

Of Dirt and Dollhouses

The differences between male and female

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Many children dream of flying, but when my brother Chris was about 10, he took matters into his own hands. Armed with rudimentary carpentry skills and curiosity, he built a homemade hang glider out of wood and trash bags. Majestically, he climbed our backyard wall, which overlooked a hill, held his glider high with the courage of Charles Lindbergh and dropped like a rock, crashing down below. Just another typical day for our family.

In our house, words like *crash*, *punch*, *tackle*, *shoot*, *explode* and *deep-fry* were normal. We ruined the “good towels” by wiping down motorcycles. Body noises occurred approximately every 12 seconds. Something broke daily (but I didn’t do it). What can I say? There were four boys in our house.

My wife, Sally, had three sisters. They braided hair, played dress-up and decorated dollhouses. If my brothers and I ever had to decorate a dollhouse, it would have lasted 20 seconds before one of the following things happened:

- A. We ran over it with tanks.
- B. We melted it with fire.
- C. We made it into a gas station and added rockets to it.

Author and physician Walt Larimore says, “When it comes to sticking things in ears and noses, boys win hands down.” Boys win, too, when it comes to cuts, lacerations or falling off monkey bars and slides. Even when boys and girls do similar activities, they quickly diverge.

Take riding bikes. Girls ride on the street. A boy may start on the street, but soon he’s jumping off curbs and chasing squirrels. Eventually, mysterious forces lead him to dirt. In fact, EVERY activity a boy does ends in dirt: running, playing with toys, haircuts, math . . .

By the tween and teen years, the difference between boys and girls are even more pronounced. Here are a few movie titles. Can you guess which one most teen girls would see?

- *Tina and Holly’s Crazy Beverly Hills Weekend* (cry potential - 8)
- *Mega Battle of the Robo-Ninjas* (Crying will get you thrown out)
- *The Miracle of Pasteurization* (This one is a trick; NOBODY would see this film!)

Then we mature into adults who enter college and maybe even marriage and parenting. But do things really change? My brothers and I still run, punch and throw (except now we’re all out of breath after making a fist). The last time we were together, Mom busted Brian for spraying whipped cream into his mouth from the can. Mark dropped chocolate candy into our water glasses when we weren’t looking. Chris chased his kids around with his face covered in shaving cream.

And just last week, Sally had some “girl time” with a friend. They sat on the couch and talked. I got together with a few guys and we ate, then went to a movie. After all that, Sally and her friend were still talking. Honestly, I could be with my closest friend in the history of friendships and the two of us would go mad if we sat on the couch for that long just talking. By the end of two hours, we’d be reduced to making chimp sounds.

The point is, the differences between male and female follow us into adulthood. In some cases, they are viewed as a titanic struggle. Thankfully, words like *grace*, *compromise* and *acceptance* make our relationships work. And there is a name – Jesus – that can draw even the strongest opposites together and help us to enjoy our differences and see why He designed us so. In fact, I wouldn’t want Sally any other way.

Now if you’ll excuse me, I’m going to ride my bike in the dirt.