

FEMININITY

- I. The words "feminine" and "femininity" are not used in the Bible.
- II. Defining "femininity"
 - A. Modern feminism has cast "femininity" into political sphere of women's rights, freedoms and equality.
 - B. Radical feminism often posits the superiority of the female as the epitome and center of reference for humanity, even projecting the female as a goddess, which has contributed to family breakdown and lesbianism.
 - C. This study will consider "femininity" as referring to what it means to be a "female as God intended."
- III. Spiritually
 - A. Male and female equal before God - Gal. 3:28
 - B. Functional humanity, male and female, requires spiritual exchange - Acts 26:18
 - C. The life of Jesus Christ is the essence of functional femininity.
 - D. A woman who fears the Lord will be praised - Prov. 31:30
 - E. Only when we are "in the Lord" (I Cor. 7:39) can anyone love others with the *agape* love of God - Rom. 5:5; I Cor. 13; Gal. 5:22.
 - F. Spiritual maturity develops divine character expression of femininity
 - 1. "imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit" - I Peter 3:4.
 - 2. "faith and love and sanctity" - I Tim. 2:15
- IV. Socially
 - A. Industrious, not idle. Prov. 31:13-20,27; I Tim. 5:10,13; Titus 2:5
 - B. Engaged in homemaking - Prov. 31:15,27,28
 - C. Dignified - I Tim. 3:11
 - D. Not engaged in gossip - I Tim. 3:11; Titus 2:3
 - E. Not controlling, manipulating, dominating conversations and situations - I Tim. 2:12
 - F. Not brash, boisterous, assertive, aggressive, pushy, bossy, contentious - Prov. 21:9,19
 - F. Accompanies her husband socially.
 - G. Other men regard her husband as fortunate to have a wife like her - Prov. 31:23.
- V. Culturally
 - A. Cultural concepts of "femininity" primarily concerned with externalities
 - 1. Physical body
 - a. height, weight, skin texture and color, hair style (I Cor. 11:5,6; I Tim. 2:9; I Pet. 3:3), breast size, shape and measurements, enlargements, reductions, facelifts, diets, body piercing, tattoos, shaving, hygiene
 - b. comportment of body - movement of head, eyes, mouth, hands, how she stands, sits, walks, talks, self-confidence, self-image, assurance, flirtatious, "sexy", wise to man's orientation of visibility
 - 2. Apparel and clothing
 - a. lingerie, bras, shoes, high heels, hosiery, dresses, pants, hemlines, necklines, form-fitting, loose, head coverings (I Cor. 11:5,6), contemporary fashions, fabrics, colors, cosmetics, jewelry, perfume
 - b. range from prudish, veiled, matronly, to frumpy, dowdy, slovenly, too revealing, ostentatious, cheap
 - c. Avoid undue preoccupation and priority - I Peter 3:2,3
 - d. Cultural acceptance of propriety and modesty - I Tim. 2:9,10
 - 3. Social involvement and roles
 - a. homemaker, mother, barefoot and pregnant, naked and nursing, seen but not heard.
 - b. vocational, working woman, executive, personal wealth
 - c. political involvement, women's rights and freedoms

- d. church leadership, teaching - I Tim. 2:12; I Cor. 14:34
 - e. competitive, aggressive, assertive, brash, bold, bossy
 - f. flirtatious, harassment
- B. Attitudes about what is attractive and appealing about women's appearances and "femininity" are inevitably influenced by the culture we live in.
- C. To what extent should we/do we accept culturally defined "femininity"?

VI. Maritally

- A. Functionally
1. Helpmate, helper, assistant, supportive, adaptive, encouraging, complete rather than compete, help husband to be all God desires - Gen. 2:18
 2. Subordinated to husband. Gen. 3:16; I Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18; I Tim. 2:11; Titus 2:5; I Peter 3:1,5,6
 - a. Not subservient slavery, forced subjugation
 - b. Not a matter of value, worth, honor or superiority; but of function and order.
 - c. Dependent?
 - d. Attitude precedes functional action.
 3. Priorities in order - I Peter 3:4
- B. Psychologically
1. Faithful to her husband - Exod. 20:14; Ruth 1:16; I Tim. 3:11
 2. Trustworthy - Prov. 31:11
 3. Loves her husband - Titus 2:4
 4. Respects her husband - Eph. 5:33; I Pet. 3:2
 5. Admires her husband - SoS 2:3
 6. Desires her husband - SoS 1:2,4; 2:5; 5:8
 7. Seeks to meet husband's expectations, preferences, desires and needs - John 8:29; Matt. 17:5; SoS 7:9
 8. Appreciates her husband; doesn't take for granted - Prov. 31:12
 8. Femininity encouraged by husband's praises - Prov. 31:28
- C. Sexually
1. Availability
 - a. Duty to husband - I Cor. 7:3,5
 - b. No excuses - SoS 5:3
 - c. Complete willingness - Phil. 2:8
 2. Visibility
 - a. "naked and not ashamed" - Gen. 2:25
 - b. Put aside inhibitions, hang-ups, what others think.
 - c. Open exposure and exhibition - SoS 4; 6:13
 3. Creativity
 - a. Novel, unique, inviting, exciting, evokes anticipation
 - b. Don't get in rut or routine without variation.
 - c. Seductive, sensual, coy, initiating - SoS 4:16; 7:11-13
 4. Not just a "sex-object"

VII. Parentally

- A. Femininity preserved through childbearing and child-rearing- I Tim. 2:15
1. Woman "made safe" to function in femininity.
 2. Learns to be available, a servant, to put aside selfishness, to love, nurture, give and protect, so she does not become a pushy, arrogant feminist seeking to dominate, rule and function as a "goddess."
- B. Femininity honored by children's lives.
1. Children rise up and bless her - Prov. 31:28
 2. Gladness and rejoicing - Prov. 23:22,25

VIII. Conclusion

- A. Fullness of "femininity" requires balanced attitude and function in foregoing areas.
- B. Differing definitions of "femininity" between husband and wife creates discord.