

## SESSION 14: GENESIS: OBJECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

### I. Objections

#### A. Theological Questions

1. Didn't the roles in Genesis RESULT from the Fall?
2. Aren't the roles in Genesis cultural and time-bound?

#### B. Practical Questions

1. Maybe that's what the Bible says, but what does the "reality" of history and sociology teach us?  
*Four Consistent Patterns:*
  - Sexual division of labor
  - Complementary job roles
  - Female subordination
  - Cultural expressions of gender differences
2. Haven't there been women-led cultures called "matriarchies"?
3. Wouldn't it be *possible* to have a culture where men and women were the same and shared all responsibilities 50/50?

### II. Conclusions

- A. Men were created by God to be the spiritual and social leaders.  
Women were created by God to be necessary helpers and completers.

- B. Both men and women's roles carry specific responsibilities.

#### MEN

- A Will to Obey
- A Work to Do
- A Woman to Love and Lead (if married)

#### WOMEN

- A God to Obey
- A Mission to Complete
- A Husband to Respect and Cooperate With (if married)

- C. The Fall corrupted man's leadership and woman's helpfulness.

#### MEN

- Passive & Negligent
- Selfish & Dominant
- Abusive & Dangerous

#### WOMEN

- Passive & Dependent
- Emotional & Manipulative
- Controlling & Adversarial

- D. Spiritual redemption, renewed perspective, and radical commitment to Jesus Christ restores our invaluable feminine identity lost in the Fall.

\*We are greatly indebted to Robert Lewis of Fellowship Bible Church Little Rock, author of *Men's Fraternity*, *Quest for Authentic Manhood*, and *Raising a Modern-Day Knight*.

# BIBLICAL WOMANHOOD

## ***Discussion Questions:***

1. From our Reflection Assignment last week: How does the Genesis pattern for male and female roles challenge or differ from what you have previously thought?
2. Had any of the “Objections” we heard about today occurred to you? What did you think of the answers you heard?
3. We suggested that, because of the corruption of “the Fall,” women can tend to become: 1) passive and dependent; 2) emotional and manipulative; or 3) controlling and adversarial. Can you identify some examples of these in pop culture or media? In our culture, how are each of these qualities viewed? Strengths? Weaknesses?
4. To which of these do you find yourself drifting?
5. The 4th conclusion states that spiritual redemption (a changed heart), renewed perspective (a changed direction), and radical commitment to Jesus Christ (a changed direction) restores our invaluable feminine identity lost in the Fall.  
What can you personally do to restore value to the “feminine identity”? What challenges do you face in the process?

## ***Reflection Assignment:***

Think back over the past week. Describe an incident or two 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?

**Passage to Ponder this week:** Psalm 139:13-16

## **Week Fourteen Summary:**

Once we've taken a look at how Genesis describes the relationship between men and women, a very common response is: "Isn't there another way to look at it?" You are not alone if you're wondering that. This week we attempted to answer some common "Questions from Genesis."

Q: Didn't the roles described in Genesis result from the Fall? In other words, roles weren't God's original plan; roles are part of life being "messed up." Shouldn't we try to get to a place where the roles aren't needed?

A: In fact, the man and the woman received their Head/Helper assignments before the Fall, not after it. It was the failure to fulfill these roles that resulted in their fall into sin.

Q: Aren't the biblical roles described in Genesis cultural and time-bound?

A: Actually, the roles communicated in Genesis were repeated and applied centuries later by the New Testament writers. In fact, they used the Genesis story as transculturally authoritative rather than cultural.

Q: Maybe that's what the Bible says, but what does the "reality" of history and sociology teach us?

A: In reality, history and sociology track pretty closely with what we see in Genesis.

Q: But, haven't there been women-led cultures called "matriarchies" in the past?

A: No. Although there are examples of "matrilineal" societies—the group's genealogy is traced through the women—there have been no true matriarchal societies.

Q: Wouldn't it be *possible* (and a good idea) to have a culture where men and women were the same and shared all responsibilities 50/50?

A: In recent history, there have been a couple of social experiments with this goal in mind—Soviet Communism and the Israeli Kibbutz. It didn't go well.

So, if the model for relationships that we see in Genesis is valid, what are some conclusions we can draw from the past two lessons?

- Men were created by God to be spiritual and social leaders. Women were created by God to be necessary helpers and completers. When we abandon or reverse these roles, chaos ensues.
- Both men's and women's roles carry specific responsibilities before God. Men are to shoulder responsibility and provide leadership; women are to bring their nurturing, life-giving strengths to partner and complete.
- The Fall corrupted both the man's leadership and the woman's helpfulness. As a result we see men who are passive and negligent, selfish and dominant, or abusive and dangerous. And, we see women who are passive and dependent, emotional and manipulative, or controlling and adversarial.

# BIBLICAL WOMANHOOD

- Spiritual redemption, a renewed perspective, and radical commitment to Jesus Christ can restore the invaluable feminine identity lost in the Fall.

The question before us as women is: are we bringing our “invaluable femininity” to our relationships and our society in a way that calls and encourages those in our sphere of influence, particularly men, to become their best selves? Are we “building up” or “tearing down” the very things and people we love and value?