

Men may be from Mars
and Women from Venus
but we still have to live on
Earth



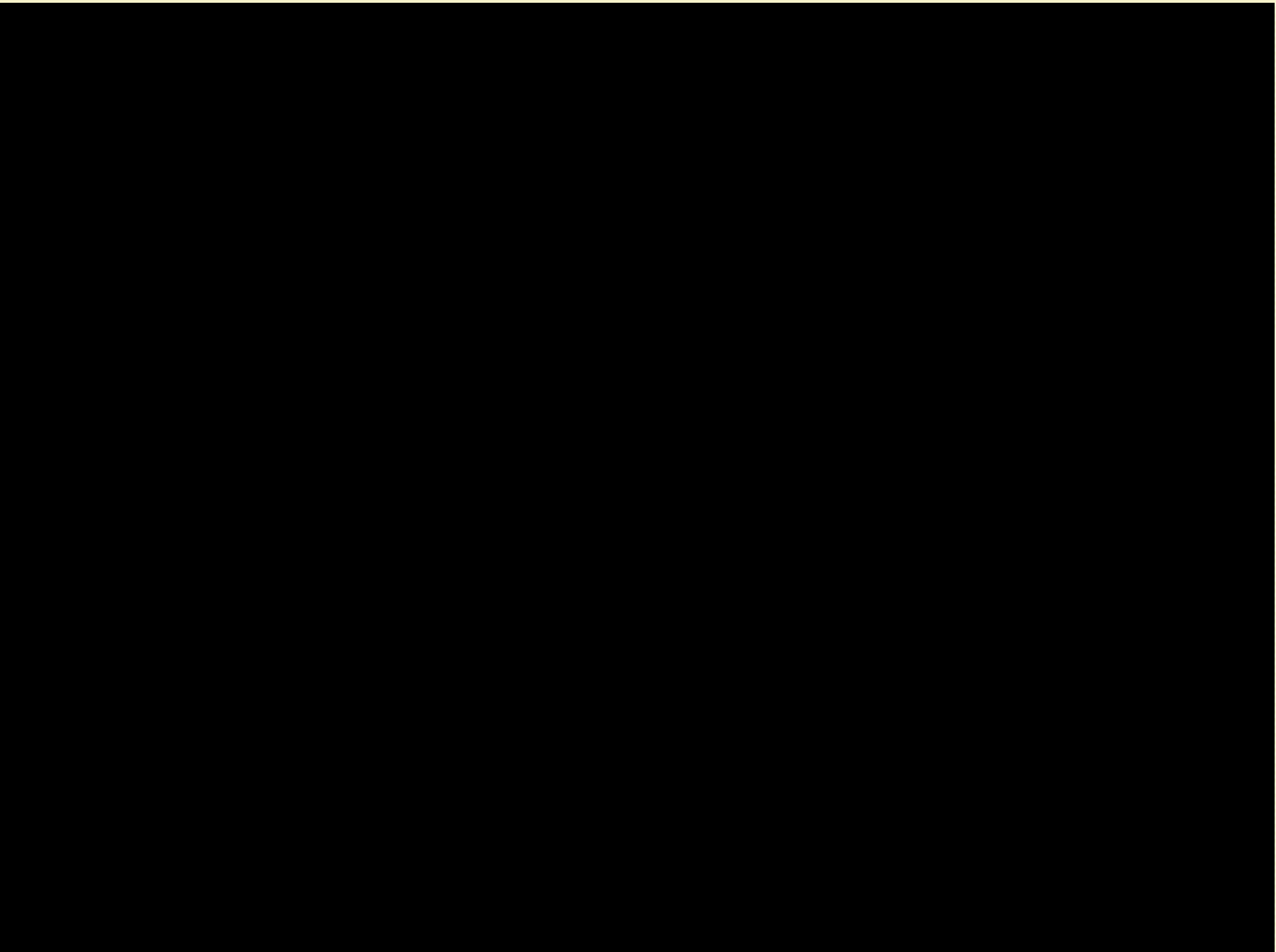
Plainness does not equal Harshness



What an insidious thing is this culture amidst which we live. It permeates our environment, and we think we are being reasonable and logical when, all too often, we have been molded by the ethos, what the Germans call the zeitgeist, or the culture of our place and time.

Our culture tends to determine what foods we like, how we dress, what constitutes polite behavior, what sports we should follow, what our taste in music should be, the importance of education, and our attitudes toward honesty. It also influences men as to the importance of recreation or religion, influences women about the priority of career or childbearing, and has a powerful effect on how we approach procreation and moral issues. All too often, we are like puppets on a string, as our culture determines what is “cool.”

David R. Stone, “Zion in the Midst of Babylon,” *Ensign*, May 2006, 90–93





Equality does not equal Sameness

An Example

During the forties and fifties women didn't complain about their husbands not being able to communicate. Men weren't expected to talk; talking was considered a woman's domain.

The last two or three decades have seen a blurring of traditional gender roles in our society. The optimistic message of the sixties and seventies was that human behavior is culturally learned, not biologically determined.

Many women have come to expect men to display more feminine behavior, men have failed to live up to their expectations; gender differences live on. This has been a disappointment for the women who believed men can and should change their conversational style. Minimizing gender differences has done a disservice to the couples whose lives are tormented by them.

– Michelle Weiner-Davis *Divorce Busting* pg. 50

The Doctrine



The Doctrine

“All human beings — male and female — are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose” (“The [Family](#): A Proclamation to the World,” *Liahona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

The Doctrine

“All human beings — male and female — are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an **essential characteristic** of individual premortal, mortal, and **eternal identity and purpose**” (“The [Family](#): A Proclamation to the World,” *Liahona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

David A. Bednar

“[Gender] in large measure **defines who we are, why we are here upon the earth, and what we are to do and become.** For divine purposes, male and female spirits are **different, distinctive, and complementary.** ... The unique combination of spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional capacities of both males and females were needed to implement the plan of happiness” (“Marriage Is Essential to His Eternal Plan,” *Liahona*, June 2006, 51; *Ensign*, June 2006, 83).

Julie B. Beck

“As spirit daughters of God, women ‘received their first lessons in the world of spirits and were prepared to come forth’ ([D&C 138:56](#)) on the earth. They were among the ‘noble and great ones’ ([D&C 138:55](#)) who ‘shouted for joy’ ([Job 38:7](#)) at the creation of the earth because they would be given a physical body with the opportunity to be proven in a mortal sphere (see [Abraham 3:25](#)). They wished to work side by side with righteous men to accomplish eternal goals that neither can attain independently. Female roles did not begin on earth, and they do not end here. A woman who treasures motherhood on earth will treasure motherhood in the world to come” (“A ‘Mother Heart,’” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2004, 76).

Margaret D. Nadauld

“Women of God can never be like women of the world. The world has enough women who are tough; we need women who are tender. There are enough women who are coarse; we need women who are kind. . . . We have enough women of fame and fortune; we need more women of faith” (“The Joy of Womanhood,” *Liahona*, Jan. 2001, 18; *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 15).

M. Russell Ballard

“The premortal and mortal natures of men and women were specified by God Himself. ... [Sometimes women] ask: ‘Is a woman’s value dependent exclusively upon her role as a wife and mother?’ The answer is simple and obvious: No. ... Every righteous man and woman has a significant role to play in the onward march of the kingdom of God. ...

“... My dear sisters, we believe in you. We believe in and are counting on your goodness and your strength, ... And we believe that God’s plan is for you to become queens and to receive the highest blessings any woman can receive in time or eternity” (“Women of Righteousness,” *Liahona*, Dec. 2002, 36–37; *Ensign*, Apr. 2002, 66–69).

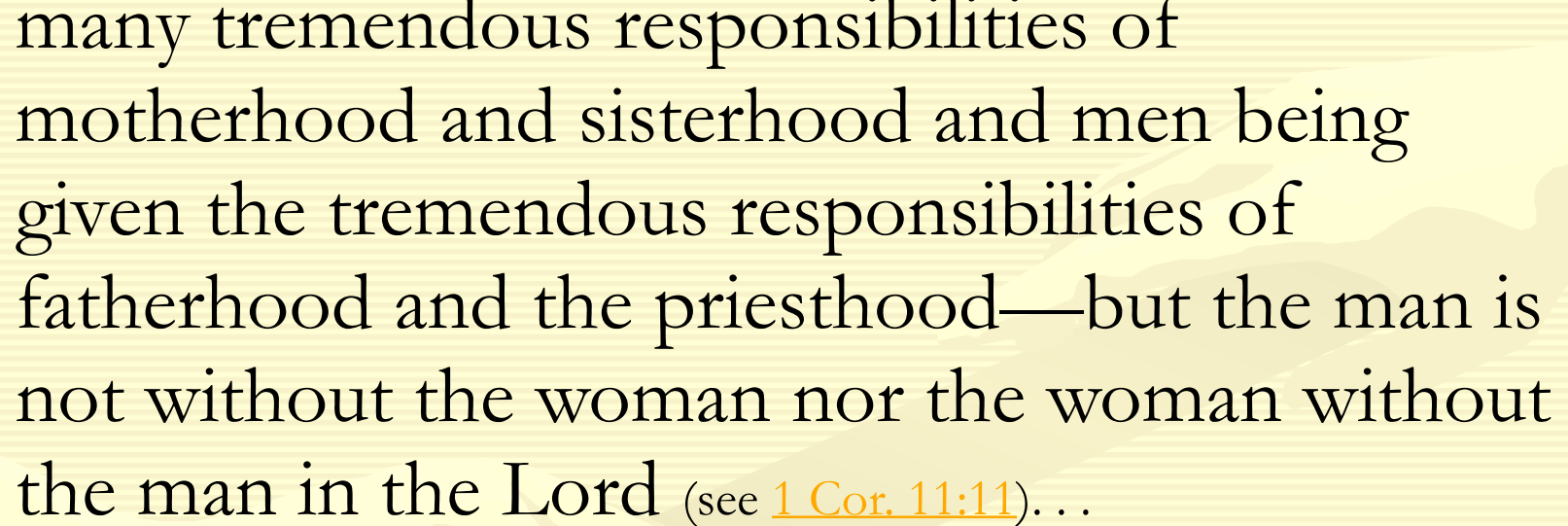
Elder Dallin H. Oaks

“We live in a day when there are many political, legal, and social pressures for changes that confuse gender and homogenize the differences between men and women. **Our eternal perspective sets us against changes that alter those separate duties and privileges of men and women that are essential to accomplish the great plan of happiness.** We do not oppose all changes in the treatment of men and women, since some changes in laws or customs simply correct old wrongs that were never grounded in eternal principles”

(in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 99; or [*Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 73–74](#)).

President Spencer W. Kimball

“Our roles and assignments differ. These are eternal differences—with women being given many tremendous responsibilities of motherhood and sisterhood and men being given the tremendous responsibilities of fatherhood and the priesthood—but the man is not without the woman nor the woman without the man in the Lord (see [1 Cor. 11:11](#))...



President Ezra Taft Benson

“You [women] were not created to be the same as men. Your natural attributes, affections, and personalities are entirely different from a man’s. They consist of faithfulness, benevolence, kindness, and charity. They give you the personality of a woman. They also balance the more aggressive and competitive nature of a man. The business world is competitive and sometimes ruthless. We do not doubt that women have both the brainpower and skills—and in some instances superior abilities—to compete with men. But by competing they must, of necessity, become aggressive and competitive. Thus their godly attributes are diminished and they acquire a quality of sameness with man” (*Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, 547–48).

President Howard W. Hunter

“I suppose you would say it is a man’s viewpoint to throw a burden upon a woman to maintain the stability and the sweetness of marriage, but this seems to be her divine nature. She has a superior spirituality in the marriage relationship, and the opportunity to encourage, uplift, teach, and be the one who sets the example in the family for righteous living. When women come to the point of realizing that it is more important to be superior than to be equal, they will find the real joy in living those principles that the Lord set out in his divine plan” (*Teachings of Howard W. Hunter*, 139).

President Spencer W. Kimball

“In his wisdom and mercy, our Father made men and women dependent on each other for the full flowering of their potential. Because their natures are somewhat different, they can complement each other; because they are in many ways alike, they can understand each other. Let neither envy the other for their differences; let both discern what is superficial and what is beautifully basic in those differences, and act accordingly”

(“[Relief Society—Its Promise and Potential](#),” *Ensign*, Mar. 1976, 5).

Elder James E. Faust

“Both fathers and mothers do many intrinsically different things for their children. Both mothers and fathers are equipped to nurture children, but their approaches are different. **Mothers** seem to take a dominant role in preparing children to **live within their families**, present and future. **Fathers** seem best equipped to prepare children to **function in the environment outside the family**”

(in Conference Report, Apr. 1993, 44–45; or *Ensign*, May 1993, 35).

Doctrines and Principles of Gender

- Gender is an essential characteristic of individual pre-mortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.
- We covenanted in the pre-mortal life that we would come down and take upon us the roles of our specific gender.
- Men and women are different
- God wants men and women to be different

Doctrines and Principles of Gender

- True happiness in this life and in our relationships can only be realized when we embrace, recognize and deal with these differences.
- Equality does not mean sameness.
- Female gender is superior spiritually to men – when women try to fit into a man's world they lessen themselves.

Doctrines and Principles of Gender

- Your way is not supposed to be their way. If you loved me you'd be like me is asking for trouble in marriage.
- Our differences in gender prepare us for our unique roles in a marriage and family.
- Our gender differences are necessary for us to be effective parents here on the earth.

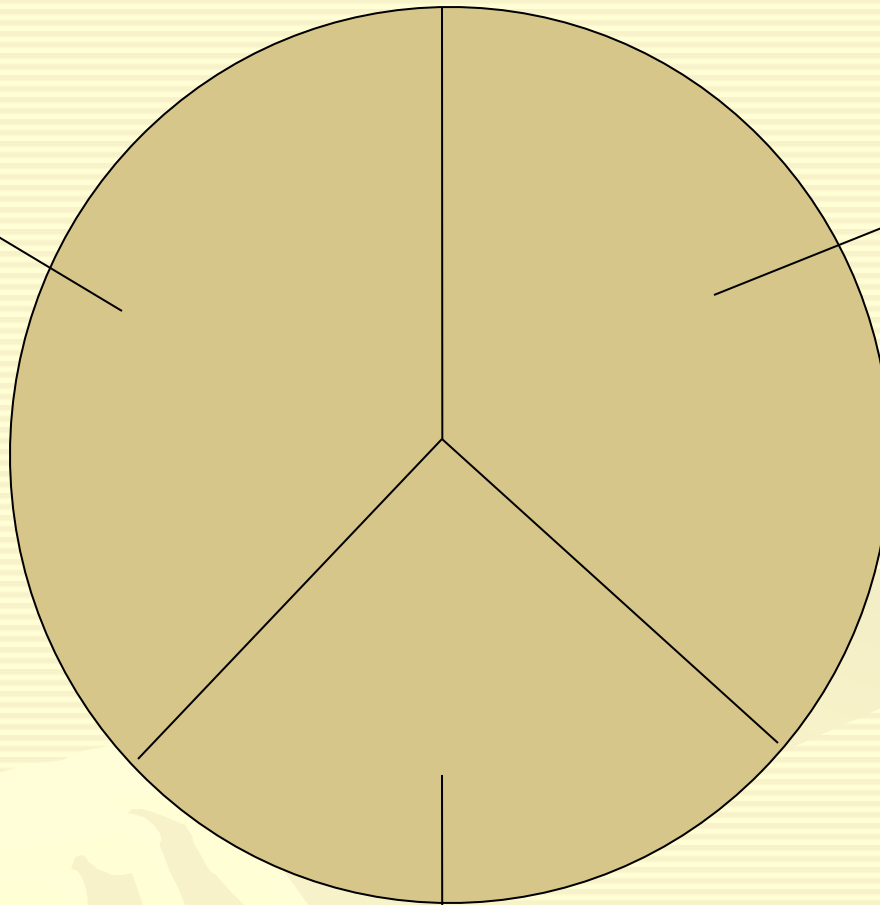
Dr. John Gottman

- 70% of the things that irritate us about our spouse are not going to change. As to the 30% part of us that can change, it is one of the great paradoxes in therapy that people do not change unless they feel accepted for who they are.

Why Marriages Succeed or Fail, pg. 184

Different
Backgrounds

Gender
Differences



Shared Experiences