



## GENESIS: HEAD AND HELPER

### I. Introductory Concepts

#### A. About Structure

1. Does structure require an assessment of value?
2. Did God design relationships with structure in mind?

#### B. About Biblical Narrative Literature

1. Narrative literature conveys meaning.
2. Adam and Eve's experience explains and measures our reality.

### II. God's Design from the Genesis Narrative

#### Genesis 1: Male/Female Commonality

1. Male and female were created with value. (Gen. 1:26,27)
2. Male and female were given a calling: to love and lead. (Gen. 1:28)

#### Genesis 2: Male/Female Distinctives

1. Adam was created first. (Genesis 2:7)
2. Adam is given an occupation with responsibility before Eve is created. (Genesis 2:15)
3. Adam is instructed by God with the responsibility of leading with His Word. (Genesis 2:16-17)
4. Adam names the animals, a sign of his leadership over creation. (Genesis 2:19-20)
5. Adam is given a helper suitable for him, a phrase that defines the core social identity for both the man and the woman. (Genesis 2:18, 21-22)
6. Adam names his helper. (Genesis 2:23)
7. The man is to leave and initiate a new household. (Genesis 2:24)
8. The temptation seeks to reverse God's original social and spiritual order. (Genesis 3:1-6)
9. God holds Adam, not Eve accountable for this transgression. (Genesis 3:8-9)

10. Adam's response to sin has a passivity attached to it. (Genesis 3:11-12)
11. Adam and Eve's judgment is based on the reversal of the created order.  
(Genesis 3:17)
12. Adam's judgment falls not only on him (Genesis 2:16-17), but on all those under his leadership. (Romans 5:16-18)
13. Adam renames his wife as an additional sign of his leadership after the fall.  
(Genesis 3:20)

\*We are greatly indebted to Robert Lewis of Fellowship Bible Church Little Rock for the basic ideas and outline in this study.

### ***Discussion Questions:***

1. From our Reflection Assignment last week: In what specific ways do you see Depravity 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...)
2. Do you agree with the statement, "All human relationships require structure?" Why or why not?
3. When you hear the terms "Head" and "Helper" do you tend to think one is more valuable or important than the other? Explain.
4. Genesis describes a reversal of God's intended order—Eve took the initiative and Adam was passive. Describe a more current example from your own experience.
5. What role does **trust** play in our ability to embrace the Head & Helper model for relationships? Who do we have to trust? In what ways is it hard to do?

***Reflection Assignment:***

How does the Genesis pattern for male and female roles differ from what you have previously thought?

***Passage to Ponder this week:*** Hebrews 13:17

### ***Week Thirteen Summary...***

So, we've taken a good, hard look at where we are, in the world of Womanhood—pretty far off track. And, we've come to an understanding of how in the world we got here—by following conventional wisdom and the desires of our hearts. Now, it's time to look forward. Where *do* we want to be? If our own wisdom and our own desires got us on the wrong path, maybe we should consider a different perspective. What is God's wisdom? What are His desires? Where does He want us to be? This is the perfect time to hit the reset button, to "go back to the beginning" and start over again. Or, rather than "beginning" we could say "Genesis." The beginning of the Bible describes the beginning of humanity and God's original design for men and women. When we look carefully, we see a pattern for male/female relationships and roles. It certainly isn't what we would have come up with, and it may not be what we want. But that's the whole point . . .

"In the beginning," God created men and women--differently. He made us for different purposes, with different roles, and different responses to the world and to each other. The man was created first and given *responsibility* and *authority* to fulfill that responsibility. The woman was created second, because the man needed her *help*. In short, the man is the *Head* and the woman is the *Helper*. Our natural inclination when we read this is to assume that this distinction assigns different *value* to the man and the woman. But, that is our misinterpretation. The Bible is clear, both in Genesis and elsewhere, that men and women are equally valuable in God's sight. Both are created in the image of God, and both are equally heirs of His grace. However, anytime we want to accomplish something, we must have structure. Roles and responsibilities must be assigned, and everyone must be clear on his/her place in the structure. Otherwise chaos will reign, and nothing will be accomplished. We know this is true in business, in the classroom, and in volunteer organizations. It is also true in families. The CEO is not more important than the Director of Engineering. The Teacher is not more valuable than the Student. The Committee Chairman is not better than the member in charge of fundraising. And the man is not more important, more valuable, or better than the woman. We just have different roles and responsibilities. And, if we each fulfill those roles and responsibilities to the best of our ability, humanity will accomplish the purpose for which we were created.