

Feminism, Sexual Assault, and the #MeToo Movement

A brief history of feminism

First Wave - Early 1900's - Women fought for equal social and political rights - especially the right to vote.

- Major leaders included: Virginia Woolf, Elizabeth Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony.
- Many of these women were also involved in trying to outlaw slavery.
- These women still very much acted and dressed like the women of their day.

Second Wave - 1960's – Women fought to remove some of the social distinctions between men and women and for progressive ideas such as homosexuality, abortion, the right to sexual promiscuity, and others.

- Whereas in the first wave of feminism women fought for equality *as women*, in the second wave of feminism the distinction between social expectations of men and women began to be blurred.
- Major leaders included: Simone de Beauvoir (*The Second Sex* - "One is not born but becomes a woman,"), Gloria Steinem, and Betty Friedan (*The Feminine Mystique*).

The problem lay buried, unspoken, for many years in the minds of American women. It was a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning [that is, a longing] that women suffered in the middle of the 20th century in the United States. Each suburban [house]wife struggled with it alone. As she made the beds, shopped for groceries ... she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent question — "Is this all?" – Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*

- This movement was not just “pro-women” it was also “anti-men.”
- This movement sought to define what it means to be a woman without reference to men, which is unbiblical.

Genesis 2:23 - This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”

- This movement produced some contradictions regarding the rights of women: For example, some feminist say that it is empowering for a woman to have casual sex (and abortions) or to be a porn star. Other feminist pointed out that this is *literally* exploiting women for sex.
- This movement produced a contradiction in how to understand the essence of women. On the one hand, some feminist where seeking to downplay the differences between men and women; on the other hand, some feminists where showing that women are less logo-centric and rule-based than men and focused more on relationships and caregiving. This means that some feminist wanted to downplay the differences between men and women and others wanted to emphasize those differences.
- This second wave is when feminism became an explicitly left-leaning position because the domestic focus on caregiving and nurturing was transposed onto what they believed the government should do for its citizens.

Third Wave - 1990's– Women of color fought for equal rights because they felt as though they had been overlooked by white women.

-In the third wave of feminism black, Latina, Asian, etc. women believed that they had been underrepresented by white women. This was also true for women of other social classes and sexual orientations.

-In this movement the primary victims of society were no longer the poor, but those who had what are considered unchangeable identities.

-Whereas women in the second wave of feminism saw themselves as victimized by men, women in the third wave of feminism used race as a way to show that they were further victimized.

(Possible) Fourth Wave – Today – Transgender women (biological men who claim to actually be women) are fighting for equal rights under the banner of feminism.

-Feminism and transgenderism are ideologically opposed.

-*There is now the idea that men and women are not even different physically.* This is seen in biological men competing in women's sports.

Sexual assault and the #MeToo Movement

-The movement began in 2006, when a lady named Tarana Burke used that phrasing on Myspace as a way to sympathize with women of color who said they had been sexually assaulted.

-However, it was really the sexual misconduct allegations of Harvey Weinstein in 2017 that helped popularize the social media trend of placing #MeToo after admissions of being sexually assaulted. Actress Alyssa Milano (From *Who's the Boss*, *Melrose Place*, *Charmed*, and other shows) helped popularize the hashtag in light of the Weinstein scandal.

What does the movement try to accomplish?

1. It seeks to prosecute those who have actually sexually assaulted women.
2. It allows women to find community and counseling to heal from the trauma of sexual abuse.
3. It highlights how much sexual abuse goes unreported.
4. It seeks to deter potential sexual predators from sexually assaulting women through the threat of legal reprisal and social exposure.
5. It is a reminder that sexual assault is sin and should not be tolerated by Christians, church leaders, or culture at large.

What is bad about the #MeToo movement?

1. It does not distinguish between actual cases of sexual assault and mere allegations of sexual assault. To be accused is to be guilty (#BelieveAllWomen).

Genesis 39 contains the story of Potiphar's wife who falsely accuses Joseph of sexually assaulting her. He goes to prison because her testimony is not questioned. The first person to cry #MeToo in the Bible is a liar.

2. It does not hold those who make false or misleading allegations of sexual assault responsible for their crime.

Deuteronomy 19:15-20 - "A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established. If a malicious witness arises to accuse a person of wrongdoing, then both parties to the dispute shall appear before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who are in office in those days. The judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely, then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. And the rest shall hear and fear, and shall never again commit any such evil among you.

1 Timothy 5:19 - Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

3. *It refuses to give an objective definition of sexual assault. Even consensual sex can be "assault." The movement believes that even if a woman says she wants to have sex she is still being sexually assaulted if she 1. Didn't really want to have sex (despite her words), 2. Later regretted that she had sex, or 3. "Felt" pressured into having sex even though she said she wanted to.*

4. The movement claims that a wife can deny her husband sex (despite the biblical command not to do that – 1 Cor 7:3-5) and that a woman can get divorced for any reason she chooses because she has sole control over her life and body.

5. It allows someone to have consensual sex and then, later in time, decide that the act was actually not consensual. It believes in retroactive sexual assault.

6. It is dismissive of other forms of sexual assault: when men are sexually assaulted (1 in 6) or when women are sexually assaulted by other women (as happens in the homosexual, transgender, and prison communities). The levels of sexual assault are much higher in the gay and transgender communities than in heterosexual relationships. 46% of bisexual or gay women have been raped compared to 17% of heterosexual women.

7. It leads to further division of men and women.

8. It does not hold to a biblical definition of rape.

Deuteronomy 22:23-24 - "If there is a betrothed virgin, and a man meets her in the city and lies with her, ²⁴ then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones, the young woman because she did not cry for help though she was in the city, and the man because he violated his neighbor's wife. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

9. It offers no actual solution regarding how to prevent sexual assault in the future.
10. It has aligned itself with other feministic and pro-abortion movements such as Planned Parenthood.
11. To ask for details when someone claims to have been assaulted is said to be unloving or unkind. The movement claims that you should just sympathize with the person without finding out if what they are saying is true.
12. It does not hold women morally accountable for sexual activity outside of marriage, immodesty in clothing, promiscuity, or seduction.
13. It doesn't take into account how easy it is for a victim of sexual assault to misidentify who they think assaulted them.

According to the Innocence Project, of the 367 exonerees who were wrongly accused, *69% involved eyewitness misidentification*. This included many sexual assault cases.

You would think that it would be easy to identify the person who raped you, but it is not (trauma, many years go by, subtle suggestions by detectives, etc.).

We saw this with the false allegations brought by Christine Blasey Ford against Supreme Court candidate, Brett Kavanaugh.

14. It is unchristian in its worldview. It does not put forward the gospel as the solution to sexual assault.

Concluding thoughts:

1. What a movement claims to be about is often not what it is really about: #MeToo, #BlackLivesMatter, #Antifa, etc. They often take a name or phrase that sounds good but hide unbiblical agendas behind it.
2. Most left-leaning social justice movements propose no actual solution that would work.