

SESSION 21: MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS

I. Challenges Our Daughters Face

- A. The Challenge of an Alternate Prime Pursuit vs. the Biblical Pursuit

- B. The Decline of Feminine Skills and Values Training

- C. The Legacy of the Absent Mom

II. Contributing to Our Daughters

- A. Moms are the primary feminine role models for their daughters.
 - You must examine your values and attitudes because you will pass them on.

- B. We must be our daughters' primary teacher /discipler.
 - A Real Woman is one who ...
 - Rejects deception.
 - Empowers others.
 - Shapes future generations.
 - Looks to the greater reward - God's reward.

- C. Moms should participate in ceremonies that celebrate true femininity for their daughters.

BIBLICAL WOMANHOOD

Discussion Questions:

1. From our Reflection Assignment last week:
 - a. If you are not a mother, what have you learned about the men in your life and the importance of their mothers?
 - b. If you are the mother of daughters, what do you need to teach them from this lesson?
 - c. If you are the mother of a son, what can you do to help your son become the man God intends him to be? What challenges will you face?
2. In one or two words, describe your relationship with your mother.
3. How has your mother shaped your view of femininity?
4. If an alien observer was studying “human women,” and you were the only specimen, what would the description be like?
5. As you examine your personal attitudes and values, what are you modeling to the young women in your life? (in the areas of beauty, friendships, men, etc.)
6. If you have a daughter, have you developed any special ways of celebrating the value of true womanhood with her? Do you have any ideas in mind?

For the remainder of our study the **Reflection Assignments** are combined into something called a **Womanhood Plan**. Take some time over the next couple of weeks to review the whole course and how it applies *in your life*. We’ve provided you with a worksheet to walk you through the process, but feel free to create any format for your “plan” that works for you.

Passage to Ponder this week: Titus 2:3-5

Week Twenty-one Summary:

Over the course of our study together, many of us have come to realize that the ideas we'd been carrying around about what it means to be a woman were misguided. We now realize that we face a number of challenges that make it difficult to embrace a Biblical view of femininity. First, *real* femininity is devalued by our culture. We, as a society, now consider careerism, self-advancement, independence, and competition to be the "Supreme Pursuit" for both men and women. Women who pursue domestic roles of nurturer/helper/caregiver are thought to be wasting their potential. Secondly, for those of us who wish to pursue a domestic focus, we face the challenge of finding training in the practical skills required. Most women enter adulthood with no idea of how to plan a menu, stick to a budget, clean a house, or manage a household. The "Home Economics" classes of the past are no longer politically correct. Those in our lives who knew how to do these things got the message that "any idiot" could do it, and so they hesitated to waste our time teaching us. But perhaps the biggest challenge many of us face as we looked for training in "feminine values" is the fact that the most obvious "trainers"—our own moms—simply weren't around. Either they were completely absent because of a divorce or a death, or they were unavailable because they themselves were busy pursuing their careers. You may have noticed that these challenges form a self-perpetuating cycle. It's been spinning this way for a couple of generations, gaining strength.

As mothers, we must recognize that all the challenges to femininity that we've faced, our daughters face to a greater degree. We have the opportunity to break the cycle, to help our daughters face their challenges and overcome them and to train them in Biblical Femininity.

Contributions We Bring to Our Daughters

- Mothers are the primary feminine **role models** for their daughters. Our children, especially our daughters, form their ideas about what women are like based on what we are like...what women do, based on what we do. This is a big responsibility. "Do as I say, not as I do," simply won't work. We must "walk the walk" if we want our daughters to do the same.
- Mothers are the primary **teachers and disciplers** for their daughters. We must also be able and ready to articulate Biblical Truth about God's design for men and women. "Because I said so" is just as weak a rationale now as it was when we were girls!
- Mothers can create and participate in **ceremonies** celebrating true femininity for their daughters. While the society at large may not value Biblical Femininity, we can find like-minded people in our community to participate with us on special occasions to create memories and elevate the feminine ideal to its proper, lofty place.

One last note: Whether you are a mother or not, younger women around you are starved for role models and mentors in the area of Biblical Femininity. No matter how "old" you are, there is someone younger than you who can benefit from your time and experience. (Two High Schoolers we know are mentoring a group of Elementary aged girls.) You need not have done everything "right." Sometimes "I wish I hadn't . . ." is a good place to start a conversation. Take a risk to nurture the next generation, bringing them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Who knows how many future generations will bless you for it?

Ceremonies to Celebrate True Femininity

From Dr. Catherine Hart Weber

Celebrating firsts and intentionally marking transitions are important landmarks in a girl's development. They are like building altars of remembrance to reflect back on. Celebrating with rituals and traditions has a significant impact on each stage of a girl's development, especially when her mother and father and other close family and friends are positively involved. (Gathering family and friends at significant moments affirms the positive events and phases of a girl's development, launching her into the next stage.)

Some of the more significant birthdays were 10, 13, 16, 18 and 21:

- 10 because you are now double digits.
- 13 because you are now a teenager.
- 16 because you can legally drive.
- 18 because you are now able to vote and have some adult privileges.
- 21 because you are usually considered an adult.

Besides birthdays, it is important to celebrate all firsts and special occasions in a girl's life, such as going off to school, getting your period (becoming a woman), going to your first dance, the prom, graduations and any other accomplishment or special occasion in their eyes.

You only pass by once, and these are landmarks of memories and opportunities to impact positively as each experience passes by. Stop and notice. Savor the moments. Celebrate with her. Bake a cake. Gather family and friends for a party. Give a card. Write a special note. Give a meaningful gift. Take her out for a special occasion. Take photos and videos. Make photo albums. Let her get dressed up — and get nails, hair and makeup done. Talk with her about each landmark. Listen to how it made her feel and what it means to her.

I [Dr.Weber] have realized over the years just how important it is that we listen to the hearts of our daughters, and get our clues from them, to set the pace and find what is most meaningful for celebrating rituals and marking moments — at the time. Imposing our expectations or ideals on marking the moments for our daughters is not the most loving response.

Be sensitive to your daughter's personality, her heart and what would be most meaningful to her. It doesn't matter what would be 'ideal,' what others have done, what your other daughters have done, what you did or what has been done for generations.

Marking the moment meaningfully will only be a true celebration to be remembered if it is meaningful to your daughter. As moms, we need to remember: It's not about us. It's about her. It's about marking the moments and milestones in her life journey.