

Chapter 15.

## A Letter Addressed to Men

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You are much too busy to read a book, or you may have attempted to read this one and were baffled or bored. Will you accept a short letter?

You are no doubt familiar with Freud's famous quotation: "What does woman want? Dear God! What does she want?" Perhaps as a man you thought Freud was quoting you! Having been a woman for well over a half century, having counseled and observed them in droves, having read widely from a mountain of literature--intelligent and inane, contemporary and ancient, may I offer my studied ] and candid appraisal for your consideration? Most of the closeted and much of the public male discussion of women is directed toward the packaging. Perhaps you would consider a brief look at the content.

What does a woman want? The answer to that question depends upon what she thinks of herself. Women are human, just as men are. Thus, the two categories, superhuman (God and Satan) and extra-human (the world of things and nature), do not apply. Women are human; they relate to the other-than-human world in the same way you do. They deny or affirm the existence of God and Satan in word and/or in practice, and as a consequence, either rule or are ruled by things and nature.

If they deny God and affirm Satan, they are a god to themselves and life becomes an ego-centered bondage. Committed to self-pleasing, woman will use one of two modes to accomplish that end: she will be either "pussycat" (covertly aggressive) or "tiger" (openly aggressive). To further confuse you, she may use them alternately, one day or moment tiger, the next pussycat. Charming, isn't it? Popularly referred to as "the feminine mystique," it is an age-old technique, both tantalizing and terrorizing to the male.

There are no rules for the game. The system of ethics which generally applies in other areas is superseded, and pretense, dishonesty, fraudulent use of bodies and minds, manipulative strategies, are all considered the means to a delightful end of ego-satisfaction. "All's fair in love and war," is stated as Christian and non-Christian women use people and scuttle their personal integrity. It's a man trap, of course, but then, as one man (a Christian!) told me, "she's lethal, but arsenic taken in small quantities is life giving, you know." Pussycats are cute, and except for a few bad habits (which you mean to train of course) are fairly manageable. The trouble is, pussycats are tigers at heart. Man-eating tigers, that is. And when the pussycat grows up to be a tiger, the man is driven to the whip for sheer survival.

What happened to that adorable little game we used to play, you ask? You know, the one in which she played the puppet and I the big operator, I talked and she listened, she lavished me with flattery and I thought I was God. What happened is that two ego trips headed toward each other are sure to collide, and rude will be the awakening, if not total calamity. What does a self-centered woman want? She wants you for herself, and she will use any ruse to get what she wants. You call the pose; she will perform, but you will be the victim, and you will waken someday to the realization that you are the puppet and your manhood is dissipated to a hollow shell.

There is the other, overtly aggressive woman. You know, the one now dominant in the media. The one you now know you mustn't treat with common courtesies, lest you "demean" her. You have no doubt met her in the marketplace, where she is climbing the same corporate ladder with you. You are aware of her power plays; they are surprisingly similar to the ones you as a male have always used. You may not have taken her seriously, at first--she didn't seem to fit what you understood to be the feminine image. You may have thought she could be "bought", and found to your dismay that it was only on her terms.

The hostile woman so familiar in today's world is at war not only with you but with herself. She is fighting the same inner insecurities and fear as you are. Please join with her in the struggle for identity and inner security that is neither male nor female, but poignantly human. The answer is not to be found in adversarial relationships, but in a joined search for significance. You will both recognize a genuine resolution to this human dilemma when your maleness and her femaleness evolve into complementary and harmonious relationships.

There is another kind of woman, rare and beautiful. Human? Yes, totally human, a whole person who, because she is seeking to be totally committed to Jesus Christ and therefore God's woman, will not need to use you or anyone else to sustain her identity. She is free to be honest, loving, enjoying all of life to its fullest, and freeing you and all who meet her to enjoy life with her (or without her)! She is a woman of integrity, who will not compromise her spiritual wholeness by flaunting her sexuality or playing fraudulent games with anyone. She will not try to play God, nor will she expect you to play God with her. The dignity of her spiritual identity will be evident in her freedom to serve, but she will not serve your ego with flattery and deceit. She will speak the truth in love and gentleness, because she will want you to be God's man, not hers. She will satisfy your total manhood because in knowing her you are brought nearer to the God in whose image both you and she were made, and for whose glory you were intended to live. "She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called happy." You will find that it is the indwelling Jesus Christ, her Lord, who makes her so, and you will want to praise him for his new creation! With such a woman, the Creator's plan of one woman joined to one man for lifelong union is not bondage but joyful freedom.

Why are such women so rare? Because, sir, you are demanding arsenic when you were designed by God to be sustained by living water. You too are human, subject either to God or Satan, ego-centered or God-centered in your perspective. Screened through your ego-centeredness, the arsenic of sexual game-playing appears life-giving, and if you keep asking for it you will fill your life with toxin, and the "every good thing" God intended for your humanity will turn to death, boredom, and futility. You will get what you expect from a woman: a plaything, a sop to your ego, or integrity of spirit, soul and body. Please, please, help us be what God intended: whole, mature, loving, sensitive, gentle, and gracious. You cannot make us so. Do not try to be God. Just give us godly, loving, sensitive leadership, so that we may see the Father in you and serve him in loving you and others.

I have never met a perfect person. I know some who are on the way to wholeness, and they make me and everyone who knows them love God, the God who filled them with himself and made them alive with beauty that is not contrived but genuine. They are growing people, honest people, struggling with truth and error, with reality and delusion--but in it all their sights are fixed on pleasing God first. He is teaching them how to love themselves and others as his people. They are learning that happiness is knowing God in the Lord Jesus Christ, who gives richness to every dimension of life.

A mature and whole woman wants you to be a mature and whole man--not for her ego-satisfaction, but for the sheer joy of knowing that you are becoming a total human being along with her. Counsel with her; she is your spiritual equal. Pray with her, give yourself to her as she gives herself to you, that you both may love and live to the glory of God, in the fullness of your humanity. If she is your wife, she is your first priority and commitment under God. If she is your sister-in-Christ, respect her as his woman. Women were not made for slavery, but God has asked us to follow your leadership. Please! Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from game-playing and fraudulent living, that, as one people, we may exalt the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, and altogether be restored to the image and likeness of God as it is in his Son. Society must have the salt and light of honest, life-giving relationships in the people of God. You are responsible, under God, to give us that kind of leadership, and we are equally responsible under God to support you in that quality of headship.

May God give you the freedom to discuss and apply any truth you find in these pages with the women in your homes and churches, that we may together want what God wants. He is the giver of every good and perfect gift, the healer of our humanity. To him be glory in his temples, our bodies, and in his people, forever.

### ***A Woman's Worth***

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