



Daughters of the King

*A Biblical apologetic
on the role of women*

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INTRODUCTION

Thanks for picking up this booklet, for being interested in living biblically as a woman. As you study God's glorious Word on this topic, you'll see that role differences are of primary importance to Him. If you've embraced the gospel and are striving to live as a biblical woman, role differences are a central issue for you, rather than secondary or minor.

The attempt to obliterate role differences has exploded around us. More than ever, we must joyfully and boldly model and teach the biblical call to womanhood and the biblical definition of femininity. The aim of this booklet is to help us speak and shine God's higher agenda, to make a difference by influencing our culture with God's Word.

Living according to God's will is an impossible task on our own. We must first pray that our hearts will be broken by the conviction of our sin, and then empowered by the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ to be crushed into submission to God's authority over us. Rules and regulations will never accomplish the task of living according to God's Word. It takes a love relationship with Jesus Christ (John 14:21). That love relationship grows as the humbling pain of confession crashes into our self-righteousness (revealing it for the hypocrisy that it is), and through repentance we are

reconciled to the Almighty. That's the only way we will ever be holy and joyful examples who influence disciples for Christ.

“O.K.,” you might say, “but what about my personal dreams and goals, or the dreams and goals of my daughter? Shouldn't I be true to myself?” Precious Daughter of the King, have you considered God's goals and God's glory? Do you want to glorify God with your life? That's what He created you for (Isaiah 43:7). Living for God's glory demands raw obedience. When we surrender not because we want to but because we are obeying the God of the universe, we stop our frustrated searching and chasing. We come to the surprise of unexpected satisfaction, fulfillment, and peace. No more desperate striving to be in control. We begin as “Daughters of the King” by admitting self focus and self absorption, and seeking biblical truth about womanhood.

This booklet is designed so that each chapter has an explanatory section, followed by discussion questions to assist you in relevant conversation for your discipleship relationships. For discipleship, you may choose to read the chapter together with your Christian friend, or independently, but either way, read the Scriptures and discussion questions together. Each chapter also has a page for personal journaling. Journaling provides the wonderful benefit of reminding you, years later as you work through this booklet with another young disciple of Christ, what God's wonderful grace has worked in you.

Your temptation will be to neglect confession of sin... to simply try harder or to act as if you're already living life God's way. It's impossible to try hard enough or to do roles biblically without the confession of sin and repentance. None of us are exempt from the curse. If we say we're not guilty, we lie and the truth is not in us. Our hope is not in pulling up our feminine bootstraps and just “doing it.” Our hope is in the blood that Jesus shed, by which we are forgiven and cleansed from unrighteousness *if and when* we confess our sin (1 John 1:6-10). So, at the end of each

chapter, when you have the chance to journal confession of your sin, go ahead and write it down, then openly share it with your discipleship partner.

The price for sin is completely paid by Christ's blood, but sin doesn't just go away by itself. Romans 8:13 tells us to put to death the deeds of the body by the Spirit. As we confess, we experience God's love through His forgiveness (John 3:16, 1 John 1:9). Repentance (change of thinking) is then granted to us by God.

Here's the Biblical way to deal with sin:

1. Recognize the desires that led to the **conception** of sin (James 1:12-15).
2. Agree with the Holy Spirit's **conviction** of sin (John 16:8-11).
3. Make an open **confession** of sin, and receive God's forgiveness (1 John 1:5-10).
4. **Change** by putting off the old, renewing the mind, and putting on the new (Romans 12:1-2)
5. **Convince** others of the repentance God has granted us (2 Corinthians 7:11).

Since dealing with sin is a lifestyle, not a one-time event, we've included this biblical outline again on the following pages, with space for you to journal. Please feel free to make copies.¹

I pray that this booklet will be a tool to help us apply our own lives to God's Word, and then make disciples. When we live for God's glory as women, we will radiate Christ's inner beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit. As we constantly mold our own lives to His glorious will in the power of the Holy Spirit, God will give us grace to disciple others who also live for His glory, in obedience to Jesus' command in Matthew 28:19-20.

So keep reading to find out what God's word teaches about being a woman who is a "Daughter of the King." It's the life of satisfying and fulfilling joy.

~Ruth Froese

DEALING WITH SIN

CONCEPTION

James 1:12-15

What am I desiring more than glorifying God, so much that I'm willing to sin to get it? _____

CONVICTION

John 16:8-11

How is the Holy Spirit convicting me of sin, righteousness (WWJD), and judgment? _____

CONFESSION

1 John 1:5-10

What is my specific confession of sin to God and the people it has affected? _____

CHANGE *Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 4:21-24, Col. 3:5-17*

What do I have to **put off**? _____

What Scriptures will **renew my mind** regarding this specific sin? _____

What new biblical actions must I **put on**? _____

CONVINCING

2 Corinthians 7:11

How will I convince others that I am earnest about changing? _____

How do I evidence that I am eager to clear myself of my sin and not just eager to clear myself of the consequences? _____

How much do I hate my sin, showing indignation toward it?

How do I show that I have a phobia to do it again, a fear of sinning again? _____

What is my longing? _____

Is there evidence that I have zeal to do what's right? If so what is it? _____

Am I upset if someone mentions my sin, or do I humbly agree that it was wrong? _____

Would those closest to me say that they are convinced I have truly changed? _____

1. WHAT IS GOD'S HIGHER AGENDA FOR WOMEN IN GENERAL?

Many times our lives reflect that we don't trust God. Influenced by our culture's portrayal of how to live as women, and by the way our mothers lived, we do what feels logical and safe. Following God's higher agenda for women doesn't feel safe or seem logical if common sense is our criteria. However, for God's Word to be absolute truth in our lives, we must embrace and obey what the Bible teaches about womanhood.

The truth is, it's not safe to trust Satan. Yet so often we step out on the dance floor with him. That's what we're doing when we allow our minds to think about how to do it ourselves rather than let our husbands lead, or manipulate to get our own way, or disrespect our earthly fathers, or criticize/complain about church leadership. Choose instead to dance with the King and know the joy that only a "Daughter of the King" can experience!

God loves you so much that He made a way to redeem you, through Jesus Christ's blood. When you recognize that you are dying in your sin, you will confess your sins and cry out to God. Confessing your sin means you

agree with God about your sin. Sin is what separates you and Holy God. Jesus' blood pays the penalty for your sin and that redemption reconciles you with God. Those whom God redeems know Him and walk in joyful relationship with Him, empowered by His Spirit, according to what He has revealed in His Word.

The results of living according to what makes sense rather than confessing sin, are selfishness, narcissism, and depression. It makes sense that the high rate of depression among North American women parallels the growth of a strong feminist culture and media mindset.¹ Sadly, this is true not only in our communities, but also in most churches. In this chapter, we'll take a look at what God clearly communicates to women. Rather than riling up to say roles are not important to God, let's determine to surrender to His glorious higher agenda.

Spiritual Equality & Role Differences

Men and women share spiritual equality. Genesis 1:27 states that both men and women are created in God's image. 1 Peter 3:7 and Galatians 3:28 teach us that men and women are equally recipients of God's grace. What does it look like for men and women to share spiritual equality? We've been deceived to think that equality is about equal rights and roles. Not true! Spiritual equality means men and women can receive God's grace—by confessing sin, then being granted repentance and forgiveness. The prayer that God hears is, "Be merciful to me, a sinner" (Luke 18:13-14).

God's higher agenda is about spiritual equality *and* role differences. In God's perfect pre-fall creation, He ordained role differences. Men were given the command to be in charge in Genesis 2:15-16. This role for men reverberates throughout Scripture and is the way in which men are to reflect God's image. Women were created as companions and helpers in Genesis 2:18. The husband/wife relationship is given priority over the parent/child relationship in Genesis 2:24. The role for women is to help

their husbands, putting that relationship above all others, as God's perfectly created avenue for reflecting His image. When sin came in, our perspective on God's gloriously perfect creation of roles was dismally overcast.

A Glimpse into the Garden of Eden

Role differences is something we protest, evidenced by our choice of living under the curse of sin. Three things are clearly stated regarding roles and relationships in the perfection of God's creation:

1. Man was put in charge - given the job to tend and keep the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15-16).
2. Woman was created to be man's companion and helper (Genesis 2:18).
3. The husband/wife relationship takes precedence over the parent/child relationship (Genesis 2:24).

These three things about relationships are important enough to God to be included in the few things we know about the Garden of Eden. God let us know who was given responsibility, He let us know who was created to help whom, and He let us know which relationship has priority over any others.

How fascinating that the content of the curse, brought about by sin, lines up with these three glimpses into pre-fall relationships. The content of the curse focuses exactly on the roles God ordained in pre-fall perfection. For women, the maternal and marital roles are cursed (Genesis 3:16). Women will struggle with the pain of the maternal role, far beyond the moment of childbirth. When children become more important to a woman than her husband, or she chooses to worry about her children, she is living under the curse. Women will also struggle with striving to control their husbands. While "professional helper roles" are not a problem for women (ie. a nurse to a doctor, a secretary to her boss, etc.), the "wife helper role" is one we rile up against. The feminist agenda plays right into Satan's hand, soliciting

women to choose to live under the curse.

In the Garden of Eden, the Creator of relationships set in motion the pattern for harmonious interaction between man and woman. It's one of the ways men and women are created in God's image, an image clearly consisting of role differences (Genesis 1:27). The Architect/ Father/Leader is the One with the plan, and the Servant/Savior/Helper carried out the plan. The husband is created to lead and the wife is created to help. Any other pattern not only breaks harmony, but worse, it does not reflect God's image.

The Curse

In God's plan, why wasn't the only punishment death? Why did He include the curse? Because to live outside of the roles God put in place is death. Why did Jesus come and die on the cross? To conquer death (Romans 6:1-10). Why do so many of the issues addressed by the New Testament epistles focus on how to harmoniously live out our roles? Because Jesus said, "You shall know truth, and the truth shall set you free" (John 8:32). Yes, we are free from the penalty of death when we confess our sins and receive the forgiveness of the blood of Jesus Christ. We are also given grace to help us live abundant lives here on earth with relationships lived in victory over the curse. It's evident from all the focus and attention this topic receives in the New Testament that it won't be automatic, but rather a struggle (1 Corinthians 11&14, Ephesians 5:22-25, Colossians 3:18, 1 Timothy 2, 1 Peter 3:1-6). The good news is that although it is a struggle, we can recognize and rise above it when we walk in the Spirit in obedience to God's Word (Galatians 5).

As humans, we *naturally* default to thinking and responding according to the curse. However, those of us who know God are not simply natural, but *spiritual*, and God's Word is no longer moronic or foolish to us. His Holy Spirit renews our minds through Scripture, teaching us how to train according to God's higher agenda. Thus, we can consider

role differences according to the way God created us, rather than according to the curse.

Abundant life vs. Cursed life

How can we live abundantly, rather than cursedly? In Genesis 3:16a, the motherhood role is cursed. What does it look like when a woman chooses to live under the motherhood role curse? The bringing forth of children that is talked about in this verse has greater meaning than simply the moment of giving birth. It includes the entire maternal role that spans the life of the child. For women choosing to live under the curse, pain in child bearing is not limited to the birthing bed. When we worry about our children instead of providing nurture and training appropriate to their age, we are making that choice. When we have closer companionship with our children than we do with our husbands, we are making that choice. When we help our grown children more than we help our husbands, or try to continue mothering after the children have left the house, we're choosing to live under the mother role curse.

There's a popular saying, "Mothers hold their children's hands for a while, their hearts forever." What's wrong with that statement? Compare it with Genesis 2:24-25, which says our children are to leave and cleave and we are to be in a close intimate relationship with our husbands. Are we holding our kids' hearts or our husband's heart? When holding our kids' hearts overrides our desire to be a companion and helper to our husband, we are choosing to live under the curse. So let's ask ourselves, is being a companion helper to our husbands the first priority in our lives? When we make the choice to live under the mother role curse we shouldn't wonder why our marital relationships are so difficult.

In Genesis 3:16b, the wife role is cursed. What does it look like when women choose to live under the wife role curse? We're choosing to live under it when we try to control

our husband, or when we get hurt because our husband doesn't seem to understand our priorities (a sure sign that our priorities are more important to us than our husband's). When we think or say, "My husband doesn't care about my priorities," we should recognize that we don't care about *his*. When a woman doesn't celebrate, promote, and protect her husband's leadership in their home, she's choosing to live under the wife role curse.

As women, we will have to answer for not being the helpers God created us to be, while men will have to answer for not taking the lead. Although Eve is the one who was deceived and told Adam to eat the fruit, Adam is the one God held responsible. Although Sarah is the one who told Abraham to bear a child with Hagar, Abraham was held responsible for the decision. Oh Eve, that you would have stepped back and let Adam take the lead in the conversation with the serpent. Oh Sarah, that you would have not set the ball into motion of unrest in the Middle East with Ishmael's birth!² Do you see what happens when we defy the role for which we were created, and take control instead? It truly is a tragedy.

Imitators of God

On the flip side, when we embrace role differences, we can imitate the unmistakable character of God. Throughout Scripture we see God showing us role differences in who He is: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When we reflect His image, we glorify Him. God the Father is the Architect, Planner, and Leader. Jesus is the obedient Servant, Creator, and Savior, according to the Father's plan. The Holy Spirit is the Convictor, Helper, and Comforter. Jesus never usurped the Father's authority. His Spirit does not attempt to put a different plan in motion. They do not step outside of their roles. First Corinthians 11:3 teaches that when a wife responds to her husband as his submissive helper, she imitates Jesus in how He responded to God. John 5:19, 8:28-29, and 12:50 reveal that Jesus did not say or do anything of His own, perfectly submitting to the Father according to His

role. Don't be fooled into thinking there is weakness or lesser value in submission. Only a fool would describe Jesus as weak or of lesser value than the Father.

Obeying God

Not only are role differences emphasized in the perfection of creation prior to sin, cursed in sin's ghastliness, and a reflection of God's character, but they are also God's clear command to the church.

Often, New Testament writers begin their section of practical advice regarding harmonious relationships with the command to women to submit to their husbands (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18). It is impossible to believe that the Bible is God's Word and yet explain the principle of role differences as being a cultural issue for the New Testament church only. Have we been so blinded by what is accepted in our culture that we consider the commands of the New Testament to be relevant for that culture only? First Timothy 2:13-14 makes it clear that role differences are a universal principle rooted in the perfection of God's creation, not in culture.

Not only is the New Testament full of commands regarding the role of women in the home and church, the Old Testament shows us example after example of women who chose obedience to God's higher agenda for women, in the context of a variety of cultures (ie. Deborah, Ruth, Esther).

When we embrace role differences, we reflect God's character, we respect God's pre-fall standards, and we obey God's commands for His glory and our good. Let's allow God to write us into His story as overcomers by His grace in the power of His Spirit. Let's be quick to confess our sin, and rejoice as "Daughters of the King" who celebrate rather than reject role differences.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read the following verses, and answer the questions that follow.

1. **Genesis 1:27** ~ What does this verse teach about how men and women are created?

2. **1 Peter 3:7** ~ Of what are both men and women recipients?

3. **Luke 18:13-14** ~ What do both men and women equally have the right to pray?

4. **Genesis 2:15-16** ~ What is Adam commanded to do in the Garden of Eden?

5. **Genesis 2:18** ~ What is Eve commanded to be when she is created?

6. **Genesis 2:15-16, 18** ~ What are the differences regarding the role of man in Genesis 2:15,16 and the role of woman in Genesis 2:18? How do these roles complement each other?
7. **Genesis 2:24** ~ Which relationship receives top priority from God?
8. **Genesis 3:16a** ~ After they sinned, what part of woman's role was cursed in **Genesis 3:16a**?
9. **Genesis 3:16b** ~ What part of woman's role was cursed in **Genesis 3:16b**?
10. **Genesis 3:13** ~ On whom did Eve blame her sin? What did she say happened to her?
11. **1 Timothy 2:14, 2 Timothy 3:6-7** ~ What are we in danger of as women?

12. **1 Corinthians 11:3** ~ Who are women to imitate in responding to their husbands as head of their home?
13. **John 5:19, 8:28-29, 12:50** ~ How did Jesus respond to His head, God the Father?

How does that relate to us as wives, in light of being taught that our relationship to our husbands imitate Jesus' relationship to the Father?

14. **Ephesians 5:22, Colossians 3:18** ~ What are wives commanded to do?

MY PERSONAL JOURNAL

1. I recognize that I have been deceived by the feminist agenda portrayed in the media and most churches. This deception has evidenced itself in my life in the following ways:
2. As a result of being deceived by Satan, today's culture, and my desires, I think women are more spiritual, more able to understand, and sometimes even more capable than men. I confess my specific sin of unbiblical thinking about men:

3. How has my thinking influenced my actions toward the men in my life? I confess the sin of interacting unbiblically with the men in my life:

4. In a short paragraph, here is my biblical understanding of my role as a woman:

2. WHAT IS GOD'S HIGHER AGENDA FOR SINGLE WOMEN?

It's a bit risky to put "single" or "married" in front of the word "woman." As a result, married women might ignore this chapter, and conversely, single women might ignore the chapter for married women. If married women ignore or deny what God says to single women, they'll have trouble, because nothing that's taught to a single woman gets negated by marriage. If single women ignore what God says to married women, it's akin to a teenager who struggles with obedience to authority because she didn't learn it as a toddler. The biblical mindset about roles is especially important for a single woman because not only will it greatly impact how she thinks and behaves, but it will also impact the lives of younger single women in the church who identify with her, look up to her, and imitate her more readily than a married woman.

As a child, I was blessed to be taught not only by my mother, but also by two dear aunts who lived together and

never married. Aunt Martha and Aunt Mary were my “other mothers. When at the age of 83, Aunt Martha passed away and the funeral stories were being told, my niece stood up to tell a little story. We all waited to see what would be said by this savvy girl with almost two decades of life’s experience behind her. She recounted that she had visited Aunt Martha and Aunt Mary a few weeks earlier, since she was at the ripe old age of nineteen and needed advice on being a spinster! Everyone laughed. Yet, the story made me think about and be grateful for the role my aunts played in teaching me to respect my husband, as I watched them sacrificially care for their blind father, respect their brother (my father), and show reverence to their church elders’ leadership.

Truly, the opening scenes of the battle regarding feminist thinking vs. godly thinking are staged miles away from the wedding altar. Each woman deals with this concept on her own battleground, her mind. How can a woman possibly develop biblical thinking, feeling, and behavior patterns with a mindset not developed according to God’s higher agenda? A single woman’s determination has colossal implications for not only her possible future marriage, but also for discipleship. All of us in the body of Christ are members of one another and the manner in which each one thinks, acts, and feels, impacts the others. Yes, the relationship of mother/daughter bears out the results of biblical or feminist thinking regarding role differences, but also the relationship of all other women in the church (married, widowed, divorced, or single) impacts younger women in either biblical or feminist thinking. A vivid example is the teen girl who was new to FFC, and sat in a Sunday School class where I was teaching on biblical role differences. Her comment was, “The women here are brainwashed.” In fact, she had bought into the feminist culture and believed it to be truth based on the example of older women in her life.

How can we as women operate as a team, united in our stand against the brainwashing of Satan through the

feminist agenda? Sometimes it's easier for me to understand team concepts when I think about my husband playing and coaching in the NHL. On the successful teams he coached, there were players who loudly supported the philosophy of the coaches by their words and actions. As women in the church, our coach is Jesus Christ, and we must loudly support a biblical view of role differences by our words and actions.

What is the biblical mindset for a single woman? Proverbs 31:10-31 was written to young men, telling them what to look for in a prospective wife. So, it's a really fitting passage to answer the above question. Single women who desire to think and live in line with God's higher agenda will work at becoming the woman God recommends a man to pursue. The "Proverbs 31 Woman" has been the brunt of many jokes regarding her attainment of seemingly impossible feats. This light-hearted scoffing does not negate our responsibility to consider the message of wisdom behind the passage.

Not only is Proverbs 31:10-31 a classic, timeless description of a woman who fears God, it is also a clever and ingenious work of art. Two types of poetry are employed. One is the familiar acrostic form of following the letters of the alphabet. The other is less familiar to us: the chaistic form that was familiar to ancient Hebrew and Egyptian cultures. It's a trick that was helpful in the memorization and recitation of longer works. Chaistic storytelling or poetry is commonly used in the Old Testament using layers in pyramidal form. An idea is expressed on the way up to the main thought or concept, then reworded on the way down. Thus, layers of ideas build to frame a main concept. When we pay attention to the literary form used, the main concept of Proverbs 31:10-31 echoes God's consistent higher agenda that woman live for the glory of man. At the end of this chapter you'll find an illustration to help you see the layers formed by the ideas that build up to the main concept... that a woman of value lives in such a way that her husband would

be respected.

There are six layers of ideas, or principles, in this poem that we must all embrace in order to understand how God wants us to live, whether we are single, married, divorced, or widowed. Can we give God glory without living according to His wisdom? Impossible. Choose to devote yourself to these six principles, with the God glorifying aim of being a woman who is able to help the man who marries her gain public respect.

1. **Fear of God.** You can see the first foundational layer of parallel ideas by reading Proverbs 31:10 & 30-31. These verses describe a woman who makes all decisions based on the fear of God, as a rare and precious find of great value. She fears and pleases God rather than trying to make an impression on people, with the result of good fruit and good works. A sure sign of not fearing God is when a woman tries to please people over pleasing God. When a woman focuses on past or present mistreatment by others, her fear of people is bigger than her fear of God. We must ask ourselves whether we focus on outer beauty, charm, and people pleasing more than we focus on fearing God (Job 28:28).
2. **Trustworthy.** Moving up the pyramid, the Proverbs 31 woman's fear of God leads to pleasing God through benefiting others. There's no doubt from Proverbs 31:11-12 & 28-29 that because of her fear of God, she will do for others only what brings them benefit. She helps her husband so that that he and her children find her worthy of praise. Notice her children do not praise her for her relationship with *them*, but because of the good she does for her *husband*. For the single woman, this mindset is developed and evidenced through appropriately benefiting those already in godly authority over her: her

father, biblical church leaders, teachers, employers, etc. A woman who speaks negatively of those she is under the authority of does not meet this qualification. A girl who is always upset with or complains about her teachers, her father, or her bosses, does not meet this qualification.

3. **Hard working.** Thirdly, the value of hard work is pointed out. Proverbs 31:13-19 & 27 are the major thrust of the poem, the largest layer in the pyramid. A list of hard-working verbs describe the activity of this woman, revealing that she *seeks, works, brings, rises, provides, considers, buys, plants, dresses, makes herself strong, and works to perceive*. Beyond the shadow of a doubt, she proves that she can take care of a household well. Her hard work does not flow out of perfectionist tendencies, but rather is a character quality that evidences her fear of God (Colossians 3:23) and brings benefit to others. It's clear to anyone that this hard working woman would benefit the man who pairs himself with her. An example can be seen in Ruth, the Moabite widow, who attracted Boaz's attention when he watched her hard at work gathering food (Ruth 2:5-18).
4. **Generous.** The next layer of parallel ideas on the pyramid is unified by the idea of openness— she opens her hand in generosity and opens her mouth to teach kindness (Proverbs 31:20 & 26). Woman living according to God's higher agenda will first give to the poor, then teach kindness to others. Both her actions and words evidence her fear of God as she benefits others and works hard to be able to offer kind generosity.
5. **Optimistic.** The pyramid continues with a layer of joy rather than a fear of the future. Women living by God's agenda do not fear snow or whatever the future holds. This woman smiles at

the future! She is prepared (Proverbs 31:21 & 25). Lazy women worry rather than prepare, while joyful women prepare and then smilingly anticipate what God will bring.

6. **Fiscally creative.** Near the top of the pyramid is the idea that this woman exhibits such creativity that others are attracted enough to buy what she offers. In Proverbs 31:22 & 24 we see that her home and clothing exude attractiveness and dignity—to the point that that she can market what she is good at. This woman’s life proves that she could live under the income of her husband and be of financial assistance to him, not hinder him.

Now we arrive at the main point (Proverbs 31:23). At first glance you may wonder why a verse about her husband in the gates is in the middle of a poem about a woman. When we understand the style of chiasmic writing, we realize that this verse is the major point of the poem. The values and habits of the woman who has been described would help her husband attain a good reputation among the wise elders of the land. First of all, she embraces God’s higher agenda because she fears God. She would speak highly of him, she would be able to care for her family under his income, she would work hard to take care of their home, and she would create an atmosphere of joy. The woman described in this poem has proven that she could be depended on to help her husband command respect.

These goals are the higher agenda of God for any woman. Are you a woman who fears God, benefits others, works hard, is kind and generous, exudes realistic joy, and capitalizes on her creative ability? The heart of the poem completes the foundation of the poem, as the fear of God leads to wisdom. Wisdom can be defined as the skill to live on this earth in relational harmony that is pleasing to God. Often jokes about the “Proverbs 31 Woman” (based on fear that we can never attain her successes) serve to overshadow the main point of the poem. Every one of us, whether

married or single, can evidence by our lives that we are the women God created us to be, suitable as a companion helper, in stark contrast to the women Proverbs 7 warns men to avoid.

Women can fear God. Do you work on fearing God more than you work on charm and appearance? Women can benefit others out of fear of God, not fear of man (1 John 4:7-12). Are you so focused on truly benefiting other people that you are praise-worthy? Women can work hard. Are you honing your skills to become excellent at whatever creative or studious endeavors will be necessary to keep a home well? Women can open their hands and mouths in kindness. Are your hands open with generosity to others? Do you open your mouth to teach kindness? Women can have no fear of the present or the future. Do you joyfully prepare, putting on joy, strength, and dignity? Or do you worry fearfully? Women can capitalize on their strengths. Are you creative to make your dignity attractive to others? Women can live in a manner that evidences respect of God and man. Women can fear God.

Answer the questions and check out the pyramid on the following pages regarding living out your life in the wisdom of fearing God. And please, don't skip the next chapter regarding God's higher agenda for married women.

Vs. 23 **P**ublic

Husband is respected
because of values/habits that
she has instilled in herself in prior to

Vs. 22 **O**nly
Makes her home and
clothing Only attractive.

Do I crea-
tively use
my gifts?

Vs. 21 **N**o fear
No fear—weather does not
frighten her for she has clothed
her family in preparation.

Am I pre-
pared and
cheerful?

Vs. 20 **M**eets
Opens her hand—to feed the
poor, she extends her kindness
to Meet physical needs.

Am I generous and
kind?

Vs. 13-19 **D**iligent, **E**ager, **F**eeds, **G**athers, **H**ones, **I**ntelligent, **J**udges,
Knows, **L**earns - Works Diligently at Difficult tasks, works with Eager and
Enthusiastic hands, rises early to Feed her family and household, Gathers what is
needed, Hones her skills & strength, Intelligently Identifies and Judges what is profitable,
stays up late if needed to acquire Knowledge, Learns how to keep home well.

Vs. 11-12 **B**eneficial, **C**omplete
Beneficial to her husband, she
Completes only what brings him gain
and is good for him.

Am I trustworthy, loyal, obedi-
ent, and good to others?

Vs. 10 **A**ppealing
Appealing beyond meas-
ure— this rare woman of
great value is hard to find.

Am I a God-fearer?

10-31

Respect

ed by his elders
at his wife disciplined
o marriage.

Vs. 24 **S**ells

What she makes is so attractive, she can and does Sell it.

Vs. 25 **T**omorrow

No fear—she smiles at Tomorrow for she is clothed with joy, strength, & dignity in preparation.

Vs. 26 **U**nderstands

Opens her mouth—Understands and wisely teaches kindness as she herself has extended it.

Am I a hard worker?

Vs. 27 **V**ery hard worker

Works Very hard at all her tasks, to meet the needs of the household without any idleness.

Vs. 28-29 **W**holly praiseworthy

Whole-ly worthy of the praise that her husband and children give her for the gain and good she has brought them.

Vs. 30-31 **XYZ**owie

Her fear of the Lord, fruit, and works are to be praised. This beats charm and beauty.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Proverbs 31:10, 30-31** ~ What should be the foundational factor for all of our decision making?
2. **Proverbs 31:11-12, 28-29** ~ What is the basis for being praised?
3. **Proverbs 31:13-19, 27** ~ What are some ways you can use these verbs to describe your work habits? (Seeks, works, brings, rises, provides, considers, buys, plants, dresses, makes herself strong, works to perceive, proves)
4. **Proverbs 31:20, 26** ~ How should we open our hands and our mouths?
5. **Proverbs 31:21, 25** ~ What should we do that will cause us not to worry, but to smile?
6. **Proverbs 31:22, 24** ~ What is evident about this woman's creativity?
7. **Proverbs 31:23** ~ How does this woman help her husband command respect?

MY PERSONAL JOURNAL

1. Am I more about impressing people or about pleasing God? How do I evidence that the foundation for all my decisions in life is the fear of God?
2. How am I doing good to others? Are there changes I need to make so that I benefit others...not to please them, but to please God?
3. How am I industrious? Do I rise early? What changes do I need to make to become disciplined? How am I growing in intelligence? How am I improving my strength and character?
4. What am I giving to the poor? To whom am I teaching wisdom and kindness?
5. How am I smiling at and planning for the future?

6. How does my clothing impact others? Is it modest and attractive?

7. Am I prepared to build my (future) husband's reputation by being able to live under the low income of a young man?

8. How does my life align with biblical role differences, evidenced by joyful stability?

3. WHAT IS GOD'S HIGHER AGENDA FOR MARRIED WOMEN?

Have you recognized that there's a fierce battle waging? The biblical order of priorities for women is under siege. It is being subtly, blatantly, loudly, quietly, deceptively, and viciously attacked. Satan began to undermine and undercut God's plan for relational harmony when he approached Eve the helper, instead of Adam, the leader (Genesis 3:1). Since that day, disguised as an angel of light, he has continued to use every method possible to shove aside God's game plan for marriage. The media brainwashing of the feminist agenda, our core desire to control our lives and the lives of those around us, and the overall deception regarding roles, are all part of Satan's vast scheme that has not only successfully infiltrated the world, but has also reached deep into the church.

Not only are we who follow Christ commanded to carry out our relationship with our husband by submitting to him and respecting him, but we are also commanded to teach other women to love their husbands first. We have already

taught our daughters by how we respond to our husbands. There's hope when we come to the point of mourning our sin in godly sorrow. Let's confess our sin where we haven't followed God's higher agenda and begin to submit to God today. Then we can model and teach our daughters and other younger women how to live for His glory!

Husband First

How shall we love our husband first? Loving him first is what God put in place in Genesis 2:24, where He established the husband/wife relationship as the priority over the parent/child relationship...before any children were born. Loving our husband first, and then our children, is still the plan for us (Titus 2:4). If we don't prioritize our lives accordingly, God's Word will be maligned. If God's plan for roles is not adhered to, the gospel is undermined. Do you grasp it? If you want to hold the gospel high, love your husband first. Ask your husband how you can put him first above your children. Ask him if he knows he's more important than your parents or your siblings. Ask him if he knows he's more important than your friends. Do you serve him first, then the kids, then others, then self last?

Children Next

Loving our children is our next priority and it must be put above keeping a home or holding down a job. What a bill of goods we've been sold, that presenting a perfect home or having a perfect career is of value over investing a short but intense period of time into the formation of a life—the life of our child. That's not saying there aren't women whose husbands ask for their help by working to bring home a paycheck. However, many women are the ones setting the living standard so high that it requires them to work. If you truly love your husband first, and consider yourself as his helper rather than the leader, then ask him how *he* would like that to look. You might find that he would be grateful if your lifestyle would fit under his

paycheck. It seems to me that every woman who loves her children can figure out a way, under her husband's leadership, to be the primary nurturer and influencer for at least their first six years. That's a God given, honorable career, the best you'll ever have. You'll never look back and regret not receiving paychecks, but you will look back and regret that you didn't take time with your children, especially when they were under the age of six.

God taught Eve the priority of her relationship with Adam before they had any children (Genesis 2:24). Proverbs 31:1-31 is all about a woman benefiting her husband, not about a woman being a wonderful mother. The children do praise her, but it's not because of her relationship with them, it's because of how she benefits her husband. Have you thought about the importance of teaching your children that your husband comes before them? The way you love them best is by living in the manner that best assures them that your relationship with their father is solid. Women who put their husbands above their children build loyalty to their husband in their children. How can we build loyalty? It'll happen when we never speak of things he has not done, and when we support his goals for them and his discipline of them.

In our home, tidy rooms was not my first priority for the boys, but it was important to my husband. It wasn't until they were teens that I realized my sin in not prioritizing my husband's goal. From that time until they moved out of the house, I had to work very hard to prioritize his desires, and found myself giving consequences to young men twice my size for rooms not kept tidy. If only I had trained them according to my husband's priorities when they were younger! When you choose the areas in which you exert the most energy in teaching and training your children, put yourself under your husband's headship by teaching and training according to *his* priorities. We'll address this issue of husband's priorities in a later chapter when we consider some of the

problems that enter in when we don't live according to God's higher agenda.

For years, my husband conducted a weekly Bible study with a group of women in a senior's home, all above the age of 85. He found it interesting that they would talk at great length about the children they had raised who were walking with the Lord, however, their rebellious children were never spoken of. This bears out 1 Timothy 2:15 about children whose mothers have taught them to be faithful, loving, and sanctified, and who have learned self-control. Do we love our children enough to make this investment in their lives? If we prioritize teaching them the Word of God, but aren't putting ourselves under the spiritual headship of our husbands and being consistent with his discipline, we are living in hypocrisy. Such a mother is not loving her kids, she is setting them up for confusion.

Home is a Haven for Hubby

Rather than thinking about how *we'd* like to put our husbands first, let's think about how he likes to be put first. One way we can put him first is by making home a place he likes to walk into, a place where he can relax—a haven of rest. I learned this the hard way one Saturday morning when Bob had an early meeting from which he would return just before lunch. That morning I had foolishly determined to make lasagna for several large families. This culinary venture had to be sandwiched in between jostling four boys to and from hockey practices, and hosting a drum lesson in our home. I was quite comfortable with the level of chaos caused by sweaty and stinky hockey equipment strewn about, loud and incessant pounding on drums, a hallway piled with dirty laundry waiting its turn in the washer, and kitchen counters strewn with breakfast dishes, pasta pots, and various concoctions necessary for lasagna—but, our home was anything but a haven of rest when Bob walked in looking for a little peace and quiet. I failed him miserably that day, and began to learn to prioritize putting him first.

Prioritize his entry through the doorway by creating the type of atmosphere that *your* man likes to come home to. It'll look different for every man, so learn your husband's definition of the type of home he'd like to come home to. Most men will be more about function than form, so think about what he likes to do when he comes in and make your home function to that end. Many a mistress has successfully supplanted a wife by learning to create the environment that a man craves.

Rejoice in The Lord

Don't keep it a secret that you are rejoicing in the Lord (Philippians 4:4)! Do you like to be around someone who complains, worries, and frets; or around someone who makes you laugh? The one who makes the moment fun for others is the one people like to be around. Men are drawn to a peaceful place where they are not being nagged. A smile will always be found much more attractive than a frown.

Think about the time you spend with your husband, in the context of joy. How can you intentionally relax, show affection, and enjoy your husband? If we are worrying and fretting, not only are we sinning, we're also making it hard for him. Putting him first, above the cares of the world, means we will know his needs and joyfully minister to him.

One of the statistically proven predictors of divorce is when a husband with negative emotions is consistently responded to by his wife with her equally negative emotions.¹ If you as a wife always choose to respond to negativity with a positive emotional response, you have the chance to move your marriage towards being happier and more stable.

Discreet, Sensible, Prudent, Gracious, Good Judgment

Do you spend less than your husband earns or gives you to spend? In our culture, this is an area where many

women don't show respect to their husbands. It's what the woman described in Proverbs 31:10-31 was so good at. Maybe one reason she is so often laughed at as an unattainable goal is because we fall to the temptations of competitive standards of materialism and beauty, such as what we see in magazine and television advertisements.

When we spend more than our husband earns, not only are we making him feel inadequate, we are hindering rather than helping him. If you spend more than can be fully paid when each credit card bill arrives, cut up your plastic. If you're an over-spender, ask your husband how much money he has for the necessities you are responsible to purchase, put that money into designated envelopes and when they are empty, don't buy *anything*, and *don't* complain to him that you've already spent what he gave you. Let God discipline you, and provide for you, as you express your daily needs to God. This is what Jesus commanded in the Lord's prayer. Then, the next time your husband gives you cash, ask a friend who does live under her husband's income to teach you how it's done.

Chaste, Pure, Honorable

Are you modest in public, but a "Song of Solomon" woman with your husband in private? Do you aggressively minister to him sexually? Do you know exactly what he likes? Or are you so caught up in your own emotional desires or feelings that you put yourself above him?

The Bible devotes an entire book to the importance of sensuality in marriage (Song of Solomon). 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 says it's our job to protect our husbands sexually. If you've bought into the lie that less sex is spiritual, you've been sadly deceived. The reality is that more sex for a married couple is more spiritual (Genesis 2:25; Proverbs 5:19; Song of Solomon, 1 Corinthians 7:1-7). Taking good sexual care of your man is your spiritual service of worship (Romans 12:1). And if you try to define how often that happens, you are a controlling woman. If you are balking at this, you're likely living in sin and need to confess that

you've made yourself god of your husband's sex life. Let's begin to think biblically about what God created for two married people to enjoy, and what God called "very good".

If you don't enjoy sex, choose to make it enjoyable for your husband, because God commands you to.² As you obey God, you will enjoy the enhanced relationship with the Son and the Father (John 14:21), and based on the experience of many women, you'll likely begin to enjoy something new between you and your husband. You may find it interesting to note that women who don't enjoy sex are women who do not live in submission to their husbands. So, here's an idea if you're failing in this aspect of life. Ask your husband to tell you one area in which he would like you to submit to him. Then, not because you feel like it but out of obedience to God's word, make yourself submit in that area (Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18). Just try it.

I did not become a pastor's wife in the usual method—via the sheltered surroundings of a Bible college campus. My husband was an athlete for many years, so as a wife hanging out with wives and girlfriends in hockey arena lounges, I watched "athlete's women" live out their roles as wives. Now as a pastor's wife, I'm watching "church women" live out their roles as wives. Sadly, "church women" in general (myself included) do a worse job of giving men room to be men. In the athletic world, wives were much more understanding and accepting of male urges driven by testosterone (which God gave men plenty of). To my observation, there was less effort to try to change men to become feminized, as they accepted and admired the manliness of their men. In that way they actually lived in a more Biblical manner.

As women in the church, we've got to learn to admire and appreciate our husbands when they act like men and take the lead. Satan is having a heyday with what is taking place in the church in terms of accepted roles for men and women. Women are putting limiters on submission and qualifying what a man should look like.

Listen to these statements and see if what I've noticed sounds familiar to you. "Well, if he won't do it, I'll just handle it myself," or "I'm the better spiritual leader.? Shame on us.

Porn

In our easy porn culture, thanks to the internet, not only are many men addicted to pornography, but many women are also being hooked. A few years ago, I took a graduate class on Biblical Sexuality at one of the largest Christian universities in America. An entire session revolved around how to deal with the fact that one of the biggest problems the Resident Assistants in the *girls* dorms were facing was female student involvement in internet pornography. Ladies, we must certainly beware of the temptation to be involved in pornography. At the same time, the issue must be addressed of how a wife is to respond Biblically when there is pornography taking place on the part of the husband.

First of all, you must understand the basis of forgiveness. All sin is so horrendous that it requires the outpouring of the wrath of Holy, Almighty God. But God also loves sinners, and so He poured that wrath onto His Son. Jesus' blood is the basis of forgiveness...not a man's actions of getting it right, not a woman's coming to an understanding of what her husband is struggling with, not a restored relationship of trust. The only basis upon which we forgive anyone of the sin they have committed against us is the basis of having been forgiven of our own sin, which required Christ's blood in payment. When we experience that forgiveness, upon recognition and confession of our own sin, we can and will extend forgiveness. If you are struggling to forgive your husband, you must look at *your own* relationship with Jesus Christ.

Dear sister, it's time to get a grip on this. Is what your husband has done a greater sin than your sin of self-righteousness, of being focused on his sin and the problems

it has brought into the relationship? Is involvement in pornography any more damaging than bringing other women into an attitude of condemning your husband evidenced by gossiping about him? "I'm having trouble submitting to my husband because he makes it so hard for me... Do you have any ideas?" That's gossip! Ask your husband how to submit. How on earth should another woman know what your husband's priorities are. Instead of gossiping about your husband, ask God for forgiveness for your sin of not submitting to him.

The truth is, we would rather focus on and confront our husband's sin than focus on and confess our own sin. Pornography is no more damaging than gossip and pride (as a matter of fact, it was self-righteous pride for which Jesus blasted the Pharisees). I am in no way justifying or excusing sin, but self-righteousness and the damage done by rating sin can be very difficult to deal with...Jesus himself attacked it heartily during His earthly ministry. So, I propose that in situations where it has come to a wife's awareness that there is involvement in pornography, we begin by confessing our own sin of pride and self-righteousness. With the focus on our own sin, the Lord will give us a spirit/attitude/heart of forgiveness, so that if and when a husband confesses involvement with pornography, we will readily be able to transact forgiveness. Then, let's get serious about our responsibility of aggressively ministering to our husbands sexually. Wives, please him till you wear him out as part of your chaste, pure, and honorable service to him. Our job is not training and teaching our husbands. Our job is not to bring our husbands to repentance. Our job is to submit, respect, and lovingly give of ourselves in ministering to our husband sexually.

This booklet is by no means a comprehensive coverage of the subject of confession, forgiveness, repentance, and change. Nor does it tackle the topic of trust, a foundational basic for marriage. However, God's Word thoroughly tackles those topics, and the struggling

couple wisely seeks biblical counsel for restoration. In the meantime wives, let's confess our own sin, and in repentance, do a good job of taking care of our husbands' sexual needs as an act of obedient worship to God.

Keeper of My Home as An "On-Guard Caretaker"

Do you evidence that your heart is fixed on home *after* your husband and kids, and *above* other things that interest you? Or do your interests override your keeping your home the way your husband would like it? We have to ask ourselves how to make the best use of our time to create an attractive and pleasant haven that can provide hospitality in a manner that glorifies God. This is described in Titus 2:5 as good, and is to be done in a manner that is obedient to our own husband (1 Peter 3:1-4). It is not to be done in a way that reflects imitation of others' homes, or in a way that shows we have the best decorating abilities, or in a way that feeds our perfectionist demands for cleanliness or orderliness, or in a way that promotes our desire for pets, or in a way that is driven by our preference for many children being around.

If your main priority in how you kept your home was obedience to your husband's preferences, would it look different? When I asked myself that question, it changed the way I decorated and cleaned. I used to like re-arranging furniture, and would laugh when my husband talked about bumping into furniture in the dark. Another question I continually must ask, as one who struggles with puttering from one task to another before completing any of them, is how to be prudent and efficient instead of wasting time.

We are to take care of our homes in obedience to our husbands because they are answerable to God. Who did God put in charge? When Eve failed in the Garden, did God first confront her or Adam? Adam. When Sarah asked Abraham to sin, who did God go to? Abraham. Sarah is held up to us as an example because of her obedience to her husband (1 Peter 3:5-6). How *could* she be, we say, if she asked him to sin. Take the time to read Genesis 12—20,

and notice that Abraham pimped Sarah out to kings to protect himself. Yet, God doesn't choose to focus on Abraham's sin, nor on Sarah's sin. Rather, He focuses on Sarah's obedience. Hallelujah! Mercy trumps sin!

Submitting to My Husband As To The Lord

When Peter and Paul address the New Testament churches about relationships, they generally speak to women first (Ephesians 5; Colossians 3; Peter 3). Evidently, in the early church there was trouble with women rising up over men, just like the Old Testament example of Isaiah 3:12. When we submit to our husbands, it will be a sign of our right relationship with the Lord (Ephesians 5:22). Conversely, when we have trouble submitting, it is evidence that our relationship with the Lord is not right. So, if you're struggling to submit, get on your knees, confess your sin, and get right with the Lord. Deliberately fall back from leading your home. If you don't know how to submit to your husband, ask him. Even if you think you do submit, ask *him* if you do. You might be surprised. But, you'll be glad someday when you stand before God, answerable not for how you led, but for how you submitted?

Respect Him

Ephesians 5:33b teaches us to respect our husband. Respect for him is not based on whether or not he has earned it, or has made wonderful decisions. Instead, respect is a direct result of putting ourselves under our husband's God given authority. Do you accept his authority or do you take over in fear that he'll fail? If you take over, you are choosing to live under the curse. Do you show confidence in his decisions or do you express anxiety? If you don't show confidence, consider the possibility that you are beating the manliness out of him. Do you insist on your own priorities, or defer to his priorities, recognizing that God will ultimately hold him, not you, responsible? Respect means we don't remember past failures as a means

to justify nagging or responding wrongly, rather we privately and publicly express gratitude to him.

Have you corrected your husband about something he has said? That's an area where I fall into sin. I want to let everyone know it was March, not April if he has said April. I want to be sure they know it was Tim if he has said Tom. Yuck! How ugly, how disrespectful! So what if it was the third or the twenty-third. I am working on zipping the lip rather than correcting my husband. I determined that the only time I would correct him was if someone would be injured by the error. Guess what, so far there's never been any injurious reason to bring up a correction. God in His grace is teaching me respect as I confess my sin in godly sorrow and am granted repentance and zeal to respect Bob.

But He Doesn't Take The Lead

I'm married to a strong leader whom I and many others greatly admire. It is such a privilege to fall under his leadership as his wife. He sanctifies me with the Word of God. He teaches me to read and study the Bible and change to apply my life to it. He confronts me about my deeply rooted sins of pride and self-focus that decades of living together continue to reveal. He makes me do something about it, rather than allowing me to complain about our children's behavior. He drives me out of my comfort zone so that the same girl who literally ran away from NHL reporters and their invasion of privacy has gained the courage and transparency to stand up in front of women and teach what God has taught me from His Word. He pulls me away from my preferred areas of service to the Savior, and pushes me into serving where I am best his helper. He consistently imposes his standard of tidiness upon me, so that our doorbell could now ring almost anytime and we would not be ashamed to offer hospitality because of the mess that I was formerly quite comfortable with (until the doorbell rang). He forces me to recognize when I'm in a fantasy dream world, opening the door for reality. Now, that's a man who takes leadership of his wife.

Maybe you think such men are few and far between. We must ask a few questions before allowing the blanket statement that “men like that are hard to find.” What if more women arose from writhing on a cold tile bathroom floor through the dark hours of night, and came out submissive and quiet instead of forcing the “better” decision? What if more women stepped out of the boxing ring as the loser, with God and Song of Solomon the winner? What if more women learned that the fool balks at reproach, while the wise woman gladly welcomes and invites rebuke? What if more women supported and implemented their husbands’ decisions about how to spend money, working joyfully together whether business ventures sank or swam? What if more women asked God for daily bread and trained themselves to spend less than their husband earned, instead of complaining about lack of money? What if more women stopped talking about their understanding of Scripture, and asked their husband questions about the Bible?

Over the years, I have wrestled with God about what His Word teaches about submission, respect, winning him without a word when he makes decisions that aren’t obedient to God, and about my responsibility to minister to him sexually. Time and time again, God has knocked me down, graciously disciplined my disobedience, humbled me through confession, and granted me repentance. He’s not done until He rescues me from myself at either the trumpet call or the death toll, but in the meantime I’ve noticed one thing: the more I obey God, the easier it is for my husband to lead me. Could it be that men who lead their wives are hard to find because women who obey God are hard to find? Watch men that take the lead, and you’ll observe that their wives obediently take the helper role. Choose to live by and celebrate the role God has created you for. By God’s grace in the power of the Holy Spirit, you can be a “Daughter of the King” who honors her King by submitting and thereby helping your husband take the lead.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Titus 2:4** ~ Do you evidence loving your husband first above your kids and home? If so, how? Ask your husband whether he feels loved above the children, the home, and your other desires.
2. **Titus 2:5** ~ How can you make your home more of a haven for your husband, not according to your taste, but according to his desires? Remember, men are more about function than form (how it works than how it looks).
3. **1 Peter 3:1-4, Philippians 4:4** ~ How do you maintain a positive emotional climate in your home by rejoicing in the Lord?
4. **1 Corinthians 7:1-5, 1 John 1:8-10** ~ Do you minister to your husband sexually? If he confesses sin of lust or pornography, do you freely forgive? Do you confess your own sin of not aggressively meeting his sexual needs?

5. **Ephesians 5:22, Colossians 3:18** ~ Ask your husband what it looks like to submit to him. What changes will you make ?

6. **Ephesians 5:33, 1 Peter 3:2** ~ How do you show eagerness to carry out your husband's priorities? Do you correct him? Do you build loyalty to him in the children?

7. **1 Peter 3:5, Genesis 12:10-16, Genesis 20:2&11-1?**
How have you pleased the Lord by obeying your husband?

8. **1 Corinthians 7:14, Titus 2:3** ~ How are you sanctifying him with your loyalty to God first, then to him?

9. **1 Peter 3:1, 1 Timothy 2:11** ~ How are you moving towards less nagging and more submission?

MY PERSONAL JOURNAL

1. When we don't submit to our husbands, it's simply evidence that we don't want to submit to the Lord. Journal your confession of the sin of not submitting to God, when you have not submitted to your husband.

2. I have identified the following areas where I need to change as a wife:

3. I will ask a disciple of Christ who evidences growth in that area (name _____), to pray for me and to hold me accountable. (Be sure not to mention your husband as that would be gossip, talk only about your own sinfulness and repentance.)

4. WHAT IS GOD'S HIGHER AGENDA FOR WOMEN IN THE CHURCH?

Complementarianism is the view that God has created men and women equal in their essential dignity and human personhood, different yet complementary in function, with male headship in the home and church being understood as part of God's created design.

What's the big deal, anyway? Why is it even important to communicate and emphasize male headship in the church? It's important because we live in a culture that is uncertain and confused about roles. The generation now entering adulthood has grown up with the effect of the feminist movement, that has led not only to the rise of female leadership and the downfall of the family, but also to the rise of homosexuality. Historically, churches that adopt a mindset that it pleases God when men/women lead in the church with equality, tend to eventually adopt a mindset that it also pleases God when men/women are involved with each other in homosexuality.¹

At the basis of this tidal wave of sexual confusion is rebellion towards roles as God has defined them. In many churches, the rebellious feminist agenda has effectively trampled the authority of male leaders, and is thoroughly

laying the groundwork for homosexuality and other gender distortions of God's Word to demand equality in leadership positions. In the wake of the feminist and homosexual agenda, you find increased tragedy in marriages and homes, and devastation in churches. The Word of God is being maligned, as we are warned will happen if we do not adhere to biblical roles (Titus 2:5). As women, we have a role to play in promoting and protecting biblical roles, not only in our own lives, but also in the church.

The Bible is clear. Both men and women are made in God's image, fell into sin, share equally in the blessings of redemption, and are equally responsible to fulfill their God-given ministries to build up the church, within their God-given roles.² In writing about roles in the New Testament, by authority of Jesus Christ, Peter and Paul both use almost identical words.³ Why? They were aware that distinctions in roles are part of God's created order, and affirmed throughout the Old Testament. The principle of male headship in the family and the church is consistent throughout Scripture (Genesis 2:18, Ephesians 5:21-33, Colossians 3:18-19, 1 Timothy 2:11-15).⁴

For centuries complementarianism was the public, unchallenged position of the Christian church in general. Then in the 1960's many previously faithful denominations began to argue this position.⁵ Seminary professors became interested in the feminist voice, and began a hermeneutical dance to explain away the apostles Peter and Paul's definitive stand of spiritual equality with role differences. In 1974, the editor of a widespread Christian magazine took the stance that Peter and Paul's position on the role of women was simply an expression of the culture of his day, and not to be considered as normative for our time.⁶ Women in churches perked up their ears and began humming along with "I am woman, hear me roar, in numbers too big to ignore..."⁷ In most churches today, it is clear that the persuasive feminist voice has prevailed, and in more churches than not, there is insistence that women

can serve in the same offices as men, offices of authority and teaching over men.⁸ This resistance of clear biblical teaching undercuts the authority of the Bible.⁹

The Bible's Consistent Vision

Whom did Jesus choose for his 12 disciples? Men. The Old Testament has 39 books. By whom are they written? Men. The New Testament has 27 books. By whom are they written? Men. Every single priest in Scripture is male. Every single person in the office of pastor or elder in the New Testament is male. There are females who prophecy in both the Old and New Testament, as a good example that women are clearly involved in the ministry of God's Word. This is not an inconsistency. "To prophecy" simply means to speak God's Word, and is not necessarily an office.¹⁰

Deborah (Judges 4-5) is sometimes cited as an example to support female leadership. In reality, she is an excellent example of a woman who promotes male headship of God's people. Her story takes place during the time period of the Judges, an era when people were doing what was evil in the sight of the Lord. The priests were not communicating a vision of God's glory and the people were not obedient to God. Deborah was a godly woman who sought God's glory in a time and place that lacked strong godly male leadership. She did not seek to replace the weak men. Prophets in the Old Testament traveled to do their work, but she worked from home under her palm tree. She is described as judging, but she is not called a judge (Judges 4:4-5). The context of the passage makes it clear that she is not providing military headship as others do who are called judges (ie. Judges 3:10), rather she is speaking God's Word to those who come to her. She does not take leadership, but motivates and encourages a man (Barak) to do his job as military leader. When Barak asks her to travel with him to war, she goes along but reproves him, telling him that he is bringing himself shame (Judges 9:54 will

help you understand this). It is another woman, Jael, who kills the enemy leader Sisera, by driving a spike through his head.

Deborah never attempts to compete with Barak or other male leaders, but compares herself instead to Sisera's mother (Judges 5). She does not view herself as a leader, but as a mother. Instead of naming herself as a leader who goes out and leads the people, that is how she describes Barak (whom she encouraged and motivated to do so). She characterizes herself as a song writer, while describing Barak as a leader (Judges 5:12). Her song begins with praise to God that the leaders took the lead in Israel. She does not shame Barak, but builds him up by praising God's success.

For a final statement on Deborah's life, consider how God views the result of her life. In Hebrews 11, a list of prophets is given. It is not Deborah, but Barak, the man whom she encouraged and motivated to do his God-given task of leading the people, who is listed together with Gideon, Samson, and David. Deborah protected and encouraged male headship among the people of God at a time when evil reigned.

So, What's a Woman's Role in the Church?

As women, we must take seriously our role of protecting and promoting the Biblical vision of male and female roles, including male headship in the church. We do so by rejoicing in it, celebrating it, and encouraging it. We pray for our leaders.

At the same time, God has not called us to be His children and serve Him in ministry, then close the door for us. We only view it that way because we are rebels to His glorious higher agenda. Our job is to respect and affirm the leadership God has put in place, and be equipped by them for whatever ministry God calls us to...and God calls us to many ministries. Men are clearly called to be the pastors and elders in the churches, so why would we expend

energy trying to overtake that role?

Let's put our full devotion into giving God glory in whatever our walk of life and area of ministry, serving Him in peace, joy, and His strength. Let's overflow in good works and encourage one another to more and more good works. Let's love, study, memorize and obey the Bible in every area. Let's be women who pray about everything, unceasingly, so that the men of our church are guarded and our influence is godly in both our church and our home. Let's rest in God's sovereignty, rely on His grace for every problem, and submit to His higher agenda for us, giving Him glory.

Beware of the "Sisterhood"

One of the ways we don't enjoy the beauty of our role and don't promote male leadership can be described as the "Sisterhood." What, you ask? Well, it's a common characteristic of churches in our culture that women's ministries, run by women, exceed men's ministries in excellence, in attendance, and in energy. On a larger scale, not to say that these are unbiblical ministries but only to cite a few familiar examples, there are: "MOPS," "Moms in Touch," "Precepts Ministries," or "Women of Faith." These are not wrong, but are there more and stronger women's groups than men's? Sure, there are predominantly male ministries as well, but try to find as many exclusively male ministries as you do exclusively female ministries. Now think on a smaller scale. Just look inside any weekly church bulletin, and while you might find the occasional monthly men's breakfast, you most likely will find at least one weekly ladies Bible study. I'm astounded at the number of women (myself included), who fit time into their schedules for multiple Bible studies for women only. This is not to say that there's anything wrong with ministries exclusively by and for women, however, in the church there is undoubtedly an overabundance of female gatherings run by females. Oftentimes, we love the gathering of the

“Sisterhood” more than we delight in male headship.

Growing up in a small southern Ontario town, we passed a ramshackle canning factory on the walk to and from school each day. In recent years, the old factory has been transformed into an elegant hotel with “Olde Worlde” atmosphere. The entry foyer welcomes you with polished stone floors, brick walls, glowing fireplaces, and comfortable leather couches surrounded by tall plants reaching for the light of a conservatory ceiling—just beautiful. Someone had given my husband a generous gift certificate, so one of my dear sisters and her husband joined us on a dreamy get-a-way. Like excited children the four of us put on our swim suits and the hotel’s plush terry bath robes, and gathered in the gorgeous outdoor hot tub, surrounded by manicured bushes climbing rock walls. Snow fell soft on our faces, stars sparkled in the sky, and we sat and talked in hot steaming water. A group of 5 women joined us, professionals, away on a weekend break from their jobs, children, and husbands. We all chatted politely until we two couples shriveled, and found a room just down the hall that held arrangements of cushioned leather couches conducive to conversation. Warm and comfortable, we sipped fancy water and enjoyed the easy company. After a few minutes, our five new “friends” from the hot tub passed by. Laughing and talking, they said something that captures the mentality of the “Sisterhood. Listen to what they teasingly said to my sister and me. “You girls must be jealous, we get to have a weekend away *without* the guys.”

We live in a culture where the gathering of the “Sisterhood” has come to have value as an event in itself. In marriage, this attitude diminishes a one-flesh relationship with our husbands as the priority relationship in our lives (Titus 2:4, Genesis 1:24). In the church, this attitude elevates women and the importance of ministries just for women, while pushing men down. May the church shield our women from the mentality of the “Sisterhood.”

When women's studies and events become more important in the life of the church than men's studies and events, we must ask ourselves whether it reflects hearts that desire female leadership.

Some of the ways we can intentionally strive to keep our women's ministries under men's ministries are by: following the men's lead in the outline used for weekly women's Bible studies, limiting the number and magnitude of outreach events we host, and stopping short of working to build a fantastic ladies ministry that outdoes men's ministries.

Older Women Teaching Younger Women

Let's pour our energies into obedience to Jesus' command to make disciples, through a multiplication ministry of life-on-life discipleship. Older women, not necessarily in age but in spiritual growth according to Titus 2:3, who can teach the biblical role of women, can become coaches for one younger woman each. Each older woman also needs accountability relationships, in which she holds herself accountable on an inner heart level. An older woman coaches a younger woman in a life-on-life discipleship relationship (like training a daughter). When the younger woman is ready to become an older woman herself, the older woman is free to coach another disciple.

My Husband is Not a Believer - What's My Role?

What do we teach women who are believers committed to Christ and His body, with unbelieving/non-committed husbands? One wife recalls how her husband became very upset by her involvement in church before God graciously revealed *her* sin to her. "The danger was that I loved being with these women and men so much that I desired to be at the church more than I desired to be at home. It wasn't verbalized, but came out in my actions."

When a woman is so excited about being at church, and developing relationships there, rather than learning and

living out devotion to the Lord (which means she puts her husband above kids and others), husbands rightly get jealous. He may even sense that she thinks the men of the church are better with her kids than he is. This can be very destructive. A woman must respectfully communicate to her husband that her faithfulness to the body of Christ is what she's called to do, not something she chooses in order to be apart from her husband.

And yet, are we to encourage that she stay home from church if that's her husband's desire? The Bible says that all Christians are baptized into the body (1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 27), and are not to give up meeting together (Hebrews 10:24-25). Those who are not devoted to edification of the body are described as having futility of mind, darkened understanding, ignorance, hardness of heart, calloused and sensuous living because they live apart from the unity of the church (Ephesians 4:1-23). The answer is putting off our old futile ways, renewing our mind, and putting on faithfulness to Christ. It is the godly behavior of a wife that influences her unbelieving husband, and that behavior includes being part of Christ's church, of which He is the cornerstone. She is a living stone being built into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices to God (1 Peter 2:4-5). Can a wife pre-sanctify her husband if she is not part of the church? No, a wife pre-sanctifies her husband by living the life God has assigned to her. This is God's rule in all the churches (1 Corinthians 7:14-16).

The woman who says, "I must submit to my husband who wants me to stay home from church," has neglected the fact that submission to a husband flows out of submission to the Lord (Ephesians 5:22). Is there any point in assuming your biblical role as a wife, apart from dying to yourself, being reconciled to God, living "in Christ," and being fully immersed in His body by His Spirit? No, that would be the mindset of works-based salvation, which is pride-based living that only builds walls between a husband

and wife. Every Christian is compelled by the love of Christ to first be reconciled with God, which means we become a new creation, and then our ministry in life is to reconcile others with God (2 Corinthians 5:14-21). When a Christian woman is married to an unbeliever, her ministry in life is to see her husband reconciled to God. This will only happen as she lives “in Christ”. That means humble obedience to God’s Word in every area, including confessing her sin to God and her husband, and extending to him the mercy she’s received as she hangs on to the cross (Colossians 3:13, Mark 11:25).

Winning Him By Actions, Not Words

What if a husband isn’t obedient to God? OK. Please have the courage to be brutally honest and answer the following questions.

“Is his disobedience to God any worse than my not being a submissive helper who puts him below the children and home?”

“Is my holiness in how I joyfully reflect Christ so attractive to my husband that he is influenced to change?”

It’s impossible to answer yes to those questions if we have a right view of God and how He views us. Look at what our own sin cost Him on the cross. Let’s band together in confessing our sin of trying to control and change our men. Let’s ask God to grant us repentance and change us. Let’s renew our minds according to Scripture. Let’s hold each other accountable (Titus 2:4-5, Galatians 5:1-5).

A wife is not to win her husband by her words (1 Peter 3:1), but rather by her godly behavior. There’s no imploring done by a half hearted lifestyle, there’s no compelling done by a woman who sways in her commitment to the Lordship of Christ. Her focus remains herself. Such a lifestyle only enables her husband to stay away from the Lord, rather than encouraging him to draw near Him.

A woman married to an unbeliever must be taught that it is her lifestyle of humility, obedience, and respect which will win her husband over to faith in Christ (1 Peter 3:1-4). The faithfulness of a woman to involvement in the church body (Hebrews 10:24-28) must result in her evidencing the most love and good deeds to her husband. He must be able to notice her growing respect and submissive obedience to him, flowing from her increasingly gentle and quiet spirit. There is less, not more, conflict in a marriage when the wife submits to her husband as to the Lord. If he does not allow her to be part of the church, she must humbly make a stand for Christ. Submission does not mean she stays home from church. Wives are never to submit when they are asked to sin, but must be careful to still respond respectfully.

And so we've come full circle. We must not submit to sin, but rather we must be helpers who protect, promote, and encourage male headship in the church, imitating Jesus Christ as He submitted to the Father.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Reread pg. 54, “So, What’s a Woman’s Role in the Church?? Discuss ways you can serve God while promoting/protecting male headship in the church.
2. **1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 27, Ephesians 4:1-23, Hebrews 10:24-27** ~ What do these passages teach about the importance of every Christian being involved in the body of Christ?
3. **1 Peter 3:1-6** ~ How is a woman to win her husband to Christ? Is there any room for teaching or nagging? (Definition of nagging: “Asking more than one time.)
4. **1 Corinthians 7:14-16** ~ What are some ways God uses a Christian wife and mother in the sanctification process?

MY PERSONAL JOURNAL

1. **1 Peter 3:1-2** ~ Write your prayer for women in our church who need to win their husbands without words. Who will you encourage to be obedient to this passage?

2. **1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 27, Ephesians 4:1-23, Hebrews 10:24-27** ~ Am I obedient to God's Word regarding involvement in His body? If not, I confess my sin. Here is what I need to put off/put on:

3. **Titus 2:3-5** ~ How am I doing in my job as a woman? Am I learning how to love my husband first, then my children, then keep my home? Then, am I teaching a younger woman how to do these things?

5. BUT IT'S NOT GOD'S HIGHER AGENDA FOR ME TO ENABLE!

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined that we should be conformed to the image of Christ, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” (Romans 8:28-29).

“Sure, I’ll help my husband, but God doesn’t want me to enable him, does He?” That’s a question often asked when a woman is faced with what God says about roles, and it’s a good question. A woman who enables a man to sin certainly isn’t helping him. A wife’s God-given role in marriage is to submit to him and respect him, to be an encourager toward godliness rather than an enabler toward sin.

A common context in which we hear the word “enabler,” is when a woman is married to an alcoholic, like Annie. Alfred and Annie’s children are grown and out of the house. Alfred loves hanging out with the boys from the plant, and after work, he stops at the local bar to have a few drinks. A few times a month he’s out until midnight, but most evenings he’s home in time for dinner. If he’s on time for dinner, Annie doesn’t say much. But if he keeps her waiting, she tearfully tells him she’s been worrying, and they end up arguing. You see, Annie just hates Alfred’s

dangerous driving, boisterous speech, and aggressive humor when he's been drinking. She much prefers how quiet he is in the mornings, or on Saturdays when she gives him his list of chores to complete, or on Sundays when they go to church together.

When Annie wakes up each morning, she begins to dread the moment of Alfred's arrival after work. By about 3PM each day, she's often had a few moments of crying about the sadness of her situation. Annie is truly fearful of where her life is going. But it's on the late nights when there's a phone call asking for a ride home that she loses it. She lets him know what a good-for-nothing loser and drunk he is, threatening that it's the last time she'll come get him, and that he's going to have to do something to change things. She works herself into such a frenzy that by the time they're in the house she is reeling with anger, and her words attack him. "After all," she reasons, "I don't want to enable Alfred in this drinking."

Yet, Annie's negativity and criticism push Alfred out the door every morning. As soon as he leaves the house, he begins to look forward to relaxing and laughing with his friends. In Alfred's mind, he'd have to be crazy to go straight home after work.

Just down the road, Tom and Tina have settled into a pattern as well. For the first five years of their marriage, Tom also hung out with the boys after work. At first, Tina was upset and angry, but one evening a friend brought her to church, where she realized she was a sinner in need of a Savior. God forgave her, and she began to extend the mercy God had shown her to Tom. Quite regularly, Tom would phone after midnight informing Tina that he needed a ride. Instead of being angry with Tom, she remembered God's goodness and mercy to her, and extended it to Tom. She thanked him for his safety and consideration of others who might be on the road. No matter his alcohol intake level, every time he walked in the door, Tina consistently made their home a haven for him, out of obedience to God. She sent him off every morning with a playful kiss, letting him

know how much she looked forward to the moment he would walk in the door and that seeing him again would be the highlight of her day. By the time their second child arrived, Tom decided he'd rather stay home, and quit hanging out with the guys.

When you look at these couples, it's obvious that Tina encouraged Tom, while Annie enabled Alfred. Tina melted Tom's heart by heaping coals of fiery kindness on his head, but Annie's actions served to strengthen Alfred's pattern of behavior (Romans 12:20). Annie's thoughts and actions backfired because instead of pulling him back, she pushed Alfred toward sin.

Pornography

Let's look at another context for enabling, the context of pornography. Our first couple is Beth and Bob. Beth goes to bed around 9PM, because she gets up for work at 5AM. Bob goes to bed after the evening news, and when he gets there, he finds Beth fast asleep. One evening, Beth couldn't sleep, so after a few hours, she meandered downstairs looking for some company. As she walked through the dark house, she saw a crack of light at the foot of the basement stairs, so she followed it and found Bob at their computer interacting with internet porn. Beth felt horribly betrayed. Weeping, she accused Bob of cheating on her. This was the beginning of a year of setting ultimatums for Bob. Beth watched him carefully, too humiliated to respond to any sexual advances Bob made. She thought often about how he had to prove his fidelity before she'd respond to him sexually. She talked with trusted friends about Bob's betrayal, and their shocked reactions deepened her vigilant defensiveness. After a while, she allowed him to have sex with her in a dark room under the covers, with tears streaming down her face. That happened a few times, resulting in the birth of a son. When their son was a few years old, Beth decided to get a better paying job to help with the bills, but in the back of her mind she was happy

to have her own income just in case their relationship didn't work out. All her friends looked at her with sympathy and pity, and either thought she was crazy, or admired her for sticking with Bob. Since their son didn't sleep well alone, he slept in bed with Beth. Eventually Bob moved to another bed. Beth suspected and expected him to be involved with internet porn, but on the day she found an inordinately high phone bill and tracked the costly phone numbers, she knew it was over. Every time she even thought about Bob, chills of horror went down her spine. She convinced herself that God would not want her to be part of such a painful, deceptive relationship. Everyone she spoke with agreed that Bob had ruined the relationship by his unfaithfulness to her.

Let's now take a look at a situation between Sue and Sam. Sue began to wonder why Sam didn't come to bed until after she'd already been asleep. In their first years of marriage, Sue would get dolled up and light a few candles before Sam came to bed at night. But their life became really busy, and now she fell into bed tired each night. One night, she couldn't sleep and went looking for Sam, only to find him involved with internet porn. Sue felt betrayed and cheated on. Her head reeled as she stood in the doorway. Finally, she asked Sam to meet her in the kitchen where she confronted him with what she had seen. Sam told her to mind her own business. Sue was shocked, but instead of focusing on her rejection, she remembered her responsibility of 1 Corinthians 7:1-7, to protect and provide pleasure to her husband by being sexually aggressive with him. She confessed her sin of being too busy for him. Sue felt very vulnerable, but she began to intentionally tell Sam ways she was going to meet his sexual needs, and set up deliberate dates that made it happen. She didn't feel comfortable ministering to him in this way for quite a while, but she aggressively continued to do so as an act of obedient worship to God. As she ministered to Sam in obedience to what she knew God wanted, Sam and Sue's relationship grew and she gradually

enjoyed sexual intimacy again. Down the road, Bob and Beth's marriage ended in bitter divorce.

As you evaluate these couples, you can see that Sue *encouraged* Sam, but Beth *enabled* Bob. Sue melted Sam's heart, but Beth helped to push Bob deeper into sin. When Beth and Annie made it easier for Bob and Alfred to choose sin, they were actually helping them be sinners. This happens at many levels, not just with the issues of alcohol and pornography.

The question we might ask is, how could Tina consistently make home more inviting than the bar? She had to be hypocritical. How could Sue heap sexual kindness on Sam if she felt betrayed by him? Was that even right? By God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, Christian wives can become the helpers God created us to be, helping our spouse to do right. We can become *encouragers* instead of *enablers*.

All of us

Please, don't put this down and say, "Oh good, this is not about me. My husband doesn't drink, and he isn't involved with porn." Every one of us defaults to being a sinful enabler at some level. There are countless ways in which we make it easier for our husbands to sin, and the motivation behind it is our deep desire to be in control. As a matter of fact, we're cursed to want to control (Genesis 3:16). We become extremely good at it, and in our minds we justify it as godly behavior. When we're really effective, our husbands look like the one with the problem. I'm *not* saying that every man's sin problems are to be blamed on his wife, just like every woman's sin problems cannot be blamed on her husband. I'm *not* rigidly saying, "Behind every bad man is a bad woman," or vice versa. **No**, we all make our choices. However, we do choose whether we will help our man by encouraging him to do right, or enabling him to sin. Let's be willing to look at some of the areas in which we enable instead of encourage.

An enabler is actually more comfortable with the sin of her spouse than with the spouse getting it right, because then she'd have to take a look at her own life and change what she is comfortable with. She'd have to change what seems right to her. I'm sure you recognize this in the drastic and oversimplified cases of Annie and Beth. We can all see that if Annie had made their home more inviting than the bar, Alfred might have wanted to come home. We all understand that if Beth would only have ministered sexually to Bob, their marriage might have lasted. However, you've read a fairly objective view of Annie and Beth's stories. If you were their friend, and they were telling you their story, you may have made a different assessment. You may not have been able to so easily recognize how Annie and Beth enabled their husbands. Proverbs 18:17 says that the one who states his case first seems right, until the other side of the story is examined. Enablers convince themselves that they are right and others are wrong, making it difficult to identify anything that needs to change in themselves. They succeed in not only convincing themselves of this, but also in convincing any observer or friend.

Think like Jesus = One Flesh

As you read this, you're going to need a very open mind and the courage to take the difficult journey inward, to see what's actually going on in your own heart. May the Holy Spirit convict us of the lie of Satan we've bought into that says women are better. Many of us believe that we are "Beauty," and our husband is the "Beast." We must recognize that we've adopted this mindset, because all around us, the "Beauty and the Beast" mindset is portrayed as the only way to think. The feminist agenda has succeeded in brainwashing our generation. Reverberating from television to internet to radio and even to church, are variations of the theme, "Anything he can do, she can do better." And it makes perfect sense to all who hear it, except those whose thinking is renewed by God's Word.

How does Jesus think about your marriage? Jesus never wavered from the mindset of a married couple being one flesh. Imagine the Pharisees interviewing Jesus (the Creator of one-flesh marriage). They were trying to finagle out of Him a supportive statement regarding man-made laws for splitting the one-flesh He created into two-fleshes (Matthew 19:3). While trying to garner His support of one of their definitions of lawful divorce, they ignored what He had created. But Jesus never wavered from the perfection of His creation, a one-flesh relationship (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5). Like Jesus, we have to ignore the voice that attempts to separate one-flesh. Jesus viewed marriage like “Super Glue” that sticks skin together. There should be no way of getting in there and separating it...but an enabler does. An enabler separates the union in subtle and unseen ways. The ways of an enabler are sometimes hard to get at because from all appearances, they seem to be the only option. When an enabler is really good at it, the ways they separate one-flesh-ness actually appear to be supportive rather than separating.

The overriding principle for the enabler is that she wants to be viewed as a good wife. She'll confess abstract sin that makes her look good, but avoid confessing anything embarrassing or deep rooted about herself. How do you respond when your husband sins? Do you encourage him towards doing right, or accuse him of doing wrong? Do you separate yourself? Does his sin wake you up at night? His sin might even move you onto the couch, while you think of yourself as merciful because you haven't clobbered him over the head. However, your own sin isn't even a factor in your mind, thus you can't forgive him (Colossians 3:13). Enablers struggle to give up control, because deep in their hearts, they crucify instead of forgive. They appear to be a union, but take very subtle steps away from one-flesh, averting other's eyes onto the “Beast's” obvious sin. If you're truly one

flesh, then when your husband sins you'll hang in there with him, and you won't allow his sin to put distance between you.

“What?!? That’s impossible. What about abuse?”

That’s a common response. But, are we being like Eve where she extrapolated God’s command to a point where He hadn’t? She took God’s command (Genesis 2:17), and added one little phrase to it that made His command seem extreme (Genesis 3:3). Just look where that kind of thinking got her! Enablers add a worse possibility to the scenario than what is actually happening. They enjoy living with the negative possibilities, the “what ifs.” To be encouragers, we must choose graceful thinking. Instead of focusing on the possibilities of what the other person might do, let’s fix our eyes on the wonder of the cross, the reality and greatness of Jesus and the price He paid. In the power of Jesus’ victory over sin, our own sin will bother us more than our husband’s sin. When we have received mercy, we will extend mercy. If we’re not extending mercy, we’re not confessing our own sin. Mercy always trumps sin.

Anytime we find ourselves talking or thinking “I or He,” instead of “Us or We,” we are struggling with an enabling mentality. A spiritual woman thinks in terms of us/we, and sees the marriage as an inseparable team. Yes, it’s a team with problems, but they’re not bigger than God’s sovereignty and grace. Yes, she is a sinner married to a sinner, but sin is not more powerful than Jesus’ blood.

**Confident and Positive Attitude,
Not in Yourself, but in Your Man**

Why are we so attracted to “bad boy” actors and rock stars? Why do women marry a man when it appears obvious that she is a “better person” than he is? Why did Hilary Clinton make excuses for her husband? The enabler is actually attracted by the “bad boy’s” weakness because she thinks this makes her look better. It won’t be long though, and she’ll have a critical attitude towards the very weaknesses that attracted her to him. An encourager

recognizes and focuses on a person's strengths and assets, instead of his weaknesses and wrong doings. She builds up those strengths by focusing on them in her mind and then speaking of them (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

When a husband does something wrong or something she perceives as wrong, an enabler wants to distance herself from him and what he's done. At the same time, she may shield or protect him from the natural consequences of failure because she looks down on him and thinks that change is not possible for him. She will manipulate and control the situation because she thinks it's the only way to get him through his failure. An encourager rests in God's sovereignty, knowing that God uses all things to complete His work (Acts 17:24-27, Philippians 1:6, Romans 8:28-31).

An encourager shows confidence in her husband. This confidence comes from trusting in what God, by His grace will do. She understands that both she and her husband are sinners, and instead of looking down on his sin, she confesses hers. Her attitude that Christ's blood is greater than all sin manifests itself in her forgiving spirit towards him. Her thoughts that he can and will be a man in whom God works, result in words and actions that motivate and influence him toward growth (1 Corinthians 14:35). She understands that even his failures are used by God to change *her* to become more like Christ (Romans 8:28-29). An *enabler* asks, "Why me? Why has God allowed me to be married to such a Beast, such a sinner?" An *encourager* asks, "How could I change to better glorify God in this situation??"

An *enabler* doesn't view her husband's sin in the same way she views her own. She considers him a hopeless failure and accepts his failure as part of her burden, rather than getting under it and helping him carry the load. Galatians 6:1-3 teaches us that when we are walking in the Spirit, we will get under the load of someone who is failing. A wife does this for her husband by her respect and service toward him, her fearless and

unwavering obedience first to God then to him, and by her gentle and quiet spirit that is unaffected by his sin (1 Peter 3:1-6). At the same time, a wife must not neglect her daily responsibility, and she must not pick up his daily responsibility (Galatians 6:4-5). An *enabler* considers that her husband is doomed to fail and she must carry the load of his daily responsibility. She thinks critically about his sin, rather than about ways she can respectfully, gently, and quietly be an *encourager* for/to him.

What You Say Gives It Away

Listening carefully tells you whether a wife is an enabler or an encourager. When we act embarrassed, or imply that there is a problem with our husband, we evidence that we have distanced ourselves from him in our thinking. A wife with a one-flesh mindset will not say anything that separates herself from her husband. Our words reveal our thoughts and intents of our heart.¹

Sin is not fun to be around, but it's what we say and do in response to sin that shows if we enable or encourage. An enabler allows just enough about her husband's sin to be known so that the sin problem isn't dealt with, and she looks good. An encourager's speech produces confidence and hope in the grace of God at work in her husband. An encourager does not put on a false front, but is willing to face relational struggles with honesty. An enabler is more comfortable presenting a façade that says, "We never fight, and when we do it's because of his sin." When an enabler stops honest interaction, she separates herself from her husband. It is more important for her to keep up appearances than to work on the unity of the relationship. Since each of us is a sinner married to a sinner, there will be arguments. If a couple denies arguing, either one of them doesn't have a heartbeat, or one of them is so beat down that she or he is afraid to say a word. An encourager welcomes truthful interaction, confesses her own sinful contribution to the problem, and communicates willingly and openly to attack the problem, not the person

(Ephesians 4:29-32).²

Queen Esther teaches us how to speak as encouragers. Her husband was about to make a devastating mistake, having listened to some bad counsel that would result in Esther and the rest of the Jewish nation being annihilated. Esther worked hard to make it pleasant for her husband to hear her request that he changed. She began by praying and fasting. She dressed and prepared herself to be as attractively pleasant as she could, and then waited for his acceptance of her presence. She invited him to spend an enjoyable evening with delicious food. Still she knew the timing was not right, so she wisely held off and asked him to return for another dinner the next day. That evening, he asked her what she wanted, and she was able to present her request for safety in a respectful manner that evidenced esteem for his position. An enabler, however, speaks in a nagging, contentious, disrespectful way. She does not believe the best about him, so her manner of speaking anticipates a negative response from her husband. An *encourager* expects the best from her husband and respects him in his God-given position of leader of their house, even when he's about to make or has made a devastating mistake.

Inciting

Scripture gives us examples of wives who enabled their husbands to sin by inciting them. Jezebel incited her husband to do evil in the sight of the Lord (1 Kings 21:25). Jezebel might argue that she loved her husband Ahab so much that all she did was finagle to get him a garden he wanted. No, that's not all. She intimidated God's prophet to the point of depression because he was more afraid of her than thousands of men. There are many ways a woman can be a Jezebel, inciting her husband to do evil in the sight of the Lord by causing problems with people in God-given authority.

In Christ

In a conversation Jesus had with His disciples, He taught them how not to enable (Luke 17:1-10). Let's apply his teaching to a wife's relationship with her husband. By the time we can recognize that a wife is enabling her husband to sin, there's a pattern of interaction in place which is a temptation for him. Jesus said it would be better for someone to hang a huge stone around her neck and throw herself in deep water than for her to keep enabling. Jesus' solution to break the pattern is radical. He gives her two things to do. Number one is to forgive over and over when there's repentance (Jesus takes it so far as seven times seventy in one day). If he never repents, she doesn't have the opportunity to transact forgiveness, but meanwhile between she and God there must be attitudinal forgiveness (Mark 11:25, Matthew 6:14). Number two is to serve.

There's nothing an enabling wife has more trouble doing than forgiving. Even as we enable a husband to sin, we hate what he's doing. When we're able to forgive, it's because we've admitted our own sin and been forgiven for it (Colossians 3:13). So to forgive him means we have to take a look at ourselves and ways in which our thoughts and responses have not been like Jesus? Forgiveness is never based on someone getting it right and changing, it's only based on the blood of Jesus (Hebrews 9). And serve? Jesus wants us to serve the sinner we live with? As we serve we are obeying, and forgiveness is a matter of obedience. The heart of forgiveness is in obedient service, not in feeling like forgiving. A woman who will not serve her husband is rebellious (Jeremiah 2:20-22).

Remember the examples we considered? It's interesting that in the areas where a wife has not served her husband he has been enabled to sin. (Beth didn't serve Bob sexually, and that's the area where he was tempted in.) Jesus knows and gives us the answer. Not only does He give us the solution, but by His grace He also empowers us to forgive and serve, ending the pattern of sinful enabling.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

As you discuss these passages, be careful not to allow speech with negative implications about a husband.

1. **Romans 12:20, 1 Peter 3:8-12** ~ What are some ways you can bless your husband or heap coals of fire-y kindness on him?
2. **Proverbs 18:17, Matthew 19:5, Genesis 2:24** ~ Have you listened to one side of the story that separated a one-flesh relationship? Have you spoken or implied one side of your story? Discuss what it looks like to no longer be involved in this sin.
3. **Acts 17:24-27, Romans 8:28-31** ~ Discuss what God is doing in your life by His sovereign grace. In what ways is He convicting you to become more Christ-like?
4. **Jeremiah 2:20-22** ~ How have you been rebellious?

MY PERSONAL JOURNAL

1. **Romans 12:20, 1 Peter 3:8-12** ~ I confess my own sin of not heaping coals of fiery kindness on my husband, and determine to bless him in the following ways.....
2. **Proverbs 18:17, Matthew 19:5, Genesis 2:24** ~ I confess my sin of being involved in gossip conversations where only one part of the story was given. Here is my prayer asking God to help me train my mouth.
3. **Acts 17:24-27, Romans 8:28-31, Jeremiah 2:20-22** ~ Here is my prayer confessing my sin of trying to control the situation rather than resting in and relying on God's sovereignty.

6. PROBLEMS THAT ARISE DUE TO OUR OWN AGENDAS

When we as women don't promote and protect male leadership in the home and church, we show that we are rebels who lack faith. A husband is commanded to lead by God, and is empowered to do so by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:25-32). When we assume leadership, we evidence a critical mindset that doesn't trust God, who clearly commands us to submit to our husbands as leaders of the home, and to our pastors/elders as leaders of the church (Ephesians 5:22-24, Hebrews 13:17). In valuing and fulfilling our God given role, we are trusting and surrendering to God, rather than trusting what a man is or isn't doing.

Instead of arguing or grumbling about decisions her husband makes, or going ahead and making decisions he has chosen not to make, a godly woman expresses confidence in his ability to lead. Instead of ignoring him or treating him as a recalcitrant child who must be corrected, she listens and takes heed. Women, we like to talk a lot, but to fall under our husband's leadership, we must talk less, listen more, ask questions, and stop taking action according to our personal priorities (1 Corinthians 14:33-35, 1 Timothy 2:9-14). When we question his choice, let's follow Esther's example and pray first, then ask one time, in such a way that it will be received well and taken seriously (Esther 4:16-5:2).

So, let's say your husband is about to decide something you consider to be foolish. How would you submissively express your heart to him? Formulate your question including the following things:

- Praise for the thought he's put into the idea or decision, and for the initiative he's taken.
- Expression of gratitude for his faithfulness to take responsibility over you in this area.
- Expression of your willing submission to his decision.
- Ask whether he would be willing to hear what you've been thinking about the issue, and suggest a date and time to talk about it.
- When he gives you opportunity, prayerfully, and attractively state your case, leaving the decision to him.

Loss of Dignity

When we take over the role of our husband, the result is that he loses dignity. Jonathan is a great example of a man who stayed within his role and strengthened David in God, holding him to his God given task (1 Samuel 23:16). David's wife, Michal, however, stepped out of her role to respect her husband. She looked down on the way David was worshipping God, and leading others in worshipping God. David was serious enough about being a leader that he no longer continued in relations with her (2 Samuel 6:16-23). Yet, is it possible that her critical spirit had something to do with David's lack of strong leadership over his children in his later years (2 Samuel 13-19)? Certainly, a critical spirit hurts our husband, and we do well to stay within our God given role. Jesus taught us to look at the log of a critical spirit that is swinging from our own eye before attempting to remove the splinter from someone else's (Matthew 7:1-8). We must confess our log of a critical spirit.

Financial Friction

One specific area in which we cause problems is by taking over his leadership role in the area of finances.

As leader, it is the husband's job to provide for his household (1 Timothy 5:8, 2 Thessalonians 3:6). We think we can handle the finances better than our husband, and in many cases it's true. There's nothing wrong with a woman paying the bills or organizing the family finances (Proverbs 31:12-31). A woman who helps her husband in this way builds respect for him among his elders. However, when she does it without respecting and falling under his leadership, something goes very wrong.

Linda had the mindset that Larry just couldn't get the bills paid on time, and that Larry couldn't provide for them in emergencies, unless they had a certain amount saved. Every day, Linda worried about how much money Larry was spending. She paid bills and balanced their checkbook several times a month. When she sat down at the kitchen table to work on finances; her critical spirit ruled her, and her worries came out in sighs and negative comments. She began to complain about bearing the load of taking care of the finances. Each time they talked about finances it turned into an argument. This example is not far fetched, finances are a problem area for many couples.

Instead of taking over his role as provider, there are ways to help and encourage our husband. Do you ask him how he wants money spent? Do you provide information and assistance that will help him lead financially? It's easier to worry and control, but then we ultimately enable our husbands not to take responsibility. Our friend in Proverbs 31:10-31 offers good ideas for helping out financially—like prepare ahead, and then smile at the future!

A Deep Danger of the “Sisterhood”

Everybody always said Judy and Julie were just like twins. They never got involved in sister to sister squabbles, and stayed close through college. Eventually, they each married, until Julie's husband got a job in another state, a full day's drive away. The higher Judy and Julie's phone bills, the happier they were. Both Christian women, they would discuss the Word of God, and what

they were learning in their churches. Yet, if they hadn't seen each other in a few months, it became so obvious to their husbands that they craved each other's company that one or the other of their husbands would say, "Well, take the weekend and go visit your sister." Eventually, Julie's husband started to become involved in internet porn, and Judy's husband became interested in a woman at work. Both Judy and Julie were shocked, but they found increased pleasure in their visits to each other, and comforted each other with Scripture.

Woman was created because man was lonely (Genesis 1:18). As women, we've got a job to do in sexually protecting our husbands by aggressively meeting his needs (1 Corinthians 7:1-5). How do you know he won't wake up missing you in the night? Overnight trips for our personal pleasure are a dangerous game played by a lot of women in our culture.

Sometimes it's inevitable for couples to be separated. If that's the case, the teaching of 1 Corinthians 7, that says we stay apart sexually as long as we are praying about an issue, gives us a good principle. So, if you have to be separated from your husband for a time, be sure you are praying for him while you are apart. But let's not get caught up in the selfish trap of leaving him lonely in an empty bed because we've got a "Sisterhood" to enjoy. Our God given responsibility is to take seriously our "Womanhood," and for those of us who are married, that should restrict time away from our husbands to pursue "Sisterhood" relationships.

Thinking For Our Husbands

It's a big problem when we step into the leadership role by thinking for our husbands. This pattern develops when a wife repeatedly doesn't give validity to what a husband says, or doesn't give him time to speak or develop his thoughts. She insists he listen to her and do the things she wants him to, or belittles what he says with a condescending smile. She takes over and makes decisions

for him in a manipulative manner and becomes upset when he makes decisions apart from her input.

We have to be careful not to do the thinking for our husbands. How? Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, both Paul and Peter encourage us to choose silence (1 Corinthians 14:35, 1 Peter 3:1). They're not saying we should never talk, because that would contradict Scripture. However, they are saying we should encourage our husbands to be leaders by talking less ourselves, and listening and learning more when they talk (Proverbs 18:13).

Honestly ask yourself if you push your ideas onto your husband. Would he say, if confronted by another man about an area in which he chooses to listen to you, "But you don't have to live with her."? Both Eve and Sarah push their ideas on their husbands, causing countless problems. God confronts Adam and Abraham specifically about listening to their wives (Genesis 3:1-17, Genesis 16). Rather than pushing our ideas onto our husband, we must evidence a disposition to yield, unless we're being asked to sin.

Feminized Parenting

When a woman thinks for a couple, it's common for their children to be raised in a feminized culture. Children being raised in a feminized manner get special treatment, because it's a mother's nurturing mindset to be devoted to her children, making sure they get what she thinks they need. A woman who thinks for her husband expects and manipulates him to think like she does about the nurture of their children.

There are many arenas in which we can push a feminized mindset. Two common areas are discipline and education. We convince our husbands to be involved in the first part of the curse of Genesis 3:16, overly worried and protective of our children. Women who stop their husbands from disciplining their sons are often feminizing their sons. Women who isolate their children from learning and sharing in the assembly of other children, refute

the biblical mandate of every member of the body being knit and joined together for the growth of the body in love (Ephesians 4:16). By catering to a prideful or dissenting attitude of isolation, the child and the assembly both suffer the lack of unity God intended. This mindset in homes may also hinder husbands from being leaders in the church, as men who are leaders in the church can not have an individualistic, nest-sitting mindset (Deuteronomy 7:6-9, Romans 15:5-7, Ephesians 4:1-16). We must ask whether we insist that our husband look at “our nest” the way we do, or whether we submit to their masculine mindset of the edification of Christ’s body and kingdom for God’s glory (consider the differences between 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8 and 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12).

We have the power of the Holy Spirit living in us to choose to be like Jesus, who said and did everything His Father told Him to say and do. Do we promote our way of thinking or promote falling under our husband’s leadership? Even if we raise children in what we consider to be an ideal, protected environment wherein we control all who teach or influence them, if we take the lead over our husbands by pushing them to think like we do, we are not glorifying God. What our children then learn from our lifestyle is rebellion, disobedience, self-righteousness, and manipulation.

A Word About Our Parents

Because Satan’s scheme to undermine role differences has infiltrated our lives, many couples either divorce or the wife becomes the leader in the home. Divorce is one way women control their husbands, another way is by manipulating them to act a certain way. Many of these women are our mothers, and many of our fathers have either escaped from or cow-tail to them. Often we recognize this and criticize our mothers, while adoring our fathers. When we verbalize adoration of these fathers, what are we communicating? Our husbands want us to adore them. Are we sending a message about how we’d

like our husbands to act? Let's be careful not to send out messages that perpetrate Satan's scheme. We would do well to *adore* our husbands and *honor* our fathers. Likewise, let's not condemn our mothers, but honor them, too (Deuteronomy 5:16). To do so, we must understand that the enemy is not our parents... the enemy is Satan and his schemes.

Another danger to be aware of is an attitude of condemnation toward our fathers that extends to all men, including our husband. This is the accepted mindset of the feminist agenda. In the church we evidence having bought into this mindset when we consider women to be more spiritual or godly than men.

We must encourage and help each other grow in biblical patterns of thinking, behaving, and feeling. Let's spur each other on to honor our parents and live in respectful submission to our husband.

Daughters of the King

How can we overcome the problems caused by living according to our own agendas? We begin by identifying the natural desire for control that all of us have, whether we do so openly or manipulatively. Let's pray that we will be convicted by the Holy Spirit of our sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and then willingly confess our sin to God and to our husband and family. God will grant us repentance as we put off our old ways, renew our mind with God's higher agenda, and put on joyful submission to our husband. Then it's time to get to work convincing everyone we've changed, eagerly going overboard in putting on the new ways because we hate our sin. Let's openly talk about our longing to glorify God, and clearly evidence our zeal for doing right. If someone mentions our sin (let's say our husband), let's humbly agree that we were wrong.

Hallelujah, we are daughters of the King. Let's give God glory by celebrating His higher agenda and shining brightly with the joy of knowing and obeying God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **1 Samuel 23:16, 2 Samuel 6:16-23** ~ How can you be more like Jonathan, who strengthened David in God, and less like Michal, who criticized David?
2. **Matthew 7:1-8** ~ What logs are swinging from your eye?
3. **Proverbs 31:12-25** ~ Discuss practical ways you can keep your home well in the area of finances.
4. **1 Thessalonians 2:7-8, 11-12** ~ Discuss ways you may have taken over in the area of parenting. Ask your coach to honestly advise you regarding attempts you may be making to control your husband in the area of parenting.

MY PERSONAL JOURNAL

1. **Esther, 1 Corinthians 14:33-35, 1 Timothy 2:9-14** ~ As I read these passages, I confess that I have approached my husband sinfully. Write down changes you will make.
2. **Matthew 7:1-8** ~ I confess my sin of removing splinters from my husband's eye while swinging a telephone pole sized critical spirit from my eye. Identify your logs, then ask God and your husband to forgive you.
3. **1 Thessalonians 2:7-8, 11-12** ~ Ask God to reveal ways you may have tried to push or manipulate your husband to think like you do about how to raise your children. How do you respond when your husband suggests or does something you do not like?

Notes

NOTES

Introduction

1. Copies of “Dealing with Sin” are available in the foyer leading to the Fellowship Hall. They are blank and you can complete them to be sure you biblically overcome what you are struggling with, by God’s grace in the power of the Holy Spirit. You don’t have to keep going in the patterns you have established!

Chapter 1

1. The National Association on Mental Illness produced a brochure in 2008 claiming that one in every eight women will suffer depressions, twice the rate of men. (<http://www.nami.org>). The American Psychological Association claims that Women are approximately two times more likely than men to suffer from major depression and dysthymia (Research Agenda for Psychosocial and Behavioral Factors in Women's Health, 1996).
2. Eve’s story is related in Genesis 3, and Sarah’s in Genesis 12-21.

Chapter 3

1. God tells us that in order to have relational harmony, we must think only on what is true, noble, excellent, praiseworthy in Philippians 4:2,8. Research reveals the devastation caused by choosing to respond negatively. “The best and most consistent correlate of marital satisfaction and dissatisfaction across research laboratories both in the United States and other countries, has turned out to be a construct researchers call, “Negative Affect Reciprocity.” This term refers to the increased probability that a person’s emotions will be negative (anger, belligerence, sadness, contempt, and so on) right after his or her spouse has exhibited negativity.” John Mordecai Gottman, *The Marriage Clinic*. NY,NY: W Morton & Co. 1999, 37.
2. 1 Corinthians 7:1-5; Philippians 2:1-4

Chapter 4

1. David W. Jones, “Egalitarianism and homosexuality: Connected or autonomous ideologies?” *The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood Journal*, vol. 8, no 2. www.cbmw.org
2. Genesis 1:27, Galatians 3:23-28, 1 Peter 3:7, 1 Timothy 2:8-15, 1 Corinthians 14:30-35.

3. For excellent and thorough exegesis of biblical passages on this topic, see George W Knight, *The Role of Women in the Church*. www.bible-researcher.com/knight1.html and J. Ligon Duncan, *Male Authority and Female Equality: In the beginning—Genesis 1-3*. www.cbmw.org/index2.
4. God authorizes Jesus in Matthew 28:18, Jesus authorizes Peter in Matthew 16:8-11, and Peter authorizes Paul in 2 Peter 3:15-18.
5. George W. Knight, "The New Testament teaching on the role relationship of male and female with special reference to the teaching/ruling functions in the church," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, vol. 18, no. 2 (Spring 1975), 81-91.
6. *Christianity Today*, vol. 17, no. 24, Sept. 13, 1974, 51. and vol. 18, no. 25, Sept. 27, 1974, 37.
7. Ray Butron and Helen Reddy—"Helen Reddy's Greatest Hits": EMI ST 11467.
8. J. Ligon Duncan, *Male authority and female equality: In the beginning – Genesis 1-3*. www.cbmw.org.
9. As women claim the call of God to positions that God has clearly assigned to men, they are setting aside the Biblical criteria that governing and teaching roles within the church are restricted to men (Galatians 3:28, 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, 1 Timothy 2:11-15). My goal is not to attempt a detailed exegetical argument of the Biblical stand (that has been done with excellence by many careful expositors and theologians), but to give us a unified understanding of how to walk in obedience to God as women. A list of suggested reading is available at the end of this book, for those with questions who desire to do further study on this topic.
10. John Piper and Wayne Grudem, ed., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1991), 70. For further information on this topic: Wayne Grudem, Prophecy-yes, but teaching-no: Paul's consistent advocacy of women's participation without governing authority," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, vol. 30, no. 1 (1987) 11-23.
11. Susan Hunt, "Women's ministry in the local church: A covenantal and complementarian approach," *The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood Journal*, vol. 11, no. 2. www.cbmw.org.

Chapter 5

1. Matthew 12:34
2. The four rules of communication from Ephesians 5:25-32 are: 1) Be honest, 2) Keep current, 3) Attack the problem, not the person, and 4) Act, don't react.

Suggested reading for further encouragement as
Daughters of the King

Tara Klena Barthel & Judy Dabler, *Peace Making Women: Biblical Hope for Resolving Conflict*, (Baker Books, Grand Rapids MI, 2005).

Nancy Leigh DeMoss, *Lies Women Believe and the Truth that Sets Them Free*, (Moody Press, Chicago IL, 2001).

Nancy Leigh DeMoss, *Biblical Womanhood in the Home*, (Crossway Books, Wheaton IL, 2002).

Linda Dillow, *Creative Counterpart*, (Nelson, Nashville TN, 1977).

Linda Dillow & Lorraine Pintus, *Intimate Issues*, (Waterbrook Press, Colorado Springs CO, 1999).

Elyse Fitzpatrick, *Helper by Design*, (Moody Publishers, Chicago IL, 2003).

Wayne Grudem, *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood*, (Crossway Books, Wheaton, IL, 2002).

Susan Hunt, *The True Woman: The Beauty and Strength of a Godly Woman*, (Crossway Books, Wheaton IL, 1997)

Carolyn Mahaney, *Feminine Appeal*, (Crossway Books, Wheaton IL, 2003).

Barbara Mouser, "The womanliness of Deborah: Complementarian principles from Judges 4-5," *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, 11/2 (Fall, 2006) 19-36.

John MacArthur, *Twelve Extraordinary Women*, (Nelson Books, Nashville TN, 2005).

John Piper & Wayne Grudem, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A response to evangelical feminism*. (Crossway Books, Wheaton IL, 1991).



