

4

HEALTHY MARRIAGE 1

1

Male and Female: How God Designed Your Spouse

ASSIGNMENTS

- **MISSION** – Your JG will begin work on the **60-Second Testimony** exercise this week. Over the next 4 weeks each member of your JG will share their **60-Second Testimony**, starting with you, then 3rd year group members and so on. Start recruiting people to share their testimony right away. Try to have only one of two people share per week so that newer people have a chance to observe other examples and hear the coaching that others receive. Some will need an extra opportunity if their testimony is unclear, too long, or doesn't focus on what Christ has done. Help your JG learn to do this well. If you have a small group, there may be time to have JG members share their testimony, receive coaching, revise and present again the following week.

EXERCISES

- Review the memory verse of the week.

DISCUSSIONS

- **TRUTH** – You can discuss any of the **IN BIBLE** questions. Here are some tips:
 - **GENESIS 1:26-28** – This passage teaches the ontological equality of men and women. The man and woman were created equal in value, dignity and glory in that they shared the image of God. They also shared the same responsibility before God to fill the earth and the same authority over the animals.
 - **GENESIS 2:15-24** – This passage teaches that men and women are functionally unique. God intended to find a suitable, or corresponding, partner to share with the man in his responsibilities before God. The woman was taken out of him to show that she corresponds to him and is dependent upon him. The man named her woman, showing that he recognized her perfect correspondence to himself – both her equality and uniqueness.
 - **GALATIANS 3:23-29** – Be aware that this passage does not teach that there is no difference between men and women. It does teach that there is no difference between men and women *in respect to their being a recipient of the promise of grace*. All redeemed people share in the same promise regardless of their gender.

- **1 PETER 3:7** – Peter mentions here that women are physically weaker than their husbands, but are nevertheless equal heirs of grace. Husbands should live with their wives honoring both this difference and this similarity.

- **TRUTH** – The important points you want to drive home are:
 - Men and women are equal in the value of their being.
 - Men and women are functionally unique.
 - The above points are by God’s design; not by accident, the Fall, or cultural influences.
 - Women are designed to correspond to men, that is, they are ontologically equal to men and functionally unique. Thus, men and women were designed by God to complement each other physically, spiritually and emotionally.
 - Women are designed to be helper/supporters to their husbands (this will be explained further next week as “headship” and “submission”).

- **EQUIPPING** – The 3rd equipping question should create an interesting discussion. The goal of this question is to expose any perceived disadvantages of the Scriptural model of male leadership/female support as being due to sin. Help your JG see that the advantages have been designed in by God, whereas any potential disadvantages are created by our own sinfulness.

- **MISSION** – Introduce the **60-Second Testimony** exercise with a question, “If someone asked you why you were a follower of Jesus and you only had one minute to answer, what would you say?” Allow some discussion, and bring out the importance on being able to give an attractive, concise response. Explain how the **60-Second Testimony** exercise will equip your JG to effectively communicate their spiritual journey. Model the **60-Second Testimony** first before any of your group members. You want to inspire your JG to make it their goal to be able to *effectively share their story of becoming a follower of Jesus*.