

Course Prospectus:

THL 344 – Christian Women

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course will challenge students to compare and analyze the differing views of “womanhood” as presented by both the Bible and modern society. We will examine many topics of interest to women, including femininity and feminism, God-ordained and expected roles for women, contemporary challenges and issues, and many more. By the end of the course, students should more deeply appreciate the diversity and uniqueness of women, and also God’s plan for them today and into the future.

PREREQUISITES & COREREQUISITES: None

COURSE CREDIT: Three (3) semester hours.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Lockyer, H. *All the Women of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1988.

Pollard, J. *Christian Modesty and the Public Undressing of America*. San Antonio: Vision Forum, 2004.

DeMoss, N.L. *Lies Women Believe*. Chicago: Moody Press, 2001.

Peace, M. *The Excellent Wife*. Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 1999.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Most of the class readings will come from church literature and selected other texts. The appropriate web links will be designated on the course web site, and may also include other secular sources.

NOTE: Required texts and other outside readings have been chosen because of their “overall” value and relation to the course. Students should keep in mind that these sources are “secular” and although very good in many ways, not all the ideas shared by the authors are biblically accurate or even acceptable in God’s Church. The instructor will attempt to point out major errors, but ultimately the student must “sift” through the material, gleaning the wise and godly elements and dismissing the inappropriate.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course attends to the unique role in life that a Christian woman fills with special emphasis on qualities relevant to the life and work of the Christian woman in the church. Selected topics include the lives and examples of outstanding women of the Bible and the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual issues affecting all Christian women and the practical, biblical methods of dealing with them. Upon completion, students should be able to articulate and explain the principles relevant to the life, work, and success of the Christian woman.

Technology Access: This course requires web access and the student also has to have an established email account. The following free ware may be useful in this course.

- *Adobe Acrobat Reader* is necessary to view documents that are PDF files. It may be downloaded **for free** at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>, which may then be installed and used to access PDF documents on the course website.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

As a result of participating in THL 344, students will be able to:

- Identify different God-ordained roles for wives and mothers.
- Character sketch two different women of the Bible and describe why they are exemplary.
- Articulate the biblical standards for submission to one's mate vs. the worldly misunderstandings of this concept.
- Identify different factors that impact and intensify emotions.
- Describe the differences between femininity and feminism.
- Articulate a personal philosophy on Christian womanhood based on biblical principles.
- Develop a deeper appreciation for the rich and diverse roles God created for women to play.

COURSE LECTURES

Course lectures will take the format of both video and audio. PowerPoint slides will accompany lectures and videos will also periodically be available for download with some lectures. See the course website for details. These slides will appear in PDF format.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Submit assignments **on** or **before** the date due. **No** late or make-up assignments will be allowed except for extreme circumstances (permission of instructor is necessary).
1. **Students will be responsible for the chapter readings** that correspond with the class lecture. Be sure to read the chapter prior to logging in and completing the weekly assignment. Readings will correspond with in-class assignments and will help you be better informed. Completing the readings in advance will make the assignments make more sense to you!
2. **Icebreaker/Biography Forum Post:** All students are required to post a brief biography to the forum **by Friday** of the first week of class. Along with the biography, briefly answer the following questions (please limit your comments to 200 words):
 - a. Your Name and the Church area that you attend.
 - b. How long you have been part of/attending the church.
 - c. Why you are taking this particular course and what you hope to learn.
 - d. Whether or not you have taken any other Living University courses.
3. **Weekly Comments and Class Participation:** Students are expected to participate in class discussions by posting weekly comments and questions they might have on the **Discussion Forum** (see the link on the course web site). Each week there will be one or two questions posted on the web page that are related to that week's lectures and readings. If there are "no unique discussion questions" posted for that particular week, you should choose from one of the following questions to write on and relate the question to one of the topics covered in the readings for the week. Also, make sure that your "comments" are more than merely "personal opinion." Your comments should be grounded in your chapter readings, lecture notes, and based on scripture. These weekly discussions are very important and are designed to reinforce the weekly content in a unique way, so it is important to participate in the discussions.
 - a) What item from the reading this week was most interesting to you? Why?
 - b) How did the readings this week relate to, reinforce, or conflict with a Bible principle?
 - c) What implications does one of the items that you learned about have for your lifestyle or the future of your family?
 - d) How might something you learned this week be addressed similarly or differently in God's Kingdom?

Minimal participation requires "one" posting per week. Postings are due on or before Friday at noon (in whatever time zone you are in). Students should also take time at the end of each week to read/review comments from their classmates. Re-posts and additional comments or questions are also encouraged. You should comment or reply to "at least one" other classmate's comments. Be sure to keep the discussions positive and helpful. Class participation points will be assigned in accordance with your level of participation, and will be a combination of student and instructor input. The rubric below, will be used

for you and I to determine a class participation score. Involvement in the discussion forum will add to your overall class experience as you discuss the various topics with your classmates. It will also give you the opportunity to get to know your classmates better. YOU will use the grading rubric below to determine your class participation grade at the end of the semester.

Scale	Criteria
5	Volunteers to share quality ideas/thoughts/findings from readings and experiences with peers <i>frequently</i> . In addition, presents questions to peers and instructor regarding ideas presented. Student is <i>always</i> prepared for class, having completed readings and assignments ahead of time. Comments are well grounded in readings, lecture notes, and scripture (when applicable). Usually posts “replies” to comments made by classmates.
4	Volunteers to share quality ideas/thoughts/findings from readings and experiences with peers <i>frequently</i> , but comments may not be solidly based upon readings, lecture notes, and scripture (when applicable). <i>Usually</i> prepared for class, having completed readings and assignments ahead of time. Posts “replies” to classmate comments <i>some of the time</i> .
3	Volunteers to share quality ideas/thoughts/findings from readings and experiences with peers <i>less frequently</i> than required. <i>Generally</i> prepared for class, having usually completed readings and assignments ahead of time. Comments are often based on opinion and rarely on readings, lecture notes, and scripture (when applicable). <i>Infrequently</i> posts “replies” to classmate comments.
2	Shares ideas/thoughts/findings from readings and experiences as directed, but little effort is put into insuring that they are of quality, and usually comments are much more “opinion” than based on fact and readings, lecture notes and scripture (when applicable). <i>Occasionally</i> prepared for class, rarely having completed readings and assignments ahead of time. <i>Does not</i> post reply comments to classmate comments.
1	Is unable to share quality ideas/thoughts/findings from readings and experiences with peers <i>consistently</i> . <i>Seldom or never</i> prepared for class, failing to complete readings and assignments ahead of time. <i>Does not</i> post reply comments to classmate posts.

- Mid-term exam** will be given during the middle week of the semester. The exam will be comprehensive and review all the material covered to that point in the semester. The exam will be comprised of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. It will be *open book* and open notebook; no proctor is required. Students are NOT however permitted to discuss exam questions and issues while taking the exam. IMPORTANT: It is “highly recommended” that the student prepare for this exam by studying ahead of time. Although the exam will not be timed, preparing for the exam will help the student expedite the exam taking process and greatly shorten its duration.
- Biblical Character Sketch Essays:** You will write two brief essays that sketch the character of two different female Bible characters. For this assignment, use your text, *All the Women of the Bible*, and other sources to identify a woman in the Bible who you want to learn “more” about. Read about her, review the scriptures that reference her, and identify one powerful character trait that she exemplified. Your essay should do the following: a) Identify the female character, b) give a brief biography of her and how God used her/what He used her for, c) identify one powerful character trait she exemplified, d) discuss WHY this character trait stands out to you and how God used it to bring about His will, e) discuss why you think God may have included this woman’s story in His “inspired word” and how her example could be used by modern Christian women. Be sure to use a title, place your name on the paper, number the pages, and use an appropriate bibliography. If you quote, use proper citations.
- Personal Philosophy of True Christian Womanhood:** You are to write up a personal philosophy essay about true Christian womanhood. This document should be about 3-4 pages, double spaced. It should give a brief definition (in your own words), of what you believe a true Christian woman is. In this philosophy, you should share several key aspects of true Christian womanhood and expand on them. Why are these characteristics (or character traits) important and what impact could they have on society if they were more prevalent in women today? Ultimately, you should share what you believe to be God’s expectations regarding true Christian womanhood... something quite different from what the world expects.

8. **Three additional Activities:** You are free to complete these Activities and turn them in at any time prior to and up to the date due. These Activities are designed to get you to think further on particular topics and issues related to class. Activities should be typed and double spaced. All should be 3-4 pages in length. Activities will be due on or before their due date, **by 12 noon** in your time zone.

A. Proverbs 31 Woman Interview: For this assignment, make an appointment to interview a woman in your or another church congregation who seems to exemplify the Proverbs 31 woman. This woman should be at least 35 years of age, be or have been successfully married for a minimum of 15 years (her husband may be deceased), have a husband who is converted (or was before his decease) and viewed as a spiritual pillar in the church. In this interview, you will want to pose the follow questions to this exemplary woman. You will be interviewing this woman to find out essentially what she believes are key aspects of true, Christian womanhood. Be sure to let her know ahead of time what you want to talk to her about. You are encouraged to speak to this woman either “in person”, on the phone, or via something like Skype. Try to avoid just emailing questions and asking for a response – this method is both impersonal and more time consuming for the person you are asking feedback from. It will also limit the beneficial feedback you receive. Be sure use the following questions in your interview. You may add more if you like. In your “write up” of this assignment, be sure to clearly articulate the questions and answers, as well as address the additional questions at the end regarding your experience.

- Roughly how old is this woman and how long has she been/was she married?
- What female Bible character is one of her favorites, and why?
- What character traits does she think are most important/essential for a true Christian woman?
- What feminine character traits does she think society today is bent on destroying or undermining?
- How has she defended against societal pulls that aim to motivate her to shun the development of character traits of a true Christian woman?
- What strategies has she used to continue growing as a true Christian woman?
- What other advice does she have for an “aspiring” Christian woman?
- Now, (you the student) personally reflect on the interview experience and share what you learned through it! How has your understanding of this topic grown, changed, or deepened?

B. Godly Submission to Husband Interview: Proper, godly submission of a wife to a husband is hard to find and has even become a loathsome concept in society today, however it is a key attribute of a godly wife (Ephesians 5:22). Identify a leading woman in your local or another church congregation who exemplifies qualities Christ would want to see in a true, godly woman. Specifically, identify a woman who appears to be willing to be and desirous of submitting to her Christian husband. This woman should be married for a minimum of 5 years, and at least age 30. Her husband can be alive or deceased. Your goal in this interview is to come to a clearer understanding of what true, godly submission to a husband IS and IS NOT. Use the questions below to guide your interview. You MAY use the same person for this interview as you did for the Proverbs 31 woman interview, or you may use a different woman. Be sure to let her know ahead of time what you want to talk to her about. You are encouraged to speak to this woman either “in person”, on the phone, or via something like Skype. Try to avoid just emailing questions and asking for a response – this method is both impersonal and more time consuming for the person you are asking feedback from. Be sure use the following questions in your interview. You may add more if you like. In your “write up” of this assignment, be sure to clearly articulate the questions and answers, as well as address the additional questions at the end regarding your experience.

- Roughly how old is this woman and how long has she been/was she married?
- To her, what does “submit to your husband” in marriage mean?
- How has her understanding of proper, godly submission to her husband changed over the years of her marriage?
- What has she discovered to be a helpful tool to assist her in properly submitting to her husband?
- How has submitting to her husband improved her marriage or helped make her life easier

- o or better?
- o What has her husband done, if anything, that makes submitting to him easier?
- o What advice does she have for young women in terms of selecting a future husband who God expects her to submit to?
- o What advice does she have for young men who aim to be the kind of godly husband their wife will desire to submit to?
- o Does she have any other comments about this pivotal, godly concept?
- o Now, (you the student) personally reflect on the interview and share what you learned through it! How has your understanding of this topic grown or changed?

C. Godly Husband Interview: Learning about true Christian womanhood from women is incredibly helpful and interesting. However, there is also much to be learned about Christian womanhood by tapping the wisdom of a godly husband. Identify a successfully married MALE, who is also viewed as a spiritual leader in your local or another church congregation, and ask to interview him. Find a man who is at least 35 years of age and has been married for at least 10 years (you may interview a widower). Your aim in this interview is to learn what qualities of a true Christian woman he appreciates most in his wife. Be sure to let him know ahead of time what you want to talk to him about. You are encouraged to speak to this man either “in person”, on the phone, or via something like Skype. Try to avoid just emailing questions and asking for a response – this method is both impersonal and more time consuming for the person you are asking feedback from. Be sure use the following questions in your interview. You may add more if you like. In your “write up” of this assignment, be sure to clearly articulate the questions and answers, as well as address the additional questions at the end regarding your experience.

- o How old is this man and for how long has he been married?
- o What Christian character traits made his wife “stand out” from the rest of the field?
- o What Christian character traits does he think are lacking in many women of the modern generation?
- o What “points of view”, that are prevalent among woman today, does he believe are destructive to true, Christian womanhood?
- o What character traits does he think many Christian men today are looking for in a future wife?
- o What other thoughts does he have about true Christian womanhood?
- o Now, (you the student) personally reflect on the interview and share what you learned through it! How has your understanding of this topic grown or changed?

SUMMARY OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS	POINT VALUE		Letter Grade	Total Points
Icebreaker	20		A	423 or more points
Philosophy essay	50		B	376-422 points
Three Activities (50 points each)	150		C	329-375 points
Class participation and forum posts	50		D	282-328 points
Mid-term exam	100		F	281 points or below
Biblical Character Sketch (2 at 50 points each)	100			
Total	470			

COURSE TOPICS:

Topics
Introduction, Expectations and Perspective
A Balance of Extremes
Proverbs 31 Woman: Is She Superwoman?
Feminism vs. Femininity
A Godly Appearance
Satan's Tool of Self Comparison
Emotions...
Kind, Meek, Gentle and Quiet Spirit
A Woman's Roles in Marriage
Submission: What It IS and IS NOT!
The Wife and Mother <i>CAREER</i> ?
Education, Preparation and Self-Improvement
PMS, Monthly Cycles and Menopause
Women, Leadership and the Church
Conclusion and Wrap Up