

## **Session 8: Masculine Depravity**

### **I. Tendencies of Masculine Depravity**

- A. Men have a tendency to avoid domestic responsibility.(Genesis 3:6; Ephesians 5:25; 6:4)
  
- B. Men tend to rule wrongly over women and children.(Genesis 3:16; Luke 22:25-26)
  
- C. Men tend to get lost in careers and lose sight of their transcendent cause.(Genesis 2:15; 3:17-19)

### **II. Encouraging the Men in Your Life.**

- A. Respect their strengths and responsibilities and understand their struggles.
  
- B. Place responsibility for leadership on their shoulders.
  
- C. Let them figure it out.
  
- D. Pray.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. From our reflection assignment last week: Consider your current relational and circumstantial challenges and difficulties. How have you tried to deal with them in the past? Factoring in the possibility of depravity being true, indicating you have personal blind-spots and problems that come from inside rather than outside, how might you shift your approach?
2. Regarding the men in your life, does it make a difference to understand their struggles as something they share with other men? How so?
3. What are some things that women tend to do that actually “feed” male depravity? Why do we do these things?
4. Think of an area of life in which you struggle. In what ways do other people help you or harm you as you deal with this issue?
5. What is something you could *easily* do differently to help/encourage the men in your life in areas they are challenged? Is there anything you could do to help/encourage them that you would find really *hard*?

**Reflection Assignment:**

How have you seen these “tendencies of masculine depravity” demonstrated in the lives of the men you know? How have you (or other women around them) encouraged or discouraged nobler character in them?

**Passage to Ponder this week:** Luke 6:41-42

## **Week Eight Summary:**

Last week we saw that, in the words of an old joke, “We have met the enemy, and he is us.” That is to say, our biggest problems come from within our own hearts; they are the result of depravity. It is no good blaming others. We must take responsibility for ourselves. In fact, we are about to spend several weeks examining how we *women* are impacted by depravity—our particularly feminine “battlefields.”

That being said, understanding how depravity affects the men around us is valuable, not so that we blame them or shame them but so that we can live considerately with them. Women have the ability, as we interact with men, to feed and exaggerate their sinful tendencies; however, we also have the ability to encourage the best in them. For that purpose, this week we examine the following “tendencies of masculine depravity”:

- **Men have a tendency to avoid domestic responsibility.** That is to say, they gravitate toward passivity in their relational interactions within the home.
- **Men tend to rule wrongly over women and children.** Rather than provide servant-leadership, they can lean toward using their superior physical and social strength to dominate those they are called to serve and protect.
- **Men tend to get lost in careers and lose sight of the transcendent cause given to them by God.**

Remember, these are tendencies, not rules. Different men will struggle in different areas to differing degrees. And, this is not an exhaustive list of all sin areas that plague all men. Still, keeping these in mind enables us to *help* rather than *hinder* the men in our lives in their struggles. Here are a few suggestions:

**Respect their strengths and responsibilities and understand their struggles.** Just as women thrive in an atmosphere of love, men thrive in an atmosphere of respect. Recognition of the burden they carry, as well as how God has equipped them for the task, tends to give them courage to face the challenge. Understanding how they struggle can increase our respect for them when they persevere and can give us gracious attitudes toward them when they fall short.

- **Place responsibility for leadership on their shoulders.** Letting men know that “we are counting on them” calls them to unforeseen heights of self-sacrifice and depth of character.
- **Let them “figure it out.”** Like us, men are on a journey in understanding and carrying out the responsibilities God has given them. Like us also, they will stumble and trip in that journey. We can help them by resisting the urge to “fix them” and giving them the space and our cooperation to figure it out.
- **Pray.** Our men are engaged in a spiritual battle against the World, the Enemy and against their own Depravity. We cannot underestimate the power of prayer on their behalf. Rather than give way to fear and attempt to take control, we do better to trust the One who is truly in control—God.