



## WOMAN: A DEFINITION

### I. Core Contributions of Men and Women From the Scriptures and From History.

A. Men are the bearers of destiny. As men go so goes society.

1. Genesis 2-3: The man was created by God with a unique social and spiritual leadership in mind.

2. Defection from this leadership spells trouble not just for the man, but also for everyone.

B. Women are the nurturers of life. Where that core contribution is honored society prospers.

1. I Timothy 2:15:

2. "Women are happiest not when given position and power, but when the creative contributions of the maternal role are upheld." -Margaret Mead

### II. A Real Woman is One Who...

➤ **Rejects worldly temptations for significance.**

INDEPENDENCE VS. INTERDEPENDENCE

EXTERNAL VS. INTERNAL BEAUTY

➤ **Embraces God's design for relationships.**

HEAD AND HELPER

➤ **Nurtures the next generation.**

Genesis 3:20

Proverbs 31:10-31

A Word to “Stay At Home” Moms:

A Word to “Older” Women:

Titus 2:3-5

➤ **Expects the greater reward-God’s reward.**

1 Peter 3:1-6

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

***Discussion Questions:***

1. From our Reflection Assignment last week: Describe a recent incident in which you were dependent, manipulative, or controlling. List some ways you could have handled the situation differently. What would have been a more “helpful” response?
2. In the past, what have you thought would make you “significant”?
3. Have you thought of “independent” and “dependent” as the only two choices for how women relate to men? How does the idea of “interdependence” change things?
4. How do you react to the term “Helper”? Do you think of it as a positive term, or does it still have other associations for you?
5. Apart from being mothers, how can women “Nurture the Next Generation”?
6. What does it mean to you to expect a reward from God for following His design? How does that look?

***Reflection Assignment:***

What are some ways you can begin to live out God's definition of Womanhood? How can YOU:

- Reject Worldly Temptations for Significance
- Embrace God's Design for Relationships
- Nurture the Next Generation
- Expect a Greater Reward—God's Reward

***Passage to Ponder this week:*** Philippians 2:3-4

### **Week Fifteen Summary...**

The images most of us carry of “femininity” are like those in a fun-house mirror. Distorted from the original, they are ugly if we take them seriously, and comical if we don’t. The female characters in popular sit-coms are examples of the comic. Does anyone remember Edith from “All in the Family”, Marie from “Everybody Loves Raymond”, or Hotlips from “M\*A\*S\*H”? If not, fill in the own current comic stereotype female characters. Genesis describes how the Fall distorted the feminine identity to the point that the word *feminine* for many means “Passive and Dependant,” or “Emotional and Manipulative,” or “Controlling and Adversarial.” That’s pretty ugly. If we want to restore the true value and beauty of Femininity, we need a biblical **Definition of Womanhood**. That’s what we started “unpacking” this week.

### **A Real Woman is One Who...**

#### **Rejects Worldly Temptations for Significance.**

- The world tells us that dependence on Men belittles women and that independence makes us significant. The implication is that that independence or a cloying, needy dependence—a doormat for men to exploit—are the only alternatives. But the Bible paints a beautiful picture of relational *interdependence* for humanity. Men and women each have needs that can only be met by the other.
- Furthermore, the world tells us that women get their significance and their value from their outward appearance—external beauty. But the Word tells us the value of a woman comes from the quality of her character—internal beauty.

#### **Embraces God’s Design for Relationships**

God created orderly structure in the Marriage Relationship: Man as the Head and Woman as the Helper. When we choose to recognize, embrace, and work within this structure we are becoming the women God intends us to be.

#### **Nurtures the Next Generation**

Women are specially equipped to Nurture. This means so much more than giving birth and raising children. “REAL” women of God take seriously the honor and responsibility to raise up the next generation of God worshipers. They invest in the lives of others as mothers, grandmothers, aunts, mentors, and disciple-makers.

#### **Looks for a Greater Reward, God’s Reward**

Following God’s design and living within His plan works so much better than anything we could come up with on our own. It is not a guarantee of any particular outcome, however. Some “REAL” women never marry or have children. Some have husbands who never step up to their roles as “REAL” men. We can’t follow God merely to get a good outcome, like a divine self-help program. We must follow God because He is God, and trust Him to reward us in His way at His time. For “REAL” women this is enough.