

Social Challenge: Women's Rights Movement

Marshall E. Patton
10511 Moonlight Way
Valley Station, KY 40272



It is appalling to behold the measure of infidelity in our society today. It is in evidence in the radio and TV talk programs, community public hearings, syndicated columns of the news papers, magazines, and the press in general. Seldom, if ever, is an appeal made to any standard by which an issue may be settled definitively. Rather, human rationalism shows itself to the highest degree. The wisdom of one human is pitted against the wisdom of another. While the issue is never completely settled, public thought and conduct in general is ordered according to whichever rationalist is able to influence the greater number of people. Rationalism, Pragmatism, and Situation Ethics join hands to revolutionize our social world and to challenge the faith of all Christians.

Such standards, however, are ever uncertain. Rationalism of today yields to that of tomorrow and often reverses itself from generation to generation. Our world needs a definitive standard. Our world needs faith in the only definitive standard—the word of God. Here is infinite wisdom! Christians must remember that issues are to be settled by infinite wisdom (the word of God) and not by human rationalism. This is the issue involved in the WOMEN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENT and the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment).

The ERA reads as follows: SECTION 1. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. SECTION 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

The expression "Equality of rights" is ambiguous and involves more than meets the eye from just a cursory reading. In fact, its involvements are rather shocking. Read the following from a former ardent supporter of the ERA:

"As a member of the Arizona State Senate, I spoke in favor of the amendment the day after it passed the Congress. Within a few days, I read the Congressional Record, with all the debate and testimony during the hearing, regarding the effect of the amendment. I was shocked. Never in all of my years of support did I realize that the amendment would have to apply in the absolute—that before the LAW we would be neither men nor women, boys nor girls.

"I was shocked also to find that the Senate overwhelmingly defeated all proposed amendments. They included exemption from military draft and service in combat on an equal basis as well as eliminating the requirement that a husband have a legal responsibility to support his family. There were others of great con-

cern. The Courts would have to see those defeats as legislative intent in all future decisions" (Bess B. Stinson, *Voice of Freedom*, October 1978).

The Women's Rights Movement supports ERA. Perhaps a summation of the high points of what is involved in the amendment would help some to see more clearly the challenge it presents to the faith of a Christian. According to literature from Phyllis Schlafly, National Chairman of STOP ERA, Box 618, Alton, Ill. 62002, *Yale Law Journal*, April 1971; Professor Paul Freund of Harvard Law School, et al., the amendment will:

1. Make every wife in the U.S. legally responsible to provide 50% of the financial support of her family.
2. Make women subject to the draft and for combat duty equally with men.
3. Wipe out criminal laws which protect only women from rape and sex crimes.
4. Wipe out much legislation which protects women from hazardous and unpleasant jobs.
5. Override the right to privacy and "require that there be no segregation of the sexes in prison, reform schools, public restrooms, other public facilities" (Professor Paul Freund, Harvard Constitutional Authority).
6. Transform every provision of law differentiating between men and women into a constitutional issue to be resolved by the Federal Court system.
7. Take from wives the right to draw Social Security checks based on her husband's earnings.
8. Approve homosexual marriages.
9. Approve of women in leadership roles in the church.
10. Nullify thousands of laws which give women special rights and privileges.

The above high points of what this amendment will do foreshadow social changes of great magnitude. Obviously, the objective is a unisex society. Child rearing would likely be done communally, for some women would claim their right to be free of such. Homosexual marriages with the privilege of adopting children would be another social evil with far reaching adverse effects upon the emotional stability of the children involved. Tax exempt status for churches that respect the divine order would most likely become a thing of the past—such being enjoyed only by churches with women in leadership roles. In fact, there would be no end to the social changes in our world.

It should be observed further that opposition to ERA does not mean endorsement of discrimination against women. In fact, the amendment is not necessary to remove discriminations. Federal laws providing for equal pay for equal work, with equal job opportunities, equal treatment in mortgage loans, credit opportunities, equal age limits in adulthood, voting, marriage, etc., already exist. When the laws making the above provisions are carefully considered in the light of the effects of ERA, one should see that the amendment is UNNECESSARY, full of infidelity, and little if anything short of just plain foolishness.

The Women's Rights Movement not only disregards but contravenes divine wisdom as revealed in the word of God. It is here that the faith of the Christian is challenged. This is evident from a clear understanding of what the Bible teaches concerning the relationship between man and woman. Much of the following is from a former article which I wrote on this point (*Searching the Scriptures*, Vol. XVII, No. 7, p. 5).

God is the creator of both man and woman, and He

created each with a view to the very ultimate in joy, happiness, and fulfillment both for time and eternity. He created both EQUAL, and with Him there is no such thing as the superiority of one over the other—so far as their worth either to Him or to one another is concerned (Gen. 2:23, 24; Eph. 5:28-31; Gal. 3:28). However, He did create each with essential differences.

Contrary to the claim of the Women's Rights Movement, these differences are not produced by a difference in education, training, culture, or one's environment. These differences are basic. Man and woman differ anatomically, biochemically, and emotionally. God created them that way. This means that each has a different capacity for service. Furthermore, this difference enables each to serve with excellence in the different roles designed for his or her fulfillment. While these different roles involve one over the other in some relationships, such does not mitigate against their equality in worth, honor, and fulfillment in life. Each serves in his respective role with honor and distinction and is a complement to the other. The Women's Rights Movement makes competitors of the two.

For further reference on the basic differences mentioned above, I suggest Dr. James Dobson's book, *What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women*. He is a licensed psychologist in the State of California, associate Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Southern California School of Medicine, and Director of Behavioral Research in the Division of Child Development, Childrens Hospital of Los Angeles. Here is a quote from his book:

"In truth, they are unique in every cell of their bodies, for men carry a different chromosomal pattern than women. There is also considerable evidence to indicate that the hypothalamic region, located just above the pituitary gland in the mid-brain, is 'wired' very uniquely for each of the sexes. Thus the hypothalamus (known as the seat of emotions) provides women with a different psychological frame of reference than that of men. Further, female sexual desire tends to be somewhat cyclical correlated with the menstrual calendar, whereas males are acyclical. These and other features account for the undeniable fact that masculine and feminine expressions of sexuality are far from identical. Failure to understand this uniqueness can produce a continual source of marital frustration and guilt. . . . Dr. Katherina Dalton, in *The Premenstrual Syndrome* (Springfield, Ill., 1964) summarizes many studies of behavior change that show a large portion of women's crimes (63% in an English study, 84% in a French) are not distributed evenly over time, but clustered in the premenstrual period along with suicides, accidents, a decline in the quality of school work, decline in intelligence test scores, visual acuity, and response speed. In the United States, she calculated that absenteeism related to menstruation cost about five billion dollars a year, but accidents, absenteeism, and domestic quarrels are only part of the social repercussions of symptoms that affect everyone. A book might be filled with discussion of other biological differences between the sexes, that are of great importance in one way or another, in everyday life." . . . (pp. 114, 131, 132).

These biological and other differences account for God's assigning them different roles in life. Hence, women are not to serve as elders and evangelists—they are not to be teachers of God's word so as to exercise authority over man (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-11; 2:15; 1 Tim. 2:12; 1 Cor. 14:34, 35). Man has been ordained to the position of headship in the home (Eph. 5:22-33; Col. 3:18-21). While they are not equal in all of life's relationships, they are equal in God's sight so far as

their worth to God and to each other is concerned. Furthermore, each finds his greatest possible fulfillment in life as he serves in his respective role. It is not commensurate with woman's nature to serve best in fighting battles, commanding armies, controlling kingdoms, or in making laws. Her best is not to be found in braving the way and bearing the responsibilities of leadership. Man is best suited for this role. Woman's throne of glory is in the home.

Unfortunately, The Women's Rights Movement equates this position with serfdom and talks loudly about boredom and how unfulfilling such a role is. True, such involves doing the laundry, washing dishes, cleaning house, nursing babies, tending children, planning menus, shopping wisely, etc. Properly viewed, however, these are important responsibilities and are very rewarding. She shares equally with her husband (though doing different things) in providing a home atmosphere that is a haven of rest. Likewise, she shares equally in the growth and development of the children. Furthermore, she thereby becomes the object of the deepest respect among men, the recipient of the tenderest love known from all other members of the family. The deep satisfaction and gratifying results of such a role is clearly pictured in Prov. 31:10-31.

Man's role, too, may be viewed as routine, boring, and frustrating. He faces competition from nearly every viewpoint—among fellow workers, sales, contracts, and merchandise. He must pay "the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker"—bills, bills, and more bills. He must deal with and try to solve the problems of his company, listen to complaints of employees, supervisors, et al. But, again, when properly viewed, such a role is rewarding. When self is forgotten in service to others satisfaction fills the soul. Honor, esteem, and distinction become his crown. He is the recipient of appreciation from among his associates, and of the greatest possible measure of love from those who know him best. When both man and woman fill their God-ordained roles, they find bliss and fulfillment for both time and eternity.

This does not mean that there is no place, time, or circumstances that would justify a woman serving in public life. The pressure of circumstances, even tragedies, sometimes necessitate it. Furthermore, in our modern society there are some positions in public life that can best be filled by woman. This, however, is a far cry from opening the doors of every relationship in public life to men and women alike—even to leadership roles in the church. Such is subversive of divine wisdom.

"The role of a woman, when properly assumed and played, is honorable, glorious, and rewarding. In filling her role, she does her husband good, blesses her household—even reaching forth her hand beyond to the needy. She may also buy a field and plant a vineyard—even make and deliver goods to the merchants. But in all this she continually 'looketh well to the ways of her household' and 'her husband is known in the gates.' Such a woman is not only praised by her husband, children, and all others, but by the Lord (Prov. 31)" (H. E. Patton, *Bread of Life Teacher*, Vol. 3, No. 5, Montgomery, Ala.).

When women forsake their God ordained role for that of the man, the consequent evils are manifold. The marital relationship is frustrated, children suffer psychologically, juvenile delinquents increase, immorality spreads, and social evils multiply. God's way is the only way for true happiness now and forever.

