

# WHAT GOD WANTS HIS WOMEN TO BE LIKE

By Paula and Nate Wilson

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## Week 1 – Foundational Truths - Leader's Notes

I'd like to start with a warning: Every one of you will probably be offended at least once during this study ☺. My goal is to get you thinking Biblically about things you've possibly not considered before. If I point you to Scripture that offends you, take it up with God ☺. If my manner of presentation is offensive to you, I apologize in advance. I do not mean to come across as judgmental. When I state what I believe, I am not thinking about what YOU believe and passing judgment on your decisions. Most of the time, I will have no clue how you arrived at the conclusions you did, and sometimes I won't even know what your conclusions are, so please don't think I am pointing my finger at you on any given subject. Ok ☺?

This week, we'll consider some foundational truths, which you probably already believe, but please stick with me, because I have a feeling that in the coming weeks, we might have to go back to these truths when we are challenged by things we see in the Bible. (Distribute student handout.)

### II Timothy 3:16-17

- The Bible is God's inerrant word and as such is the final authority on all matters.
- The Bible is transcultural. If there is a "cultural" passage there must be a transcultural principle we can apply to our own culture. ("All Scripture...")
- The culture at the time of Genesis was much different than the culture at the time of II Timothy, but "ALL Scripture..."
- What Scripture is being discussed here (New Testament, Old Testament or both)? Only the OT and possibly parts of the NT were considered Scripture at this point, but considering God's sovereignty, I believe this verse pertains to the whole Bible as we know it.
- The Bible is God's revealed will to us. While circumstances, nature and feelings can sometimes point us to God and His will, the only absolutely perfect revelation of His thoughts is found in the Bible. THEREFORE, if circumstances, nature or our feelings lead us to believe something that is contrary to what God teaches in His Word, we are simply WRONG and need to change our thinking, and sometimes our way of living, in a particular area.
- Too often, when we have decision to make, we pray for wisdom but neglect to check out what God has already told us about that issue - possibly because it doesn't occur to us that He would have something to say. We make our decisions using logical and cultural filters rather than Biblical filters. What can I handle? How do I feel led? What do other respectable people in the church do? What can I afford? What is culturally acceptable? (For example, a woman in Yemen would cover herself completely in black to go out, while a woman in Denver might wear shorts & a tank top.) It is appropriate to use these filters, but all things should be filtered through the Bible first and last.
- We treat the Bible as if it were a bare-bones moral code when it is actually full of principles that apply to all areas of our culture and life.

**John 14:15-17,21**

**James 2:14-18**

**I John 2:3-6**

**Proverbs 14:12, 16:25**

**James 2:19**

- We must live according to what God's word says.
- The world's way is not necessarily the best way, because the world does not have the "Spirit of truth." The world doesn't even know what the truth is.
- Was John a legalist? Define legalism. How does it differ in appearance from the works that come from faith (for example, Roman Catholic pro-life efforts)? (Distribute "Legalism Scenarios" and "Legalism Definition." My point with these is to encourage you to take someone at face value without jumping to the legalism conclusion.)
- In Presbyterian circles, we're so careful to avoid the saved-by-works heresy that we sometimes go overboard the other way. We quote the 5 solas (Faith alone, Grace alone, Scripture alone, Christ alone, Glory to God alone) and say, "since xyz isn't required for salvation, I don't need to do it." Is that a Biblical view? No. If someone wants to get into the Kingdom by the skin of his (her!) teeth, he should be asking hard questions about whether he is saved. At the very least, he has an inadequate view of why God has rules by which we should live. (He created us and knows us inside and out. He knows how the human body works, how humans work in society with one another, etc., so He knows the best way for us to do things.) A person who is unwilling to do anymore than "what is required for salvation," may also not have an adequate grasp of what God has done for us and that we should want to reciprocate with loving obedience. Also see James 2:19. Is believing there is one God enough? No.
- My Dad used to say to me, "This is what the Bible says about xyz, but you just can't do it in today's world." Why not?
- The church has bought into the Hegelian Dialectic. What's that? It's the idea that with every issue, there are two contradictory extremes (the thesis and the antithesis), and one has to find a middle ground (the synthesis) to resolve the differences. In Christian circles, this means that we see what God has to say in the Bible, compare that to what the world has to say, and try to make the two meet. True Christianity has only one option - the thesis, or what God says in the Bible. In what ways do Christians kowtow to the world like this (age of the earth, dress, politics/women voting/voting for lesser-of-two-evils, church leadership/women voting instead of heads-of-households, insurance, speed limit, sports on Sunday, music)?
- I don't expect every one of you to come to the same conclusions I have on the issues we'll be discussing. Let's look at the Scriptures objectively, with a heart to do God's will. Discuss them with your husband, and submit to his leading, not to me 😊.

**Matthew 7:1**

**I Corinthians 5:9-13**

**Romans 14**

- The flip side of judging someone as legalistic is judging someone as not spiritually mature enough.
- We often hear "Christians shouldn't judge people," and that is true of judging those outside the church, but we **are** supposed to judge those who call themselves Christians (see I Cor. 5:12). I Cor. 5:11 tells us what the important issues are.

- On trivial matters, we are to refrain from passing judgment while also being careful not to cause someone who believes differently from us to violate their own conscience. Romans 14:4 sums it up nicely.

**Psalm 40:8**

**Psalm 143:10**

- We should want to do God's will above all else.

**Genesis 2:18-22**

**I Corinthians 11:8-9,11-12**

**I Timothy 2:12-13**

- God created many different creatures. None were suitable helpmates for Adam (Gen. 2:18,20), so God created Eve. *Note: Eve could just as well have been another man, but God knew that would not work either. He wanted a creature that was somewhat different from Adam - more on femininity in another lesson.*
- Gen. 1:27 says that both man and woman were created in God's image (c.f. Galatians 3:28). Spiritually, man and woman are equal, but Adam was created first, so man is to be in a position of authority over woman. Woman was created as a helpmate for man. The feminists are wrong in this regard, as they claim that woman was not made for man. This is what the apostle Paul says in I Corinthians 11:8,9,11,12 and also in I Timothy 2:12-13.. And remember, "All Scripture..." (II Tim. 3:16)

**Conclusion:**

OK, that's it for the foundational truths - God's word is inerrant, and we need to read it and do it; women are a special creation of God with special responsibilities and privileges, as distinct from man's. There is obviously no end to the issues we could discuss in applying the Bible to practical life. Since we only have a few weeks, and this is a ladies' Bible study, we'll tackle some that particularly concern women. Issues we'll discuss include: Does God want me to get a job? How many kids should I have? Training children for God's glory. What's this about submission? How should a woman of God dress? If you're tired of trying to keep up with the world in all these areas, there's good news! God has something to say about all of it! Come back next week to learn about Biblical submission. In the meantime, I have two challenges for you:

1) A friend asked Nate, "If Christianity is true, why should I have to read my Bible every day to prove it to myself. Isn't that like a cult?" A cult operates by repeating propaganda over and over until you believe it. Our culture is full of statements about who we are as women. Those statements almost never line up with Biblical truth. (Remember, the world doesn't even know what's true.) We Christians receive non-Biblical messages all day long (Ask for suggestions: sit-coms, NPR, women's magazines, billboards, lingerie posters at WalMart, secular news sources, books on the New York Times bestseller list). This week, I challenge you to limit as much as possible the non-Biblical input you receive about womanhood. Maybe that means dropping your favorite sit-com for the week and hiding your women's magazines. You decide ☺.

2) Remember the Scripture about the man who has an evil spirit cast out, but because he is not filled with God's Spirit, the demon comes back with seven more to live in that man (Matthew 12:43-45)? In the same way, guarding yourself from non-Biblical input isn't going to help if you

don't receive Biblical input instead. Your homework assignment this week is to search the Scriptures to find out as much as you can about women and submission. Feel free to use a concordance, books on the subject that reference Bible verses. (Hint: look those verses up rather than accepting what the author has to say at face value.)

*Define "legalist":*

*One who believes that salvation is obtained by living according to the law. A legalist will often expand the boundaries of the law and add human teachings and tradition to it.*

Date: Sat, 6 Mar 2004 22:20:31 -0500

Subject: LEGALISM??

I read something recently that defines what legalism really is:

"Legalism is the doctrine of salvation by good works; reliance on good works for salvation rather than on free grace. Christians have given this word a new meaning: If you are trying to be good, you are a legalist. That is not what the word means. If you are relying on your good works to save you, and not accepting God's free gift of salvation, you are a legalist. Don't let your good works get ahead of your salvation. Fix your eyes on Jesus. But never cease in striving in the Holy Spirit's power for good works, not for your salvation, but rather BECAUSE OF your salvation."

And this quote by Jonathan Lindvall:

"Whenever we deal with specific points of obedience as I am going to take the risk in doing we are in danger of sounding "legalistic." Jesus said (John 14:15), "If you love Me, keep my commandments." This is not legalism. True legalism is thinking I can somehow earn God's grace. We cannot add a single thing to what Jesus already accomplished through his death on the cross in purchasing our salvation. But when Christians purpose to obey the Lord explicitly they are often accused of legalism."