

### **Reflection - Justice Love Mercy**

There is a core difference between men and women; and children, better than grown-ups, instinctively know what it is. As adults, we need to also clearly discern that difference and define it. I will try to do that here.

Suppose there is a boy in school who is being bullied. The boy who is the victim doesn't bring home the news to Mom, but to Dad, because he knows Dad will cut to the chase in working out a solution. To the contrary, when the bully discerns he is in trouble, he goes to his Mom, for he knows she will cushion and sugarcoat the bad news for Dad. Both children were cognizant of the core character traits of justice and mercy in Dad and Mom, respectively, and used it to their advantage.

Justice is firm, and men represent God's justice. Mercy is tender, and women exemplify God's mercy. Though there is justice and mercy in both men and women, it is men who lean towards justice and women who lean towards mercy.

Justice is the defender of the home. Men are taller and stronger because justice requires them to be the protectors of the family, shielding it and saving it from harm. Thus God accordingly equipped men physically for the task at hand. As children, the boys wrestle and play rough games. It is as if they were practicing for the time when their full attribute of justice would take over and they must assume their position as defenders of their family.

Mercy is the nurturer. Women's heart seems to be big in goodness, because such a heart is needed for mercy to heal the family when it's hurting. As children, the girls play nurturing games, as if practicing for the time when their full attribute of mercy will take over and they will care for, nurture, and heal their loved ones.

When we observe the demonstrations of justice and mercy from men and women, respectively, we notice how all around us there is ample evidence of it. Justice is hard and mercy is soft. The man builds the table, a solid structure; the woman softens it by placing a cloth over it and adding a bouquet of flowers or a bowl with fruits. The man builds the chair; she adds cushions and an afghan in case you're cold. He builds a bed; she adds pillows and a comforter. He builds a house, the stronghold for protection; she adds curtains and throw rugs and turns it into a home. And so it goes, even intimately, because men and women are the product of a perfectly thought-out plan that only a wise, caring, loving Creator could have devised. It is a perfect, beautiful plan.

In the home, both justice and mercy are needed in equal amounts. And an equal amount of love is needed to bind both together and represent God, Who is love, justice and mercy. In the courtyard of the Sanctuary built by Moses, the altar of the sacrifice had a grate where the offering was laid to be burnt. It was there that the demands of justice were met. The altar was three cubits high and the grate was halfway up the altar, that is, 1.5 cubits off the ground. (See, Exodus 38:1,4; 27:4-5) Inside, in the Holy Place, was the table of shewbread. A table is representative of a place where people sit around to eat and laugh and share in harmony with each other. It is a place where love abounds. The table of shewbread was 1.5 cubits high. (*Ibid.* 25:23) Finally, in the second compartment, that is, the Most Holy Place, the Mercy Seat

came into focus. It was in that compartment where the priest ministered once a year on the day of atonement, and the sins of Israel were blotted out. The Mercy Seat rested atop the ark of the covenant which was 1.5 cubits high. (*Ibid.* 25:10, 21)

Indeed the furnishings that represented justice, love, and mercy, were designed to each bear the measurement of 1.5 cubits, for God's justice is not more than His love and His mercy. His mercy is not greater than His justice and His love. Nor is His love greater than His justice and His mercy. They each are equal. Such should be the love, justice and mercy which are present in the Christian home, so that the perception of justice and mercy is always perfectly balanced by an equal measure of love.

Woman was created not as a helper or subordinate. She was created as a *helpmeet* for the man, his significant other. Example: to carry a sofa, a man lifts up one end and needs a volunteer to lift it at the other end. The volunteer cannot be a helper. What if a 6-year old boy, or someone who broke a leg, volunteers to help him? That will not work. The volunteer must be a help meet for the task: a helpmate. An equal! The weight of a home is to stand upon the shoulders of justice and mercy—two equal columns of support. And love is what binds them. Accordingly, God provided to man a helpmeet for the task, thus facilitating with the presence of both a man and a woman, all the blessings He intended to bestow upon the family unit.

Unfortunately, many a man is like this: He misinterprets his yearning to fight, and his divine calling to guarantee justice for his home, and instead becomes the tyrant and abuser of his own family. Rather than being on the alert like a standing sentinel, so that his family may enjoy the freedom to be happy, he tears-up the spirit of those he is supposed to love and protect. He does not draw his wife and children unto himself with strings of love, but instead demands their loyalty without paying the price of loving them with eternal love. He feels entitled to their service and blind obedience, without realizing that our Example, Christ, never claimed anyone's love by force. He calls himself the head of the home, but forgets THE MIND IS OF CHRIST. Misguided justice is perverted justice, and is injustice.

Unfortunately, many a woman is like this: She misinterprets her need to care, nurture and heal, as well as her divine calling to uphold mercy in the home, and instead uses her tender attributes to forgive the oppressive, abusive behavior and cruel, raged-filled words of her tyrannical husband, whether directed at her or their children. Whatever pain, whether verbal or physical, he uses to debase and demoralize them with, she mercifully continues to forgive again and again. Misguided mercy is perverted mercy, and perpetuates injustice.

Some men complain that women cry, and too much. But of course, it is mercy that tugs at the heart. If the film is sentimental or tender, it's a girl movie. If there's lots of fighting or killing, it's a guy movie. Rough sports? Guys. Synchronized swimming? Girls. That's just how it is. One elementary school registrar, after years of dealing with parents of children who got into trouble, and after finding that it was easier for her to deal with a problematic kid than with Mom and Dad, summed-up her experience about what she observed from those particular parents: The mothers would not reprimand their child and instead blamed the school, while

*From the Desk of Teresita Pérez*

*February 2013*

*Archived at [www.women1844.com](http://www.women1844.com)*

the fathers were ready to lash their anger on the child in what seemed like an overkill. Both extremes corrupted love for the child.

When will justice and mercy be balanced by love? Justice and mercy may be worlds apart, but love is the magnetic bond that attracts and binds them in harmony. The presence of the Divine is needed in the hearts of Mom and Dad to heal the home and bring on the blessings God intended for the family unit.