

Session 5: Power of Family Dynamics

Key Principle: A crisis in the family creates a confused identity.

I. Different Family Structures

II. A Father's Influence

If Dad was There . . .

1. She is more likely to feel secure in being feminine.
2. She can more easily relate to men.
3. She is more likely to have a healthy marriage and sex life.

*If Dad was **Not** There . . .*

1. She may develop a personality that is shy, insecure, or anxious.
2. She may have difficulty bonding with a man in an intimate relationship.
3. She may become inappropriately self-assertive, angry, and even promiscuous.

III. A Mother's Influence

1. Daughters receive a clear value in being feminine from their moms.
2. Daughters receive a life interpretation from a trust-worthy source in their moms.
3. Daughters often develop their first life-long friendship in their moms.

BIBLICAL WOMANHOOD

Discussion Questions:

1. From our Reflection Assignment last week: Which of the Mixed Messages have affected *you*? What is the evidence of that in your life? What step did you identify to begin reshaping your thinking.
2. Was your father present or absent while you were growing up? If he was there physically, was he emotionally available and supportive?
3. How has his presence or absence affected your relationships with men?
4. List three attributes of your mother. How are you like her? How are you different?
5. What has been your reaction to the “messages” you received from your home of origin about what it means to be a woman?
6. What examples of femininity do you want to pass on the women and girls in your life that you have influence over?

Reflection Assignment:

Read Titus 2:3-5. List women you know who could be described by this passage. How have they influenced you? Do you welcome their influence or resist it?

List the women you are influencing. Are YOU a woman who could be described by this passage? What changes would you need to make in order become a woman of godly influence like this?

Passage to Ponder this week: Romans 3:10-12

Week Five Summary:

“The Apple Doesn’t Fall Far From the Tree” is a cliché that proves truer than most of us realize in our own lives. In the area of femininity and masculinity, what we believe and what we live out is hugely shaped by what was modeled for us in our earliest years by those adults closest to us--our parents. This is a good news/bad news kind of situation. For those of us who grew up in a family where Mom and Dad were both present, lovingly committed to each other, and related in a positive way to the kids, a biblical model of the relationship between men and women doesn’t seem too odd; it’s even desirable. But for those who grew up in homes where Mom or Dad was physically or emotionally absent (or abusive), it’s a very different matter.

As women, we learn how to relate to men based on how our fathers related to us. If that relationship was positive, we develop security in our femininity, learn to relate positively to men, and are more likely to have a healthy sexual relationship in our marriage. If a father is absent or worse, we tend toward one of two other paths: We may become shy, insecure, and anxious around men; or we may become inappropriately aggressive, angry, or even sexually promiscuous. Similarly, our relationships with our mothers also shape us as women. From our mothers, we receive signals about what it means to be feminine and whether “being a woman” is a good or a bad thing.

If for you, all this is “Bad News,” the Good News is that God himself promises to be the Father to the fatherless. And, He provides other “life messages” than the unspoken ones we learned as children, and other role models besides our earliest ones. God’s Word tells us of His good plans for us. Part of his plan for women involves nurturing relationships between older and younger women, regardless of their biological relationship.