



INTRODUCTION

I. The Issue in the Confusion

THE ISSUE IS NOT Equality.

THE ISSUE IS Identity.

II. The History of the Confusion

The Spiritual Roots:

The Economic Roots:

The Social Roots:

III. Two Helpful Suggestions

Please engage in truth seeking.

Please relax.

Discussion Questions:

1. How would you define womanhood?
2. What roles and expectations have historically been placed on women? In what ways have women you know accepted or rejected those roles and expectations?
3. Why do you think women have such concern about equality with men?
4. What issues or topics regarding being a woman would you like to explore in this study?

Reflection Assignmet:

As women, we have been influenced by many factors on what it means to be a woman. Retrace your “walk toward womanhood.” Was the path lined with confusion and struggle, or did you have role models and mentors to guide you through, or was it something in between? What were some significant milestones on your journey that have shaped the woman that you are today? Who were the important people in your life at those times? What did you learn from them about womanhood?

Passage to Ponder this week: Genesis 2:18

Week One Summary...

Welcome to Biblical Womanhood! We are so glad you have joined us for what we hope will be a life-changing study. For the next several months we will be taking a hard look at a crucial issue in our world, our society, and for many of us personally: “What does it mean to be a Woman?” There is a great deal of confusion, controversy, and even conflict surrounding this issue. As women, we have the sense that being a woman is crucially important. If we don’t do a good job of “being a woman” we may have missed out on something vitally important when all is said and done. But we seem to be stumbling blindly through a maze with many voices shouting contradictory advice at us. Most of us have a vague mental image of “traditional” gender roles (resembling what we read in the “Little House” books or saw on old TV shows) which is tied to “traditional” religious views or conservative politics. But Science and Philosophy tell us that traditional thinking is for mental lightweights, and God is either irrelevant or non-existent. Feminist teaching tells us that “gender roles” are an archaic idea: there are no differences between men and women except the ones we create in our own minds, and that in general men are either irrelevant or The Problem. But for the most part, we are so busy—our lives and families so scattered by the pace of things and all the responsibilities we juggle—that we don’t have time to sort it all out.

It’s the goal of Biblical Womanhood to take the time to untangle some of the confusion. This study will challenge beliefs and opinions many of us embrace without really thinking about it. In the next few months, you may find yourself questioning or defending convictions you’ve had for years with regard to women and men. For example, most of us are in the habit of thinking that the issue between women and men is Equality. But the Bible is clear on that issue. Men and women are absolutely equal in the sight of God. We have equal value to Him and, as Christians, we are equal heirs to His grace. However, we are **different**, and biblically, we have different roles to play and different functions to perform. So, the issue is not Equality, but Identity.

This rearranging of our mental categories can be a difficult experience, so we want you to be prepared. Before we go any further, please understand that the principles set forth in this study are founded on Biblical Teaching, not on one individual’s opinion or society’s conventional wisdom. That’s where we’re coming from. We think it will also be helpful to you to spend some time examining where **you’re** coming from.