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Message to Men's Fellowship
2nd November 2008.

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN MUST INHERIT

NUMBERS 27:1-11 AND ACTS 2: 14-21

DIVINE RIGHTS: The fact that all people are daughters and sons of God, "OUR FATHER", makes them brothers and sisters of one another, in Christ. Men may have patriarchal and religious power to disinherit or discriminate against their own daughters but this does not influence God, the Father of all, to disenfranchise any of his children, whether boys or girls, men or women. We are heirs of God's gifts and blessings by virtue of God having made us in his likeness and legatees of his Eternal life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. So, because men and women are equal heirs of God's reign,

- First ,by virtue of having been created in God's image,
- Secondly, by God having given them dominion (Genesis 1:26) indiscriminately
- Subsequently by appointing them as his co-rulers over creation and
- Making provision for them to inherit eternal life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ,

their responsibility is to enjoy God and enjoy him for ever. Amongst many other sins, what prevents people from enjoying God is men's struggle for dominance and control of resources; women are caught in the crossfire of this struggle.

If all people are entitled to become heirs of God's kingdom, then God does not have some special inheritance, cows, businesses, houses, lands and eternal life reserved for men. Is there a privileged place in God's reign (kingdom) reserved for men only? The story of the daughters of Zelophehad, namely Mahrah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Tirzah (NUMBERS 27:1-11) was written to tell us of God's judgment about the mistaken idea of a special place or privilege in God's kingdom. In this text the father of the four women died in the wilderness. The Israelite women, the daughters of Zelophehad included, had suffered the same hardships as the men during the Exodus. These daughters marched before Moses, the lawgiver, and Eleazer, the priest, and demanded that the Israelites' politics and religion recognize the equality of men and women in the allocation of land. The four women defied the male traditional

wisdom and influenced Moses and Eleazer to seek divine judgment on their behalf. Moses and Eleazer consulted God, as the Father of all from whom the common Fatherhood of women and men precedes. God, who is the ultimate and final arbiter on all matters in creation in which humans like Moses and Eleazer are just but stewards, ruled that women have absolute rights to inherit property.

WHIMSICAL RIGHTS: But in chapter 36, two male “heads of the clan of Gilead, the son of Machir and grandson of Manasseh son of Joseph, went to Moses and the other leaders and said, *‘The lord commanded you to distribute the land to the people of Israel by drawing the lots. He also commanded you to give property of our relative Zelophehad to his daughters. But remember if they marry men of another tribe their property will belong to that tribe and the total allotment to us will be reduced’*”. They went behind God and sought to amend God’s command without either appealing to God or caring to involve God’s priest, Eleazer, but through Moses alone. Patriarchy got the best of Moses’ rational sense, and he did not even care to inform Eleazer or “essemess” (SMS) God about men’s desire to amend his law. This amounted to male conspiracy against the equality of men and women and against God’s unconditional law. Moses ruled in favor of men to the effect that women may inherit property on condition that they marry within the clan. Hence, Moses weakened God’s verdict of **daughters’ absolute rights to inherit** by inserting a provisional clause that their inheritance remains valid as long as they do not marry outside their clans. (The fathers of Kenyan Succession Law must have read Moses amendment, when they wrote, even if a man dies intestate the wife holds the property on condition that she does not remarry). They must keep property within their clan circles. This male-inspired amendment was contradictory to divine verdict when God created humanity and gave both women and men equal dominion over the earth and the content therein, animals and plants. It was not until the last century that the American and some European laws recognized women’s absolute right to own and inherit property, even to vote.

By having already inherited God’s likeness and salvation, God has nothing remaining that women cannot inherit. Women’s rights are human rights and human rights are divine rights. Jesus said that just as there is no hierarchical order in his rights and God’s rights, there should be no such pecking order in human rights between the old and the young, women and men. Jesus insinuated that human rights are divine rights (or his rights) by saying, *“Whoever receives one such little child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives not me but the One who sent me (Mark 9:37) “For when you give a*

little one a cup of water, you are giving it to God” (Matthew 10:42)”. Men should not define women by their biological functions by which the terms brother and sister may be very distinct, but have no distinctions whatsoever when it comes into their social and divine functions. Besides giving birth, human beings share with animals such other traits as growth, hunger, thirst, sickness and death. In some animals the male is huger than the female, yet we do not confuse such biological traits with humans when it comes to social and divine laws. Just as the society does not excuse the men who are huger than others to bully the smaller men or when they are hungry to eat the smaller men, the society should not excuse men to use any biological distinctions as an excuse to claim exclusive rights to be breadwinners, property owners and protectors. The fact that men normally acquire bigger physique should not be an excuse for men to mate and eat more and before women. Such privileges were ended by the Agrarian revolution which ended the hunter-gatherer era. In fact, there is no biology that tells a woman that simply because she has no testes, she has lesser hands and brains to create wealth. God created both male and female as one and gave them brains and hands to execute his command to procreate.

It is for the purpose of procreation, which men and women share with other animals, that the distinction between male and female occurs but not at the divine and social level. To base divine and social rules on laws that are there by biological necessity, for procreation, is a flagrant distortion of humanity as written in Genesis 1:26 that God created both man and woman as one humanity and in his own likeness. God distributed his Holy Spirit to both men and women that they may equally become prophets (Acts 2: 14-21). Despite their physical distinctions, the Bible says (Genesis 5:1-2) God made Adam as male and female. The pillars of healthy masculinity as well as healthy womanhood are lifetime spiritual, mental and physical exercise, balanced and nutritious food and compliance with God’s word. Being breadwinner, provider and property owner is a temporary stage between childhood and retirement.

My call is that you should think of others, men or women, as better than yourself which means considering others as entitled to more social and material benefits than you and before you. Philippians (2:2-4)