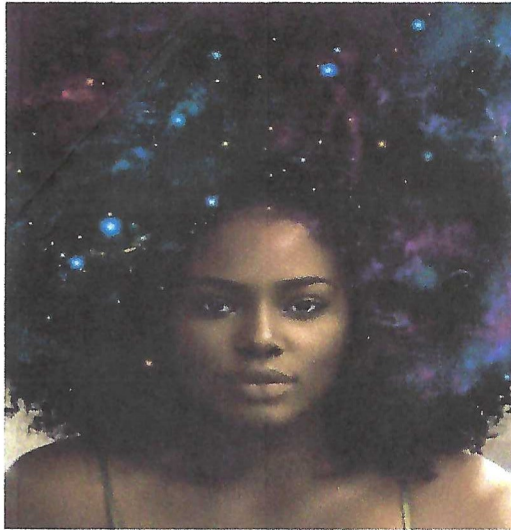


CHAPTER 3

"UNDERSTANDING the PURPOSE and POWER OF WOMEN"



"THE PURPOSE AND NATURE OF HUMANITY"

Agape Love WPF Family Ministries

Zoom - Bible Study Series

Pastor Rudolph & Lady Zee Maybell

THREE

THE PURPOSE AND NATURE OF HUMANITY

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

—Genesis 1:27

Let us now look at the purpose of humanity, starting with the first two human beings God created, because they represent all of us. When God created humanity, He had two overarching purposes in mind: *relation* and *vocation*. The first purpose is God's personal reason for creating us—for relationship with Himself. The second is His executive reason for creating us—for the lifework He designed us to carry out for Him in the earth.

THE CREATION OF MAN

The book of Genesis tells us of the origin of humanity. Genesis 1 is a declaration chapter. It declares what God did in creation. Genesis 2 is an explanation chapter. It explains how God accomplished His act of creation. In Genesis 1:26–27, we read,

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over...all the earth..." So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (NKJV)

The first question we need to ask is, Why did God decide to create man? The second is, What does it mean to be created in God's image? Third, What does it mean for man to have dominion over all the earth? Fourth, Why did God create male and female?

WHY DID GOD CREATE MAN?

The ultimate purpose behind the creation of man was—and is—love. The Scripture tells us that “*God is love*” (1 John 4:8, 16). What I especially like about this statement is that God doesn’t just give love, He doesn’t just show love, He is love. He desires to share His love with us because love is His essential quality.

GOD CREATED MAN OUT OF LOVE.

From front to back, the Word of God teaches that God is love. Consider these passages:

The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: “I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.”
(Jeremiah 31:3)

The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing.
(Zephaniah 3:17)

I am convinced that neither death nor life, . . . nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
(Romans 8:38–39)

Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ.
(Ephesians 2:4–5)

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!
(1 John 3:1)

God has many other qualities besides love that we could list. He is righteous, holy, omnipotent, almighty. He is all of these wonderful things. Yet God could be all of these attributes and still exist by Himself in isolation. He doesn’t need anyone else in order to be holy. He doesn’t need anyone else to be righteous. He doesn’t need anyone to be almighty. He can be omnipotent, omnipresent, and all the rest of His qualities by Himself. However, it is the nature of love to give of itself, and it cannot give in isolation. In order for love to be fulfilled, it has to have someone to love, and it has to give to its beloved.

“*I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God*” (Isaiah 45:5). There is no other God besides the Lord, yet He is a God of relationship, not isolation. He desires someone of His nature and likeness whom He can love. Therefore, God’s primary motivation in the creation of man was love. He created man because He wanted to share His love with a being like Himself, a being created in His image.

This truth is amazing to me. Genesis tells us that God created the heavens and the earth. He created all the plants and animals. He made the sun, the stars, the galaxies, the millennia, and the eons. He looked at all these remarkable things that He had created, and He said that they were good. However, He couldn’t truly love these things because they were not like Him. Yes, they reflected His power, glory, and creativity; they revealed His nature and qualities, but they were not made in His essential likeness. It is man whom God created in His image to love.

In the New Testament, Jesus both affirms and exemplifies God’s love for us. He said, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son*” (John 3:16 NKJV). “*He gave.*” He gave because He loved. You cannot love without giving. When you love, you give. It’s automatic. Yet in order to give love in a way that is truly fulfilling, the receiver has to be like the giver in nature; otherwise, the love would not be complete. You cannot give in a meaningful way to something that is not like you, because it cannot receive your gift in a way that will satisfy your giving. Giving is only complete when the receiver and the giver are alike. God desired a shared and mutual love—not a one-sided love.

God looked at what He had created, and here was this man, this beautiful duplicate of Himself. Here was someone to fulfill His love. This relationship of love was the primary purpose that God created man. This is not an abstract concept. This means that the entire human race—including you and me—were created by God to be loved by Him.

Some years ago, I was pondering the question of why, when humanity rejected God’s ways, God didn’t start over and make a new race of men. The reason is that God is not a two-timer. His love is pure and unconditional; it is not based on the actions of the receiver. Therefore, when we offer our lives to God, we should not do so believing that God merely feels sorry for

us. We should go to God because, in response to such unconditional love, we can't love anyone else the way we love God.

God and humanity were made for one another. It doesn't matter whom else you love, you aren't ever going to be satisfied until you love God. No matter how many relationships you have and how many gifts you buy for others, when it's all over, you will still be lonely. Why? It is because the Person whom you were made to love above all else—God—doesn't have the place in your life that He needs to have. You were made to love God. Your love was designed to be fulfilled in Him.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE?

What is this image of God in which we were created?

GOD DREW MAN OUT OF HIMSELF.

When God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness" (Genesis 1:26), He was saying, in effect, "Let Us make someone to love, and call it 'man.' Since We want man to be the object of Our love, We're going to make man in Our own image and in Our own likeness. This creation will be just like Us." Therefore, when God made man, He essentially drew man out of Himself, so that the essence of man would be just like Him. In this way, the receiver could be just like the Giver, and could reciprocate His love. God created man out of His own essence. Since "God is spirit" (John 4:24), He created man as spirit. This is a vital aspect of creation that we will return to again.

Man is the only being on the face of the planet—and even in the universe, that we know of—that is created in God's image. This includes angels. Nowhere in the Bible do you find that the angels are made in God's image. However, man came out of God and was created in His image and likeness. Man is the only being of God's creation that is like Him.

So man—the spirit-man—was created as a result of God's love. Note carefully that, at this point, we are still talking about the creation of man, the spirit. We are not yet talking about male and female. Whom did God create in His image? Man. Man is spirit, and spirits have no gender. The Bible never talks about a male or female spirit. God created the spirit-man without a gender.

Yet we next read in Genesis 1:27, "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." God took this spirit-man, and He placed him in two physical forms: male and female. The spirit-man is neither male nor female. However, to fulfill His eternal purposes, God used two physical forms, called male and female, to express the one entity of man. Therefore, the essence of both male and female is the resident spirit within them, called "man."

In the Bible, when God speaks to humanity, He uses the term *man*. He doesn't address the male or the female unless He's talking to individuals. Instead, He talks to the man within them both. He addresses the spirit-man. Many

THERE'S A MAN WITHIN THE WOMAN.

of us are preoccupied by the outward manifestation of male or female, when we should be focusing on the spirit-man. For example, some people say, "I don't believe in women preachers." However, they fail to realize that there's a man within the woman. If you don't like women preachers, then close your eyes and listen, because there's a man within her. Let the man within her preach. God deals with the inner being (Ephesians 3:16). Paul said in Galatians 3:28 that in the body of Christ there is neither male nor female, neither slave nor master. When God deals with people, He deals with their spirits.

Genesis 5:1–2 says, "When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them [together] 'man.'" Whom did God call man? Both male and female. Therefore, it would be incorrect for you to call me "man" and to call my wife a "non-man." Both of us are man. God is referring to the spirit inside.

God deals with the man inside us because "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). We worship God with our spirits, not with our gender. That means, if you are a man, before God, your spirit does not depend upon your wife. If you are a woman, before God, your spirit does not depend on your husband.

Many men seem to have this impression. They drop their wives off at church because they believe their wives are going to cover for them while they go off to some other activity. "She's the spiritual one in the house,"

they think. "She'll pray for the kids, and she'll pray for me. I'll just go and play baseball." Yet the man within the male and the man within the female are each responsible to God.

Many women misunderstand this truth, also. They seem to be waiting for their husbands to become Christians before they will worship God. If their husbands don't care about God, that fact has nothing to do with their own worship of Him. A woman has a spirit; she is a responsible spiritual being. Even if a woman's husband wants to live in an evil way and be an abomination to God, she is to worship the Lord anyway. God is not going to say to her, "Well, since your husband didn't worship Me, it's fine that you didn't, either."

The Bible says that every person must stand on his own feet before God. (See Romans 14:10.) God is going to deal with us Spirit to spirit. Therefore, spiritually, God does not care whether you are male or female. He is concerned with the spirit-man. Your relationship to God is not dependent on whether you are a male or a female. You must come to God through your spirit.

"MAN" MEANS BOTH MALE AND FEMALE.

The presence of the spirit-man within us is why the Bible says that all men have sinned, rather than that "men and women have sinned." "Death came to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12). The word "men" in this verse is translated from the Greek word *anthropos*, meaning human beings. With the exception of Jesus Christ, every human spirit-being from Adam forward has sinned, whether male or female. Have you ever wondered why, when a wife becomes a Christian, God doesn't always save her husband at the same time? The reason is that he's a different spirit-being altogether. God does say that believing spouses sanctify their unbelieving spouses, which means that they keep them in a protective environment so that God can reach them. (See 1 Corinthians 7:13-14.) However, these spouses still have to go to God of their own accord.

So the person who lives inside you, the real you, is the spirit-man. No matter what anybody else does, you are responsible for your relationship with God.

The fact that the same spirit of man resides in both female and male has generally been forgotten by humanity, so that men and women end

up battling one another for supremacy, as if one needs to prove superiority over the other. Yet neither is superior, for they are both of the same essence, even with their differences.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR MAN TO HAVE DOMINION?

The personal reason that God created humanity, therefore, was to establish a relationship of love with man. God created man—the spirit-man—in His own image, so that love could be freely given and received between Creator and created. God also created man for vocation—to carry out His purposes in the earth. What is the central nature of that purpose?

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule ["have dominion" NKJV] over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

(Genesis 1:26-28)

Man was created to have dominion over the earth, to rule over it. Let us keep in mind that the word "man" in Genesis 1:26 refers to the species that God made, the spirit-being called "man." This means that the purpose of dominion was given to both male and female, since the spirit-man resides in each. Therefore, spiritually, both male and female have the same responsibility toward the earth.

What does it mean for man to have dominion over the world? First, God has entrusted the earth to the care of man. God's charge to humanity to have dominion means that man is to be the proprietor of the physical earth, including all the other living things in the world—fish, birds, livestock, all the animals. In Genesis 2, we read that the man was placed in the Garden of Eden to tend it and cultivate it. This is what mankind is to do with the entire earth: both tend it and cultivate it. God told humanity, in effect, "Rule over My world. Take care of it. Subdue it and fashion it with your own creativity." In this way, man would reflect the loving and creative spirit with which he was made in the image of God.

Yet having dominion means even more than taking care of the physical world. Since man is both physical and spiritual in nature, humanity is to reflect God and His purposes in the spiritual realm as well as in the earthly realm. Ephesians 3:10–11 tells us that God’s eternal purpose for humanity was made possible through the coming of Christ:

His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.
(Ephesians 3:10–11)

God’s eternal purpose is that the entire spiritual world, including the powers of darkness, will know His wisdom through us. What an awesome responsibility! If the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms want to know what God is like and what He has accomplished, they are supposed to look at us. If the devil wants to know what God is like, he’s supposed to look at us. Most of us aren’t showing the devil what God is like; we’re showing the devil what he is like. However, God’s purpose is that He might display His manifold wisdom to all of the spirit world through those whom He has both created and redeemed in Christ. In this way, through the physical and spiritual realms, it has been given to man to reflect God’s wisdom, creativity, power, and glory. Humanity is to reflect the attributes of the Creator, in whose image we were created.

WHY DID GOD MAKE MALE AND FEMALE?

Again, it is important to remember that this charge to have dominion was given to man. Let us look again at Genesis 5:1–2: “*When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them ‘man.’*” “Man” is the name of the species God made. How, then, did God go about creating male and female, and why did He create them?

God took man and placed him in two separate physical “houses” so that He could fulfill His purposes for humanity and for the world. Therefore, although spirits have no gender, the houses in which they live do. The first house God made was the male; the second house God made was the female.

Genesis 1:26–27 implies that the process through which God created man as a spiritual being was different from the process through which God formed the male and female bodies. We can think of the distinction in this way: God created man, but He *made* male and female. The word “*make*” in verse 26 (“*Let us make man*”) and “*created*” in verse 27 (“*So God created man*”) are different Hebrew words. The word “*make*” is *asah*, and it means to form out of something that is already there. The word “*created*” is *bara*, which means to form out of nothing. These verses indicate that God *created* man in His own spiritual image, but that God also *made* man with a physical body. God used both of these words in reference to how He brought the first human being into existence. In effect, He was saying, “I will both create him and make him. I will create him out of nothing, and I will make him out of something”

**GOD CREATED MAN,
BUT HE MADE MALE
AND FEMALE.**

God created the spiritual aspect of human beings out of His own being rather than out of anything from the physical world. The spirit of the first human was not created from matter; it came out of God’s Spirit. God created the essential nature of man to be spirit, as He Himself is Spirit. (See John 4:24.) God just spoke the spirit of man into existence, similar to the way in which He spoke, “*Let there be light, and there was light*” (Genesis 1:3). Yet when God made the physical bodies of both male and female, He used material from the physical world that He had already created.

CREATION OF THE MALE

When God gave the spirit-man dominion over a physical earth, he gave him a physical body so that he could live and function in the world and rule over it. “*The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being*” (Genesis 2:7). God formed a house from the dust of the ground; this house was the male. Then God housed the spirit-man in the male. Therefore, part of the male was created out of God’s Spirit and part of the male was made out of dust, out of the dirt of the ground. God took what He had created (the spirit-man) and put it inside what He had made (the man’s body). Then He placed the male in the Garden of Eden so that the man could rule what God had already created (the earth) through what God had made

(the man). "Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed....The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it" (Genesis 2:8, 15).

CREATION OF THE FEMALE

In Genesis 2:7-17, we see that, at first, only the spirit in the male (let's call him the male-man) is ruling in the Garden. If God created man for the purpose of having a relationship of love, and then placed him in the male so that he could carry out his dominion over the world, what motivated God to make the female?

When God placed the spirit called "man" in the male, God and man could still give and receive love through their spirits. However, because the man now had a physical body, he also needed someone with whom to share human and physical love. This is a reflection of man's creation in the image of God. God is love. Man came from love and is made up of love, and love cannot dwell alone.

"The LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him'" (Genesis 2:18). Do you sense the implication of that verse? Even though the spirit within the male had communion with God, the male needed love. Genesis 2:19-20 tells us,

Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.

The male-man had a problem. God told him, "You have the animals, but they aren't like you." Animals were created for man's enjoyment, and although they can give us some comfort, they cannot truly fulfill a person's need for love. Some people know that they need the love of other humans, but they are not brave enough to pursue it. They don't have the capacity to put aside their pride or their fears so they can risk love with another human being. Therefore, they turn to animals for companionship. You see, a dog can't answer back or tell you about your faults. A cat can't point out your

weaknesses. That's why some people would rather love dogs and cats than other people. Yet animals are not of the same essence as humans, and so the love isn't a complete or fulfilling one.

God presented every animal to the man, but none was suitable for him. There was none to whom he could relate, none who could help him in his proprietorship of the earth. So God said, "It's not good for man to be alone in one body." Love cannot dwell alone. It is impossible for love to love alone. So God created the woman, the female-man.

The first principle to note regarding the woman is that she was created as a result of something beautiful. Woman came about because of love; it was love that caused her existence. The primary purpose of the female was to be loved by the male, just as God's major purpose for creating the spirit-man was to give him love. Having dominion was secondary.

What was the method God used to create the female?

The LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. (Genesis 2:21-22)

God's creation of the female is fascinating because it exactly parallels His creation of man. Just as God had drawn man from Himself and created him as a spiritual being, He drew the woman out of the man and made her a physical being. God, who is love, needed someone to whom to give His love, and so He created man out of Himself. Similarly, the male needed someone to whom to give his love, and so God created the female from the male's own body. This parallel in creation illustrates the oneness and mutual love that God and man and male and female were created to have.

The word "rib" in Genesis 2:22 is the Hebrew word *tsela*. It does not necessarily mean a rib as we understand the word. It could mean "side" or "chamber." In any event, the Scripture is telling us that God drew the woman from a part of the man. Why? It is because the receiver has to be exactly like the giver. Just as man needed to be spirit in order to receive love

GOD'S CREATION OF THE FEMALE PARALLELS HIS CREATION OF MAN.

from God and be in relationship with Him, the woman needed to be of the same essence as man in order to receive love from him and be in relationship with him.

That is why God did not go back to the soil to fashion another house when He formed the female. If He had done that, she would not have been the exact duplicate of the man. She would not have been made of the essence of the male, the way humanity was made of the essence of God. So God took exactly what was needed from the male to make an exact replica, and He created the woman.

Now, while males and females are of the same essence, and while the woman is a replica of the man, God actually made them using different methods. The Bible says that the man was “formed” of the dust of the earth. (See Genesis 2:7.) The Hebrew word for formed is *yatsar*, meaning to mold, as a potter molds clay. However, the Bible says that God “made” the woman. (See Genesis 2:22.) The Hebrew word for made is *banah*, which means to “build” or “construct.”

When Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:8, “*Man did not come from woman, but woman from man,*” he was referring to this passage in Genesis. God took the woman out of the man and built her. This is how I picture it: God built her by multiplying cells that He had taken from the man, similar to what happens in the womb after a fertilized egg is implanted there. The cells begin to multiply, and a new human being begins to be constructed.

So there was this beautiful structuring in the creation of woman. When God had finished making her, she was exactly like the man. She was so much in likeness to him that, when God presented her to the man, his first words were, “*This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man*” (Genesis 2:23). The man’s words are both beautiful and instructive. Something that is built has the same components as the material from which it is made or from which it comes. Therefore, God built the female out of the part that He took from the male so that they would be made of exactly the same substance.

A PERFECT COMPLEMENT

The female-man is the perfect complement to the male-man. She is man because she came from man and has a spirit. Her physical house is

also like the male’s. She is bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. She is the same as a man, and that is why she can give and receive love and be in relationship with him.

A DISTINCT CREATION

Because the female came from the male, the male is essentially the giver, and the female is essentially the receiver. Thus, God fashioned the woman to be the receiver. If you look at the way the female body is made, she is a receiver from A to Z. This is part of the purpose for which she was created. Her receiving complements the male’s giving. The woman is like the man because the receiver has to be exactly like the giver. However, in order for the woman to be the receiver, she also has to be different from the man.

Though the woman was taken from the man and was built to be like him, she is a distinct creation. This is highlighted in her physical difference from the man in that she is able to bear children. You could say that a woman is a “wombed man.” She is a man with a womb. She is still the same as a male, but she has certain differences. These differences are complementary in nature and are designed so that the male and female can fulfill one another’s emotional and physical needs while they are spiritually nourished by God and His love, and so that together they can fulfill their mandate to have dominion over the world.

THE FEMALE IS BOTH THE SAME AS AND DIFFERENT FROM THE MALE.

DIFFERENT BY DESIGN

Males and females were created both similarly and differently in order to fulfill God’s purposes. Remember the two main principles of purpose?

- ✦ The purpose of something determines its nature (or design).
- ✦ The nature of something determines its needs.

Men and women were created with complementary designs that reflect their individual roles in the larger purposes for which they were created. In the next chapter we’ll look at the implications of their complementary roles and discover what put their perfect symmetry out of balance.

PRINCIPLES

1. God created man for relation and vocation.
2. Man was created to be loved by God.
3. Man was created as spirit.
4. Man was created to have dominion over the world.
5. Man was placed within two physical houses: the male and the female.
6. The male is essentially a giver, and the female is essentially a receiver.
7. The male was created to give love, and the female was created to receive love.
8. Men and women are of the same essence but have different designs.
9. Men and women have complementary designs in order to fulfill their purposes.

CHAPTER THREE STUDY QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Read Genesis 1:27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." What does it mean to be created in the image of God? Does your understanding of your creation in God's image have an effect on your relationship with God and how you live your life?

EXPLORING GOD'S PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES

2. When God created humanity, what two overarching purposes did He have in mind? (p. 57)
_____ and _____
3. Why does God desire to share His love with us? (p. 58)
4. You cannot love without doing what? (p. 59) _____
5. In the Garden of Eden, when humanity rejected God's ways, why didn't God start over and make a new race of men? (p. 59)
6. God created mankind as spirit, and spirits have no _____. (p. 60)
7. God used two physical forms to express the one entity of man in order to fulfill His _____. (p. 61)
8. The essence of both male and female is the resident spirit within them, called "_____." (p. 61)

9. Men and women often end up battling one another for supremacy, as if one needs to prove superiority over the other. Why is neither superior to the other? (p. 63)
10. Genesis 1:26–27 indicates that the process through which God created man was different from the process through which God formed the male and female. We can think of the distinction in this way: God _____ man, but He _____ male and female. (p. 65)
11. The first principle to note regarding the woman is that she was created as a result of something _____. It was _____ that caused her existence. (p. 67)
12. What did the man say when God presented the woman to him? (p. 68)
13. Because the female came from the male, the male is essentially the _____, and the female is essentially the _____. (p. 69)
14. Why were the male and female designed with complementary differences? (p. 69)

CONCLUSION

God created humanity for a relationship of love with Himself and for the vocation of exercising dominion over the earth and reflecting God's nature and purposes in the spiritual realm. Male and female were created so mankind could fulfill its dominion responsibilities in a physical world while experiencing the blessings of human oneness and love. Males and females were designed both similarly and differently in order to fulfill God's plans. Their complementary differences reflect their individual roles in the eternal purposes for which they were created.

APPLYING GOD'S PRINCIPLES TO YOUR LIFE

THINKING IT OVER

- ✦ Are the two overarching purposes for which you were created—relationship with God and family and exercising dominion—the central focus of your life? Why or why not?
- ✦ Have you allowed your spiritual life to become dependent on the spiritual life of your spouse, or are you developing a personal relationship with God yourself? Are you waiting for your husband or wife to become a Christian before you will enter fully into the Christian life? Think about the fact that you are an individual spiritual being and are directly responsible to God for your spiritual life. Will you devote yourself to loving God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength—no matter what others around you may do or say?

PRAYING ABOUT IT

- ✦ Ask God to show you how you can better fulfill your purposes of relation and vocation. Write down what you feel He is saying to you and share it with your spouse, prayer partner, or pastor. Ask for prayer support in these vital areas of your life.
- ✦ Have you seen yourself as a complement to your mate and others of the opposite gender, or do you feel you are working at cross-purposes? Ask God to help you see your differences as complementary and to use them for your mutual benefit and His glory.

ACTING ON GOD'S TRUTH

- ✦ Commit to memory the two Scripture passages that emphasize mankind's dominion role in the earthly and spiritual realms: Genesis 1:26–28 and Ephesians 3:10–11. Meditate on these verses daily until they have renewed your mind regarding your God-given purpose.

Through both the spiritual and physical realms, it has been given to man to reflect the love, wisdom, creativity, power, and glory of God.

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