

# Sentimental Religion

## The Feminization of American Christianity



At the outset it must be clearly stated that “feminine” is a beautiful quality, when found in women. However, the “Feminist Movement” is an entirely different story. There is nothing feminine about the “Feminist Movement!”

“Radical Feminism is the most destructive and fanatical movement to come down to us from the sixties,” writes Judge Robert Bork. Feminists concede there are two sexes, but claim there are five genders: men, women, lesbians, gays, and bisexuals. By substituting “gender” for “sex” the feminist enterprise would remove all differences between men and women and the roles they play in society. This movement is anti-God, anti-family, anti-capitalist, and anti-intellectual.

On the cover of NOW (National Organization for Women) magazine they declared:  
*NOW is the time to take back control of our lives, NOW is the time to make reproductive freedom for wimmin of all classes, cultures, ages, and sexual orientations a reality. . . .*  
*NOW is the time to drop a boot heel in the groin of patriarchy. NOW IS THE TIME TO FIGHT BACK. NO GOD, NO MASTER, NO LAWS.*

This short paragraph illustrates the intolerance of feminism today. Intellectual analysis would reveal that radical feminism is false. This is a movement that has abandoned reason and given itself over to hysteria. That is why the boundary between the emotional and the intellectual must be obliterated, else the whole thing be revealed for the hoax it really is.

The whole feminist movement would be laughable, except for the fact that it has had a profound impact on every major facet of American life. Our feminized civilization is more concerned with “feeling” than “facts.” This leads to the point of this article: the feminization of religion.

### A Religion of Sentiment

Ours has been described as a “culture of feelings.” Simply put, people are dominated by “affections” rather than “thoughts.” So what we have is a sentimentalized culture.

Theology of intellect has given way to a theology of feeling. The conscious force of the church has given way to domestic affection. Popular religion is little more than a sentiment or affection of the heart. It consists largely in performing simple and blameless tasks--a matter of personal application and experience.

The toughness, sternness, and virility of revival preachers like George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards has all but disappeared. Now a gentle, feminine Jesus has triumphed over a stern Jehovah. Cloaking the holiness of God, and focusing on His love to the exclusion of wrath has resulted in the unsettling of the entire moral landscape.

Men are not governed by reason, but by emotion. Intellect is sacrificed for good intentions. The relational supersedes the pro-positional.

Conversion is no longer man’s acceptance of God, but man’s acceptance of himself. Countless ministers have mastered the technique of maternal influence. Emphasizing “nurture”

and “unconscious growth” has eliminated the need for a sudden, painful, and violent religious awakening. Conversion amounts to little more than an ever evolving mutual assimilation of two similar beings.

### **Religion of Influence**

God instructs the wives of unbelieving husbands, “Wives be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation (*behavior*) of the wives” (1 Pet. 3:1). In the case of wives, it is the example and unspoken influence that ministers grace to their husbands, not direct leadership.

The last century saw the minister’s role in liberal churches reduced to that of a woman. The pastor was content to “wait on” his congregation rather than “lead” it. The message was implied rather than stated. In the pulpit he sought to influence only by example, rather than persuade by arguments. His congregation consisted of those who were feeling rather than thinking. Unassertive, retiring, saccharine, weakly, passive, sickly, and homebound, these ministers were the opposite of dogmatic.

What goes around comes around. Countless ministers today are little more than “cultural custodians.” Their specialty lies in maintaining the status quo. These hirelings are not leaders. They belong to the community only because they embody the shared feelings and aspirations of the group. Operating totally by consensus, these unassertive pastors become a mere emblem of influence. Much like the man who had involved himself in a movement with gross doctrinal error, he said he was participating so he could “lend an influence” to the movement. By that he didn’t mean he was going to confront the leadership with truth. Somehow he felt his presence was going to exude an unconscious influence on the direction of the movement. HOGWASH!

The Religion of Influence has a wrong view of God. Those who espouse sentimental religion have shifted from a paternal, authoritarian God to a god that is fundamentally maternal and affective. God is no longer expressing hatred for sin in the sacrifice of His Son, but His love of man. God ceases to govern by the imposition of His will and begins to sway by the influence of example. However, wrong-headedness about God and Christ’s sacrifice are not trivial concerns!

This imaginary Christ of Influence meets men on mortal terrain by shaping himself to human needs. He offers himself only as a model, not as a governor. He courts those he favors instead of overwhelming them. Sensitized and feminized in image, the liberal Jesus is interested in tapping the unconscious. He prefers to prove his power of infiltration rather than test his capacity for onslaught. The feminized Christ is not dependent on his followers’ ability to perceive objective truth, but on their capacities for subjective impression.

### **Silly Putty Religion**

When I was growing up Silly Putty was extremely popular. You could take this elastic marvel from its egg-shaped container, press it flat on newsprint, and it would absorb whatever image it contacted. Roll it back into a ball, press it flat again on another page, and--BINGO--it would pick up the exact image you placed it on.

Another unique quality, in addition to its mirroring ability, was its amazing adaptability. You could form it into any shape, fit it into any nook or cranny, and adapt it to fit virtually any context.

Church members who have grown accustomed to soft, therapeutic religion have forgotten how rigorous religious life used to be. Fluid has displaced the solid. Weak and watery belief has replaced rock-solid conviction. Feminine has usurped masculine. A metamorphosis has taken place from an eagle to a dove.

All this is the result of left-leaning pastors who dilute their doctrine to suit the taste of their hearers. Lacking energy, direction, and proper foundation sermons have become like horoscopes – “You will want love this month, but you may not find it; trust your old friends.” These fortune-cookie-like messages are designed to fit any set of circumstances, but the corrective bite is gone. Lines of demarcation have steadily been erased. Black and white have blended into pastel shades of gray.

Since people are less willing to accept a demanding God, popular Christianity has turned to a god we can use, rather than a God we must obey. Most people claim to be religious, but most are not comfortable with those whose faith is strong enough to affect their public behavior.

In his book, *God in the Wastelands*, David Wells notes how Evangelicalism has emptied itself of serious thought, discarded theology, and won cultural acceptability. Few of the pragmatic practitioners are willing to sacrifice near-term gains for long-term benefits. Consequently, every distinctively Christian moral position has suffered steady erosion.

The consensus among Christians today is that there is no consensus. The mega-church gurus who speak at the Crystal Cathedral one week are invited to speak at conferences for “Bible believers” another week. Everything appears to be negotiable and very few question anything. If anyone does raise a question about a dubious practice, people get upset with the one who raises the issue instead of those who compromised.

It has been noted that the 19th century minister became the only professional, other than the housewife, who ceased to overtly command, much less monopolize, any special body of knowledge. Any preacher who doesn’t strive for mastery of one Book ought to quit and get an honest job!

The nature of God, sin, man, and the atonement are not issues that can be glossed over. Doctrine-free preaching will not only swell church rolls, it will also populate hell. The time has come for the trumpet to sound a “certain sound.”

### **Right-Brain Religion**

Some years back the psychological community announced the amazing discovery of left-brain, right-brain differences. Under this theory the left hemisphere of the brain contains and controls the ability to think, reason, analyze, and make logical deductions. The right hemisphere of the brain, on the other hand, holds the capacity for emotion and feeling. The astute researchers remarked how that men tended toward left brain-dominance and women to right-brain dominance.

This research was distorted to advance the radical left-wing agenda. Then came the push to reverse the natural and normal differences between men and women. The liberals wanted “women in combat” and desired that men get in touch with their feminine side. The left-brain, right-brain paradigm gave the neutering of America a strong push, and the rest is history.

Feminine religion is fiercely anti-intellectual, and that out of necessity. That which is masculine smacks of domination, decisiveness, and demarcation. Feminine is characterized by absorption, affection, and assimilation. The devotional had to overtake the doctrinal. The demise of theology was inevitable because right-brain religion cannot undergo the scrutiny of serious examination and analysis. The demise of theology was imperative. Emotion triumphed over the intellect.

In her book, *The Feminization of American Culture*, Ann Douglas notes how dogma gave way to fiction. The liberal ministers of the 19th century had jettisoned truth. In their sermons people were not encouraged to observe or act, but feel. The men left their churches and church membership consisted largely of women.

Liberal ministers romanticized their sermons to appeal to their female congregations. Feminine fiction became a substitute for religious faith. Douglas comments, "A novel pervades without argument, without labor: it suggests a credo of leisure." Orville Dewey in 1830 articulated his conviction, "Novel reading is the pursuit of idle ladies and men who are fast becoming 'effeminate' as a result." Concerning fiction William Peabody stated, "It is to the mind like drinking is to the body: it intoxicates and destroys the power of the mind for any strong and useful exercise." I guess Mr. Peabody didn't think it was good for men to get in touch with their feminine side!

Today we have the stealth approach to reach people. The idea is to subliminally disguise the gospel. In other words, sneak the message in between the jokes and songs so no one knows what they hear or when they hear it. The appeal is not to the mind, but to the heart.

Sentimental religion over-emphasizes camaraderie, connection, and involvement. It conveys its instinct for inclusion, rather than separation. This is critical to the New Church world view. All standards must be collapsed if this new-found sense of one global Church is to be maintained.

Tocqueville writes, "One of the most ordinary weaknesses of human intellect is to seek to reconcile contrary principles and to purchase peace at the expense of logic." This is the only explanation for the Evangelical/Catholic/Charismatic axis. You have to leave your brain (*at least leave the left-side!*) at the door to enter into the spirit of ecumania.

"Denominational Reconciliation" is a prime example of right-brain religion. It is both irrational and anti-Scriptural to seek unity apart from Truth. Newspapers around the world reported,

ASSISI, Italy--Carrying olive branches and offering prayers, Pope John Paul II and the representatives of the world's religions, including a Crow Indian medicine man from Montana and an African animist witch doctor, pledged Monday to work for peace. As 60 religious leaders joined the Pope in this picturesque medieval hill town where St. Francis preached 700 years ago, governments and rebels throughout the world put down their arms briefly in response to a papal call for a cease-fire and a day of prayer.

Other religious leaders were present including the Dalai Lama (the exiled Buddhist, god-king of Tibet), fire worshippers, snake worshippers, Hindus, Muslims, and spiritists. Apparently, the pope thrills that prayers to Allah, the moon god, and other pagan deities are just as effective in this moral battle as prayer to the God of the Bible. This is but

another example of the Pope leading the greatest ecumenical movement in all history to unite all religions under Rome's leadership. And they want us to accept Roman Catholicism as a legitimate expression of evangelicalism!?!?!? It's impossible to reconcile truth and error, right and wrong, light and darkness.

Ours is a feminized culture. Religion has followed suit and become feminized. But God commands, yes commands, that men love the Lord their God with all their hearts, soul, strength, and *minds* (left-brain included!) (Matt. 22:37).

The disconnect between the intellectual and emotional must go. If someone doesn't rock the boat soon, before long there will be no boat left to rock!

*He that hath ears to hear, let him hear!*

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