

A Mountain Out Of A Molehill

Donal Graeme | 15 March, 2015 | by Donal Graeme

This post is an opportunity for my readers to help my out. I am concerned that I might have made something out to be a bigger deal than it really was. Or perhaps misunderstood the point that was being made. It began when I read [this](#) post over at Leane's blog. This paragraph in particular caught my eye:

Men left to themselves too long tend to become rough, brutish, and even evil. I saw enough of this in the Army during the two years overseas with the same outfit. There was something vital missing in the lives of these soldiers. It was the influence of their mothers, their sisters, their wives, and their sweethearts. The deterioration of the soldiers overseas was slow and gradual but still very definite. The great mass of mankind finds it pretty difficult to climb very much above its environment. An all-male environment is not good for a man over a long period of time. God never intended for the average man to so live. Eve appeared on the scene soon after Adam.

I reacted... rashly to this message. Here is my response:

I don't know how to describe this paragraph other than as vile. The central argument is that without women (presumably good women) in their lives then adult men will become uncivilized savages. To the best of my knowledge there is zero support for this in Sacred Scripture or Tradition. A great many monastics lived lives which stand as a strong testament against the proposition advanced here.

Furthermore, even if this were true, and I contend it is not, this is an awful thing to include in advice supposedly directed at women. It is the worst kind of pastoral care. More than a few women will read this as saying that their presence is the only thing keeping the men in their life from being rough, brutish, and even evil. This feeds into the worst parts of female nature. It is especially poisonous for wives who have rebellious tendencies- which happens to be all of them, as all human beings are rebellious at heart. Simply put, there is no good reason to include this paragraph in this particular work.

Additionally, if I or another man was to write something similar, only with the roles reversed- describing the awful things women will do if left too long to themselves, would anyone simply leave it be? Or would it be called out?

I am going to stop here. I am sorry for hijacking this comment thread, but I could not remain silent.

This drew, as expected, some opposition from female commenters, as well as the blog hostess herself. What I hope to hear from my readers is whether my reaction to that paragraph was on target, and whether I over-reacted or not. As a quick recap, and to help folks better understand what I was saying, here are the three general points I was making:

1. The argument which the author made is not supported by Sacred Scripture or Tradition.
2. It was bad pastoral practice to include this paragraph in the book it was found in.
3. A similar paragraph or statement with the roles reversed would not be ignored like that paragraph was.

If anyone thinks I was wrong, please indicate where I screwed up. And if you have any problems with my

response, besides the bad proofreading, please let me know. Don't hold back, let me have it. [Although I will say that I think the response of one of the female commenters to a piece of red meat I left in the second point justifies my third point.]

So, did I make a mountain out of a molehill?

[Update: It wasn't clear from my post, but Leane did not write that paragraph. Her post was quoting from a book called The Wife Desired. The book was written by a Catholic priest back in 1951.]

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