

TRUE WOMANHOOD



THE SCENE was a beautiful semitropical garden — a veritable paradise. The young man in the picture seemed to have everything going for him. He had perfect health, radiant good looks, a keen, alert mind. He even had ideal employment and abundant wealth in natural resources nearby.

A paradise?

Yes.

But, as he walked in these gorgeous surroundings, ate the delectable, natural fruits, observed and petted the friendly animals, an aching, gnawing feeling began to grow inside of him. He was dissatisfied.

He was just plain lonesome. There was no one of his kind to talk to. No one with whom he could share this beauty as well as his plans, hopes and dreams. No one he could love.

He was alone.

Why Woman Was Created

“And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him” (Gen. 2:18).

Then, God took a rib out of Adam’s own body and used it as the basic substance from which He created woman. Then He brought her to the man.

“And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (verse 23).

Then God states: “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (verse 24).

If every young girl could be taught this inspired account of her reason for being, the world would be a much happier place for both male and female. If every young boy could be given proper understanding of this event, the husbands and fathers of tomorrow would respect and appreciate their wives far more than most men do today.

But what do we find today?

A real lack of understanding of woman’s true purposes

in life of what true womanhood is and how to achieve it. This lack is a major cause of the frustrations and unhappiness of multiple millions of women. The effect on our entire modern civilization has been profound.

Questions That Demand an Answer

In today's mixed-up world, millions of women are wondering — and literally hundreds have written us — questions like the following: "Just what feminine characteristics should a woman have?" "Just where do women fit, anyway?" "What value does the Creator place on women?" "Just what are women for?"

The answer is found in the simple, yet beautiful, account of woman's creation. Review and analyze this inspired account. It is found in Genesis 2:18 in your Bible. Let us learn what it does *not* say, as well as what it does say.

God said: "It is not good that the man should be alone." Obviously, then, man was *not* the great, all-conquering hero, self-sufficient and in need of no help! Rather, man needed help — and needed it badly. Man was not complete unto himself. Rather, each man is incomplete and in need of the help, inspiration, warmth and balance imparted by the right woman as his wife.

In a way that no animal creature could, woman was created to share with man his life, his plans, hopes and dreams. She was created specifically to help the man.

Without this help, which only the woman can give, man would never achieve the full, abundant, peaceful and balanced life which God intended. Without giving this help, woman becomes edgy, resentful, frustrated, headed up a "blind alley" — for she is failing to fulfill the very purpose for which she was created.

Goals Women Should Bear in Mind

To be truly happy, a real woman should bear in mind the purpose for which she was created — and set herself definite goals to fulfill in the accomplishment of that purpose.

First of all, she should remember that she was called to help and supplement her husband. She should learn to be responsive to him and to his direction of the home, entertainment and way of life.

She should realize that her husband's success is her success also — and fully share and delight in the triumphs and achievements of her husband, knowing that they are partly her own. Also, she should equally share in his sorrow and disappointments — trying always to give the right kind of balanced and positive sympathy and encouragement so that he will rebound to other successes in the future.

A second area in which a woman should cultivate success and service is that of bearing and training her children. Certainly, young mothers exert a powerful influence on the leaders of tomorrow. And women should realize the overwhelming importance of zealously and joyously dedicating themselves to this as their highest physical calling. Far more important it is than that of an office worker or secretary on *any* level.

In His Word, God instructs older women: "That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, *keepers at home*, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Titus 2:4-5).

Here, the Great God who created woman tells her to be a keeper at home. Christian women who objectively and enthusiastically give themselves to their calling are adding immeasurably to their own happiness and well-being, first of all, and to that of their family — now and perhaps for generations to come. But it goes deeper than that. They are adding to the entire society in which they live.

How a Woman Can Best Serve the Entire World

This leads us to the third area of woman's rightful accomplishment. That of serving — through her husband and family — the society and the world as a whole. In the end, women can really accomplish far more to help this

entire world by being the kind of wives and mothers that God Almighty intended.

Then, for the woman who reads and understands the Bible, another goal presents itself. That is the goal of preparing to help rule and reconstruct this entire society in the World Tomorrow (Rev. 2:26; 5:10). Some Christian women wonder how they are being prepared for this. If they, themselves, are not leading and directing businesses, families and public activities today, how are they learning and preparing for tomorrow's world?

The answer is that a woman, with the physiological and psychological nature given her by God has magnificent opportunities — too often untapped — for preparing toward this goal. She needs to set herself to be a really successful wife, mother and contributor today. But, you say, she is not getting direct experience in leadership?

Let's put this another way. How many men that you know are constantly "leading"? How many men are in complete charge of every situation wherever they may be? How many men are responsible to no one else?

The answer, of course, is that every man on earth is responsible to others. The overwhelming majority of all men have supervisors and bosses over them during the day. Then, on the way home, they are certainly "under" the authority of the youngest motorcycle policeman on that particular freeway. Even at home they are "under" the authority of the police, the mayor of the city, the governor of the state, the president, premier or other leader of the nation and the ministers appointed by each of those in governing their respective territories.

And the woman?

All during the day while her husband is gone she is "in charge." Over whom? Over what? The organization and administration of household duties, the children and their training, and perhaps servants, and delivery people who may assist her from time to time.

Her leader, her boss — who should be her husband — is not around and watching over her work nearly as much as his boss is probably watching over his activities hour by

hour! It is just that they have different kinds of work and different kinds of responsibility.

If a woman learns to zealously and wisely think out and plan, execute and follow through on her responsibilities, she will be just as well prepared for any future responsibility in God's Kingdom as will her husband.

For both husbands and wives, it is important to realize a basic principle of leadership. This is a valid principle taught in many military organizations and quite often civilian ones. It is that you are not ready to give orders until you have first learned how to responsively take orders and to accomplish the assigned job effectively.

Certainly, the very nature and role in life which God Himself has assigned women enables them to learn some very important Christian qualities most directly. They learn in a direct, personal sense to be yielding and responsive, to help and to serve. In a constant and personal manner, a woman has the blessed opportunity to live to its greatest extent Jesus' inspired statement: "It is more blessed to GIVE than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

The happiness, the joy, the sense of deep-down satisfaction and accomplishment which comes to a dedicated and successful wife and mother bears eloquent testimony to the eternal truth of the above inspired statement of the Son of God.

True Femininity is An Attitude — An Entire Way of Life

Although many women think that femininity is primarily looking pretty, dressing neatly or talking softly and being retiring, these are just outward symptoms of an inward state of mind. These things are important in themselves — yet they alone do not constitute the whole of femininity by any means. Sometimes, in fact, certain women "put on" these outward manifestations which belie their real attitude and approach to life.

The basic attitude a true feminine woman should cultivate springs from her recognition and agreement with the feminine goals outlined above.

Her attitude and approach, therefore, is that of trying

to help and add to the stature of her husband. It is that of gladly bearing and training her children, spending time and effort with them in the realization that they may be the leaders of tomorrow. It is attempting to serve the larger society through — not apart from — husband and family. It is also, finally, preparing for her ultimate spiritual goal in the Kingdom of God by learning the lessons of love, obedience and service here in this life and expressing these to the full extent as a wife and mother.

The above attitude and approach is basic.

Every woman who seeks to be truly feminine should inculcate this approach into every area of her life. She should actually write down these areas of feminine responsibility, analyze how she is fulfilling them and write down suggestions as to how she may fulfill them more perfectly. Asking God's help, she should attempt to live this way in her relationship with her husband, family and society as a whole. Attempting to help, supplement and serve in these areas should be the motivating factor in all of her life and permeate her thinking and approach to every situation.

Something to Study

In meditating on the above approach to life, she should study, analyze and obey God's inspired instruction found in I Peter 3:1-11.

Notice, in this passage, that wives are to be subject to their own husbands. If their husbands are not Christians, God says that they may be "won" apart from the "Word" — or Bible teaching — by the conduct (this word translated in old English as "conversation" really means "conduct" in modern English) of the wives. The passage explains that if a wife shows deep respect and reverence for her husband, he may be won over to Christianity by his admiration of her willingness to take the place which God has assigned the woman in this life. She wins him not by "preaching at him," but by her Christian humility in submitting to him as a wife should.

Her "adorning" is not to be the over-usage of gold, pearls, fancy clothes or outlandish hairdos. Rather, it is to be the outward way of life reflecting "a meek and quiet

spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

In verse 6 of this passage, the Christian woman is instructed to consider her husband as her "lord" or boss.

With the attitude of deep respect for her husband, a truly feminine woman will not be arguing, bickering or nagging at her husband.

She will anticipate his wishes and his directions. Because of its altered meaning in modern terminology, she may not literally call her husband "lord," but she can and should respond to him with proper respect.

Beginning in verse 7, husbands are told to respect the willingness of their wives to take the place designed by God. Then, in verse 8, both man and wife — and all Christians — are instructed to be of "one mind" — with compassion, love, courtesy and a definite self-restraint in the use of the tongue in arguing and bickering.

Truly, as this scripture says: "He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (verse 10). Life is entirely too short to spend it arguing, bickering, and fighting with anyone — especially the very man or woman whom you should love the most.

While we are on this subject, let me give you the advice of one eminent physician — with whom I heartily agree — who has said that the words, "I'm sorry, dear," are very medicinal in their effect in people's lives. A simple and sincere apology often averts a great deal of trouble, bickering and anguish. It takes courage to admit that you — and sometimes you alone — are wrong in a particular situation. But, in marriage above all other institutions, it is certainly worth it.

In seeking to implement and magnify the above feminine approach to life, let us now discuss five specific feminine characteristics which every woman should cultivate:

I. Responsiveness and Service

Perhaps the most outstanding characteristic of a truly feminine woman is that of being warm and responsive. The first man, Adam, was alone; he was lonesome. He had no one to talk to. He was incomplete.

Woman was created to share man's life and love, to respond to him, and encourage him.

If a woman will lovingly and consistently do this, any right-minded man will lavish love and appreciation upon her in return. For this is the kind of person most men truly want to marry and with whom they want to share their lives.

"There are people," said the brilliant French essayist, Raoul de Roussey de Sales, "who transmit to others their particular emotional atmosphere; who show you how to love, to suffer, to be happy, to laugh at the humorous things in life."

This describes the truly feminine woman. Her mind and heart are enthusiastically sharing in the ideas and hopes of the man she loves. She is constantly aware of him and is in the middle of his hopes and dreams — not merely an onlooker.

For her husband — and for all people for that matter — she cares: things not only happen to her, she happens to them.

But in all of this, she is not leading and dominating — but responding to others and especially to her husband. She is sharing and furthering their hopes, interests and joys. She is not competing for the center of the stage or trying to "get."

Such a feminine woman instinctively adapts her mood to that of her husband whenever possible. She rejoices in his triumphs, she weeps with him in his sorrow. Yet, constantly she bolsters him, balances him and helps him in every possible way.

Both in her family and in the larger society, she is not only responding but serving. She is constantly attempting to make her home a cleaner, more beautiful, more happy place. As part of her husband and family, she is attempting to do the same thing in the lives of those around her.

An Outside Job?

Should this type of woman ever, ever have an outside job?

This is a basic question — but one that needs to be

answered here. The true answer depends upon whether — in taking such a job — she is responding to her husband's true wishes and serving her family's true needs as well as those of the larger society.

There are certainly many situations in which a young, unmarried woman needs to be working as a secretary, shop girl or in some other position. For the young married woman, these situations are distinctly fewer.

Yet they do exist.

Especially in the first few months of marriage, a young woman may need to take at least a part-time job *before* the children come if her husband requests it, she knows it is temporary, and the right job situation presents itself. But the true interests of most marriages are not truly furthered by having the wife work throughout marriage. That is why I said that a woman should respond to her husband's *true* wishes.

On the surface, he may imagine that he would like to have his wife work and thus continually supplement the family income.

But would he like the ultimate result of the wife working constantly, beginning to be more independent and competitive?

A woman needs to be very careful about this. With prayer, with timely suggestion and advice, she should do her full part to see that she is not pushed into taking an outside job.

Recently *Money* magazine ran an article captioned: "The Half-a-Loaf Life of the Working Wife."

The author pointed out that up to 70% of the added income provided by the wife's job is largely taken up with travel expenses, additional taxes, outside lunches, extra clothes, day-care centers, baby sitters or nursemaid's fees to take care of children at home.

This article showed that — looking at it economically alone — a family will gain relatively little, in many cases, by having the wife work outside the home. What the article did not attempt to point out, of course, was the severe damage done to the attitudes of both husband and wife in such a situation and to the very characters of their

young children growing up without the care and guidance of a full-time mother.

Keep Feminine and Responsive

An outstanding biblical example of responsiveness is given in Ephesians 5:22-24. Here, the wives are commanded to "submit" to their own husbands "as unto the Lord."

This passage shows that a wife's highest duty is the development of this responsiveness, service, and obedience in regard to the God-appointed head of the home, the husband.

If a Christian woman seeks to respond to her husband as to Christ Himself, she will never undermine his plans or hopes, but will do everything possible to make them a success — even when some of the details have not been in perfect agreement with *her* ideas and suggestions.

The old saying, "There is more than one way to skin a cat," certainly applies here. Everything may not be done her way, but she should try to be "on her husband's team," and see that the play is a success even though it is not the particular play that she would have called at that particular stage of the game.

The warm and responsive woman who doesn't try to conquer or rule the man has an inner serenity and security not found in the aggressive, raucous, competitive type of woman. She is glad to be a woman. She has an innate tenderness for a man. She intuitively senses her husband's mood and responds to him — making him feel glad to be alive, sparking his personality, enthusiasm, courage and initiative and gladly sharing in his successes.

II. Tenderness and Beauty

The truly feminine and happy wife is one who wants to have a husband as the head of her home. She does not marry in order to enter into an "equal partnership" agreement.

She knows that a house divided against itself cannot stand. She knows that only one person can drive a car at a time. She wants her husband to be that person!

She respects and admires what her husband is trying to achieve in life. She hopes to help him in achieving it and to make him happy along the way. In thus giving herself to the happiness of her husband and others, she achieves her own greatest happiness, joy and inner peace.

Since she expects and wants her husband to be the head and the one she can "lean on," this woman has a deep softness and tenderness for him. There is no bristling, no competition, no frigidity.

This tender, yielding state of mind automatically gives such a woman added beauty, a sparkle in her eyes and an unusual capacity for patience, love and compassion for others.

Automatically feeling tender and yielding toward her husband, she will naturally walk more softly, talk more softly and dress in a more soft, feminine and attractive way for her husband.

Frankly, any truly feminine woman will dress, fix her hair, wear perfume and accessories and so conduct herself in all these ways in a manner to please her husband. She will not dress merely to please other women or to follow the latest fashion fads. More often than not, she knows these are dreamed up by "weirdo" effeminate men who actually don't like women in a normal, decent manner anyway.

In the area of tenderness and beauty, a woman should use her mind to cultivate true womanhood in every way possible. She should keep herself neat and clean. She should take a bath or shower every day and wear perfume lightly. In like manner, she should keep her home scrubbed, clean and warmly attractive in the arrangement of furniture, flowers and other things which only such a woman can add to make a house a home.

III. Intelligence and Understanding

Actually, although both men and women were definitely created equal as fellow human beings, the outstanding kind of intelligence possessed by women is that of intuitively sensing the moods and attitudes of husbands and children, adapting themselves to these family situ-

ations and inspiring husband and family in the supporting role for which they were created.

But it does take a lot of intelligence to be the kind of wife and mother described in this booklet!

Yes, a feminine woman needs sparkling intelligence and deep understanding. For she needs to perceive in a very special way how to complement and inspire her husband to accomplish the greatest possible success commensurate with his health, abilities and situation in life.

IV. Christian Virtue

A truly feminine woman is always an outstanding example of virtue and purity. Although among the men, many rogues and scoundrels among the kings, dictators and emperors have emblazoned their names in the pages of history, very few women indeed have commanded continuing interest or respect who have not been examples of decency and purity.

So the scripture states: "A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones" (Prov. 12:4).

As far as their reputation in this world is concerned, some scoundrels among the men appear to get by. But among intelligent people of every race and creed, rarely is a woman respected who has failed to be an example of decency, purity and virtue.

For, as the scripture states, a virtuous woman is indeed a "crown" to her husband — adding to his stature and respect even among others. If she has the implicit trust of her husband and constantly demonstrates her faithfulness and loyalty to him, that in itself is a tremendous help and inspiration in his work and accomplishments.

This also inspires him, and his sons after him, to be faithful and loyal to his wife and to all women. The ever-widening effect of this kind of woman's dedication to Christian principles may help, purify and strengthen the characters of countless children, grandchildren and friends and relatives by the score.

It is worth it!

As the mother in the home, the woman also has a tremendous responsibility to set an example of Christian character and faithfulness to right principles. Her example — and her diligent teaching and training — will leave an everlasting impression upon her growing sons and daughters.

There is no need to belabor this obvious point. But in a very special way for a woman the dedication to virtue and decency involves a living law. Her responsiveness and obedience to this law will protect her from immeasurable heartache, and guarantee a type of lasting love, respect and appreciation extending to generations beyond her own life.

V. Faith, Hope and Courage

A woman who shows faith in God, faith in her husband and faith in herself is one whose price is beyond compare. For such a woman will inspire her husband to think and do more brilliantly than he may have thought he was able. She will inspire her sons to high accomplishment which may well not have been theirs otherwise.

In moments of defeat and despair, such a woman shows faith and hope in God. She will thus rekindle the spirit of her husband — and perhaps others who are “too close” to the situation to see the larger picture. This may save them from even greater disaster and despair.

A feminine woman does not need the type of strength, leadership and dominance which befits a man. But she does need a depth of courage which would befit any man. For, many times, as the help and support for her husband and family, she is able to buoy them up when they need it most.

There will be times, or course, when her husband may be sick, absent or perhaps dead, and she will have to carry on with courage and implicit faith in the fact that God will help her do her part, in a feminine way, to act for her husband in his absence.

In this area of life, especially, to be truly and everlastingly feminine, a woman needs to believe in the true God. She needs to know — and know that she knows —

that the Great God of heaven stands behind the living laws He has set in motion and will bless, guide and protect her in her place as a woman as she yields to Him!

In Summary

What a much better place this world would be if all women were truly feminine!

For all husbands would have real wives, partners, sweethearts and loving "helps" to assist them, buoy them up and share in the highest degree their hopes, dreams and successes. All children would have full-time mothers to teach, guide, protect and inspire them by constant training and by loving and faithful example.

Society as a whole should have the real warmth, tenderness and responsiveness which only this kind of woman can impart.

In summary, and before bringing this booklet to a close, I want to draw the reader's attention to the most complete single passage in all the Bible on womanhood. This passage is found in Proverbs 31:10-31. It has been preserved for nearly three thousand years in the Canon of Scripture. It is inspired of God to help the woman of today grasp and understand the type of life she should be living.

All, both men and women, should study it regularly.

It calls attention to the tremendous value of the "virtuous woman" (verse 10). It shows how she buoys up and encourages her husband. It describes how she works for him and her family in the home.

Surprising to some, perhaps, it shows that a Christian woman should have the right kind of initiative. For she "bringeth her food from afar." If the family budget permits, she may order things from distant places and overseas. "She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard" (verse 16).

This kind of woman obviously has initiative. Her initiative may be exercised, occasionally, in purchasing additional plots of land for her own gardens or vineyards and adding to the income of the household by her cultivation of these lands. This type of activity, of course, can be

exercised on her own husband's property. But it does take initiative, drive and vision.

"She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant" (verse 24). Here again, this woman is going above and beyond keeping the home and rearing the children. She is actually in the clothing industry — yet at home.

"She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple" (verse 22). Most important of all, she may save her husband and family a good deal of money — when necessary — by sewing at home and in every way making sure that her children and family are well dressed and well taken care of in every way possible. She assists her husband in providing quality products for her home and family by making some of them herself.

"Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with *wisdom*; and in her tongue is the *law of kindness*" (verses 25-26).

This inspired passage certainly describes a wife of diligence, vision and accomplishment!

She is a wife of "honour." She has wisdom. She is alert to her place in assisting and encouraging her husband and remembers to be tender and kind in what she says, thinks and does.

Her children grow up and praise her. Her husband praises her and loves her till death does them part.

Frankly, long generations yet unborn will praise and honor this type of feminine woman and her memory. For she is the kind of woman who will be the ideal in "the world tomorrow."

She is the kind of woman who is fulfilling the role for which she was created. Beyond all doubt, she will be blessed, appreciated and everlastingly loved for joyously fulfilling this high calling! □