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WOMEN'S YEAR AND FEMININE FULFILMENT

By D.B. Knox

THE PROTESTANT FAITH

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1975 is international Women's Year. It has been launched in Australia by the Governor General in a broadcast which you may have heard. Amongst many women the emphasis is to be on feminine fulfilment. Women are seeking self fulfilment and it is being suggested that they have not obtained this in the old ways but new possibilities are being put before them as objectives to be striven for. It is an important question as to how we find fulfilment. It is not the first time that women are being stirred up by the thought that the restrictions in which they find themselves prevent the fulfilment of their personalities. You may remember that in Genesis 3 Satan tempted Eve by drawing her attention to a restriction which the Creator had placed her in with the suggestion that she should ignore this restriction and find fuller life. It was suggested that to disregard this restriction was the gateway to a fuller life, it would raise her status and fill out her personality, that was the suggestion and it did seem that there was something in it, for as Eve looked at the forbidden fruit, she saw that it was "...good for food ... a delight to the eyes ... and to be desired to make one wise." In a word the very thing needed to extend ones personality and to make one more complete. This was the temptation but of course the tempter never delivered the goods. The far away fields in actuality turned out to be scorching desert. But the temptation is still the same, to seek fulfilment by disregarding the way God has made us. Women are still being stirred up to discontent by being told by the devil, no longer taking the form of a serpent but a women's liberation movement - that the restrictions of the created order prevent her from fulfilling herself. To take one example; women are being urged to kill the foetus within them if that is inconvenient to their way of life or what they want to do. Here is a plain disregard for the restrictions of creation and the providential circumstances of life in order to seek a fulfilment which is in fact more likely to fill her full of morbid guilt. But how do

women, and men for that matter, find their fulfilment. It will be found within the laws that God has created and it will be found to be true fulfilment.

Jesus gave us the key when he said that his life was a life of service "I am among you as he that serves." (Luke: 22:27b). And indeed his service brought him to the cross where he gave up his life for others. But how can our own death be said to be our fulfilment? Only when we lay down our lives for others as Christ did. This concept of service of others gives the key for the whole of life. We find fulfilment not by expressing ourselves but by denying ourselves for other people. Fulfilment is in service; fulfilment is in relationships which accompany serving one another. But even here there is a temptation, Martha you may remember in the Gospel story was so taken up with the business of serving that she had no time to find her true fulfilment in her relationship to Jesus. So if we want to fulfil our lives which God has given us, seek God's fellowship through repentance and forgiveness and the gift of his Holy Spirit. If we relate ourselves to God in this way we will be truly fulfilled and we will find that we will be related to people in the way that God is, through serving them rather than serving our own interests. This is true fulfilment for women and for men. So that if 1975 is to bring its blessing to women they must turn away from the temptation of seeking fulfilment by disregard of the restrictions that God in creation has placed on all of us, and find true fulfilment in serving God in glad and loving obedience and serving one another for God's sake. This is fulfilment and it will not run into the sands with sickness or old age or at death, but has eternal dimensions. Use eternity as the test as to whether the fulfilment that is being offered is genuine or merely Satan's temptation of something which does not really deliver the goods.

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THE PROTESTANT FAITH
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