

Session 9: BATTLEFIELD - NURTURE FOR CONTROL

What Depravity Specifically Means for Women

Battlefield #1: Women have a tendency to trade nurture for control.

- I. Born to nurture

- II. Struggle for control

- III. Avoiding the Jezebel and Ahab Syndrome

- IV. Scriptural Encouragement

Discussion Questions:

1. From our Reflection Assignment last week: 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?
2. In what ways have you observed women to be gifted/wired to nurture the human race? What are some of the nuances of female nurture in your unique context (generational, cultural, racial, economic, etc.)? What are the benefits of this female capacity in the lives of others?
3. In your view, why might being nurtured appeal to men? How can nurture help them or hurt them?
5. How have you seen or experienced nurture become a means of control?
6. What are situations in your life (i.e., worklife, marriage, parent/child relationship, extended family, friendships) where you could tend to trade nurture for control?

**We are greatly indebted to Robert Lewis of Fellowship Bible Church for the basic ideas of this lesson.*

Reflection Assignment:

Look for evidence of your desire to **Trade Nurture for Control**. For example, do you find yourself “doing everything”—maybe because others “won’t do it” or “don’t do it right”? Are you regularly frustrated by other’s resistance to your plans or your advice?

Passage to Ponder this week: Proverbs 14:1

Week Nine Summary:

Most of us know people with strong personalities. These folks have great strengths of character which can be powerfully positive traits but, when misapplied, can become their greatest weaknesses. For example, a visionary, dynamic leader can damage relationships when *people* get in the way of her direction. Depravity works that way. It takes our most positive potentials and bends and twists them until they do damage rather than good.

One of the greatest strengths of women, in general, is our capacity to nurture. Not only are we biologically equipped to bear and sustain life, we are emotionally and psychologically wired to care for the people around us—whether we are mothers or not. We are the givers of life, the cultivators of family, and the preservers of relational ties. What a hugely valuable contribution!

Unfortunately, depravity has introduced a dark side to our nurturing nature. We can tend look at those we love, and we think we KNOW what would be **good** for them. So, we sometimes launch campaigns to make that **good** happen. An almost irresistible urge can drive us to use our nurturing skills to manage (or manipulate) the people and circumstances around us. It's as if we are making a deal with the world, "I will take care of everything, and in exchange, I expect to be in charge." Others may respond in one of two ways: They may let us make all the decisions and "take care of everything," in which case they lose our respect. Or, they may resist us, either actively or passively, in which case they frustrate or anger us. It's a "no-win" situation for them *and* us. How does that work in your life?