

The Fully Alive Woman

Mother's Day, May 11, 2025

What does it mean to be fully alive female for the glory of God?

DAY 1: The fully alive woman, reflecting the relational beauty of the Triune God

*Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "**Let us** make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; **male and female** he created them.*

1. "Let us..."

2. The first hint of God as a community of persons occurs when He creates people. He reveals Himself as a relational divine being creating human beings to be like Him. How? In His relationality. The relational divine being creates relational human beings. We are to resemble Him, to reflect His image...

3. At the core of who we are, we are gendered. Our soul's center is alive with either masculinity or femininity.

4. Our uniquely gendered style of relating is clearly visible in our interactions when it reflects something wonderful about the relational nature of our God.

"When we know God well enough to value nothing greater than our opportunity to enjoy Him and reveal Him to others by the way we relate, we will then become more and more alive as masculine men and feminine women." -Larry Crabb

5. We exist to tell God's story. God does not exist to tell ours. We're to become fully alive for God's sake, to glorify Him by enjoying Him and revealing Him to others.

6. What does it mean that we bear God's image?

- We bear the image of a relational God, the Trinity.
- To be truly formed like Jesus means to relate like Jesus.
- *Spiritual* formation is (includes) *relational* formation.

7. What would it mean to be fully alive as an image-bearing female in whatever relationships my life provides, and in whatever opportunities to advance God's kingdom come my way that I am called and gifted to seize?

DAY 2: Feminine beauty

*1 Peter 3:3-5 Don't be concerned about the outward beauty of fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes. You should clothe yourselves instead with the **beauty** that comes **from within**, the **unfading beauty** of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God. This is how the holy women of old made themselves beautiful.*

1. Peter identifies two kinds of feminine beauty:
 - a. What does he say is true of outward beauty?

 - b. What does he say is true about inward beauty?

Genesis 1:26-27 (NLT) Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us" So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. -

2. A woman is most fully alive as feminine when she relates to others in a way that reveals something wonderful about God, something wonderful about how He relates.

3. She is especially designed to reveal something wonderful about the character of God, felt in how she relates.

4. Here is one example, revealing something wonderful about invitational nature of Jesus Christ.

Matt. 11:28 Come to me all of you who labor and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

- There is something beautiful about God that Jesus perfectly revealed!
- Jesus' invitational power--what femininity offers people
- What is "rest?" Helping people "rest" in your presence

5. A woman is feminine when she **relates** in a way that **invites** others to see something about **God** that is deeply attractive, something about the relational nature of God that she was created to enjoy and reveal.

6. Is there a woman you know who relates like this, where you feel drawn to her, and your heart and mind can not only rest in her presence but find rest, be replenished?

DAY 3: Relational femininity

*Genesis 1:26-27 NLT Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us" So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God, he created them; male ("zakar") and **female** ("neqebah") he created them.*

"Neqebah"

1. The Hebrew word "neqebah" means punctured or bored through. When Old Testament worshippers came to the tabernacle, they placed their offerings into a wooden box with a "nequbah," a hole in the top to allow the tithes and offerings of the people to be collected.

2. The word is used for something that has been opened and can now be entered.

3. Metaphorically, relationally, what is God saying about a woman?

A woman is open, not closed, to relationally receive people....
She warmly and enjoyably embraces those whom she receives.
She invites movement toward her and receives relational movement.

4. What does the opposite of femininity look like?

*Genesis 3:16 To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your **desire** shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."*

5. "Desire" = The Hebrew word means the "desire to control."

6. What is the opposite of femininity? Eager to control the relationship. She easily closes herself off and is hesitant to receive relational initiative.

6. A woman who is not fully alive is driven by fear and is somewhat guarded and somewhat closed to relationship.

7. Every daughter of Eve is designed with the capacity both to invite life-giving relationships and nourish life-giving relationship.

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 4: Submission and mutual submission

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image (tselem), after our likeness (demut)-Genesis 1:26

1. The Trinitarian model: "Each person of the Trinity **gives** to the other two and **receives** from the other two, **always moving toward** the others to give and **always remaining open** to receive. That is how God relates to us, always moving toward us to give us everything we need and always open to receive from us everything it brings us joy to give." – Larry Crabb

*Ephesians 5:21 ...**submitting to one another** out of reverence for Christ. ²² **Wives, submit** to your own husbands, *as to the Lord.**

2. One of the most misunderstood concepts in the bible is submission. What is "submission?"

a. Both husband and wife are to submit to one another!

b. There is a particular kind of submission that a wife is to exhibit.

c. Marriage is the challenge of two people becoming one over a long period of time. At the beginning, two people are jockeying for position, their way, and their needs *first*. Women are designed with relational and emotional “antennae,” vision, understanding, sensibility, and language that even the most “sensitive” men just don’t have.

d. Submitting to a husband first involves learning how to navigate the relationship forward with a man. She has the God-given antennae to see what she has and doesn’t have relationally and slowly navigates the relationship forward, toward life-giving.

3. This concept is underscored in Genesis 2:20.

*Genesis 2:20 The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a **helper (Ezer) fit (Kenegdo)** for him.*

"Ezer" = "helper"

a. This word is most used of God! "Ezer" is never used as someone subordinate to someone else. The Greek word is "boethos" which means "help provided by someone strong."

b. Our gender is meant to reveal something about God. What does "ezer" reveal about God? "A strong ability to imitate God's invitational nature, even to critical and rejecting men."

"Kenegdo" = "fit" or "suitable"

c. This word means someone who corresponds to another, someone uniquely designed to come alongside another as a companion--neither behind as a follower nor beneath as an inferior.

"The challenge of the Christian life is to act toward others in ways that are similar to the way that God has acted toward us." - Charles Ringma

4. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 5: More inner beauty

1 Peter 3:4 Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. ⁴ Rather, it should be that of your **inner** self, the **unfading** beauty of a **gentle** and **quiet** spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

"Gentle" spirit = "praus," was used to describe a once-wild horse that had been tamed, and came to mean, "strength under control." What does that look like?

1. A woman with a gentle spirit:

- Relies on her inner strength to determine her actions, not her emotions that are triggered by how others treat her.
- Knows her husband has no power to destroy her beautiful soul, her feminine center.
- Does not live in fear of her husband. Fear no longer requires her to protect her soul.
- Is free to honor a higher good, to respect her husband as a fellow image-bearer, and to invite him by her gentle attitude to be the man he was created to be.

"Quiet" **spirit** = means calm in a crisis

2. A woman with a quiet spirit:

- Has no controlling urge to "get even" with someone.
- Has a ruling passion to **invite the best from** others by **offering her best to** others.
- She trusts that God is her real Lord and is working redemptively in her life.
- She is learning to have peace even in a crisis. That peace is life-giving to her and is meant to be radiated to those around her.

3. Look back over these devotionals.

a. What is one thing that stands out to you?

b. Is there something you want to remember?

c. Is there something you want to do?

d. Is there something you want God to do in you and through you?