



## MASCULINE DEPRAVITY?

### I. Tendencies of Masculine Depravity

- A. Men have a tendency to avoid domestic responsibility.
  
- B. Men tend to rule wrongly over women and children.
  
- C. Men tend to get lost in careers and lose sight of their transcendent cause.

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

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

**Discussion Questions:**

1. From our reflection assignment last week: In what ways do you see your problems coming from *within you*? In the past, how have you tried to deal with that situation? (Blaming others, therapy, self-help/improvement, turning to God...)
2. Why is it important to recognize these “Battlefields” as common for all men? Does it make a difference to think of “your man’s” struggles as something he shares with other men?
3. What are some things that women tend to do that actually “feed” male depravity? Why do we do these things?
4. Think of an area of your life where you struggle to do the right thing. In what ways do other people help you and harm you as you deal with this issue?
5. Name something that you could *easily* do differently to help the men you know in their “Battlefield” areas. Is there anything that you think would be very hard? Why?

**Reflection Assignment:**

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

**Passage to Ponder this week:** Proverbs 14:1

## **Week Eight Summary...**

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

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

- **Men have a tendency to avoid domestic responsibility.** That is to say, they prefer to be passive in their relational interactions within the home.
- **Men tend to rule wrongly over women and children.** Rather than provide biblical leadership, they domineer and use their superior strength *against* those they should lead.
- **Men tend to get lost in careers and lose sight of the transcendent cause given to them by God.**

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

- **Respect their strengths and responsibilities and understand their struggles.** Just as women thrive in an atmosphere of love, men thrive in an atmosphere of respect. Recognition of the burden they carry, as well as how God has equipped them for the task, tends to give them courage to face the challenge. Understanding how they struggle can increase our respect for them when they persevere, and help us have a gracious attitude toward them when they fall short.
- **Place responsibility for leadership on their shoulders.** Letting men know that “we are counting on them” calls them to unforeseen heights of self-sacrifice and depth of character.
- **Let them “figure it out.”** Especially as men begin taking responsibility for their leadership role, it is key that we demonstrate a willingness to follow. We may be asked for and give input, which is fine. But if we yield to the temptation to try and “fix them” as leaders, we in effect usurp their efforts to develop in leadership.
- **Pray.** Our men are engaged in a spiritual battle against the World, the Enemy and against their own Depravity. We cannot underestimate the power of prayer on their behalf. Rather than give way to fear and attempt to take control, we do better to trust the One who is truly in control—God.