

# HELPING MEN THINK IN PINK AND BLUE

By Anonymous (it depends on whether the session goes well)

**Introduction:** Three caveats to start my topic today.

First, I checked the title of my session by *pink* (my wife) and it did not pass. Pink does not want you to think in pink; they want you to understand pink but keep thinking in blue. Even the title of *blue's* session is not how *pink* thinks. 😊

Second, I have a text for my session. "But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless *such will have trouble in the flesh*, but I would spare you" (1 Corinthians 7:28, my emphasis).

Third, I occasionally lean on the *Love & Respect* video series of Emerson and Sarah Eggerichs for illustrations and ideas, most of which I have tried to give credit for below. My wife and I would host couples' nights at our house in the Philippines during which we would watch their five-part series as couples. (I think they have ten parts now.) Want a taste? Google "Eggerichs, love and respect" in YouTube and see if you can pull up Love & Respect, Part 1, where Emerson is preaching at Houston's First Baptist Church on October 7, 2019.

## Why this session?

1. Because God created us male and female. As Eggerichs puts it, *women think in pink and men think in blue*.

Examples:

2. Because these pink and blue differences lie at the roots of some (many?) of our marital difficulties.

- a. Some of those difficulties are because you do not understand each other—you are communicating without communicating.
- b. Some of those difficulties are because you are each viewing the other as unspiritual because you don't think the same way about things: because different things frustrate, unsettle, discourage, or bother you.

3. Because there are missionary couples who have unresolved marriage difficulties, and some of these could simply be gender communication misfires.

## How can I better respond to *pink*?

1. Biblical admonition

- a. Love your wives as Christ loved the church; He loved her as *being one with Himself*: "He who loves his own wife loves himself" (Eph. 5:28b).
- b. Love your wives and be not bitter against them (Col. 3:19). You and I may *feel* reasons to be bitter against our wives (e.g., disappointments, unfulfilled expectations, unanticipated reactions, etc.)
- c. Know your wife's limitations and value her as an equal partner in your marriage (1 Peter 3:7). Your instincts toward something weaker ought to be to protect it, not to run rough-shod over it. A wife is

weaker both in that she has different physical challenges than you do and in that she is in a position of subordination.

Aristotle: "For Providence made man stronger and woman weaker, so that he in virtue of his manly prowess may be more ready to defend the home, and she, by reason of her timid nature, more ready to keep watch over it" (Armstrong 1936: 333).<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Practical advice

- a. Allow her to doublecheck things without expressing frustration. (*Pink* needs to doublecheck things that *blue* feels are obvious.)
- b. Assume your wife wants to please you and has "goodwill" (Eggerichs) toward you, even if her follow through may not always be exactly what you wanted.
- c. Realize that she is probably trying to connect with you, not control you (Eggerichs).
- d. What you think is spiderwebbing is not.
- e. Decode *pink*—don't interpret it as *blue* language.
- f. Do not berate her (even mentally) or look down on her as unspiritual for things that do not bother you just because they bother her. She is not less spiritual than you because she has concerns you don't have.
- g. Recognize your wife will typically have more fear(s) when you have children.

Xenophon: [God] made the man's body and mind more capable of enduring cold and heat, and journeys and campaigns; and there imposed on him the outdoor tasks. To the woman, since he has made her body less capable of such endurance, I take it that God has assigned the indoor tasks. ... And since he imposed on the woman the protection of the stores also, knowing that for protection a fearful disposition is no disadvantage, God meted out a larger share of fear to the woman than to the man; and knowing that he who deals with the outdoor tasks will have to be their defender against any wrong-doer, he meted out to him again a larger share of courage. (Marchant 1938: 421)<sup>2</sup>

- h. You don't have to accede to all her fears, but you need to listen to them.
- i. Use the language of "I felt" rather than "you said" when conveying hurt over statements made: "I felt disrespected when ..."
- j. Have fun with these pink and blue disagreements. The two perspectives complement each other and come together to form the beautiful color of purple (Eggerichs).
- k. Ask *her* where she wants to change rather than assume areas where she wants your help (to change). She better understands than you do what in her thinking exalts itself against the knowledge of God (2 Cor. 10:5). Let her identify those. You will be better able to pray for and encourage her.
- l. Realize pink and blue each react differently to "heated fellowship" (Eggerichs).
- m. Help your wife understand how respectful talk and behavior helps you.

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<sup>1</sup> Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 208.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 208–209.