

CHAPTER 37

"WHAT IS TRUE FEMININITY?"

I. A WOMAN WHO IS FULFILLING HER GOD-GIVEN ROLE IN LIFE IS SOURCE OF GREAT SPIRITUAL STRENGTH TO A MAN.

- A. She is the most beautiful creature on earth to him.
- B. Not only is she a crown of joy to her husband, but also to others with whom she comes in contact.
- C. Scriptures:
 1. Prov. 12:4 — *"A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband..."*
 2. Prov. 18:22 — *"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord."*
 3. Prov. 19:14 — *"House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the Lord."*
 4. Prov. 11:16 — *"A gracious woman retaineth honor..."*

II. CONVERSELY, A WOMAN WHO REJECTS GOD AND DENIES HER ROLE CAN ALSO BE A PAINFUL THORN IN THE MAN'S FLESH — A HINDRANCE, A DISCOURAGEMENT AND A CONTINUAL GRIEF TO HIM.

- A. A woman who is hard and manish is not an asset to herself or to her husband.
- B. Scriptures:
 1. Prov. 12:4 — *"...she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones."*
 2. Prov. 11:22 — *"As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion."*
 3. Prov. 19:13 — *"...the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping."*
 4. Prov. 21:9 — *"It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house."*
- C. Few things can bring greater heartache to a man than a brawling, nagging, bickering wife — who is ungrateful and forever criticizing him.

III. WHY ARE SO MANY WOMEN NOT FEMININE?

- A. This is Satan's world, and he does not want women to be feminine. He does not want them to know their role or to fulfill it.
 1. Poor training at home because of lack of right knowledge of what is feminine.
 2. Influence of society.
 3. Women's lib (Mr. Armstrong says that this started back in the Garden of Eden with Eve!).
 4. So-called "equal rights."
 5. Peer pressure and associates at school, work, neighbors, family; influence of those around her.
 6. The media: TV, movies, magazines newspapers billboard ads, books, etc.
- B. If a woman is a victim of the above circumstances (and all are), she has to recognize the source and realize that she has the power, with the help of God, to change her life. She must not use other people or circumstances as an excuse.

IV. TRUE FEMININITY IS A FINE ART.

- A. True femininity is first and foremost an attitude of mind.
- B. It is how a woman thinks about herself and even more importantly, how she relates to men. It is a uniqueness that makes her lovely and beautiful to her male counterpart.
- C. A truly feminine woman wants to be a woman — she does not desire to compete with a man in his role.
- D. She tries to underline those qualities that make her distinctly different rather than trying to be like him.
- E. She understands that God knows what is best for women because He created them.
 1. God made her physically weaker than the man with softer skin, delicate muscle tone and a higher voice.

2. God made her different emotionally from men. She cries more easily and is generally more spontaneous in expressing joy and love.
- F. Because the feminine woman knows that she was created to be man's support and helpmeet, she is happy with this knowledge. The qualities that make her feminine are reflected in her whole personality.
 1. She thinks femininely, seeing everything from a womanly point of view.
 2. The feminine woman capitalizes on and underlines the physical things that make her unique and attractive.
 3. Because she enjoys being a woman and fulfilling that role, her physical softness and beauty come through in everything she does.
 4. Because she is physically weaker (and is not ashamed of it), her movements and mannerisms are more delicate and gentle.
 5. Because her voice was not designed to shout down a whole room full of people, it is higher, softer, and has a soothing quality.

V. THERE ARE THREE BASIC AREAS THAT COMPRISE FEMININITY.

- A. A woman's relationship with God.
 1. A feminine woman will recognize God's sovereignty — being obedient to & responsive to His will.
 2. She will study the Bible for examples of true femininity — the lives of Sarah, Ruth, Hannah, Mary (Christ's mother) and others.
- B. How a woman feels about herself.
 1. If a woman has a right attitude, confidence and self-respect about herself and her role, she will be feminine.
 2. If she has guilt feelings or deep-seated hang-ups about herself, she will have inner conflicts and frustrations.
 3. She will know that she's falling short of God's standards — thus making herself miserable.
- C. A woman's relationship with others.
 1. If a woman has a close relationship with God and accepts her role as He ordained it, then she will have right relationships with those around her.
 2. God's Spirit will radiate from her with sincerity and genuine love.

VI. WHAT THEN, ARE THE SPECIFICS OF FEMININITY?

- A. Characteristics:
 1. True Conversion and the Fear of God
 - a. Prov. 31:30 — A virtuous woman fears God.
 - b. She is obedient and submissive to God.
 - c. Even in the face of trials, disappointment and persecution, she has uncompromising character and upholds God's principles.
 2. Strong Faith and Courage
 - a. Pressures and crises don't cause her to crumble. Circumstances such as a sick child, the loss of a job, a death in the family or a crisis in the Church do not shake her faith.
 - b. Knowing that all things work together for good to them that love God (Rom. 8:28), she has unshakeable trust in God.
 - c. She has cultivated and built inner strength into her life. She knows that God will give her the power to face all trials and obstacles if she remains true to Him.
 3. Meekness and Humility
 - a. I Peter 3:1-6 — Meek and quiet spirit.
 - b. Because she is teachable and willing to change, she seeks out counsel and advice.
 - c. She doesn't mind being in the background as a helper and servant of others.
 1. If she is single, she realizes that she must support herself financially, but she chooses her "career" wisely.
 2. In choosing a job, she looks for one that is a support function, not one commanding 100 men at the head of the company. She doesn't strive for supervision over others because she knows that this will not help her to achieve the attitude of true feminine humility and meekness that God wants her to have.

- d. The feminine woman does not debate, argue or insist on her way. (Contentiousness is condemned five times in the book of Proverbs: Prov. 19:13; 21:9,19; 25:24; & 27:15.)

4. Submission and Service

- a. The feminine wife recognizes her role as being submissive to her husband and responsive to his needs and wishes.
- b. The single woman, if she desires to be feminine, also will reflect this same basic awareness.
 1. She will practice a submissive attitude toward her boss and the men she interfaces with daily on her job.
 2. Even though these men do not have the same kind of authority as a husband, she realizes that she must respect them as leaders in society. She knows that God has given men in general the leadership role.
- c. A woman can learn submission and service (qualities that God wants all of mankind to learn) perhaps even more fully than a man because of the very nature of her support role that God has assigned.
- d. A truly feminine woman will have an attitude of helping, serving and encouraging others in general.
- e. By viewing her role as man's helper and companion, a woman is freed from the stresses and strains required of a man. This allows her to be even more full of zeal and energy and love for others.
- f. There are so many opportunities for a woman to be of service and give to others. They can give her life purpose whether she be single or married.
 1. Visiting the sick.
 2. Volunteering to help the needy.
 3. Keeping children for a friend who is sick.
 4. Being involved with singles activities if she is single.
- g. Preoccupation with self makes a woman dry, bland, uninteresting and dull.
- h. The feminine woman will demonstrate maturity because she has grown out of self-centeredness, giddiness and selfishness.

5. Feminine Values and Goals

- a. High on the list of priorities for the feminine woman is the goal of being the best wife, mother and homemaker possible.
- b. The single girl should be interested in and eager to learn these womanly duties.
- c. Developing her talents and skills are important to her:
 1. Academically, she keeps up with world events, and can understand the concepts in the light of prophecy and the Bible.
 2. She is interested in cooking, nutrition, health, sewing, needlecrafts, decorating, reading, the arts, etc.

6. Self-control and Emotional Stability

- a. The feminine woman doesn't overreact to failure, disappointment, frustration, irritation or any number of unpleasant situations that may arise. Other negative attitudes she will guard against are: depression, moodiness, poutiness, hurt feelings and inferiority.
- b. She overcomes child-like outbursts of temper and sets the proper example for her children — especially her daughters.
 1. Her children admire her and depend on her.
 2. Prov. 31:28 — *"Her children arise up, and call her blessed..."*
- c. Because she has her emotions under control, the feminine woman is able to handle unpleasant circumstances calmly and intelligently.

7. Trust and Responsibility

- a. Prov. 31:11-12 — Her husband safely trusts her.
- b. Reliability and dependability are strong points of a feminine woman's character.
- c. Whether she is married or single, punctuality is a part of her life because she schedules her time wisely.
- d. She is true to her word and keeps her promises and commitments.
- e. Loyalty is one of her strengths and her husband or employer can count on her to be productive and trustworthy.

f. Confidences are treated as such and her friends know that they can trust her.

8. Wisdom and Understanding

a. Prov. 31:26 — *"She openeth her mouth with wisdom."*

b. Even though she may have a strong opinion, the feminine woman knows when to express it and when to pass over a matter.

c. Impulsiveness is not part of her character — she thinks before she acts.

d. She doesn't monopolize conversation or interrupt when others are speaking.

e. She doesn't blatantly tell everyone she meets about her personal problems.

f. Exercising caution, she thinks a matter through until she can see the end result.

g. She isn't naive — she doesn't leave the gate and doors unlocked, shades up at night, or let salesmen in, etc.

h. When there is conflict or misunderstanding, she is tactful and acts quickly to make peace.

9. Intelligent and Discriminating

a. Having a clear set of priorities helps her to discriminate between essentials and non-essentials.

b. Her mind is alert and discerning because her ideals and values are based on the Bible.

c. She learns from experience and association with other people.

d. She chooses friends who are balanced and level-headed, rather than those who will commiserate and be overly sympathetic.

e. Keeping abreast of news and current events helps her to be informed.

f. She knows how to converse intelligently on many different subjects because she keeps her mind alert and stimulated by reading widely.

10. Diligent and Resourceful

a. Prov. 31:13-22 — She is able to negotiate business and earn extra money.

b. Femininity is not being utterly helpless. The feminine woman is prepared. She can change a flat tire, light the pilot light on the stove, and make minor repairs in case of an emergency.

c. Finances are not a mystery to her. She knows how to pay the bills and balance the checkbook.

d. She is a wise shopper — compares prices, doesn't buy on impulse, and stays within her budget.

e. Imagination and inventiveness are part of her creative abilities.

f. If she is an employee, she is diligent even when the boss is not present. She does not do only that which is required — she goes above and beyond. She strives to please her employer and tries to make his business successful.

11. Initiative, Leadership and Drive

a. She recognizes opportunities to serve and make herself useful.

b. Motivating and encouraging others are some of her strongest qualities.

c. Spontaneity and love for people are expressed in her desire to see them happy and successful.

d. Having a genuine interest in the welfare of others, she doesn't serve to impress.

e. She is aware of her example at all times.

f. New challenges are stimulating and exciting.

g. She can lead, but not in a manish way. Her style of leadership is not one of competitiveness or abrasiveness, but one of inspiration and encouragement.

h. She is responsible and capable without being hard and demanding.

12. Modesty and Virtue

a. She not only practices modesty in her personal life, she also actively teaches her daughters the value of this beautiful feminine trait.

b. She is careful of her posture and bodily movements: sitting, standing, walking, stooping, as well as the look in her eyes and tone in her voice. She steers clear of any action that is sexually arousing or would lead others to think she is morally impure.

(1 Thes. 5:22 — *"Abstain from all-appearance of evil."*)

c. Avoiding emphasis on self and vanity, she dresses out of concern for her husband, daughters and others.

- d. She avoids seductive attire — plunging necklines, short skirts, bare midriff, bikinis, heavy make-up, etc.
 - e. Her conversation is always proper and appropriate without vulgarity or lewd insinuations.
13. Balance and Moderation
- a. Excess is a sin. This applies to eating, sleeping, recreation, music, etc. The feminine woman is balanced in every aspect of life and avoids going to extremes.
 - b. She doesn't neglect her responsibilities or engage in activities that serve no useful end.
 - c. Self-discipline is an integral part of her basic character.
14. Kindness and Patience
- a. Prov. 31:26 — "*...in her tongue is the law of kindness.*"
 - b. Understanding of and tolerance toward others are expressed in how she handles their short-comings.
 - c. She is quick to overlook mistakes and forgive, and think the best about them.
 - d. The feminine woman expresses empathy and concern toward those with problems in an encouraging way.
 - e. She's especially gentle, kind and sympathetic toward the sick and infirmed.
15. Poise and Self-Confidence
- a. This self-assuredness comes from good breeding, proper teaching, observation and experience.
 - b. It comes from living a clean and wholesome life — and walking with God.
 - c. Inner poise is the absence of self-consciousness and shyness.
 - d. It's a characteristic any woman can develop if she sets her mind to it.
16. Culture and Refinement
- a. Prov. 11:16,22 — "*A gracious woman retaineth honor.*"
 - b. Proper etiquette and social graces are important values in her make up. She knows how to meet and converse with people at all strata of society.
 - c. She keeps her living environment clean, organized and tidy.
 - d. The feminine woman is up-to-date. She keeps abreast of current fashions, trends, decorating techniques, etc.
 - e. She has a good vocabulary she knows how to communicate and intelligently express her ideas.
 - f. She appreciates quality both in terms of material things and the arts.
17. Attractive Personality
- a. Her pleasing smile and soft-spoken manner display an inner charm and grace. She is known and admired for her gentle ways — not for boisterousness, coarseness and competition.
 - b. Innocence, naturalness and friendship are reflected in her face.
 - c. She is cheerful and positive in her basic disposition toward life.
 - d. She displays a good sense of humor in the way she laughs with people and not at them.
18. Grooming and Appearance
- a. High standards of personal cleanliness and grooming are important to her and are reflected in her clothing and appearance.
 - b. Avoiding extremes, her hairstyle is becoming, but not exotic.
 - c. She wears clothes that are in good taste, becoming to her personality and dresses appropriately for whatever activity she is engaged in.
 - d. She doesn't dress to call attention to herself or out of vanity.
 - e. Realizing that outward beauty isn't everything, she knows she can enhance her inner beauty and attractiveness by developing her character and femininity.
19. Calmness and Inner Peace
- a. This attitude is the result of growing and overcoming — following a lifestyle that she believes is pleasing to God.
 - b. She sparkles with warmth and spontaneity.
 - c. Her mind is full of God's Word, good thoughts and positive attitudes.
 - d. She doesn't engage in any form of activity that is filthy, debasing or worldly.
 - e. She radiates a magnetism and charisma that is distinctly Godly and glorious — but not gushy, sentimental or overly religious.

B. SUMMARY

The truly feminine woman will have her mind on others rather than on herself. She will be aware of their needs and be concerned for their well-being. She is outgoing, warm, and considerate. She'll radiate joy because she is content with the role that God has given her and because she knows that giving and serving are what bring lasting joy and happiness. She will have a quiet confidence and serenity because she is fulfilling the role that God intended her to perform. In short, she thoroughly enjoys being a woman!

VII. THE QUALITIES OF FEMININITY FROM A MAN'S POINT OF VIEW.

A. The qualities that inspire him personally:

1. A lifestyle that reflects the fear of God and a deeply converted attitude.
 - a. Keep God first in your life and be aglow with the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Set a right example in all that you do.
 - c. Realize that being a Christian is something that you practice every minute of every day — not just when you feel like it or on the Sabbath.
 - d. Strive to overcome and grow daily.
 - e. When you fear God, the whole of your life will radiate an innocence, naturalness, and simplicity — qualities that men highly admire.
2. An attitude of respect, appreciation and submission toward the man's God-given role.
 - a. Always remember that God made man the head and placed him in the leadership position.
 - b. Respect his office. Don't antagonize him by being belligerent, defiant or competitive.
 - c. God better equipped man to handle the leadership role. Willingly submit and reverence his calling.
 - d. Being submissive doesn't make you an inferior person. You enhance your own status when you submit to and uphold him.
3. A gracious, warm and humble demeanor.
 - a. The ability to entertain and put others at ease.
 - b. Be friendly and charitable.
 - c. Esteem others better than yourself.
 - d. Don't be haughty and cynical.
 - e. Show sincere concern for others.
4. A supportive and responsive spirit.
 - a. Be encouraging.
 - b. Support from behind the scenes. Don't try to steal the spotlight by calling attention to yourself. Rejoice in his successes and don't take credit for yourself.
 - c. Respond to his wishes with cooperation and eagerness.
 - d. Show excitement toward his interests and plans.
5. The ability to encourage and uplift him when he's down and defeated.
 - a. Express faith in God and keep a positive attitude that all things will work out.
 - b. Help him to see the brighter side.
 - c. Be sympathetic and concerned, but don't get down yourself.
 - d. Let him know that you're on his side and that you have faith in his abilities and that he can always depend on you.
6. A caring and serving attitude toward others regardless of their status in life.
 - a. If you don't have this attitude — work to attain it. Remember that every person is a potential member of God's family and should be treated with equal love.
 - b. Look beyond status or position and serve anyone in need.
 - c. God put everyone in His Church as it has pleased Him. Therefore, don't be a respecter of persons.
 - d. A man is impressed with the woman who demonstrates a heartfelt love for others.
7. The ability to inspire him with confidence and ambition by reinforcing his potential strengths and achievements.
 - a. Let him know that you admire him and that with persistent effort he will succeed.

- b. Recognize that you have the ability to make or break his spirit. Don't nag, criticize or complain.
 - c. Be encouraging — try to keep him in a positive frame of mind. Remind him that God has never let him down, nor will He in the future.
 - d. Talk often about the Bible and engage him in spiritual conversation — yet recognize that he's your spiritual leader.
8. The ability to listen, communicate and adapt to needs.
- a. Be an interested listener. Show a willingness to cooperate and make his decisions work.
 - b. Communicate your feelings and ideas to him.
 - c. Be a good sounding board and offer a variety of solutions.
 - d. Actively participate in all his plans, hopes and dreams.
9. A genuine interest in his goals and career.
- a. Show an interest in his job. Even if it's in a very technical field, you can at least learn a few basics.
 - b. Be hospitable to those he works with.
 - c. Let him know that you're behind him in whatever Godly and acceptable career he chooses.
 - d. Be patient and sympathetic toward his trials and frustrations on the job.
 - e. Give him the incentive to want to improve.
10. The ability to entreat him with positive love and honor when he's wrong.
- a. Pray for humility and a right attitude before approaching him about a problem.
 - b. Wait for the right moment when he's in a pleasant mood.
 - c. Describe the problem in a quiet, respectful tone of voice.
 - d. Remember that God put him as the head, and holds him responsible. If he does not agree with you, leave it in God's hands.
11. An attitude of teachableness and repentance when corrected without self-justification.
- a. Apologize and don't be defensive or make excuses.
 - b. Be willing to learn and change.
12. A fervent desire to please God and help her family make the Kingdom.
- a. To be the kind of example that will evoke in your husband and children an awareness of God and His holy righteous standards.
 - b. Your whole life and being should be a constant representation of the characteristics of Prov. 31.
 - c. You should strive to be a source of inspiration and hope to your entire household.
 - d. Your life and conduct should depict the glory and honor as reflected in the bride of Christ.
- B. Make attaining true femininity a constant, daily goal.

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