

**BIBLICAL
PORTRAIT**
— *of* —
WOMANHOOD



Discovering and Living Out God's Plan for Our Lives



*Nancy DeMoss
Wolgemuth*



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1. Susan Hunt, *By Design: God's Distinctive Calling for Women* (Franklin, TN: Legacy Communications, 1994), 17.

2. John Angell James, *Female Piety: a Young Woman's Friend and Guide* (Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1995), 72-73.

Within my lifetime, there has been a sweeping revolution—a revolution of how women view themselves and their roles, how they view men, how they view their families, and how they function in our culture.

Whether they realize it or not, the vast majority of Christian women have bought into this “new” way of thinking. In the home, the church, and the marketplace, they have adopted the values and belief system of the world around them. The world promises freedom and fulfillment to those who embrace its philosophy. But sadly, millions of women who have done so have ended up disillusioned, wounded, and in terrible bondage.

For nearly forty years, I have listened to the heartcries of these women:

- women who are exhausted from trying to juggle the demands of job and family.
- women who are desperately lonely.
- women who feel trapped in unhappy marriages.
- women who battle a pervasive sense of hopelessness and despair.
- women who live under a crushing load of guilt and failure.
- women who are struggling to find a sense of purpose in the midst of the “daily-ness” of life.
- women who have never known what it is to have whole relationships built on mutual love and commitment.
- women who live with crippling fears and chronic anxiety.

I find that many women have given up hope that they can ever be released from their emotional and spiritual prisons. But over and over again, I have seen a light kindled in their eyes when they discover that the “abundant life” God promised truly can be a reality, regardless of their circumstances. The purpose of this booklet is to help us discover the path to that abundant life and to examine our lives in light of God’s design and plan.

Before you go any further, I feel I should warn you that what you are about to read is not politically correct. It flies in the face of what we have been taught as twenty-first-century, “liberated” women. It is contrary to our natural instincts. It will never be the majority position and is likely to make some women uncomfortable.

But I can assure you that it is the only path to true joy, peace, and fulfillment as a woman. You see, God made us, He loves us, and we can only be whole when we function according to His design for our lives.

If your heart longs to be free to fulfill the purpose for which you were created, I invite you to join me in seeking to know the heart and ways of God.

I am praying that God will orchestrate a counter-revolution in our day—a quiet revolution of women who are willing to pattern their lives, not after the world, but after the Word of God. I am convinced that the influence of an army of godly women will be incalculable—in our homes, our churches, and our culture. Will you be one of those women?



Examining OUR
WALK IN THE LIGHT
OF SCRIPTURE



“*It is time for women of biblical faith to reclaim our territory. We know the Designer. We have His instruction manual. If we don't display the Divine design of His female creation, no one will. But if we do, it will be a profound testimony to a watching, needy world.*”

Susan Hunt
By Design¹

The verses on the following pages express God's heart for women. Together they provide a biblical portrait of a godly woman.

The questions that follow each verse are designed to help evaluate how well you are applying the Word in your daily walk. The point is not to answer a simple "yes" or "no" to each question, but rather to *use the questions as a basis for personal meditation, application, and response to the Lord.*

Some of these verses are directed specifically to married women. Others apply more broadly to all women. Regardless of your marital status, ask God to open your heart and to help you see areas where He wants to mold you and make you a woman after His own heart.

To get the most out of this exercise, you may want to *focus on one verse each day*, asking God to show you how your life measures up to that particular aspect of His design. As you work through this section, *highlight three or four verses that reveal specific areas of need in your life*, so you can memorize them and engraft them into your heart and life.



WHY WAS I CREATED AS A WOMAN?

1. The Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him"
(Gen. 2:18).

Have I embraced my God-created design to be a helper to the man?

Am I willing to sacrifice my own ambitions and aspirations in order to fulfill my primary role and calling as a helper to my husband?

Am I providing companionship for my husband?

Am I completing and complementing my husband rather than competing with him?

How could I better help my husband fulfill God's purpose for his life?

What kinds of words, actions, and attitudes on my part will help Christian men around me become all God wants them to be?

Am I promoting healthy, godly marriages in the ways I relate and respond to other women's husbands?

Am I maintaining the kinds of boundaries in my relationships with men that promote biblical standards of purity?

2. Man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man (1 Cor. 11:8–9).

Do I recognize and accept that God created the woman to complete, complement, and help the man?

Is my life helping and blessing the men around me in ways that promote holiness and godliness?

3. Woman is the glory of man (1 Cor. 11:7).

Do I show the God-created worth and value of men in the way I talk to and about them?

Am I a responder (rather than an initiator) in my relationships with men?

Do I make it easy for men to fulfill their God-given calling to lead in the home, the church, and society?

Do I respond to men in ways that communicate appropriate respect and affirmation of their manhood?

Do I seek to protect and preserve God-created distinctions between men and women in the way that I conduct myself, in my dress, and in my various roles as a woman?

4. The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living (Gen. 3:20).

Do I recognize and accept my God-created calling to be a bearer and nurturer of life?

Do I consider it a high and holy calling to be a “mother,” whether of physical or spiritual children? Am I actively involved in bearing and nurturing life?

WHAT MAKES A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN?

5. Your adornment must not be merely external . . . but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit (1 Peter 3:3–4 NASB).

Do others see in me an inner radiance and beauty that are the result of a grateful, yielded, trusting spirit?

Do I focus more time and effort on cultivating inner spiritual beauty than I do on matters of external beauty?

6. This is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves (1 Peter 3:5).

Am I more concerned about being holy than about being happy?

Am I placing my hope and trust in God rather than in people?

7. Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised (Prov. 31:30).

Am I more concerned about cultivating my relationship with the Lord than about being fashionable, stylish, or physically attractive?

Do I live in the constant, conscious recognition of the presence of God?

Do I desire to please God more than I desire the approval of others?

8. Women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control (1 Tim. 2:9a).

Do I dress modestly?

Do my clothing styles encourage men to think pure thoughts rather than stimulating them to have sensual thoughts or desires?

Do I dress in such a way as to draw attention to the heart and spirit of Jesus within me rather than to my physical body?

9. Adorn [yourself] . . . not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire (1 Tim. 2:9b).

Do I avoid extreme or excessive fashions (hair, clothing, jewelry, makeup) that could call attention to myself or cause people to be distracted from focusing on the Lord?

Do I avoid extravagant jewelry or clothing that could flaunt my wealth or cause others to be envious?

Do my wardrobe and outward appearance portray a spirit of moderation, sobriety, purity, and reverence?



HOW DOES A WOMAN OF GOD CONDUCT HERSELF?

10. "All my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman" (Ruth 3:11).

Do I have a reputation for being a woman of moral virtue and godly character?

Do I keep myself pure from all influences that could defile my heart, thoughts, or actions?

11. She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue (Prov. 31:26).

Do I bless my family, friends, and acquaintances by speaking words that are kind and wise?

Do I study and meditate on the Word of God so I can know how to speak wise words?

Am I able to point people to specific Scriptures that apply to their lives and needs?

12. With patience a ruler may be persuaded, and a soft tongue will break a bone (Prov. 25:15).

Am I willing to wait quietly for God to change the heart of an authority that I feel is wrong rather than pushing, manipulating, or nagging?

Do I seek to influence others by means of gentle words rather than controlling or intimidating them with harsh words?

13. Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness (1 Tim. 2:11).

Do I have a teachable spirit?

Do I receive instruction with a meek, obedient spirit?

14. It is better to live in a desert land than with a quarrelsome and fretful woman (Prov. 21:19).

Does my spirit make it easy for those I live or work with to be around me?

Do I frustrate others or make them want to stay away from me because of an argumentative or angry spirit?

WHAT IS GOD'S PLAN FOR ME AS A WIFE?

15. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain (Prov. 31:11).

Can my husband trust me to walk with God on a consistent basis and to respond to life's circumstances with praise, gratitude, and faith?

Can my husband trust me to be loyal and morally faithful to him?

Am I completely trustworthy in every area of my life—in my relationships with other men? in my spending habits? in the way I talk about my husband to others?

16. She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life (Prov. 31:12).

Am I committed to support my husband in every way possible and to always act in his best interests?

Does my husband know beyond the shadow of a doubt that I am committed to him for life, no matter what?

Am I committed unconditionally to bless and serve my husband?

17. She took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate (Gen. 3:6).

Is my life setting a godly example to my husband, children, and friends?

Do I ever influence others by my words or example to act in a way that is contrary to the Word of God?

18. As the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands (Eph. 5:24).

Do I respond to my husband's leadership in the same way that the church is to respond to Christ as its head?

Am I submissive to my husband in my actions, as well as in my attitude?

Does my response to my husband demonstrate to the world the beauty and blessing of submission to Christ?

19. The husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church (Eph. 5:23).

Have I ever agreed with God that my husband is my spiritual head?

Do I allow my husband to lead me, or do I resist his leadership, making it difficult for him to fulfill his God-given responsibility?

20. Let the wife see that she respects her husband (Eph. 5:33).

Does my husband feel that I reverence and respect him?

Do others know that I reverence my husband?

By my words, example, and counsel, do I encourage other women to reverence their husbands?

21. The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does . . . (1 Cor. 7:3-4 NASB).

Do I reserve intimate communication, looks, words, and touch for my husband?

Am I giving of myself to meet my husband's sexual needs?

22. If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home (1 Cor. 14:35).

Do I motivate my husband to grow spiritually by seeking his counsel, input, and direction, or am I quick to run to my pastor or another counselor for answers to my questions and problems?

Does my husband feel that I value and respect his input and counsel?

HOW DOES GOD WANT TO USE ME IN OTHERS' LIVES?

23. Urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority (1 Tim. 2:1–2 NASB).

Do I faithfully pray for the leaders God has placed in my life—my husband, parents, pastor, employer, elected officials—asking God to bless them, to meet their needs, to protect them, and to make them godly leaders?

When someone in a position of authority fails, do I pray for them rather than criticizing or attacking them?

24. She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness (Prov. 31:27).

Am I a hard worker?

Am I attentive to the needs of those around me?

Am I faithful in fulfilling practical responsibilities in my home?

25. Having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work (1 Tim. 5:10).

Is my life characterized by compassion, sacrifice, and acts of service?

Do I have a reputation for reaching out to minister to the needs of others?

26. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality (Rom. 12:13).

Am I sensitive to the needs of other believers?

Am I generous in sharing with others who are in need?

Do I open my home to minister to others?

27. Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good (Titus 2:3).

Is my life a godly example to younger women?

Am I self-controlled and temperate in the way I speak and in my lifestyle?

Am I actively involved in teaching younger women how to live their lives according to the Word of God?

28. Train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled (Titus 2:4-5).

Are my priorities in order?

Am I adequately focused on loving and meeting the needs of my family?

Do I model a selfless, sacrificial, serving love for my husband and children?

Is my spirit self-controlled, pure, and kind?

Is my life an illustration of the “biblical portrait of womanhood”?





BUILDING OUR HOMES
WITH *wisdom*



“*A community is not likely to be
overthrown where woman fulfills her
mission, for by the power of her noble
heart over the hearts of others, she will
raise it from its ruins, and restore it
again to prosperity and joy.*”

John Angell James
Female Piety²

The wise woman builds her house, but the foolish tears it down with her own hands. —Proverbs 14:1 NASB

Few women are aware of how much influence they have on their surroundings.

Regardless of our marital status or living arrangement, all of us as women have some type of “house.” That “house” may be our immediate family, our neighborhood, our workplace, our school, our church, or our nation.

Through our attitudes, our words, and our behavior, we have the power to bless and build the lives of those around us; we also have the power to tear them down and destroy them.

On the following pages, you will find a series of contrasting statements that suggest specific ways we can build up or tear down our homes. Check the statements that best describe your attitudes, words, and actions toward those God has placed in your life.

Ask God to reveal whether you are wisely helping others by building them up or foolishly hurting and hindering them by tearing them down.

Do not let the enemy discourage you by what you may see. Rather *as you become aware of attitudes, words, or actions that are tearing down your home, agree with God, confessing your foolishness. Then in each of those areas, ask Him to make you a wise woman and to help you build a home that will bring great glory to Him.*

DO MY *attitudes* BUILD UP . . .

- I am committed to give to meet the needs of others, regardless of whether or not I get anything in return. (*Acts 20:35*)
- I have a grateful spirit toward God and others for the blessings and benefits I have received. (*1 Thess. 5:18*)
- I “count others more significant” than myself and demonstrate it by putting their needs and desires ahead of my own. (*Phil. 2:3*)
- I have yielded all my “rights” to God and therefore can respond with meekness and forgiveness when others wrong me. (*Col. 3:12–13*)
- I realize that God is in control of all things, so I can respond to difficult circumstances with a spirit of meekness and trust. (*Rom. 8:28*)
- I trust God to work through the authorities He has placed in my life. (*Prov. 21:1; 1 Peter 3:5*)
- I have a submissive spirit toward the authorities God has placed over my life. I am quick to yield and to follow direction that is given, even when it crosses my own will. (*Heb. 13:17*)

. . . OR TEAR DOWN?

- My willingness to meet the needs of others is determined by the love and appreciation they show to me.

- I chain people to my expectations and get hurt when those expectations are not fulfilled.

- I often selfishly insist on having my way and seek to meet my own needs ahead of the needs of others.

- I am easily angered when I feel my rights have been violated.

- I often resent and resist the circumstances that come into my life.

- I struggle with responding properly to authority because I don't really believe that God is big enough to change their hearts.

- I have a resistant, stubborn spirit toward authority and seek to manipulate or maintain control over my life, my circumstances, and those around me.



DO MY *attitudes* BUILD UP . . .

- My life radiates joy, peace, and contentment, because I know God loves me and is in control of every detail of my life. (*Rom. 8:37–39*)
- I am quick to extend mercy and forgiveness toward those who fail. (*Matt. 5:7*)
- I have an attitude of reverence and respect for my husband, as my spiritual head. (*Eph. 5:22–23, 33*)
- I remain loyal to my husband, regardless of his failures or shortcomings. (*Prov. 17:9; 1 Cor. 13:7*)
- I genuinely love other people and seek to meet their needs ahead of my own. I am more interested in the welfare of others than I am in my own. (*2 Cor. 12:15; Phil. 2:4*)
- I am easily content with whatever God provides for me. (*Heb. 13:5*)

. . . OR TEAR DOWN?

- I often communicate a spirit of discontentment, bitterness, or fear regarding my circumstances.

- I keep a mental record of the offenses of others and seek for ways to get even.

- I communicate an attitude of disrespect toward my husband.

- I am openly or subtly critical of my husband when he fails.

- I really love myself more than I love others and seek to protect and defend my rights, my possessions, my time, and my reputation. I am more concerned about being happy than about making others happy.

- I struggle with a spirit of discontent about my circumstances, my health, my physical surroundings, or my material possessions.



DO MY *words* BUILD UP . . .

- I frequently express gratitude for the benefits I have received from God and others. (*Col. 3:15*)
- I build others up with words of praise, appreciation, and admiration. (*Eph. 4:29*)
- I am quick to humble myself and seek forgiveness when I have wronged someone. (*Matt. 5:23–24*)
- I am faithful in praying for God to work in others' lives (i.e., my husband, children, friends, pastor, etc.). (*Eph. 6:18*)
- I seek to speak only wise words that point people to the Word and ways of God. (*Prov. 31:26*)
- My words encourage others and minister health and life to their spirits. (*Prov. 12:18*)
- I am careful to speak words that are absolutely truthful. (*Eph. 4:25*)
- I am quick to hear and slow to speak. (*James 1:19*)
- When provoked, I generally respond with a gentle answer. (*Prov. 15:1*)
- I restrain my words. (*Prov. 10:19; 17:27*)

. . . OR TEAR DOWN?

- I frequently grumble about having what I don't want or wanting what I don't have.
- I often hurt others with critical, belittling words. I am quick to point out others' failures.
- I tend to defend or justify myself rather than admitting when I am wrong.
- I spend more time talking to friends or counselors about the needs in the lives of those around me than I do in fervent, intercessory prayer on their behalf.
- I am quick to share my own opinions about matters rather than consciously pointing people to the Word and ways of God.
- My words tend to make others feel discouraged and defeated.
- I sometimes shade or exaggerate the truth for my personal benefit.
- I am not a good listener. I tend to dominate conversations and want others to listen to me.
- I am easily provoked and tend to respond with harsh words.
- I talk too much.



DO MY *actions*

BUILD UP . . .

- I set an example for my children and others by obeying my authorities with a right heart attitude. (*Titus 2:4–5*)
- I am diligent in serving and meeting the needs of others with a willing heart attitude. (*Gal. 5:13*)
- I am faithful in caring for the practical needs of my family and home. (*Prov. 31:27*)
- I take time to renew my mind with the Word of God so I can be transformed into the likeness of Jesus. (*Rom. 12:2*)
- My behavior with men is discreet, chaste, and above reproach. (*1 Thess. 4:3–7*)
- I look for opportunities to minister in practical ways to the poor and needy. (*Prov. 31:20*)
- My home is a place of ministry and encouragement to others outside my family. (*1 Peter 4:9*)
- My behavior in the presence of others is reverent, sober, and self-controlled. (*Titus 2:3–4*)
- I am actively involved in teaching and discipling my children and/or other women in the ways of God. (*Titus 2:4–5*)





. . . OR TEAR DOWN?

- I often disregard authority and do whatever I want to do.
- I am often lazy and reluctant or unwilling to serve others.
- I neglect many of the practical needs of my family and home due to lack of planning, discipline, or desire.
- I indulge my mind in suggestive books, magazines, television programs, or movies.
- My behavior with men is sometimes aggressive, bold, or flirtatious.
- I am so consumed with my own needs that I don't have time to reach out to the poor.
- I seldom invite others into my home.
- I often seek to draw attention to myself or to gain acceptance through loud, boisterous behavior.
- I am not personally involved in ministering to others.



Through its various outreaches and the teaching ministry of Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth, *Revive Our Hearts* is calling women around the world to freedom, fullness, and fruitfulness in Christ.

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Did you know God created you with a distinct purpose in mind? Understanding and embracing that purpose is the key to experiencing true freedom and fulfillment.

In *Biblical Portrait of Womanhood*, Nancy highlights specific Scriptures that reveal God's design for our lives as women. Through a series of penetrating questions, discover how well you are fitting into His plan. Learn practical ways you can influence and "build up" the lives of those around you through your attitudes, words, and actions.



Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth has touched the lives of millions of women through *Revive Our Hearts* and the True Woman Movement, calling them to heart revival and biblical womanhood. Her love for the Word and the Lord Jesus is infectious and permeates her online outreaches, conference messages, books, and two daily nationally syndicated radio programs—*Revive Our Hearts* and *Seeking Him*. Her books have sold close to 3 million copies.

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