

MAMA BEAR  R

*Apologetics*

As Christians, we are thankful for a God who gave women-honoring mandates that broke with the traditions of culture.

We are thankful for feminism. Early feminists paved the way for the equality that women enjoy today.



But today, when a woman calls herself a feminist, it is not always clear what she means. The definition of feminism has changed a lot since its inception.





I hope by the end of today, you will recognize not only the more redeeming aspects of the feminism of ages past, but also learn how to advocate for a healthier feminism in times to come.



# A Brief History of Feminism

- First-Wave Feminism (early 1900s-1960s)
  - Egalitarian feminists
    - Argued for women's rights apart from their gender and fought for a women's right to operate in the same roles as men
  - Maternal feminists
    - Argued for women's rights and equality within their unique roles as mothers and caregivers



# A Brief History of Feminism

- Second-Wave Feminism (1960s-1980s)
  - Expanded the idea of women's rights by arguing for so-called "reproductive rights" and reducing workplace inequalities
  - Consistently downplayed the unique role of women in society and instead focused on the message of self-determination and autonomy
  - "My body, my choice"
  - "The patriarchy" became public enemy #1

# THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE

BETTY FRIEDAN

*"I found *The Feminine Mystique* absolutely interesting, pertinent, relevant to my own problems and those of every woman I know, and far and away more real, truer and more moving than *Madame de Beauvoir's The Second Sex*. Betty Friedan has both grasp and gumption—and has put her finger on the inner wound we all carry around. Not to name the suffering is relatively easy. What Mrs. Friedan has done is to show both cause and cure. The book should be read by every anxious woman in the country, and all of us are troubled about ourselves and what we're doing. She has done a great service in underlining the fact that before we are women, we are human beings."*

—Virginia Peterson

“Have not women who live in the image of the feminine mystique trapped themselves within the narrow walls of their homes? They have learned to “adjust” to their biological role. They have become dependent, passive, childlike; they have given up their adult frame of reference to live at the lower human level of food and things. The work they do does not require adult capabilities; It is endless, monotonous, unrewarding...they are suffering a slow death of mind and spirit.”

# THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE

BETTY FRIEDAN

*"I found *The Feminine Mystique* absolutely interesting, pertinent, relevant to my own problems and those of every woman I know, and far and away more real, truer and more moving than *Madame de Beauvoir's The Second Sex*. Betty Friedan has both grasp and gumption—and has put her finger on the inner wound we all carry around. Not to name the suffering is relatively easy. What Mrs. Friedan has done is to show both cause and cure. The book should be read by every anxious woman in the country, and all of us are troubled about ourselves and what we're doing. She has done a great service in underlining the fact that before we are women, we are human beings."*

—Virginia Peterson

“Just as with the prisoners in the concentration camps, there are American women who have resisted that death, who have managed to retain a core of self, who have not lost touch with the outside world, who use their abilities to some creative purpose. They are women of spirit and intelligence who have refused to ‘adjust’ as housewives.”



# A Brief History of Feminism

- Third-Wave Feminism (1980s-present)
  - All out war
  - They believe only a complete transformation of society from the ground up will free women from their chains.
  - They believe that men – whether they realize it or not – are still part of a system of oppression that holds women down.
  - Once you're taught to look for misogyny, you'll find it everywhere.

# Recognize the Message

Girl power!

Stop the war on women!

Men are superfluous.

Anything men can do, women can  
do better.

# Offer Discernment

- We cannot exercise discernment on this issue without first acknowledging that women have been mistreated in the past, are mistreated today, and most likely will be mistreated in the future.
  - A victim who is desperate to be heard will overlook the flaws of a movement that is willing to listen and be angry on her behalf.
- We can be thankful for feminism's advocacy and protection of women in terms of economic opportunity.
- The idea of "patriarchy" has been stolen.
  - The patriarchal structure was intended to be protective, not oppressive.



# Offer Discernment

Lie

Our seemingly democratic society is really about men controlling women.

Lie

Biology is unfair.

Lie

The traditionally masculine domain is more important.

Lie

The right to complete autonomy trumps even the right to life.

Lie

Feminism freed women.

Lie

Anger is power.

# Argue for a Healthier Approach

Recognize that there is no one-size-fits-all version of feminism.

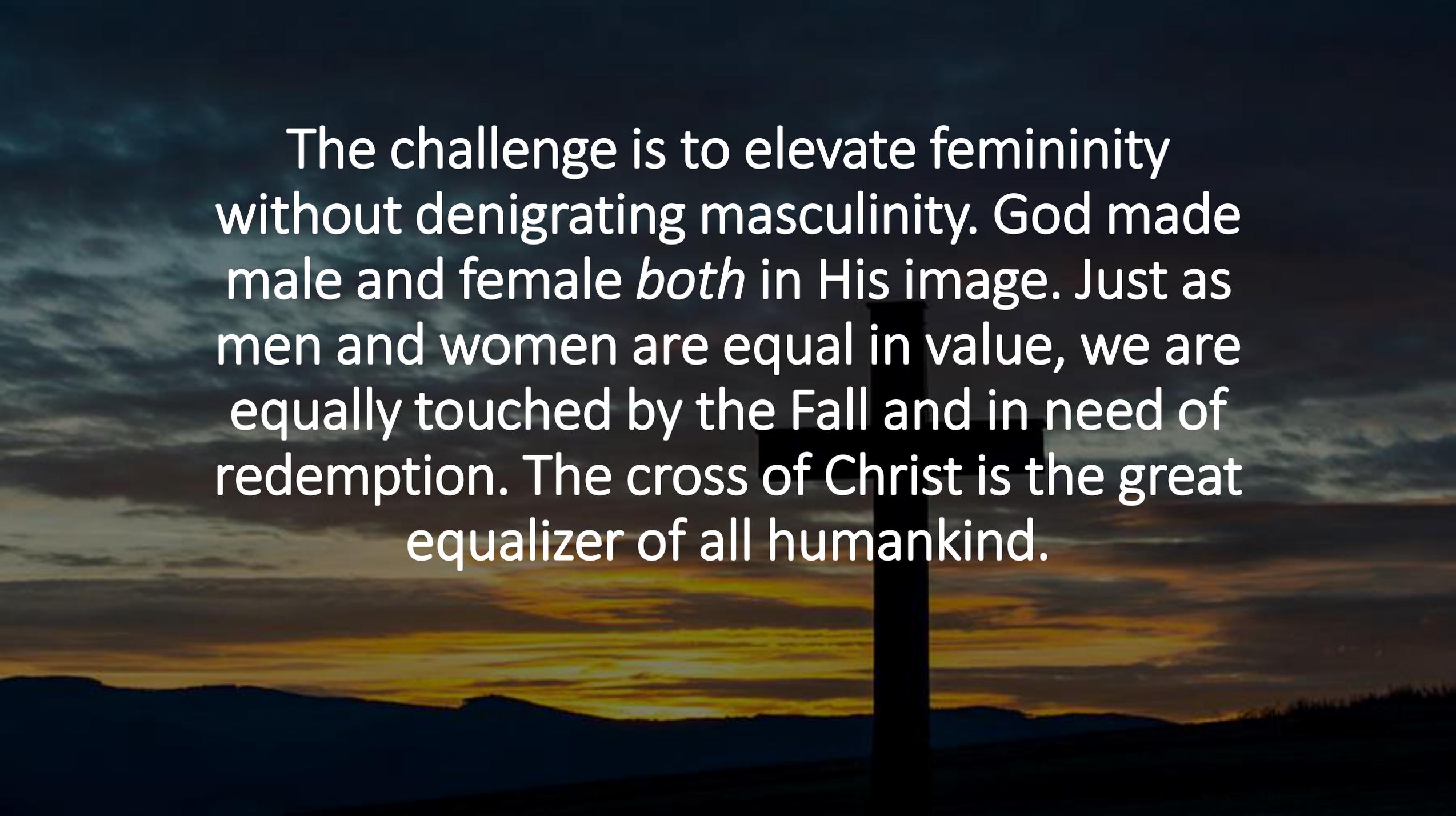
Have compassion on angry feminists.

Male and female He created them.

# Reinforce Through Discussion, Discipleship, and Prayer

- Discuss God-given gender differences.
- Properly define “weaker vessel.”
- Teach healthy gender perspective.
- Healthy gender relationships begin in the home.





The challenge is to elevate femininity without denigrating masculinity. God made male and female *both* in His image. Just as men and women are equal in value, we are equally touched by the Fall and in need of redemption. The cross of Christ is the great equalizer of all humankind.