

## Beyond equality: The value of stay-at-home mothers rediscovered



I am a half-soft feminist, I guess. I think women have all the rights that a man also has. There is no reason why a woman is inferior to a man. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is also very clear about this. In '*The family: a proclamation to the world*' it says *Fathers and mothers ... each other as equal partners.*

Apostle Russell M. Ballard said the following on 20 August 2013:

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*Man and woman are equal in God's eyes and in the eyes of the church, but equal does not mean the same. The duties and divine gifts of man and woman are different in nature, but not in importance or influence. God does not consider either sex better or more important than the other.*

I fully support gender equality, but I am not going to say they are equal. On the contrary and thankfully so. We are complementary. As a matter of fact, I hope so for everyone in any relationship. Let one plus one be more than two. For Latter-day Saints, that is a given fact in why God created us that way. So we are certainly not going to compromise on that.

So I don't go along with this current society of gender equality where people desperately want to erase or ignore any difference. Sometimes even against the will of women themselves. Is that still feminism when new authority figures start determining women's doings? Sorry, then I really do consider myself a better feminist.

Just this weekend, I read an *interview with a minister* who considered the *tradwives'* movement a society in reverse: '*We cannot imagine that women themselves would want to return to the hearth.*' Can count as free choice or straitjacket.

Not long ago, there were liberals and socialists who said that stay-at-home women should not have rights. They were just barely called profiteers of the system.

## Reverence and respect for women

I have respect and reverence for women who go to work, whether out of necessity or free will. But I cannot stand it when women who make the courageous choice to put one of the most important tasks - raising children - number one in their lives are treated as pathetic, inferior creatures. They deserve applause and admiration for their sacrifice. They deserve respect for taking on such a hard task.

I notice that women of faith find it increasingly difficult to hold on to the role they believe in. For us, it is a sacred duty to start a family and raise children. As *equal partners*, they will be held accountable by God for fulfilling these obligations.

Can we finally get to a society where others stop dictating what a woman should do? There is no going *backwards* in mourning who choose to

traditional values such as taking care of the family at home. They deserve a statue. I am sure we would have a lot less *snowflakes* if children were raised more often in a family with two loving parents.

That these women cost society money, I dare doubt. The savings of steadfast adults, are many times greater. There is the long-standing and often underestimated importance of their contribution to the social and emotional development of the next generation.

These women play a crucial role in shaping their children's values, behaviour and future aspirations. By providing a stable and loving home environment, they lay the foundation for their children's well-being, resilience and success. Moreover, their choice represents a form of economic and social investment beyond the individual family by c o n t r i b u t i n g to a stronger, more cohesive society. Recognising and valuing the efforts of these women is essential to ensure that all forms of work, both inside and outside the home, are seen as valuable and respectable.

Or to put it in the words of prophets, '*We appeal to responsible citizens and public servants everywhere to promote measures aimed at maintaining and strengthening the family as the fundamental unit of society.*'