

Mother's Love

There is no closer and more intimate relationship than that between mother and child.

No love is greater than a mother's love.

In this world everything comes to an end except a mother's love.

A mother's love is forever; time, distance, hardship... all fall before the strength of her love.

A mother's love is institutional, unconditional, and forever.

A mother loves her children even when they least deserve to be loved.

ALL OF THESE DESCRIPTIONS OF MOTHER'S LOVE ALSO SOUNDS LIKE GOD'S LOVE!

Does God have a feminine side? Any feelings of love, softness and warmth that the word 'Mother' elicits - God is all that and more.

Divine Dilemma

The insurmountable difficulty is that there will always be people for whom an analogy evokes the intended warm feelings of love and security quite effectively. At the same time there will be some people for whom the analogy is a disaster. Any group of humans - parents, pastors, doctors, coaches, teachers, etc. - who for some of us epitomize tenderness, loyalty, devotion, selflessness, wisdom and all things good, will at the same time be symbols of raging hurt for a few of us.

The ones for whom an analogy is a disaster are the ones who need to discover that God is the one person who can fill their gaping wound with his love, compassion and faithfulness.

Most people see Jesus as a tender and compassionate; a friend of outcasts; a defender of the downtrodden. They see him as warm, approachable, innocent. He is all that is loving and desirable. What is startling, however, is that many who rightly hold this view of Jesus see God differently.

The fact is that Jesus is just like God. **John 14:7**, "If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!" **John 5:19**, "So Jesus explained, "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does."

It takes all of the human condition to try to explain God. More than 20 times the Bible calls God a rock. There are positive and negative connotations to rocks. Choosing to call God a rock is not in any way a denial of the fact that God has many abilities beyond that of a rock, such as intelligence and emotions. Likewise, the Bible calling God Father cannot of itself be taken to deny that God has attributes beyond those of a father.

To say that God is a rock does not mean God is unfeeling. Likewise, to say that God is a father cannot of itself be taken as implying that he is lacking in motherly softness or feminine tenderness. We might think of rocks as cold and hard. Yet, a rock represents dependability, strength and safety.

"What is God's gender" is a meaningless question as, "How old is God?" To have gender implies not only sexuality but a certain incompleteness outside of union with the opposite sex. There is no incompleteness to God!

To think of God as either male or female - as humans are - is not only theologically mistaken, it is an insult to God. There is nothing lacking in God. The Almighty is perfectly whole and self-sufficient. Gender has nothing to do with the nature of God.

My aim today is to stretch your concept of God. God is so much bigger than us that the never-ending challenge is to keep bursting the confines of our own hang-ups and narrow human thinking and shallow reading of Scriptures.

Isaiah 55:9-10

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater,

Ephesians 1:16-18

do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

Jeremiah 29:13

And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

God is the Best of Both Genders

Genesis 1:27

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

Women as much as men are created in the image of God. The verse so hints that both male and female were required for God's image to be complete. This is why marriage better portrays the fullness of God than individuals.

God is neither male nor female. He has male and female characteristics. In whatever respect one gender excels, in that respect that gender better reflects the nature of God.

There is a heartwarming reason for God preferring to reveal himself as Father. In this fallen world, fathers are more likely than mothers to be cold and aloof, then people will need God as the warm, approving father they never had.

Until recent history, the English language referred to the human race as mankind.

The original language of this verse, "So God created "man" was gender neutral - human.

Feminine Aspects of God

Isaiah 66:12-13

This is what the Lord says: "I will give Jerusalem a river of peace and prosperity. The wealth of the nations will flow to her. Her children will be nursed at her breasts, carried in her arms, and held on her lap. I will comfort you there in Jerusalem **as a mother comforts her child.**"

Matthew 23:37

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God's messengers! How often **I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings**, but you wouldn't let me.

In Luke 15 Jesus delivered 3 consecutive parables: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost (prodigal) son. In the middle parable, Jesus likened *God* to a **woman**. *God's* love was compared to a woman who was deeply anxious about her lost coin, which might have been part of her dowry, having great sentimental and emotional, as well as material value. Today's equivalent would be a stone from an engagement ring.

God's love is so immense that we are forced to scan the full range of human attachment and love and compassion to find a mere shadow of *God's* feelings for us.