

True Masculinity & Femininity

1 Timothy 2:8-9

While the terms are not used in this text, Paul addresses the subjects of masculinity and femininity. What does it mean to be a man? What does it mean to be a woman? Every culture attempts to define these concepts. Culture creates a stereotype for both men and women. Yet, we must not allow the culture to define how we are to behave as men and women.

True Masculinity

In western society, men are expected to be strong and courageous. They are permitted to be loud and boisterous. They can be violent at times. They can be sexually unrestrained. After all, "boys will be boys." In this passage, Paul describes men being given to anger and fighting. However, cultural stereotypes have no place in the kingdom of God. Paul in effect says, "If you want to be a real man, learn to pray."

"I desire then that in every place the men should pray, *lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling.*" 1

Timothy 2:9

Prayer is a demonstration of humility and submission. Prayer is a recognition of dependency on God. Prayer requires holy conduct. Prayer is an indication of spiritual development. Prayer helps the pride man become humble. Prayer helps the lustful man become restrained. Prayer helps transform the old man into the new man.

True Femininity

Just like masculinity, western society forms a cultural stereotype for femininity. The stereotypes for men and women have not changed much in 2,000 years. Just like the ancient Greco-Roman world, our culture assigns worth to women based on appearance. This cultural stereotype is consuming for some women. Beauty becomes an idol and it eats us alive. Superficial standards cannot satisfy.

Of course, God is not concerned with the superficial. He is concerned about the heart. Character brings value. Godliness brings fulfillment.

**“Likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel,
*with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works.” 1 Timothy 2:9-10***