

# Introduction

It is universal truth. We cannot skip over it, ignore it, or pretend that God did not impose a handicap on Adam and Eve when they rebelled. God spoke to Eve directly, warning her, “He shall rule over you” (Genesis 3:16). Next he spoke to the man, “In the sweat of your face you will eat bread” (Genesis 3:19); he would now have to overcome thorns and thistles. Both had a decision to make. Both were accountable.

Eve’s challenge is the same as every woman’s today. She would chafe under sinful man’s dominance. Would she recognize the warning and learn to handle it, and at the same moment strengthen the bond of her marriage? Could she? How? Likewise, Adam’s challenge is the same as every man’s today. He would have to work and sweat to earn his way in life. Would he acknowledge the discipline and overcome the handicap? Would he accept responsibility for his rebellion and let God be God?

Every man and woman, including you and me, must face this universal truth or try in vain to ignore it. Will we recognize the authority of God or pretend we can live happily in willful ignorance?

## **Biblical Equality**

*Submission is Not Silence: Boldness From a Quiet Spirit* is dedicated to the pursuit of wisdom for women and is taken entirely from Scripture. I believe this is a true interpretation of the role of women as God intended for us.

The Bible has the original message of equality for women, which is obliterated from mainstream culture today. If every woman understood how her significance plays out in

Scripture, she would step onto the right path, find clear vision, and understand her value. Scripture offers women a personal handbook of wisdom: it is written directly to her. With this handbook and the confidence it brings, every person in her world benefits, especially her husband and children. Beyond this influential role an adventure of self-discovery awaits.

Her innate gifts are needed, today more than ever. Beside her precious responsibilities at home, her husband and children, there is very likely more for her to prepare for and accomplish. Feminism didn't get it when they thought the message of the Bible relegated women to second class; and they rejected it. Yet it appears they were not completely wrong, as through the centuries, misguided men teaching in the church did control and disrespect women. Yet the Bible never has!

## **Boldness With a Quiet Spirit**

If I had known this one fact of life—that I had the power to speak up, speak out, speak the truth in love, and that it would have made the difference—this book never would have been written. Instead of knowing how I should handle God's discipline to women, and overcome the handicap, I silently submitted to my husband. Though my passion raged inside, he had no idea why I was passive. Fearful of disobeying God, afraid of losing my husband, I obeyed more like a slave or child. I am convinced that many today can relate, but it doesn't have to be like that. My goal is to show you how you are free to think what you think, accountable to your Creator, and how to live God's way.

Sadly, when a woman does not comprehend the power of her female role, she often does not hold a husband accountable for his abuse or despotic rule over her. Wives who accept a despotic husband as their lot tend to lead covert lives, going "under the radar," living in a separate world. They know something is wrong with the church's teaching on submission, and

they instinctively crave freedom to think what they think without being told what to do at every step—but they don't know the way out.

*Boldness with a quiet spirit* is possible by knowing your role and knowing your husband needs you to stand in front of him, facing him as equal partner, which is different from squaring off with him like a male to fight. You can be bold with your perspective while maintaining a quiet self control. As females, we have not been taught the basics of our powerful role. Created in the image of God, we are spirit, soul, and body—accountable to the Creator for how we invest our “fearfully and wonderfully made” selves (cf Psalm 139:14). When we stand before Him in the end, our husbands won't be the ones answering for how we lived our lives. We all will stand alone before our Creator, each solely and personally accountable for this amazing gift of life we've been given.

Too often, the topic of submission taught in the church is presented as if that is all a woman needs to know about marriage. As a result, women have been hindered from growing whole. Instinctively, they know there is something wrong in the overly simplistic way this doctrine is presented. Also, when the Bible is used to teach that good wives and mothers stay at home as “keepers of house and home,” does it mean to live only behind four walls and, if so, for how many years?

The Word of God is directed to both men and women. When women know it is also meant for us, the freedom, wisdom, hope, and inspiration it contains can be taken personally. Isn't it interesting that in Scripture wisdom is personified as female? “Wisdom cries without; she utters her voice in the streets” (Proverbs 1:20).

## **The Gift of Femaleness**

This book encourages every woman to express her innate femaleness. Indeed, a woman has a responsibility and duty to do so. I recognize the unfortunate attempt by some Christian men

(and many men from other religions) to suppress their women and force them into silence. Unfortunately, this effort has persisted in the church for centuries and is still promoted by some churches today. This book provides a Christian woman the foundations to know why this is wrong and provides biblical advice how to overcome.

Ponder this: Every female, as every male, is created in the image of God and they are given dominion over the earth together. The creation of both male and female in His image infers difference but not greater vs. lesser. What part of the image of God is more significant, or less? “And God said, ‘Let us make man [mankind] in our image, after our likeness: and let them [emphasis added] have dominion . . . over all the earth’” (Genesis 1:26).

Every pursuit has basic principles that lead to success. Cooking, health, business, the arts, and sports all depend upon our knowledge of the basic rules and how we apply them. The basic rules for a cake involve combining ingredients thoroughly, baking at a certain temperature for a set time, cooling down before decorating, etc. The game of tennis requires knowing its unique rules and also requires agility, strength, and the coordination to connect the racket to the ball. Practicing the basics first leads to success later. Femaleness is the same—by God’s design.

Good philosophy may be gleaned from the wisdom of the Bible; it ignites vision and hope. It works like a miracle, giving knowledge, assurance, and encouragement as a woman becomes her best self. With its positive guidance, she looks to God, then inward to discover her unique gifts and calling.

That a wife is an equal opposite to a husband is a central focus in Scripture. As is every male, the female is created in the image of God. She has a personal dominion over which she alone has the power and innate ability to shine. Femaleness comes from within, the power to create a persona that guides a woman’s demeanor for life. She is unique, gifted, and fits perfectly

in the Creator's design. She is "meet" for a man, inherently capable of helping him in such a powerful way that he no longer is alone and no longer tends to languish. A wife stands in front of and as the part opposite her husband; a woman is a man's counterpart, with an innate predisposition to create the atmosphere in their world.

## **My Challenge and Hope**

For whom is this book written? While it can be read by anyone, female or male, the primary audience is married Christian women. Of course, single women can benefit from it, too, as can daughters, sisters, older mentoring women, and women from other religions. Married and unmarried men can learn from it and perhaps some may realize they are suppressing the very one who could aid them greatly. Men who have shy, retiring wives or daughters can intentionally encourage them to develop and express their gifts to become a blessing to all around them.

My challenge to every reader is to understand the rules of femaleness from Scripture—every woman is capable of it. You alone are responsible for yourself. The promise for you is for personal success. And you incline your marriage partner toward success by the application of your unique skill and opinion. When I grew and changed, everything in our marriage relationship changed of necessity. Today, our marriage is better than ever, but it might have ended very differently.

My hope is that the church and women will grow to understand the power of the female role. She is created in the image of God with all the mental capacity, perspective, and potential of men, but she is an opposite, a counterpart. If she delves into serious questions, to understand for herself from Scripture, she will find answers. Her answers will be unique, fitting her life, and at the same moment a foundation solid and sure. Her husband will be only more charmed by the intelligent, respectful woman at his side. With a wise wife, he will be helped in his own quest for

his destiny. A confident, wise woman will “speak the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15), even if he sometimes doesn’t want to hear it. Your husband will never know how much he can love you until he respects you. Commanding or summoning respect is an art for every woman to learn.

NOTE: This book is *not* a manual encouraging divorce. Although some cannot be saved, many broken marriages can and should be repaired. Sadly, many women and men give up the reconciliation process and don’t make a concerted, serious attempt to work on themselves to save the marriage. The book also does not address spousal abuse, other than recognizing it exists and is evil. Physical violence is wrong. Prolonged, excessive suppression of a woman is emotional abuse and is wrong. Abuse is a crime and should be treated as such. I wish this book could solve abuse issues, but that is far beyond its scope. If you are reading this and you are being abused, seek help—NOW! Then when you have brought the abuse to an end, read this book so you can start to live as God intended for you.

## **Practice Being a Wise Woman**

As my husband, Eric, and I read the Bible together and acted on it, in a simple, practical way our frustration was transformed to an equal and opposite balance of power. Eric’s and my frustration with our marriage was relieved through the awe and obedience to the Designer of the Marriage Relationship—God. We know that the truth of Scripture works like a miracle when it is properly applied. In the beginning, we didn’t understand how to work out our differences and the mystery that is marriage. As we went along, we just took each next step as we understood how. Practice made it more perfect.

You will hear me reiterate often that every woman is created in the image of God. It is a gift that infers power, freedom, and purpose. As a woman, you are a reflection of God, not merely of your heritage, upbringing, status, education, and family—not even your husband.

You are created in God's image and not your husband's. With your own individuality, uniqueness, and initiative, you are free to go in the direction you choose—wisdom is one of those choices.

“Every wise woman builds her house, but the foolish plucks it down with her hands” (Proverbs 14:1). Herein lies your power: either build a strong household (set it up surely), or (with that same innate power) tear your house apart. Self-centeredness and a corrupt philosophy do that thoroughly.

Jesus said, “If the Son makes you free, you are free indeed” (John 8:36). He sets you free to think what you think; free to ponder the path of your feet; free to build your life on wisdom, or destroy your chances with foolishness. This is the freedom and power that lies within you—because God Himself gave it to you.

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