What’s a woman’s role? That’s a discussion that can cause as much turmoil as religion or politics. Everyone has an opinion but most of us have learned to keep quiet when this issue comes up. In fact, you might even be a little uncomfortable that I’d even ask that.
But this is a topic our churches, communities and families work through regularly. And even within church denominations and our own families there can be a diversity of opinions. And it’s often tough to come to consensus on the issue.
The other day I was driving and saw a car pulled over on the side of the road with its hazard lights on. I slowed and pulled around it but curiosity made me look at what was going on. It appeared that the car had a flat tire, as there was a young lady working hard trying to get it changed. And since it looked like she had it under control I kept going, but then my ‘chivalrous’ nature (or guilt) caused me to turn around just to make sure she was okay. She said she was, and, honestly, I was impressed that at her age she had it so well under control.
And then I got to thinking, why did I turn around? If it had been a 40 year old man, would I have gone back to check to see if he was okay? Did I return because of her age or because of her gender or another reason? Was I sexist in my actions?
But that experience reminded me of something I’d read recently that was written back in 1938 called “Are Woman Human?” And it was written by a woman in a satirical and sarcastic way based upon the view of women back in the 1930s. Among other things, she wrote about the rise of feminism and the good and the bad that it caused. And that reminded me of Jesus.
Though I have a limited knowledge of feminism, I don’t think we could call Jesus a feminist. We can, however, say without a doubt that Jesus valued, loved and raised the status of women during his ministry. Over and over again, Jesus’ words, actions and teachings reveal to us how he wanted to show the equality of women to men in God’s created order. He repeatedly showed that women have no less inherent value than a man. And in his culture that would have been more than shocking.
And though that doesn’t solve the issue of roles for women (or men), I do believe it’s vitally important to note that whatever role we have, there is an innate, God-given equality between genders, as well as social classes, nationalities, political parties and any other lines we use to divide ourselves. I pray we find ways to reach across those lines in love. God bless.