

My response to 'A Day Without a Woman'

According to this morning's *Washington Post*, some women will refuse to smile today. Some schools will be closed in Washington, D.C., and Alexandria, Virginia. Some restaurants are shrinking their menus as women go on strike. Rallies will be held around the country.

Today has been designated "A Day Without a Woman." Organizers are encouraging women to take the day off work, shop exclusively at "small, women- and minority-owned businesses," and wear red "in solidarity." The emphasis is timed to coincide with International Women's Day.

The day is meant to recognize "the enormous value that women of all backgrounds add to our socioeconomic system—while receiving lower wages and experiencing greater inequities, vulnerability to discrimination, sexual harassment and job insecurity." It is organized by the same people who created the Women's March on Washington last January in support of abortion and other women's "rights."

Although I disagree with the organizers on a host of moral issues, I agree with them that the value of women in our culture cannot be overstated.

If women stopped working, 53 percent of the American workforce would disappear. More than three-quarters of our public school teachers would not be in the classroom. Eighty-five percent of our nation's obstetricians, 75 percent of our pediatricians, 57 percent of our psychiatrists and 58 percent of our family doctors would no longer see patients. Thirty-six million volunteers would no longer volunteer.

Despite their value to our nation, women comprise only 4.6 percent of S&P 500 CEO positions. They hold only 16.9 percent

of Fortune 500 board seats. Only 34.3 percent of all physicians and surgeons are women; only 15.9 percent are medical school deans. Women of color hold only 3.2 percent of Fortune 500 company board seats.

All this despite a Harvard Business School report that organizations with women in leadership generate greater profits. We have come a long way in recognizing the contributions of women, but we have much further to go.

If you're wondering whether the Bible endorses the value of women, look no further than its first chapter. Genesis 1:27 contains this well-known revelation: "God created man in his own image; in the image of God He created him." But here's the lesser-known way the verse ends: "male and female He created them." Women are created in God's image just as fully as men. They are just as valuable to their Father. They are just as significant to his Kingdom.

Jesus proved that it is so. In Luke 8, our Lord was preaching with the support of "some women," including Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, "and many others, who supported Him with their possessions" (v. 3). Mary Magdalene was the first person to meet the risen Christ and the first to announce his resurrection to the world (John 20:11-18).

Deborah was a female prophet, Israel's fourth judge, and one of her country's greatest military leaders (Judges 4-5). Esther saved her people from annihilation. Lydia was the first Christian convert in Europe (Acts 16). Philip had four daughters "who prophesied" (Acts 21:9). Priscilla led a ministry with her husband Aquila (Rom. 16:3-5). Paul was emphatic: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, and there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28).

Does our culture value women as much as God does? Do you?
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