Wonderfully, women are—to use a popular book title—Different By Design.¹ The biblical terminology from Genesis 2:18 tells us that God fashioned the woman to be “a helper suitable,” or literally, “an opposite counterpart.” In other words, she is “a corresponding one like the man.”

Because Adam had seen and named all the animals with their ‘opposite counterpart,’ and because God stated that Adam shouldn’t be “alone,” the phrase “suitable helper” comes to mean: “a corresponding compliment by divine design!”

She was taken from man so that she would have a one-flesh relationship with him, intricately linked with him as the one God had designed to complete the design of Adam. She was designed to provide what Adam was not designed to provide. The man was given the heavy burden of headship over the woman and their children. He was designed for a more profound accountability as to the legacy of his leadership of the family. The woman was designed, therefore, to bear the burden of supporting her husband in all that God was accomplishing. She was designed to nurture and help carry out the course of their lives as God directed her husband.

Adam was fashioned to spiritually and physically provide for and protect the woman. Even was uniquely designed to cultivate and nurture what God purposed to do through her husband’s leadership.

Becoming a Woman After God’s Own Heart
Ten Core Disciplines

1) Learn to Hope in God - 1 Pet 3:1-6

Psalm 38:15 – “For I hope in You, O LORD, You will answer, O LORD My God.”

Psalm 42:5,11 – “Why are you in despair, O my soul, and why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him for the help of His presence.”

Psalm 62:5 – “My soul, wait in silence for God only, for my hope is from Him.”

Romans 5:1-2 – “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand.” – Knowing we have peace with God and stand “in grace,” we can trust the Lord and honor our husband.

Romans 15:13 – “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in the hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” –

Respecting and honoring a flawed leader always comes down to this:
⇒ Do we have hope in Christ?
⇒ Do we have peace with God?
⇒ Do we know that God is our refuge and strength?

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If the answer is “YES” to all these questions, then we can trust the Lord when we’re challenged to respect and honor our spouse!

You can try a thousand cheap, earthly weapons to fight the desire for control but you’ll lose every time. The only sure defense against unsubmittiveness is knowing and trusting that God made NO mistakes when He called a wife to willingly “come under” her imperfect husband.

1 Timothy 6:17 – “Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.” – This text applies because many women are tempted to dishonor and disrespect their husband’s wages and God’s supply of their needs. The warning is clear: Do not be “conceited” or “fix your hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God.”

1 Peter 1:21 – “…who, through Him, are believers in God who raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”

1 Peter 3:5 – The holy women of old “hoped in God”

As you are already aware, when your husband’s leadership is weak the temptation to become discouraged and lose hope is fierce!

The Lord promises that a wife is blessed, protected, sustained, and strengthened with grace when she humbly honors the decisions and leadership of her husband (1 Peter 3:1-6).

Usurping the role of leader in the home removes you from God’s protective covering and SLANDERS THE GOODNESS of Jesus Christ’s shepherding of your life. Always remember that the Lord your Master has never failed you in even the smallest command or promise!

The lie we believe: If he just had more information and reasoned through it with my insight, he would make a different decision and our family would be much better off in the long run.

2) Offer Only Godly Advice – Prov 31

Proverbs 31:11-12 – “The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.”

Proverbs 31:25-31 – The Godly woman “looks well to the ways of her home”

Labor and strive to bring godly wisdom to your husband, whether he hears it or not. You always have more time ahead of you for your faithful counsel and prayers to hit their target. Trust in that promise! Through your humble, godly character the Lord will soften, expose, and renew the fallow ground of your husband’s heart.
Because they’re imperfect, husbands often desire respect long before they’ve earned it. But realize that the only advice that will ever last is that which the Holy Spirit has given already.

Know the truth, live the truth, and speak the truth in love, then follow your husband as the Lord sanctifies you in the waiting! God will surely do the rest in His perfect timing.

3) **Humbly follow God-given Authority (particularly your husband)**

Ephesians 5:22-23,33 – “In the same way, you wives be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife as Christ also is the Head of the church, being the Savior of the body…(v33) Nevertheless…let the wife see to it that she respect her husband”

No matter how ‘comfortable’ you feel manipulating or controlling your husband’s leadership, in God’s eyes it **is unrighteous and brings a severe chastening** in order to teach you the folly of hoping in your own preservation.

The Bible does not use the word “manipulation,” but the idea is conveyed by Scripture’s use of the word “deceit.” When you manipulate your husband to obtain your desired outcome, it is deceit, and it is NOT accomplishing the Lord’s will!

Hebrews 12:12-13 – “Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.”

Be on your guard! **If your husband succumbs to your manipulation and control, you will reap what you have sown and have yourself to answer for it.**

If you form a habit of manipulating him to get what you want, then that’s all you’ll ever have in the end—a **human prize gained by sinful means and used for self-exaltation.** You may have temporary relief from your fears, but:

Your guilt will compound before God (increasing your sense of fear)
Your capacity to find rest in the Lord’s purposes will diminish
The flame of your spiritual passion will eventually be quenched.

What will you be able to offer your precious children then?

Labor in this area with all diligence. As part of the body of Christ, help and encourage one another in this crucial battleground. Pray for each other and reprove one another where you need it. The Gospel-influence you desire for your children and grandchildren depend upon it!

4) **Fill your home with echoes of Scripture/Truth**

Deuteronomy 6:4-6 – In all of life, and throughout each day, you are to teach God’s commandments to your family!
Proverbs 2-9 – Through nine relentless chapters, Solomon is giving daily instruction from Scripture to his sons!

Ephesians 6:4 – “Fathers (and mothers), do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

You only get one shot at family life. In the first ten years (the most formative) your kids will spend most of their time inside your home with you. It’s a highly privileged opportunity to lay a foundation that cannot be moved.

Timothy’s mother and grandmother poured Biblical truth into his little mind and heart from his earliest days. The promise of God is that His word, taught from childhood, is able to “give the wisdom that leads to salvation” (2 Timothy 3:15).

Here’s the problem: with each subsequent generation, complacency sets in. Young mothers who are first generation believers vigorously teach Scripture to their kids, knowing how clever Satan’s schemes are and how easily deceived the human heart is. The next generation of mothers “grew up” hearing the word, it’s already a comfortable part of their home furnishings. And as the burdens of life increase and exhausting days pass with greater frequency, biblically-grounded moms can be lulled into taking short-cuts.

The urgency their parents felt—which lifted them above the weariness—begins to fade. Mothers stop their own Bible reading, rarely quote an actual verse or clear biblical principle when disciplining a child, and often no longer correct worldly thinking patterns adopted by their kids.

The truth is: second and third generation Christian moms are vulnerable to laziness and unbelief regarding the command to repeatedly put truth into their children’s minds. Don’t let this be your life or your home.

Don’t live for one more hour of sleep today that will rob others (or your kids) of a soul-rescuing truth tomorrow. Think long-term, and believe the promises of God. Whether you’re a second or third generation Christian, make sure you’re a mother with first-generation passion for the souls of your little ones!

The devourer, Satan himself, wants to destroy their souls!

5) **Remove all worldly entanglements and distractions**

Hebrews 12:1 – Remove all excess baggage

Ephesians 5:1-3 – Worldliness and Impurity should not even be named among saints

It’s so easy for long-held convictions to erode these days. Countless families slowly become fearful of the world’s opinions, leading them to flirt with earthly values and ethics in ways they would’ve never dreamed at first. Over time the clarity of God’s word is lost in the mist and fog
of worldly compromises. Families that begin with such biblical promise and strength end with nothing but broken dreams and shattered hopes.

Know and believe the Scriptures, and you will never be duped! Satan wants your heart and he wants to captivate the hearts of the children God gives you in the future. And being the prince of this world, he has all the evil resources at his whim. You need not fear his wicked plots if you “resist him, firm in faith” (1 Peter 5:9). But make no mistake, if you refuse to put off pop-cultural entanglements, self-serving distractions, and shallow friendships you and your family will indeed suffer.

Don’t be like Abraham’s nephew, Lot, who secretly harbored the notion that he could enjoy what God provides without a sober concern for how it might steal his affection for God.

Never downplay the dangers lurking in the world around you, nor overestimate your own ability to enjoy life’s comforts and amusements AND still honor God for them. Our hearts love possessions, power, and pleasure. Faith and a humble heart before God’s truth is our only true protection. Be very careful here!

6) **Don’t Be Idle**

2 Thess 3:5-7 – “…keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive, and who does not live according to the teaching you received from us.”

1 Tim 5:9-15 – “…[young single women (particularly widows)] learn to waste their time, going from house to house. …”

Ephesians 5:14-17 – “Be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise. So then, do not be foolish and understand what the will of the Lord is.”

The undercurrent and highest priority of your life ought to be the things of Christ and His kingdom (Colossians 3:1-4 – “seek the things above”). **Innocent pleasures on earth still cost valuable time and resources.** Be wise, and make the most of your time with your husband, your children, and the work of the ministry!

7) **Keep Your feet close to home**

Warning: Prov 7:11 – “She is boisterous and rebellious; her feet do not remain at home;”

With all the great technology around us these days, the 24-hour global access is unprecedented. These are wonderful tools and offer a world of opportunities far beyond what people just a few decades ago ever dreamed. But our home life must be protected by spiritual and practical insulation.

The family is where every necessary life-discipline is developed. It is also the place where sin is either allowed to spread or **powerfully curbed through the grace of the Gospel.** A home is a
place of insulated learning, where truth is taught, sin is checked early, the gospel finds softer soil, and sin’s fallout is curtailed.

And the family is also for interdependent relationships. God gives each member of the family to one another so that we might serve each other faithfully as our highest spiritual priority. If we do not protect our family by setting a protective hedge around relationships inside the home, the cost will be great indeed!

Children today are being robbed of a strong, truth-saturated, character-forming environment in many Christian homes because parents allow the outside world (cultural fads, peer opinions, lifestyle influences) to invade their personal family space almost without limit.

The unceasing intrusion from outside the home via electronic friends, opinions, and peer-groups cannot be sufficiently countered by a casual approach to those influences. Staying connected with friends across town or the across the country through the internet is a gift and a privilege. But when this medium aggressively shatters the proper barrier between our “private” and “public” worlds, the family unit is dangerously given over to the whims of the village.

Christians must be discerning! Each of us will answer to God for the decisions that affect the spiritual fortitude of our home life.

8) **Starve Idols of Personal Significance**

1 Timothy 5:13 – “And at the same time [young women] also learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they should not say” –

Women are personally engaging and enjoy relationships at a high level. But where an idol of significance takes hold (in other words, sinful fears & insecurities), there will be jealousy, strife and tale-bearing.

Proverbs 11:13 – “He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy conceals a matter.” – Trustworthy people try to avoid becoming involved in negative information about others. They’ll offer biblical counsel, but they won’t become a conduit for harmful speech.

Proverbs 18:8 – “The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels, and they go down into the innermost parts of the body” – In other words, people swallow gossip all the way down.

Proverbs 16:28 – A perverse man spreads strife, and a slanderer separates intimate friends.” – Slander (false information about others) is not only an offense to God, it will quickly destroy the most intimate of friendships.

Proverbs 20:19 – “He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets. Therefore, do not associate with a gossip.” – Strongly encourage others in this area, and don’t make friends with those who refuse to work on correcting their weakness in this area.
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Proverbs 26:20 – “For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.”
This is such a great verse. You quench the fire of gossip by not adding the wood. Don’t be the fuel for talebearing!

James 3:16 – “For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.”

Be very careful to learn self-restraint, and cultivate discernment about your motives for trafficking in certain information. Because women treat relationships as deeply rich and emotionally fulfilling, you will also be tempted to use relationships for our own sense of personal worth and significance. This will form habits of tearing others down or desiring the intimate details of matters not concerning us personally. Help each other learn self-control and build habits that honor the Lord Jesus Christ.

9) Do Not Feed Vanity

Proverbs 31:30 – “Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised”

Having a “charming outward manner” can be deceiving, and being “pleasurable to the eyes” is useless/worthless.

Why? Because we immediately link outward charm and looks with things we’re convinced we must have to have our slice of happiness and fulfillment in life! Charm often deceives us because we have come to love shallow, temporary emotional fulfillment rather than believe the truth and keep a clean conscience before Jesus Christ.

And what about comparing ourselves with others?

Are we drawing ungodly conclusions through envy, jealousy, and resentment because we’re discontent with the way God made us?!

Sometimes we envy another’s life, circumstances, physical appearance, prosperity, social standing, even someone else’s personality. And we believe we must have what they have in order to be happy. At times, we are jealous and dislike others because we don’t want them stealing perceived significance away from us. We can become resentful because we do not believe that God knew what He was doing when He made us and gave us the life and circumstances He’s ordained for us.

Yet, it is godliness that is beautiful in the eyes of our Savior, Jesus Christ!

Proverbs 11:22 – “Like a gold ring in a pig’s snout is a beautiful woman without discretion.” - A beautiful woman who lacks righteous character is like exquisite high end jewelry hanging from the hideous nose of a pig!
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1 Peter 3:3-4 – “Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear—but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious.”

Work on the beauty of the inside rather than obsessing over the outside. Be personally groomed (for other people’s sake), but don’t conclude that those things mean anything substantive. Work hard on the things that have eternal beauty and value. A “gentle” spirit means being “considerate and humble. A “quiet” spirit means having an inward rest and calm—a strong conviction that God is trustworthy!

God says that these qualities are “imperishable” and “very precious in His sight.”

10) Do Not Feed Sinful fears

Proverbs 21:19 – “It is better to live in a desert land, than with a contentious and sinfully fearful woman.”

Proverbs 27:15 – “A constant dripping on a day of steady rain and a quarrelsome woman are alike;”

Titus 2:5b – Paul says to teach young women “to be self-controlled, pure, homemakers, kind, and submissive to their husbands, that the word of God many not be dis honored.”

Take your fears before the Lord (1 Peter 5:7), petition Him with pure motives and thankfulness (Philippians 4:6-7; James 4:3), and wait upon Him to raise you up in supernatural peace and strength (Psalm 40:1-5; 119:73-77; Philippians 4:7).

Growing Old Gracefully
1 Timothy 5:9-15

Faithful to Solemn Vows (integrity of life, for better or for worse)
Known for Obedience (proven humility, prayer, service, outreach)
Life-long Nurturer (effectively passed on truth to the next generation)
Practiced Love of Strangers (willing to serve without selfish preferences)
Sacrificial Love Without Pretense (willingly behind-the-scenes)
Consistent Compassion (merciful, no matter the cost)
Striving to Honor Christ More (maturing in Christlikeness)
Avoiding the Sins of Young Women