

Some Religion Empowers Women

The theme of The Women's Conference 2008 this week is We Empower. Does religion empower women?

1.....All Olympians who do their best go home winners. All women who do their best, regardless of impedances, are winners. All societies which encourage all citizens, women and men, to do their best (in today's jargon, "to fulfill their potential"), are winners.

2.....That leaves us with piles of losers. Athletes who fail to do their best. Women (and men) who fail to do their best under whatever circumstances. Societies failing to encourage all citizens to do their best, even more so societies preventing all or some of their citizens from doing their best.

3.....Within each society are customs, traditions, institutions which encourage men but not women to do their best. Instance classical Athens. Well, not just classical Athens. When I was born, American women could not vote.

4.....Now, American women outvote their husbands, who tend to ask the advice of "the little woman" on whom to vote for. The more years of formal education, the more inclined one is to vote. One reason for the male/female voting gap is that increasingly, women outnumber men in higher education. Now, "they" (The Women's Conference 2008) want to empower women MORE: shouldn't "they" (women) fear that they'll OVERpower men? At least as husbands, women don't want weak men.

5.....A few years back, I managed to generate a conference titled "How to Make Men out of Boys." For forty years - not long after the beginning of third-wave feminism - we've been getting books on "the feminization of" this and that societal dimension. Our society now fits girls better than it does boys, so it's easier to make women out of girls. Girls go to college, boys go to prison (80% of America's prisoners are male).

6.....While Robert Coles, a truly great scholar of childhood, cautions us against swinging too far in the sympathy-for-boys direction, in the interest of BALANCE America does need to give an honest read to such contrarians as William S. Pollack and Todd Shuster ("Real Boys' Voices: Rescuing Our Sons From the Myths of Boyhood") and Christiana Hoff Sommers ("The War Against Boys: How Misguided Feminism is Harming Our Young Men").

7.....Sexual identity and sexual preference are irrelevant to society's God-given task to help all children to be winners, to become the best they can be for the glory of God and the good of humanity and the good earth. The good society helps boys become real men and girls become real women, in celebration of difference, of mutual superiority, and of personal service. One beneficent result of such a society would be real families, with a new and balanced version of Freud's "Biology is destiny." A society without glass ceilings for girls or trip-boards for boys.

8.....*Religion?* As any society's root and summit (both variously conceived), religion is good news if it furthers my idea of the good society and irrelevant or bad news if it doesn't. In this opinion, I'm not different from anybody else, just more frank than most: everybody wants a society fulfilling their religion's dream (even if their religion is dreaming of a religionless society).

9....."On Faith" asks, "*Does religion empower women?*" Yes and no, depending on the religion. My no-glass-ceilings version of Christianity empowers women to become clergy, as several in our family - including my wife - are. This is the usual meaning of "empower," namely, to empower-in-society, in societal functioning. It's inspiring to see-hear online the women given, by The Women's Conference, "The Trailblazer Awards." Wells Fargo is to be congratulated for sponsoring this week's "The Women's Conference 2008."

10.....Another meaning of the term is to empower women to be real women rather than only female competitors with males for power-positions in the dimensions of society. In Biblical religion, this includes being companions of men, mothers of children, and daughters of God.

11.....Finally, a third meaning. Good religion empowers each woman to be the particular "purpose-driven" self God intends her to be. The subtitle of Rick Warren's "blockbuster" "The Purpose Driven Life" is "What on earth am I here for?" It should be a lifelong self-examining, world-examining question for everybody. Women who live this question are inwardly strong, leaning into the winds.

BY WILLIS E. ELLIOTT | OCTOBER 24, 2008; 3:35 PM ETSAVE & SHARE:        

PREVIOUS: [FAITH-BASED FEMINISM: THE MOST POWERFUL MODEL](#) | NEXT: [BEING TRUE TO GOD'S CALL \(NOT MAN'S\)](#)

Comments

Please report offensive comments below.

"1.....All Olympians who do their best go home winners. All women who do their best, regardless of impedances, are winners. All societies which encourage all citizens, women and men, to do their best (in today's jargon, "to fulfill their potential"), are winners.

"2.....That leaves us with piles of losers. Athletes who fail to do their best. Women (and men) who fail to do their best under whatever circumstances. Societies failing to encourage all citizens to do their best,"

Hey, it wasn't exactly Bose surround-sound, but while I was being a 'loser' I could put you together a half-decent-sounding rack system out of trashpick with whatever 'impedance' you liked, four ohm, eight ohm,

Sorry if it wasn't 'my best,' yo. :)

"shouldn't "they" (women) fear that they'll OVERpower men?"

Never you worry, when that's a problem, we'll let you know. If you have to ask, it's too late, anyway, and you won't 'fix' it by knocking people down.

"At least as husbands, women don't want weak men."

Weak men hiding behind a sense of entitlement and thinking they're made stronger by so doing, Reverend, are *not* stronger men. Just more dangerous ones.

Strong men, (And I do insist on it, that's why I swore off Christians, actually) *just get it.* They don't hide behind a Command From The Ultimate Vicarious Alpha Male....

They just *get it.*

Don't blame women, blame the fact that *men* somehow got their own dominance contests with each other and over 'shrewish sinful women' confused with what *actually makes a strong man.*

I mean, you wonder about failure of 'role models' what do you expect when you offer *as* role models, only maniacs hopped up on steroids, money, violence, or religion, in various combinations, and treat the prospect of your kid watching a Jimmy Stewart movie or caring about his appearance like you may as well be cutting his stones off and donating them to PFLAG. :)

That's not 'strength,' and it's not anything women are taking away.

Especially not by taking up the slack when you'd rather bluster and whine about everyone in the world not bowing to your entitled male power and threatenedness.

That's all you guys.

It's not like women with brains and wits and can do spirit sprung all unbidden out of the head of Lyndon Johnson on some mythical reefer binge...

POSTED BY: PAGANPLACE | OCTOBER 28, 2008 7:19 PM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)

"Our society now fits girls better than it does boys, so it's easier to make women out of girls. Girls go to college, boys go to prison (80% of America's prisoners are male)." Interesting.

When the guys all ditched the unions, the gals stepped up to revive them. Labor racketeering still thrives. Look at our U.S. industries and follow the decline in numbers. Steel, auto, airlines and the list goes on. All killed by labor unions. The numbers tell the story. The jail guard union and other public unions thrive on the economic destruction of business.

POSTED BY: MOONPENN | OCTOBER 27, 2008 4:07 AM

[REPORT OFFENSIVE COMMENT](#)
