

SESSION 15: WOMAN: A DEFINITION

I. Core contributions of men and women from the scriptures and from history

A. Men are the bearers of destiny. As men go so goes society.

1. Genesis 2-3: The man was created by God with a unique social and spiritual leadership in mind.

2. Defection from this leadership causes trouble not just for the man, but for everyone.

B. Women are the nurturers of life. Where that core contribution is honored society prospers.

1. 1 Timothy 2:15: The woman was created by God with a unique ability to give and nurture life.

2. "Women are happiest not when given position and power, but when the creative contributions of the maternal role are upheld." -Margaret Mead

II. A Real Woman is One Who...

A. Rejects deception

Refuse the world's definition of significance

Emotions v. Truth

Independence v. Interdependence

Outer v. Inner Beauty

B. Empowers others

Embrace God's design for relationships

Head and Helper

Nurture for Control

C. Shapes future generations

A Word to "Stay At Home" Moms: Caution

A Word to "Older" Women: Titus 2:3-5

D. Looks to the greater reward-God's reward

John 10:10

1 Corinthians 2:9

BIBLICAL WOMANHOOD

Discussion Questions:

1. From our Reflection Assignment last week: Describe a recent incident in which you were dependent, manipulative, or controlling. List some ways you could have handled the situation differently. What would have been a more “helpful” response?
2. In the past, what have you thought would make you “significant”? In what areas of your life do you find it particularly difficult to “reject deception.”
3. Have you thought of “independent” and “dependent” as the only two choices for how women relate to men? How does the idea of “interdependence” change things?
4. Apart from being mothers, how can women “shape future generations”?
5. What does it look like for you to have the freedom to nurture? What might God be leading you to change so that you can experience more freedom in order to influence the younger generation?
6. What does it mean to you to expect a reward from God for following His design? How does that look?

Reflection Assignment:

What are some ways you can begin to live out God’s definition of Womanhood?

How can you:

Reject Worldly Temptations for Significance

Embrace God’s Design for Relationships

Nurture the Next Generation

Expect the Greater Reward – God’s Reward

BIBLICAL WOMANHOOD

Passage to Ponder this week: Philippians 2:3-4

Week Fifteen Summary:

As we move from the Genesis narrative that we have been looking at the last two weeks, we can come to a conclusion on what the core, or primary, contributions God designed men and women to make in society. Men are the bearers of destiny. God created men with a unique wiring for leadership and calls men to be the social and spiritual leaders in the family and in society. However, defection from this leadership spells trouble not just for men, but for everyone. Women are the nurturers of life. Women thrive in societies where this core contribution is honored. History as well as the physical and social sciences all agree that women have are wired to nurture life: biologically, emotionally and relationally. And it is our greatest joy as women. As we understand the core contribution that women are to make in society, we can then find a biblical **Definition of Womanhood**. That's what we started "unpacking" this week.

A Real Woman is One Who...

Rejects Deception

- Women must be truth seekers. We must fight our desire to consider emotions as truth and take a critical look at the ideas that the world gives us by taking it to the standard of Truth found in God's Word. And then we must go with Truth.
- The world tells us that independence from men makes us significant. It implies that the only alternatives to independence are needy dependence on "a man to take care of me" or a worthless, ignorant doormat for "a man to take advantage of me." But the Bible paints a beautiful picture of relational *interdependence* for humanity. Men and women each have needs that can only be met by the other.
- Furthermore, the world tells us that women get their significance and their value from their outward appearance—outer beauty. But the Word tells us the value of a woman comes from the quality of her character—inner beauty.

Empowers Others

God created orderly structure in the Marriage Relationship: Man as the Head and Woman as the Helper. When we choose to recognize, embrace, and work within this structure we are becoming the women God intends us to be.

Shapes Future Generation

Women are specially equipped to Nurture. This means so much more than giving birth and raising children. "REAL" women of God take seriously the honor and responsibility to raise up the next generation of God worshipers, pouring into the lives of others as mothers, grandmothers, aunts, mentors, and disciple-makers.

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BIBLICAL WOMANHOOD

Looks to the Greater Reward, God's Reward

Following God's design and living within His plan works so much better than anything we could come up with on our own. It is not a guarantee of any particular outcome, however. Some women never marry or have children. Some have husbands who never step up to their roles as men. We can't follow God merely to get a good outcome, like a divine self-help program. We must follow God because He is God, and trust Him to reward us in His way at His time. For women this is enough.