



1st SEMESTER REVIEW AND RECAP

I. The Issue of Confusion

Is it: EQUALITY : What can I do?

Or: IDENTITY : What was I created to be?

II. What Shaped Us?

- A. Satan's Strategy: Deception
- B. Identity Confusion: Marred Design
- C. Advocates Who Undermine: Skewed Perspective
- D. Family Ties that Didn't Bind: Distorted Models
- E. Mixed Messages: Contradictory Concepts
- F. Depravity: Broken Hearts

III. What Shape are we in?

Men: Struggles in Struggles in Leadership

Women:

Nurture for Control: Twisted Tactics

Inner v. Outer Beauty: Faulty Focus

Emotions v. Truth: Distorted Direction

Key Principle: Because of external influences and internal struggles, the shape of our womanhood has been distorted. We need to reshape our minds, hearts, and lives to reflect the beauty of God's design.

IV. Where Do We Go From Here?

Discussion Questions:

1. Name something that stood out to you from the first half of our study (or today's review.)
2. What "external forces" have influenced your thinking about femininity? (i.e. the media, your family of origin, cultural philosophy...)
3. Of the three Battlefields of Depravity (Inner Beauty vs. Outer Beauty, Nurture for Control, and Emotions vs. Truth) with which one do you struggle the most personally?
4. Cite an example of that struggle you experienced over the Holiday Break.
5. Looking ahead, what issue or question would you like to address in the second half of the study?
Or, in what area would you like to experience personal life change as a result of this study?

Reflection Assignment:

In what specific ways do you see Depravity (the sinful desires of your own heart) pulling you away from God's Plan for you as a woman? Are there other factors around you that add to this pull? (e.g. Peer pressure, the media, family influences...)

Passage to Ponder this week: Genesis 2:18-24

Week Twelve (Mid-course) Summary:

Welcome back! Think of this study as a journey--we are on the “path” to Biblical Womanhood. Before we move along, let’s spend a little time reviewing the ground we’ve covered so far. Basically, we’ve asked and answered two questions: “How did we get *here*?” and “Where in the world *are* we?”

We started with the premise that God had a plan in mind when he created men and women—a purpose and design for masculinity and femininity. God intends women and men to work together to “love and lead Creation” on His behalf. And, He has designed us to complement each other in that task. Men have strengths where women are weak, and *women* have strengths where *men* are weak. Together, we have all the strengths needed to accomplish God’s purpose for us. It is a beautiful plan.

However, we have not arrived at that original design but have veered in other directions. Therefore, we spent several weeks answering the first question “How did we get here?” by examining the various forces that have influenced us away from that plan, forces that moved us to where we are today. We saw that there is an Enemy whose goal is to ruin God’s design and whose strategy to accomplish this goal (for women) is to get us to believe the wrong things. A number of influences have served as tools in this process of confusing our thinking, including our families of origin, the media, and popular philosophies such as feminism. But, of all the factors that lead us away from God’s plan, the most potent is the depravity of our own hearts. Humanity is bent away from God’s design for us, and we have sinful tendencies that repeat familiar patterns in our lives again and again.

Finally, we spent a few weeks answering our second question “Where in the world *are* we?” by exploring those sinful tendencies, or “Battlefields from the Fall.” We saw that men and women have unique battlefields with which we struggle. For men those battlefields are:

1. The tendency to avoid domestic responsibility.
2. The tendency to rule wrongly over women and children.
3. The tendency to get lost in careers and lose sight of their transcendent cause.

We women struggle in different ways:

1. We tend to place a higher emphasis on external beauty and ignore the need for internal beauty.
2. We tend to trade nurture for control.
3. We tend to set our direction based on our emotions and downplay the priority of truth.

That’s where we are. It may not be a pretty picture, but it’s a valuable insight. Imagine the big “Directory” at the mall *without* an arrow telling you, “You are HERE.” Not too useful. Frankly, if you don’t know where you are, how can you get where you want to be? The next two questions we’ll try to answer in Biblical Womanhood are “Where do we want to be?” and “How can we get there from here?”