



WEEKLY
Summary

Week Sixteen Summary:

Last week we examined a definition of “Woman,” from a biblical perspective:

A REAL Woman is One Who...

- Rejects Worldly Temptations for Significance
- Embraces God’s Design for Relationships
- Nurtures the Next Generations
- Looks for a Greater Reward—God’s Reward

It makes sense, of course, that God’s ideal for male/female relationships would entail a relationship between a REAL Woman and a REAL Man. So, let’s add another definition:

A REAL Man is One Who...

- Rejects Passivity
- Accepts Responsibility
- Leads Courageously
- Looks for a Greater Reward—God’s Reward

For women who earnestly want to pursue this standard in their own lives, questions immediately spring to mind: How do those definitions play out in the most elemental building block of relationships, marriage? What *is* God’s Design for Relationships? When we see the words, “Leads Courageously,” most of us think immediately of a traditional “Top-Down” model of leadership. In other words, for “leader” we substitute the word “boss” or “king.” This implies an authoritarian, maybe even oppressive, style of leadership in which the “leader” receives benefits at the expense of those he leads. Our appropriate and natural reaction to this image is a negative one; Jesus had the same reaction. In reaction to this faulty model, we think we would prefer a more “modern” approach to the marriage relationship—a 50-50 Model. Wouldn’t it be better if there was no leader, if everyone shared all responsibility equally? It would be GREAT . . . if we could just get the men to do their share. We call this 50-50 concept the “Mythical Model,” because while it sounds wonderful, a real, live example remains elusive.

Interestingly, the Bible lays out a completely different paradigm for leadership; we don’t have to pick between the faulty model and the fantasy model. Jesus taught a model of leadership which is completely at odds with the “Traditional Top-Down” model and is actually reality-based unlike the “50-50 Mythical” model. According to him, His followers are to lead as He did—sacrificially serving those they lead. Likewise, in the Biblical Head/Helper Model of the marriage relationship, the husband leads by working unselfishly for the benefit of his wife and family. The wife helps by bringing all her strengths to bear as she empowers and supports him in that effort. Rather than a Top-Down relationship, it is a Side-by-Side (even symbiotic) relationship. The wife responds to her husband’s servant leadership with submission and respect; the husband responds to his wife’s help with praise and honor. Those responses enable and encourage both spouses in their effectiveness in their core roles. And as God himself said, it is “very good.”

