



Against Female Military Conscription

The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) stands unequivocally against conscripting America's daughters into military service. Requiring women to register with the Selective Service alongside men to make them eligible for military conscription would be to treat men and women interchangeably and to deny male and female differences clearly revealed in Nature and Christian Scripture.

The Testimony of Nature

The natural order, considered by plain reason, supports what the vast majority of civilized societies — ancient and modern — have recognized: men are better suited than women for warfare; thus, women are at a disadvantage against men in warfare. The inherent, distinct, physiological compositions of male and female point to differently-suited purposes that have implications in the realm of fighting. The average man is stronger and has a larger frame than the average woman, making him better equipped for aggression; the female body is naturally equipped to nurture the next generation, suiting the average woman better for care and not combat. Only a non-scientific assessment of male and female physiology overlooks these plain and natural differences.

Nature and plain reason also warn that a government that conscripts its female citizens in their reproductive prime is a government that fails to seek what is best for its future and the future of its citizens. A woman aged 18–25, the current range for military conscription, is in the midst of her prime reproductive years. Therefore, to conscript a generation of women — wives, mothers, and daughters — is to demographically doom the next. Drafting women into the military, where many could be involuntarily assigned combat roles, would set the nation up for demographic disaster as birth rates would be inevitably and drastically affected.

Moreover, not only could a woman, unbeknownst to her, be with child when conscripted, she could also become pregnant during her time of service, which would put her and her unborn baby in the path of great harm — not to mention the necessary leave during pregnancy and postpartum that would require additional resources to train her replacement.

Furthermore, should a woman become a prisoner of war, she could be subjected to rape and sexual abuse at the hands of enemy combatants that could lead to unwanted pregnancy. Especially in light of our current cultural moment, we should be seeking to protect America's daughters against such abuse, not making provision for it. This great evil would be aided and abetted by a nation that places women involuntarily on the front lines of warfare.



The Testimony of Christian Scripture

Christian Scripture affirms what is revealed in Nature and provides further significance and clarification to this revelation. Scripture teaches that Adam was created first and given familial and covenantal headship. Eve was created second to be Adam's complementary helpmeet, corresponding to his likeness and complementing his nature with differing sexual, physical, and psycho-social characteristics that form the basis for their complementary roles (Gen. 1:27; 2:18–24; 1 Cor. 11:2–10; 1 Tim. 2:12–13). One divine purpose of the complementary differences between male and female is the fulfillment of the creation mandate, to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth through the divine institution of the family (Gen. 1:28), which necessitates periods of vulnerability on the part of the woman and provision and protection on the part of the man while a woman is with child, both in utero and in the child's infancy.

Male headship in the family and the covenant community is patterned after the creational arrangement and is rooted in the very nature of God's original design before sin entered the world (1 Cor. 11:2–10; 1 Tim. 2:12–13). The family, husband and wife in covenantal marriage and father and mother to their God-given offspring, is a pre-political institution that God-fearing nations must not subvert in law or custom. Conscripting wives, mothers, and daughters against their will and away from their own families would constitute just such a subversion and disrupt this fundamental unit of society, without which there is no society.

Christian Scripture also unequivocally teaches that God created men and women with differences for distinct purposes that must not be ignored. The biblical pattern is for men, as the physically stronger sex (1 Pet. 3:7), to lead and to protect their families and covenant communities, including, when necessary, in warfare apart from civil vocations for a time (Gen. 14:14; Num. 31:3, 21, 49; Deut. 20:5-9; 3:14; Josh. 1:14-18; 6:3, 7, 9; 8:3; 10:7; 1 Sam. 16:18; 18:5; 2 Sam. 11:1; 17:8; 23:8-39; Ps. 45:3-5; SoS. 3:7-8; Isa. 42:13). Accordingly, the Bible commands husbands — not wives — to lay down their lives for their spouses just as Christ did for the church (Eph. 5:25).

It is not a properly ordered society that sends its daughters to combat; instead, Scripture indicates it is a sign of shame and disorder for a society to do so (Jer. 50:37; Nahum 3:13). When Deborah went out with Barak to battle — Scripture does not indicate she fought, but that she accompanied him to the battlefield — it was to his and Israel's shame (Jdgs. 4:9). Further, when Jael wielded the hammer and peg against Sisera, it was not as a soldier but as a citizen under invasion, and this to the shame of the men charged with Israel's protection (Jdgs. 4:17–22). Moreover, when God commands his people not to confuse the garments of men and women, forbidding men to wear women's clothes and women men's clothes in Deuteronomy 22:5, it is literally the garb of warfare that is forbidden to women.



Conclusion

The biological differences between male and female evident in both Nature and Christian Scripture necessitate that men and women not be treated indistinctly and interchangeably. While we respect the decision of women who wish to engage in military service as volunteers, the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, represented by the undersigned, vehemently opposes every effort to force women into military service by government coercion. With the strongest conviction, the Council urges the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service to reject any recommendation to require America's daughters to register with the Selective Service to make them eligible for conscription.

Signed August 1, 2019

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