

1 John 5: 19—“We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.”

“Isms” are the wiles of the devil.

“Isms” are constantly attacking and trying to erode, eclipse or replace God’s truth.

“Isms” eventually become “strongholds” when left unchecked by the truth.

Some, like secularism and materialism, are subtle and not always recognized as foes.

Some, like relativism, are constant and influential enough they get a foothold before we recognize how far off center they are and how supportive they will be to other “isms.”

Some are just bold and blatant in their attack on truth.

Feminism would definitely fall under this last category

Following are some quotes from With A Shepherd’s Heart by John R. Sittema, Reformed Fellowship Inc., pps. 70-76

[Note: Pastor’s Sittema’s book was printed in 1996—How much more has the feminist agenda advanced during the past ten years?]

“...feminism does not refer to matters of justice and equity; it does not describe attempts to apply Biblical righteousness to situations in which there has been unrighteous discrimination against people because they are female. Those issues are not feminist issues; they are simple yet profound issues of Biblical obedience!

Feminism is different. It is a belief system; it embraces values and ethics; it seeks to shape behavior far beyond the mere quest for justice and righteousness. And it is evil....a profoundly important example of how the Evil One adapts his attack from generation to generation.

Real feminism, as the most ardent feminists would define it, is a much more radical concept than you may be aware of. Often known as *Gender Feminism*, it seeks nothing less than a rewriting of the Divine blueprint for human interaction. Dissatisfied with maleness and femaleness, chafing under traditional understandings of male and female relationships within marriage and family, Gender Feminism seeks to “de-construct” those roles and relationships, replacing them instead with a frightening and humanistic set of alternatives that redefine marriage, family, sexual right and wrong, and even theology.”

The following quotes of the goals and beliefs of Gender Feminists are from Dr. James Dobson’s newsletter and a document released by the US Department of State entitled “Background on the UN Conferences on Women Leading to the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development, and Peace.”

—Marriage is seen as the root of all evil for women...Everything related to traditional male and female relationships is despised. Men are seen as oppressors and exploiters whom women should regard as lifelong enemies.

—The family is also blamed for most of the violence suffered by women and girls. Nowhere is it acknowledged that men and women should be partners in the procreation, care and nurturing of children.

—Gender Feminism proposes “a new way of looking at human sexuality.” ...Sexual identification, they say, is something *society imposes on children and them expects them to play it out in their behavior ever after*. One feminist writer expressed it like this; “Although many people think that men and women are the natural expression of a genetic

- blueprint, gender is a product of human thought and culture, a social construction that creates the ‘true nature’ of all individuals.”
- the political agenda of gender feminists even seeks the elimination of “such terms as *wife, husband, son, daughter, sister, brother, manhood, womanhood, masculine, and feminine*. These references to sexual identity are being replaced with gender neutral terms, such as *parent, spouse, child, sibling*.”
  - Once this redefinition of terms and identity has been accomplished, social life will radically change...there will be absolutely no difference tolerated between the sexes.”
  - Gender Feminism demands a high priority be given by governments and cultures to “reproductive rights,” a byword for safe-sex ideology, including condom distribution and especially abortion rights for all women.
  - Gender Feminism walks hand in hand with the homosexual and lesbian lobby. Listen to their own words (from the Declaration of the Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission to the UN Conference): “We, the undersigned, call upon the Member States to recognize the right to determine one’s sexual identity; the right to control one’s own body, particularly in establishing intimate relationships; and the right to choose if, when, and with whom to bear or raise children as fundamental components of all human rights of all women regardless of sexual orientation.”
  - Gender Feminism is extremely hostile to traditional “fundamentalism” in religion...Nothing, they say, has done more to oppress women or limit their aspirations than these patriarchal religious beliefs and teachings....they feel “the reformation maintained the subordination of women.”
  - Gender Feminists suggest a rewrite of major Christian doctrines:
    - \* a transformation of the *doctrine of man* which they see as having been male dominated...
    - \* A re thinking of the *doctrine of God* which has been thoroughly corrupted by male imagery to the exclusion of the female...requiring...new language (God as “Father” must always be supplemented by the word “mother”; even suggesting using the new term “God/ess”)
    - \* a redefinition of the *doctrine of sin* as follows: “Women’s sin is precisely the failure to turn toward the self. The sin of women is submitting to the view that she is powerless or helpless.”
    - \* A change in the understanding of the *doctrine of redemption*; redemption is liberation, and is understood as “empowerment or becoming able to take responsibility for one’s own life.”
    - \* the work of Christ undergoes the greatest reworking. Rosemary Ruether, in her book, *Christology: Can a Male Savior Save Women?*, asks, ‘Does not the worship of a male figure reinforce the stereotype that women cannot be whole persons without the intervention of or relationship to a man?’

For many of us, to even hear such things seems unbelievable, but then to realize that these lies are gaining a strong following seems inconceivable. The psalmist captures it well:

Psalm 119:53 (KJV)

“Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.”

The word rendered “horror” has two flavors; one is like shock, the other is to boil up into anger. (ESV) “Hot indignation seizes me because of the wicked, who forsake your law.”

[Three examples in scripture of horror/hot indignation]

Ex 32:19—“As soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses’ anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain.”

Ezra 9:3—“So when I heard this thing, I tore my garment and my robe, and plucked out some of the hair of my head and my beard, and sat down astonished.”

Neh 13: 25—“So I contended with them and cursed them, struck some of them and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, saying...”

Whatever our mental and emotional response may be to this or any other blatant assault by the enemy, we must always remember---the solution to every ism, is Him!

Our Triune God has provided all that we need for every “ism” in His Word.

2 Timothy 3:16-17—“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God (lit. God-breathed), and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

2 Peter 1: 20-21—“No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

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.”

John 1:14—“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us... full of grace and truth.”

John 6: 63—“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.”

How we need to saturate our mind and heart with His truth and meditate on it day and night in order to battle the constant onslaught of the enemy. (Always wrestling)

**Psalm 119: 15-16—“I will meditate on Your precepts, and contemplate Your ways. I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.”**

*“Precept”—(1828 Definition)—Any commandment or order intended as an authoritative rule of action; but applied particularly to commands respecting moral conduct. [(6490) Strong’s—a mandate of God]*

*“Ways”—(1828 Definition)—In Scripture, the ways of God, are His providential government, or His works. [(734) Strong’s—a well trodden road]*

*“Statutes”—(1828 Definition)—An act of the legislature of a state that extends its binding force to all the citizens or subjects of that state, as distinguished from an act which extends only to an individual or company; an act of the legislature commanding or prohibiting something. Statutes are distinguished from common law:*

*(Common law) owes its binding force to the principles of justice, to long use and the consent of a nation.*

*(Statutes) owe their binding force to a positive command or declaration of the supreme power.*

*[(2708) Strong's—an enactment; hence an appointment—from a prim. root implying (laws being cut in stone or metal tablets in primitive times)]*

As I meditate on His precepts (*His commands and intended order I am to live out*), and contemplate His ways (*His providential governing and working*), and delight myself in His statutes (*His binding commands and declarations*), and use His Word as my constant point of reference:

I will prosper, be fruitful, and glorify Him. (Psalm 1, Jeremiah 17, John 15)

I will hold my ground and not be moved. (Ephesians 6)

I will not find myself walking in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standing in the way of sinners, nor sitting in the seat of the scornful. (Psalm 1)

I will find my affections shifting to things above instead of things on the earth. (Colossians 3)

I will no longer be an enemy of the cross, with my belly as my god and my glory in what should bring me shame, with my mind set on earthly things. (Philippians 3)

I will be renewed in my mind and be transformed into His image. (Romans 12)

I will be a witness and testimony to His grace and goodness and truth (Deut. 4, 1 Peter 2)

The list of blessings are endless and the value of meditation on God's Word unmeasurable!

As I consider "feminism", I need to meditate on what God says about Himself, what God says about men and what God says about women.

[Time will not allow for a development of all three areas in one lesson. Following will be some areas to meditate on in looking at what God says about Himself and what God says about men.]

What God says about Himself:

How does He represent His authority?

Why does He reveal himself as a Father, as A Husband, as a Son

How does He demonstrate His leadership? (Protector, Provider, Initiator)

How does God demonstrate His love?

What are the characteristics of His person? His name? His manner?

What God says about men:

What authority does He give them? What areas of jurisdiction?

How are they to carry that authority or leadership out?

To whom are they accountable?

What are their responsibilities before God in the marriage, home, and church?

What are the consequences of the fall upon men?

What are the characteristics of a godly man?

What are the common sins that render them ineffective?

How is a man to demonstrate his love?

[The rest of this lesson will be around the theme of what does God say about women.]

1. God makes no distinction between male and female in their value. Both are equally important in God's plan and purpose from the beginning.

Gen. 1: 26-31—"Let Us make **man** in Our image, according to Our likeness: and let **them** have dominion over...

So God created **man** in His own image; in the image of God He created **him**; **male** and **female** He created **them**.

Then God blessed **them**, and God said to **them**, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over...

Then God saw everything He had made, and indeed it was very good."

2. God makes no distinction in their redemption.

Romans 3: 23-24-6—"For **all** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,...that He might be just and the justifier of **the one who has faith in Jesus**."

Galatians 3:26-29—"For you are **all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus**. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, **their is neither male or female**; for **you are all one in Christ Jesus**. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed **and heirs according to the promise**."

3. God used the husband/wife marriage relationship to reveal His relationship with His people in the O.T., and to reveal the relationship of Christ with His church in the N.T. The value and desirability of each person in the relationship is honored and the differing role of each one is developed.

Hosea 2: 19-23—"I will **betroth** you to Me forever; yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord...

And I will have mercy on **her** who had not obtained mercy; then I will say to those who were not My people, 'You are my people!' And they shall say, 'You are my God!'"

Isaiah 54: 5-6—"For **your Maker is your husband**, the Lord of hosts is His name; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; he is called the God of the whole earth. For the Lord has called you like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, like a youthful wife when you were refused, says your God."

Eph. 5: 22-24—"Wives submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in everything...

[Note---verses 25-32 lay out the example of Christ's relationship to the church and a husband's parallel responsibility to his wife. The neglect of this responsibility being carried out is the primary reason wives find functioning under the husband's headship so difficult and thereby principles of feminism are breed and nurtured.]

Eph. 5: 33—"Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."

4. God also uses the analogy of the head (Christ) and the body (the church) which again serves to accentuate the mutual importance of each although differing roles.

Eph. 1: 22-23—“And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all.”

1 Cor. 11: 3, 8-9, 11-12—“The head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God...”

For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man...

Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God.

5. God uses the equal but subordinate role of the wife in scripture to demonstrate a proper heart response to God given authority (which is so important in teaching children to submit to authority). A woman is not required to submit to just any man, or to every man; her equal but subordinate role is acted on only in relation to God given authorities in her life.

1 Peter 3: 1-6, 8-9—“Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror...”

Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.”

1 Timothy 2: 9-12—“In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works. Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.”

[MacArthur—“Women are not to be the public teachers when the church assembles, but neither are they to be shut out of the learning process... Paul is commanding that women be taught in the church. That was a novel concept, since neither first century Judaism nor Greek culture held women in high esteem....

“Silence” (“quiet”) and “submission” (“to line up under”) were to characterize the role of a woman as a learner in the context of the church assembly. Paul explains his meaning in v. 12: Women are to be silent by not teaching, and they are to demonstrate submission by not usurping the authority of the pastors or elders.”]

6. God does not elevate one role above the other but uses each role to complement the other and both roles to accomplish His own purposes and glorify His name. Both rule together (Children need to know this). The husband’s authority is delegated by God and the woman’s authority is delegated by God through her husband in conjunction with his responsibility before God.

Gen 2: 18—“”And the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’”

[MacArthur—“The words of this verse emphasize man’s need for a companion, a helper, and an equal. He was incomplete without someone to complement him in fulfilling the task of filling, multiplying, and taking dominion over the earth.”]

Matt. 10: 40—“He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.”

Exodus 20: 12—“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.”

Proverbs 20: 20—“Whoever curses his father or his mother, his lamp will be put out in deep darkness.”

7. God used a rib from the man (“ish”) to form his counterpart (woman, or “isha”). Out of one He made two and out of two He makes one.

Gen 2: 21-24—“And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his rib, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

8. The effects of the fall will be ever present in the lives of all men and all women. The curse of sin is more sin. “Equal but subordinate” was God’s design for the woman even before the fall just by nature of her creation (out of the man) and His purpose in creating her (suitable helper).

1 Tim 2: 13-15—“For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.”

Gen. 3: 16—“To the woman He said: ‘I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.’”

[MacArthur—“By nature Eve was not suited to assume the position of ultimate responsibility. By leaving Adam’s protection and usurping his headship, she was vulnerable and fell, thus confirming how important it was for her to stay under the protection and leadership of her husband. Adam then violated his leadership role, followed Eve in her sin, and plunged the human race into sinfulness—all connected with violating God’s planned roles for the sexes. Because of sin and the curse, the man and the woman will face struggles in their own relationship. Sin has turned the harmonious system of God-ordained roles into distasteful struggles of self-will..Lifelong companions, husbands and wives, will need God’s help in getting along as a result.”]

[Shishko—In a fallen world, the temptation for the woman is to dominate her husband, and the temptation for the man is to tyrannize his wife or else abdicate his leadership. We must realize these two temptations and deal with them as Christians.]

9. God in His justice and in accordance with His design and decree holds the man accountable for original sin, not the woman. And God uses another “Adam”, the God-man, Jesus Christ, the Son of God the Father, to make all things new and right in the sight of God. It’s in Him we live, and move, and have our being, whether male or female.

1 Cor. 15: 21-22—“For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.”

Romans 5: 6-21—“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

10. God uses the woman to model and teach the “nurturing” aspect of the Godhead. He made them (male and female) in His own image and after His likeness so the woman is an expression of Him in her gift of femininity, just as the man is an expression of Him in his masculinity. Both are important otherwise in the fifth commandment, God would have only required honoring fathers.

Eph. 6: 1-4—“Children, obey your parents (male and female) in the Lord, for this is right ‘Honor your father and mother,’ which is the first commandment with promise: ‘that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.’

And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”

[Shishko---The father certainly has the responsibility before God for overseeing the

training of his children but often the bulk of the training and admonition, in the early years especially, is done by the mother. Her example leaves even more of an imprint on the child than the father's because she is with them more than him.]

Her words and instruction are important.

Proverbs 31: 26—"She open her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness."

Proverbs 6: 20-24—"My son, keep your father's command, and do not forsake the law of your mother. Bind them continually upon your heart; tie them around your neck. When you roam, they will lead you; when you sleep, they will keep you. For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life, to keep you from the evil woman, from the flattering tongue of the seductress."

2 Timothy 1 :5, 3; 15—"...I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also...And that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

She helps establish an atmosphere of grace in the home.

Ephesians 5: 29-32—"Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers...Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."

She teaches other women by example and by admonition.

Titus 2: 1-5—"But as for you (Titus), speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: that the older men be... [male]

the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God may not be blasphemed." [female]

She reveals the gentleness and forbearance of God.

Phil 4: 5—"Let your gentleness (graciousness or forbearance) be known to all men. The Lord is at hand."

1 Thess 2: 7-8, 9-12—"But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us....[female]

You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved

ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.” [male]

She is the main comforter in the home and demonstrates God’s care and comfort.

(Why do kids run to mom when they are hurt?)

Isaiah 66: 12-13—...”On her sides shall you be carried, and be dandled on her knees. As one whom his mother comforts, so will I comfort you; And you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.”

2 Cor. 1: 3-4—“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”

She models real beauty and femininity for her sons and daughters.

1 Peter 3: 4—“The hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible (imperishable) beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.”

Proverbs 31: 30—Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.

She understands and experiences the ache and joy of heart more than the man.

Proverbs 10: 1—“A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is the grief of his mother.”

Proverbs 17: 25—“A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her who bore him.”

Her value is spoken of in Scripture more often and more highly than any man apart from Christ

Proverbs 31: 10-31 —“An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life. She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands. She is like the ships of the merchant; she brings her food from afar. She rises while it is yet night and provides food for her household and portions for her maidens. She considers a field and buys it, with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. She dresses herself with strength and makes her arms strong. She perceives that her merchandise is profitable. Her lamp does not go out at night. She puts her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle. She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household are clothed in scarlet. She makes bed coverings for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple. Her husband is known in the gates when he sits among the elders of the land. She makes linen garments and sells them; she delivers sashes to the merchant. Strength and

dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: ' Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.' Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates."

What a privilege and high calling to be a "hand maiden of the Lord" in "the midst of this dark and perverse generation.". May all women in the church of Christ be able to say, "Let it be to me according to Your word," and draw encouragement and focus as they meditate on the truths of God's Word and His purpose in making them female.