice godly men and women voluntarily make. God doesn’t force anyone to accept these roles, but He hopes that we will because living these roles as He intended leads to greater happiness now and a better understanding of His plan for us in the future.

Submission to God’s expectations starts in our minds. It is first a way of thinking, as we learn what God desires, and then we can begin applying what we have learned. The

results of our submission to God’s instructions are then reflected in our attitude and outward appearance. We willingly accept our unique roles as males and females. The clothing we wear is modest (1 Timothy 2:9) and it indicates our gender (Deuteronomy 22:5).

Surprising to many, even our hair length demonstrates our submission to our role as either male or female. In 1 Corinthians 11, God tells us that long hair on a man “dishonors” God (verse 4). Reflecting upon this concept, a subsequent verse asks, “Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor [“shame,” King James Version] to him?” (verse 14).

# The Honorable Role of Women

by Kristen Yarbrough

**S**ubmit. Silent. Weaker. Shameful. Wincing at the biblical passages containing these words, many feminists reject Christianity as anti-woman. Early American feminist Elizabeth Cady Stanton called the Bible and the church “the greatest stumbling blocks in the way of women’s emancipation.”

Could a loving God, who supposedly “shows no partiality” (Acts 10:34), really look on half of His human creation as inferior? Or have scriptures been taken out of context to create a false understanding of how God views women?

The truth is that the Bible describes the role of women as one of great honor and worth. The prophetess Miriam, the judge Deborah, Abraham’s wife Sarah, Rahab and many leading women of the New Testament Church serve as examples of faith, virtue and courage.

From the beginning, Genesis 2:18 tells us that Eve was made as a helper to Adam. Here, the Hebrew word for “helper” doesn’t mean a slave or a helper to any and every man. Interestingly, this word is also used to describe the help that God gave to His servants. In no way does it denote inferiority.

## Jesus’ example

In a society where man-made social conventions kept men and women

separate, Jesus Christ was often chided for talking to women. The Bible records His conversations with the Samaritan woman at the well, sisters Mary and Martha, and others.

But Jesus was not a revolutionary, overturning harsh Old Testament restrictions. As a Jewish man, He just interacted with women the way they were intended to be treated—with respect, as He treated everyone else.



voluntarily accept this role within marriage follow in the footsteps of Sarah and other “holy women” who trusted in God (1 Peter 3:1-6).

Ephesians 5 also gives us insight into God’s original intentions for men and women. God explained these roles in terms of a family, as men and women were originally intended to marry for life and have a family. These roles are patterned after those that Jesus Christ (the Head) and the Church (the Bride) fulfill now and in God’s Kingdom.

Though women are not to preach during church services (1 Corinthians 14:34-35), they can help their husbands teach others privately (Acts 18:26). They can also mentor younger women (Titus 2:3-4), and pass their knowledge on to their children (2 Timothy 1:5).

## The same in Christ

Galatians 3:28 reveals that neither

**Eve was made as a helper to Adam. The word for “helper” doesn’t mean a slave or a helper to any and every man.**

## Marriage

Ephesians 5:22-24 tells wives to submit themselves to their husbands as the head of their marriage. The Greek word the apostle Paul used in verse 22 describes submission as voluntarily accepting the authority of another and choosing to submit to that authority.

Again, there is no indication of inferiority. Paul uses the same Greek word in verse 21 to describe how all Christians are to treat one another. Women who

gender has a preferred place above the other in God’s family: “There are neither Jews nor Greeks, slaves nor free people, males nor females. You are all the same in Christ Jesus” (God’s Word). And even though we are males and females now, with distinct roles, we share the same awesome destiny.

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In contrast to God’s expectation that men wear their hair short, God desires that women wear their hair longer because “if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her” (verse 15). Longer hair on a woman shows her respect for her husband and God (verses 5-10).

Following God’s instructions for males and females often goes against the standards around us. But don’t be discouraged. Living as God desires is the highest calling to which we can aspire! Let’s “submit to God” (James 4:7). Honor Him, and He will honor you (1 Samuel 2:30).

—David Treybig

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# Where Have All the Young Men Gone?



What has happened to masculinity? How can a boy grow up and become a real man in a hostile world?

by Randy Stiver

Out of the howling vortex of the sexual and drug revolution of the 1960s rose dramatic forces that have robbed young men in the 2000s of the final remnants of societal and family understanding of true masculinity.

God created mankind male and female, revealing definite functions for each (Genesis 1:27-28). The world corrupted those gender roles, but the last 40 years have particularly hammered young men.

The feminist movement sought gender equality under the law, and this helped spawn a huge increase of women in the workforce. Twelve percent of mothers with children under age 6 were employed in America in 1950. By 2000 it was 64 percent.

Some feminist thinkers proclaimed that the sexes were just the same—that traditional gender roles were shaped only by society's expectations. The idea seemed to be that boys would behave better—defined as more like girls—if they were taught to do so early enough.

This unisex philosophy persists to varying degrees in spite of the ageless observation of the obvious male-female differences and the dramatically increased understanding of brain mapping. God wired male brains very differently from female brains—to equip each for his or her purpose in marriage, family and life. Yet feminism's philosophers proceeded to make themselves the arbiters of masculinity.

## A masculinity crisis

Male studies scholar and author of *A New Psychology of*

*Men*, professor Ronald Levant of the University of Akron cites "a crisis of connection between men and women resulting from major structural changes in women's roles over the last 40 years" ("Why Study Boys and Men?," 2002). He says this has "shaken traditional masculinity ideology to such an extent there is now a *masculinity crisis* in which many men feel bewildered and confused, and the pride associated with being a man is lower than at any time in the recent past."

The political correctness movement within education takes a serious toll on boyhood and young manhood. One young mother of three rambunctious boys in a small town in Ohio volunteers at her sons' schools. She finds teachers increasingly frustrated with boys because they don't sit as quietly or learn like the girls. She has tried to help by pointing out that, after all, they *are* boys—and they don't learn as girls. We now see almost the reverse of the song "Why Can't a Woman Be More Like a Man?" from the old Broadway musical *My Fair Lady*.

The hard data about the education of young men is alarming. The Higher Education Statistics Agency in the United Kingdom projected that the percentage of male students in higher education will be only 39 percent before 2010 (Wendy Berliner, *The Guardian*, May 2004).

In the United States the percentage of male university students is now only 44 percent. This decade-long downward spiral of male education indicates that young men are focusing significantly less on preparing to be good providers for their future families.

Popular culture's entertainment, advertising, consumerism and the quest for "stuff" greatly undermines youthful masculinity. Many seem to have bought into the adage, He who has the most toys when he dies wins. Numerous male studies scholars talk about the delay of emotional maturity in many young men today; some observe that age 30 is the new 15.

The media coined three terms to describe the boy-man consumer groups of the 21st century:

- *Metrosexual*—a man in love with himself and his urban lifestyle, who is fastidious about his appearance and who gropes for masculine identity based on the judgments of women. The metrosexual spends; therefore, he is.
- *Ubersexual*—the masculine-appearing, self-focused, media-idol type who exudes opportunistic self-confidence irrespective of female opinion.
- *Retrosexual*—the macho man of the past, but lacking the outgoing masculine qualities of duty, honor and loyalty.

Do you see the makings of a good future husband and father in any of those definitions? Do you know why not?

### Exit the dad

One of the horrific spin-offs of the sexual revolution and the hard-core feminist head games of the past 40 years has been the determined devaluing of the role of the masculine husband and father.

Interviewed by a *Popular Mechanics* magazine editor, Conn Iggulden expressed the brothers' hope that the book inspires fathers to get outside to do and build things with their sons: "Most boys will value something they do with their dad, and they'll have an experience they'll value for the rest of their lives... If you show them how to beat the next level on the Xbox, it *won't* last the rest of their lives" (October 2007).

Where have all the young men gone? They've wandered off hoping to find a real, manly, loving dad who will take them outdoors and teach them good things.

### A game plan

What can you as a vertically thinking young man do to develop true masculinity? How can you find the godly way (Psalm 119:9)? Here are a few ways:

Find good role models. If you have a strong, involved dad—great! Love and honor him. If you are not so blessed, find men of honesty and good character in your life and observe them. Learn the good; discard the bad.

Develop honor, duty and loyalty. Be respectful of authority. Cheerfully do your work (*and then some*) at home, school or on the job. Loyal care for your family and serve God and man.

Build your strength. "The glory of young men is their strength..." (Proverbs 20:29).

## One of the horrific spin-offs of the hard-core feminist head games of the past 40 years has been the determined devaluing of the masculine husband and father.

The exponential increase in the numbers of single-mom households over that time represents the results of a tragic Hiroshima of sexual immorality in the world. It gives a new and terrible meaning to the term *nuclear family*—a family blown apart by a generation of young men who lustfully, selfishly and foolishly abdicated their God-given responsibilities to the divine institutions of marriage and family.

Those males, because they really aren't real men, became the nonsupporting husbands and disappearing dads who sired sons to likewise disappear from the lives of *their* children. Maybe you have felt the lonely pain of fatherlessness yourself or know friends who do.

Thankfully, some men overcome this negative cycle. Some have realized the importance of loyalty and love for wife and children. Some have eloquently explained how much a boy learns and prizes attention from his dad.

Brothers Conn and Hal Iggulden wrote the current best seller *The Dangerous Book for Boys*. It is only "dangerous" by today's politically correct, emasculated standard, as it provides a host of practical, hands-on things for boys and young men to do and learn.

- *Physically*—turn off the TV or computer and get outdoors, exercise, eat right and soak up the sights, sounds and smells of God's creation.

- *Mentally*—study hard, learn well and seek true values in your education.

- *Emotionally*—read history (including in the Bible), read biographies of great men of character, soak up the moral strength of their good examples, learn to suffer patiently and faithfully and learn to laugh joyfully at the right things.

- *Spiritually*—pray daily to the one Father you can always count on, thank Him profusely for your blessings and ask Him for greater strength of faith to get up and do all that needs to be done.

The lament of "Where have all the young men gone?" will disappear when Jesus Christ returns to rule the nations for 1,000 years and beyond. In the meantime He is looking for a few good young men to dream the dream and see the vision of His soon-coming Kingdom.

**Randy Stiver** is the pastor of United Church of God congregations in Columbus and Cambridge, Ohio, and is a regular guest on the *Beyond Today* television program.



The feminist minority: Why do women reject a movement that claims to advance their rights?

by Kristin Yarbrough

# Feminism's Fatal Flaw

**A** woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle," my professor scrawled on the chalkboard. I giggled, picturing a squirming trout straining for the pedals with its tail fins. As an aspiring writer, I could appreciate the catchy slogan (often attributed to feminist Gloria Steinem). But by the time the day's lecture was over, it was one of the only things I found attractive about feminism.

Apparently I'm not alone. Only 29 percent of American women consider themselves feminists, according to a 2007 poll conducted by Rasmussen Reports, LLC. Polls that CBS conducted in 2006 and 1997 yielded similar responses.

Why do so many women distance themselves from a movement that claims to fight for their rights? Could modern feminists have lost sight of the goal for which their founding mothers fought?

## Feminism in history

If feminism stuck to the dictionary's definition, it would be hard to reject. *Merriam-Webster's* defines feminism as the theory of the political, economic and social equality of the sexes. Who would object to that? Today, women work as scientists, university professors, CEOs and heads of state. But obviously, it wasn't always this way.



Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Like many other social movements, feminism started with good intentions. Many consider Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* to be one of the first feminist documents. Published in 1792, the book largely argued that women should be educated like men since they were primarily responsible for teaching their children. Women who studied topics like medicine, science and math could be true companions to their husbands instead of emotional, irrational "spaniels," as she put it.

Another major milestone came in 1848, when Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott and others held a women's convention in Seneca Falls, New York. At the convention, a declaration of independence for women was written, demanding full legal equality, full educational and commercial opportunity, equal compensation and the right to vote. Their complaints had merit. Consider that, at the time of the convention, African-Americans could still legally be held as slaves. Less than two decades later, African-American men won the right to vote. Women of all races had to wait until 1920.

Feminism experienced a revival in the 1960s, and it was in this decade and the one that followed that many women believe

the movement went astray. In their rush to liberate women from the kitchen and the nursery, feminists alienated women who valued their contributions as wives and mothers. Hijacked by radicals, the movement eventually became about power, sexual freedom and contempt for men.

As a result, feminism branched off into many paths. There are so many theories, some philosophers argue, that the movement should be called “feminisms.” However, all theories maintain that women, as a category, are oppressed and exploited by men ([www.factmonster.com](http://www.factmonster.com)). And nearly all fight for abortion and lesbianism.

### Abortion

Early feminist leaders Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were vehement opponents of abortion. Yet one thing that nearly all current feminists share is a concern for “reproductive freedom,” or freedom from unwanted child-bearing, which usually means the right to have an abortion or to use emergency contraception like the “morning-after” pill. In fact, both the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the Feminist Majority list abortion rights among their top issues.

How does abortion tie in to the feminist agenda? One of the movement’s major ideals is for women to pursue careers.

or her appendix. Different camps debate when the fetus becomes human. Some believe it is when a heartbeat or brain waves are present; some believe it is at birth.

Our individual genetic traits—like eye color—are determined at conception. Most fetuses have a heartbeat around 18 days after conception, long before many women are aware they are pregnant. Brain waves can be recorded 40 days after conception. Nearly everyone who is pro-choice believes that abortion is acceptable during the first three months of pregnancy—long after all these characteristics are present.

The Bible tells us that children are a gift from God (Psalm 127:3). Humanity is made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26-27), and He views children like all other human beings—as His daughters and sons. Scripture indicates that God views the unborn as human beings, and, as a result, so should we.

### Gay rights

In addition to abortion, most feminists also promote gay rights, specifically rights for lesbians. Obviously, homosexuals, like all human beings, should not be mistreated. But we must recognize that groups advocating this lifestyle and gay marriage—although sincere—are terribly misguided.

God clearly says in Leviticus 18:22 that homosexual activ-

**In their rush to liberate women from the kitchen and nursery, feminists alienated women who valued their contributions as wives and mothers. Hijacked by radicals, the movement became about power, sexual freedom and contempt for men.**

There is nothing wrong with women having careers. But for a woman to advance in her career, she must complete her education and work in her field for several years—and having a child can interrupt that. So it’s not surprising that 69 percent of all women who have abortions say they did so because having a baby would interfere with their work, school or their ability to care for dependents, according to a 2006 study by the Guttmacher Institute.

It’s ironic that a movement concerned with winning and preserving women’s rights is willing to deny the most basic right to the millions of babies who are aborted each year—the right to life. A woman should have control over her own body, they argue. Shouldn’t the baby as well?

God definitely has a perspective on the unborn, according to the Bible. In Psalm 139, King David writes that God formed him in his mother’s womb: “You saw me before I was born. The days allotted to me had all been recorded in your book, before any of them ever began” (verse 16, Today’s English Version).

Most people who are pro-choice argue that a fetus is not yet a human being. They view it as a cell mass that’s part of a woman’s body. She can choose to remove it, like a tumor

it is a sin, and the New Testament reiterates the fact (see Romans 1:26-28; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 Timothy 1:10).

Many believe that gay marriage would further facilitate the breakdown of traditional marriage, the nuclear family and, as a result, society itself. God and current law in most countries define marriage as the union of one man and one woman. Changing the definition could open the door for virtually any type of union, including “marriages” between three or four individuals or perhaps an adult and a child.

When the definition of marriage changes, so does its perceived purpose. God originally ordained marriage to build families and perpetuate the human race, as well as to picture a spiritual relationship.

But feminists are seeking to extend rights to one segment of the population, not get rid of heterosexual marriage, right? Consider these quotes from some prominent feminists:

“We can’t destroy the inequities between men and women until we destroy marriage”—Robin Morgan, radical feminist and former editor of *Ms.* magazine.

“The institution of marriage is the chief vehicle for the

*Continued on page 17*



Choices made earlier in life have a significant impact on the opportunities that will come later. Here is one couple's story and advice. **by Sharon Babcock**

## Careers and Motherhood: Maximizing Your Options

**A**re you sure you want to quit work?" When I first thought about this question, the answer was an absolute yes. I wasn't even pregnant yet, but I had always imagined that I would earn a degree, work full-time and then quit work to raise children while my husband worked.

After marrying and working a few years, I began looking forward to a break from the pressures of corporate life in exchange for the challenges and rewards of parenting. My husband Brendan and I read books about children today receiving very limited time with men and how important such time is to their development.

We heard male friends and coworkers comment that they never saw their kids except when they drove them somewhere. After much discussion and thought, Brendan decided to start his own business working from home, and I decided to work part-time from home. This would allow us to raise our children ourselves and spend more time with them.

Parenting and supporting a family financially may seem like responsibilities in the distant future to *Vertical Thought* readers, but this is a topic worth considering. Your educational and occupational choices now will largely determine your parenting and employment options later in life.

Much has been written about the benefits of families taking

care of their children in their own homes instead of putting them in day care. While some may not be able to attain this ideal, it was one to which my husband and I were deeply committed.

### Making plans

Brendan and I were working full-time in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and were without children when we began serious discussions about how to structure our life to raise children. We both enjoyed our work and yet felt likely to burn out with jobs requiring 50+ hours a week. We didn't like commuting, and we wanted to live in the country, preferably close to Brendan's relatives in Tennessee.

We wanted the freedom to spend time on our own projects and interests, not just working for our employers and clients. Most importantly, we wanted to be the primary influences in our kids' lives and for them to spend a lot of time with both of us. Yet the jobs Brendan and I held in our respective fields—patent law and consumer product sales—didn't align with these desires.

### Getting there

So we began to focus on how we could each transition into working from home, ultimately living in Tennessee. Our

vision was one that wouldn't even have been feasible a generation earlier, without e-mail, mobile phones and the Internet. But technology now offers opportunities for many people to work primarily from their homes. Thus began two years of heartfelt prayer, help from others and some proactive physical steps that led to a wonderful blessing.

After working for seven years at a large company, I formally requested part-time and home-based work. No opportunities initially existed, but I continued to ask. After a couple of extensive maternity leaves, a former manager created a 20-hour-a-week office-based job for me, and I was permitted to work one day a week from home. At this point, Brendan also arranged his schedule so he could spend Wednesday mornings with the boys and work from home in the afternoon. These were baby steps toward the life we wanted, but we were moving in the right direction.

Shortly afterward, Brendan left the firm at which he had worked for five years as an associate attorney and started his own practice. About five months later, my company offered me relocation to Tennessee for a part-time, home-based role managing a remote sales team. Of course, I joyfully accepted! We made the move to Tennessee, and all but one of Brendan's Minnesota clients agreed to work with him remotely.

- Pursue work that can be measured by results (sales, words written, reports produced, Web sites designed or entrepreneurial ventures) instead of the type that requires your physical presence (receptionist, hospitality or manufacturing). No matter what your function or field, there are probably exceptions. With the right preparation, desire and God's help, you can likely become one of them.

- Choose an area in which you can offer a comparative advantage. Companies are most likely to grant flexibility to their most valuable, productive employees. I offered to take a demotion in job level and responsibilities in order to work part-time from home and have the location I wanted.

- Seek employment at companies with established family-friendly policies such as flexible or reduced-hour schedules and telecommuting. Work hard in school to improve your chances of obtaining interviews and job offers from these types of employers.

- Solidly establish your value before seeking nontraditional arrangements. This amount of time will vary, but you can figure out what's reasonable by looking at typical turnover and promotion rates.

- When seeking a reduced or flexible role, frame your

## Technology offers opportunities for many people to work primarily from their homes. Now a young woman can have the flexibility to work and be the primary influence in her childrens' lives.

### What you can do

If you are a young woman and want flexibility with a career when you begin raising a family, here are some things you can do to maximize your options later in life:

- Start with a personal Bible study about God's expectations of mothers. Deuteronomy 6:6-7 says that parents should teach their children God's ways throughout the day. In 1 Timothy 5:14 Paul advises women to guide their homes. Proverbs 31 describes a woman involved in business who diligently guides her children and servants, ably overseeing her household's operation. Our free booklet *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension* is an excellent resource for additional scriptures on this subject. You may read, download or order a copy at [www.gnmagazine.org/booklets](http://www.gnmagazine.org/booklets).

- Clarify your personal priorities. In light of God's instructions, I hope you and your husband will want to be the chief influences in your children's lives. If you are going to work in addition to family responsibilities (something that not all mothers will choose), figure out with your husband how you can do so and still "guide your home."

- Observe parents and children you know. What works well (or not) for them? Consider why any particular arrangements do or do not appeal to you.

proposal in terms of business needs and how you can meet those instead of your personal reasons for wanting part-time status or permission to work from home.

- Get out of debt and save money. The transition from an employer's office to home-based employment can be bumpy and unpredictable. A financial cushion will help you bridge rough spots and make better decisions even in the midst of challenges.

- Starting your own business could be another route to future flexibility. These efforts typically require large investments of time and energy in the beginning, and sometimes on an ongoing basis. It can be tough to predict exactly when you'll be able to back off, so—if this is your plan—start as early as possible before having children.

How a couple structures work and takes care of their children will have a huge impact on both partners' day-to-day satisfaction—and on the welfare of the children, of course. If you want choices when it comes to motherhood and a career, the time to begin planning is now.

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**Sharon Babcock** lives in Nashville, Tennessee, with her husband Brendan and their two sons, ages 3 and 1. She works part-time from home for General Mills.



# What Guys Should Know Before Marriage

by Mike Bennett

“Isn’t it ironic that a plumber’s license requires four years of training, but a marriage license requires nothing but two willing bodies and sometimes a blood test?” (Gary Smalley with Steve Scott, *If Only He Knew*, 1988, p. 12). Marriage is more important, more challenging and more fulfilling than just about any other activity in life. But where do you find the training program to help you prepare to be a successful husband and father?

What do you need to know before marriage?

## Understand yourself

Do you want to get married? Why? Why not? When? What do you want to accomplish before you get married? What do you want to accomplish in your life after marriage?

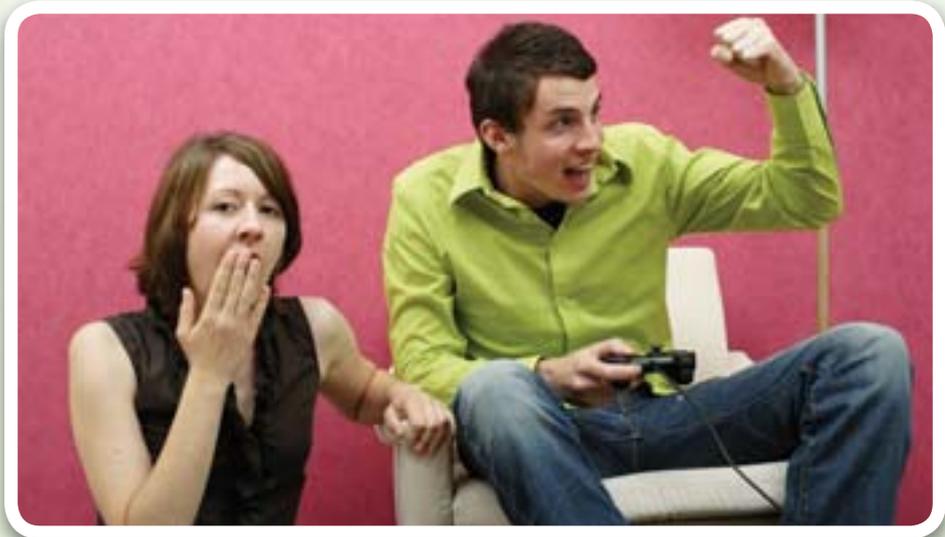
If you don’t know what you want in life, how will you know if you have found the person to join you on this journey? Girls who are thinking about their own goals in life are going to be more inter-

*Thought* writers, Randy Stiver, did just that, and recorded the answers in his article “True Dating: What Guys and Girls Want” in the January/March 2004 issue ([www.verticalthought.org/vt/vt02/truedating.htm](http://www.verticalthought.org/vt/vt02/truedating.htm)). You’ll want to read it.

There are many books on how men and women think and communicate differently. A classic book that attempts to help men and women understand

adults you know with long-lasting marriages. Get to know a variety of girls. Trying to understand the opposite sex is worth the struggle. Depending on your attitude, the differences can lead to a lifetime of misery or a lifetime of exploring the mystery.

When you go from wanting to understand *women* to wanting to understand a particular *woman*, take your time and



## If you don’t know what you want in life, how will you know if you have found the person to join you on this journey?

ested in a man with goals and direction in life, rather than a drifter.

What about your religious beliefs and commitment? Knowing God and developing that most important commitment in life is a prerequisite to preparing for the second most important commitment—marriage.

## Understand women

You think that in this short article I’m going to be able to give you the answer? “A famous psychiatrist once said, ‘After thirty years of studying women, I ask myself, “What is it that they really want?”’” (Smalley, p. 13).

One way to find out what women want is to ask them. One of our *Vertical*

each other is *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus* by John Gray. Though it can sound a bit stereotypical (in a humorous sort of way), it does point out some general differences that can be good to know.

For instance, Dr. Gray says the most common mistake men make in relationships is: “A man tries to change a woman’s feelings when she is upset by becoming Mr. Fix-It and offering solutions to her problems that invalidate her feelings [‘you shouldn’t feel that way’].” We guys think we’re helping, but the girl likely just wanted to share her feelings and have them understood. She’ll ask for a solution if she wants one.

Talk to your parents, minister and

get to know her in many different circumstances. Ed Smith, a minister who has been happily married for 63 years now, recommends getting to know each other well:

“Even play some type of competitive game in which there is a winner and loser and see how the prospective spouse controls or loses his or her temper or composure. Look for extreme mood swings. Observe how the prospective mate handles her relationship with her parents, siblings, friends, etc. Chances are you will be handled in much the same way.”

(For more invaluable advice from couples married more than 50 years, see “Secrets of Love” at [vcmagazine.org/](http://vcmagazine.org/)

vcm/article.asp?volume=2&issue=2&article=secretsoflove).

## Understand marriage

Before marriage you need to know the



responsibilities of this God-plane relationship. God created marriage, and He explains what He expects of husbands in the Bible. One such expectation is found in Ephesians 5. After showing that human marriage is actually a type of the divine relationship between Christ and the Church, it concludes, "Let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband" (verse 33).

What does it mean to really love your wife? And how can a husband make it as easy as possible for his wife to respect him? These are advanced subjects in the science of husbanding. Our free booklet *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension* will help you in understanding and applying the required textbook, the Holy Bible.

**Mike Bennett**, a minister of the United Church of God, is the managing editor of *United News*. He, his wife Becky and their two daughters live near Cincinnati, Ohio.

# Marriage Misconceptions

## **There's only one perfect true love for you, and you'll magically know it when you find him or her:**

It's not that simple or that hard. God doesn't say that there is only one possibility for you out there, but He does answer prayers. He wants us to prepare ourselves, learn about others, seek wise counsel and make the best possible choice of a husband or wife. Then He wants us to commit to making it work. No two people are perfectly compatible. Marriage is a learning process for two best friends to enjoy and work through together.

**You can fall into or out of love:** You can't "fall into" the kind of committed, godly love required for a lasting marriage. One writer said you have to "climb up" to the kind of *agape* love described in 1 Corinthians 13. It involves the Spirit of God that comes through baptism and a conscious choice to keep loving even when the feelings of romantic love may be hidden by the trials of life or the actions of your mate.

We do "fall into" romantic love though. "Once the experience of falling in love has run its natural course (remember, the average in-love experience lasts two years), we will return to the world of reality and begin to assert ourselves. He will express his desires, but his desires will be different from hers.

"They fall out of love, and at that point either they will withdraw, separate, divorce or set off in search of a new in-love experience, or they begin the hard work of learning to love each other without the euphoria of the in-love obsession" (Gary Chapman, *The Five Love Languages: How to Express Heartfelt Commitment to Your Mate*, 1995, pp. 32-33).

**You've got to spend more than \$25,000 to get married:** Planning and budgeting for a wedding could be the first big test for a couple and the in-laws! If it's important to your parents and you—and if you won't have to go into debt to do it (or have little to eat in a one-room apartment for several years)—then you can easily spend the \$27,000 to \$28,000 that the average American couple spends on a wedding. (That's up 73 percent in the last 15 years.)

But you don't have to. If you all feel that a lot of that money would be better spent on education or the down payment on a house, there are lots of choices for beautiful, memorable but less expensive weddings. Don't get so caught up in planning the perfect wedding that you forget to plan for your future life together!

**You've got to be realistic and plan for divorce in case it happens:** How can you have a 100 percent commitment to making a marriage work if you already have an escape plan?



# What Girls Should Know Before Marriage

by Mike Bennett

It's hard to believe that a few decades ago, 45 percent of brides in first marriages in the United States were between 15 and 18 years old. Now the average age of marriage is between 27 and 29. That should mean more time to learn what it takes to have the kind of happy marriage we all dream of. But still close to half of first-time marriages in Western nations end in divorce.

What are the keys to a successful, lifelong marriage? What should a girl know before marriage?

## Questions to ask yourself

Do you want to get married? Why? Why not? When? What do you want to do before you get married? What is your vision of your life after marriage?

If you don't know what you want in life, how will you know if you have found the person you want to spend the rest of your life with?

What about your religious beliefs? Knowing God and developing that most important commitment in life is a prerequisite to preparing for the second most important commitment—marriage.

differences that can be good to know. For instance, Dr. Gray summarizes the most common mistake women make in relationships this way: "A woman tries to change a man's behavior when he makes mistakes by becoming the home-improvement committee and offering unsolicited advice or criticism [that makes him feel incompetent and broken]" (1992, p. 24).

It's true. Even tough men can have very sensitive egos. To ask for directions, for example, might be to admit incompetence or defeat—and that's a big deal. Really!

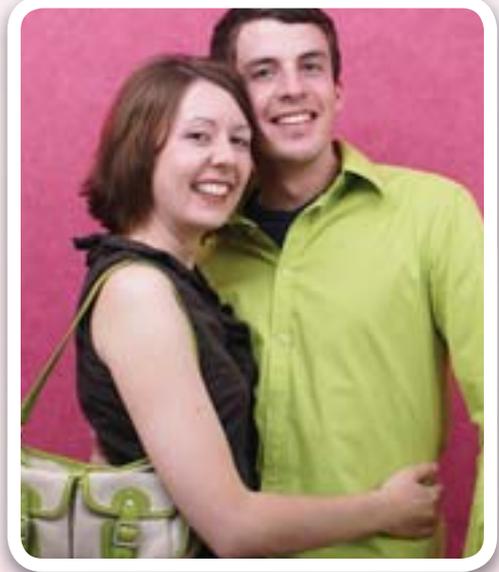
Of course generalities are one thing, and understanding a specific guy is quite another. One marriage counselor said that if he had only 30 seconds to give a couple advice, he would say, "Get to know each other."

Anne Elliott, who has been married to her husband Jack for more than 50 years, also stressed the importance of getting to know the person in many different situations. "What is his or her attitude toward work? Toward play? Is he or she glib with the truth? Does he or she drink too much at parties? Would he or she rather play

the process early on, before romantic attachments have formed, the wisdom of their counsel can be invaluable." (Read more "Secrets of Love" at [vcmmagazine.org/vcm/article.asp?volume=2&issue=2&article=secretsoflove](http://vcmmagazine.org/vcm/article.asp?volume=2&issue=2&article=secretsoflove)).

## Understand marriage

Before marriage you need to know the responsibilities of this God-plane relationship. God created marriage, and He explains what He expects of wives



**"If you enter into marriage blinded by physical attraction, you'll be rudely awakened not long after, when the full character of your spouse becomes evident."**

## A trip to Mars

Likely you know quite a bit about guys from studying your dad, brothers and classmates. But some things probably just seem weird, and some things make no sense at all. Maybe you think guys are so predictable, but then one goes and surprises you. It's like they are from another planet.

John Gray is a therapist specializing in relationships, and he would agree. His book *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus* is a classic that attempts to help men and women understand each other. Though it can sound a bit stereotypical, it does point out some general

than work? Do you share similar interests in religion, music, literature, education, recreation?"

She warned about the immaturity of the belief that "I know he'll change because he loves me."

"Love and marriage do not change human nature. In other words, 'What you see is what you get.' If you enter into marriage blinded by physical attraction, you will be rudely awakened not long after, when the full character of your spouse becomes evident," Mrs. Elliott said.

She also encouraged couples to seek parental input. "By involving parents in

in the Bible. Ephesians 5, after showing that human marriage is actually a type of the divine relationship between Christ and the Church, concludes, "Let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband" (verse 33).

What does it mean to really respect your husband? And how can a wife make it as easy as possible for her husband to love her? These are advanced subjects in the art of marriage. Our free booklet *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension* will help you in understanding and applying the required textbook, the Holy Bible.

# Fatal Flaw

Continued from page 11

perpetuation of the oppression of women; it is through the role of wife that the subjugation of women is maintained”—Marlene Dixon, radical feminist and sociology professor at the University of Chicago.

“Marriage and the family must be eliminated”—The Feminists, a radical feminist group active in the 1960s and 70s.

Yet, over thousands of years of human existence, societies that have not regulated sexuality within marriage and defined marriage as the union of a man and a woman have not survived, according to Harvard sociologist Pitirim Sorokin (*The American Sex Revolution*).

Many governments recognize this fact. They encourage marriage and family for a reason: if these didn't exist, neither would society.

## Devaluing men

While the first feminists fought for equality with men, some

Feminized classrooms value concepts like inclusiveness, cooperative learning and political correctness. Little boys, who by nature want their individual efforts to be rewarded, who learn through questioning their (typically) female teachers and who want to compete, are viewed as rude, disruptive and disrespectful.

The next step is often to recommend testing for some type of behavioral disorder. Statistics show that nearly 10 percent of boys ages 3 to 17 have been diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Fewer than 4 percent of girls are diagnosed with the disorder. Could it be that for the simple offense of being born male, some of these little boys are being labeled as flawed?

Do all feminists hate little boys? No. But many are anti-male, either covertly or overtly. Consider the following quotes from prominent feminists:

“I feel that man-hating is an honorable and viable political act, that the oppressed have a right to class-hatred against the class that is oppressing them”—Robin Morgan, radical feminist and former editor of *Ms.* magazine.

## Time after time, sitcoms, television commercials and radio ads portray men as bumbling fools while the women around them swoop in to save the day.

modern feminists seem to elevate women *above* men. This attitude has permeated our culture, from the way men are portrayed in the media to the way boys often are treated in schools.

Time after time, sitcoms, television commercials and radio ads portray men as bumbling fools while the women around them swoop in to save the day. In fact, two thirds of respondents in a United Kingdom survey answered that women portrayed in ads were intelligent, assertive and caring while men appeared pathetic and silly (2001 poll of 1,000 adults conducted by the Advertising Standards Association in Great Britain). What would the outcry be if women—or perhaps a racial minority—were consistently portrayed as such?

Experts say these repeated portrayals can lead to problems with self-image, self-concept and aspirations among boys and young men (“Gender Issues in Advertising Language,” *Women and Language*, 1999). Impressionable males learn that others expect them to fail, act immaturely and lack intelligence.

Feminism has also penetrated the classroom, according to author Christina Hoff Somers. In her book *The War Against Boys*, she describes how complaints that girls were suffering in male-oriented schools persuaded officials to turn the education system on its head.

“Men know everything—all of them—all the time no matter how stupid or inexperienced or arrogant or ignorant they are”—Andrea Dworkin, radical feminist.

Feminism started out with noble intentions. Even today, feminist organizations have some worthy causes. The Feminist Majority supports groups that are rebuilding Afghan girls' schools destroyed by the Taliban. NOW seeks to eliminate domestic violence and sexual assault. Both condemn pornography. But like all human ideas, feminism is a fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If we are unwittingly drawn in by the good, the bad is harder to recognize.

Have men oppressed women? Yes. Is that fair? No. But that doesn't give women license to disregard the rights of others, dominate men or simply create an alternate social structure.

God created women and men with distinct roles within marriage, and He desires that they work together as a team. Both sexes were made in God's image and get their highest value from their Creator, not from each another, not from their level of education and not from their marital or employment status.

And most importantly, both are invited to become part of God's family.

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# Are You Up for the C

Life's greatest challenges are in everyday decisions! Learning to choose wisely and learning from your experiences can prepare you for a rewarding future.

by Larry Greider

**H**ave you ever thought about what a dull experience life would be if it were not for its amazing variety? God gives us this incredible variety in His creation—daytime and nighttime, seasons and cycles—making life full of contrasts, changes and increasing challenges. Life is full of enough variety and touches of adventure to constantly move us outside our comfort zones.

As a reader of *Vertical Thought*, you know that our articles are written to encourage you to make the most of your life and to develop a deeper spiritual quotient so that you will be confident that you can develop your full potential.

Youth is a time to stretch yourself and to take on new challenges. Whether it is to develop your skills in a sport, learn a new language or learn how to play a musical instrument, the more you try different pursuits, the more likely you are to discover your innate talents.

## Choices you make

Our lives are composed of the choices we make, the values we embrace, the crises we experience and the mentors we choose.

Free choice is one of the greatest gifts God has given to man. We are not like animals that react primarily by instinct. Human beings, made in God's image, have the ability to accept or reject opportunities. When you make wise choices and set your heart to accomplish something wholesome and healthy, the result can be satisfaction and greater understanding of life and of God.

In contrast, making poor choices in life

can be costly and sometimes deadly. In the beginning, God presented the first human beings, Adam and Eve, with two trees in the Garden of Eden representing two different ways of life (see Genesis 2-3). God's instruction was to *not* take of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. You probably remember the story and the repercussions for humanity that ensued.

We all have the opportunity to choose. When admonishing Israel about which

## God wants us to learn from our mistakes and determine to change by making wise choices.

lifestyle to choose, God told them to choose life (Deuteronomy 30:19), showing them what the result would be of each option. Many people today make wrong choices and don't even realize the consequences until some disaster or pain has come upon them.

## Values you embrace

Our choices usually center on what is important to us. We all have to decide how to live our lives and must accept the reality that not all values are the same. The values that God offers us show us how to have a better relationship with Him, our elders and our peers.

These values stem from His law, which He reveals as truth. Jesus prayed to God the Father: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth" (John 17:17). When we base our lives on God's inspired law, God says it will go well with us: "Observe and obey all these words which I command you, *that it may go well with you and your children after you forever*, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God" (Deuteronomy 12:28, emphasis added).

We all have 24 hours in a day, but some use time much more effectively than others. If we value time, we can use it to accomplish something lasting or important. An athlete must practice, a worker must perform, a student must study, etc.

It has been said that if you don't know where you are going, you'll probably end up somewhere else—and that usually means having to face the question of where your time went. Time can be

one of God's greatest gifts, or it can be a great curse when misused. Spending precious moments to learn godly values is one of the most beneficial uses of the time we have.

## Crises you experience

No matter how good we might think our choices have been, eventually we will face challenges or crises that will try our character. Bad things can happen to good people, and being in the wrong place at just the right time can bring a life-changing moment.

I remember a sobering story of a young boy who was riding in the backseat of the family convertible. They were enjoying the warm weather on a family outing when a stray golf ball from a driving range next to the highway smashed into his forehead. The freak accident caused a lifetime of headaches and some permanent brain damage. Coping with this unfortunate accident became the challenge of his life.

Some people are born with severe birth defects, while others may find them-

# Challenge?

selves in the middle of a war or a natural disaster. Besides these random acts of man and nature, we can make poor decisions that have repercussions that are just as serious—more than we could possibly have realized at the time.

Driving too fast, not wearing a seat belt or choosing to hang out with the wrong crowd are all real choices that young people face in today's world. You can either learn or lose from your experiences, and how you recover from your mistakes is often indicative of your character.

God wants us to learn from our mistakes and determine to change by making wise choices. Sometimes it takes suffering the consequences of a poor choice to motivate us to make better ones.

## Mentors you choose

Having someone to guide you could be one of the most important ingredients in making the most of your life, at any stage in life. Hopefully, your parents, a pastor or older siblings are part of your mentoring network. Hanging around with the wise provides an opportunity to become wiser yourself. "A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel" (Proverbs 1:5).

Many people let their lives become dictated by routine and expediency rather than making creative choices to bring something better. Accepting the challenge of developing your mind, body and spirit can be a springboard toward a fulfilling and exciting life.

As a young man growing up, I was privileged to be a part of the Scouting movement and was encouraged to work toward the highest level, the Eagle Scout award. Being encouraged to set goals and push myself at an early age helped me more than I realized at the time. It has been instrumental in achieving all that I have accomplished and in going all the places I have been.

We live in a time when there are so many opportunities, if you have the eyes to see them and the desire to grow. *Vertical Thought* readers realize that they must take responsibility for their own lives. Accept the challenges that come your way to become the best you can be. Set worthwhile goals for yourself, and remember that your life is a composite of the choices you make, the values you embrace, the crises you experience and the mentors you choose.

The challenge is up to you. Make the most of your life!

**Larry Greider** is national director of the United Youth Camps and Challenger II programs and pastors a United Church of God congregation in Los Angeles, California.

## Difference

Continued from page 5

marriage and family, which also outlines the norm for the male leadership roles in the Church.

- A husband is to put the needs and care of his wife and family ahead of his own, and to love and cherish his wife as Christ does the Church.
- A wife is to bring honor to her husband by supporting his leadership and using her talents to complement her husband's abilities, as they work together to serve God and care for their family.
- Spiritually mature women are to teach and encourage younger women in their feminine role. A wife's role includes keeping the home and loving her husband.
- The foundation of godly leadership established by Jesus Christ emphasizes mutual love and respect between husbands and wives/men and women, as each fulfills the role God designed.
- God regards men and women as equal in spiritual potential, and He treats them accordingly. One is not superior to the other. Both have equal access to God and His promises.

## Equality of "worth"

Men and women were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). This shows us that God has the same goal and future in store for all men and women who answer the invitation to become part of the family of God (Galatians 3:28; 1 Peter 3:7).

True equality—*equality of worth*—is not measured by equivalent religious or leadership roles. It is measured by each person being all that God intended him or her to be through a proper relationship with Him. After all, He loves us all, showing no partiality (Galatians 3:28; Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11; Ephesians 6:9).

Now, if Christian men and women are really sincere about being the best they can be, if they both seek dignity, significance and true, lasting happiness, they will need courage.

Courage is needed to recognize that man's definition of *equality* cannot be used to change the teaching and intent of the law and plan of God. Courage is required to learn, with pure and honest objectivity, about the wonderful uniqueness of being male or female. Courage is necessary to accept the obligations and role that our gender bequeaths to us. And courage is needed to know that our greatest potential imaginable lies in being who we are—as God intended. Because, in the end, it all leads to the same destiny—living forever in the family of God!

**Doug Horchak**, a husband and father and coordinator of the United Youth Corps program, pastors congregations in Dallas and Sherman, Texas.

“don't believe in the Bible because dinosaurs lived a long time before man ever did.”

Have you ever heard a statement like that? I certainly have—many times. In fact, this was one of the principal reasons Charles Darwin, the father of the theory of evolution, eventually rejected the Bible. Many have followed suit.

Most people believe you can't reconcile dinosaurs and the Bible—but they are wrong. This erroneous idea is based on the supposition that either you have to believe in the young-earth theory of a 6,000-year-old earth and dinosaurs living with Adam, or you can't believe in the creation week account of Genesis 1. Yet many would be surprised to find that several centuries ago scientists did believe in dinosaurs, an *ancient* earth and in creation week.

In fact, many of the first geologists who established the basic geologic column were believers in both the Bible and an ancient earth.

British physicist Alan Hayward wrote about these premier geologists: “Among them were William Buckland and Adam Sedgwick. Buckland held the chair of geology at Oxford in the early-nineteenth century, while Sedgwick was his counterpart at Cambridge [University]. Both were leading churchmen, and both preached the plenary inspiration of Scripture and argued in favor of special creation ...

“Buckland maintained close links with Sedgwick and the famous French geologist, Baron Cuvier ... They did much to persuade

the early nineteenth-century church that the earth was extremely old and that such views could be harmonized with the teaching of Genesis” (*Creation and Evolution*, 1985, pp. 72-73).

### Proper chronological sequence

It is interesting to note that two Bible experts in the 1970s combined their skills to publish *The Reese Chronological Bible*, which supports an ancient earth and a creation week that is actually a re-creation of a devastated earth.

Edward Reese was a professor of Bible, history and missions at Crown College in Powell, Tennessee, and spent 20 years putting biblical events in chronological order. Frank Klassen was an architect and engineer who spent 10 years writing *The Chronology of the Bible*.

They both agreed that the account of Genesis had important biblical events occur *between* Genesis 1:1 and 1:2.

Figuring out when the dinosaurs lived relative to man isn't really so difficult.

by Mario Seiglie

# Where Do



In fact, they felt the first verses of the Bible chronologically would be John 1:1-2: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God."

This is the same way 20th-century Church of God leader Herbert W. Armstrong explained the real beginning of the biblical account. Before space, matter and energy were created, there existed the Word (who would later become Jesus Christ, see John 1:14) and God (who later would be identified as God the Father).

### **There is more than just the young-earth explanation—there is one that fits well with the biblical facts.**

Next in *The Reese Chronological Bible* comes a scripture that speaks of God existing before the creation of the earth, Psalm 90:2: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God."

Then comes the traditional first scripture of Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This marks the creation of the universe as we know it, including the galaxies, stars and planets.

But the most fascinating part of this Bible is what follows—not Genesis 1:2, but Isaiah 14:12-17, where Lucifer's fall from heaven is recorded. Next comes the parallel account of Lucifer's fall in Ezekiel 28:13-18.

verse says, "Or possibly *became*."

Apparently, something happened to cause the earth to become, as the Hebrew denotes, "chaotic and in confusion." Since God is not the author of confusion or chaos (Isaiah 45:18; 1 Corinthians 14:33), it makes sense that the earth became that way due to Lucifer's rebellion and subsequent expulsion to the earth.

As Jesus Christ remarked, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18). Other scriptures reveal it was not only Satan, but also the fallen angels that were cast down

with him. We read in 2 Peter 2:4, "For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell [from the Greek *tartaroo*, a place of confinement, and in this case, the earth] and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment..."

Revelation 12:3-4 describes the dragon (Satan, verse 9) as having drawn a third of the stars of heaven to be cast down to the earth—these "stars" being symbolic of angels (compare 1:20).

What we don't know is how long it took Lucifer to rebel—and how long this was before the six-day renewal of the earth culminating in the creation of Adam and Eve, as described in the rest of Genesis 1. Satan's

on the earth is the change from the Mesozoic Age of Reptiles, to the ... Age of Mammals. It is as if the curtain were rung down suddenly on a stage where all the leading roles were taken by reptiles, especially dinosaurs, in great numbers and bewildering variety, and rose again immediately to reveal the same setting but an entirely new cast, a cast in which the dinosaurs do not appear at all, other reptiles are supernumeraries and the leading parts are all played by mammals of sorts barely hinted at in the previous acts" (*Life Before Man*, 1972, p. 42).

This apparently reflects the change from the pre-Adamic world to the world of man. Certainly there are smaller reptiles in our world, but they are insignificant in comparison to what existed in the previous age.

What has been presented here is not the only "ancient earth" explanation available, but it seems to make the most biblical sense. It is the only explanation I know of that accepts the literal 24-hour days of the creation (or to us, *re-creation*) week and, at the same time, makes room for an indefinite period *before* the creation of mankind that could include the dinosaurs and previous eras.

Recent geological and astronomical discoveries, such as cosmic expansion and signs of meteor impacts at the Cretaceous-Paleocene border of the geologic column, have only served to substantiate this view.

So, if anyone tells you he or she

# the Dinosaurs Fit?

### **Devastation and renewal**

Only then comes Genesis 1:2, "The earth was *without form, and void*; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters" (emphasis added). In the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible, a footnote to the word "was" in this

rebellion apparently happened after the earth had passed through the dinosaur age. Then, geologists agree, something dramatic occurred between the age of reptiles and the age of mammals.

As the famous paleontologist G.G. Simpson once remarked: "The most puzzling event in the history of life

doesn't believe in the Bible because of a dilemma with the dinosaurs, let that person know there is more than the young-earth explanation available—one that fits well, as best we know, with the biblical facts.

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## Overloading on “Healthy” Food?

Recent studies have shown that diners tend to eat more at restaurants perceived as serving healthy food than those who eat at other restaurants. Apparently, individuals underestimate the calorie content of “healthy” food and eat more of it.

The studies asked subjects to eat at certain establishments and then estimate the calorie content of the foods they had consumed. On average, in one study patrons of Subway underestimated their meals by 151 calories as compared to those eating at McDonald’s. This difference could lead to a possible weight gain of nearly five pounds a year if such meals were eaten on a regular basis.

Dr. Pierre Chandon of the research institution INSEAD in Fontainebleau, France, and Dr. Brian Wansink of Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, suggest that thinking objectively about calorie content will help diners avoid getting swayed by the perception of one food being healthier than another (“People Eat More in ‘Healthy’ Restaurants,” *Journal of Consumer Research*, October 2007).

Of course, if we are aware of this tendency, we can be realistic about the calorie content. It is much better for our health to get calories filled with vitamins and minerals than empty calories from fat and sugar, for example.

# O

**The exact number of books one in every four adults said they had read in the last 12 months!**

AP-Ipsos poll, Aug. 21, 2007

# >In the News<

Compiled by Amanda Stiver

## Japan Speeds Up

The Japanese broadband Internet infrastructure allows super high speeds. An aggressive fiber-optic cable installation program implemented by Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp. (NTT), along with a national electrical infrastructure using higher quality copper wire, installed following the destruction of the Second World War, has provided the physical basis for higher speed and better quality Internet connections in Japan, surpassing the United States and competing with South Korea and Europe.

Such speeds allow the Japanese to watch high-quality, full-screen television and to have teleconferences over the Internet. Plans for telemedicine are now possible, with improved image quality allowing doctors to diagnose patients by way of Internet cameras (Blaine Harden, “Japan’s Warp-Speed Ride to Internet Future,” *The Washington Post*, Aug. 29, 2007).

## Real Friends in a Virtual World?

New York University recently held a “Facebook in the Flesh” seminar to introduce incoming freshman to the seemingly lost art of face-to-face conversation. Web sites like MySpace, Friendster and Facebook promote the rapid acquisition of friends whose photos users may display on a page. New Web sites have emerged promising to provide friend decoys, eye-catching people who will



help a user to attract even more friends. Collecting hundreds or even a thousand virtual friends is reportedly not uncommon.

According to Will Reader of Sheffield Hallam University in Britain, “Although the numbers of friends people have on these sites can be massive, the actual number of close friends is approximately the same in the face to face real world”—an average of five close friends (Christine Rosen, “More, but Not Merrier,” *The Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 5, 2007).

Proverbs 27:17 says, “As iron sharpens iron, a friend sharpens a friend” (New Living Translation). The best way to sharpen a friendship is to be there, in person.

## Web Poker Addiction

Internet gaming in the truest sense of the phrase—high stakes online poker—is now a fast-growing industry estimated at \$12 billion a year. However, only 5 percent of those playing have sustained success. The other 95 percent lose.

In the past five years, poker has gone from a private leisure activity to one of the highest-rated televised “sports,” second only to football. Based on the legends of highly successful online players who have won great wealth in face-to-face tournaments, the number of college students actively gambling online has surged.

A University of Connecticut survey “found that one out of every four college students who gambles online fits the clinical definition of a pathological gambler, suggesting that hundreds of thousands



of students may be addicted” (Michael Werner, “All In? The Stakes Are Rising as Internet Poker Gains Popularity Among College Students,” *Oregon Quarterly*, Autumn 2007).

Instead of trying to take the wealth of others through winning bets against them, the Bible encourages us to obtain income through work (see 1 Thessalonians 4:11; Proverbs 13:11). For more on what the Bible says about gambling, see our “Teen Bible Study Discussion Guide: Gambling” at [www.ucg.org/teenstudy/gambling.htm](http://www.ucg.org/teenstudy/gambling.htm).

## Tattoo Trouble

New concerns about medical complications from tattoos have caused several Canadian doctors to warn pregnant women about the dangers of tattoos on the lower back. This area of the body is the location where needles for epidural procedures are injected, carrying painkilling medicine to ease labor pains.

Although no studies have yet been conducted, isolated cases have occurred that suggest microscopic pieces of skin stained with ink from the tattoos could get caught at the tip of the needle and be carried to nerves deep in the back, causing sensitivity, pain and burning.

Concerns that the metal in tattoo ink can cause burning during a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) procedure are also supported by recent cases of injury (Rachel Zimmerman, "Why Some Expectant Moms Are Worried About Tattoos," *The Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 18, 2007).

For more on tattoos, see "Leave a Permanent Mark" at [www.verticalthought.org/issues/vt17/c\\_mark.htm](http://www.verticalthought.org/issues/vt17/c_mark.htm).



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[VerticalThought.org](http://VerticalThought.org)

## Eardrum Damage

Are your ears taking a beating? Do you frequently have earbuds growing from them? If so, it might be time to turn down the volume on that MP3 player.

A study done in Manchester, Birmingham and Brighton, England, found that the average listening device user typically turned up the volume to above 85 decibels, which can lead to hearing loss. That many decibels sustained over the course of one hour has come to be recognized as the maximum level of sound that is healthy for the human ear.



Another study in the United Kingdom found that most users of personal listening devices (such as the iPod) don't know the guidelines for healthy listening. The combination of intense

loudness from in-ear phones and long-term use are the main culprits in hearing damage. The same study found that keeping sound levels to 60 percent of maximum and not using earbuds for more than 30 minutes a day can prevent substantial hearing loss ("Les Ecouteurs Sont-ils Dangereux Pour L'Ouïe? [Earphones, Are They Dangerous to Hearing?]," *Le Figaro*, Oct. 3, 2007).

## Middle-Aged Immaturity?

Brain researchers at Temple University have found that the adolescent brain tends to direct young people toward thrill seeking and impulsive behavior because of the long maturation process of the human cognitive-control system. Such findings help explain the tendency of teenagers to indulge in reckless and dangerous behavior.

However, similar studies have found that the age group spanning 35 to 54 years has an even worse record. Incidences of drug-abuse deaths, incarceration for violent crimes and major felonies among this group have increased 550, 600 and 200 percent respectively since the mid-1970s in the United States.

Sadly, the "baby boomer" generation has exhibited more signs of immaturity as it has aged, while succeeding generations have a track record of better behavior as they grow older (Mike Males, "This Is Your (Father's) Brain on Drugs," *The New York Times*, Sept. 17, 2007).

## Ghost Vibrations

**"Many mobile phone addicts and BlackBerry junkies report feeling vibrations when there are none, or feeling as if they're wearing a cell phone when they're not" (Associated Press, Oct. 10, 2007).**

## Dangerous Debt and Credit Card Catastrophes

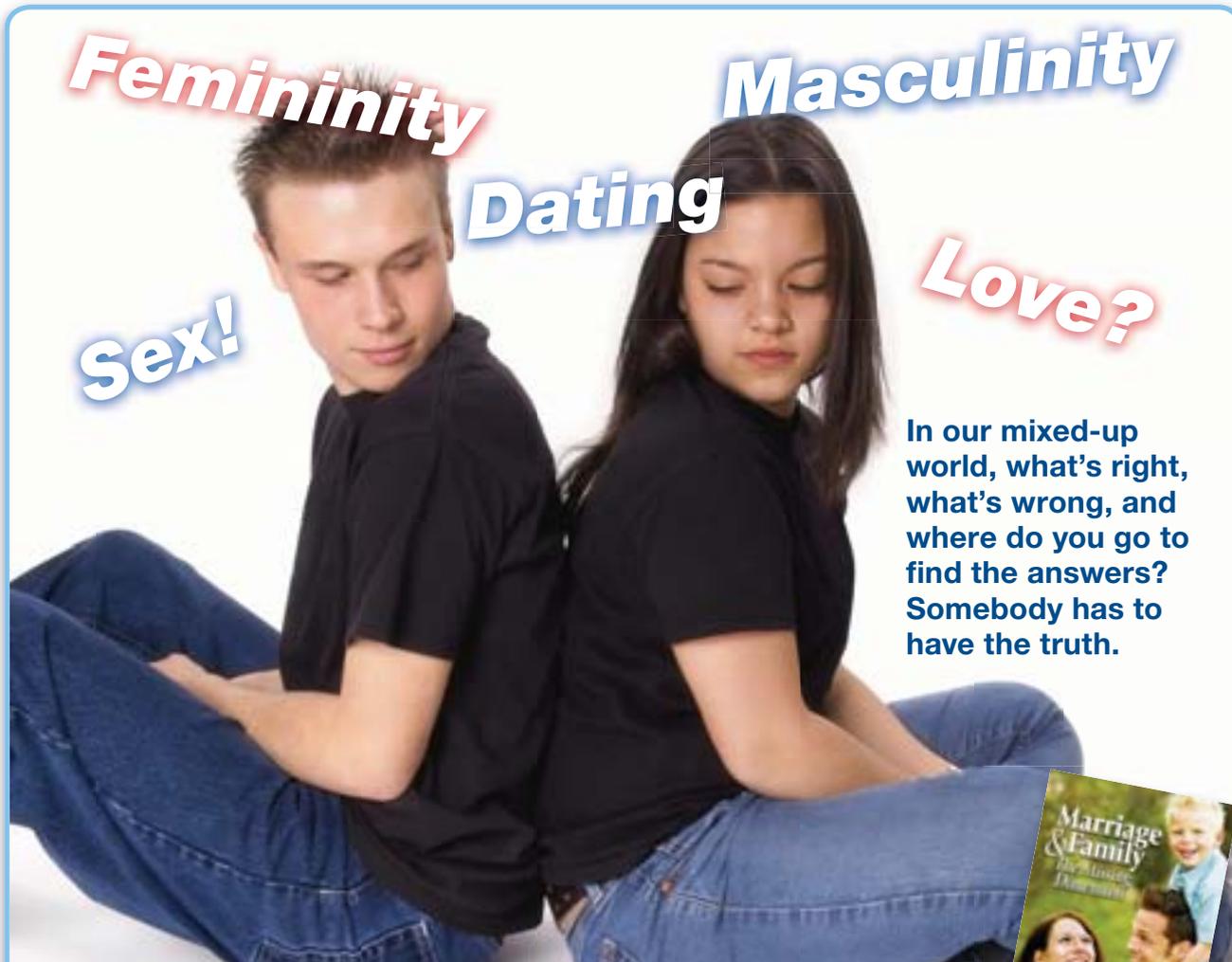
Legislators in the United States are seeking to rein in credit card companies that give large lines of credit to unemployed college students. This practice sets up students to graduate with excess credit card debt before finding stable income.

Credit card companies often rely on legal loopholes and variable interest rates to make a profit, but for students who don't fully understand the effect of long-term payments and debt on their credit record, these practices can seriously affect their finances.

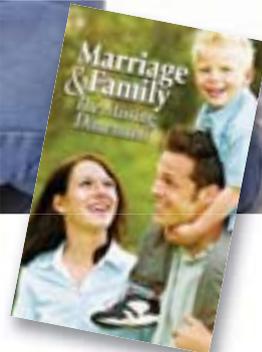
The final responsibility, however, comes down to the individ-

ual, and Jessica Silver-Greenberg of *Business Week* provides a few ideas to help young people build good credit and stabilize their finances ("Fixing the College Credit-Card Mess," Sept. 7, 2007):

- Limit the amount of debt you incur. Choose cards with a credit line of \$1,000 to \$2,000 instead of multiple thousands to avoid the temptation of excessive spending.
- Be an informed student and understand all the fine print that comes with credit card statements to avoid missing key information.
- Avoid credit vendors that have a record of unfair business dealing, and pay off credit bills on time and fully, whenever possible.



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