‘Women shouldn’t have rights’ Evaluate this statement. (12 marks)

Supporters of the statement would say that women are less important than men as they are not as powerful and it is their natural role to be submissive. St Paul in the Bible writes, ‘women should remain silent in the churches,’ which means that in Christianity women do not have the right to engage in debate about religion or politics. It has also led to Catholics banning women from becoming leaders within the Church. This supports the view that men should have more rights than women i.e. to become a priest.

On the other hand, rejecting views can be supported by teachings from the Bible such as ‘there is neither Jew nor Gentile, salve nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. The quote actually mentions gender and is essentially saying there is no difference in rights between a man and a woman. This may lead some Christians such as Anglicans to support women having equal opportunities and rights to men, such as being allowed to train as a priest.

Another view to support the statement would be to say that although men and women are equal, there are certain rights that just aren’t appropriate for a woman because it is not her role. For example, in Muslim tradition it is the man’s job to support their family financially, whereas a woman should take the role of taking care of the family. Sometimes if the family has a lot of children and perhaps elderly or disabled relatives, it would be neglecting her duties for the mother to then take a full time job. So it could be argued that she doesn’t have the right to work when this means neglecting the role that God wanted her to play within the family.

On the other hand, Islam teaches that women and men, though they have separate roles, should be equal and have the same rights. One teaching which supports this is ‘people are equal like the teeth of a comb’ which is from a Hadith of the prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This means that no matter someone’s sex, they should be seen as of equal value. Therefore many Muslims would not support the statement.

In conclusion, I feel that in the 21st century there is no justifiable argument, religious or otherwise, to support the statement above. Even religious teachings which seem to suggest males are more important do not rule out the rights of women altogether. Therefore I disagree with the statement.