

GET THE GIRL

**HOW TO BE THE KIND OF MAN
THE KIND OF WOMAN YOU WANT TO MARRY
WOULD WANT TO MARRY**

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Douglas Wilson, *Get the Right Girl: Be the Kind of Man the Kind of Woman You Want to Marry Would Want to Marry*
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Dedication:

To all my real nephews—Davis, Dane, Graham,
Gunn, Masis, Scott, and Luke—who all got mar-
ried without this book being in print yet.

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FOREWORD

Life between the sexes has always been good for generating pastoral challenges, but we live in a generation that has figured out how to multiply, compound, and complicate such challenges.

A number of New Testament epistles devote some significant column inches to instructing husbands and wives on how to get along. Because of the differences between men and women, and because of the disposition to selfishness that was introduced to all of us by the Fall, you would think that this would be enough to keep us busy.

And so it was, but then we introduced a host of other complications—including, but not limited to, an inability to define *man* or *woman*, the widespread availability of contraception, the widespread

availability of pornography, the entrance of women en masse into the work force, the cultural shifts that resulted when the average age for marriage was delayed by many years, the widespread acceptance of feminist assumptions, and so on.

Although Christians are not enthusiastic participants in many of these shifts, they are nonetheless still *affected* by them.

In the old days, back before all this, the standards were at least clear. The difficulty was that because of our sinful fallenness, we had trouble meeting the standards that both we and our surrounding culture acknowledged. But because of our theological laziness and indolence, we have now allowed the rot of sin to get into the standards themselves. It used to be that everyone recognized that it was a rotten move to impregnate a woman and then leave her. But now? She should have been on the pill. What do you expect? A *generous* move would be for the father to offer to pay for half the cost of the abortion. And so on.

Christians are dismayed by this kind of thing, particularly when it gets to issues like abortion or same sex immorality. But even though Christians are dismayed by it, as stated earlier, they are still affected by these shifts. When non-Christians marry later and later, it turns out that Christians are following the same demographic shifts—either because they are copying the non-Christians or, as

ONE

LIFE IN GIRL WORLD

Dear Dawson,

Thanks for contacting me. I actually wasn't that surprised to hear from you, but I was perhaps a little surprised at how much detail you were able to provide. You have clearly done your homework, and I am glad you are working through these issues. You are clearly taking things seriously.

Dealing with the breakup of a long term relationship is always hard, and this is particularly the case when you didn't see it coming. You were shopping for a ring I gather, and she was apparently thinking that she could probably do better. That

kind of thing is a punch in the gut, and there is no way around it.

Your questions are very good ones, and it is going to take me more than one letter to work through them. But I trust that you can put up with hearing from me from time to time—you have always been a most dutiful nephew.

So I want to work through this systematically. Think of this as a series of letters from an old guy on life between the sexes. Some of what I say will seem like it is straight out of the Bible, some of it will seem like it is commonsense obvious, and some of it will seem to you to be wildly inappropriate and possibly illegal.

Judging from some of the books and websites you mentioned, I think it would be good to begin there. Your initial attraction to them was understandable, certainly, but there is real bitterness there, and there are profound spiritual hazards in that kind of bitterness. And the “manosphere” online is filled with a certain kind of red-pilled bitterness which, when it is coupled with evolutionary and materialistic assumptions, produces an odd mix of appalling selfishness and cynicism (and reductionism with regard to sex) coupled with common grace insights that you would never hear from an evangelical beta-preacher. So as you read such stuff you need to take that phrase *caveat emptor*, soak it in lighter fluid, and set it on fire.

TWO

EVOLUTION AND SEXUAL SELFISHNESS

Dear Dawson,

Thanks for your quick reply. I gather this entire subject has your interest.

So I want to start by picking up on one of the central ramifications of something I mentioned to you in my first letter. It is really important that you banish every form of evolutionary thought from your calculations. The sexual differences between men and women are created, and they were then bent by the fall. They are not the result of evolutionary “strategies,” with women developing their own

set of them, and men developing theirs. The relationship between the sexes is not the result of blind groping at the cellular level, but rather purposive and intentional, a gift from God.

In the former, we have a haphazard arrangement that men and women have to negotiate with their own peculiar sexual goals in mind. In the latter we have an intricate organism, meticulously designed by God, one which is accompanied by a user's manual. And there is a vast difference between life in that first world and life in the second. More about that in a minute.

God created man in His own image, male and female. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:27, ESV). And in the verse immediately prior to this, He established the cultural mandate for all of humanity, expecting them to exercise dominion over the earth and all of its creatures.

I know you are familiar with the whole concept of intelligent design when it comes to certain mechanisms like the falcon's eye, or an eagle's feather, or how the liver functions, or a monkey's tail, or any number of other "irreducibly complex" interactions. The complexity of all these things is beyond staggering, and yet the relationship of a man and a woman puts all of them in the shade: "There be three things which are too wonderful for me, Yea, four which I know not: The way of an eagle in the air; The way of a serpent upon a rock; The way of a

THREE

CALVINISM AND GIRLS

Dear Dawson,

So this letter is going to be a discussion that combines your two favorite subjects—Calvinism and girls. Let me start by saying something you might think is problematic, and then see what I can do to work my way out of it.

If I were speaking to a group of young men, and I used the metaphor of a “sexual marketplace,” the chances are pretty good that I would have a bunch of young men tracking along with me, and probably taking notes. “Man, I didn’t know half this stuff!” If I were fool enough to do the same thing with a group of young women, the chances are outstanding that

the indignation levels would rival a roomful of wet cats. Men are far more transactional on the subject, and women are far more relational.

To illustrate, suppose a young man moved into the area and joined your church, and he was of a marriageable age, and he proceeded to ask three girls out in the first month. The first two said, “No, thanks,” the third went out with him once, and then said, “No, thanks.” Word of his activities gets around. Suppose further that he asked a fourth girl out in the second month he was there, and they were engaged by the end of that month. The chances are pretty good that this young man will be tagged as someone simply on the hunt for “any willing female,” and the levels of indignation, again, will be high. More on this in a minute.

(Now to clarify, men are far more transactional when it comes to sexual attractiveness. When it comes to long-term life together, their positions usually reverse. In that realm, women are far more practical and pragmatic, and the men are the romantics. But I will perhaps pursue that in another letter.)

In our generation, men generally have to hide how transactional they are with regard to looks, and this is because the feminine paradigm has become the orthodoxy for all. This is the result of the “victories” of feminism. Feminism has not altered the fact that men still rule, and still basically make the decisions. That is largely unaltered, and has even been expanding. After all, men are even taking

FOUR

NICE GUYS AND JERKS

Dear Dawson,

I think I have laid enough groundwork now. Let's go back and do some post-game analysis of your breakup with Jan. Now keep in mind that some of this might sting a little bit, but that is a whole lot better than the long-term chronic misery that results from not facing up to these sorts of things.

The point, of course, is not to rub your nose in the mistakes you made, but rather to head off and prevent similar mistakes in the formation of any new relationship. The first thing to recognize is the fact that you didn't see the breakup coming means

that you probably still don't understand the causes of it. You were thinking of your position in the relationship as being stronger than it actually was (Rom. 12:3), and this means that you were looking at the wrong markers, the wrong indicators.

Some of what I am about to say Nancy and I both observed the few times we met with you guys, and some of it I am deducing from certain descriptions and phrases in your letters. That said, I think I am pretty confident about what happened. So here we go.

In your relationship, you were the quintessential nice guy and would turn yourself inside out to do whatever she wanted. And that is how you drove her off. Not only would you do whatever she wanted, it was starting to look as though you were willing to be whatever she wanted.

But a woman wants what she wants from two different places, two different realities—and both of those realities are formidable. First, she has certain desires that are built-in, part of her framework as a woman. She is created by God to respond to and follow her head, her husband. She is called by God to respect her husband, and she has a deep creational need to be with someone who is easy to look up to, easy to respect.

But a woman is also part of a fallen human race, and she also wants certain things the way all of us do. She, like everyone else, wants her own way. She has selfish desires, selfish moments, and

FIVE

A MATTER OF RANK

Dear Dawson,

We are getting close to the current center of all the turmoil between the sexes. Now I use that word current advisedly. There has always been turmoil between the sexes, and the nature of that turmoil is handed down across generations in proverbs, customs, and lore. But something unusual has happened in our generation.

Up until very recently, men and women both understood the natural order of things. The man was the head of the home, and there you go. This was often violated in practice, in many different ways and for many different reasons, but everyone

more or less acknowledged the way things ought to go. When it was practiced, it was honored, and when it was not practiced, it was denied, hidden, or named something else. This is because everyone subscribed to the natural order. Everyone paid it lip service, in other words.

It has been left for our time to abandon this standard as a standard at all. Not only is it not the standard anymore, it has now become a hate crime to profess that you even think it should be the standard.

The desire that a woman has to usurp the rule of her husband is a desire that goes back to the third chapter of Genesis. This is the source of the running tension between the sexes. Finding and marrying a godly woman is going to mitigate this tension for you, but it will not erase it: “Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy *desire* shall be to thy husband, and he shall *rule* over thee” (Gen. 3:16, emphasis added).

Until this mortal life is over, this curse of multiplied sorrow is something that women have to deal with, including saintly women. Childbirth involves travail, and this travail is shared by believing and unbelieving women both. So why should the problems go away simply because we got to the next clause?

The Lord tells the woman two things. First, He says that her desire will be “to thy husband.” Secondly, He says that the husband will rule over her. We know that this is a desire to usurp the

SIX

THE NATURAL USE OF THE WOMAN

Dear Dawson,

Up to this point, I have perhaps said a number of unusual things, and in our day controversial things, but we are still just assembling pieces on the workbench. We are now approaching the point where we will begin the assembly. I am talking about constructing a biblical view of how a man and woman ought to enter into the marriage covenant. Once you have this clear in your mind, you will then be in a position to seek out a woman who has it clear in *her* mind. Or, failing that, if it is not clear in her

mind because of the prevailing fog we all live in, you seek out a woman who is absolutely submissive to the Scriptures and is willing to learn what the Scriptures require of Christian women.

I am going to be using two analogies. The first will be the one I have already alluded to, that of assembling a complicated piece of machinery on a workbench. The second will have to do with novels—one written by a man for men, and the other written by a woman for women.

Let us start with the assembly metaphor. You no doubt have had the experience of putting something together, in a way that made sense to you, and then having the disconcerting experience of finding a piece left over. The unique shape of the piece declared to you the fact that you clearly left something out. It was nothing so simple as an extra screw, or an Allen wrench that was just there for the assembly. The piece was clearly meant to go inside the thing you just assembled, and now you know that your gizmo, whatever it is, does not have that piece, and it was probably an essential piece. And so you know that piece was intended to play a role. And its configuration clearly means that it will be useless unless it goes into its assigned spot.

Now suppose that you lived in a time when egalitarianism had almost reached its apotheosis. “Equality for all” was within reach, and that supreme moment was just around the corner. As a consequence, your workbench was surrounded by

SEVEN

LACK OF COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Dear Dawson,

I am glad you have met a girl, at church no less, and it is good to hear that you have decided to ask her out. I have no doubt that I will have to explain this one a bit more, but if you ask her out, and if she says yes, always remember that lack of communication is key.

Let's say you go out to dinner, and discover along the way that you two can talk easily, naturally. You are a warm-hearted and expressive guy. What could go wrong? The temptation you will face is that of

someone who has been nurtured on the propaganda of this present darkness, and that temptation will be to share, as opposed to making conversation.

If you don't watch your step, you are going to share, and she is going to share, and then you both share a little more, and then it gets tangled up a little bit, and first thing you know, the two of you are besties. A little bit later you are going to be trying desperately to figure out how you became her girlfriend. You don't want to be her girlfriend. But congratulations, you are now stuck in the friend zone, and she won't let you out of the friend zone because she is an evangelical Christian, and lesbianism holds no attractions for her.

So what is the difference between sharing and making conversation? If you sit down with her, and you start telling her all about your hopes, dreams, and aspirations, along with the fact that your long term goal is to be a screenwriter, you are sharing. You are unloading the truck. You have ramped the intimacy levels of your conversation way up to eleven. You are leaving her guessing about absolutely nothing. You have become a spiller of guts.

The danger in telling you this is that you might think I am encouraging you to play head games with her instead, trying to act like an international man of mystery. But I am not trying to get you to manipulate or lie. Rather, I am encouraging you to cultivate good manners and not to worry about the