

sex. Jesus treats women with a great deal of equity. He counted women like Mary and Martha among His followers, which would have been scandalous in first century Palestine. Respectable teachers did not have female followers. In John 4, He speaks publicly to the Samaritan woman at the well, a move that surprises even His disciples (v. 27). Self-respecting Jewish men did not speak to women in public. Then again, Jesus is no mere man.

Whether it is racism or sexism, one sign of a manmade religion is discrimination against minority groups. The stock and trade of many religions is discrimination against women, assigning them a secondary place of worth. A woman's place is one of honor, not humiliation. If we want to honor God, we need to keep it that way.

News:

Potluck this month is scheduled for today after A.M. Services.

Fifth Sunday contribution results:

\$510.00 Bibles for Ukraine

\$70.00 work in India

\$200.00 Lawrence Knowlton

Thanks to all who gave above and beyond their weekly commitments.

A lectureship will be held at the Eloy church of Christ on April 21-24. The lectureship will feature topics from the book of Jude. Everything starts on Sunday at 10:00 A.M. Lectures begin at 7:00 P.M. on Monday-Wednesday.

Info: eloy.churchofchrist@yahoo.com

Please continue to pray for Tatyana's daughter Olga who is undergoing treatments for cancer.

Prayer List:

Healing: *Jerry Robinson's daughter Christie, Jerry Robinson's mother Norma. Mike Cavasos, Sandy Cavasos, Ben Atchley, Faye Atchley, Nicolas and Annie Self, Douglas and Jonda Gardner, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.*

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Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

21 April 2013

Sermon Topics

A.M.: The Roll of Satan

Genesis 3:1-7

P.M.: A Prophecy Against Edom & Arabia

Isaiah 21:11-17

Pulpit Evangelist

Ken Knowlton: 428-5974

Elders

Ben Atchley: 428-2246

Greg Briggs: 428-8756

John Cunningham: 428-0895

Services

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

Keeping Women in their Place

Dewayne Bryant

www.focuspress.org

A young woman screams for help as men from the community carry her out of her home. She is thrown to the ground while a mob circles around her. The girl has been found guilty of a capital crime and will be stoned to death. Members of the crowd take up baseball-sized rocks to carry out her sentence. She begs the people around her for help, some of whom are her own family members. But mercy is a commodity her pleas cannot purchase.

Her execution begins. After the first few blows hit their mark, she crawls on the ground dazed, half-heartedly trying to dodge the inescapable barrage of stones. Her hands and face are covered with blood, as are her clothes. She sobs from both the pain and the knowing that she will not live another few moments. It takes thirty minutes for her executioners to finish their grisly work.

An extreme penalty indeed. So what crime merits such carnage? Being seen in public talking with a member of the opposite sex.

Sharia law is an important part of Islamic fundamentalism. It is a body of laws that governs all aspects of life, ranging from business and politics to social issues such as marriage and divorce. While much of Sharia law is relatively benign, it does have aspects that are frightening. Punishment under Sharia law is nothing short of barbaric. Graphic videos depict its horrors. One video opens by showing the severed head of a seven-year-old girl. It proceeds to show mutilations, hangings, and executions in living color. One scene shows actual footage of a mob stoning two women. Using fist-sized rocks, the crowd slowly bludgeons them to death. Some call it justice. Most would call it murder.

Women in Middle Eastern countries live under the specter of honor killing. If a wife or daughter in the family has done something shameful, the entire family is shamed. The only way to rectify the situation is to kill the offender. While it applies to women having an unlawful relationship, it could be something as simple as converting to another religion. One of the most horrendous sentences is a woman executed for the 'crime' of being raped. In America, sexually based crimes rank among the worst punishable under federal law. The reverse is true in Islamic countries. It is the woman who bears responsibility for the crime even though she is the victim.

In a November 2006 interview on the Glen Beck program, Sharia law expert Dr. Paul Marshall of the Hudson Institute affirmed that a woman accused of adultery needed four witnesses to demonstrate her innocence but merely one witness to convict her. He also acknowledged that people are encouraged to go to mass beheadings that take place in stadiums. In many places, women are not allowed to drive an automobile or receive an education.

According to the Koran, women in Islamic countries enjoy far fewer legal rights than do men (Surah 2:228). The Hadith, a body of Islamic teaching attributed to the oral sayings of the prophet Muhammad, says that the legal testimony of a woman is untrustworthy because she is mentally deficient (Hadith 3:826). This prejudice against women even permits husbands to beat their wives. In fact, the Koran endorses it: "As to those women on whose part you fear rebellion, admonish them, refuse to share their beds, beat them" (Surah 4:34). When asked to clarify the matter, Muhammad himself said that the husband should avoid disfiguring or excessively beating his wife. If the Prophet were alive today, he would advise husbands everywhere, "By all means beat your wife, but do try to exercise a little restraint."

Even children are not safe under Sharia law. Twenty-four children have

been executed in Iran since 1990. One of them was 16 year-old Atefah Rafavi Sahaaleh. She was hanged in public for the crime of 'acts incompatible with chastity.' The only evidence presented against her was a forced confession. Her execution was particularly cruel. In Iran, a person is hanged by the suspension method, meaning that he or she is hoisted into the air and left to slowly asphyxiate. It is an execution designed to prolong the suffering of the condemned as long as possible.

The subjugation of women is a classic feature of manmade religions both ancient and modern. In Greek mythology, there were no women in the beginning. The only human beings were men. According to the Greek writer Hesiod, women could not contribute to their own upkeep and they nagged too much. The first woman created was Pandora, who was infamous for releasing a wide assortment of evils into the world from a box she was given for safekeeping. For the Greeks, the "problem of evil" had a rather simple solution: all human ills are the result of a foolish and overly inquisitive female.

The Bible's view of women is drastically different from that of other religions. It is important that the first thing God says is "not good" is that man is alone (Genesis 1:18). Unlike the misogynistic Greek culture (and others before and since), the Hebrew Bible clearly shows that woman is a dignified, essential part of creation. She is not given to man to punish him, but to complement him. The text in Genesis uses artful language to describe the formation of woman. She is not a common creation out of leftover parts like Frankenstein's monster, but a carefully sculpted masterpiece that is an integral part of God's plan.

The New Testament is in agreement with Genesis. Rather than being a piece of property, the Bible teaches husbands to "be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect" (1 Peter 3:7, NIV). The apostle Paul teaches that man and woman are equal: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28, NIV). Here Paul mentions three classes of individuals where religious discrimination can take place. While the text is often mistakenly used to claim that women can hold positions of leadership in the Church, this view misses Paul's point. In the larger context of the passage, Paul is teaching that both women and men have equal opportunity to become children of God. Women do not constitute a secondary class of believers. As far as the faithful go, they have as much access to the throne of God as do men.

One has only to contrast the opinions of women in the lives of Muhammad and Jesus. Muhammad taught that a man should not beat his wife excessively or disfigure her – hardly a comforting thought for the fairer