

Faith and the Female Mind

Jeanne Hendricks

I. Introduction

- A. Personal Illustration: I was a question asker.
 - 1. Grew up as a question asker.
 - 2. Learned that God has all the answers to our questions.
 - 3. Always wondered: “why did God make me a girl?”
- B. Over time drew three conclusions about what it means to be a woman:
 - 1. Weaving Faith into the Fabric of Living (the focus of this lesson)
 - 2. Building a Faith to Defy Disaster
 - 3. Transferring of Faith to Other People

II. Weaving Faith into the Fabric of Living

- A. We are justified by faith
 - 1. Definition of Faith
 - a) Faith is that unique trust relationship that exists between God and a human being
 - b) Something happens in an individual when God comes to a person - He forms a relationship
 - c) When a person does come to faith and believe in God, this trust relationship exists
 - d) God is a covenant keeping God.
 - (1) Deuteronomy 7:9 - “Know therefore that the Lord thy God is a faithful God...”
 - e) Essence of our Faith: Romans 10:9 - “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”
 - 2. The message of justification comes to all people.
 - a) When this message comes, it comes where the Holy Spirit is at work.
 - b) There must be a response with the exercise of a person’s will.
 - c) This message comes to all, male and female.

III. Faith, Feelings, Femininity

- A. Faith is based in what we know; it is a fact.
- B. Feelings go up and down; they change.
- C. Femininity is the way we process information.

IV. Background of Thought: Greek Philosophy vs. Near-Eastern Thinking

- A. Modern Education: derives from Greek philosophy

1. When the Greeks took over, they converted the concepts of Scripture into Aristotelian thought.
 2. Aristotelian Thought: Cause to Effect (didactical thinking)
- B. The Bible: written with Near-Eastern thought
1. God tells a grand story rather than a systematic presentation.
 2. Differences between *man* and *woman* in the creation narrative
 - a) Creation of Man: “manufactured”
 - b) Creation of Woman: “hand-crafted” as by an artisan
 - (1) “Weaker Vessel”
 - (a) When Peter tells husbands to treat women as the “weaker vessel,” it is a weakness similar to that of a precious antique.
 - (2) It is in that sense that we as women come into the world.
 3. As the narrative continues, we see God’s response to man’s disobedience and the great climax of his solution in the cross.
- C. What is my role in this narrative as a woman?
1. Quotations
 - a) “The mother’s X chromosome dictates the morphology - the early shape - of the fetus, even though the father’s chromosome may be Y to sidetrack the mother’s code, a boy is formed from an X + Y combination. But the mother’s dominant code still dictates a female body for the customizing job that yields a male baby. And both baby boys and full-grown men carry breasts as a proof of the original morphology of Adam. In other words, as late as the 9th week, the clearly human fetus is distinctly female in form.” Donald M Joy, *Lovers, Whatever Happened to Eden*
 - b) “Where sex differs everything differs: the brain, the central nervous system, appearance, the reproductive system...” - Aryana Stesanopolis
 2. General differences between girls and boys
 - a) Girls
 - (1) More verbal
 - (2) The ability to do more than one thing at a time
 - (3) Complexity in our thinking processes
 - (4) Need to be protected
 - (5) Less belligerent attitudes
 - (6) Relationships of trust and tenderness and affections
 - (7) Preconditions for self-abandonment
 - (8) Need to nurture
 - b) Boys

- (1) More linear in thinking
- (2) More violent
- (3) Spatial relationships
- (4) Physical automation
- (5) Mastery over objects

c) We all reflect to the world what God is like, men and women in different ways.

3. Tracing examples through history of how women respond differently to information

a) Eve

- (1) Eve's senses overrode her wisdom.
- (2) We need a strong rational back-up when we make decisions.
- (3) Women handle stress differently, and our decision-making ability suffers.

b) Sarah

- (1) Sarah laughed when she learned that her 90+ year old body would have a baby.

c) Hannah

- (1) She did not eat the double portion he gave her.
- (2) When a woman is grieved, she loses her appetite.

4. United States heritage of women who handle information very well

- a) Women worked side by side with men in the founding of the United States.
- b) Women never turned back when they traveled from the East to the West.
- c) Women went out on the battle fields of the Civil War to provide aid to dying men.

V. Guarding, Teaching, & Practicing Femininity

- A. Who do you know that is doing something that is an expression of womanliness?
- B. We need to take care not to bend to the ideas of the minority.
- C. It is the strength of femininity that influences a society.
- D. God wants us to ask him: what do you want me to do?

1. If we have children

- a) Be a good mother
- b) Keep a good home
- c) Making an impact does not require a public platform
 - (1) 1 Thessalonians 4:11 - Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, to work with your hands, just as we told you. So that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders.

2. "Ordinary" people often fall through the cracks.

- a) God gives ordinary people opportunities.

- b) Write a letter of encouragement.
- c) Pick up the phone and call someone who needs a listening ear.
- d) You end up establishing a network, and you are able to share yourself.
- e) When God is in it, a little becomes a lot.

Study Questions

A. As you reflect on this lesson, what are some qualities about you that strike you as uniquely feminine? How might God desire to use those qualities to have an impact in this world?

B. What are some examples of how you respond to situations differently than the men in your life? Do you feel *free* to respond in a distinctly feminine way? Why or why not? Do you take your femininity *too far* in your responses, using your femininity to excuse sinful behavior or to manipulate? If so, what can you do to check that way of thinking?

C. Think of the women in your life. How do they display their own beautiful feminine qualities? How might you affirm these qualities in them this week?
